

## **Philharmonia Orchestra Vienna Preview *City of Dreams***

### **Julian Johnson**

The city of Vienna lies nestled in a bend in the Danube River and stretches all the way across to the low foothills of the Vienna woods, which eventually turn into the Austrian Alps.

Viewed from up here on the kahlenberg (?), it looks like a quiet and peaceful place, yet it was here that the 19<sup>th</sup> century gave way to the 20<sup>th</sup>, that a group of like minded artists and composers and intellectuals changed the nature of modern culture forever.

Motor cars came shooting out from deep, narrow streets into the shallows of bright squares, dark patches of pedestrian bustle formed into cloudy streams....(fade out).

This series invites us to think again about how inseparably the romantic and the modern bound up with each other.

It's not just that Berg and Schoenberg began writing in a late Romantic idiom and then moved to a more modern style. It's that their whole musical language was a quest to find a more adequate voice, a voice that was true to the experience of modern life.

### **Agnes Husslein-Arco**

...and what happened in Vienna was that there was a radical change suddenly. In all areas, in Architecture, in the paintings, the visual arts but also in the music and it all interacted.

### **Julian Johnson**

The series presents this music against the Viennese background from which it emerged and locates in the time and place in which it was made. Among the paintings of Klimpt, the designs of the Weiner Werkstatte and Freud's new theories of interpreting dreams. Hearing it in this way, as part of the vibrant experience of the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time, bewildering and exhilarating, forward looking and nostalgic, gives us an insight into the century in which we ourselves, were born. More than that, it reminds us that their world, their desires as much as their anxieties were not so different to our own.

The series runs from February to October 2009, highlights include Mahler's Symphonies no. 6,7 and 9. Schoenberg's vast Gurre-Lieder and Berg's Violin Concerto and Opera Wozzeck, all conducted by Esa-Pekka Salonen. For further details and to pick tickets go to [www.philhamronia.co.uk/vienna](http://www.philhamronia.co.uk/vienna)