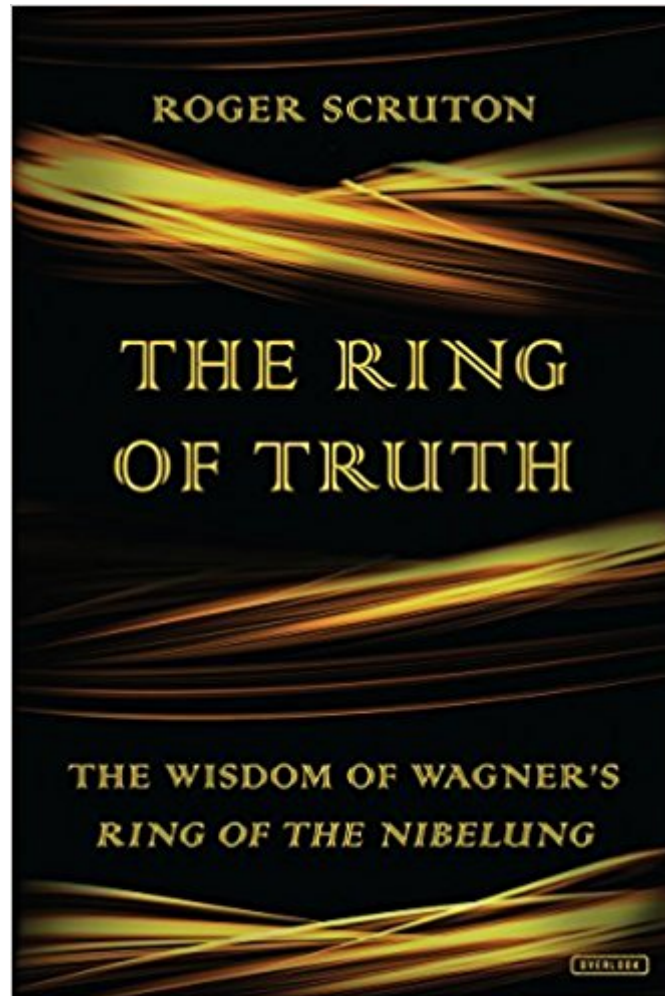


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The Ring Of Truth: The Wisdom Of Wagner's Ring Of The Nibelung



Synopsis

The vital, carefully crafted discussion on Wagner's masterpiece, offering deep insight into both the work itself and profound perspective on certain key philosophical questions. Richard Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung is one of the greatest works of art created in modern times, and has fascinated both critics and devotees for over a century and a half. No recent study has examined the meaning of Wagner's masterpiece with the attention to detail and intellectual power that Roger Scruton brings to it in this inspiring account. The Ring of Truth is an exploration of the drama, music, symbolism and philosophy of the Ring from a writer whose knowledge and understanding of the Western musical tradition are the equal of his capacities as a philosopher. Scruton shows how, through musical connections and brilliant dramatic strokes, Wagner is able to express truths about the human condition which few other creative artists have been able to convey so convincingly. For Wagner, writes Scruton, the task of art is to "show us freedom in its immediate, contingent, human form, reminding us of what it means to us. Even if we live in a world from which gods and heroes have disappeared we can, by imagining them, dramatize the deep truths of our condition and renew our faith in what we are. Love, death, sacrifice and the liberation that we win through sacrifice—these are the great themes of the Ring, as they are of this book. Scruton's passionate and moving interpretation allows us to understand more fully than ever how Wagner conveys his ideas about who we are, and why the Ring continues to be such a hypnotically absorbing work.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“[Scruton] lays out his argument in a clear, coherent, and readable manner. . . . An admirable, welcome effort to illuminate one of the most significant artistic achievements of the modern age.” - Kirkus Reviews
“After reading this book, only the most unadventurous reader would turn down the chance to see Wagner’s masterpiece.” - Economist
“Roger Scruton is in many ways the ideal interpreter of the Ring. His book is a deeply felt rallying call for the view of humanity and its place in the cosmos that Scruton sees as embodied in the Ring.” - Adam Lively, The Sunday Times

Roger Scruton is a writer and philosopher who has held positions at the universities of London, Oxford, Boston, and St. Andrews and who has written widely on art, architecture, music, and aesthetics. His books include his now classic *Short History of Modern Philosophy* (1981), *The Aesthetics of Music* (1997), *Death-Devoted Heart: Sex and the Sacred in Wagner’s Tristan and Isolde* (2004), and *Fools, Frauds and Firebrands* (1985, republished 2015). He is a fellow of the British Academy and the Royal Society of Literature.

Roger Scruton has long been known as the philosopher who focused his penetrating and immediately accessible insights on all manner of the arts. While Wagner’s Ring Cycle is widely reputed as "difficult" and murky, Scruton reveals it in such a way, act by act, to make it seem entirely understandable and I must say, far more appealing to me. So far, I have found the Ring a hard work to enjoy thoroughly as I do Parsifal or Tristan. There is also much to offer here for well-seasoned Wagnerites who need no convincing of the importance of this masterpiece. What Scruton does is reveal the great spiritual accomplishment that is the Ring, even despite Wagner’s efforts to move society beyond religion. First reviews that I read made knee-jerk assertions that Scruton white-washes Wagner’s anti-semitism. I didn’t find that at all the case after reading this. It fully embraces Wagner as an ill-behaved and sometimes callous man who was one of the greatest and deepest geniuses of the last 200 years for the reasons clearly illuminated throughout. Scruton wisely doesn’t believe anti-semitism can entirely define someone. While the modernist wishes they could dismiss anyone who receives PC demerits, thankfully Scruton looks at the whole man here. I loved this work and any music lover should count this as a top ten book along with Charles Rosen’s and Letters of Mozart.

Bought this because I was going to Bayreuth to see my first "Ring." It was extremely helpful. It included a synopsis of each opera. Various historical interpretations were mentioned. Its modern

interpretation was interesting. The allusions to musical leit motifs was good, but the musical discussion wasn't that helpful to me. I read it along with a couple of other books including the complete libretto in German/English. Well written, clear, a good start for Wagner's The Ring of the Nibelung.

Insightful, clear. Slightly gushing, but you'd probably only be reading it if you were also a fan. Contains thought provoking analyses of leitmotifs which inspire further listening (as though you need another reason!)

Outstanding analysis of Wagner's Ring. I'll refer to it often in the years to come. The author is an excellent writer who fully appreciates the totality of the Ring Cycle and articulates the elements of the piece that keep Wagner-lovers enthralled. I highly recommend it to any Ring fan.

There is a great deal I missed because my musical knowledge is far below the author's. However he did make work a bit to increase that knowledge. I do enjoy the author.

Unique & profound analysis of Wagner's Ring.

Superb. Deeply considered.

Excellent book.

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