

Dear Chairs of Wagner Societies,

Dear Wagner friends,

You have all been well informed via the minutes of the Board meeting held on October 23/24 in Frankfurt am Main, about the current issues being discussed in the RWVI.

From the minutes, you can refer to the court action, brought in the local court in Bayreuth by the Magdeburg Wagner Society lodging an objection to the elections of the President and the Secretary, held in Dessau on May 16, 2015, on the grounds that these elections were unconstitutional.

On the 26 November 2015, the district court of Bayreuth issued an order dismissing the action and awarding costs. It has now been clarified that both the President and the Secretary of the RWVI were elected in a constitutional manner.

The online sales of Bayreuth Festival tickets for member societies are in the process of taking place. Although we cannot guarantee that all requests will be fulfilled, we should recognise that the Festival management has taken a first step towards once again allocating tickets to RWVI member societies after several years of tickets not being available to us.

I see this as a positive new beginning, which could be improved in the coming years. The fact that Festival tickets for our member societies have once again been made available has led to some large member associations, who withdrew their membership some two years ago, now applying for reinstatement (New York, Washington, Adelaide), about which we are very pleased.

On 02.12.2015, the last surviving granddaughter of Richard Wagner, Verena Lafferentz-Wagner could celebrate their 95th birthday. Mrs Lafferentz-Wagner has always very willingly attended both our international congresses and other events of our member societies and has always felt comfortable in our company. She was very happy that we visited her at Lake Constance and sends you all her heartfelt good wishes.

After another very successful singing competition in Karlsruhe from 1 to 3 October 2015, organised by our RWVI Vice-President Prof. Dr. Hans-Michael Schneider, there followed the 21<sup>st</sup> traditional “Giornate Wagneriane” in Venice from 27 to 29 November 2015 where I gave a welcome address on behalf of the RWVI. Our RWVI Vice-President Prof. Alessandra Althoff-Pugliese had once again organised this Wagner event perfectly and the highlight this year was a high-profile symposium on "Wagner and Mozart".

Next year, once again we highlight our International Richard Wagner Congress, taking place from 5th to 8th May 2016 in Strasbourg. I hope that many member societies will honour the long-standing President of the Strasbourg Wagner Society, M. Louis Oster with their presence at the Congress.

With Budapest (2017) and Innsbruck / Bozen (2018) the next few congresses are already in place. As regards Budapest, I attach a statement from Dirk Jenders, Chairman of the Wagner Society of Frankfurt / Main.

I should like to express my agreement with the right of all members to express their opinions, even if this goes against unanimous decisions taken by the Board. Naturally, as with any RWVI Congress, in my capacity as President, I will act according to the correct protocol.

For the following years from 2019 to 2021, we have already received applications to host the International Congress from some member societies, although these have not yet been decided upon.

As as we can about the exact dates and locations of these events/

I should now like to wish you a peaceful holiday season and a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year 2016.

With best wishes from Bayreuth

Horst Eggers

President RWVI