

Richard Wagner

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

February 11, 2012

Conductor **Fabio Luisi**
Production **Robert Lepage**
Associate Director **Neilson Vignola**
Set Designer **Carl Fillion**
Costume Designer **François St-Aubin**
Lighting Designer **Etienne Boucher**
Video Image Artist **Lionel Arnould**

Live in HD Host **Patricia Racette**

Brünnhilde **Deborah Voigt**
Gutrune **Wendy Bryn Harmer**
Waltraute **Waltraud Meier**
Siegfried **Jay Hunter Morris**
Gunther **Iain Paterson**
Alberich **Eric Owens**
Hagen **Hans-Peter König**

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PROLOGUE The three Norns weave the rope of destiny. When one of them mentions Alberich and the theft of the Rhinegold, the rope breaks: their wisdom has ended. Brünnhilde sends Siegfried into the world to do heroic deeds. As a pledge of his love, he gives her the ring he took from Fafner.

ACT I The sinister Hagen, half-brother of the Gibichung rulers Gunther and Gutrune, advises his siblings to marry. He suggests Brünnhilde as Gunther's bride and Siegfried as Gutrune's husband and proposes a plan: a potion will make Siegfried forget Brünnhilde and fall in love with Gutrune. To win her, he will get Brünnhilde for Gunther. Siegfried, travelling along the Rhine, arrives. Hagen offers him the potion, and Siegfried promptly confesses his love for Gutrune. Gunther tells him about his chosen bride, and Siegfried agrees to win her, using the Tarnhelm to transform himself into Gunther. The two men take an oath of blood brotherhood and depart for Brünnhilde's rock.

Meanwhile, Brünnhilde receives a visit from her sister Waltraute, who asks Brünnhilde to give the ring back to the Rhinemaidens to save the gods. Brünnhilde refuses, declaring that Siegfried's love is more important to her. Waltraute leaves in despair. Siegfried's horn sounds in the distance. Brünnhilde's joy quickly turns into terror when a strange figure appears, claiming her as Gunther's bride and tearing the ring from her hand.

INTERMISSION

ACT II Hagen has a vision of his father Alberich, reminding him to win back the ring. Gunther and Brünnhilde arrive and are greeted by the Gibichung clan. When she sees Siegfried, Brünnhilde furiously accuses him of betraying her. Still under the spell of the potion, Siegfried innocently tells her he is to marry Gutrune and that she will become Gunther's wife. Noticing the ring on Siegfried's finger, Brünnhilde accuses him of stealing it, since only the night before it was taken from her hand, supposedly by Gunther. Siegfried protests and swears on Hagen's spear that he has done no wrong. Brünnhilde is beside herself with fury and bent on revenge. Hagen offers to kill Siegfried, suggesting the murder be made to look like a hunting accident. Gunther hesitates to join the conspiracy, but ultimately gives in.

INTERMISSION

ACT III On a hunting excursion, Hagen asks Siegfried to tell them about his youth. Siegfried describes his life with Mime and his fight with the dragon. While he is talking, Hagen offers him a drink containing an antidote to the potion of forgetfulness. Siegfried continues his tale, describing how he walked through the fire and woke Brünnhilde. At the mention of her name, Hagen stabs Siegfried, claiming that a false oath must be avenged. With his dying words, Siegfried remembers Brünnhilde. Presented with his body, Gutrune accuses Gunther of murder, who replies that Hagen is the guilty one. The two men fight and Gunther is killed. When Hagen reaches for the ring, the dead Siegfried threateningly raises his arm. Brünnhilde orders a funeral pyre to be built and, taking the ring from Siegfried's hand, leaps into the flames. The river overflows its banks and destroys the Gibichungs' hall. Hagen, trying to seize the ring, drowns, and the Rhinemaidens joyfully reclaim their gold. In the distance, Valhalla and the gods are seen, surrounded by flames.

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