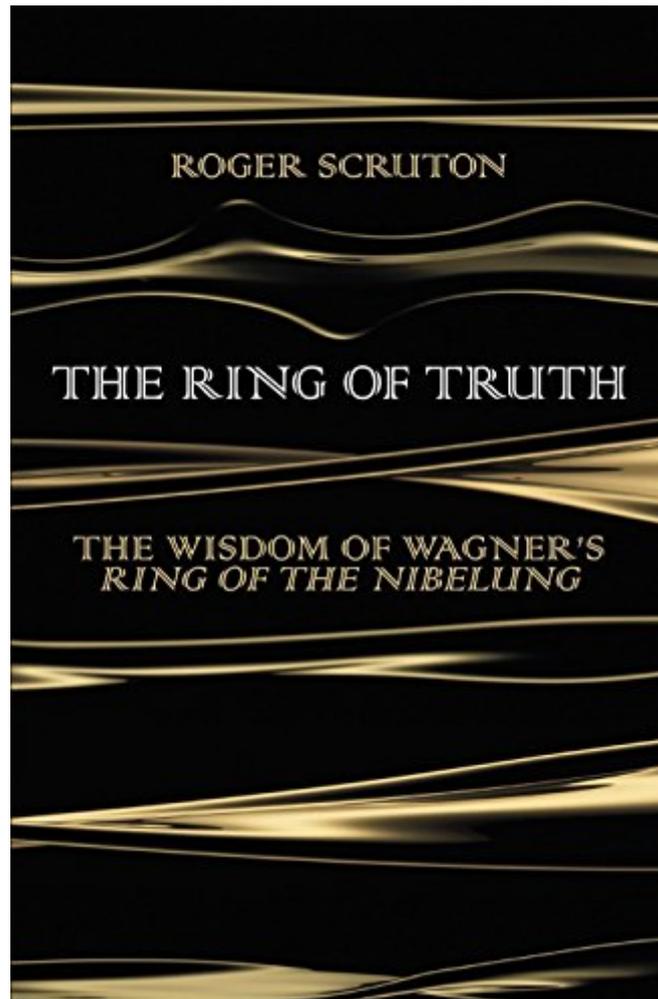


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The Ring Of Truth: The Wisdom Of Wagner's Ring Of The Nibelung



Synopsis

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.

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Customer Reviews

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 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.

Unique & profound analysis of Wagner's Ring.

Excellent book.

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