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An Introduction To Richard Wagner's Der Ring Des Nibelungen: A Handbook



Synopsis

Today, more than a century after its first performance, Richard Wagner's The Ring of Nibelung endures as one of the most significant artistic creations in the history of opera. This monumental work not only altered previously accepted concepts of music and drama but also inspired creative and intellectual efforts far beyond the field of opera. Previous studies of the Ring have appealed only to those already acquainted in some way with the Wagnerian art. For the uninitiated, Wagner and his landmark creation have seemed forbidding, and those eager to learn about the masterpiece have faced a vast and frequently esoteric body of commentary. Professor Cord addresses the interests of the non-specialist by taking the reader first into Wagner's unique intent, and then through the complete history of the Ring. Cord, who has attended forty performances of the Ring, considers the conception of the poem, its development into a music-drama exemplifying Wagnerian thought, its introduction to the world, and the reactions and interpretation it elicits.

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Customer Reviews

Professor Cord's book proved very useful to me when I attended the Ring cycle at the S.F. Opera in June 1999. I had watched the N.Y. Met video tapes, and read up on the four operas, but Cord's book gives extensive background information to help you understand the context in which the operas were created and first performed. The S.F. Opera was selling this handbook to its patrons and it turned out Professor Cord was sitting two rows ahead of us. His enthusiasm, love, respect and knowledge of Wagner are clear. You can read the book before attending or, if you prefer, after

the experience to clarify questions and insights you have had. I recommend it as a wonderful starting point for anyone exploring Wagner's Ring.

I am a true Wagnarian. Der Gotterdammerung is my favorite opera. The Rhine Maidens in this book were not described accurately.

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