



Wagner: *Siegfried* Act 3

2nd and 3rd December 2023. Inverness Cathedral and Strathpeffer Pavilion

Welcome to today's concert.

Wagner: *Siegfried*

Act 3 (complete)

Cast (in order of appearance)

Der Wanderer Sir John Tomlinson

Erda Rozanna Madylus

Siegfried Brad Cooper

Brünnhilde Lee Bisset

The Mahler Players

Conducted by Tomas Leakey (2nd December) and Anthony Negus (3rd December)

Sung in German with English surtitles

Translation by Simon Rees

Version for chamber orchestra re-orchestrated by Matthew King and Peter Longworth.

Running time c.85 minutes. *Please note, there will be no interval in this concert.*

Wagner's operas (which he called 'music dramas') were often composed on a vast scale, with large orchestras, hugely demanding vocal parts and, perhaps most infamously, sometimes enormous durations. They are arguably the pinnacle of artistic achievement within the German Romantic movement of the nineteenth century; but before most music lovers had heard a note of his music, Wagner was an intellectual celebrity across Europe, and it is often claimed that he is the most written-about figure after Jesus Christ and Napoleon Bonaparte. Exaggeration or not, it is certainly true that during his lifetime, and for a long time after, Wagner was much more culturally significant than might be believable today.

Some of his innovations were of course musical. Wagner's use of harmony was innovative not just in its embracing of added 'colour' and dissonance, but in the way he built up moments of tension on top of one another. He would then delay the resolution of this tension to create a sense of yearning, finally released in moments of ecstasy that are almost unmatched within music.

He used musical symbolism to enrich the drama within his operas, and a particularly momentous invention is the *leitmotif*. These short fragments of melody corresponded to a particular character, place, object or emotion. Spun together in musical counterpoint, they create a complex web of extra-musical meaning, operating on an almost subconscious level – a network of musical and dramatic memories that live in his audience’s minds.

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There were also technical innovations, such as the idea of a darkened auditorium for performances, and the invention of the modern ‘orchestra pit’ to allow the singers to be heard and seen more clearly, blotting out distractions; his vision for a new way of experiencing theatre was so extensive that in order to fully execute it, he had his own theatre built at Bayreuth.

Before all this, Wagner’s extra-musical fame arrived partly thanks to his manifesto-style theoretical writings, notably *Art and Revolution* and *The Artwork of the Future*, both published in 1849, and his book *Opera and Drama* of 1851. Wagner advocated for a unification of all the arts into a *Gesamtkunstwerk* (a ‘total artwork’), and he believed that such works should be rooted in folklore. This was pertinent in an increasingly nationalist nineteenth century. Folk histories and mythology were a helpful way to create shared cultural ancestry in brand new states such as the newly-unified Germany and Italy.

Wagner realised these theories in *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (‘The Ring of the Nibelung’), most commonly referred to simply as the *Ring Cycle*. It is a set of four operas rooted in German and Norse mythology, each making sense on its own but intended to be experienced in a sequence. The libretto and music took Wagner 26 years to complete, from 1848 to 1874, with the first performance taking place at his Bayreuth Festival in 1876 over four days – a staggering feat, given the operas contain well over 15 hours of music. There was a twelve-year break in the composition of the *Ring* between Acts 2 and 3 of *Siegfried*, during which Wagner wrote *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger*.

The cycle opens with *Das Rheingold* (‘The Rhinegold’), intended as a prologue to the main story. A Nibelung dwarf, Alberich, steals gold from the Rhine maidens and forges a ring that gives the owner the power to rule the world; he builds huge wealth and gets his brother to forge a magic helmet, a Tarnhelm, that gives the wearer magic powers. Wotan, the king of the gods, steals the ring from Alberich, who curses it. Wotan then has to give the ring to two giants in payment for building Valhalla, the new home of the gods. The giants fight to the death over the cursed ring whilst the gods cross over to Valhalla.

The second part of the *Ring* is *Die Walküre* (‘The Valkyrie’). In the intervening time, the surviving giant has used the Tarnhelm to transform into a dragon, guarding the ring and his hoard of gold. Wotan has visited Erda, the goddess of earthly wisdom, and fathered a daughter by her named Brünnhilde; she and Wotan’s eight other daughters are known as

Valkyries – fierce, winged females who bring fallen warriors back to Valhalla. Wotan has also fathered twins from a Völsung woman, a boy and girl named Siegmund and Sieglinde, long since separated.

Die Walküre begins as Siegmund and Sieglinde meet by chance and fall into an adulterous, incestuous love. Sieglinde's husband challenges Siegmund to a duel, in which Brünnhilde interferes to try to protect Siegmund (against Wotan's wishes); Wotan sees to it that both Siegmund and the husband are killed, smashing Siegmund's magic sword with his spear. Brünnhilde flees with Sieglinde, who is pregnant with a child called Siegfried. As punishment for her disobedience, Wotan strips Brünnhilde of her immortality and leaves her asleep on a rock, surrounded by fire, which cannot be crossed by anyone who fears Wotan's spear; she awaits a true hero.

Siegfried begins in a forest, where the boy Siegfried has been adopted and raised by Alberich's brother, Mime (the smith who created the Tarnhelm). Mime wants Siegfried to kill the giant, now in dragon form, who is guarding the Ring and a hoard of gold. Mime tells Siegfried that he is really the son of Sieglinde, who died giving birth to him, and shows him the broken pieces of his father Siegmund's magic sword. Wotan has told Mime that only someone who does not know fear can forge it back together. After Mime's failure to do so, Siegfried forges the sword and cuts the anvil in half with it for good measure.

Act 2 of *Siegfried* begins with a mysterious encounter between Wotan, disguised as a Wanderer, and Alberich, who keeps jealous watch over the dragon-giant Fafner's cave in the forest. Siegfried and Mime arrive, Mime hoping that the dragon will teach Siegfried fear. Siegfried imitates birdsong on a reed pipe and then a horn, which wakes the dragon; Siegfried slays it. The dragon's burning blood splashes him, he puts his hand to his mouth, and can suddenly understand birdsong. The birds instruct Siegfried to take the ring and the Tarnhelm from the hoard. The dragon's blood also allows him to understand Mime's thoughts as he tries to feed Siegfried a poisoned drink; Siegfried kills Mime whilst Alberich, hidden, watches on and laughs. A bird sings to Siegfried of a woman on a rock – perhaps she can teach Siegfried fear?

Act 3 of *Siegfried* begins on Brünnhilde's rock, with Wotan (as a Wanderer) summoning Erde. Wotan tells her he no longer fears the end of the gods, recognising that his legacy will be a couple free from envy: Siegfried, whose fearlessness rendered him incorruptible by the ring, and Brünnhilde, who will perform a world-redeeming act. Siegfried arrives and is quizzed by the Wanderer, his grandfather; Siegfried mocks his shabby, disguised appearance and breaks his spear (the symbol of Wotan's authority) with his magic sword. Siegfried crosses the fire surrounding the rock fearlessly, and examines what he thinks is a sleeping, armoured man. Removing the armour, he finds a woman – the first he has seen. He feels love, but also fear, and desperately kisses Brünnhilde. She

wakes and hails him as the World's Light. Initially frightened, she eventually submits to Siegfried's love and renounces the gods; they sing to the glory of love, which outshines even that of the gods.

Much is yet to follow in the final part of the *Ring*, *Götterdämmerung* ('The Twilight of the Gods'), with love and honour tested by corruption and betrayal. Mortals and immortals alike are ultimately redeemed through love and sacrifice.

Anthony Friend

A note on the reorchestration, by Matthew King

Wagner was an extraordinarily inventive artist who, in the 1850s, managed to single-handedly reinvent musical dramaturgy, harmony, motivic structure and orchestration. At the heart of his creative work during this decade was the immense undertaking of the Ring cycle, which Wagner managed to complete up until the end of Act 2 of *Siegfried*. At this point, discouraged by the lack of performance options for the cycle, he abandoned work on it, and turned instead to composing first *Tristan und Isolde* and subsequently *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, both immense and challenging works in their own right. Only after the triumphant premiere of *Die Meistersinger* in 1868 did Wagner return to work on the Ring Cycle with Act 3 of *Siegfried*. Work on this act then absorbed most of his attention until he finished it in 1871. Right from the opening of the prelude, there is a sense of Wagner returning to his great project with a renewed sense of passion and urgency, and there is a thrilling new grandeur to his orchestral sound, as well as new depths of expressivity and intimacy in the final scene.

It has been a great privilege to work with Peter Longworth on this reorchestration of Act 3 of *Siegfried*. This project was undertaken after similar work on *Die Walküre* Act 1 and *Tristan* Act 2, and also my own creative project, *Richard Wagner in Venice: a Symphony*, a work for chamber orchestra (also composed for the Mahler Players) which elaborates sketches Wagner was working on in the final years of his life. Wagner's *Siegfried Idyll*, composed at the same time as the third act of *Siegfried*, and developing several of the main themes from the opera, demonstrates how beautifully the material from *Siegfried* Act 3 adapts to a more intimate instrumental setting. Wagner is often thought of as a composer for huge orchestras but in fact he tends to reserve the full orchestra for quite rare climactic passages. Much of his orchestral writing is for smaller combinations of instruments, in a constant state of fluidity, mixing in ever-changing combinations. Wagner's orchestration is prodigiously inventive: he uses the instruments like characters in the drama, and his mastery of timbre as an agent of dramatic and symbolic meaning is never more fully realised than in tonight's score. The biggest challenge of taking on the task of reducing Wagner's orchestration for chamber orchestra, apart from its sheer immensity (!) was to find balanced new timbral solutions, using leaner combinations of instruments, in order to replicate the effect of the original in such a way that even seasoned Wagnerians would find it difficult to spot the difference.

Whether we have succeeded or not will no doubt become apparent in today's performance!

Sir John Tomlinson *Der Wanderer*

John Tomlinson was born in Lancashire. He gained a B.Sc. in Civil Engineering at Manchester University before winning a scholarship to the Royal Manchester College of Music. He was awarded a C.B.E. in 1997 and knighted in the Queen's Birthday Honours of 2005. He was awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society Music Award for Singer in 1991, 1998 and 2007 and in 2014 their Gold Medal.

John Tomlinson's engagements include performances at La Scala, Milan, Rome, Barcelona, Geneva, Lisbon, Metropolitan Opera, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, San Diego, Tokyo, Opera Australia, Paris, Amsterdam, Berlin (Deutsche Oper and Deutsche Staatsoper), Dresden, Hamburg, Frankfurt, Munich, Vienna, Antwerp, and Bilbao and the Festivals of Bayreuth (where he sang for eighteen consecutive seasons), Orange, Aix-en-Provence, Salzburg, Edinburgh and the Maggio Musicale, Florence. He has sung regularly with English National Opera since 1974 and with the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, since 1977 and has also appeared with all the other leading British opera companies. His repertoire includes Wotan DAS RHEINGOLD and DIE WALKÜRE, Wanderer SIEGFRIED, Hagen GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG, Titirel and Gurnemanz PARSIFAL, King Marke TRISTAN UND ISOLDE, Heinrich LOHENGRIN, Hans Sachs DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG, Landgraf TANNHÄUSER, title role and Daland FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER, Swallow PETER GRIMES, Baron Ochs DER ROSENKAVALIER, Boromeo PALESTRINA, Orestes ELEKTRA, Moses MOSES UND ARON, Green Knight in the world premiere of Harrison Birtwistle's GAWAIN, Claggart BILLY BUDD, Doctor WOZZECK, Rocco FIDELIO, King Philip and Grand Inquisitor DON CARLOS, Sarastro DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE, Leporello and Commendatore DON GIOVANNI, Lindorf, Coppélius, Dr Miracle and Dapertutto LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN, Golaud and Arkel PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE, Boris Timofeyevich Ismailov LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK, title role, Pimen and Varlaam BORIS GODUNOV, Ivan Susanin A LIFE FOR A TSAR, Fiesco SIMON BOCCANEGRA, Tiresias OEDIPUS, Dosifey KHOVANSCHINA, The General THE GAMBLER, Thomas à Becket MURDER IN THE CATHEDRAL, Ivan Yakovlevich, Newspaper Clerk and Doctor THE NOSE, Sergeant of Police THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE and title roles in BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE, OBERTO, MOSE IN EGITTO, Priesterkönig in Jörg Widmann's BABYLON, and the world premieres of Birtwistle's THE MINOTAUR, Brett Dean's LAST DAYS OF SOCRATES and Ghost of Old Hamlet in the world premiere of Brett Dean's HAMLET, Doctor Charles Conde in Thomas Ades' EXTERMINATING ANGEL and the title role in THE MIKADO. He took the title role of KING LEAR at the Grange Festival in 2021.

John Tomlinson has a large concert repertoire and has sung with all the leading British orchestras and in Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland, France, Spain, Denmark and the U.S.A. He has made many recordings including Wotan, Wanderer, Hagen, Hans Sachs, Titirel, Don Alfonso COSÌ FAN TUTTE, Leporello, and title roles LE NOZZE DI FIGARO and BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE, Beethoven CHORAL SYMPHONY, MESSIAH, ACIS AND GALATEA and the Verdi REQUIEM. Videos include MARIA STUARDA, PETER GRIMES, GIULIO CESARE, RIGOLETTO, DAS RHEINGOLD, DIE WALKÜRE, SIEGFRIED and THE MINOTAUR.

In upcoming seasons, he will take part in Mark-Anthony Turnage's world premiere FESTEN at the Royal Opera House in London as well as Dikoj in KATYA KABANOVA at the Glyndebourne Festival.

Rozanna Madylus *Erda*

Described as having “an engaging stage presence” (*The Daily Telegraph*) and giving “compelling performances, offering fluid line and gripping conviction” (*Opera Magazine*), Rozanna is a graduate of The Royal Academy Opera School, where she studied with the late Anne Howells and Jonathan Papp and was the recipient of The Karaviotis Scholarship, The Sir Charles Mackerras Award and The Carr-Gregory Trust Award. She has appeared as a soloist and member of the chorus on international stages, including English National Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, The Royal Opera House, Wexford Festival Opera, Festival d'Aix-en-Provence and Garsington Opera.

Rozanna was born in Leicestershire, England, of Ukrainian descent. After completing her undergraduate degree in English Literature and Philosophy at the University of East Anglia, she decided to dedicate herself to classical singing. During her time at the Academy, she was a member of Academy Song Circle and a finalist in the prestigious Patrons' Award. Rozanna was also awarded The Karaviotis Prize at Les Azuriales Young Artist Competition, Nice, France, in August 2012 and, in the summer of 2013, attended the Solti Accademia in Castiglione della Pescaia. Rozanna was on the Young Artist Platform at The Oxford Lieder Festival (now known as The Oxford International Song Festival) and, since then, she has been invited to perform in various concert halls around the UK and abroad, including The Wigmore Hall, The Royal Festival Hall, The Holywell Music Room, Kings Place, The Mendelssohn-Remise Berlin, the Prokofiev Hall at the Mariinsky Theatre and the St Petersburg Philharmonic.

Previous roles include Hänsel *Hänsel und Gretel* (Hampstead Garden Opera), Messaggera/Speranza/Proserpina *L'Orfeo* (cover for Longborough Festival Opera), Lapák (Dog)/Zlatohřbítek (Fox) *The Cunning Little Vixen* (HGO), Gabriel/Belial in the world premiere of Bertie Baigent's *Paradise Lost*, Ljubica in Ana Sokolovic's a cappella opera, *Svadba 'A Wedding'* (Waterperry Opera Festival), Žofka in Janáček's *The Diary of One Who Disappeared* (WOF), Cordelia/Fool in John Casken's *The Shackled King*

(Counterpoise), Forester's Wife *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Longborough Festival Opera), Rosina *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Barefoot Opera), Third Lady *The Magic Flute* (WOF), Prinz Orlofsky *Die Fledermaus* (Berlin Opera Academy), Mother Goose *The Rake's Progress* (cover for Festival d'Aix-en-Provence), Second Woman/Second Witch *Dido and Aeneas* (Birmingham Opera Company), Jezebel in Goehr's *Naboth's Vineyard* (Melos Sinfonia), Beggar Woman in Britten's *Death in Venice* (Garsington Opera), Smeraldina in Dove's *The Little Green Swallow* (British Youth Opera), the title role in Handel's *Ariodante* (Royal Academy Opera), Madame de la Haltière *Cendrillon* (RAO), Fidalma in Cimarosa's *The Secret Marriage* (cover for BYO), the title role in Ravel's *L'enfant et les sortilèges* (RAO and the BBC Symphony Orchestra) and Maddalena in Verdi's *Rigoletto* (Stanley Opera).

In September 2023, she was awarded the Audience Prize at the Mastersingers' *Carole Rees Awards* Wagner Voice Competition and will be performing the role of Rosswisse in Wagner's *Die Walküre* in Longborough Festival Opera's Ring Cycle 2024. Her first CD, performing alongside Sir John Tomlinson and Counterpoise in *Kokoschka's Doll*, is available on Champs Hill records.

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Brad Cooper *Siegfried*

Born in Sydney Australia, **Brad Cooper** studied at the **Sydney Conservatorium of Music**, the **National Opera Studio** in London and with **Marilyn Horne** at **Music Academy of the West**, California. Brad continues his development into the German repertoire under the guidance of **Siegfried Jerusalem**.

In current and upcoming Seasons Brad appears as **Siegfried** in Melbourne Opera's 'Bendigo Ring Cycle', **Apollo** in Richard Strauss' Daphne for Scottish Opera, in the role of **Agamemnon** in Ernst Krenek's 1930 opera *Leben des Orest* and **Siegmund** in Wagner's *Die Walküre* for Theatre Münster, **Albert Gergor** in Janáček's *Věc Makropulos* and **Aegisth** in Strauss' *Elektra* for Mainfranken Theater Würzburg. Brad's operatic career has seen him appear as **Tamino** in *Die Zauberflöte* for Opera Australia, Oper Köln & English Touring Opera, **Albert** in *Albert Herring* for Opera Australia, **Belmonte** in Mozart's *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* for Oper Köln, **Florestan** in Beethoven's *Fidelio* for Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg, **Almaviva** in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for Opera Holland Park in London, **Don Alonse** in Grétry's *L'amant jaloux* for Opera Comique in Paris, **Davey** in Jonathan Dove's *Siren Song* and **Aubry** in Marschner's *Der Vampyr* for Grachtenfestival in Amsterdam, **Emilio** in *Tutti in Maschera* at Wexford Festival and create the role of **Clem** in Misha Hamel's *Snow White* for Nederlandse Reisopera. In 2018 Brad toured

throughout China as **Radamès** in *Aida* for Australian International Opera.

In concert Brad has performed Jonathan in Handel's **Saul & Beethoven's 9th** for Philharmonia Choirs at Sydney Opera House, Handel's **Messiah** and Mozart's **Requiem** with St Andrew's Cathedral Choir in Sydney, Britten's *St Nicolas* at Newcastle Music Festival and Orfeo in Haydn's **L'orfeo** under the baton of Richard Bonyngé.

Brad is passionate about sharing his love of music. His 'crossover' shows **BERLIN ELECTRIC, A NIGHT in VIENNA, ARIAS in the OUTBACK, COOPER sings KABARETT** have played to sell out audiences in Australia London, Europe and the USA. His **MAGIC FLUTE WORKSHOP** has brought the fantastical world of Opera to thousands of children in Australia, while his 2018 choir & band project, **TERRA AUSTRALIS**, introduced hundreds of Ohio students to Australian Music.

Brad is thankful for the support of *Nance Atkinson Trust, Wagner Society in NSW, Tait Memorial Trust, Australian Singing Competition* and the *Dame Joan Sutherland & Richard Bonyngé Scholarship*

Lee Bisset *Brünnhilde*

Born in Scotland, which she represented at the BBC Cardiff Singer of the World Competition, Lee Bisset studied at the Royal Northern College of Music and the National Opera Studio, before joining the Young Singers' Programme at English National Opera, where her roles included **Mimi** *La bohème*.

Praised "*as an overwhelming and richly luminous Isoldé*" (The Times) for her performance as **Isolde** *Tristan und Isolde* at Longborough Festival Opera, she made her debut with The Royal Opera, London, as **Liza** *The Queen of Spades*. Other recent highlights have included **Brünnhilde** *Die Walküre - Siegfried* for Longborough Festival Opera, **Isolde** *Tristan und Isolde* at the Konzert Theater Bern, and **Sieglinde** *Die Walküre* with The Orchestra of the Music Makers, Singapore.

Her UK engagements have further included the title role in *Jenufa* for Scottish Opera, the title role in *Tosca* for Northern Ireland Opera and **Gerhilde** *Die Walküre* at the Edinburgh International Festival, whilst for Opera North she has sung **Freia** *Das Rheingold*, **Third Norn** *Götterdämmerung* and **Sieglinde** *Die Walküre*. a performance of which The Guardian wrote that her "*unforced vocal range and committed characterisation produced the most all-round compelling Sieglinde I have heard since the great Helga Dernesch*. With Opera North, she has also appeared in concert singing Mahler *Symphony No. 8* and *Songs by Sibelius*.

International engagements have included the title role in *Tosca* for Opera Memphis and Opera Omaha, **Minnie** *La Fanciulla del West* for Opera Omaha, **Senta** *Der fliegende Holländer* for the Ópera de Bellas Artes, Mexico City, **Sieglinde** *Die Walküre* at the Ópera

São Paulo, Beethoven *Symphony No. 9* at the Teatro Real, Madrid, the première performances of Piet Swerts' *Symphony of Trees* with the Flanders Symphony Orchestra (now available on Phaedra CD) and a Wagner Concert at the Theatro São Pedro, Brazil.

Conductors with whom she has worked include Jessica Cottis, Mikhail Agrest, David Angus, Nisa Bareza, Andrew Bisantz, Jeremy Carnall, Nicholas Chalmers, Sir Andrew Davis, Kevin John Edusei, Richard Farnes, Edward Gardner, Anthony Legge, Luiz Malheiro, Anthony Negus, Peter Robinson, David Stern, Stuart Stratford, Phillip Thomas, Willie Waters and Christopher Willis.

Recent engagements have included **Santuzza** *Cavalleria Rusticana* for Cambridge Philharmonic, **Brünnhilde** in Longborough Festival Opera's new production of *Siegfried and Brünnhilde* *Siegfried – Götterdämmerung* for Grimeborn Festival at the Hackney Empire.

In Summer 2023, she returned to Longborough Festival Opera as **Brünnhilde** *Götterdämmerung*, ahead of complete cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* in 2024m and her current engagements further include **The Overseer** *Elektra* for The Royal Opera, London.

Lee Bisset is delighted again to be singing with The Mahler Players.

The Mahler Players were founded by Tomas Leakey in 2013.

As part of our *Mahler in Miniature* project we performed chamber orchestra versions of Mahler's First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Ninth and Tenth Symphonies, *Das Lied von der Erde*, and most of Mahler's other song cycles. We have commissioned many new works, including by leading Scottish composer Stuart MacRae. Since 2017 we have had a particular focus on the music of Wagner, which has included the complete Act 1 from *Die Walküre*, Act 2 from *Tristan und Isolde* and substantial sections of music from *Götterdämmerung*, *Parsifal* and *Tannhäuser*. We have worked with some of the greatest Wagnerian singers of our era, including Sir John Tomlinson, Magdalena Anna Hofmann, Peter Wedd and Lee Bisset.

In 2021 we released our first album, which features the world premiere recording of Matthew King's *Richard Wagner in Venice: A Symphony*. This Symphony brings to life for the first time many of Wagner's late sketches, left unfinished at the time of his death in 1883, and until now largely unknown and unheard outside specialist circles. Also featuring is Wagner's own beautiful masterpiece for chamber orchestra, *Siegfried Idyll*.

Tomas Leakey (conductor, 2nd December)

Founder of the Mahler Players, Tomas began his musical life as a trombonist and owes much to the influence of the Highland instrumental tutors and associated ensembles, especially the Highland Regional Youth Orchestra, to which he will be returning as conductor for the 2023/24 season. He studied with and was encouraged in his conducting by the formidable late George Hurst and undertook further study with Denise Ham at the London Conducting Academy. Another important influence when it comes to Wagner has been Anthony Negus, who will conduct the Mahler Players' second performance of Siegfried Act 3 on 3rd December. Last year, Tomas was selected as a Stipendiat by the Wagner Society of Scotland, and attended the Bayreuth Festival in this capacity in summer 2022. As well as his work with the Mahler Players and Highland Regional Youth Orchestra, he will make his debut with the Aberdeen City Orchestra in May 2024.

Anthony Negus (conductor, 3rd December)

Anthony Negus is one of the leading Wagnerian conductors of our day. 2023 has seen him give two highly acclaimed cycles of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* for Melbourne Opera (MO). This was preceded by a concert performance of *Siegfried*, and productions of *Die Walküre* (in 2022) and *Das Rheingold* (in 2021). For MO he has also conducted *Fidelio* (2020), *Der fliegende Holländer* (2019) and *Tristan und Isolde* (2018), for which he won a coveted Green Room Award for best conductor.

He is the longstanding Music Director of Longborough Festival Opera (LFO), where in June he conducted five enthusiastically received performances of *Götterdämmerung*, in advance of an eagerly awaited full *Ring* cycle in 2024. During his many years with LFO, he has established himself as one of the most perceptive and original conductors of the Wagner repertoire, giving acclaimed performances of the *Ring* cycle (2008–12 individual operas, 2013 full cycle, all directed by Alan Privett), *Tannhäuser* (also directed by Privett), *Tristan und Isolde* (directed by Carmen Jakobi) and *Der fliegende Holländer* (directed by Thomas Guthrie). The 2017 revival of *Tristan und Isolde* met with especial critical and audience acclaim. In the same year, the London Wagner Society awarded Anthony Negus the Goodall Award for 'his devotion to the works of Richard Wagner'. For LFO, Negus has also conducted highly praised productions of *Die Zauberflöte* and *Ariadne auf Naxos*. Elsewhere, recent appearances have included *Un ballo in maschera* (concert performance) for Chelsea Opera Group in 2023, *Der fliegende Holländer* (two concert performances) for Grange Park Opera with Sir Bryn Terfel and Rachel Nicholls in 2022, and a guest performance of *Die Walküre* for English National Opera in 2021. Other guest appearances have included *Lulu* for the Fondazione Haydn di Bolzano e Trento, Italy (directed by David Pountney), two Beethoven concerts with the George Enescu Orchestra in the Athenaeum in Bucharest, and *Parsifal*, *Der fliegende Holländer* and a concert of American music in Lübeck. He has also conducted a performance of *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* for Glyndebourne Festival, and *Parsifal* with the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra at the Wellington Festival.

For Welsh National Opera he has conducted more than 150 performances in a wide repertoire, including works by Beethoven, Berg, Gluck, Janáček, James MacMillan (*The Sacrifice*, broadcast by the BBC and released as a recording by Chandos), Martinů, Mussorgsky, Richard Strauss, Wagner, Weber and, especially, Mozart. Particular highlights of his work with WNO have included *Parsifal* and several of Richard Strauss's operas. As an assistant conductor, he worked with Pierre Boulez on *Pelléas et Mélisande*, with Reginald Goodall on *Tristan und Isolde*, *Parsifal* and *The Valkyrie*, and with Sir Richard Armstrong, Sir Charles Mackerras, Carlo Rizzi, Mark Wigglesworth and Vladimir Jurowski.

Anthony was born near Buckingham, attended Stowe School and studied clarinet and piano at the Royal College of Music. He went on to read Music at Christ Church Oxford, and gained opera conducting and répétiteur experience at the Else Mayer-Lismann Opera Workshop and the London Opera Centre. He studied conducting with Franco Ferrara in Sienna and with George Hurst in the UK. He made his conducting debut in Wuppertal with d'Albert's *Tiefland*, and worked as an assistant conductor at Bayreuth Festival and in Hamburg.

My association with Tomas Leakey

Tomas Leakey was highly recommended to me by my friend and colleague, the tenor Peter Wedd, as a talented young conductor. Peter had sung the 1st act of *Die Walküre* with Tomas and his Mahler Players. So I invited him to attend some of my orchestral rehearsals of *Der Ring des Nibelungen* which I am conducting for the Longborough Festival Opera to be performed complete in 2024. Last year he came to me for coaching on conducting *Tristan und Isolde*, and I found his approach both sensitive and intelligent. After playing the piano rehearsals, I attended his fine performance of *Tristan Act II* in Strathpeffer. This year I shared my experience of conducting *Siegfried* with him, and played for his rehearsals with the singers in London. I was delighted to be asked to conduct the 2nd performance of Act III in Strathpeffer.

Anthony Negus

Emma Donald (leader)

Originally from the Highlands, Emma Donald has been playing the violin since the age of 8. Growing up, she enjoyed learning both classical and traditional Scottish music, and has strived to keep both passions running simultaneously. She has a first class honours degree in music from the University of Edinburgh, and she works full time as a freelance musician based in Glasgow.

Emma is very passionate about chamber music, she is a founding member of the Fyrish String Quartet and the Cairdeas Trio. She is also an accomplished composer, with Fyrish String Quartet premiering her piece "The Sound of Sleepless Kings" earlier this year. Emma is one half of a contemporary folk duo with harpist Isbel Pendlebury. Their

original music is being featured as part of “The Farewell Glacier”, a programme being broadcast on BBC Radio 3 in January 2024.

FIRST VIOLIN

Emma Donald (leader), Simon Evans,
Ruth Kalitski, Francis Moore-Colyer,
Josie Robertson, Jerome Woodwark

SECOND VIOLIN

Andrew Birse, Emily Birse, Sophie
Cushnie, Hazel Younger, David Murray,
Ellis Ash

VIOLA

Rachel Farmer, Rebecca Minio-Paluello,
Nick Hadwen

CELLO

Katy Bell, Kate Ellingson, Sarah
Matthews

DOUBLE BASS

Tam Darlugdach, Chris Sergeant

FLUTE/PICCOLO Babs Crocker

OBOE David Cushman

OBOE and COR ANGLAIS Krys Hawryszczuk

CLARINET Mhairi Callander

BASS CLARINET and CLARINET Mike Weare

BASSOON Bruce Gordon, Kate Smith

FRENCH HORN Rob Farmer, Wendy Ritchie

FLUGELHORN and TRUMPET Alasdair Grant

TROMBONE Mark Bell, Dave Allan

TUBA Gavin Woods

TIMPANI Ally Russell

PERCUSSION Brodie McCash

HARP Erica Sinclair

SURTITLES OPERATOR Gordon Tocher

ORCHESTRAL MANAGER Rob Farmer

FRONT OF HOUSE

Sam Leakey, Lisa Khadaeva, Kim Kelly,
Hilary Cameron

PUBLICITY AND LOGISTICS

Rachel Farmer, Rob Farmer, Sam
Leakey, Lisa Khadaeva

MAHLER PLAYERS TRUSTEES

Tomas Leakey, Mhairi Callander, Rob
Farmer, Rachel Farmer

HRI | Munro architecture



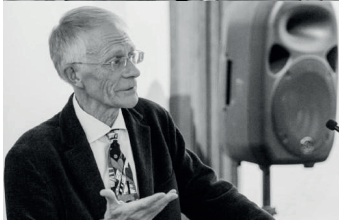
We are Chartered Architects and Design Consultants based in Inverness, Highland.

The long established Practices of HRI Architects and Thomas Munro & Co merged in 2016 to create **HRI | Munro Architecture** - one of the largest and most experienced firms of Architects in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

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THE WAGNER SOCIETY

President: Dame Gwyneth Jones DBE Kammerängerin

Vice President: Sir John Tomlinson CBE

Registered Charity: 266383 Founded 1953

wagnersociety.org

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The Wagner Society would like to invite members of the audience to join the world's largest Wagner Society. Benefits include:

Entry into the Annual Ballot for Bayreuth Festival tickets

Regular Live and Zoom Events,

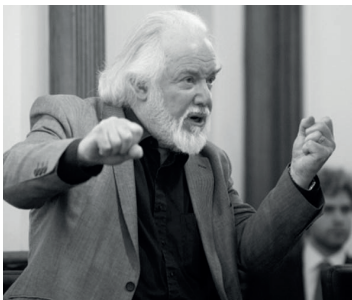
including the Society Singing Competition

Copies of the quarterly Wagner News magazine

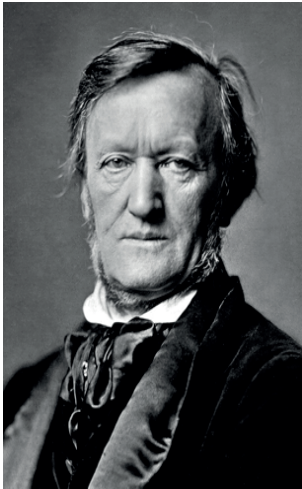
Free access to recordings of event webinars with Grace Bumbry, Nina Stemme, Anna Tomowa-Sintow, Sir Graham Vick, Sir Mark Elder, Michael Volle, Stephen Gould, Petra Lang, Simon Callow, Alex Ross and many others

Membership costs £30 per year for single and £40 for joint membership. Students and under 30s can join FREE. Join online at wagnersociety.org or email:

membership@wagnersociety.org



WAGNER SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND



*Proud sponsors of the Mahler
Players, and of the annual
Bayreuth Scholarship.*

The Wagner Society of Scotland offers:

- Annual Courses
- Monthly talks
- Priority booking for tickets at the Bayreuth Festival
- Participation in the annual RWVI Congress
- Recitals and talks by scholarship winners

We warmly welcome new members, and guests to our events. For more information, please visit our website:

www.wagnerscotland.net

With warm thanks to

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The Mahler Circle - members

Ash Johnston and Donna Mortimer
Professor Sue Lightman
Dr Helen Robinson
Sandra and John Black
Thomas Baxter and Benjamin Mawston (Rossmor Guesthouse)

We are also hugely grateful to the many generous audience members who offered accommodation for our musicians. Thank you for your support!

If you would like to support the orchestra why not consider joining our supporters' network, **The Mahler Circle**. For an annual contribution you would:

- receive 2 complimentary tickets to each programme we perform, at the venue of your choice and with seats reserved.
- be informed about our plans ahead of public announcements.
- receive a complimentary copy of our CD, *Richard Wagner in Venice*.
- have the option to be acknowledged in our concert programmes.

If you are interested in becoming a member then please feel free to approach someone today or write to us at **donations@mahlerplayers.co.uk**. We would be delighted to discuss the network further with you.

We always welcome any one-off support that may be available, this can be formally acknowledged or remain anonymous depending on your preference.

Additionally, we are keen to develop further relationships with businesses - local, regional and national and have a framework which offers a tiered system of sponsorship. If you would like to know more, please get in touch with us: **contact@mahlerplayers.co.uk**
You can find us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter **@mahlerplayers**.

The Mahler Players is a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) Charity
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