

Stephen Fry curates Verdi / Wagner festival at The Royal Opera



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Author: LondonTown.com

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Deloitte Ignite contemporary arts festival celebrates 200th anniversaries of both composers

September 02, 2013, 3:31 pm -- /[EPR NETWORK](#)/ -- Stephen Fry, the actor, writer, comedian, television presenter and lifelong Wagner fan, curates the sixth Deloitte Ignite contemporary arts festival, which runs from Friday 6th to Sunday 29th September. Entitled Verdi/Wagner (200), the festival explores the work and creativity of Giuseppe Verdi and Richard Wagner in their bicentenary years with a range of events - including a special one-man show by Simon Callow.

Running for the duration of the festival at the Linbury Studio Theatre in Covent Garden, Inside Wagner's Head is written and performed by Callow and sees the eminent writer, director and actor portray the German composer in the style of his previous one-man shows based on the lives of Charles Dickens and William Shakespeare. The play attempts to communicate what the divisive and contradictory Wagner was actually like: a sublime visionary and a petty anti-Semite, a political radical but with staunch conservative views, irritating and needy, yet charismatic, innovative and romantic. Tickets cost £25.

Unlike previous years, Deloitte Ignite 2013 extends over four weekends rather than just the one, with both free and ticketed events in a rich and varied programme that includes a unique installation in Covent Garden Piazza by the award-winning costume designer Es Devlin (the designer of the London 2012 Closing Ceremony and Take That's Progress Livetour), which features a zoetrope using behind-the-scenes footage from a 2012 Royal Opera House production of Wagner's Die Walküre . Visitors attending any of the Verdi/Wagner (200) festival from outside the capital can book a [cheap hotel in London](#) on the respected events and hotel bookings website LondonTown.com, where there is an extensive array accommodation to suit all styles, locations and budgets.

Other Deloitte Ignite highlights include hand mime artist Andrew Dawson performing a potted version of Wagner's Ring Cycle, a global recording of people from all walks of life singing the Hebrew slaves' 'Va, pensiero' from Verdi's Nabucco, and comedy dance duo New Art Club presenting their own interpretation of Verdi operas, not to mention myriad live radio broadcasts and choral work. For more information and full listings please visit www.roh.org.uk/deloitteignite.

Coincidentally, the Last Night of the Proms on Saturday 7th September features an overture (The Mastersingers of Nuremberg) by Wagner as well as 'Va, pensiero' from Verdi's Nabucco . The on-going Wagner 200 festival taking place throughout the year across London also features, in September, a Goethe Institute lecture by the opera director and music historian Mike Ashman on 'Wagner and Modern Productions' (7.30pm on Thursday 12th September) and a day-long Wagner and Freud symposium at the Freud Museum (9.30am-5pm on Saturday 28th September).

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