



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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Seattle Opera's *Ring des Nibelungen* Returns Three Cycles Presented August 9 to 30

23 Countries and 49 States Represented at this Year's *Ring*

Economic Benefits for Pacific Northwest Region Projected at Nearly \$9.5 Million

Seattle—Seattle Opera's signature production of Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen* returns to McCaw Hall in August. The four operas that comprise the *Ring*—*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung*—will be presented in three full cycles: August 9 to 14, August 17 to 22, and August 25 to 30.

This award-winning production, first unveiled in 2001, was inspired by the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Director Stephen Wadsworth and conductor Robert Spano, music director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, return for this summer's production, which features the creative team of set designer Thomas Lynch (a 2008 Seattle Opera Artist of the Year for his work on *Iphigenia in Tauris* and *Flying Dutchman*), costume designer Martin Pakledinaz, and lighting designer Peter Kaczorowski.

"Every time we present Wagner's *Ring*, we hope for a greater series of performances than we have given before," said General Director Speight Jenkins. "The rehearsals this year have been extremely rewarding, and I have every reason to think that this will be a very great series of cycles indeed."

Over 63 percent of the cast is new to this summer's production, including Janice Baird as Brünnhilde, Stig Andersen as Siegfried, Kobie van Rensburg as Loge, and Stuart Skelton as Siegmund. Many Seattle *Ring* favorites are returning: among them are Greer Grimsley as Wotan/The Wanderer, Richard Paul Fink as Alberich,

Margaret Jane Wray as Sieglinde and the Third Norn, and 2009 Artist of the Year Stephanie Blythe as Fricka, the Second Norn, and Waltraute (*Götterdämmerung*).

The *Ring* is expected to generate almost \$9.5 million in economic benefits for Seattle this summer, drawing attendees from 49 states, 23 countries, and eight Canadian provinces. Tickets for the production are nearly sold out, although limited full cycle, single opera, and standing room spots remain.

Throughout August, Seattle Opera is also hosting a number of *Ring* festival activities at McCaw Hall and Fisher Pavilion. General Director Speight Jenkins will offer insights into each evening's opera through his in-depth "Exploring the Ring" lectures. A symposium will be held during each cycle, featuring a variety of Wagner experts speaking about the composer and his work from their unique perspectives. Technical Director Robert Schaub will give audiences a glimpse into the *Ring*'s stage magic at his Tech Talks.

The artwork of this summer's New Visions artist, David Kreitzer, will be on display at McCaw Hall and Fisher Pavilion. Seattle Opera commissioned five *Ring* paintings from Kreitzer, who felt artistically compelled to continue with the subject. Kreitzer has created seventy *Ring* paintings—the product of more than two years' work—which he will bring to the August exhibit.

Seattle Opera is unveiling a number of new activities at McCaw Hall and Fisher Pavilion under the auspices of its Wallace Foundation Excellence Award grant. During intermissions (and before curtain in the case of *Das Rheingold*) audience members may stop by any of eight television sets throughout McCaw Hall for a glimpse into the backstage action in the company's "Behind the Scenes" video program. To help audiences share their *Ring* experience with others, Seattle Opera created *Walküre Views*. This special online interactive program will let people choose from several *Ring* photos to create personalized postcard-like messages to email to friends and family, or to post directly to their own Facebook pages. Each image will also have a section where everyone can comment on, discuss, and rate the scenes they depict. Computer kiosks with touchscreen monitors will be available for *Walküre Views* at Fisher Pavilion and at McCaw Hall.

On Seattle Opera's website, guest bloggers have been invited to contribute to the Seattle Opera blog, and the blog will also feature a daily caption-writing contest. A new video series called *The Road to Valhalla* will give viewers a look behind the scenes into the complex activities that go into producing the *Ring* Cycle. Seattle Opera's "Confessions of a First-Time Operagoer" project may also be viewed on the website.

Tickets for the *Ring* can be purchased online at seattleopera.org/ring, by calling the box office at 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619, or in person at 1020 John Street (two blocks west of Fairview) between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The box office is also open on Saturdays during August from noon to 4 p.m. A limited number of

standing room tickets are available for \$20 per opera. These go on sale on the opening day of each cycle for the four operas that follow, and can only be purchased over the phone or in person.

The following cast list for Der Ring des Nibelungen replaces all previously announced artist lists.

Der Ring des Nibelungen
By Richard Wagner

Three Cycles Summer 2009
In German with English captions

OPERA	CYCLE I	CYCLE II	CYCLE III
<i>Das Rheingold</i> (7:00 p.m.)	(Sun) August 9	(Mon) August 17	(Tues) August 25
<i>Die Walküre</i> (6:00 p.m.)	(Mon) August 10	(Tues) August 18	(Wed) August 26
<i>Siegfried</i> (6:00 p.m.)	(Wed) August 12	(Thurs) August 20	(Fri) August 28
<i>Götterdämmerung</i> (6:00 p.m.)	(Fri) August 14	(Sat) August 22	(Sun) August 30

The Artists

Conductor: Robert Spano
 Director: Stephen Wadsworth
 Set Designer: Thomas Lynch
 Costume Designer: Martin Pakledinaz
 Lighting Designer: Peter Kaczorowski
 Original Hair and Makeup Designer: Denise O'Brien
 Hair and Makeup Designer: Joyce Degenfelder
 Fire Designer and Flight Technical Director: Charles T. Buck
 English Captions: Jonathan Dean
 German Language Coach: Irene Spiegelman

Role	Artist
Brünnhilde	Janice Baird
Wotan/The Wanderer	Greer Grimsley
Siegfried	Stig Andersen†
Alberich	Richard Paul Fink
Sieglinde/Third Norn	Margaret Jane Wray
Siegmund	Stuart Skelton†
Fafner/Hagen	Daniel Sumegi
Fricka/Second Norn/Waltraute (<i>Götterdämmerung</i>)	Stephanie Blythe
Waltraute (<i>Walküre</i>)/First Norn	Luretta Bybee
Erda/Rosswisse	Maria Streijffert†
Loge	Kobie van Rensburg†
Fasolt/Hunding	Andrea Silvestrelli†
Froh	Jason Collins
Donner/Gunther	Gordon Hawkins
Mime	Dennis Petersen†
Freia/Ortlinde/Gutrune	Marie Plette
Woglinde/Forest Bird	Julianne Gearhart
Wellgunde/Grimgerde	Michèle Losier

Flosshilde/Schwertleite	Jennifer Hines
Helmwige	Sally Wolf
Gerhilde	Miriam Murphy†
Siegrune	Sarah Heltzel
Bear	JC Casiano

† Seattle Opera debut

8/5/09 Update

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About Seattle Opera

Founded in 1963, Seattle Opera is 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. Since 1975, Seattle Opera has presented 35 cycles of the *Ring* (three different productions), in addition to acclaimed productions of all the other major operas in the Wagner canon. Seattle Opera has achieved the highest per capita attendance of any major opera company in the United States, and draws operagoers from four continents and fifty states.