

FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation



FESTLAB

An initiative of the
European Festivals Association



Creativity
and Innovation
European Year 2009

Launched at the occasion of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation, the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation is established to spotlight the excellence of festivals in the creative and societal process and to give incentives to successfully fulfil the festivals' core mission which still is the artistic one. The FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation follows the mission of the FestLab.

FestFlash 5, September 2009

Alliances make the difference:

Festivals, the European House for Culture and more commitments for a cultural Europe

Innovative alliances and strong commitments are the key aspects in order to further develop a cultural Europe based on creativity and participation:

- In the spotlight: the **International Festival Wratistlavia Cantans**, one of the first partners of the [FestLab for Creativity and Innovation](#) is looking for innovative alliances;
- the latest meeting in the framework of the **FestLab for Creativity and Innovation in Linz** provided the grounds for new alliances by bringing together the directors of Europe's major festivals;
- the **European House for Culture**, officially presented to the public on 27 September 2009, offers a platform for cultural networks to develop innovative partnerships.

All this in the strong belief that Europe is first and foremost a cultural project and that culture must play a vital role in shaping the overall development of Europe: The [European Festivals Association](#) remains committed!

In the spotlight

International Festival Wratistlavia Cantans



Dyrektor generalny:
Andrzej Kosendlak

Dyrektor artystyczny:
Paul McCreesh

Dating back to 1966, the Wratislavia Cantans festival honours the magnificence of vocal and choral music as well as the oratorio tradition in the historical settings of Wroclaw and the Silesian region.

The festival has been known for its innovative alliances, notably cross-disciplinary, combining music with other art forms, as the visual arts and films, but also bringing music from different sorts together.

Currently, the festival's artistic director is Paul McCreesh. He is specialised in the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods yet has also been working with modern instrument orchestras throughout the world.

In dialogue with...

Paul McCreesh, Artistic Director International Festival Wratislavia Cantans, interviewed by Cristina Farrinha, LabforCulture.org

European Festivals Association & Cristina Farinha/LabforCulture.org (EFA/CF): In which ways the 2009 programme translates the FestLab mission and acts as a nest for fostering new visions and stimulating new works?

Paul McCreesh (PM): The current policy is to focus on the very original aims of the festival, as set out by the founder conductor Andzej Markowski. Thus we have invited many of the finest choirs and solo vocalists and we have set the emphasis on the art of the voice, the great oratorio tradition and in general, music that engages the spectrum of human spirituality. We had no festival co-productions, our performances involved the collaboration between artists and Wratislavia's excellent ensembles. This is, I believe, the pioneering aspect of the festival.

An international festival should serve two purposes. 1. To bring outstanding artists into the region. 2. To produce programmes that cannot be heard in the city's concert season. One of the greater values of the festival is that these events should influence and develop ensembles in the cities and region; in order to broaden and improve performance standards.

EFA/CF: Indeed, a festival is in its essence a local happening. Why nevertheless you consider important to be part of such a European-wide initiative such as the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation?

PM: One of the most interesting things about working as I do in so many countries, is to realise the huge musical history that concerns the small geographical region that is Europe. The festival offers the opportunities to reassess these traditions; to build upon them, to exchange and sometimes to destroy them. In this way the art of music regenerates. The festival is the ideal crucible for this process.

EFA/CF: The programme included several free entrance events. Is there any special concern towards enlarging and diversifying the accessibility and inclusion of the Festival proposals as targeted by the FestLab?

PM: We are particularly keen to widen access wherever we can; in an ideal world we would recommend that all concerts would be free. On the other hand, music is a commodity with enormous expenses and even the paid concert tickets are charged at a fraction of the price and do not cover the costs of the programme.

EFA/CF: You have conducted the youth festival orchestra in an outdoor concert. Is this for you a mean to promote youngsters interest for vocal and choral music and the oratorio tradition as practitioners but also as audience?

PM: This is a new project for us and it filled me with excitement and it has to be said, also a degree of terror! This was a huge event, incorporating 1000 young Polish singers, many of them under the 'Singer Poland' programme. I personally believe that opera, oratorio and sacred music have a great value in the cultural landscape. I think young people get a more personal and passionate experience being practitioners as well as listeners.

We are also forming a new Wratislavia orchestra, which will incorporate our finest musicians from the city, alongside the finest young musicians in the country. I have created a similar elsewhere; I'm sure it will be exciting.

The interview is the result of a collaboration between EFA and Cristina Farinha/LabforCulture.org; it can also be read on the respective [blog at Labforculture.org](http://blog.at.Labforculture.org).

FestFlash Highlights

Innovative alliances for a cultural Europe: Festivals engage in strong partnerships



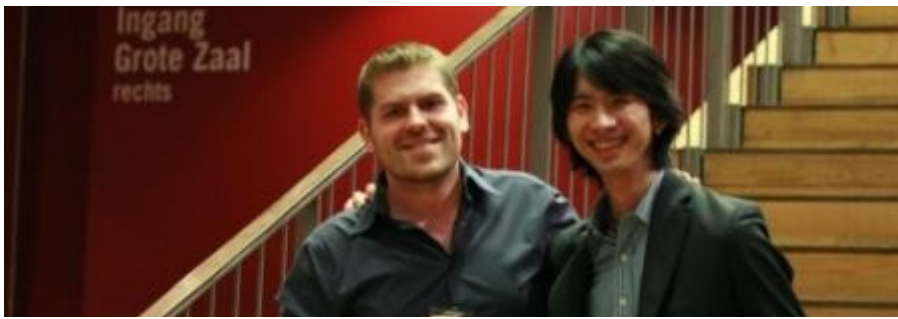
At the occasion of Linz, European Capital of Culture and the [opening](#) of the [Brucknerfest](#), the European Festivals Association (EFA) delivered a [commitment declaration](#) to Mr Ján Figel', former European Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth: During a [meeting](#) on 13 September 2009, EFA and European festivals stress their continued engagement for a cultural Europe.

In a parallel move, the [FestLab for Creativity and Innovation](#) invited festivals from all over Europe to engage in a lively exchange on how music festivals deal with creation and international co-production.

In the same spirit, the [European House for Culture](#) - an initiative of the European Festivals Association - was officially presented to guests and public ([27 September 2009 in Brussels](#)). The ambitious project is supported by the firm belief that the House can be the stage from where the cultural sector can project its voice, a space for communication, dialogue and shared values.

The main message: culture and art play a fundamental role in society and in the European integration process; therefore, it is key to support artistic creation!

Ted Hearne wins Gaudemus Prize 2009



At the final concert of the International Gaudeamus Music Week 2009 (7-12 September, Amsterdam), the [Gaudeamus Prize was awarded](#) to the American composer Ted Hearne (1982). He receives the award of 4,550 Euros, intended as a commission for a new work to be performed at the next edition of the International Gaudeamus Music Week in 2010.

Brucknerfest Linz goes innovative with its “Klangwolke”



Fabulous creatures created and brought to life by people from Linz and vicinity pour through the city and transform it into a biotope full of wonders. [Klangwolke 2009](#), an initiative of the Brucknerfest and Ars Electronica in collaboration with Linz, European Capital of Culture 2009, follows the flow of one of humankind’s oldest narratives - the myth of the Great Flood. The streets of Linz and the banks of the Danube are the settings for this innovative event.

International literature festival gives the floor to newly discovered authors



Experiencing literary diversity in times of globalisation: it's possible at the [international literature festival](#) of the Berliner Festspiele. Arab poets meet with American short story-writers, South Korean poets with their Russian colleagues, and South African novelists with young, budding Albanian authors. The most interesting, newly discovered authors stand equally beside literature's most established and respected talents.

Emilia Romagna Festival remembers historical events

Music to promote remembrance. This is the theme chosen this year to close the 2009 edition of the Emilia Romagna Festival. On September 11, a date that has become highly symbolic, the Festival [presented](#) Estaba la Madre, a masterpiece by Academy Award winner Luis Bacalov, composed by the Argentine maestro to commemorate over 30,000 desaparecidos.

“European Week of Festivals”: Italian festivals association reflects on creativity and innovation

At the occasion of the European Year for Creativity and Innovation, Italiafestival launched “[La Settimana Europea dei Festival](#)” - a European Week of Festivals”. In a one-day seminar, Italiafestival further explored the role of festivals in the fostering of creativity and innovation in a dedicated [seminar](#) on 17 September in Rome.

How to become a FestLabPass holder

The European Festivals Association invites all arts festivals to sign up to the initiative “FestLab for Creativity and Innovation” and commit to its objective. Read the Open Call [here](#).

About FestFlash and EFA

The **FestFlash on Creativity and Innovation** brings news about festivals and their activities implemented in the spirit of the FestLab for Creativity and Innovation.

The FestFlash follows their activities throughout 2009; a **best practices** reader will be published at the end of 2009 showcasing most outstanding examples of festivals’ work and reflects on the challenges in the context of fostering innovative and creative talents.

Latest news and relevant information may be found on the **FestLab website** at www.efa-aef.eu/festlab/

The **FestLab for Creativity and Innovation** is an initiative of the [European Festivals Association](#) in the framework of the [European Year of Creativity and Innovation](#).

The **European Festivals Association (EFA)** is the umbrella organisation for arts festivals across Europe and beyond. Over more than 50 years, EFA has grown into a dynamic network representing more than 100 music, dance, theatre and multidisciplinary festivals, national festivals associations (representing on their behalf more than 1,000 festivals) and cultural organisations from 37 (mainly European) countries. Since 2004, the EFA offices are based in Belgium.

EFA is initiator of the **European House for Culture** (www.efa-aef.eu), contributes to the ‘[Platform for Intercultural Europe](#)’, is member of the EU Platform on ‘[Access to Culture](#)’ and collaborates closely with ‘[A Soul for Europe](#)’.



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