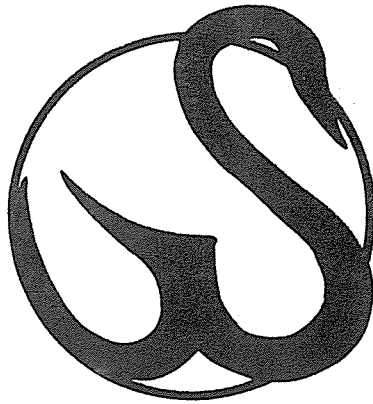


The Wagner Society

IN NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

Registered Office: 4/22 Read Street, Waverley NSW 2024



Newsletter

55 JUNE 1994

Print Post Approved PP 242114/00002

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 June 19th	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> video	Goethe Institute 1.00pm
Sunday July 17th	The Annual General Meeting plus <i>The Making of the Chéreau Ring</i> video plus <i>German Castles</i> video	<i>Goethe Institute</i> 1.00pm
Sunday August 21	Carol Ann Petherick song recital on children to celebrate the Year of the Family	Joan Sutherland Studio the Opera Centre Surry Hills 1.00pm
Sunday September 18	Talk by Moffat Oxenbould Artistic Director of the Australian Opera on <i>The Australian Opera's Wagner Repertoire</i>	Goethe Institute 1.00pm

COMMITTEE

President	Olive Coonan	387.6403
Vice President	Paul Lehmann Sue Kelly	552.1424
Membership	Clare Hennessy	747.5664
Treasurers	Janet Wayland Bill Watson	332.3926 428.2909
Secretary	Annie Marshall Clare Hennessy	042.94.2992 747.5664
Catering	Margaret Budge (Resigned April 1994)	521.6097
Newsletter	Annie Marshall Ramon Josey	042.94.2992 326.2593
Public Officer	Richard King	

CONTENTS

Notes from the President	1
Letters to the Editor	2
Upcoming Seminar by Robert Gay	2
New Members	2
Program for 1994 continued	3
Florence Austral	3
Rudolstädter Festspiele '94	7
Bayreuth Debuts for 1994	8
Obituary	9
Die 'Strictly Ballroom' Meistersinger	10
Wagner - the Passion in my Life	11
New <i>Lohengrin</i> in London	13
The New Glyndebourne	13
Carol Anne Petherick's Coming Recital	14
Guessing Competition winners	15
The Wagner Birthday Lunch	15
Annual General Meeting	16
An Interview with Heiner Müller and Erich Wonder	19
An Interview with Norbert Balatsch	20
"Because it's there!"	25
Next Issue	26
Recent Donations	26
The Ravens Reporting	28

NOTES FROM THE PRESIDENT

This will be my last President's notes to you as, due to ill-health, I will not be standing for re-election as President at July's Annual General Meeting. I will still stay on the Committee as immediate Past President to assist the next President who will also have your full co-operation and assistance that has been given to me over the years.

In the last three months I have attended some very successful events. Lady Persia Galleghan invited me to a Luncheon for Opera Foundation at the Women's Club which was a very enjoyable afternoon. Our yearly Seminar with the Australian Opera was another resounding success. *The Trojans* by Berlioz was apparently a popular choice. Let's keep up the good work and partnership with the Friends of the Australian Opera.

A group of members went to Melbourne to see the *Mastersingers* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which, according to everyone, was a great success. I went the following weekend and after hearing Bruce Martin sing why do we need singers from overseas?

Please keep the following dates in the months leading up to Christmas. On July 17th our AGM, August 21st a recital by Carol-Anne Petherick at the Opera Centre, September 18th a talk by Moffat Oxenbould, Artistic Director of the Australian Opera and November 20th a talk by Robert Gay on Liszt and Wagner.

Unfortunately, the luncheon won't be over when I am writing this but we have had 76 bookings. This is a wonderful response considering it is our first attempt at a luncheon.

In conclusion, my thanks to my committee and all the loyal friends I have made in my ten years on the Committee. Please God we will continue to flourish and preserve Wagner's worth in this world gone mad.

**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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To the President,

Dear Olive,

Congratulations to you and each of your Committee members for making our 1994 Annual Dinner such a huge success! Not only did it fall exactly on the Master's birthday, but you were also able to arrange a perfect Autumn day for us. The venue was charming, the food delicious, our guest of honour a great treat, and it was lovely for us "country bumpkins" to see so many old familiar faces and so many new ones as well. As retiring President, Olive, you certainly have vacated the chair in a burst of glory!

With best wishes,

Judy and Joseph Ferfaglia

UPCOMING SEMINAR BY ROBERT GAY

AN INTRODUCTION TO WAGNER'S *RING* CYCLE

Attendees at the last seminar on *The Trojans* will be delighted to learn that Robert Gay is delivering an *Introduction to Wagner's Ring Cycle* at the Australian Opera Centre. The cost (8 sessions of 2½ hours each) is \$90 for Friends of the Australian Opera and Wagner Society members and \$120 otherwise. The course commences on Wednesday 3rd August and finishes on Wednesday 21st September and the sessions run from 10.30am to 1.00pm or in the evening from 6.30pm to 9.00pm. Here is an opportunity for members who want to expand their knowledge or refresh their memory. If you wish to book, please contact Ruth Taylor of the Friends of the Australian Opera on 699 1099.

NEW MEMBERS

The Wagner Society is delighted to welcome the following new members - Mrs Mary Meppen, Mrs Joan Taylor, Mr Barry & Mrs Jane Walters, Mrs Mabel James and Mrs Sheena Lawson.

PROGRAM FOR 1994 CONTINUED

June 19th	<i>The Flying Dutchman</i> video	Goethe Institute
July 17th	The Annual General Meeting plus <i>The Making of the Chéreau Ring</i>	Goethe Institute
August 21	Carol Ann Petherick song recital on children to celebrate Year of the Family	Joan Sutherland Studio, the Opera Centre
September 18	Talk by Moffat Oxenbould, Artistic Director, Australian Opera on <i>The Australian Opera's Wagner Repertoire</i>	Goethe Institute
October 16	<i>Tannhäuser</i> video	Goethe Institute
November 20	Talk by Robert Gay on <i>Liszt and Wagner</i>	Goethe Institute
December 11	Christmas Party	Goethe Institute

FLORENCE AUSTRAL

April marked the centenary of Florence Austral's birth. We celebrate the anniversary with some praises from the 1920s and a recent and illuminating article.

In the early twenties Florence Austral was the most important recording soprano we had, thanks to the beauty, power and compass of her voice.

She greeted the light without any effort, and sang with richness and depth.

Florence Austral, the Brünnhilde, is a voice, a great one, vibrant and warm.

Arthur Hammond, principal conductor and music director of the now defunct but affectionately recalled Carl Rosa Company, was a man of many memories. They came up bright as a button and were as obedient to his call as the genie of the lamp. I once mentioned Florence Austral. "Ah", he said promisingly, and his mind went back to the 1920s when he was a young man who had been in the opera business for a few years and

thought he knew it all. His stories of course became other men's and were retold more than once, as I fear this has been. Here it comes again even so:

A piano rehearsal of *Die Walküre* was about to start, and the people involved were sitting around in chairs, he himself chatting away with the nice rather motherly woman next to him. The music commenced and looking round he remarked inwardly that there seemed to be no Brünnhilde. You can't get far in Act II without her, and already Wotan had begun to sing commands to his daughter apparently *in absentio*.

Then, said Arthur Hammond, as the pianist introduced Brünnhilde's Battle Cry he was never so surprised in his life as to hear a mighty "Hojotoho" from beside him. His nice rather motherly neighbour was still sitting and as far as he was aware had not even troubled to draw a preliminary breath.

But it was a voice such as he had never heard. Solid, exact, effortless: the octave leaps, the trill, the full-voiced easy high B natural, everything was in place, and it had all been done in a way that made falling off a log seem difficult. This, he learnt, was Florence Austral, and the voice remained for ever after in his ears. And not only the voice. The cool professionalism was equally impressive, and in later years he found this to be typical of her. He once met her leaving the theatre, after she had sung superbly as ever, on her way home where earlier she had come back to find that she had been pretty extensively burgled. Everything of value had been taken, but she had a job to do and that came first.

The poor woman was to need all the fortitude and forbearance she could muster. As early as 1930, when she was no more than 36, signs had begun to show of the arteriosclerosis which shortened her career and crippled her severely in later life. She went back to her native Australia at the beginning of the Second World War and, after teaching for some years at the Newcastle Conservatory, retired to face a condition of near poverty right up to her death in 1965.

Among those who wrote of her, Harold Simpson, author of *Singers to Remember* (Oakwood Press, 1973), referred to a letter in which she told him how well she was sustained by happy memories; and Don White, who contributed a valuable article and discography to *The Record Collector* (Vol. XIV, nos. 1 and 2), visited her in 1960, when he found a woman of clear, energetic mind and 'of overwhelming charm' though almost totally paralysed.

If, in those darkened years memories of the illustrious past did indeed rise to cheer her then perhaps she must have paused to wonder "what if?" After her first decisive success, in a scholarship at Ballarat, in which she won both the soprano and mezzo-soprano prizes, she made a modest studio-opera debut and then left Australia for the United States. Her studies in New York prospered so well that in 1920 she was offered a contract with the Metropolitan. Like Geraldine Farrar before her, she thought it premature.

Hard to say: she might have been taken on and dropped after a season or two, as happened with several good singers in the period, or perhaps have shared roles with another Florence, Easton of that name, from Middlesborough, England, one of the most useful and not least celebrated members of the company, in those starry, prestigious years. As it was, she sailed for England, and the scene of her first triumphs was not the Metropolitan but Covent Garden.

Her debut there - and, as far as I know, anywhere - was as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* (her adjudicator in Ballarat had said that she was 'a Brünnhilde' which at that time was something she had never heard of). This was with the British National Opera Company in 1922, and she was put on stage, for the first time and in this fearsome role, as a last-minute substitute (some say for her compatriot Elsa Stralia, but more probably for Beatrice Miranda, who with Agnes Nicholls was the company's resident heroic soprano). Agnes Nicholls was the Sieglinde of that performance; Edna Thornton, Walter Hyde, Clarence Whitehill and Robert Radford were the other principals; Albert Coates conducted. So the newcomer was in good company, and in it she proved outstanding.

Two nights later, in *Siegfried*, she "greeted the light without any effort, and sang with richness and depth". In the second cycle she added *Götterdämmerung* to her repertoire and thus became established; it was generally agreed that here was the finest new talent to be heard at the house since the war.

What was then hoped was that the magnificent voice would remain and the acting be improved. In the following season she repeated her success in the same operas, and the excellent 'Figaro' (A P Hatton), opera critic of *Musical Opinion*, reported that while Hyde and Nicholls were artistically the most satisfying singers, "Florence Austral, the Brünnhilde, is a voice, a great one, vibrant and warm - though not yet an actress. Vocally, she fits so perfectly into the Wagnerian scheme, like a superb solo orchestral instrument, that one feels almost resentful that she should be required to fit into stage pictures and dramatic actions as well." (Note, incidentally, that that was a requirement in those days.) The deficiency was more inescapable when she offered her first Isolde. In 1924, her *Aïda*, though "rather modelled on Wagnerian lines" still provided some lovely singing; "in acting and gesture, of course, she still has something to learn." Later that year, from Manchester, came the news that "her acting has improved very considerably and the voice seemed to have taken on a still finer shade of bloom."

1924 was the year when the Germans came. Covent Garden that year was full of talk about the brilliant new generation: Lotte Lehmann, Elisabeth Schumann, Maria Olczewska, Lauritz Melchior, Friedrich Schorr, all arrived that year, and with them the singer who for Londoners was to be the adored and incomparable heroic soprano of the age, Frida Leider. Austral returned for the international seasons of 1929 and 1933, but her place had been taken by an artist whose stage presence was so compelling that, a

generation later, not even Kirsten Flagstad could shake the loyalty of those for whom Leider was the unique Isolde and the unapproachable *Götterdämmerung* Brünnhilde.

Shortly afterwards, the BNOC dissolved and Austral, without a company-base, turned to concert work, where she developed a surprisingly varied repertoire (including Lucia's Mad Scene which would involve her flautist-husband, John Amadio) and innumerable Love-Deaths and Immolations. Beethoven's Ninth (under Weingartner), Verdi's Requiem, Messiah, Bach's Mass in B Minor, and many recording sessions, were worked in with tours of Canada and the USA.

In 1930 came an early intimation of the crippling disease, for having almost completed her first Brünnhilde in Berlin she was unable to stand after kneeling for Brünnhilde's plea. The great Friedrich Schorr was her Wotan in this performance and, understanding her plight, placed himself in front of her so that the audience could not see as she held to the back of his cloak and hoisted herself up. In spite of her disability she sang in opera throughout the 1930s, in her native Australia and in the States where she was warmly acclaimed. No second offer from the Metropolitan came her way but in Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco and Boston she was hailed as one of the great singers of her time. "Hers was an amazing voice," wrote one of the American critics, "a marvellous instrument that stands supreme among the dramatic sopranos of the present generation."

Records preserve this. The pity is that the records themselves have not been preserved to better effect in this her centenary year. She recorded exclusively for HMV (now EMI): "In the early twenties Florence Austral was the most important recording soprano we had, thanks to the beauty, power and compass of her voice," wrote Fred Gaisberg. Of her 1928 Immolation Scene, Neville Cardus wrote in the *Manchester Garden*: "The waters of the Rhine seem to mount high, and over all rides the triumphant voice of Austral as Brünnhilde. Her singing can justly be called queenly. Even after hearing the glorious singing of Frida Leider on other records, Austral's triumphant voice remains in the mind." Another *Manchester* critic (in *the Musical Times*) writing of a live performance of the *Ring* in 1926 reached further back for an even more resounding comparison: "Not even Ternina at her best in the late 1890s sang with more supreme nobility."

Let us hope that in her last afflicted years she was able to recall those praises (and there were plenty more). Let us hope also that some record company will at last devote a disc to her (and it could include famous duets with Chaliapin and Miguel Fleta, and still better ones with Walter Widdop and Tudor Davies). Meanwhile all honour to Florence Austral, baptised Florence Wilson, later known as Florence Fawaz (the surname of her stepfather), born Melbourne, April 26, 1894.

John Steane, *Opera Now*, May 1994, pp 48-49

RUDOLSTÄDTER FESTSPIELE '94

Once again we pass on the program for 1994 in the hope that some of you may be able to visit here before going on to Bayreuth!

The events are running between 10th and 30th June at the Castle Heidecksburg and Thüringer Landestheater, Rudolstädt. Devoted largely to the works of Siegfried Wagner the program runs as follows:

Siegfried Wagner	<i>Wahnopfer (Illusionary Sacrifice)</i> (First Performance) Castle Court - Heidecksburg 10, 18, 24, 28 June
Judith Weir	<i>Die Schwarze Spinne (Black Spider)</i> Spectaculum - Castle Heidecksburg 11, 15, 23, 26, 29 June
HIL (Wolf Hildebrandt)	<i>Das Paradies is das Labyrinth (Paradise is a Labyrinth)</i> One man Theatre 14, 20 June
Siegfried Wagner	<i>Schwarzschanenreich (Kingdom of the Black Swan)</i> Grosses Haus des TLR 17, 19, 22, 25 June

Tickets can be ordered and hotel rooms asked for from Thüringer Landestheater Rudolstädt, Anger 1 07407 Rudolstädt (tel: 03672 22766).

Remember our successful booksale at the 1993 Christmas Party?

If you'd like to clear some space on your shelves, please donate your no-longer needed books, records, cassettes or CDs by bringing them to our meetings. This will help to swell our funds and enable the Society to continue its strong support of Wagner.

DONATIONS

The Society welcomes all donations and they can be sent as follows:

DONATION FORM

To The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
The Treasurer (Mrs Janet Wayland)
c/- 4/22 Read Street
WAVERLEY NSW 2024

Please find my cheque/money order attached for \$..... being a donation to the Wagner Society in NSW Inc.

Name:

Address:

Membership Number:

NB: Receipts will be issued and all donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

BAYREUTH DEBUTS FOR 1994

Poul Elming as Parsifal - *Ring* cast

The Bayreuth Festspiele will present this coming summer quite a few new castings and changes in castings. What was intimated last autumn is now a certainty: Placido Domingo will not be available to sing Parsifal. His place will be taken by Poul Elming under the baton of Giuseppe Sinopoli who conducted last year's *Flying Dutchman*. The Danish tenor has already alternated with Domingo in 1992 in the role of the "pure fool".

The main interest of the Festspiele in 1994 of course centres on the new production of the *Ring des Nibelungen* (Musical Direction: James Levine; Director: Alfred Kirchner; Designer: Rosalie). Poul Elming will sing Siegmund, as he did in Harry Kupfer's new Berlin production. Both Siegfried roles will be interpreted by Wolfgang Schmidt, who

made his Bayreuth debut as Tannhäuser two years ago. The old and the new Wotan will be the same (John Tomlinson), just as Brunhilde will again be interpreted by Deborah Polaski. Wotan's wife, Fricka, will be sung by Hanna Schwarz, who will be remembered in this role over past years - 1978/80 and 1984/5.

Numerous well-proven Festspiele soloists will make their debuts in the new *Ring* from 25th July to 28th August 1994. Falk Struckmann will sing Donner on the Grünen Heugel, while Richard Brunner will sing Froh. New in the cast list also are Siegfried Jerusalem as Loge, Manfred Jung as Mime, Hans Sötin as Hunding, Tina Kiberg as Sieglinde and Eckehart Wlaschiha as Alberich. Rene Pape (Dresden) and the American Eric Halvarson will be making their debuts as the giants, Fasolt and Fafner. Also new to Bayreuth will be the Swede Nina Stemme, as Freia and the American Joyce Guyer in the roles of Woglinde and the Waldvogel.

In *Tristan und Isolde* Matthias Hölle will make his Bayreuth debut as King Marke, while the title roles will be sung again by Siegfried Jerusalem and Waltraud Meier.

The 83rd Richard Wagner Festspiele opens with Wolfgang Wagner's production of *Parsifal*, followed by the premieres of the *Ring* tetralogy. Besides last year's new Heiner Müller production of *Tristan* under Daniel Barenboim's baton, Dieter Dorn's version of *The Flying Dutchman* will be shown. The conductor will be Peter Schneider, the *Lohengrin* conductor of last year.

Our appreciation to Hildegard Perini for the translation from the Nordbayerischer Kurier, Bayreuth, 19/20 February 1994

OBITUARY

Joan Cross

7 September 1900 to 12 December 1993

Although she was cheated of the opportunity to become an international singer, Joan Cross, who has died aged 93, exerted a powerful influence over the opera scene in Britain throughout her long career. Born in London she developed an interest in music early at St Paul's School for Girls, where Gustav Holst taught music throughout the last 30 years of his life. After further vocal studies at the Trinity College of Music she joined the chorus of the opera company at the Old Vic in 1924. There she began to build a repertoire which included both Elisabeth and Venus in *Tannhäuser* and Sieglinde in *Die Walküre*. During the war Joan Cross was the Sadlers Wells company's director as it toured the country and at its re-opening in 1945 she began a creative relationship with Benjamin Britten and Peter Pears until her retirement in 1955.

DIE 'STRICTLY BALLROOM' MEISTERSINGER

or how Melbourne learned to love Wagner

Die Meistersinger is Wagner's most accessible work and his only romantic comedy. Did I say romantic comedy? You bet I did. This opera would suit lovers of Rossini. And how literally do I mean comedy? Well I cried laughing during the final scene of the opera. Honest! *Die Meistersinger* is the Strictly Ballroom of operas. It's got a rebel who bends the rules and still gets the girl. A capacity Melbourne audience clapped, stamped and cheered for 10 minutes before affording the cast of *Meistersinger* a richly deserved standing ovation - a welcome and uncommon sight at Melbourne opening nights!

This Australian Opera production comes to Melbourne (for the first time) with a fine Australasian cast. Indeed there are at least two roles I don't expect to hear sung better in my lifetime. As Hans Sachs, Bruce Martin shows off a bass-baritone that is peaking in strength, clarity and timbre. Having been scratched from the production's 1988 Sydney premiere through ill health, Martin sings like he has something to prove. And prove it he does. Just as it is always momentous for opera companies when they introduce Wagner's operas into their schedules, so it is for singers who enter Wagner's world by adding one of his great and famous roles to their repertoire. With this production, Joan Carden sang in a Wagner opera for the first time, and in doing so added a radiant reading of the role of Eva to her already impressive list of credits. John Pringle sang powerfully and presented a nicely sustained Beckmesser, fussy and with just a touch of caricature about it. As David, apprentice to Hans Sachs, Barry Ryan sings with an enchanting lightness and bell-like purity. In the 1988 production, the role of David was sung by Christopher Doig, who has been "promoted" to the heldentenor lead, Walther von Stolzing. Cillario's conducting was poised and alert and held a strong cohesion between pit and stage.

Michael Hampe's production concentrates on the nature of art, the balance of the old with the new and how these matters are wound through the substance of *Die Meistersinger*. It is an absorbing and impressive production, which provided the scaffolding and framework for a most successful opening night. The production itself is a little camp, perhaps to reassure those who are terrified of Wagner that this is just a director's cut of a G and S operetta they didn't know about. But any opera that gets a standing ovation in Melbourne is worth queuing to see. One thing, you'll get your money's worth.

Put together from:

Chris Boyd of *The Melbourne Times* (April 13, 1994);

Kenneth Hince of *The Age* (April 11, 1994);

and

Peter Burch of *The Australian* (April 14, 1994)

WAGNER - THE PASSION IN MY LIFE

One of our country members, Barry Tarver, recently sent us the text of a recent talk he gave on Wagner to his Toastmasters Club in Ballina. We are very pleased that it received such a positive response.

I'd like to talk to you tonight about one of the passions in my life - the music of the German composer, Richard Wagner. But first, a joke. Two men are standing on a street corner arguing about the pronunciation of Wagner's surname, one man saying "It's Vagner" and the other "No, it's not, it's Wagner!" Just then they see a man carrying a violin case walking towards them. They look at each other, and one says "well, he should know." When the musician gets close, one of the men sings out, "Excuse me, sir. I wonder if you could help us. We can't agree on the pronunciation of the surname of the composer, Richard W A G N E R. Can you tell us the correct pronunciation?" The musician, with authority, replies "Vagner." One of the men, with a big smile on his face, says "Thank you." "You're welcome!"

And now a question. Please raise your hand if you have ever heard and enjoyed the music of Beethoven, Mozart or Bach. Well, unless I'm mistaken, just about everyone had their hand up. And why not? Three giants of classical music, their music loved and listened to by millions all over the world. Has anyone heard of a Beethoven Society? I haven't. A Mozart Society? I'm not aware that one exists. What about a Bach Society? I saw an ad in the paper about a Baroque Society, but that would cover a wide variety of composers, including Bach. But I haven't heard of a Bach Society. Is there such a thing as a Wagner Society?

Is there ever! There are Wagner Societies all over the world, with thousands of paid-up members, receiving their monthly newsletters and, if they live close to a capital city, going to the monthly meetings to socialise with other Wagnerians, and to listen to the latest CDs and watch videos of Wagner's operas. Just ordinary folks, from all walks of life, but with a common interest, an enthusiastic addiction for the music of Wagner, bordering on fanaticism. Sounds like a cult, well it is. Look, I'll make no bones about it. We're the junkies of classical music, we've got to get our regular fix.

A body surfer wading into the surf, when confronted by a towering dumper, dives under the wave but us Wagnerians just stand there, willing to let each powerful wave of emotional and psychological music overwhelm us, again and again.

And the man responsible for this world-wide following.... What was he like, and what did he write? Richard Wagner was arrogant, a womaniser, chased by creditors from country to country; he sucked up to Kings and Princes for money and he was anti-semitic. Not a very likeable person. But he had a vision and great persistence and

thankfully avoided his creditors and jail and so was able to write his music. And what music it is!

Apart from a small number of orchestral pieces and lieder songs, the majority of his work was opera. His earlier operas such as *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin* and *The Flying Dutchman* are basically tuneful but they enabled him to cut his teeth and develop his own particular style, a new style of opera, known as music-drama, which is a complete integration of orchestra and singers, rather than the traditional approach of the orchestra supporting the singers. But it is his last four operas, his major works, that are loved best and performed most. These are *The Mastersingers of Nuremberg*, *Parsifal*, *Tristan and Isolde* and his greatest work, the magnificent *Ring Cycle*.

But what's the attraction of Wagner's music that results in so many dedicated followers? I could rattle off 20 adjectives, which would only bore you, so instead I'll repeat what a well known music and art critic, Bernard Levin, who lives in New York, had to say on Wagner. And this is what he said: "Wagner's music gradually gets into your bones and, once there, will never leave you." And it's true.

But why? Well his music has that mysterious X-ingredient, that extra dimension, so that his music transcends that of all other composers. In fact, the only disadvantage of being a Wagner lover is that, after a while, most other classical music becomes just pleasant music, much like office muzak, and that includes Beethoven's symphonies.

Is there an explanation for this extra dimension? Yes, an explanation has been put forward. You see, Wagner was smart. He understood people. He knew that a lot of us have strong feelings in our subconscious mind. Feelings such as love, fear, anger, hate, revenge and, sometimes, if pushed too hard, we may very well wish to kill someone. But unless we wish to spend the rest of our lives in jail, we control or repress these feelings. And it is to this level of our subconscious mind that Wagner's music is aimed.

Music has the ability to express things that words can't and time and time again the Wagnerian orchestra expresses what the subconscious wants to express but can't. Suddenly a whole part of you which can't be expressed in life can be expressed in art. And this is very fulfilling. There is so much more to tell you about Wagner's music but, above everything else, and this is probably the big attraction, his music is sensual. Just like your lover's hand drifting across your skin, Wagner's flowing and attractive music caresses your intellect and your heart.

It's not easy music to tune into. It takes some getting used to but the effort, believe me, is worthwhile.

Barry Tarver

NEW *LOHENGRIN* IN LONDON

Lohengrin, the grandest, most psychologically complex of Wagner's pre-Ring operas, has not been seen in London since 1988, when it was last revived at Covent Garden. Tim Albery's staging for ENO is the first new Wagner of any kind at the Coliseum for eight years and an important, serious undertaking. The watchword is discipline, a discipline confidently sustained across the five-hour span.

Though the very first image of the evening, the chorus prostrate, only rising haphazardly and gradually to their feet, replays a similar moment in Albery's Coliseum *Peter Grimes*, the action is stripped down to essentials and places the dramatic responsibility firmly on Wagner's own pacing. Symbolism is consciously underplayed, the Christian subtext is scarcely tackled. The swan is personified by a male dancer, spare of gesture, his left arm clothed in a dazzling white wing. Austerity is everything, yet the dramatic grip never weakens.

Much credit for this must go to Mark Elder who conducts the score with a blazing intensity. The cast too serves the production rather than themselves. The American-born John Keyes is Lohengrin and Linda MacLeod is Elsa.

THE NEW GLYNDEBOURNE A new house for Wagner?

Opera lovers the world over look forward to the 1994 Season in the new Glyndebourne Opera House which opens on May 28th with a new production of Mozart's *Le Nozze Di Figaro* (conductor Bernard Haitink), exactly sixty years after Audrey Mildmay and her husband, John Christie, opened the original House with the same opera.

Their son, Sir George Christie, proudly declared the new house to be the first professional opera house to be built in the UK since his father built the original in 1934. Another proud claim is that it is an all-British project, completed on time and within budget!

Standing in front of Glyndebourne's lovely old house, it is extraordinary how little of the Opera House and its great flytower can be seen. It is much bigger and more comprehensive, and seating has been increased from 1992's level of 830 seats to 1200, with 42 standing room places as before. The foyer is a joy to prepare the listener for the music to come. It is a natural continuation from the garden across which patrons can approach along a choice of pathways past the new Mildmay Hall - how right to have Audrey Mildmay properly remembered - or the new Figaro and Bourne Gardens. The main building is entered through lobbies leading into the warmth of the House which is

lined with wall panels and balcony fronts made from old and beautifully reclaimed pitch pine. Extremely comfortable seats, unique air conditioning and the horseshoe shape of the House ensure an intimate relationship with the stage. The orchestra pit has a moveable floor, allowing for varying sizes of orchestral forces, which now reaches 80 players.

John Christie's long but unfulfilled ambition was to mount a Wagner opera at Glyndebourne; indeed, his first choice for the original opening was *Die Walküre*. This would have been far from easy in the old house but now, perhaps, we can look forward to Wagner in Sussed.

**From an Article in Musical Opinion (May 1994), editor Denby Richards,
written by Denby Richards**

CAROL ANNE PETHERICK'S COMING RECITAL

Carole Anne Petherick is a native of Edinburgh, Scotland. She studied singing at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and, during her studies, was winner of the Governor's Recital Prize and the Savoy Club Award for Opera in 1978. She also participated in Masterclasses with Sir Geraint Evans. As a result of winning the best performer award, she made her London debut in a recital at the Purcell Room, receiving considerable acclaim from the critics, and she was chosen to take part in a BBC documentary filmed in Italy about overseas study for performers.

During her first two years in Australia she worked to gain experience and to develop further the dramatic quality of her voice and was engaged by the Australian Opera in 1990, singing and covering a number of major roles. She has a busy year ahead both on the concert and opera platform. This year also sees her first broadcast for the ABC.

Grace Edwards, her accompanist, is also an expatriate Scot who studied and graduated in singing and piano at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music in Glasgow, where she won the Bach Prize for Piano and the Lieder Prize for accompanying.

Since coming to Australia she has performed as a vocal accompanist for concerts and the ABC. For several years she was repetiteur at the National Theatre Opera School in Melbourne and later was vocal coach when this institution became the Victorian College of the Arts. Further vocal studies continued with Lucy Altman, specifically to gain more insight into the teaching of singing. Now based in Sydney, Grace devotes most of her energies to teaching singing and her successful students are performing professionally in Australia and overseas.

Carol Anne Petherick's recital will deal with childhood. She says:

In this year of the family, I have chosen music which reflects some aspects of family life. Lullabies for the infant, childrens' songs and parents' reflections on the death of children.

The program is as follows:

<i>Childrens' Songs</i>	-	Arensky
<i>Kindertotenlieder</i>	-	Mahler
<i>Nursery Song Cycle</i>	-	Mussorgsky
<i>A Lullaby</i>	-	Hamilton Harty
<i>Aux enfants</i>	-	Rachmaninoff
<i>Dors mon enfant</i>	-	Wagner
<i>Wiegenlied</i>	-	Brahms

GUESSING COMPETITION WINNERS

Our lucky winners of the guessing competition, drawn at the lunch, were:

Klaus Baldenhofer	Kobbe's Opera Book
Allan Smith	Wagner -new translation of the Ring
Alma Straube	Lady's watch
C J Heathers	Gentleman's watch

THE WAGNER BIRTHDAY LUNCH The Ritz Carlton Hotel

The wisdom of changing a habit of 13 years some may question but we are happy to report that the change from celebrating Wagner's birthday with a Dinner on the Friday evening nearest to the 22nd May, to a Sunday Luncheon on the actual day, as it happened this year, proved propitious.

The increase in numbers, despite the lure of a perfectly golden Sydney day outside may, in part, have been due to just that. Public transport is more appealing in daylight, and what transport more delightful could there be than a ferry to Circular Quay and a stroll up the hill to the Ritz Carlton.

We were especially pleased to have as our guest of honour this year Mr Bob Carr and his wife Helena whose first visit to Bayreuth in 1993 is still fresh in their minds. His pertinent reflections on Bayreuth as seen through the eyes of an environmentalist gave graceful compliment to Germany's ability to decentralise; creating townships as separate entities, supported by local industry and connected to neighbouring towns by good roads and transport (that word again) and close to the countryside of rivers and forests. On a more urban note Mr Carr made two comparisons with the Festspielhaus: one to the Sydney Opera House and one to the Bastille Opera. He reminded us that the Festspielhaus took 15 years to build while the Bastille Opera, with all its late 20th C. design and technology, failed to satisfy the needs of the patrons and the performers and administrators in the way Wagner perceived those needs, both inside the house and in its environs.

To the members and friends who travelled from as far afield as Canberra, Yass, the Mountains and Moss Vale, our thanks for making it such a happy occasion. Our thanks also to the Ritz Carlton for their unobtrusive service and their attention to every detail.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held at The Goethe Institute on Sunday July 17th 1994 at 2.30pm.

VOTING RULES

At the Annual General Meeting the office bearers (President, two Vice Presidents, Treasurer and Secretary) and four Committee Members of the above Society HAVE TO BE ELECTED.

If the number of nominations does not exceed NINE MEMBERS those members are automatically declared elected to the COMMITTEE. Similarly the Office Bearers go into their positions specified if no one else is nominated to the same position. In the case of TWO OR MORE NOMINATIONS to positions of office bearers a ballot will be held on the day of the Annual General Meeting.

Financial members may vote by proxy given to a financial member if unable to attend the Annual General Meeting.

If more than FOUR MEMBERS are nominated for the Committee a ballot will also have to be held to elect same.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL PAPERWORK (NOMINATIONS AND PROXY VOTES) HAS TO BE RECEIVED BY 1ST JULY 1994

NOMINATIONS

The Secretary
The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
4/22 Read Street
WAVERLEY NSW 2024

Dear Madam,

Please take notice that we, the undersigned members, hereby respectively propose and
second
for election as
or a member of the committee of the Wagner Society.

Date

Signed
(proposer)

Signed
(seconder)

Signed
(nominated member)

NOTICE OF MOTION

I/we will be attending the Annual General Meeting on 17th July 1994 and would like the
following motion to be placed on the Agenda for discussion under General Business.

.....
.....

Name:

Member no:

PROXY

The Secretary
The Wagner Society in NSW Inc
4/22 Read Street
WAVERLEY NSW 2024

Dear Madam,

I cannot attend the 14th Annual Meeting to be held on 17th July 1994 but give my proxy

vote to

who is a current financial member of the Society, Membership number:

Date

Signed

Address

.....

(nominated member)

NOTICE OF MOTION

I/We will be attending the annual general meeting on Sunday 17th July 1994 and would like the following motion to be placed on the agenda for discussion under general business.

.....

.....

Name

Membership no

*We would like to thank Hilda Perini for her translation of the following excerpts from the 1993 Annual General Meeting of Der Freunde von Bayreuth, of, firstly, an interview with producer Heiner Müller and the set designer Erich Wonder of the new production of **Tristan und Isolde** and, secondly, an interview with Norbert Balatsch, the leader of the Festspielhaus chorus, taken from the Newsletter of the Richard Wagner Verband International October 1993.*

We feel sure that those people who attend this year's Festival will find these texts most illuminating.

**AN INTERVIEW WITH PRODUCER HEINER MÜLLER
AND THE SET DESIGNER ERICH WONDER
RE THE NEW PRODUCTION OF *TRISTAN UND ISOLDE***

Mr Wolfgang Wagner invited members present to ask questions about the production.

The first questions were about the set design, whose cubistic forms were not clear to everyone. Mr Wonder and Mr Müller explained that they had tried to give the illusion of a ship and a sea journey, in the first act, for example, with the light effects on both sides giving the impression of running water and a journey. Also the extreme slant of the stage floor was intended to give the illusion of a ship and a sea journey.

The set design of the second act was criticised for the many empty breast plates. Mr Müller remarked that of course one could argue if it was correct to present a sort of soldier's cemetery, instead of a garden. Mr Wonder and he had tried to put the love story between Tristan and Isolde into a contemporary setting. For a producer there would be only three periods - the time of the story of Tristan and Isolde, therefore the high Middle Ages, the time of the creation of the work, the last century, and the time of the production of the work and, as today there are more areas where war takes place than there are gardens, he and Mr Wonder had had the idea of the empty breast plates. He is of the opinion that with a production you cannot simply leave this present world.

In answer to one of the member's remarks that the music in the second act demands that Tristan and Isolde come together, Mr Müller said that he believes it far more interesting to play with the relationship of closeness and distance. There would be far more tension created by Isolde walking very slowly along one of those geometrical aisles and once in a while both meeting and touching each other and then distancing themselves again. He thinks one underrates the effects of the music if one demands that the choreography or the action on stage should be the same as the music. Mr Wonder and himself had tried to leave much room for the music also in having the movements in counterpoint to the music once in a while.

In answer to a question that he had said in a newspaper interview that Tristan is not capable of love, he explained that he had meant that he understands the work that way, that there is a difference between Man and Woman in their relationship to love and death; that Woman has a relationship with less angst about love and death than Man. Richard Wagner recounts this here; Tristan is always on a different level from Isolde at the deciding moment. He, Tristan, goes into death after having offered Isolde death together, according to his intention at the end of the second act. In the third act he dies too early. He could not wait any longer for this hour which Isolde demands of him. Both function therefore by different timetables. But this does not preclude Tristan loving Isolde. He [Müller] thinks that Isolde loves more totally. And besides, the whole story has another aspect, that Tristan is bound into the world of men; also in his personal relationship to Marke. This makes for a deciding difference.

Mr Wagner remarks that it is not right that the audience should go to the Opera and have to be informed the following day what the Producer meant, because they did not understand the production. But in Bayreuth it is possible to meet the producer and discuss the production, Mr Wagner said.

To the choice of Heiner Müller as producer, Mr Wagner explained that he wanted a dramatist and playwright to interpret and produce the work and that he has a very high opinion of Mr Müller and his production of *The Hamlet Machine*; that he, Wolfgang Wagner, is of the opinion that from that angle the production receives new impulses, just as happened with the Chéreau production of the *Ring*.

In answer to a question from the public whether he would make changes to future productions, Mr Müller said that this is the advantage of working in Bayreuth, to be able to make alterations the following year. He thinks that he and Mr Wonder will make some changes in 1994, they think for the better.

AN INTERVIEW WITH NORBERT BALATSCH

Norbert Balatsch was recently honoured with the Golden Ring of the City of Bayreuth - hereafter follows a conversation about the secrets of singing in a group.

Whenever he appears with his beautiful sounding "collective" in front of the public he receives orgies of applause. Wherever in the world there is a newspaper review about a Bayreuth production, his name is nearly always positively mentioned. Norbert Balatsch, since the death of Wilhelm Pitz, counts as one of the most desired chorus leaders of the world.

Kurier reporter Gert-Dieter Meier talked to Balatsch about the work in Bayreuth, about the crisis of chorus singing and about hard-to-find chorus leaders.

Herr Balatsch, please tell us briefly the secret of the Festspiel Chorus in Bayreuth?

Balatsch: Heavy work, most difficult work. Ask the Chorus. But seriously, this year [1993] was one of the most difficult, simply on account of the amount of the great chorus operas which are in this year's program - *Lohengrin*, *Parsifal*, *Holländer*, *Tristan* and *Tannhäuser*. This year the Chorus required 39 new members. And since the beginning of the stage rehearsals until the premiere we had practically every day a stage rehearsal for any one of these operas and four full days where the Chorus rehearsed alone.

What causes these rehearsal difficulties?

Balatsch: This is the consequence of a new law. According to it we are only allowed to work 50 days during our 72 days presence. For this reason we had to devise a mosaic of a timetable which nearly required the work of a PhD degree. My wife and I worked on it for weeks. In the end we had to engage 18 more singers to be able to ensure that no member of the Chorus had to sing every opera. This, of course, complicated the normal rehearsal routine dreadfully.

Is it in effect prescribed by law that nobody sings everything?

Balatsch: Yes. And of course people have to relax too. Nowhere in the world does it happen that someone sings every night during 30 performances. I sang long enough to know that this is not possible, especially if you have to bring the quality that is expected of us.

Which is the most difficult work for you?

Balatsch: *Tannhäuser* is the most difficult of them all, especially on account of the Pilgrims' Chorus! Those hairy harmonies, those changes, everything is moving, some come, some go. What a job to bring all of these groups to the right intonation and woe if you don't make it!

Isn't the *Holländer* very difficult for the Chorus too?

Balatsch: The *Holländer* is a very peculiar opera. It is mostly underrated. The culmination of the opera is the moment when the ghost chorus sounds up. Then everything starts pointing to the last act. And the ghosts have to be there in double strength to sing away the Daland chorus. This is very difficult to achieve. It becomes a problem if one has to reinforce the acoustic. I am always afraid of this, simply

because the singers do not always sing the same way. And then if the reinforcement does not function properly, then we have the "conserve" effect on it. Then the illusion is gone, when it sounds as if one has turned on the radio.

From the public view, the orchestra is between the chorus and the public and you conduct from above, behind the front of the stage. Is the conducting, on account of the mixing of sounds in Bayreuth, especially difficult?

Balatsch: Bayreuth has, viewed from the House, mostly likely the best acoustic in the world. This shows especially if something has to be changed, for example, at the ramp, which results in changes of sound which most of the time are detrimental.

One simply has to leave the stage as it is - and this results in the sound of the orchestra mixing with the singer's voice as background. Therefore the orchestra can play to their full strength and the singers can sing softly. There is no disturbance. This is unique in the world.

For you, as the conductor of the Chorus, does this house bring certain problems?

Balatsch: Yes, for us this is very difficult. The sound of the orchestra does not reach the public immediately, but reaches the stage first. And then, depending on the background of the stage at that time, how long the reverberations will take to reach the public will vary. Therefore the sound is re-directed twice. If it is a deep stage then the sound of the orchestra takes still longer. And every singer who sings with the baton of the conductor is ahead of the orchestra. For a soloist this is not too bad but for the Chorus it is disastrous. This is immediately noticeable.

That means you have to hold back the Chorus?

Balatsch: Exactly. This situation that one has to hold back the Chorus against the baton of the conductor does not exist anywhere else in the world. It happens to the most experienced of conductors that they gain the impression that the Chorus is too late. In this case we place assistants in the auditorium who later report to the Maestro that everything was all right.

But these delays are only fractions of a second?

Balatsch: This is my experience. The deeper the stage, the more I have to hold back the Chorus. If it is a shallow stage one goes nearly parallel with the Conductor. But this is only possible with the teamwork of the assistants. Thank Heaven we can see each other when conducting.

The Chorus then follows you one hundred per cent and not the Conductor?

Balatsch: One has, first of all, to train the new singers. Take *Lohengrin*. In the Herzog production, Second Act, this is led 95% to 97% by me. Nobody can or is allowed to look at the Conductor. As the stage declines at the rear, only the first row could see the Conductor. I am hanging behind a pillar and practically conduct the whole of the Second Act. With an earphone on one ear I listen to the orchestra. The other ear is free for the Chorus. And the monitor is there to see the baton of the Conductor. If the Conductor corrects his orchestra then I have to go according to the sound and must not look to the baton any more. This Festspielhaus is a very tricky instrument.

This year you engaged 39 new singers. How did you get to this comparatively high figure?

Balatsch: Usually we have between 20 and 30 new ones. We have the problem that we have people in the chorus who mostly tend to sing solo. When they get solo spots in their respective houses then often they don't get leave of absence any more and old age takes its toll too. And if the quality of the singing of one or another is not up to scratch any longer then we are obliged to do something. These are hard rules.

But just the same, the wish to sing here is great; where do you recruit your new singers from?

Balatsch: There is great interest. We give auditions in Bayreuth, London, Hamburg, Berlin, Leipzig, Frankfurt and Vienna.

With the fall of the Wall, did another reservoir of singers in the former East Germany open up?

Balatsch: We hoped so but it did not happen. Maybe some singers had already left the East. But anyhow it is most regrettable that there are hardly any more singers for choruses at German theatres. There is hardly anything on offer. But, of course, it is a fact that a chorus singer has

to know a great deal. He or she has to know several languages; they have to memorise a great volume of music; they have very little time and have to be on stage nearly every day. I think that a good chorus is just as good a support for the house as is the orchestra. There would not be an opera house in Bayreuth if there wasn't a chorus. Unfortunately there is a trend emanating from singing teachers to denigrate chorus singing. I think this is a great mistake.

Do soloists who grow out of the chorus profit from their "collective" past?

Balatsch: People who come from the Chorus have such a thorough grounding which they cannot acquire anywhere else. Of course, only there, where the whole set up is right. The work has to be right, also the chorus leader. Maybe this sounds very boastful but I think that today good chorus leaders are scarce.

How many people come to these auditions?

Balatsch: 50 to 60 people in every city. And I have just about five minutes' time for each one. The problem is there are the so-called aria buffs. They only know two arias. And when they sing those they think they are Caruso. But if you want something a bit different then their singing stagnates. And to be absolutely sure I would have to work with each of these singers for at least a quarter of an hour. This is impossible, for reasons of cost alone.

If there are so few good chorus leaders, then you would have to be getting heaps of offers?

Balatsch: I could hire myself out in slices, I have so many offers. But I cannot accept any. I work around the clock. For three years I have not had a holiday. I had to step in at the Met in New York as their chorus leader had died. Right after the Festspiel in Bayreuth I went to the Met to do *Parsifal*. Covent Garden lost their chorus leader. I lost my whole Christmas holidays because I had to do their *Holländer*. The Deutsche Oper got into difficulties while I was still leading the chorus of the Academie Santa Cecilia in Rome. There is not one day of free time. I did 22 flights from the beginning of March until 22nd April. On some days I flew back and forth four times to keep the rehearsals going.

So leaders of choruses are really scarce?

Balatsch: Definitely. I receive many requests from houses all over the world to work or to recommend someone. I have become very cautious as it has backfired several times. The profession of chorus leader is 50% psychological. One has to know how to do rehearsals, how far one can go. There has to be a lot of give and take. You cannot lose track from the first rehearsal to the premiere. I had one advantage - I was a Vienna Choir Boy. I started in 1938 and sang in choirs for 12 years. I am 55 years old now and I have had a lot of experience.

What was the most difficult phase in your career?

Balatsch: The change from chorus singer to chorus leader. This was like a revolution, like a war. Even Television got involved and inquired about the "state of war". It was a real orgy of envy in the chorus because everyone thought they could do it better. But I mastered this crisis.

Do you still sing?

Balatsch: (LAUGHS) At every rehearsal, I sing along up to the soprano. After 7 hours of rehearsals, this affects the voice. But I must not lose my voice either as I have to show my people how it is being done.

Her Balatsch, thank you for this conversation.

*from the Newsletter of the
Richard Wagner Verband International October 1993*

"BECAUSE IT'S THERE!"

We've been following closely various plans to produce a *Ring* cycle, or parts thereof, in Australia over the next few years, so *Arts & Minds* was interested to note that the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, is putting on a "controversial" production of Wagner's 16-hour note-fest in its next season. "We shall be launching the only Ring cycle to be put on by a British opera company during the 1990s," the company's director, Nicholas Payne, boasted. "The Ring is like Mount Everest - you've got to climb it. I think we have devised an interesting and clever way to bring it alive - and I can promise you it will be controversial." Ah, so that's why everyone wants to do it. Because it's there.

Deborah Jones, *The Weekend Australian*, Saturday 14.5.94

NEXT ISSUE

In the next issue we will bring you the text of a long essay on Mein Leben written by David T Rowlands.

RECENT DONATIONS

The Society wishes to acknowledge with thanks the recent donations from Mrs Pauline Thompson, Lady P Gallegan and Mr Hamlyn.

THE RAVENS REPORTING cont from p 27

- Linz Linz Internationales Brucknerfest: September 11- October 2.
Lohengrin is included in the Festival.
- La Scala Riccardo Muti is conducting *Die Walküre* (the opening performance for this coming 1994/5 season) with Waltraud Meier, Karen Huffstodt and Placido Domingo.
- St Petersburg *Holländer* - Brigitte Fassbaender is producing *Holländer* at the Maryinsky Theatre in November.
- Bayreuth *Ring Cycle* #1, July 26, 27, 29 and 30
Ring Cycle #2, August 11, 12, 14 and 16
Ring Cycle #3, August 22, 23, 25 and 27
Holländer, August 2, 4, 8, 18 and 20
Parsifal, July 25, August 3, 7, 10 and 19
- Santiago Elizabeth Connell will be singing as Brünnhilde in *Die Walküre* in May 1995
- New York John Tomlinson will make his house debut at the Met as Hans Sachs in September 1996.

THE RAVENS REPORTING cont from p28

- Edinburgh *Tristan und Isolde*, performed by Scottish Opera on tour, June 25
- Stuttgart *Die Meistersinger*, a new production opens conducted by Gabriele Ferro, producer Hans Neuenfels and director Reinhard von der Thannen. June 12, 16, 19, 22, 26 and July 2
- Vienna *Ring Cycle* (one only), Staatsoper. Christoph von Dohnanyi has withdrawn from the June Ring cycle, which he conducted last June and September. Siegfried Jerusalem has pulled out to allow a break before his Tristan performances at Bayreuth. Christoph von Dohnanyi considered the minimal rehearsal time allowed not sufficient for Siegfried Jerusalem's replacement. Peter Schneider will now conduct. Others in the cast include Schnaut and Salminen. June 5, 12, 15, 26
- Paris *The Ring Cycle - Chatelet Theatre Musical*
Das Rheingold, with Robert Hale, Peter Straka, Franz-Josef Kapellmann, conductor Jeffrey Tate, producer Pierre Strosser, director Patrice Cauchetier. June 25, 29, July 2
Die Walküre, Jyrki Niskanen, Sergie Koptchak, Robert Hale, Karen Huffstodt, Mechthild Gessendorf and Nadine Denize. June 26, 30, July 3, October 31, November 2
Siegfried, October 14, 21, 27, November 4, 11
Götterdämmerung, October 16, 23, 29, Nov 6, 13
 Two full cycles will be performed on October 31, November 1, 4, 6 and November 8, 9, 11 and 13.
- Seattle *Lohengrin*, a new production with Ben Heppner, Andrea Gruber, Carol Yahr, Greer Grimsley and Gabor Andrasy. Conducted by Hermann Michael, staged by Stephen Wadsworth and designed by Thomas Lynch. July 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, August 3, 6 and 10.
- Aarhus Danish National Opera is to present a revival of its 1987 Ring. The two cycles at the Musikhuset in 1996 are on August 27, 28, 30, September 1 and September 3, 4, 6 and 8.
Siegfried, August 26, 28 and September 1
Tristan und Isolde, August 1, 5, 9, 17, 21 and 28
- Glasgow *Holländer* - the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall is presenting a concert performance conducted by Walter Weller on August 26.
-

THE RAVENS REPORTING

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

- London Anne Evans has received the UK Wagner Society's 1993 Sir Reginald Goodall Memorial Award.
- Helsinki *Lohengrin*, conducted by Leif Segerstam, produced by Folke Abenius, directed by Anna Kontek. June 3, 6, 9 and 13
- Berlin *Die Meistersinger*, Deutsche Oper with Wolfgang Brendel, Gosta Winbergh, Eva Johansson and conductor Rafael Fruhbeck de Burgos. June 19 and July 10
- Munich *Holländer*, Robert Hale/Ekkehard Wlaschiha as the Dutchman and Julia Varady/Luana DeVol as Senta, conducted by Heinz Fricke. June 9, 12 and 17
 Opera Festival Performances:
Tannhäuser, a new production with Nadine Secunde, Waltraud Meier, Jan-Hendrik Rootering, René Kollo and Bernd Weikl. Conductor Zubin Mehta, producer David Alden, Directors Roni Toren and Buki Shiff. July 6, 9, 14 and 17.
Die Meistersinger, a revival with Nancy Gustafson, Cornelia Wulkopf, Bernd Weikl, Jan-Hendrik Rootering and Gosta Winbergh. Conducted by Peter Schneider, producer August Everding, director Jurgen Rose. July 28 and 31
- Geneva *Lohengrin*, a new production opens with Thomas Moser, Eva Johansson, Hartmut Welker, Marilyn Zschau and Hans Tschammer. Conductor Christian Thielemann, producer Robert Carsen, director Michael Levine. June 10, 14, 17, 20, 24, 27, 30.
- Cologne *Die Walküre*, with Gary Lakes, Kurt Moll, Gwyneth Jones, conductor James Conlon, producer Kurt Horres, director Andreas Reinhardt. June 12, 15, 18, and 22.
- Istanbul Istanbul International Festival
 Hildegard Behrens is soloist in the *Wesendonk* *Leider* and the *Liebestod* with the Dresden Philharmonic. June 16.
- Newcastle
 UK *Tristan und Isolde*, performed by Scottish Opera on tour, June 18.
-