



*1998–2008*

# Tenth Anniversary Report



## Table of Contents/Credits

**Editors:** ..... Aurelius Fernandez and Frederic Harwood

Chairman’s Message ..... Jim Holman ..... page 1

President’s Message ..... Aurelius Fernandez ..... page 2

Section 1: Awards ..... The Editors ..... page 3

Section 2: Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program

    A Journey Towards Excellence ..... John Edward Niles ..... page 6

    Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart: Their Impact on the Next Generation ..... Compiled by Frederic Harwood ..... page 7

    The Singers: Selected Reviews ..... Compiled by Frederic Harwood ..... page 8

Section 3: Musical Programs, Symposia, and Seminars ..... Compiled by the Editors ..... page 12

Section 4: A Chronology of Monthly Programs ..... Bonnie Becker ..... page 16

Section 5: *Wagner in der Wildnis* ..... Aurelius Fernandez ..... page 20

    The Saturday Night Live Libretto Reading ..... Betty Byrne ..... page 21

Section 6: The Bayreuth Festival as a Religious Pilgrimage ..... Aurelius Fernandez ..... page 22

Section 7: Ten Years of Membership Growth ..... Lynne Lambert ..... page 24

Section 8: Publications ..... The Editors ..... page 26

Section 9: Board of Directors ..... The Editors ..... page 28

Premium Members 1998–2008 ..... Compiled by Bill Pastor ..... inside back cover

The Editors are grateful to the following for edits and proofreading: Lynne Lambert, Betty Byrne, Prof. Donald Crosby, and Jim Holman. Nancy O’Hara provided invaluable assistance with proofreading and edits.

Photo Credits: All photos by Aury Fernandez, except for the following: p. 2 Gwen Lewis; p. 3 Washington National Opera (WNO); pp 4–5 and 25 top Anderson Photography; p. 6 Evelyn Lear; pp 9–11 courtesy of the singers; p. 14 Jeffrey Swann; p. 15 Tim Scanlon; p. 23 dinner photo courtesy of Tom and Yoko Arthur; p. 23 Bayreuth 2006 group photo courtesy of Bonnie Becker; pp 28–31 courtesy of the subjects.

# Chairman’s Message

The magnificent opera analyst, Owen Lee, once used a single word to describe the works of Richard Wagner: “indispensable.” That word has always seemed particularly apt, whether applied to Wagner, or to any of the Great Masters. The original Mission Statement of our Society — “for the study and enjoyment of Wagner’s art” — continues to inspire us, and our first decade has also alerted us to opportunities to expand the mission.

With a base of more than 500 members, our Society has emerged as one of the most vibrant cultural institutions in Washington. We are proud to serve the Washington community in many ways — through monthly lectures, semi-annual concerts, and special events through a network of collaborating institutions such as the Smithsonian Institution, the German Embassy, and the Goethe-Institut. We are ready to make even greater contributions to our community.

In our second decade, we will extend the reach of our programs to a growing membership. We are poised, through the Emerging Singers Program, to make added contributions to the training of great Wagner singers. We will encourage and support Wagner performances around the country and the world, and are especially looking forward to the upcoming “American *Ring*” of the Washington National Opera. In short, we remain committed to bring the indispensable value of Wagner’s art to an ever-expanding audience.

Jim Holman  
Chairman

# President's Message

*“Weisst Du, wie das wird?”*

“What will happen now?” (Second Norn in *Götterdämmerung* Prologue)

The question posed by the Second Norn was very much on my mind in May 1998 when I organized a Steering Committee to work toward the creation of what became the Wagner Society of Washington DC (WSWDC). Among those on the Committee were Barbara Karn and R G Head who became long time members of the Board of Directors, and others such as Janice Rosen, who served for a short time.

The Steering Committee decided at the outset to seek a Good Samaritan and godfather to be our chairman. Jim Holman agreed and the steady growth of our programming and membership took off.

There were no limits to our imagination on the Steering Committee, but none of us dared imagine that by our 10th anniversary our rolls would count over 500 dues-paying members! Moreover, we did not imagine that in two short years we would have 15 sets of Bayreuth tickets — 105 in all! — allotted to us for the Festival each year. Nor did we dare imagine that by our tenth anniversary in 2008 we would have behind us 17 Concerts of the Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program, which has mentored and promoted the careers of more than

40 Emerging Singers who have the ability to sing Wagnerian roles, and completed eight annual *Wagner in der Wildnis* weekend retreats, 15 issues of our twice-yearly *Wagner on the Potomac* newsletter, and the 4 annual issues of *The Wagner Singer* publication devoted to the Emerging Singers Program.

That we would be affiliated with an international publication such as Barry Millington's *Wagner Journal* never occurred to us. We look back in amazement on the more than 70 lectures by the world's leading Wagner musicologists at The George Washington University's Fungler Hall, more than ten separate, major musical programs including programs in cooperation with the Washington National Opera, the Smithsonian Resident Associates, and the Goethe-Institut, along with the Society's awards ceremonies, cast dinners, galas, fund raisers, and so much more. The Society's development today has far exceeded our most fantastic, sweetly unreasonable dreams in 1998!

As with any volunteer arts organization, success depends on the commitment and dedication of a diligent working board, to support the big idea policy makers. And we knew that it was equally important in the long run to have the support of a strong core of active members. As it turned out, the



Society has been truly blessed with dedicated volunteers and loyally active members.

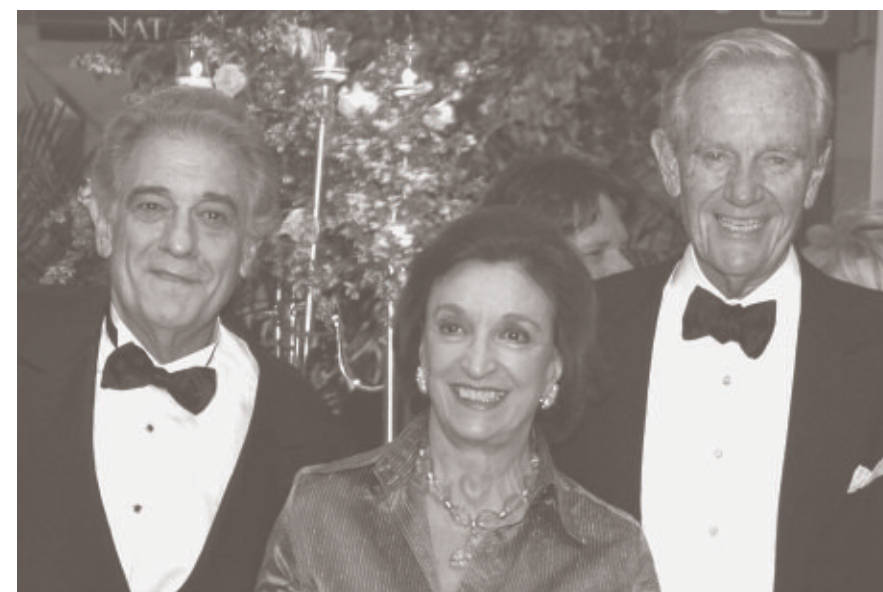
As I transition to the role of President Emeritus after ten years as President, I share with many members much awe at what has been achieved. We have a promising future for the “study and enjoyment of Wagner's art,” as we set forth in our mission statement in August 1998.

My years as President have been so satisfying, so very educational. I've had the great fortune to meet opera lovers who are students of Wagner, as well as renowned authorities, authors, lecturers, musicologists, singers, and performers from throughout the world, from our sister Wagner societies, and from Bayreuth. I look upon the past with heartfelt gratitude and look forward to the future with great anticipation. I am grateful to all who have helped make the Wagner Society of Washington DC such a remarkable success. And so, as Wagner would have said: *Aufwiedersehen, aber nicht leb' wohl!* (Goodbye, but not farewell!).

Aurelius (Aury) Fernandez  
President Emeritus

# Awards

The Society formally recognizes notables in the opera world who have made extraordinary contributions to the study and enjoyment of Richard Wagner's art. Nine persons have been so honored by the Society at award banquets and galas.



**Martin Feinstein.** Impresario. The late General Director of the Washington National Opera made a singular contribution to developing the staging of opera in the nation's capital, including the works of Richard Wagner. For this reason, he was the logical first recipient of the Award in June 1999, just before the Society's first anniversary.

**Thomas Stewart.** Bass Baritone. He was deservedly Herbert von Karajan's Wotan of choice at a time when both were at the height of their musical careers. In retirement after a triumphant international opera career, Tom Stewart settled in the Washington DC area with his wife Evelyn Lear. Together, they co-founded the Emerging Singers Program, named in their honor, a partnership with the Wagner Society of Washington DC. Tom received the Award in May 2000. We continue to mourn his untimely death in September 2006.

**Placido Domingo.** Tenor. The opera world's foremost living tenor, he has sung the role of Sigmund in opera houses throughout the world, and, with Nina Stemme, recorded an acclaimed studio version of *Tristan und Isolde* in 2005. He is the General Director of

Placido Domingo, Selwa "Lucky" Roosevelt, and Washington National Opera (WNO) Chairman and Wagner Society Board Member John Pohanka at the 50th Anniversary celebration of the WNO.



James Morris accepts Wagner Award at Gala Benefit (June 2005) with Board of Directors. (left to right) Phillip W. Raines, R G Head, John Pohanka, President. Aury Fernandez, James Morris, Tom Arthur, John Edward Niles, Betty Byrne, Chairman Jim Holman and Lynne Lambert.



James Morris, the Wotan and Hans Sachs of the present generation with Thomas Stewart who "owned" those roles in the last generation. The two Wagner Award recipients are seen here at the Third Gala Benefit (June 2005).

the Washington National Opera and the Los Angeles Opera. He accepted the Award in April 2001; a film clip of the award ceremony was screened for members at the Society's June 2001 banquet.

**Fr. M. Owen Lee.** Critic and Author. Professor of Classics at the University of Toronto, Father Lee is author of *Wagner's Ring: Turning the Sky Around*, books on Horace and Virgil, as well as more than a hundred articles on both classical and musical subjects. He was a frequent guest on the Metropolitan Opera/Texaco radio broadcasts. He accepted the award in December 2001.

**Maestro Heinz Fricke.** Music Director of the Washington National Opera, he made his company debut in 1992 conducting *The Flying Dutchman*, and shortly thereafter, in 1993, was named the company's music director. His international reputation as a Wagner conductor, and his extensive discography, have placed him in the pantheon of great conductors. He accepted the Award in

May 2002. The 60th anniversary of his conducting career was celebrated in May 2006 at an event hosted by German Ambassador Klaus Scharioth.

**Evelyn Lear.** Soprano. An internationally celebrated soprano on the opera stages in Europe and the U.S., she is widely acclaimed for her interpretation of the German repertoire, especially Strauss, Mozart, and Berg. With her husband Thomas Stewart she co-founded the Emerging Singers Program (ESP) named in their honor, a partnership with the WSWDC. Ms. Lear generously continues to serve as Artistic Director of the Program, which she has taken to increased prominence and influence. She accepted the award in June 2003.

**Saul Lilienstein.** A conductor and musicologist who studied with Leonard Bernstein, Maestro Lilienstein has developed an impressive career in the Washington area as a lecturer for the Society, the Smithsonian Institution's Resident Associates Program,

and other arts organizations. Each Washington National Opera season, he records commentaries of the season's operas. His commentaries on Wagner's operas are especially prized. He accepted the award in June 2004 at the banquet at the Arts Club.

**James Morris.** Bass Baritone. The leading Wotan and Hans Sachs of his generation, Mr. Morris is in many respects the heir to Thomas Stewart. Writing in the New York Times, Anthony Tommasini noted that Morris was "born to sing Wotan." He has sung Wotan in productions at the Met, the Vienna State Opera, and the Deutsche Oper, and he has recorded *The Ring* for Deutsche Grammophon with James Levine, and for EMI with Bernard Haitnik. He is a native of Baltimore and attended the Peabody Conservatory. He accepted the award at the Society's 2005 Gala Benefit.

**Jeffrey Swann.** Pianist. An internationally famous pianist, he completed his doctoral dissertation at Julliard on Richard



The Third Gala Benefit (June 2005) silent auction attracted special attention. In the photo, Peggy Jones, Lynne Lambert and Diana Holman.

Wagner. He is especially prized by the Society for his lecture-demonstrations at the annual *Wagner in der Wildnis* weekend retreats and at the concerts he has presented each year. Since 2005 his concerts have inaugurated the Society's autumn program season. He accepted the Award in June 2007 at a festive awards ceremony at the Arts Club, Washington DC.

#### *Special Award*

**Gerry Perman** was honored at the Society's 2007 Gala in recognition of his pioneering work in creating and managing the Vocal Arts Society of Washington DC.



Diane Stanley and Yoko Arthur co-chairs of the 2007 Gala Benefit and Awards Ceremony.

# The Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program

## *A Journey Towards Excellence*

In 1999, after a monthly Board meeting of the WSWDC, Program Director John Edward Niles approached Chairman James K. Holman and pointed out that here in the Washington DC metropolitan area lived two giants of the operatic world, Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart.

They had moved to Rockville from Santa Fe three years earlier. They were already involved with the Young Artists Program at the Wolf Trap Opera Company, but Niles thought we might approach them about forming a young artists program with the Wagner Society of Washington DC.

The concept was all very vague at that point but, after some initial phone calls, Eve-

lyn Lear, Thomas Stewart, James Holman, and Niles met in the winter of 2001 at the L'Ecole du Cuisine Restaurant in Bethesda for dinner. On the back of a paper napkin, Thomas Stewart outlined what he and his wife considered to be the basic outline for a Young Artists Program.

First, it was NOT to be called a Young Artists Program because the emphasis of

this program was to be on the music of Richard Wagner. Evelyn and Thomas felt that the participants in this program MUST be at least 35 years old. To call a 35 year old singer “young” was both insulting and inaccurate. So Tom decided on The Emerging Singers Program (ESP).

Second, it was to be a partnership with the Wagner Society of Washington DC, but it would operate both inter- and intra-dependently of the main body of the parent organization.

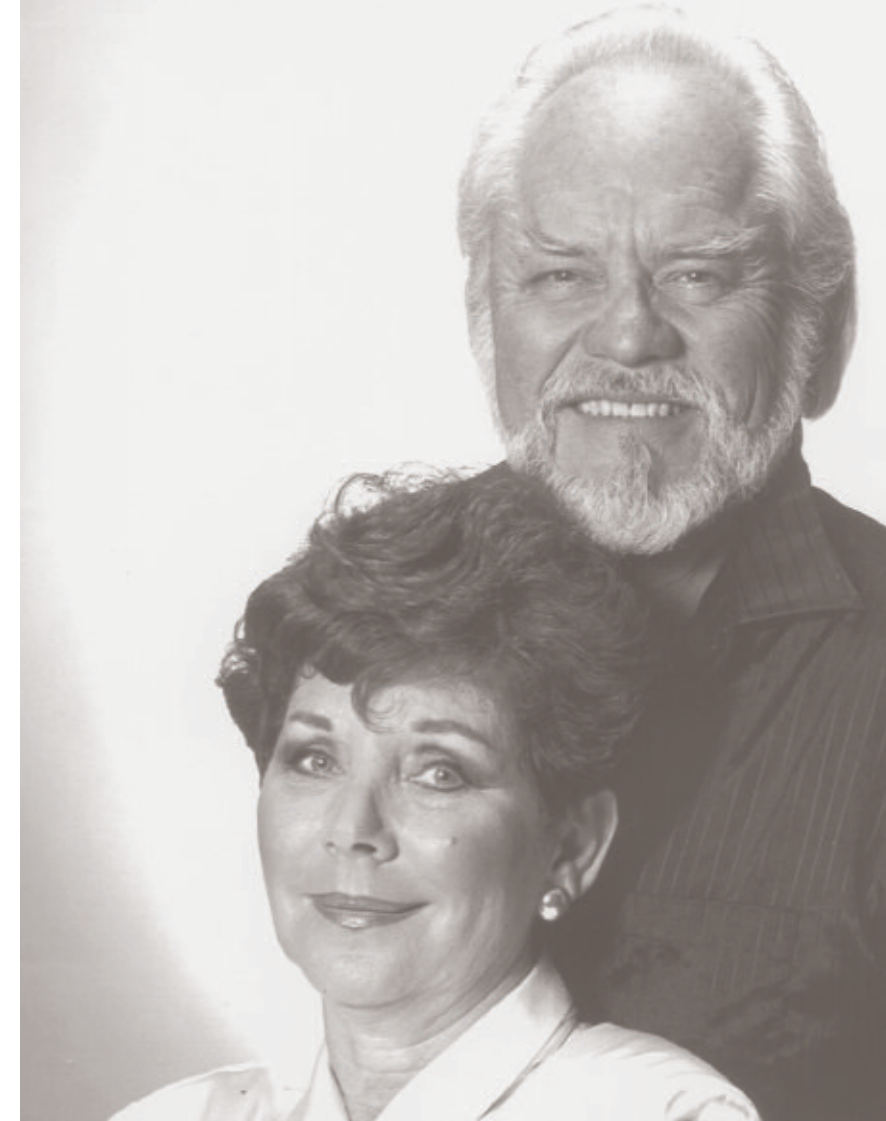
Third, it was NOT to be a contest! The singers would be chosen by audition. Those selected, numbering between two to five each year, would come to Washington for one week where they would work intensively with the pianist and with Evelyn and Tom. At the end of the week, a concert would be given at the German Embassy. After that, the singers would remain in the program and continue to work with Evelyn and Tom, who, along with the Wagner Society of Washington DC, would give them support both professionally and financially for audition trips, lessons, coaching, new photographs, concert wardrobe, and promotional materials. Tom and Evelyn, recalling their difficult early years when they felt they had to move to Europe to gain singing opportunities,

were determined that the ESP should focus on developing American singers with the talent to sing the Wagner repertoire.

The Emerging Singers Program has now grown to become an important element in the vocal scene in the United States. Since its inception, the program has received over 500 applications, has auditioned close to 200 singers, and has presented over the last 7 years a total of 17 concerts featuring more than 40 singers. Even as we enter our tenth anniversary, about two thirds of the ESP singers actively continue to pursue operatic careers. An even dozen have performed in European opera houses and major summer festivals.

Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart began their association with the WSWDC in 2001. Before moving to Washington, they resided in Berlin before moving to Santa Fe. During those years, they performed in the leading opera houses in the United States and Europe. They were both honored by the City of Berlin and the City of Vienna with the title of *Kammersängerin* and *Kammersänger*.

They conducted many master classes together, and together “discovered” and mentored many singers now developing international careers. After Mr. Stewart’s untimely death in 2006, Evelyn Lear contin-



The iconic photo of Thomas Stewart and Evelyn Lear, Founders and Artistic Directors of the Emerging Singers Program named in their honor.

ues to work with and inspire emerging American singers. She is presently a member of the faculty of the University of Maryland School of Music.

### *Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart: Their Impact on the Next Generation*

The Wagner Society of Washington is indeed fortunate to have partnered with Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart to develop new emerging Wagnerian singers. Evelyn and Tom are recognized for their extraordinary work with emerging singers.

Joan Reinthaler, *The Washington Post*, September 23, 2003 wrote: “Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart are two of the most distinguished singers of our time. From the 1960s into the 1980s they sang leading roles in every major opera house in the world. Ms. Lear is renowned for her roles in Strauss, Mozart, and Berg.

“Mr. Stewart is especially revered as the leading Wotan and Hans Sachs of the post-war era. He is the only bass-baritone to sing all four operas of *The Ring* in one week at the Bayreuth Festival, and the only American to

## The Emerging Singers

Charles Robert Austin	bass-baritone	2003
Nathan Bahny	baritone	2002
Dianne Barton	soprano	2005
Valerie Bernhardt	soprano	2007, 2008
Cory Bix	tenor	2007
Allison Bolshoi	soprano	2002
Daniel Brenna	baritone	2005
Brian Carter	tenor	2004
Connie Coffelt	soprano	2000
Alma DeLon	soprano	2001
Richard Demers	baritone	2002
Jason Detwiler	baritone	2001
Amy Fuller	soprano	2001
Jerett Gieseler	baritone	2008
Deidra Palmour Gorton	soprano	2006
Othalie Graham	soprano	2008
Karen Harman	soprano	2006
Lawrence Harris	tenor	2002
Michael Hayes	tenor	2003, 2007
Pavel Izbedsky	bass	2005
Ray Karnes	bass-baritone	2001
Ryan Kinsella	baritone	2007, 2008
Daniel Klein	baritone	2008
Matthew Lepold	baritone	2004
Amanda Mace	soprano	2001
Jay Hunter Morris	baritone	2001
Paul Mow	tenor	2001
Christopher Owens	tenor	2005
Brian Register	tenor	2007, 2008
Jennifer Roderer	mezzo	2002, 2004, 2006, 2007
Roxanne Rowedder	mezzo	2003, 2004, 2005
Julia Rolwing	soprano	2007, 2008
Joshua Saxon	tenor	2005
David Smith	tenor	2004, 2006, 2007
Jeffrey Springer	tenor	2006
Roy Stevens	heldentenor	2003, 2004
Jason Stearns	baritone	2005, 2006, 2007
Gail Sullivan	soprano	2002, 2003, 2006
Jason Switzer	bass-baritone	2004
Rebecca Teem	soprano	2005, 2007
Kara Shay Thomson	soprano	2008
Thomas Rolf Truhitte	heldentenor	2001, 2002
Carolyn Whisnant	soprano	2003
Jennifer Wilson	soprano	2001, 2004
Laura Zuiderveen	mezzo soprano	2000, 2001

sing major roles at Bayreuth for fourteen consecutive years.

“Both Ms. Lear and Mr. Stewart have left us extensive award-winning discographies. In addition to *Lulu*, Ms. Lear is particularly noted for her portrait of Pamina in *Die Zauberflöte* and Marschallin in *Der Rosenkavalier*. Mr. Stewart’s performances as Hans Sachs with Rafael Kubelik, and as

Wotan in the historic von Karajan *Ring* recording, are a permanent record of Wagner singing at the highest level.

“In retirement from star-quality careers on the opera and concert stage, Thomas Stewart and Evelyn Lear, husband and wife, are passing on the wisdom underlying their artistry to a new generation of singers. ...What is emerging is the maturing to the

status of Wagnerian singers, something one attains, if ever, only with considerable physical and artistic development.”

Tim Smith, *The Baltimore Sun*, May 7, 2002, wrote: Lear and Stewart “know good Wagner singing when they see it. ...They help identify, mentor and promote singers who show promise as Wagnerians.” The 4th Concert “...offered a tantalizing notion that a new vanguard of Wagnerians just might be in the offing.”

Mark Estren, *The Washington Post*, June 23, 2006, wrote: “There is no finer tribute to a teacher than the success of his students. The richness and depth of the Wagner performances at the German Embassy on Friday night showed that bass-baritone Thomas Stewart was clearly an inspirational teacher. The concert was a memorial to Stewart, who died last month, and a tribute to his wife of 51 years, Evelyn Lear...”

### The Emerging Singers Program: Achieving Our Mission, Making an Impact

#### Selected Reviews

The emerging singers are making an impact in the opera world, most especially in the singing of Wagner. With the coaching and career guidance of Thomas Stewart and Evelyn Lear, the participants have performed

at important opera houses throughout the world, including Bayreuth (Amanda Mace), the Valencia *Ring* (Jennifer Wilson), the



Rebecca Teem

Long Beach *Ring* (Nathan Bahny and Deidra Palmour Gorton), New York City Opera (Jennifer Roderer, Paul Mow), and Spoleto (Thomas Rolf Truhitte). The Society’s most recent success is Rebecca Teem, who sang Brünnhilde in the Lübeck, Germany *Ring* in summer, 2008.

Below are selected reviews from the international press.

“Jennifer Wilson suddenly burst onto the international opera scene by jumping in for Jane Eaglen as Brünnhilde in Wagner’s



Jennifer Wilson

*Götterdämmerung*, at the Lyric Opera of Chicago, just a day after singing the same character in a rehearsal of *Die Walküre*. Artistry aside, this is a stunning athletic feat. Ms. Wilson not only sang the killer leading role of the five-hour *Götterdämmerung*, she also sang it so



Evelyn Lear with Betty Bullock at the piano rehearse singers for one of the Emerging Singers Concerts.

well, with a huge, beautiful sound and dramatic nuance, that she brought down the house.” Anne Midgette, *New York Times*

“Jennifer Wilson, as Senta, showed that beautiful singing was her top priority. This *Dutchman* marked a Cinderella WNO debut for Wilson, returning to a stage where she sang in the chorus for six seasons before embarking on what is shaping up to be a very nice international career. The buzz is deserved...she sings with a creamy, lyrical sound...” Anne Midgette, *The Washington Post*

“La soprano dramática Americana Jennifer Wilson, a Brunhilda del año pasado, regresa con una voz aun mas madura y un criterio musical mas denso para bordar con el



Jason Stearns

tenor las escena conclusiva.” *La Nueva España*, Valencia  
“Jason Stearns ... one had to admire his firm, wide ranging baritone, not to mention his steadfast bravado.” Martin Bernheimer, *Financial Times*, re: Metropolitan Opera’s *La Gioconda*.

“...Jason Stearns ...possesses a vocal instrument of uncommon presence — a discernible tinge of star quality, if you will. Stearns dominated the opening night performance.” Robert Battey, *The Washington Post*

“Moments of pleasure crop up in strange places. Jason Stearns, as the Philistine High Priest, has a dark and sparkly instrument, all velvety evil.” Lawrence Johnson, *Miami Herald*



Julia Rolwing



Corey Bix



Ryan Kinsella

“Sopranos Julia Rolwing and Valerie Bernhardt, along with tenor Corey Bix and baritone Ryan Kinsella sang, and all of them did so superbly... Rolwing had all the spacious



The 10th ESP Concert, the German Embassy (May 2005) Left to right: Bass-baritone Charles Robert Austin, Thomas Stewart, Soprano Rebecca Teem, Soprano Dianne Barton, Baritone Nathan Bahny, Evelyn Lear, Bass Pavel Izbedsky, Tenor Joshua Saxon and Baritone Daniel Brenna.

exuberance and vocal flexibility needed for Wagner's Elizabeth in *Tannhäuser*. Bix delivered a confident, impassioned version of Walther's prize song for *Die Meistersinger* with golden resonance.



Michael Hayes Bryan Register

"Bernhardt has a molten mezzo quality and a lovely high range, and Kinsella responded with sonorous bass tones. Though not listed in the program, Michael Hayes and Bryan Register added some gorgeous, full-bodied Wagner singing to the evening." Cecelia Porter, *The Washington Post*



Nathan Bahny

also got two terrific Brünnhildes — the first, Deidre Palmour

Nathan Bahny and Deidre Palmour Gorton, Long Beach Opera's 2006 *Ring*:

"Albrecht was impressively acted and sung throughout ...by Nathan Bahny. ...We

Gorton (who could very well go on as a Wagnerian) tearing up the stage as a tom-boy and singing with confident beauty." *Opera West*

Opera Theater of Pittsburgh "cast singers who could act and it paid off in the rapport between Wotan (Charles Robert Austin) and Brünnhilde (Deidre Palmour Gorton)." *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

Roy Stevens, heldentenor, at the 24-hour *Ring* in Austria, 2004:

"Roy Stevens war ein wunderbar zynischer Loge" —*Der Standard*

"Roy Stevens macht Loge zur schillernen figur." —*Kronen Zeitung*

"Roy Stevens, ein ausgezeichnete, durchtriebener Loge" —*Wagner Verband Bamberg Kritik* (Germany)

"Die Auffuehrung wurde zudem von ganz hervorragenden Saengerleistungen getragen. Uberragend Roy Stevens." —*Neue Freie Zeitung*



Jeffrey Springer



Paul Mow

Jeffrey Springer was "a sensational Des Grieux, a passionate dramatic tenor with a surprisingly powerful and clear-voiced quality. Jeffrey Springer received the major portion of the evening's applause." *West-deutsche Zeitung*

Paul Mow "Now a regular fixture at the New York City Opera, Mow possesses a plangent lyric tenor with a clarion top. ...Paul Mow is a greatly gifted young singer with a bright future." *Grammophone* magazine



Thomas Rolf Truhitte

Thomas Rolf Truhitte "sings with power, conviction, musicianship and the requisite Wagnerian steeliness. (His) Tristan has a fine, firm tenor voice of considerable heft and amplitude; thankfully, he can sing softly too, and made much of the rapt, ecstatic urgency of the love duet." Tim Page, *The Washington Post*

"Spoleto has a tradition of astute talent spotting, and it produced a Lohengrin in the person of Truhitte. Not since Peter Hofmann's brief and unforgettable prime have I heard this role sung with such grace of voice and phrasing. His tone was unforced in forte passages and his high tessitura in the pianissimo moments was



Gail Sullivan



Amanda Mace

memorable." Michael Kennedy, *The London Sunday Telegraph*

"Gail Sullivan was a magnificent actress and I am eager to hear her again." Eloise Bouye, *San Francisco Classical Voice*

"The American soprano Amanda Mace turned in an outstanding performance as Sieglinde." *Lietuvos Rytas-Vinius*, Lithuania National Opera

As Eva in Bayreuth's 2007 *Die Meistersinger*, "Amanda Mace's sweet-voiced Eva..." —*Bloomberg News*

"Caroline Whisnant has a glorious, all knowing instrument that can deliver rage when betrayed or perversion when tempted. The high point of this performance was at Vanessa's realization that Erika was still alive, the single word 'Yes' repeated unaccompanied in Whisnant's thrilling upper-middle range." *Opera News*

"...The soprano's beautiful young diva displayed every emotion expected of her..."

Whisnant's voice possesses a rich bloom capable of conveying Tosca's volatile personality, combined with expressive gestures." *Opera News*



Caroline Whisnant

least threat to her vocal security." *Opera News*

"Amneris was mezzo-soprano Jennifer Roderer, singing with plush, muscular tone and fierce dramatic instincts.... (She dispatched) a dazzling account of the opera's last act." *The San Francisco Chronicle*



Jennifer Roderer

"...but it is the mezzo-soprano Jennifer Roderer, as the witch, who makes the show come alive; she sings and cackles in equal measure, to delightfully creepy effect." *The New Yorker* on New York City Opera's *Hansel & Gretel*.

"Every bit her match was the mezzo Jennifer Roderer as Susanna's terrified confi-

dante. Roderer's chesty sound and impassioned performance perfectly conveyed this character's hollow dread...." *Opera magazine*

"Charles Robert Austin represented a beautiful discovery in this premier. When expressing his disenchantment and highest pain by Tristan's betrayal, his song resonated with potency and line, and in addition to an apollonian ethos, perfect pitch and moving nobility." *El Nuevo Dia*, San Juan PR



Charles Robert Austin

"The best finding in this concert was Charles Austin who sang Koenig Marke. The graceful voice and the way he sang to express the sadness of the king showed that he has something which stands out in him." Minoru Okamoto, *Grand Opera/Tokyo*

"Charles Robert Austin brought a big, solid, colorfully shaded voice, not to mention a commanding presence, to the role of Hunding." Tim Smith, *Opera News*

"It was dazzling to hear Charles Robert Austin bring so many colors and effects out of his baritone. His singing soars on an underlying power." Daniel Ginsberg, *The Washington Post*

# Musical Programs, Symposia, and Seminars

In addition to the Emerging Singers Program concerts, the Society is an increasingly prominent performing arts organization. It sponsors concerts, symposia, and events that extend knowledge about the music of Richard Wagner.

The Wagner Society inaugurates its autumn season with a concert by Jeffrey Swann. In addition, throughout the year, the Society co-sponsors programs with some of the leading arts organizations in the Washington area, including the Washington National Opera, the Smithsonian Resident Associates Program, the Goethe-Institut, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts.

## Concerts by Jeffrey Swann

The Wagner Society's relationship with Jeffrey Swann, which dates from 2002, is grounded in his artistry, his erudition as an

educator, and his pitch-perfect knowledge of the Wagner canon. This relationship is well founded. Writing in *The New York Times* of July 19, 2008, Allan Kozinn noted: "Lecturing is something performers need to think about seriously before embracing: too much chattiness can try an audience's patience if the musician doesn't have the talent for it or hasn't prepared. Mr. Swann doesn't have that problem ... because his comments, however lengthy, are packed with both obscure and commonplace information and are clearly prepared carefully, even though they give the impression of being off the cuff."

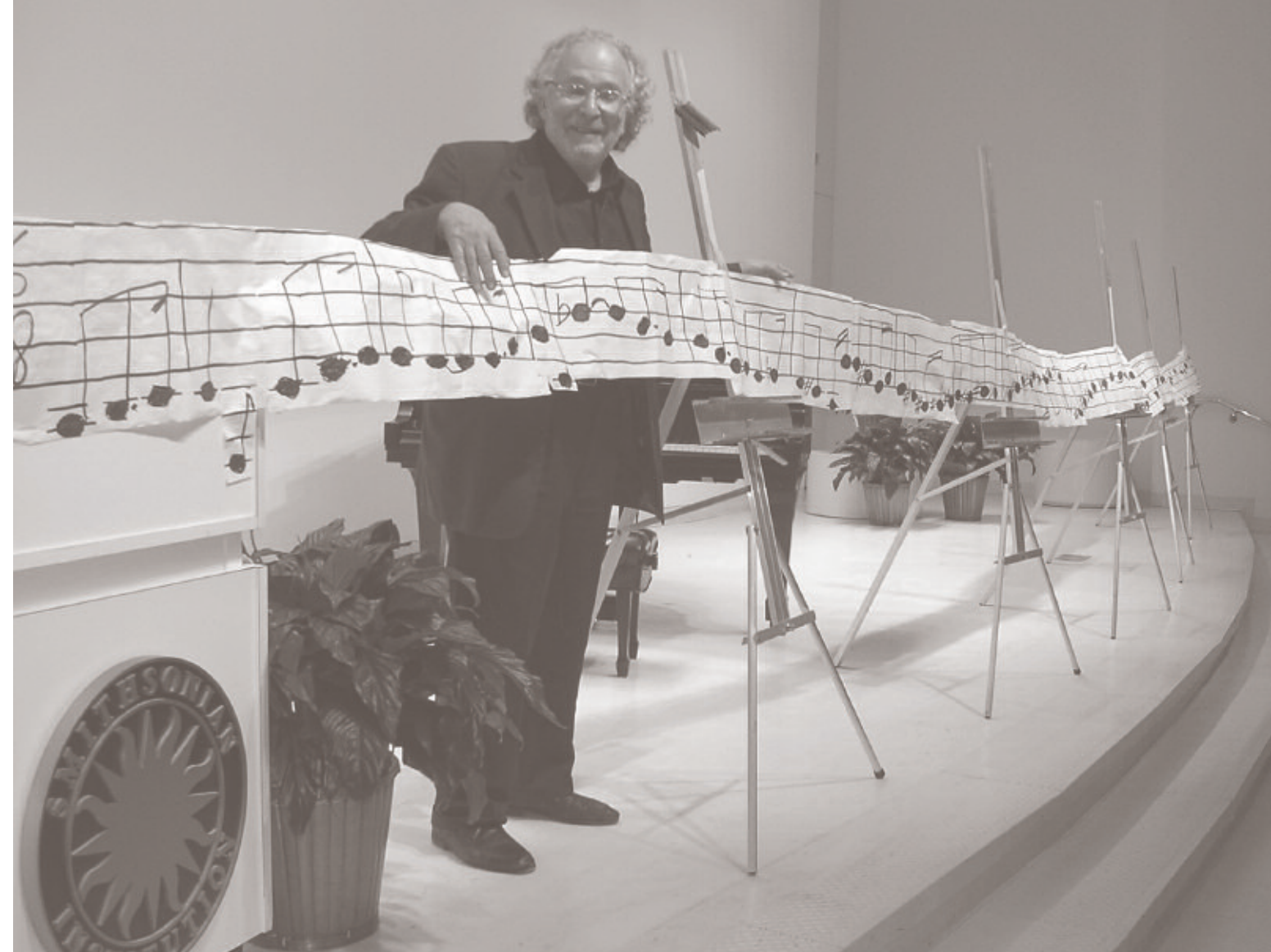
Society members have come to anticipate and appreciate that Jeffrey's brilliant artistry will be accompanied by his equally brilliant explication of the composition. He does not disappoint. Mr. Swann's programs included:

**Tristan and the Mystic Experience:** the influence of Wagner's spirituality and sense of mysticism on his compositions. April 2004 at the German Embassy.

**Major Works Influencing Wagner and Major Works Influenced by Wagner:** Works by Chopin, Liszt, and Berg, and piano transcriptions of Wagner works by Karl Tausig and Jeffrey Swann, Ferocious Busconi, and the Zoess/Swann transcription of the Prelude to *Götterdämmerung*. December, 2005, German Embassy.

**Chopin as the Proto Wagnerian:** the subtle connections between the works of these consummate composers. September 2006 at the German Embassy.

**The Art of Piano Transcription: Intimate Expression of the Grand:** Drawing on works by Mahler, Verdi, Liszt, and transcriptions of Wagner works by Liszt, Friedman, and Swann, Mr. Swann illustrated the challenges of transcribing orchestral arrangements into music for the piano. September 2007, Washington National Opera Recital Hall.



*Tristan und Isolde* Seminar at Smithsonian Institution (2005): The inimitable musicologist and brilliant teacher Maestro Saul Lilienstein explains the Tristan Chord with the help of his self-made teaching aid.

**The World of Nature: Wagner, Schumann, Liszt, Debussy and Messiaen:** Comparing and contrasting the works of Wagner's contemporaries Schumann and Liszt, as well as 20th-century works of Claude Debussy and Olivier Messiaen. September 2008, at the German Embassy.

**Pianist Stefan Mickisch: WSWDC's Inaugural Musical Program:** In 1999, Mr. Mickisch, a Bayreuth lecturer at the time of his performance at the German Embassy,

presented the Society's first musical program, playing his own paraphrases and transcriptions of Wagner's operas, including *Tristan und Isolde*, *Götterdämmerung*, and *Parsifal*.

## Events with Arts Organizations

**Smithsonian Institution Resident Associates Program (RAP)**

**Smithsonian RAP-Wagner Society of Washington DC Symposium: Wagner's Epic Vision** September 19–21, 2003,

moderated by Chairman J. K. Holman

- Keynote Speaker: Speight Jenkins, General Director, Seattle Opera
- Donald Crosby, Professor Emeritus of German, University of Connecticut;
- Iain Scott, Canadian opera commentator and author;
- Saul Lilienstein, musicologist, WNO commentator;
- Carolyn Abbate, Professor of Music, Princeton University;



Jeffrey Swann, internationally renowned pianist, recipient of the Wagner Award, inaugurator of the Society's autumn program seasons.



- Peter Mark, conductor and artistic director, Virginia Opera;
- Winnie Klotz, photographer, Metropolitan Opera;
- Phillip W. Raines, Wagner Society of Washington DC Board Member;
- Christina Scheppelmann, Director of Artistic Operations, Washington National Opera;



Lea McDaniel and Board Member Frederic Harwood, Development Committee Co-Chair, at the *Tristan und Isolde* Seminar.

- Cori Ellison, New York City Opera Dramaturge;
- Jeffrey Buller, (then) Professor of Classics, Mary Baldwin College;

- Thomas Stewart, bass baritone, and Jennifer Wilson, soprano, were interviewed live by Tim Page, music critic, *The Washington Post*;
- The weekend's events were concluded by the 7th Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Concert featuring soprano Caroline Whisnant, tenor Roy Stevens, and baritone Charles Robert Austin. The singers were accompanied by The Friday Morning Music Club Orchestra under the baton of Maestra Sylvia Alimena.

WSWDC-Smithsonian Institution Symposium February 11-12, 2005 was held in connection with Virginia Opera performance of *Tristan und Isolde*, featuring two Emerging Singers Program participants, Thomas Rolf Truhitte in the role of Tristan, and Charles Robert Austin in the role of King Marke. Society members enjoyed a cast dinner party following the performance. WSWDC Chairman Jim Holman moderated the program.

- Carolyn Abbatte, Professor of Music, Princeton University;
- Iain Scott, Canadian opera author and critic;

- Maestro Saul Lilienstein, WNO Commentator;
- Peter Mark, Conductor and Artistic Director, Virginia Opera;
- Professor John de Gaetani, Hofstra University;
- Dean Jeffrey Buller, Florida Atlantic University;
- Winnie Klotz, Metropolitan Opera photographer.

Washington National Opera performance of *Die Walküre* and *The American Ring* directed by Francesca Zambello, 2006

- A Wagner Society-Goethe-Institut joint program with Francesca Zambello and members of the cast at the Institut;
- Lecture for the Society by Saul Lilienstein at The George Washington University Fonger Hall;
- Presentation by Francesca Zambello and cast members to the Society at The George Washington University Fonger Hall;
- Kennedy Center Millennium Stage, lecture by Society Chairman Jim Holman;
- An opening night performance followed by WNO cast dinner at the home of the German ambassador.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor hosted at the Supreme Court an Emerging Singers Recital with soprano Jennifer Wilson and tenor David Smith. In the photo (left to right) Thomas Stewart, Evelyn Lear Justice O'Connor, John O'Connor and Jim Holman.



Washington National Opera presentation of *Der fliegende Holländer* March 2008.

Jennifer Wilson, a participant in the Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program and long time Washington National Opera chorus member, made a triumphant WNO debut in the role of Senta.

- Chairman Holman presented a lecture titled "Wagner's Great Leap Forward" at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Millennium Stage;
- Musicologist and Wagner Award recipient Saul Lilienstein presented an Opera Insights lecture at the Kennedy Center Opera House;
- A cast dinner with members of the Wagner Society after the matinee performance was organized by WSWDC Board Member Betty Byrne and Office Manager Jackie Rosen.

WSWDC-Goethe-Institut: *The Wagner Orchestra*, May 2008.

A daylong program featuring three leading authorities:

- Jeffrey Swann described the instrumentation in Wagner's major works.
- Saul Lilienstein, a concert trombonist, described the musical styles of the era that influenced Wagner's orchestrations.

- Maestro James Ross, conductor of the University of Maryland Symphony Orchestra, discussed the challenges of conducting a Wagner orchestra. Maestro Ross, in addition to playing a Wagner tuba, presented a lecture-demonstration on conducting, with active audience participation.

WNO "Generation O" *What's Opera, Doc, Discussion/Reception at The Goethe-Institut*, 2007

Washington National Opera has targeted young professionals, ages 18-35, as "Generation O," with special programs and ticket offers that help build audience interest. One such program occurred in 2007 at the Goethe-Institut. A showing of the Warner Brothers cartoon *What's Opera Doc?* that features the *Ride of the Valkyries* was followed by a reception and informal question and answer between the "O's" and Board members Nancy O'Hara, R G Head, Betty Byrne and Aury Fernandez.

The National Museum of Women in the Arts, 2008.

The Museum sponsored four programs under the theme "Women in Opera: What Were They Thinking?" The symposia explored the idea of opera as drama where nasty men are doing despicable things that affect the lives of good women.

Betty Byrne of the WSWDC organized the presentation focused on Senta of *Der fliegende Holländer*, featuring Evelyn Lear and Jennifer Wilson, who was singing Senta in the WNO production.

The U.S. Supreme Court Recital hosted by Justice O'Connor, 2004

As a gesture of encouragement and support for the Society, Justice Sandra Day O'Connor joined Chairman and Mrs. Holman in hosting a recital and reception at the U.S. Supreme Court for Society members, and friends and employees of the Court. Emerging Singers Program participants Jennifer Wilson and David Smith sang before the reception. Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer, both subscription holders of the WNO, also attended the recital.

1998–2008

# A Chronology of Monthly Programs

Since the founding of the Wagner Society of Washington DC (WSWDC) in 1998, monthly meetings have featured some of the world's leading Wagner scholars, musicologists, writers, and musicians. Presentations open to the public were usually held in Funger Hall at The George Washington University and included lectures, films, videos, recordings, discussions, and other activities supporting the Society's mission: "the study and enjoyment of Wagner's art."

The early programs offered by the Society were held in a small back room of the Middle C Music Store. Donald Crosby, professor of German at the University of Connecticut, spoke to the first gathering on "The Literary Sources of *Tristan und Isolde*." The world's greatest authority on Wagner performances in Russia between 1840 and 1991, Rosamund Bartlett, discussed "Wagner on the Russian Stage" for the second meeting, and our future chairman James K. Holman spoke on "Wagner's *Ring*: Listening to Leitmotifs" at the third. Below is a summary of 72 programs that followed these beginnings.

## The 2007–2008 Season

Paul Schofield: "Parsifal as the Fifth Ring Opera" Wagner scholar and Buddhist monk asked if Parsifal is the re-born Siegfried in *The Ring*, thus reflecting Wagner's belief in Buddhism.

Jeffrey Buller: "Die Meistersinger: A Dream No Longer a Dream" A man on a journey and a stranger coming to town are the eternal two stories entwined in Wagner's only "official" comedy.

Jessica Quillin: "Wagner, Shelley, and Musico-Poetics of Lyric Drama" Cambridge scholar showed Wagner's musico-literary inheritance from British Romantic poets, particularly Shelley.

Donald Arthur: "Hans Hotter — An Operatic Giant" Opera singer and author described his experiences working with the famous German bass-baritone on his memoirs.

## The 2006–2007 Season

Alfred Turco: "Nobody's Perfect—George Bernard Shaw as Wagnerite" Wesleyan professor described Shaw as Wagner interpreter and advocate in 1890 publication *The Perfect Wagnerite*.

David Levin: "Four Directors, One Ring" *New Opera Quarterly* editor discussed a project that had multiple stage directors and production teams working on one new production of *The Ring*.

Thomas May: "Visualizing *Die Walküre*" Author of *Decoding Wagner* showed how different designers and directors, such as Appia, Eisenstein, and Wieland Wagner envisioned *Die Walküre*.

Donald Crosby: "Wagner in Switzerland: Genius in Residence" Wagner's productive "Switzerland years" included the Wesendoncks, the von Bülow, Semper, and Nietzsche.

Tim Page: "The Artistry of Thomas Stewart" *Washington Post* music critic and Evelyn Lear led memorial tribute to Thomas Stewart featuring recordings of his Wotan and other great roles.

Donald Collup: "The Life and First New York Career of Astrid Varnay" Filmmaker commented on the documentary he produced about this legendary soprano.

Robert Bailey: "The Valkyries and Their Infamous Ride" NYU Professor of Music showed how "The Ride of the Valkyries" relates thematically to Act III of Wagner's opera *Die Walküre*.

Saul Lilienstein: "Appropriation of Wagner: Germany in 1930s" Smithsonian lecturer told how Wagner's music was caught up in artistic currents and political developments of 1930s.

## The 2005–2006 Season

Carolyn Abbate: "New Perspectives on *The Flying Dutchman*" Harvard Professor of Music showed connections between opera and film music, illustrating use of Wagner themes in cinema.

John Edward Niles: "Carriers of the Wagner Flame" Artistic Director for the Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia described composers Humperdinck, Pfitzner, and others as Wagner's musical successors.

Simon Williams: "Coming to Terms with History: Nietzsche and *The Ring*" Popular author of *Richard Wagner and Festival Theater* explored relationship between Nietzsche and *The Ring*.

Irwin Shainman: "Wagner and Strauss Songs: Women and Love" Kennedy Center lecturer compared Wagner's *Wesendonck Lieder* to Richard Strauss' *Four Last Songs*.

Alan Walker: "Liszt as Wagner's Cultural Ambassador" Canadian music professor spoke about the help Liszt gave to Wagner in the 1860s that Wagner himself acknowledged.

Phillip W. Raines: "Magical Moments and Video Moments in Wagner" WSWDC Board member shared personal "magical moments" from a video collection of famous productions.

Iain Scott: "Inspiration of Italy on Richard Wagner" Canadian opera expert showed how travel in Italy inspired Klingsor's garden, the E-flat chord of *Das Rheingold*, and other ideas.

## The 2004–2005 Season

William Berger: "Wagner Without Fear" National Public Radio author of *Verdi with a Vengeance* shared the secrets addressed in his book *Wagner Without Fear*.

Dana Gioia: "Can Poetry Matter?—Role of Poetry in Popular Culture" Poet and National Endowment for the Arts Chairman

shared thoughts on poetry, music, literature and the arts.

Phillip W. Raines: "The Music Drama in Which Nothing Happens" WSWDC Board member described difficulties in staging *Tristan und Isolde* which is a great drama but is quite static.

Simon Morrison: "Tchaikovsky's Miracle" Princeton author told why, only seven years after Wagner's death, Tchaikovsky's *Sleeping Beauty* was the antithesis of Wagner's music teachings.

Paul Fryer: "Wagner in Silent Film" British expert on opera and silent-films presented a lecture-screening of the 1912 silent film *Life of Richard Wagner* with a new orchestral score.

Oswald George Bauer: "False Prophet: *Le Prophète* and Denunciation" Bayreuth insider proposed that Wagner's reaction against Meyerbeer's opera motivated him to write *The Ring*.

John DiGaetani: "Wagner and Suicide" Author of *Richard Wagner and the Modern British Novel* gave background for title of his latest book, *Wagner and Suicide*.

## The 2003–2004 Season

Irmgard Wagner: "Where is Wagner's Faust?" American Goethe Society president explained why Wagner never composed music to Goethe's *Faust* despite parallels in their dramas.

Edward R. Haymes: "The Two Rings: Tolkien's and Wagner's" Author of *Heroic Legends of the North* showed commonalities between themes in Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* and Wagner's *Ring*.

James McCourt: "Beware of Wagner Heroines!" Author of the 1971 cult classic *Mawrdew Czgowchrwz* explained why some Wagner heroines are out to kill the men they seem to love.

Jeffrey Buller, "Siegfreid: The Wurm Turns" Classics and opera expert explained three

perspectives on Siegfried and why the dragon Fafner says “you don’t know who you are.”

**Nicholas Vazsonyi: “The Wagner Industry and Audience of the Future”** German professor asserted Wagner planned a market for his unique musical works and “artwork of the future.”

**Wagner Night at the Movies! *The Golden Ring***, BBC documentary about making the first complete *Ring* (Solti) was shown, also a film featuring Wagner satirist Anna Russell.

**Cori Ellison: “A Ride with the Valkyries”** NY City Opera dramaturg explained what Valkyries are and why they and Brünnhilde are imprinted on our culture.

#### *The 2002–2003 Season*

**John Pohanka: “Wagner, the Mystic”** WSWDC Board member explained that the mystical reaction listeners may have to Wagner’s music is an intended result of Wagner’s metaphysics.

**Carol Berger: “At the Heart of *Die Walküre* — Forgiveness vs. Redemption”** Musicologist spoke about philosophical and psychological aspects of *Die Walküre*.

**Jeffrey Buller: “Sleep in the *Ring*”** Classics professor and author of *Classically Romantic: Classical Form in Wagner’s Ring* spoke about sleep as metaphorical and philosophical principle.

**Carolyn Abbate: “*Die Walküre* and the Dream of the Secret”** Princeton professor of music examined how Wagner used the theme of secret knowledge in plots and as a musical device.

**Phillip W. Raines: “A Productional Ride through *Die Walküre*”** WSWDC Board member illustrated the difficulties in staging *Die Walküre*, using numerous video examples.

**Saul Lilienstein: “*Die Walküre* on the Mind of Mann”** Narrator of Washington National Opera Commentaries, discussed

*Die Walküre*’s influence on German novelist Thomas Mann.

**Evelyn Lear: “An Evening with Evelyn Lear”** Using video and recordings, legendary *Lulu* soprano shared her career highlights and favorite memories of famous friends.

#### *The 2001–2002 Season*

**Winnie Klotz: “Photographer at the Metropolitan Opera”** An official photographer for the Met presented an illustrated lecture about singers and conductors performing Wagner.

**Carol Berger: “Dialectics in *Die Meistersinger* — Sacred Rituals”** Musicologist explored the philosophical, psychological, and artistic network forming this complex Wagner drama.

**Donald Crosby: “*Die Meistersinger* in Historical Contexts”** German professor described 16th century guilds of master singers, contemporaries of Luther, Dürer, and the historical Hans Sachs.

**Elise Kirk: “Wagner’s Influence on American Composers”** *American Opera* author explained Wagner’s influence on the aesthetics, dramaturgy, and musical ideology of American composers.

**Phillip W. Raines: “Human Dramatic Elements in *Die Meistersinger*”** WSWDC Board member illustrated how Wagner’s words and music explain opera’s characters and their relationships.

**Iain Scott: “Baptism of the Morning Dream — *Die Meistersinger* Quintet”** Canadian expert on Wagner shared what makes *Die Meistersinger* his favorite opera.

#### *The 2000–2001 Season*

**Paul Fryer: “Opera Singers and Silent Film”** At Library of Congress, British expert on opera and silent films showed the 1904 Edison version of *Parsifal*, the first film of a Wagner opera.

**Saul Lilienstein: “Uncommon Resonance: Wagner’s Long Reach”** Wagner and his music influenced composition and literature in Europe and America in the post-Wagner generation.

**Heinz Fricke: “Conducting the Works of Richard Wagner”** Conductor of the Washington National Opera talked about conducting WNO’s production of *Parsifal* and other Wagner operas.

**James K. Holman: “Wagner: The Power of Two”** Wagner Society Chairman and author of *Wagner’s Ring: A Listener’s Companion and Concordance*, shared insights into Wagner’s music.

**Frank Ruppert: “Schubert and Wagner — A Better Mystery of Life”** Schubert scholar spoke on the relationship of Schubert and Wagner, showing similarities that suggest common inspiration.

**Penelope Turing: “*Parsifal* at Bayreuth”** British music critic and historian of Bayreuth Festival shared her knowledge about the changing production styles for *Parsifal*.

**Janice Rosen: Backstage Tours** In cooperation with Washington National Opera, WSWCD Steering Committee member hosted backstage tours for *Parsifal* at the Kennedy Center.

**Jonathan Lewsey: “*Parsifal* Insights”** British singer, director, author, and lecturer shared his perspectives on *Parsifal* gained from his career in opera.

**Phillip W. Raines: “*Parsifal*: A Visual Journey”** WSWDC Board member showed three visual approaches to *Parsifal* with scenes from Met and Bayreuth productions and the Syberburg movie.

**Lou Santacroce: “*Parsifal*: A Christian’s View”** National Public Radio host asked if Nietzsche was right in describing Wagner as sinking “helpless and broken, before the Christian cross.”

*Washington Post* music critic Tim Page with Professor Donald Crosby and Bonnie Becker. Mr. Page wrote and narrated a memorial program inspired by Jim Holman titled “The Artistry of Thomas Stewart.” In 1998, Professor Crosby presented the Society’s very first lecture, at the Middle C Music Store on Wisconsin Avenue.



#### *The 1999–2000 Season*

**Henry-Louis de La Grange: “Mahler, Champion and Disciple of Wagner”** French musicologist and Mahler biographer analyzed the relationship between works of Mahler and Wagner.

**Paul Heise: “*The Ring des Nibelungen*”** Wagner scholar viewed *The Ring* as allegory for the real world vs. imagination, and conflict of objective science vs. artistic and religious thought.

**Saul Lilienstein: “*Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* — A Fresh Look”** Popular lecturer for WNO “Opera Insights” series provided new perspectives on a familiar masterpiece.

**Phillip W. Raines: “*Tannhäuser* — Video and Discussion Program”** Video scenes provided a comparison of Munich’s avant garde production with the Met’s resolutely traditional production.

**Iain Scott: “*Tannhäuser*”** Canadian expert on Wagner analyzed the opera’s structure, demonstrating his points with audio excerpts.

**Phillip W. Raines: The Richard Burton Wagner Film** WSWDC Board member

showed the entire Tony Palmer miniseries about Richard Wagner, starring Richard Burton.

**Jeannie Williams: “Jon Vickers — A Hero’s Life”** Author of the first biography of Jon Vickers discussed legends and facts about the great 20th century heldentenor.

**Andrew Gray: “Wagner Says NO!”** Translator of Richard Wagner’s autobiography *Mein Leben* defended Wagner against “continuing distortions and sheer nonsense ... in public forms.”

**Speight Jenkins: “Wagner in Seattle”** Quarter century General Director of the Seattle Opera shared his experiences with and ideas about producing *The Ring* every four years.

**Thomas Stewart: “An Evening with Thomas Stewart”** Renowned bass-baritone and co-founder of the Emerging Singers Program shared his experiences singing his favorite opera roles.

#### *The 1998–99 Season*

**William L. Berger: “Wagner and Architecture”** Author of *Wagner Without Fear*

explained the relationship between architecture and Wagner’s art.

**Marie Travis: “*Siegfried*, the Fritz Lang Classic Movie”** George Washington University professor presented the classic film by Fritz Lang.

**Joan Grimbert: “Misconceptions of the Medieval Tristan Legend”** The *Liebestod* theme is found in medieval legend but modern lovers have different ideas of forbidden love and death.

**Monte Stone: “*The Ring Disc*”** Creator of the *Ring Disc*, a computerized hyperlinked guide to *The Ring*, demonstrated interactive overlays of analyses, scores, and audio recordings.

**Martin Feinstein: “Reminiscences of Wagner Performances”** Former General Director of the Washington National Opera reminisced about his experiences producing Wagner operas.

**Penelope Turing: “Wolfgang Wagner’s Productions in New Bayreuth”** Author of *The New Bayreuth* and *Hans Hotter* outlined changes at Bayreuth during the Wolfgang Wagner era.

# Wagner in der Wildnis

The inspiration for the *Wagner in der Wildnis* weekend retreats came directly from Richard Wagner and his Bayreuth Festival. It was Wagner's idea that a village in the bucolic countryside — not a bustling big city with all its distractions — is the best setting for the contemplative study and enjoyment of his art. And so it is in rural West Virginia, near the town of Berkeley Springs.

The term “*Wildnis*” in the title of this program is double-headed. While a direct translation of the German language term is “wilderness” referring to the setting for the event, the term has a wider meaning as inspired by member Ilse Niedermeyer who first

proposed a retreat to explore the challenging outer reaches of Wagner's musical, dramatic and psychological genius.

Eight *Wildnis* weekend retreats have been staged since 2001. Simon Williams, Professor of Dramatic Art at the University of

California Santa Barbara and author of *Richard Wagner and Festival Theater* has been a lecturer since 2001. In 2002 he was joined by the concert pianist and Wagnerian scholar Jeffrey Swann, who added the musical dimension to the program. Together they became the Society's “dream team,” so called for the depth of understanding and sheer enjoyment they have brought to the retreats.

The flier announcing the 2008 program for this members-only event noted: “We arrive at Wagner's *Tannhäuser*, this year building on the success of our seven previous *Wildnis* weekends including *The Ring des Nibelungen: Das Rheingold* (2001), *Die Walküre* (2002), *Siegfried* (2003), *Götterdämmerung* (2004), *Die Meistersinger* (2005), *Parsifal* (2006), and *Lohengrin* (2007). The weekend includes lecture and discussion sessions in the meeting rooms, and collegial conversations in the corridors and the restaurant. Saturday night live involves the reading of the libretto in English by *Wildnis* participants, in assigned roles, a highlight of the weekend.”

The lectures are videographed by Tim Scanlon or Mark Golden, and the DVDs are available to participants.

To give a sense of the weekend, the topics addressed in the 2008 *Tannhäuser* program are as follows:

The cast for the Saturday night libretto reading for *Die Meistersinger* (June 2005) (left to right) Maria Prytula (Apprentices), Phil Pulaski (Meisersinger), Jean Lauderdale (Magdalena), Victoria Cordova (David), Jeffrey Swann (orchestra at the piano!), Betty Byrne (director), Bob Misbin (Beckmesser), Carole Hoover (Eva), Simon Williams (Hans Sachs and lecturer on drama), R G Head (Walter), Henry Bardach (Hans Sachs Act 1), Jack Sulser (Polgner), and Mark Golden (Kothner).



- *Tannhäuser, Wagner's Contest of Song* —Jim Holman
- *Why Did Wagner Make So Many Revisions of Tannhäuser?* —Jeffrey Swann
- *What Did Wagner Revise in Tannhäuser?* —Jeffrey Swann
- *Music of Opposing Poles — How Tannhäuser Anticipates Lohengrin, Tristan and Parsifal* —Jeffrey Swann
- *Wagner, Biedermeier, and the Crisis of Romantic Sexuality* —Simon Williams
- *Tannhäuser: The Modern Orpheus* —Simon Williams
- *Tannhäuser Staged Across the Ages* —Simon Williams.

The weekend closed with Lynne Lambert's discussion of topics for *Wagner in der Wildnis* 2009, Betty Byrne's briefing on the WNO upcoming *Ring*, Frederic Harwood's demonstration of *The Ring Disc*, and his briefing on the WSWDC vision and plans. As with previous *Wildnis* weekends, Aury Fernandez served as moderator.

*The Saturday Night Live Libretto Reading*  
Starting as a semi-staged “production,” the libretto reading has evolved into one of the weekend's most popular events. Anyone wanting a role gets one, but the hard-driving director (Ms. Byrne) assigns roles from

among the volunteers. The background, setting of the scene, and between the acts musical interludes are provided by Jeffrey Swann. Simon Williams gets the male lead role. There have been many light-hearted moments: Tim Scanlon using a wash bucket to produce a very effective Fafner dragon and Melody Bunting (Mrs. Swann), playing Siegfried, getting into the spirit by bursting into German as the young Siegfried enters with the bear. The audience is very much a part of the reading, and there were even a few tears as the final chorus, “The grace of God to the sinner is given, his soul shall live with the angels in Heaven,” ends *Tannhäuser*.



*Wagner in der Wildnis VII* (2007) *Lohengrin* (left to right) Board members and speakers: Lynne Lambert, Jeffrey Swann, Melody Bunting (Mrs. Swann), Jim Holman, Simon Williams, Aury Fernandez, Nancy O'Hara, Betty Byrne, R G Head and Office Manager Jackie Rosen (missing from photo: Board members Bill Pastor and Guillermo Schultz).

# The Bayreuth Festival as a Religious Pilgrimage

In his classical history of the Bayreuth Festival, Frederic Spotts mentions that generations of Wagnerians treat a trip to the event as a religious pilgrimage.

When, in 1998, the Steering Committee that led to the creation of the Wagner Society set forth its goals, procuring Bayreuth tickets was highest on the list of desires and lowest on the list of expectations. As Spotts reported in his book, by the early 1990s nearly half a million people were applying for the 58,000 available tickets.

The pilgrimage to Bayreuth is the dream of many a Wagnerian. The opera house with its matchless acoustics, designed and built by Richard Wagner, along with the quality of the playing and singing, the educational and social events held in conjunction with the event, and the camaraderie among attendees, makes Bayreuth an unforgettable experience. For one entire week, participants are immersed in Wagner.

On the opening night of the third cycle, The Wagner Society of Southern California

organizes a dinner party for the cast and attendees. Also for the third cycle, the Wagner Society of New York sponsors a series of lectures, often by Jeffrey Swann or Simon Williams, on the ensuing evening's program. Other Wagner societies from throughout Europe sponsor lectures in German, French, and sometimes Italian. After each evening's performance, many from the North American societies gather for dinner and more conversation. By the end of the day, attendees who started with the morning lecture have been immersed in Wagner for 14 exhilarating hours.

The Society's annual ticket allotment came about as the result of coincidence, boldness, and good luck. Wolfgang Wagner and his wife Gudrun visited Washington in February 1999 for the Washington National Opera's performance of *Tristan und Isolde*.

Although the Society was but six-months old, with about 50 members, the Society invited Wolfgang to give a talk, which he did for an audience of over 130 persons in the Kennedy Center atrium. In a further act of daring, the Board, including Jim Holman, Barb Karn, R G Head, and Aury Fernandez invited Wolfgang and Gudrun to lunch, which, surprisingly, they accepted. Barb, R G and Aury, seated with Gudrun at one table, suggested a ticket allotment, and Gudrun assured them that the Society would get tickets at some indeterminate future date. Wolfgang, seated with Jim at another table, agreed, for in a few weeks an application arrived from Bayreuth, and shortly after that, the allotment.

The tickets are offered to our members according to established criteria. No member may attend more than once every three years if any qualified applicant has not previously received tickets. Points are awarded based upon length of membership, attendance at Society events, the extent of the applicant's volunteer activity for the Society, and the applicant's membership category. A selection committee prioritizes applicants based upon the criteria. In all, more than 140 members have had the Bayreuth experience.



Some of the members of the Bayreuth Class of 2006 (front row left to right) Peggy Jones, Janet Fernandez, Betty Byrne, Cathleen Fuller, Cathy and Richard Soderquist, Aury Fernandez and Richard Fuller. (Back row) R G Head, Carole Hoover, Bonnie Becker, Donald Crosby, Lynne Lambert, Sally Lund, Frederic Harwood and Lea McDaniel.



Yoko (far left) and Board member Tom Arthur (center) hosted in Munich a dinner in winter 2008 with friends in honor of Bayreuth Festival chief consultant Klaus Schultz (far right) and singer Robert Dean Smith (center right) with Wagner Society members from Germany and Switzerland.



Aury Fernandez with Gudrun Wagner

# Ten Years of Membership Growth

The Society is proud of its 500-plus members, making The Wagner Society of Washington DC the second largest Wagner Society in the United States.

Members actively support the Society's events, which have increased substantially in number and quality over the past ten years. A core of about 300 members participates in six or more events per year. The membership renewal rate is above 80%, indicating a high degree of satisfaction with the Society's programs and activities. Two examples: The Wildnis weekend in West Virginia started in 2001 with twenty-five participants; by 2008, attendance grew to more than 70 with a waiting list. The Emerging Singers concerts regularly play to capacity audiences, and consistently earn high praise from Washington's music critics.

Financial support from members rose even more rapidly than membership itself, as members, recognizing the quality of the Society's programs, renew their memberships at steadily higher levels of support. Currently, about 35% of members belong at the \$150 Patron level and above, and the Society seeks to increase that to 45% within two years.

Until 2005, the top membership category was Sponsor at \$500 a year. In 2005, the Golden Ring level at \$1,000 a year per couple was inaugurated, and there are currently 36 Golden Ring members. In 2007, the Meistersinger Guild was formed, at \$5,000 a year per couple, primarily to in-



James Morris and Thomas Stewart greet long-time members Cathy and Dick Soderquist at the Third Gala Benefit (June 2005)

crease support for a more ambitious Emerging Singers Program. The Guild currently has 10 members, a number that the Society hopes to double in two years. In addition, for many years, generous contributions from Jim Holman, John Pohanka, Guillermo Schultz, and Frederic Harwood have ensured the financial stability of the Society.

Who are the Society's members? As in many arts groups, the majority is over the age of fifty. More members are employed by or retired from the Department of State than any other institution, about 12 percent of all members. The membership also includes several prominent Washington philanthropists, physicians, university professors,

generals and admirals, research scientists, and a federal judge.

Membership is promoted by flyers, the newsletter, and inserts in programs of Washington arts organizations, including all performances of Wagner operas at Washington National Opera and at other east coast venues. A program sponsored with the Smithsonian Resident Associates brought in 130 new members in 2003. A priority for the future is extending outreach, including to younger audiences and, especially, to Washington's opera-going public in preparation for the Washington National Opera's upcoming production of Wagner's *The Ring*.



The youth demographic meets The Dutchman, portrayed here by Tim Scanlon, at the Third Gala Benefit. Students from the George Washington University Law School have created their own "Junior Wagner Society" and take part regularly in Society programs.



Evelyn Lear extends Wagner's appeal to young members, appearing here with Peter and Midori St. Onge at an Emerging Singers concert.

# Publications

The Society advances the knowledge and appreciation of Wagner's music by sponsoring and archiving scholarly presentations and supporting scholarly publications.

**Videotape archives of programs and concerts:** The Society videotapes, for archival and reference purposes, the monthly presentations at The George Washington University and the lectures and discussions at the annual *Wagner in der Wildnis* weekend retreats.

**Professional-quality CDs of the Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Programs** are provided to the Society's members and to the singers, who use the CDs to advance their careers. In addition, the Society sends CDs to agents and to the artistic directors of a number of opera companies in the U.S. and Europe to promote ESP singers.

*The Wagner Journal*, Barry Millington's quarterly dedicated to the art of Richard

Wagner, is partially supported by the Society, which serves as the US distributor and funds the Journal's Website.

*Wagner on the Potomac*, a twice-yearly newsletter, and the annual *The Wagner Singer* newsletter, keep members, other societies, and the press updated on the Society's upcoming concerts and lectures. Since their inception, both have been edited by Aury Fernandez.

**Scholarship:** Society members are actively involved in the scholarship concerning the music of Richard Wagner. Chairman J K Holman has authored *Wagner's Ring: A Listener's Companion and Concordance* (Amadeus Press, Portland OR, 1996) and is the editor

and annotator of *Wagner Moments, A Celebration of Favorite Wagner Experiences* (Amadeus Press, Portland OR, 2007). John Pohanka's upcoming book, *Wagner the Mystic*, is expanded from a presentation he made to the Society in 2003.

Press releases, publicity notices and fliers are regularly sent to a mailing list of over 1400, plus 150 arts organizations and electronic and print media outlets for the Society's public events, including the Emerging Singers Programs, monthly presentations at The George Washington University, and the Jeffrey Swann recitals. As a result of these efforts, the Society's concerts regularly sell to capacity, and they are regularly reviewed by the Washington media, most prominently *The Washington Post*. Fliers are drafted and distributed by Betty Byrne with the help of Board members. Media relations and publicity are managed by Tom Arthur, who initially carried out this function under the tutelage of Aury Fernandez.

**The Society Website** is an up-to-date resource for upcoming programs and is an archive of past activities and events.

**The Wagner Singer**  
November 2007

**Chairman's Greeting:** We are pleased to present this fourth annual issue of *The Wagner Singer*, the latest publication of our beloved Wagner on the Potomac community. Join us for our 2007 GPCR Study on December 1 and other programs!

**Reminder: The 2007**  
December 1, 2007

**Chairman's Greeting:** As we approach our 20th Anniversary Celebration on November 6, I am on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Wagner Society who would like to thank you for your support. It is our wish to have you participate in the 20th Anniversary Celebration on the 20th Anniversary of the Society's founding. As in our tradition with the Wagner Society, we encourage you to participate in the 20th Anniversary year - 2007 - by reporting with the names of subject singers from the Wagner Guild to the Society. And as usual, our 20th Anniversary issue will be our friends to join us for the day!

**The 15th Emerging Singers Concert**  
November 5, 2007 at the German Embassy

**Chairman's Greeting:** As we approach our 20th Anniversary Celebration on November 6, I am on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Wagner Society who would like to thank you for your support. It is our wish to have you participate in the 20th Anniversary Celebration on the 20th Anniversary of the Society's founding. As in our tradition with the Wagner Society, we encourage you to participate in the 20th Anniversary year - 2007 - by reporting with the names of subject singers from the Wagner Guild to the Society. And as usual, our 20th Anniversary issue will be our friends to join us for the day!

**Wagner on the Potomac**  
For the study and enjoyment of Wagner's Art

**Chairman's Greeting:** As we approach our 20th Anniversary Celebration on November 6, I am on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Wagner Society who would like to thank you for your support. It is our wish to have you participate in the 20th Anniversary Celebration on the 20th Anniversary of the Society's founding. As in our tradition with the Wagner Society, we encourage you to participate in the 20th Anniversary year - 2007 - by reporting with the names of subject singers from the Wagner Guild to the Society. And as usual, our 20th Anniversary issue will be our friends to join us for the day!

**The 15th Emerging Singers Concert**  
November 5, 2007 at the German Embassy

**Chairman's Greeting:** As we approach our 20th Anniversary Celebration on November 6, I am on behalf of the Board of Directors and the Wagner Society who would like to thank you for your support. It is our wish to have you participate in the 20th Anniversary Celebration on the 20th Anniversary of the Society's founding. As in our tradition with the Wagner Society, we encourage you to participate in the 20th Anniversary year - 2007 - by reporting with the names of subject singers from the Wagner Guild to the Society. And as usual, our 20th Anniversary issue will be our friends to join us for the day!

**2007 GPCR Study**  
ESP Singers on World Stage  
Selected ESP Participants

**The Wagner Society of Washington DC**

Events Emerging Singers Publications Videos Press Resources

**An Evening with Jeffrey Swann**  
"The World of Wagner: Schumann, Liszt, Debussy & Mendelssohn"  
Friday, September 19, 2008, 7:30 at the German Embassy

**17th Emerging Singers Program**  
Thursday, October 23, 2008, at the German Embassy

**Wagner Society 20th Anniversary Celebration!**  
Thursday, November 6, 2008, at the German Embassy

**John Scott Lecture**  
Thursday, December 4, 2008, at George Washington University

**Wagner in der Wildnis**  
The Wagner Society's annual weekend in West Virginia to focus on Wagner's opera.  
Friday - Sunday, June 5 - 7, 2009

**Bayreuth Festival**  
August 2009, in Bayreuth, Germany

**Willkommen!**  
Welcome to the finest growing society for the study and enjoyment of Wagner's Art...

Home | Join | Contact | Site Map

**WAGNER MOMENTS**  
A Celebration of Favorite Wagner Experiences

C. S. LEWIS • BEVERLY SILLS • W. H. AUDEN  
T. S. ELIOT • G. B. SHAW • MARYLYN HORNE  
JAMES JOYCE • THOMAS MANN  
FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE • MARCEL PROUST • GEORG SOLTI  
VIRGINIA WOOLF • PLACIDO DOMINGO  
\*\*\* AND OTHERS \*\*\*  
EDITED & ANNOTATED BY  
J. K. HOLMAN

**The Wagner Journal**

Volume 1  
Number 2

Price: £13.00

# Board of Directors

The Board of Directors was established in 1998, succeeding the Steering Committee that initially explored the feasibility of a Society dedicated to the art and music of Richard Wagner.

The Board was conceived as a working body, with each member fulfilling specific responsibilities. Jim Holman plans programming, Hank Gutman attends to legal affairs, Tom Arthur drafts press releases, Betty Byrne does fliers, Lynne Lambert attends to membership matters, Nancy O'Hara serves as *Webmeisterin*, Bill Pastor maintains the data base, Frederic Harwood chairs the Development Committee with Guillermo Schultz, and to date President Emeritus Aury Fernandez has edited the *Wagner on the Potomac* newsletter, and *The Wagner Singer*. Jackie Rosen is Office Manager.

Former Board members have contributed much to the growth of the Society. Barbara Karn created the initial member database, the Website, and secured, along with R G Head and Aury Fernandez, the

Bayreuth tickets. R G Head, with Carol Hoover, has organized and managed the annual banquets and awards ceremonies. The late Phillip W. Raines, a noted Wagner archivist and popular lecturer, recorded and archived the Society's monthly lectures and ESP concerts.

## The Board of Directors Chairman, J. K. Holman



Jim Holman became the first Chairman of the Wagner Society upon its organization in 1998. He is the author of the award-winning *Wagner's*

*Ring: A Listener's Companion and Concordance* (Amadeus Press, 1996), and the editor of *Wagner Moments* (Amadeus, 2007). He has written numerous articles and lectured frequently on the works of Richard Wagner. He is a past Board member of the Washington National Opera and the American Friends of the English National Opera. He retired in 2002 as a Managing Director of The Carlyle Group, based in Washington. He is a graduate of Princeton (BA) and Harvard (MA) Universities.

## Directors

### Thomas L. Arthur



A member of the WSWDC Board since 1999, Tom has been active in Washington's musical scene since his retirement from the Office of Management and Budget in the Executive Office of the President, where he worked on Presidential budgets for over 20 years. He currently chairs the endowment committee of the Board of The Vocal Arts Society, and is a volunteer for Opera Lafayette for which his wife, Yoko, serves as president and chief operating officer. Upon graduation from the

University of Texas at Austin, Tom joined the Peace Corps, first as a volunteer in Thailand and then as associate director in South Korea. He holds master's degrees from the Florida State University and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He manages press releases for the Society.

### Betty Byrne



A member of the WSWDC Board since 2000, Betty manages publicity except for press releases, is the libretto reading director at *Wildnis*, serves on the Bayreuth selection committee, and is the liaison with the Goethe-Institut and the Washington National Opera. She helped establish a partnership program between the WNO and the DC public schools, and she has developed and presented programs to thousands of elementary and high school students in the Washington area. During her professional career she worked in the domestic and international communications industry. She holds a degree in Statistics from Stanford University and has studied music with Alan Curtis and Margaret Mason.

### Harry L. Gutman



The Principal in Charge of Federal Tax Legislative and Regulatory Services and Director of the Tax Governance Institute at KPMG LLP in Washington, Hank currently serves as the Vice President-Finance and Treasurer of the Washington National Opera. He is a graduate of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton. He received a B.A. in Jurisprudence from University College, Oxford University, and his LLB from Harvard Law School. A founding member of the Wagner Society of Washington, he oversees the Society's tax filings and regulatory documentation.

### Frederic Harwood



Former executive director of the Association of Clinical Research Professionals, Washington DC, Frederic was co-founder of Barnett Interna-

tional, an international management consulting firm in the pharmaceutical industry. He has co-owned a nightclub in Washington, which led to his founding the DC Nightlife Association and becoming active in the city's legislative process. Co-author of *Just Promoted* (McGraw Hill, 1989), he holds a PhD from the University of Minnesota, and was on the faculty of Temple University in Philadelphia for 15 years. He co-chairs the Society's Development Committee, and is co-editor of the Tenth Annual Report.

### Lynne Lambert



A recently retired Foreign Service Officer who continues to do consulting for the Department of State on counter terrorism, Lynne is the recipient of numerous awards, including the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award. As a Foreign Service Officer, she served in Budapest, London, Brussels, Paris, Athens, Tehran, and Washington. She makes her home in the District, where she is a court-appointed children's advocate. She is a graduate of Smith College and Johns Hopkins University. Serving on the Board



since 2001, she manages membership for the Society and is on the Bayreuth selection committee.

#### John Edward Niles



Since 1981 John Edward Niles has been the artistic director/conductor of the Opera Theater of Northern Virginia. He has also conducted

for the Ithaca (NY) Opera Association, the Bel Canto Opera of New York City, and Virginia Opera, was invited to conduct at the 50th anniversary memorial in Krakow, and has served as musical director of the Europe-Fest in Prague. He is a graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University, and holds a Masters in Music from the University of Cincinnati. He serves the Society as program director of the Evelyn Lear and Thomas Stewart Emerging Singers Program

#### Nancy O'Hara

Elected to the Board in 2006, Nancy serves as the Society's Webmeisterin. A graduate of UC, Berkeley with a Masters degree in Economics from UCLA, Nancy has worked with computer software for the Congressional Budget Office and the Social Security Administration. She participated in



research at UC, Santa Barbara with the ARPA Net, precursor to the Internet. Private-sector work includes Boeing and Bank of America. Nancy is a member of the Vocal Arts Society, Opera Lafayette, and The Guild for Washington Concert Opera.

#### Bill Pastor



Manager of W S W D C's membership and mailing database, Bill was elected to the Board in 2003. A manager in the quality improvement department at Children's Hospital in Washington, DC, he has received several awards including the 2005 Race for Results for his work in reducing infections in surgical procedures. He has published papers in professional health care journals and presented at national conferences. Bill also has served on Boards of local chapters of The American College of Healthcare Executives and the National Association of Healthcare Quality. He has given talks at *Wagner in der*

*Wildnis* and the Society's Bayreuth briefings

research at UC, Santa Barbara with the ARPA Net, precursor to the Internet. Private-sector work includes Boeing and Bank of America. Nancy is a member of the Vocal Arts Society, Opera Lafayette, and The Guild for Washington Concert Opera.

#### John J. Pohanka



Director of the Wagner Society since its founding in 1998, he concurrently serves as Chairman of the Board of Washington National Opera and as a member of its executive committee. A native of Washington, he is a graduate of Princeton University. His company, Pohanka Automotive Group, founded by his father in 1919, is one of the nation's largest and most successful networks of automotive dealerships. John is a former President of the National Automobile Dealers Association, and in 1972 he founded and was the first chairman of the National Institute for Automotive Service Excellence (ASE). John has lectured on topics including *Wagner the Mystic*, delivered to the Society in May 2003. That topic is the subject of a book he is in the process of completing.

#### Guillermo Schultz

Appointed to the Board in 2007, Guillermo worked for an affiliate of the World Bank for 20 years, before founding International Investment Management Corporation, a Washington-based investment



counseling firm. A graduate of the National University of Mexico, he holds an MBA from Stanford University and a PhD in Finance from Harvard. He serves on the Board of the Washington National Opera, the Youth Orchestra of the Americas, and belongs to the Friends of Bayreuth and Friends of Salzburg. He co-chairs the Society's Development Committee.

#### President Emeritus

##### Aurelius (Aury) Fernandez



Aury Fernandez organized the Steering Committee that led to the creation of the Wagner Society of Washington DC in 1998, and served as President until August 2008. His home office was the "secretariat" where the Society's telephone, fax, and files were maintained. He has edited the Society's newsletters, *The Wagner Singer* and *Wagner on the Potomac*, maintained extensive video and print archives of Society activities, and has been the Society's liaison with the Bayreuth Fes-

tival. For eight years he has been the inspiration, primary organizer, and moderator of *Wagner in der Wildnis*.

Aury is a retired (USIA) Foreign Service Officer with postings in Santiago (Chile), Bucharest, Vienna, London, and Paris. In retirement he served on the Board of Governors of the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA). He was the founding Secretary and Executive Director of the International Media Fund. He holds master's degrees in international affairs from the Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and the Tufts University Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. He is the co-editor of the Tenth Anniversary Report with Frederic Harwood.

#### Office Manager Jacqueline Rosen



As office manager, Jackie is responsible for financial accounts, preparing budgets and financial reports, and managing arrangements for musical and educational programs. For the past ten years she has served as Volunteer Manager for the WNO, responsible for scheduling and supervising 130 volunteers, who work about 12,000 hours a year. She came to

Washington DC in the mid 70s, from Santiago, Chile, and graduated from George Mason University with a degree in Business Administration and Computer Science. She was President of the Fairfax Public Schools PTA, and she worked as a Parent Liaison with the Spanish-speaking population.

#### In Memoriam: Phillip W. Raines



In 1998, after delivering the second lecture in the WSWDC's monthly series, Phil was elected to the Board. In all, he made seven presentations to the Society, and lectured to many other opera groups. He provided the audio support for the Society's lectures and for the early ESP concerts. Born in Munich of a Japanese mother and American father, at age 17 he made the first of several pilgrimages to Bayreuth, the last being 2006 with WSWDC. A graduate of the University of Maryland, for 30 years he was a Speech Therapist for Montgomery County (MD) Schools. Phil loved both Wagner and baseball. He passed away peacefully on July 3, 2008 listening to his favorite recording of Wagner's *Siegfried*. At his memorial service mourners sang a chorus of "Take me out to the ball game."



Wolfgang Wagner met with selected members of the first WSWDC Board of Directors at the Kennedy Center after his discussion program with Society members in February 1999. Left to right: Jeffrey Roames, Aury Fernandez, Janice Rosen, Wolfgang Wagner, R G Head, John Green, Jim Holman and John Edward Niles.



Michel Krisel, Assitant to Placido Domingo and Society Chairman Jim Holman.



Cecilia and Guillermo Schultz with singer Tom Truhitte at the cast party after the Virginia Opera *Tristan und Isolde* performance in 2005.

Others who have served on the WSWDC Board are:



**Barbara Karn**

As a member of the Steering Committee that preceded the Board, and as a Board member Barbara designed the Society's membership database, and helped attain the Bayreuth allotment. A PhD in biology, she leads the EPA's research grants program for nanotechnologies, and is lead editor of *Nanotechnology and the Environment* (Oxford University Press, 2005).



**R G Head**

A member of the Steering Committee that preceded the Board, R G served on the Board until 2008. With his wife Carole Hoover, he managed the Society's banquets, and helped with Awards. A Brigadier General in the USAF(Ret), he holds a PhD from Syracuse University. He and Carol were 2008 recipients of the San Diego Opera Champions of Opera Award.



**Bill Kugler**

A member of the Board for three years, Bill operated an opera tour group, Kugler Tours, for 20 years. Fluent in Russian, he worked as an intelligence analyst and researcher. He holds a Masters degree from the Russian Institute at Columbia University, and was a Fulbright Scholar in Berlin.

Other members who served on the Steering Committee and the first Board include Janice Rosen, Justin Swain, and the late John Green. An active and productive role on the first Board was played by Jeffrey Roames, then registrar at the School of Medicine of The George Washington University. His talented wife, Myra Feldman, designed the Society's first logo.



John and Lynne Pohanka with James Morris.

# Premium Members 1998–2008

**MEISTERSINGER GUILD**

Frederic Harwood & Lea McDaniel  
J K & Diana Holman  
Christine Hunter  
John & Lynn Pohanka  
Guillermo & Cecilia Schultz  
The Cafritz Foundation

**GOLDEN RING**

Thomas & Yoko Arthur  
Thomas C. Brennan  
Betty Byrne  
Antonio Civit & Chelo Andreu  
Aurelius & Janet Fernandez  
Kathleen & Richard Fuller  
Mark & Annette Golden  
Walter & Brent Goo  
Harry Gutman  
R G Head & Carole Hoover  
Louis & Barbara Hering  
Lynne Lambert  
Marc & Jacqueline Leland  
John Edward Niles  
Nancy O'Hara  
Bill & Cathy Pastor  
Phillip W. Raines & Martha E. Kern  
Maika Siebeck  
Richard Soderquist & Cathy Noogard  
Thomas & Diane Stanley  
Mark L. Villamar & Esther Milsted  
Frederic Wolff & Catherine Chura Wolff

**SPONSORS**

Donald R. Allen  
Jim Allison  
Walter Arnheim & Marsha Rehns  
Philip Baten  
Carol Berger  
Alfred & Patricia Boyd Jr.  
David & Miriam Browning  
Stephen Case & Margaret Ayers  
Donald Crosby & Bonnie Becker  
Daniel D'Aniello  
John E. Dixon  
Colin Dunham  
Kathryn Faith  
Kenneth R. Feinberg  
Heinz Fricke  
Jose Garcia & Norman I. Miller  
William H. Greene  
Todd Hasson  
Cragg Hines  
Flynn & Daniel Holman  
Paul & Nancy Ignatius  
Carol & Terry Ireland  
Margaret C. Jones  
Dr. Barbara Karn  
Alfred G. Kelley  
Albert Lauber & Craig Hoffman  
Eliot & Blaine Marshall  
William & Nancy McConnell  
Janet C. Meyer  
Michael D. Moore  
Etsuro K. Motoyama & Linda Nardone  
Ilse Niedermeyer  
Kent & Ruth Obee  
Richard & Kathleen Riether  
Janice Rosen  
Francois Roy  
Barbara & Keith Severin  
Dan Sherman  
Harold Silkwood  
Richard & Marie Sippel  
Vito & Patricia Spitaleri  
Edward & Cindy Stegemann

William & Karen Tell, Jr  
Giselle Theberge & John Jeppson  
Lawrence & Margot Young

**DONORS**

Peter R. Agnew  
Jean Arnold  
Henry & Cynthia Bardach  
Daniel H. Bearss  
Robin A. Berrington  
Beatrice Bobotek  
Chris Boutlier & Aaron Flynn  
Maija Budow  
Jessie W. Bynum & Delores H. Kucha  
Kenneth W. Carter  
H. Roberts Coward  
Linda Crompton  
Jere & Jacqueline Daum  
Mark Davenport  
William & Mary Drew  
Carolyn Duignan & Milan Valuch  
Joy Dunkerley  
Robin Elwood  
James & Marta Evans  
Steven Gathman  
Benno Gerson  
John A. Graham  
John & Rita Grunwald  
Jack Harwood & Elizabeth Miles  
Basil & Anne Henderson, Jr  
Joan H. Jackson  
William Jegl & Linda Carducci  
Henry & Helen Justi  
Alexandra Kauka  
Barton A. Keiser  
Patricia & Paul Kirkham  
Stephen Kitchen  
J. Martin Lebowitz  
Jan & Elizabeth Lodal  
Peter Longstreth  
Samuel J. Lowe  
Sally Lund  
Howard Lynd  
William Malone  
Dan Marsh  
William Martin & Maria L. Wagner  
Susan M. McConnell  
Ingrid & Lew Meyer  
Robert I. Misbin  
Ruth Mitchell  
Allen & Myrna Mondzac  
Irene S. Morgan  
Gerald Perman  
Maureen Polsby & Alessandra Marc  
Kenneth Quandt  
James & Henrietta Randolph  
Louise Austin Remmey  
Akos & Kinga Revesz  
Jeff Roames & Myra Feldman  
Randall Roe  
Robert & Suzanne Rooney  
Jacqueline Rosen  
Joachim Roski & Victor Perea  
Mark J. Rozell  
Philip & Ann Ruppe  
Michael & Martha Rushlow  
David Ryan  
Betty Sams  
Lili-Charlotte Sarnoff  
Peter & Midori St. Onge  
Pedro Taborga  
Oliver Transue  
Adele Waggaman  
Dorothy Wexler  
William Zeile & Maria Yang

**PATRON**

Joseph W. Abell  
Judith Andrews Agard  
Ali Al-Daftari  
William Allman  
Florence Ashby & Laird Anderson  
Claudia & Jessica Assmann  
Roger E. Avebe & Shirley D. Shockey  
Merribel Ayres  
Adele Baker  
Kenneth Ballen  
David & Nancy Barbour  
Douglas Barnert & John Mainz  
Lucile Beaver  
Virginia Martino Bland  
Richard Bleiberg  
Donn W. Block  
Sheila Bloom  
Marilyn Sue Bogner  
Roy W. Boyce  
Arturo Brillembourg  
Ivy Broder  
Tom Brumbach  
John & Polli Brunelli  
Donnie L. Bryant  
Carlos Camargo  
Scott Carlton  
Timothy Carlton  
Christopher K. Chapin  
Donald Claggett & Charlotte Hollister  
Nelson T. Clapp  
Victoria Cordova  
Gandolfo & Frances Corradino  
Robert & Jamie Craft, Jr.  
Anne-Marie Crawford  
William Crocker  
Karon N. Cullen  
George W. Darden  
Oliver Dib  
Anne & Edward Dillon  
Earl & Rita Donaldson  
Darrell Rico Doss  
Paul du Quenoy  
William R. Eckhof  
Hilda & Fred Ederer  
Lee M. Edwards  
Charles Elliott  
Larry L. Ellis  
Vernona Elms  
John Feather  
Marcia Feinstein  
Charles & Theresa Feldmayer  
Jay Fellows  
Ann Fenton & Dennis Moore  
Mark & Lauren Fernandez  
Jonathan Fine  
Sherman & Marty Finger  
Russell Fisher  
Jerry & Thomas Floyd  
Jerry & Janet Fodor  
Herbert A. Fogel  
Louis & Marie-H Forget  
Keith & Catharine Fretz  
Robert Galbraith  
Barbara Gauntt  
Marilyn Wong Gleysteen, Ph.D  
Elizabeth Graves  
J.F. Greene  
Anne Hackl  
Joyce & Charles Hagel-Silverman  
Cynthia Haggard & Georges Rey  
Daniel Harmon  
Hermann Helgert  
Anne G. Hodge  
Dorothy Holman  
Marcel & Ann Humber  
Thomas Illgen

Robert Inglis  
Mark & Anastasia Joelson  
Carolyn Johnson  
Kenneth B. Johnston  
Paul Kearney  
Leslie Kiefer  
Jean-Blaise Kikudi  
Elise K. Kirk  
Elizabeth Kocmur  
Richard W. Krimm  
William & Joan Kugler  
Jean & Jules Lauderdale  
Michael Lauver  
Robert Lawrence  
Thomas Leahy  
Claire Lent  
Arthur Carl LeVan  
Daniel & Luna Levinson  
Laurence & Kiyomi Lueck  
Daniel & Maeva Marcus  
Nina Matheson  
David Mayger  
Mary Lynne McElroy  
Stephen & Tara McKenna  
Maurice & Ann Meneguzzi  
Richard & Suzanne Morton  
Raymond Oneson & Francine Decary  
Frank Pierce  
David Pozorski & Anna Romanski  
Larry & Harriet Pressler  
Courtney & Joseph Price  
Richard J. Price & Trent Tucker  
Philip & Susan Pulaski  
Ralph H. Redford  
John S. Rodgers  
Bruce E. Rosenblum & Lori Laitman  
Gerald B. Rosenstein  
Frank Ruppert  
Thelma M. Santee  
Peter Scherer  
Jan Schlotthus  
Edward T. Schnoor  
Marcus Sgro  
Jane Sloat  
Frank & Jane Snyder  
Michael Southwick  
Paul & Mimi Spielberg  
Allan Starkey  
Cita Stelzer  
John Stocker  
Larry Sullivan  
Jack Sulser & Sally Greer  
William H. Taft IV  
Julia Thompson  
Robert Torres  
Jason & Kelly Trumbour  
Ingrid Valtin-Kern  
Wendell J. Van Lare  
David G. Van Ormer  
Fernando & Stephanie van Reigersberg  
James & Elinor Vaughter  
David Vespa  
Mary Jo Veverka  
Gesa & Klaus Vogt  
Anastasios Vrenios  
Charles & Charlotte Walker  
John & Frances Webb  
Ralph & Katheryne West  
Adelaide & Duncan Whitaker  
Michael Wiedman  
H. Lawrence Wiggins  
Dennis Winstead & Edwin Foster  
Marlene Wojahn  
Kenneth & Dorothy Woodcock  
Jennifer Choate Woods  
Leslie D. Zupan



## The Wagner Society of Washington DC

P.O. Box 58213  
Washington, DC 20037

Tel. 703-370-1923  
[www.wagner-dc.org](http://www.wagner-dc.org)