



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

## Goodbye, Lindita by Mario Banushi

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In Goodbye, Lindita, Albanian director Mario Banushi delivers a haunting, wordless meditation on grief and ritual, marking his Austrian debut at the 2025 Wiener Festwochen. Staged at Halle G in the MuseumsQuartier, the 75-minute performance unfolds entirely without dialogue, relying on potent visual storytelling and physical expression to explore the universal experience of loss.

Inspired by the death of Banushi's stepmother, the production immerses the audience in a domestic setting where a family silently mourns a loved one. As the narrative progresses, the mundane transforms into the surreal, with memory intertwining with imagination and reality blending with dreams. The absence of spoken language amplifies the emotional resonance, allowing viewers to engage deeply with the characters' internal journeys.

Set and costume designer Sotiris Melanos crafts a minimalist yet evocative environment, where everyday objects take on symbolic significance. Tasos Palaioroutas's lighting design bathes scenes in a sacred, painterly glow, enhancing the ritualistic atmosphere. Emmanouil Rovithis's soundscape, featuring ambient noises and traditional Balkan mourning sounds, underscores the emotional landscape without overwhelming it.

The ensemble cast, including Banushi himself, delivers physically demanding performances that convey profound sorrow and resilience. Particularly striking is the portrayal of the deceased, whose body is tenderly prepared for burial in a traditional wedding dress—a poignant nod to Balkan customs for unmarried women. Goodbye, Lindita stands as a testament to the power of non-verbal theatre, offering a visceral exploration of mourning that transcends cultural boundaries. Banushi's direction invites audiences into an intimate space of reflection, making the performance a standout in this year's festival lineup.

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