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## P R E S S C O N F E R E N C E

# N E W Y E A R ' S C O N C E R T 2 0 2 6

MONDAY, DECEMBER 29, 2025, at 1 pm

H O T E L I M P E R I A L

KÄRNTNER RING 16, 1010 VIENNA

S P E A K E R S

Daniel Froschauer, Chairman of the Vienna Philharmonic

Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Conductor

Stefanie Groiss-Horowitz, ORF Programme Director



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## 2026 New Year's Concert. List of Works.

**Johann Strauß II**, Ouverture to the operetta *Indigo und die vierzig Räuber* (*Indigo and the Forty Thieves*)

**Carl Michael Ziehrer**, *Donausagen* (*Legends of the Danube*). Waltz, op. 446\*

**Joseph Lanner**, *Malapou-Galoppe*, op. 148, No. 1\*

**Eduard Strauß**, *Brausteufelchen*. Fast Polka, op. 154\*

**Johann Strauß II**, *Fledermaus-Quadrille* (*Quadrille from The Bat*), op. 363

**Johann Strauß I**, *Der Karneval in Paris* (*The Carnival in Paris*). Galopp, op. 100

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**Franz von Suppè**, Ouverture to the operetta *Die schöne Galathée* (*The Fair Galatea*)

**Josephine Weinlich**, *Sirenen Lieder* (*Siren Songs*). Polka mazur, op. 13  
(arrangement: Wolfgang Dörner)\*

**Josef Strauß**, *Frauenwürde* (*Women's Dignity*). Waltz, op. 277

**Johann Strauß II**, *Diplomaten-Polka* (*Diplomat's Polka*). Polka française, op. 448

**Florence Price**, *Rainbow Waltz* (arrangement: Wolfgang Dörner)\*

**Hans Christian Lumbye**, *Københavns Jernbane-Damp-Galop* (*Copenhagen Steam Railway Galop*)

**Johann Strauß II**, *Rosen aus dem Süden* (*Roses from the South*). Waltz, op. 388

**Johann Strauß II**, *Egyptischer Marsch* (*Egyptian March*), op. 335

**Josef Strauß**, *Friedenspalmen* (*Palms of Peace*). Waltz, op. 207

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\*First performance at a New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic



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## 2026 New Year's Concert. Programme Notes.

### From Vienna Out Into The World And Back Again

The 2026 New Year's Concert, presented since 2009 by Rolex, brings to an end the celebrations marking the bicentenary of the birth of Johann Strauß the Younger and at the same time underlines the importance of the music not just of the Strauß family but of their contemporaries, too, in the repertory of the Vienna Philharmonic. The programme also includes works that look beyond this immediate context. With Yannick Nézet-Séguin on the podium, 2026 will see a New Year's Concert conducting débüt.

The first work on the programme is another premiere: *Indigo und die vierzig Räuber* (*Indigo and the Forty Thieves*) was the first operetta by Johann Strauß the Younger. It dates from 1871. So many librettists were involved in the attempt to condense the plot of the *Arabian Nights* to manageable proportions that their not entirely successful effort is best described as an ongoing experiment. The story tells how Fantasca, a young woman from Vienna, and her lover Janio are shipwrecked and end up as slaves of King Indigo of Makassar. The name Makassar is that of a city on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi, which in the nineteenth century was a Dutch colony. Despite being reworked many times, *Indigo* remains one of Strauß's least-known stage works. The Overture begins by striking a vaguely French-sounding note and includes motifs from all three acts of the operetta, which have also found their way onto the concert stage in other works, such as the polka *Im Sturmschritt* (*At the Double*). It is perhaps significant that the Overture does not include a waltz: Strauß evidently wanted to introduce himself to his audiences at the Theater an der Wien by presenting them with a new and different facet of himself.

It was for the City of Vienna Ball in 1893 that the military bandmaster Carl Michael Ziehrer wrote his *Donausagen* (*Legends of the Danube*). This waltz sets out unmistakably from Hungary before leading us off on a musical journey through the lands that made up the Habsburg Monarchy on either side of the Danube. On the way it also alludes to the region's legends, such as that of the "Danube maiden". Like many other mythical creatures who live near or in water, this sprite lures men to their death, although in other versions of the legend she also helps humans in their time of need. Ziehrer dedicated his waltz to Archduchess Maria Christina, the widowed queen of Spain who at the time in question was ruling the country on behalf of her young son, Alfons XIII. This was a difficult time for the Spanish monarchy, when Maria Christina tried to push through a number of moderate reforms.

Joseph Lanner's *Malapou-Galoppe* represents another aspect of the global history of Viennese music in the nineteenth century. In 1838/39 an Indian company of five dancers and three musicians performed for the first time in several European towns and cities. Aged between six and thirty and known as *devadasis*, the female dancers came from the French colony of Pondicherry in southern India. In Vienna, too, they caused a stir. Here they were advertised with the pseudo-oriental name of "Bayadères from India". The dances that they performed were accompanied in part by Indian instruments and in part by local musicians. The accompanying programme described the *malapou* as "depicting the joy of the shepherds and shepherdesses at the return of spring, together with their feelings and their gratitude to the goddess of agriculture". There is no evidence that Johann Strauß the Father or Lanner attended any of these performances but both composers wrote galops that were inspired by them. Lanner incorporated Indian influences directly into his score: among the percussion instruments are a reed pipe and a hand drum of the kind used by Indian musicians. The part for the *Schlagnkugel* includes shouts that may reflect the performance practices of the Indian dancers.



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Eduard Strauß's fast polka *Brausteufelchen* received its first performance at a masked ball at the Schwender Colosseum in the Viennese district of Rudolfsheim to the west of the city centre in January 1872. It is an effervescent piece that the composer also included in the programme of his promenade concert in the Golden Hall of the Musikverein the following month. This "Carnival Revue" marked a day of special celebration for the youngest of the Strauß brothers, since he had been appointed Music Director of the Imperial and Royal Ballrooms at the Hofburg, an appointment conferred on him by a decree issued by the Senior Steward's Office. Both his father and his brother Johann had held this post before him.

Johann Strauß's operetta *Die Fledermaus* (*The Bat*), was first heard in 1874, the year in which he arranged a quadrille made up of some of its best-known tunes. This *Fledermaus-Quadrille* (*Quadrille from The Bat*) remains the most popular and most frequently performed quadrille in Vienna and is played every year at midnight as well as at two in the morning at the traditional Vienna Philharmonic Ball in the Musikverein, when it is known as the "Midnight Quadrille". The dancing master announces six parts or figures starting with a *pantalon* and ending with a finale. On the dancefloor the ballroom dancers, who have been familiar with the forms of the quadrille since their days at dance school, follow his instructions as best they can – but they are, in any case, in the sunniest of dancing moods.

In the best tradition of the ball, the quadrille is invariably followed by a galop. At the 2026 New Year's Concert this is *Der Karneval in Paris* (*The Carnival of Paris*) by Johann Strauß the Father, who together with his orchestra had performed in Paris during the Carnival season of 1837/38. The piece was dedicated to the "beautiful women of Paris", who received a copy of the piano score at the first performance. The work was heard in Vienna later that same season.

With the Overture to *Die schöne Galathée* (*The Fair Galatea*) the Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Concert returns to the world of the Viennese operetta. Franz von Suppè wrote this work in the spring of 1865 for the city's Carltheater in an attempt to challenge the hegemony of Offenbach's *La Belle Hélène*, which had been running at the Theater an der Wien since 17 March under the title of *Die schöne Helena*. In the event Suppè's operetta was premiered in Berlin, where it encountered criticism on account of its affinities with the worlds of opera and opéra bouffe, one Berlin reviewer complaining that "Herr Suppè has recently been copying Verdi and Offenbach", while a Viennese critic took a similar line, dismissing the composer as "the Leopoldstadt Offenbach". Despite this, the Overture was soon being championed by military bands throughout the Habsburg Monarchy.

*Sirenen Lieder* (*Siren Songs*) is the title of a polka mazur by Josephine Weinlich, a violinist, pianist, conductor and composer who was born in Dechtice in what is now Slovakia but who grew up in Vienna, where at the age of only twenty she formed a women's orchestra that performed this piece at its inaugural concert in Vienna's New Dreher Beer Hall in August 1868. Originally featuring only six to eight players, her orchestra later grew to include more than forty. Like Johann Strauß, Weinlich conducted her orchestra from the violin, which she played while standing. They toured widely, even travelling as far afield as Russia and North America. In 1879 Weinlich moved to Lisbon to work as a piano teacher and as a music journalist, and it was there that she died of tuberculosis in 1887. Wolfgang Dörner's orchestration of her *Sirenen Lieder* is based on a piano reduction that was published in the *Reformblätter*.



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The Strauß Orchestra planned to hold its 1870 Carnival season in the new Musikvereinssaal, but the hall had to close following a fire only a few weeks after its official opening. As a result the Lawyers' Ball was transferred to the Imperial Hofburg, where Josef Strauß's waltz *Frauenwürde* (*Women's Dignity*) received its first performance. The piece was dedicated to the ball's "high-born patronesses", who in view of the last-minute change of venue were required to "decorate the Ballrooms in the most brilliant way imaginable". The work's title was no doubt inspired by Schiller's worthy but paternalistic poem *Würde der Frauen* (*Women's Dignity*) but the Strauß brothers were also able to draw their inspiration from their own mother, Anna, a powerful woman who successfully managed not only the family's affairs but also its business interests. Three weeks after the Lawyers' Ball, Josef collapsed at the bedside of his dying mother and by the July of that year he too was dead.

In 1892 Johann Strauß ventured into a new area and made his début as an opera composer, but despite the presence of the Vienna Philharmonic in the orchestra pit, *Ritter Pásmán* (*Knight Pázmán*) was a fiasco when it was staged at the Court Opera, driving its composer back to the world of operetta with *Fürstin Ninetta* (*Princess Ninetta*), which he wrote at the age of nearly seventy. From the librettists he received only the sung texts but not the spoken dialogue and, hence, the outlines of the plot, which caused a number of surprises among cast members at the rehearsals. The work is set in a beach hotel in Sorrento, where the guests are from the international aristocracy and upper middle class. *Ninetta* is the young widow of a prince. Her origins are disputed and it requires the help of a diplomat, Baron Mörsburg, to sort out the situation. Johann Strauß soon pillaged the score for an elegant and polished *Diplomaten-Polka* (*Diplomat's Polka*) that his brother Eduard introduced to Musikverein audiences six weeks after the stage première of the operetta.

The African-American pianist-composer Florence Price spent her whole life struggling to achieve respect and recognition. Born in Arkansas, she established herself there in the early years of the twentieth century as a musician and as a teacher but the persistent and even growing racial discrimination in the Southern States led her and many other African Americans to leave – in 1927 she and her family moved to Chicago. Divorced, she remarried but was soon separated from her new husband. Despite her difficult situation as a Black Woman and a single parent, she still managed to pursue a professional career and to produce a substantial body of work. She wrote a sizeable number of works ranging from brief piano pieces to chamber and choral music and four symphonies. During her life she enjoyed a handful of successes and in the years after her death in 1953 a group of her supporters actively championed her work, but it is only in recent years that her output has been more fully explored and assessed, a process triggered by the discovery of numerous manuscript scores in her former summer home in 2009. These include her *Rainbow Waltz*, a piano piece written in 1939 and performed in an orchestral guise at the 2026 New Year's Concert.

The Danish composer Hans Christian Lumbye began his career in a military band and playing music for the dance floor, and soon began writing his own works. In 1839 a band from Styria visited Copenhagen and introduced him to the music of Joseph Lanner and Johann Strauß the Father, whose style he proceeded to adapt. At this date the Austrian musicians were required to make the laborious journey to Scandinavia by coach, but the newly developing railway network was already promising to make travel much easier. In 1847 the line between Copenhagen and Roskilde was opened by a British engineering firm, a distance of thirty kilometres that was covered by three trains



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a day. To mark this occasion Lumbye composed his *Københavns Jernbane-Damp-Galop* (*Copenhagen Steam Railway Galop*) for the summer concerts that he organized in the city's Tivoli Gardens. The piece captures the sense of a new awareness of the speeding passage of time bursting in on an age of pre-industrial tranquillity.

*Das Spitzentuch der Königin* (*The Queen's Lace Handkerchief*) is another of Johann Strauß's stage works that was only moderately successful. Written in 1880, it was intended as a topical satire on the Habsburg imperial house but for reasons of censorship it had to be relocated to an imaginary Portugal in the sixteenth century, where the king, who is under the care of a guardian, is attracted neither to the business of state nor to his wife. Instead, he is fond of truffles. Integral to the plot lay the rakish lifestyle of Archduke Rudolf but few members of the Viennese audience picked up on this. Within only a matter of weeks, however, Strauß had snatched success from the jaws of defeat and drawn on the score for one of his most beautiful concert waltzes, *Rosen aus dem Süden* (*Roses from the South*). Here the operetta's lines about truffles and the romance "Wo die wilde Rose erblüht" (*Where the wild rose blossoms*) took on a new lease on life, the romance presumably giving the waltz its title. The "South" was no longer Portugal but Italy, to whose king, Umberto I, Strauß dedicated the work. Umberto was assassinated by an anarchist in 1900, a fate that had befallen the Austrian Empress Elisabeth two years earlier. Following the suicide of her son – Crown Prince Rudolf, who had been the original target of the operetta's satire – she had spent the remaining years of her life aimlessly travelling round Europe.

Despite its title, Johann Strauß's *Egyptischer Marsch* (*Egyptian March*) spirits us away to the Northeast: Strauß wrote it in 1869 for his final summer engagement in the tsar's residence at Pavlovsk. The march – which also requires the musicians to sing – includes vaguely oriental echoes that allowed the composer to rename the work as his *Tscherkessen-Marsch* (*Circassian March*) only a few days after its "Egyptian" première. Soon, however, an opportunity arose to revert to the original title when the Suez Canal was opened in November 1869 and Emperor Franz Joseph attended the celebrations in his yacht. Similar festivities were held at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna, where they took place under the title *Nach Egypten* (*To Egypt*). Strauß's March was played as part of the incidental music performed on this occasion.

When Josef Strauß wrote his waltz *Friedenspalmen* (*Palms of Peace*) in 1866, peace had finally broken out in the Habsburg Monarchy. It was to be the Empire's last period of peace. Two parallel wars had been fought in 1866, one of them ending with victory over Italy at Custoza, the other one resulting in a humiliating defeat for Austria at Königgrätz, when the enemy had been the Kingdom of Prussia. The peace treaty that was signed in Prague in August 1866 reduced the Habsburg Empire to its core territories. Austria left the *Deutscher Bund* (*German Confederation*) and in doing so allowed Prussia to form the nucleus of a new "kleindeutsch" (*Little German*) nation state. Austria also had to cede Venetia and Mantua to Italy. The Strauß brothers sought to process this trauma through their music, Josef with his measured, stylistically unified *Friedenspalmen* (*Palms of Peace*), which begins with a typically refined introduction, while Johann responded to Königgrätz with a whole series of works about his reduced Austrian homeland, including his most famous waltz, *An der schönen blauen Donau* (*The Beautiful Blue Danube*), which traditionally serves as an encore at every New Year's Concert.



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## Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

Internationally acclaimed conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin has been Music Director of the Metropolitan Opera in New York since 2018, Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2012, and for 25 years Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain of Montréal. From 2008 to 2018, he was Principal Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was appointed Conductor Laureate. He is also an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin is committed to expanding the classical symphonic and operatic repertoire, including rarely performed works by composers such as Florence Price, Clara Schumann, William Dawson and William Grant Still. He is equally dedicated to contemporary composers. Through his conducting academies at Domaine Forget and Montréal, he also provides a platform for the next generation of conductors, whose graduates now work in major orchestras around the world.

The rediscovery of Florence Price has been powerfully reinforced by Yannick Nézet-Séguin and the Philadelphia Orchestra, whose performances and recordings have played a central role in restoring Price's place in the repertoire and were recognized with a Grammy Award in 2022.

As a guest conductor, Yannick Nézet-Séguin also works with many leading European orchestras, including the Vienna Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, the London Philharmonic and the London Symphony Orchestra. He has conducted concerts at the Salzburg Festival and at many European festivals, including Edinburgh, Lucerne and the BBC Proms in London. In the summer, he conducted in North America at the Mostly Mozart Festival in New York, in Lanaudière, Vail and Saratoga, among other venues. As an acclaimed opera conductor, he has appeared at the Vienna State Opera, La Scala, the Royal Opera House Covent Garden, the Dutch Opera and the Salzburg Festival.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin made his debut with the Vienna Philharmonic in 2010 at the Mozart Week in Salzburg. Since that time, he has regularly conducted the orchestra in Vienna and Salzburg, and on tour. One special highlight was the Summer Night Concert 2023 under his baton. On 1 January 2026, he will conduct the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert for the first time.

Born in Montréal, Yannick Nézet-Séguin studied piano, conducting and composition at the Conservatoire de Montréal. He has received numerous honors, including five GRAMMY Awards. He was named Musical America's 2016 Artist of the Year and has been awarded the Order of Canada and the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres. With his artistic work and his commitment to the highest musical quality, Yannick Nézet-Séguin inspires audiences and musicians around the world.

Yannick Nézet-Séguin became a ROLEX Testimonee in 2024.



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## 2026 New Year's Concert. Donation Information.

The Vienna Philharmonic will donate EUR 100,000 to LICHT INS DUNKEL from the proceeds of ticket sales to the Preview Performance of the New Year's Concert on December 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

The funds will be allocated to the following projects and organizations:

- EUR 20,000 to #girls\_only  
(a psychotherapeutic group for girls with experience of violence and abuse)/  
Association Help for Children and Parents – Child Protection Center Graz
- EUR 5,000 for emergency assistance for underage victims of abuse and violence/  
Child Protection Center Salzburg – Help for Children and Parents
- EUR 15,000 for counselling, support and guidance for girls and women  
and their children who are affected by violence/  
Women's Center East Tyrol – Counselling for Girls and Women
- EUR 10,000 for the TAMAR Association,  
a counselling center for mistreated and sexually abused women, girls and children
- EUR 50,000 to Soforthilfefonds (Emergency Aid Fund) of LICHT INS DUNKEL.  
This supports families with disabled or underage children in emergency situations.



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## ORF.

**The 86<sup>th</sup> New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic:  
Live on ORF 2, Ö1, and ORF ON on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, also featuring a "matinee"  
with portraits, a making-of documentary, a ballet, and an intermission film.**

Once again, on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, (ORF 2, Ö1, and ORF ON at 11.15 am), ORF is off to a swinging start into the new cultural year with the glamorous live broadcast of the famous New Year's Concert of the Vienna Philharmonic from the Golden Hall of the Vienna Musikverein. With Canadian conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin at its helm – his première at what is arguably the world's most important classical music event –, the top-level orchestra is introducing a few new tones to a programme that traditionally draws from the rich repertoire of the "Strauss Dynasty" and its contemporaries: five special pieces will be celebrating their New Year's Concert première in 2026, including two works by composers Josephine Weinlich and Florence Price.

The TV concert broadcast will be accompanied by an interesting television programme, featuring a documentary titled "Johann Strauss und die Frauen" (9.05 am), a film portrait of the conductor (9.50 am), the traditional making-of documentary "Auftakt zum Neujahrskonzert" (10.45 am), the ORF intermission film titled "Der Zauber der Kunst – 250 Jahre Sammlung Albertina" (approx. 11.50 am), and two ballet performances by the Vienna State Ballet, pre-recorded at locations in the Museum for Applied Arts and the Vienna Hofburg.

**68<sup>th</sup> ORF broadcast with a total of 14 HD cameras:  
A round anniversary for New Year's Concert specialist Michael Beyer**

This is already the 68<sup>th</sup> time in its history that ORF television is broadcasting the New Year's Concert live from the magnificent Golden Hall of the Vienna Musikverein, a venue with exceptional acoustics. This legendary cultural event is considered the most widely broadcast concert in the world, produced in amazing high-definition quality by the ORF and watched live on TV and stream by around 50 million people in more than 150 countries. Behind this world-class TV production is a top-notch team headed by New Year's Concert specialist Michael Beyer, who will be orchestrating a total of 14 high-definition cameras. The experienced German television concert and opera director has been tasked with the live broadcast already nine times – from 2014 to 2017, in 2020, and from 2022 to 2025 –, so he will be celebrating a round 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2026. This year, already for the 13<sup>th</sup> time, he is also responsible for the production of the ORF New Year's Concert Ballet, consisting of two dance performances by the Vienna State Ballet to compositions by Johann Strauss II, already pre-recorded in late summer. As in previous years, culture presenter and journalist Teresa Vogl will be commentating on the TV broadcast live for audiences in German-speaking countries.

### **New Year's Concert matinee, encores, and John Neumeier portrait**

As part of the New Year's matinee on Thursday, January 1<sup>st</sup> at 9.05 am, ORF 2 and ORF ON will be setting the scene for the live TV broadcast of the concert (11.15 am) with a total of three television programmes. The first one will be a documentary titled "Johann Strauss und die Frauen" directed by Barbara Weissenbeck, focusing on the Strauss legend: This exciting cinematic journey throws a light on the ambitious musical genius and his complex family



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history – shaped by personal conflicts, rivalries, yet also by strong women who significantly contributed to the success of the world-famous "Waltz King". It will be followed by a film portrait by Christiaan van Schermbeek on French-Canadian Yannick Nézet-Séguin (9.50 am), who will be conducting the New Year's Concert for the first time. Finally, the traditional making-of documentary titled "Auftakt zum Neujahrskonzert" (10.45 am) by Barbara Pichler-Hausegger will once again offer exclusive insights into the months-long preparations leading to this most famous of all philharmonic concerts, one of the largest TV concert productions in the world. In addition: The ORF intermission film produced by Alex Wieser titled "Der Zauber der Kunst – 250 Jahre Sammlung Albertina" (around 11.50 am) will take viewers through a nocturnal fantasy tour through one of Austria's most significant arts and culture institutions. And: TV audiences will be truly enchanted by the New Year's Concert Ballet performances to two special compositions by Johann Strauss II.

Those who may miss the live broadcast of the New Year's Concert in the morning of January 1<sup>st</sup> will have three more opportunities to experience this glamorous event on TV: As a proven tradition, ORF III Culture and Information will be broadcasting the concert encore during prime time on New Year's Day (8.15 pm), preceded by the "Auftakt zum Neujahrskonzert" (7.50 pm). Another repetition of the classical music event will be shown on 3sat on Saturday January 3<sup>rd</sup> (8.15 pm). ORF 2 will be airing the top event again in the matinee on Epiphany, Tuesday January 6<sup>th</sup> (10.05 am), preceded by the concert intermission film "Der Zauber der Kunst – 250 Jahre Sammlung Albertina" (9.05 am) and an extended version of the making-of documentary, this time under the title "Behind the Scenes of the New Year's Concert" (9.35 am). The concert encore will be followed by a portrait of this year's ballet choreographer, titled "John Neumeier – Ein Leben für den Tanz" (11.55 am).

### Star-studded ballet comeback for choreographer John Neumeier and designer Albert Kriemler

During the concert broadcast on 1<sup>st</sup>, ORF will also be showing dance performances of the Vienna State Ballet recorded during the summer to two selected music pieces, the waltz *Rosen aus dem Süden* (*Roses from the South*) and the *Diplomaten-Polka* (*Diplomat's Polka*), both composed by Johann Strauss II. US American John Neumeier was in charge of the choreography for the third time – after 1999 and 2006. Until 2024, he had served as director of the Hamburg Ballet for 50 years, and his extraordinary creations place him among the most important choreographers of our time. This year's ballet costumes are the work of Swiss designer Albert Kriemler, creative director of the fashion label AKRIS. The collaboration between Neumeier and Kriemler began exactly 20 years ago at the 2006 New Year's Concert Ballet – followed by numerous joint projects and stage productions. For the *Rosen aus dem Süden* waltz, Neumeier chose the Vienna Museum for Applied Arts (MAK) to render a very expressive and emotional homage to the so-called "Wiener Rose", the famous rose décor created by the Viennese Augarten porcelain manufactory. The Vienna Hofburg served as the backdrop for the *Diplomaten-Polka*, with a choreography that takes a humorous approach to diplomacy, bureaucracy, and civil service.

The pieces were performed by a total of twelve female and male dancers of the Vienna State Ballet. Four enchanting couples interpreted the waltz: first female soloist Ketevan Papava and the newly appointed first male soloist Timoor Afshar, accompanied by Natalya Butchko and Géraud Wielick, Gaia Fredianelli and Calogero Failla, and Alaia Rogers-Maman and Victor Cagnin. Alessandro Frola, who changed to the Vienna State Ballet as first soloist for the season 2025/26, was joined by five gracile female dancers for the performance of the *Diplomaten-Polka*: Natalya Butchko, Gaia Fredianelli, Anita Manolova, Tatiana Mazniak, and Laura Cislaghi.



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## **"Der Zauber der Kunst – 250 Jahre Sammlung Albertina": The ORF concert intermission film**

The traditional ORF film for the New Year's Concert intermission, directed and produced for the first time by Alex Wieser this year, is dedicated to the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Albertina Museum. The 25-minute music film takes viewers on a nocturnal fantasy tour through the renowned Viennese museum and its impressive painting gallery, featuring masterpieces from Monet to Kandinsky. As the tour begins, famous works come alive through music, and arcane things seem to happen. TV audiences are immersed into exceptional moments in music and arts history, in a melodious setting created by the musicians of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra, the Albertina taking centre stage as one of Austria's most significant cultural hotspots. Masterpieces from the museum's collection are combined with real locations in Vienna – from the Monet Garden in Kagran to a historical coffee shop, and from old inner courts in the city's centre to the stately rooms of the Albertina –, morphing into a cinematic dreamscape.

## **The New Year's Concert 2026 on Ö1: Live broadcast and "Intermezzo" during the intermission**

Ö1 will also be broadcasting the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 live from the Vienna Musikverein at 11.15 am as its traditional opening of the new year, commentated by Eva Teimel. The "Intermezzo" culture talk show with conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin will air during the concert intermission at around 11.50 am.

## **The world-famous classical music event in the ORF.at network and on ORF TELETEXT**

The New Year's Concert being part of the ORF.at network's ongoing cultural coverage at the turn of the year, numerous channels will be reporting on the concert programme, the orchestra, and its conductor. On January 1<sup>st</sup>, the concert itself will be broadcast in a video livestream on ORF.at and on ORF.ON (including the ORF intermission film). The live audio stream will come from ORF Sound and oe1.ORF.at. Moreover, the concert will air in Dolby Digital 5.1 quality via the Ö1 app as part of the ORF-HbbTV programme (requires a latest-generation device with Internet connection). Both the concert and the film can be watched later as video on demand on ORF.ON. ORF TELETEXT will also be focusing on the New Year's Concert as part of its ongoing cultural coverage.

## ROLEX AND THE ARTS

*Rolex is committed to achievement in the arts, recognizing the crucial role they play in our world. Artists evoke emotions and connect people, inspiring creativity and shaping our future for the better. As an organization dedicated to craftsmanship and excellence, Rolex fosters the conditions that enable artists to reach the peak of their art.*

*Over five decades, Rolex has formed deep partnerships with artistic visionaries, based on their commitment to the highest standards of creativity and performance. The first was renowned soprano Dame Kiri Te Kanawa in 1976. Since then, the company's role has evolved to include many other Testimonees who are world-class performers as well as relationships with institutions that enable outstanding artistic achievement.*

*Today, this ongoing endeavour has become known as the Perpetual Arts Initiative, a global framework encompassing architecture, cinema, dance, literature, music, theatre and visual arts. Through its expanding partnerships with talented artists and leading institutions, Rolex aims to celebrate and support those at the pinnacle of their disciplines, uphold cultural legacy and cultivate rising talents who will reach new heights in the future.*

### NOTE TO THE MEDIA

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## ROLEX TESTIMONEE YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN JOINS ILLUSTRIOUS LIST OF CONDUCTORS TO LEAD VIENNA PHILHARMONIC'S WORLD-FAMOUS NEW YEAR'S CONCERT IN 2026

**Geneva, 15 December 2025** – For more than 80 years, one of the world's most revered orchestras, the Vienna Philharmonic, has welcomed the New Year with a mesmerizing concert, which demonstrates the power of music to connect people worldwide. The Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Concert, presented by Rolex since 2009 and celebrating artistic heritage, will be performed on the morning of 1 January in the Golden Hall of the city's historic Musikverein. With a global television and streaming audience of approximately 50 million viewers in more than 150 countries, it is the most watched classical concert on the planet.

Some of the music world's greatest maestros have conducted the concert, including Herbert von Karajan, Carlos Kleiber, Zubin Mehta, Riccardo Muti, Daniel Barenboim and Rolex Testimonee Gustavo Dudamel. This year, the 2026 concert will see a new name take up the baton: Canadian conductor and Rolex Testimonee Yannick Nézet-Séguin.

## VIENNA PHILHARMONIC NEW YEAR'S CONCERT 2026

"It is an immense honour for me to join my friends of the Vienna Philharmonic and take part in the unique and world-renowned tradition of the New Year's Concert. As a musician, and as a human being, my passion is to build a bridge from the traditional to the contemporary, to broaden the message of classical music. This programme reflects that vision." – *Yannick Nézet-Séguin*.

Renowned for his vibrant vision and spirited conducting, Nézet-Séguin is one of the most influential conductors of his generation.

Among his many honours, the multiple Grammy Award-winner was appointed Companion to the Order of the Arts and Letters of Quebec in 2015 and received Musical America's Artist of the Year in 2016.

Nézet-Séguin has collaborated with the Vienna Philharmonic since 2010, regularly conducting the orchestra during concerts in Vienna, Salzburg and on tour, as well as at the historic Summer Night Concert in 2023. At the New Year's Concert – a programme famously consisting of music by composer Johann Strauss – the Rolex Testimonee will bring to life the music of Austrian composer Josephine Weinlich, as well as Florence Price, who in 1933 became the first black female composer to have a symphony performed by a major American orchestra.

The New Year's Concert, traditionally a celebration of the music of the Strauss dynasty and their contemporaries, is broadcast on television and streamed on Rolex partner [medici.tv](#).

Rolex has been Exclusive Partner of the Vienna Philharmonic since 2008, and the Exclusive Sponsor of the New Year's Concert since January 2009.



**Yannick Nézet-Séguin** is one of the world's leading conductors who is famous for his unconventional style, dynamic leadership and innovative contributions to classical music. In 2018, he was appointed Music Director of the Metropolitan Opera. Since then, the 'Met' has embraced a programme that includes more contemporary music. At the age of 25, he was appointed Artistic Director of Montreal's Orchestre Métropolitain, where he now has a lifetime contract. He joined the Philadelphia Orchestra as Music Director in 2012, revitalizing it by engaging younger audiences with new works. He enjoys close collaborations with the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonics, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Orchestra of Europe and has led performances at Teatro alla Scala, the Royal Ballet and Opera, Dutch National Opera, the Vienna State Opera, as well as major festivals such as the Salzburg Festival. He became a Rolex Testimonee in 2024.

## VIENNA PHILHARMONIC NEW YEAR'S CONCERT 2026

### ABOUT THE VIENNA PHILHARMONIC

The Vienna Philharmonic is widely acknowledged as one of the world's most revered orchestras, upholding the greatest traditions in classical music. Founded in 1842 and with more than 180 years of artistic contribution, it is known for its individuality and lustrous sound, as well as for its exacting standards, maintaining artistic integrity and communicating music's humanitarian message around the world. Today, this is carried out by way of two notable events which are broadcast in numerous countries around the world: the New Year's Concert and the open-air Summer Night Concert, where, every May or June, over 50,000 people gather in the Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn in Vienna, known as the capital city of music.

### ABOUT ROLEX AND MUSIC

Rolex celebrates human achievement as a journey marked by milestones, emotions and defining moments. For more than half a century, the brand has partnered some of the world's most talented artists and leading cultural institutions to promote excellence and the transmission of artistic heritage, creating a link between the past, present and future.

Through the Perpetual Arts Initiative, a broad portfolio of arts that extends through architecture, cinema, dance, music, literature, theatre and visual arts, the brand confirms its long-term commitment to global culture.

Rolex has partnerships with internationally renowned opera houses including Teatro alla Scala, the Royal Ballet and Opera, Metropolitan Opera, Opéra national de Paris, Teatro Colón, Opéra de Monte-Carlo and the Opernhaus Zürich. It also supports performing arts centres such as the National Center for the Performing Arts and the Elbphilharmonie.

Rolex promotes music through prestigious festivals and orchestras, including the Salzburg and Whitsun festivals, as well as the Vienna Philharmonic. It also partners ventures that encourage rising young artists such as Operalia – the World Opera Competition, the Kiri Te Kanawa Foundation, the Vienna Philharmonic Academy and the Herbert von Karajan Young Conductors Award.

Rolex Testimonees in music are world-leading artists including Cecilia Bartoli, Benjamin Bernheim, Michael Bublé, Renaud Capuçon, Gustavo Dudamel, Juan Diego Flórez, Hélène Grimaud, Jonas Kaufmann, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jakub Orliński, Anoushka Shankar, Dame Kiri Te Kanawa, Sir Bryn Terfel, Rolando Villazón, Sonya Yoncheva and Yuja Wang.

## VIENNA PHILHARMONIC NEW YEAR'S CONCERT 2026

### ABOUT ROLEX

#### AN UNRIVALLED REPUTATION FOR QUALITY AND EXPERTISE

Rolex is an integrated and independent Swiss watch *manufacture*. Headquartered in Geneva, the brand is recognized the world over for its expertise and the quality of its products – symbols of excellence, elegance and prestige. The movements of its Oyster Perpetual and Perpetual watches are certified by COSC, then tested in-house for their precision, performance and reliability. The Superlative Chronometer certification, symbolized by the green seal, confirms that each watch has successfully undergone tests conducted by Rolex in its own laboratories according to its own criteria. These are periodically validated by an independent external organization.

The word 'Perpetual' is inscribed on every Rolex Oyster watch. But more than just a word on a dial, it is a philosophy that embodies the company's vision and values. Hans Wilsdorf, the founder of the company, instilled a notion of perpetual excellence that would drive the company forward. This led Rolex to pioneer the development of the wristwatch and numerous major watchmaking innovations, such as the Oyster, the first waterproof wristwatch, launched in 1926, and the Perpetual rotor self-winding mechanism, invented in 1931. In the course of its history, Rolex has registered over 600 patents. At its four sites in Switzerland, the brand designs, develops and produces the majority of its watch components. A fifth site, also in Switzerland, is under construction and is expected to open in 2029. Rolex carries out its own manufacturing operations, from casting the gold alloys to machining, crafting, assembling and finishing the movement, case, dial and bracelet. Furthermore, the brand is actively involved in supporting the arts and culture, sport and exploration, as well as those who are devising solutions to preserve the planet.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT ROLEX AND MUSIC, GO TO

<https://newsroom.rolex.com/world-of-rolex/perpetuating-arts-and-culture/rolex-and-music/rolex-and-music-2025>

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## European Broadcasting Union (EBU).

The European Broadcasting Union is the world's leading alliance of public service media. We have 113 Member organizations in 56 countries and have an additional 31 Associates in Asia, Africa, Australasia and the Americas.

Our Members operate nearly 2,000 television, radio and online channels and services, and offer a wealth of content across other platforms. Together they reach an audience of more than one billion people around the world, broadcasting in 153 languages.

Our mission is to secure a sustainable future for public service media. We provide our Members with world-class content from news to sports and music and build on our founding ethos of solidarity and co-operation to create a centre for learning and sharing.

In that spirit, and together with our Austrian Member ORF, we are delighted to present the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert 2026 – a global tradition that exemplifies the cultural role of public service media in bringing people together through shared experiences.

Now in its ninth decade, the Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert continues to evolve while honouring its remarkable heritage. This collaboration showcases how public service media sustain and share the world's most enduring cultural events with audiences everywhere.

Through the Eurovision and Euroradio networks, over 40 of our Members and approximately 50 additional international broadcasters will carry this special concert to audiences around the world as we usher in 2026 together.

We warmly invite you to join us in this celebration.

Wishing you all a joyful and healthy New Year!

<https://www.ebu.ch/>

## New Year's Concert 2026: Floral Decorations by Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department

The Vienna Philharmonic's New Year's Concert will take place on 1<sup>st</sup> January under the baton of conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin in the Vienna Musikverein. The concert is enhanced by the splendid decoration provided by the Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department. The Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department has enjoyed a successful partnership with the Vienna Philharmonic since 2015. The New Year's Concert is a highlight in the world of floristry and a unique opportunity to showcase the artistry of Vienna's city gardeners to a global audience.

*"The long-standing partnership between the Vienna Philharmonic and the Parks and Gardens Department combines musical perfection with floral artistry. With their long history, both institutions contribute significantly to Vienna's global reputation. The artfully arranged floral decorations created by our florists emphasize this connection and thus provide a colorful setting for this globally unique musical performance of the New Year's Concert"*, says Karl Hawliczek, director of the Parks and Gardens Department.

### **Main Colours of the Floral Decoration: Elegant colours and bold colour accents**

The Golden Hall will shine in a sea of 30,000 flowers at the 86th New Year's Concert. Warm, soft colour combinations of various types of flowers will predominate, whether roses, amaryllis, carnations or orchids. *"Delicate apricot in various shades to subtle coral tones as well as flowers in pink will dominate the floral decorations. Playful colour accents are set with bright elements, especially in red and orange"*, adds master gardener, Edith Hopf. All plants and flowers have been cultivated sustainably and under fair working conditions.

### **Floral Master Craftsmanship at its peak**

Exceptional craftsmanship is necessary to effectively showcase the floral decorations on television. This year, the audience may look forward to a true sea of flowers in the Golden Hall, whose perfect presentation requires much experience and expertise. The florists' work will begin on 27<sup>th</sup> December to ensure everything is prepared in time for this worldwide cultural event. The Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department is supported by the florist apprentices of the non-profit organization Jugend am Werk, along with their teachers.

*"The Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department brings more than 160 years of horticultural experience,"* explains Karl Hawliczek. The organization annually plants approximately 1.5 million spring and summer flowers throughout Vienna.

### **New Year's Greetings from Vienna around the Globe**

The musicians of the Vienna Philharmonic along with the Vienna's Parks and Gardens Department will once again make this New Year's Concert a highlight for millions of television viewers around the world, delivering a special cultural New Year's greeting. The New Year's Concert is broadcast worldwide in over 150 countries via TV and stream and is watched by around 50 million viewers.



# NEW YEAR'S CONCERT 2026

## VIENNA PHILHARMONIC

### YANNICK NÉZET-SÉGUIN



#### THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS CLASSICAL MUSIC EVENT

The Vienna New Year's Concert is one of the most anticipated concerts in the world. On January 1st, 2026, Maestro Yannick Nézet-Séguin will take the stage to conduct the New Year's Concert for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in the world renowned Golden Hall of the Vienna Musikverein.

Internationally acclaimed conductor Yannick Nézet-Séguin has been Music Director of the Metropolitan Opera in New York since 2018, Music Director of the Philadelphia Orchestra since 2012, and for 25 years Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Orchestre Métropolitain of Montréal. From 2008 to 2018, he was Principal Conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, where he was appointed Conductor Laureate. He is also an honorary member of the Chamber Orchestra of Europe.

The live recording of the 2026 New Year's Concert will be available digitally from January 9, on CD from January 16, and on Vinyl, DVD, Blu-ray and as visual album from January 30. Additionally, the album will be released in the Dolby Atmos format, offering a 3D audio experience that can be easily enjoyed with headphones. Available on Apple Music, Amazon Music Unlimited, TIDAL and Deezer.



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Press Photos of the New Year's Concert 2026 can be downloaded at:

<https://www.wienerphilharmoniker.at/en/press/5ix4ion-8Fn5-R4cvkn8>

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