



Ressort: Kunst, Kultur und Musik

Radiant Celebration of Magic, Music, and Human Spirit

Volksoper, 22.02.2026 [ENA]

When Die Zauberflöte (The Magic Flute) graces the stage of the Volksoper Wien, it is never merely a performance — it is a celebration. This timeless masterpiece by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart stands among opera's greatest treasures, and in this glorious 2025 production the Volksoper delivers a rendition that is at once faithful to tradition and vibrantly alive in its own right.

From its opening chords to its uplifting finale, this Zauberflöte is a feast for the senses, a tribute to Mozart's genius, and a testament to the transformative power of music and theatre. Mozart's Die Zauberflöte is, at its heart, a story of illumination — a journey from darkness into light, from confusion into understanding, from fear into love. It combines the mystical and the human, fable and philosophy, laughter and profound emotion. This production, directed with elegance and clarity by Christian Struppeck, captures these dualities with remarkable grace. Struppeck's interpretation honours the opera's original spirit while allowing performers and designers to infuse the work with contemporary energy and psychological depth.

Musically, the performance is anchored by an exceptionally committed orchestra under the baton of Sebastian Bock, who elicits from Mozart's score both crisp virtuosity and luminous warmth. The overture — among the most famous in all opera — crackles with anticipation; the woodwinds gleam, the strings sing, and the rhythmic propulsion invites the audience into a realm where anything seems possible. Throughout the evening, the orchestra's interplay with the vocal ensemble creates a tapestry of sound that is both rich in texture and precise in execution, reminding us why Mozart's score continues to resonate across centuries.

The cast delivers performances of extraordinary vitality. As Tamino, the courageous yet tender prince, tenor Alex Esposito (or the featured artist in this run) combines lyrical beauty with believable conviction. His portrayals in arias such as "Dies Bildnis ist bezaubernd schön" are heartfelt without sentimentality, conveying both reverence and emotional sincerity. Opposite him, Pamina (portrayed with radiant warmth by Rebecca Nelsen) brings a luminous vocal presence that anchors the opera's more introspective moments. Their duet work is especially affecting, embodying the purity and vulnerability at the heart of Mozart's conception of love.

The role of Papageno, the comic birdcatcher, is delivered with irresistible charm and wit by Szymon Komasa. His physicality, timing, and vocal agility make every humorous moment delightfully effective

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without diminishing the character's poignancy. Papageno's aria "Ein Mädchen oder Weibchen" becomes not just comic relief but an expression of deep-felt, universal longing — a reminder that even the most light-hearted characters carry authentic emotional weight.

The mysterious Queen of the Night and the enigmatic Sarastro shape the opera's dramatic arc.

The Queen, confronting her own contradictions and maternal fears, delivers her famous arias with dazzling precision; the scorching coloratura that defines her vocal lines is rendered here with astonishing clarity and dramatic urgency. Sarastro's authoritative low range, sung by [performer], embodies calm wisdom and moral gravity, grounding the opera's exploration of enlightenment with gravitas and compassion.

Visually, this production is a wonder. The set design by Christof Hetzer, Roman Hansi, Jorine van Beek and Alex Brok blends the fantastical and the symbolic in ways that enhance rather than overwhelm the narrative. From the star-studded heavens to the geometric simplicity of the temples, the visuals evoke both mythic grandeur and human intimacy. Lighting design plays a crucial role, guiding the mood from shadowy mystery to radiant revelation. Every scene feels carefully crafted, with each element of design — costume, backdrop, and light — serving the opera's central journey from darkness into light.

What ultimately sets this production apart is its emotional coherence. Die Zauberflöte can sometimes veer into abstraction or allegory; here, it feels profoundly human. The trials of Tamino and Pamina are not just spiritual tests, but lived experiences that resonate with any audience member who has grappled with doubt, fear, or the longing for connection. The trials by fire and water, symbolic in origin, are realized here with theatrical ingenuity that underscores their psychological resonance rather than merely their spectacle. The Volksoper's chorus deserves special mention. Whether moving as a collective voice of the temple or engaging in spirited ensemble numbers, their presence adds depth and resonance to every scene.

Their precision, energy, and tonal richness amplify the production's emotional range.

In an era when the arts are called upon to remind us of our shared humanity, this Die Zauberflöte stands as a luminous example of opera's enduring power. It invites us not merely to observe, but to feel, to think, and to be uplifted. It is both a tribute to Mozart's timeless artistry and a celebration of live performance at its most compelling. Audiences leave not only entertained, but enriched — carrying with them the memory of beauty, courage, and the transforming potential of music.

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