



THE ROYAL OPERA

Music Director Designate JAKUB HRŮŠA
Director of Opera OLIVER MEARS

Die Walküre

MUSIC DRAMA IN THREE ACTS

Music and Libretto RICHARD WAGNER

Conductor ANTONIO PAPPANO

Director BARRIE KOSKY

Set Designer RUFUS DIDWISZUS

Costume Designer VICTORIA BEHR

Lighting Designer ALESSANDRO CARLETTI

ORCHESTRA OF THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

Concert Master MAGNUS JOHNSTON

Directed for the screen by PETER JONES

Exceptional philanthropic support from

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DIE WALKÜRE PRODUCTION SYNDICATE,

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Cast sheets generously supported by the

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE ENDOWMENT FUND

Broadcast live from the Royal Opera House on

WEDNESDAY 14 MAY 2025

Approximate Timings

PRE-SHOW: 15 minutes

ACT I: 1 Hour 10 minutes

INTERVAL: 25 minutes

ACT II: 1 Hour 30 minutes

INTERVAL: 30 minutes

ACT III: 1 Hour 10 minutes

CURTAIN CALL: 10 minutes

Language

Sung in German with English subtitles

Guidance

Suitable for ages 15+

This opera contains themes of incest and domestic violence.
This production contains scenes of nudity and depictions of
blood, violence and death.

Cast

Wotan CHRISTOPHER MALTMAN

Brünnhilde ELISABET STRID

Sieglinde NATALYA ROMANIW

Siegmund STANISLAS DE BARBEYRAC

Hunding SOLOMAN HOWARD

Fricka MARINA PRUDENSKAYA

Helmwige MAIDA HUNDELING

Ortlinde KATIE LOWE

Gerhilde LEE BISSET

Waltraute CLAIRE BARNETT-JONES

Siegrune CATHERINE CARBY

Rossweise ALISON KETTLEWELL

Grimgerde MONIKA-EVELIN LIIV

Schwertleite RHONDA BROWNE

Actors CLARE ALMOND, LUCY BRENCHLEY,

CLEA GODSILL, MARIA LEON, ILLONA LINTHWAITE,

VIRGINIA POLI, NADIA SADIQ, JAY YULE

The role of Wotan is supported by

GREG AND MARIANNE BETHEL

The role of Brünnhilde is supported by an anonymous donor

The role of Sieglinde is supported by

IAN AND HELEN ANDREWS and

LORNA AND CHRISTOPHER BOWN

The role of Siegmund is supported by

PEGGY CZYZAK DANNENBAUM

The role of Helmwige is supported by HAMISH PARKER

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The role of Siegrune is supported by

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AN ANONYMOUS PHILANTHROPIST

Synopsis

ACT I

A storm rages as a weary man takes shelter in the home of Sieglinde and her husband, Hunding. After receiving hospitality, the stranger, who is wounded and unarmed, shares his tragic story of loss and misfortune. Hunding recognises the stranger's tale as that of his slain kinsmen and challenges him to a fight the next morning.

Alone, the stranger recalls the sword his father once promised he would find in his hour of greatest need. Sieglinde appears and recounts how, at her enforced wedding to Hunding, a stranger appeared and thrust a sword into the tree trunk. No one has been able to pull it out. Sieglinde and the stranger pledge themselves to one another and the stranger asks Sieglinde to rename him. Discovering his father's name was Wälse, Sieglinde is convinced the stranger is her twin. She names him Siegmund. Siegmund removes the sword, Nothung, from the tree, and claims Sieglinde as both bride and sister. Ecstatically and defiantly they declare their love.

INTERVAL

ACT II

Wotan orders Brünnhilde, his favourite Valkyrie daughter, to ensure Siegmund defeats Hunding in battle. However, Fricka, Wotan's wife, demands justice for the incestuous relationship between Siegmund and Sieglinde, claiming it violates marriage laws. Wotan defends their love, arguing that Siegmund can carry out the deeds he and Fricka cannot. Fricka points out that Siegmund is dependent on Wotan's sword and protection, and therefore not truly independent. Defeated, Wotan agrees not to protect Siegmund.

Wotan, despairing, confides in Brünnhilde about his past, revealing his theft of the ring from Alberich. He explains that Brünnhilde and her Valkyrie half-sisters were created to protect Wotan, and that his plan to retrieve the ring from the giant Fafner is now at risk, as he needs a free agent to act on his behalf. Wotan instructs Brünnhilde not to protect Siegmund, threatening dire consequences if she disobeys.

Siegmund and Sieglinde flee from Hunding. Brünnhilde tells Siegmund he will die in battle but will be honoured in Valhalla. Siegmund refuses to leave Sieglinde and their unborn child. Moved by compassion, Brünnhilde promises to protect him. Hunding's horn signals his arrival. Brünnhilde tries to help Siegmund, but Wotan shatters his sword with his spear, leading to Siegmund's death. Brünnhilde escapes with Sieglinde, and Wotan kills Hunding, vowing to punish Brünnhilde.

INTERVAL

ACT III

The Valkyries gather dead warriors for Valhalla. Brünnhilde arrives with Sieglinde, shocking the Valkyries. Brünnhilde begs for their help to protect her and Sieglinde from Wotan. Initially hesitant, the Valkyries agree when Brünnhilde reveals Sieglinde is carrying Siegmund's child, who will be a great hero. They advise Sieglinde to flee to the forest, where Fafner guards the Nibelung hoard, and she takes the fragments of Siegmund's sword with her.

Wotan arrives and, despite the Valkyries' pleas, angrily banishes Brünnhilde for disobedience. He condemns her to mortal sleep until a mortal man awakens her. The Valkyries scatter in fear when Wotan threatens them with the same fate.

Brünnhilde asks Wotan if her compassion for Siegmund and Sieglinde deserves such punishment. She believed it aligned with his true desires. Wotan remains unforgiving, even when she tells him that a Wälse hero will be born to Sieglinde. In her final plea, Brünnhilde asks for a ring of fire to surround her so only a worthy hero can awaken her. Wotan, moved by his feelings for her, agrees and calls upon Loge to create the flames.

Production

Music preparation CHRISTOPHER WILLIS,
EDWARD REEVE, PATRICK MILNE,
SUSANNA STRANDERS
Assistant Directors SIMON IORIO,
JOHANNES STEPANEK, RUTH KNIGHT
Fight Director PHILIP D'ORLÉANS
Assistant to the Set Designer JAN FREESE
Intimacy Co-ordinator ANNA MORRISSEY
Language Coach FRANZISKA ROTH

The Royal Opera

Patron HM THE KING
Music Director Designate JAKUB HRŮŠA
Director of Opera OLIVER MEARS
Director of Casting PETER MARIO KATONA
Associate Director NETIA JONES
Administrative Director CORMAC SIMMS

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