



# Wagner Without Fear: Learning to Love--and Even Enjoy--Opera's Most Demanding Genius

*William Berger*

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Do you cringe when your opera-loving friends start raving about the latest production of Tristan? Do you feel faint just thinking about the six-hour performance of Parsifal you were given tickets to? Does your mate accuse you of having a Tannhäuser complex? If you're baffled by the behavior of Wagner worshipers, if you've longed to fathom the mysteries of Wagner's ever-increasing popularity, or if you just want to better understand and enjoy the performances you're attending, you'll find this delightful book indispensable.

William Berger is the most helpful guide one could hope to find for navigating the strange and beautiful world of the most controversial artist who ever lived. He tells you all you need to know to become a true Wagnerite--from story lines to historical background; from when to visit the rest room to how to sound smart during intermission; from the Jewish legend that possibly inspired Lohengrin to the tragic death of the first Tristan. Funny, informative, and always a pleasure to read, **Wagner Without Fear** proves that the art of Wagner can be accessible to everyone.

Includes:

- The strange life of Richard Wagner--German patriot (and exile), friend (and enemy) of Liszt and Nietzsche
- Essential opera lore and "lobby talk"
- A scene-by-scene analysis of each opera
- What to listen for to get the most from the music
- Recommended recordings, films, and sound tracks

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