



SALZBURGER
FESTSPIELE

18. JULI - 31. AUGUST 2025

AURA – MYTH – ATTRIBUTION

The Salzburg Festival and its Contribution to Establishing an Austrian Identity in Public Perception, 1945 to 1995

A Three-Part Festival Dialogue - 11, 18 and 25 August 2025

A Three-Part Photography Exhibition at the Marko-Feingold-Steg, at Leopoldskron Palace and at the Karl Böhm-Saal - Starting on 20 July 2025



Illustrations, left to right:

1. Ernst Deutsch (in the role of Death) drinking from a Coca-Cola bottle during a *Jedermann* rehearsal, 1947 © ASF / Photo: Anny Madner
2. Bestowing honorary citizenship on General Mark W. Clark, with Federal Chancellor Leopold Figl and the interpreter Edwin M. J. Kretzmann (centre), 1946 © ASF / Photo: Anny Madner
3. Opening of the Salzburg Festival on Mozartplatz, 1955 © ASF / Photo: Anny Madner

FESTIVAL DIALOGUE

In 2025, the Salzburg Festival has programmed a three-part symposium commemorating the years 1945 as well as 1955 and 1995, exploring the public perception of the Salzburg Festival at these significant historical turning points, and its influence on identity-generating mechanisms.

80 years after the liberation of Austria from National Socialism and the revival of the Salzburg Festival in the Second Republic, the world has once again come to a time of crisis and change, veering towards a geopolitical reordering. After the entirely unimaginable, yet so positive development after World War II, today's outlook is dominated by fears for the future, "experiences and expectations of losses" (Andreas Reckwitz) and fatalistic pessimism.

Taking the key years of 1945, 1955 and 1995 as points of departure, renowned experts will discuss the political, economic, societal, cultural and social frameworks for the (renewed) development of an Austrian and international cultural scene and the gradual establishment of an Austrian identity. With the unexpected fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the expansion of the European Union in several steps, including the accession of Austria in 1995, new

challenges arose, calling into question especially those identities in Europe and Austria involving multiple layers.

In three panels with high-carat participants, historical knowledge that is critical for orientation purposes, the international perception from the outside, and innovative questions in the arts and culture are discussed as complementary elements of a new kind of sign-posting through the current, “hyper-nervous age” (Oliver Rathkolb).

11 August 2025 • 10 am–1 pm • Aula

1945 – Liberation. The Salzburg Festival and its Contribution to Establishing an Austrian Identity

Featuring Aleida Assmann, Mavie Hörbiger, Helga Rabl-Stadler, Oliver Rathkolb, Danielle Spera, Ilija Trojanow and Hannelore Veit

18 August 2025 • 10 am–1 pm • Aula

1955 – The Interstate Treaty and Neutrality. The Consolidation of the Salzburg Festival from an International and an Austrian Perspective

Featuring Jeremy Eichler, Heinz Fischer, Maja Haderlap, Jan Mojto, Oliver Rathkolb and others

25 August 2025 • 10 am–1 pm • Aula

1995 – Joining Europe. The EU Accession from a Global and National Perspective, Considering the Consequences of 1989

Featuring Karl-Markus Gauß, Misha Glenny, Anna Goldenberg, Gerald Heidegger, Markus Hinterhäuser, Michael Kerbler and Ursula Plassnik

Based on an idea by Oliver Rathkolb

Concept: Oliver Rathkolb, Margarethe Lasinger, Markus Hinterhäuser, Helga Rabl-Stadler, Lydia Rathkolb

Presented by the Salzburg Festival and the Festival Archive in cooperation with the Vienna Institute for Cultural and Contemporary History and Arts (VICCA) and the Robert-Jungk-Bibliothek für Zukunftsfragen



Illustrations, left to right:

1. Alexander Trojan, Margit Sasma (?) and Hermann Thimig outside the Festspielhaus, 1946 © ASF / Photo: Anny Madner
2. Festivalgoers on Franziskanergasse, 1946 © ASF / Photo: Anny Madner
3. Herbert von Karajan, 1980s, © Photo: Marion Kalter
4. Václav Havel in Salzburg, 1990, © Photo: Marion Kalter

FESTIVAL EXHIBITIONS

In parallel with the Festival Symposium, an exhibition at Leopoldskron Palace presents a collection of photographic and documentary images demonstrating the influence of culture on the development of society in eventful times.

This exhibition, in turn, is continued in a series of posters exhibited on the bridge Marko-Feingold-Steg, focusing on iconic photographs about the *Liberation and New Beginning in Salzburg 1945 · 1955*.

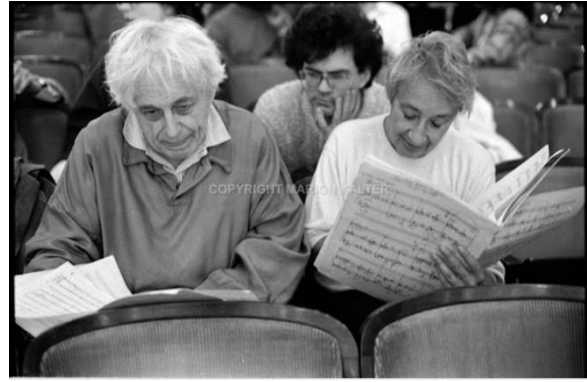
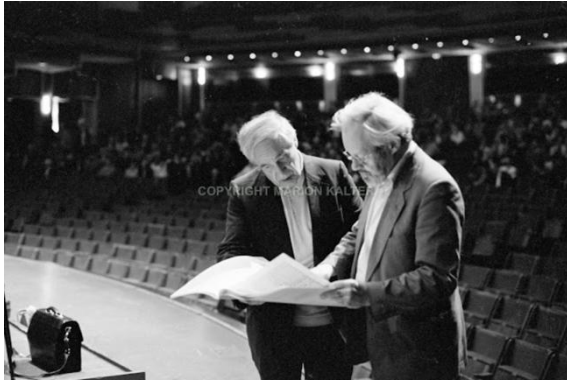
In 1945 – after the horrors of World War II and the liberation of the Nazi regime – the arts and culture made a significant contribution to redefining Austrian identity, and to reinventing the country amidst ruins. In this context, the Salzburg Festival offered multiple opportunities for identification, merging tradition and visions. For example, General Mark W. Clark – the commander in chief of the US Occupation Forces in Austria – emphasized in his speech opening the first post-war Festival in August 1945 that this was a “celebration of the rebirth of Austria’s cultural freedom”.

Salzburg was a place of departure for new times and old homelands, but also a place of arrival – and frequently one of precarious continuities, bridging profound historical changes. On the one hand, the photographs document the perspective of the liberators through the lens of the United States Information Service; on the other, they show an inside perspective, for example the camera views of Austrian photographers. American lifestyle mingled with Austrian traditions. Iconic Festival images are transformed into myths. Political statements emphasize the importance of the arts and cultural exchange. Persistent images outlast radical, epochal change.

An initiative of the Salzburg Festival Archive

Concept: Margarethe Lasinger, Oliver Rathkolb, Gabriele Straschil

The Salzburg Festival thanks Salzburg Global, the Image Archive of the National Library of Austria and the Salzburg Municipal Archive for their support.



Images, left to right:

1. Pierre Boulez and Friedrich Cerha, 1996, © Photo: Marion Kalter
2. György and Vera Ligeti, 1993, © Photo: Marion Kalter

MARION KALTER · Pierre Boulez *Le compositeur, c'est l'œil qui imagine l'oreille*

Finally, the Salzburg Festival exhibits selected photographs by Marion Kalter at the Karl-Böhm-Saal at the Festspielhaus. Entitled *Le compositeur, c'est l'œil qui imagine l'oreille* [The composer is the eye that imagines the ear], these photographs – starting with Pierre Boulez, to whom a concert series is dedicated this summer, commemorating the 100th anniversary of his birth – document the times of upheaval starting in 1989, illustrating the end of the era of Herbert von Karajan and the beginning artistic directorship of Gerard Mortier.

Marion Kalter, born in Salzburg in 1951 to an Austrian mother and an American father, returned to the city of her birth at the age of 16, attending the Salzburg Festival for the first time. “My mother was dying and sent me to Karl Böhm, whom she had met as an actress at the Graz Opera. He gave me my first ticket to the Festival,” the photographer, who lives in Paris and Salzburg today, recounts. From the 1980s onwards, she occasionally took photographs at the Salzburg Festival, becoming officially accredited in 1992 and capturing the beginning of a new era and its protagonists in impressive, entirely novel images of Salzburg.

Concept: Marion Kalter, Margarethe Lasinger, Johannes Steidl