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## Festspiele and Festivals

*Festspiel*, or *Festspiele* in the plural, is the German word for 'festival'. So is Festival writ large, although, as we shall see, the two mean quite different things depending on their historical context. In fact, the modern-day festival is a German invention. Its epitome is the Bayreuth Festival (Bayreuther Festspiele), which Richard Wagner 'invented' in 1876 in order to present his music dramas in superior productions in Bayreuth's Festival Hall, which he had created specifically for that purpose. Germany in the 19th century was equally inclined toward progress and restoration, which made it an ideal breeding ground for festivals. At the same time that Wagner was concocting his festival scheme, the Duke of Meiningen, as director of his own court theatre, developed the notion of 'model performances' for classical drama. He focused on Shakespeare's plays, which he popularised in guest performances all over Europe. Franz Liszt inaugurated the Beethoven Festival (Beethovenfeste) as early as 1845 to accompany the unveiling of the Beethoven Monument on Bonn's Münsterplatz. And the earliest festival of orchestral music, the Music Festival of the Lower Rhine (Niederrheinische Musikfeste), has been held in various Rhenish cities at Whitsuntide every year since 1817.

Since the mid-20th century this historical form of *Festspiele* with its lofty artistic standards – and many would say its air of elitism – has competed with a more recent type of event unburdened by tradition: the Festival, which tends to target a mass audience rather than a cultural élite and aligns its programmes less on artistic genres than on marketing strategies. Here the event as such is its own *raison d'être* and the vehicle for its own success. This new term only entered German vocabulary after 1945 as the influence of America made itself felt on the 'Old World'. Initially its purpose was merely to distinguish *Festspiele* from this new, open and popular type of event. This early distinction, however, has long been forgotten: even the *Festspiele* of old have long ago taken to calling themselves 'festivals'.

Google 'festival' and the search engine will offer 259 million hits; even 'festival 2010' still produces 211 million. If 'festivalitis' were a disease, we would have to call it a pandemic. Once the exclusive precinct of 'high art', it has spread all over the globe like wildfire. From Woodstock to the Festival of the German Language, from the Festival dei due Mondi to the two Danube Festivals (one in Ulm, another in Krems), and from the Festival of the Senses to the Festival of Hearts, the number of festivals has exploded, as has the use of the term itself. In the era of 'event culture', any public event staged for a limited period of time and advertised in the competing markets and media is called a 'festival'. It is thus essential to introduce some definitions and distinctions.

### » Definitions

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There is no unequivocal definition of the concepts of *Festspiel* and festival. To quote Harald Kaufmann, 'Celebrations and festivities are not a proper subject for a neutral sociology of knowledge' (1). Rather, they are influenced by subjective judgements depending on the historical standpoint, personal interests and ideological biases of the observer. Therefore, the only way to determine the defining features of these two phenomena in our cultural life is empirically, by describing their characteristics and comparing them with related phenomena.

Riemann Musiklexikon, the standard music dictionary in German, defines *Festspiel* as follows: 'Festspiele and music festivals are events that are meant to present performances of superior quality or with combinations of artists unavailable in normal repertory conditions. They are also lifted out of the ordinary by their choice of venue, which is distinguished by tradition, by special buildings or auditoriums, or by a holiday-like atmosphere.' The English version of Wikipedia offers a much less sophisticated definition: 'A Festival is an event, usually and ordinarily staged by a local community, which centres on some unique aspect of that community.'

*Festspiele* emerged between the 17th and 19th centuries from court festivities and historicising anniversary celebrations (Handel in 1785, Mozart in 1856) and were adopted by the burgeoning middle classes as a vehicle for their emancipation. But it was not until after World War II that this type of event became a determining factor of our music life. As the new species of festival made greater inroads and took stronger hold, the festival mutated from an art form, traditionally viewed as a supreme cultural achievement, into an organisational form dominated by our industrial society's ideal of perfection. Festivals, in other words, also express the zeitgeist in which they take place. Their event character, their exceptional times and locations, their strategies for marketing 'sensational' artists or artistic achievements and, not least of all, their position in the media have turned them into the quintessential mode of artistic activity for our time and for the future. Festivals, as opposed to *Festspiele*, are thus an 'invention' of the 20th century and will become a cultural commodity of the 21st.

Viewed in a positive light, the defining features of this new species of festival are professional management, generic blends (including 'crossovers') and aesthetic broad-mindedness. But in a critical light, we must also mention elements shared by no small number of new festivals: a strict market orientation, a sharp focus on stars and a spirit of artistic retrenchment. Economic stabilisation often goes hand in hand with artistic stagnation, for which the 'old' *Festspiele* (Bayreuth, Salzburg, Verona) provide proof enough to the critical observer. It is striking how quickly the 'new' festivals (Berlin, Vienna, Athens, Baden-Baden) have learned to capitalise on the virtues of European unification: complete networking of information, unrestricted exchange of 'goods', rapid media exploitation and 'political correctness', all of which have been ineluctably combined with a sharp focus on current fashions, an occasionally slavish adherence to the zeitgeist and often an abject deference to box-office hits. There are, of course, exceptions – festivals that proclaim their opposition to prevailing opinions and trends, and others which, at least partly and temporarily, refuse to step onto the merry-go-round of global cultural marketing. But all in all, the new species of festival is increasingly blotting out the traditional institutions of bourgeois culture from public awareness. 'Festivals', Karin Peschel wrote in her final report on the economic impact of the Schleswig-Holstein Festival (1998), 'are becoming a fixture in our musical landscape, augmenting the traditional opera and concert seasons' (2). In the meantime, her word 'augmenting' might more usefully be replaced by 'suppressing'.

## » Criteria

The lasting value and perhaps even the *raison d'être* of *Festspiele* and festivals alike are governed by four criteria:

- > an outstanding programme
- > exemplary performances
- > exceptional modes of presentation and
- > a distinctive idea and/or atmosphere.

In an age when the culture industry is governed by the global marketing of top stars, the ubiquitous dissemination of artists and programmes as 'brand-name items' and the total availability of information, there is no question that exemplary performances and exceptional modes of presentation have become key criteria of the present-day notion of festival.

Further, given the rampant fashion (or necessity) among even the great festivals to enter co-operative ventures, share programmes and pass them on in an effort to reduce expenses, the distinctive idea or atmosphere has gained steadily in importance. It is not least the distinctiveness and uniqueness of a festival's artistic image that constitutes its 'unique selling point' for a successful marketing campaign.

An outstanding programme refers not only to the presentation of the programme per se, but in particular to the artistic offerings and the manner in which they are turned into events. The outstanding quality of a festival is manifest in its special style of management and operation, its level of artistry and its reception by society. A festival 'stands out' above year-round opera houses and concert halls in three ways: organisationally, artistically and socially.

The organisational dimension includes 1) a predefined and regularly recurring time slot, 2) a special location, 3) an avoidance of fixed structures (permanent ensembles, pre-set subscriptions, standardised modes of operation etc.) in favour of ad hoc teams and forms of organisation, 4) short-term contracts for the artistic, technical and, if applicable, administrative staff, with special working conditions and better pay, and 5) higher ticket prices compared to institutions that work all year round.

The 'glory and misery' of a festival stands or falls with its artistic uniqueness. A festival may focus on a genre, theme or composer (e.g. the Ruhr Piano Festival, the Herne Early Music Festival or the Max Reger Festival in Weiden); it may owe its uniqueness to a special performance venue (the staircase in Schwäbisch-Hall, an abandoned power plant in the Eifel mountains); or its programmes may orbit a single artist (Karajan in Salzburg, Gidon Kremer in Lockenhaus, Hans Werner Henze in Montepulciano). Whatever the case, some music-lovers will view these unique features as grounds for excitement and reasons to make a pilgrimage, while others will criticise them and stay away.

Festivals are socially visible because of their status as 'events'. They attract a different clientele and are more attractive than year-round music institutions to certain types of people: media representatives, sponsors, the jet set. Some festivals are therefore accused of being 'elitist', others of being 'populist'. Yet it is precisely this social visibility that can motivate sponsors to commit themselves to a particular festival.

## » From Festspiel to Festival: a Success Story in High-Speed Playback

### The Early Period from 1900 to 1945

All in all, relatively few festivals were founded in Europe during the first half of the 20th century until the outbreak of World War II. The first to come into existence were Munich (1901), Strasbourg (1905), Savonlinna in Finland (1912) and the Arena di Verona (1913). But the most important festival founded at the beginning of the last century was the Salzburg Festival, created by Max Reinhardt, Hugo von Hofmannsthal and Richard Strauss in 1920. To the present day it has served as a model for *Festspiele* in the elevated sense of the term.

### Fresh Start after 1945

In the early post-war years Central Europe was inundated at breathtaking speed and impressive density by a wave of new festivals. They were established independently of and in addition to the traditional urban theatrical and musical scenes, which gradually overcame the depredations of war and slowly sprang back to life. The wounds that Hitler had inflicted on the whole of Europe were to be closed by the healing powers of art; the nation-state mentality, having degenerated into mutual hate figures, was to be counteracted by the forces

of democratic renewal and open-mindedness; and the cultural gap between the winners and losers of the war would, it was hoped, be closed by an international exchange of top-calibre performances, creating the basis for lasting peaceful co-existence. In sum, the motivating forces behind the rapid spread of new festivals throughout Europe, though highly conflicting, were primarily humanitarian in nature. It was not until some 25 years later, around 1970, that this trend came to a halt (see Table 1).

Table 1

» Festivals founded in Europe between 1945 and 1968\*

1945	Sagra Musicale Umbra, Perugia	1951	Eutiner Festspiele
1945	Cheltenham Festival	1951	Wiener Festwochen
1946	Bregenzer Festspiele	1951	Festival Internacional de Música y Danza Granada
1946	Montreux Festival	1952	Festspillene i Bergen
1946	Internationale Bachfeste Schaffhausen	1952	Europäische Wochen Passau
1946	Prager Frühling	1952	Schwetzingen Festspiele
1946	Ruhrfestspiele Recklinghausen	1952	Händel-Festspiele Halle <sup>1</sup>
1946	Sommerliche Musiktage Hitzacker	1952	Nürnberger Orgelwoche
1947	Holland Festival	1952	Festival Internacional de Santander
1947	Edinburgh Festival	1952	Festival Ljubljana
1947	London Music Festival	1953	Wiltz, Festival de Luxembourg
1948	Bachwoche Ansbach	1953	Münchener Opernfestspiele <sup>1</sup>
1948	Festival d'Aix-en-Provence	1955	Athens Festival
1948	Aldeburgh Festival	1956	Menuhin Festival Gstaad
1948	Festival International de Musique de Besançon	1957	Warschauer Herbst
1948	Bath Music and Literature Festivals	1957	Gulbenkian Festival Lissabon
1949	Dubrovnik Sommer Festival	1957	Festival dei due Mondi Spoleto
1949	Venedig, La Biennale die Venezia	1957	Flandern Festival
1950	Berliner Festwochen	1958	Cuenca, Semana de Música Religiosa
1950	Wiesbadener Maifestspiele <sup>1</sup>	1961	Jerusalem, Israel Festival
1950	Bad Hersfelder Festspiele	1961	Musicki Biennale Zagreb
1950	Festival Pablo Casals de Prades	1962	Stresa, Settimane Musicali
1950	Donaueschinger Musiktage <sup>1</sup>	1963	Festival del Mediterráneo, Barcelona
1951	Bayreuther Festspiele <sup>1</sup> („Neubayreuth“)	1967	Montreux Jazz Festival
1951	Festival junger Künstler Bayreuth	1968	Helsinki Festival
1951	Mozartfest Würzburg <sup>1</sup>	1968	Graz, Steirischer Herbst

\* This list raises no claim to completeness.

<sup>1</sup> Re-established or reoriented.

Source: Compiled by Franz Willnauer for the German Music Information Center.

### Stagnation and Protests of the 1970s

Between 1970 and 1990 there was a conspicuous restraint in the founding of new festivals. This was unquestionably a consequence of the student protests of the late 1960s, which irrevocably rocked the foundations of Germany's perception of culture and its consumption of art. In the final analysis, the artistic stagnation

that befell the outstanding representatives of the *Festspiel* industry at this time – a stagnation noted by international critics in Salzburg, Bayreuth, Berlin and even Donaueschingen – was rooted in the political protest movements of those years. At the same time a new cultural phenomenon arose – the hippie movement, which developed impressive ways to present mass culture in the Woodstock Festival (1969) or the Burg Herzberg Festival (1968).

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### Reunification and Festival Boom

The great political transformations of the early 1990s triggered a new wave of festival foundations, which has since given rise to an international festival landscape of unprecedented richness. It all began when the pianist and conductor Justus Frantz founded the Schleswig-Holstein Festival in 1986. Frantz attracted new audiences to classical music. With his slogan ‘classical music in the countryside’ (‘Klassik auf dem Lande’), he also discovered an untapped market niche and created a new species of all-embracing festival aimed at special target groups and accompanied by sponsors. To be sure, he was able to draw on earlier examples, such as the Flanders Festival (founded in 1957) and Sviatoslav Richter’s legendary festival at La Grange de Meslay. But credit must surely go to Frantz for having combined all these ingredients at just the right time.

Since then the Schleswig-Holstein Festival has itself become a ‘model’ for new festivals, whether in the former West Germany or, since 1990, in the newly formed states of the former East Germany. Examples include the Rheingau Festival and Ludwig Güttler’s successful blend of ‘Sandstone and Music’ (see Table 2). Especially noteworthy is the explosion of new festivals in the historically and culturally rich states of Saxony-Anhalt, Thuringia and Saxony. These new festivals reveal a tendency to market local ‘stars’ or regional specialities; they also display an effort to obtain economic success in the cultural sector by employing new marketing techniques. The festival boom is impressively captured in the figures published by the German Music Information Centre (DMI) in its annual *Musik-Almanach*. If the 1993-94 edition lists 136 *Festspiele* and festivals, by 1999-2000 the number had already climbed to 203. Four years later there were over 270 festivals, and the most recent edition of 2007-08 lists more than 360. The DMI’s constantly updated online database, using a slightly broader definition, even comes up with a total of some 480 music festivals.

The dramatic increase in new festivals after German reunification is all the more unusual when we consider the longstanding downturn in public largesse – especially the cost-slashing measures of Germany’s states and municipalities – and listen to the widespread laments about the growing unwillingness of sponsors to subsidise culture and the endless debates on orchestral mergers and theatre shutdowns. Why, then, do municipalities, companies, private associations and die-hard optimists move into the crowded festival market? Unlike the post-war years, the reasons have less to do with the will to survive or a realignment on spiritual forces than with hard-nosed business interests. Economists advance the thesis that culture is a ‘soft’ economic factor in regional economies, and politicians trumpet the benefits resulting from so-called indirect profitability. Both factors have evidently turned the festival idea into a casebook example of our modern event culture.



Table 2

» Festivals established in Germany after 1985\*

1985	Europäisches Musikfest Stuttgart	1997	Bonner Schumannfest
1985	Händel-Festspiele Karlsruhe <sup>1</sup>	1997	Heidelberger Frühling
1985	Schreyahner Herbst	1997	Kammermusikfestival ‚Oldenburger Promenade‘
1986	Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival	1997	‚Eclat‘ Festival Neue Musik Stuttgart
1986	Bad Kissinger Musiksommer	1998	Spannungen: Musik im Kraftwerk Heimbach/Eifel
1988	Rheingau Musik-Festival	1998	Internationale Festspiele Baden-Baden
1988	Braunschweiger Kammermusik-Podium (seit 2001 Braunschweiger Classix Festival)	1999	Internationale Beethovenfeste Bonn <sup>1</sup>
1988	Münchener Biennale – Internationales Festival für neues Musiktheater	1999	Bachfest Leipzig**
1989	Klavier-Festival Ruhr	1999	‚Pèlerinages‘ - Kunstfest Weimar**
1989	Internationales Bodensee-Festival	2000	young.euro.classic – Europäischer Musiksommer Berlin
1989	Musikfest Bremen	2001	Putbus Festspiele**, <sup>1</sup>
1989	Richard Strauss-Festival Garmisch-Partenkirchen	2002	Ruhrtriennale
1989	Rossini in Wildbad	2002	KlangZeit Münster
1990	Sommerkonzerte zwischen Donau und Altmühl	2003	Bebersee Festival b:fes**
1990	Magdeburger Telemann-Festtage**	2004	Sommerfestival AlpenKLASSIK Bad Reichenhall
1990	Festspiele Mecklenburg-Vorpommern**	2005	Altenberger Kultursommer
1991	Internationales Festival junger Opernsänger - Kammeroper Schloss Rheinsberg**	2005	RheinVokal – Festival am Mittelrhein
1991	Brandenburgische Sommerkonzerte**	2006	Hamburger Ostertöne
1991	Musikfestspiele Potsdam Sanssouci**	2006	chiffren. kieler tage für neue musik
1991	Telemann-Tage Köthen**	2006	Thüringer Schloßfestspiele Sondershausen**
1992	Festival „Mitte Europa“ Bayern/Böhmen/Sachsen**	2006	Viersener Musiksommer
1992	MDR Musiksommer**	2006	Kammermusikfestival Rolandseck
1992	Rossini-Festival Putbus <sup>1</sup>	2007	Musikfest Jahrhundertklang Freiburg
1992	Festspiele ‚Orff in Andechs‘	2007	Der Sommer in Stuttgart – Musik der Jahrhunderte
1993	Kurt Weill Fest Dessau**	2007	Klangbiennale – Festival zeitgenössischer Musik Frankfurt
1993	Europäisches Musikfest ‚Europamusicale‘	2007	‚Provinzlärm‘ – Festival Neuer Musik Eckernförde
1993	Köthener Bachfesttage**	2008	Alles im Fluss. Festival für Neue Musik Passau
1994	Musik-Triennale Köln	2008	Audiodigitale – Festival für elektronische Musik und Visual Arts Dortmund
1994	Usedomer Musikfestival**	2008	Bach Biennale Weimar
1994	Dresdner Musikfestspiele**, <sup>1</sup>	2008	Impuls. Festival für Neue Musik Sachsen-Anhalt
1994	DomStufen-Festspiele in Erfurt**	2008	Musik der Synagoge – Biennale im Ruhrgebiet Bochum
1994	Koblenzer Mendelssohn-Tage	2008	Festival ‚Musik 21‘ Niedersachsen Hannover
1994	Lausitzer Musiksommer**	2009	Klangvokal Musikfestival Dortmund
1995	Festival der Nationen Bad Wörishofen		

\* The list raises no claim to completeness.

\*\* Festival venue in East Germany.

<sup>1</sup> Re-established.

Source: Compiled by Franz Willnauer for the German Music Information Center.



## A Tentative Classification System

Just as '*Festspiel*' and 'festival' escape clear definition and their artistic offerings resist normative evaluation, it is difficult to place festivals as they exist 'on the ground' into a classification system that does more than pin labels to them without placing them in a meaningful order. The difficulties involved in classifying festivals are also surely related to the noticeable unwillingness on the part of today's scientific community to study *Festspiele* and festivals at all, although they are among the most conspicuous phenomena in today's cultural landscape. It has been more than 35 years since the German music theorist Hans G. Helms proposed a functional classification scheme along Marxist lines (3). Ten years later the Viennese cultural anthropologist Manfred Wagner developed a contrary 'theory of types' that is convincing today only because of its far-sighted predictions (4). Since then experts in cultural management have made no significant contributions to the topic.

Wagner proposed four types of festivals depending on whether they emphasise prestige, local patriotism, an overriding theme or particular target groups. In contrast, the classification scheme given below distinguishes between an intrinsic and an extrinsic perspective. The intrinsic perspective focuses on festivals as 'art products' and places conceptual and dramaturgical aspects at its centre. The extrinsic perspective proceeds from viewpoints outside the culture industry and examines the ostensible purposes and functions of festivals. Neither approach makes a terminological distinction between traditional *Festspiele* and modern festivals.

If we assume that the true purpose of a festival – indeed, its sole purpose – is to present events of supreme artistic stature, it follows naturally that its primary goal is 'the production of art'. Viewed in this light, festivals can be classified according to their contents, e.g. by segment (historical period, stylistic era, early music, contemporary music etc.), by genre (orchestral music, chamber music, opera, music theatre, ballet, operetta, musicals, jazz etc.) or by theme (aesthetic concepts, political topics, regional emphases, particular composers, etc.).

Depending on the rigour with which they turn these contents into programmes, festivals are now said to range on a scale from exclusive 'speciality festivals' to mixed forms known by the somewhat derogatory term of 'shopping cart festivals'. Given the perilous and widespread trend toward marketing the same things everywhere over and over again, success is increasingly being sought in 'niche festivals'. Even the term 'monument festival' coined by Manfred Wagner ('an attempt to elevate a prestigious figure associated in one way or another with the location into a monument and to stage a festival in his or her honour') (5) crops up every now and then in festival parlance. All in all, however, it must be conceded that any effort to create a classification scheme for festivals on the basis of their contents can produce nothing more than a superficial system of pigeonholes for items which are, by their very nature, individual and autonomous.

If instead we view festivals on the basis of their extrinsic purpose as business enterprises, they fall into two categories depending on their mode of financing and the nature of their audience. Needless to say, this approach is likewise incapable of producing an 'air-tight' classification system. On the contrary, here too we are more likely to encounter hybrids, overlaps and exceptions. Roughly speaking, there are three modes of financing:

- > exclusively from public funds,
- > exclusively from private funds and
- > mixtures of public and private funds.

Festivals financed entirely from public funds are just as rare as those which are financed entirely from private funds or generate enough revenue to cover their own costs. The first type is exemplified by the Munich Opera



Festival, the second by the Rheingau Festival, which is funded almost entirely by sponsors. Most festivals in Europe thrive on a complex mixture of government subsidies, sponsorships, patronage and their own income, i.e. proceeds obtained by exploiting their own 'products'.

Festivals may also be categorised by the nature of the audience they attract (and the marketing strategies they must employ to this end). Here we can distinguish between

- > local festivals,
- > regional festivals and
- > supra-regional or international festivals.

Audience research will undoubtedly attract great attention in the future. As the management echelons of successful festivals become increasingly dominated by a profit mentality in addition to artistic stature, targeted marketing strategies will become all the more prevalent. We can expect to see scientifically solid and up-to-date surveys of audience behaviour and statistically relevant visitor polls, which at present are sporadic at best or already outdated.



### Art or Business?

Quite apart from the role they play in regional, national or international cultural life with their artistic achievements, festivals are by their very nature business enterprises. However, unlike businesses in the market economy, the economic success of non-profit companies (to which festivals, like every other artistic venture, belong by their very nature) cannot be measured in terms of revenue and profit, but only by the relation between operating expenses and operating income as a measure of their ability to make ends meet. The 'viability' of festivals, being generally dependent on subsidies, is thus subject not only to commercial pressures but also to monitoring by the public sector. If supported by the private sector, they are also subject to the rules of the market economy, which – as in the case of sponsorships, a well-known instance of one hand washing the other – include the benefits of advertising and the anticipated gain in image. The market may even have repercussions on artistic decisions.

### Forms of Financing

In principle, *Festspiele* and festivals can be financed in any of three ways:

- > internally through ticket sales and media exploitation,
- > subsidies from the public sector or
- > donations from sponsors, patrons, supporters or similar groups.

In actual practice, the most common form of financing is probably a combination of public subsidies and allocations from private individuals or companies, i.e. donations and sponsorships. These are managed in a great many ways. Foundations are increasingly being sought out as sponsorship vehicles, in which case the annual interest from the foundation's assets form an additional source of funds.

The economic success of a festival invariably hinges on the amount of revenue it can generate. Besides income from media exploitation (radio and TV rights), advertising and the sale of programme booklets, this revenue comes mainly from ticket sales. Occupancy rates and capacity utilisation are not quite the same thing, for the number of 'occupied' seats also includes complimentary tickets for artists, reviewers, emplo-



yees, sponsors and so forth. Nonetheless, high occupancy figures invariably imply a relatively high rate of capacity utilisation. In the best case, i.e. with a fixed public subsidy or a guaranteed volume of sponsorship funds, the balance sheet may even show a surplus. This can usually be carried forward to the following year, provided the government waives its right to call back 'unused' funds and to reduce the subsidy accordingly – a right set down in its subsidy guidelines.

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### Quantitative and Qualitative Economic Benefits

The economic effects that greet the eye when we regard a festival as an economic venture fall into two categories: quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative effects are distinguished by the nature of their impact: value creation, income, employment and fiscal effects. More significant, though more difficult to quantify, are the qualitative effects, such as improvements in the quality of the location, enhanced attractiveness for tourists, a more positive image and stronger identification with the town or region involved. These aspects have been recognized and proved by studies in the past. However, no study so far has assessed the 'value-added' for those festival visitors who consider art and culture to be affirmative and life-enhancing per se. Such spiritual and intellectual enrichment should probably be booked as 'improvements in the quality of life'.

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### Indirect Profitability

Festivals as business operations can be assessed in other ways besides the nature of their economic impact – namely, by the degree to which they influence economic success, including the benefits enjoyed by the tourist infrastructure from the mere existence of festivals. These benefits are known as 'indirect profitability'. Many studies have shown that hotels, restaurants and retail shops have significantly higher revenue and profits thanks to festival visitors.

Finally, we must look at the framework conditions of a festival's business activities. Two of these conditions are self-evident: professional management and artistic attractiveness. An amateurish or sloppily organised festival that pins its hopes entirely on enthusiasm and goodwill has no better chances of surviving in this highly competitive market than one with run-of-the-mill artists. Nor will a festival with unattractive offerings succeed as a business enterprise. Admittedly the opposite also holds true: artistic potential cannot come to fruition without a solid economic basis. Still, festivals cannot be expected to create favourable framework conditions entirely on their own: equally crucial to their economic success is reliable long-term funding, usually from the public purse.

Festivals are luxury items by nature. However, once we agree that culture as a whole is not a luxury but necessary nourishment for the mind and spirit, then art too, like the human body, requires 'food', whether daily bread in order to survive or other foodstuffs as a source of pleasure and joie de vivre. In this light, festivals, if judiciously enjoyed and carefully nurtured, are one of our vital luxuries. Although it is not set down in Germany's constitution, the state has an inescapable self-imposed duty to further the advancement of culture. And this must go beyond the provision of cultural 'staples' – libraries, museums, orchestras, theatres and the like. It must also encompass the luxury item, festivals.



### Conclusion and Predictions

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Throughout the 20th century the history of *Festspiele* and festivals alike was a success story. We have meanwhile reached the second decade of the 21st century and can look back at the greatest economic and financial



crisis in recent times. Nobody will deny that this crisis has affected culture, too, including its most exposed products, *Festspiele* and festivals. Even showpieces like the Salzburg Festival or the Bonn Beethoven Festival struggle to cope with the problem of retaining their public subsidies and reaching the previously open ears of their sponsors. Less protected institutions, like the Ruhr Piano Festival, must make do with half of their previous subsidies; others, like the Viersen Music Summer or the Klagenfurt Lakeside Festival, must shut down altogether. Even the Moers Jazz Festival is faced with financial ruin after 40 successful years. By the same token we can observe two contradictory trends: the boom in the founding of new festivals that meet the above criteria is slowing down, and the popular music scene (see Peter Wicke on 'Popular Music' in this volume) is increasingly using the word 'festival' as a synonym for rock and pop events marketed under the slogan 'open-air and free of charge'.

It is difficult to make predictions, but classical music and contemporary music are both showing a trend towards short one-time-only events that combine a specific (often historical) occasion with specialist artistic programmes. Examples include the Nono Festival (2007), the Mahler festivals in Iglau (2010) and Leipzig (2011) and the newly established International Shostakovich Days in Gohrisch (2010). New festivals in the full sense of the term, such as the Klangvokal Festival in Dortmund or, to choose two festivals founded by leading musicians, Rudolf Buchbinder's festival in Grafenegg (Lower Austria) and Gustav Kuhn's projected Mahler Festival in Toblach (South Tyrol), are few and far between (see Table 2). In contrast, there is no overlooking the multitude of open-air pop music events labelled festivals, which take place in defiance of the economic crisis. We are already hearing about the 'festivalisation of the cultural landscape', meaning 'the exemplification and staging of an entire region with events tailored to suit the audience and the media' with the object of presenting 'intermingled products and unique events'. Perhaps the sheer number and mass presence of festivals (with or without quotations marks) will lead to their complete loss of relevance. Perhaps, when all is said and done, the hoary *Festspiel* will rear its head again.

- (1) Harald Kaufmann: 'Kanon des Festlichen', *Fingerübungen: Musikgesellschaft und Wertungsforschung* (Vienna, 1970), p. 107.
- (2) K. Peschel, H. Herrmann and M. Niese: *Ökonomische Effekte des Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festivals: Beiträge aus dem Institut für Regionalforschung der Universität Kiel 25* (Kiel: Institute für Regionalforschung, 1998), p. 13.
- (3) H. G. Helms: 'Festivals für neue Musik', *Neue Musik und Festival*, ed. O. Kolleritsch (Graz, 1973), p. 90.
- (4) Manfred Wagner: 'Kulturfestivals – eine Form gesellschaftlicher Reaktion auf die Krisen der Achtzigerjahre', *art management: Theorie und Praxis des Kunstmanagements*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Vienna, 1983).
- (5) *Ibid.*, p.7.