

#soWIENie #VIENNAlike never before: Film Festival at Vienna's Rathausplatz to kick off with an innovative concept

Mayor Michael Ludwig presents all the details on the reinterpretation of the popular open-air festival

- **Free cultural attractions with a comfort factor from 4 July to 6 September 2020**
- **Musical summer of anniversaries – headed up by Ludwig van Beethoven**
- **Separate open-air cinema and dining area**
- **Ticket reservation online, remaining tickets on site**
- **All details at filmfestival-rathausplatz.at**

(Vienna, 12 June 2020) Each summer for the past three decades, the Film Festival has offered appealing cultural enjoyment free of charge at Vienna's Rathausplatz. This year, however, the conditions leading up to the popular public event were difficult "like never before", and until recently it was uncertain whether it would be possible to hold the event due to the measures implemented to fight COVID-19. "But challenging times require creative solutions," as Mayor Michael Ludwig emphasised during the presentation of this year's programme. Following the announcement of the statutory framework conditions for events throughout the summer months, it quickly became clear that the Film Festival on Rathausplatz would take place, albeit "like never before".

This year, event organiser stadt wien marketing gmbh is launching the festival with an innovative concept that has been adapted to the situation but is still guaranteed to provide a fantastic open-air experience, all the while complying with the safety measures necessary to protect public health.

"Even in these unusual times, Vienna offers people safe and entertaining cultural and dining enjoyment. A reinterpretation of this popular event combined with that summer feeling promises a Film Festival experience on Rathausplatz in 2020 like never before while also setting the benchmark for major events held under special conditions," said a pleased Mayor Michael Ludwig. "We will make sure that this year, too, we provide people – and in particular residents of Vienna – with a cultural experience set in front of the unique and incomparable backdrop of Vienna's City Hall. Free of charge – and naturally in compliance with all the safety measures necessary to protect everyone's health."

Two events – a safe experience

In order to comply with the applicable legal provisions, it was necessary to completely redesign the Film Festival from the ground up. As a result, Rathausplatz will this year be divided into a clearly defined open-air cinema area with 500 seats in front of City Hall, and an entirely separate culinary event for a further 500 guests. Arranging the event area like this makes it possible to implement the prescribed safety distances and protective measures in the best possible way.

As a further safety precaution, the entrance and exit areas will be separated from each another. It will only be possible to access the open-air cinema via Lichtenfelsgasse and only with a valid ticket during the stipulated admission times. At the end of the screening, visitors will be directed to leave through two exits (Felderstrasse and Lichtenfelsgasse).

Floor markings, signs, information displayed on LED walls and the large screen will all serve to provide further guidance. There will, of course, be plenty of stations for hand disinfection throughout the site, and protective masks will also be provided. All of these measures are designed to make it easier for visitors to comply with the rules and guarantee maximum protection of the guests while simultaneously ensuring a high-quality experience.

Free cultural attractions with a comfort factor

The open-air cinema area exudes all the flair of a cosy lounge. In front of the impressive 300 m² screen, 500 seats will be grouped in attractively designed boxes for 2 or 4 people in compliance with the legally stipulated distance. This deliberately chosen arrangement of the infrastructure is not just for safety reasons; it also gives the cultural experience an exclusive and comfortable feel.

Yet another special feature awaits the visitors at the 2020 Film Festival #soWIENie: in the front section of boxes, guests can give their full attention to the productions in the genres of opera, operetta, dance, pop and jazz, and enjoy that special feeling of being so close to the screen. In the seats placed further back, the musical experience can, for the very first time, be accompanied by culinary delights while the screening is taking place. A special service will see food and beverages by DO & CO served in this separate section of boxes.

All boxes can be reserved free of charge and without hassle via the website at www.filmfestival-rathausplatz.at or directly at the information desk by the entrance, which will open one hour before admission to the cinema area. Remaining places, if available, will be assigned at the information point on site.

Access to the open-air cinema is possible two hours before the film starts and only with a valid ticket. The event closes either one hour after the end of the film or at the latest at midnight.

Musical summer of anniversaries – headed up by Ludwig van Beethoven

The musical programme of the 2020 Film Festival features diversity “like never before”. Amongst the medley of many anniversaries, the focus is on the 250th birthday of Ludwig van Beethoven. Following the opening with the opera “Fidelio” on 4 July, the wonderful compositions of the musical genius, who adopted Vienna as his home, can be heard at least one evening per week at Rathausplatz; the schedule includes “Symphony No. 9”, the “Beethoven Project - Ballet by John Neumeier” and “Beethoven’s Piano Sonatas”, performed by Rudolf Buchbinder.

The 150th birthday of Franz Lehár will be honoured with the operetta “The Land of Smiles”, while the 140th anniversary of Jacques Offenbach’s death will be commemorated with the production “Orpheus in the Underworld” from the 2019 Salzburg Festival. The musical legacies of great artists who have recently passed away will also be brought to life on screen once more for the audience. This includes opera singers Jessye Norman and Mirella Freni, director Franco Zeffirelli, contemporary composer Krzysztof Penderecki and jazz legend Aretha Franklin. Productions by the Vienna State Opera will be available to watch on a total of seven evenings. And fans of pop music can look forward to legendary concert evenings by and with stars ranging from Avicii to Herbert Grönemeyer to Take That.

Further programme highlights:

OPERA

04.07. + 30.08. / Fidelio
08.07. + 08.08. / Tosca (Vienna State Opera 2019)
22.08. / Les Indes Galantes

CLASSICAL CONCERT

18.07. + 29.08. / John Williams - Live in Vienna (with John Williams and Anne-Sophie Mutter)
05.07. + 28.08. / Martin Grubinger’s The Percussive Planet Ensemble
10.07. + 24.08. / Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (with Claudio Abbado)

DANCE

07.07. + 25.08. / Romeo and Juliet
11.07. + 31.08. / Riverdance: 25th Anniversary
13.07. + 10.08. / Beethoven Project - Ballet by John Neumeier
14.08. / Swan Lake

MUSICAL

01.08. + 05.09. / I am From Austria - the Musical with the hits by Rainhard Fendrich

POP

09.07. + 03.09. / Avicii Tribute Concert - for Mental Health Awareness

23.07. + 20.08. / Herbert Grönemeyer plays Baloise Session

23.07. + 01.09. / Max Raabe & Palast Orchester – MTV Unplugged

25.07. + 13.08. / Take That: Wonderland – Live at the O2

30.07. + 27.08. / Mando Diao - Berlin Live

JAZZ

06.07. + 01.09. / Respect to Aretha

07.08. / Quincy Jones - A Musical Celebration in Paris

The detailed programme for the 2020 Film Festival #soWIENie at Vienna's Rathausplatz is available online at <http://filmfestivalrathausplatz.at> or <http://filmfestival-rathausplatz.at>.

Gastronomic delights

The culinary motto of this year's Film Festival is "small but mighty". Under the supervision of long-term partner DO & CO, a separate area with a total of 500 seats will be transformed into a sublime restaurant space.

For Attila Doğudan / DO & DO, the new concept represents a positive challenge: "We are pleased that even during times such as these, we are able to hold one of the best open-air events in Europe in cooperation with the City of Vienna. Obviously while complying with all the necessary regulations."

Each day from 11 a.m. to midnight, several gourmet stands will offer an exquisite, always freshly prepared selection of Viennese specialities and international dishes. The table units are arranged at the prescribed minimum distance; prior reservation via the Film Festival website is recommended.

2020 Film Festival #soWIENie #VIENNAIikeneverbefore at Vienna's Rathausplatz

4 July to 6 September 2020

Films start daily at nightfall

Admission 2 hours before the film starts - only with a valid ticket!

Gastronomy 11 a.m. to midnight - table reservation recommended!

<http://filmfestivalrathausplatz.at>

<http://filmfestival-rathausplatz.at>

www.stadtwiemarketing.at

[fb.com/filmfestivalrathausplatz](https://www.facebook.com/filmfestivalrathausplatz)