



ANDRE F. CHUNG/SUN-TIMES

Siegfried Jerusalem and Eva Marton bring Siegfried and Brunnhilde together in the powerful Act III of Lyric's "Siegfried," running through Feb. 18 at the Civic Opera House.

'SIEGFRIED' SCORECARD

Wagner's epic "The Ring of the Nibelungs"—more than 17 hours of music spread among four operas—is the ultimate operatic challenge, one by which companies and singers measure themselves as dream teams or minor league players.

With "Siegfried," Lyric Opera of Chicago enters the third quarter with one more to go in its new production of the "Ring" cycle. And "Siegfried" introduces the hero who will claim Brunnhilde, the former Valkyrie, in a fit of grand romantic passion.

■ **When to watch for signature moments:**

Siegfried's noisy forging of Nothung, the magic sword.

* The battle between Siegfried and Fafner the dragon. (Siegfried wins.)

The passionate Act III love duet for Siegfried and Brunnhilde.

■ **What to listen for:**

"Siegfried" offers few big set pieces, such as "The Ride of the Valkyries" in "Die Walkure" or "Siegfried's Rhine Journey" from "Götterdämmerung." But the "Forest Murmurs" music will be familiar from TV commercials, along with short musical motifs such as Siegfried's horn call and Brunnhilde's fire music.

■ **Who's onstage: stars of "Siegfried":**

Eva Marton, one of opera's leading Brunnhildes. Siegfried Jerusalem, who is adding more Wagner roles to his repertoire (Siegfried is the most important of all).

James Morris, perhaps the greatest living Wagnerian bass-baritone.

■ **Where to go for further listening:**

The Rough Guide to Classical Music recommends Daniel Barenboim's "Ring," recorded at Bayreuth on Teldec, as the best modern version of the cycle.

Wynne Delacoma