



The Magical Reality of Theatre Celebrating Max Reinhardt's 150th Birthday (9 September 1873 – 31 October 1943)



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In the autumn of 2023, the theatrical world celebrates the 150th birthday and the 80th anniversary of the death of Max Reinhardt. He is often called the first modern stage director, revered as a theatrical magician and described as the quintessence of an impresario of international renown, whose work radiated from Berlin and Vienna to Salzburg to the United States of America.

The Salzburg Festival commemorates the theatrical magician and co-founder of the Festival by reconstructing his last work in Salzburg: the celebrated 1933 production of *Faust* at the Felsenreitschule. Further events – a symposium and a three-part exhibition – also focus on Reinhardt's *Faust* (1933-1937), and thus also on the historical caesuras of 1933 and 1937/38.

FAUST 2023

A very special project is *FAUST 2023*, which brings together analogue, stage and virtual realities in a performative guided tour. This project is made possible by cooperation between the Salzburg Festival and the Ars Electronica Futurelab.

The Ars Electronica Futurelab helps bring Reinhardt's production of *Faust* to new life through a Virtual Reality application: using a VR headset, visitors enter *The Magical Reality of*

Theatre – a reconstruction of the Faust town at the Felsenreitschule, directly on stage. There, they occupy unique positions: amidst the stage setting, they are guided through the Faust town designed by Clemens Holzmeister during a 10-minute virtual interpretation of the play. Lighting and music play a decisive role – as they did in Reinhardt’s open-air production 90 years ago. Visitors enter Faust’s study and witness the Walpurgis Night and the dance under the linden tree.

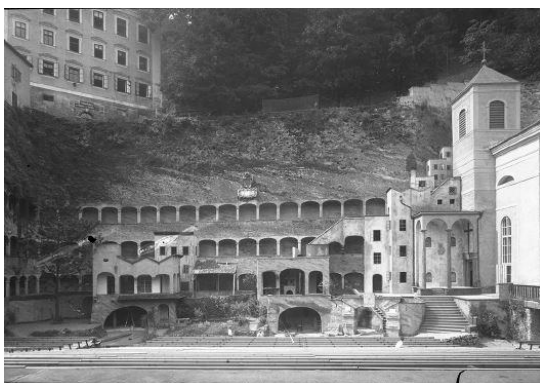


Fausts Studierstube
© ASF/Maximilian Karnitschnigg



Visualisierung: Ars Electronica Futurelab

The reconstruction of the Faust town has been accomplished on the basis of construction plans, recordings and other documents from the archive of the Salzburg Festival. In addition, the stage model held by the Austrian Theatre Museum in Vienna has become the object of photogrammetry. Together with a 3D laser scan of the Felsenreitschule, these form the basis of the VR reconstruction. A multitude of photographs has been de-skewed for perspective and improved in quality, partially with the help of AI. Thus, original photographs from the Festival’s archive have provided the textures projected onto the manually constructed geometry. This process allowed the details of the original stage sets and the technical limitations of VR headsets to be reconciled.



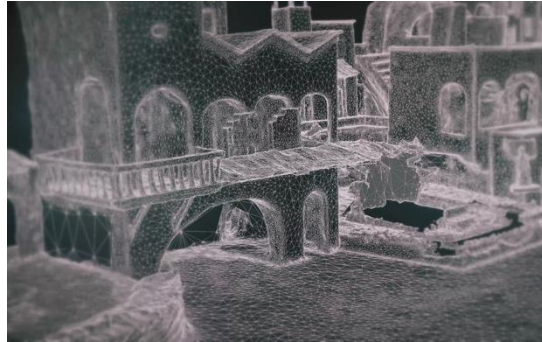
Faust-Stadt, 1933
© ASF/Maximilian Karnitschnigg (Neg 127)



Visualisierung: Ars Electronica Futurelab



Lotte Medelsky und Paula Wessely in einer Probe, 1933 © ASF/Photo Ellinger (Neg 77-1000)
Visualisierung: Ars Electronica Futurelab



Visualisierungen: Ars Electronica Futurelab

The VR experience is embedded within a multi-perspective guided tour led by acting students from the Mozarteum University Salzburg: Ben Engelgeer, Victoria Kraft and Joseph Lang. Many different media are used in this context: storytelling, photographs, film clips, exhibits, manuscripts and audio recordings, a *Faust* score, three-dimensional stage elements and the virtual simulation described above. Thus, visitors move between various levels of perception, delving into this VR world at the scene of the original production. Analogous, stage and virtual realities intermingle in a wonderful way.

“The Salzburg Festival is a feast of the arts, whose enchantment unfolds through shared experience in the here-and-now. Max Reinhardt invoked this experience in his productions and the idea of holding a festival in Salzburg. ‘The passion for theatre-going and theatre-playing,’ he wrote, ‘is a fundamental human drive. This drive will bring actors and audiences together again and again, creating the highest form of theatre which is its only true embodiment.’ On the occasion of his 150th birthday, we are presenting a project – together with Ars Electronica – eliminating the boundaries between stage and audience. Entirely in Max Reinhardt’s spirit, the performing arts merge with the digital ones – including virtual worlds.”

Markus Hinterhäuser · Artistic Director, Salzburg Festival

“For us, collaborating with the Salzburg Festival team is an extraordinarily good opportunity to explore the possibilities of new technologies and develop them further. The goal is to grasp and use ‘virtual reality’ as a means of design, enhancing the comprehension of historically relevant scenarios in an audience of our own times. I am sure that the aura of the real space combined with the possibilities of representation offered by virtual reality will ensure a highly impressive and effective experience for all visitors.”

Gerfried Stocker · Artistic Managing Director, Ars Electronica

FAUST 2023

A cooperation of the Salzburg Festival with the Ars Electronica Futurelab and the Ars Electronica Festival

Team and Credits

Concept

Margarethe Lasinger, Martin Kern Salzburg Festival (SF)
Roland Haring, Peter Freudling Ars Electronica Futurelab (AE)

Production Coordinator SF

Martin Kern

Production Coordinator AE

Peter Freudling

Dramaturgy, Script & Cast SF

Margarethe Lasinger

VR Application AE

Raphael Schaumburg-Lippe
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Friedrich Bachinger
Johannes Pöll
Arno Deutschbauer

Composition

Hannes Löschel

Research SF

Susanne Anders, Victoria Morino

Head of Sets and Costumes SF

Michael Veits

Technical Implementation for the Stage SF

Sven Gfrerer

Props SF

Anita Aichinger

Lighting SF

Johannes Grünauer

Guides

Ben Engelgeer
Victoria Kraft
Joseph Lang

Projects during the 2023 Reinhardt Year

Kindly supported by austrian capital management GmbH

Symposium - 24/25 May

On 24 and 25 May, a two-day symposium in Leopoldskron is devoted to Reinhardt's prompt book for Goethe's *Faust* – whose publication in a facsimile edition with comments we are preparing, in cooperation with the publishing house Hollitzer Verlag and the Austrian Theatre Museum in Vienna – as well as the reception and characteristics of his *Faust* productions, scientific research on classic texts and questions of canon development.

Presented by the Salzburg Festival in cooperation with the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, the Stefan Zweig Centre Salzburg, the publisher Hollitzer Verlag and the Salzburg Global Seminar

Exhibitions - from 19 July

From the beginning of the Festival, a three-part exhibition on Reinhardt's *Faust* will illuminate its political, historical and social context as well as its status in the history of theatre. In cooperation with two of the most important Reinhardt archives – the Austrian Theatre Museum in Vienna and the Wienbibliothek in Vienna – we trace Reinhardt's production via rehearsal notes, models, sketches, plans, letters, newspaper articles, caricatures, photographs and memorabilia. The exhibition *Annäherungen an Faust (Approaches to Faust)* will take place at the Karl-Böhm-Saal, at the Stefan Zweig Centre at the Edmundsburg and at Leopoldskron Palace.

A cooperation of the Salzburg Festival with the Austrian Theatre Museum in Vienna, the Wienbibliothek im Rathaus, the Stefan Zweig Centre Salzburg and the Salzburg Global Seminar

Festival Opening Party - A Feast for Max Reinhardt - 23 July

The detailed programme for the festivities in Leopoldskron will be announced at a press conference on 23 June.

FAUST 2023 - A Performative Tour

Preview 25 August 2023 (Press tours)

31 August, 8, 9, 26 and 27 September

(further dates will be announced as and when they become available)

Tickets via www.salzburgfestival.at

Max Reinhardt & Goethe's *Faust*

Why are we studying Reinhardt's last production in Salzburg?

Since Max Reinhardt's work in the early and founding period of the Salzburg Festival has been explored extensively during the past years (2020/21), i.e. on the occasion of the Salzburg Festival's centenary, in 2023 we focus on his last Salzburg production: Goethe's *Faust* (1933-1937) – including the historical caesuras of 1933 and 1937/38.

What was the point of departure?

· The events of 1933 – the rise of the National Socialist Party NSDAP in Germany, where Hitler became Chancellor of the Reich, the elimination of the Austrian Parliament and the appointment of the authoritarian "Ständestaat" regime under Engelbert Dollfuß, the passing of the 1000-mark limit, etc. – form the important political background for studying Reinhardt's *Faust* production, which was shown at the Salzburg Festival through 1937. In 1938, after Austria had been annexed by Nazi Germany in the "Anschluss", Reinhardt's *Faust* was replaced by a production of *Egmont* directed by Heinz Hilpert.

In the autumn of 1937, Reinhardt departed for Hollywood. In March 1938, Austria was annexed to Germany, causing widespread jubilation among the Austrian population. Reinhardt would never return from his American exile. In October 1943, he died in a hotel in New York, impoverished and robbed of his artistic homeland.

· At the same time, we were interested to see how the summer riding school was unlocked for theatre, given Max Reinhardt's weakness for it even during the Salzburg Festival's earliest days.

How did Reinhardt unlock the Felsenreitschule for theatre?

330 years ago, Archbishop Johann Ernst Thun had the striking 96 arcades carved from the Mönchsberg, in three layers on top of each other – presumably according to plans by the baroque master builder Johann Bernhard Fischer von Erlach – in order to create an auditorium for his riding displays and animal fights. Max Reinhardt opened this special space for theatre and the Salzburg Festival – as he had opened Cathedral Square for his *Jedermann* or the Kollegienkirche, also designed by Fischer von Erlach (1656-1723), where Reinhardt staged the world premiere of Hofmannsthal's *Das Salzburger große Welttheater*. As early as 1926, Reinhardt directed Goldoni's *The Servant of Two Masters* on an open-air wooden stage construction at the Felsenreitschule (revived in 1930 and 1931). As a theatrical space, however, Reinhardt unlocked the summer riding school with its iconic arcades only with his last production in Salzburg: for Goethe's *Faust* (1933-1937), he had Clemens Holzmeister erect an entire town, in which the entire piece could be performed without any breaks for resetting, and where all sets were placed alongside and on top of one another: the purest form of a "simultaneous stage setting", achieving a magical effect.

Why is the Faust town being recreated?

"The idea of the city as a stage [which is quoted time and again in the context of *Jedermann*] was turned around: now the stage was the city" (Pia Janke). "The intention was that of a total illusion, towards which all theatrical means were employed. Optical and acoustical elements, lighting, colours, noises and music were to work together, creating a new form of the 'total work of art'."

This concept went down in theatrical history. As contemporary reports and reviews demonstrate, this production was the highlight of the 1933 Festival summer for most observers.

When planning the centenary festivities, the idea of recreating the Faust town was already floated, but it proved impossible, for planning and logistical reasons. Now cutting-edge technology enables us to recreate it in the virtual space. Using a virtual recreation of this

Faust town (by the Ars Electronica Futurelab) in its original location and through a multi-perspective guided tour given by acting students at the Mozarteum University Salzburg, we bring Holzmeister's unique stage set and Reinhardt's production back to life.

Why are we virtually recreating the Faust town?

Rebuilding an analogue version would be extremely expensive – and the Felsenreitschule stage is needed for our Festival productions. Moreover, simple recreations of old productions make little sense, as they lose their original power in today's world.

Even though the Salzburg Festival considers itself a festival whose enchantment unfolds within the present, through shared live experiences, we are now implementing our first project using virtual worlds – inspired by the notion of a living Festival archive.

We make use of new technology in those areas where conventional means fail, namely when reconstructing historical material. Thus, in this project, we are not recreating a historical production, but a historical stage set, and are thereby enabling the public to experience the historical staging without re-enacting it. Furthermore, the VR experience is anchored to the original location, where a stage reality is also created, namely by rebuilding individual elements of the stage sets. We are moving between very different levels of perception: analogue, stage and virtual realities.

We invited our colleagues from Linz to help us with their expertise in virtual worlds. The result is the confluence between a performing arts festival performed live – the Salzburg Festival – and the fascinating worlds of a festival of digital arts – the Ars Electronica Festival.

What is a performative tour like?

“Reinhardt took up anything which heightened and increased effect on stage; anything that increased illusion; that intensified reality; that illustrated the flow, the incessant movement on stage, and most of all, anything that created contact with the audience, increasing the viewers' involvement in the action.”
(Arthur Kahane)

Every hour, the guides take groups of no more than 15 visitors through the exhibition at the Karl-Böhm-Saal, across the stage of the Felsenreitschule, through virtual worlds and back to the Toscaninihof, at the foot of the Holzmeister-Stiege stairway.

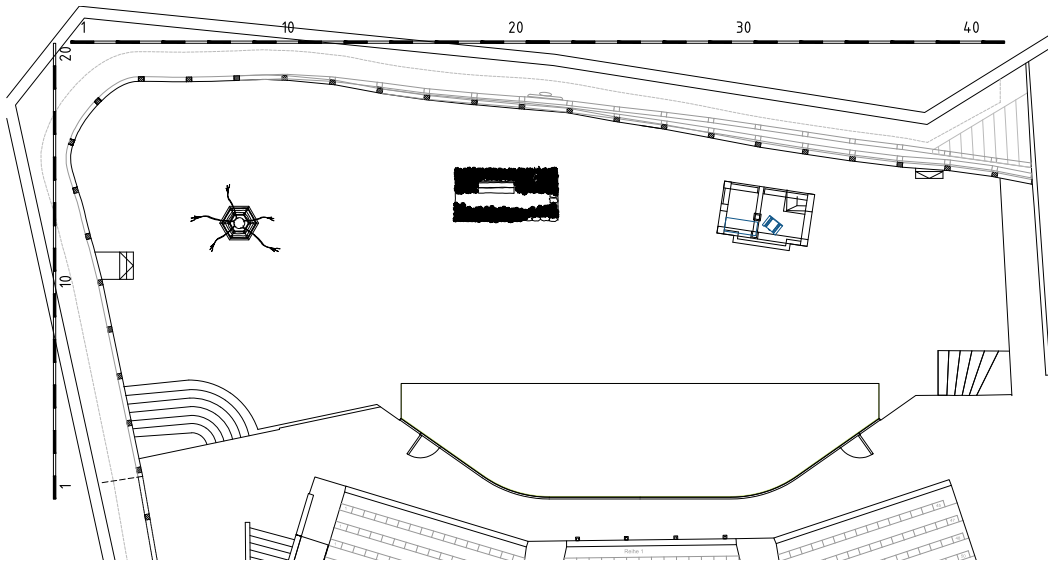
- Feature I - Karl-Böhm-Saal - Historical Background

On the gallery of the Karl-Böhm-Saal, guests are introduced to the subject. The guides offer insights into how the riding school was unlocked for theatre. The focus of the guided tour of the analogue exhibition is on the stage sets as well as the props and costumes of the production.

- Feature II - Felsenreitschule - The Stage & Sets

The guides lead the visitors into the Felsenreitschule. They walk on stage and get a feeling for the atmosphere of the original location. Elements of Clemens Holzmeister's Faust town are arranged on stage; they mark three scenes of the impressive simultaneous stage: Faust's study, the garden scene and the dance scene under the linden tree.

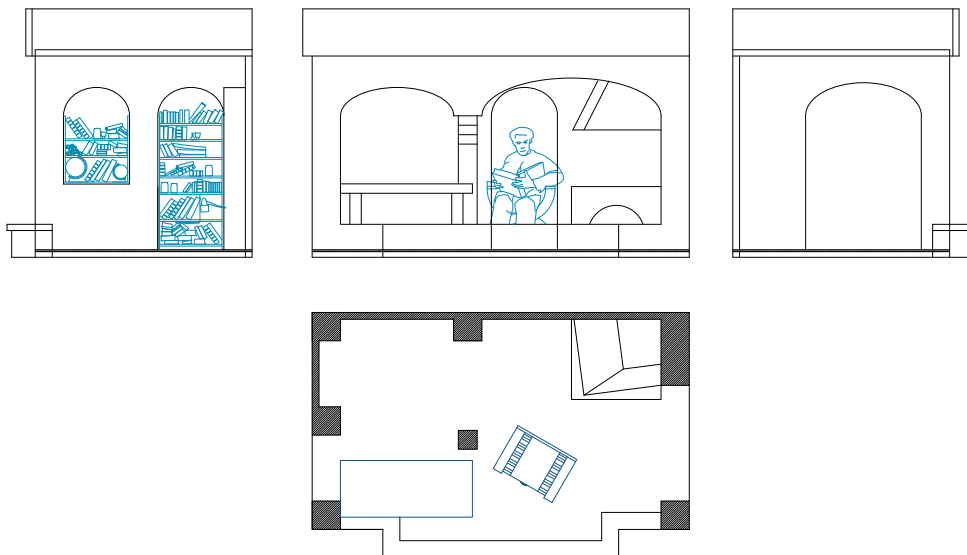
The stage set elements were reconstructed on a smaller scale in the Salzburg Festival's workshops, based on photos and sketches, and outfitted with props. They enable the audience to pass through the three scenarios.



Stage plan of the Felsenreitschule; installation of the stage set elements
 Visualization: Michael Veits

- Faust's Study

Amidst books and alchemical contraptions, the audience finds itself within Reinhardt's theatrical cosmos, gaining insights into the director's working method. The guides explain the entries in his prompt book and rehearsal notes.



Visualization: Michael Veits



Faust's study, Louis Rainer, 1934 © ASF/Photo Ellinger (GP 75-970)
Visualisation: Ars Electronica Futurelab

– Garden Scene

Visitors amble on to the next scene: on a bench in a blooming meadow, Faust and Margarete meet. The guides talk about Reinhardt's ensemble – including Wessely, Balsler, Pallenberg and others –, quoting from reviews and explaining Reinhardt's dramaturgical focus.



Garden scene · Paula Wessely and Ewald Balsler, 1933
© ASF/Photo Ellinger (Neg 70-922a)

· Feature III · Felsenreitschule · Time-Travel VR Application

Visitors take a seat on stage at the Felsenreitschule; the guides help them put on the 3D headsets. A short introduction to the VR experience is followed by an explanation of the *Faust* score: the music for *Faust* was composed in 1933 by Bernhard Paumgartner. For the recreation, Hannes Löschel has been commissioned to write a new *Faust* score, supporting the dramaturgy of the VR experience.

Thanks to the VR headsets, Holzmeister's impressive *Faust* town arises before the visitors' eyes – the highlight of the "theatrical" guided tour. Aided by the music, ghost lights guide the visitors' gaze, leading them through the scenery. They spark lights illuminating Faust's study;

they transform into a poodle and flying books, they practice witchcraft, turn the garden and the linden tree green and finally accompany Margarete to her desperate prayer.

- Feature IV - Felsenreitschule - Faust's Linden Tree

After the journey through the virtual Faust town, visitors find themselves back in the stage world, gathering under Faust's linden tree, the last stop of the guided tour.

At this station, the political context is explained and the production is considered before the historical backdrop of the end of the First Republic.

Reinhardt's *Faust* was performed for the last time in 1937. The looming catastrophe was already palpable ...

This final scene is bookended by two historical film clips dated 1936 and 1938.