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Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

## A Symphony of Premieres and Stellar Legacy

Wiener Staatsoper, 13.04.2026 [ENA]

The Wiener Staatsoper's matinee on April 12 was nothing short of a jubilant revelation, as Director Bogdan Rošćic and Ballet Director Alessandra Ferri unveiled the 2026/27 "Spielzeit." This radiant event, pulsing with orchestral splendor from Axel Kober and the Staatsoper's forces, star vocalists like Marina Rebeka and Christopher Maltman, and a mesmerizing pas de deux by Margarita Fernandes and António Casalinho.

Elevating the operatic slate are six audacious new productions, blending rare gems, directorial bravura, and star debuts that promise to redefine the repertory. The season bursts open on October 3 with a riveting double bill of Eine florentinische Tragödie and Bartók's Bluebeard's Castle, conducted by Alain Altinoglu and staged by Vasily Barkhatov. Soprano Asmik Grigorian dazzles in dual roles, marking her international debut as Bianca—a feats of vocal chameleonism in Zemlinsky's hothouse intrigue and Bartók's psychological abyss.

November 22 brings Strauss's Ariadne auf Naxos under Franz Welser-Möst's idiomatic baton, with Barrie Kosky's whimsical direction and Golda Schultz's house debut as the forsaken Ariadne. Kosky's penchant for meta-theatrical magic will illuminate the opera's commedia-opera seria clash, blending Schultz's luminous soprano with Zerbinetta's acrobatic fireworks. December 17 introduces Berlioz's La Damnation de Faust in its first fully staged outing at the Staatsoper, directed by Lydia Steier and led by Bertrand de Billy. John Osborn's heroic tenor assays Faust opposite Eve-Maud Hubeaux's Marguerite, transforming Berlioz's dramatic legend into a visually arresting descent.

Ferri's ballet vision dazzles with four premieres, masterfully divided between Staatsoper grandeur and Volksoper intimacy. John Neumeier's Nijinsky launches October 20 at the Staatsoper, a choreographic psychodrama to Chopin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Shostakovich, and Schumann. Neumeier's empathetic lens on Nijinsky's descent—poetic leaps yielding to convulsive torment—will demand Ferri's corps deliver raw emotional precision.

January 16 at the Volksoper introduces Masterpieces for Two, a pas de deux anthology spanning ballet's pantheon: Fokine's dreamlike Le Spectre de la Rose (Weber/Berlioz), Béjart's Mahlerian Le Chant du Compagnon Errant, Preljocaj's baroque Annonciation (Roy/Vivaldi), Balanchine's surreal Variations pour une Porte et un Soupir (Henry), and Robbins' sultry Afternoon of a Faun (Debussy). These duets, intimate crucibles of technique and passion, spotlight Ferri's principals in revelatory pairings.

### Redaktioneller Programmdienst: European News Agency

Annette-Kolb-Str. 16  
D-85055 Ingolstadt  
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660  
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661  
Email: [contact@european-news-agency.com](mailto:contact@european-news-agency.com)  
Internet: [european-news-agency.com](http://european-news-agency.com)

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Wayne McGregor's *Woolf Works* arrives April 20 at the Staatsoper, the Royal Ballet commission weaving *Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway*, *Orlando*, and *The Waves* into Richter's cinematic score. McGregor's kinetic abstractions—fluid geometries and projected texts—promise a cerebral triumph, redefining literary ballet for Vienna.

June 12 at the Volksoper pairs Alberto Alonso's incendiary *Carmen Suite* (Shchedrin's Bizet paraphrase) with Eno Peci's premiere *Burden Loops* to Philip Glass—a cyclical meditation on inexorable fate, its minimalist pulses driving taut, hypnotic formations.

Revivals like Cranko's *Onegin* and Max und Moritz provide emotional anchors, alongside staples *Schwanensee*, *Living Legacies*, *Visionary Dances*, and *Marie Antoinette*. The Jerome Robbins Gala on June 28 caps the season with Robbins classics and Justin Peck innovations to Bach, Bernstein, Chopin, Gould, and Verdi—a jubilant celebration of American ballet's wit and athleticism.

Fernandes and Casalinho's excerpt hinted at Ferri's partnering ethos, while artist talks revealed creative intimacies—Kosky on Ariadne's whimsy, Welser-Möst on Straussian finesse. Rošćić's stewardship shone, framing opera-ballet as symbiotic forces. Viewer reactions praise the event's "electric optimism," a beacon amid uncertainty. It has been universally hailed as "the most exhilarating season launch in memory." Amid dialogues with maestros like Franz Welser-Möst and Barrie Kosky, the palpable synergy between opera and ballet underscored a season brimming with innovation, star power, and unbridled optimism.

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V.i.S.d.P. und gem. § 6 MDSStV: Dr. Nadejda Komendantova

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Annette-Kolb-Str. 16  
D-85055 Ingolstadt  
Telefon: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.660  
Telefax: +49 (0) 841-951. 99.661  
Email: [contact@european-news-agency.com](mailto:contact@european-news-agency.com)  
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