



The Wagner Society of Ireland

Founded 2002

President: Dr. Alexander Anissimov, Conductor



Newsletter

December 2010

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

Dear Member,

How quickly this year has passed. It has been an eventful year for our members with our first organized trip abroad to Berlin, and the first of our seminars on Wagner's operas. I am delighted both initiatives are continuing and that another trip is planned for next year to see the Ring cycle in Karlsruhe. Hopefully this will become an annual event.

The Committee goes to considerable trouble organizing events and it has been very satisfying for us to see increased attendance at our talks this year. Next February we will continue our exploration of Wagner's works and I am delighted to announce that Derek Watson will continue to lead us. This time we shall explore Tannhäuser.

Sadly, given the demise of Opera Ireland, the plans to perform the Ring cycle over the coming years have ended. I would like to acknowledge here the performances of Wagner's opera by Opera Ireland/DGOS over the 60 years of their existence. Though never as numerous as members of the Society would have liked, they did at least serve to give Irish audiences some taste of Wagner and their last full staging of a full Wagner work – *The Flying Dutchman* – was an excellent performance. It is also worth noting that the Wotan of the Rheingold performance last winter is the Wotan of the Walküre opening La Scala this year. (that performance is being broadcast to the Stillorgan Ormonde cinema live on the 7th December).

The application form for the Bayreuth ballot is attached at the end of the Newsletter. The Committee is trying to be as fair as possible and to ensure that those who have never been to Bayreuth have preference. This year there is no Ring Cycle but five of Wagner's other works will be performed. In order to allow as many members as possible to attend, members will initially be allocated two operas and we will try to facilitate members' preferences.

As we send this newsletter I read with regret of the death of Peter Hofmann. He was one of the first Wagner tenors I saw and remains in my memory as a wonderful Parsifal and Lohengrin. May he rest in peace.

Lastly may I, on behalf of all the Committee, wish you a very Happy Christmas and we look forward to seeing you at talks next year and hopefully at our Christmas gathering.

Kind regards,
Anthony Linehan,
Chairman

SOCIETY PROGRAMME OF EVENTS Winter 2010/Spring 2011

We have had three lively, well-attended and fascinating lectures since we left the summer behind, presented by John Allen, Anthony Linehan and Ian Fox. More lie in store, so do check through the events listed below, and mark any that appeal to you in your diaries. Two further talks are in the process of being confirmed and we will let you know as soon as arrangements are complete. We will continue to send reminders a week or so before each event.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Time</u>
Thursday, December 16th	Christmas Event and Bayreuth Draw	United Arts Club 3, Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2	8.00 p.m.
Sunday, January 9th	Special Concert Sponsored by the Wagner Society: Exploring links between Wagner Meyerbeer and Stanford: Paul McNamara, tenor; Colette McGahon, mezzo-soprano; and Philip Mayers, piano. A number of places will be reserved for Wagner Society members – please let the Committee know if you wish to attend. These free recitals always fill the hall and people take their seats well in advance.	Dublin City Gallery - The Hugh Lane, Parnell Square, Dublin 1.	12.00 noon
Saturday, February 5th	Day-long event: Talk by Derek Watson on Tannhäuser – followed by optional dinner and DVD viewing of the opera.	The Herbert Park Hotel	9.30 a.m.
Wednesday, February 23rd	Annual General Meeting (A DVD on Melchior's career will also be shown.)	United Arts Club 3, Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2	8.00 p.m.
Thursday, March 24th	Room booked: Talk details to be confirmed.	United Arts Club 3, Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2	8.00 p.m.
April 20th – 25th	Group Trip to Ring Cycle produced by Denis Krief	Germany: Karlsruhe	
Thursday April 28th	Room booked: Talk details to be confirmed.	United Arts Club 3, Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2	8.00 p.m.
Thursday May 19th	“Recordings of Wagner's Parsifal.” A personal appraisal by our Honorary Vice President Christopher McQuaid.	United Arts Club 3, Upper Fitzwilliam Street Dublin 2	8.00 p.m.

TRIPS

Karlsruhe Easter 2011 (20, 21, 23, 25 April)

The trip to Karlsruhe to attend the Ring Cycle has attracted fifteen travelers. Many thanks to Michael Marr who co-ordinated the seat reservations and shared his extensive research on travelling and accommodation arrangements with all those travelling.

For those entering the Bayreuth Ballot, Michael has offered some interesting advice about reducing travel expenses there too. See the next section of the Newsletter.

Wroclaw 2 – 5 June 2011

<http://www.richard-wagner-verband.de/english/index.html>

The meeting of the Richard Wagner Verband in Lower Silesia is an opportunity to meet members from other Societies and also a chance to see a historically interesting part of Poland. The agenda for the days includes a number of organised tours. Opera performances include Tosca in three separate appropriate locations, Parsifal and King Roger by Karol Szymanowski. There are also chamber concerts as part of the various tours. Please see the website for details which are in English. One can also book on the website. While we would ask that members who are interested in attending book online, do let the Committee know if you will be there so we can organise an Irish group.

NEWS, REVIEWS and MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Many of our Members travel regularly abroad and will have their own favourite sources of advice and information. The following useful tips are offered by intrepid traveller and Committee Member, Michael Marr.

Going to Bayreuth need not be expensive!

Maybe you've thought about applying for tickets for Bayreuth but been put off by thoughts of the cost. But it need not be expensive! The key is to **plan ahead**:

- An easy way to get there is to fly to Frankfurt and take the train to Bayreuth.
- Book the flight early. Ryanair fly to Frankfurt Hahn and often have sales for as little as €10 each way, including taxes. Check the website months in advance!
- My preference though is to fly Aer Lingus to Frankfurt Airport – they also often have sales and you should be able to get a flight for around €50 each way including taxes. Keep an eye on the website.
- Or maybe check one of the ticket sales sites, such as www.lastminute.ie or www.skyscanner.ie to see if you can find a bargain.
- There is a train station in Frankfurt Airport and the train will take you to Bayreuth, with possibly one or two changes of train *en route*. The train fare if bought on the day would be around €69 each way. But if you book a few weeks ahead online (<http://www.deutschebahn.com/site/bahn/en/start.html>) you can get the ticket for only

€29 each way! Bookings can be made up to 90 days in advance. Remember to book from Frankfurt Airport, **not** Frankfurt Hbf (main railway station)

- You can stay in luxury in Bayreuth for €150+ per night (possibly with a 4-day minimum stay). Or you can stay in a Gasthaus (usually a restaurant with some rooms for rent) for a lot less – one can get a nice clean room for less than €30/night, within walking distance of the Festspielhaus. Usually included in the price is a great breakfast which can keep you going for most of the day! You'll find details on websites such as www.hotels.com etc. Or you can just google “gasthaus Bayreuth” or “gasthof Bayreuth”, find the right place and book directly by phone or email. They don't usually require payment in advance but do expect you to turn up.

So it need NOT be expensive and maybe you'll decide to try your luck and put your name in the hat for the ticket ballot.

Maybe I'll see you there (if my name comes out of the hat too)!

Michael Marr

FILM PRODUCTIONS

Don't forget to keep an eye on upcoming live performances from the Metropolitan Opera in New York as well as other great opera houses. These are proving very popular in various cinemas and generally need to be booked well in advance. (Until recently at least, the Swan Centre in Rathmines has been an exception and easier to get into at short notice. However, there are reports that the sound system is not as good as some others.)

NEWSLETTER

Circulation and Interim Updates

The Newsletter is circulated by email unless members do not have an email address, in which case it is sent by ordinary post. Updates or reminders are also sent by email from time to time. The Committee would urge all members to check the Society Website: www.wagnersociety.ie on a regular basis to check for updates. The Committee will also try to update Members who don't have email addresses by texting mobile phones or leaving a phone message, but this is a less convenient and reliable method given the way the Committee is set up and operates.

Contributions

In addition to seeking contributions from members, the Committee welcomes contributions members themselves might like to send us, whether brief reports on performances or recordings of Wagner's works, or thoughts on aspects of his work that they would like to share with other members of the Society. Contributions can be sent by email to: info@wagnersociety.ie

Talks

If any Member has a fascination with an aspect of Wagner's work which they would like to share with the Society some Thursday evening in the United Arts Club, do let a Committee member know. We would be delighted to hear from you.

BAYREUTH BALLOT – Reminder of Current Rules

The Chairman has recently applied for tickets for the 2011 season, which does not include a Ring cycle. Whatever tickets we receive will be drawn for in the Ballot on 16th December 2010.

All applicants for, and recipients of, Bayreuth tickets must be members of the Wagner Society. This means that a winning member cannot take two tickets to share with a non-member. Everyone needs to sign up people they would like to share the Bayreuth experience with as members of the Wagner Society. To allow members to travel together it will be possible to apply for tickets as a joint entry into the Ballot. Then only one entry will be made for both members but if drawn both can go (assuming there are two places left).

All applicants and recipients should be members in good standing at 31st August 2010

The ballot will take place in three rounds:

Round 1 – open only to those applicants who have never been to Bayreuth with the Society before.

Round 2 – applicants who were not in Bayreuth with the Society last year are added to the mix.

Round 3 – if tickets still remain available – open to all Members.

The Application Form is overleaf.

BAYREUTH BALLOT APPLICATION FORM

In addition to the general Rules governing the Ballot, the following longstanding Rules also apply:

1. If a member is allocated tickets in the Ballot and then, for whatever reason, is unable to attend, *the tickets must be returned to the Wagner Society of Ireland.*
 2. Those who are allocated tickets *must pay for them within one week* of the Ballot, which will take place at the buffet supper in the United Arts Club, on 16th December 2010.
-

I should like to apply for tickets for the 2011 Festspiele in Bayreuth.

I have / have not attended Bayreuth with the Society before. (Tick whichever applies.)

I did / did not attend Bayreuth with the Society last year. (Tick whichever applies.)

My preference, in order is for the following:

Tannhäuser and/or Tristan und Isolde
 and/or Meistersinger and/or Parsifal and/or Lohengrin

(Please number any of these which you wish to attend in order of preference and put an X in any which you do NOT wish to attend.)*

I wish to apply for ONE ticket / TWO (joint) tickets for my chosen performances. (Tick whichever applies.)

I shall / shall not attend the meeting on 16th December 2010, and stay for supper afterwards. (Tick whichever applies.)

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

TELEPHONE..... EMAIL

NAME OF JOINT APPLICANT, (if two tickets requested).....

Please return by post, ideally to arrive by 13th December, to: Chairman, Wagner Society of Ireland, 20, Belmont Green, Galloping Green, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin. However, given the risk of continuing inclement weather, applications will be accepted up to the evening of 16th.

* On the evening of the Ballot, we will try to fulfil members' first choice but it is possible that the first choice may not be available, so please make your preferences as clear as possible.