



SEATTLE OPERA  
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

## NEWS

### Wagner's *Ring* And Seattle Opera Basic Facts

#### Wagner's *Ring*

Richard Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* was first performed in August 1876 in Bayreuth. The four-opera production, created to be performed within a week, spins a complicated tale of power, greed, corruption, love, and renewal inspired by Norse mythology.

#### Wagner's *Ring* at Seattle Opera

Seattle Opera has created three different productions of Wagner's *Ring*.

- **In 1975**, under Seattle Opera General Director Glynn Ross, the company **became the first North American company** to perform the *Ring* as Wagner wanted it: four operas in one week in a festival atmosphere. The production was performed every summer at Seattle Opera from 1975 to 1984.
- **In 1984**, newly appointed Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins commissioned a **strikingly different, post-modern *Ring* directed by François Rochaix, designed by Robert Israel, and lighted by Joan Sullivan**. The second *Ring* production was first introduced in the summer of 1985 with performances of *Die Walküre*. In 1986, the complete cycle debuted. The production was staged again in 1987, 1991, and 1995 (all three cycles sold out).
- For the 21st century, Jenkins commissioned a **third *Ring* production, one that emphasized nature** and closely followed the composer's own vision for the *Ring*.
- **Directed by Stephen Wadsworth, designed by Thomas Lynch (sets) and Martin Pakledinaz (costumes), with lighting by Peter Kaczorowski**, Seattle Opera's third production of the *Ring* **previewed in 2000** with performances of *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*. **The complete cycle was presented in 2001**. This *Ring* production proved to be the **company's most successful to date, selling out more than a year in advance**. It also garnered a **2001 EDDY (Entertainment Design) award** for the designers, Seattle Opera Scenic Studios, and Seattle Opera Costume Shop.

#### 2001 *Ring* Facts and Figures

Seattle Opera's *Ring*—offering the region's only month-long opera festival—is widely recognized as the premier cultural event in the Northwest. Seattle Opera's *Ring* strongly appeals both to the local population and to tourists. The estimated total impact of the 2001 *Ring* on the local economy exceeded \$38 million.

- **More than 36,000 people attended the three cycles of the 2001 *Ring* production**. Approximately **56% of *Ring* ticketholders came from outside King County**, including visitors from 47 states (not represented were South Dakota, Vermont, and West Virginia) and 19 countries.
- The **complete cycle was broadcast** in 2001 via Classical KING FM, which reaches listeners throughout the Pacific Northwest region.
- Besides attending the operas, **nearly 20,000 people attended educational events related to the *Ring***, including day-long symposia, lectures, discussions, and even a week-long

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“Experience the *Ring*. ”

- **Seattle Opera began fundraising for the 2001 *Ring* several years in advance of the production.** The Seattle Opera development team raised more than \$10 million. The **2001 *Ring* donors came from 3,900 individual households, representing 48 states and 19 countries**, as well as from major corporations and arts funds.
- **Fundraising for the 2005 *Ring* began in Fall 2003.** By November 2003, the development team had raised more than half of their goal of \$2 million.
- Seattle Opera’s third *Ring* production will be repeated in **August 2005, 2009, and 2013.**
- **The economic impact of Seattle Opera’s third *Ring* is estimated to reach \$150 million by 2013.** This figure includes the the impact of production-related jobs as well as tourism dollars. **By 2013**, this *Ring* production is expected by **have reached 425,000 people** through audiences at performances (estimated at 78,340) and listeners to *Ring* radio broadcasts (approximately 360,000 in the Pacific Northwest).

### **More on the *Ring* on the Web Site**

Seattle Opera has devoted an extensive section on the company’s Web site to Wagner, Wagner’s *Ring*, and the past 20 years of Wagner opera in Seattle.

For basic information on Seattle Opera and Wagner, go to: <http://www.seattleopera.org/wagner/>.

Information on the 2005 *Ring* will be updated periodically at <http://www.seattleopera.org/operas/ring/>.

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Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera has developed into one of the leading opera companies in the United States. The company is recognized internationally for its theatrically compelling and musically accomplished performances, especially the Opera’s interpretations of the works of Richard Wagner. Seattle Opera dedicates its inaugural season in the new Marion Oliver McCaw Hall to Priscilla “Patsy” Bullitt Collins.

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