



***Die Walküre* marks a historic moment in Iceland**

The Icelandic Opera's staging of *Die Walküre* in February 2022 will be the first time that Wagner's opera will be performed in Iceland



When the curtain rises on Wagner's *Die Walküre* at Harpa Hall in Reykjavík on 24 February 2022, a moment of operatic history will be taking place in Iceland.

A collaborative project between The Icelandic Opera, Iceland Symphony Orchestra and the Reykjavík Arts Festival, initially programmed for May 2020 and then postponed to February 2021, *Die Walküre* will finally be staged at Harpa Hall in February 2022. This performance marks the first time that the opera will be performed in Iceland. It will also be the first

Wagnerian opera to be performed by the Icelandic Opera since *Der fliegende Holländer* in 2002.

Die Walküre is a co-production with Opéra National de Bordeaux and received its premiere in France in May 2019 to critical acclaim. One major difference to the performance in Bordeaux is that, due to the limited size of the orchestra pit at Harpa Hall, the players of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra will be seated on the stage.

Steinunn Birna Ragnarsdóttir, CEO and Artistic Director of The Icelandic Opera, shares her thoughts: "It is of vital importance to us to be able to share this Wagner production with Icelandic audiences now that the future has started up again, and to provide the opportunity to experience this magnificent opera with a stellar cast. We shall have to disappoint Wagner by placing the orchestra on the stage, but hopefully not the audience!" She concludes with further optimism: "Hopefully there will be more Wagner to come at Icelandic Opera in the near future."

A strong international cast is headed by the celebrated Wagnerian soprano Iréne Theorin as Brünnhilde, a role she has sung throughout the world, most notably Barcelona, Bayreuth and Berlin. Having previously sung Alberich internationally, Icelandic baritone Ólafur Kjartan Sigurðarson will now make his role debut as Wotan.

Another acclaimed Wagnerian and one of the world's leading heldentenors, Christopher Ventris, sings Siegmund with a fellow Brit, the soprano Claire Rutter, in the role of Sieglinde. German mezzo-soprano Christa Mayer makes her Icelandic Opera debut as Fricka and Icelandic bass Kristinn Sigmundsson sings Hunding. The Valkyries are performed by eight singers from Iceland.

Eva Ollikainen, Iceland Symphony Orchestra's recently appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director, conducts the production, with Julia Burbach as the director and BAFTA-winning Tal Rosner as video designer and co-director.

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Thursday 24 February 2022 6pm, Saturday 26 February 2022 4pm
Harpa Hall, Reykjavík

Wagner *Die Walküre*

Iréne Theorin Brünnhilde | **Ólafur Kjartan Sigurðarson** Wotan | **Christopher Ventris** Siegmund |
Claire Rutter Sieglinde | **Christa Mayer** Fricka | **Kristinn Sigmundsson** Hunding | **Eva Ollikainen**
conductor | **Iceland Symphony Orchestra**

Julia Burbach director | **Tal Rosner** video designer and co-director