

2. JULI 2024

"DANUBE SO BLUE": VIENNA SHORTS AND JOHANN STRAUSS FESTIVAL YEAR 2025 ANNOUNCE THEIR OWN SHORT FILM COMPETITION

Modern film interpretations of the Strauss waltz "The Blue Danube" sought – Main prize worth €6,000 – 9 awarded works to be shown next year at VIENNA SHORTS and at the film festival on Rathausplatz – Submissions open immediately until January 5, 2025

One of the most famous pieces of music in the world and a significant part of film history is **"The Blue Danube"** by Johann Strauss II. On the occasion of the 200th birthday of the composer, which will be celebrated next year with numerous events throughout Vienna, the international short film festival VIENNA SHORTS, together with the Johann Strauss Festjahr 2025, is seeking modern and cliché-free film interpretations under the title **DONAU SO BLAU** to shed new light on this popular evergreen.

Whether it's a music video, animation, or artistic experiment, whether it's a poetic, political, or personal approach, the access to the piece is freely selectable. The only restriction: the submitted short films must be **a maximum of 10 minutes long**. The competition is **open internationally**. The Festjahr provides all interested parties with a musical interpretation by the Vienna Johann Strauss Orchestra, which can be used, edited, and adapted free of charge by all entrants with proper copyright acknowledgment.

The best submissions will be publicly presented at a gala event **on May 28, 2025, as part of the VIENNA SHORTS Festival** and **awarded a total of €12,000**. The main prize is €6,000. The awarded works will also be shown in July and August 2025 at the **film festival on Rathausplatz** as a **Strauss prologue**. **Submissions can be made from now until January 5, 2025, via viennashorts.com.**

KAUP-HASLER: "CONNECTING TRADITION AND INNOVATION" – GEYER: "BREAKING CLICHÉS"

"Cooperation and creative partnerships are essential means for cultural organizations: they create new synergies and enrich our cultural landscape," says Veronica Kaup-Hasler, Vienna's City Councillor for Culture, delighted about the collaboration. "With the short film competition, the Johann Strauss Year 2025 and Vienna Shorts connect tradition and innovation, offering another opportunity to approach Johann Strauss artistically and present his work in a new light, thereby keeping **our cultural heritage alive for future generations**. I look forward to many creative ideas!"

Festjahr director Roland Geyer further explains that the stated goal is to **"repeatedly break through the clichés during the Festjahr and show Strauss in a fresh light**. Thanks to the expertise of Vienna Shorts, we look forward

to innovative approaches and to seeing how this joint competition will sustainably change the perception of Johann Strauss."

For the festival, which already participated in the Vienna Mozart Year 2006 with a presentation of short films, the current competition is a sign of interest in interdisciplinary approaches. "From **Grand Hotel** to **2001: A Space Odyssey**, the Blue Danube Waltz is associated with quite **iconic cinematic moments**," say festival directors Doris Bauer and Daniel Hadenius-Ebner. "Now, the visual representation of the masterpiece, which is so often reduced to static orchestra views or kitschy images, should receive **a fresh and worthy reinterpretation** together with the Johann Strauss Festjahr."

TOP-CLASS PROGRAM FOR RATHAUSPLATZ – IMZ: "SHORT FILMS PROMOTE TOLERANCE"

"The film festival on Vienna's Rathausplatz was created over thirty years ago to offer the people of Vienna, as well as the many visitors to the city, **free access to a high-quality musical cultural program** from various genres, especially classical, during the off-season of opera and concert halls," says Paul Weis, Managing Director of stadt wien marketing gmbh, which organizes the festival. "We are pleased to offer the audience, which has already enjoyed short films from Vienna Shorts, another highlight next year with the **Strauss prologue**."

For the IMZ International Music + Media Center, "art and culture in media play a central role in societal reflection and identity formation. **Short films, in particular, provide insights into different worlds of life**, promote understanding and tolerance towards various cultures, and contribute to education and entertainment," says Secretary General Max Beckham-Ortner. "With DONAU SO BLAU, the audience at Vienna's Rathausplatz has the opportunity to rediscover the most famous waltz in the world in a never-before-seen form."

ABOUT THE FESTJAHR AND THE FESTIVALS

The **Johann Strauss Festjahr 2025 GmbH** is a company of Wien Holding, established to celebrate the 200th birthday of composer Johann Strauss II. On behalf of the City of Vienna, the jubilee will be celebrated in 2025 with a variety of events, developed, curated, and coordinated by a creative team under the artistic direction of Roland Geyer.

VIENNA SHORTS is the international short film festival in Vienna. The festival has been organized by the Independent Cinema Association since 2004 and annually presents around 300 productions under 30 minutes in competitive and non-competitive programs. The festival is a qualifying event for the Academy Awards (Oscars), the European Film Awards, the British BAFTA Awards, and the Austrian Film Awards.

The **film festival on Vienna's Rathausplatz** has been held annually since 1991 with free admission and is considered Europe's largest cultural and culinary festival. About two dozen restaurateurs and a free music film

program with highlights from all genres attract around 750,000 visitors annually. The festival is organized by stadtwien marketing gmbh on behalf of the City of Vienna.

All information regarding the open call:

[LINK](#) to open call on viennashorts.com

[LINK](#) to submission

Press images are available for download at viennashorts.com/presse/ . Royalty-free use is permitted with proper copyright attribution.

For further inquiries, please contact

VIENNA SHORTS

Anna Carina Roth under presse@viennashorts.com or +43 677 61838707
www.viennashorts.com

Johann Strauss 2025 Wien

Jacqueline Haberl under jacqueline.haberl@jost25.at or +43 676 6827992
www.johannstrauss2025.at

Film Festival auf dem Wiener Rathausplatz

Noah Schönhart under presse@stadtwienmarketing.at or +43 1319 82 00-0
www.filmfestival-rathausplatz.at