

## **Official Statement of the IMZ concerning the future of the ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra**

We, the IMZ International Music and Media Centre, are writing this open letter to express our unwavering support for the ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra (RSO). At Avant Première Music and Media Market 2023 in Berlin, our audience – consisting of over 600 international broadcasters, streaming platforms, distributors and producers – was informed that the RSO is facing significant budgetary cuts and might be on the brink of dissolution. It is distressing to think that the future of such an iconic institution is in jeopardy.

The IMZ was founded in Vienna under the aegis of UNESCO in 1961 to preserve the performing arts as a cultural asset. It is our mission to promote cultural dialogue globally, which is why we stand in full solidarity with the RSO. For over 50 years, the RSO has been a beacon of light in the classical music world and an exceptional ambassador for Austria's cultural heritage. They have provided the public with countless hours of musical pleasure and have been a driving force behind the promotion and development of classical music as a living art form. Their commitment to new music, living composers, innovation and expanding the art form is invaluable and unique in Austrian music and a beacon of quality and diversity. Their rich repertoire and history are a testament to the enormous contribution that the RSO has made to the cultural landscape of our society and beyond. Eliminating a publicly-funded radio symphony orchestra in Austria, the home of classical music, would have a ripple effect in many other countries and could lead to a cultural loss of unprecedented proportions!

Anyone who has ever attended or listened to a recording of the RSO can attest to the exceptional quality of their performances. The concerts are not just mere musical performances; they are experiences that leave a lasting impression.

Moreover, the RSO's commitment to educating the public on classical music is truly commendable. Their outreach programs, workshops and community concerts have helped inspire a new generation of music lovers. Their efforts have helped foster a deep appreciation for classical music among people of all ages and backgrounds in Vienna and beyond.

It is therefore alarming to hear that the RSO is facing significant budget cuts. The loss of funding will undoubtedly have a devastating impact on their ability to continue providing the high-quality performances and educational programs that have become synonymous with the institution. This would be a tremendous loss not just for the orchestra, but for the entire performing arts sector.

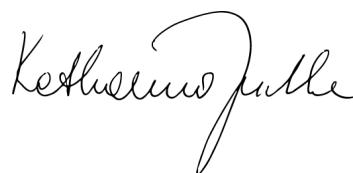
In light of this, we urge the general public and government officials to recognize the value of the RSO – Austria's only radio orchestra – and to take action to support it. We implore you to consider the tremendous contribution that the orchestra has made to our society and beyond and to prioritize its continued funding. The ORF Radio Symphony Orchestra is an essential cultural asset that deserves to be maintained for generations to come.

Their music has touched the hearts and souls of countless people, and the RSO has enriched our cultural life immeasurably. We hope that they will continue to inspire and educate music lovers for many years to come.

Sincerely,



Arild Erikstad, IMZ President



Katharina Jeschke, IMZ Secretary General