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Triumph of Choral Artistry

Vienna Boys? Choir at MuTh, 13.02.2026 [ENA]

On a crisp February afternoon in Vienna, theatregoers gathering at MuTh – Konzertsaal der Wiener Sängerknaben were treated not to an ordinary concert, but to a luminous celebration of choral tradition and youthful musical brilliance. It showcased the Vienna Boys' Choir in a way that reaffirmed both their historical legacy and their enduring relevance in the world of classical music.

From the very moment the 24 choristers entered the hall, clad in their iconic sailor suits, a palpable sense of anticipation transformed into rapturous engagement. It was clear that this was not merely a performance — it was a sonic and emotional journey that invited the listener to experience music as a living, breathing expression of human artistry. What distinguished this Friday Afternoon concert was its breadth of repertoire and its seamless traversal of musical epochs. The choir's artistic director led the boys through a diverse programme that intertwined canonical works from Mozart, Schubert, and Strauss with selections drawn from world music and even contemporary popular idioms.

This stylistic plurality was more than a mere display of versatility; it served to underline a fundamental truth about the Vienna Boys' Choir: that choral music is, at its core, a universal language — one capable of transcending cultural and temporal boundaries. Whether the harmonic purity of a classical motet or the rhythmic vivacity of a global folk piece, each selection was imbued with clarity and communicative power.

Technically, the choir's performance was nothing short of astonishing. The boys' voices, ranging from crystalline sopranos to rounded altos, were perfectly balanced and consistently precise. Not once did intonation waver; dynamic contrasts were keenly shaped; phrasing was both expressive and informed by a deep understanding of musical lineage. In shorter excerpts, one might be reminded of the choral traditions of the Renaissance and Baroque. In longer works, the ensemble's cohesion suggested a maturity far beyond the years of its constituent singers.

That such a high level of professionalism was achieved by a choir composed of children and adolescents is a testament to their training, but also to the intrinsic musical intelligence each chorister brought to the stage. It was not simply technical skill on display, but a profound communicative sensibility — an attribute that remains the hallmark of the Vienna Boys' Choir after more than 525 years of history.

While youthful choirs can sometimes charm with purity alone, this ensemble succeeded in articulating

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emotion with both subtlety and conviction. Mozart's lyrical lines were delivered with an almost operatic expressiveness, Schubert's harmonic richness was rendered with tender warmth, and Strauss's effervescent waltz-like numbers provided moments of sheer delight. Equally compelling were the world music segments, where rhythmic drive and tonal colour brought a fresh vitality to the programme — suggesting the choir's capacity to inhabit disparate musical styles without ever losing artistic focus.

The inclusion of storytelling and brief historical reflections — delivered with charm and poise — further enriched the experience. These interludes offered perspective on the choir's monumental tradition, situating the music within a historical narrative that spanned centuries yet spoke directly to contemporary listeners. The setting of MuTh itself contributed to the evening's success. The hall's warm acoustics and intimate atmosphere allowed for an immediacy of sound that enveloped the audience. Each phrase seemed to hover in the air with crystalline presence, rendering every harmonic nuance and vocal timbre accessible in vivid detail.

The interval provided a welcome moment of reflection, yet even as intermission concluded, the performance resumed with an energy that felt freshly ignited. As the final chord resonated, it was evident that Friday Afternoon was more than a concert; it was a living testament to the power of collective musical expression. The Vienna Boys' Choir, in this performance, reaffirmed their status not merely as custodians of a venerable tradition, but as vibrant and relevant interpreters of a repertoire that spans epochs and cultures alike.

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