



SEATTLE OPERA
SPEIGHT JENKINS GENERAL DIRECTOR

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Seattle Opera Announces 2010 Wagner Production: *Tristan und Isolde*

**New Production to Feature Conductor Asher Fisch,
Stage Direction of Peter Kazaras, Sets and Costumes by Robert Israel, and
Lighting by Duane Schuler**

**Annalena Persson Makes Seattle Opera Debut as Isolde
Additional Cast Members Include:
Clifton Forbis, Margaret Jane Wray, Stephen Milling, and Greer Grimsley**

Seattle—With thousands of Wagner enthusiasts from around the world arriving in Seattle for a nearly sold-out *Ring* cycle which opens today, General Director Speight Jenkins announced that Seattle Opera will present Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde* July 31 through August 21, 2010, continuing its dedication to presenting the works of Richard Wagner. The company last staged *Tristan* in August 1998.

The new production of *Tristan* will be directed by Peter Kazaras, who is staging his first production of the opera, with costumes and sets designed by Robert Israel. This is the first collaboration for the pair. Maestro Asher Fisch, principal guest conductor at Seattle Opera, will lead the production.

“Over the last few years, director Peter Kazaras and designer Robert Israel have separately given Seattle Opera some of our most exciting evenings in the theater,” Jenkins said. “No opera offers more of a theatrical challenge than *Tristan und Isolde*. The imagination of these two artists will give Seattle a *Tristan* to conjure with.”

An opera whose score influenced subsequent composers positively and negatively more than any other ever composed, *Tristan und Isolde* tells a tale of longing. The two lovers, Tristan and Isolde, seek constantly to consummate their love, united finally only in death.

Swedish soprano Annalena Persson will make her United States debut as Isolde, with tenor Clifton Forbis singing Tristan. Forbis was last seen at Seattle Opera as Cavaradossi in Puccini's *Tosca* in 2001, and has subsequently sung Tristan with many of the world's major opera companies. Several veterans of Seattle Opera's renowned *Ring des Nibelungen* production will return to Seattle for next summer's *Tristan*. Soprano Margaret Jane Wray, currently performing Sieglinde and the Third Norn, will return to sing Brangäne, Isolde's handmaiden. Greer Grimsley, currently singing Wotan in this summer's *Ring*, will sing Kurwenal, a role he sang in the company's last *Tristan* production, in 1998. Danish bass Stephen Milling, who sang Fasolt and Hunding in the 2001 and 2005 *Ring* productions, returns to the company to sing King Marke.

Maestro Asher Fisch has conducted Wagner's *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, and *Der fliegende Holländer* for Seattle Opera. He won a 2007 Seattle Opera Artist of the Year award for conducting Richard Strauss's *Rosenkavalier* and the 2006 International Wagner Competition.

Director Peter Kazaras, the artistic director of Seattle Opera's Young Artists Program, has directed several Young Artists productions, as well as Bellini's *Norma* and Mozart's *Nozze di Figaro* on Seattle Opera's mainstage. He will return to stage Verdi's *Falstaff* in February and March 2010. Kazaras has a long history with Seattle Opera as a singer as well as director, performing in such roles as Loge in Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*. He is also a professor and Director of Opera Studio at UCLA.

Designer Robert Israel made his Seattle Opera debut with *Die Walküre* in 1985, and went on to design sets and costumes for the *Ring* production that was performed through 1995, as well as sets for Catán's *Florencia in the Amazon* and Verdi's *Macbeth*. He also designed both sets and costumes for the production of Wagner's *Parsifal*.

Further details about Seattle Opera's 2010/11 season will be announced at a later date.

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

Music and Libretto by Richard Wagner
In German with English Captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall
7 Performances: July 31, August 4, 7, 12, 15, 18, 21, 2010

Approximate Running Time: 4 hours, 30 minutes with two intermissions
Evening performances begin at 6:30 p.m., matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: Königliches Hof- und Nationaltheater in Munich on June 10, 1865
Previous Seattle Opera Productions: March 1981, August 1981, August 1998

Artists

Isolde:	Annalena Persson†
Tristan:	Clifton Forbes
Brangäne:	Margaret Jane Wray
King Marke:	Stephen Milling
Kurvenal:	Greer Grimsley
Melot:	TBD
Shepherd:	TBD
Sailor:	TBD
Steersman:	TBD

Conductor:	Asher Fisch
Stage Director:	Peter Kazaras
Scenery and Costume Designer:	Robert Israel
Lighting Designer:	Duane Schuler

Scenery and Costumes: Seattle Opera

†Seattle Opera Debut

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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.