



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

## A Musical Extravaganza at Volksopera of Vienna

Volksopera of Vienna, 23.01.2025 [ENA]

The Volksoper production of Ralph Benatzky's operetta, *Im weißen Rössl*, is a resounding success that masterfully blends humor, romance, and satire. This performance offers a fresh perspective on a classic piece, making it a must-see for both operetta enthusiasts and newcomers alike. Set against the picturesque backdrop of the Austrian Salzkammergut, *Im weißen Rössl* transports audience to shores of Lake Wolfgang.

Here, head waiter Leopold secretly pines for his employer, the vivacious innkeeper Josepha Vogelhuber. However, Josepha's affections are directed towards the charming regular guest, Dr. Erich Siedler. The arrival of the grumpy Berlin textile manufacturer Wilhelm Giesecke and his daughter Ottilie adds further complexity, especially when Giesecke recognizes Dr. Siedler as the lawyer of his business rival, Sülzheimer. As the story unfolds, a series of romantic entanglements and comedic misunderstandings ensue, leading to a heartwarming and humorous conclusion.

The casting for this production is impeccable. Jakob Semotan shines as Leopold Brandmeyer, delivering a performance that is both endearing and nuanced. His portrayal captures the essence of a devoted employee torn between duty and unspoken love. TV entertainer Harald Schmidt returns to the Volksoper stage as Professor Dr. Hinzemann, bringing his signature wit and charisma to the role. Julia Edtmeier, nominated for the Nestroy Prize in the category of "Best Actress," delivers a captivating performance as Klärchen, showcasing her versatility and depth as an actress. German TV star Götz Schubert makes a notable debut as the grumpy manufacturer Giesecke, embodying the character's complexities with finesse.

Robert Palfrader reprises his role as the Emperor, delivering a performance that is both regal and relatable. Director Jan Philipp Gloger offers a fresh and insightful take on this beloved operetta. By delving into the nuances of tourism and over-tourism, Gloger presents a production that is both entertaining and thought-provoking. The set and costume designs are a visual delight, capturing the charm of the Austrian countryside while subtly commenting on the commercialization of culture. The choreography is lively and complements the musical numbers perfectly, adding to the overall vibrancy of the production.

The musical composition of *Im weißen Rössl* is a delightful fusion of various styles. Folklore melodies intertwine with jazz elements, Viennese songs meet classical symphonic pieces, and underlying it all are rhythms of foxtrot, march, and waltz. This eclectic mix is executed flawlessly by the orchestra, bringing

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each piece to life with energy and precision. The vocal performances are equally impressive, with each cast member delivering their songs with clarity and emotion, making the musical numbers both memorable and moving.

This rendition of Im weißen Rössl is a testament to the timeless appeal of operetta. It balances humor with heart, tradition with modernity, and offers a narrative that resonates with contemporary audiences. Whether you're a seasoned operetta aficionado or a first-time attendee, this production promises an evening of entertainment that is both enriching and enjoyable. The Volksoper Wien's 2024 production of Im weißen Rössl is a triumph in every sense. With its stellar cast, insightful direction, and musical excellence, it breathes new life into a classic, ensuring that audiences are both entertained and engaged. This performance is a shining example of how traditional works can be adapted to reflect contemporary themes, making it a must-see

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