

MORPHING CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

VIENNA



MORPHING x
JOHANN STRAUSS

THE 200th ANNIVERSARY IN 2025

TOMASZ WABNIC
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



NIKLAS LIEPE
VIOLIN



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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: Jaroslaw Gaszynski

Tomasz Wabnic and the MCO have their finger on the pulse with their latest releases. 2019 saw the launch of their debut album with Sony: “Desire,” featuring the stratospheric voice of Polish soprano Aleksandra Kurzak, which received critical acclaim and was named “Best Foreign Album” at the Fryderyk Awards in Poland in 2021. Kurzak’s next album, “Mozart Concertante”, features an unusual mix of arias as well as Mozart’s Sinfonia Concertante with soloists Tomasz Wabnic and Yuuki Wong - an example of the MCO style of soloist-led music-making.

“Stabat Mater” is dedicated to the works of the famous contemporary composer Arvo Pärt and impresses with singers Aleksandra Kurzak, Roberto Alagna and countertenor Andreas Scholl. “De Profundis” is a spiritual journey through the works of Bach and Schönberg.

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 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 Bartholomeé).

www.morphingmusic.com



photo: Caroline Doutre



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 Czeszochoviensis (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 Lobkowitz Festival.



photo: Johannes Ifkovits

MORPHING MUSIC INSTITUTE
VIENNA



NIKLAS LIEPE

VIOLINIST

'Impressive artistic personality' - Gidon Kremer



photo: Kaupo Kikkas

Hamburg-based violinist Niklas Liepe has made a name for himself internationally for his innovative repertoire concepts. His Sony Classical debut album "The Paganini Project" (2017) with the Deutsche Radiophilharmonie already attracted worldwide attention. He worked with around twenty composers to give Paganini's demanding Capricci a new sound in a different style each time.

For his second album "Goldberg" (2020), which was created in collaboration with the NDR Radiophilharmonie, Liepe worked with a number of arrangers to bring the music of one of the great classical composers into the present day. His new versions for solo violin and orchestra of Johann Sebastian Bach's famous Goldberg Variations earned him an Opus Klassik.

In 2017, he founded the "Liepe & Co. Festival in the Stahlhallen am Südbahnhof in Hannover" together with his brother, pianist Nils Liepe, where he also explores the boundaries of classical music in a new way. Niklas Liepe recently made debuts at the Rheingau Music Festival, the Ocean Sun Festival in Helsinki, the Musikverein Vienna, La Seine Musicale Paris and the Beethovenfest Bonn.

In the current and past seasons, he has performed with the NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, the Munich Radio Orchestra, the WDR Funkhausorchester, the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra, and the Royal Bangkok Symphony Orchestra in Europe and Asia, among others. In addition, in the 2024/25 season he will be a guest at the Elbphilharmonie, the Berlin Philharmonie, Tonhalle Düsseldorf and will make his debut with the Norrlandsoperan Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Jessica Cottis.



photo: Kaupo Kikkas

At the Beethovenfest Bonn, the violin concerto composed for Niklas Liepe by Oscar winner Rachel Portman was premiered and recorded on the SONY Classical label with the WDR Funkhausorchester and Erina Yashima.

Niklas Liepe has performed with artists such as Gidon Kremer, Yuri Bashmet, Fazil Say, Christoph Eschenbach and Andras Schiff.

As a soloist, Niklas Liepe also performs with various orchestras under conductors such as Jamie Phillips, Erina Yashima, Patrick Hahn, Joana Mallwitz, and Christoph Eschenbach.

He also studied at the Hanover Conservatory with Prof. Krzysztof Wegrzyn, at the Cologne Conservatory with Prof. Zakhar Bron and at the Kronberg Academy with Prof. Ana Chumachenko and Prof. Mihaela Martin. He completed his master's degree in chamber music with Prof. Oliver Wille in Hannover.

Since 2022 Niklas Liepe is working at the Musikhochschule Hamburg in the subject "Art Participation & Strings Diversity".





Morphing + [truth] [life] [needs]

The only rule is Attentiveness...



MORPHING x JOHANN STRAUSS

THE 200th ANNIVERSARY IN 2025

PROGRAM:

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

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

3. Stephan Koncz (*1984) GoldBergHain (2'44)
Niklas Liepe solo violin

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

5. Amy Beach - Romance Op. 23
Tomasz Wabnic - viola (6,23')

6. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Banditen-Galopp, op.378 (3'00)

7. Daniel Sundry (*1979)
New Goldberg Variations Heaven or Hell (2'14)
The Elements (1'08)
The Moocher (1'36)
Metal Quodlibet (1'30)
Niklas Liepe solo violin

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

PAUSE

9. Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756 – 1791)
Presto aus "Sinfonia Concertante" für Violine &
Viola, K.V. 364 (6'30)
Niklas Liepe - violin, Tomasz Wabnic - viola

10. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
Wienerwald 9min

12. Rachel Portman (1960*) Earth (5'02)
Niklas Liepe solo violin

11. Johann Strauss (1827 - 1870)
Ohne Sorgen, Polka schnell, op 271 (2'30)

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

14 Fazil Say (1970*) Paganini Jazz (7'30)
Niklas Liepe solo violin

15. Johann Strauss II (1825 - 1899)
An der schönen blauen Donau, Walzer, op. 314 (9'30)
mit Niklas solo - version arr. Tomasz

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!

Tomasz Wabnic

photo: Johannes Ifkovits





MORPHING CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

VIENNA

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