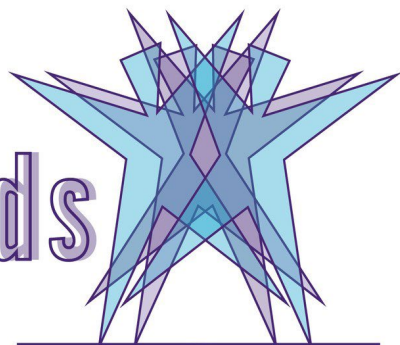


# EFFE Awards Salon



26 September 2019

BOZAR  
Center for Fine Arts Brussels

EUROPE FOR FESTIVALS  
FESTIVALS FOR EUROPE



EUROPEAN  
FESTIVALS  
ASSOCIATION

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## DEAR COLLEAGUES, DEAR FRIENDS

Welcome to the EFFE Awards Salon 2019 at BOZAR.

A special day is bringing the attention to the arts, artists and the role of festivals in offering artists the platform to develop their work.

The European Festivals Association (EFA) is convinced about the importance of festivals, cities and decision makers on the local level and their interaction.

Arts and the artists are the matrix of each festival. As is the city and its community. There is no community without the arts. The links between a festival and a city are strong. Cities and regions in Europe are natural partners for festivals (and for Europe) in their daily local work.

At the EFFE Awards Salon, we are coming together: artists, festival makers, city representatives, European decision makers to express our readiness to act together, to increase joint steps and practical arrangements that enable arts, arts festivals, cultural activities as well as cities, and Europe, to do their respective jobs. It seems to us a unique composition of people here today and an opportunity for us to connect and empower our alliance to be meaningful, present and influential in the European story. Culture is no evidence, it is a work of every day.

The EFFE Awards 2019-2020 will demonstrate the EFFE Jury's recognition to a few, but in the end to all arts festivals committing themselves to Europe on the FestivalFinder.eu. We will come back to all of you with concrete proposals and are curious about yours.

We wish us all a constructive, joyful day with new ideas and steps forward.

Kathrin Deventer  
EFA Secretary General

Jan Briers  
EFA President



# Programme

# 1



## PROGRAMME

14:30 Registration & Welcome coffee at Rotonde Bertouille

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Host of the Salon: **Annabelle Van Nieuwenhuyse**, Music by **Albert Vila**

15:00 Salon Conversations

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Welcome words by

**Hermann Schnitzer** (EFA Vice-President), **Tamás Szusc** (Director Culture and Creativity at DG EAC), **Pawel Potoroczyn** (EFFE International Jury)

Salon Conversations with

**Frie Leysen** and **Rabih Mroué**, facilitated by **Virve Sutinen** (EFFE International Jury)

**Dieter Kosslick** and **Beki Probst**, facilitated by **Haris Pašović** (EFFE International Jury)

16:30 Coffee break

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17:00 EFFE Awards Ceremony

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Welcome by **Jan Briers** (EFA President) and **Sabine Verheyen** (Chair Culture Committee of the European Parliament)

EFFE Laureates and EFFE Audience Choice announcement by

**Tibor Navracsics** (European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth & Sport)  
Audience Choice winner of the festival trip

**Sven Gatz** (Brussels Minister for Finance, Budget, promotion of multilingualism, Tourism and of the Brussels image and Flemish Minister for Brussels Affairs)

17:30 EFFE Awards 2019-2020

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Video message by **Sir Jonathan Mills** (EFFE International Jury President)

EFFE Awards winners 2019-2020 announcement by the EFFE International Jury

18:15 EFFE Lifetime Achievement Awards

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Introduced by **Peter Florence** and **Fairouz Nishanova** (EFFE International Jury)

**Saodat Ismailova** laudation on **Dieter Kosslick** and the Berlinale

**Romeo Castellucci** laudation on **Frie Leysen** and the Kunstenfestivaldesarts

Evening programme

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18:45 Dinner reception at Horta Hall (BOZAR)  
hosted by Bertelsmann and the UFA Film Nights

20:00 UFA Film Nights  
Die Frau Im Mond - Fritz Lang (1929, Silent) - Film Classics  
with Brussels Philharmonic & Timothy Brock

20:15 Festival Cities Alliance Meeting hosted by the City of Brussels at the City Hall

## EFFE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2019



### Frie Leysen

Frie Leysen is recognized as one of the most experienced figures on the international theatre scene. At a time when the long-standing conflict between Flemish and Walloon communities in Belgium was escalating, she successfully used the arts as an agent of integration and understanding. From 1980 to 1991 she established the international arts center deSingel in Antwerp.

In 1992 she founded the multidisciplinary Kunstenfestivaldesarts in Brussels, which she continued to run successfully for over ten years and developed into one of the most influential festivals in Europe.

Afterwards, Frie Leysen concentrated mainly on the Arab region, where she curated Meeting Points 5, an international festival in nine Arab cities from Damascus to Rabat. In 2010 she was artistic director of the festival Theater der Welt in Mülheim and Essen.

In 2012, she was appointed Artistic Director of Foreign Affairs, the newly-established international festival for theatre and the performing arts at Berliner Festspiele. In 2013-14, she was the theatre director of the Wiener Festwochen.

### From the EFFE International Jury:

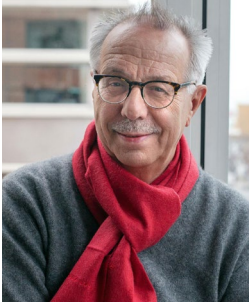
In 1992, Frie Leysen founded KunstenfestivaldesArts in Brussels. During the ten years of her directorship, the festival became one of the most influential performing arts festivals in Europe. The multidisciplinary and intercultural programmes she presented were deeply rooted in her belief in the power of art; that the visions of artists are fundamental forces for social change. Her own artistic vision has inspired generations of festival directors, programme managers and curators worldwide. Her dedication has set new standards for European festivals in engaging with non-Western cultures.

Kunstenfestival has had a great impact on the development of European festival culture and beyond. She has brought fresh local and global ideas to audiences and developed the festival context as a forum for tolerance and inclusion. Her curatorial practice has been lead by curiosity for artistic innovation wherever it might occur.

In this increasingly complex world, her vision of theatre has opened up a space in which an unusual canon of works can display a truthful image of contemporary reality. She has advocated for the necessity of risk-taking in programming as crucial to the development of new artistic languages and ideas that reflect the world as it appears now.

The KunstenfestivaldesArts has always been a place where you discovered something idiosyncratic, curated by someone idiosyncratic. Traveling around, you met Frie Leysen on her own, with a cigarette, in search of imagination and talent in all sorts of unlikely spots, well away from the haunts of the usual suspects. She is a real pioneer, with the necessary courage to present, and keep on presenting, the artists she has discovered and believes in.





## Dieter Kosslick

Dieter Kosslick is a German film critic, journalist and researcher. He is the current Director of the Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale). He has held this post since 1 May 2001 when he took over from Moritz de Hadeln.

Dieter Kosslick studied Communication, Politics and Education at the Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich. After receiving his master's degree, he stayed on at the university in the Bavarian capital as a research assistant before moving to Hamburg in 1979 to work as speechwriter

and office administrator for the First Mayor of Hamburg Hans-Ulrich Klose. In 1983 he became involved in film funding, firstly as managing director of Hamburg's cultural film fund (Hamburg Film Office). In 1986 he founded the European Low Budget Forum with the cinema "Kino auf der Alster". In 1988 he became managing director of the city's economic film fund. The same year, he was a co-founder of EFDO (European Film Distribution Office)

In July 2000 the federal state and city of Berlin as well as the Federal Government of Germany appointed him director of Germany's prestigious Berlin International Film Festival. Dieter Kosslick took up his new position in the capital as head of the Berlinale on May 1, 2001.

Dieter Kosslick has received many honours and awards for the diverse ways in which he has promoted film and culture; the Bundesverdienstkreuz, the Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres among others.

### From the EFFE International Jury:

Dieter Kosslick has been one of the most important people in the development of German film, heading funds and enterprises crucial for German cinema. In 2001, he was appointed as the Berlinale director. He took over the directorship with a vision for the festival in the 21st century. He continued the work of his great predecessors, but also brought innovation. He added new sections to the festival programme and found a successful balance between star attendance and the core artistic integrity of the festival. He has contributed to liberty and democracy in countries on all continents and been relentless in demanding liberation for imprisoned artists.

For the 18 years of his tenure, Mr.Kosslick has become a symbol for expertise mixed with coolness, freedom-fighting mixed with great art and good humour mixed with seriousness. He has helped the development of cinema in many countries and is widely loved and celebrated for his spirit and compassion. These have remained unchanged despite his power, influence and celebrity status as an artistic leader.

**Berlinale** was founded in 1951; presented to the Berlin Senate as an individual and group initiative of American, British and German officers. Berlinale has always been the festival of freedom in the ideological world, the festival of art in the political world. Created at the very beginning of the Cold War, the Berlinale had a vision of unification - for the divided city, divided country, divided Europe and humanity. It was a Bridge where the Wall was a symbol.

It grew into one of the three "A"-film-festivals, although it was always substantially more engaged with reality and much less glamorous than its equivalents: Cannes and

Venice. It has presented generations of amazingly talented artists and enabled them to become classics of world cinema. It has always celebrated democracy in its programme and festival practice, and favoured high artistic quality and independence over money and power. Berlinale has been ahead of most other festivals in championing equality. It has presented low-budget films from small countries, as well as discovering and giving a chance to film makers persecuted in their own countries. Berlinale was always on the right side of history; always courageous and taking risks.

It has been rewarded with the loyalty of hundreds of thousands of visitors who last year paid 500.000 visits to the festival programmes, a record compared to any other festival. With 8 million euros of public money, the festival generates a 26 million euro budget. More than 30.000 national and international professionals, journalists and guests attend the festival and its more than 1.000 screenings each year. The Berlinale presents more than 400 films from all over the world. Its gender balance leads the festival sector, with female staff and directors forming the majority in most of the festival sections and many female film makers presented in the programmes. Berlinale remains a leading festival that inspires the world's artist with its freedom-loving character and quest for art and diversity.

## SALON SPEAKERS



## Romeo Castellucci

Director and stage, lighting and costume designer Romeo Castellucci (Cesena, Italy, 1960) is known throughout the world for creating a theatre founded on the totality of the arts and aimed at an integral perception. He has also written various theoretical essays on directing. His theatre engages in a type of dramaturgy that overturns the primacy of literature, thus becoming a complex and supple form of art, a theatre made of extraordinarily rich images expressed in a

language as comprehensible as music, sculpture, painting or architecture.

The Societas Raffaello Sanzio, the theatre company he created in 1981, is internationally recognised as one of today's most important Companies for its radical aesthetic stance and the profoundly human nature of its creations.

Since 2006, after the eleven performances of the cycle *Tragedia Endogonia*, a monumental recapitulation of tragedy in contemporary Europe, Romeo Castellucci regularly also works on individual projects of Opera and Theatre.

His stagings are regularly invited to and produced by the most prestigious international theatres, opera houses and festivals, in over fifty countries covering all the continents. Among his most recent creations: *Inferno.Purgatorio. Paradiso* (2008), *Sul concetto di volto nel figlio di Dio* (2011), *Parsifal* by Richard Wagner (2011), *The Four Seasons Restaurant* (2012), *Hyperion* based on Friedrich Hölderlin (2013), *Orfeo ed Euridice* by Christoph W. Gluck (2014), *Neither* by Morton Feldman (2014), *Go Down, Moses* (2014), *Le Sacre du Printemps* by Igor Stravinsky (2014), *Ödipus der Tyrann* (2015), *Moses und Aron* by Arnold Schönberg (2015), *The Minister's Black Veil* inspired by Hawthorne's parable (2016), *Democracy in America* freely inspired by Alexis de Tocqueville (2017), *Tannhäuser* by Richard Wagner (2017).

At the end of 2018, in November, he opens the last project in Brussels with the direction of *The magic Flute* by W.A. Mozart presented at La Monnaie, the Exhibition *History of old painting* presented at BOZAR Center For Fine Arts and the new performance *La vita nuova*, presented at KANAL Centre Pompidou, in coproduction with Bozar, Kanal (Brussels) and La Villette (Paris)



## Saodat Ismailova

She is one of the most internationally visible and accomplished representatives of a new generation of artists from Central Asia who came of age in the post-Soviet era and have established cosmopolitan artistic lives while remaining deeply engaged with their native region as a source of creative inspiration. Her debut feature film *40 Days of Silence*, a poignant depiction of four generations of Tajik women living in the complete absence of men, was nominated for best debut film at the 2014 Berlin

International Film Festival, and thereafter was screened in more than two dozen prestigious festivals around the world. Her video installation *Zukhra* was featured

in the Central Asian Pavilion at the 2013 Venice Biennale and her documentary film *Aral: Fishing in an Invisible Sea* won Best Documentary at the 2004 Turin Film Festival. Saodat Ismailova resides in Tashkent and Paris, and is affiliated with Le Fresnoy, France's National Studio of Contemporary Arts. Saodat's travel supported by the Aga Khan Foundation.



## Rabih Mroué

Born in Beirut and currently lives now in Berlin, is a theatre director, actor, visual artist and playwright. He is a contributing editor for *The Drama Review /TDR* (New York) and the quarterly *Kalamon* (Beirut). He is also a co-founder and was a board member of the Beirut Art Center (BAC).

He was a fellow at The International Research Center: Interweaving Performance Cultures/ FU/Berlin since 2013 -2014. He was a theatre-director at Münchner Kammerspiele (Munich) since 2015 – 2018.

He got different awards including the Foundation for Contemporary Arts for performing arts - New York, The Spalding Gray Award, New York 2010, and the Prince Claus Award - The Netherlands, 2011 among others...

He has performed and exhibited internationally including dOCUMENTA (13) - Kassel, CA2M Centro de Arte Dos de Mayo - Madrid, MoMa - New York , Centre Pompidou – Paris, SALT – Istanbul, The City Art Museum of Ljubljana, and others...

His works include: *Borborygmus*, *The Pixelated Revolution*, *So Little time*, *Ode to Joy*, *Riding on a cloud*, *How Nancy wished that everything was an April Fool's Joke*, *Looking for a missing employee*, *water Between three hands*, *The Inhabitants of images*, *Who's Afraid of Representation*, *Biokhraphia* and others...



## Beki Probst

Born in Istanbul, where she first worked as a journalist after completing her studies in law and journalism, Beki Probst moved to Switzerland, where she became the general manager of the Quinnie Cinemas. From 1981 to 1988, Beki Probst served as the Berlin International Film Festival's official delegate for Turkey and Greece. Beki Probst founded the European Film Market of the Berlinale in 1988, developing it into one of the most significant industry hubs in the international film business. She was its Director and later President until 2018. Beki Probst has served as a jury

member on multiple international film festivals and has received much recognition – she has been decorated as “Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres” by the French Ministry of Culture, was honoured with the Berlinale Camera in 2018 and in 2019 with the Honorary Award of the Swiss Film Award.

## MUSIC



## Albert Vila

Albert Vila began his musical studies at the "Taller de Musics" Barcelona, where he studied with Andy Rossety and J. Luis Gamez. In 1999 he was accepted into the Conservatory of Amsterdam and followed the "jazz guitar performance" program, there he had the opportunity to study with Jesse Van Ruller. In 2004 he was awarded with the first prize in the Dutch Jazz Competition for his composition "Gym Jam". The following year the conservatory gave him a scholarship to join the graduate program at the prestigious "Manhattan

School of Music" in New York, where he lessons from: Rodney Jones, Dave Liebman and Phil Markowitz.

In 2007 after completing his post graduate studies he decided to return to his hometown, Barcelona. Once in Barcelona he decided to lead a new project: Albert Vila quintet, with this group in 2007 won the national competition in Donosti "Debajazz", and is in the same year that the record label Fresh Sound New Talent released his debut album "Foreground music" In 2011 released his second album on Fresh Sound New Talent, entitled "Tactile" with seven new songs, Albert shows his work in Spain and in several European countries, receiving a very warm welcome by both the public and the critics.

In 2012, Albert presented his latest album in trio formation, where he surrounded himself by the great drummer Jorge Rossy and bassist Reinier Elizarde, this time his repertoire will consist of well-known American jazz standards. He was also awarded with the first prize at Jazz Hoeilaart competition for one of his songs.

In 2014 Joins the Jazz Master program for composition at the Royal Conservatory of Brussels. In 2015 He was teaching and performing next to: Dave Douglas, Aaron Goldberg, Greg Hutchinson and Reuben Rogers at the International Jalisco Jazz Festival.

In February of 2016 he releases his most recent record "The Unquiet Sky" recorded in NY and featuring some of the most original voices in the nowadays jazz scene: Aaron Parks on piano, Doug Weiss on bass and Jeff Ballard on drums.

During 2020 he is going to record his last trio project with new compositions and an upcoming tour in Europe.

## THE EFFE INTERNATIONAL JURY

The EFFE International Jury, chaired by Sir Jonathan Mills, former director of the Edinburgh International Festival, consists of a group of personalities from the arts and festival scene worldwide. They take the final decisions on which festivals will receive the EFFE Label and which festivals qualify for the EFFE Awards.



The International Festival Jury members are:

**Sir Jonathan Mills** | President EFFE Jury, Director Edinburgh International Culture Summit - Australia, UK

**Tamar Brüggeman** | Co-Director Wonderfeel - Netherlands

**George Delnon** | Artistic director Hamburg State Opera - Switzerland, Germany

**Peter Florence** | Founder and Director Hay Festival group - UK

**Fairouz Nishanova** | Director of the Aga Khan Music Awards and Aga Khan Music Initiative - Switzerland

**Keng Sen Ong** | Founder of the Singapore International Festival of Arts - Singapore

**Haris Pašović** | Theater director, Director East West Centre Sarajevo - Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Pawel Potoroczyn** | Diplomat, author, theatre, opera, film and music producer in Warsaw - Poland

**Ruta Pruseviciene** | Executive Director Vilnius Festival and General Director National Philharmonic Society - Lithuania

**Renato Quaglia** | General Manager FOQUS Foundation and Project Manager Friuli Future Forum - Italy

**Virve Sutinen** | Artistic director Tanz im August - Germany

# EFFE Laureates

# 2

## THE 24 EFFE LAUREATES

The EFFE International Jury selected 24 festivals out of 705 EFFE Labels 2019-2020 for their exceptional quality, work, commitment and impact within their contexts and territories.

**Afropolitan Festival**, Belgium

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**Ars Electronica**, Austria

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**Baltic Circle International Theatre Festival**, Finland

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**BBC Proms**, United Kingdom

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**Bergen International Festival**, Norway

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**Conrad Festival**, Poland

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**Dark Music Days**, Iceland

---

**Festival del Silenzio**, Italy

---

**Festival Deltebre Dansa**, Spain

---

**Festival Khamoro**, Czech Republic

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**Førde Traditional and World music Festival**, Norway

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**GAIDA Festival**, Lithuania

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**GogolFEST - Multidisciplinary International Festival of Contemporary Art**, Ukraine

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**HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival**, Armenia

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**Jazz'n Chişinău International Festival**, Moldova

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**Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival**, Germany

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**Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival**, Finland

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**Maggio Musicale Fiorentino**, Italy

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**Mother Tongues Festival**, Ireland

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**Music Biennale Zagreb**, Croatia

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**Prague Spring International Festival**, Czech Republic

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**Varna Summer International Music Festival**, Bulgaria

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**Vukovar Film Festival - Danube Region Film Festival**, Croatia

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**Welcome to The Village**, Netherlands

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# Afropolitan Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Ayoko Mensah, Afropolitan Festival Programmer*

LOCATION	Brussels, Belgium
DIRECTOR	Ayoko Mensah
DATES	08 – 10 February 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Digital Arts, Film, Literature

February might not seem the obvious month to hold a weekend festival devoted to Africa in Brussels' largest arts centre – hard to generate the heat of the plains or the humidity of the equatorial coast when the audience are draped in scarves. Nonetheless, that is

what BOZAR has been doing and the result is clearly a success.

Ayoko Mensah, a long-time cultural journalist who was editor of *Africultures* and has been managing the festival within BOZAR for the last three years, says it is aiming to be an innovating platform for African creativity. 'It goes back to the Visionary Africa exhibition held here in 2010. It had an important effect on how contemporary African cultures are seen. We want to reinforce these effects, to bring together the popular and intellectual artists and showcase their work.'

The programming is partly left in the hands of invited practitioners. 'Of course we bring artists from Africa but there is a very vibrant diaspora in or near Brussels and they very rarely meet, let alone collaborate in a transdisciplinary way. Afropolitan responds to a real need from both Africa and the diaspora in Europe – and from the various language groups.'

'Here the artists love the concept. The three days we have now are too short – a week would be better but there's always the question of money.' For the selection of what to put on (music, fashion, literature, discussions and cinema but also performing arts that cross boundaries) Afropolitan looks each year to a different pair of African arts practitioners already operating in Brussels who are familiar to the diaspora audience. For the next edition the blank 'black cards' will be handed to Prezy (an Afro-Trap musician of Cameroonian origin) and Sulaiman Addonia (an Eritrean writer) to 'build on the theme of bridges'.

'In Europe,' Ayoko says, 'the classifications between the arts are more obvious than they are in Africa. There the only real difference was between sacred and secular. So the bridges between music, dance and theatre are easier to cross.' While there is a real intent to maintain the high quality and intellectual content of the festival she

has found that reaching out to young people in Brussels through hip-hop and other popular genres is bringing an audience into BOZAR that would never usually cross its threshold.

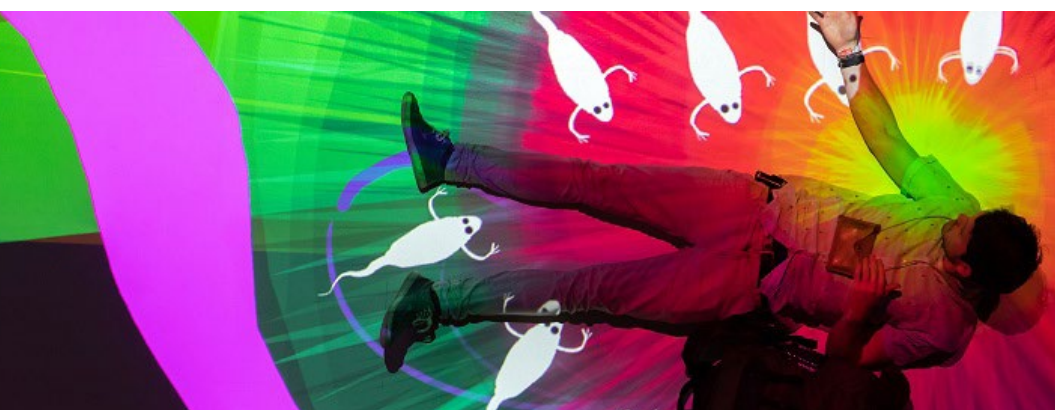
Ayoko hopes too that Afropolitan can be used to help cities in Europe and in Africa come up with similar programmes. 'There is a clear need in Africa itself and some cities are beginning to take artistic leadership. I think something will happen and I hope we can show the way.'

### **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This is the most systematic and the most complex presentation of African art in Europe today. It connects Europe to Africa with a deep understanding of the artistic currents on that continent at a time when many of its countries are reflecting on over half a century of independence.

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## Ars Electronica Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Veronika Liebl, Ars Electronica Director of European Co-operation*

LOCATION	Linz, Austria
DIRECTOR	Martin Honzik
DATES	5-9 September 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Digital Arts, Interdisciplinary, Music, Photography/Video

It would be natural to assume that a festival dedicated to all arts that are digital and electronically generated would date back only a few years, to the time at the start of this century when the internet had taken hold and digital was the most fashionable word on offer.

And one would be wrong. One might also assume that it was held in one of the capital cities creating their new media quarters and one would be only half right. Ars Electronica was actually started in 1979, long before the computer escaped from university or government silos. It was, though, making great inroads into experimental music, where electronically generated sound and manipulation was being caught and edited on reel-to-reel tape to change the nature of performance and, importantly, radio.

Linz is not a governmental capital city but it was then Austria's biggest industrial city. As Veronika Liebl, Ars Electronica's Director of European Co-operation, says, 'Linz was a super-heavy steel and chemicals producer, very dirty, and it realised this was

not going to be its future.' The local branch of Austria's national broadcaster, ORF, understood it needed to promote the idea that science and the arts together would be the mechanisms to get Linz through the period of industrial decline. Until then, Linz's claim to musical fame rested on its Cathedral organist from the 1860s, the composer Anton Bruckner, like his city disdained by fashionable and sophisticated Vienna, further up river.

While the early days concentrated on electronic music, as computer influenced visual art began to be explored during the 1980s the festival was quick to expand its coverage to new disciplines. 'In those days,' says Veronika, 'the original organisers remind me they had to ring the artists directly, not even on mobiles or by fax, often trying to call them in the middle of the night to persuade them to come and take part.'

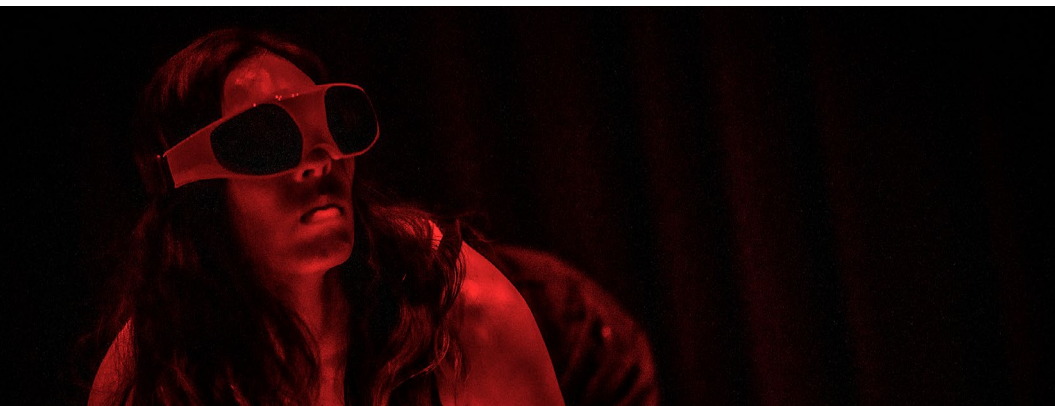
Gradually the audiences started to increase, helped by the establishment of the annual Sound Cloud event on the banks of the Danube, broadcast on national radio. 'Ars Electronica has become a huge platform for developing the intersection between art and technology. It also has,' Veronika tells me, 'important political messages. Now the arts are at the centre of arguments about whether European humanism wins out over US commercial monopolies or Asian government control, about which kinds of data can be collected, by whom, and how we can all participate without losing our freedoms, about how and why machines should be part of our lives.'

This year Ars Electronica had 111000 visitors, 548 individual events, 1,449 artists and scientists from 45 countries. 'It's constantly growing in diversity. What I love most,' Veronika says, 'is that I see a Japanese digital artist next to a British scientist, mixing with grandparents bringing kids who understand even more than they do. We're building bridges between generations as much as between artistic genres.'

### ***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

Ars Electronica has been held for 40 years. It retains its ability to fill the audience with curiosity for art, technology and society, and is at the forefront of presenting the cultural and social significance of new technical and scientific developments. Thanks to brilliant dramaturgy, audiences enter a place which is alive, pulsing, and takes into account the problems of the present no less than visions of a better future.

# Baltic Circle International Theatre Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Hanna Nyman, Baltic Circle Managing Director*

LOCATION	Helsinki, Finland
DIRECTOR	Hanna Nyman
DATES	12-17 November 2019
DISCIPLINES	Interdisciplinary, Theater

The title of the festival after 19 years is somewhat misleading, admits its Managing Director, Hanna Nyman. 'That was how the festival started,' looking at what was happening in theatre in the Baltic region, 'but now we are not really

focused on that. We have thought about changing the name but it's what people know us as and it's a good brand.'

The local context of Helsinki and southern Finland has come to be more important. 'There is an energy in Finnish theatre at the moment, a new wave of collective working that depends much less on a writer's text,' she says. 'The borders between different disciplines are shifting and floating.' She feels performers and directors, as well as dancers and film makers, are exploring this more than traditional theatre. It is, of course, a trend that has been visible across European theatre for over 50 years but is now becoming mainstream.

The festival was first envisaged in 1996, when a network of Baltic and Nordic theatre makers came together. It was held in Helsinki in 2000 but not as an annual event until 2007 and afterwards. It sees itself as a meeting place for theatre professionals still, as well as a showcase for contemporary trends.

This mission has seen it invite a far wider international representation, from as far afield as Japan and Canada. It has also led the team to explore more challenging relationships with the local community. Hanna Nyman is particularly proud of a production called *All the Sex I Ever Had*, worked up by a Canadian collective which was devised from the stories of local people over 65. 'It was such a touching and subtle performance,' she says, 'and very important to see for our audience, who are mostly under 40 and were confronted, not only with the life of their parents' generation but also their own future.'

## **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival involves the Nordic and the Baltic countries, including Russia, in terms of looking at what theatre is today. It has changed character and is now managed by younger hands; an idealistic project which enables people to work together across borders to create something special.

# BBC Proms



*Simon Mundy interviews David Pickard, BBC Proms Director*

LOCATION	London, United Kingdom
DIRECTOR	David Pickard
DATES	19 July - 14 September 2019
DISCIPLINES	Music

150 years ago the founder of The Proms, Henry Wood, was born and 125 years ago he conducted the first Proms concert in London's Queen's Hall. The extraordinarily young conductor's formula was simple. He wanted a

summer season for his underemployed orchestra and he wanted an audience who would never normally be able to afford concert tickets. So the seats on the floor of the hall were removed. The expensive stalls became cheap standing room and the programmes mixed great classics, pieces that were just fun, and lots of new music.

Now the formula has expanded but not changed. The BBC, its radio studios built next door to the Queen's Hall, took over the administration in 1937 and the concerts were forcibly moved two miles west to the much bigger Royal Albert Hall when the Queen's Hall was bombed in 1942. The Prommers stand in the huge arena and promenade around the gallery just under the roof. The festival has concerts every day (sometimes several) for ten weeks from July till September and every one is broadcast live on radio, with an increasing number on TV too.

Since the 1970s chamber concerts and talks have spread to neighbouring churches, colleges and halls, to a big outdoor stage in Hyde Park for crossover pop/classics, and – on the last night – to similar big stages in some of Britain's other cities, notably Belfast and Liverpool.

Seats, expensive and a little aloof from the action, can be booked in advance but to Prom you join the queue that snakes around the London streets from lunchtime (and, for a really popular night, sometimes long before). The queue is a social event in itself. Friends are made and greeted, students mix with octogenarians, kind neighbours keep your place when necessary. As the summer goes on you recognise more and more of the regulars. A guide to the average age range is that 57% are under 45.

Once inside, the prommers in the arena and gallery share their opinions in chants – special ones reserved for the orchestra tuning up and the opening of the piano lid. When the music starts, though, the silence is absolute (invariably coughs come from the expensive seats). 'We know the atmosphere is special,' says Proms Director David



Pickard, ‘because our musicians tells us it is. If you’re in a visiting orchestra the feedback from the hall – the way the audience interacts – is extraordinary.’

‘I can’t think of any festival in the world that has the breadth and depth of The Proms,’ David says. ‘Reaching the widest possible audience has always been important but, like classical music itself, that means something different in 2019 than it did in 1895. So the question I constantly ask myself is, if Henry Wood was bringing in ‘new’ composers like Sibelius, Rachmaninov and Ravel, who am I bringing in?’

The answer came with the first (that word is going to appear a lot in this paragraph) work of the first night of this year’s festival. Karina Canellakis became the first woman to conduct the First Night. It opened with the first performance of Canadian composer Zosha Di Castri’s Long Is The Journey – Short Is The Memory, written to mark the 50th anniversary of the first moon landing the next day. Then there was the first Proms performance of Dvorak’s neglected tone poem The Golden Spinning Wheel, and finally Janacek’s monumental Glagolithic Mass, first introduced to London by Henry Wood at The Proms in 1930. I think that gives the idea!

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

The Proms have dominated summer music-making in London for well over 100 years but recently the BBC has taken enormous steps to move beyond their traditional venues and audience. They have an extraordinary record for commissioning composers, hosting a huge range of orchestras and ensembles and developing fresh talent. The Proms have a very democratic atmosphere and an incredible media-footprint.

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## Bergen International Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Anders Beyer, Bergen International Festival Director*

LOCATION	Bergen, Norway
DIRECTOR	Anders Beyer
DATES	22 May – 6 June 2019
DISCIPLINES	Music, Theater, Dance, Interdisciplinary

The festival held in late Spring in Bergen has the comfort of not just being one of Europe’s most venerable among the group that started in the aftermath of World War II, it can trace its origins back a lot further – back to the determination of its greatest musician, Edvard Grieg, to bring the best of the world’s performers to his native city. He invited Amsterdam’s Concertgebouw Orchestra, then only 10 years old, in 1898.

'His sketch for how the festival should be became the foundation of ours – in fact some of his ideas are part of our statutes,' says the Director for the last 7 years, Anders Beyer, 'but after World War II people looked at what Salzburg and Edinburgh were doing and realised that cities that were not the biggest in a country could do something to reimagine the world – to demonstrate a new belief in life.'

That sense of purpose has stood the Bergen Festival in good stead ever since, Anders says. 'When an event is just a piece of paper on a Minister's desk, it will be a failure. If it is rooted in the people with real enthusiasm it will succeed.' Bergen, though only a city of quarter of a million, is not shy of saying what it thinks. 'Just as when the festival started, we now want to mirror the challenges the world faces. So I have a mandate which allows us to do many things; to be inclusive, world class, family friendly etc. And this, from my perspective, means I will be heavily criticised, which is in itself stimulating. I have to argue my case on prime time TV in Norway. Art matters to people here and they really care.'

The fact that he is from Denmark, with which Norway historically had much the same relationship that Scotland has with England these days, adds spice to the debates. Anders is philosophical. 'We must embrace our own time if we are to renew and rebrand the heritage. The world is so heavily interconnected that we have invested heavily in creating new productions in digital format. And we want to work with other festivals to share our audiences.'

'Even in our own community it is important to share what we have beyond the concert hall. These days spending public money is questioned, and that is not a bad thing. We can respond. Now we, for example, livestream visiting artists like the Berlin Philharmonic to old peoples' homes, schools, refugee camps – to those who cannot or cannot afford to come to the hall.' He sees this third century of a festival in Bergen as potentially the most exciting.

#### ***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

The Bergen Festival has for many years been the most important in Norway, celebrating Grieg's home town as well as its history and fjord landscape. With one of Europe's best orchestras resident and a collection of superb museums, Bergen has become an artistic destination that uses its isolated location to best advantage.

# Conrad Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Grzegorz Jankowicz , Conrad Festival Programme Director*

LOCATION	Krakow, Poland
DIRECTOR	Grzegorz Jankowicz
DATES	21 – 27 October 2019
DISCIPLINES	Literature

The Conrad Festival may be named after the great Polish writer, who sailed the world and wrote most of his work in English, but it is not about him. Having said that, Grzegorz Jankowicz, the Programme Director, admits that Joseph

Conrad’s sense of being a detached observer of very complex situations is one that guides the festival’s ethos. ‘We devote a few events to Conrad, there’s an annual Conrad lecture and an award in his name, but we mainly cover contemporary literature from around the world. There is a feeling that when Conrad went away from Poland, he left a gap. While he belongs to English culture, he writes with a Polish soul. So we are, in a way, trying to fill that gap by inviting writers from everywhere.’ About a third of the 150 who appear each year are not Polish.

In the autumn (this year 21 – 27 October) Krakow is alive for a week of debate and argument, using writers and literature as the catalyst. ‘The bottom line is that we think literature is the best language for discussing today’s problems. We talk about politics, religion, economic problems but through the medium of literature, the writers who explore them. We never discuss something just to make a book popular.’

Grzegorz spends the rest of the year as editor of one of Poland’s leading literary journals, which gives him a usefully topical knowledge of which writers have something interesting to say. ‘I can have a cold and critical look at what is being published,’ he says.

The festival events each run for just over an hour, allowing visitors to attend several in a day. Over the course of the week around thirty thousand readers visit the festival. ‘We are aware that there are many people who cannot get to the festival but can benefit from the ideas, so there is a lot of social work along with the events. We have many programmes with schools and seniors but also with prisoners – and we make the workshops in prisons part of the official programme. They have to be visible to the audience, not treated as artificial extras.’

Grzegorz arranges the programme along thematic lines. ‘We design it to work around a title, a story. We use the writers to develop the theme and its complexity, we’re not



interested in promoting the books sent by publishers.’This year the theme is ‘realities’ and how literature deals with it. He explains it like this; ‘At times literature fits in with our reality; then we feel that the world is – or should be – as it is described by literature; at other times we reject literature or we cannot understand it because its vision of reality is too singular. But it should be stressed that although we all live in the same world, we don’t all live in the same reality, and it is this ambiguity and discord from which literature draws its extraordinary power’.

The Conrad Festival is organised by the City of Krakow, the Krakow Festival Office and the Tygodnik Powszechny Foundation. The Festival is a strategic element of the Krakow UNESCO City of Literature programme (Krakow joined the network of creative cities in the field of literature in 2013)

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival in Krakow is one of the finest literature festivals in Europe. The quality of programming, finely-tuned talent-detecting radar, intellectual gravitas and global perspective makes it a perfect symbiosis: a textbook collaboration between locals and the global community of writers, poets and thinkers.

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## Dark Music Days



*Simon Mundy interviews Gunnar Karel M sson , Dark Music Days Artistic Director*

LOCATION	Reykjav�k, Iceland
DIRECTOR	Gunnar Karel M�sson
DATES	26 January – 2 February 2019
DISCIPLINES	Music, Interdisciplinary, Opera

The festival title, Dark Music Days, gives a clue to its location, not the mood of the music it presents. January in Reykjav k is not a time for late afternoon sunshine. Light of any sort is a fleeting commodity. “In truth,” says Gunnar Karel

Masson, its current leader, “there was not much happening in the city that month. It seemed a good moment to concentrate on contemporary work.”

For Icelandic composers, the Dark Music Days represent a sort of mid-winter professional sauna – a way to find out what they are writing and, since they are not too many earning opportunities at home, what their compatriots who have moved away are producing.

Placed precariously on top of the Atlantic Ridge that divides the two continental shelves, Iceland has a habit of looking in both directions at once - at the very different

music cultures of America and Europe, with the inevitable tendency to identify with Nordic sounds.

“At first the festival limited the type of music to mainstream contemporary classical but now we recognise that people are writing in a huge variety of styles. So our programmes are becoming much more eclectic. And that is bringing in new, young, audiences who do not find the music they usually listen to in the concert hall,” Gunnar Karel says.

The festival was founded in 1980 by the Society of Icelandic Composers for its own members to present their works but these days, while this is still an important focus, it is seen as an opportunity to assess their music in the overall context of the times. “The focus lies on works with mixed techniques where the boundaries of contemporary music performance are explored.” One of the largest venues is the Harpa Hall, the steel and glass building opened eight years ago in the wake of the financial crisis which hit Iceland particularly hard.

There is something encouragingly stubborn and Viking about the festival’s optimism, relishing adversity, that seems to characterise the country itself. Fiercely contemporary, oblivious of the weather, prepared to pit its composers against any in the world, the Society can even claim that its 80 members represent, out of total national population of 340000, surely the highest proportion of composers to citizens of any country in the world.

#### **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

The Icelandic winter is long and devoid of light for large parts of the day. This festival fills the gloom with contemporary music and has been doing since 1980. The jury appreciated its celebration of the relationship between the artist and nature.

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## Festival del Silenzio



*Simon Mundy interviews Riccardo Olivier, Festival del Silenzio Project Manager*

LOCATION	Milan & Brioso, Italy
DIRECTOR	Rita Mazza
DATES	2 – 5 May 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Interdisciplinary, Theater Music

The Festival of Silence must surely be one of the most ground-breaking events in Europe – a festival devoted to the arts that is also accessible to deaf and those who use sign language as native or second

language. If that sounds limiting, think again. The four day festival in May includes an extraordinary array of theatre, dance, film, workshops and discussions.

There is an advocacy agenda too, because Italy is one of the last countries that does not officially recognise its own sign language – a problem Project Manager Riccardo Olivier thinks mainly goes back to the policy of the Catholic Church which traditionally had responsibility for education of deaf children and resisted signing as holding people back from learning to speak.

‘We forget,’ says Riccardo, ‘that language is not just a function. It is there as a result of a culture. Culture produces and defines its own languages, spoken and written, just as each culture has its own sign language. There is an international sign, but it is not a proper language (not Grammatically structured) and does not work well for all native signers. It is usually harder to understand for non-native signers or signers not used to different sign languages. A signer from Italy who is used to his own local version of Italian Sign Language and not used to meet signers from other countries will have difficulties in understanding and using International Sign.’

The festival came about when a colleague, Cesare Benedetti, started to learn his partner’s sign language. Workshops and dance performances (with sign language) followed at the experimental arts centre they run in Milan, Spazio Fattoria. ‘It was crazy, though, that we were only reaching 25-30 people when we knew we could give something to many more.’ So they decided to start a festival.

They asked the native signing actress Rita Mazza to be artistic director. She left Turin and is now based in Berlin, a city she found more tolerant. ‘There really is nobody else who could have made a success of it. Signing has its own art forms, Visual Vernacular and its own poetry too.’ says Riccardo, ‘Not teaching sign language at school, whether you can hear or not, is a pity because it can open really interesting new doors; make each one of us more patient and tolerant also concerning language use, not so certain only one way is right.’

He says they turn the process of programming upside down, ‘so that everything is accessible, and we support also signing artists to produce their shows or to be part of other artists’ artistic development processes. This increases access to artistic research. We figure out a way that the artist is happy with and make sure this is not reducing the artistic value but support it. We also work with interpreters, surtitles, non-language-based shows.’

### ***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

A truly remarkable festival in Milan which concentrates on the arts that can be communicated without audible language. It particularly champions the use of signing, regarding sign language as a ‘mother tongue’ in its own right.

# Festival Deltebre Dansa



*Simon Mundy interviews Veronica Guirguis, Deltebre Dansa Content and Dissemination Manager*

LOCATION	Deltebre, Spain
DIRECTOR	Roberto Olivan
DATES	8 – 21 July 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Circus, Digital Arts, Interdisciplinary, Music

The River Ebro rises in the Cantabrian Mountains and flows South-east through Zaragoza, reaching the Mediterranean about halfway between Barcelona and Valencia. Where it meets the sea, a wide delta has formed of wetlands and silt, now a National Nature

Reserve for its wildlife and delicate environment. Deltebre, the core settlement on these flatlands, takes its name from its surroundings. To start a dance festival and community there could only be the result of one passionate individual. In this case it was Roberto Olivan, a dancer and choreographer who has spent much of his career in Brussels, first working with the celebrated Rosas company and then, from 2001, with his own group, R.O.P.A.- Roberto Olivan Performing Arts.

Deltebre and its nearby town upriver, Tortosa, are home, though, and from 2004 he decided he wanted to give something back so he started the festival – not as a normal series of performances but as a summer celebration of dance and movement, using professionals, workshop participants and local people. Workshops have become integral to Olivan’s way of creating and he leads them all over the world. At home, though, he wanted to ‘show his own people his work, and help young people study and live the performing arts,’ says member of the communication team, Veronica Guirguis.

Now there are two intensive weeks of workshops in July, with over 150 professional participants and around 300 beginners or talented amateurs. Intensive is the word. The workshops start at 9:30 in the morning and continue until 6pm. In the early evening there are talks and discussions before performances start at 10. ‘Then we party,’ smiles Veronica, ‘nobody wants to miss a second so of course everybody stays till late.’ In the midsummer heat such dancing must be exhausting. ‘It would be easier when the weather is cooler but this is the time of the year when everybody is free,’ whether from universities or dance company seasons.

It would be easier to hold workshops in a big city like Barcelona, ‘but it wouldn’t be the same. Here we are able to create our own performing arts city a long way from anywhere else.’ As so often in places where there is no professional artistic tradition,



there was resistance to the festival and Roberto Olivan's ambitions at the start. Fifteen years later, the attitude 'has completely changed. Now people wait for it and talk about it for months before.' Roberto says the festival has 'helped Deltebre develop cultural tourism – visitors who want high quality in what they see and do. We have a very fragile environment in the Ebro delta and we have to have visitors who will help us take care of it.'

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival founded by Roberto Olivan is having a big impact on and creating a real phenomenon in this little village in the southern part of Catalonia, on the delta of the River Ebro. It is accessible for a wide audience, but has become a place where professionals go for workshops and courses too.

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## Festival KHAMORO



*Simon Mundy interviews Jelena Silajdžić, Festival Khamoro Producer*

LOCATION	Prague, Czechia
DIRECTOR	Džemil Silajdžić
DATES	26 May – 1 June 2019
DISCIPLINES	Classical Music, Jazz, Pop

For a week in May Prague is host to the sights and sounds of Roma culture. An event that started small 21 years ago has become, it claims, Europe's largest gathering of the Roma arts in all their vibrancy, both traditional and

contemporary. The festival was not a spontaneous gathering of wandering people from Central Europe, it was the response of a pair of impresarios to a gratuitous act of prejudice.

'My husband and I are not Roma, we are Bosnian and we fled from Sarajevo in 1992 when the brutality was at its worst,' Jelena Silajdžić told me. 'I'm a film producer and my husband is a musician so when we came to Prague we did what we knew best and began producing events.' Seven years later they were producing a concert by a Roma band. When the musicians started to play the engineers deliberately sabotaged the sound. 'We were so angry,' says Jelena. 'We were refugees and we knew what it felt like to be rejected for no reason. We left our country because of nationalist fascism and yet here in the Czech Republic we were finding the same intolerance. We thought the best way to counter that was to start the festival – to celebrate Roma art, not suppress it.'

Jelena points out that because the Roma are a nation without a territory defined by

borders they always leave an influence on the settled cultures they come into contact with. 'From Russia to South America there is always an element in the rhythm, a step in the dance.' Modern Western Europe does not know it so well, she says, mainly being familiar with the sounds of Gypsy jazz, like the playing of Django Reinhardt. She wanted to show how much more there is in the culture.

'We started in a small space, perhaps for 300, and no Roma people came.' Gradually the ratio improved step by step as the scope of the festival broadened. 'Now it's about 10000 over the week and the audience is about half and half, though the non-Roma still tend to come to the jazz first.' There are about 300 performers, mostly from seven countries – Spain, Romania, Hungary, Russia, Czech Republic, Serbia and Slovakia – but increasingly the net is widening. 'We've had artists from India, Egypt, Finland, the US and Brazil too.'

She sees it as essential that the festival is not just about traditional Roma music. 'It's about meeting, talking, eating, discussing watching films, seeing the visual arts.' She says there are tensions between the generations, as in every culture, and they need to be explored – as well as how Roma life can fit into European life today as nationalism increases. 'We have an open stage for young Roma artists to really explore how they are merging their culture with contemporary arts and moving Roma culture on. We really always want to fight against the stereotypes.'

#### **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival describes itself as the world's largest of Roma music and takes place in Prague. At a time when Roma people are under pressure throughout Europe this is a festival we regard as important to highlight.

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## Førde Traditional and World Music Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Per Idar Almås, Førde Festival Director*

LOCATION	Førde, Norway
DIRECTOR	Per Idar Almås
DATES	3 – 7 July 2019
DISCIPLINES	Heritage, Music, Photography/Video

There is one very wiggly road that covers the 150km north to Førde from Bergen and finding your way by sea would be a bit of a challenge too, though there is a very small airport if you need to get back to Oslo in a hurry.

So of course, nestling at the head of a long fjord, it's the obvious place to hold a four day festival of traditional music from all around the world, quite a lot of it in the open

air, against a backdrop of mountains and glaciers.

There are an impressive number of visitors, though, plenty of whom - and even some musicians - will be camping. 'This year,' says its Director, Per Ider Almas, 'we're having a family lunch in the park. We're making lunch for 2500 with plenty of hot dogs as back up. We think we'll need another 500.'

Now marking its thirtieth birthday, the festival has developed into the largest in its genre in Scandinavia, and by far the most important in Norway. Though there are only about 13000 permanent residents, Førde still has a modern and spectacular art gallery, as well as an impressive four hall cultural centre. Apart from the open spaces, Per can count on venues from a small old house museum seating 25 to the main hall for 1900.

The music on offer from the 250 musicians is billed as 'folk and world' but Per says that is only half the story. 'We do a lot to keep the very old traditions of music alive, whether from Norway or anywhere else, and we take that duty seriously. But we also want to show the young musicians who are crossing genres with new soundscapes. We have the traditional music as the basis but then see how far we can go.'

There are some who like to hear what they regard as pure old music, 'but over the years they have come to trust us,' says Per, 'because while we are not afraid to challenge expectations, we do not attempt to be commercial or attract headline artists. We are only interested in the genuine musicians - not those who are changing music to make it more popular. We just want it to be interesting.'

Even in July it can be chilly by the water that far north. Per just shrugs. 'Most of the Norwegian visitors know how to dress and our international guests,' there are 30 countries represented this year, 'come prepared.' Nevertheless a roof does go up over the outdoor amphitheatre and there is one concert on top of the area's highest mountain which, he smiles, 'could be interesting and exotic.'

### ***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

Førde Traditional & World Music Festival in Norway provides a remarkable example of excellence as well as artistic and curatorial integrity. July 2019 sees its 30th edition, Førde annually presents 300 artists in 90 acts across 30 venues in concerts, workshops, master classes, children's events and many other endeavours. It has been a winner of Songlines' best world music festivals worldwide and The Guardian's top 10 festivals in Europe.

# GAIDA Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Remigijus Merkelys, GAIDA Festival Artistic Director*

LOCATION	Vilnius, Lithuania
DIRECTOR	Remigijus Merkelys
DATES	03-19 October 2019
DISCIPLINES	Digital Arts, Music, Opera, Theater

For nearly 30 years Vilnius has hosted this impressive Autumn festival of contemporary music in its mainstream venues. GAIDA has become one of the festivals where composers most want to hear their music and it has been

important in cementing the reputation of the Baltic Republics of the EU as leaders in steering the quality and direction of new classical music in the 21st century.

GAIDA has been determined in recent years, though, to make sure this music is enjoyed by more people than the traditional few enthusiasts who usually turn out when a première is on offer. ‘We have been lucky with our audiences,’ says Artistic Director Remigijus Merkelys, ‘and we have worked hard to increase them, especially with young people.’

‘About 10 years ago we decided we had to move away from the niche that new music normally finds itself in and become more diverse. We’ve done that by moving into electronic music of many kinds, performed by big names. The result has been a massive uptake by young people. These days we sell out more than half the concerts.’

The festival takes place in October and November each year. Deliberately Merkelys does not release the details of the full programme long in advance, preferring to drip feed the information so there’s something fresh to announce up until a few days before the events begin. However two suitably performances coming up illustrate the range of the next edition: Francesco Tristano, playing electric piano, and the Canadian Inuit throat singer, Tanya Tagaq.

‘Mainstream’ new music is still the programme core. Composers have to be at the heart of any new music festival and this year Merkelys has commissioned, among others, one established Lithuanian composer and one younger: Martinaitis Algirdas is writing a double concerto (violin and piano) and Dominicus Digimas is writing a major piece for string orchestra.

When a festival has been held for a generation it is interesting to find out which commissions stick in the Artistic Director’s mind as being special. Merkelys cites two very different works. He remembers with pleasure ‘a very small but important



piece,' a cello octet by the late Jonathan Harvey in 2008 and, from two years later, 'our own audio-visual production of Sand Glasses by Juste Janulyte. That has been an extraordinary success and has been seen all over the world, including Sydney and Paris.'

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival in Vilnius has become Lithuania's best known contemporary music festival, developing its programme of internationally known composers since 1991. GAIDA presents creations in many different genres, from symphonic orchestra concerts to electronic music, innovative multimedia projects, music theatre, sound installations and club events.

## GogolFEST - Multidisciplinary International Festival of Contemporary Art



*Simon Mundy interviews Andrii Palatnyi, Programme Director*

LOCATION	Kyiv and various cities, Ukraine
DIRECTOR	Maksym Demskyi
DATES	26 April – 1 May 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Interdisciplinary, Literature, Music, Theater

I suspect that Nikolai Gogol (1809 – 1852) would have thoroughly enjoyed the festival that bears his name in his native Ukraine. He was famously ambitious, as is the festival, and equally famously unafraid of pointing out the absurdities of those

in authority. There was nothing anarchic about him, though many of his works portrayed the anarchy that authorities could cause through their venality and stupidity. Importantly for present politics too, he was equally at home in the Ukrainian and Russian languages. What he perhaps would have liked best is that there is nothing normal about Gogolfest.

Most festivals are held in a particular place or region at a particular time of year. Gogolfest is not. It seeks out partner cities that are prepared to hold a festival to make a strong case for solidarity in the face of the forces, emotional or physical, that are tearing communities apart. In Ukraine the age-old tensions, not only of language, but of the different traditions in the four corners of the country, always need drawing together.

Andrii Palatnyi, Programme Director, says the aim of a Gogolfest event, 'is to make our country safe through uniting it.' The festival is relaxed about how they operate. 'There are several cities where we have started events ourselves and others where local activists have put together a festival and we have come in to make sure it continues.'

'The core of the festival is always theatre but in many different forms,' Andrii tells me. It started in 2007, a tumultuous period in Ukrainian politics, with actors led by Vlad Troitskyi taking over a 'huge and abandoned factory in Kyiv. They cleaned it up and had a week-long festival there. It came out of the underground artist movement of a decade or more ago.'

He goes on, demonstrating the scope by talking to me from a literary event in Lviv, 'that theatre core, though, is always multidisciplinary. If you like it's our first or outer circle but there is also a second, inner, circle that means we have synergy – music of many kinds, visual arts and literature – and there's always a lot of attention for children.'

Just what multidisciplinary means can be seen from the extraordinary week of festival in Mariupol this April, the city on the Sea of Azov only a few kilometres from the de facto front line with Russia-backed armed units. In the harbour and shipyard there Gogolfest climaxed with a ballet of loading cranes and an opera on a ship's deck which was tilted and half sunk in the process. Hardly small black box theatre! If the term festival is to be relevant through this century, then Gogolfest will surely be a cornerstone of these times just as Edinburgh and Aix were of last century.

***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

GogolFest is an incredible platform for artistic development: not only a single festival in one city but a whole movement presented in different festival formats and disciplines throughout the immense country of Ukraine. The strategic and artistic choices are exceptionally strong: contemporary, innovative, energetic, presented in a context of very limited financial means and political upheaval.

# HIGH FEST International Performing Arts Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Artur Ghukasyan, HIGH FEST Director*

LOCATION	Yerevan, Armenia
DIRECTOR	Artur Ghukasyan
DATES	1 – 10 October 2019
DISCIPLINES	Contemporary Dance, Circus, Interdisciplinary, Street Art, Theater

Confounding expectations is something that festivals are designed for and so it should not be surprising, but somehow is, to find one of Europe's most daring programmes of contemporary dance and radical theatre in Yerevan. That was the intention, right from the start in

2003, says its Director, Artur Ghukasyan. 'We began with a company from Avignon doing a piece of street theatre called Funeral, which involved moving with a coffin through the city and at one point taking their clothes off and having simulated sex. We thought it would cause a lot of trouble so we warned the Cathedral, the city authorities and the police but actually 80% of people loved it – so we knew we should carry on and every year we have a strong street theatre element.'

In the 15 years Highfest has been held the emphasis has been on work that can show its strength regardless of language. 'With contemporary dance you have no problems,' says Artur. 'You need good tech facilities – lighting, floors, projections – but we have and it's easy to bring. We started with dance, circus, mime but I always said I wanted a multi-form festival and these days new theatre is limitless, working across all art disciplines.'

Artur began his career studying production at the Edinburgh Festival in 1998 and he realised that, even if they started small, the festival could grow into something special. The word high in Armenian means the country itself but Artur says the wordplay with English is deliberate. 'So it also means Highlands, high mood, high standards and ambition. Now Highfest is a flagship event for Armenia and we have been called the most interesting theatre festival in Eastern Europe outside Moscow. We are trying to create possibilities for audiences to enjoy more complicated cultural experiences, not just relax with what they know already. If you want to relax, go to the sauna.'

For the region Highfest is especially important because Armenia is surrounded by countries with difficult social and political contexts which often limit access to the more challenging arts. 'We don't ask embassies for their recommended artists,' Artur says. 'We are not interested in officially approved shows.' Instead he himself views about 400 productions a year and works with colleagues able to offer something

different. ‘For example, we have found a producer in Iran who has a long list of young people who want to break down barriers,’ and encouragingly (as with Georgia and Russia) Highfest has found that there are plenty of people keen to cross the borders to come and watch.

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This was a very strong application. The general arts festival brings theatre, dance and music to Armenia from an impressive array of countries. It is a cosmopolitan bridge and its focus is on inclusion in a complex context. The openness of the multi-disciplinary festival is not only reflected in its high quality programme but on inclusivity and social sustainability. Their collaboration with women shelters, orphanages and elderly houses in Yerevan is a true inspiration.

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## Jazz’n Chişinău International Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Dan Bruma, Jazz’n Chişinău International Festival Volunteer*

LOCATION	Chişinău and various cities, Moldova
DIRECTOR	Valeriu Culea
DATES	17 – 19 April 2019
DISCIPLINES	Music

Chişinău is one of Europe’s least talked about capital cities, unless it is for political complexity, and Moldova’s cultural life tends to be overshadowed by its neighbours, Romania (of which it was part until after World War II). One

recent focus for international notice, though, has been the emergence of the Chişinău Jazz Festival, held during April since 2013.

It was the brainchild of the pianist Valeriu Culea, who is still its driving force and writes most of the ensemble arrangements. For this interview, fearing for the fluency of his English, he invited musician and volunteer of the festival Dan Bruma to speak on his behalf. There is anyway a co-operative feel to the way the festival is managed, perhaps reflecting the nature of jazz itself and Culea’s own multifaceted interests.

‘Chişinău really needs this festival because we really had nothing like it. We started by looking at the way jazz can work with other art forms – with a painter at work while the musicians played – and we aim to expand that.’

As its venue the festival uses the city’s main Philharmonic Hall, rather than the smoky nightclubs the genre usually inhabits. It means the audience tends to come from the among intellectual enthusiasts but that, Bruma says, does not mean that concerts are

very formal; merely that 'there is not really any underground jazz in our city. It is just not part of our cultural tradition. In the small clubs around town the scene is more likely to be folk music.'

According to the EFFE jury, the most encouraging aspect of the festival is its ability to bring musicians from around the world to a city that is largely devoid of international connections. This was greatly assisted by international missions and embassies, particularly the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), the embassies of the USA, Italy, Poland, Lithuania, the German cultural center "Akzente", Ministry of Education, Culture and Research, Chişinău City Hall, the EU Delegation to Moldova and Adam Mickiewicz Institute from Poland.

Moldova continues to be isolated from its neighbours. Despite the close linguistic and cultural ties with Romania there is still an EU border in between. 'Our musicians perform there, but few Romanians come here and the border is not free in either direction,' says Buma. The problems are even greater with Ukraine, which surrounds it on three sides, because of the multiple tensions with Russia. However, jazz can make its point. 'On the third day of the festival, a new project is usually presented, created on the basis of Valeriu Kul's music, with the participation of international and local musicians. In just three days of getting to know each other and their various styles - we have a team that inspires to experiment and combines jazz music with various musical genres.'

***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

This small but beautiful festival in Moldova features jazz from the region which still needs to be discovered. It offers an insight into the high quality this country can contribute to the international community. At the same time it brings international artists to a country that too rarely sees them.



# Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Gerhard Wissner, Kassel Dokfest Director*

LOCATION	Kassel, Germany	Kassel is a city that could be a lesson in civic survival so it is perhaps not surprising that its main international festival is one devoted to documentaries. The city sees itself as being at the geographical centre of Europe (depending on how Europe is defined) but it is certainly central in Germany, a relatively small city of around 200 thousand that found itself heavily influenced by the atmosphere of the Cold War because of its close proximity on the Western side to the East German border about 30km away.
DIRECTOR	Gerhard Wissner	
DATES	12 - 17 November 2019	
DISCIPLINES	Digital Arts, Film	

Kassel Dokfest has a reputation for seriousness and Gerhard Wissner, the festival’s long-term Director, agrees that almost by definition, documentaries tend to deal with the world’s problems rather than its levity. ‘My opinion is that you have to face how the world is and then you will react.’

That, though, only gives one side of the festival, which has been running since 1981. It covers, says Gerhard, any form of visual activity that is not fiction. ‘It is about how you question, imagine without making up stories, and explore ways of dealing with time and space.’ Documentary now has evolved and is a great deal wider than just journalism on film.

A major part of Kassel Dokfest now looks at the way artists are using the audio visual medium to chronicle the world around them – their use of screens, installations and sound. The artist’s approach to recording and reacting, editing and manipulating is very different from traditional reportage.

‘What keeps me going,’ says Gerhard, ‘is that it is different each year.’ Because it does vary so much from year to year he is ‘shy to discuss trends,’ finding that filmmakers inevitably work on the themes that occupy society at any moment. ‘There were some years when we had a lot of films about refugees but that has slackened.’ There are a mass of biopics at the moment, the environment is covered, and he finds that many young directors make films about their own family and then their focus widens as they grow older. ‘What I see missing, though, are films looking at our own society in Germany.’ Perhaps it is easier to make documentaries about ‘other people.’



Gerhard works with a selection team of 23, sifting through the more than 3.000 films and projects submitted, for both screening and competition. Roughly 250 are shown during the six days of Dokfest each November. The festival understands itself as European and addresses an international audience, which is supported by the language rule that everything has English subtitles, including German submissions.

The festival is connected and integrated into the city very well, so Kassel Dokfest has a list of some 200 hosts who are willing to put up filmmakers in their homes. This has huge advantages, says Gerhard. The hosts come to see the films and guide the participants around town where they meet many local people, start friendships and often new projects. 'It means that we are more than an event, we are a community.'

### **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This November festival has been held for 35 years. It shows well over 200 short films in six days and concentrates on experimental artistic productions as well as documentary features. It explores the outer reaches of contemporary visual media, including installations, educational film and a university film day.

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## Kuhmo Chamber Music Festival



*Article by Simon Mundy*

LOCATION	Kuhmo, Finland
DIRECTOR	Sari Rusanen
DATES	14 - 27 July 2019
DISCIPLINES	Music

This festival in Finland has been featuring small scale classical music for fifty years. It takes place in the last two weeks of July and prides itself on offering high quality chamber music in an area of beautiful landscape 600km

north of Helsinki, close to the Russian border. Kuhmo is part of the region of Karelia, an integral part of Finnish stories but also of the music of Jan Sibelius, who drew on its folk traditions in many of his most famous works.

Even the nearest railway station is 100km away in Kajaani so there is little point in turning up for just a single concert. Despite its relative isolation and having a population of under 10000, Kuhmo boasts a fine modern arts centre in lakeside surroundings. Events take place there and in the town's wooden church, as well as its newly built school and surrounding villages.

The festival plays host to an impressive array of musicians, using the small scale to its

advantage by allowing performers and audiences to mix easily. In a way there is little choice as the town only has two hotels. Visitors and artists spread out into holiday cottages, camp sites and local homes.

The Artistic Director is the viola player and composer, Vladimir Mendelssohn, who has been playing in Kuhmo for nearly forty of its fifty years – although he is originally from Bucharest, connections which triangulate Europe between them.

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

This festival in Finland has been featuring small scale classical music for fifty years. It offers high quality in a beautiful landscape: a very resilient festival that has kept its artistic integrity and draws attention to this distant area 600km north of Helsinki close to the Russian border. Even the nearest railway station is 100km away.

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## Maggio Musicale Fiorentino



LOCATION	Florence, Italy
DIRECTOR	Alexander Pereira
DATES	6 May - 11 July 2019
DISCIPLINES	Ballet, Music, Opera, Theater

Why is the Maggio “the” Maggio? Above all, because of its history: a Season of symphonic concerts resulted in a Festival which, in turn, resulted in the founding of a music theatre company.

In 1928 Florence created an Orchestra, a seemingly natural consequence of the growing international dimension of a city that for centuries had been devoted, like few others, to art and culture. It was a courageously elitist decision for the time and resulted, in 1933, in the first Festival of Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, which followed the European tradition of presenting theatre and music together. It is now the oldest festival in Europe after Salzburg and Bayreuth.

It is for its prestigious history through the last decades that still today the Maggio, with its top-notch offering of opera and concerts, continues to be synonymous with innovation, purpose, and an interdisciplinary vision of music and performance, concerts and exhibition, and opera and seminars, which complements and perfectly embodies the vibrant culture of the unique and stunning city of Florence - a city of art, monuments and museums, and a city enriched with an incomparable, magnificent past.

For decades and over the years the greatest names in music performance have

appeared at the Maggio and have established long and productive relations with the city in an ever-increasing connection between the Festival itself and all the other activities that take place throughout the year in the historic theatres of Florence as well as - and mostly - in the new venue of the Teatro del Maggio one of the most interesting European Opera Houses created and designed to offer the most innovative technical equipment and a modern, efficient and stylish auditorium with excellent acoustics to its audience.

Major chapters in the history of the Orchestra, the Chorus and the Teatro del Maggio Fiorentino, on the last 50 years are the musical directions of Riccardo Muti (1969 – 1981), and Zubin Mehta (1985 - 2017), who is now the Honorary conductor for life and, from last May 2018 of Fabio Luisi. And today, as in the past, it's not a question of a mere parade of famous persons; each one of them has helped the Maggio audience and, by extension, all music lovers to gain greater knowledge and understanding.

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

The Maggio Musicale Fiorentino is one of the oldest arts festivals and traces its origins back to the spring festivals of medieval Florence. Into the twentieth and this century the programming has undergone a profound process of renewal guided by great music personalities, confirming its value and international status.

# Mother Tongues Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Francesca la Morgia, Mother Tongues Festival Director*

LOCATION	Dublin, Ireland	In Ireland language is a deeply political subject. The centuries-old battle between Irish and the English of the governing classes is still a live subject of debate. There is a newer reality, though, which is the gap between locals and the increasing number of residents who have come to work and live in the country since Ireland joined the EU and its economy became global.
DIRECTOR	Francesca la Morgia	
DATES	22 - 23 February 2020	
DISCIPLINES	Architecture, Circus, Film, Interdisciplinary, Theater	

Ireland is now a country where many languages are spoken but most in the privacy of homes, not in public. The Mother Tongues Festival tackles that monolingual public space by offering a high quality artistic programme. 'Maybe we are saying these are

not foreign languages – it's the way Ireland is now,' says Festival Director Francesca la Morgia, 'More and more families live in bilingual or trilingual households.'

Mother Tongues has only been held twice but is already proving to be a fascinating window into local people's lives. 'We try to showcase as much as possible – whatever feels like home.' So the origami workshop was in Japanese, there were children's illustration sessions in Portuguese and Polish, theatre in Irish and other events in Bulgarian, Spanish and Arabic, among many others.

'For the children they suddenly see the relevance to the outside world of the language they speak only at home,' Francesca says. 'For adults it's so important because they are often disconnected, having to engage through their children's better English with the society around them. The festival is a good opportunity to end that isolation and have a conversation. I heard from one mum who was crying with happiness to see her daughter enjoying herself in her own language outside the home. And the Japanese artist who had never spoken it in a public talk before.'

Not everyone joining the festival comes from another country and, while some events are immersive in an unfamiliar tongue there are many that are bilingual. 'Music, of course, is universal and people are used to listening to other languages sung. We found in the hip-hop workshop that rap works in anything.'

Francesca points out that lack of language can have devastating effects in terms of isolation and social wellbeing. 'Race and colour divisions are based on concepts and attitudes but language division is real and unbiased. This arts festival is helping us have a discussion about who we really are.'

***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

Contemporary Ireland has many immigrants who work hard in the community. This festival embraces their cultures and experiences based on epics, fairy tales and stories in their mother tongues. For those who work in factories and on farms this is an important way of showing their own traditions to the majority Irish population.



## Music Biennale Zagreb



*Simon Mundy interviews Antun Tomislav Šaban, Croatian Composers' Society Secretary General and Margareta Ferek Petrić, Music Biennale Zagreb Artistic Director*

LOCATION	Zagreb, Croatia
DIRECTOR	Margareta Ferek Petrić
DATES	6 - 13 April 2019
DISCIPLINES	Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Interdisciplinary, Music, Opera

There are not too many festivals which can boast that Stravinsky appeared at the second edition and that, many years later, its then Artistic Director, Ivo Josipovic, became President of the country from 2010-2015 and had to be protected by bodyguards at his own concerts. But that sums up both the

prestige of the Music Biennale Zagreb (MBZ) and the central position it has in the artistic life of Croatia.

Run by the nation's Composers' Association, it has been hosting a combination of the world's leading creative voices and its own members since 1960. During the last thirty years of communism, when it was part of Yugoslavia, Zagreb capitalised on its political position of being an acceptable destination for both Soviet bloc and Western musicians. It allowed local composers the ability to hear what their colleagues from both traditions were doing, whether the experimentalism of the West Germans or the more traditional idioms favoured by the Soviet aesthetic.

Antun Tomislav Šaban, the composer who is guiding the festival between editions in his capacity of Croatian Composers' Society's Secretary General (the next is in April 2021) feels that MBZ has its special place because it is not afraid to concentrate wholly on the music of its own time: a full scale immersion in which musicians and audiences can take a critical view of their own period. "We have two duties, I think. One," he says, "is to give our own composers the chance to hear their music in well-prepared performances so that their quality can be shown in an international context and to their peers from abroad. The other is to let audiences here get to know what are now contemporary classics by composers who are still with us – or have been part of the festival's history."

For 2021 MBZ will have a female composer in artistic control for the first time. Margareta Ferek Petrić is a 37 year-old composer from Zagreb, now based in Vienna. She is relishing the challenge and feels that she can refresh the model as the festival enters its third generation. "MBZ represents the diversity and creativity of the Croatian

and international contemporary music scene. My goal is to have a festival where artistic collaborations between musicians and composers are as important as winning over the audience of the future. through workshops and concerts for children and young people, I also want to encourage music students to explore new sounds. In 2021 & 2023 we will celebrate the founder, Milko Kelemen; draw a bow over time confronting the tradition with new artistic approaches, always creating a stage for curious minds of all generations.”

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

Since 1961 Music Biennale Zagreb (MBZ) has been dedicated to presenting and supporting the development of contemporary music of all genres through two prevailing ideas: tolerance and high quality music production and creativity. The festival features both “living legends” and upcoming talents, offering its audience a wide range of approaches to contemporary artistic expression, featuring symphonic and chamber orchestras, experimental music theatre, contemporary dance, jazz, electronic and alternative music.

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## Prague Spring International Festival



LOCATION	Prague , Czechia
DIRECTOR	Roman Belor
DATES	12 May - 4 June 2019
DISCIPLINES	Classical Music, Jazz

The Prague Spring International Music Festival is considered the most important arts event in the Czech Republic.

In 1946, during the anniversary of the end of the Second World War and as part of celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Czech Philharmonic, the Prague Spring Festival was established at the initiative of the Czech Philharmonic’s chief conductor, Rafael Kubelík. In the second year, the Prague Spring International Music Competition was added. Subsequently the Festival, held in the heart of the formerly long-divided Europe, became a bridge between East and West. Kurt Masur had once described the festival as ‘the most important cultural link between the East and the West in the era of the Iron Curtain’.

The very first annual festival already saw the participation of a number of distinguished Czech and foreign musicians, among whom the American composer, pianist, and conductor Leonard Bernstein would win the greatest fame in the course of the following decades. Bernstein’s appearance in Prague was his overseas debut, and it is



listed in his official biography as one of the most important moments of his career.

Another fundamental regular project of the Festival is its support for young interpreters from all over the world in the form of the Prague Spring International Music Competition. The Competition has helped to launch the international careers of many now legendary interpreters, including Mstislav Rostropovich, James Galway, Maurice Bourgue, Natalia Gutman, and the Smetana Quartet.

The programme is usually offering around 45 concerts with a broad, colourful range of events that will captivate both fans of the full orchestral sound and those who love chamber music, followers of contemporary music and those who monitor the latest trends in the historically informed interpretation of music from past eras.

The 75th season of the festival will be at several venues in Prague including Dvořák Hall at Rudolfinum and Smetana Hall at Municipal House from May 7 until June 4, 2020. The opening concert on May 7 with Berliner Philharmoniker under the baton of their new chief conductor Kirill Petrenko.

#### **Note from the EFFE International Jury**

The Prague Spring Festival was started in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and has survived all the political upheavals since. It has been an inspiration to music lovers through all those years and to appear at it is a distinction valued hugely by composers and performers alike. In these more settled times it retains its place as one of the great annual gatherings of European art.

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## Varna Summer International Music Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Mario Hossen, Varna Summer Music Festival Artistic Director*

LOCATION	Varna, Bulgaria
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR	Mario Hossen
DATES	23 June – 3 August 2019
DISCIPLINES	Ballet, Contemporary Dance, Interdisciplinary, Music, Opera

For most people in Western Europe, Bulgaria is undiscovered country and, if they are aware of its Black Sea city of Varna at all, it is as holiday resort of crowded beaches. It is a surprise to find that its summer classical music festival runs all through the hot

season and has been doing so since 1926, long before Salzburg and Edinburgh began their operations, started by the composers Pantcho Vladigerov and Dobri Hristov.

It has evolved through many names and formats since then, emerging as an international festival in 1968.

2019 sees 93 years since the foundation but with the international acclaimed violinist Mario Hossen's first as Artistic Director. For all that he has known the festival most of his professional life. 'I was only 17 when I first appeared in Varna Festival Hall, performing Paganini's Concerto No.1 with Varna Philharmonic Orchestra, and that was (he sighs) 27 years ago.'

With all its longevity, though, the festival and the city is still in the process of rediscovering its potential and Mario sees there is plenty still to do. 'We want to create a real atmosphere across the whole city, not just in the centre, to reach out and persuade all the people that we can to celebrate together. The festival needs to be much more visible all over the city.'

Varna is not short of good music venues. It has a Festival Hall seating 1100 and an open air theatre for 2200, as well as smaller halls at the university and in the roof space of the main Art Gallery. The cultural department of the City of Varna has contemporary music in the archaeological museum set among the ruins of the Roman buildings (Varna Gold Treasure is considered the oldest processed gold in the world dating back to 5000-4000 BC) and, he points out, 'the jazz is where it should be: in the jazz clubs but also on the beach.' The programme covers most genres from baroque to contemporary, though its core is in the mainstream, heavily influenced by the legacy that Vienna classical music tradition has left across Europe.

Mario insists that in his tenure as an international violin virtuoso there will be no artistic compromises and that he wants to broaden musical horizons. 'Even if some of the world established names are not so well known in Bulgaria, and the young bulgarian artists are still not enough famous abroad the level will be very high and we also want to be able to bring some of the world's great orchestras and ensembles to Bulgaria for the first time. Varna has been part of the European festival family for so many years. It is open to the ideas of sharing the message and we want to open Bulgaria to other Europeans. There is such a pulse in this city: such young energy.'

### ***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

Varna Summer International Music Festival gives artistic substance to Bulgaria's principal Black Sea resort. It engages audiences in international exchange and productions not only with well-known orchestras and ensembles but also new talents and a very fine choice of artists from the country and the region.

# Vukovar Film Festival



*Simon Mundy interviews Dean Sinovčić, Vukovar Film Festival Artistic Director*

LOCATION	Vukovar, Croatia
DIRECTOR	Dean Sinovčić
DATES	4 – 7 July 2019
DISCIPLINES	Film

'It would be much easier to organise this festival on the Adriatic coast where almost every city has one but that is not the point,' says Artistic Director Dean Sinovčić. 'Here, 24 years after the war, things are still difficult and the festival is

important.'

The war was the brutal breakup of Yugoslavia and Vukovar became a symbol of its crazed logic. Only 10% of its buildings were left undamaged when the army swept across the River Danube from Serbia and devastated the town, forcing its inhabitants to flee further into Croatia or abducting them. Many died. When I went there as part of a Council of Europe delegation in 1997 it was under UN Peacekeeping control. Only a few stunned people remained, augmented by equally stunned Serb settlers who had been promised wonderful new property and who found themselves in near ruins surrounded by landmines. My room in the only functioning hotel was riddled with bullet holes.

Since then much, though not enough, has changed. Many buildings have been restored and new ones built. A proportion of those forced out have returned but the town is scarred, physically and psychologically. The Danube is not now a divide between two Yugoslav Republics but between the European Union and Serbia. 'Now Croatia is in the EU many young people have left – mainly for Ireland, Austria and Germany,' Dean told me. Vukovar's population has dropped by a third to about 18000.

The Film Festival week has been running for 13 years and is a chance to change the narrative. 'A guy born in 1995 doesn't care now about that history, he cares about films and music, so that is what we give,' Dean says, pointing out that there are rock concerts as well as films during the festival. As with many film festivals there is a competitive element but it also gives viewers an early chance to catch up with the winners of the Cannes and Berlin Festivals that would otherwise find it hard to get a screening in such a remote location.

These days Dean has a reasonable number of venues to play with. There are terraces seating around 400 on the new water company's offices and in the grounds of the 18th

century castle. Then a German company has recently opened a 3 screen ‘miniplex’ of 200 seats each. The audience is not surprisingly mainly local but Dean reports there are an increasing number of visitors from Zagreb and upriver in Hungary and, most encouragingly, over 100 from Serbia – a very short distance by boat but a long way mentally.

The big challenge for the town now is economics because it has missed out on the benefits of tourism that have boosted the Istrian and Dalmatian parts of Croatia. ‘The atmosphere in Vukovar is definitely not perfect but it is much better, especially if you are young. We are a politics-free festival – no speeches – and we hope things keep improving.’

**Note from the EFFE International Jury**

Vukovar, on the Croatian bank of the Danube, was almost totally destroyed by war in the 1990s and has been looking to come back to life ever since. The summer Film Festival, with many screenings in the open air, makes this regeneration visible by using the locations around the town including the Danube itself and a reconstructed monastery as well as the new cultural centre and cinema spaces opened this century.

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# Welcome to The Village



*Simon Mundy interviews Sjoerd Bootsma, Welcome to The Village Director*

LOCATION	Leeuwarden, Netherlands	Welcome To The Village (WTTV) is ‘an invitation – to spend time, reflect, contribute and have a seat at the table,’ says Sjoerd Bootsma, who describes himself as ‘Artistic leader and Chef Pannekoeks’. ‘In a way we are a protest against mass events, creating space and a place for four days, a Utopian ideal of how a village should be run, a hands-on DIY approach to activism.’ He actually collates the notion of practical activism into the not-entirely dictionary legitimate ‘practivism’.
DIRECTOR	Sjoerd Bootsma	
DATES	18 - 21 July 2019	
DISCIPLINES	Music, Interdisciplinary, Literature, Theater, Sculptures	
WTTV calls itself ‘the most beautiful small festival in The Nertherlands’. It is held in a recreation area and nature reserve on the Eastern fringe of Leeuwarden, capital of Friesland (the northernmost region of The Netherlands) and one of last year’s European Capitals of Culture. For him WTTV is only partly an artistic happening. It is as much		

a social and political statement about the way we should live together, co-operate, volunteer and then enjoy ourselves – and about looking forward to the middle of the century. ‘How we organise is just as important as what we organise,’ he says. The festival is helped by around 1000 volunteers, many of them from parts of society usually pushed to the margins: those with mental health issues, the elderly, refugees.

‘A village for a festival is temporary,’ Sjoerd points out, ‘but the infrastructure that supports it is permanent.’ So he has year-round relationships with local farmers who supply the food, as well the management of De Groene Ster, the nature reserve in which the festival takes place. He is also proud that, through the local technical college, WTTV has helped several start-ups by testing their prototype ideas. Now that openness has become global, with the festival taking on a role as laboratory for new initiatives from all around the world.

‘We want to show that the arts are the most important drivers of change.’ The artists and entertainers chosen to appear at WTTV tend to be deliberately genre-bending, like the festival itself resisting being categorised. Sjoerd says the festival is all about different concepts of time and how you spend it. He draws the distinction between the two embodiments of time in Greek myth, Kronos and Kairos. Kronos is seen as the establishment clock, the inexorable and unchanging sequence, whereas as Kairos is flexible and considered. ‘We see the festival as a way of escaping the usual clock; of creating a temporary society that has an optimal atmosphere of understanding.’

***Note from the EFFE International Jury***

Welcome To The Village, in Leeuwarden, northern Netherlands is a pop festival that creates an all-inclusive family feeling on its outdoor festival site. Its raison d'être is ecological and social sustainability, wrapped in an energetic 4-day music party that not only focusses on these 4 days, but also thinks about what our world will look like in five or fifty years' time. Besides their high quality line-up (which also includes classical music, 'world music', visual arts, et al.), they organize DORP - hundreds of students, artists, volunteers, designers, scientists, visitors working together - which uses the festival as a testlab for innovative ideas in different areas, incl. food sustainability.



## A NEW FESTIVAL CITIES ALLIANCE

We extend a warm welcome to 43 representatives of cities coming together in the framework of the EFFE Awards Salon to express the necessity to collaborate closely with their arts festivals. They will meet up at the invitation of the City of Brussels at the City Hall after the Salon to discuss first proposals for concrete actions.

**Delphine Houba** | City of Brussels - Alderwoman of Culture, Tourism, Big Events and Municipal Equipment

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**Elfi Dombret** | City of Brussels - Secretariat of Alderwoman Delphine Houba

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**Marie-France Botte** | City of Brussels - Fundraising City Hall

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**Antoine Umbrain** | City of Brussels - International Relations Officer

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**Ivan Portnih** | City of Varna - Mayor

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**Plamena Marinova** | City of Varna - Deputy Mayor

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**Stanislav Stilyanov** | City of Varna - Protocol

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**Antonia Yovcheva** | City of Varna - Director of Culture Department

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**Bilyana Raeva** | City of Varna - Representative of Varna in Brussels

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**Therese O'Connor** | Ministry of Culture Ireland - Attaché at Irish Perm. Rep. to EU

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**Oleksandr Kochurin** | City of Mariupol - Deputy Mayor for Culture, Sport and Education

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**Larysa Bondarieva** | City of Mariupol

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**Nataliia Khomuk** | Sirko's Beeyard - Sicheslav Festival Association member

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**Trukhanov Gennadiy** | City of Odesa - Mayor

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**Tetiana Markova** | City of Odesa - Department of Culture and Tourism - Director

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**Serhiy Morhunov** | City of Vinnytsia - Mayor

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**Vladyslav Skalskyy** | City of Vinnytsia - Deputy Mayor

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**Nataliia Skrypchenko** | Tokmakivka Municipality - Mayor

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**Milan Bandić** | City of Zagreb - Mayor

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**Lluís Soler I Panisello** | City of Deltebre - Mayor

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**Paula Navarro Pujol** | City of Deltebre - Law and Environmental Technician

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**Anna Giménez Uribe** | City of Deltebre - Councilor of Culture

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**Eutimio Mauri Castells** | City of Deltebre - President of Consell Riumar

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**Francisco Castro Casanova** | City of Deltebre - Councilor Town Hall

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**Nuno Mascarenhas** | City of Sines - Mayor - Festival Musicas do Mundo (FMM - Sines)

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**Carlos Seixas** | City of Sines - Director - Festival Musicas do Mundo (FMM - Sines)

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**Valentina Antic** | City of Novi Sad - European Youth Capital 2019 - Head of International Cooperation (OPENS)

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**Nina Latinovic** | City of Novi Sad - European Youth Capital 2019 - Event Manager (OPENS)

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**Danijela Mirjanić** | City of Belgrade - Member City Council

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**Robert Piaskowski** | City of Krakow - Plenipotentiary of the Mayor of the City of Krakow for Culture

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**Edita Tamošiūnaitė** | City of Vilnius - Deputy Mayor

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**Aušra Kiškūnienė** | City of Vilnius - Deputy Head of Culture Department

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**Ivar Svensøy** | Førde Municipality – Representative

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**Martin Benda** | City of Prague - Vice-chair of the Culture Committee

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**Harm Christian Tolden** | City of Bergen - Director General - Department of Culture

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**Julie Andersland** | City of Bergen - Deputy Mayor

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**Hilde Bjørkum** | Region of Sunnfjord - Director for culture and sports

---

**Sybrand Buma** | City of Leeuwarden - Mayor

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**Sjoerd Feitsma** | City of Leeuwarden - Deputy Mayor

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**Sopio Khuntsaria** | City of Tbilisi - Deputy Mayor

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**Revaz Kotrikadze** | City of Tbilisi - Senior Officer at International Relations Department

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**Isabella Menichini** | City of Milano - Head Performing Arts Department

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# EFFA and its members

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## THE EUROPEAN FESTIVALS ASSOCIATION

### Being EFA Now

We are living in a time when money for the arts is rationed, when every expense needs to be justified and new technology and globalisation are changing the way we live and work. The European Festivals Association – the longest serving network of arts festivals – finds itself needing to offer fresh reasons for membership, and to explain the added value, influence and opportunities that EFA creates.

EFA is sometimes described as a members club, where involvement is principled and enjoyable. It offers festival organisers a front seat in European policy-making and the opportunity to establish networks that lead to dialogues with all sorts of actors. It is also considered by some to play an essential role in a globalising world. Through EFA, local initiatives achieve international relevance.

### EFA is more than the sum of its parts

EFA is becoming a “We” story, linking people and organisations active in the arts management field. It is a story that is reaching beyond Europe as it strives to consolidate interaction between continents, countries and cultures so that there can be mutual inspiration, influence and confrontation.

Art is fundamental to civilisation. The beauty and meaning, exaltation and opposition that are intrinsic to art make it a potentially healing process that demands our commitment. EFA guides the discourse on the value of arts festivals. A sector that is so unique and that shares a myriad of concerns on the level of intellectual, artistic, material and organisational matters deserves a strong umbrella organisation that supports local initiatives and gives arts festivals a unified voice.

### As context changes so does EFA:

#### an evolving international hub

Europe’s arts festivals, however acclaimed they may be on a local level, need international connections. By joining EFA, you acquire an international mandate. It is your partner in a worldwide conversation. EFA is your authoritative and permanent motor for exchange, a guardian for the arts and a driver of evolution and progress for festivals. We are here to enable that process by maintaining a permanent and informed dialogue with decision-makers and colleagues worldwide. We keep arts and festivals on the political agenda. We are a hub and at the same time, an advocate.

## A contemporary network

EFA wants to see its stakeholders ride the waves of innovation – without compromising traditions – so that all EFA members can exert their influence on the international scene. EFA offers festival makers a place to stay in touch with each other, share concerns and discover new partners. EFA events are social as well as professional occasions, allowing us all to form friendships.

Festivals depend on the involvement and professional development of staffmembers. EFA is a channel for training and communication: face-to-face meetings cover such topics as festival management, project development, emerging artists, new business models, audience outreach strategies, and short residencies and festival visits, to mention but a few.

EFA is a bastion of continuity and professional support. We help spread the word, reinforce the importance of festivals, keep them at the forefront of the political agenda and, perhaps most of all, we serve as a platform to broaden and deepen your artistic relationships. Every return is a celebration.

**The Arts Festivals Summit** is the annual appointment for Festival makers hosted in a specific local arts and cultural environment. This 3-days conversation is a time-out for you to share, refresh and allow unforeseen encounters and ideas to happen.

EFA's **The Festival Academy** has become respected as an important world resource. Its inspiring workshops help young programmers and producers leap forward in their understanding and effectiveness. The links they forge in this global conversation during the Academy sessions endure, EFA has found, for years.

**Europe for Festivals, Festivals for Europe (EFFE)** is the European Union's mandate to EFA to promote all arts festivals in Europe towards audiences worldwide, national and European policy makers.

The exclusive **annual appointment with EU Commissioner** and Europe's press in Brussels aims to develop a shared narrative for the role of festivals in today's society and contribute to the European Agenda for Culture.

## Come and build with us

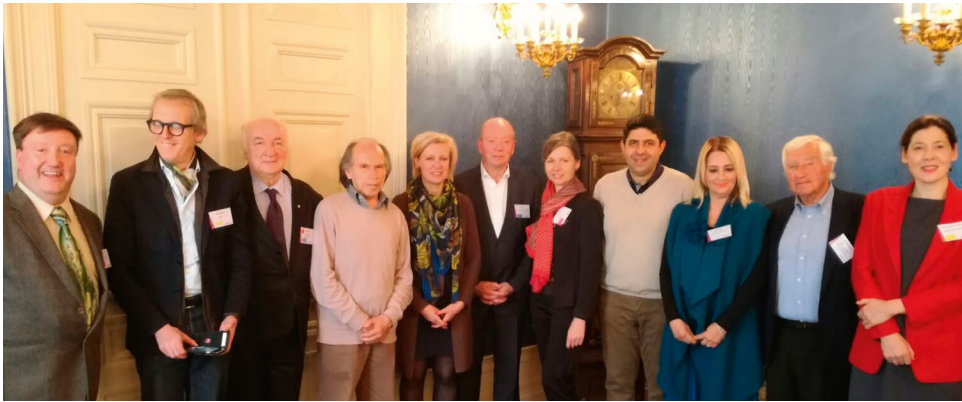
You can contact EFA's Secretary General, Kathrin Deventer, to talk about your membership. Our team is ready to answer all practical questions and provide you with detailed documentation about the membership conditions and procedures.

## EFA Members

<b>A. Sakharov International Art Festival</b> - Nizhny Novgorod (Russian Federation)
<b>Abu Dhabi Festival</b> - Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates)
<b>Al Bustan Festival</b> - Beyt Meri - Beirut (Lebanon)
<b>ALTOFEST – International Contemporary Live Arts</b> - Napoli (Italy)
<b>Ankara International Music Festival</b> - Ankara (Turkey)
<b>Armel Opera Festival</b> - Budapest (Hungary)
<b>Aspendos International Opera &amp; Ballet Festival</b> - Antalya (Turkey)
<b>Audi Sommerkonzerte</b> - Ingolstadt (Germany)
<b>BBC Proms</b> - London (United Kingdom)
<b>Berliner Festspiele</b> - Berlin (Germany)
<b>Bergen International Festival</b> - Bergen (Norway)
<b>Bodrum Music Festival</b> - Bodrum (Turkey)
<b>BOZAR Festival</b> - Brussels (Belgium)
<b>Bratislava Music Festival</b> - Bratislava (Slovak Republik)
<b>Budapest Spring Festival</b> - Budapest (Hungary)
<b>Cisternúica - Alcobaça Music Festival</b> - Alcobaça (Portugal)
<b>CULTURESCAPES</b> - Basel (Switzerland)
<b>Dubrovnik Summer Festival</b> - Dubrovnik (Croatia)
<b>Edinburgh International Festival</b> - Edinburgh (United Kingdom)
<b>Estoril Lisbon Festival</b> - Estoril/Lisbon (Portugal)
<b>Europalia Arts Festival</b> - Brussels (Belgium)
<b>European Festival of Performing Arts Timisoara - New Romanian Drama Festival</b> - Timișoara (Romania)
<b>European Film Festival Palic</b> - Subotica (Serbia)
<b>Festival della Valle d'Itria</b> - Martina Franca (Italy)
<b>Festival Del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino</b> - Firenze (Italy)
<b>Festival Castell de Peralada</b> - Peralada (Spain)
<b>Festival Internacional de Música de Canarias</b> - Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (Spain)
<b>Festival Internacional de Teatro Clásico de Mérida</b> - Mérida (Spain)
<b>Festival of Contemporary Art GogolFest</b> - various cities (Ukraine)
<b>Flanders Festival International</b> - various cities (Belgium)
<b>FMM Sines – Festival Músicas do Mundo</b> - Sines (Portugal)
<b>Gdansk Shakespeare Festival</b> - Gdansk (Poland)
<b>George Enescu International Festival and Competition</b> - Bucharest (Romania)
<b>Georgian International Festival of Arts GIFT</b> - Tbilisi (Georgia)
<b>IBIZACINEFEST</b> - Formentera (Spain)
<b>International Antalya Piano Festival</b> - Antalya (Turkey)
<b>International Festival Sarajevo Winter</b> - Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
<b>International Festival Wroclaw Cantans</b> - Wroclaw (Poland)
<b>International Izmir Festival</b> - Izmir (Turkey)
<b>Israel Festival, Jerusalem</b> - Jerusalem (Israel)
<b>Les Festivals de Wallonie</b> - various cities (Belgium)



<b>Leoš Janáček International Music Festival</b> - Ostrava (Czech Republic)
<b>Ljubljana Festival</b> - Ljubljana (Slovenia)
<b>Lucerne Festival</b> - Lucerne (Switzerland)
<b>Ludwig van Beethoven Easter Festival</b> - Warsaw (Poland)
<b>Malta International Arts Festival</b> - Valletta (Malta)
<b>Mersin International Music Festival</b> - Mersin (Turkey)
<b>MITO SettembreMusica Festival</b> - Milan/Turin (Italy)
<b>Mittelfest</b> - Cividale del Friuli (Italy)
<b>Mosel Musikfestival</b> - Bernkastel - Kues (Germany)
<b>Music Biennale Zagreb</b> - Zagreb (Croatia)
<b>Music Festival in Belém</b> - Lisbon (Portugal)
<b>Nasimi Festival. Poetry, Arts, Spirituality</b> - Baku (Azerbaijan)
<b>Ohrid Summer Festival</b> - Ohrid (Macedonia)
<b>Prague Spring International Music Festival</b> - Prague (Czech Republic)
<b>Ravenna Festival</b> - Ravenna (Italy)
<b>Semana de Música Religiosa</b> - Cuenca (Spain)
<b>Sochi Winter International Arts Festival</b> - Sochi (Russian Federation)
<b>SoNoRo Festival</b> - Bucharest (Romania)
<b>Stresa Festival</b> - Stresa (Italy)
<b>südtirol festival merano . meran</b> - Merano (Italy)
<b>Terras sem Sombra</b> - Santarém (Portugal)
<b>The International Festival of Arts Named after P.I. Tchaikovsky</b> - Klin, Moscow Region (Russian Federation)
<b>Usedom Music Festival</b> - Seebad Heringsdorf (Germany)
<b>Utrecht Early Music Festival</b> - Utrecht (The Netherlands)
<b>Varna Summer International Music Festival</b> - Varna (Bulgaria)
<b>Vilnius Festival</b> - Vilnius (Lithuania)
<b>Yerevan Perspectives International Music Festival</b> - Yerevan (Republic of Armenia)
<b>Sicheslav Festival Association "ArtEthnoFest"</b> (Ukraine)
<b>Association of Irish Festival Events (AOIFE)</b> (Ireland)
<b>Bulgarian Festivals Association</b> (Bulgaria)
<b>Czech Association of Music Festivals</b> (Czech Republik)
<b>Federation of Music Festivals in Flanders</b> (Belgium)
<b>Finland Festivals</b> (Finland)
<b>France Festivals</b> (France)
<b>ItaliaFestival</b> (Italy)
<b>Musik i Syd</b> (Sweden)
<b>Norway Festivals</b> (Norway)
<b>Rotterdam Festivals</b> (The Netherlands)
<b>Serbian Festivals Association</b> (Serbia)
<b>Spanish Association of Classical Music Festivals</b> (Spain)
<b>Sweden Festivals</b> (Sweden)
<b>European Early Music Network (EEMN/REMA)</b>



## EFA Board

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Paul Dujardin      BOZAR - Centre for Fine Arts Brussels  
Herman Schnitzer      südtirol festival merano . meran

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## EFA Team

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Eva Nunes	European Projects Manager
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Adam Harton	Project Trainee
Zeynep Sağlam	Communication Trainee
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## WHAT IS IMPORTANT FOR ME TO MENTION...

The European Festivals Association, 3 years ago, has embarked on a new adventure. A we-story of organisations and people was announced. EFA is inviting not only its members, but artists, audiences, cities representatives and all sorts of stakeholders into a new alliance we are building together; a we-story, eye-to-eye, that from the inside of the organisation to audiences worldwide puts up on its mission statement to facilitate and enable the broadest possible access to the arts and the artists.

This EFFE Awards Salon is a powerful part of our we-story. Adam, Eva, Gert, Hueyu, Inge, Laure, Naima and Zeynep contribute as much to its invitation to you, as do Paul Dujardin, Magdalena Liskova, Frederik Vandewiele and his whole BOZAR team, as well as Marc Sundermann and Jana Walter from Bertelsmann and the UFA Film Nights.

The exceptional availability of BOZAR to welcome us and the continued support of the EFFE International Jury chaired by Sir Jonathan Mills, need to be mentioned as well. And I do not want to forget Commissioner Tibor Navracsics, Anna Isola, Barbara Gessler and the entire DG EAC team that helped implementing EFFE's ambition; the mayor of Brussels Mr Philippe Close and Volker Hassemer with Christiane Loetsch in Berlin from Cities for Europe that support the Festivals Cities Alliance from its beginning.

Together with the EFA Board and its President Mr Jan Briers, we would like to express our highest appreciation to all speakers of the EFFE Awards Salon, above all Romeo Castellucci, Rabih Mroué and Saodat Ismailova.

We are all together prepared to give the current culture a serious upgrade.

Kathrin Deventer  
EFA Secretary General