

# Longwood Opera

Longwood Opera

Stage Director J. Scott Brumit

Music Director Jeffrey Brody

*Tales from*

# Der Ring des Nibelungen

*by Richard Wagner*



## US PREMIERE

### Christ Episcopal Church

1132 Highland Ave., Needham

Friday, June 4 at 7:00 pm

Sunday, June 6 at 2:00 pm

### Park Avenue

### Congregational Church

50 Paul Revere Rd., Arlington

Sunday, June 13 at 2:00 pm

## PROGRAM



This program is sponsored in part by the Needham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Longwood Opera | Needham, MA  
781-455-0960 | [www.LongwoodOpera.org](http://www.LongwoodOpera.org)

## **Longwood Opera's mission is:**

- to prepare trained emerging singers for the next stage in their operatic careers by providing them with the opportunity to practice their art and to polish their performing skills in major roles before a live audience
- to foster appreciation for opera among individuals from all walks of life in the Greater Boston communities by offering high-quality, accessible and affordable operatic experiences.

Longwood Opera, Inc., was founded in 1986 to fill a void in New England's performing arts network. After students graduate from the universities and conservatories in the Boston area, they have the skills necessary to make a career as opera singers, but they lack the opportunity to use their talents. Producing opera is a costly undertaking, and most major companies are reluctant to risk using "unseasoned" singers in leading roles. Longwood Opera gives talented Boston-based singers a chance to polish their performing skills so that they may become successful artists. So far, over 700 singers have performed as members of the company. In 1995 we adopted the slogan "Opera For All!" This expresses our goal to make opera accessible to everyone, especially to those who might otherwise not have access to this wonderful art form. We are proud to be reaching a large sector of the public, which can now attend professional-quality performances without the inconveniences of expense or travel. As more people want to pursue performing arts careers in a climate where opportunities are dwindling, Longwood Opera is successful at its second goal of our mission, and has matured into a forum for young, talented artists.

*J. Scott Brumit, General Director*

## **Acknowledgments**

Longwood Opera would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their assistance:

- Our continued thanks to Christ Episcopal Church, Needham, its Rector, Robert Windsor, and the congregation for giving us a home for auditions, rehearsals and performances.
- Landmark Impressions in Burlington for their special consideration and help with our printing. Contact them at (781) 229-6662.
- Linda Hull for the creation of our poster and program cover.
- This program is paid for in part by the Joseph and Patricia Brumit Memorial Fund for Longwood Opera.
- We are very fortunate to have been given matching grants from IBM, GE Verizon, Home Depot and John Hancock. Contact J. Scott Brumit at (781) 455-0960 for more information on matching grants.
- Thanks to our volunteer house staff.
- Thanks to the following individuals for their assistance with this production: Bob Begin and Rebecca Saslow.
- Special thanks to those who helped with our production but could not be noted by press time.

*This program is sponsored in part by the Needham Cultural Council, local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.*

# Cast

Benjamin Clark	Alberich, Fasolt, Fafner, Gunther
Janice Edwards	Fricka, Sieglinde, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Norn
Stephanie E. Mann	Woglinde, Guttrune, Forest Bird
Joanna Porackova	Brünnhilde, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Norn
Alan Schneider	Siegmond, Siegfried
Rachel Selan *	Wellgunde
Christopher Aaron Smith	Loge, Mime
Angeliki Theoharis	Erda, Flosshilde, 1 <sup>st</sup> Norn
Thomas Weber	Wotan, Wanderer, Hundig, Hagen

\* Denotes Longwood Opera debut

## **There will be one intermission**

<i>General Director</i>	<i>J. Scott Brumit</i>
<i>Music Director &amp; Pianist</i>	<i>Jeffrey Brody</i>
<i>Production Coordinator</i>	<i>Bob and Shelley Monaghan</i>
<i>Director Marketing Communications</i>	<i>Harding Ounanian, Jr.</i>

***These U.S. Premiere performances are in honor of  
Joseph and Patricia Brumit***

***20<sup>th</sup> Annual Summer Concert Series July 6<sup>th</sup> – August 31<sup>st</sup>***

***Humperdinck - HANSEL & GRETEL – October 2010***

***Brody/Saslow – PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY – June 2011 (world premiere)***

## Some thoughts on the *Ring*

Jeffrey Brody

A most delightful and indeed quite *gemütlich* dinner party at the home of Boston Wagner Society President Dalia Geffen was the setting for my discovery of the version of Richard Wagner's monumental *Der Ring des Nibelungen* with which Longwood Opera opens its 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive season. This version, prepared by Prof. Dr. Peter P. Pachl, Vice President of the International Siegfried Wagner Society, and pianist and conductor Rainer Armbrust, was originally staged in a private home in Solingen, Germany. For Longwood Opera purposes I have modified the Pachl-Armbrust performing edition slightly by tightening a few cuts here, opening a few cuts there. I have also made a slight redistribution of the roles and have added a ninth voice to an ensemble that originally called for eight. I would like to offer very special thanks not only to my good friend, Prof. Dr. Peter Pachl, who made his and Rainer Armbrust's version of the score available to us, but also to the Boston Wagner Society, who gave us the idea for this *Ring* production.

More ink has been spilled about Richard Wagner, the man and his music, than anyone else, with the exceptions of Jesus Christ, Napoleon Bonaparte and William Shakespeare. (I doubt that Wagner would have minded at least some of that company as he himself thought he was the incarnation of Shakespeare and Beethoven and Plato all rolled into one). A lack of ego was never his problem. To add to the always-growing Wagner literature, I should like to offer a few thoughts here.

As a dyed-in-the-wool and most fervent Wagnerian, I have for a very long time wanted to do Wagner with Longwood Opera. Unfortunately, in this path lie many obstacles, not the least of which remains the formidable scenic demands that this composer imposes. This particular performing version of the *Ring* serves our needs quite well indeed. In a concert format sung in our customary English, the demands become purely musical issues. Performing these works in the vernacular, as is our custom, allows the audience to grasp more readily the meaning of the text, instead of having to deal with Wagner's purposely archaic German. (Only Wagner would call the male chorus in *Götterdämmerung* "Mannen" instead of "Männer"!)

The idea of a less-than 13-hour, 4-day *Ring* is not new. Indeed, as late as 1974 when Wolfgang Wagner was searching for a stage director for the Centennial Bayreuth Festival *Ring*, he initially asked the Berlin stage director, Peter Stein, who said he preferred to do a two-evening version of the usual 4-evening *Ring*. This was completely anathema to Wolfgang Wagner, who then turned to the French *enfant terrible* stage director, Patrice Chereau, whose 1976 Centennial *Ring* production revolutionized opera staging and brought about what, in modern parlance, is called *Regietheater* or, in less kindly terms, *Eurotrash*.

Another consideration of *Ring* simplification is the actual size of the orchestra. In present times, most opera houses of any size (and prestige) perform the cycle using Wagner's original orchestration (quadruple winds, eight horns, four trumpets, four trombones, contrabass trombone, contrabass tuba, seven harps, many anvils of various sizes, and massive strings). However, even in Wagner's day, many opera houses wanted to perform the *Ring* but lacked not only the necessary budget but the space in the orchestra pit for an ensemble of close to 100+ instrumentalists. To further propagate his art, Wagner allowed a reduced orchestration to be made by one Alfons Abbass. Thanks to this reduced scoring, many smaller houses were able to present the *Ring*. It is this version that the German impresario Angelo Neumann used to present his composer-sanctioned *Ring* staging all over Europe following the 1876 Bayreuth premiere. (A precursor to contemporary touring Broadway productions!) In 1983, Boston Lyric Opera presented its first (and last) *Ring* under the exceedingly capable direction of conductor John Balme and stage director Anne Ewers, using the Abbass reduction. Sitting in the prompter's box for close to 14 hours I can well attest to the ingenious solutions that Abbass found in boiling down Wagner's extravagant orchestral demands into practical (physical and economic) reality. (Incidentally, it remains a mystery as to how anyone can conduct the Abbass reduction, since it does not exist in any real conductor's full score. It exists only in the instrumental material.) Recently, the EOS Ensemble, under the direction of Jonathan Sheffer, has also presented an orchestrally reduced *Ring*, and the Berkeley Opera in 2011-12 is scheduled to mount a 3-hour *Ring* and with a 10-piece orchestra to boot.

Our Longwood Opera version is meant to tell the story in a most practical and as non-repetitive way as possible. Our present concert format in the vernacular allows the listener to partake or participate in the drama as much as possible, without any preconceived director's or scenic designer's interpolated ideas. Hearing this music not within the context of a large Wagnerian orchestration but with only one piano also allows the listener to really

hone in on the true substance of the composition, rather like hearing Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in the version for piano 4-hands or, even with more clarity, the version for piano solo, the latter being quite a pianistic tour de force. I should like to suggest a few thoughts for the listener as we proceed through, and indeed experience, what Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau has called a "family tragedy"; for these thoughts I remain very much indebted to my good friend and colleague, John Balme.

"The story of the *Ring* is susceptible to all kinds of interpretations, of which six come to mind immediately. The *Ring* makes a religious statement, actually an anti- or non-religious statement: most major religions offer the promise of an afterlife or a soul-recurrence theory; the *Ring* rejects all such futurisms. The *Ring* makes a political statement: Utopia is indeed Utopia, an idealized dream, incapable of realization. The *Ring* makes a sociological statement: the conflict between the aristocracy and the lower classes is incapable of resolution into a classless society. The *Ring* makes an economic statement: the exploitation of either hereditary power or of industrial power sows the seed of the destruction of both. The *Ring* makes a moral statement: Truth (represented by Erda and acted upon by Brünnhilde) is not an absolute in the eyes of gods or men, but is adjusted by circumstances. Absolute truth is an impotent statement incapable of acting upon the reality of the moment. And finally, the *Ring* makes a philosophical statement: that in the conflict between the need for love and the pursuit of power, the latter will dominate and because of its unavoidable corruptive power will ultimately destroy itself and everything around it. Wagner wrote some lines for Brünnhilde at the very end of the Immolation Scene which establish this eschatological focus. The lines include the phrase "I saw the world end". This uncompromising finality was more than Wagner, with his personal obsession with redemptive themes, could handle, so he omitted them when he wrote the music. However, the message is still quite clear and unavoidable: the world will indeed end and we will bring about that ending."

With this composer at least, there is hardly any middle ground---one either loves the *music* or not. Unfortunately, for many people, the composer's noxious anti-Semitism is a major turn-off. It did not help the composer's reputation when a certain Austrian corporal painter manqué declared that to understand Nazi Germany one must know Wagner. To this day, there are many who still loathe Wagner because he was the house composer of the Third Reich. It is very difficult, if not impossible, to get Wagner-haters to think otherwise. The reality, however, was that Wagner, despite being a ferocious anti-Semite, still had a throng of Jewish friends and supporters who, for the sake of his towering creations and revolutionary art, were willing to overlook his own personal and moral failings. Genius does not always come from nice people, as this composer so well proves. Wagner stole the wife of his best friend and supporter, lied to his royal patron, King Ludwig II, and yes, was a vicious anti-Semite. However, one must simply put aside all these human issues and focus on the music. Wagner's only son Siegfried, Bayreuth Festival conductor and administrator from 1896 until his death in 1930, always advised his audiences that "Hier gilt es die Kunst" (here it is Art that counts). For a detailed and concise consideration of this issue, I recommend a reading of the classic essay, *The Monster*, by Deems Taylor.

The *Ring* is a monumental work that took close to twenty-five years to write, from the first draft of the libretto for *Siegfrieds Tod* in 1848 to writing the final measure of the full orchestral score of *Götterdämmerung* in November of 1874. (Forgetting about the actual composition, the act of simply copying with pen and ink on paper these four enormous scores simply boggles the mind of contemporary-computer-music software-savvy composers!). As noted above, the *Ring* can be appreciated on so many levels. It is our hope that perhaps some of the audience members who either do not know Wagner well, if at all, might just have their appetites whetted by this judicious selection of "Tales" from this operatic summit of human creation and seek out a total *Ring* experience, be it live, or on CD or DVD. Nowadays, the selection of recorded performances is vast indeed in both audio and video media; the *Ring* flourishes the world over (despite and still!). I envy those who have yet to make their acquaintance with these works.

## *Der Ring des Nibelungen (The Ring of the Nibelungs) – synopsis*

*Italics = omitted sections*

### **Das Rheingold (The Rhinegold)**

The Three Rhinemaidens are swimming in the depths of the river Rhine, as Alberich the Nibelung (a night-dwarf) enters. The Rhinemaidens tease him as he tries to catch them.

A ray of sunlight shines on a pile of gold. The Rhinemaidens tell Alberich that if someone should forswear all love, he would be able to forge an all-powerful ring of the Rhinegold. They tell this to Alberich because they think he would never forswear love, as he was so lustily chasing them. But they are wrong: mad with despair, Alberich forswears and curses all love, steals the Rhinegold and flees before the shocked Rhinemaidens can take any action.

Elsewhere, Wotan, the head of the gods, has hired two giants - Fasolt and Fafner –to build him a mighty fortress. Following the cunning Loge's advice, he promised the giants the goddess Freia as payment. Now Freia is fleeing towards Wotan and his wife, Fricka, goddess of marriage, as the giants appear: the fortress is completed and they have come for their payment. Wotan stalls for time, hoping that Loge will appear and find some clever way out of the nasty situation. *Donner, the god of thunder, and Froh, the god of youth, arrive to protect Freia. Donner is about to swing his hammer at the giants, but Wotan stops him: Wotan's spear protects his deal with the giants.*

Finally, Loge appears in a flickering flame. All the gods are angry at him. Loge says he understands the giants' demand - for who could deny a woman's charm? Who except Alberich? Loge tells them about Alberich's new might: the Ring and the treasures he has acquired by the power of the Ring. Alberich is a bitter enemy of the giants and the two giants declare that they will take the Nibelung's treasure instead of Freia. As Wotan hesitates, the giants take Freia away and demand their payment be delivered before sunset. *The gods suddenly feel weak: Loge knows that this is because Freia normally gives them Golden Apples which bestows them their eternal youth - no Freia, no Apples. Loge suggests that Wotan should take the Ring from Alberich, since it does not belong to him: steal from the thief.* Left with little choice, Wotan agrees to try to win Alberich's treasure. He tells Loge to lead him to Nibelheim, but not through the river Rhine (possibly because he does not want the Rhinemaidens to see him, as he does not intend to return the gold to them but keep it).

*Meanwhile, in Nibelheim, Alberich has forced his brother, Mime, to forge a magic helmet called the Tarnhelm, which enables its wearer to change shape and to become invisible (it also grants its wearer the ability to teleport, but this will be revealed much later). Mime has hidden the Tarnhelm, hoping to steal the Ring with its help, but he fears Alberich's might too much and gives the helmet when Alberich asks for it. Alberich wears the Tarnhelm and turns invisible - and beats Mime up.*

*Alberich has just left when Loge and Wotan arrive. Loge promises Mime they will free all Nibelung dwarfs from Alberich's tyranny. Alberich arrives and becomes visible. He recognizes Wotan and Loge immediately and asks what it is they want. He is told that the gods have heard of his new might and wanted to see if the rumors are true. Alberich boasts of his treasures with which he says he will rule the world. Loge pretends disbelief in the Tarnhelm's powers, and to prove its might, Alberich wears the Tarnhelm and turns into a huge dragon. Loge pretends to be frightened, and asks next whether Alberich could turn into something tiny to evade his enemies. Alberich doesn't see the trick and turns into a toad. Loge tells Wotan to catch the toad: the gods seize the Tarnhelm and leave Nibelheim with Alberich as their captive.*

*Wotan demands that Alberich pay all his treasure as ransom for his freedom. Alberich summons the Nibelungs and they pile all his treasures. Loge also places the Tarnhelm on the pile, Alberich is furious, but tries to calm himself with the knowledge that Mime can forge a new magic helmet. Wotan demands the Ring. He proceeds to take it and lets Loge free Alberich. Crushed, Alberich places a powerful curse on the ring: whoever has the Ring will be its slave and will be doomed, he will be envied and hated by others - everyone will covet for the Ring. With these words he leaves. Wotan ignores his words.*

The giants return with Freia. They demand that the treasure must fully cover Freia before they are satisfied. After all the gold has been used, her hair can still be seen: the Tarnhelm must cover that. Even then, Fasolt claims he

can still see Freia's eyes - but he can also see a golden ring on Wotan's finger: he wants it too. Wotan refuses abruptly. The giants say the deal is off.

Just then, bathed in blue light, a woman appears and tells Wotan to surrender the Ring and thus evade its dread curse. She introduces herself as Erda the Earthmother and tells the gods she has seen a dark day dawn for the gods: the End of Everything. Then she disappears. Reluctantly, Wotan follows this advice and gives the Ring to the giants.

Immediately, the giants quarrel over how to divide the treasure. Fafner kills his brother Fasolt, and gets all the treasure. The power of the curse horrifies Wotan. After Fafner has left, the gods turn to greet their new home. *Donner summons a lightning bolt to clear away the fog and a Rainbow Bridge spreads out. Wotan is silent for a moment, as though seized by a novel idea.* Wotan names the fortress Valhalla.

*As the gods are walking the Rainbow Bridge to Valhalla, Loge stays behind them and remarks that the gods are merely hastening to their own end and he would welcome the day he can turn again into fire and burn everything.* Distant singing can be heard: the Rhinemaidens mourn their lost gold. *Wotan bids Loge tell them to be silent - but they won't be silenced.* The gods enter Valhalla.

### **Die Walküre (The Valkyrie) - Act I**

*There is a thunderstorm. A weaponless man called Siegmund is fleeing and comes across a house: he is wounded and exhausted and cannot go on, so he decides to rest here. (It is possible that Siegmund does not know his own name yet). Sieglinde, who lives in the house, finds him and gives him water. She informs him that the house and she herself belong to Hunding and that the guest should wait for the master of the house. Siegmund says that bad luck haunts him and that he must leave lest he should bring bad luck to the house but Sieglinde bids him stay: he cannot bring bad luck where bad luck already lives. Siegmund names himself "Woeful" and waits for Hunding.*

*Hunding arrives and greets Siegmund in a formal manner and then wants to hear his story. Siegmund tells his hosts that his father was "Wolf" (he wore a wolfskin), and he had a twin sister. "Wolf" was very warlike and had many enemies. As Siegmund one day returned home, his mother had been killed and the home burned. His sister and father were nowhere to be found. He only found an empty wolfskin in the forest. Later he saw a damsel in distress: she was being forced into a marriage she did not want. Siegmund rushed to her defense and killed some of her enemies - only to learn they were actually her brothers and kinsmen. Siegmund fought, but was wounded and eventually lost his sword. The girl was killed and Siegmund fled.*

*Hunding declares that he was summoned to avenge a murderer who had killed some people nearby and Siegmund turns out to be that murderer. Hunding says that his house will protect his guest for today, but that he must prepare to fight Hunding to the death tomorrow. Then he retreats to his bed - and Sieglinde mixes him a drugged drink, which will make him sleep heavily so she can meet Siegmund in private.*

Siegmund is left alone. He remembers his father (whom he now calls "Wälse") promised him a sword when he most badly would need one - where is that sword now he asks. Sieglinde enters *and tells him she was forced to marry Hunding against her will. Their wedding party had an uninvited guest: a fearsome stranger whose large hat was pulled down to cover one eye. All except Sieglinde were afraid of him. The stranger had a sword and he thrust the sword in the tree trunk that is in the middle of Hunding's house and said that the blade would belong to anyone who pulled it out of the tree. Many have tried but none of them succeeded. Sieglinde believes Siegmund is the hero who would free her from her miserable life as Hunding's property.*

They both reveal their true feelings to each other. Sieglinde reveals to Siegmund that she is his lost twin sister as well, and calls him his true name, Siegmund. Siegmund draws the enchanted sword from the tree and names it Nothung ("Needy"). They embrace each other passionately and rush out into the forest.

### **Die Walküre - Act II**

Wotan orders his Valkyrie daughter Brünnhilde to protect Siegmund in the fight that will come soon. Fricka arrives and starts to complain: she, as the guardian of marriage, is furious at Wotan's latest stunt. She was alarmed by Hunding's prayers to her, but Wotan says he does not honor Hunding's marriage since it was against Sieglinde's will. Now Fricka says the trouble is not only that but - she asks - when has anyone heard of twin-born lovers! Wotan answers abruptly: you are hearing of it now. But Fricka insists that it is the gods' status and honor that is at stake: should they lose the mortals' respect, they would lose their power.

Not even Wotan's explanations can change her mind. Wotan calls Siegmund a "free hero", she rightly points out that Siegmund is not free or independent at all, since it was Wotan - posing as "Wälse" - who brought him up, and led him to the sword. She demands that Wotan withdraw all protection and even the magic sword from Siegmund and forces Wotan to give his promise of that.

*Fricka leaves as Brünnhilde enters and finds her father looking gloomy. Wotan tells her his tale: how Loge tricked him into dishonest treaties concealing evil, how they stole the Ring and how he was warned by Erda. Later Wotan visited her again "in the bowels of the earth" and overpowered her with the magic of love. Erda gave him information but, as a price bore him nine Valkyrie daughters. Wotan sent the Valkyries to collect perished brave heroes into the halls of Valhalla to avert the horrible end Erda foretold. Alberich's army could not beat Wotan's heroes, but if Alberich regained the Ring, he could turn Wotan's heroes against him. Fafner is guarding the Ring now, but Wotan's own treaties prevent him from attacking Fafner directly. Thus, the only possible solution for him is to let a free hero kill Fafner; Siegmund was to be this hero, but as Fricka remarked, Siegmund was everything but free. Wotan has no idea what to do now. He even knows the end is near, for Erda said that when Alberich has a son, the end will come soon; now he has learned Alberich has bought a woman with gold and that woman is now pregnant with Alberich's child.*

*Wotan orders Brünnhilde to protect Hunding instead of Siegmund, but Brünnhilde, feeling as compassionate toward Siegmund as Wotan himself, refuses. Wotan is angered by this: he furiously orders Brünnhilde to ensure that Siegmund dies. Brünnhilde can only obey.*

*Siegmund and Sieglinde are desperately fleeing Hunding and his kinsmen who are hunting them with dogs. Sieglinde gets hysterical and faints. Brünnhilde appears and announces to Siegmund that only those doomed to die may see her - he is to follow her to Valhalla. But as he learns he will not find Sieglinde in Valhalla, Siegmund refuses Brünnhilde's promises. He decides he will kill himself and Sieglinde with one swift blow rather than let Hunding get them. Brünnhilde is so moved by his courage that she decides to rebel against Wotan's orders and protect Siegmund.*

When Sieglinde awakens, Siegmund has already left to face Hunding: she can hear their voices but cannot see them. Hunding and Siegmund fight, after a few insults. As they fight, Brünnhilde appears, holding a shield above Siegmund and tells him trust his sword. But then Wotan appears, in a red storm cloud and breaks Nothung into pieces with his spear. Hunding finishes Siegmund off easily, Brünnhilde flees with Sieglinde on her horse's back.

Wotan gazes thoughtfully Siegmund's corpse and then turns to Hunding who is gloating over his victory. He gives Hunding one contemptuous gesture and Hunding falls down dead. Then he turns to chase Brünnhilde, the rebel, who dared disobey his order and leaves amid thunder and lightning.

### **Die Walküre - Act III**

*Eight of the Valkyrie sisters are bringing dead heroes on their horses, when Brünnhilde appears with Sieglinde, asking for a horse for Sieglinde (her own horse, Grane, faints after a strenuous ride). The other Valkyries are shocked when they hear she has disobeyed Wotan. They refuse to give Sieglinde a horse, but when Schwertleite tells Brünnhilde that Wotan seldom ventures eastwards, where Fafner guards his treasure in the form of a dragon, Brünnhilde thinks it would be the safest place for Sieglinde. She gives her the splinters of Nothung and tells her that she is carrying the greatest hero of all time in her womb and she is to name him Siegfried. Sieglinde flees just before Wotan arrives in a thundercloud.*

Brünnhilde is terrified behind the backs of her sisters - but finally comes out of her hiding. Wotan is furious: he says Brünnhilde will be a Valkyrie no longer; she will lay defenseless in deep sleep and will become wife to the first person who finds her. *The other Valkyries protest, but Wotan tells them to leave lest they wish to share Brünnhilde's fate. The eight Valkyries flee in terror, only Brünnhilde and Wotan are left. Brünnhilde tries to make Wotan change his mind, but it is no use.* Her last wish is that Wotan surround her with a wall of fire which only bravest of all heroes can penetrate. Wotan says she's asking too much, but as Brünnhilde asks him to rather kill her on the spot, he is moved so deeply that he decides to grant his daughter's last wish.

Brünnhilde falls in deep sleep and Wotan gives her a long goodbye - and then kisses her godhood away: she is a mortal woman now. Wotan knocks the ground three times with his spear and summons Loge (in his fire-



elemental form) to surround the sleeping Brünnhilde. He leaves the scene with the words "Whosoever fears the tip of my spear shall never pass through the fire!"

## **Siegfried - Act I**

*In a cavern in deep wilderness Mime, Alberich's brother, is forging a sword. He is frustrated: no matter how good a sword he forges, his young "ward" Siegfried breaks every one of them. There is only one sword Siegfried could not break: Nothung the enchanted. But Mime cannot forge it anew. In his monologue we learn that he wants Siegfried to slay Fafner so he could get the Ring.*

*Siegfried hauls on a bear he has tamed and scares Mime out of his wits. Siegfried asks for a sword and Mime hands him his latest piece of forging. Siegfried lets the bear go and he breaks it, saying that a sword must be hard and firm, not a puny pin. Siegfried also refuses the food Mime offers him, saying he has roasted meat for himself. Next he makes an inquiry about his parents: he saw that all animals have two parents, and Mime cannot be his since he looks so different. Pressed hard, Mime finally tells him he found his mother as she gave birth to him in the wilderness and died. Mime lies and says he does not know Siegfried's father's name. Finally Mime shows Siegfried the fragments of the sword Nothung as a proof of his tale. Siegfried tells him to forge Nothung again so he can leave Mime forever. He exits, telling Mime to be ready when he is back.*

Mime is alone, worrying about his plans which do not seem to work, as Wotan enters, disguised as a Wanderer. Mime is terrified: he wants to get rid of the Wanderer, but Wotan stubbornly sits down and challenges Mime to a riddle game. Wotan wagers his head and Mime is to ask three riddles - he must answer all three correctly to redeem his head.

First Mime asks the name of the race that dwells in the earth's depths. Wotan answers correctly: the Nibelungs. The next question is the name of the race that dwells on the earth's face - the Giants. Mime's last question is which race lives high in the clouds, and Wotan answers correctly: the gods. As he tells Mime about them, he by "mistake" lets his spear knock the ground: there is thunder and lightning - Mime cowers. The Wanderer says that since he wagered his head, Mime should have asked things he needed to know instead of such meaningless riddles. Now Mime must answer three riddles of his or Mime's head is his! First the Wanderer asks the name of the race Wotan oppresses though he loves them very much. This Mime knows-- it is the "Wälsungs" Next he asks the name of the sword Siegfried must wield to slay Fafner. Mime answers correctly and here we also learn that Mime is fully aware of who Siegfried is and who his parents really were. Wotan's last riddle is: who will forge Nothung anew? This Mime cannot answer: he cannot forge Nothung anew, so who can? As Mime panics, the Wanderer leaves, having won Mime's head. He also says that one who knows no fear shall forge Nothung anew and that he leaves Mime's head to him who has never felt fear.

*Mime is left alone in utter horror. His wild imaginings take over, and as Siegfried's figure shadows the entrance of the cave, he thinks it is Fafner who has finally come for him and screams in terror. Siegfried comes back to ask for Nothung, but Mime answers that he cannot forge Nothung. Mime says there is one more thing Siegfried should learn: the meaning of fear - he promised Siegfried's mother he would teach young Siegfried the meaning of fear. He cannot teach Siegfried, but he knows one who can: Fafner. All right, says Siegfried, after I have seen this Fafner, I will leave you forever.*

Siegfried decides to forge Nothung himself. *As he forges the sword, Mime brews a drugged potion for him. Mime is happy again as he can see the fulfillment of his plans.* The act ends with one mighty blow by Siegfried's Nothung, cleaving the anvil in two.

## **Siegfried - Act II**

*Alberich is watching Fafner's cave, Neidhöhle (the "Hole of Envy"), for he wants to know where his precious Ring is. Wotan arrives, still posing as a Wanderer, but Alberich sees through his disguise immediately and calls him a shameless thief. Alberich remarks that Wotan cannot kill Fafner himself or else his spear would break and his powers be lost forever; he also boasts about his own schemes of world domination. Wotan answers that Alberich need not mind him: he should worry about Mime instead. He also suggests that Alberich ask Fafner to give the Ring to him. As Alberich hesitates, Wotan wakes Fafner up. Wotan and Alberich tell Fafner about a strong boy with a sharp blade who is coming to kill Fafner, but wants only the Ring: if he gives up the Ring, he*

*will be spared. Fafner ignores their words and goes back to sleep. Wotan laughs at this ingenious prank he pulled on Alberich and leaves, warning about Mime one more time.*

*Mime leads Siegfried to Neidhöhle but dares not come near it himself. Even his terrifying descriptions of the Dragon do not scare Siegfried. Mime stays there waiting for Siegfried - Siegfried walks alone toward Neidhöhle. He wonders what his mother was like - he has never seen a woman. He sees a beautiful bird - he carves a flute and tries to imitate its singing, but realizes his playing does not sound right. So Siegfried decides to give the bird a few notes from his hunting-horn.*

*As Siegfried blows the hunting-horn, Fafner comes out of his cave to investigate the noise. He says he wanted a drink and now he has found some food as well. Naturally, Siegfried does not want to end up as the Dragon's meal - he just wanted to "learn the meaning of fear". Fafner takes this to be bravado and a fight ensues. It is a brief fight: Nothung pierces the Dragon's heart very quickly.*

*Fafner, just before he dies, asks his slayer's name and tells his story to the boy. He also warns Siegfried about the evil intents of the one who lead him to Fafner.*

*Some of the Dragon's blood has been spilled on Siegfried's fingers and as he licks the blood off of them he realizes he can now understand the bird's speech. The bird tells Siegfried to take only the Tarnhelm and the Ring and leave the rest of the treasure.*

*Meanwhile, Alberich has reached Mime. They quarrel about to which one of them the treasure belongs. Mime suggests that they split the treasure: Alberich may keep his Ring and Mime gets the Tarnhelm. Alberich refuses, as he could never sleep his nights comfortably if Mime had the Tarnhelm - thus he wants both. Siegfried appears, carrying both the Ring and the Tarnhelm. Alberich curses and hurries off.*

*Now Siegfried can hear the bird's voice again: the bird warns him of Mime's treachery and tells him that he now can perceive what Mime is thinking in his heart.*

*Siegfried tells Mime that the teacher has failed: he could not learn the meaning of fear from Fafner. Mime tries to offer Siegfried a drugged potion, but Siegfried can read his mind as if it were an open book. He gets angry and slays Mime with one swift blow of his sword. He throws Mime's corpse in Neidhöhle.*

*Siegfried asks the bird if the bird knows where he could find a suitable companion. The bird tells him about what has befallen Brünnhilde, who is lying in deep sleep, surrounded by a magic fire which can be penetrated only by one who knows no fear. Siegfried realizes how stupid he was, trying to learn fear and now follows the woodbird who will lead him to Brünnhilde.*

### **Siegfried- Act III**

*It is night; there is much thunder and lightning. Wotan, still disguised as the Wanderer, can be seen standing before a vault-like hollow in a rocky mountain. With a spell-song he awakens Erda the Earth-mother herself, saying that he wants information. Erda is tired and asks why Wotan did not ask the Norns first. Wotan replies that the Norns can only perceive things: they cannot alter what is to come. Next Erda suggests that Wotan seek Brünnhilde's advice as she is very wise. But as Wotan tells about what has befallen on Brünnhilde, Erda is utterly bewildered. Wotan is disappointed in Erda's inability to give him any advice. He tells Erda about Siegfried, the free hero and says that he will gladly accept anything all this leads to. He lets Erda fall back down to her slumber and leaves to meet Siegfried.*

*Siegfried meets Wotan at the base of the mountain on the top of which Brünnhilde lies. The Wanderer interviews Siegfried about his newest heroic deed. But the disrespectful Siegfried talks to him so abusively that he eventually gets quite angry. Wotan blocks Siegfried's way with his spear and tells Siegfried to flee lest his spear break Nothung once more. Siegfried knows he has now met the person responsible for his father's death and as vengeance breaks Wotan's spear in two with Nothung: there is a crack of thunder and Wotan loses all his might. He flees and Siegfried ignores him, starting his climb up to Brünnhilde.*

*Siegfried goes through the enchanted fire and finds Brünnhilde there, thinking her to be a man. But as Siegfried realizes she is definitely not a man, but something different, he shudders: for the first time in his life, he*

experiences fear. Unsure of what to do, Siegfried tries first to waken Brünnhilde, then kisses her. And by this kiss Brünnhilde is awakened.

Brünnhilde is ecstatically joyous to see that her awakener really is Siegfried. But as she sees her Valkyrie battlegear and her steed, she is reminded once more of her glorious past. She realizes that she can never get that back again. But then her passion for Siegfried takes over her, and she cares no more for Valhalla. They declare their love to each other and Siegfried readily forgets the fear he just learned. Brünnhilde falls in Siegfried's arms, leaving her past life behind her, for good.

### **Götterdämmerung (The Twilight of the Gods) - Prologue**

The Three Norns are spinning the rope of fate. They are talking about things which are, have been and will be. We learn how Wotan lost his eye drinking from the Spring of Wisdom and how he carved his spear from a branch of the World-Tree Ash. Now the spring has dried up and the Ash has died, and Wotan's spear has been shattered. Wotan has ordered the dead Ash be cut down and the wood be piled around Valhalla as a great pyre which will one day be ignited by Loge. *As the Norns are discussing Alberich and his Curse, the rope of fate snaps and is broken. The wisdom of the Norns is at an end and the Norns hurry to their mother, Erda.*

A new day dawns around the Valkyrie Rock where Siegfried and Brünnhilde are. Siegfried can be seen in full armor in the sunlight. He wants to go wandering in search of new heroic deeds. Brünnhilde lets him ride her horse, Grane, and Siegfried gives the Ring to Brünnhilde, as a token of his faith. After a passionate farewell, Siegfried rides down the mountainside toward the River Rhine. Brünnhilde can hear the sound of his hunting-horn from the distance.

### **Götterdämmerung - Act I**

In the hall of the Gibichungs, lord Gunther asks his clever half-brother Hagen (whose father is Alberich) how could he win more fame and glory. Hagen says that Gunther should marry and only one wife would be noble enough for him: Brünnhilde, who is surrounded by magic fire which only the bravest of heroes can penetrate. Gunther moans that he lacks the courage for such a task. Hagen says that indeed, the one with such courage is Siegfried - who is the person Gunther's sister, Gutrune, should marry. Gutrune thinks Hagen is jesting--how could she charm the bravest hero in the world? Hagen reminds her of a magic potion which would make Siegfried lose his memory and fall in love with the first woman he sees. Gunther admires Hagen's cleverness, but asks how they can find Siegfried.

Hagen replies that Siegfried is searching for new heroic deeds to be achieved and he might drop by here any day. We hear Siegfried's hunting-horn. He has come to visit the castle and wants to see Gunther, Gibich's son. Hagen calls him by name, explaining later that of course everybody had heard of such a great hero and that's how he knew Siegfried. Siegfried wants Gunther to either fight with him or become his friend. Gunther, not the bravest of men, prefers to become his friend. Hagen leads Grane to the stables as Siegfried follows Gunther into the castle.

*As Hagen returns, he inquires if it is true that Siegfried is really the owner of the Nibelung treasure hoard. Siegfried briefly describes his encounter with Fafner. Hagen asks if Siegfried took anything from the hoard. Siegfried shows him the Tarnhelm, which Hagen immediately identifies. He tells Siegfried of its powers: it allows its wearer to change shape at will and to travel from one place to another at the speed of his thought. Siegfried also mentions the Ring and says "a most marvelous lady" is keeping it safe. Gutrune appears and gives a welcoming toast to Siegfried. It is the magic potion which makes Siegfried lose his memory and fall madly in love with Gutrune. The unfortunate Siegfried drinks the toast for Brünnhilde [he speaks these words as an "aside" so Gunther does not know that Siegfried's beloved is none other than Brünnhilde].*

Siegfried now wants to marry Gutrune. When he hears about Gunther's "beloved", Brünnhilde, and the fires which surround her rock, his mind is struggling to throw off the spell of amnesia, but to no avail. *He devises an ingenious plan: he will use the magic of the Tarnhelm to disguise himself as Gunther and win Brünnhilde for Gunther, if Gunther lets him marry his sister, Gutrune. Gunther affirms this arrangement and Hagen makes Gunther and Siegfried swear an oath of blood-brotherhood before Siegfried leaves to conquer Brünnhilde for Gunther. Hagen sits on watch, waiting for Siegfried's return and when left alone, reveals his true plans: he is*

only interested in the Ring and is using Siegfried and his half-brother, Gunther, merely as pawns in his master scheme.

*Meanwhile, Brünnhilde has a visitor: her Valkyrie sister, Waltraute, rides in on a flying Valkyrie horse with a clap of thunder - against Wotan's orders. She tells Brünnhilde the latest news from Valhalla: how Wotan no longer goes wandering, but just sits on his throne, doing nothing. Wotan has said that if only Brünnhilde would give the Ring back to the Rhinemaidens, the gods and the whole world would be freed from its Curse. Brünnhilde has no intention of throwing her precious Ring away and she angrily tells Waltraute to leave. Waltraute, seeing that her pleas can only be refused, leaves predicting some horrid fate for Brünnhilde, the gods and everyone.*

Brünnhilde hears a horn - she thinks Siegfried is coming back. But the figure who emerges from the fire is Gunther (actually Siegfried in Gunther's guise). He imitates Gunther's voice and informs the terror-stricken Brünnhilde that she is now Gunther's wife. He takes the Ring from Brünnhilde's finger. *He decides to spend the night here, but proclaims that Nothung will guard his oath of blood-brotherhood during the night.*

## **Götterdämmerung - Act II**

*Hagen has fallen asleep. His father, Alberich, appears in a dream vision. He tells Hagen that he must oppose Wotan's kin and gain the Ring at any price. He also says that the Rhinemaidens must not get the Ring or all is lost - and that Brünnhilde might be wise enough to do that. As Alberich gets Hagen's promise, he disappears and Hagen wakes up.*

*Just then Siegfried appears, using the Tarnhelm's power of teleportation. He tells Gutrune that she can now marry him as he has completed his part of the bargain.*

*Hagen blows into a cowhorn, summoning the Gibich vassals, who think there is an attack or some other danger. This is, however, only a practical joke: he tells the alarmed vassals that there is no danger and they should now prepare a great marriage feast. The vassals love Hagen's joke.*

*As the crowd watches, Brünnhilde and Gunther come from a boat. Brünnhilde is shocked to see Siegfried and Gutrune together. Then she notices the Ring on Siegfried's finger and says it was Siegfried who took the Ring from her. Siegfried is confused: he can now remember slaying a Dragon and thus winning the Ring. Hagen suggests to Brünnhilde that Siegfried has played some trick. Brünnhilde screams of her betrayal. *The crowd is getting nervous.* She even claims that Siegfried forced delight from her, at which Siegfried decides to swear a new oath that he has spoken true. Hagen offers his spear for the oath. Siegfried swears: if I have sworn falsely, let yours be the blade that pierces me. Suddenly, Brünnhilde also places her hand on the spear and blesses the blade for this purpose, for, she says, Siegfried has sworn falsely indeed. *Siegfried feels a bit uneasy and whispers to Gunther that maybe the Tarnhelm hid his features only partially and suggests that Gunther should simply let Brünnhilde be in peace for a while so that she can learn to accept her fate.**

*Later, Brünnhilde, Hagen and Gunther are together. Brünnhilde wonders what has happened to Siegfried - what devil's trickery has made him betray her? Hagen offers to avenge her on Siegfried, but Brünnhilde doubts his combat prowess: a single flicker from Siegfried's eyes would suffice to make Hagen's courage falter. Surely, asks Hagen, he would still be vulnerable to his spear because of the false oath he swore on it? Brünnhilde says that she has protected Siegfried with magic which makes him invulnerable to any weapon - only his back did she spare protection as she knew Siegfried would never turn and run from any combat. There shall my spear strike, declares Hagen. Gunther is desperate: the events have put him into a terrible shame. Hagen's answer is that only one thing can restore his honor now: Siegfried's death. Gunther falls silent and hesitates, but Hagen makes him come around with a hint of the all-powerful Ring which Siegfried is wearing. Brünnhilde, Hagen and Gunther decide that Siegfried shall die. Aside, Hagen tells Alberich to summon the Nibelungs to serve him once more: the hour of their dominion is at hand.*

## **Götterdämmerung - Act III**

The three Rhinemaidens are singing and swimming in the River Rhine, as Siegfried arrives. He is hunting, but has lost his prey. The Rhinemaidens spot the Ring and try to persuade Siegfried into giving it to them. For a moment Siegfried holds the Ring in the air and is indeed going to give it away, but as the Rhinemaidens warn him of the dangers which he will meet if does not yield the Ring, he simply declares he does not care for his life.

The Rhinemaids swim away calling him a madman - and they prophecy that the Ring will today go to a certain lady, who will make a more reasonable decision. Siegfried ignores their first seducing and then threatening.

Siegfried meets the rest of the hunting party: Hagen, Gunther and some vassals. Gunther is very depressed as Hagen mixes a drink for Siegfried, who also offers the drink to Gunther. To brighten Gunther, Siegfried decides to tell a story from the years when he was but a boy. He now remembers Mime and how he could understand the bird which told him not to trust Mime and how he eventually slaughtered Mime. Hagen gives him another drink which will "waken memory more clearly". Now Siegfried tells the others how he found Brünnhilde. Gunther is shocked. Siegfried now remembers everything--his beloved turns out to be none other than Brünnhilde! Two ravens fly up and circle above Siegfried, then fly away. Hagen asks him if he understood what the ravens said. Revenge, says Hagen, and plunges his spear in Siegfried's back. Siegfried falls down. Gunther and the vassals are terrified and ask Hagen why he did that. Hagen still maintains it was vengeance. Siegfried opens his eyes and still sees a vision of Brünnhilde, then dies.

Siegfried's corpse is taken to the hall of the Gibichungs. *Hagen tells Gutrune that Siegfried has fallen prey to a wild boar. Gutrune accuses Gunther of murdering Siegfried, but Gunther replies that Hagen was the "wild boar". Hagen confesses to murdering Siegfried, but as Gunther proceeds to take the Ring, he attacks Gunther and strikes him dead, saying abruptly: "Give the Ring here!". Now everyone present is shocked, as Gunther is killed by his own half-brother. Nobody makes any attempt to stop Hagen as he now proceeds to take the Ring - but miraculously Siegfried's corpse raises its hand as Hagen draws near. Hagen is terrified and dares not go any nearer.*

Now Brünnhilde enters. She has heard everything and now knows what it was all about. She makes it clear that Siegfried belonged to Brünnhilde all the time and Gutrune admits that.

Brünnhilde instructs the vassals to pile logs into a funeral pyre and leave Siegfried's corpse atop the pyre. She understands that it was not in fact Siegfried who deceived her as he in turn was betrayed himself and thus forgives Siegfried and mourns her loss. She wishes him peace saying that now she knows everything. She takes the Ring and says that the fire that will soon consume her will cleanse it from the Curse and then the Rhinemaids can fetch their gold from the ashes. She puts on the Ring and takes a torch from one of the vassals. She tells Wotan's ravens to fly home past the Valkyrie Rock and bid Loge, who is still there, to go to Valhalla: the downfall of gods is nigh. She hurls the torch into the pyre. The wood catches fire rapidly. Brünnhilde mounts her steed, Grane, and speaking a last greeting to Siegfried she rides into the blazing pyre.

Wagner's stage directions continue: "The flames instantly blaze up and fill the entire space before the hall, seeming even to seize on the building. In terror the women cower towards the front. Suddenly the fire falls together, leaving only a mass of smoke which collects at back and forms a cloud bank on the horizon. The Rhine swells up mightily and sweeps over the fire. On the surface appear the three Rhinemaids, swimming close to the fire-embers. Hagen, who has watched Brünnhilde's proceedings with increasing anxiety, is much alarmed on the appearance of the Rhinemaids. He flings away hastily his spear, shield and helmet, and madly plunges into the flood crying 'Give back the Ring!'

"Woglinde and Wellgunde twine their arms round his neck and draw him thus down below. Flosshilde, swimming before the others to the back, holds the recovered Ring joyously up.

"Through the cloud-bank on the horizon breaks an increasing red glow. In its light the Rhine is seen to have returned to its bed and the nymphs are circling and playing with the Ring on the calm waters. "From the ruins of the half-burnt hall, the men and women perceive with awe the light in the sky, in which now appears the hall of Valhalla, where the gods and heroes are seen.



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**I**f you love the music of Richard Wagner, we invite you to join the Boston Wagner Society, an organization of Wagner enthusiasts. We are the first Wagner society in Boston and New England (founded in 2004) and the only organization in the area devoted to a single composer.

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- "*Tristan* and Ecstasy: Perspectives on Isolde's Transfiguration," a talk by Professor Hans Rudolf Vaegt, with rare recordings;
- "The Redeemer Reborn: *Parsifal* as the Fifth Opera of Wagner's *Ring*," by the Buddhist scholar Paul Schofield; and
- *The Confessions of Winifred Wagner*, the screening of a rare film by the German filmmaker Hans-Jürgen Syberberg.

### **Recent concerts were**

- "Wagner and Strauss," excerpts from Wagner's *Tannhäuser* and *Die Walküre* and Strauss Lieder, including the *Four Last Songs*, with Soprano Julia Rolwing and Pianist Lloyd Arriola
- "Exquisite Love Duets and Solos by Richard Wagner," excerpts from *Rienzi*, *Lohengrin*, *Siegfried*, and *Tristan und Isolde*, with Heldentenor Alan Schneider, Soprano Andrea Matthews, Soprano Joanna Porackova, Mezzo-soprano Rachel Selan, and Pianist Jeffrey Brody

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## Meet the Artists



**Jeffrey Brody**  
Music Director

A finalist in the 1990 European International Composers Competition and winner of numerous ASCAP awards, Jeffrey Brody has earned international acclaim for his compositions. His output, including two operas and works for chorus, orchestra, chamber ensemble, solo voice and organ, has been performed in venues throughout the world. One of Boston's finest coaches and collaborative pianists, he was appointed Music Director and Organist of Park Avenue Congregational Church in 2007, and serves as Music Director of Longwood Opera, Principal Accompanist of the Paul Madore Chorale, Music Advisor for the Boston Wagner Society, and is a staff collaborative pianist at NEC. The present season brings performances of his works by the Salem Philharmonic Orchestra, Arlington-Belmont Chamber Chorus, Parkway Concert Orchestra and the Dirk Hillyer Festival Orchestra, among others. Mr. Brody's works are published exclusively by Ashbrook Music and also appear on YouTube. For more information, kindly refer to [www.Jeffreybrody.com](http://www.Jeffreybrody.com).



**J. Scott Brumit**  
General Director

J. Scott Brumit received his undergraduate degree from Occidental College in Los Angeles and his graduate degree from the New England Conservatory in Boston. He taught at the Boston Conservatory for five years as the assistant director of the Opera Department, under the direction of John Moriarty. He then served as artistic administrator for the Opera Company of Boston for Sarah Caldwell. In 1986, he co-founded Longwood Opera with John Balme and is currently the company's General Director. He has over 100 operatic roles in his repertoire and he has sung and directed throughout the United States. He is the narrator and tutorial voice for the computer game release of "Empire Earth II." He is an accomplished martial artist and teaches classes in T'ai Chi and Qigong. In 1984, he received the Jacopo Peri award from the New England Opera Club. In 2008, he was initiated as a National Arts Associate of Sigma Alpha Iota. These U.S. premiere performances of *The Ring* are dedicated to his parents Joseph and Patricia Brumit who instilled in him the love for opera. They were great fans of Richard Wagner and *Der Ring des Nibelungen* was one of their favorite set of operas by him.

## Meet the Artists



### **Benjamin Clark**

*Baritone*

Baritone Benjamin Clark is happy to return to Longwood, where he has appeared previously in the title role of *Don Pasquale*, and as the Sacristan in last season's *Tosca*. He has appeared with many Boston organizations, including MetroWest Opera in *L'enfant et les sortilèges* and *The Magic Flute*, Boston Opera Collaborative in *The Countess of Seville* and Mass Theatrica in *The Sorcerer*. He recently completed his Master of Music in Opera at the Longy School of Music, where he appeared as Bartley in *Riders to the Sea*, Frank in *Die Fledermaus* and Prunier in *La Rondine*. Other roles have included Top in *The Tender Land*, Lockit in *The Beggar's Opera*, Plutone/Apollo in *L'Orfeo*, The Devil in *The Devil and Daniel Webster* and the Four Villains in *Tales of Hoffmann*. In the 2010-11 season Benjamin will be returning to Mass Theatrica as the Lord Chancellor in *Iolanthe*, as well as making appearances as Benoit/Alcindoro in *La Bohème* and The Usher in *Trial by Jury*.



### **Janice Edwards**

*Mezzo-soprano*

Janice Edwards has appeared frequently with opera companies and orchestras throughout New England since moving to New Hampshire in 1999. Granite State Opera appearances have included Marcellina in *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Suzuki in *Madama Butterfly* and The Mother in *Amahl and the Night Visitors*. Her repertoire includes the principal Wagner and Verdi heroines as well as the major concert works of Mahler, Bach, Beethoven and Handel with organizations both in the U.S. and in Europe (Arizona Opera, Kentucky Opera, New Hampshire Music Festival, New Hampshire Symphony, Pioneer Valley Symphony, Portland Symphony Orchestra, Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra, Dvořák Summer Music Festival, Karlsbad Symphony Orchestra, Janáček Philharmonic, and the Danish Sinfonietta, among others). *Opernwelt* magazine found her portrayal of Fricka in the Arizona Opera *Ring* cycle "an excellent combination of vocal power and dramatic skill." Recent engagements have included the role of Lady Mountchessington in the premiere of Eric Sawyer's opera *Our American Cousin* in Northampton, MA, Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time* with the Manchester Choral Society, and Baba in Longwood Opera's *The Medium*. In November of 2010, Janice will sing the role of Maria Aegyptiaca in Mahler's *Symphony No. 8* with the Nashua Symphony. In addition to her performing engagements, Janice has an active voice studio in Manchester, NH. Please visit [www.JaniceEdwards.com](http://www.JaniceEdwards.com) for information on upcoming engagements and events sponsored by the Janice Edwards Studio.



## Meet the Artists



**Stephanie Mann**

*Soprano*

Soprano Stephanie Mann very pleased to be returning to sing with Longwood Opera. A frequent singer in their Summer Concert series, she has sung the roles of Alice Ford in Verdi's *Falstaff* and Fanny Hill/Soprano Soloist in their 'Tribute to Rossini/The Marriage Contract'. In 2006 she made her debut with the Asheville Lyric Opera Company as Second Lady and Papagena in *Die Zauberfloete* and in 2007 she made her mainstage debut singing Cherubino with Worcester Opera Works in their production of *The Marriage of Figaro*. That fall she sang the role of Mme. Herz in Mass Theatrica's production of Mozart's *The Impresario*, a role she then repeated with Worcester Opera Works. She made her debut with Riverside Theatreworks in the role of Kate in *Pirates of Penzance* and returned to play Eulalie Shinn in *The Music Man* and Lady Thiang in *The King and I*. She was seen as Mrs. Gobineau in Mass Theatrica's *The Medium* and in October, 2009, she created the title role in the World Premiere of Gabriella Snyder's *The Rough-Face Girl: An Algonquin Cinderella* with Mass Theatrica. Most recently she sang the role of Fiordiligi in *Così fan tutte* at Riverside Theatre Works. In late June she will be singing the role of Donna Anna in a concert performance of *Don Giovanni* with the New Hampshire Opera Theatre.



**Joanna Porackova**

*Soprano*

Joanna Porackova was celebrated for her "soaring majesty" (*Opera News*), and "huge vocal and emotional range" (*Boston Globe*). The *New York Sun* singled her out of the Walkyries at the 2008 Easter Salzburg Festival with the Berliner Philharmoniker directed by Sir Simon Rattle. The *Neue Zuercher Zeitung* acclaimed her in the title role of Liebermann's *Medea* at the Stadt Theater Bern and was engaged by James Conlon for the same role at the Paris Bastille Opera. The *New York Times* praised her "great fervor and skill" as Magda Sorel in *The Consul* directed by Gian Carlo Menotti at the Washington National Opera and as Senta in Katharina Wagner's directorial debut of *Der Fluegende Hollaender* at the Wuerzburg Opera. She has also been engaged with the Aix en Provence Festival, Grand Theater de Tours, Hong Kong, Connecticut, Seattle, Miami, Boston Lyric Opera, Boston Bel Canto, and Opera Boston. She has performed the title roles of Aida, Tosca, Turandot, Salome. Her voice has been heard on Swiss National Radio, BBC, WGBH, ARTE, and Bel Air Classiques. *Die Walkueere* with the Berliner Philharmoniker released on DVD 2009. Her upcoming engagements include Wagner's *Immolation Scene* with the Longwood Symphony 2010 and *Die Walkueere* with the Berliner Philharmoniker 2012.

## Meet the Artists



**Rachel Selan**

Mezzo-soprano

Rachel Selan is praised for “singing with a radiant mezzo.” A native of Los Angeles, she is becoming a sought after performer in the New England area. Performances: *Carmen* (Carmen cover), *The Crucible* (Rebecca Nurse), *Le nozze di Figaro* (Marcellina), *Gianni Schicchi* (Zita), *Suor Angelica* (Principessa), *The Mikado* (Pitti Sing), *Into the Woods* (Baker’s Wife), *The Medium* (Mrs. Nolan, Baba cover), world-premieres of *Sara McKinnon* and *Holy Ghosts*. Her Jordan Hall debut was NEC’s production of *Cole!*, performing there since in the world premiere of Percy Grainger’s *Random Rounds*, *A Hand of Bridge* (Sally), and *Side by Side by Sondheim*. Miss Selan is a member of Boston Opera Collaborative. Rachel holds a Bachelor’s Degree in Music from the University of Colorado - Boulder, a Master’s in Music from USC, and a GD from the New England Conservatory. Upcoming performances include the reprisal of her role as the Baker’s Wife in *Into the Woods*.



**Alan Schneider**

Tenor

Mr. Schneider has appeared in opera, operetta, and music theatre productions with companies in his native New England and elsewhere, including Opera Boston, Sarasota Opera, OperaDelaware, The Huntington Theatre Company, The North Shore Music Theatre, Opera New England and Boston Bel Canto Opera. He has most often appeared with Boston Lyric Opera, appearing in *La Traviata*, *Lucie de Lammermoor*, *Salome*, *Don Carlos*, *Carmen*, *La Rondine*, and *Rigoletto*. In the course of six seasons with the company, he has created roles in world premieres of works by composers Eric Sawyer, Joseph Summer, Daniel Pinkham and Paula Kimper. In the summer of 2001, he took part in the Glimmerglass Opera Young American Artists Program, appearing in *Le nozze di Figaro* and Chabrier’s *L’Etoile*. He is an alumnus of The University of Massachusetts at Amherst and received his Master’s Degree from Boston University, where he appeared as Acis in *Acis and Galatea*, Reverend Pollard in Stephen Paulus’ *The Village Singer*, the Mayor in *Albert Herring*, Harlekin in Ullmann’s *Der Kaiser von Atlantis*, Eisenstein in *Die Fledermaus*, and Ferrando in *Così fan Tutte*. In May 2003, he finished the program at Boston University’s Opera Institute with the title role in Mozart’s *Idomeneo*, which was the subject of a feature article by Richard Dyer of the Boston Globe. Mr. Schneider lives in Northampton Massachusetts with his wife and son, and when not performing, teaches singing at Amherst College.

## Meet the Artists



### Christopher Aaron Smith

*Tenor*

Noted for his "remarkable tenor" (*Isthmus*), Christopher Aaron Smith continues to earn critical and popular acclaim for his work as an opera singer, recitalist, concert soloist, and new music specialist. Recent operatic credits include Oronte in *Alcina* (BOC), Torquemada in *L'Heure Espagnole* (OperaHub), Erice in *L'Ormino* (HEMS), The Italian in *Angelique* (NEC), Laurie in *Little Women* (Stoughton Opera Company), Beadle Bamford in *Sweeney Todd* (FST), the Duke of Dunstable in *Patience* (Madison Savoyards), and Tamino in *The Magic Flute* (Wartburg College). Other credits include leading roles and solos with companies in Boston and throughout the Midwest and awards from the Metropolitan Opera Auditions, Peter Elvins Vocal Competition, NEC Vocal Concerto Competition, and Iowa and Wisconsin NATS Competitions among others. Also an up-and-coming specialist in the new music and contemporary opera repertory, Mr. Smith has premiered compositions by Jason Belcher, Jeffrey Brody, and Randal Despommier, has presented the regional premiere of works by Scott Gendel, Daron Hagen, and Henry Mollicone, and is featured on the recording premiere of Jonathon Lovenstein's *With Rue my Heart is Laden*, *Cara Mia Ben*, and *Pippa Passes* with the composer at the piano. Upcoming new music engagements include the premiere of works by Davide Zannoni, Lawrence Dillon, Andrew Wilson, Dominick DiOrto, Andrew Ager, Nancy Bloomer Deussen, Allan Gilliland, Zachary Wadsworth, and Jonathon Lovenstein and the role of Mortimer in the world premiere of David Walther's *Edward II* with The Acting Singers Project.



### Angeliki Theoharis

*Mezzo-soprano*

“As Azucena, the gifted mezzo, Angeliki Theoharis, ground out her hair-raising chest notes and nailed her top ones with courage and thrilling beauty,” said the *Boston Globe*. “As Santuzza, the heroine of *Cavalleria*, Theoharis displayed a voice like a cannon, capable of launching one big, solid note after another,” -*The Boston Herald*.

Of her Witch in Opera Manhattan’s award winning production of *Hansel and Gretel*, Olga Privman of *The Review Fix* remarked, “But none can match the sheer vocal prowess of Theoharis, whose voice can only be compared to a racing waterfall: at once stunning and incredibly, frighteningly powerful. And yet, her magnetic presence leant itself to many laughs, as well. From the moment her bright-clad form came onstage, all eyes were glued and lips helplessly caught in ongoing laughter.” Theoharis has sung Eboli in *Don Carlo* with the legendary bass, Jerome Hines. Solo engagements include Ulrica, Fricka, Dame Quickly, Laura, Baba the title role in *Carmen*, requiems of Verdi, Mozart and Durufle, Handel’s *Messiah*, Beethoven’s *Ninth* and Rossini’s *Stabat Mater*. Regional companies include Opera Manhattan, NYC Hellenic Music Foundation, Regina Opera (NYC), Lyric Opera of New York, Commonwealth Opera, Longwood Opera, Boston Bel Canto Opera and Opera Boston.

## Meet the Artists



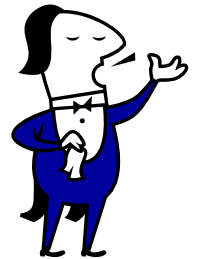
**Tom Weber**

*Baritone*

Tom is pleased to have the opportunity to sing again with Longwood Opera. This appearance marks the eighth time during the past twelve years in which he has appeared in a principal role with the company. Overall, Mr. Weber has pleased audiences and critics alike, displaying versatility and flexibility in a variety of roles and settings. His most recent opera roles include *Don Pasquale* with Longwood, Monterone (and Rigoletto cover) in Commonwealth Opera's *Rigoletto*, Schicchi in *Gianni Schicchi* (Opera del West), Dr. Bartolo in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, (Longwood Opera) and Peter, the Father, in Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*, (Longwood Opera, with Symphony Pro Musica). Earlier, he portrayed the title role in Longwood's production of Verdi's *Falstaff* and Don Magnifico in Rossini's *La Cenerentola* (Raylynmor Opera Co.) In addition, Tom has also made dozens of concert appearances singing dramatic and comic selections from opera, operetta, and Broadway. This summer, he can be heard in concerts at Longwood Opera, Worcester Opera Works, and Mass Theatrica.

**Just weeks away...**

## Longwood Opera's 20th Annual Summer Concert Series



Tuesdays at 7:30 pm **Christ Episcopal Church**  
1132 Highland Avenue, Needham

July 6 :	An Evening of Opera	August 3:	Opera Meets Broadway
July 13:	Broadway Melodies	August 10:	An Evening of Gilbert & Sullivan
July 20:	An Evening of Opera Scenes	August 17:	More Operatic Scenes
July 27:	Presenting Rising Stars	August 24:	More Broadway Melodies
		August 31:	A Gala Night of Opera

### Ticket prices

#### Summer Season Passes:

Adults - \$50.00

Seniors, Students and Children 10 and under - \$35.00

[Season passes may be purchased by mail in advance](#)

#### Single admission tickets

*(available only at the door on the night of the performance):*

Adults - \$8

Seniors, Students and Children 10 and under - \$6

# Longwood Opera

## Chronology of Productions

### 1986-87

*La Bohème*  
*Barber of Seville*  
*Madame Butterfly*  
*La Perichole*  
*Der Rosenkavalier*  
*Hansel & Gretel*

### 1987-88

*La Bohème*  
*Hansel & Gretel*  
*Tosca*  
*Barber of Seville*  
*Don Giovanni*  
*Carmen*

### 1988-89

*Elixir of Love*  
*Barber of Seville*  
*Hansel & Gretel*  
*La Traviata*  
*Friends & Dinosaurs\**  
*La Bohème*  
*The Mikado*

### 1989-90

*Hansel & Gretel*  
*La Traviata*  
*Elixir of Love*  
*Friends & Dinosaurs*  
*La Bohème*  
*The Telephone*  
*Die Fledermaus*

### 1990-91

*Hansel & Gretel*  
*La Traviata*  
*Elixir of Love*  
*The Telephone*  
*Rigoletto*  
*Romeo & Juliette*  
*L'Histoire du Soldat*

### 1991-92

*The Magic Flute*  
*I Pagliacci*  
*La Voix Humaine*  
*The Telephone*  
*L'Histoire du Soldat*  
*Summer concerts*  
*La Bohème*

### 1992-93

*Marriage of Figaro*  
*The Telephone*  
*The Medium*  
*Don Pasquale*  
*Il Tabarro*  
*Suor Angelica*  
*Gianni Schicchi*  
*Summer concerts*

### 1993-94

*Don Giovanni*  
*Hansel & Gretel*  
*The Tales of Hoffmann*  
*Barber of Seville*  
*Summer concerts*

### 1994-95

*Old Maid & The Thief*  
*La Bohème*  
*Così Fan Tutte*  
*La Traviata*  
*Summer concerts*

### 1995-96

*Susannah*  
*Merry Wives of Windsor*  
*Carmen*  
*Summer concerts*

### 1996-97

*Tosca*  
*Cinderella*  
*Summer concerts*

### 1997-98

*Die Fledermaus*  
*Elixir of Love*

### 1998

*Summer concerts*  
*Barber of Seville*  
*Hansel & Gretel*

### 1999

*Mozart and Salieri*  
*The Secret of Susanna*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Don Giovanni*

### 2000

*The Human Voice*  
*The Telephone*  
*Summer concerts*  
*The Marriage of Figaro*

### 2001

*The Impresario*  
*The Measure of Love\**  
*Summer concerts*  
*Carmen*  
*Hansel & Gretel*

### 2002

*Albert Herring*  
*Summer concerts*  
*The Magic Flute*

### 2003

*Susannah*  
*Summer concerts*  
*The Tales of Hoffmann*

### 2004

*A Tribute to Leonard Bernstein*  
*Summer concerts*  
*La Bohème*

### 2005

*A Tribute to Kurt Weill*  
*Summer concerts*  
*La Traviata*

### 2006

*A Tribute to Amadeus Mozart*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Falstaff*

### 2007

*Hansel & Gretel*  
*The Barber of Seville*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Die Fledermaus*

### 2008

*A Tribute to Rossini*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Don Pasquale*

### 2009

*The Medium*  
*The Old Maid and the Thief*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Tosca*

### 2010

*Tales from Der Ring des Nibelungen*  
*Summer concerts*  
*Hansel & Gretel*

### 2011

*The Picture of Dorian Gray\**

\* world premiere

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# Longwood Opera... Where the Stars Shine

## Celebrating our 24<sup>th</sup> Season



Longwood Opera     J. Scott Brumit     Jeffrey Brody  
 Director     Music Director

*Verdi's*  
**Falstaff**



Longwood Opera     Stage Director     Music Director  
 J. Scott Brumit     Jeffrey Brody

**DON PASQUALE**  
 by Gaetano Donizetti

**Program**

October 17 & 18 at 8pm  
 October 19 at 2:30pm  
**Christ Episcopal Church**  
 1132 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA

October 23 at 8pm  
**Park Avenue Congregational Church**  
 58 Red Banners Road, Arlington Heights, MA

October 26 at 2:30pm  
**Congregazione Shirat Hayam of the North Shore**  
 33 Atlantic Avenue, Swampscott, MA

Longwood Opera | Needham, MA | 781-455-0960 | www.LongwoodOpera.org





# **Contact Us!**

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video clips, performance dates & times...and much more!

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**Encore@LongwoodOpera.org**

For the most up-to-date performance information,

*Call Us:*  
**781-455-0960**

## **Make a contribution to Longwood Opera**

Over the past several seasons, Longwood Opera has improved the quality of its productions through costumes, props and set design. All of these enhancements cost money. Depending on tickets sales alone makes it difficult to plan a full season of staged opera.

Writing a check today (remember, donations are always tax-deductible) can make a difference. Your gift, large or small, can help assure Longwood's future productions.

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Longwood Opera, 42 Hawthorn Avenue, Needham, MA 02492**