

Lawo's mc²56 for Vienna Musikverein

Picture: Reinhard Tomek, ORF



With the 2025/26 concert season already underway, ORF has inaugurated its newly upgraded sound control room at the Vienna Musikverein - now fully equipped with IP-based audio technology from Lawo. This modernization marks a significant step forward in enhancing live broadcast workflows, capturing the intricate soundscapes of orchestral performances with even greater precision, and ensuring robust operational reliability for high-profile live productions. The smooth functioning of the control room plays a central role in mixing not only numerous concerts and live broadcasts throughout the year, but also the globally celebrated Vienna Philharmonic New Year's Concert, viewed by millions around the world.

The decision to implement Lawo technology was driven by the need to improve system compatibility and foster synergies across ORF's production infrastructure. "This new setup is more than just an upgrade - it's our gateway into next-generation audio IP technology," says Reinhard Tomek, Project Manager Audio Technology at ORF. "It offers us tremendous flexibility for future expansions and seamless integration of external devices. The incorporation of Lawo's HOME platform simplifies system management, while keeping interfaces to external IP-

enabled systems open and adaptable.”

At the heart of the new infrastructure is an mc²56 MkIII production console featuring 48 faders, powered by an A__UHD Core audio engine licensed for 256 DSP channels. Two A__stage80 stageboxes provide connectivity, while the signal architecture is managed via Lawo's HOME platform, designed for IP-based production environments. The console runs the latest software version 12.2, which introduces several key enhancements. Most notably, a new 7-band EQ with three dynamic bands enables sound engineers to shape orchestral audio with exceptional precision. Additional improvements include optimized channel displays, more intuitive operation of audio crosspoints via the HOME API, and the ability to switch banks and layers directly from the fader panel. Previous software versions such as 10.12 and 12.0 laid the foundation for deeper integration between console, DSP, and network. With the HOME mc² DSP app, CPU-based processing resources are now also available.

Another major highlight is the full integration of Waves SuperRack V15. Extensive Waves plug-in bundles can be loaded into the Immersive Wrapper and operated directly from the console - ideal for immersive formats such as 5.1.4, 7.1.4, or 9.1.4. “Native control of Waves processing within the console streamlines live operations significantly,” Tomek explains. “It allows complex sound processing to be embedded directly into the workflow, eliminating the need for external workstations or workaround solutions.”

Following commissioning in August, Lawo conducted a three-day hands-on training session for ORF's sound engineers, focusing on practical application of the new features. The system made its debut on September 20, 2025, during the season-opening concert featuring the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Lahav Shani. “Despite the new technology, it was a routine production for our team - a clear sign that the system is intuitive, and the transition went smoothly,” Tomek concludes. With this renovation, ORF ensures that future productions at the Vienna Musikverein can be realized with maximum reliability and cutting-edge technical capabilities. At the same time, the new infrastructure enables the exceptional acoustics of the Musikverein's Great Hall to be captured with unmatched precision and brought vividly to life for radio audiences.

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