

MORPHING CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

VIENNA



MORPHING X
JOHANN STRAUSS

THE 200th ANNIVERSARY IN 2025

TOMASZ WABNIC
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



JULIA STURZLBAUM
SOPRANO

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2025 marks the 200th anniversary of the birth of one of Austria's most iconic musical figures, Johann Strauss! During his prolific career, the 'Waltz King' composed no less than 500 musical works, ranging from the world famous 'Blue Danube Waltz' to other classics such as 'Voices of Spring' and the operetta 'Die Fledermaus'.

The sheer volume and quality of his output is not the only reason his legacy has endured in his native Austria and around the world, but rather it is the universality of his music and its ability to transcend cultures, languages and backgrounds that is key to its place in audiences' hearts.

The works of Johann Strauss have always been an important part of the Morphing Chamber Orchestra's activities on the concert stage, in the recording studio and on the airwaves, thanks in part to founder and artistic director Tomasz Wabnic's two-decade long experience with this music. We are delighted to celebrate this composer on the occasion of his 200th anniversary in our own unique way, combining the emblematic classics with special interpretations reflecting the sounds of today, a real morphing of 2 worlds!

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,Morphing' – the core of the ensemble's name stands for its philosophy to be in the state of constant evolution, metamorphoses and modifications, leading to ground-breaking new musical interpretations while at the same time striving for excellence in performance.

The art of transformation characterizes the philosophy of this innovative chamber music ensemble that has been making music internationally for 17 years.

Founded in 2006 by artistic director Tomasz Wabnic - violinist, violist, as well as arranger- Morphing Chamber Orchestra has stayed true to the philosophy of ensemble playing. Its players are young, diverse, and award-winning artists from around the world, who all came to Vienna to perfect their musical skills. Their alert playing and outstanding qualities are paired with an acute sense of style which enables them to excel at a range of genres.

The Metropolitan Opera, Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall, music labels Aparté & Sony Classical and the World Economic Forum: these are just a few of the important institutions that put their trust in the MCO. Whether it's a concert, a recording or a major ceremony, the MCO is a first-class chamber music partner for any occasion. Opera stars Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna and Andreas Scholl,

American jazz icon Bobby McFerrin and composer Arvo Pärt have also opted for the cosmopolitan Vienna-based ensemble. The MCO performs at the Vienna Konzerthaus and the Vienna Musikverein.

"Music is like a language: if you have enough love for music, you can play anything. Then style or genre is just a matter of dialect." Tomasz Wabnic

The pure sound of the Viennese classical period is the musical foundation from which the MCO has branched out into Baroque period style, romantic opera, film music, pop and even world music. The MCO collaborates with jazz pianist Makoto Ozone (Morphing in Blue concert, November 2023), oud player Joseph Tawadros (4 Seasons on tour 2024), singer-songwriter Noa and singer Timna Brauer. This year will also see the concert *Mystical Morphing* with Andreas Scholl in the Brahmsaal of the Vienna Musikverein and a Mozart & Chopin program with the Brazilian pianist Alvaro Siviero in the Vienna Konzerthaus.



photo: Caroline Doutre



photo: Jaroslaw Gaszynski

Tomasz Wabnic arranged all the arias for chamber music performances together with Lukas Medlam.

Morphing Chamber Orchestra owns the exclusive rights for the world premieres of compositions from the archives of the 700-year-old monastery Jasna Gora, Poland. These archives contain over 3000 scores of 400 Polish and foreign composers - including Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Carl Ditters von Dittersdorf and Joseph Haydn.

MCO has made recordings for various television stations (PBS TV, ORF, TVP Kultura, ARTE TV, MEZZO TV) and radio stations (OE1, radio klassik Stephansdom, Radio Classique France and Polish Radio 2). Morphing Chamber Orchestra is a partner of the Parisian label Aparté (Artistic Director: Nicolas Bartholoméé).

www.morphingmusic.com

Further albums with Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna as well as Barno Ismatullaeva and Kévin Amiel are in the making.

2020 saw MCO section leaders open a new chapter for the ensemble with two livestream performances as a quintet, curated by the New York Metropolitan Opera. Vienna's Morphing String Quintet accompanied opera stars Pretty Yende, Angel Blue, Matthew Polenzani, Javier Camarena, and Aleksandra Kurzak & Roberto Alagna in charming and rare locations around Europe.



TOMASZ WABNIC

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

„The concert with Morphing Chamber Orchestra and its musical director Tomasz Wabnic, has given me great pleasure. The creative input concerning the program, the virtuosity of the musicians and the teamwork of the ensemble have left me inspired.” - Bobby McFerrin (2011)



photo: Cléa Bernal

Tomasz Wabnic founded the Morphing Chamber Orchestra in 2006. As its artistic director, manager, and producer he brought the soloist ensemble to international attention with performances at the Teatro alla Scala and the Metropolitan Opera Live in Concert Series and the World Economic Forum in Davos. Violist Tomasz Wabnic performs as soloist, generally leads the ensemble in performance or takes the role of principal violist. Tomasz Wabnic also creates unique orchestrations and arrangements for a wide range of music- his arrangements for the MET were received enthusiastically by Peter Gelb. He has recorded 16 CDs for several labels including Sony Classical International and Gramola and is currently an official Aparté artist.

In recent years, he forged professional relationships with leading musical personalities in diverse genres: amongst them are singer Bobby McFerrin, counter-tenor Andreas Scholl, soprano Angel Blue, oud virtuoso Joseph Tawadros and composer Arvo Pärt.

In 2020, Soprano Aleksandra Kurzak first chose Morphing Chamber Orchestra for her Sony album Desire, prompting the invitation by Wabnic for another collaboration: the album Mozart Concertante co-produced by Wabnic and Aparté's Nicolas Bartholomew, which received rave reviews. A further recording featuring the renowned Polish opera singer together with Roberto Alagna and Andreas Scholl was released in 2022. Its focus is Arvo Pärt's Stabat Mater, Tomasz Wabnic plays the solo part in Spiegel im Spiegel and again co-produces with Nicolas Bartolomee.

Recent work as an arranger and orchestrator includes the reduction of opera scores for the Morphing Quintet in performances with MET opera stars for the 2020 online series Metropolitan Opera Live in Concert, as well as the MET Stars New Year's Eve Gala with Blue, Pretty Yende, Javier Camarena and Matthew Polenzani, broadcast on Dec 31, 2021, on American TV network PBS. Further credits include work for Aparté, French label Little Tribeca, and renowned cellist Ophélie Gaillard.

As a violist and chamber musician, Tomasz Wabnic recently performed in the Golden Hall of the Wiener Musikverein, Teatro alla Scala, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Moscow's Philharmonic Hall, Teatro Amazonas in Brazil and Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall. He performs the viola solo of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante on his most recent album Mozart Concertante, his musical partner is violinist Yuuki Wong.

In 2013 Tomasz Wabnic founded the Huberman String Trio together with brothers Sándor and Ádám Jávorkai. The Trio presented its critically acclaimed recording of J.S. Bach's Goldberg Variations (arr. Dmitri Sitkovetsky).

Since 2012, Tomasz Wabnic leads a world-class Early Music ensemble dedicated to unearthing hidden treasures, particularly of the Polish Baroque era, the Capella Claromontana. Previously, Tomasz Wabnic founded and led the Capella Czestochoviensis (2006-2012). He produced 9 world-premiere recordings, including works by Amando Ivancic, Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf, Józef Daubeck and Filip Gotschalk, and discovered lost gems by W.A.Mozart and Joseph Haydn at the Częstochowa monastery of Mons Clara in Poland which were received with great acclaim internationally.

Born in Wrocław, Poland, into a family of musicians, Tomasz Wabnic began his studies at the conservatories and universities of Bydgoszcz and Poznan in the violin class of Prof. Jadwiga Kaliszewska before continuing his training at Vienna's Musik und Kunst Privatuniversität (MUK) as a member of the viola class of Herwig Zelle. He received important impulses in the chamber music masterclass of the Altenberg Trio Wien. After graduating with honours, Tomasz Wabnic received several awards as a soloist and chamber musician. With his Fidelio Quartet, he was a finalist in the 2001 International Chamber Music Competition in Melbourne.

Tomasz Wabnic lives and works in Vienna, Austria. He leads the Morphing Music Institute and is the founder of the Lobkowicz Festival.



photo: Johannes Ifkovits

JULIA STURZLBAUM

SOPRANO



photo: Markus Tordik



photo: Marco Sommer

The young Viennese singer completed her studies in musical theatre in 2020 at the Music and Arts University of Vienna (MUK).

In her earlier years she was a member of the children's choir at the volksopera in Vienna and was part of productions such as »Gräfin Mariza«, »Turandot« und »Anatevka«.

Due to her dance education, which she completed from 2008–2016 in Jazz, Ballett and tap dance, she won and participated in numerous competitions. As a graduate of the musicgymnasium Vienna, she additionally received a classical piano education by Elisabeth Eschwé.

In 2018 Julia Sturzlbaum won the den Walter Jurmann- singing competition and appeared as a soloist in Bernsteins »Mass« in the Wiener Musikverein, as Adele in the »Fledermaus« at the Festivals in Langelois and as Chloé in the Offenbach operetta »Daphnis et Chloé«.

In the summer of 2019 she debuted as Pauline in »La vie Parisienne« at the Lehár Festival in Bad Ischl.

In 2020 she received the young upcoming artist award for performing arts of the Proskenion foundation and in 2021 she won the audience price and first price at the Heinrich-Strecker- competition in Baden.

Since season 2020/2021 Julia Sturzlbaum is a principal singer at the Gärtnerplatz theater in Munich, where her many roles have included Despina (»Cosí fan tutte«), Eliza Doolittle in (»My fair Lady«), Pepi Pleininger in (»Wiener Blut«), Hannchen in (»Der Vetter aus Dingsda«), Judith in (Monty Python's »the life of Brian«) and Cosette in (»Les Misérables«).

ALFREDO OVALLES

PIANO

'New Austrian Sound of Music' Artist



photo: John Sobek

Alfredo Ovalles is one of those musicians that are stylistically hard to categorize, which is a sign of constant evolution and tremendous artistic openness. Born in Caracas, Venezuela, the pianist has already explored many different musical worlds. In the course of his career, he has played in rock and pop bands, explored classical, chamber and electronic music and roamed the field of contemporary music.

It is his curiosity for the new and his immense love for experimentation that make him stand out and have led him to many different musical paths offside the beaten track. He is just as committed to standard repertoire, as he is to searching for new compositions that are brought to life through his incomparable performance skills.

'The Morphing Chamber Orchestra played a significant instrumental introduction to the next selection. Their concertmaster Yuuki Wong is a gem.'

— Classical Music Daily
from the Metropolitan Opera New York
,Met Stars Live in Concert'



photo: Johannes Ifkovits

YUUKI WONG

CONCERTMASTER

Quoted by The Strad as an artist with 'imagination and insight....a crowd-pleaser', Yuuki Wong has enjoyed a multi-faceted career performing, recording and teaching. Besides his teachers including Almita and Roland Vamos, Boris Kuschnir, Pierre Amoyal and Ilya Gringolts, Yuuki was inspired by encounters with personalities such as Yehudi Menuhin, Itzhak Perlman, Tibor Varga, Aaron Rosand, Zakhar Bron, Leon Fleischer to mention a few.

Honours bestowed upon Wong include prizes at the Sibelius, Michael Hill, Summit and Kingsville competitions. Besides appearances at the festivals of Verbier, Ravinia, Gstaad, Perlman Music Program, concert highlights include performances for the President of Singapore, for HM Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace, and with orchestras such as the Helsinki Philharmonic, Finnish Radio Symphony, Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne,

Camerata de Lausanne, Auckland Philharmonia, Singapore Symphony etc.

As concertmaster of the Vienna Morphing Orchestra, recent highlights include performances for the Davis World Economic Forum opening ceremony, the New York Metropolitan Opera Live-Streaming series Met Stars in Concert' with Aleksandra Kurzak and Roberto Alagna from Eze, France leading to a re-invitation for the New Year Gala of the same series.

Other projects with the Morphing Chamber Orchestra include a recording of Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante with violist and founder Tomasz Wabnic and Mozart Arias with soprano Aleksandra Kurzak for the French label Aparté.

JOHANN STRAUSS X VILLA - LOBOS

CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF BRAZIL-AUSTRIA RELATIONS

PROGRAM:

1. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)
Ouverture "Le Nozze di Figaro", K.V. 492 (4'40)

2. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Emperor Waltz, op. 437 (12'00)

3. Richard Heuberger (1850 1914)
Der Opernball, Act 2: No. 11, "Geh'n wir
ins Chambre séparée" (3'00)
Julia Sturzbaum - soprano

4. Johann Strauss I (1804 - 1849)
Sighing Galop, op. 9 (2'30)

5. Hector Villa - Lobos (1887 1959)
Alfredo Ovalles - solo piano + MCO

6. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Bandit's Galop, op.378 (3'00)
7. Luigi Arditi (1822 - 1903)
"Il bacio" / Der Kusswaltzer (5'00)
Julia Sturzbaum - soprano

8. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka, Op. 214 (3'00)

9. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)
III. Presto, Sinfonia Concertante for violin & viola,
K.V. 364 (6'30)
Yuuki Wong - violin, Tomasz Wabnic - viola

10. Hector Villa - Lobos (1887 1959)
Bachianas Brasileiras No.5 for soprano and string
orchestra (arr. Tomasz Wabnic)
Julia Sturzbaum - soprano

11. Johann Strauss (1827 - 1870)
Ohne Sorgen (Without a care!), Polka schnell,
op 271 (2'30)

12. Hector Villa - Lobos (1887 1959)
Alfredo Ovalles - solo piano + MCO

13. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Stürmisch in Lieb' und Tanz, op.393 (2'30)

14. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
«Mein Herr Marquis» Adele's song from the
Operetta «Die Fledermaus» (3'30)
Julia Sturzbaum - soprano

15. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
The Blue Danube Waltz, op. 314 (9'30)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Simply playing the notes written down by the
composer is not art! Rediscovering music through
individual artistic sensitivity, however, is!
Together with my musicians from the Morphing
Orchestra, I would like to present a program of the
works of Johann Strauss in an innovative way to mark
the 200th anniversary of his birth. Merging two
images: a classic one in a fresh interpretation and a
new one inspired by the music of Strauss.
Join us and feel the magic of Vienna!

Tom Weller



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photo: Johannes Ifkovits



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