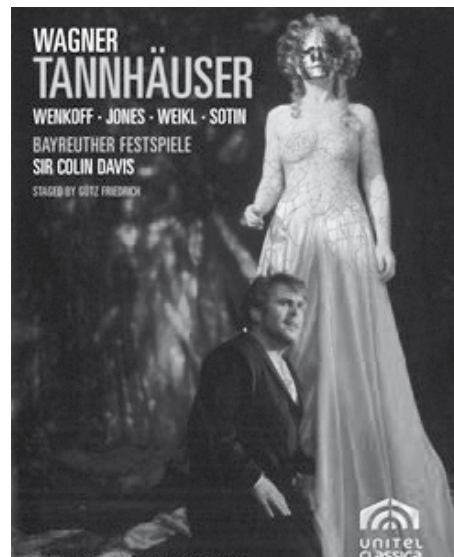
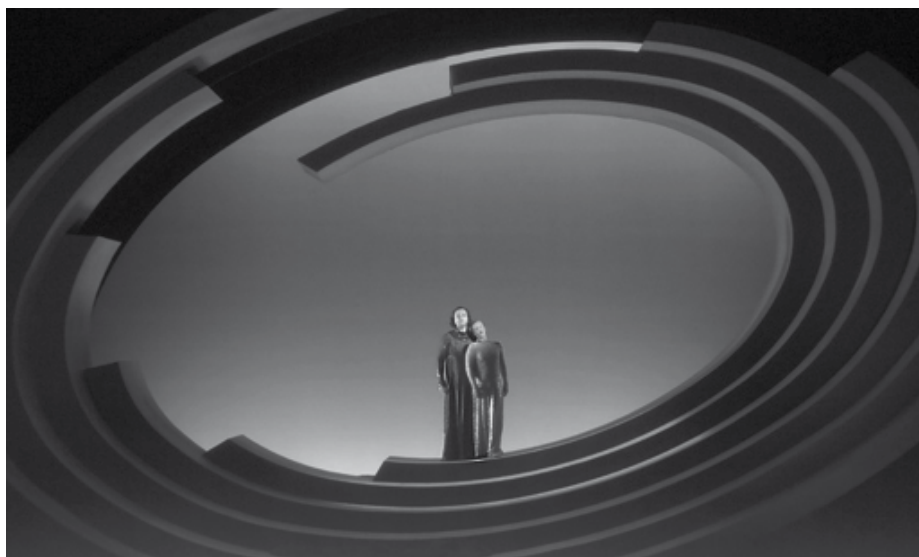


EARLY STARTS FOR TRISTAN & TANNHÄUSER



Tristan & Isolde from Glyndebourne (above) and Tannhäuser from Bayreuth (right)

On Sunday 11 July the North Island will experience an outbreak of Wagnerian love, in all its guises, with a screening of *Tristan & Isolde* in Auckland and *Tannhäuser* in Wellington.

Please remember to make a special note that both performances start earlier than normal.

The screening of Nikolaus Lehnhoff's Glyndebourne production of *Tristan* will commence at 4.30pm in the Music Theatre, School of Music, Auckland University with an introduction by Heath Lees. There will be two intervals and you are invited to bring along some sustenance to 'keep you going'!

The production, which stars Nina Stemme and Robert Gambill as the doomed lovers and René Pape as King Marke, has received wide critical acclaim; 'supremely intelligent; gravely beautiful, haunting and meditative, it is deeply reflective rather than visceral, fortified by Roland Aeschlimann's stunningly effective set, a womb-like space through which the protagonists move like gods. Conductor Jiri Belohlávek mirrors Lehnhoff's approach in his sophisticated plumbing of the score's depths, with every shift in texture carefully laid bare by an inspired London Philharmonic Orchestra.

Auckland:
Tristan & Isolde – 4.30pm, 11 July

Meanwhile further south, in Wellington, the Wagner Society and the NZ Opera Society will join forces to present the 1978 Bayreuth production of *Tannhäuser*. If you want to make sure that you see the Bacchanale you will need to be at the Paramount Theatre prior to the start of the screening which begins at 10.30am (10.30 on Sunday morning!)

Dan Davis reviewing the production on Amazon.com writes:- *This 1978 production from Bayreuth was directed by Götz Friedrich, and includes choreography by John Neumeier with stage designs by Jürgen Rose. The controversial production shocked many opera patrons* (which is why you don't want to miss the Bacchanale – Ed) *But what makes this Tannhäuser outstanding is the singing of the soloists and Colin Davis' inspired conducting. Gwyneth Jones takes on both of the female leads, Venus and Elizabeth. Tenor Spas Wenkoff matches her in intensity of singing and acting, never seeming to tire, even in the harrowing last Act of this demanding role. Baritone Bernd Weikl is an excellent Wolfram, and Hans Sotin's strong bass makes the Landgraf an imposing authority figure.*

Wellington:
Tannhäuser – 10.30am, 11 July

LUNCH ANYONE?

With the early start of *Tannhäuser* the NZ Opera Society and WSNZ are considering meeting for a late lunch following the screening. If you are interested could you please contact Garth Wiltshire on 04 3872 559 for further details.

No doubt the lunch will consist of more than just a Venusberger!

NEW MEMBERS

A big Wagnerian welcome to:

Gilbert Wood.....Dunedin
Nuala Grove.....Auckland
Briar & Ben Gordon.....Wellington
M et Mme Gerard Assayag.....Paris

Annual General Meeting

The Wagner Society AGM was held on Sunday 23 May 2010

The following were elected Office-Bearers and Committee members:-
President Chris Brodrick
Vice President Ken Tomkins
Secretary.....Michael Sinclair
Treasurer *Vacant
PR/Liaison.....Sidney Smith
CommitteeLesley Kendall
..... Bob O'Hara
.....Les Holborow
..... Juliet Rowe

* See President's report on page 4



THE FILMS OF TONY PALMER

As we announced in the last newsletter, the Wagner Society of New Zealand is bringing British film director Tony Palmer to New Zealand in March next year to tour the four main centres. Palmer, “a giant among documentary film-makers” as the London *Times* puts it, has now directed well over 100 films but in New Zealand his talks to the Wagner Society centres will focus on his famous *Wagner* film with Richard Burton, his documentary on *Parsifal* with opera-star Placido Domingo, and on his newly released, sometimes startling film about the Wagner family.

In addition, Palmer will give talks to public meetings about the prodigious output of films that have spanned his hugely productive career from 1966 until today. Starting as producer on Ken Russell’s film of Isadora Duncan, he went on to direct works that captured the essence of subjects as varied as comedian Peter Sellers, one-time England Football captain Bobby Moore, playwright John Osborne, Michael Crawford (the original ‘Phantom of the Opera’) and *Chariots of Fire* composer Vangelis .

Many of Tony Palmer’s films have been about classical composers — Brahms, Vaughan Williams, Berlioz, Stavinsky — but he is also fascinated by the world of Rock. Once a friend of both John Lennon and Jimi Hendrix, he has been close to many of the legendary figures in the golden age of Pop. In 1968 he produced a pioneering and definitive documentary called *All My Loving* on the subject of British pop music, and in the mid 70s he followed this up with a

Tony Palmer’s Films in New Zealand	Auckland Public Library	Auckland University Library	Wellington City Library	Victoria University Library	Canterbury Public Library	Canterbury University Library	Dunedin Public Library	Otago University Library	Alice in Videoland Christchurch	Aro Video Wellington
Wagner		V		•					V	V
200 Motels: Frank Zappa									V	•
All My Loving		•	•						•	
All You Need is Love (TV Series - 5 discs)		•	•	•			•	•	•	•
A Time There Was: Benjamin Britten:		V	•		••			•	•	•
At the haunted end of the day: William Walton		•	•		••					
Cream: Farewell Concert			•							
John Osborne and the Gift of Friendship			•						•	•
Kindness of strangers, The: Andre Previn					•					
Ladies & Gentlemen, Miss Renee Fleming								•		
Margot: Margot Fonteyn		•		•	•••				•	•
Maria Callas							•		V	
O, fortuna!: Carl Orff								•		
Once at the Border: Stravinsky	•	•V	•	•	••		•		•	
O thou transcendent: Vaughan Williams			•		•					
Parsifal									•	
Puccini					•					
Rachmaninoff					•					
Salzburg Festival, The	•								•	•
Symphony of Sorrowful Songs, The: Henryk Gorecki’s Symphony No. 3								V		
Testimony: Shostakovitch	•		•	•	••			•	•	•
Toward the Unknown Region: Malcolm Arnold					•				•	•

Key: • – DVD ◦ – On Order V – Video Cassette

A table showing the availability of Tony Palmer’s films in New Zealand

17-part series on the history of American popular music — *All you need is Love*. He has also made films on musicians as varied as Maria Callas, Yehudi Menuhin, Liberace, and one-time *Cream* drummer Ginger Baker.

For devotees of Wagner’s music, Tony Palmer’s fame rests firmly on the film *Wagner*, which has had a brilliant run over 25 years and is now being re-mastered and re-issued. In addition to Burton in the title role, this film included the three great 20th century doyens of British Theatre, Sir Laurence Olivier, Sir Ralph Richardson and Sir John Gielgud. In a further masterstroke, Palmer even managed to get Vanessa Redgrave to play the composer’s wife Cosima.

Tony Palmer has won over forty international prizes for his work, including television’s most coveted award, the Prix d’Italia — indeed, he is the only film-maker to have won this prize twice.



HANZ SACHS?

The Guardian recently ran this picture of Bryn Terfel rehearsing the role of Hans Sachs for Welsh National Opera’s forthcoming production of *Die Meistersinger*. It caught the eye not for the impressive looking beard, but that this passionate Welshman was wearing - an All Black rugby jersey!

TOUR DE FORCE!



Sherwin Sloan: photo - Los Angeles Times

On 1 June, just as the LA Opera *Ring* was getting underway, the Los Angeles Times reported the death of retired ophthalmologist and *Ring* Cyclist extraordinaire, Sherwin Sloan, at the age of 72.

There would be a number of 'Wagnerians' who will have experienced double digit *Ring* Cycles, even fewer will have seen more cycles than their birthdays! Sherwin Sloan managed 87 in his 72 years!!

That is some feat and is worth putting into perspective. Complete performances of *the Ring* take place over six days or a week. In order to get near Sherwin's extraordinary record you would have to attend a full cycle every week from now until Christmas 2011 and beyond! If we settle on the fact that the complete *Ring* takes an average of 16 hours to perform, then 16 hours x 87 cycles = 1,392 hours or 58 full days! Again if we put that into perspective: we are told that we should brush our teeth for 2 minutes twice a day. So to keep the dentist happy we should brush for 4 minutes a day, 28 minutes a week and 1,456 minutes a year. 1,456 divided by 60 equals just over 24 hours. In other words we *should* spend one day each year brushing our teeth. So Sherwin Sloan achieved the equivalent of 58 years worth of teeth brushing with his 87 *Ring* cycles. The fact that he clocked up his impressive record in only 35 years makes his achievement even more staggering!

MET SET FOR RING

In preparation for their new production of *the Ring*, New York's Metropolitan Opera has strengthened the stage, after engineers determined that the set, conceived by director Robert Lepage and weighing 45 tons, could well cause a theatrical armageddon by falling through the floor. Three steel girders have been installed to 'hold up' the structure when it is 'parked' at the side of the stage.

WAGNER SOCIETY OF NEW ZEALAND 2010 PROGRAMME DETAILS

Auckland

Sunday, 11 July 4.30pm

Venue: Music Theatre, School of Music, University of Auckland, 6 Symonds St
Tristan & Isolde – Robert Gambill and Nina Stemme in Nikolaus Lehnhoff's Glyndebourne production

Sunday, 5 September 7.30pm

Venue: Music Theatre, School of Music, University of Auckland, 6 Symonds St

The Operas Wagner almost wrote - Peter Bassett gives a behind the scenes look at Wagner's creative mind
NB: A \$10 fee will apply

Sunday, 5 December 7.30pm

Venue: Music Theatre, School of Music, University of Auckland, 6 Symonds St
Wagner Pot Pourri - A Christmas celebration: An evening of requests, roundups, selections and surprises

Wellington

Sunday 11 July 10.30 am

Venue: Paramount Theatre

Tannhäuser - 1978 Bayreuth Festival production (In association with NZ Opera Society)

Monday 6 September 7.00 pm

Venue: St Andrew's on the Terrace

The Operas Wagner almost wrote - Peter Bassett gives a behind the scenes look at Wagner's creative mind

Sunday 31 October 4.00 pm

Venue: St Andrew's on the Terrace

A View from the Stage Pt 1 – Chris Brodrick looks at those who attended the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876

Christchurch

Friday 3 September 7.30pm

Venue: Lecture Theatre A6, University of Canterbury

The Operas Wagner almost wrote - Peter Bassett gives a behind the scenes look at Wagner's creative mind

Friday 8 October 7.30pm

Venue: Lecture Theatre A6, University of Canterbury

The Life of Max Lorenz - John Pattinson will introduce a DVD on the life of the Wagnerian tenor of 1930-40s, Max Lorenz

Sunday 28 November 6.00pm

Venue: To be confirmed
Christmas BBQ

Dunedin

Sunday, 12 September 2.00 pm

Venue: Marama Hall, University of Otago

Wagner And German Tradition -

Baritone Roger Wilson, with pianist Terence Dennis, brings the historical context to vivid life in a lecture/recital

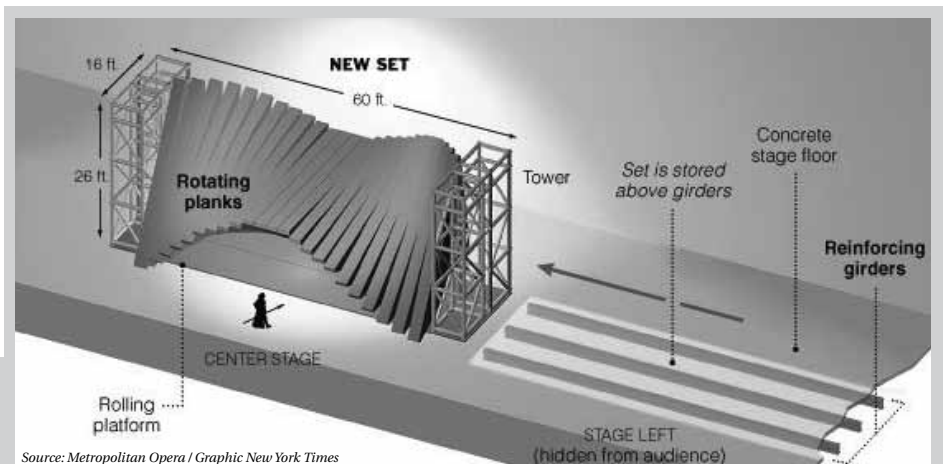
Sunday, 7 November 1.00 pm

Venue: Barclay Theatre, Otago Museum
Die Meistersinger At The Met: Acts 1 & 2

Otto Schenk's production of Wagner's comic opera from the Metropolitan, New York, conducted by James Levine

Sunday, 5 December 1.00 pm

Venue: Barclay Theatre, Otago Museum
Die Meistersinger At The Met: Act 3 and our end-of-year Christmas celebrations



Source: Metropolitan Opera / Graphic New York Times

The set consists of two 8 metre-tall towers connected by an axis 1.5 metre in diameter. Twenty-four planks are attached, at their centres, to the axis which moves vertically, powered by hydraulics. The planks that revolve individually around the axis are like a series of see-saws placed side by side, that can move independently and

collectively levitate.

The system allows for a vast number of possible configurations and will also serve as a backdrop for complex computer-controlled projections. Most of the singing will take place on the stage in front of the planks, although characters will perform on the structure in its various shapes.

Wagner Society of New Zealand President's Report May 2010 (Edited for the newsletter)

In last year's President's report I alluded to the Society as being like a car that had gained a new engine and driver. While at the start the engine was a bit tight and the driver tentative, I am pleased to say that over the course of the last twelve months everything has been easing up and we are beginning to pick up speed.

Over the last twelve months our four centres have presented a total of twenty-six meetings. Breaking down those numbers show: 6 meetings in Auckland, 5 in Wellington, 7 in Christchurch and 8 in Dunedin. Fifteen of those meetings involved eight different presenters with subjects as far ranging as *An Introduction to Rienzi* and *The composition of the Flying Dutchman to Wagner and Literature* and *The audience at the first Bayreuth Festival in 1876*. In addition there were four social events as well as screenings of *the Flying Dutchman*, *Lohengrin* and *Visconti's Ludwig*. Most recently there was the Simon O'Neill concert that was held in March this year and attended by a large number of members.

Looking down the list of events you will find that the name of one person stands out. With a talk on *Wagner in Paris* that he gave in two centres, an introduction to documentaries on singer Max Lorenz and Winifred Wagner plus his contribution to the visit of Siegfried Jerusalem to Dunedin, the Roger Wilson recital and the evening with Simon O'Neill in Wellington, Terence Dennis has made a huge contribution to the Society over the last year. Our thanks go to him and to all the other presenters who contributed to such an interesting and stimulating programme.

To publicise these events we produced six issues of the newsletter which received a fresh look during the year, with a new master head and typeface. I'd like to give a big thank you to all those who contributed articles during the year and offer an invitation for more contributions, particularly from members who attend productions of Wagner operas when travelling overseas.

In addition to the activity at home we also undertook two international tours. The first under Michael Sinclair to see *the Ring* in Seattle and the second led by myself to Adelaide for *the Flying Dutchman*. An enormous amount of work is required in setting up these tours so they can't happen every year. Nevertheless we will keep looking out for productions around the world on which we can build interesting tours because, despite the work involved, they happen to be tremendous fun!

It should also be noted that we had 10 members who attended the Bayreuth Festival in August last year and we also co-ordinated tickets for the Simon O'Neill concert in Wellington in March this year.

Our sponsorship of Simon's recording dominated much of the committee's work during the year culminating in the Wellington concert. It was a tremendous occasion made special by the presence of our Patron and Simon's teacher, Sir Donald McIntyre.

Much of the Society's organisational work falls into the lap of our secretary, Michael Sinclair. He not only looks after the Auckland Branch but is the engine of the whole New Zealand operation. We are extremely fortunate to have someone of Michael's ability in this role as he manages our affairs with consummate skill.

Another committee member who has worked tirelessly is Wellington based George Risk. After six years as our membership secretary, George has decided to step down. On behalf of us all I'd like to record a big vote of thanks to George for all his hard work.

Sadly we will also be looking for a new Treasurer as Malcolm Hammond, who has recently undergone surgery, has resigned from his position as Treasurer. [The resignation came too late to find a replacement to stand at the AGM]. Thanks go to Malcolm for looking after the accounts during the last 12 months.

Thanks also to John Hambling who, a year ago stepped in at the last minute to audit the accounts and has repeated the exercise this year. With Jonathan Blakeman now resident in Sydney, John has agreed to take on the role of honorary auditor for the 2010-11 financial year.

As I explained in my report last year our committee meetings, which take place five times a year, include representatives from our four branches. Communication between committee members takes place via a telephone conference call. Thanks go to our honorary solicitor, Peter Rowe, not only for providing this technology and the use of a conference room at Minter Ellison Rudd Watts, but also for his role as our legal advisor.

Thanks to all members of the committee: Michael, George, Malcolm, Vice President Ken Tomkins, Minute Secretary Juliet Rowe, Sidney Smith, Bob O'Hara and Lesley Kendall. In addition, and to ensure that we included representatives from each centre, we co-opted Les Holborow from Wellington and Gloria Streat from Christchurch, to sit in on discussions.

This National approach is working very well with a good deal of coordination taking place between the centres. But while running the incorporated society is handled by a national committee, each centre has its own group of members who look after the nuts and bolts of their meetings. I'd like to pay a special tribute to this group as without them we would struggle to undertake such an extensive programme.

So thanks go to Michael Sinclair, Malcolm Hammond, Juliet Rowe, Sidney Smith, Bob O'Hara and Ken Tomkins for taking care of Auckland; Les Holborow, George

Risk, John Morrison, Ann Mallinson and Tibby Simcock for their care of Wellington; in Christchurch I thank Gloria and Garth Streat, Jenny Lee, John Pattinson, Elizabeth Couch and Cynthia Hawes; and in Dunedin the wonderful duo of Lesley Kendall and Terence Dennis.

Last, but certainly not least, thanks go to our President Emeritus, Heath Lees, who not only attended our meetings when he was in the country but also provided counsel from all over the world whenever it was sought. I would also like to thank both Heath and Liz for the close attention they pay to proofing the newsletter.

Last year I mentioned that, as a result of the generous bequest left to us by the late Roa Morrissey, the committee was looking at a number of exciting projects that, prior to Roa's bequest, would have proved beyond our means. Over the last year your committee has spent a great deal of time discussing various proposals. The Simon O'Neill recording was our first major project and we were delighted to be part of a group that enabled this recording to be made in New Zealand rather than London. In order to promote the work of the Society and 'our heldentenor', Simon O'Neill, the WSNZ has sent a copy of the recording to 40 of the major Wagner Societies around the world.

We have also spent time discussing our next project: the visit to New Zealand of the film director Tony Palmer. It will take place in March next year and take the form of a National tour.

Tony Palmer's association with Wagner by way of his biographical film, his production of *Parsifal* and his latest documentary on the Wagner family, will give members a wonderful opportunity to hear one of today's great artists talk about another great from the past. Tony's visit presents the Society with a wonderful opportunity to reach out to a much wider audience who, hopefully, will come to realise that Wagner goes considerably deeper than helicopter gun-ships and bridal marches.

The Wagner Society of New Zealand can feel proud of its achievements during the last twelve months. It has been an impressive year with the success a tribute to the hard work of a few and the strong support given by many.

By way of an introduction to Tony Palmer's visit and to give an insight into what we can expect in the year ahead, I'd like to quote from a new book, *Wagner & Cinema*. In the foreword to this book Tony Palmer writes:-

"Richard Burton once asked me why I wanted him to play the role of Wagner in my epic film. "Easy," I said. "Both of you have the gift of the gab, drink more than you should, have had more women than hot dinners, talk rubbish most of the time, are often thoroughly unpleasant, even offensive, but can be, when the mood takes you, effortlessly charming and seductive. Oh, and you also both happen to be, in your different ways, blessed with genius." "Good," he replied, "As long as I know."