

CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter, May 2010

Wagner: Love him, or Hate him



Wagner 1813-1883

In 2001, in Israel, the famous pianist and conductor, Daniel Barenboim, performed the prelude to Richard Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde*, breaking the ban on the composer's music which had been in place since the founding of the state in 1948. A national controversy and condemnation from the Israeli prime minister was the result.

Wagner was born on the 22nd of this month, almost 200 years ago in Leipzig, Germany. He is a controversial figure. Though many have a low opinion of the man they regard the artist as almost superhuman.

Wagner grew up in a theatrical family and his primary interest was opera. Unlike other supremely gifted musicians Wagner was not a child prodigy: he did not even start to compose until his late teens and was an indifferent pianist. On top of that, his musical education was sketchy (a few years of composition lessons starting at the age of 15). Wagner worked as musical director at various opera houses in the early part of his career, later concentrating on composition. He never made much money. Though in debt for most of his life, Wagner could only compose in an atmosphere of luxury, insisting on silk wall hangings, cushions and clothes, and exotic perfumes. He had no shame in asking his friends, or total strangers, for 'loans' (which, of course, he never intended to pay back).



His early operas follow the example of such composers as Weber and Meyerbeer. His later works explore Teutonic and Norse mythology, the foremost example being *Der Ring Des Nibelungen*, a 15-hour cycle of four operas that took 26 years to write. Wagner wrote both the music and, unusually, the libretto. The *Ring* was first performed in 1876 in a specially designed (by Wagner, of course) theatre in Bayreuth. Many people are inspired to learn German to fully appreciate this epic work. Half way through his work on the *Ring* Wagner took off in other directions – composing the operas *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger* – before returning 12 years later to finish his tetralogy. *Tristan* is an intense and passionate work and ends with the overpowering *Liebestod* (literally 'love death').

Wagner held pronounced anti-Semitic views and was Hitler's favourite composer. Daniel Barenboim (who is Jewish) has said of Wagner: "Wagner, the person, is absolutely appalling, despicable, and, in a way, very difficult to put together with the music he wrote, which so often has exactly the opposite kind of feelings ... noble, generous, etc." Barenboim believes that the contradictions within Wagner should be "actively considered" and that, rather than censorship, people should be allowed to make up their own minds about him.

Article by Jonathan

Net News

NET LESSONS: Try our *lessons on the Internet!*

It's CROSSROADS in your home or office! You get CROSSROADS' great teachers, teaching programs, even classmates, *on-line!* Call for details: **089 9217595**

NET SITE OF THE MONTH:

You can find a biography of Wagner here:

www.notablebiographies.com/Tu-We/Wagner-Richard.htm

NET NOTEBOOK: Don't forget to take a look at the Internet activity notebook in our open-house. You'll find games, news and English learning sites.

Some Thoughts for the Month



Joshua Says: I'm pleased to see that many more of you are starting to use the café-Open House these days – even to do some extra study! This is a very good development and we hope more of you will catch on to this service in the future. But, don't forget the roof-top garden is also open to you. The extra rain we have been having this year has made the garden especially green with flowers popping out all over the place! A coffee, a book to read or study, fresh air, sunny weather and tables and chairs under the shade from a parasol - Why not give it a try?

Junko Says: Nowadays, many salary men and women are taking lunch boxes to work instead of going to restaurants for lunch. I guess this is reflecting recent conditions in the economy here in Japan. And, I think there is a very interesting spin-off coming out of this situation: people, and manufacturers, have become more creative, making hand-made items, producing ecological and inventive products. As an example, the latest lunch boxes can cook rice and heat up side dishes at the same time.



Jonathan Says: We are having a double celebration in our house this month: our oldest child is four on May 2nd and our youngest (two and a half) has just become 'Pantsman' (that is, he no longer needs nappies). Those of you more used to American English may be confused: the American word for trousers is pants. By pants, we English mean, specifically, underpants (which the Americans call briefs). And nappies are diapers in America. As someone once said of the USA and England: Two countries separated by a common language

Greg Says: It seems that every year the beer gardens open earlier and earlier... not that I'm complaining! It lets us all know that summer is just around the corner, and if the other day is any indication it's going to be scorching this year... my daughter and I were golfing in Tokushima and it was 33 degrees... in early May!!!.. Beer gardens are a welcome sight to quench the thirst on scorching days... So, bring it on!!



Kevin Dit: "En mai, fait ce qu'il te plait" ! Ou du moins, c'est ce que l'on dit en France, mais nous faisons rarement ce que nous voulons vraiment, n'est ce pas ? Et vous, que voudriez vous faire en ce moment ? Le mois commence avec la Golden Week, cette "semaine dorée" vous permettra peut être de réaliser l'un de vos souhaits : aller en vacances, sortir avec des amis, faire un voyage, ou tout simplement se reposer !

NOTICE BOARD

ENGLISH Poet's Corner

For all those poetry fans, we are going to run a (semi) regular English "Poet's Corner" here on page 3. For those who are interested in contributing, please jot down your poem and hand it to your teacher. Then watch for it to appear here!

To start to ball rolling, here is the first, a joint effort from Yukiko Yagi and Mami Kido in S(b)1class. It's an English *Haiku*:

Early afternoon
Spring wind turns the footpath pink
Petals on my feet

You're Invited!



As everyone knows, the Open House is open to all our students, all day, every day, 6 days a week. But did you know that you can invite a friend to join you for a coffee, too? Yes! You can invite a friend, or family member, to come in, have a free coffee with you, take a look around, use the library and the internet - all "on the house!"

And, if they like it, they can join up in our 1+1 campaign, or just join the "easy start" café-club. We welcome everyone to pop in and have a look around.

クロスローズの好きなコースで英語を学ぶ。

"GENERAL (ジェネラル) コース

英語+実践練習

60分 x 2回/週:

1学期-4ヶ月毎にレベルが上がる
クロスローズのメインプログラム

90分 x 1回/週:

忙しい方のための週1レッスン

プライベート(個人)

月2回からレッスン回数自由選択

セミプライベート(セミ個人):

月3回からレッスン回数自由選択

クロスローズで学べるその他の外国語

フランス語 - スペイン語 - ドイツ語 - イタリア語 - ロシア語 - 中国語 - 韓国語

COSMOPOLITAN (コスモポリタン) コース

英語+実技を通した実用練習、だから誰でも分かる、自然に上達する。

英語でギターを習う

英語で歌う

英語で料理

英語でマジック

ピアノ

英語劇

ヨガ

NET(ネット) レッスン

グループOR プライベート

レッスン料 ¥4,725/月~
詳細はお問合せ下さい



KIDS' (キッズ) クラス

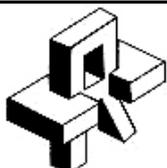
グループOR プライベート



MOTHER & CHILD

(マザー&チャイルド)

グループOR プライベート



CROSSROADS

ランゲージスタジオ
英会話スクール

〒790-0004 松山市大街道
2丁目1-3 2F, 3F



Phone: 0120-21-7594

Tel: (089) 921-7595

Fax: (089) 921-7319

E-mail: info@crossroadsco.com

Web Site: www.crossroadsco.com