

Opera Nights: Wagner & Strauss

Bibliography

Richard Wagner's writings

Wagner comes in for a lot of criticism over his writing for being wordy and pompous. His first translator was William Ashton Ellis who published the complete prose works in eight volumes in the 1890s and he bears some responsibility for this. I don't find the translations a barrier to reading the texts (I can't comment on the original German). They may be clumsy, but it does not take long to become immersed in the texts. The complete prose works in English were published between 1892-99 by Kegan Paul. They have since been reprinted in the 1990s by Bison Books and are now available by a myriad of print-on-demand publishers. I am lucky to have been able to obtain first editions of all eight volumes.

Richard Wagner's Prose Works (8 vols), Ashton Ellis (trans),
1892-99, Kegan Paul, London

Mein Leben, Gray (trans) 1983, Da Capo, New York

Cosima Wagner's Diaries, Skelton (trans) 1976, Harcourt

Selected Letters of Richard Wagner, 1987, Spencer & Millington,
Norton

Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck, Ashton Ellis (trans) 1905,
Scribner

Wagner Biographies

Two English biographies stand head and shoulder above all others. The first, began as a translation of C F Glasenapp's six volume *Das Leben Richard Wagners (1894-1911)*. William Ashton Ellis began his translation (Volumes 1-3), but it became fully his own work from Volume 4. The second is that by Ernest Newman *The Life of Richard Wagner*, first published in 1933 in four volumes.

The Life of Richard Wagner Glasenapp (Vols 1-3) Ashton Ellis (trans), Ashton Ellis (Vol 4-6), 1900-1908 Kegan Paul
The Life of Richard Wagner (4 vols) Newman, 1933, Alfred Knopf, New York
Franz Liszt, Hilmes (trans Spencer), 2016, Yale
Wagner, Chancellor, 1978, Little, Brown
Michotte, Richard Wagner's Visit to Rossini, 1906, Quartet
Story of the Century, Downes, 2024, Faber
Richard Wagner, The Sorcerer of Bayreuth, Millington, 2012, Thames and Hudson
Wagner As I Knew Him, Praeger, 1892, Longmans
Bayreuth: The Early Years Hartford (ed), 1980, Cambridge
Bayreuth A History of the Wagner Festival, Spotts, 1994, Yale
Richard Strauss, Boyden, 1999, Weidendeld & Nicolson
Richard Strauss: Man, Musician, Enigma, Kennedy, 1999, Cambridge
Richard Strauss, Del Mar (3 Vol), 1962, Barrie & Rockliff

Commentaries

I have been heavily influenced and inspired by two Wagner commentators. I have always enjoyed reading Michael Tanner and I often return to his books on Wagner, both of which are called Wagner. I always carry the second (Faber) text with me to any Wagner performance and the first (Harper Collins) is a wonderfully fluid, concise and complete study of Wagner and his works. Like Dr Tanner, Bryan Magee was also a philosopher and a great writer. His *Aspects of Wagner* and *Wagner and Philosophy* are brilliant sources for the study of Wagner's philosophy. A philosopher I lean on to help me understand what I am listening to is Roger Scruton. His books on Parsifal, The Ring and Tristan always help me uncover more. The Royal Opera included an extract from Slavoj Žižek's Opera's Second Death in a programme and this introduced me to the world of Žižek.

His book is a characteristically challenging commentary on Wagner's works and philosophy.

Commentary on Strauss is much smaller in scope than that on Wagner - not least because opera was only a part of his creative output. Osborne's *Complete Operas of Richard Strauss* remains my first port of call for information.

Wagner, Tanner, 1997, Harper Collins

Wagner, Tanner, 2010, Faber

Wagner and Philosophy, Magee, 2000, Penguin

Aspects of Wagner, Magee, 1972, Granada

The Ring of Truth, Scruton, 2016, Allen Lane

Death Devoted Heart, Scruton, 2004, Oxford University Press

Wagner's Parsifal, Scruton, 2020, Allen Lane

The Wagners, Wagner N, 2000, Weidenfield and Nicholson

Wagner Nights, Newman, 1949, Bodley Head

The Cambridge Companion to Wagner's Ring, Berry and Vazsonyi, 2020, Cambridge

The Perfect Wagnerite, Shaw, 1923, Constable

Opera's Second Death, Zizek, 2002, Routledge

Richard Wagner's Parsifal, Beckett, 1981, Cambridge

Richard Wagner and the Synthesis of the Arts, Stein, 1960, Greenwood Press

Richard Wagner's Music Dramas, Dahlhaus, 1971, Cambridge

The Oxford Handbook of Opera, Greenwald, 2014, Oxford

Shaw's Music, Bernard Shaw (ed Laurence), 1981, Dodd Mead

Wagner in Context, Trippett, 2025, Cambridge

Wagner and the Art of the Theatre, Carnegy, 2006, Yale

The Complete Operas of Richard Strauss, Osborne, 1988, O'Mara

Richard Strauss: A critical study of the Operas, Mann, 1964, Cassell

A Mingled Chime, Becham, 1944, Columbus

Beecham Stories, Atkins and Newman, 1978, Robson Books

The Wagner Journal, Millington (ed) Quarterly

Opera, Rosenthal, Milnes, Allison (ed) Monthly since 1950
The Guardian
The New York Times
The Financial Times

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The Wagner Compendium, Millington (ed), 1992, Thames and Hudson
The Cambridge Wagner Encyclopedia, Vazsonyi (ed) 2013, Cambridge
The Grove Dictionary of Opera (4 vol), Sadie (ed), 1992, Macmillan
The Grove Dictionary of Music (20 vol), Sadie (ed), 1980, Macmillan
Ottonian Marriage Diplomacy, Storey Walker (Emily) 2024, Winchester

Schopenhauer

Schopenhauer is refreshingly easy to read (compared to, say, Kant and Hegel), but Michael Tanner and Bryan Magee have been indispensable guides for me. I particularly enjoyed Schopenhauer's essay *On Aesthetics* is his Aphorisms.

The World as Will and Representation (2 vol), Schopenhauer
(Trans Payne), 1969, Dover
Essays and Aphorisms, Schopenhauer (trans Hollingdale), 1970, Penguin
The Philosophy of Schopenhauer, Magee, 1983, Oxford
The Essence of Christianity, Feuerbach (Eliot trans), 1841, Prometheus