

## Ecologically-sustainable *Ring Cycle* explores Wagner's theme of the exploitation of the earth's natural resources

**Göteborg Opera mounts its first Wagner Ring Cycle  
directed by Stephen Langridge**



***Das Rheingold*** | Richard Wagner  
17 November – 9 December 2018

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

**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

**In their 2018/19 season, Göteborg Opera** launches an epic, four year project to mount its first **Wagner Ring Cycle** which will create a landmark as a more ecologically sustainable opera production. The cycle directed by Artistic Director Stephen Langridge opens with ***Das Rheingold*** on **17 November** and runs until **9 December 2018**. It stars local Swedish stars including **Anders Lorentzson** as Wotan, King of the Gods and **Katarina Karnéus** as Fricka and will be conducted by **Evan Rogister**. Following in the footsteps of the great Wagnerian soprano Birgit Nilsson, Sweden has produced some of the greatest Wagnerian voices in subsequent generations.

The Göteborg Opera is a champion of ecological sustainability and a leader among opera houses, using power from renewable sources, solar panels and more. However the company is leading the way in developing a production which takes into consideration the environmental impact in all aspects of its planning. Not only will materials used in the set and costumes be selected from recycled or sustainable sources, this decision has had a direct impact on every aspect of the administration of the building.

By documenting the process, they are redefining the values of a modern opera house and reinventing the terms for others to follow. They hope to find new solutions on the way for everything from body paint to theatrical flames. Whereas many opera houses rely on flying in stars from across the globe, Göteborg Opera benefits from its local talent, again reducing its footprint from air miles.

Wagner fused elements from German and Norse legends to create *Der Ring des Nibelungen*, his tetralogy on an epic scale never experienced before. It is now considered the epitome of musical storytelling on an epic scale. The cycle - *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* - runs to more than 15 hours. **Das Rheingold** sets the scene with the tale of the disruption of nature, beginning with Alberich stealing gold from the three Rhine maidens to gain power over the world. This begins the themes of the entire Cycle - abuse of power, liberation, atonement and destruction. **Stephen Langridge** picks up on the theme of the earth being robbed of its natural resources, converting its power for selfish gain and destruction.

Stephen Langridge commented:



*"I'm thrilled to be exploring how we as artists can contribute to a more sustainable world. The Opera House already has excellent credentials in the running of the building and in its production processes, but here is a new challenge to create an opera production with the designer Alison Chitty that pushes the envelope from an artistic perspective. How far can we go? Recycled and biodegradable materials, low energy lighting... how can we help our audience to walk, cycle and use public transport? There are endless ideas and challenges. It's a suitably epic adventure for Wagner's massive Ring Cycle."*

**Evan Rogister**, who last appeared with The Göteborg Opera in 2015 conducting *Bluebeard's Castle & Erwartung*, will conduct all four installments of the Ring Cycle. The cycle will end with **Götterdämmerung** in 2021, marking the city of Göteborg's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Goteborg Opera's **2018-19 season** presents more intriguing programming including a concert premiere for International Women's Day of **Fritiof's Saga**, a captivating work by Elfrida Andrée which tells the story of the Viking hero Frithiof the Bold. This sits alongside several revivals and two sets of double bills.



**Madama Butterfly**, Puccini's tale of passion and tragedy under the backdrop of international power play, will start the season, from **1 September to 4 October**. This is a revival of the acclaimed 2016 production by director **Yoshi Oida**, who was inspired by his own upbringing during the post-war colonisation of Japan by the USA. Oida's production is a revival of the very first version of *Madama Butterfly* (Brescia). This version is more critical of colonialism and exoticism, and it is perhaps for this reason that it was not well received at

its premiere. **Henrik Schaefer**, Musical Director of the Göteborg Opera Orchestra conducts this production, with South Korean soprano **Karah Son** in the title role and Irish tenor **Aaron Cawley** in the role of Pinkerton.

*"Yoshi Oidas direction is magnificent"* Radio p4 Sjuhärad

The Göteborg Opera returns to themes of Norse mythology with a concert **premiere** of an opera by two underrated female artists, composer **Elfrida Andrée** and author **Selma Lagerlöf**, for **International Women's Day on 8 March 2019**. **Fritiof's Saga**, based on Esaias Tegnér's epic poem, is an old Norse story which tells the tale of the Viking hero Frithiof the Bold, who runs away with the King's daughter, leading to political conflict, the wrath of the gods, exile and eventual reconciliation. Elfrida Andrée (1841-1929) was Sweden's first female cathedral organist, and she composed *Fritiof's Saga* for a competition to compose an opera for the inauguration of the Royal Swedish Opera in Stockholm. Andrée did not win, but she adapted it into a popular suite for orchestra. This concert performance, with conductor **Marit Strindlund**, will be the first time this late-romantic opera has been heard in its entirety.

The first double bill is of Damiano Michieletto's Olivier Award-winning production of **Cavalleria Rusticana & Pagliacci** from Covent Garden, running from **9 February to 31 March 2019**. These two one act operas continue the season's themes of passion and revenge, but unlike *Das Rheingold* they do not use intellectual drama, simply the dramatic effects of pure emotions and the power of music. The two works mark the dawn of *verismo* opera, telling the dramas and tragedies of ordinary people instead of gods and kings. *Verismo* expert **Pier Giorgio Morandi** conducts this double bill, with an all-star cast including **Tomas Lind, Ida Falk Winland, Carolina Sandgren, Katarina Karnéus, Joachim Bäckström** and **Annalena Persson**.

Passions run high in the double bill of **Trois Fragments de Juliette & La Voix Humaine** from **13 April to 12 May 2019**. Director **David Radok** has previously produced unusual combinations of one-act operas, as seen with *Die Sieben Todsünden & Gianni Schicchi* last season. This double bill of operas by **Bohuslav Martinů** and **Francis Poulenc** has also been interwoven to create an entire new surreal love story. Martinů's *Trois Fragments de Juliette* is a **world premiere** staging, with a French libretto based on a play by the surrealist writer George Neveux. *La Voix Humaine* continues the surrealist themes with Poulenc's story of a woman's desperate last attempts to save a relationship. The roles of both Juliette and the Woman are played by multi-award winning soprano **Kerstin Avemo**, while the role of Michel will be sung by **Joachim Bäckström**.

The opera season will end on a comedic high with ***The Marriage of Figaro*** from **16 to 26 May 2019**. This is a revival of director **Stephen Langridge's** 2014 production, with new voices in all the main roles. **Ida Falk Winland**, who played the role of Susanna in 2014, returns as the Countess, with **Mattias Ermedahl** as the Count, **Mia Karlsson** as Susanna, and **Henning von Schulman** as Figaro.

*"Mozart's 'The Marriage of Figaro' is a vertiginous study of human weaknesses and shortcomings, but also of courage, joy and a love that beats everything else".*  
Stephen Langridge

## SEASON 2018 – 2019 LISTINGS

### ***Madama Butterfly*** BRESCIA REVIVAL

| Giacomo Puccini  
1 September – 4 October 2018

**Henrik Schaefer** conductor  
**Yoshi Oïda** director  
**Tom Schenk** set design  
**Thibault Vancaenenbroeck**  
costume design  
**Fabrice Kebour** lighting design

**Karah Son** Butterfly  
**Katarina Giotas** Suzuki  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Kate Pinkerton  
**Aaron Cawley** Pinkerton  
**Daniel Hällström** Sharpless  
**Daniel Ralphsson** Goro  
**Åke Zetterström** Yamadori  
**Jonas Landström** Bonzen

***Das Rheingold*** | Richard Wagner  
17 November – 9 December 2018

**Evan Register** conductor  
**Stephen Langridge** director  
**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

***Cavalleria Rusticana & Pagliacci*** |  
Pietro Mascagni/Ruggiero Leoncavallo  
9 February – 31 March 2019

**Pier Giorgio Morandi** conductor  
**Damiano Michieletto/Rodula**  
**Gaitanou** directors  
**Paolo Fantin** set design  
**Carla Teti** costume design  
**Alessandro Carletti** lighting design

***Cavalleria Rusticana* cast**  
**Annalena Persson** Santuzza  
**Katarina Karnéus** Santuzza  
**Joachim Bäckström** Turiddu  
**Rosalind Plowright** Mama Lucia  
**Åke Zetterström** Alfio  
**Ann-Kristin Jones** Lola

***Pagliacci* cast**  
**Tomas Lind** Canio  
**Ida Falk Winland** Nedda  
**Carolina Sandgren** Nedda  
**Mats Persson** Tonio  
**Markus Pettersson** Beppe  
**Luthando Qave** Silvio

***Fritiofs Saga*** | Elfrida Andréé  
8 March 2019

**Marit Strindlund** conductor  
**Selma Lagerlöf** librettist  
**Julia Sporsén** Ingeborg  
**Markus Pettersson** Fritiof



***Trois fragments de Juliette & La Voix Humaine*** | Bohuslav Martinů/Francis Poulenc  
13 April – 12 May 2019

**Claire Levacher** conductor  
**David Radok** direction & set design  
**Zuzana Ježková** costume design  
**Přemysl Janda** lighting design  
**Dalibor Fencel** video design

***Trois fragments de Juliette* cast**  
**Kerstin Avemo** Juliette  
**Joachim Bäckström** Michel

***La Voix Humaine* cast**  
**Kerstin Avemo** conductor

***The Marriage of Figaro*** | Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart  
16 May – 26 May 2019

**Rory Macdonald** conductor  
**Stephen Langridge** director  
**George Souglides** set and costume design

## THE GÖTEBORG OPERA

**The Göteborg Opera** in its modern venue designed by Jan Izikowitz of Lund and Valentin was opened in October 1994. It seats 1,300 places and 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 (such as an ozone cabinet to clean delicate costumes). The orchestra and chorus are fully adaptable for opera, dance and musicals and the diverse programme allows for audience to experiment with all three art forms, with a quarter regularly attending all three with little sign of the usual snobbery normally associated with opera.



### Ecological ethos

The Göteborg Opera strives to be efficient in all its operations when working with finite, 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:

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

**Mattias Ermedahl** Count Almaviva  
**Ida Falk Winland** Countess Almaviva  
**Mia Karlsson** Susanna  
**Henning von Schulman** Figaro  
**Adrian Angelico** Cherubin  
**Carolina Sandgren** Marcellina  
**Mats Almgren** Bartolo  
**Markus Pettersson** Basilio  
**Alexander Grove** Don Curzio  
**NN** Barbarina  
**Peter Loguin** Antonio

- Its restaurant has won a Nordic Ecolabel meaning it endeavours wherever possible to use organic Fair Trade produce. At least once a week, there is one meat-free lunch to reduce the carbon footprint.
- Electricity consumption is taken 100% from renewable sources.
- Laundry providers and printers are Nordic Ecolabelled.
- Most of the lighting is LED or better than energy class B
- Beehives on the roof of the Opera House where there is a flower plantation. The honey is sold within the shop
- 600sq.meters of the roof (nearly 3 tennis courts) are covered in solar panels supplying 107,000kW per year.
- Sets and scenery have modular systems where everything can be taken down built back up again with carcasses being used multiple times. All waste is strictly sorted and all supplies are delivered in returnable crates, bottles and packaging.
- Genuine hair for wigs
- Long term goal to create an entire production eco-labelled.

"As a community member we are using creativity, openness, curiosity and modern approach to move gently through life. We are co-creating our society where pluralism, diversity and responsible development lead to a good life now, and for future generations."

<http://en.opera.se/>

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