

# 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 November 2021, the ensemble xx. Jahrhundert premiered *Listen, Revolution (we're buddies, see -)* at Wien Modern as part of its 50th anniversary, before performing the work with the Ensemble Modern in Frankfurt in December. 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 ManiFeste festival in Paris in June with soprano Sophia Burgos and conducted by Matthias Pintscher.

In September 2023, Johannes Maria Staud's new music theatre work *Missing in Cantu*, with a libretto by Thomas Köck, premiered at the Kunstfest Weimar; the world premiere of the percussion concerto *Whereas the reality trembles* (Christoph Sietzen, Cleveland Orchestra, Franz Welser Möst) follows in October 2023. Co-commissioners are the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and the Vienna Konzerthaus. For the coming season, Johannes Maria Staud is composing a wind quintet for the Ensemble Windkraft (premiere at the Osterfestival Tirol) and a new work for the Munich Chamber Orchestra.

With *Die schöne Müllerin/These Fevered Days*, an ensemble version of Franz Schubert's song cycle with about seven new songs on texts by Emily Dickinson is being created for the Schubert interpreter Christoph Prégardien and the Ensemble Kontraste.

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

2023/24 season

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