

Johannes Maria Staud, Composer

Biography

Born in Innsbruck in 1974, the composer Johannes Maria Staud draws much of his inspiration from literature and the visual arts. Reflections on philosophical questions, social processes, and political events also influence his compositions. His artfully constructed works possess a rigorous dramaturgy.

Johannes Maria Staud studied musicology and philosophy in Vienna before continuing his compositional studies with Hanspeter Kyburz in Berlin. In 2002, just one year after graduating, he won the Erste Bank Composition Prize; in 2003 he received the International Rostrum of Composers prize, followed by the Ernst von Siemens Composers' Prize in 2004 and the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival's Paul-Hindemith-Prize in 2009. Prestigious commissions followed. In 2004/05 *Apeiron* was commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic under Sir Simon Rattle. In 2006 *Segue* for violoncello and orchestra was commissioned by Heinrich Schiff and the Vienna Philharmonic under Daniel Barenboim for the Salzburg Festival.

His fascination with the work of Jewish writer and illustrator Bruno Schulz is reflected in works such as *Über trügerische Stadtpläne und die Versuchungen der Winternächte* (2009) and *Zimt: Ein Orchesterdiptychon für Bruno Schulz*. The first part of this orchestral diptych, *On Comparative Meteorology*, was premiered in its original version in 2009 by the Cleveland Orchestra under Franz Welser-Möst, and in the revised version in 2010 by the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra under Peter Eötvös; the second part, *Contrebände (On Comparative Meteorology II)*, was commissioned by Pierre Boulez for the Ensemble Modern and premiered in 2010. In 2012 orchestral work *Maniai* had its world premiere with the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra in Munich under the Mariss Jansons. He was also "composer in residence" of the Staatskapelle Dresden that same year.

Major ensemble works of the last decade include *Auf die Stimme der weißen Kreide (Specter I-III)*, which premiered at the Festival Musica in Strasbourg in 2015, and the diptych *Par ici - Par là*, performed for the first time in full by the Ensemble Intercontemporain at the Acht Brücken festival in Cologne. The violin concerto *Oskar (Towards a Brighter Hue II)*, written for Midori, premiered in 2014 at the Lucerne Festival, as did the opera *Die Antilope* based on a libretto by Durs Grünbein. The poet also provided the textual template for *Der Riss durch den Tag* (2011), a monodrama for Bruno Ganz, and for the opera *Die Weiden*, which premiered in 2018 at the Vienna Staatsoper.

Stromab ("Downstream"), was premiered in 2017 by the Royal Danish Orchestra under Alexander Vedernikov, with subsequent performances in Vienna (Vienna Symphony Orchestra under Francois-Xavier Roth), Cleveland and New York (Cleveland Orchestra under Franz Welser Möst). In 2018, the Vienna Philharmonic premiered his orchestral work *Scattered Light* without a conductor, followed by a performance in Berlin. He explored baroque alchemy for the works *Terra pinguis* and *Terra fluida*, premiered in 2019 by the Munich Chamber Orchestra and the Boulanger Trio respectively. In 2020 Martin Grubinger, with Slavik Stakhov and Richard Putz, brought *Epicentre. Seismic construction in 3 parts* for three percussionists to life and the Ensemble Phace premiered *Am Horizont (...schon ganz woanders...)*.

In 2021, the ensemble xx. Jahrhundert premiered *Listen, Revolution (we're buddies, see -)* at Wien Modern before the work was performed by the Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt. The American poet William Carlos Williams provided the text for two other new compositions: *Jittering Directions* for soprano and orchestra was performed for the first time in February 2022 with Yeree Suh and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra under their new principal conductor Andrés Orozco-Estrada at the Vienna Konzerthaus. *Once Anything Might Have Happened* for soprano, horn, ensemble, and live electronics, commissioned by the Ensemble intercontemporain and IRCAM, was celebrated at its premiere during the Mani-Feste festival in Paris in June with soprano Sophia Burgos and conducted by Matthias Pintscher. In 2023, Johannes Maria Staud's new music theatre work *Missing in Cantu*, with a libretto by Thomas Köck, premiered at the Kunstfest Weimar.

In the 2024/25 season, the percussion concerto *Whereas the Reality Trembles*, premiered in autumn 2023 by Christoph Sietzen with the Cleveland Orchestra under Franz Welser Möst, will be performed in Austria and Germany. The work, which was co-commissioned by the Wiener Konzerthaus, BR, WDR and SWR, will be performed in Vienna, Munich, Essen, Stuttgart and Hamburg. Also on the agenda is a wind quintet for the Ensemble Windkraft, which will be performed at the Tyrol Easter Festival in 2025, as well as a new work for the Munich Chamber Orchestra under Bas Wiegers, which will then

be performed in France under the direction of Pascal Gallois as a co-commission with the Festival Les Musicales de Quiberon. With *Die schöne Müllerin/These Fevered Days*, an instrumental version of Schubert's song cycle with seven new songs on texts by Emily Dickinson for tenor Christoph Prégardien is also being created, commissioned by Ensemble Kontraste, Casa da Música Porto, the Wiener Konzerthaus, Klangspuren Schwaz and the Osterfestival Tirol and interpreted by Ensemble Kontraste, Ensemble Remix and Klangforum Wien. A new organ work for Wolfgang Kogert and a piece for the Kuss Quartet, commissioned by the DYNAMIKfest Salzburg, are also in the pipeline.

Johannes Maria Staud has been Professor of Composition at the Mozarteum University in Salzburg since 2018. He is co-initiator of the annual summer academy of composition Arco, which alternates between Marseille and Salzburg.

2024/25 season

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