



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MAESTRO JONATHAN MCPHEE AND
LEXINGTON SYMPHONY & SYMPHONY NEW HAMPSHIRE PRESENT
THE ESSENTIAL RING, PART I**

*Two orchestras and a cast of world-class vocalists to perform
a selection of the greatest music from Richard Wagner's Ring Cycle*

Lexington, Massachusetts . . . Conductor Jonathan McPhee and the combined orchestras of Lexington Symphony and Symphony New Hampshire will join together at Cary Hall (1605 Massachusetts Avenue) in Lexington on Saturday, April 2 at 7:30 p.m. to present *The Essential Ring, Part I* — a special three-hour program of selected music from German composer Richard Wagner's epic *Ring Cycle*. Presented in cooperation with the Boston Wagner Society, this performance will also feature an impressive roster of renowned international vocalists.

With the goal of making one of the greatest musical achievements of all time accessible to a wide audience, Maestro McPhee — who currently serves as Music Director for both Lexington Symphony and Symphony New Hampshire — has taken all four *Ring Cycle* operas and distilled them into two magnificent three-hour performances, keeping all of the essential elements. This premiere of Part 1 will focus on the first two *Ring Cycle* operas, “Das Rheingold” and “Die Walküre,” which are loosely based on characters from the Norse sagas. “My guiding principle in creating *The Essential Ring* was to include as many of the great ‘arias’ and landmark orchestral selections as possible, and to make key transitions relatively smooth and invisible,” says McPhee. “Within these parameters, the storyline has been retained in vocal terms while always remaining true to the dramatic flow of the work.”

Taking the stage with Lexington Symphony and Symphony New Hampshire to bring the vocals of this inspiring musical masterpiece to life will be Alwyn Mellor, soprano; Jane Eaglen, soprano; Joanna Porackova, mezzo-soprano; Thomas Studebaker, tenor; Sarai Cole, soprano; Frank Kelley, tenor; Alfred Walker, bass-baritone; Richard Paul Fink, bass-baritone;

and Pawel Izdebski, bass. “My hope is that the audience will be carried off by the beauty and power of the voices and the music, and that they will leave wanting to experience more of Wagner’s masterful theatricality,” says McPhee, who will bring Lexington Symphony and Symphony New Hampshire together again in 2016–2017 for *The Essential Ring, Part II*.

The April 2nd concert will be preceded by a Conductor’s Talk by McPhee at 6:30 p.m. that will combine musical examples with biographical information about the composer in an effort to educate the audience and enhance the listening experience. Tickets for this concert, which are priced at \$65/\$52/\$39 and \$20 for students, are available at www.lexingtonsymphony.org, by telephone at 781-523-9009, or at the door at Cary Hall (based on availability).

The Essential Ring, Part I will also be presented at The Keefe Center for the Arts in Nashua, New Hampshire, on Sunday, April 3 at 3:00 p.m. Tickets and information for this performance are available at www.symphonymh.org.

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Lexington Symphony is a professional orchestra of devoted musicians who share a passion for classical music, a commitment to community engagement, and a dedication to exacting standards of performance. Offering six concerts each season, the Symphony reaches thousands of area youth annually with its award-winning educational outreach programs, including its program for third and fourth graders, Orchestrating Kids Through Classics.™