

## Wagner Performances in Brisbane, Australia 2020

*Tristan und Isolde* and *Der Ring des Nibelungen* will be performed in Brisbane this year between late-October and mid-December by Opera Queensland, Opera Australia and the Queensland Symphony Orchestra.

### TRISTAN UND ISOLDE

The season begins with *Tristan und Isolde*, semi-staged, on 28 and 31 October in the Concert Hall of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Conductor Pietari Inkinen will arrive in Brisbane immediately after conducting the new *Ring* at Bayreuth. "My conducting teacher once conducted *Tristan und Isolde*", he has said, "and this was a very powerful experience and stayed with me for a very long time.... Wagner's music remains for me both a fascination and a most rewarding step in my career to climb as a conductor."

The demanding role of Tristan will be sung by New Zealand tenor Simon O'Neill, described by Inkinen as "one of my closest allies in this repertoire and we have both travelled along the Wagner road for a long time". O'Neill has performed in the world's most famous opera houses and festivals (including Bayreuth) with conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Sir Simon Rattle, James Levine, Riccardo Muti, Valery Gergiev, Sir Antonio Pappano, Pierre Boulez, Donald Runnicles, Christian Thielemann, Simone Young, Andris Nelsons, Esa Pekka Salonen and Gustavo Dudamel. Already a celebrated Siegmund, he will sing Tristan with Santa Fe Opera in mid-2020 and will make his debut as Siegfried in a new *Ring* at the Deutsche Opera Berlin.

Complimentary pre-performance talks will be held on the day of each performance at 10.30am inside the Concert Hall. Talks will run for approximately one hour and are given by Dr. Peter Bassett, renowned Wagner scholar, author and President of the Wagner Society in Queensland.

### CREATIVE TEAM

Conductor       Pietari Inkinen  
Director         Patrick Nolan  
Lighting and  
Video Designer Mark Howett

### CAST

Tristan         Simon O'Neill  
Isolde          Meagan Miller  
Brangäne       Anna Werle  
Kurwenal       James Roser  
King Marke     Paul Whelan

Opera Queensland provides support for group bookings for members of international Wagner Societies who travel to Brisbane for *Tristan und Isolde* and the *Ring Cycle*.

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## **DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN**

Opera Australia's new *Ring* production will be staged in the Lyric Theatre of the Queensland Performing Arts Centre between 10 November and 5 December. The director and designer is Chinese/American Chen Shi-Zheng, and we have every reason to look forward to a fascinating, beautiful and poetic realisation of this incomparable work.

Chen was born in China and staged traditional Chinese works as well as many western operas in the United States and Europe, including *Eugene Onegin*, *Nixon in China*, *La traviata*, *The Coronation of Poppea*, *Orfeo*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Flying Dutchman* and *Così fan tutte* – and *Turandot* for Opera Australia's 'Opera on the Harbour' in 2016.

Chen has been quoted as saying: "Wagner productions, in recent history, are always trying to relate the story of the Ring to current western society. But this story is fantasy, a myth. So, what I want to do is take the myth as a platform to dive into, and reimagine it in the 21st century, in Australia, in this very landscape. The references also relate to where I come from. What we are trying to avoid is using the familiar methods of European cultural reference. We are trying to get away from that."

The conductor of the Ring in Brisbane will be Philippe Auguin, who has conducted many Ring productions around the world, including for the State Theatre Nuremberg at the International Beijing Music Festival in 2005 – the first-ever staging of the complete Ring in China. He also conducted Washington National Opera's Ring in 2016, and many well-known orchestras around the world. The terrific Brisbane cast will be led by Vitalij Kowaljow as Wotan (recently seen in this role in the Salzburg Festival conducted by Christian Thielemann), Allison Oakes as Brünnhilde (she has sung Gutrune at Bayreuth and the Walküre Brünnhilde for Deutsche Oper Berlin), and Stefan Vinke, greatly admired by Australian audiences, as Siegfried.

### **Cycle 1**

Das Rheingold 10 November 2020, 19:00  
Die Walküre 12 November 2020, 17:00  
Siegfried 14 November 2020, 13:00  
Götterdämmerung 16 November 2020, 16:00

### **Cycle 2**

Das Rheingold 19 November 2020, 19:00  
Die Walküre 21 November 2020, 17:00  
Siegfried 24 November 2020, 13:00  
Götterdämmerung 26 November 2020, 16:00

### **Cycle 3**

Das Rheingold 28 November 2020, 19:00  
Die Walküre 01 December 2020, 17:00  
Siegfried 03 December 2020, 13:00  
Götterdämmerung 05 December 2020, 16:00

More information: [https://www.qpac.com.au/event/oa\\_ring\\_cycle\\_20/](https://www.qpac.com.au/event/oa_ring_cycle_20/)

## **RING ANCILLARY EVENTS**

During the three cycles of the *Ring*, Dr Peter Bassett and Professor Stephen Emmerson will be holding talks and panel discussions on 11, 20 and 30 November 2020 in the Ian Hanger Recital Hall of the Queensland Conservatorium. These sessions will also involve Stage Director Chen Shi-Zheng and Conductor Philippe Auguin.

Details for bookings are available at: [www.qtix.com.au](http://www.qtix.com.au).

Following the afternoon session, members of Wagner Societies who are attending the session are warmly invited to join their Queensland counterparts for drinks on the Conservatorium balcony.