



Wagner on the Potomac

For the study and enjoyment of Wagner's Art


August 18, 1999


Vol. 1 No 1


First Anniversary Issue

Message from the Chairman: As the inaugural season of the Wagner Society of Washington, D.C. draws to a close, we look back to a year of important accomplishments, and ahead to a season of exciting promise. We accomplished our goal of presenting monthly programs, including a forum with Wolfgang Wagner, director of the Bayreuth Festival for nearly half a century. And once again the renowned pianist Stefan Mickisch thrilled us with his Wagner transcriptions. We established a strong and active membership, now approaching 200, and we hope to double that number in the coming year. Next year's programs are shaping up with equal excitement, to include outstanding Wagnerians such as Thomas Stewart, Speight Jenkins, Saul Lilienstien and Andrew Gray.

In addition to next years monthly programs, we will have:

 - a monthly film series, featuring Wagner operas, commentaries and biographies

 - a fabulous concert by another great artist, and ...

 - a trip to Baltimore to see a new production of Tannhäuser

 - tickets, books and merchandise at discount prices.

We are well on our way to meeting the goal of the Wagner Society of Washington, D.C. by creating an organization for the study and enjoyment of Wagner's art.

Special thanks to all the Wagnerian experts who gave so generously of their time and support in our inaugural year, and to Wolfgang and Gudrun Wagner, Bayreuth Festival; Heinz Fricke

The 1999/2000 season will be the best yet. With great thanks for the support of current and future members,

and Chris Hunter, The Washington Opera; Larry Wilker, The Kennedy Center; Gudrun Constantine and the German Embassy; Nathalie Wagner and Kit Gill, Wagner Society of New York.

J.K. Holman, Chairman



Board of Directors: Jeffrey L. Roames; Aurelius Fernandez (*President*); Janice E. Rosen (*Founder*); WOLFGANG WAGNER; R.G. Head: John C. Green; J.K. Holman (*Chairman*); John Edward Niles.
(Not in picture: Thomas L. Arthur III; Henry L. Gutman; Barbara Parish Karn and John Pohanka)

Highlights - The Inaugural Season 1998-1999

Wolfgang Wagner Visit

Wolfgang Wagner, Grandson of Richard Wagner and General Director of the Bayreuth Festival, met with members and guests at the Kennedy Center on February 28, 1999. He was accompanied by his wife, Gudrun Wagner.

Tristan und Isolde Events

In connection with the Washington Opera's presentation of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* (February 27 through March 23) the Society was involved in the following events:

An opening night back stage tour led by Founder Janice Rosen. Society members and guests were given a guide tour of the sets as well as the costume, make up, wig and dressing rooms.

Discount tickets were available to Society members for the Opera Insights lecture series which included appearances by Music Director Heinz Fricke, *Tristan und Isolde* Director Lofti Mansour, Saul Lilienstein and Donald Crosby.

An opening night Hospitality Suite was hosted by Society members for all ticket holders including friends from the New York, Chicago and Dallas Wagner Societies.

Supernumeraries in the cast included Wagner Society President Aurelius Fernandez.



Stefan Mickisch Recital

Stefan Mickisch, Bayreuth Lecturer, at the German Embassy Washington, DC (June 24, 1999) performed his paraphrases and transcriptions of Wagner's operas, including *Tristan und Isolde*, *Goetterdämmerung* and *Parsifal*.

First Annual Banquet

First Annual Wagner Society Award to Martin Feinstein, former Washington Opera General Director. (June 1, 1999)
A celebratory occasion for 60 members and their guests - food, skit and music!

Monthly Programs of The Inaugural Season 1998-1999

Penelope Turing

Author of *The New Bayreuth* and also a biography of *Hans Hotter*, "Wolfgang Wagner's productions in *New Bayreuth*" (October 8, 1998) Wagner expert insights to the Bayreuth Festival.

Martin Feinstein

"Reminiscences of Wagner Performances" by former General Director of the Washington Opera. (November 17, 1998)
Experiences of decades with opera production, singers, and conductors.

Monte Stone

Creator of the Ringdisc (December 10, 1998) An illustrated lecture and demonstration.

Joan Tasker Grimbirt

Associate Professor, Catholic University of America, "Modern Misconceptions of the Medieval Tristan Legend" (January 7, 1999) Background to sources for Wagner's *Tristan*.

Siegfried

Fritz Lange classic film (April 14, 1999) Pre-movie lecture given by Professor Marie Travis of the George Washington University. Film screening and discussion with members and guests.

William L. Berger

Author of *Wagner Without Fear* lectured on "Wagner and Architecture" (May 13, 1999) Presented perceptive insights for both Wagner experts and novices.

The Second Season 1999-2000

Programs

All programs and films are scheduled for 7:30 PM at George Washington University, Fungler Hall, Room 103.

Thursday, September 16, 1999. "An Evening with Thomas Stewart". The renowned bass baritone will share his thoughts about his career and experiences singing Wagner.

Thursday, November 4, 1999. "An Evening with Speight Jenkins" The General Director of the Seattle Opera, world famous for its *Ring* productions, will share his experiences.

Thursday, October 14, 1999. Saul Lilienstein, eminent musicologist, will give an exciting lecture on *Die Meistersinger*.

Thursday, December 9, 1999. Andrew Gray, Wagner expert, will speak on special aspects of the composer's music.

The 1999-2000 season will continue with monthly programs through June, with special focus on *Tannhäuser* in connection with the Baltimore Opera's production of that opera. (See Special Events, below.)

Chairman J. K. Holman (right) with Martin Feinstein (center) recipient of Wagner Society First Annual Award and Heinz Fricke (left) Music Director, The Washington Opera.



Film Showings

Wagner - The Complete Epic

The famous 1983 film biography directed by Tony Palmer, with Richard Burton, John Gielgud, Laurence Olivier, Vanessa Redgrave and Ralph Richardson. The complete, unedited, nine hour version will be presented in three installments.

Thursday, September 30, 1999 - Part I

Thursday, October 28, 1999 - Part II

Thursday, November 18, 1999 - Part III

Year 2000 films will include *Tannhäuser* and *Die Meistersinger*.

Year 2000 Special Events

Sunday, March 26, 2000, excursion to matinee performance of *Tannhäuser* at the Baltimore Opera. New production directed by Werner Herzog. Sign up while tickets last!

Ticket and round trip motor coach transportation for \$100.

Please send checks and reservations to the Wagner Society of Washington, DC.

June 2000. Second Annual Banquet. *Gemütlichkeit!*
Presentation of Second Annual Award.

Purposes of the Society

- To organize, plan, and promote Wagner-related events, such as lectures, workshops, symposia, a newsletter, a web page, and live performances.
- To relate the Society's efforts to area opera activities as appropriate.
- To encourage and facilitate group attendance at live performances of Wagner's works in the Washington-Baltimore area, as well as other cities in the US and abroad.
- To establish contact with other Wagner societies, both in the US and abroad and to encourage and develop complementary and synergistic programming.

Benefits of Membership

- Free Admission to WSWDC monthly programs and films
- A voice in the type of programs you would like to see.
- Lectures, panels, symposia, workshops with Wagner experts.
- Video showings and discussion groups about Wagner operas .
- Periodic newsletter and advance information about area events.
- Discounts on books and materials offered by the Wagner Society of New York.
- *Gemütlichkeit!*

Please contact us to join. Membership forms are available at www.wagner-dc.org. Single memberships are \$30; dual memberships are \$40; student, senior and out of town (over 100 miles) memberships are \$20.

Membership is offered on a calendar year basis.
Donations and Volunteers welcome!

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