
THE WASHINGTON RING CYCLE

EARLY ANNOUNCEMENT

Tuesday, May 17th through Sunday, May 22nd, 2016

BECAUSE OF THE UNUSUAL NUMBER OF EARLY REQUESTS FOR 'THE WASHINGTON RING', WE ARE INCLUDING THIS TOUR IN OUR CURRENT BROCHURE INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR OUR SPRING BROCHURE.



The Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Nina Stemme (as Brünnhilde): *"An Immolation Scene in an unending stream of perfection. No-one who heard it will ever forget it, nor the magnificent interpretation that led up to it."*

The Guardian

David Brenna: *"The American dream heldentenor, whose youth and power have ignited the British and German stages"*

Dijon Opera

Alan Held (as Wotan): *"Through his voice, the God's sentencing of his daughter to a flaming prison once again had its potent stirring effect. . . His reminiscences were heartbreaking. His summons of flames? Terrifying."*

Cleveland Plain Dealer

Christopher Ventris produces a fresh, blossoming tenor, a Siegmund at the height of his vocal powers."

Die Presse

The Washington National Opera (WNO) will be the next major company to mount Richard Wagner's towering **Der Ring des Niebelungen**. During a concise **six-night** period of May (2016), Great Performance Tours will host old and new friends for the four performances of the Ring Cycle at Washington's prestigious **Kennedy Center Opera House**. May is an ideal month to enjoy the warm spring weather of our nation's capitol.

Wagner 'aficionados' will not want to miss this important production of the Ring. We have carefully selected the *third cycle* because it is the only one starring Swedish soprano **Nina Stemme** as Brünnhilde. Ms. Stemme is today's reigning dramatic soprano and has not yet been heard in this career-defining role at the MET.



Nina Stemme



Alan Held



Daniel Brenna

The WNO has already earned its Wagnerian spurs with recent stagings of 'Das Rheingold', 'Die Walküre', 'Siegfried', and this season's gripping 'Der Fliegende Holländer'. Now we look forward to the completion of the Ring Cycle to be directed by the company's dynamic Artistic Director **Francesca Zambello** and conducted by the French Music Director **Philippe Auguin**. The concept of this "American Ring draws on settings from U. S. history to explore Wagner's greed, ambition and betrayal." (*Huffington Post*). The scenic designs reflecting this original vision are by **Michael Yeargan**, resident set designer of the Yale Repertory Theatre.

Our top-price tickets for Cycle III will be in the Orchestra. The principal artists for Cycle III are as follows:

Brünnhilde: **Nina Stemme**
Wotan/The Wanderer: **Alan Held**
Siegfried: **Daniel Brenna**
Siegmund: **Christopher Ventris**
Sieglinde: **Meagan Miller**
Fricka: **Elizabeth Bishop**
Alberich: **Gordon Hawkins**
Loge: **William Burden**
Mime: **David Cangelosi**
Waltraute: **Jamie Barton**
Gunther: **Ryan McKinny**
Hagen: **Eric Halfvarson**
Fafner: **Solomon Howard**
Fasolt: **Julian Close**
Erda: **Lindsay Ammann**

Our accommodations for **six nights** will be at the traditional **Georgetown Inn**, located in the heart of Washington's presti-

gious Georgetown neighborhood. The comfortable guest rooms have been recently renovated, and the public spaces are tastefully furnished in classic style. Fine dining is offered in the Inn's **The Daily Grill**, and there is a convenient fitness center on the premises. In addition, the nearby 'sister hotel', the Latham, offers the gourmet dining room of **Citronelle** and complimentary access to Georgetown's only outdoor rooftop swimming pool. There are many other restaurants and attractive shops (Ralph Lauren, Calvin Klein, Abercrombie & Fitch) within easy walking distance of this sought-after property.

Early Tuesday evening, May 17th, a **cocktail reception** is planned to meet other members of the Tour. Our party will be in a private entertainment suite of the hotel.

At 7:30 pm, we will attend the Washington National Opera's production of **DAS RHEINGOLD**.

Wednesday, May 18th, is left free for independent activities before the long opera tonight.

At 6:00 pm on Wednesday, we will return to the Kennedy Center for the WNO presentation of **DIE WALKÜRE**.



Gunstan Hall Plantation



Christopher Ventris



Meagan Miller

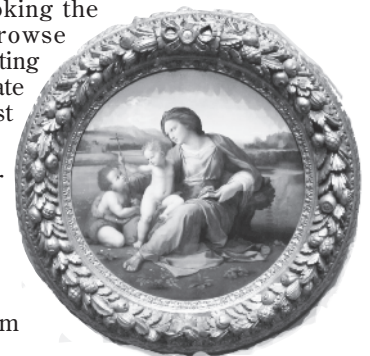
On Saturday, May 21st, a sightseeing excursion will take us to **Gunstan Hall Plantation**, an 18th century architectural jewel perfectly preserved in the original style created by patriot George Mason (1725-1792). Gunstan Hall is situated in the countryside of Lorton, Virginia about an hour from Washington. The intimate main residence contains a priceless collection of American antiques, and the renowned boxwood gardens are reputed to be the tallest and most extensive in the U.S. After an introductory film and a tour of the house, there will be time to view the outbuildings (kitchen, smokehouse, laundry), to explore the gardens overlooking the Potomac River, and to browse through the unusually interesting gift shop. This remarkable estate is usually overlooked by most Washington visitors.

Saturday evening is free for independent activities.

On Sunday, May 22nd, a late morning **brunch** is planned at **Paolo's**, a favorite Italian restaurant across the street from the Inn.

Sunday afternoon, May 22nd, the Ring tetralogy will conclude with the 1:00 pm matinee performance of **DIE GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG**.

Independent departures should be on Monday, May 23rd.



Raphael's 'Alba Madonna', National Gallery



Marjorie Merriweather Post's Hillwood Estate; French Drawing Room and Japanese Garden



Thursday morning, May 19th, a half-day excursion is planned to the exquisite private **Hillwood Museum and Gardens** founded by **Marjorie Merriweather Post**, heir of the Post cereal empire and one of America's first businesswomen. Encircled by woodlands in the

heart of Washington, the twenty-five acre estate boasts pleasure gardens and important azalea and orchid collections. The grand interior rooms contain the most comprehensive assemblage of Imperial Russian decorative arts outside Russia and an extensive collection of eighteenth-century French 'objets d'art'. You will also want to stroll through the Japanese-style **Garden**.

Thursday evening is free for independent dining in one of the capitol's many enticing restaurants. The hotel's front desk will be happy to assist you with suggestions and reservations.

Midday on Friday, May 20th, a leisurely **lunch** will be served at the **Peacock Café**, on Georgetown's quiet Prospect Street only a few minutes walk from the Inn.

We will return to the Opera House on Friday for the 6:00 pm curtain for **SIEGFRIED**.

Washington Ring Cycle:

Price per person, based on double occupancy	\$ 5,250*
Single room supplement	\$ 970

Airfare NOT included.

***IMPORTANT: THE DEPOSIT FOR THIS TOUR IS \$2,000. OUR STANDARD CANCELLATION POLICY WILL APPLY, BUT WE MUST ADVANCE THE DATE FOR FULL PAYMENT AND THE CANCELLATION DEADLINE TO 90 DAYS PRIOR TO THE TOUR INSTEAD OF OUR USUAL 60 DAYS.**

OUR PRICE REFLECTS THE 4 EXPENSIVE ORCHESTRA TICKETS FOR 'THE RING' AND THE INFLATED RATES FOR THE GEORGETOWN INN DURING THE WEEK OF GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY'S GRADUATION.