

Sets for *Die Walküre* by Richard Wagner, 2005

Directed by Federico Tiezzi, music by Richard Wagner, costumes by Giovanna Buzzi, produced by the Teatro di San Carlo, Naples.

First performance: Naples, Teatro di San Carlo, 24, 26 and 30 March, 3 and 6 April 2005 (conductor Jeffrey Tate).

Other performances: Naples, Teatro di San Carlo, 11, 12, 16-18 May 2019 (conductor Juraj Valčuha); Naples, Teatro di San Carlo, 16, 20, 23, 26 and 29 April 2023 (conductor Dan Ettinger).

In 2006 Paolini was awarded the 25th Franco Abbiati Prize sponsored by the Italian Association of Music Critics for his set designs for this play.

“The stage is the echo, the reflection of something that has already been: the action does not come about, it does not take place in ‘real time’ but rather through the memory of its representation. What we are witnessing is a re-evocation, a register of events and situations cited and restored, today, by a ‘theatrical hypothesis’.

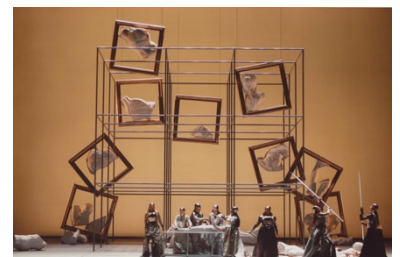
The various thematic sections are therefore intended as separate areas, alternating one with the other as a ‘catalogue’ of appearances, as a representation unfolding beyond the very events that comprise it.

The set layout is geometrical, empty, transparent, but also alludes to an experimental laboratory equipped with instruments, ‘samples’ or finds from the places evoked (backdrops, frames, bases, reconstructions, models...).

The atmosphere is that of an archive, a library, a museum... where the weight of time shows through and reverberates.

The costumes are likewise essentially nineteenth-century in style, with references, citations, accessories that evoke the original facts of the story: in a word, costumes and not clothes; and the characters are ‘the actors’, no longer the ‘figures’ of the event, in harmony with the ‘museum-like’ aspect of the stage. A modular metal structure houses the objects and furnishings placed inside: the three levels correspond to the three acts.

Immediately in the first act the tree and the sword stand as a central nucleus, an initiatory one, intended as symbolic of this (and not only this) representation. The tree and the sword are seen as metaphors of the work of art and the artist respectively: of the artist who gives his all, becomes lost, erases himself in his anxiousness to possess the key to the work (Notung, meaning the urgent need to arrive at the ‘truth’ of the work of art). The action takes place on the ground, ‘mirrored’ outside the structure: for example the duel in two opposite areas of the second order of squares (in act two)... while the Valkyrie rise upwards with the ‘bodies’ of the heroes (the plaster casts in the third act)” (G. Paolini, “La scena è l’eco”, 2005).





Bibliography

- *Richard Wagner. Die Walküre*, edited by L. Valente (Naples: Edizioni del Teatro di San Carlo, 2005), programme with essays by Q. Principe, G. Salvetti, G. Guandalini, and G. Montesano, text "La scena è l'eco" by Paolini (pp. 40-43), essay by C. De Seta on Paolini (pp. 45-51), conversations between S. Valanzuolo and J. Tate and F. Tiezzi, essay by G. Gualerzi on a 1963 performance of the *Valkyrie*, chronology of performances of the *Valkyrie* at the Teatro di San Carlo, album and videography for the *Valkyrie*, summaries of the acts (in Italian and English), opera libretto (in Italian and German), biography of Wagner by A. Estero; b/w and col. repr. pp. 40, 43, 44, 46-49 (works on paper by Paolini with iconographic references to the theatre and other works), 50-51 (backdrop for the *Valkyrie*), 52, 55, 56, 58, 60, 62, 74-75, 76, 77, 78, 81, 82-83, 84 (sets for the *Valkyrie*), playbill for the performance with three b/w images of the set designs by Paolini.
- C. Fiorillo, "Paolini. 'Così metto in mostra il mio processo creativo'", in *Corriere del Mezzogiorno* (Naples), 16 March 2005, p. 13, not repr. (review, with statements by Paolini).
- L. Valente, "Evento San Carlo", in *La Repubblica* (Naples), 23 March 2005, pp. XVI-XVII, repr. (review).
- G. Pestelli, "Questa Walkiria sprizza gioia di vivere", in *La Stampa* (Turin), 27 March 2005, p. 25, repr. (review).
- C. Moreni, "Le Valchirie perdono i cavalli", in *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Milan), 3 April 2005, p. 43, repr. (review).
- A. Tecce, "Walkirie cubiste", in *Vernissage* 6, no. 60 (Turin), May, 2005, supplement to the newspaper *Il Giornale dell'Arte*, pp. 8-9, col. repr. (review).
- F. De Maio, "Tre scenografie per il Teatro San Carlo a Napoli. Innesti di arte contemporanea all'opera", in *Casabella* 744 (Milan), May, 2006, pp. 91, 96, col. repr. p. 97.
- *Kiefer e Paolini: ritorno a Capodimonte*, exhibition catalogue, Naples, Museo di Capodimonte (Naples: Electa Napoli, 2006), p. 18, col. repr. pp. 22-28.
- *Richard Wagner. Parsifal* (Naples: Edizioni del Teatro di San Carlo, 2007), programme with opera libretto of *Parsifal*, col. repr. pp. 75, 76 (sets for the *Valkyrie*).
- *Alla scoperta di un protagonista. Il Teatro di San Carlo di Napoli*, exhibition catalogue, Naples, Palazzo Reale (Naples: Arte'm, 2008), p. 253, col. repr. pp. 178, 255.
- *Opera ad Arte. Arte all'Opera*, edited by L. Valente, exhibition catalogue, Naples, MEMUS Museo e Archivio Storico del Teatro di San Carlo (Naples: Arte'm, 2011), col. repr. pp. 202-203, 225.
- B. Satre, *L'Arte Povera et les arts de la scène: Les expériences théâtrales de Jannis Kounellis, Giulio Paolini, Michelangelo Pistoletto et Mario Ceroli*, doctoral dissertation in History of Contemporary Art, Aix-Marseille Université, 2012, col. repr. vol. 3 nos. 39a-f pp. 95, 96, in French.
- B. Scuderi, "Tra teatro e immagine: 'Die Walküre' e 'Parsifal' secondo Federico Tiezzi e Giulio Paolini", in *Quaderni della Ricerca* 1 (Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", 2016), pp. 141-150, col. repr. pp. 151-155.
- *CURTAIN – VORHANG* (Vienna: museum in progress and Verlag für moderne Kunst, 2017), p. 147 (short entry), col. repr. p. 146.
- S. Sette, *Teatro dell'opera. La produzione scenografica di Giulio Paolini*, thesis presented for a graduate degree in History of Arts and Conservation of Artistic Heritage, University Ca' Foscari, Venice, 2017-18, pp. 5, 52, 57, 89-90, 121, col. repr. nos. 41-44 p. 136, 137.
- *Richard Wagner. Die Walküre* (Naples: Edizioni Fondazione Teatro di San Carlo, 2019), programme with essays by Q. Principe, G. Salvetti, interview with F. Tiezzi by B. Scuderi (with reference to Paolini on pp. 27-30), text "La scena è l'eco" by Paolini (pp. 30-31), essay by C. De Seta on Paolini's sets (pp. 32-33), biography of Wagner by A. Estero, summaries of the acts (in Italian and English), opera libretto (in Italian and German), chronology of performances of the *Valkyrie* at the Teatro di San Carlo by E. Tellini, biographies of the protagonists (pp. 145-146 for Paolini), col. repr. pp. 44-56 (rehearsal, Naples 2005), and on cover and back cover, playbill for the performance.



- E. Di Raddo, “‘Un teatro di idee drammatizzate’. Giulio Paolini e le scenografie per l’opera di Wagner”, in *Titolo 10*, no. 20 (Soveria Mannelli), Summer - Autumn, 2020, pp. 22-25, repr.
- D. Chiara, *Le scenografie teatrali e televisive di Giulio Paolini*, thesis presented for a graduate degree in History of Arts and Cultural Heritage, University of Catania, 2021-22, pp. 106-115, col. repr. nos. 120-130.
- *Richard Wagner. Die Walküre* (Naples: Edizioni Fondazione Teatro di San Carlo, 2023), programme with text by D. Tortora, interview with F. Tiezzi by B. Scuderi (with reference to Paolini on pp. 26-28), summaries of the acts (in Italian and English), opera libretto (in Italian and German), biographies of the protagonists (pp. 133-134 for Paolini), col. repr. pp. 7, 32, 34, 36, 38-46(rehearsal, Naples 2005), repr. p. 24 (backdrop for the *Valkyrie*), 29 (*In ascolto (stanza dello spettatore)*, 2005, GPO-898), playbill for the performance.
- C. Moreni, “La Valchiria sfreccia tra macigni volanti”, in *Il Sole 24 Ore* (Milan), 23 April, p. XIII, col. repr. (review).

Interviews

- D. Longobardi, “‘Per Walkiria echi di pianeti e costellazioni’. Giulio Paolini tra San Carlo e metrò”, in *Il Mattino* (Naples), 10 March 2005, p. 27.
- A. Pepe, “Giulio Paolini fra San Carlo e Metrò”, in *Roma* (Naples), 17 March 2005, p. 11.
- A. Mammi, “Planetario Wagner”, in *L’Espresso* (Rome), 24 March 2005, pp. 134-135.

Entry by Maddalena Disch