

Press release

Wolfgangsee, Jan 2024

The new Salzkammergut Seebühne at Lake Wolfgangsee and premiere of Wolf ≈ Das Mystical by Gerd H. Ortler and Franzobel in May 2024

As the highlight of the "**1,100 years of St. Wolfgang**" anniversary, architect **Prof. Eduard Neversal** is building the new mobile **Salzkammergut Lake Wolfgangsee stage** in front of the historic vacation resort in the St. Gilgen district of Ried near the Falkensteinwand in spring 2024. The **world premiere of the musical play Wolf-Das Mystical on May 23, 2024** will open up a new cultural dimension in the Wolfgangsee region and will also be the stage's grand opening. This future venue for regional and international cultural events will give Austria a new lakeside stage between Bregenz and Mörbisch, which will also be completely covered. Around 8,000 visitors are expected in the first season from May 23 to June 24, 2024.

Innovative lake stage for the Salzkammergut region by architect Prof. Eduard Neversal

With a **total stage and audience area size of 26x40 meters**, the aesthetically and technologically sophisticated theater will **offer space for 800 visitors**, with ten additional wheelchair spaces available. The complete roofing of the venue will protect both the ensemble and the audience from the rain. In line with **an ecologically sustainable approach**, the mobile structure can be dismantled without leaving any residue after the performances at the end of June 2024. A system that allows it to be adapted to different venues and the content of productions. A flexible and modular system is used for the grandstand, which can be adapted to the site and size requirements with a changeable substructure. Depending on requirements, it will be used at other locations in the Salzkammergut before being set up again at Lake Wolfgang in early summer 2025 for another series of Mystical performances. This was important to the initiators in order to preserve the natural beauty of the surrounding landscape in harmony with the regular school and summer camp operations of the vacation resort.

Gerd Hermann Ortler and Franzobel's Wolf will premiere on May 23, 2024

The libretto by Wolf ≈ Das Mystical, a combination of mystical theater and musical, was written by the **author and Bachmann Prize winner Franzobel**. The play aims to entertain and at the same time pose the big questions of life. The music is by **composer Gerd Hermann Ortler**, the production is musically supervised by **Prof.**

Herbert Pichler. An ensemble of around **18 performers** will bring prominent characters to the stage. The musical backbone is formed by a band (b/dr/git/key), which is extended by a chamber ensemble of strings and wind instruments. Ortler thus immerses the audience in a genre-spanning, mystical and captivating world of sound. **The production is directed by Victoria Schubert.**

An atmospheric boat trip across Lake Wolfgangsee to the music theater

The unique location at the foot of the mighty Falkenstein creates the opportunity to make even the journey there an unforgettable experience. **On board the WolfgangseeSchiffahrt**, visitors are taken from the **landing stages of the Wolfgangsee communities to the lake stage across Lake Wolfgangsee in less than 20 minutes**. The boats can carry 800 people almost simultaneously, ensuring that everything runs smoothly.

Ticket information and Wolf packages from the accommodation providers

In order to make culture accessible to everyone, **ticket prices start at 28 euros**. Tickets are available at wolfmystical.at, advance sales have started. Other advance booking offices are the tourist offices at Lake Wolfgangsee as well as OÖ Touristik in Linz and Salzkammergut Touristik in Bad Ischl. Accommodation providers in the Salzkammergut are putting together special **Wolf packages** comprising a musical theater performance and overnight stay.

Ticket prices from Euro 28,- to Euro 98,-. **Ticket prices for the premiere** (May 23, 2024) from Euro 28,- to Euro 150,-. **A total of ten performance dates in 2024:** May 24, May 25, May 29, May 31, June 1, June 7, June 8, June 21, June 22.

High value for the Salzkammergut in the pre-season

The operators of the Salzkammergut~Seebühne Wolfgangsee, the specially founded **Wolfgang Betriebs-GmbH** under the management of **Prof. Dr. Christian Meyer**, are wholly owned by the **'Wolfgang 2024' association** and thus within the sphere of influence of the four association members: the municipalities of **Sankt Gilgen, Strobl and St. Wolfgang as well as Wolfgangsee Tourismus GmbH**.

In the course of the **cultural focus of the provinces of Salzburg and Upper Austria** as well as the international appeal of the **1,100th anniversary of Wolfgang**, the initiators have justifiably high expectations of this lighthouse project. The investment sum of € 2,650,000 will be provided with the **support of the provinces of Salzburg and Upper Austria, the Wolfgangsee communities, the church, Wolfgangsee Tourismus GmbH, other sponsors and supporters as well as the company's own income**. The two most important aspects in this context are the greatly increased attention in the pre-season due to an additional cultural, weatherproof offer and the associated **added value for the entire Wolfgangsee region and the entire Salzkammergut**. Talks are currently being held with other potential business partners and supporters of art and culture.

Safeguarding the cultural heritage and historical significance of Lake Wolfgangsee

A venue of this kind and the music theater production will undoubtedly not only have a major impact on the future economic development of the region but will also make a very important contribution to safeguarding the **cultural heritage and historical significance of Lake Wolfgangsee**.

The Wolfgangsee region welcomes around 300,000 guests every year, who stay overnight in one of the approximately 8,000 beds and thus record a total of around 1,000,000 overnight stays. The excursion destinations Schafbergbahn, Zwölferhorn, Postalm, lake shipping, the pilgrimage churches Falkenstein and St. Wolfgang as well as the Mozarthaus and the Wolfgangsee Advent also bring well over 1 million visitors p to the lake every year.

The 1,100-year-old story of St. Wolfgang

Wolf ≈ The Mystical is based on the 1,100-year-old story of St. Wolfgang. It all began with an axe throw, as the story has been told for centuries in the Salzkammergut and far beyond. Driven by quarrels and disputes, Wolfgang, born in Pfullingen in 924 as the child of small farmers and consecrated Bishop of Regensburg at the age of 48, went to his monastery in Mondsee in 976 to - as we would say today - take some time out and test his limits. He sought solitude and withdrew from the monastery into the mountains.

At Abersee, the old name of Lake Wolfgangsee, on the border with Salzburg, he found peace and time to reflect. He threw his axe from the Falkenstein, vowing to find the right place to build a church. A mighty throw, as the axe landed only 5 kilometers away on the rock above the lake, around which the market town of St. Wolfgang has grown over the past 1000 years. However, the church could not be built alone, so Wolfgang made a pact with the devil: the first soul to enter the church would belong to the devil. The day after completion, the cunning Swabian caught a wolf and drove it into the church. Out of sheer rage at having been tricked, the devil tore the animal apart in the air, disappeared and has not built any more churches since.

The first pilgrimages to the 'little church in Wolfgangland' were mentioned in documents as early as 1291. The peak was reached in the 15th and 16th centuries with almost 70,000 pilgrims. Some chronicles speak of significantly higher numbers. Wolfgang quickly became an emergency helper for almost everything that troubled people. Alongside Rome, Aachen and Einsiedeln, Falkenstein and the church in St. Wolfgang were among the most important Christian pilgrimage sites in the West and are still well-known places of pilgrimage today.

Quotes

For me, the new Salzkammergut Lake Stage on Lake Wolfgangsee and the Mystical Wolf are a sustainable and exciting art and tourism attraction. In the months of May and June, Lake Wolfgangsee has a new attraction that is equally attractive for locals and international guests. A real win-win situation for tourism and culture and a worthy highlight of the feast year of St. Wolfgang.

Stefan Schnöll, Deputy Governor of Salzburg

The Super Year of Culture 2024 is gaining momentum and a unique alliance of tourism and cultural institutions is joining forces to put the spotlight on local cultural offerings. Alongside the Anton Bruckner anniversary year and the European Capital of Culture Bad Ischl Salzkammergut, the 1,100th anniversary of St. Wolfgang will be a central beacon that need not shy away from comparison: A unique lakeside stage is being created on Lake Wolfgangsee against the impressive backdrop of the St. Wolfgang vacation resort. Not only the stage is tailor-made, but also the play Wolf - The Mystical, which will be performed there. Enjoying culture and consuming cultural offerings in all their various forms will be more possible than ever in Upper Austria in the coming year. The diverse cultural offerings are already a reason for many of our guests to spend their vacation in Upper Austria. The Year of Culture 2024 with its major events is a unique opportunity to make Upper Austria's cultural tourism offering internationally visible in this globally growing market, to position it and thus to attract new guests and target groups in the long term. 'ALL ALL! CULTURE - LOUD. REAL. CONNECTING' is therefore also the core message of our cultural tourism campaign. At and on Lake Wolfgangsee, a further important impulse will be given for this.

Markus Achleitner, Upper Austrian Provincial Councillor for Economics and Tourism

Religion is always playing with fire, yet it can enrich our lives immensely and make our existence better and more meaningful. But what should we do with terms like miracle or saint in the 21st century? In 2024, Wolf is the Austrian answer to Jesus Christ Superstar, the mythology of Wagner and a touch of Monty Python. The work shows the struggle of a man who tries to escape his destiny, has to make compromises, gets involved with the devil and ultimately becomes what he was chosen to be - a saint. Wolfgang, the charismatic saint of the Middle Ages, struggles between his personal desires and what his church community wants from him. This makes the play timelessly contemporary.

Franzobel, libretto

My music for WOLF is intended to be mystical and at the same time captivating. It unfolds effectively into a multi-faceted world of sound in which pulsating rhythms and atmospheric timbres musically bring our story and its characters on Lake Wolfgangsee to life.

Composer Gerd Hermann Ortler

The Salzkammergut-Seebühne is conceived as a changeable theater and is one of the first examples of a successful realization in this genre. This venue could point the way to the future of theater construction.

Architect Prof. Eduard Neversal, Artistic Director

The Salzkammergut-Seebühne fulfills a long-cherished wish in the region for a prestigious mobile theater. It will create cultural identity in large formats and enrich the local population as well as guests from home and abroad. A new play is always a risk, especially about St. Wolfgang, who is very famous but whose life is largely unknown. With Gerd Hermann Ortler and Franzobel, we have been able to attract outstanding artists who will rediscover St. Wolfgang in a contemporary context and surprise a wide audience with a versatile, amiable patron saint.

Prof. Dr. Christian Meyer, Commercial Director

The initiative of the Wolfgang 2024 association to build the lake stage and stage WOLF - The Mystical is a very special boost for the Wolfgangsee cultural and tourism region. The new opportunities for the associations on Lake Wolfgang and the certainty for the population that the historical development of the region will be remembered will strengthen the cohesion of the more than 10,000 inhabitants of the three municipalities in the provinces of Salzburg and Upper Austria. From the point of view of those responsible for culture, business and politics, this project strengthens Lake Wolfgangsee as a location and will benefit both overnight tourism and high-quality day tourism on Lake Wolfgangsee. In the past, requests for such performance opportunities had to be turned down due to a lack of suitable structures. Now the covered lake stage is a special feature that does not exist in Upper Austria, Salzburg and Styria on the scale envisaged for Lake Wolfgangsee. It will also be an attractive venue for various cultural events.

Wolfgangsee communities and tourism

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