

Podcast '70 Years of Eurovision – 70 Years of Austrian Sound': Vienna Soundcheck Explores the Evolution of Austrian Music Culture

As part of the international press trip "Vienna Soundcheck", hosted jointly by Austria Tourism and the Vienna Tourist Board, the live podcast "70 Years of Eurovision – 70 Years of Austrian Sound" explored how Austrian music evolved between classical heritage, Austropop and contemporary pop culture.

From Mozart and Strauss to Falco, Conchita Wurst and today's new Eurovision generation, the discussion focused on the question of how Austria has continuously reinvented its musical identity over the past decades.

To explore these questions, the live panel brought together four personalities who each represent different facets of Austria's music scene today: singer-songwriter Ina Regen, one of the defining female voices of modern Austrian dialect pop, who worked closely with Conchita Wurst during the early stages of her career; Florian Ritt, frontman of the Austrian chart-topping band folkshilfe, known for blending traditional Austrian folk influences with modern pop music, whose music agency also represents Austria's current Eurovision Song Contest candidate Cosmó; conductor, composer and producer Nazanin Aghakhani, who is internationally recognised for merging classical music with contemporary influences and pushing the boundaries of musical tradition; and Austrian film director and producer Rudi Dolezal, who made music history alongside Falco with "Rock Me Amadeus" and also worked with international artists such as Freddie Mercury and The Rolling Stones.

Together, they discussed Austria's changing musical identity, the influence of Eurovision on Austrian pop culture and the question of how "Pop made in Austria" became internationally relevant. The conversation traced Austria's musical evolution from Udo Jürgens' Eurovision victory in 1966 to Falco's global breakthrough with "Rock Me Amadeus", the first and still only German-language song to top the US charts. The panel also highlighted the role of artists like Marianne Mendt, who helped establish Austropop by bringing Austrian dialect onto the Eurovision stage in the early nineteen seventies.

Another focus of the discussion was the merging of Austria's classical music heritage with contemporary sounds. Inspired by artists like Conchita Wurst, JJ and Austria's current Eurovision generation, the speakers explored how younger artists increasingly move between genres, combining dialect pop, orchestral music, electronic influences and international pop culture. Live performances by Ina Regen and multimedia inserts featuring

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folkshilfe, Nazanin Aghakhani and Rudi Dolezal complemented the discussion and showcased the diversity of Austria's contemporary music scene.

With the event, Austria Tourism and the Vienna Tourist Board highlighted Austria not only as the home of classical music but also as a country continuously reinventing its musical identity across generations.