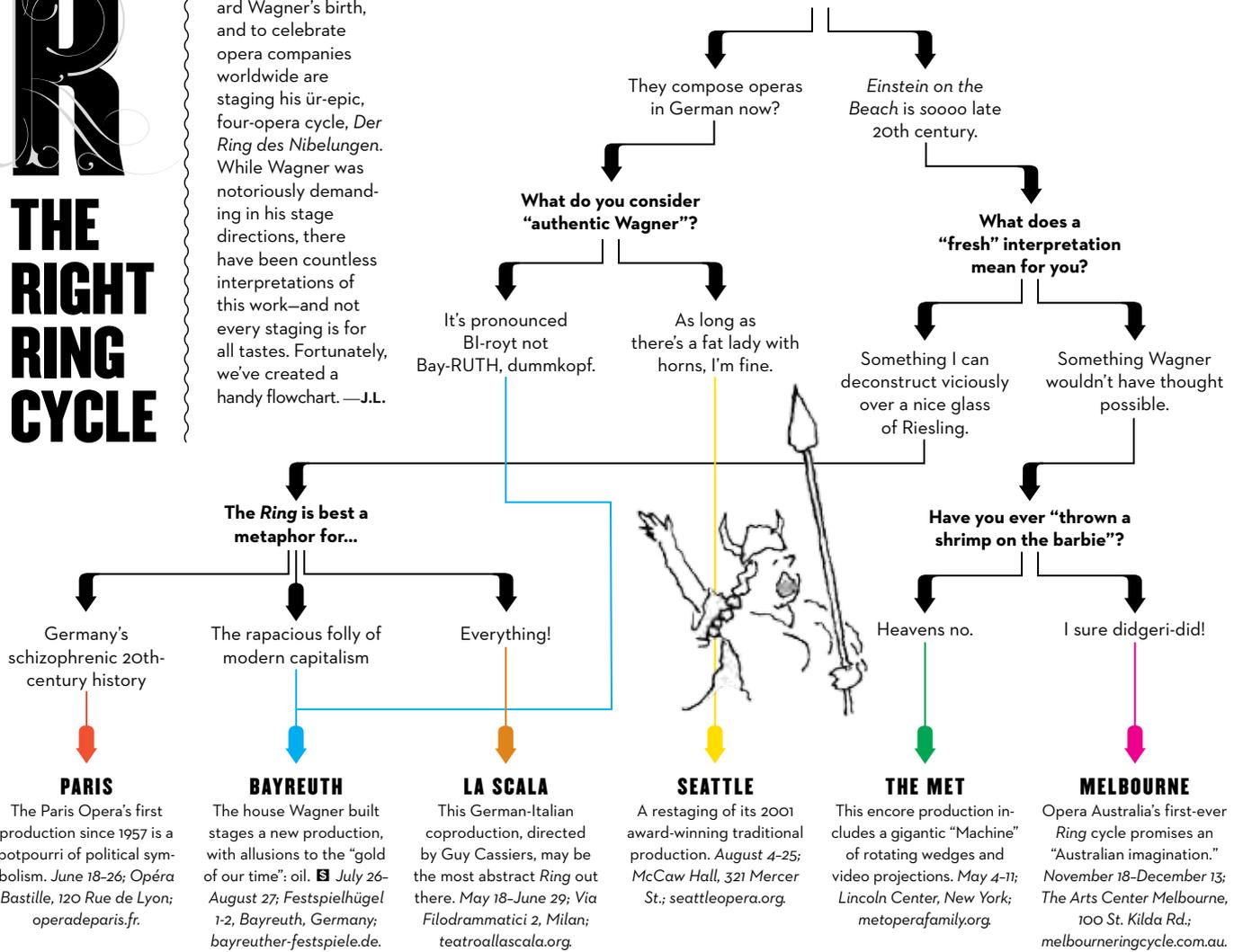


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THE RIGHT RING CYCLE

This year marks the bicentennial of Richard Wagner's birth, and to celebrate opera companies worldwide are staging his ü-epic, four-opera cycle, *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. While Wagner was notoriously demanding in his stage directions, there have been countless interpretations of this work—and not every staging is for all tastes. Fortunately, we've created a handy flowchart. —J.L.

HOW MUCH OF AN OPERA TRADITIONALIST ARE YOU?



RETURN TO FORM

Four acts that have been sorely missed.



A May 19 concert at Carnegie Hall marks the beginning of maestro **James Levine's** comeback season, two years after a fuge of ailments brought his four-decade run at the Metropolitan Opera to an abrupt curtain call.



After an injury sidelined him at the Olympics and the US Open, tennis star **Rafael Nadal's** 222-day hiatus came to a close in February, when the racket wonder made some promising clay-court plays at the Chile Open.



In April, **Bette Midler** made an overdue return to the *Great White Way* in *I'll Eat You Last*, her first Broadway show since 1979. The one-woman monologue tells of Hollywood agent Sue Mengers, a figure as abundant in moxie as the name brightening the marquee.



Though **Mick Fleetwood** insisted just a year ago that it would never happen, **Fleetwood Mac** launched an ambitious reunion tour last month, set to regale more than 30 American cities with both tried and new material. —R.T.