

Still from the film Parsifal by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg.

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A film by **HANS-JÜRGEN SYBERBERG**

A Wagner Society in NSW Inc presentation

PARSIFAL

11.00am Sunday 17 August, 2025

Goethe Institut

90 Ocean Street (corner of Jersey Road), Woolahra

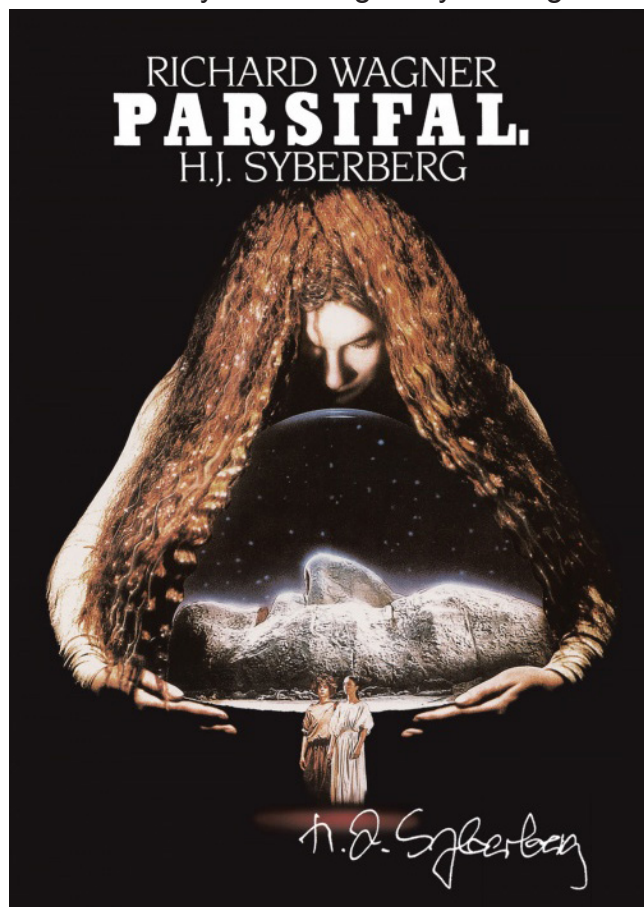


Wagner Society in NSW Inc.
established 1980



PROGRAMME

11.00 am - DVD **PARSIFAL**
A film by Hans-Jürgen Syberberg



Break after Act 1 - 12.50pm to 1.10pm

Concluding around 3.30pm (approx)

YOUR DONATIONS HAVE HELPED THESE STARS



Elizabeth Campbell



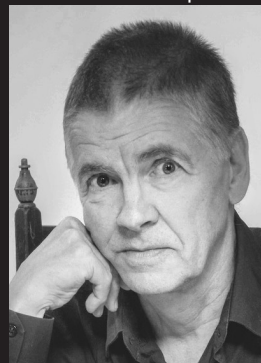
John Wegner



Bernadette Cullen



Daniel Sumegi



David Stanhope



Marilyn Richardson



Stuart Skelton



Jennifer Condon



Lisa Gasteen



Warwick Fyfe



Tabatha McFadyen



Samuel Sakker

These are some of the 100 ARTISTS the WSNSW has assisted OVER 40 YEARS.
We target \$20,000 annually towards supporting emerging Wagnerian performers from NSW.
Help continue to support our talented artists.

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Richard Wagner's death mask as the main scenographic element of Syberberg's film.
A landscape of death?

HANS-JÜRGEN SYBERBERG

German film director, whose best known film is his lengthy feature *Hitler: A Film from Germany*.

Born in 1935 in Nossendorf, Pomerania, the son of an estate owner, Syberberg lived until 1945 in Rostock and Berlin. In 1952 & 1953 he created his first 8mm takes of rehearsals by the Berliner Ensemble. In 1953 he moved to West Germany, where in 1956 he began studies in literature & art history, completing them the following year. He earned his doctorate in Munich with his thesis on "*The Absurd in Dürrenmatt*." In 1963 Syberberg began producing documentary films about Fritz Kortner & Romy Schneider for Bavarian Radio and others.



For Syberberg, cinema is a form of Gesamtkunstwerk. Many commentators, including Syberberg himself, have characterized his work as a cinematic combination of Bertolt Brecht's doctrine of epic theatre & Richard Wagner's operatic aesthetics. Well known philosophers and intellectuals have written about his work, including Susan Sontag, Gilles Deleuze & Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe.

In 1975 Syberberg released *Winifried Wagner und die Geschichte des Hauses Wahnfried von 1914–1975* (English title: *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner*), a documentary about Winifred Wagner, an Englishwoman who had married Richard Wagner's son Siegfried. The documentary attracted attention because it exposed Mrs Wagner's unrepentant admiration for Adolf Hitler. The film thus proved an embarrassment to the Wagner family & the Bayreuth Festival (which she had run from 1930 until the end of the Second World War). Winifred Wagner objected to the inclusion in the film of conversations she did not know were being recorded.

Syberberg is also noted for an acclaimed visual interpretation of the Wagner opera *Parsifal* in 1982. A quarter of a century after his last previous film, Syberberg released the three hours long documentary *Demminer Chants* in 2023. The film is about the town Demmin in north-eastern Germany, where Syberberg grew up and where he has made attempts to reestablish the central market square as a communal space. The film looks at urban planning and the future of local communities.

WHAT'S COMING UP NEXT?

WSNSW'S 45TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION CONCERT with
ALEXANDRA FLOOD & THOMAS VICTOR JOHNSON on **Sunday 14**
September at **St Columba** starting at **2.00 pm**.

Talk by **ESTEBAN INSAUSTI** on *Traditional versus Iconoclastic stagings of Die Meistersinger* on **Sunday 12 October** at **The Goethe Institut** at **2.00 pm**.
Preceded by DVD of Act 1 of *Die Meistersinger*
starting at **12.30 noon**.

SIEGFRIED SYMPOSIUM on **Saturday 15 November** at **The Goethe Institut**
starting at **10.30 am**.

WSNSW'S CHRISTMAS CONCERT with **BRAD COOPER** (TBC) on **Sunday**
30 November at **St Columba** starting at **2.00 pm**.



Main picture is a still from the film with the two Parsifals embracing in the Wagner death mask set.
Above, three photos from the filming of *Parsifal*.