

When a concert is also geopolitically stimulating: The renowned Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra performs in Grafenegg.

With its Music Director Manfred Honeck, the renowned Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra has once again appeared at the [Grafenegg Festival](#). And as luck would have it, the weather god played along, so the concert could go ahead beneath the suggestively romantic atmosphere of the ‘towering clouds’ (Wolkenturm).

The program of the evening was not only musically stimulating, but stimulating also in the historical and political sense. It started with ‘Komarov’s Fall’ by the Australian composer Brett Dean, this year’s ‘composer in residence’ at the [Grafenegg Festival](#). The work is dedicated to the memory of the cosmonaut Vladimir Mikhailovich Komarov, who in 1967 became a victim of the space race between the USSR and the USA. The Soyuz capsule in which Komarov failed to survive re-entry into the earth’s atmosphere was not well engineered.

Shostakovich composed his Fifth Symphony (played after the interval) in an easy to absorb style and with reference to classical structures – this was for political reasons, easy to understand given Stalin’s reign of terror.

Before that, we had a ‘culinary work’: Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto, in which the 26-year-young [sic] Yuja Wang excelled with her breathtaking technical bravura. Which left only one question open: how did the soloist manage to operate the pedals without a mishap, given the extreme height of her heels?

Honeck’s lucid conducting, without any eye-catching stunts, allowed the orchestra to play all three pieces confidently, and gave the audience a very satisfying listening experience.

**Kurier
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