

Götterdämmerung seals the fate of Stephen Langridge's ecologically-sustainable Ring cycle in Göteborg Opera's 2021/22 season



5 December 2021 – 9 January 2022
Wagner *Götterdämmerung* NEW PRODUCTION

Göteborg Opera House, Gothenburg, Sweden

The **Göteborg Opera** announces its 2021/22 season with a return to live performances including the grand finale of its four-year *Ring* cycle in the sublime apocalypse of *Götterdämmerung* marking the 400th anniversary of the city of Gothenburg.

Göteborg Opera goes local in Gösta Nystroem's 1959 opera *Herr Arnes penningar*, set in the area's medieval hinterlands, and a suffragette cantata by Gothenburg organist Elfrida André, while looking abroad to Italy with productions of Puccini's *Tosca*, Verdi's *Rigoletto*, Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, and Donizetti's witty behind-the-scenes account of a chaotic opera rehearsal, *Viva la mamma*. The new season is the first to be conceived by Henning Ruhe, appointed Artistic Director Opera/Drama at the Göteborg Opera in June 2019.

Henning Ruhe, Artistic Director of Opera & Drama, said:

"We all know that unique feeling... when the hall gets dark, when we feel this electricity going through the auditorium... and then... the unpredictable follows. Every note, every bar, is a surprise. No feeling can be compared to sitting together with other people in a hall and being united by this shared experience: we all go through the same yet each of us feels something different and unique. We have waited for over a year to finally be able to share this irreplaceable privilege again. The season 2021/2022 is more meaningful to us than ever before – for when the house reopens, the hearts of our audiences can finally open and we will together experience why music can do what nothing else can – bring us close to ourselves and to each other."

Marking the 400th anniversary of the city of Gothenburg in 2021, the **Göteborg Opera** premieres the final instalment of its ground-breaking *Ring* cycle, an epic four-year ecologically sustainable project, as director Stephen Langridge (Artistic Director 2013-

2019) returns to Gothenburg to stage Wagner's **Götterdämmerung** (*Twilight of the Gods*).



Director **Stephen Langridge's** pioneering new *Ring* cycle is crowned on 5 December 2021 in a finale set in a world of pollution and climate change, where desperation hangs in the air of an ever-warmer world soon to be consumed by fire.

Following in the footsteps of Birgit Nilsson, the great Wagnerian soprano, Sweden has produced some of the greatest Wagnerian voices in subsequent generations. Members of the outstanding Scandinavian cast include AnnLouice Lögdlund (Brünnhilde), Mats Persson (Gunter), Carolina Sandgren (Gutrune), Mats Almgren (Hagen), and Olafur Sigurdarson as Alberich. Conductor Evan Rogister is joined by stellar American tenor Daniel Brenna, who returns as Siegfried.

"Siegfried is only a heedless bully if he is made to look and sound like one; Brenna, Langridge and Rogister between them present a much deeper portrait of this very modern anti-hero."

Peter Quantrill (Arts Desk)

"Physical and philosophical clarity was reflected in the singing; this is a truly integrated cycle that is proving a fertile meeting of fresh, talented artists."

Andrew Mellor (Opera News)

The **environmentally-conscious production** addresses the themes of the cycle through a new lens: abuses of power, liberation, atonement and destruction see the earth robbed of its natural resources, its power converted for selfish gain and destruction, and nature violated.

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 an environmentally sustainable production. In *Götterdämmerung*, set materials and costumes are recycled from *Siegfried* (2020), itself recycled from *Die Walküre* (2019) & *Das Rheingold* (2018), and from sustainable sources and processes as far as possible.



Documenting the process, Göteborg Opera are redefining the values of a modern opera house and reinventing the terms for others to follow. They have found 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.

★★★★★ (Music) ★★★★★ (Staging)

"Stephen Langridge's staging is magnificently inventive. [...] The impact of this Walküre, however, is huge: a modern staging that speaks to all, and to the now. Magnificent."

Colin Clarke (Opera Now)

"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)

Heralding the return of live opera to the stage in Gothenburg after a year and a half of closure, **Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*** returns to the stage on 29 August 2021 in a new production, directed by Rodula Gaitanou. Greek tenor Vassilis Kavayas is the lovelorn Count Almaviva to Ann-Kristin Jones' Rosina, with Markus Schwartz (Bartolo) and Hannes Öberg (Figaro) in this homage to joie de vivre and young love, semi-staged in a fast-paced, colourful and entertaining production packed with musical and pop-culture references.



Puccini's *Tosca* returns from 18 September 2021 in a long-awaited revival of the 2011 production by **Lorenzo Mariani**, set in the film noir era Italy of the 1930's marked by Mussolini's oppressive rule. The fiery and seductive tale of lust and destructive power is sung with Carolina Sandgren (Tosca), Tomas Lind (Cavaradossi) and Mats Persson (Scarpia).

"incomparably emotional and powerful"

Dagens Nyheter

Celebrating 100 years of women's suffrage in Sweden, ***Let the voice be heard*** (14 October 2021) sets centre-stage works by women composers Thea Musgrave (her oboe concerto *Helios*), Cécile Chaminade's ballet symphonique *Callirhoë*, songs by Dora Pejačević, and the English suffragette Dame Ethel Smyth's *March of the Women*. The concert also includes the *Cantata at the International Congress for Women's Suffrage* by Gothenburg composer **Elfrida Andrée**, a pioneering advocate for the rights of women and cathedral organist in the city from 1867 until her death in 1929.

Highlights of the second part of the season in 2022 will include the seldom heard Swedish opera ***Herr Arnes penningar*** (*Mr Arne's Money, or The Treasure*), by **Gösta Nystroem**, Donizetti's tongue-in-cheek *Viva la mamma* (*Le convenienze ed inconvenienze teatrali*) – where characters upstage each other during a chaotic opera rehearsal – and Verdi's *Rigoletto*.

Nystroem's opera is based on the macabre tale *Mr Arne's Money* (or *The Treasure*) by Swedish writer **Selma Lagerlöf**, the first woman to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Set in the bleak and supernatural wintery landscape of the medieval Gothenburg region, the 1904 novel is a riveting tale of murder, stolen treasure and ill-fated love. After its original conception as the music for a 1959 radio play, and first staged as a full opera in Gothenburg in 1961, the opera was revived in concert in 2017 to critical acclaim.

Full details and casts for the second half of the season will be announced in due course.



Full Opera Listings

29 August – 2 October 2021

Rossini *Il barbiere di Siviglia*

Rodula Gaitanou director
Ville Matvejeff conductor

Simon Corder set, lighting design

Vassilis Kavayas Count Almaviva
Markus Schwartz Doctor Bartolo
Ann-Kristin Jones Rosina
Hannes Öberg Figaro
Mats Almgren Don Basilio
Mia Karlsson Berta
Jonas Landström Fiorello
Henrik Andersson officer

18 September – 20 October 2021

Puccini *Tosca*

Lorenzo Mariani director (original)
Mia Nerenius director (revival)
Ramón Tebar conductor
Henrik Schaefer conductor

Maurizio Baló set design
Silvia Aymonino costume design
Christian Pinaud lighting design (original)
Karin Wijk lighting design (revival)

Carolina Sandgren Floria Tosca
Tomas Lind Mario Cavaradossi
Mats Persson Baron Scarpia
Erik Rosenius Angelotti
Anders Lorentzson Sacristan
Daniel Ralphsson Spoletta
Jonas Landström Sciaronne
Herbjörn Thordarson prison guard

14 October 2021

Let the voice be heard

Music by Thea Musgrave, Cécile Chaminade, Dora Pejačević, Elfrida Andrée & Dame Ethel Smyth

Henrik Schaefer conductor
Katarina Karnéus mezzo-soprano
Sofie Asplund soprano
Geoffrey Cox oboe

5 December 2021 – 9 January 2022

Wagner *Götterdämmerung*

Stephen Langridge director
Evan Rogister conductor
Göteborg Opera Orchestra

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

Daniel Brenna Siegfried
Mats Persson Gunther
Mats Almgren Hagen
Ólafur Sigurdarson Alberich
AnnLouise Lögdlund Brünnhilde
Carolina Sandgren Guttrune
Katarina Karnéus Waltraute
Hege Høisæter First Norn
Katarina Giotas Second Norn
Charlotta Larsson Third Norn
Mia Karlsson Woglinde
Frida Engström Wellgunde
Ann-Kristin Jones Flosshilde
Anders Lorentzson Wotan

19 February – 13 March 2022

Gösta Nystroem *Herr Arnes penningar*
(Mr Arne's Money)

14 April – 29 May 2022

Verdi *Rigoletto*

7 May – 10 June 2022

Donizetti *Viva la mamma*

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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