

**SALZBURG WHITSUN FESTIVAL 22–25 May 2026**  
**Artistic Director: Cecilia Bartoli**



## **Final Press Release of the 2026 Salzburg Whitsun Festival**



Final curtain call at the premiere of *Il viaggio a Reims* at the Haus für Mozart. The new production by Barrie Kosky was the centrepiece of the 2026 Salzburg Whitsun Festival. © SF/Marco Borrelli

(SF, 25 May 2026) “Bon Voyage!” was the motto of the 2026 Salzburg Whitsun Festival, which ends today, having won euphoric audience reactions and filled 99 percent of available seats.

**Cecilia Bartoli, Artistic Director of the Salzburg Whitsun Festival**, summarizes: “For several years, we have been paying metaphorical visits to certain cities and countries or faraway centuries during the Whitsun Festival. As I am looking back on my own life’s journey in a few days – on the occasion of my birthday – I approached the subject of travel this year from many different angles. Even if we no longer use stage coaches like the colourful travelling party in *Il viaggio a Reims*, travel confronts us musicians with entertaining, but also unexpected challenges and new encounters – just as in Rossini’s opera. Thanks to Gianluca Capuano, Barrie Kosky and a cheerful, exquisite ensemble, we undertook this journey to Reims with carefree abandon, but also reverence for our beloved role models. After that, John Neumeier and the Hamburg Ballet took us on a sea voyage inspired by Hans Christian Andersen; and Gianluca Capuano, Les Musiciens du Prince – Monaco and the puppet company Carlo Colla & Figli from Milan as well as Christina Pluhar and L’Arpeggiata brought mythical sea journeys of antiquity to life. Finally, we invited the audience to an artistic journey through my own life: guided by Davide Livermore and Yvan Cassar, an ensemble of

fantastic people behind and on stage created *Ciao, bella ciao*. We marvelled at this newly-invented piece, which overcomes genre boundaries – in it, I surprised the Salzburg audience by singing not only arias from my familiar repertoire, but also Italian *canzoni*, dance and pop music. All this could only be achieved thanks to our dear guests and especially thanks to the faithful, professional team at the Salzburg Festival with its unwavering dedication to the arts. To all of them – and to all of you, our dear audience members – my heartfelt thanks!”


**Festival President Kristina Hammer** pays homage to the Artistic Director and the Whitsun Festival’s great success: “Cecilia Bartoli is far more than an opera star in Salzburg – she is an exceptional phenomenon. With her unmistakable artistic handwriting, her unquenchable curiosity and her ability to treat big issues with artistic verve, profundity and the highest quality, she has been putting her unique mark on the Whitsun Festival as its artistic director for many years. Under the motto ‘Bon Voyage!’, she once again took the audience along on an inspiring journey full of discoveries, emotions and artistic highlights. Great international demand and the enthusiastic reaction of our audience impressively confirm the attractiveness of this special festival.”

Approximately 11.860 guests attended the 2026 Salzburg Whitsun Festival. Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, the USA, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Hungary and Japan were the top ten countries from where these guests came, out of a total of 48 nations.

83 journalists producing features and reports for media in 15 countries were accredited at this year’s Whitsun Festival. They came from Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Latvia, Slovakia, the United Kingdom, North and South America and Japan.

The *dramma giocoso* ***Il viaggio a Reims*** will be revived during the summer Festival on 5 August. Further performances are scheduled for 8, 11, 13 and 16 August at the Haus für Mozart. After the gala performance on 8 August, Cecilia Bartoli will be honoured with a gala dinner at Salzburg’s Residenz.

Photographs are available here: <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/press#photoservice>

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