

## ***DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG***

### **PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY**

#### **PAULE CONSTABLE, *Lighting Designer***



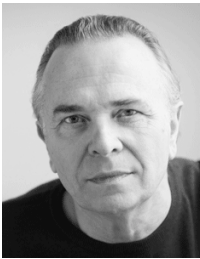
**Paule Constable** (Lighting Designer) is an Associate Director of the National Theatre and an associate of the Lyric Hammersmith and for Matthew Bourne's New Adventures. She has been nominated for a further 6 Olivier awards and for a 2007 Tony Award for *Coram Boy* and a 2013 Tony for *The Cripple of Inishmaan*. She was the recipient of the Hospital Award for Contribution to Theatre and has also received the LA Drama Desk Award for *Les Mis* and for *Warhorse*; and both the New York Critics Circle Award and Drama Desk Award for both *Curious Incident* and *Warhorse* on Broadway. She was the first recipient of the Opera Award for Lighting in 2013.

Opera includes *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Rigoletto*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Magic Flute* and *Macbeth* for the Royal Opera House; *Entführung aus dem Serail*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *The Cunning Little Vixen*, *Die Meistersinger*, *Billy Budd* (also BAM), *Rusalka*, *St Matthew Passion*, *Così fan Tutti*, *Giulio Cesare* (also Metropolitan Opera, New York), *Carmen*, *The Double Bill* and *La Bohème* at Glyndebourne; *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Così fan Tutti*, *Medea*, *Idomeneo*, *Satyagraha* (also Metropolitan Opera New York), *Clemenza Di Tito*, *Götterdämmerung*, *The Rape of Lucretia*, *The Rakes Progress* and *Manon* for ENO; *Cav and Pag*, *The Merry Widow*, *the Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni* and *Anna Bolena* at the Metropolitan Opera, New York; *Tales of Hoffman* for Salzburg Festival; *Poppea* for Theatre Champs Elysees; *Agrippina* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (La Monnaie); *Così* and *The Ring Cycle* for Opera National du Rhin, *Tristan and Isolde* for the New National Opera in Tokyo, *Peter Grimes*, *Don Giovanni*, *La Traviata*, *Magic Flute* and *Rosenkavalier* for Opera North; *Innes di Castro* and *Madama Butterfly* at Scottish Opera and *Don Giovanni*, *The Sacrifice* and *Katya Kabanova* for WNO as well as productions throughout Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand.

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#### **MARK ELDER, *Conductor***



**Mark Elder** (Conductor) makes his San Francisco Opera debut conducting *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. He is music director of the Hallé located in Manchester, artistic director of Opera Rara, and a principal artist of the Orchestra on the Age of Enlightenment. He has also served as music director of English National Opera and principal guest conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, and London Mozart Players. Recent career highlights include *King Roger* at the Bregenz Festival, *Tannhäuser* with Paris Opera, *Billy Budd* at the Glyndebourne Festival, *The Tsar's Bride*, *Fidelio*, *Wozzeck*, *La Bohème*, and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* for the Royal Opera, Covent Garden and concert performances with the Boston Symphony, Chicago Symphony, London Philharmonic and

London Symphony, and in the Netherlands, Rotterdam, Bergen, Budapest, Gothenburg, and Zurich, among others. Sir Mark Elder was knighted in 2008 and awarded the CBE (Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in 1989. In May 2006 he was named "Conductor of the Year" by the Royal Philharmonic Society (RPS) and was awarded honorary membership of the RPS in 2011. He received Gramophone Awards in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013 for his Hallé recordings of *Götterdämmerung*, *The Dream of Gerontius*, *The Kingdom*, *Elgar's Violin Concerto* and *The Apostles*.

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#### **ANDREW GEORGE, *Choreographer***



**Andrew George** (Choreographer) trained at the Laban Centre. His British opera credits include: For the Royal Opera House: *Les Troyens* (also La Scala) *Adriana Lecouvreur* (also Barcelona, Vienna, Opera de Paris) and *Salome*; For English National Opera: *Turn of the Screw*, *Der Rosenkavalier* (also Scottish Opera and Opera North) *Agrippina* (also Barcelona), *The Handmaid's Tale*, *Die Walküre*; For Glyndebourne Festival Opera: *Die Meistersinger* (also Chicago Lyric Opera), *Giulio Cesare* (also Chicago Lyric Opera and Opera Lille) and *Carmen*; For Scottish opera *Rake's Progress* and *La Traviata* (Also WNO and Geneva Opera); For Grange Park Opera: *The Love for Three Oranges* and *I Capuleti e i Montecchi*. Other worldwide choreography includes: Anna

*Bolena* and *Don Giovanni* (Metropolitan Opera); *Tristan und Isolde* in Tokyo, *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried*, *Götterdämmerung* and *Così fan tutte* (Opéra National du Rhin); *A Little Night Music* (Paris Châtelet); *Orlando* (Lille); *Orlando, Ariodante, Semele* (Champs-Élysées, Paris); *L'incoronazione di Poppea* (Champs-Élysées, Strasbourg, Staatsoper Berlin, La Monnaie, Copenhagen); *Don Carlos* (Frankfurt); *Turn of the Screw* (Mariinski-Kirov); *Cavalleria rusticana/Pagliacci* (Essen and Amsterdam); *L'elisir d'amore* (Amsterdam); *La belle Hélène* (Festival d'Aix-en-Provence); *Les contes d'Hoffmann* (Salzburger Festspiele); *Griselda* (Deutsche Oper Berlin); *La bohème* (Hamburg); *Tannhäuser* (La Scala); *Agrippina* and *Orphée aux Enfers* (La Monnaie), *Il barbiere di Siviglia*; *Venus and Adonis*, *Dido and Aeneas* (Vlaamse Opera and Innsbruck Early Music Festival); *The Cunning Little Vixen* (Maastricht); *The Handmaid's Tale* (Copenhagen); *Il Trovatore* (Gothenburg); *Der fliegende Holländer*, *Daphne* (New York City Opera); *Il Trovatore* (Los Angeles).

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### **PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY**

#### **DAVE MAIER, *Fight Director***



**Dave Maier**, resident fight director for San Francisco Opera, made his Company debut choreographing the fight scenes for *The Tales of Hoffmann* in 2013; he appeared also appeared as a swordsman in the 2010 production of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Maier has directed for American Conservatory Theater, Berkeley Repertory Theater, San Jose Repertory, Aurora Theatre, Marin Theatre Company and Magic Theatre, among others. He is a five time recipient of the San Francisco Bay Area Drama Critics Circle Award for Fight Direction and an eleven time nominee, and he serves as resident fight director at California Shakespeare Theatre and a company member with the Shotgun Players. Maier is recognized as an instructor of theatrical combat by Dueling Arts International and a founding member of Dueling Arts San Francisco. He

is an adjunct faculty member at the University of California Santa Cruz and St. Mary's College of California; he currently teaches combat related courses at Berkeley Repertory School of Theater.

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### **PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY**

#### **DAVID MCVICAR, *Director***



**David McVicar** (Director) made his San Francisco Opera debut directing *Don Giovanni* in 2007; his production of *Il Trovatore* was seen here in 2009. His most recent production with the Company was *The Trojans* in 2015. Career highlights include *Macbeth* at the Kirov (Mariinsky) Opera, Washington National Opera, the Metropolitan Opera, and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; *Salome* at Covent Garden; *Il Trovatore* at the Met and Lyric Opera of Chicago; *Billy Budd* and *Giulio Cesare* at Lyric Opera of Chicago; *L'Incoronazione di Poppea* and *Semele* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées; *Alcina* and *Manon* with Houston Grand Opera, the Dallas Opera, and English National Opera; and *Agrippina* at English National Opera, Frankfurt Opera, the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie, and the Théâtre des Champs-

Elysées. His work has been seen frequently at Royal Opera, Covent Garden, where his credits include televised productions of *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Faust*, *Die Zauberflöte*, and *Rigoletto*. Other productions include *La Bohème*, *Carmen*, *Giulio Cesare* for the Glyndebourne Festival; *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Les Contes d'Hoffmann* for the Salzburg Festival; *Der Rosenkavalier*, *Don Giovanni*, *Sweeney Todd*, *Hamlet*, and *Il Re Pastore* for Opera North (U.K.); *Tosca*, *Der Rosenkavalier*, *The Rape of Lucretia* for English National Opera; *The Turn of the Screw* for the Mariinsky Theatre and English National Opera; and *Tamerlano* for Deutsche Oper Berlin. McVicar received the South Bank Show Award for his production of *Giulio Cesare* at the Glyndebourne Festival, and his productions have been nominated for numerous Laurence Olivier Awards. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in 2012.

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### **PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY**

#### **VICKI MORTIMER, *Production Designer***



**Vicki Mortimer** (Production Designer) British designer Vicki Mortimer made her Royal Ballet debut in 2003 on Wayne McGregor's *Qualia* and has since returned to work on McGregor's *Raven Girl* (2013). She made her Royal Opera debut in 2013 on *Written on Skin*, directed by Katie Mitchell, and in the 2015/16 Season returns to work with Mitchell on a new production of *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Mortimer studied at the Slade School of Fine Art. For Mitchell her opera designs include costumes for *Orest* (Dutch National Opera) and designs for *Al gran sole carico d'amore* (Berlin State Opera, Salzburg Festival), *Neither* (Berlin State Opera), *After Dido* and *The Way Back Home* (English National Opera), *St Matthew Passion* (Glyndebourne) and *The Sacrifice, Jenůfa, Kát'a Kabanová* and *Jephtha* (Welsh National Opera). Her other opera designs include, for Nicholas Hytner, *Così fan tutte* (Glyndebourne), and for David McVicar, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (Glyndebourne) and *Wozzeck* (Chicago). She works regularly with McGregor, credits including *Yantra* (Stuttgart Ballet), *Genus* (Paris Opera Ballet), *Skindex* (Nederlands Dans Theater) and *Millenarium, Sulphur 16* and *Aeon* (Wayne McGregor | Random Dance).

For the National Theatre Mortimer has designed more than 25 productions, including *The Silver Tassie, Othello, Hamlet, The Seagull* and *The House of Bernarda Alba*. She has also worked for the Royal Shakespeare Company (including *Uncle Vanya* and *The Winter's Tale*), on Broadway (costumes for *Nine* and *Fiddler on the Roof*) and for the Royal Court, Almeida, Donmar Warehouse and the Royal Dramatic Theatre, Stockholm, among others. She is a member of the Linbury Prize Committee and is on the steering committee for Birkbeck's director training.

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### **PRODUCTION TEAM BIOGRAPHY**

#### **IAN ROBERTSON, *Chorus Director***



**Ian Robertson** (Chorus Director) has been chorus director and conductor with San Francisco Opera since 1987, having prepared more than 275 productions for the Company. He was awarded the Olivier Messiaen Foundation Prize in 2003 for his artistic contribution to the preparation of the Company's North American premiere of *Saint François d'Assise*. Robertson made his San Francisco Opera conducting debut with *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and has since led performances of *Falstaff*, *Lohengrin*, *Rigoletto*, *La Traviata*, *Don Carlo*, *Turandot*, *Il Trovatore*, and *La Bohème*. He has led the San Francisco Opera Orchestra and Chorus in many concerts, including the Company's recent Stern Grove appearance, and he has conducted *Così fan tutte* and *La Périochole* for San Francisco Opera Center and frequently led Merola Opera Program's Grand Finale concerts. Other North American opera credits include productions with Sarasota Opera, Edmonton Opera, and Philadelphia's Curtis Opera Theatre. Before joining San Francisco Opera, Robertson was head of music and chorus director of Scottish Opera, where he led numerous productions, including *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, *The Pearl Fishers*, *The Secret of Susanna*, and *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*. The Scotland native trained at the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and the University of Glasgow; he studied conducting under Sir Alexander Gibson. Robertson is currently the artistic director of the San Francisco Festival Chorale, which performed this summer at the Grand Teton Music Festival, and the San Francisco Boys Chorus. A 2009 trip with the San Francisco Boys Chorus took him to the inauguration of the President of the United States, and this summer he led performances with the Boys Chorus in St. Petersburg, Russia and Copenhagen.



## ***DIE MEISTERSINGER VON NÜRNBERG***

### **COMPOSER BIOGRAPHY**

#### **RICHARD WAGNER, *Composer & Librettist***



**Richard Wagner** (May 22, 1813 – February 13, 1883), German composer, conductor, theatre director of operas, is considered one of the most important figures of nineteenth-century music. Wagner's music is still widely recognized today, accompanying celebrations with the ever-present *Wedding March (Bridal Chorus)* from the opera *Lohengrin* and the *Ride of the Valkyries* from the opera *Die Walküre*, which has been used in movie soundtracks to great effect.

Richard Wagner was born at No. 3 (The House of the Red and White Lions), the Brühl, in the Jewish quarter of Leipzig, the ninth child of Carl Friedrich Wagner, who was a clerk in the Leipzig police service, and his wife Johanna Rosine, the daughter of a baker. He enrolled at the University of Leipzig in 1831, taking composition lessons with the cantor of Saint Thomas Church, Christian Theodor Weinlig, who arranged for the composer's first work, his Piano Sonata in B flat to be published. In 1833, Wagner's older brother Karl Albert managed to obtain for Richard a position as choir master in Würzburg. At the age of 20, Wagner composed his first complete opera *Die Feen*, which was not performed until after the composer's death.

His reputation grew as the composer of works such as *Der fliegende Holländer (1843)*, *Tannhäuser (1845)*, *Lohengrin (1850)*, which were broadly in the romantic vein of Weber and Meyerbeer. Wagner's compositions are notable for their complex texture, rich harmonies and orchestration, and the elaborate use of leitmotifs: musical themes associated with individual characters, places, ideas or plot elements. Unlike most other opera composers, Wagner wrote both the music and libretto for every one of his stage works.

Wagner's *Lohengrin* was rejected by Dresden opera and the composer was infuriated. Anger fueled his support of the socialist party, and Wagner took a role in the May Uprising, which led to a government call for the arrest of the revolutionaries. Wagner was forced to flee Dresden for Paris, eventually settling in Zurich for a thirteen-year exile. *Lohengrin* was presented in Weimar in Wagner's absence, conducted by his friend, the composer Franz Liszt.

Wagner was used to a high standard living, and was plagued by problems with money and women all of his life. Fortunately for the composer, a young King Ludwig II of Bavaria decided to become Wagner's benefactor in 1864. Wagner was in dire straits when the 18-year old Ludwig settled Wagner's considerable debts, and proposed to stage *Tristan*, *Die Meistersinger*, the *Ring*, and the other operas Wagner planned. The drawing room of "Mad" King Ludwig's Neuschwanstein Castle in southwest Bavaria is graced with mural of the *Lohengrin* story. Incidentally, the palace, built in homage to Wagner, is also the inspiration for Disneyland's Sleeping Beauty Castle. Eventually, a scandalous affair forced Ludwig to move the composer to Switzerland.

Eventually, in 1871, Wagner settled in the small town of Bayreuth, a place chosen as the location of his new opera house, Bayreuth Festspielhaus, which contained many novel design features. It was here that the *Ring* and *Parsifal* received their premieres and where his most important stage works continue to be performed today in an annual festival run by his descendants. Wagner's views on conducting were also highly influential. His extensive writings on music, drama and politics have all attracted extensive comment in recent decades, especially where they have anti-semitic content. Wagner died of a heart attack at the age of 69 on February, 13 1883 at Ca' Vendramin Calergi, a 16th century palazzo on the Grand Canal and is buried in the garden of the Villa Wahnfried in Bayreuth.

Wagner transformed operatic thought with his concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* ("total work of art"), a synthesis of all the poetic, visual, musical and dramatic arts. Wagner realized this concept most fully in the first half of the monumental four-opera cycle *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. Wagner's *Ring* — comprised of *Das Rheingold* (1869), *Die Walküre* (1870), *Siegfried* (1876), *Götterdämmerung* (1876)— is considered one of the great artistic achievements in opera. However, his thoughts on the relative importance of music and drama were to change again,

Wagner pioneered advances in musical language, such as extreme chromaticism and quickly shifting tonal centres, which greatly influenced the development of European classical music. Wagner's influence continued to spread beyond music into philosophy, literature, the visual arts and theatre with his last few stage works, including *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* (1868), *Tristan und Isolde* (1865) and *Parsifal* (1882). His *Tristan und Isolde* is sometimes described as marking the start of modern music.

Wagner achieved all of this despite a life characterized, until his last decades, by political exile, turbulent love affairs, poverty and repeated flight from his creditors. His pugnacious personality and often outspoken views on music, politics and society made him a controversial figure during his life, which he remains to this day. The effect of his ideas can be traced in many of the arts throughout the twentieth century.

Sources: [www.classicsforkids.com](http://www.classicsforkids.com), [wikipedia.org](http://wikipedia.org), [www.wagner.net](http://www.wagner.net)