

Starting on September 1, 2024, Jonas Kaufmann – world-renown and widely admired contemporary interpreter of classical music – will head the artistic direction of the Tiroler Festspiele Erl. The new Artistic Director will for the first time present an annual program in Erl, a novelty for the festival, which has until now announced its winter and summer seasons separately. Jonas Kaufmann thus invites his audiences to plan long-term and to enjoy the festival's four seasons (Thanksgiving, Winter, Easter, and Summer) as a connected whole. Building on its founding idea, a range of music will continue to be celebrated, spanning from chamber music to opera, from classical music to folk music, from baroque to contemporary.

In his first season in Erl, Jonas Kaufmann will have “only” the Festspielhaus stage as venue for his programs. The Passionspielhaus, usually site for the festival's grand Wagner-productions, will be in use for the Passionsspiele in 2025. The program at the Festspielhaus, which opened in 2012, will have the goal of firmly establishing this venue as a first-rate destination among the international music festivals.

Kaufmann and his team have focused on the following aspects while designing the program:

First, the cultivation and growth of its orchestra is of utmost importance. “With Asher Fish as new Music Director of the Festival, we are pleased to have an internationally recognized conductor with decades of experience, highest work standards and expertise, who at his heart understands the importance of working with and developing the orchestra,” says Jonas Kaufmann. “He will spend a good portion of the season in Erl and combine his new function here with his many international engagements.”

Another priority will be the development of young musical talents. The singers of this winter's premiere of “La Bohème,” for example, will all be around 30 years-old and on the brink of international stardom. Other productions will also give emerging talents an opportunity to present themselves on an international stage. Extraordinary young pianists such as Alexandra Dovgan and Alexander Malofeev, performing as part of the recital series, are further examples of the Festpielhaus lending its stage to emerging artists.

Jonas Kaufmann is also committed to giving a new generation of female opera directors an opportunity to present their work. First up will be Spanish director Bárbara Lluch's new staging of „La Bohème,“ this coming Winter.

In addition, focus will be placed on native artists already or about to be known in international music circles. Regional singers, but also conductors Vinzenz Praxmarer („Weihnachtsoratorium“ on December 8, 2024) and Heinz Ferlesch of the Wiener Singakademie („Matthäuspasion“ on Good Friday, April 18, 2025) will be given the opportunity to showcase their expertise here. Austrian director Philipp Maria Krenn will stage the new production of “Parsifal” during Easter 2025.

At the same time, audiences will be able to enjoy the work of world-famous opera directors. The festival's leading team is particularly proud to announce that Claus Guth – one of the most important directors of our time – will lead the coming season's production of „Bluebeard's castle / La voix humaine,“ a co-production with Teatro del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino. Following Claus Guth will be greats such as Calixto Bieito and Damiano Michieletto.

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Joining Jonas Kaufmann to make Erl a high-quality destination for classical music fans is Casting Director Ilias Tzempetonidis. Their combined enthusiasm for Erl has inspired many of their colleagues to join them in their endeavor. Pretty Yende will give her debut as Leonora in a concert staging of „Il Trovatore“ in Summer 2025 (July 26, 2025). Top baritones Ludovic Tézier (July 19, 2025) und Luca Salsi (July 25, 2025) will alternately take title roles in „Rigoletto“ and Rosa Feola will star as Violetta in „La Traviata“ (July 12 and 27, 2025). Finally, Florian Boesch and Vera-Lotte Böcker will be in Erl for „Bluebeard’s castle / La voix humaine,“ on July 11, 13, and 18, 2025.

Celebrated soprano Camilla Nylund will present a Liederabend on July 16, 2025, in Erl. Further productions will showcase the most exciting opera voices in the world, among them Irene Roberts as Kundry in the aforementioned new production of „Parsifal“ alongside Jonas Kaufmann in the title role during Easter 2025 (April 17 and 20, 2025). Lise Davidsen will perform as Sieglinde in a concert staging of the first act of the „Walküre“ in July 2025 (joining René Pape as Hunding and Jonas Kaufmann as Sigmund) as well as Belcanto stars like René Barbera and Marina Monzó in concert performances of „I Puritani.“ This work poses the greatest challenge for all Belcanto singers (Wagner’s favorite musical style) and will be part of the first Winter season on December 27, 2024 and January 4, 2025.

Contemporary music has long played a prominent role in Erl. Erl will continue to promote and present contemporary music in its programming. The new team is proud to bring „Picture a day like this“ by George Benjamin in a much-celebrated production from Aix-en-provence, giving its Austrian premiere here in Erl.

The work of the *Junges Festspielhaus* – the festival’s music education programs – will continue to take a special place also in the future. Popular formats such as the more intimate Polsterkonzerte for the youngest audiences (3- to 6- year-olds) or the Familienkonzerte with orchestra for children aged 6 and up and their families, will continue to enliven the stages. In the coming winter, a Familienkonzert (“Applaus für die Gebrüder Strauß!”) based on the life and music of Johann Strauß will be presented on December 29, 2024, directed by Julianna Giammona. During Easter 2025, there will be a project for families in collaboration with the new production of “Parsifal,” followed by new music education formats in Summer 2025.

From October 4 -6, 2024 there will be a three-day festival entitled “Ausklang”, curated by Andreas Schett, presenting artists such as Tobias Moretti, the Strottern, the Simply Quartet, the Erlkings or Nikola Hillebrandt and other musicians mixing classical, folk and popular music styles.