



SAN FRANCISCO  
OPERA

## ADDITIONAL CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR JUNE/JULY 2028 PRESENTATIONS OF RICHARD WAGNER'S FOUR-OPERA *THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG* CYCLE



Music Director Eun Sun Kim and Director Francesca Zambello. Photo: Cody Pickens  
Scenes from the *Ring* cycle: *Die Walküre* (center), *Siegfried* (right). Photos: Cory Weaver

## MUSIC DIRECTOR EUN SUN KIM CONDUCTS THREE CYCLES IN VISIONARY PRODUCTION BY DIRECTOR FRANCESCA ZAMBELLO



Top: Tamara Wilson, Brian Mulligan, Simon O'Neill, Falk Struckmann, Julie Adams, Christopher Sokolowski, Judit Kutasi  
Second row: Brenton Ryan, Zhengyi Bai, John Relyea, Kwangchul Youn, Annika Schlicht, Sadie Cheslak, Sofia Gotch

Tickets Available to Ring Circle, subscribers, donors on October 13

[sfopera.com/operas/ring-cycle](https://sfopera.com/operas/ring-cycle)

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (October 1, 2026) — Casting details for San Francisco Opera's Summer 2028 presentations of Richard Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*) were announced this week. Also known as the *Ring* cycle, Wagner's epic transpires across four different operas—*Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. Relating the creation of the world, the corrupting influence of an all-powerful ring and a heroine's sacrifice that makes possible a new beginning, the *Ring* is widely considered the most ambitious work ever conceived for the lyric stage. Leading the massive work for the first time, Caroline H. Hume Music Director **Eun Sun Kim** conducts three complete cycles from June 13 through July 2, 2028. **Francesca Zambello** directs her visually spectacular staging, a co-production with Washington National Opera, which was first unveiled at the War Memorial Opera House in June 2011 and revived here in 2018.

Tickets for the complete *Ring* cycles go on sale on October 13 at 10 a.m. for Ring Circle members, 2026–27 Season subscribers and donors of \$150 or more. Four-opera cycle tickets go on sale to the general public in July 2027. Tickets for the non-cycle performances of *Das Rheingold* in May/June 2027 are available now. Tickets for non-cycle performances of *Die Walküre* in fall 2027 and the one-off performances of *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in spring 2028 will be available after the Company's 2027–28 Season is announced in early 2027.

In 2023, **Eun Sun Kim** began her initiative to conduct the works of Wagner each season in San Francisco with *Lohengrin* (the preparation for which was captured in the NorCal Emmy-nominated documentary [Eun Sun Kim: A Journey into Lohengrin](#)), followed by *Tristan und Isolde* in 2024 and the Company's new production of *Parsifal* in 2025. This season, Kim leads *Das Rheingold* (May 29–June 22, 2027), the first installment of Wagner's epic tetralogy as the Company prepares to present the complete *Ring* in 2028. KQED summarized Maestro Kim's multi-season Wagner program to date: "And can we take a moment to appreciate the gift San Francisco has in Eun Sun Kim at the podium? All the dynamism of the score comes alive under her baton."

San Francisco Opera has assembled an international cast of the world's leading Wagnerians for the 2028 *Ring*. As previously announced, the *Ring* cast will be headed by a trio of dynamic artists. American soprano **Tamara Wilson** makes her highly anticipated Company debut as the warrior goddess Brünnhilde who appears in three of the four operas: *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. American baritone **Brian Mulligan**, well-known to San Francisco Opera audiences in a wide repertoire of operas including his standout performances singing Wagner, is Wotan, the chief of the gods who appears in *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre* and, disguised as the Wanderer, in *Siegfried*. New Zealand tenor **Simon O'Neill**, who won acclaim as the Company's Tristan in 2024, is the heroic Siegfried in both *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*.

German bass-baritone **Falk Struckmann** has sung most of the low-voiced roles in Wagner's works and returns as the cycle's namesake, the Nibelung Alberich, in *Das Rheingold*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*. American soprano and former San Francisco Opera Adler Fellow **Julie Adams**

will portray Sieglinde in *Die Walküre* and Gutrune in *Götterdämmerung*. American tenor **Christopher Sokolowski**, who made his Company debut this season as Lord Darnley in Thea Musgrave's *Mary, Queen of Scots*, takes on the role of Siegmund in *Die Walküre* and sings Froh in *Das Rheingold*. After creating a sensation as Ortrud in *Lohengrin* for her American and role debut, Romanian mezzo-soprano **Judit Kutasi** portrays Wotan's wife, Fricka, in both *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*.

American tenor **Brenton Ryan** returns to the Company as the cunning god of fire, Loge, in *Das Rheingold*. Chinese tenor and former Adler Fellow **Zhengyi Bai** is Mime in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried*. Canadian bass **John Relyea** portrays two roles spread across three of the cycle's operas: Fafner in *Das Rheingold* and (in the form of a dragon) *Siegfried* as well as the evil Hagen in *Götterdämmerung*. Korean bass **Kwangchul Youn** is the giant Fasolt in *Das Rheingold* and Hunding in *Die Walküre*. Estonian bass-baritone **Lauri Vasar**, last seen on the War Memorial Opera House stage as Papageno in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*, is Donner in *Das Rheingold* and Gunther in *Götterdämmerung*. After making her Company debut as Brangäne in *Tristan und Isolde* in 2024, **Annika Schlicht** returns in *Götterdämmerung* as the Second Norn and the Valkyrie Waltraute.

The cast includes current San Francisco Opera Adler Fellows **Sadie Cheslak** as Erda in *Das Rheingold* and *Siegfried* and the First Norn in *Götterdämmerung*; **Sofia Gotch** as the Rhinemaiden Woglinde in *Das Rheingold* and *Götterdämmerung* and the Forest Bird in *Siegfried*; and **Mary Hoskins** as the Third Norn in *Götterdämmerung*. Mezzo-sopranos **Laura Krumm** and **Taylor Raven** are the Rhinemaidens Wellgunde and Flosshilde, respectively. Additional casting for the *Ring* will be announced at a later date.

When first unveiled as a complete four-opera cycle during San Francisco Opera's 2011 *Ring* Festival, the *New York Times* hailed Zambello's production as "boldly contemporary." Zambello revisited elements of the staging for its April/May 2016 revival at the Washington National Opera, which the *Washington Post* proclaimed "strong and moving, thought-provoking and powerful," and concluded, "My bottom line for any production, updated or not, is the quality of its storytelling, and this is where Zambello excelled. When a production creates characters that move you, and get you to re-engage with the work in new ways, it is succeeding." In 2018, the *San Francisco Chronicle* said, "It would be hard to ask for a more triumphant conclusion to a triumphant week at the War Memorial Opera House ... the swell and fall of the composer's richly imagined orchestral currents, the pinpoint dramaturgy of these stark moral and psychological portraits, and the cornucopia of vivid stage imagery—all of it combined to create an immersive theatrical experience unlike any other."

Along with Zambello, the production showcases the work of set designer **Michael Yeargan**, costume designer **Catherine Zuber**, lighting designer **Mark McCullough** lit in revival by A.J. Guban, projection designers **S. Katy Tucker** and **Jan Hartley** and, in the cycle's final chapter, Chorus Director **John Keene**.

There are some differences in the casting for the non-cycle performances of individual *Ring* operas in Summer 2027 (*Das Rheingold*) and Fall 2028 (*Die Walküre*), but otherwise all announced artists for the *Ring* will perform their roles in each of the three cycles, which are scheduled for June 13–18, June 20–25 and June 27–July 2, 2028.

As in San Francisco Opera's previous presentations of the *Ring*, the Company will offer a variety of community programs and ancillary events around the cycles, including lectures, symposia and musical performances, providing opportunities to delve deeper into Wagner's epic masterpiece. Ring Festival events and details will be announced at a later date.

### TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets for the 2028 *Ring* cycles will go on sale October 13, 2026 at 10 a.m. for Ring Circle members—a group of supporters who are invited to make a contribution at levels beginning at \$7,500 and who will enjoy special benefits leading up to and during the cycles—along with current season subscribers and donors of \$150 and up. Visit [sfopera.com/operas/ring-cycle](https://sfopera.com/operas/ring-cycle). For information about the Ring Circle, visit [sfopera.com/give/donations/giving-circle/ringcircle](https://sfopera.com/give/donations/giving-circle/ringcircle). *Ring* cycle packages will go on sale to the general public in July 2027. Tickets for the non-cycle performances of *Das Rheingold* in May/June 2027 are available now. Tickets for non-cycle performances of *Die Walküre* in fall 2027 and the one-off performances of *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in spring 2028 will be available after the Company's 2027–28 Season is announced in early 2027.

### THE RING AT SAN FRANCISCO OPERA



Scenes from San Francisco Opera's history with the *Ring*: *Die Walküre* (1935) with Lauritz Melchior and Kirsten Flagstad; Hunding summons the vassals in *Götterdämmerung* (1972); the gods enter Valhalla in *Das Rheingold* (1985).

Photos: Franklin & Rognan (l), Carolyn Mason Jones (c), Ron Scherl (r)

San Francisco Opera is among the world's leading presenters of *The Ring of the Nibelung* with a storied history extending back to 1935, the Company's 13th season, with performances featuring legendary artists Kirsten Flagstad as Brunnhilde, in her first-ever complete *Ring* cycle,

Lauritz Melchior as Siegfried and Friedrich Schorr as Wotan with Artur Bodanzky conducting. Later stagings followed in 1972 for the Company's Golden Jubilee season, a new production by Nikolaus Lehnhoff in 1985, 1990 and 1999, and Zambello's production in 2011 and 2018.

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## SUMMER 2028 OPERA SEASON: *DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN*

CYCLE 1: June 13 (7:30 p.m.); June 14 (6 p.m.); June 16 (6 p.m.); June 18 (1 p.m.)

CYCLE 2: June 20 (7:30 p.m.); June 21 (6 p.m.); June 23 (6 p.m.); June 25 (1 p.m.)

CYCLE 3: June 27 (7:30 p.m.); June 28 (6 p.m.); June 30 (6 p.m.); July 2 (1 p.m.)

All cycle performances are presented on Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday

### Production:

|                                |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Conductor                      | Eun Sun Kim        |
| Director                       | Francesca Zambello |
| Set Designer                   | Michael Yeargan    |
| Costume Designer               | Catherine Zuber    |
| Original Lighting Designer     | Mark McCullough    |
| Revival Lighting Designer      | A.J. Guban         |
| Original Projections           | Jan Hartley        |
| New Projections, Remounted by  | S. Katy Tucker     |
| Choreographer                  | Denni Sayers       |
| Associate Director             | Denni Sayers       |
| (Das Rheingold, Siegfried)     |                    |
| Associate Director             | Christian Rath     |
| (Die Walküre, Götterdämmerung) |                    |
| Chorus Director                | John Keene         |

Co-production with Washington National Opera  
Sung in German with English supertitles

### *DAS RHEINGOLD* by Richard Wagner

June 13 (7:30 p.m.), 20 (7:30 p.m.) and 27 (7:30 p.m.), 2028

|                                   |                                          |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Approximate running time:         | 2 hours, 35 minutes without intermission |
| World Premiere:                   | Munich; September 22, 1869               |
| First SF Opera Performance:       | November 1, 1935                         |
| Most Recent SF Opera Performance: | June 2018                                |

### Cast:

|          |                 |
|----------|-----------------|
| Wotan    | Brian Mulligan  |
| Loge     | Brenton Ryan    |
| Alberich | Falk Struckmann |
| Fricka   | Judit Kutasi    |

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Erda</i>       | Sadie Cheslak          |
| <i>Mime</i>       | Zhengyi Bai            |
| <i>Fasolt</i>     | Kwangchul Youn         |
| <i>Fafner</i>     | John Relyea            |
| <i>Froh</i>       | Christopher Sokolowski |
| <i>Donner</i>     | Lauri Vasar            |
| <i>Woglinde</i>   | Sofia Gotch            |
| <i>Wellgunde</i>  | Laura Krumm            |
| <i>Flosshilde</i> | Taylor Raven           |

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

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*DIE WALKÜRE* by Richard Wagner

June 14 (6 p.m.), 21 (6 p.m.) and 28 (6 p.m.), 2028

|                                   |                                            |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Approximate running time:         | 4 hours, 30 minutes with two intermissions |
| World Premiere:                   | Munich; June 26, 1870                      |
| First SF Opera Performance:       | November 4, 1935                           |
| Most Recent SF Opera Performance: | June 2018                                  |

Cast:

|                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Brünnhilde</i> | Tamara Wilson          |
| <i>Wotan</i>      | Brian Mulligan         |
| <i>Sieglinde</i>  | Julie Adams            |
| <i>Siegmund</i>   | Christopher Sokolowski |
| <i>Fricka</i>     | Judit Kutasi           |
| <i>Hunding</i>    | Kwangchul Youn         |

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

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*SIEGFRIED* by Richard Wagner

June 16 (6 p.m.), 23 (6 p.m.) and 30 (6 p.m.), 2028

|                                   |                                |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Approximate running time:         | 5 hours with two intermissions |
| World Premiere:                   | Bayreuth; August 16, 1876      |
| First SF Opera Performance:       | November 6, 1935               |
| Most Recent SF Opera Performance: | June 2018                      |

Cast:

|                             |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Siegfried</i>            | Simon O'Neill   |
| <i>Brünnhilde</i>           | Tamara Wilson   |
| <i>Mime</i>                 | Zhengyi Bai     |
| <i>The Wanderer (Wotan)</i> | Brian Mulligan  |
| <i>Alberich</i>             | Falk Struckmann |

*Fafner*  
*Erda*  
*Forest Bird*

John Relyea  
Sadie Cheslak  
Sofia Gotch

San Francisco Opera Orchestra

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**GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG** by Richard Wagner  
June 18 (1 p.m.), 25 (1 p.m.) and July 2 (1 p.m.), 2028

Approximate running time: 5 hours, 15 minutes with two intermissions

World Premiere: Bayreuth, August 17, 1876

First SF Opera Performance: November 9, 1935

Most Recent SF Opera Performance: June/July 2018

**Cast:**

|                    |                 |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| <i>Brünnhilde</i>  | Tamara Wilson   |
| <i>Siegfried</i>   | Simon O'Neill   |
| <i>Gunther</i>     | Lauri Vasar     |
| <i>Hagen</i>       | John Relyea     |
| <i>Waltraute</i>   | Annika Schlicht |
| <i>Gutrune</i>     | Julie Adams     |
| <i>Alberich</i>    | Falk Struckmann |
| <i>First Norn</i>  | Sadie Cheslak   |
| <i>Second Norn</i> | Annika Schlicht |
| <i>Third Norn</i>  | Mary Hoskins    |
| <i>Woglinde</i>    | Sofia Gotch     |
| <i>Wellgunde</i>   | Laura Krumm     |
| <i>Flosshilde</i>  | Taylor Raven    |

San Francisco Opera Orchestra and San Francisco Opera Chorus

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**ABOUT DER RING DES NIBELUNGEN (THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG)**

The plot of Richard Wagner's epic music-drama *Der Ring des Nibelungen* revolves around an all-powerful ring made from gold stolen from the Rhine River. The ring carries a deadly curse that determines the destiny of those who come in contact with it. Throughout the cycle, various mythic figures struggle to obtain the ring; chief among them is Wotan, ruler of the gods. The ring is eventually won by the hero Siegfried, son of Siegmund and Sieglinde, and he braves a circle of fire to awaken the sleeping Brünnhilde. Siegfried gives the ring to Brünnhilde but is ultimately slain. Brünnhilde sacrifices herself to return the ring to its natural home in the Rhine, thus ending the rule of the gods and restoring the world to its natural order.

Composed from 1848 to 1874, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is among the pinnacles of music, storytelling and artistic ambition. The composer, who also wrote the libretto, drew inspiration for his magnum

opus from early Germanic and Norse mythology and from the poem *Nibelungenlied*, which was written by an anonymous German poet in the 13th century. In 1848, Wagner drafted a prose outline for his drama and throughout the next five years wrote the libretti for *Das Rheingold*, *Die Walküre*, *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung* in reverse order. While *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre* received their premieres in Munich in 1869 and 1870, the first performance of the complete *Ring* cycle was in 1876 at the composer's own, custom-built theater in Bayreuth, Germany.

# # # #

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**PRESS PHOTOS:** High-resolution, downloadable artist headshots and production images for the *Ring* cycle are available at [sfopera.com/press](http://sfopera.com/press).

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