

**MUSI 2000- Orchestral Excerpts**  
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**Wagner-Ride of the Valkyries**

- I. Background – Richard Wagner
  - a. Dates – (1813 – 1883)
  - b. German Composer, Theater Director and Conductor
  - c. Argumentative personality
  - d. Wrote his own libretto and music
  - e. Operas noted for their complex textures, harmonies and orchestration
  - f. Special feature of his operas – Leitmotif – Musical phrases associated with certain
    - i. Characters
    - ii. Places
    - iii. Ideas
    - iv. Plot Elements
- II. Guidelines
  - a. Period/Style
    - i. Nineteenth Century
    - ii. First Performed 1870 - Munich
    - iii. Part of the Four Opera Group known as the Ring Cycle
      1. Das Rheingold
      2. Die Walkure
      3. Siegfried
      4. Gotterdammerung
    - iv. Begins the 3<sup>rd</sup> Act of the Opera;
  - b. Context
    - i. Repeated downward/upward scalar patterns in the strings
    - ii. Trilled and scalar exchanges in the woodwinds
    - iii. Dotted 8<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> motor rhythm in the bassoons, horns and celli.
- III. Challenges
  - a. Unusual Harmonic and Interval Structure
  - b. Key – B Minor/Major – Not comfortable for trombonists
    - i. Make all notes in tune with a centered tone
    - ii. Maintaining the musical line in spite of shifting registers and tonalities
    - iii. Sectional – intonation, blend
    - iv. Intervallic Leaps in the line

- c. Section Playing in Unison/Octaves
  - d. Technique
    - i. Range Demands, especially dynamic
    - ii. Intonation
    - iii. Rhythmic Precision
- IV. Strategies for success
- a. Adjacent key modeling
  - b. Even rhythm to actual rhythm metamorphosis
  - c. Legato renditions
  - d. Using words to enunciate rhythms, i.e “Am-sterdam-dam-ski”