Anno Mungen

Wagnerscapes

Keynote „WagnerWoldWide:Bayreuth“ topic “Nature and Environment”

The huge topic of Music, Nature and Environment will be looked at from the perspective of Wagner and his connections to the idea of landscape. The term of landscape as it is prominent in art history serves as the starting point of investigation. It offers a variety of approaches to music theatre, which will be discussed within the recognition of similar terms (as soundscape and cityscape) in relation to Wagner’s work. Wagner’s personal thoughtful and dreaming imagination reflecting the very beginning of the “Ring”-Cycle as he made it public in his autobiography refers in a very specific way to the idea of segmentation and framing, as it is prominent with the landscape concept. The new term of Wagnerscape relates the landscape conception to the inner construction of the idea of representational music. Actual developments in cultural studies looking at nature and environment form cultural topography or ecocriticism point of view might help us to shape up Wagner’s legacy within 21st century discourse. It might also give us guidelines in helping to understand the possible relationship between ecology and music theatre. A “green” “Ring” à la Robert Carsen or the power plant in John Dew’s “Rhinegold” production seem to put that question in the center of Wagner today. An immediate relevance of 19th century art for our day’s issues might be verified through these examples.