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Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

## A Blues-Rock Explosion: Hamburg Blues Band & Friends

Vienna Blues Spring, 24.03.2025 [ENA]

For over 40 years, the Hamburg Blues Band has been an integral part of the European blues scene, and their 40th Anniversary VOL. II tour proves they are as electrifying as ever. With a powerhouse lineup featuring the legendary Gert Lange, the groove-driven Reggie Worthy, the masterful Eddie Filipp on drums, and the virtuosic Krissy Matthews, this performance was a thrilling journey through decades of blues and rock history. Adding to the excitement, special guest Vanja Sky brought an undeniable energy, rounding out an evening that delivered not only nostalgia but also fresh, dynamic musical firepower.

The Hamburg Blues Band is the definition of a well-oiled blues machine. Their setlist, covering over four decades of music, was a testament to their ability to evolve while staying true to the raw essence of blues-rock. Frontman Gert Lange remains a commanding presence, his voice carrying the grit and wisdom that can only come from years of living and breathing the blues. His dynamic range and seasoned delivery made every lyric resonate with authenticity, from slow-burning ballads to full-throttle rock anthems.

Reggie Worthy's bass playing was the heartbeat of the night, locking in tight grooves that provided the foundation for the band's explosive sound. Meanwhile, Eddie Filipp's drumming was a masterclass in precision and feel.

Matthews' performance was both technically dazzling and emotionally charged. His ability to switch between blistering lead lines and soulful, expressive phrasing showed a deep understanding of blues tradition while pushing its boundaries. Whether channeling the raw power of British blues giants like Peter Green and Rory Gallagher or carving out his own modern voice, Matthews proved he belongs in the pantheon of today's blues greats.

Adding another layer of excitement to the evening was special guest Vanja Sky, hailed as Croatia's answer to Sheryl Crow and Norah Jones. Sky brought a fresh, vibrant energy that complemented the band's seasoned sound beautifully.

Her voice, a perfect blend of smokiness and strength, added a new dimension to the performance, whether in soulful duets with Lange or taking center stage with her own powerhouse renditions.

Sky's guitar work was equally impressive, blending blues grit with rock sensibilities. She held her own alongside Matthews, and their combined energy ignited the stage. Her presence was a reminder that blues is

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alive and well across generations and borders, and her performance left no doubt that she is an artist to watch in the coming years.

What made this night truly special was its spirit of camaraderie. The Hamburg Blues Band & Friends didn't just perform—they celebrated. This was a gathering of musicians who live for the blues, who play with a passion that transcends time. The interplay between Lange, Matthews, and Sky was electrifying, and the energy from the stage spilled over into the audience, creating an atmosphere of pure joy and appreciation.

As the final notes rang out, it was clear that this wasn't just another gig; it was a milestone—a testament to the Hamburg Blues Band's legacy and the future of blues-rock. For anyone lucky enough to witness this performance, it was a reminder of why the blues endures: because it evolves, because it welcomes new voices.

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