

Göteborg Opera celebrates 25 years in its Opera House with premiere of second opera in Stephen Langridge's ecologically-sustainable *Ring* cycle

★★★★★ (Music) ★★★★★ (Staging)

**"The Rhine gold is far from an inert metal: it is a living, golden-skinned child, touching in its innocence."**

*Das Rheingold* (2018) - Peter Krause (Opera Now)



**Wagner *Die Walküre***

**1 December – 19 January**

Göteborg Opera House, Gothenburg, Sweden

**Stephen Langridge** director  
**Evan Rogister** conductor  
**Alison Chitty** set and costume design  
**Paul Pyant** lighting design  
**Annika Lindqvist** movement instructor

**Brenden Gunnell** Siegmund  
**Mats Almgren** Hunding  
**Anders Lorentzson** Wotan

**Elisabet Strid** Sieglinde  
**Annalena Persson** Brünnhilde  
**Katarina Karnéus** Fricka  
**Carolina Sandgren** Gerhilde  
**Gabriella Locatelli** Ortlinde  
**Julia Sporsén** Waltraute  
**Hege Høisæter** Schwertleite  
**Åsa Thyllman** Helmwig  
**Matilda Paulsson** Siegrune  
**Natallia Salavei** Grimgerde  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Rossweise

**30 November** *Das Rheingold* (2018) screening

Gothenburg's ground breaking *Ring* cycle, an epic four-year ecologically sustainable project, continues on **1 December** as director **Stephen Langridge** returns to Gothenburg to stage ***Die Walküre***. The 2019/20 season sees Göteborg Opera celebrate 25 years in its cutting-edge opera house, designed by **Jan Izkowitz** of Lund & Valentin. The House was

inaugurated in 1994 by godmother **Birgit Nilsson**, who wished the company *"all its happiness and success on the bountiful ocean of fine arts."*

Seven operas will be seen in Gothenburg's new season, including a new production of **Britten's *Death in Venice*** directed by **David Radok**, and the Scandinavian premiere of **Nadia Boulanger's *La ville morte***. The new season has been fully programmed by the outgoing artistic director, **Stephen Langridge**, whose tenure ends on a high note with Göteborg Opera recently nominated for **Best Company** at the 2019 International Opera Awards.

Fusing elements from German and Norse legends to create his *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, Wagner's tetralogy is now considered the epitome of musical storytelling on an epic scale. *Die Walküre* moves from the heavens to earth as the continuing exploitation of the planet and its resources leads to calamitous consequences for both humans and Gods alike.



In this environmentally-conscious production, director Stephen Langridge continues addressing the themes of the cycle: abuse of power, liberation, atonement and destruction. The earth is robbed of its natural resources, its power converted for selfish gain and destruction. Stephen Langridge commented:

*"Our way, the Göteborg way, is an attempt to be as sustainable as we can. When I first arrived at The Göteborg Opera, I was hugely impressed by the engagement and commitment of the house to working in a sustainable way. I wanted to find a project where we artists, the designer and director and leading team would be excited to push themselves to pull sustainable ideas into the artistic work too. The Ring seems like the perfect vehicle for the experiment as a major topic in the operas is our relationship with the natural world, also because it is a project over several years, allowing us to make long term plans, test ideas over a longer period than normally."*

Göteborg Opera has long championed ecological sustainability and is a leader among opera houses, using power from renewable sources, solar panels and more. Recycling is inherently built into Wagner's scores through his use of leitmotifs, making the Ring cycle with its themes of greed and destruction a natural candidate for the next step: an environmentally sustainable production. In *Die Walküre*, set materials and costumes are recycled from *Das Rheingold* (2018) and from sustainable sources and processes as far as possible.

*"It won't happen again. In life, you can't go back in time and here, we won't be able to go back to *Das Rheingold*."*

- Stephen Langridge

Documenting the process, Göteborg Opera are redefining the values of a modern opera house and reinventing the terms for others to follow. They hope to find new, greener solutions on the way for everything from body paint to theatrical flames. Positive spin-offs are already beginning to emerge and new techniques are already having an impact on the other productions.



Following in the footsteps of Birgit Nilsson, the great Wagnerian soprano, Sweden has produced some of the greatest Wagnerian voices in subsequent generations. *Die Walküre* features an outstanding Swedish cast, including **Elisabet Strid** (Sieglinde), **Mats Almgren** (Hunding) and **Annalena Persson** (Brünnhilde), while **Katarina Karnéus** and **Anders Lorentzson** reprise their roles from *Das Rheingold* as Wotan and Fricka. **Brenden Gunnell** stars as Siegmund, while **Evan Rogister** returns to conduct.

Göteborg Opera's four-year cycle will end with *Götterdämmerung* in 2021, with the grand finale marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city of Gothenburg. Highlighting the continuing four-year cycle, special screenings of last year's five-star production of *Das Rheingold* are held between **24 November** and **14 December**.



Watch the trailer for *Das Rheingold* here: <https://vimeo.com/302478324>

***"Vocally, and dramatically, this Rheingold has an intimacy and flexibility that sets it far apart from the static, heavyweight slugfests of the gloomiest Ring tradition."***

Boyd Tonkin (The Arts Desk)

***"this accomplished and at times revelatory start to his Ring sets up the coming catastrophes very nicely indeed."***

Andrew Mellor (Opera News)

***"For the preliminary evening of his new Ring cycle, Stephen Langridge chooses an image as unusual as it is simple: a kiss. We are told that the Ring is a story about the severe damage that the lust for power inflicts on nature and on humanity. Here Langridge ... shows us that, before the fall, there was a world without sin, when mankind existed in harmony with the divine world."***

Peter Krause (Opera Now)

Elsewhere in its 2019/20 season, Gothenburg hosts the **Scandinavian premiere** of **Nadia Boulanger's *La ville morte***, performed in concert with the Göteborg Opera Orchestra and conductor **Anna-Maria Helsing** to celebrate **International Women's Day**. Nadia Boulanger was one of the most influential teachers of the twentieth century, though the first public performance of her 1909 *La ville morte* – the composer's only opera – was not given until 2006.



Göteborg Opera's performance on **8 March** forms the second ever performance of this impressionistic work, a tragic tale of decadence and a weakness of antiquity as archaeologists in Mycenae search for the royal tombs, including that of King Agamemnon, who features in Strauss' *Elektra* of the same year. The cast includes **Katarina Karnéus**, **Matilda Paulsson**, and **Natallia Salavei**.

**Benjamin Britten's** famous ***Death in Venice*** is also the focus of a new production in Gothenburg premiering on **4 April**. Director **David Radok** returns the action of Britten's final opera to its original European setting, prior to the outbreak of World War I. Based on Thomas Mann's semi-autobiographical novel of the same name, *Death in Venice* sees author Gustav von Aschenbach, obsessed with the young and beautiful Tadzio, becoming plagued by writer's block and inner battles between intellect and ecstasy.

Radok has enjoyed great success in Gothenburg in recent seasons, especially originating innovative new pairings including Martinu's *Trois fragments de Juliette* with Poulenc's *La voix humaine* (2018), and Weill's *Die sieben Todsünden* with Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi* (2017).

This new production is conducted by the Britten authority **Steuart Bedford**, who conducted the world premiere in 1973 at the behest of the composer too ill to undertake the task himself. The production stars **Paul Nilon** as Aschenbach with **Åke Zetterström** as the traveller.



From **1 February**, a new production of **Puccini's *La bohème*** is presented in Gothenburg, directed by **Max Webster**, an Associate Director at the Old Vic, where he was also inaugural Baylis Director. The setting is updated to 1970's Paris amid student revolts and protest marches. **Kerstin Avemo** stars as Mimì, with Rodolpho sung by the rising New Zealand star **Thomas Atkins**, conducted by **Karen Kamensek**.

Göteborg Opera highlights its continued dedication to environmental issues with special screenings of **BBC Earth's** multi award-winning **Planet Trilogy**, exploring the incomparable beauty of our planet through its marine world, animal kingdom, and harsh polar regions.

The **Göteborg Opera Orchestra** is conducted by the Planet Trilogy's multi Oscar-nominated composer, **George Fenton**, whose soundtrack has won an Emmy, BAFTA, Classic Brit and Ivor Novello award. The three documentaries are shown in a comprehensive weekend, with **Blue Planet** on **15 May**, **Planet Earth** on **16 May**, and **Frozen Planet** on **17 May**. The trilogy is narrated by **Lars Hjertner**.



The full Gothenburg season begins on a comedic high on **31 August** with a revival of Stephen Langridge's 2014 *The Marriage of Figaro*, starring **Ida Falk Winland** as Countess Almaviva and **Sofie Asplund** as Susanna, with **Mattias Ermedahl** as Count Almaviva and **Henning von Schulman** as Figaro.

*"Mozart's 'Le nozze di Figaro' is a vertiginous study of human weaknesses and shortcomings, but also of courage, joy and a love that beats everything else."*

- Stephen Langridge

**Bizet's *Carmen*** is performed from **1 November** in **Sir David McVicar's** production, revived by **Marie Lambert** with conductor **Patrik Ringborg**. The revival sees **Katarina Giotas** return as Carmen, with **Joachim Bäckström** as Don José, and **Mats Persson** as Escamillo.



**Mattias Ermedahl** turns from singer to director at Göteborg Opera in **Mozart's *Così fan tutte***, which opens in Skövde on **14 March** before transferring to the Small Stage in Gothenburg from **12 May** following a short tour. The production stars **Mia Karlsson** and **Ann-Kristin Jones** as Fiordiligi and Dorabella, with **Hannes Öberg** and **Per Lindström** as Guglielmo and Ferrando.

The season closes on a passionate note with **Puccini's *Tosca***, appearing in a long-awaited revival. Opening on **8 May**, American-Italian director



**Lorenzo Mariano** presents the work in a film-noir style, with events unfolding in Mussolini's Italy during the 1930s. Conductor **Henrik Schaefer**, Musical Director of the Göteborg Opera Orchestra, leads **Carolina Sandgren** as Floria Tosca, **Tomas Lind** as Mario Cavaradossi, and **Mats Persson** as Baron Scarpi.

## Full Season Listings

**31 August**  
**6, 8, 13 & 15 September**

**Mozart** *Marriage of Figaro*

**Stephen Langridge** director  
**Rory MacDonald** conductor

**George Souglides** scenography  
and costume design

**Giuseppe di Iorio** lighting design  
**Dan O'Neill** choreography

**Mattias Ermedahl** Count Almaviva  
**Ida Falk Winland** Countess  
Almaviva

**Sofie Asplund** Susanna  
**Henning von Schulman** Figaro  
**Adrian Angelico** Cherubino  
**Carolina Sandgren** Marcellina  
**Mats Almgren** Bartolo

**Daniel Ralphsson** Basilio  
**Alexander Grove** Don Curzio  
**Anna Johansson** Barbarina  
**Peter Loguin** Antonio  
**Tiina Markkanen** first flower girl  
**Erika Tordéus** second flower girl

**1, 6, 9, 13, 17, 20, 23 & 27**  
**November**  
**3, 5, 8, 11 & 19 December**

**Bizet** *Carmen*

**Sir David McVicar** director  
(original production)  
**Marie Lambert** director (revival  
production)  
**Patrik Ringborg** conductor

**Michael Vale** set design  
**Sue Blane** costume design  
**Andrew George** choreography  
(original production)  
**Paule Constable** lighting design  
(original production)

**Clare O'Donoghue** lighting design  
(revival production)

**Katarina Giotas** Carmen  
**Joachim Bäckström** Don José  
**Mats Persson** Escamillo  
**Frida Engström** Micaëla  
**Mattias Ermedahl** Dancaïre  
**Daniel Ralphsson** Remendado  
**Sami Yousri** Zuniga  
**Henrik Andersson** Moralès  
**Mia Karlsson** Frasquita  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Mercèdes  
**Jérôme Delbey** Lillas Pastia

**24 & 30 November**  
**14 December**  
(screening of the 2018 production)

**Wagner** *Das Rheingold*

**Stephen Langridge** director  
**Evan Rogister** conductor

**Alison Chitty** set and costume  
design  
**Giuseppe Di Iorio** lighting design  
**Annika Lindqvist** movement  
instructor

**Anders Lorentzson** Wotan  
**Mats Persson** Donner  
**Tomas Lind** Froh  
**Brenden Gunnell** Loge  
**Olafur Sigurdarson** Alberich  
**Daniel Ralphsson** Mime  
**Henning von Schulman** Fasolt  
**Mats Almgren** Fafner  
**Katarina Karnéus** Fricka  
**Carolina Sandgren** Freia  
**Hege Høisæter** Erda  
**Mia Karlsson** Woglinde  
**Frida Engström** Wellgunde  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Flosshilde

**1, 7, 15, 21 & 29 December**



**3, 11 & 19 January**

**Wagner** *Die Walküre*

**Stephen Langridge** director  
**Evan Rogister** conductor

**Alison Chitty** set and costume design  
**Paul Pyant** lighting design  
**Annika Lindqvist** movement instructor

**Brenden Gunnell** Siegmund  
**Mats Almgren** Hunding  
**Anders Lorentzson** Wotan  
**Elisabet Strid** Sieglinde  
**Annalena Persson** Brünnhilde  
**Katarina Karnéus** Fricka  
**Carolina Sandgren** Gerhilde  
**Gabriella Locatelli** Ortlinde  
**Julia Sporsén** Waltraute  
**Hege Høisæter** Schwertleite  
**Åsa Thyllman** Helmwig  
**Matilda Paulsson** Siegrune  
**Natallia Salavei** Grimgerde  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Rossweise

**1, 6, 12, 14, 19, 23 & 27  
February  
1, 13, 22, 26 March  
1 April**

**Puccini** *La bohème*

**Max Webster** director  
**Karen Kamensek** conductor  
**Henrik Schaefer** conductor

**Fly Davis** set and costume design

**Jack Knowls** lighting design

**Kerstin Avemo** Mimì  
**Thomas Atkins** Rodolfo  
**Luthando Qave** Marcello  
**Sofie Asplund** Musetta  
**Mia Karlsson** Musetta  
**Henning von Schulman** Colline  
**Ivan Dajic** Colline  
**Anton Ljungqvist** Schaunard  
**Daniel Ralphsson** Benoît  
**Mats Almgren** Alcindoro

**8, 11 & 15 March**

**Boulanger** *La ville morte*

**Anna-Maria Helsing** conductor

**Katarina Karnéus** Hébé  
**Matilda Paulsson** Anne  
**Natallia Salavei** Amman  
**Markus Pettersson** Léonard  
**Anton Ljungqvist** Alexandre

**14, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27 & 29  
March  
12, 13, 15 & 17 May**

**Mozart** *Così fan tutte*

**Mattias Ermedahl** director  
**Joakim Brink** musical direction

**Gunnar Ekman** set and costume design  
**Joakim Brink** lighting design

**Mia Karlsson** Fiordiligi  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Dorabella  
**Hannes Öberg** Guglielmo  
**Per Lindström** Ferrando  
**Frida Engström** Despina  
**Anders Lorentzson** Don Alfonso

**4, 9, 18 & 22 April  
3 & 7 May**

**Britten** *Death in Venice*

**David Radok** director  
**Steuart Bedford** conductor

**Lars-Åke Thessman** set design  
**Zuzana Ježková** costume design  
**Torkel Blomkvist** lighting design

**Paul Nilon** Gustav von Aschenbach  
**Åke Zetterström** the traveller  
**Daniel Carlsson** Apollo's voice

**8, 10, 22, 24, 27, 29 & 31 May**

**Puccini** *Tosca*

**Lorenzo Mariani** director



**Henrik Schaefer** conductor

**Jonas Landström** Sciaronne

**Maurizio Baló** set design  
**Silvia Aymonino** costume design  
**Christian Pinaud** lighting design

**15, 16 & 17 May**

**Blue Planet, Planet Earth and  
Frozen Planet, Live in Concert**

**Carolina Sandgren** Floria Tosca  
**Tomas Lind** Mario Cavaradossi  
**Mats Persson** Baron Scarpì  
**Anton Ljungqvist** Angelotti  
**Peter Loguin** Sakristanen  
**Daniel Ralphsson** Spoletta

**George Fenton**  
conductor/composer  
**Lars Hjertner** narrator

**Göteborg Opera Orchestra**

## **Göteborg Opera**

Gothenburg Opera House, a modern venue designed by Jan Izikowitz of Lund and Valentin, was opened in October 1994. Seating 1,300, it boasts a state of the art acoustic enhanced by special egg-tempera acoustic paint (which used 6,000 eggs). There is even space for a hidden chorus in the circular lighting rig in the middle of the auditorium.



The building houses all the carpentry, metal and wood workshops for mounting full productions from the creation of the sets and props, to costumes, wigs and prosthetics with the latest environmentally-aware technology, including an ozone cabinet to clean delicate costumes. The orchestra, soloists, chorus and contemporary dance company perform opera, dance, and musicals, with a diverse programme allowing for audiences to experiment with all three art forms.

Gothenburg Opera strives to be efficient in all its operations when working with finite and renewable resources. It provides its employees with good environmental knowledge and works to actively reduce its impact on the environment in the following key areas:

- The Nordic Ecolabel restaurant endeavours wherever possible to use organic Fair Trade produce, and meat-free lunches are provided at least once a week to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Electricity consumption is taken from 100% renewable sources.
- Laundry providers and printers are Nordic Ecolabelled.
- Most of the lighting is LED, if not energy class B or better.
- Beehives on the roof of the Opera House – where there is a flower plantation – produce honey sold within the shop.
- 600 square meters of the roof (nearly 3 tennis courts) are covered in solar panels – supplying 107,000 kW per year.
- Sets and scenery are conceived as modular systems where the constituent parts can be reused multiple times.
- All waste is strictly sorted and all supplies are delivered in returnable crates, bottles and packaging.





- Genuine hair is used in wigs

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**For more information on any of the above, please contact:**

**Nicky Thomas Media**

101 Bell Street, London NW1 6TL

+44 (0)20 3714 7594 | +44 (0)20 7258 0909

[info@nickythomasmedia.com](mailto:info@nickythomasmedia.com)

[www.nickythomasmedia.com](http://www.nickythomasmedia.com)