

Press Release of the 2020 Salzburg Festival

## “The Dream of a Fairytale Temple”

**Artistic interventions regarding festival theatres never built**

Mönchsberg, Kapuzinerberg, Mirabellgarten – extended through the end of 2021

A wintertime walk through Festival history on Salzburg’s city mountains



Salzburg’s city mountains resplendent in the winter sun



Photos: SF/ Anne Zeuner

While cinemas and theatres, concert halls and opera houses, museums and exhibition spaces are closed, Salzburg’s city mountains feature an art project inspired by 100 years of Salzburg Festival history which can be explored by walking: *The Dream of a Fairytale Temple* remains on view through the end of the 2021 Festival summer, offering a possibility to discover discarded ideas and plans for festival theatres through artistic interventions that remain accessible during the cold season as well.



**Esther Stocker (Vienna), *Three-Part Wrinkle Sculpture for Mönchsberg***

Intervention regarding the Mozart-Festspielhaus project on Mönchsberg, 1890 (Atelier Fellner & Helmer, Vienna)

© Margarethe Lasinger

**Salzburg’s city mountains lie bright and resplendent in the winter sun**, opening our eyes to an incomparable harmony of urban and natural landscape. An extended walk allows ramblers to discover three artistic interventions in exposed spaces, each pointing to an unrealized idea for a festival theatre. Of the numerous construction projects designed over the course of the past 130 years, the Salzburg Festival decided to make four architectural ideas visible via artistic

interventions during the summer of 2020, in celebration of the Festival's centenary. Three of the arts projects can still be visited until the end of August 2021. They document how these festival theatres would have inscribed themselves into Salzburg's urban resp. natural landscape.

Following the Müllner Schanze past the Hotel Mönchstein, we arrive at the meadow where the Viennese theatrical architects Fellner & Helmer planned to erect a Mozart-Festspielhaus in 1890. Based on the model of the Richard Wagner Festival in Bayreuth, a temple of the muses dedicated to Salzburg's own genius was to be built here, facing Castle Hohensalzburg. For this extraordinary place, Esther Stocker created a three-part wrinkle sculpture: large-scale sheets with plans for the Mozart-Festspielhaus printed on thin aluminium sheets are spread throughout the meadow, like crumpled-up sketches of ideas unthinkingly discarded. "Artistically, I played with this utopia and this visionary idea," says Esther Stocker. The huge sheets quote original excerpts from the memorandum *Das Mozart-Festspielhaus in Salzburg*, self-published in 1890 by the Action Committee; they also depict the original sketch of the Festival theatre.

Following the path across the meadow towards the Museum der Moderne, the top of Mönchsberg offers a panoramic view of today's Festival district, extending from Cathedral Square, the first performance venue of the Salzburg Festival, towards the Kollegienkirche and the former riding school complex, from which the Festival theatres in use to this day developed from the early 1920s onwards – including the Großes Festspielhaus, which was inaugurated in 1960 and required the considerable effort of drilling deep into the rock. Looking across the Salzach River in a north-easterly direction, the leafless trees allow a view of Mirabell Palace, and in the east the Kapuzinerberg mountain is visible, another stop on the circular "Fairytale Temple" path.



**Werner Feiersinger (Vienna), Panel, 2019–20**

Intervention regarding the Festspielhaus project on Kapuzinerberg, 1942/43 (Architect Otto Reitter, Salzburg) © SF/Anne Zeuner

Following Linzer Gasse and passing through the gate of the Franziskusforte, our path takes us toward the Kapuzinerkloster, the Capuchin monastery. Before taking Basteiweg along the old bastion walls, it is worth stopping briefly at the Mozart monument: the commemorative stone reads: "Here stood the ZAUBERFLÖTEN-HÄUSCHEN from 1877 to 1948." It reminds us of the former place of pilgrimage of Mozart admirers, and also of the first music festivals in Salzburg, which were presented by the International Mozarteum Foundation and can be considered the precursor of the Salzburg Festival.

Finally, in the midst of the forest we reach Werner Feiersinger's intervention regarding the Festspielhaus project on Kapuzinerberg, which was planned by Otto Reitter in the 1940s and was to be part of the megalomaniac "Gauforum" of the Nazis. "I wanted to counterbalance this gigantomaniac design with a model that was as small as I could make it," says Werner Feiersinger. With this purposefully simple and reduced work, he wishes to emphasize the critical

examination of the original project. Amidst the bare winter forest, the exposed location of the Festspielhaus is particularly easy to discern: Otto Reitter planned to align the building's axis towards Hohensalzburg Castle, thereby further emphasizing the presence of the Nazi dictatorship in the urban landscape.



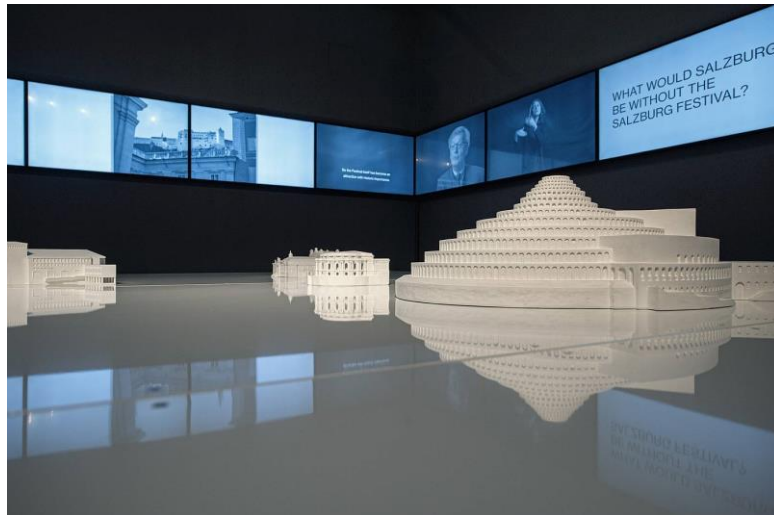
**Isa Rosenberger (Vienna), Portal Frame for the Mirabellgarten**  
Intervention regarding the Festspielhaus project in Mirabellgarten, 1950/51 (Architect Clemens Holzmeister, Ankara)  
© SF/Anne Zeuner

Clemens Holzmeister's plan for a Festival theatre on the so-called Rosenhügel ("Rose Hill") inside the Mirabellgarten was also oriented towards the Hohensalzburg Castle, aiming to establish an entity of stage and auditorium. Isa Rosenberger's installation quotes the three large backstage portals of Holzmeister's 1950 design. Her three-part, gold-varnished portal frame offers an abstraction of these outlines of the backstage portals. The view framed by the portals sweeps across the Mirabellgarten towards the Hohensalzburg Castle: the city itself becomes the stage, as envisioned by Festival founder Max Reinhardt. "The portal frame invites visitors to stage themselves and their visit," says the artist.

This design by Holzmeister was one of his last visionary designs before he realized the current Großes Festspielhaus, replacing the former Prince-Archbishops' stables. During the second century of its existence, the Salzburg Festival – together with the Federal, State and City governments – begins a new architectural chapter in Festival history: the Festspielhäuser in the historic city centre will undergo fundamental renovation, reorganization and expansion, preparing them for future challenges.

Addendum: the fourth intervention – by Maria Flöckner, Hermann Schnöll and Norbert Mayr at the Hellbrunn park, referencing Hans Poelzig's Festival theatre project of 1922 – is no longer accessible. The installation, which played with building elements and reached into the zoo, had been designed to dissolve gradually over its exhibition period, as the measuring poles visualizing the Poelzig project within the landscape were designed to be taken away as souvenirs by visitors. Therefore, only the three inner-city projects, chosen a year ago through a competition among invited contestants, remain accessible for viewing today.

*Margarethe Lasinger*



A table featuring models of festival theatres never built, by **Werner Feiersinger**, Salzburg City Map, film © Luigi Caputo

The State Exhibition *Great World Theatre – 100 Years of the Salzburg Festival* at the Salzburg Museum, which remains open **until 31 October 2021**, also features reflections of the “Fairytale Temple” project: on the first floor of the exhibition Werner Feiersinger’s *Panel* appears, echoing his installation on Kapuzinerberg. For the State Exhibition, on one oversized table the artist has here arranged those four models of unbuilt Salzburg festival theatres which the “Fairytale Temple” project transformed into a living, visual experience at the exact urban sites they were conceived for.

## 100 Years of the Salzburg Festival

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Mönchsberg, Kapuzinerberg, Mirabellgarten

Through the end of August 2021

Concept: Norbert Mayr

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- **Werner Feiersinger (Vienna)**, *Panel*, 2019–20

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- **Isa Rosenberger (Vienna)**, *Portal Frame for Mirabellgarten*

Intervention regarding the Festspielhaus project in Mirabellgarten, 1950/51 (Architect Clemens Holzmeister, Ankara)

State Exhibition *Great World Theatre – 100 Years of the Salzburg Festival* at the Salzburg Museum, extended **until 31 October 2021**.

Further information is available here: <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/fairytale-temple> and <https://www.salzburgmuseum.at/index.php?id=landesausstellung3>

Press photographs are available at: <https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/presse/fotoservice>