

The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

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Newsletter

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PATRON: SIR CHARLES MACKERRAS
HONORARY LIFE MEMBERS: Miss RITA HUNTER, CBE
Miss LEONIE RYSANEK
Prof MICHAEL EWANS
Mr RICHARD KING
Mr REG MALONEY

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, March 20	<i>Parsifal</i> video The Goethe Institute	1.00pm
Sunday, April 17	TBA The Goethe Institute	1.00pm
Sunday, May 15	Seminar on Berlioz' <i>The Trojans</i> The Opera Centre	9.00am
Sunday, May 22	Annual General Meeting followed by Wagner Birthday Lunch (probably) Ritz Carlton Hotel, Macquarie Street	12.00noon

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NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am writing this after having had our unforgettable trip to Bayreuth. What a wonderful experience! It would be impossible to hear such wonderful singers, such awe-inspiring conducting and unforgettable music as in Bayreuth. The dinner with Sherwin Sloan and other Wagner Societies was perhaps the highlight of the week. We Australians were lucky enough to be seated one at each table so we were able to make some lovely contacts with the other Wagnerites. It is very difficult to come back to earth when you have such a very enjoyable holiday.

I was invited to the Goethe Institute on Germany's National Day to meet the new Consul General, Irene Gründer, a truly charming person. It was a beautiful day with sunshine glowing and everybody seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves.

As of now, would you please send all mail or correspondence to MY address at the front of the newsletter and again below, as our registered public office is to be changed in May 1994.

I asked all present at the October Wagner Day about having a luncheon next year instead of a dinner. Everybody was agreeable so next year, Sunday May 22nd (Wagner's Birthday), is to be our first luncheon, hopefully at the Ritz Carlton, Macquarie Street, City.

Please don't forget our Christmas Party this month, on Sunday 12th December. We have some lovely raffle prizes this year. We are also having a garage sale of surplus books and stock so bring your cheque books and spend up. Entertainment is promised, and a delicious afternoon tea.

All the best to anyone who cannot come to the Party and I sincerely hope next year brings you happiness, health and anything else close to your hearts.

Olive Coonan
President

CONTRIBUTIONS

All contributions to the Editor are gratefully received, be they in the form of letters, articles or items that have caught your eye in other publications. If you do submit items it would be helpful if they could be typed rather than hand-written, especially if they are lengthy. However we welcome your interest in this newsletter in whatever form it comes.

Please forward your items to: the Editor - The Wagner Society in NSW Inc, c/- 4/22 Read Street, WAVERLEY NSW 2024

WITH THANKS TO DAVID MCKIE OF *THE GUARDIAN*

Nicholas Medtner
 Wrote a rave review of *Ma Vlast* by Smetana
 But Glinka
 Gave it a stinker
 (He also got a bit of a panin' off
 Rachmaninov).

Asked by his agent why his symphony no 9 in C Major, usually known as "the Great"

Was now more than two years late

Schubert retorted: "How pushy can you get?"

I'm not halfway through number 8 in B minor (my 'unfinished') yet!"

The composer of "Land of Hope and Glory"
 Was, as you may have guessed, a frightful old Tory
 But Carl-Maria von Weber
 Voted Labour.

Leo Delibes

Took the score of *Daphnis and Cloe* with him to Thebes.

He told friends: "I invariably find

That Ravel broadens the mind."



Jean-Baptiste Lully

Loved to field in the gully*

Poaching all the chances that Sir Arthur Bliss

Would invariably miss

(*Especially of Robert Schumann

bowling right hand fast off a 19-pace run in the manner of F S Trueman).



QUOTABLE QUOTES

Who said what? If you have a favourite, please send it in for future use.

- I. "I am not the world's best guide to *Lohengrin* (I tend to spend the first act working out the relationship between the money supply and inflation, for want of anything on the stage that holds my attention)".
- II. "Siegfried is a yokel, with neither Land nor Leute".
- III. "A gimcrack gold and snuff-coloured affair [the Margrave's opera house], & desperately ugly, though quaint".
- IV. "The difficulty with a fundamentally realistic staging of Wagner's *Ring* is the unreality of the story line".
- V. "Cutlets, baked potatoes, omelettes, all are discussed much more eagerly than Wagner's music".

DONATIONS

The Society gratefully acknowledges a donation from Lady Gallagher.

TATIANA TROYANOS

Born September 12, 1938; died August 22, 1993

Tatiana Troyanos, who has died at the age of 54, was one of the most remarkable American opera singers of the last 30 years.

Matthew Epstein, director of the Welsh National Opera, described her thus:

"She had a remarkable technique, musicality, a strong personality, linguistic ability - she sang perfectly in any number of languages; she had an extraordinary ability to do different things and be great at everything she did."

Her stage debut was in the chorus of Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music*, before making her opera debut at the New York City Opera in 1964 as Cherubino. She went to Europe in 1966 where she auditioned for the Hamburg State Opera, debuting as the Composer, in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, and remaining there for 10 years under the musical director Charles Mackerras.

A singer with a magnificent, commanding stage presence, her repertoire was prodigious, ranging from early opera to Wagner. After a period in the 1970s singing the bel canto repertoire other roles such as Brangäne in *Tristan* (1980) and Kundry in *Parsifal* at Chicago in 1987 showed her career moving towards a more dramatic/character range. Earlier this year she added Fricka in Chicago and Waltraute at the Met to her repertoire.

She leaves a serious gap in the American opera scene.

SIEGFRIED WAGNER

We hear that Bayreuth's new sister city in the former East Germany, Rudolstadt, is putting in a bid to rival its esteemed relative. Rudolstadt has its own tiny opera house, the Thüringer Landestheater, which - if director Peter P Pachl has his way - could become a world centre for the operas of the great man's son, Siegfried Wagner. The project has the support of the International Siegfried Wagner Society. Conductor and artistic director at Bayreuth from 1908 to 1930, Siegfried wrote 15 unforgettable operas, including *Der Bärenhäuter*, *Der Kobold*, *Rainulf und Adelasia* or *Der Schmied von Marienburg*.

EDO DE WAART

Now that we have Edo de Waart in our midst it's worth reminding ourselves of his many Wagnerian accomplishments, among them the San Francisco *Ring* of 1985 and onwards, starring, among others, Eva Marton, James Morris, Helga Dernesch, René Kollo, John Tomlinson, Peter Hofmann, Jeannine Altmeyer, Walter Berry, Gwyneth Jones and on, and on, and on....

As Arthur Bloomfield said in *Opera*:

"this Brünnhilde proceeded with the aid of Edo de Waart to give us one of the most noble, reposeful, evolving Immolation Scenes in Wagnerian annals... Thanks not only to the staging but the sinuous and deftly phrased conducting of de Waart, Hofmann's and Altmeyer's Act I encounter was the most erotic I can remember..... [de Waart] was pampering us with the most ecstatic lilt... But it was in *Siegfried* (beginning with a very mysterious and subtly mocking first page) and *Götterdämmerung* that he achieved total immersion in Wagner's scores, a complete command of pace and mood with no detours. The pastoral and scherzando element in *Siegfried* obviously appeal to him a great deal, but perhaps the best of all was his Rhine Journey in which an animal exultancy gave way, before the horn call, to a sense of utter desolation rarely noticed in this location.... de Waart's second cycle travelled from the efficient to the ineffable."

THE KUPFER RING ON VIDEO

Das Rheingold and *Die Walküre* have been recently released on video (Teldec VHS 4509-91122-3 and Teldec VHS 4509-91123-3 respectively).

Criticism has been levelled at the quality of Horant Hohlfeld's direction of the video production, one reviewer (Richard Fawkes in *Opera Now*, October 1993) stating of *Das Rheingold* that:

"unless [the director] reinterprets the stage director's intentions for video, you end up with something as exciting to watch as the latecomers' monitor in the bar at Covent Garden."

James Pritchard in *Wagner News* (October 1993), the UK Wagner Society's newsletter, radically differs from Fawkes on the matter of close ups in these video offerings. He points out that:

"What is enhanced [by the video format] is, of course, the perception of the superb characterisation by the principal singers, not only when singing but also when interacting to others and it is this that can be so easily missed in the theatre."

Fawkes does find more to enjoy in *Die Walküre*, however, and for those of us who crave the occasional visual fix as well as the aural fix we can obtain from CDs, these operas could be a great substitute for being there or for the "bleeding chunks" which are the occasional fare of Sydney audiences.

RONALD DOWD SUMMER SCHOOL FOR SINGERS

Now in its seventh year, this Summer School at Charles Sturt University, Bathurst, is inviting participation in some of its new programs and masterclasses in January '94. Of special interest to our members is that:

- there is a Werner Baer Award covering costs for attendance at the school;
- Sybilla Baer will be guest presenter and Italian coach for the spaghetti opera night (Wednesday, January 19th); and
- the special celebrity tutor on Friday January 21 will be Rita Hunter, CBE.

The Summer School runs from Sunday January 16 through to Tuesday January 25, culminating in Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*.

Enquiries: The Secretary, Ronald Dowd Summer School for Singers, c/- Helen King Promotions, PO Box 842, Bathurst, NSW 2795.

PARSIFAL FOR THE CINEMA

The AFI Cinema (formerly the Chauvel) in Paddington Town Hall, Oxford Street, is presenting *Parsifal* for one performance only, at 6.00pm on Monday 13th December (the day after our Christmas Party). Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's radical concept is either enlightening or maddening, depending on taste, but is worth sampling if you haven't viewed it before, using both a girl and young man to embody Parsifal's stages of emotional growth.

NEW MEMBERS

The Society wishes to welcome the following new members: Sheila Mason, William Frederick Naylor and Helen Naylor.

EXCERPTS FROM THE *NORDBAYERISCHER KURIER*, BAYREUTH 29 AUGUST 1993

Our thanks to Shirley Robertson, who supplied this article, and its translation

(Peter Emmerich, press spokesman of the Bayreuth Festspiele announced on the closing night, a few future casting details. For the new *Ring*, Wolfgang Schmidt in his debut as Siegfried, Deborah Polaski as Brünnhilde, John Tomlinson as Wotan, Poul Elming as Siegmund, Siegfried Jerusalem as Loge and Manfred Jung as Mime. For *Tristan*, no changes. For *Holländer*, a change only of conductor, Peter Schneider, as Guiseppi Sinopoli takes over as conductor of *Parsifal*, leaving James Levine free for the new *Ring*. The *Parsifal* cast will only be announced at the beginning of '94 as Placido Domingo, because of other bookings, cannot sing the title role (Emmerich has hopes of him appearing again in '95) and Deborah Polaski's role of Kundry must be recast. In 1995, the year of the 2000th performance of the Festspiele, a new *Tannhäuser* will open the season and in 1996 high hopes are held for a lavish new *Meistersinger* produced by Wolfgang Wagner and conducted by Daniel Barenboim.)

The *Nordbayerischer Kurier* on 29th August also ran an Interview with Siegfried Jerusalem and Waltraud Meier over their experiences with the new and controversial 1993 production of *Tristan*:

Editor: One has read that Meier is no Isolde and Jerusalem has problems in the second act. How do you feel about your achievements?

Meier: I feel that our performances have continued to improve and as debutants in the roles we have both needed time in such large roles.

Jerusalem: One cannot be dismissed on premiere performances.

- M:** Or be compared with a 40th appearance of a Nilsson or with my last appearance as Kundry.
- J:** Five years ago I had greater difficulties with my Siegfried debut and feel it took four or even five years to master the role.
- E:** Can you tell us anything of direction plans that were perhaps not realised?
- J:** Actually it was a quite normal rehearsal time. Naturally it was difficult for us to work with a director with no idea of opera direction and who cannot express himself as he does in his books. At 80, after 40 years in the DDR one is moulded differently from us.
- E:** There are also critics who claim there is too little passion in this production.
- J:** That is a question of taste. Of course the stage design says a lot. In such a design there is room only for erotic fantasies, not eroticism itself.
- E:** But you must portray feeling in the singing though. Is that difficult in such a "cooled down atmosphere"?
- M:** Yes, I think so. On the other hand, we have often, though far apart, long looks that must carry. One should therefore feel that we both belong together - even though we are not embracing the whole time.
- J:** No way - that would be frightful and (laughing) more sweaty.
- E:** And were there scarcely any releases from tension?
- J:** No, but then one shouldn't overall make too much of the production. Always the discussion centres on Müller or Kupfer or whatever and it is forgotten that at least 50% input is furnished by us. If we stay musically correct and go well with the text - and I claim that we do - there is not that much room for direction disagreements. *Tristan* is not a dance arrangement!
- M:** There is not much to direct there - it is about inner states - we reflect over our feelings.
- J:** And settle up with each other, before we can go ahead.
- M:** And then the light goes out...

- E:** You have, in the past year, stressed that the singers should have rights of discussion in such a staging. Have you had that?
- J:** A lot.
- M:** In the framework in which we can work.
- E:** Any possible changes in the next year?
- J:** I think alterations in the second act, a few less suits of armour...
- E:** So *Tristan* rests till next year. Anything else together?
- J:** We'll see. We have a good agent - and both the same one!
- E:** Is *Tristan* the hardest work of your career?
- J:** Yes indeed, and the most costly. Siegfried doesn't think deeply - quite different to Parsifal or Siegmund but *Tristan* a thousand times more so. To sing it honestly is the main thing.
- E:** And is *Isolde* a change of specialisation for you, Frau Meier?
- M:** Absolutely not.
- J:** That is the same voice - God be thanked. She is a soprano and *Kundry* sings incredibly high. Comparable are Siegfried and *Tristan*. Actually these parts are not so hard because of the high notes but because of the deep ones.
- E:** Frau Meier, Herr Jerusalem. We thank you for this talk.

TICKETS TO BAYREUTH THROUGH THE WAGNER SOCIETY IN NSW

The Society has felt it desirable to draft some rules relating to the acquisition of tickets for Bayreuth through membership of the Wagner Society in NSW as follows:

- I. Only Financial Members of at least 2 years standing are eligible to apply for tickets
- II. Only signed orders placed on the form below will be accepted.
 - A. A deposit of \$100 (one hundred dollars) for each application is also required.

- B. If tickets are not allocated to you the Deposit will be promptly refunded.
- III. Applications must be made prior to 31st December 1993
- IV. We will apply for performances in the third cycle, ie, middle to late August 1994.
- V. You are responsible for the price of the tickets once they are received. (Unfortunately, because of the nature of the dealings with the Festival Box Office, we require payment even if you are unable to use the tickets. We will not return tickets to the Bayreuth Box Office because there is a risk that such a move may prejudice future orders from our Society. However, if you are unable to go, after paying for the tickets, it is **extremely probable** that we would be able to find someone else to take them over).
- VI. **All payments** must be made through the Society.
- VII. You will be responsible for your own travel arrangements and accommodation.
- VIII. The Festival commences on Monday 25 July, with *Parsifal*, and concludes Sunday, 28 August, with *Tristan und Isolde*. The other operas scheduled are *Der fliegende Holländer*, and the new *Ring*, produced by Alfred Kirchner and onducted by James Levine (3 cycles).
- IX. Tickets will be sold as a package (subject to availability).
- X. We will add a service charge of 10% to the tickets to cover the Society's expenses and overhead in ordering and distributing the tickets.
- XI. In the event of a ballot being necessary one ticket only will be allocated to Financial Members of 2 years standing or more, except in the case of a married couple, or close relatives, when 2 tickets will be allocated **provided both are financial members**.
- XII. If a ballot is necessary, it will be conducted at the Print Room in early January. Reg Maloney, our retiring auditor, and Richard King, our Public Officer, will conduct same in the presence of Committee Members, or any other members of the Society wishing to attend.

Signature	
Name	
Address	
Phone (work and home)	

SEND TO THE WAGNER SOCIETY, 4/22 READ STREET, WAVERLEY, 2024.
 TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES 387 6403

Number of seats:..... If there is a choice would you prefer expensive seats.....? Less expensive seats:.....?

DONATION OF BOOKS

The following titles have been donated to the University of Sydney Library and a letter of acknowledgement has been received from the Gift and Exchange Librarian.

Donington, R	Wagner's Ring and its Symbols
Hodson, P	Who's Who in Wagner's Life and Work
Newman, E	Wagner Nights
Winkler, F E	For Freedom Destined - Mysteries of Man's Evolution in Wagner's Ring Operas and Parsifal
Kapp, J	Loves of Richard Wagner - Minna Planer: Mathilde Wesendonck: Judith Gautier: Cosima von Bulow.
Skelton, G	Richard & Cosima - a biography of a marriage
Wagner, R	Tannhäuser with English Trans. (N McFarran)
	Siegfried with English Trans. (F Jameson)
	Tristan & Isolde with English Trans. (H G Chapman)
	Parsifal with English Trans. (S Robb)
	Der fliegende Holländer with English Trans. (S Robb)
	Tannhäuser with English Trans. (M E Petz)
	Lohengrin with English Trans. (S Robb) 2 copies
	Das Rheingold with English Trans. (")
	Die Walküre with English Trans. (")
	Siegfried with English Trans. (")
	Götterdämmerung with English Trans. (")
	Tristan und Isolde with English Trans. (")
	Die Meistersinger with English Trans. (J Gutman)
	Parsifal with English Trans. (S Robb)
	[All of the above with vocal score in German and English]
Wagner, R	Lohengrin
	Die Walküre
	Siegfried
	Götterdämmerung (")
	Die Meistersinger
	[Vocal and/or orchestral score in German]
Mann, T	Pro and Contra Wagner
Wagner, R	Das Liebesverbot
	Tristan und Isolde (Opera Guide No 6)
	Götterdämmerung (") (Opera Guide No 31)
	[Libretti in English and German]
Phelan, N	Charles Mackerras: A Musician's Musician
Wayrer-Fauland, E	Erda
	Wieland the Smith
	R Wagner and Karl May (4 copies)
	Tal auf Gräser (4 copies)
	R Wagner und Graz

Pourtales, G	Richard Wagner: Mensch und Meister
Keller, W	Richard Wagner: Briefe an W Baumgartner
Borchmeyer, D	Richard Wagner und dou anti-semitismus
Ashton-Ellis, W	Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt Vols I & II
Wagner, R	Lohengrin Piano Score (2 Hands) F Schneider
	Tannhäuser Piano Score (solo) R Keller

LETTERS

Following Arthur Carter's letter in the Wagner Newsletter, I would like to argue the case for an educational course for anyone interested in Wagner's music. Such a course would provide a stream of new members for our Society.

The way I envisage it a student could pay, say \$100, to the WEA or the Goethe Institute. For this there would be provided 10 illustrated lectures on Wagner and his music. Such a course would be taught every quarter.

The lecturer could work with our society so that VHS recordings could be used as well as records and a piano. Such a person could then present themselves as the leading local expert on Wagner.

The harsh fact is that, with the exception of the Flying Dutchman, most of the operas are quite challenging for the average opera enthusiast. What do other members think about our society instituting and subsidising such a course?

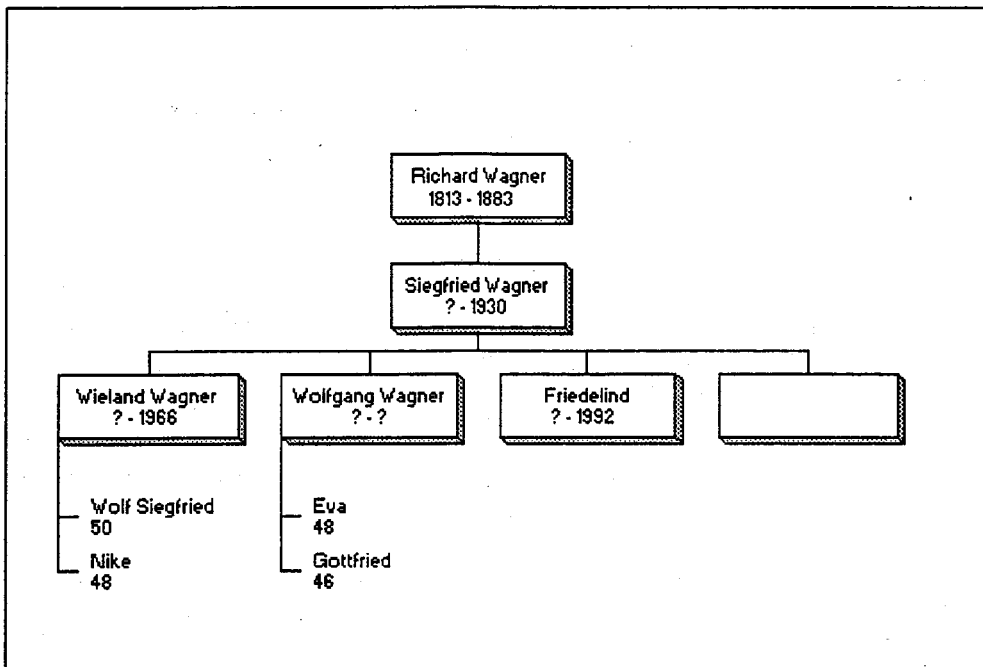
John Drew

QUOTABLE QUOTE ANSWERS

I	MARTIN MEYER
II	ARTHUR BLOOMFIELD
III	JEANNETTE MARSHALL (1889)
IV	MARTIN MEYER
V	TCHAIKOVSKY

WAGNER AND HIS SUCCESSORS

Who will be the next general manager of the Bayreuth Festival? Technically neither Wolfgang nor any member of the family can determine the Bayreuth succession. In 1973 the Bayreuth Festival was incorporated and its assets turned over to the Richard Wagner Foundation, which is empowered to choose the next Director, a post that the current one, Wolfgang, holds for life. Below follows a draft of a short family tree of who's who in the Wagner Family race. If readers would care to contribute more detail, we would be delighted to update the tree.



DIARY DATES 1994

March 17	Goethe Institute	Parsifal video
April 17	Goethe Institute	TBA
May 15	Opera Centre	Seminar on Berlioz' The Trojans
May 22	Ritz Carlton??	AGM + Lunch
June 19	Goethe Institute	
July 17	Goethe Institute	
August 21	Goethe Institute	
September 18	Goethe Institute	
October 16	Goethe Institute	
November 20	Goethe Institute	
December 11	Goethe Institute	Christmas Party

THE RAVENS REPORTING (CONTINUED)

- Stockholm: *Lohengrin* - conducted by Siegfried Kohler, producer Gotz Friedrich, directors Andreas Reinhardt and Katherine Hysing, Opens January 28.
- Cosa Mesa, USA *Die Walküre*, from Opera Pacific (Orange County, California), with Ealynn Voss, Mechthild Gessendorf, Vicor von Halem, conducted by John Mauceri, March 4, 10, 12, 18, 20
- New Orleans *Tannhäuser* with Richard Versaille, March 2, 5
- Montpellier *Tristan und Isolde* with Gabriele Schnaut, Heikki Siukola, March 3
- Köln Rienzi, director David Pountney, with Philip Kang, Carolyn James, March 27
- Düsseldorf: *Parsifal*, directed by Andreas Reinhardt, opens March 6.
- Hamburg *Götterdämmerung* with Gabriele Schnaut, Siegfried Jerusalem, Matti Salminen, March 25, April 4
- Antwerp *Lohengrin*, March 29, April 1, 4, 7, 9, 12
- Ghent *Lohengrin*, April 17, 20, 23, 26 with Hans Neugebauer, Rene Allio, Christine Laurent
- Munich *Tannhäuser* July 6, 9, 14, 17 with Nadine Secunde, Waltraud Meier/Schmiege, Rene Kollo, Bernd Weikl, Jan-Hendrik Rootering
- Bayreuth: 1996 - Daniel Barenboim is conducting the new production of *Meistersinger* at Bayreuth in 1996.



THE RAVENS REPORTING

Here we offer advance short items/performance news of interest to Wagner lovers.

- London: The ENO is performing a new production of *Lohengrin* which opened November 20; it stars John Keyes, Linda McLeod, Malcolm Donnelly with the conductor Mark Elder, producer Tim Albery and director Hildegard Bechtler. this December 2, 8, 11, 18, 22, 29.
- Chicago: *Die Walküre* with Eva Marton, James Morris, Siegfried Jerusalem, conducted by Zubin Mehta, December 3, 6, 10, 14, 18, 22.
- Düsseldorf: 1993 - *The Ring*, director Reinhardt, with Gabriele Schnaut, December 12, 17, 21, 25
- Berlin: *Ring Cycle* - Deutsche Staatsoper beginning with *Die Walküre* with Poul Elming/Siegfried Jerusalem, John Tomlinson/Falk Struckmann, Margaret Jane Wray, Deborah Polaski, Ute Prieu/Rosemarie Lang, Eric Halfvarson/Peter Rose, conducted by Daniel Barenboim, produced by Harry Kupfer, sets and costumes by Hans Schavernoeh and Reinhard Heinrich - December 12, 15, 19, 22, 28, March 5, 9, 13.
- Hamburg: *Tannhäuser* - conducted by Gerd Albrecht, December 19, 22, 26, January 2, 9, 30.
- Berlin: *Die Meistersinger* at Deutsche Oper, with Wolfgang Brendel, Eva Johansson and conducted by Rafael Frübeck de Burgos, December 25.
- Hamburg *Tannhäuser*, Jan 2, 9, 30
Das Rheingold March 6, 9, 22, 27
Die Walküre March 13, 16, 29
Siegfried March 20, April 1
- Frankfurt: *Lohengrin*, January 9
- Marseilles *Der fliegende Holländer* with Jose van Dam, Jan 18, 21, 23, 25
- Dallas *Der fliegende Holländer*, with Mechthild Gessendorf, Victor von Halem, Gary Lakes, Jan-Hendrik Rootering, January 27, 30, February 2, 5
- Phoenix: *Siegfried* - January 13, 15, 19, 21, 23.