



## RING NEWS

### For Immediate Release

#### **Spano in Rehearsal for His First *Ring*, Production Marks 30th Anniversary of *Ring* at Seattle Opera**

Seattle—American conductor **Robert Spano** is now in Seattle to rehearse Wagner’s *Ring des Nibelungen* for presentation at Seattle Opera’s Summer Festival. This is the maestro’s first time conducting the *Ring*. Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra since 2001, Spano has conducted most major North American orchestras, has led the opera companies of Chicago, Houston, and Santa Fe in the United States, and has conducted the Royal Opera at Covent Garden, the Welsh National Opera, and the Orchestra Filarmonica della Scala.

Spano will be conducting Seattle Opera’s 30th-anniversary presentation of Wagner’s *Ring*. The three cycles begin August 7 and run through August 28. Spano previously appeared at Seattle Opera in 2001, conducting Britten’s *Billy Budd*. “Maestro Spano is one of America’s finest and most exciting young conductors,” said Seattle Opera General Director Speight Jenkins.

Since his Seattle Opera debut four years ago, Spano has won three Grammy awards, including “Best Classical Album” for Vaughan Williams’ *Sea Symphony* (released by Telarc). He has also been named Director of Contemporary Music for the Tanglewood Festival. Upcoming events include three new releases on Telarc and Deutsche Grammophon, conducting the Czech Philharmonic as well as the Chicago, Boston, and Cleveland symphonies, leading the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra at Carnegie Hall in 2006, and conducting John Adams’ *Dr. Atomic* at Lyric Opera of Chicago (2007/08 season).

#### **Thirty Years of the *Ring* in Seattle, Three Distinct Productions, Thirty-two Complete Cycles to Date**

Since Seattle Opera’s first full *Ring* in 1975, the company’s productions of the *Ring* have become one of the most highly anticipated classical music events in the Northwest. **This year’s three complete cycles of the *Ring* sold out** in November, approximately nine months before opening. This production will bring visitors from 49 states and 19 countries to Seattle. The only tickets left are “standing room”—which will go on sale on the first day of each cycle.

Seattle Opera has built three distinct productions of the *Ring*. The first *Ring* cycle was presented in the

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summer of 1975 in German and English. That production's sets and costumes (*Ring I*) were used through 1984. The second production (*Ring II*) debuted in 1986 and had its final presentation in 1995. The third and current production was presented in full in 2001 (*Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* were presented in 2000).

2005 marks **the 30th anniversary** of the *Ring* in Seattle. Seattle Opera has presented the ***Ring 15 times since 1975, for a total of 32 complete cycles in Seattle***. With the 2005 presentation, Seattle Opera will have presented 35 *Ring* cycles over the course of 16 summer festivals. This summer's *Ring* opens August 7.

**2001 Singers Return for 2005  
Grimsley and Berkeley-Steele Take On New Roles  
Podles and Saks New to *Ring***

Seattle Opera's 2005 *Ring* features many of the singers who made the 2001 *Ring* a sold-out success. Returning to the 2005 *Ring* are **soprano Jane Eaglen (Brünnhilde)**, **tenor Alan Woodrow (Siegfried)**, **soprano Margaret Jane Wray (Sieglinde)**, and **baritone Richard Paul Fink (Alberich)**, among others. Also returning to Seattle's *Ring* but in new roles are **tenor Richard Berkeley-Steele** and **baritone Greer Grimsley**. Grimsley will sing Wotan for first time for the complete cycle (he has sung the *Rheingold* Wotan at L'Opéra Montréal). Grimsley sang Donner and Gunther in the 2001 *Ring* at Seattle Opera. Berkeley-Steele stepped in for an injured Woodrow in 2001, singing Siegfried. This time, he will sing Siegmund.

Singers new to this production are world-renowned **Polish contralto Ewa Podles** (Erda/First Norn) and **British bass-baritone Gidon Saks** (Hagen/Fafner). Podles made her Seattle Opera debut as Adalgisa in Bellini's *Norma* in 2003 and won the Seattle Opera's Artist of the Year Award for her performance. Saks made his company debut last summer as a memorable King Heinrich in Wagner's *Lohengrin*.

**Wadsworth and Design Team Return  
Production Moves to New Home at McCaw Hall**

In 2001, **director Stephen Wadsworth** and his design team—**Thomas Lynch (sets)**, **Martin Pakledinaz (costumes)** and **Peter Kaczorowski (lights)**—received the 2001 EDDY (*Entertainment Design*) award for their production of the *Ring*. Also named in the EDDY award were Hair and Makeup Designer Denise O'Brien, Seattle Opera Technical Director Robert Schaub, Seattle Opera Associate Technical Director Robert F. Reynolds, Seattle Opera Scenic Studios Manager Michael Moore, Seattle Opera Costume Shop Manager Lise Schellman, Flight and Fire Designer Charles T. Buck, and Seattle Opera Master Scenic Artist Kitty Kavanaugh.

For the first time, the *Ring* will be presented in Seattle Opera's new home, **Marion Oliver McCaw Hall**. McCaw Hall, which stands on the site of the old Opera House, opened in 2003 and has been acknowledged by critics and audiences to be one of the finest opera houses in North America.

## Seattle Opera Summer Festival

*Der Ring des Nibelungen*

By **Richard Wagner**

Three Cycles

**In German with English captions**

Cycle Tickets: **SOLD OUT**

Standing Room Only: On sale August 7, August 15, and August 23

<b>OPERA</b>	<b>CYCLE I</b>	<b>CYCLE II</b>	<b>CYCLE III</b>
<i>Das Rheingold</i>	(Sun) August 7	(Mon) August 15	(Tues) August 23
<i>Die Walküre</i>	(Mon) August 8	(Tues) August 16	(Wed) August 24
<i>Siegfried</i>	(Wed) August 10	(Thurs) August 18	(Fri) August 26
<i>Götterdämmerung</i>	(Fri) August 12	(Sat) August 20	(Sun) August 28

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

2005 Hair and Makeup Designer: Joyce Degenfelder

Fire Designer and Flight Technical Director: Charles T. Buck

English Captions: Jonathan Dean

Brünnhilde: Jane Eaglen

Wotan/The Wanderer: Greer Grimsley

Siegfried: Alan Woodrow

Alberich: Richard Paul Fink

Sieglinde/Third Norn: Margaret Jane Wray

Sigmund: Richard Berkeley-Steele

Hagen/Fafner: Gidon Saks

Fricka/Second Norn: Stephanie Blythe

Erda/First Norn: Ewa Podles

Loge: Peter Kazaras

Fasolt/Hunding: Stephen Milling

Froh: Thomas Rolf Truhitte

Donner/Gunther: Gordon Hawkins

Mime: Thomas Harper

Waltraute (*Götterdämmerung*): Nancy Maultsby

Freia/Ortlinde/Gutrune: Marie Plette

Woglinde/Forest Bird: Wendy Hill

Wellgunde: Carolyn Kahl

Flosshilde/Rosswisse: Jennifer Hines†

Helmwige: Caroline Thomas

Gerhilde: Holly Hall†

Waltraute (*Walküre*): Stacey Rishoi†

Grimgerde: Fredrika Brillembourg†

Schwertleite: Luretta Bybee

Siegrune: Sarah Heltzel†

Bear: Steven Goldstein

† Seattle Opera debut

## ***Rings At Seattle Opera***

<b><i>Ring Year</i></b>	<b>Number of cycles</b>
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### ***Ring I***

1975	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1976	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1977	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1978	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1979	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1980	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1981	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1982	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1983	2 (1 in English and 1 in German)
1984	1 in German

### ***Ring II***

1986	2 in German
1987	2 in German
1991	3 in German
1995	3 in German

### ***Ring III***

2001	3 in German
2005	3 in German
2009	3 in German
2013	3 in German

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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 presentation of the works of Richard Wagner.

Seattle Opera gratefully acknowledges the support of the following for the *Ring*: Marion O. McCaw Garrison, Craig and Joan Watjen, Virginia and Bagley Wright, 4Culture, National Endowment for the Arts, Washington State Arts Commission, John Graham Foundation, Mayor's Office of Arts and Cultural Affairs, City of Seattle, Carol Franc Buck Foundation, Dilettante Chocolates, Town & Country Chrysler/Jeep

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