

# The New Criterion

## Music

December 2001

### “Dallas” auf Deutsch

by [Alexander Coleman](#)

On the legacy of Richard Wagner.

If the tenor of the vast abundance of books about the works of Richard Wagner is indicative of anything, it is that it is impossible to approach the man and his work with a light heart. His operas impose on any listener a profound seriousness along with a sense of awed disbelief that all of this could have been the product of a single mind (and this simple declaration concerning Wagner’s operas does not even register his multifaceted activities outside of the realm of music—as critic and theoretician of the arts, politician, theater designer, and all-around maverick).

Wagner himself would surely consider this earnest critical attention richly deserved—he was more than tolerant of disciples and even sycophants. Yet his wild personality has long since disappeared into the depths of scholarly adulation. The diaries of his second wife, Cosima Liszt Wagner, first p ...

**Alexander Coleman** was a long-time contributor to The New Criterion and a close friend of the editors. He died on June 17th, 2002.

[more from this author](#)

This article originally appeared in The New Criterion, Volume 20 December 2001, on page 67

Copyright © 2012 The New Criterion | [www.newcriterion.com](http://www.newcriterion.com)

<http://www.newcriterion.com/articles.cfm/-ldquo-Dallas-rdquo--auf-Deutsch-4126>