

The Raven

Newsletter of

The Richard Wagner Society of the Upper Midwest

Volume VII Number 2

Summer 2011



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Announcement*

Bayreuth 2012 Ticket Information

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Thirteenth Annual Founders Day Dinner

Please Come and Bring a Guest!

Saturday, 10 September, 2011
5:00 – 9:00 pm
Germanic American Institute
301 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota 55107

Program

5:00 – 5:30 PM Open Discussion on “What fascinates you about Wagner’s Music Dramas?”

David Cline will lead off: “Why did Wagner want to reform Germany, What did Tacitus have to say?” Let Dr Cline know if you have a fascination you would like to discuss. His cell phone is 612-802-8104.

5:30 – 6:00 PM Annual Business Meeting & Election of Board Members

6:00 – 6:30 PM Social Time with hors d’oeuvres & sparkling wine

6:30 – 7:30 PM Musical Presentation

7:30 - 9:00 PM Dinner

Musical Presentation

Musical Presentation will include star tenor Dennis Petersen, who graciously agreed to again sing for us. Dennis just returned from singing with the Metropolitan Opera in New York and the

(Continued on page 3)

Dinner

(Continued from page 2)

Musical Presentation

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Erik's aria and Der Steuermann's aria from
Der Fliegende Holländer

Dir tone Lob and the Pilgrim's Chorus from
Tannhäuser

In fernem Land and Mein lieber Schwan from
Lohengrin

Wie sie selig and the Sheperd's song from
Tristan und Isolde

The Prize Song and David and Walter duet from
Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

First act finale of Siegfried with Mime and Siegfried
and various arias from *Der Ring des Nibelungen*

Dinner Menu

Chilled cucumber soup with herbs and sour cream

Your choice of Entree:

Almond/herb crusted salmon filet, salsa verde sauce, barley salad
and fresh asparagus

OR

A vegetarian dish of potato gnocchi with sautéed kale and lemon
zest and grape tomatoes

Dessert

Bayreuth 2012 Ticket Requests Due by 24 September 2011

Bayreuth has announced that a new production of *Holländer* by the German stage director, Sebastian Nübling for 2012. Christian Thielemann will conduct. Unconfirmed is Adrienne Pieczonka as Senta. Returning to the stage will be Sebastian



Sebastian Baumgarten: *Tannhäuser*. Bayreuth, 2011. Act 1.
Photo: Enrico Nawrath / Bayreuther Festspiele

Baumgarten's *Tannhäuser* and Hans Neuenfels's rat infested *Lohengrin*. The other two operas have not yet been announced. All is subject to change until we receive the forms from Bayreuth. There will be no new *Ring* until 2013. Yep, 2013. Of course, according to the Mayan calendar, the world ends in December of 2012, so perhaps we will be spared after all.

How to Order

As in past years, we will be ordering tickets to the last cycle of the 2012 Festspiele, which is the last week in August. Again, the number of tickets requested will reflect the interest expressed by our members before we order. Therefore, to meet the anticipated Bayreuth deadline of 15 October, members wishing to attend Bayreuth in 2012 must submit requests by the 24th of September 2011. Exact costs will not be known until we receive our order form in September, but based on past years we anticipate that the price of tickets to all five operas range from \$750 to \$1250. Tickets to individual operas are not available.

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Bayreuth

(Continued from page 4)

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The rules

- 1) Current membership is a prerequisite.
- 2) Only one ticket request per membership.
- 3) All ticket requests must be specific and in writing. (A form is enclosed.) Requests by phone or email will not be accepted.
- 4) A deposit of \$250 per request is required. Requests without deposits will not be accepted.
- 5) After our order is submitted in early October, these deposits become non-refundable except in the event we receive fewer tickets than requested.

Dinner

(Continued from page 3)

Red and white wine selection (All wines are compliments of Udo Heinz Consult)

Reservations must be received by September 2, 2011. The cost is \$60 for WSUM and GAI members and their guests and \$80 for nonmembers.

Above prices are all inclusive of the entire evening including tax, gratuity and parking

Two ways to reserve your spot

1) Online with a credit card: Direct your browser to

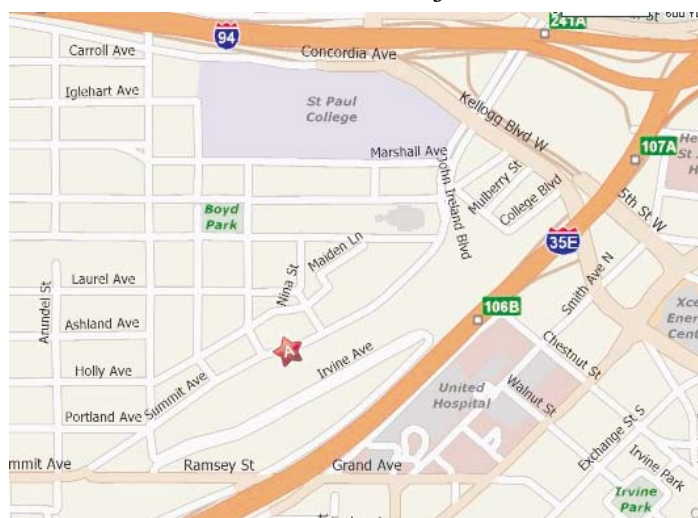
<http://tinyurl.com/13th-Dinner>

2) By mailing a check and state choice of entree to
The Richard Wagner Society of the Upper Midwest

P.O. Box 3804

Minneapolis MN 55403

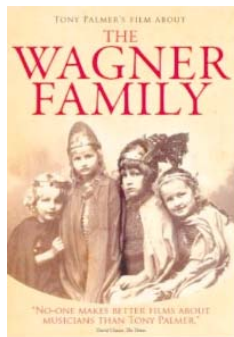
***Reservations are NOT accepted by phone.
Walk-Ins are not allowed for the Dinner.***



Video Nights 7-9 PM

Second Wednesdays

We resume in September with an imaginative 2010 Deutsche Oper Berlin production of the rarely performed *Rienzi*. While popular in his lifetime, Wagner eventually dismissed it as a youthful indiscretion. This renders it non-canonical to purists. Of course, it also comes with some baggage, reportedly being one of Hitler's favorites. Its relentless parades, rallies and march-pasts may have affected Nazi aesthetics. Stage Director Philipp Stölzl reimagines *Rienzi* in terms of a 20th-century dictatorship. Torsten Kerl is Rienzi, with Camilla Nylund as his fanatical sister Irene. Kate Aldrich sings Adriano. This production is cut to a total of 152 minutes, and will be shown in two parts, September 14 and November 09. NOTE: there will be no video night in October.



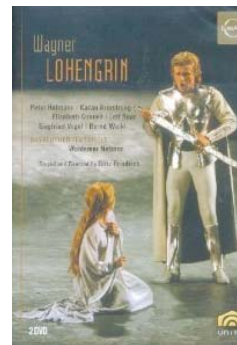
Following *Rienzi*, we will view Tony Palmer's film about The Wagner Family, December 14. This is a film about a family, a family which has ruled the theater in Bayreuth for the last 140 years, some say still the greatest theater in the world. There is no doubt that Richard Wagner was the most influential composer in the whole of the 19th century. But the family has survived by a mixture of lies, deception, fraud and dangerous political alliances. The story of this family is a soap opera. It is a family - in many ways the Royal family of Germany - at war with itself. Gottfried Wagner, Wolfgang Wagner's maverick son is a central figure of this film.

We will begin 2012 with *Lohengrin* in a 1982 Bayreuth production, a time when Bayreuth was still capable of staging acceptable productions.

Director: Götz Friedrich. Bayreuth 1982 (production from 1979).
Cast: Peter Hofmann (Lohengrin), Karan Armstrong (Elsa), Elizabeth Connell (Ortrud), Leif Roar (Telramund), Siegfried Vogel (Heinrich).
Conductor: Woldemar Nelsson.
From <http://mostlyopera.blogspot.com>:

Götz Friedrich's vision of Lohengrin is dark and static, shifting between reality and Utopia - reality being the power-obsessed people of Brabant, Utopia being the land of Elsa's dreams where Lohengrin lives. A golden disc mediates between these two worlds, reality and fantasy, thus replacing the traditional swan.

That Elsa is a sensitive, but not overly naive woman dreaming of an alternative to her power-obsessed compatriots is obvious from the moment she appears in misty light during the prelude. She conjures up the imaginary Lohengrin, appropriately dressed in white. However, when he returns in Act 3 as a black knight returning a miniature warrior brother to Elsa, we realize that there really is no hope.



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Video Night

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The staging is simple, square, dark and unfortunately very static as well. While it may offend no-one, I doubt many will find it exciting. What however works well, austere surroundings apart, is the core romantic drama, mainly thanks to Peter Hofmann.

Peter Hofmann is the ideal romantic Lohengrin. He looks the part. He is the real romantic hero. He sings well. He is very moving. What more can anyone want? That Peter Hofmann in the last part of his career (end-80s) may have performed less well, may quite possibly be attributed to the well-known incipient onset of the invalidating Parkinson disease he officially was diagnosed with in 1994, and which has resulted in him apparently struggling economically as well being virtually crippled today. But in 1982 he was on top of his game.

This event is hosted by Kevin Edgar. Coffee and tee are provided. If you like, bring some snacks to share. (A kitchen is available.) The address is 700 Douglas Ave, Minneapolis. (Which is located two blocks south of the Walker Art Center on the Corner of Douglas and Hennepin.) The apartment building is called Kenwood Gables. If you are planning to attend please let Kevin know by email (wagner@bke.org) or phone 612-564-0253

**On the cover:
Performers at the Thirteenth Annual Founders Day Dinner
are (Clockwise from top left) tenor Dennis Petersen, tenor
Matthew O'Neill and pianist Lara Bolton.**

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