

# BERLIN: WAGNER'S RING CYCLE

## *The Complete 'Ring Cycle' at Berlin's Deutsche Oper*

### Sunday, May 19th through Monday, May 27th



*Berlin's Museum Island and the Bode Museum*

*"One of the most remarkable features of Wagner's works is the author's complete absorption of the times of which he wrote... In **Der Ring des Nibelungen**, he has done more – he has absorbed an imaginary epoch; lived over the days of gods and demigods; infused life into mythological figures."*

Gustav Kobbé



*Donald Runnicles*

*"This is a probing, thought-through production . . . If it's a thinking-person's **Ring** you are after, there's plenty here to engage you."*

(Opera News, June '23)

**W**e were fortunate to send repeatedly sold-out 'RING' Tours to Berlin's venerable **Deutsche Oper** in 2016, '17 and '19. As the pandemic eased in 2021, we returned for the company's new production with yet another full complement of our travelers. Now in May of 2024, an ideal time of the spring to explore Europe's most stimulating capital, we will again offer a concise week to encounter **Stefan Herheim's** "provocative production, intellectually elaborate and emotionally complex" (*Opera News*).

*Because 'The Ring' is typically staged in Europe over a considerably longer period, the Deutsche Oper's six-night Cycle provides a welcome opportunity of experiencing Wagner's masterpiece during a short visit sensibly conceived for international travelers. Our week-long Tour will include three free evenings (one before the Cycle begins and another between the two final performances) and of course the four nights of the operas. Our package therefore reflects the most advantageous price of any recent European Ring. **Optimum Orchestra Seats** are already confirmed. Because we have*

*enjoyed a rewarding relationship for many years, our seats at the Deutsche Oper are the best we ever receive for a European Ring.*

The staging is directed by the Norwegian **Stefan Herheim**, who has already earned Opernwelt's Best Director of the Year three times. He is also responsible for the scenery along with co-designer **Silke Bauer**. The conductor is again the Scottish maestro **Sir Donald Runnicles**, who triumphantly led all of our recent Berlin Rings.

**Brünnhilde: Ricarda Merbeth & Elizabeth Teige** (Siegfried)

**Wotan: Iain Paterson & Derek Welton** (Walküre)

**Siegfried: Clay Hilley**

**Siegmund: Brandon Jovanovich**

**Sieglinde: Elizabeth Teige**

**Fricka & Waltraute: Annika Schlicht**

**Hagen: Derek Welton**

**Alberich: Jordan Shanahan**

**Mime: Ya-Chung Huang**

Reprising their 2021 portrayals will be **Elizabeth Teige** as a "sumptuous laser-beam Sieglinde" and **Clay Hilley** as "the finest Siegfried on DVD, with ringing top notes, perfect diction and impressive tonal flexibility". **Donald Runnicles** leads pacy yet detailed readings of all four operas, and his orchestra is superb." (*Opera News*)



*Deutsche Oper*

Every traveler should discover the thrill of walking through the Brandenburg Gate and onto 'Unter den Linden' Boulevard – past where the Wall formerly blocked all passage. The survival, reconstruction and final reunion of Berlin add a moving chapter to modern political history, now reinforced by the return of the nation's government to the Reichstag and other major sites reflecting the city's turbulent 20th century upheaval.

Sunday, May 19th, departure from New York's Kennedy Airport at 9:50 pm on Lufthansa flight #405, arriving in Frankfurt at 11:45 am on the 20th. This connects with Lufthansa #184, departing Frankfurt at 12:45 pm and arriving Berlin's Brandenburg Airport at 1:55 pm. Or independent travel to Berlin.

Accommodations for a **seven nights with buffet breakfast** included at the **Bristol Berlin Hotel**. Combining old-world appointments and personal service with renovated furnishings, the Bristol is a famous landmark and meeting place in Berlin. Located on the corner of the throbbing Kurfürstendamm adjacent to the city's prime shopping area, the Bristol features an indoor swimming pool and health club (complimentary for hotel guests) and several excellent restaurants – the Bristol Bar for snacks, the Bristol Café for all-day dining, and the Bristol Grill for gourmet meals. *All of our rooms are confirmed in the hotel's upgraded Executive category.*

Monday evening, May 20th, a **welcome reception** in a private entertainment area of the hotel will be an opportunity to meet other members of the Tour prior. *No performance this evening, to allow you to recover from jet lag.*

Mid-morning on Tuesday, May 21st, an orientation tour of Berlin will introduce you to the various districts of the city. En route we will view the major monuments along the famed boulevard

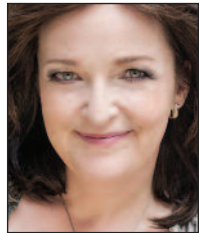


*Hans Memling's Madonna and Child in the Gemäldegalerie*

**'Unter den Linden'** ('Under the Linden Trees'), as well as **Potsdamer Platz**, and several sections of the former Wall. We will also pass the highly publicized **Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe**.

At 7:30 pm on Tuesday, our first 'Ring' performance at the **Deutsche Oper** will be **Das Rheingold** (*performed without intermission*).

Wednesday, May 22nd, is left free for independent activities prior to the long opera performance. During the several free periods of our stay, your individual outings should certainly include shopping along the elegant **Kurfürstendamm** and a leisurely exploration of the huge **'KaDeWe'**



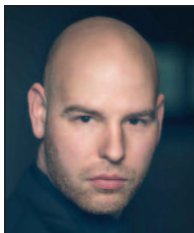
Ricarda Merbeth



Elizabeth Teige



Iain Paterson



Derek Welton



Clay Hilley



Brandon Jovanovich

department store (the 'Kaufhaus des Western' or 'Shopping House of the West'), celebrated for its sumptuous food halls. You can easily arrange with the concierge for a day-tour to **Potsdam**, about an hour from Berlin, where Frederick the Great's **Sans Souci Palace** is one of the Baroque splendors of the 17th cen-

tury, and where the Four-Power agreement was signed at the end of World War II in the **Cecilienhof** Prussian villa. The **Zoo's** wide variety of species in the heart of the city is a perennial attraction for Berliners; and within a few blocks of our hotel is the haunting **Gedächtniskirche** (Memorial Church), a symbol of the city's survival with the cobalt blue modern nave juxtaposed against the bombed ruins of the original Gothic apse.

At 5:00 pm on Wednesday, our second 'Ring' installment at the **Deutsche Oper** will be **Die Walküre**.

Thursday morning, May 23rd, we will visit the **Gemäldegalerie** ('Painting Gallery'), which houses most of the Old Masters from the former

**Dahlem Museum**. Major works by Raphael, Rembrandt and Vermeer are included in this priceless collection of Western art particularly rich in the Italian Renaissance and in the Dutch and Flemish Primitives (van Eyck, van der Weyden and Breughel).

Thursday evening is left free for independent dining or a concert/opera of your own choice. The hotel's concierge desk will be happy to assist you with tickets/reservations.

Friday afternoon, May 24th, a pre-opera **lunch** is arranged at **Inizio Ristorante**, a short walk from our hotel. This atmospheric 'trattoria' specializes in outstanding Italian cuisine.

At 4:00 pm on Friday, we will return to the **Deutsche Oper** for **Siegfried**.

On Saturday morning, May 25th, we will Berlin's **Museum Island** to visit the renowned **Bode Museum**, housing a vast collection of art from the ancient Mediterranean region. Second only to the archaeological museum in Istanbul, the various masterpieces include as the "Great Berlin Pyxis" ivory carvings of early Byzantine applied art; Coptic Art of Late Antiquity consisting of textiles, burial objects, and ceramics; and Eastern Roman and Byzantine sculptures. (*The Pergamon Museum is adjacent to the Bode, but the colossal Pergamon Altar is undergoing a five-year restoration.*)

Saturday evening is left free for your own activities.

On Sunday afternoon, May 26th, a pre-opera **lunch** will be arranged at the **Opera Café** adjacent to the Deutsche Oper.

At 4:00 pm on Sunday, our Wagnerian immersion will conclude with the **Deutsche Oper's** performance of **Die Götterdämmerung**.

Monday, May 27th, departure from Berlin's Brandenburg Airport at 9:50 am on Lufthansa flight #1931, arriving in Munich at 11:00 am. This connects with Lufthansa #410, departing Munich at 12:05 pm and arriving New York's Kennedy Airport at 2:55 pm. Or independent departure.

**Berlin**

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 5,880
Single room supplement	\$ 850

**Airfare NOT included.**