

WORLD ORCHESTRA FESTIVAL · VIENNA 2026

Chinese Soundscapes — Vienna Premiere

Songjin Music Theme Orchestral Suite · Vienna International Symphony Orchestra
Conducted by Georgi Nikolov · Strauss Palace Concert Hall, 11 July 2026

PERFORMANCE REVIEW

A Powerful Debut in Vienna's Music Capital

On July 11th, the Strauss Palace Concert Hall in Vienna hosted the international premiere of *Chinese Soundscapes — Songjin Music Theme Orchestral Suite*, presented as part of the 12th World Orchestra Festival. Under the direction of Georgi Nikolov, the Vienna International Symphony Orchestra delivered a performance that captivated a full house and resonated deeply with audiences from around the world.

The concert opened with the **"Jasmine Flower Variations,"** instantly drawing the hall into silence with its iconic melody. The piece unfolded through three evolving layers — a pure pentatonic foundation, elegant Viennese waltz motion, and a radiant orchestral climax — creating a musical dialogue that bridges centuries and cultures.



VIENNA INTERNATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA · STRAUSS PALACE CONCERT HALL

The suite continued with six movements, each portraying a different musical landscape of China:

MOVEMENT I

Northwest Echoes

Blending the emotional timbre of Qin opera with Tajik folk colors to evoke the vastness of the Silk Road.

MOVEMENT II

Graceful Jiangnan

A poetic fusion of Suzhou storytelling and modern jazz harmonies.

MOVEMENT III

Songs of the Borderlands

Tibetan, Mosuo, and Mongolian musical elements painting snow-covered mountains and open grasslands.

MOVEMENT IV

Melodies of Jiangxi

Heartfelt expressions through tea-picking opera and Hakka mountain songs.

MOVEMENT V

Symphony of the Greater Bay Area

A vibrant, contemporary Lingnan sound.

MOVEMENT VI

Seasons of Life

Closing with the warm, nostalgic tune "Is It Snowing Where You Are?"

The encore, **"Sweet Song March,"** ignited the hall with rhythmic energy, prompting the entire audience to rise in applause. Many listeners described the concert as one of the most impressive presentations of contemporary Chinese orchestral music ever heard in Vienna.



Composer Wu Songjin (吴颂今) with conductor Georgi Nikolov after the performance

THE CONDUCTOR

Speaking to reporters after multiple curtain calls, conductor Georgi Nikolov could not hide his emotion.

"This is one of the most unforgettable concerts of my career. 'Chinese Soundscapes' reveals a modern, authentic China through the language of symphonic music. Tonight proved that music truly has no borders."

GEORGI NIKOLOV — CONDUCTOR, VIENNA INTERNATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

"The beauty of the pentatonic scale truly amazed me — this was my first time performing contemporary Chinese orchestral music."

Concertmaster

"In 'Moon over Lugu Lake,' the dialogue between piano and violin felt like moonlight shimmering on water."

Pianist

"Using the purest Western symphonic form to master the Chinese pentatonic language is historically meaningful."

Italian Conductor, Guest Artist

"From the imagined China of the 19th century to today's creative confidence — this marks a shift in artistic voice."

French Composer, Guest Artist

A MILESTONE IN EAST–WEST DIALOGUE

Bringing Contemporary Chinese Symphonic Art to the World's Music Capital

Musicians from over 30 countries took part in this performance. As China and Austria celebrate 55 years of diplomatic relations, *Chinese Soundscapes* stands as a milestone in East–West musical dialogue — using the world's most universal language to carry China's story onto the international stage.



PROGRAMME

Chinese Soundscapes — Songjin Music Theme Orchestral Suite

CONDUCTOR

Georgi Nikolov

ORCHESTRA

Vienna International Symphony Orchestra

VENUE & DATE

Strauss Palace Concert Hall, Vienna · 11 July 2026

FESTIVAL

12th World Orchestra Festival & Competition

OCCASION

55th Anniversary of China–Austria Diplomatic Relations

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