

25th Life Ball announces theme for 2018
***The Sound of Music* as creative framework of the anniversary year**

Vienna. On June 2, 2018, Life Ball celebrates its 25th anniversary. We are using this milestone event to reflect on the past and look to the future: to review the achievements in the fight against HIV / AIDS over the last 25 years and evaluate Life Ball's sociopolitical impact. The anniversary festivities will reaffirm our commitment to fighting for all of those living with HIV and those impacted by the virus both in Austria and around the globe.

As an exuberant and entertaining means of conveying its crucial message, Life Ball has established itself as a festival of life. It represents a multicultural, inclusive Austria that engages an increasingly international audience. Life Ball, as is the case with *The Sound of Music* (1965), represents Austrian values and traditions yet still touches a broad international impact. Therefore, deliberately referencing Austria, the touching story of the von Trapp family will be the anniversary's leitmotif. *The Sound of Music* is considered one of the most successful musical films ever released. In the movie, Austria is seen through a joyful Hollywood lens. It touches millions around the world with its famous melodies.

"With the interpretation of key scenes from *The Sound of Music*, we immerse ourselves in Austria's history, culture, traditions, and clichés. The most important societal values such as diversity, tolerance and sensitivity also play a major role," says Gery Keszler, chairman of LIFE + and organizer of the Life Ball when describing the surprising dramaturgical and musical framework of the 25th Life Ball.

"Austria between tradition and innovation, spirituality and zeitgeist, home and internationality, are the strong and sometimes unexpected topics in the anniversary year," continues Keszler. This anniversary project was made possible by the generous support of Rodgers & Hammerstein as well as all rights holders of the film, who were indispensable for the planning and realization of this year's creative theme.

„The history, the evident skill and passion shown in past Life Balls, made the decision for us to throw our support behind the 25th Anniversary easier. THE SOUND OF MUSIC has been such a beacon of life for so many people over the years – for it to be honored in the unique

way of Life Ball is something that I hope everyone will accept and celebrate," says Ted Chapin, President and Chief Creative Officer, Rodgers & Hammerstein.

For Life Ball 2018 and the new Style Bible, some of the most famous Austrians were cast as characters inspired by the film: In response to an unforgettable Julie Andrews, Conchita, winner of the Eurovision Song Contest in 2014, plays Fräulein Maria. Photographed in the Andrews's world-famous pose at the beginning of the film, this image will be the main visual for 2018. Leading up to Life Ball, the Style Bible cast will serve as ambassadors for the work of LIFE+, and as such will make appearances in the events leading up to Life Ball.

"In *The Sound of Music*, Maria shows that music is a universal language of emotions that can change everything for the better. Therefore, I am particularly pleased to slip into this great role. Of course, country life in the film is a bit exaggerated. But during my childhood in the country I often ran singing through flower meadows," says Conchita.

The Style Bible includes new interpretations of iconic scenes from *The Sound of Music*, photographed by Markus Morianz at original locations in and around Salzburg. The characters of this year's Style Bible appear in elaborate costumes provided by ART for ART. The creative production team at Life Ball reimaged these outfits and designed new costumes new pieces to make the vision a reality. The figures of death and life, central motifs of the Style Bible, were dressed in costumes provided by the Salzburg Festival and previously used in theater productions of Hofmannsthal's *Jedermann*. The complete Style Bible will be presented at the end of January 2018 in Salzburg by the team around Gery Keszler and the Life Ball family.

Dates for the 25th anniversary of the Life Ball:

June 1, 2018: LIFE + CELEBRATION CONCERT at the Burgtheater Wien

June 2, 2018: Life Ball at Vienna City Hall

June 3, 2018: LIFE BALL NEXT GENERATION at Vienna City Hall

Press Release
January 5th 2018



Press contacts

Karin Bellmann

Head of PR & Communications

presse@lifeball.org

LIFE+ | LIFE BALL

Verein LIFE+

Werdertorgasse 1, 1010 Wien

T +43 1 5955600 - 20, F + 43 1 5955677



Verein LIFE+ | Werdertorgasse 1, 1010 Wien | T: 43 1 595 56 00 | F: +43 1 595 56 77 | ZVR: 279376 172 | UID: ATU66830147 | www.lifeball.org

Erste Bank | Kontonr.: 300 000-13131 | BLZ: 20111 | Lautend auf Verein Life+ | IBAN: AT692011130000013131 | BIC: GIBAATWWXXX