

JOHANN STRAUSS
BY
KLANGFORUM
WIEN
200 YEARS OF GREAT HITS



Wolfgang Mitterer
tritsch tratsch
johann strauss II – great hits / a remix

Commissioned by Johann Strauss 2025 Wien

„... a Viennese tradition was surely founded: the merrier, the incredibly whimsical, the tinglingly kitsch-free, the breathtakingly speedy New Year's Concert!“

– Armin Thurnher, falter.at, 29.1.2025

Background

On the occasion of the anniversary year celebrating 200 years of Johann Strauss in 2025, the renowned contemporary composer **Wolfgang Mitterer** was commissioned with an arrangement of Strauss's world-famous original works.

You have never heard so much **Johann Strauss II** in a mere 70 minutes. Instead of a large string orchestra and four horns, Klangforum Wien achieves an equally stunning impact with just 3 violins and 1 horn and by adding real sound effects for the eponymous thunder (for *Blitz und Donner*) or whinnying horses (for *Persischer Marsch*).

In any case, in the future the listener will experience the Viennese New Year's Concert with repetitive renditions as an empty bore compared to the captivating sound of Strauss in *tritsch tratsch*.

tritsch tratsch, which approximately means *tittle-tattle* or *chit-chat*, refers to a Viennese passion for gossip. Johann Strauss II wrote his *Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka* in 1858 after a successful tour of Russia where he performed in the summer concert season. After the gossip in Viennese newspapers as to whether „dashing Jean“ had fallen in love, become engaged or even married in St. Petersburg, Strauss completed this composition in Vienna.

tritsch tratsch packages 120% of the genius of Johann Strauss II into a whirlwind ride through his iconic oeuvre that encompasses beloved works such as: *Annen-Polka*, *Du und Du*, *Elfen a Magyar*, *Frühlingsstimmen*, *G'schichten aus dem Wienerwald*, *Kaiserwalzer*, *Im Krapfenwald'l*, *Künstlerleben*, *Leichtes Blut*, *Lob der Frauen*, *Persischer Marsch* and several more.



Photo: (c) Klangforum Wien/Christina Kastner

Review Highlights

„There hasn't been anything like this for a long time. Something like „tritsch trasch“ – a pure evening of Johann Strauss, remixed in a sexy and impure fashion by composer Wolfgang Mitterer, 70 minutes of cork popping, excessive speed, and violin bliss.“
(Armin Thurnher, falter.at, 29.1.2025)

„Mitterer lures us on a 70-minute musical roller coaster.“
(Meinhard Rüdener, Online-Merker, 28.1.2025)

„When a child decides to take her favorite toy apart to look inside, then puts it back together, and disassembles it again.“
(Flavia Foradini, RSI Radiotelevisione svizzera, 5.2.2025)

„Strauss transposed into the 21st century“
(ORF ZIB, 28.1.2025)

„Thanks also to Elena Schwarz's conductorship, the soloist ensemble of Klangforum Wien once again proved to be not only a reliable force in the execution, but also highly focused and passionately engaged interpreters of these new ideas dedicated to the jubilarian.“
(Uwe Krusch, pizzicato.lu, 29.1.2025)

„a musical revelation“
(Armin Thurnher, falter.at, 29.1.2025)

The Composer

Wolfgang Mitterer (born 1958 in Lienz, Osttirol), virtuoso of recharging, reinterpretation and dissection, gets to the bottom of the ambiguity of Strauss' music. He studied organ, composition and electroacoustics in Vienna and Stockholm. His current home is Vienna. He is not only one of the Austrian specialists for electronics as well as being equally brilliant on the keyboard and on the slide controls, but is also one of the most innovative composers. His work oscillates between composition and open form.

Apart from music for organ and orchestra, a piano concerto and an opera he has produced electronic pieces, conceptualized sound installations, and engaged in collective improvisation with diverse groups, developing a language of extremes, tension

and complexity. The pleasure he takes in experimenting leads him to combine contrasting elements in the creation of unpredictable musical events. In one major composition, for instance, he juxtaposes musical bands and children's choirs with specialized instrumentalists and singers, while filling the hall with surround sound created by live electronics.

But his work transcends the merely spectacular, precisely because of his musical presence and the high – deeply moving – intensity and complexity of his compositions. Listening intensely to low sounds has its place just as much as the “installing” of exploding sound fragments in the listeners' minds. Far from being smoothly pleasurable, Mitterer's music is still uncannily beautiful at times.

