

DEUTSCHER LEBENSTIL UND DEUTSCHE KULTUR (Austrian Lifestyle and Culture)

How Austrians learned to stop worrying and love “The Sound of Music”

roles of the von Trapp children. “They are a new generation of Austrians who felt it was part of their history,” von Maldeghem explained.

Casting these Austrian children was a major step in bringing the musical home to Salzburg. And Von Maldeghem had stressed the importance of carefully engaging with the local setting immediately outside the theatre:

Here the audience comes from skiing, from the lakes, with beauty in their mind. Depicting the same thing on stage would have been boring, and would have confirmed the American projection.

To avoid replicating Salzburg, set designer Court Watson created the Salzburg skyline but only in silhouette, framed by the forest.

The show was expected to last for a very limited run. But the Salzburg production has instead been regularly performed in German since its 2011 opening, with English surtitles provided for foreign spectators. Given the worldwide popularity of sing-a-long Sound of Music cinema screenings, the Salzburg production has even added a sing-a-long at the end of the stage musical. The musical had a mountain to climb in winning over locals, but the hills surrounding Salzburg now remain filled with the sound of this universally loved musical.

