Finding an Ending

REFLECTIONS ON WAGNER’S RING

The most rewarding new account of the Ring that I have read in many years.”
—Michael Tanner, author of Wagner
Finding an Ending: Reflections on Wagner's Ring, Philip Kitcher, Richard Schacht, Oxford University Press, 2005, 0195183606, 9780195183603, 241 pages. Few musical works loom as large in Western culture as Richard Wagner's four-part Ring of the Nibelung. In Finding an Ending, two eminent philosophers, Philip Kitcher and Richard Schacht, offer an illuminating look at this greatest of Wagner's achievements, focusing on its far-reaching and subtle exploration of problems of meanings and endings in this life and world. Kitcher and Schacht plunge the reader into the heart of Wagner's Ring, drawing out the philosophical and human significance of the text and the music. They show how different forms of love, freedom, heroism, authority, and judgment are explored and tested as it unfolds. As they journey across its sweeping musical-dramatic landscape, Kitcher and Schacht lead us to the central concern of the Ring--the problem of endowing life with genuine significance that can be enhanced rather than negated by its ending, if the right sort of ending can be found. The drama originates in Wotan's quest for a transformation of the primordial state of things into a world in which life can be lived more meaningfully. The authors trace the evolution of Wotan's efforts, the intricate problems he confronts, and his failures and defeats. But while the problem Wotan poses for himself proves to be insoluble as he conceives of it, they suggest that his very efforts and failures set the stage for the transformation of his problem, and for the only sort of resolution of it that may be humanly possible--to which it is not Siegfried but rather Brünnhilde who shows the way. The Ring's ending, with its passing of the gods above and destruction of the world below, might seem to be devastating; but Kitcher and Schacht see a kind of meaning in and through the ending revealed to us that is profoundly affirmative, and that has perhaps never been so powerfully and so beautifully expressed.

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Wagner's the Ring of the Nibelung Opera Classics Library Series, Version 1.5, Burton D. Fisher, Jul 1, 2005, Music, 140 pages. A comprehensive guide to Wagner's THE RING OF THE NIBELUNG, featuring insightful and in depth Commentary and Analysis, and Story Narrative with over 90 Music Highlight Examples ....


The Complete Operas of Richard Wagner, Charles Osborne, 1990, Music, 288 pages. Wagner's operas can be counted among the most important works of art of the nineteenth century. But Wagner was a composer around whom violent artistic, political, and literary ....

Letters from Bayreuth Descriptive and Critical of Wagner's "Der Ring Des Nibelungen" With an Appendix, Joseph Bennett, 1877, Music, 154 pages. .

Treacherous Bonds And Laughing Fire Politics And Religion in Wagner's Ring, Mark Berry, 2006, Music, 287 pages. Mark Berry explores the political and religious ideas expounded in Wagner's Ring through close attention to the text and drama, the multifarious intellectual influences upon ....


Speaking to Our Condition Moral Frameworks in Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung, Anthony Winterbourne, Jan 1, 2000, Music, 143 pages. "As well as offering new insights into the way in
which Wagner's intellectual debts are reflected in the ethical superstructure of the Ring, the author suggests a provocative ....