Festivals have always been part of city life, but their relationship with their host cities has continually changed. With the rise of industrialization, they were largely considered peripheral to the course of urban affairs. Now they have become central to new ways of thinking about the challenges of economic and social change, as well as repositioning cities within competitive global networks. In this timely and thought-provoking book, John and Margaret Gold provide a reflective and evidencebased historical survey of the processes and actors involved, charting the ways that regular festivals have now become embedded in urban life and city planning.

Beginning with David Garrick's rain-drenched Shakespearean Jubilee and ending with Sydney's flamboyant Mardi Gras celebrations, it encompasses the emergence and consolidation of city festivals. After a contextual historical survey that stretches from Antiquity to the late nineteenth century, there are detailed case studies of pioneering European arts festivals in their urban context: Venice's Biennale, the Salzburg Festival, the Cannes Film Festival and Edinburgh's International Festival. Ensuing chapters deal with the worldwide proliferation of arts festivals after 1950 and with the ever-increasing diversification of carnival celebrations, particularly through the actions of groups seeking to assert their identity. The conclusion draws together the book's key themes and sketches the future prospects for festival cities.

Lavishly illustrated, and copiously researched, this book is essential reading not just for urban geographers, social historians and planners, but also for anyone interested in contemporary festival and events tourism, urban events strategy, urban regeneration, or simply building a fuller understanding of the relationship between culture, planning and the city.

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FESTIVAL CITIES Culture, Planning and Urban Life

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Contents

Pro	Preface and Acknowledgements	
1	Introduction	1
2	Ancient and Modern	35
3	Biennale	71
4	Salzburg	108
5	Cannes	141
6	Edinburgh	166
7	Proliferation	209
8	Asserting Identity	240
9	Conclusion	264
Bibliography		273
Index		315

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Preface and Acknowledgements

Cannes and Newport, Edinburgh and Roskilde, Bayreuth and Montreux: it is hardly necessary to add the word 'Festivals' to know that these very different places share a common bond. Just mentioning their names is sufficient to call to mind a group of long-established annual arts festivals that enjoy global reputations. To have performed at *Bayreuth*, to have taken a show to *Edinburgh* or to have had a film screened at *Cannes* are much cherished additions to the *curricula vitae* of those involved in the arts. The attraction for audiences, many of whom return year after year, is scarcely much less. Every year tour companies, hoteliers, restaurateurs, shopkeepers, souvenir vendors and transport operators gear up to cope with the influx of visitors – sometimes numbered in the hundreds of thousands – who enthusiastically descend on festival sites in search of the rich mixture of spectacle, noise, tradition, modernity, ritual, emotional succour and experimental challenge that characterises such events.

The same sense of instant association and attraction applies to a further list of places that includes New Orleans, Rio de Janeiro, Venice, Port of Spain (Trinidad and Tobago) and Notting Hill (London). Here again it scarcely requires the insertion of an extra word – in this case 'Carnival' – to conjure up images of a notable group of street festivals that occupy a central place in the international tourist calendar and have long brightened the lives of residents of their host cities. The roots of the carnival might stretch back to the pre-Lententide Christian celebrations that originated in central and southern Europe during the Middle Ages, but each passing year sees fresh additions to the roster as new groups find ever-more-innovative reasons to establish carnivals in order to further the interests of their towns, to trumpet causes that they wish to promote, to assert the identity of specific groups, or simply to boost the local exchequer. Yet regardless of the reasons for their creation, even newly founded carnivals quickly acquire something of the transgressive character that permeates such events, despite the sporadic efforts of civic authorities to curb them.

These two forms of effervescent festivals have inspired an enormous literature that essentially comes from two very different sets of authors. Some write from the position of insiders, with theatre managers, cinematic glitterati, festival directors, city managers and others recording memories of their experiences in founding and running festivals. Often seeking to 'set the record straight' as they would see it, they help us understand the internal dynamics that lie behind

the public face of specific events. Many other commentators, mostly but not entirely from academic backgrounds, cast a critical gaze from the outside. Their goal is sometimes to berate, but many more seek to build an understanding of the relationship between the festival and its home city, as well as more general insights into, say, the workings of the arts in society and the development of the creative and cultural economy.

As anyone who knows about the history of such festivals will readily testify, it is not surprising to learn how often the underlying narrative hinges on deep controversy. The story of most music or theatre festivals, even the longestablished ones, is rarely complete without reference to conflicts between those who support what they would see as the original vision for the festival and other groups who seek a greater and perhaps more permissive modernity (often to legitimize other objectives). Choice of programmes and decisions over commercial sponsorship are forever enmeshed in debates about the extent of the compromises acceptable when seeking to secure sufficient funding. Accounts of the dogged persistence shown by festival organizers in the face of official indifference or even determined opposition coexist alongside civic- or corporate-sponsored 'official' histories that are permeated with expressions of self-congratulation and place promotional gloss.

There is also the problem that 'festival' has become a rather overworked word. Besides the long-established festivals that are the apogee of the international arts calendar come the Eighth Biennial Research Methods Festival (Bath, UK) in 2018, the annual International Biscuit Festival (Knoxville, Tennessee), the Ealing Business Expo and Networking Festival (London), the Baby Jumping Festival (Castrillo de Murcia, Spain), the Grape Throwing Festival (Mallorca, Spain), the Louisiana Shrimp and Petroleum Festival (Morgan City), the Underwater Music Festival (Big Pine Key, Florida), and the annual Festival of St Vincent (Manganeses de la Polvorosa, Spain), albeit with its goat throwing activities now performed with a replica rather than the real thing. Words are also used carelessly. In 2018, the ever-innovative management of Copenhagen's Tivoli Gardens labelled their Christmas attractions 'a festival of the heart'. At the same time, their counterparts at the UK National Trust's Waddesdon Manor were staging their Christmas Carnival which, while apparently inspired by 'feasts, festivities, masked balls and fairy tales', was primarily a sales event without apparent connection with 'carnival' as the term is normally understood. Selectivity therefore is inevitable in any analysis and overview.

This book proceeds against this background, seeking to map common features and trends while making sense of diversity. Its central aim is to provide detailed scrutiny of the relationship between cities and the festivals that they host, concentrating particularly on arts festivals and carnivals. Its two initial chapters provide an introductory overview of key conceptual issues and supply a historical overview of festivals and carnivals up to the nineteenth century. Attention then switches to the arts, with a sequence of four chapters that each supplies a case

study of a pioneering European arts festival in its urban context. In chronological order of the dates of their establishment, they are the Venice's Biennale (founded 1895), the Salzburger Festspiele (1920), the Cannes Film Festival (1946, but arguably 1939), and Edinburgh's International Festival (1947). Two ensuing chapters deal with the global proliferation of arts festivals after 1950 and with the ever-increasing diversification of carnival celebrations, particularly through the actions of groups seeking to assert their identity. The conclusion draws together the book's key themes and sketches the future prospects for festival cities.

The reasons for choosing this structure and any explanations as to why the book includes this but excludes that are best left to the introductory chapter rather than being rehearsed here. However, at this juncture we are happy to own up to the fact that, whatever formal justifications are offered, we have long had a personal interest in its subject matter. Festivals provide a fascinating wealth of insights into how individuals and groups make culture happen. Almost all longerestablished festivals can offer suitable fodder for engrossing tales of heroes and villains and, not infrequently, illuminate the battles waged between democratic impulses and totalitarian ideologies. Like anyone interested in the workings of culture, we have found ample evidence emerging of both its lighter and darker sides when considering festivals. There is also the experience of the moment. Being there at festival time has indelibly shaped our knowledge of Venice, Edinburgh, Salzburg, New Orleans and other festival cities. During these special times of year, the usual attractions associated with the grandeur of their architecture or fascinations with their social fabrics are sidelined or, at times, even eclipsed by the tidal wave of frenetic energy that their annual festivals release. To be there when festivals are in full spate is to experience cities animated by the influx of large and invariably good-natured crowds, with a sense that you as a visitor are participating in the unfolding spectacle rather than standing passively apart from it. Being required to visit these places at such moments has meant that undertaking this book has rarely seemed like a chore.

Nevertheless, there are also abundant academic reasons for seeking to write about this topic. Its subject matter sits alongside material covered in earlier works in which we examined the ways in which cities have staged ambulant sporting and cultural mega-events, such as the International Expositions (or World's Fairs), the Olympic Games and the European Cities (now Capitals) of Culture. When turning our attention here to cities that host non-ambulant and recurrent arts festivals and carnivals, we are fully aware that there are important differences in scale, cost, frequency, organization and ambition compared with the cultural and sporting mega-events that we have examined previously. Yet, so saying, there are many comparable features in the relationship between the festivals and their host cities with regard to the ways in which they operate, what they seek to do and, not least, in their relationship with what is happening in the wider world. In that spirit, we seek to bring a similar lens of historical analysis to bear when considering the origins, development and future of these festivals,

their importance for urban life, and their significance for city planning and management.

In doing so, we are only too aware of the priorities of the moment. The worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic of early 2020 effectively put paid to festival going for that year and perhaps beyond. The logic, as the illustrations on many pages of this book testify, was simple. Festivals are places characterized by the throng and huddle. The threat of a highly contagious and deadly disease demanded lockdown of the mass of the population, followed by periods of social distancing. Some festivals, with hand-to-mouth existences and dependent on one year's takings in order to proceed to the next year, may not survive. Yet almost as soon as the rules for carefully contrived avoidance behaviour were introduced, the cultural and creative sector started to find innovative ways of recapturing something of the festival experience. Through digital means the voices of isolated individuals were aggregated into choirs, solo musicians into orchestras and soliloquizing actors into plays - all available for audiences online. Some elements may well be here to stay but, if so, we believe that they will be in addition to and not substitution for the regular round of festivals. There is an irreducible core of cultural experience offered by festivals that is simply not available from other sources. Whatever else is true, we believe that the return of the festival to add colour to the annual round of everyday activity is a question of when and not if.

Given that we do our own typing and that this book is largely based on sources either gathered or researched by ourselves, the ensuing list of thanks breaks with current trends by being somewhat shorter than the cast list of a major Hollywood blockbuster. However, thanks are due to a select group for their assistance and support. Ann Rudkin supported this project from inception and supplied encouragement throughout although, like any publisher, she is not overly keen on being thanked for her patience lest it should lead others into equally bad ways. We are grateful to all those who have given permission to reproduce photographs and other illustrations; in each case, sources are included in the captions. Thanks go to the following for giving us the benefit of their wisdom and practical assistance: Ruth Craggs, Graeme Evans, Nicole Ferdinand, the late and much missed Sir Peter Hall, Dennis Hardy, Olaf Kaltmeier, Peter Larkham, Gordon Orlando-Davies, Sandra Rosen, David Francis Taylor and Jeremy Whitehand. The home team - Iain, Josie, Thomas, Jenny, David and Mathilda - were once again wonderfully supportive. Finally, this volume is dedicated to the memory of the late Mark Fisher, the architect of rock 'n roll arena spectacle, who contributed nothing directly but so much indirectly to the writing of this book.

West Ealing August 2020

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

My eyes, till then, no sights like this will see, Unless we meet at *Shakespeare's Jubilee*! On Avon's Banks, where flowers eternal blow! Like its Full Stream our Gratitude shall flow! There let us revel, show our fond regard, On that lov'd Spot, first breath'd our matchless Bard; To Him all Honour, Gratitude is due, To Him we owe our all – to Him and to You.

David Garrick1

With these words, the actor and theatre manager David Garrick brought the season of plays at London's Drury Lane to a close on 18 May 1769. Normally he would have confined himself to a promise to return after the summer's break, but on this occasion chose instead to extol the virtues of a forthcoming event – a Jubilee to be held at Stratford-upon-Avon in honour of William Shakespeare. It was a cause close to his heart. Garrick first attracted attention in 1741 with his 'career-defining' performances as the King in 'Richard III' (McPherson, 2014). Thereafter, he became a formative influence in staging and interpreting Shakespeare's plays for eighteenth century audiences and was the mainstay of the movement that sought to elevate Shakespeare to the status of *the* 'national poet and icon' (Thomson, 2004, p. 537; Marsden, 1995). Such was Garrick's admiration that in 1756 he commissioned the architect Robert Adam to design



Figure 1.1. Garrick's faux temple to Shakespeare (designed by Robert Adam) at Hampton-on-Thames. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

an octagonal Palladian-style temple for a riverside plot adjacent to his villa at Hampton-on-Thames to house appropriate memorabilia (figure 1.1). A lifesize statue of Shakespeare by the celebrated French Huguenot sculptor Louis-François Roubiliac presided over its interior.

The planned Jubilee resonated with this brand of hagiography – much later satirized by George Bernard Shaw (1901, p. xxxi) as 'Bardolatry' - although its scope and intent fundamentally diverged from anything previously associated with Stratford. Admittedly a funerary bust posited in the parish church (Holy Trinity) shortly after Shakespeare's death in 1616 was the first memorial to him erected anywhere, but hitherto his name had been primarily connected with London (Dobson, 1992, pp. 180-184). That was where his plays had originally been performed, where he achieved his greatest success and where his audiences, 'both courtly and common', resided (Lynch, 2007, p. 245; Salkfeld, 2018). Stratford, by contrast, merely provided the setting for the bookends of his life: the place where he was born and raised and where he later chose to spend his retirement. There is no record of his plays being performed there before September 1746² and a scheme for a festival in 1764 to celebrate the bicentenary of his birth had come to nothing.³ Admittedly the Shakespearean connection had long drawn a trickle of visitors to the town, but the prevailing local attitude towards this early expression of cultural tourism was more acquiescent than enthusiastic. Other than selling souvenirs of dubious provenance, there was

strikingly little concerted effort by Stratfordians to capitalize upon the reputation of their illustrious predecessor.

The Jubilee radically altered matters. The idea stemmed from a somewhat unlikely source, when a proposal emerged in 1768 to fill an empty niche on the exterior wall of the Town Hall, then under construction, with a statue of Shakespeare. Stratford Corporation⁴ readily agreed, provided that the necessary artefact could be procured at little or no expense. Aware of the statue created for the faux temple at Hampton and knowing that he was a man of means, civic dignitaries made tentative inquiries to see if Garrick might donate something similar to Stratford. In December 1768, the strategy of persuasion extended to proposing to make him an Honorary Burgess (freeman) 'in order to flatter Mr Garrick into some such hansom present' (quoted in Macdonald, 1986, p. 4). Further blandishment came from suggesting that his portrait might hang alongside Shakespeare's in the new building (Deelman, 1964, p. 73).

The town's leaders, it should be stressed, were only interested in sculpture. Yet while quickly obliging their request by supplying a cheaper plaster cast copy of the statue at Hampton, Garrick sensed a bigger opportunity in the offing. A celebratory event based around the statue's unveiling might revive the spirit that had inspired the unrealized celebrations planned for the 1764 bicentenary. It would also serve professional self-interest. Garrick's friend and mentor Samuel Johnson had recently published *The Plays of William Shakespeare* (Johnson, 1765), an eight-volume collection critically acclaimed as a landmark in its field. It was an achievement that challenged Garrick's position 'as top man' in the Shakespearean world in a way that no actor had ever managed (England, 1964, p. 11). By way of response, staging the Jubilee might lastingly endorse his leadership, especially as the festival was initially envisaged as being recurrent. As testimony to that point, the first public announcement on 6 May 1769 in the *St James's Chronicle* had proclaimed that:

a Jubilee in Honour and to the Memory of Shakespeare will be appointed at Stratford [at] the beginning of September which will be kept up every seventh year. Mr. Garrick, at the particular request of the Corporation and Gentlemen of the Neighbourhood, has obligingly accepted the Stewardship. At the first Jubilee, a large handsome Edifice, lately erected in Stratford by subscription, will be named Shakespeare's Hall and dedicated to his Memory. (quoted in Tait, 1961, p. 103)

'Stewardship' meant responsibility for event planning and design as well as management. Here Garrick had ample precedents to direct his thinking. The theatre, a realm in which he was fully at home, furnished ideas for set and auditorium design and for ways of achieving dramaturgical effect. State and royal pageantry provided inspiration for achieving spectacular displays involving processions, music, lights and pyrotechnics (see also chapter 2). More specifically, there were the 'Jubilees' staged at irregular intervals in Georgian London's

pleasure gardens (Corfield, 2012; Coke and Borg, 2011). Usually reserved for special occasions such as celebrating royal births, commemorating military victories or the signing of important peace treaties, Jubilees featured colourful processions, loud music, fireworks, masked balls and abundant opportunities for 'pleasure-seeking, socializing, [and] dressing up' (Caines, 2013, p. 105). Observing one such event on 26 April 1749 in the Ranelagh Gardens in Chelsea, a 'Jubilee Masquerade in the Venetian manner' held in honour of the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, the English polymath Horace Walpole told a correspondent that: 'it had nothing Venetian in it, but was by far the best understood and prettiest spectacle I ever saw; nothing in a fairy tale even surpassed it' (quoted in Shelley, 2004, p. 171).

The version proposed for Stratford promised a three-day 'heady cocktail of miscellaneous entertainments' (Watson, 2007, p. 205; Doderer-Winkler, 2013, p. 33); some designed as 'panegyric and quasi-religious rites for paying tribute to Shakespeare' (Habicht, 2001, p. 441) and others more reminiscent of fairground attractions. The programme included the composer Thomas Arne presiding over a performance of his oratorio *Judith*, cannonades, pealing bells, fireworks, a horse race for the Jubilee Cup, a ball, festive meals, a masquerade, display of transparencies (lantern-lit allegorical illuminations), and a procession of 200 costumed Shakespearean characters (Thomas, 2012, p. 16). Surprisingly, there were no plans to stage any of Shakespeare's plays as part of the festivities, but Garrick decided to fill that gap with a celebratory ode that would be permeated with suitable 'echoes and quotations' from the Bard (DG, 1769).

After a month spent formulating plans, carpenters and builders moved in to undertake the necessary works. Houses were freshly whitewashed. The



Figure 1.2. A sketch of the Rotunda built at Bomstead Mead, Stratford-upon-Avon, originally published in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XXXVIII, October 1769. (*Image*: © Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

completion of a turnpike road from Dudley was expedited. Sedan chairs arrived from London and Bath to meet the needs of more genteel visitors (Fogg, 2014, pp. 112–113). A substantial octagonal, wooden-boarded and 'elegantly painted and gilded' rotunda, based on the design of the large rococo building used for concerts at London's Vauxhall Gardens (Coke and Borg, 2011), would serve as an arena for the main celebrations. Constructed at a spot where woodland had been cleared at Bankcroft Mead, a water meadow 'on the brink of the Avon' (Boswell, 1769, p. 451), the Stratford rotunda (figure 1.2) could hold a thousand spectators, with a stage large enough for 100 performers.

Garrick actively marketed the event to polite society, drawing on his celebrity status⁵ and his consummate abilities in the field of self-promotion. The festival of music, theatre and entertainments, he assured them, would be well worth the 'difficult and crowded' two-day stagecoach ride from London (Frost and Laing, 2013, p. 110). Sceptics, however, questioned whether Stratford, a provincial market town with just 2,200 inhabitants, could cater for a gathering on this scale. It manifestly lacked sufficient accommodation to cope with the sudden influx of performers, festivalgoers and their small armies of accompanying servants. The proprietor of the drab and poorly appointed 'White Lion', the only inn, did endeavour to modernize his premises, rapidly adding assembly, coffee and card rooms, renaming guest bedrooms after Shakespearean characters, ordering 3,600 pewter plates and the cutlery to go with them, procuring a 327-pound sea turtle, and stocking his cellar with 1,000 gallons of wine (McConnell Stott, 2019, p. 114). Nevertheless like other hostelries of rural England, the 'White Lion' was essentially geared to cater for the clientele attending the town's three annual fairs:6 typically 'plebian, brash and raw' affairs (Cameron, 1998, p. 1) that served the agricultural economy and provided sites for recruitment for domestic service. It was always highly unlikely that it could provide food and services of the calibre to which fashionable visitors from London were accustomed. Stratford would also lack a functioning sewerage and main drain system until the mid-nineteenth century. Its roads were unmetalled, rutted, poorly lit and always likely to turn into a quagmire if the weather should turn inclement. Conscious of potential problems, the organizers therefore inserted the phrase 'if the Weather will permit' into the publicity material for the Jubilee (Ousby, 1990, p. 43).

Those harbouring doubts would soon feel that their views were fully vindicated. The Jubilee drew double the anticipated number of visitors (Stochholm, 1964, p. 173), with accommodation in short supply and then only available at sharply inflated prices. Those unable to rent houses found themselves lodging in the parish almshouses, spare rooms, attics, cellars, hay lofts and even henhouses (England, 1964, p. 34). Others that failed to procure even those meagre and sometimes insanitary quarters might find themselves sleeping in the carriages in which they arrived. Visitors complained volubly about the high cost and poor quality of the limited amount of food that was available. The clause about the weather proved judicious. While the first day enjoyed clear skies,

'a violent tempest of wind and rain' (Murphy, 1801, p. 298) blighted the more ambitious second day. Floodwater inundated the riverside site. The street pageant was postponed for a day before being summarily cancelled. The firework display was severely impaired, literally featuring damp squibs. The roof of the Rotunda leaked and the rising waters affected the ball, necessitating the rescue of the more unsuitably clad participants. The third day's activities were truncated despite improved weather, with the Rotunda unusable and the horse race on Shottery Meadow contending with deep standing water before the winner 'swam home by seven lengths' (Fogg, 2014, p. 120). It would be several days before the roads were sufficiently passable for the remaining visitors to depart.

After the Jubilee

The Jubilee, which had aroused huge public curiosity before the event, triggered even keener interest afterwards. Contemporary commentators avidly debated the merits and follies of the occasion (Cunningham, 2008). The machinations of the local inhabitants invited vitriol, with Garrick's colleague Benjamin Victor, Drury Lane's treasurer, railing against 'the scandalous Behaviour of the very *low People* of the Town of *Stratford*, in regard to their *Avarice*, and shameful Extortions' (cited Stochholm, 1964, p. 112). In a letter to *The Town and Country Magazine* another correspondent scathingly concluded:

A Jubilee, as it hath lately appeared, is a public invitation urged by puffing, to go post without horses, to an obscure borough without representatives, governed by a mayor and aldermen who are no magistrates, to celebrate a great poet whose own works have made him immortal by an ode without poetry, music without harmony, dinners without victuals and lodgings without beds. (*Ibid.*, p. 113)

By way of reply to these and similar comments, James Boswell defended the townspeople: 'it is reasonable that Shakespeare's Townsmen should partake of the Jubilee as we as Strangers did; they as a Jubilee of Profit, we of Pleasure' (cited Stochholm, 1964, p. 110). In a further rebuttal, he went on the attack against the 'envious Foes of our Roscius' for claiming that the Jubilee was a 'Piece of Farce and Rhodomantade' rather than 'an elegant and truly classical Celebration of the Memory of Shakespeare' (cited in Tankard, 2014, p. 19).

The response from the inhabitants and Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon was less predictable. At one level, they would have been excused if they chose to forget about the Jubilee as quickly as possible. A substantial part of the proceedings could not be delivered and there were heavy losses. Local resentments had been fuelled by the disruption caused by building works and from the high admission prices charged for the main entertainments. Certainly, all physical traces of the Rotunda soon vanished. Nevertheless, at another level, the seeds of commercial self-interest and civic boosterism had been sown.

Any perceived damage to the town's reputation from criticisms of profiteering and alleged mendacity quickly dissipated. The festival had allowed Stratford to challenge, if not yet to shake off, the sense of being a rural backwater, revealing in practical terms how staging high-profile Shakespearean events of several days' duration could enhance the town's reputation as well as yield sizable profits for its business community (Brock and Morris, 2016, p. 5). This positive assessment, for instance, prompted a new approach to Garrick to see if he might be prepared to curate another Jubilee in 1770. He courteously declined, but his reply (quoted in Deelman, 1964, p. 289) bore a waspish sting in the tail; effectively questioning whether Stratford was a fit place to be associated with a national hero:

But my good Friend, w^d. the Gentlemen do real honour, & show their Love to Shakespeare – Let 'Em decorate y^e town (y^e happiest & why not y^e handsomest in England) let your streets be well pav'd, & kept clean, do Something with y^e delightful Meadow, allure Everybody to visit y^e holy Land; let it be well lighted, & clean under foot, and let it be said for y^f. honour, and I hope for y^f. Interest, that the Town, that gave Birth to the first Genius since y^e Creation, is the most dirty, unseemly, illpav'd, wretched-looking Town in all Britain.

Yet while being unwilling to repeat the exercise, Garrick could not ignore the Jubilee's estimated £2,000 losses. In view of Stratford Corporation's unwillingness to underwrite an event that was always beyond their means (Foulkes, 2002, p. 59), it was agreed in advance that Garrick would cover any shortfall while profits would accrue to the town. As it transpired he settled the debts, albeit too slowly for Stratford's liking, by restaging the 'dampened celebration' of the Jubilee as a light-hearted and gently self-mocking musical spectacular at Drury Lane. That decision was not entirely premeditated (Farnsworth Smith and Lawhon, 1980; Ritchie, 2019). Garrick had learned that that the theatre's competitors at Covent Garden planned to adapt George Colman's existing matrimonial comedy 'Man and Wife', shifting its focus to Stratford and adding new dialogue in a tongue-in-cheek review of the Jubilee (Burden, 2017, 152). On hearing the news, Garrick wrote to Colman 'in a most candid manner' (Everard, 1818, p. 15; quoted in Burden, 2017, p. 152). He proposed abandoning all thoughts of performing 'The Jubilee' at his theatre if Colman would reciprocate at Covent Garden. Only after being rebuffed, did Garrick assemble his version, 'The Jubilee, or Shakespeare's Garland', for the Drury Lane stage. This subsequently opened on 14 October 1769.

Both theatres gained immediate box office successes, but Garrick's show quickly gained the upper hand. Taking 90 minutes to perform and involving appearances from 320 individuals, it closed after ninety-one performances – the longest continuous run of any theatrical production in the eighteenth century (Brewer, 1997, p. 325).⁷ The debt to Stratford was 'covered four times over', with the play proving so popular with audiences that the Drury Lane company felt compelled to take it off for a few days in January 1770 simply 'to vary the

Entertainment of the Stage' (Deelman, 1964, p. 286). For years afterwards, Garrick had recourse to 'The Jubilee' as an afterpiece to ensure filling the house when the main play of the night was judged to be weak (Johnson with Buzwell, 2016, p. 110).

With or without Garrick's participation, Stratford also strove to keep the memory of its landmark festival alive; a decision that impacted in a discontinuous but discernible way on the long-term development of the town. In immediate terms, a series of smaller annual adaptations attempted to emulate something of the content and visitor potential of the 1769 Jubilee. This initiative eventually foundered in 1776 when a slump in the wool trade caused prolonged recession, but the enhanced flow of visitors to Stratford proved enduring. The town had effectively become a pilgrimage site, indisputably benefitting from the 'romantic belief that the spirit is immanent in matter, that genius can hallow the common earth it touched briefly long ago' (England, 1964, p. 81). As the English naturalist, the Rev. Edward Daniel Clarke (1793, p. 379) wrote in his account of travels in Britain and Ireland in 1791: 'STRATFORD! All hail to thee! When I tread thy hallowed walks; when I pass over the same mould that has been pressed by the feet of SHAKESPEARE, I feel inclined to kiss the earth itself'. Bardolatry now enveloped Stratford as firmly as it hero-worshipped the Bard himself: it was the location most closely identified with Shakespeare considering that the principal London theatres where he worked had long since been demolished.⁸

Conditions became right for the resumption of celebratory festivals in the early nineteenth century. A one-day event in 1816 to mark the bicentenary of Shakespeare's death offered a ball, public banquets, and a firework display (Styles, 1945, p. 245). A decade later, the newly founded Shakespeare Club held commemorative events in 1826 and 1827. In April 1830 the Club, now enjoying the patronage of George IV, organized a three-day Royal Gala, replete with another wooden rotunda (Hunter, 1864, p. 85). Closely reminiscent of its 1769 antecedent but now situated beyond the river's reach in the Rother Market (Styles, 1945, p. 245), it housed a rich mixture of activities that included banquets, masquerades and a performance of 'Richard III' (Anon, 1830). In April 1864 a weeklong festival, instituted to mark the tercentenary of Shakespeare's birth, again commissioned a rotunda and incorporated the usual blend of memorial services, processions, firework displays, concerts and junketing, albeit now with tours and excursions as additional attractions.9 Notably the brewer Charles Edward Flower, one of the major sponsors of this event, used it as a platform to argue strongly for constructing a major theatre that would be devoted to performances of Shakespeare's plays. This ambition was achieved in 1879 with the opening of the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (SMT),¹⁰ completing the process of forging closer connections between the town and playwright.

By this time too, local sentiment was fully aligned with the national and international movement that had 'purloined, appropriated, [and] re-deployed' Shakespeare's work in order to 'suit new designs and new purposes' (Caines,

2013, p. xix; see also Watson, 2006, pp. 56–68; Rumbold, 2012; Dobson, 2015). As the 'Swan of Avon',¹¹ Shakespeare was the Warwickshire boy who conquered the London stage and had become the greatest playwright of his or, arguably, of any age. His work possessed a 'universalism, global and multicultural' (Bloom, 1998, p. 3; Massai, 2016, pp. 73–76) that transcended national or linguistic boundaries. That point was quickly verified by the foundation of the first recognizable annual Shakespeare festival outside of Stratford at Kronborg Castle (Elsinore, Denmark) as early as 1816, itself the forerunner of the extraordinary global proliferation of such events (see chapter 7).

Understandably, celebration and reverence for the life history and works of Shakespeare remain at the heart of Stratford's annual round of festivities and relationship with festivals. Explicitly Shakespearean events span the arts and are an integral part of the unique and instantly recognizable selling proposition that is endlessly exploited when seeking to promote Stratford nationally and internationally. For example, the SMT has long organized theatre festivals.¹² From inception, the Birthplace Trust has run the Poetry Festival which, when introduced in 1953, was the first of its kind in Great Britain. A Film Festival with an openly Shakespearean content was added in 2012. In addition, organizers of kindred arts festivals have chosen the town when looking for somewhere with a sympathetic ambiance for their offerings. In 1949, for example, the English Folk Song and Dance Society selected Stratford against several other contenders for its first Folk Festival held outside London.

At the same time, as suggested earlier, other events that have been steadily added that bear less relationship to the process of 'mapping' Shakespeare on to Stratford (Hodgson, 1998) but rather a steady accretion of increasingly 'commodified [and] standardised' events, cloned from general practices, that have 'no special relationship with place' (Newbold *et al.*, 2015, p. xxi; Yeoman, 2004). This occurrence has contributed here, as elsewhere, to the two related trends with universal application. The first is to clone innovative ideas for festivals found to be popular and profitable elsewhere, albeit often with a rationale, however contrived, that stresses some link to the locality (MacMillan, 2014). The second is to market almost any gathering as a 'festival' if it promises, no matter how optimistically, to deliver a sense of joyous spontaneity or the commemorative commitment implicit in that term.

The extent and spread of Stratford's annual festivals calendar provides a first indication of these points. The 2018 schedule, for example, began in March with a Shakespeare Week. This was followed by the Birthday Celebrations, the Literary Festival and the Festival of Motoring (all in April); the Poetry Festival and the Folk Festival, newly revived as an annual event (June); the Beer and Cider Festival and the River Festival (July); the Shakespeare Film Festival and the Food Festival (September); the Music Festival, Mop Fair¹³ and Halloween Festival (all in October). The Christmas Festival rounded off the year. Naturally these events tended to be clustered in the main tourist season but at any juncture

when the timetable might have seemed somewhat empty, it was always possible to co-opt suitable events hosted by nearby towns to provide a semblance of continuity. For Stratford, these included advertising Alcester's Food Festival or Chipping Campden's Literature and Music Festivals as local events that might plug the empty weeks in May.

Cumulatively, this schedule conveyed the impression that the town had a coordinated 'programme', a telling word with implications of a *planned* sequence of events with purposive outcomes. Yet designation as a programme and claims that the town was now 'alive with festivals' (DS, 2014, p. 26) owe more to *ex post facto* marketing of discrete events initiated by separate actors and agencies than to any comprehensively organized development policy. It was true that Stratford-on-Avon District Council, the current local authority, participated in the process through marketing initiatives and a small funding scheme that assisted festivals which could claim 'to support the local economy and specifically [involve] ... businesses from the local area' (SADC, 2014). Nevertheless, the overall strategy rested on a reactive approach rather than one that sought to impose a defining and comprehensive vision as to how such events might be deployed.

Moreover, the sense of a municipally approved programme did not necessarily indicate unanimous public support. That, in itself, is nothing new. As noted above, Garrick's Jubilee drew its share of complaints about the intrusiveness of the building works and the high price of entry to the Rotunda celebrations. The 1864 Tercentenary experienced similar discontent over admission prices.¹⁴ This prompted the formation of a Committee that organized, albeit relatively amiably, a series of alternative and affordable events (Anon, 1864, p. 73; Hunter, 1864, p. 246; Chouhan, 2014); a move that was in some respects similar to later creations of 'fringe' events. Hubbard and Lilley (2000, pp. 229-230) identified a lengthy list of dissatisfactions arising from Stratford's more recent drive to boost tourist revenues through festivals and related activities. These included inflated prices for groceries in local shops, unwanted temporary land-use changes, parking restrictions, overcrowding, traffic congestion in the town centre, concerns about visitor behaviour, damage to seats and street furniture, litter, and the dangers of attracting the 'wrong sort of people'. Opinions about these matters, though, varied according to whether or not the local residents concerned saw themselves as benefitting from the visitors' presence. As ever, self-interest colours attitudes.

Festivals and Festivalization

Clearly much sets Stratford-upon-Avon apart as a centre for staging festivals but, equally, aspects of this town's experience are amply replicated elsewhere. In broad terms, a *festival* is an out of the ordinary, place-specific, thematically organized and publicly accessible gathering that is recurrent, animated and

pleasurable. That definition places little emphasis on the size, duration or content of the event, although self-evidently these are factors that impact on its resulting character. Rather the defining characteristics are an amalgam of organizer intent and participant experience. An event is a festival, therefore, if its organizers establish and designate it as such and participants experience it as something that captures the spirit associated with festive events and that differentiates them from everyday life.

Understandably plurality abounds, as is manifested in the enormous range and scope of festivals. For example, any survey of current practice could potentially include: celebrations of the fine arts (painting, sculpture, classical music, opera, ballet and modern dance, literature, poetry, film, television, photography, philosophy, haute couture, cuisine, archaeology, architecture, design, and theatre); expressions of popular culture (e.g. food and drink, fashion, ice and snow, gaming, sand sculpture, flowers, pets, puppets, hobbies and crafts, motoring, fire, murals, lanterns and floating baskets, marching bands, majorettes and cheerleaders, circus arts, comedy, comics, ceramics, popular cinema, street art, visual media, song, world music, jazz and blues, country and folk music); folklore and re-enactments; science and engineering (particularly events that aim at increasing public understanding of the results and implications of technological innovation); night (*nuit blanche*) and light festivals; carnivals and street performance; celebrations of political identity, ethnicity, gender and sexuality; and religious ceremonies, harvest celebrations and thanksgivings.

To compound matters, most of these categories can be further divided into a bewildering range of sub-genres. When considering film festivals, for instance, one can identify: the acknowledged market leaders (Cannes, Venice and Berlin); other major international events (Toronto, Rotterdam, Karlovy Vary, Sundance, Tribeca, Hong Kong, Locarno, Hong Kong, Busan, San Sebastián and Mar del Plata) that are similarly 'embedded within the global system of the film festival circuit' (de Valck, 2007, p. 68); a host of smaller gatherings dedicated to documentary, indie, art house, alternative, experimental, avant-garde and underground cinema; fan-fest events devoted to identifying with the characters and locations associated with selected televisual or cinematic series; festivals highlighting cinematographies differentiated by region, country or continent; events that show specialized programmes (e.g. adult, animation, archival, bizarre, silent, children's films, extreme, fantasy, horror, thriller, human rights, natural history, environmental, science fiction, sports, ethnography and anthropology); festivals showing movies by named film-makers (especially retrospectives) or types of director (e.g. students, newcomers, minorities, refugees and political detainees); events screening films that cater for audiences differentiated, inter alia, by age, gender, sexual preference, ethnicity, religion and political allegiance; gatherings devoted to particular film formats (e.g. 16 mm, Super 8, Cinerama, IMAX and smartphone); and even bring-your-own festivals (where participants show up, register their films, and then exhibit them).

Attempting to take stock of such diversity might seem a truly Sisyphean task in light of the continual search for new rationales, forms and fusions that have fuelled the exponential growth of festivals. Nevertheless, it is readily apparent that there are categorizations available. To continue with the example of film festivals, table 1.1 cautiously recognizes two main orientations – 'business' and 'audience' – by virtue of the 'characteristics typical to the operation of the film festival itself' and in light of the 'interest groups that must be appeased for the continuing support and success of the festival' (Peranson, 2009, p. 25). The 'business model', which would typify the major festivals, is configured around the desire to sell. In line with that commercial orientation, its organizers seek to maximize exposure through press coverage, awards ceremonies, A-list celebrity receptions and the screening of premières. These festivals predominantly feature a diet of mainstream movies designed to attract large audiences through the box

Characteristics	Business Festival	Audience Festival
Festival finance	High budget; operating revenue not primarily from ticket sales; major corporate sponsorship; sometimes support from local or national state	Low budget; operating revenue primarily from ticket sales; limited corporate sponsorship; little official support
Commercial orientation	High visibility film premières; strong promotional element with participation of filmmakers and celebrities; marketing and business presence with attendance by representatives of distributors, sales agents and sponsors	Not concerned with premières; limited business presence
Venues and infrastructure	Sizeable auditoria, multiple venues sometimes purpose built	Smaller spaces, sometimes makeshift
Staffing	Large numbers, some permanent	Small numbers, often unpaid and volunteer
Audience	Many/mostly non-paying guests; large festivals as social occasions; corporate hospitality; lesser concern for public audiences	Major concern – audiences need to be attracted and satisfied; few guests
Attracting audiences	Reputation of festival, press reporting, direct marketing	Largely word of mouth
Critics	Junkets for critics; not crucial for ticket sales and continuance of festival	Critics need to be propitiated; views important as promotional tools for selling tickets
Competition	Awards are of key concern	Competition is of minor significance
Future outlook	Ever-expanding in scope and outreach and sometimes scale	Content to remain the same size

Table 1.1. Two models for understanding film festivals. (Source: Based on Peranson, 2009, pp. 27-28)

office. By contrast the 'audience model', which characterizes the vast majority of film festivals, is primarily concerned with promoting film to cinema audiences rather than addressing the needs of the movie industry. It is designed less to ensure the participation of distributors, agents and buyers than to guarantee the satisfaction and continuing attendance of filmgoers (de Valck, 2007).¹⁵

Binary classifications of this type are common first steps when deconstructing the cultural complexities of festivals. As examples, festivals can be designated as either primarily sacred or dominantly secular. They may embrace internationality or focus explicitly on the locality. They may be tied to a special, often sacred place where the faithful habitually assemble as pilgrims or may be celebrated with equal intensity at any location suitable for the observances required. They may be rooted in fan culture, in which participants have a deep commitment to the festival's subject matter or be framed in a way that seeks to develop markets and audiences that did not previously exist (Linden and Linden, 2017). They may be conceived as singular events or used purposefully as part of 'a programme of events [designed] to strategically and sustainably support long-term policy agendas that enhance the quality of life for all' (Richards, 2017a, p. 45). They may be primarily 'celebrations of some aspect of the community that is special to the residents of that community' (Delamere, 2008, p. 130) or, as suggested earlier, respond to universal trends that have no profound local associations. They may focus narrowly on accomplished artistic achievement or address more 'inclusive' concepts of culture by encouraging amateur participation (Lee, 2004).

Conversely, binary distinctions can be too simplistic or even misleading when dealing with the complexity of festivals. Giorgi and Sassatelli, (2011), for example, distinguished between 'traditional' and 'post-traditional' when seeking to differentiate longer-established and culturally-embedded festivals from more recent 'placeless' events. That dichotomy, however, unwittingly seems to suggest the historiographically problematic idea that there are archetypal and authentic gathering that contrast with, and progressively give way to, commodified events that might appear the same but lack the same intent. Other types of classification that recognize greater complexity through demarcating spectra within which individual events may be situated may be preferable. Size is an obvious benchmark in this respect, with festivals ranging from small niche or 'boutique' events, through medium-sized and large festivals, to sporting and cultural megaevents with a global outreach. Timing is another, with some festivals completed in a day, others taking several days and yet others lasting months. Modes of observance also supply the basis for classification, with events situated on a scale that ranges from solemn worship to chaotic irreverence and all points inbetween.

The growing interest in festivals of all types as ingredients in urban life has frequently led to allusions to 'festivalization' when referring to 'the role and influence of festivals on the societies that host and stage them – both direct and indirect, and in both the short and longer term' (Roche, 2011, p. 127). However, precisely what festivalization includes and excludes remains contentious. For

Smith (2016, p. 32), it was an overarching process within which the urbanization of events occurs. Bennett *et al.* (2014*b*, p. 2) suggested that festivalization brought together 'cultural identities, lifestyles, political ideologies, leisure practices, creative styles, taste cultures and audiences' in the process of building 'an understanding of festivals as integral components of the contemporary cultural landscape and as key sites that inspire community, cultural critique, social mobility and change' (also Roth and Frank, 2000; Hitters, 2007; Hooker, 2008; Cudny, 2016). Dealing with festivals that are held repeatedly in the same locations, Zherdev (2014, p. 6) maintained that what was at stake was a new cultural ambiance, with urban space turned 'into a place of constant festival'.

Others prefer narrower meanings. To Négrier (2015, p. 19), festivalization represented two processes: that 'by which cultural activity presented in a regular, on-going pattern or season, is reconfigured to form a "new" event'; and that 'by which cultural institutions, such as a cinema, theatre, arts centre or gallery orients part of their programme around one or more themes or events, concentrated in space and time'. When exploring the experience of two Australian music festivals, Duffy (2014, p. 230) noted how they are 'intimately embedded within the public sphere as normative and at times transformative processes' (see also Giorgi and Sassatelli, 2011). When seeking to understand a Finnish festival, Van Elderen (1997, p. 126) took festivalization to mean the 'transformation of the town into a specific symbolic space in which the utilisation of the public domain ... is under the spell of a particular cultural consumption pattern' (quoted in Richards and Palmer, 2010, p. 28).

The definition adopted here recognizes this plurality, viewing 'festivalization' as the process by which increasing the number and duration of festivals held in a particular place produces tangible and intangible changes in the economy, culture and environment of that place. As such, staging festivals harnesses the age-old role of the city as a centre for formally-constituted and regularly-repeated festivities to the new 'cultural and creative economy' - the dynamic and stillevolving economic sector that encompasses activities that 'lie at the crossroads of arts, culture, business and technology' and that capitalize on 'the socio-economic potential ... of creativity, knowledge and information' (O'Connor, 2010; CCBC, 2014).¹⁶ Festivals thereby shed their aura of being ephemeral appendages to the *real* urban economy. Instead, they are recognized to have contributed substantively to the post-industrial economic restructuring of towns and cities (Häussermann and Siebel, 1993) by linking cultural creativity to economic competitiveness. Working with the grain of fundamental structural changes, festivalization assists the growth of economically vibrant sectors of cultural and creative activity by helping to offset the problems brought by deindustrialization (see also Landry, 2000; Florida, 2002; Mommaas, 2004; Amin and Thrift, 2007).¹⁷

This revalorization of festivals as being central rather than peripheral to the urban economy demonstrably reflects the recent realities of the contemporary city. Yet appreciation of their significance has long been hamstrung by

overemphasis on their diversity as a genre of events. Certainly it is true that constructing a working understanding of the actual and potential impact of festivals requires a multi-stranded and historically grounded approach that embraces a wide range of processes and variables. Yet in reality, most of those processes and variables fit within three overall categories. These are respectively: festivals as media for the transmission and reception of culture; festivals as significant ingredients in creating and maintaining place identity; and festivals as intrinsic parts of the urban economy. The ensuing three sections consider these propositions in turn.

Culture

Dealing first with culture, the archaeological record shows that festivals have occupied an important niche in cultural organization since the dawn of human civilization. Exactly how long is an open question. Excavations at Göbekli Tepe in south-eastern Anatolia (Turkey), for example, reveal clear signs of ceremonial structures but scant evidence of permanent occupancy, suggesting that around 11,600 years ago a 'mobile population gathered for feasting and collective labour in monumental construction and returned periodically to continue and commemorate their work' (McCorriston, 2017, p. 13; Dietrich et al., 2012; Mithen et al., 2011). Artefacts and other objects retrieved from excavations at ancient settlements throughout the Near and Middle East provide source materials that indicate celebratory or ceremonial dimensions of life during the Neolithic era (Darvill, 2010, pp. 165-166; Hill et al., 2016). Yet despite unambiguous archaeological signatures of prehistoric festivities, it is always difficult to pinpoint the purpose and meaning of any associated rites or proceedings from excavations or relict landscape features.¹⁸ Meanings drawn from the available clues are generally imaginative extrapolations that reflect whatever overarching views are currently in vogue about cultural formation (see Morris, 2012).

Rather more reliable information can be gleaned once it is possible to triangulate archaeological discoveries with written or hieroglyphic testimony (Greer, 2013). Scriptural and other sources from Antiquity highlight the character and timing of observances. Festivals joined the seasons into circles (Rappaport, 1999, p. 96). Babylonian and Assyrian texts described ceremonies for the spring festival associated with the sowing of barley (Bidmead, 2004). The annual cycle of ancient Egyptian festivals centred on the flood regime of the Nile (Bleeker, 1967). Special occasions merited recognition. Sumerian clay tablets depicted feasts and celebrations of military victories (Crawford, 2004, p. 152) although similar events, as Assyrian written records and bronze reliefs show, might also include the spectacle of grisly punishment for the vanquished (Bleibtreu, 1991). The Old Testament emphasized festivals as being at the heart of the Judeo-Christian tradition, supporting the idea that devotion is amplified if

people express faith together. Exodus 12:14 indicated that festivals were divinely ordained events intended to be celebrated 'for all time to come'. Leviticus 23 and 25, respectively, laid out a full calendar of holy days and established the idea of a fifty-yearly celebration of emancipation from Egypt known as a 'Jubilee' – the original meaning of that term.¹⁹ Centuries later, festivals would serve as the 'heartbeat' of classical 'Greek and Roman society, its social and political organization, and its institutions' (Brandt and Iddeng, 2012*b*, p. 1; see also chapter 2 below).

Important vestiges of these practices emerge when considering the etymology of the English noun 'festival' and its equivalents in other major Western European languages: Fest (German), festa (Italian), fête (French), and fiesta (Spanish). All derive from the Latin noun festum, meaning a 'feast-day' or 'holiday' that is accompanied by plentiful food, public joy and revelry. So saying, it is important to recognize that early Latin had a second word for festive occasions - feria - meaning abstinence from work in honour of the gods (Falassi, 1987, p. 2). Over time, the two terms fused together, but the uneasy tensions between joyous festivity and solemn observance, often in relation to the same event, have remained. Equating this dualism with the distinction between secular and sacred, Brandt and Iddeng (2012b, p. 5) pointed out that, even for the rites of ancient religion: 'Was a festival ... a true religious celebration and a way of communicating with the gods? Or were the gods more of a pretext for social festivity and political demonstration?' For example, in The Republic, written around 380 BC, Plato imagined his tutor Socrates visiting the port city of Piraeus to undertake religious observances, but also being intrigued by the spectacle of the festival and accompanying rites:

I went down to the Piraeus yesterday with Glaucon the son of Ariston to offer a prayer to the goddess [Bendis]. Also I wanted to watch the festival, to see how they would conduct it, since it was the first time it was being celebrated. The parade of Athenians struck me as excellent, and the show put on by the Thracians was every bit as impressive, I thought. We offered our prayers, watched the festival, and then started off on our journey back to town. (Ferrari, 2000, p. 1)

This existence of mixed motives for attending festivals was not confined to Antiquity since, throughout the ages, ritual solemnity has rarely negated all opportunity for conviviality. Many solemn festivals are preceded or concluded by celebration, as with carnival (or Mardi Gras) paving the way for Lent or Eid al Fitr being positioned at the close of Ramadan. Each underlines the juxtaposition between religious piety and secular transgression. At a more fundamental level, Émile Durkheim (1912, pp. 312–314) argued that festivals and religious rituals are closely linked in that: 'the very idea of a religious ceremony of some importance awakens the idea of a feast. Inversely, every feast, even when it has purely lay origins, has certain characteristics of the religious ceremony' (cited in Leal, 2016, pp. 584–585). Durkheim also stressed the role of the

'collective effervescence' as a force that could lead to behaviour that crosses the line into boisterous merry-making (Ramp, 1998, p. 136). Such eventualities can pose problems for political or spiritual leaders: the former worried about the potentially destabilizing effects of disorderly conduct; the latter about the possibility of moral or aesthetic indulgence that might cross the line into licentiousness and depravity.

Nevertheless, those in authority usually avoided imposing outright bans unless prohibition was absolutely necessary and the outcomes could be guaranteed. Torn between tolerance and control, they weighed their wishes to maintain order against the expediency of permitting a measure of forbearance. Notable in this respect was the French charivari, also known as stang riding or the skimmington ride in England (figure 1.3). These were street parades in which revellers armed with 'kettles, pans, tea-trays, and the like' cavorted through the streets 'in mockery and derision of incongruous or unpopular marriages, and of unpopular persons generally; hence a confused, discordant medley of sounds; a babel of noise'.²⁰As the lawyer Claude de Rubys observed when witnessing the excesses of a charivari in the early seventeenth-century, those in authority may have calculated that temporary disorder acted as a 'safety valve'. As he noted: 'It is sometimes expedient to allow the people to play the fool and make merry, lest by holding them in too great a rigour, we put them in despair' (quoted in Davis, 1971, p. 41; also Mänd, 2005).

If when stripped to their rudiments, festivals are 'public themed' events staged at given times by groups of people participating in acts of celebration,



Figure 1.3. Thomas Rowlandson 'Dr. Syntax with the Skimmington Riders', hand-coloured etching and aquatint, 1820. (*Image*: CC Philadelphia Print Shop Ltd).

remembrance or commemoration, then they must meet four broad sets of requirements to qualify as festivals (Falassi, 1987; Boissevain, 1992; Jepson and Clarke, 2015). First, the event needs to be part of a recurring series, although the lapse of time between events in the series concerned might be annual, biennial, decennial, quadranscentennial, or even centennial. Secondly, festivals need to be 'delivered with a clear purpose' (Evans, 2001, p. 237) that distinguishes the day or days of festivity from the normal rhythms of work and domestic life. The experience of a festival is premised upon difference (Pieper, 1999, p. 9) and the sense of being planned and anticipated occasions that, at their best, bring 'sudden intrusions of the marvellous into the everyday' (Gooding, 1986, np). Thirdly, festivals are conduits for the celebration and transmission of 'culture'²¹ and are internalized into a 'community's calendar of memorable and narratable pasts, with the sociocultural rhythm of life in the present, and with anticipated futures' (Roche, 2011, pp. 127-128). In saying that, there is no suggestion that festivals passively transmit authentic tradition, for they change over time in the same way as culture itself changes. Indeed, as will be seen in chapter 2, many festivals accord to the principles of 'invented tradition' whereby a set of practices is instituted that are: 'normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature ... [these] seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past' (Hobsbawm, 1983, 1). Finally, festivals necessarily involve some form of physical gathering at prearranged locations. Their proceedings may be shaped for a television audience - 'media events' (Getz 2012, p. 45; Couldry et al., 2010) - or communicated online by extending participation to a far flung audience through internet 'streaming' of video and audio material, but as understood here festivals cannot be purely virtual events (see also chapter 9).²²

Festivals, therefore, not only bring people together at regular intervals to participate in an event with a common focus, they also connect the occasion with the frameworks of beliefs, values and practices prevailing within society. Some of the oldest known festivals, for example, principally served to remind people of their station in society. For example, the twelve-day *atiku* festival, dating back to Babylon in the third millennium BC, began with rites that symbolized chaos, such as having slaves with temporary authority over their masters, but continued with purification rituals and sacrifices that aimed at confirming the reinstatement of the proper order (Bell, 1997). The underlying conception of managed social inversion would resonate down through the ages.

Yet while staging festivals usually works towards reinforcing the cultural *status quo*, as noted their character and content changes over time in accordance with social and cultural trends. This applies even to festivals run by religious groups, who might reasonably be expected to cling tenaciously to the original purpose and symbolic meanings of the events that they stage. At times these have also changed in order to accommodate new circumstances, either voluntarily through reinterpretations of doctrine and working practices or through social

pressures. Occasionally, too, festivals serve as forums in which accepted values or received wisdoms are directly contested. This may be, say, by mounting protest at exclusion of minority groups from established festivals or by arranging carnivalesque or alternative arts events where the rights and identities of neglected minority groups are asserted (see chapter 8).

Notions of power and identity also enter the equation. These may stem from 'the wider context of political structures', which position 'the festival vis-à-vis the type of political context [from which] it emerges' (Cremona, 2005, p. 6) or from control over the administration of 'ritual' - defined as 'demonstrative actions with an agenda and the possibility of repetition' (Burkert, 2012, p. 39). Since Antiquity, enforced festival observances have been used by ruling groups as part of exercises to proclaim or promote identity, defined as the 'set of characteristics or a description that distinguishes a person or thing from others'.²³ Exercises in identity promotion through festivals are often linked to cultural subjugation (e.g. Amitay, 2017), with patterns of influence articulated in linguistic practices associated with the event. Pintarić and Škifić (2018), for example, showed how the naming of the street festival of Špancirfest reflected the spread of dominant Germanic immigrant groups into north-western Croatia. The staging and content of festivals have been used to crystallize disputes, say, over location and land ownership or about competing demands for resources. They may act as foci for resistance through what are termed 'manifestivals' (Zaiontz, 2018, p. 11) or 'protestivals' (Lundman, 2018) - events arranged around issues of collective struggle. Poetry festivals, for example, were enormously popular in Latvia during



Figure 1.4. The Basque flag is waved at the 2011 Bakersfield festival. (Photo: © Nancy Zubiri/Euskal Kazeta)

the period of Soviet rule due to the scope that the medium gave for 'reading between the lines' (Morris, 2018, p. 39). Festivals may also serve purposes of public diplomacy. Goirizelaia and Iturregui (2019), for example, show how organizers of festivals among Basque communities in the USA sought to use these events to emphasize and solidify community identity and also to help in forging closer relations between the United States and the Basque County (figure 1.4).

Alternatively, issues of power and identity may centre on 'cultural politics', defined as the field concerned with the power behind meaning and the way that the exercise of such power advances the position of particular groups and their interests (Barker, 2000, p. 383). Cultural politics may stem from seemingly innocuous details such as the names and themes chosen for a festival: 'labelling' that, through announcing the organizers' intentions and chosen identity for the festival, can play a determining role in the artistic direction of and spectatorship for the event (Cremona, 2005, p. 6). At other times, cultural politics may engender fierce debate by explicitly addressing key issues connected with social exclusion (figure 1.5) or by filtering festival content in the light of value-laden notions of 'taste' or public decency. Such interventions are part of a process that serves to elevate certain interests and downgrade or silence others (Quinn, 2013, p. 50). Not for nothing do festivals routinely spawn fringe events, apparently



Figure 1.5. Signpost to nowhere: ironic graffito that appeared at the time of the Architecture Biennale, July 2015 and would remain on the wall undisturbed for years afterwards. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

freed from the constraints of the mainstream festival, at which alternative groups of performers or celebrants exercise their right to be seen and heard.

Place

The close and mutually enriching bonds that develop between festivals and their home venues often become defining features of both place and event.²⁴ Simply stated, festivals appropriate places and places appropriate festivals. If 'places' are understood as being 'meaningful locations' (Cresswell, 2004, p. 7), then the experience of establishing and retaining festivals can be seen as part of the way in which the host location acquires meaning (Agnew, 1987; Wilkinson, 2007). Equally, the character of the host city quickly becomes engrained in the event, even for the more generic type of festivals, and is reinforced by visitors' word-of-mouth recommendations, which undoubtedly help to root a festival and impart a distinct character (Luonila *et al.*, 2016). The cumulative effect is that no two place-based festivals are ever identical regardless of how 'placeless' they might seem to outsiders (MacLeod, 2006).

Various propositions flow from the interrelationship between festival and place. Some observers speculate that the staging of festivals was an intrinsic part of the founding of cities. Harold Carter (1977), for example, argued that the desire to congregate temporarily for both solemn and joyous purposes was an important element in the emergence of the earliest permanent settlements. Similarly, Lewis Mumford (1963, p. 18) asserted that 'the first germ of the city ... is in the ceremonial meeting place that serves as a goal for pilgrimage'. Ray Laurence (2007, p. 186; also Robertson, 1992) hypothesized that, through the generations: 'the city's existence may have been bound up with the continued maintenance and re-invention of these sacred places'.

Such ideas, of course, are difficult to evaluate dispassionately, given that they are generally overlain with broader theories about the relationship between the city, social organization and cultural development (e.g. Sjoberg, 1965; Hall, 1998; Kemezis, 2015). In the first place, the genuinely archaic is overlain with the accretion of later centuries' beliefs and attitudes. The practice of physical sacrifice in one era, for example, might give way to the ideal of symbolic offerings in another. Equally, the use of festivals to transmit urban foundation myths bears the hallmarks of subsequent manipulation of mythologies to strengthen beliefs in the deep connection between people and place: ideas charged with notions of possession and belonging (see also chapter 2). What is eminently plausible, however, is that the presence of sanctuaries where religious rites were routinely enacted provided foci for place-based festivals (Iddeng, 2012, p. 17; Brandt and Iddeng, 2012a). Interconnections between sacred sites within the city might also be inscribed upon urban space by the routes of processions and wakes, sometimes with starting and finishing points marked by sumptuous architecture (Rykwert, 1976).

The notion of recurrence - a key dimension in classifying festivals - is another important expression of the relationship between festivals and place. To elaborate, the largest sporting and cultural festivals, including mega-events such as the Olympic Games and World's Fairs,²⁵ are ambulant gatherings that are unlikely to be awarded again to any specific city within a generation. The large-scale event spaces and varied arenas needed for such gatherings are difficult to procure and develop, but the expense and effort involved in doing so is frequently justified by the hope that staging a festival will lead to an enduringly positive 'legacy' (Gold and Gold, 2007, 2018). By contrast the vast majority of festivals, including those considered in this text, are non-ambulant. There is, of course, no absolute division between the two types; the World's Fairs, for example, inspired techniques of spectacle and display and an orientation towards internationality that were crucial to the subsequent development of many arts festivals (e.g. see chapter 3). Nevertheless, non-ambulant festivals are generally smaller than their ambulant counterparts and involve no general bidding process. They are intended to make a continuing contribution to local culture and economy rather than serving as one-off catalysts for legacy. They are normally run by bodies that are permanent fixtures in their host cities, with the local presence of organizing committees and at least a skeleton staff on a year-round basis. This contrasts with the patterns employed for mega-events, which are typically run by specially recruited taskforces that are disbanded once the event is over.

Besides acting as crucibles for activity, the nature of the places set aside in the city for performance, display and encounter serve to energize the festivities that occur there, most notably through the medium of urban spectacle. There was always a close connection between spectacle and power. The organizers of major festivals of classical Greece and Rome, the pageant-masters of the European Renaissance, and the ideologues that designed the revolutionary festivals of France and the former Soviet Union shared an understanding of how to appropriate the city and its resources in the interests of their ruling regimes' wishes for positive self-representation and social control (see also chapter 2).²⁶ Typically, they used the city's architecture as a backdrop to reinforce effects created by deploying imposing scale, brilliance of colour, imaginative costumes, inventive installations and wanton extravagance (figure 1.6). Often co-opting many thousands of participants in a manner that blurred the boundaries between audience and celebrants, festival organizers effectively wrapped proceedings in the 'imagery of urbanity itself' (Castle, 1986, p. 14). It was perhaps a logical conclusion to the argument by Chisholm and Brazeau (2002, p. 3) that: 'The city is the spectacular centre of metropolitan modernity: a mass theatre where progress is staged in scenes of radical innovation' (see also Zherdev, 2014).

However, the notion of 'spectacle', especially with regard to the visual power and emotive force of large festivals, needs to be treated with care. There is no single culture of spectacle and the word itself is invoked 'in a wide range of



Figure 1.6. The Fête de la Fédération, held in the Champ de Mars, Paris (14 July 1790) as seen from behind the King's tent. (*Image:* Isidore Stanislas Helman – Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Public Domain)

critical and not-so-critical discourses' (Crary, 1989; quoted in Pinder, 2000, p. 361).²⁷ This point is exemplified by the continuing debate around 'The Society of the Spectacle', written by the French Marxist theorist and philosopher Guy Debord (1967).²⁸ Written at a time when social commentators struggled to conceptualize the apparently all-pervasive incursion of media imagery into everyday life (Morgan, 2010), Debord's book drew together two main strands of thought: one centred on 'commodity fetishism and the politics of everyday life and the other focusing on the geopolitical importance of images and appearances' (Kinkle, 2010, p. 16).²⁹ On this basis, it was argued that spectacle had become the central organizing principle in modern societies, with authentic social encounter supplanted by its representation.

Explicit applications of this theoretical perspective to the realm of festivalization are limited but Will Self (2013) noted how festivals can act as important focal points for commodification and media-borne spectacle. By virtue of their high media visibility, for example, larger festivals can play a role in convincing 'the denizens of the Spectacle that they are still living in a cyclical and eternal go-round, while only the anointed few, the celebrities, are imbued with the attributes of money and power that signify the ability to make choices – to progress into a better future'. Other commentators (e.g. MacAloon, 1984; Manning, 1992; Hancox, 2013) prefer to separate use of the term from that of 'festival', arguing that the sense of detached awe and wonder involved in spectacle distinguishes it from the participatory dimension that is an essential element of festivals. This argument gains some historical support from the fact that

spectacle derives from the Latin verbs *specere*, meaning 'to view or watch', and *spectare*, meaning 'to look at carefully, contemplate, observe',³⁰ thereby suggesting a disinterested act of observation. However, arguments that use etymology to relate spectacle to detachment are countered by the connotations that derive from the related term *spectaculum* (describing the shared arenas in which spectacle occurs).³¹ Festival venues are localities that come alive through the interaction of performers and audience. From that standpoint, it is hard not to see the presence and active participation of spectators as an additional part of the characteristics that create the spectacle and fuel its emotive power.

Beliefs that cities provide sympathetic environments for staging festivals are also applicable at neighbourhood level. Not all cities have culturally significant or even recognizable neighbourhoods (Judson, 2012), but the internal structures of many larger urban centres on both sides of the Atlantic enduringly reflect the arrival and settlement histories of groups migrating in hope of a better economic future or seeking sanctuary after displacement from their homelands. In the past, relatively little was made of any characteristics of difference. As minority communities, they frequently preferred to maintain a low profile in the face of prejudice and assimilationist pressures rather than advertise their ethnic distinctiveness. Indeed, festivals were often forums for 'aesthetic cosmopolitanism' whereby groups found ways to express or reshape their own culture in light of the culture of 'others' or the 'outside world' (Regev, 2007; Chalcraft *et al.*, 2011).

That tendency is still present, most notably with music festivals for which organizers see advantage in situating their offerings in a broader context (e.g. folk, early and world music) in order to appeal to a larger audience. By contrast, other groups choose the opposite strategy, using neighbourhood festivals to boost community development (Bennett et al., 2014a, p. 1; Shaw 2013). These can constitute forceful statements of identity (Bungert, 2003; Valentine, 2008; Brighenti, 2010), which may simultaneously involve protests against erstwhile exclusion (Simonsen et al., 2017, p. 637). Festivals may also be part of redefining, rediscovering and expanding 'local social life and the meanings of place ... [t]hrough specific appropriations of public and semi-public spaces' (Stevens and Shin, 2014, p. 1) or in communicating evidence of local creativity (Edensor et al., 2010). When analysing street festivals, Shaw (2012, p. 401) noted: 'Around the world, in the public spaces of cities that are gateways to immigration, festivals are created and re-created by people whose cultural practices seem "exotic" to the majority population'. They may start with a local clientele, but can grow into international affairs that 'raise the profile, not only of the neighbourhood where they take place, but also of the city as a culturally diverse and vibrant place to be' (*ibid*.).
INTRODUCTION

Economy

Although many organizers routinely express reluctance when confronted by processes that seem to commodify culture, the commercial dimension is never far from the surface for some types of festival. For example, the British travel company Martin Randall has custom-designed private festivals for paying participants on a strictly commercial basis since 1994. Similarly, screenings at the larger film festivals may often be dictated more by the requirement to show new material to distributors or potential investors than to engage audiences drawn from the general public. As Cindy Wong (2011, p. 1) noted, such festivals owe their rationale to the economics of the cinema industry, unashamedly dealing 'with business, from production to distribution, including the very financing that ensures their own reproduction' (see also chapters 3 and 5). While other forms of festival may be run on an avowedly not-for-profit basis, they still depend on establishing reliable income streams in order to survive, especially if incurring hefty expenses from, say, live performance or needing to supply enhanced levels of security. If sources of revenue such as catering and souvenir sales are insufficient, then sponsorship, advertising revenues and media payments may be needed if admittance charges are to remain within acceptable limits.

At best, the precise nature of the contribution that festivals make to the economy of their host cities is contentious, despite the existence of a large, if highly disaggregated, corpus of 'impact studies'. Mintel (2019), for instance, estimated the value of the UK music festivals and concerts market to be worth just over £2.6 billion in 2019, up from £2.46 billion in 2018.32 In 2016, the value of Edinburgh's annual festivals was assessed at £313 million, a sum increased by the multiplier effect of the 6,021 jobs that the festivals supported (Ferguson, 2016). A study in Ontario estimated that ninety-seven culture, sports, recreation and community festivals contributed nearly C\$80 million to the province's Gross Domestic Product. As such, these provided over C\$30 million in taxes for all levels of government and helped to create 2,600 jobs and over C\$50 million in wages and salaries (Hill Strategies, 2003). The 2017 San Antonio Fiesta in Texas had an economic impact of \$340.1 million in terms of sales to the local economy, up from \$284 million in 2007 (FSAC, 2017). The Cologne carnival generates €600 million in economic value added to the German economy (Consultancy. eu, 2020). Even a smaller-scale festival like the Gay Pride Festival in the Hillcrest neighbourhood of San Diego (California) yielded \$10.9 million economic impact in 2014 from sources that included ticket sales, vendor rents, parade entry fees, sponsorship fees and beverage sales - a ten-fold increase from a decade earlier (Gold, 2011).

Yet notwithstanding these seemingly impressive figures, many festivals routinely run on a financial knife-edge, barely covering their costs and scarcely living up to the view of festivals as the new 'best thing' in the battle to secure the future of traditional cities. Music festivals in Western Europe, for example, can

see a quarter of ticket price revenue typically taken up by Value Added Tax and royalty fees to songwriters. After that come the costs of the live acts, expenditure on security and logistical costs such as water, electricity and waste management. The 2014 Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts in 2014, for instance, made just £86,000 profit on a turnover of £37 million (Hickey, 2016). For smaller events that are run by enthusiasts who club together to foot the bills, a year when attendances are poor or when new and unforeseen expenses are suddenly incurred may mean the end of the festival (see also chapter 9). Viewed dispassionately, it is highly likely that most events have either little economic impact in their own right (Shibli, 2015) and may only seem to produce significant revenues by dint of adding large amounts of notional income or putative benefits to the balance sheet (Strydom *et al.*, 2006).

Part of the problem is that audiences frequently come to a host destination for a variety of reasons besides attending a festival. Many will be classified as 'cultural tourists', defined as those who participate in 'passive, active and interactive engagement with culture(s) and communities ... [to gain] new experiences of an educational, creative and/or entertaining nature' (Smith, 2009, p. 17). Through doing so, they not only participate in a process in which cultural resources are transformed into products with a recognizable financial expression, they also contribute to local exchequers beyond the boundaries of the festival's venues. In this respect, cultural tourists are highly prized since they normally have higher disposable incomes than 'mainstream' tourists and therefore spend more. This arises directly through sales at festival-related retail outlets and payment of local taxes (where relevant) and indirectly through expenditure on hotels, groceries, restaurant meals and transport.³³

The actual gains, however, are difficult to ascertain. There are no universally approved frameworks for gathering economic data on festivals. Estimates of visitor numbers may not differentiate between participation of local residents and vendors (however 'local' is defined) and those visiting from further afield. Free entry events may not record figures at all. There are neither commonly accepted approaches nor criteria for conceptualizing and measuring the economic impacts that come through investment, employment and income. The extent of leakages (e.g. the propensity to import supplies rather than source locally) and various imputed returns are rarely calculated on any standardized basis. Environmental and social impacts are seldom included in festival assessments and evaluations (UNESCO, 2015, p. 7). Multiplier effects on spending and employment are often exaggerated, with Crompton (2006) identifying a series of potential errors likely to cause overstatement of economic impact. The most significant concerned overlooked countervailing factors such as failure to account for: 'timeswitchers' or tourists who would have visited anyway with or without the festival taking place; 'casuals' or people attending who happened to be in the vicinity but were not primarily attracted by the festival; and local visitors, whose expenditures simply redirect funds from alternative locality-based expenditures. In addition,

INTRODUCTION

there is often failure to account for incremental municipal costs related to the event or to take into account the loss of revenue from displaced visitors (Litvin, 2007).

This statistical morass is permissive. Without recognized canons of consistent scrutiny, analysts frequently have virtual *carte blanche* to produce almost any conclusions that they wish from the figures produced for an event (Carlsen, 2004, p. 252), including those that they think their sponsors might most want to hear. As Crompton (2006, p. 67; cited in Litvin *et al.*, 2013):

Most economic impact studies are commissioned to legitimize a political position rather than to search for economic truth. Often, this results in the use of mischievous procedures that produce large numbers that study sponsors seek to support a predetermined position.

From a similar perspective, Richards (2007, p. 250) argued that the majority of Catalan festivals are neither generally staged for tourists nor are 'commoditized' in the manner common for many events in northern Europe. Yet, although maintaining the view that festivals 'are seen far more as a social tool which is ... aimed at Catalan society itself', he accepted that promotion of events is not without an economic element in that the rhetoric:

is more often linked to political discussions, because the public sector has a crucial role in funding. Visitor numbers are inflated not so much to attract commercial sponsors but to persuade local politicians to continue public funding. (*ibid*.)

Further complexities arise from the multiplier effects that attend the staging of festivals. Even local festivals can provide important shop windows for a city's cultural and creative sector, resembling trade fairs in serving 'as temporary clusters ... which support processes of interactive learning and knowledge creation for those who participate' (Bathelt and Schult, 2008, p. 853; Walters and Insch, 2018). Moreover, any festival can play its part in 'reconstructing, reframing and promoting' place identity (Govers and Go, 2009, p. 52) by being drawn into planning and management strategies designed to improve the city's image. These include 'place promotion' - the conscious use of publicity and marketing to communicate selective images of towns and regions to a target audience (Gold and Ward, 1994, p. 2) - and its more focused management theory-based incarnations as place marketing, place branding, and 'brandscaping'.³⁴ Branding a neighbourhood as a 'cultural quarter', for example, seeks to use the potential of culture 'as the anchor of attraction' in promoting the economic and social revitalization of an area (Hargrove, 2014, p. 3). Certainly, the business of promoting and selling places was an important factor behind the quickening pace of festival proliferation in the 1980s and 1990s (see chapter 7).

It is also important to recognize that festivals can have negative outcomes. Some may have direct or imputed economic expression. The Spoleto Festival

USA in Charleston (South Carolina), for example, is credited by the city's long-term mayor John P. Riley as being founded:

at a time in 1977 when Charleston, like many cities in America, was wrestling with the decline of its central core and business areas... Spoleto, almost magically, brought life and vitality to the streets and sidewalks that had been quiet in recent years; it was a catalytic agent that brought about much needed restoration and recovery within the city. (cited in Litvin and Fetter, 2006, p. 43)

Yet in spite of this apparent success, the business community is not necessarily convinced. Charleston's hoteliers, for instance, argue that the success of the festival can have an adverse effect on hotel occupancy and revenue, for instance by creating an impression that the town is crowded and that hotels are overbooked and overpriced (*ibid.*, p. 46; see also chapter 7).

Less tangible but nonetheless substantial are the losses that can stem from adverse publicity arising from festivals running into trouble through misfortune or malfeasance. Recent history, for example, reveals events that have caused environmental damage, suffered from corruption scandals and bungled lastminute cancellations, experienced serious overcrowding and crowd-related injuries including fatalities, witnessed civil disturbances, and gained reputations



Figure 1.7. Notice warning of reinforced security measures, Nice Carnival, February 2018. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

INTRODUCTION

for substance abuse and perceived affronts to public decency (e.g. Getz, 2002; Carlsen et al., 2007; Andersson and Getz, 2009; Garcia, 2012; Helbing and Mukerji, 2012; Dwyer and Jago, 2015). Open-air festivals are clearly vulnerable to the weather, with cancellations taking effect at the point when the emerging mud baths become safety hazards. On numerous instances, in-fighting between key stakeholders has seriously damaged the image of a festival and any movement that might support it, doing more to divide groups than to forge collective identity or inspire harmony. Finally, festivals have recently generated unwelcome publicity through terrorist and insurgency groups seeking to further their cause by targeting large-scale public gatherings. As chapter 9 suggests, responding to this form of asymmetric conflict can pose the need for expensive protective infrastructure, surveillance capabilities and small armies of security personnel that can bring into question the festival's viability (figure 1.7). It also presents organizers and municipal authorities alike with the challenge of how to maintain the cherished freedoms and openness of the event while guaranteeing the safety of festivalgoers.

Aims and Structure

The relationships between festivals, on the one hand, and culture, place and economy, on the other, permeate all the ensuing chapters of this book, albeit with varying weights and empirical contexts. Its aim is to provide a critically reflective, evidence-based and historically-constructed survey of the ways in which regular, non-ambulant, place-based festivals have become embedded in the life and planning of the cities in the developed world since the end of the nineteenth century. In saying that, we are only too aware that we are imposing chronological and spatial limits on this study, but do so in light of the potentially limitless nature of the subject matter given the dramatic expansion in numbers, scope and global spread of such festivals. Hence, while fully accepting the ubiquity of festivals and impressive vitality of festival culture in many parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, with few exceptions³⁵ our spatial focus has perforce been limited to festivals that are either West European or North American in origin.

Within that focus, we highlight two main types of events: urban arts festivals and carnivals. When examining them, we concentrate less on the nature of the experience for the participant or on the significance of specific festivals for the development of the arts – subjects about which large bodies of literature already exist³⁶ – than to identify the reciprocal relationship between development of the festival and the planning and management of its host city. Throughout, we have sought wherever possible to draw on contemporaneous comment and documentation to place events within the relevant climate of ideas. At the same time, when using reports of participants as mediated by personal memoirs – one of the staples of research in this field – we seek to ensure that they are properly scrutinized. As Rick Massimo (2017; see Glandfield, 2018, p. 29) ruefully noted

with respect to the history of the Newport Folk Festival, it was one of 'life's more predictable ironies' that 'some of the most confidently expressed memories were among those proven incorrect'.

At the outset, it might seem that the twin foci on city-based arts festivals and on carnival events represent visits to two distinctly different domains; with the art gallery and opera house juxtaposed with the street, the world of high culture with popular culture. Increasingly, however, such distinctions have dissipated, if not completely disappeared. We have seen the advent of genre-busting events that have responded to the migration of peoples, celebrated fusions of existing forms of festival with new and different artistic media, and accommodated 'changes in the nature of the public and the wider democratization and internationalization of culture' (Delanty, 2011, p. 191). Any distinctions between different forms of festival, as made in the later chapters of this book, are frequently ones of degree and focus rather than rigid differentiation of kind.

With regard to structure, the book contains eight further chapters. Chapter 2 provides contextual background by introducing the long but nonlinear history of city festivals. It opens by identifying the social and political importance of festivals during the Age of Antiquity followed by an analysis of the interplay between secular and ecclesiastical regimes in establishing the annual cycles of festivals that were so much part of life in the towns of mediaeval Europe. After then discussing the chronologically synchronous theme of the propagation of the street parades and masquerades associated with carnival, this chapter stresses the need to balance any sense of historic continuity with recognition of the disjunctures to be observed. In doing so, it highlights the elements that separate present-day festivals from their pre-industrial antecedents as well as those that supply convincing threads of continuity. In relation to this point, we note the decline of many popular festivals during the nineteenth century, following the advent of industrialization and growth of disapproving moral regimes, but also draw attention to the new forms of events that arose - a point illustrated by the example of music festivals. After providing commentary on the ideological dimension of the newly-emerging festivals, this chapter ends by adding historiographic reflections of key relevance to the case studies that follow.

Each of the four subsequent chapters (3–6) then presents a case study of a pioneering European arts festival in its urban context. Chapter 3 begins with Venice, arguably *the* modern festival city, with its Biennale (founded in 1895) and associated Film Festival, both of which became the progenitors of similar events worldwide. This is followed by analysis of the founding and development of, respectively, the Salzburger Festspiele (chapter 4), the Cannes International Film Festival (chapter 5), and Edinburgh's International Festival (chapter 6). Naturally, there are differences between their respective experiences, most notably in the relationship between festival and city. It is noticeable that Cannes, for example, came about and was sustained by the actions of the municipality, whereas at times in Edinburgh there is a sense that the festival has survived despite the seeming

INTRODUCTION

periodic indifference of local politicians. Yet taken as a whole, these events share the credit for helping to codify the rationale for establishing city-based arts festivals and for acting as antecedents for the steady accretion of associated festivals, even though none technically were the first in their respective fields. Collectively, they helped to balance the spirit of internationalism against more parochial considerations; embracing the desire for understanding and harmony while advancing economic benefit, cultural ascendancy and, in certain instances, political ideology. In addition, the stories of the various festivals overlap. For instance, the establishment of the Cannes International Film Festival was directly stimulated by a powerful response to a forerunner in Venice and, equally, the foundation of the Edinburgh International Festival was strongly affected by the staging of the Salzburger Festspiele. In light of these shared features, we have tried wherever possible to include common structural threads that allow a measure of comparative analysis of the interaction between the festival and the broader agenda of the cities where they are held.

The next two chapters examine the proliferation of festivals over the last century and especially over the last 40 years. Chapter 7 covers the growth of arts festivals, although there is, of course, no attempt to account for all events ranging from the local to international and from the avowedly communal to the strictly commercial. After initially exploring the statistical mire encountered when seeking to trace the origins and spread of festivals, each of the next three sections provides a thematic overview of the growth of a given form of arts festival. Their subjects are respectively theatre festivals, literature festivals, and biennales.

A similar approach is taken in Chapter 8, which illustrates how carnival, a form of festival with a deep history, can be appropriated to serve variously assorted purposes, such as expressing the cause of identity. There are three sections. The first takes examples from both sides of the Atlantic to examine the way that Latin American, especially Trinidadian, carnival has been reexported to supply statements of identity for black communities living in the USA and Europe. The second part examines St Patrick Day celebrations, a longstanding example of carnivalesque parades used by the Irish, at home and abroad, to express varying conceptions of national identity. The final part focuses on the Pride Parades and the opportunities that they supply for the LGBQT+ communities to declare their visibility in a changing moral climate. In each section, we also note how an often uneasy accommodation is reached between the goals of asserting identity and pressures for commercial development, usually linked to tourism.

In providing summary and afterword, chapter 9 reviews the major themes developed in this book and underscores the key issues to emerge. It is noted that although the global trend of the last century and especially the last 40 years has been towards the rapid formation of new festivals and the continual expansion in their scope, a variety of countervailing trends have recently appeared. These include the problems of viability in a satiated market, mounting public resistance

to encroachment and appropriation of urban spaces, the growing threats to security, and the sharp shock of 2020 when the entire world of festivals came to a juddering halt. Yet despite these and other uncertainties, we remain convinced that festivals – one of the most lasting and malleable forms of social gathering – will survive. Indeed, if the lessons of their long history are to be believed, they will thrive as they continue to respond to changes both in society and in the agendas of the cities that host them.

Notes

1. Cited in Jarvis (1827, p. 5).

2. This was when a travelling company staged 'Othello' to raise funds to pay for the repair of the monument in Holy Trinity (Highfill *et al.*, 1993, p. 260). The town at that point had no resident theatre company.

3. In passing, it is worth noting that this occurred primarily because Garrick, the obvious person to act as its steward, was unavailable (Stochholm, 1964, p. 5).

4. The local council's status as a Corporation dates from a Royal Charter of Incorporation in 1553, which rectified land ownership and other residual problems resulting from the suppression in 1547 of the local religious house, the Guild of the Holy Cross, as a belated part of the Crown's Dissolution of the Monasteries. For more information, see Fox (1953).

5. Garrick is now regarded by many commentators as the first true media celebrity (e.g. Lilti, 2014, p. 75).

6. There was also a statute or 'Mop' fair for hiring labour, principally for the agricultural and domestic service sectors (Styles, 1945, p. 237; Kussmaul, 1981). There had been a mediaeval tradition of great seasonal festivals (e.g. at Corpus Christi), but these had fallen foul of Protestant reformers and by this stage were mostly a dim memory (Greenblatt, 2014, p. 37).

7. A further sixty-two performances were added in a second run during the ensuing season (Taylor, 1989, p. 119).

8. The Globe (Southwark) and Blackfriars (City of London) theatres were closed by the Puritans at the start of the English Civil War. They were demolished shortly afterwards in a manner that left so little physical trace that it took the attentions of archaeologists in the 1980s even to work out the exact location of the Globe (Carson and Karim-Cooper, 2008). For more on place and authorship, see Squire (1994), Dillon (2000) and Fawcett and Cormack (2001).

 These activities sought to draw in visitors via the newly opened rail routes to Birmingham, Oxford and London, although rail connections to the town have always remained problematic (Kennedy, 1998, p. 177).

10. Notably, this was situated close to the location of the 1769 Rotunda. In passing, it is worth noting that there had been various previous attempts to found such a theatre. The 1827 festival saw the foundation stone laid for a Shakespearean theatre in Chapel Lane (Jarvis, 1827). This was one of four theatres opened in Stratford in the 1830s; the other three being the New Theatre (opened in November 1821), Scowton's Theatre, later Scowton's Royal Pavilion (1823), and the Henley Street Theatre (1824). Only the Chapel Lane would have any continuous history and even this was demolished in 1872 (Styles, 1945, p. 245).

11. The phrase was coined by the playwright Ben Jonson in his tribute entitled 'To the Memory of My Beloved the Author, Mr. William Shakespeare', which was written in 1623. The encomium (quoted in Duncan-Jones, 2011, p. 233) reads:

'Sweet Swan of Avon! what a sight it were To see thee in our waters yet appear,

And make those flights upon the banks of Thames'

INTRODUCTION

12. Its early festival seasons of roughly ten plays per annum were largely dismissed by London-based critics as being 'notably banal' (Kennedy, 1998, p. 176), bedevilled by 'provincialism' (Jackson, 2010, p. 295), and blighted by the retention of actors 'who were fond of repeating their successful routines... a holiday resort instead of an English Bayreuth' (McMillin, 1991, p. 37). In time, however, the SMT's switch to more adventurous and thematically coherent seasons of plays brought greater critical acclaim. This was notably the case from the turn of the 1950s onwards – a process that developed first under the directorship of Barry Jackson and then those of Anthony Quayle and Peter Hall (Smallwood, 2002, pp. 103–104).

13. The present version is now essentially a fun-fair and comprises three segments: the Charity Mop, Main Mop and Runaway Mop (all held in October).

14. The festival was held against a general air of radicalism generated by reaction to the Shakespeare celebrations here and elsewhere (see Swindells and Taylor, 2010).

15. It is worth noting, however, that in a later piece, Marijke de Valck (2016) argues that globalization makes division into mainstream and alternative increasingly misleading 'with regard to the different hierarchies that exist between them today, and in relation to the variety of cinemas that these festivals showcase'.

16. Use of the term 'cultural and creative economy' (e.g. see O'Connor, 2010; CCBC, 2014) is preferred here to the bewildering array of alternative and conceptually overlapping terms on offer. *Inter alia*, these include the 'experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), the 'cultural economy' (Scott, 2000; Gibson and Kong, 2005), 'the cultural industries' (Driver and Gillespie, 1993; Hesmondhalgh, 2002), the 'creative economy' (Howkins, 2001; Florida, 2009; Markusen *et al.*, 2008), and 'creative industries' (Cunningham, 2001; Hotho and Champion, 2011; Gibson, 2012).

17. The evolution of thinking about culture as an economic sector involves a 60-year progression from 'the Culture Industry' thinking of the Frankfurt School (see Horkheimer and Adorno, 2002), through writings about the 'cultural industries' and ending at the 'creative industries' (O'Connor, 2010). Detailed discussion of this development in thinking, its historical and philosophical roots and the underlying tensions between culture and economics lies beyond the scope of this text. For more information, see Caves (2000), Power and Scott (2004), Moeran and Pedersen (2011), Flew (2012) and Bakker (2015).

18. This leaves aside the probability that those originally creating artefacts may well have intended pictorial or other representations to invite imaginative or even symbolic interpretations: see Smith (2004, p. 20).

19. Albeit emphasizing devotion rather than pageantry (see Chase, 1990).

20. Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 2, p. 260.

21. Detailed discussion of the definition and characteristics of culture lie beyond the scope of the present discussion. For more information, see Smith (1995), Ingold (1999), Worsley (1999), Jeong and Almeida Santos (2004) and Jahoda (2012).

22. Although extreme circumstances can bring exceptions, as with the Social Distancing Festival established to provide contact between artists whose live performances were cancelled due to the need for social distancing because of the spread of Coronavirus COVID-19 (see also chapter 9).

23. Selected from the various definitions available from the *Oxford English Dictionary*, available at: https://www-oed-com.oxfordbrookes.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/91004?redirectedFrom=identity#eid.

24. The ensuing discussion is framed in terms of city-based rather than rural events, which lie outside the scope of this book. For more on festivals held in the countryside and the continuing processes of reinvention that surrounds them especially in light of rural development, see: Janiskee and Drews (1998), Higham and Ritchie (2001), De Bres and Davis (2001), Gibson and Connell (2011), Blichfeldt and Halkier (2013), Hjalager and Kwiatkowski (2018), Mackay *et al.* (2019), and Mahon and Hyyryläinen (2019).

25. On the nature and characteristics of mega-events, see Greenhalgh (1988), Jafari (1988), Roche (1992, 2000, 2017), Gold and Gold (2005, 2018), Horne and Manzenreite (2006), Maennig and Zimbalist (2012), Müller (2015) and Wenner and Billings (2017).

26. See Beacham (1991), Edmondson (1999), Quigley (2012) and Malte (2015).

27. Much proceeds on the presumption that modern society is 'ocularcentric' - dominated by, or

perhaps under the hegemony of the visual. For opposing views on this matter, see: Ellul (1985) and Jay (1993).

28. For discussion, see Debray (1995), Best and Kellner (1997) Cronin and Hetherington (2008), Rancière (2009) and Chu and Sanyal (2015).

29. However, see also Debord (1988) for a later, and somewhat different, expression of his ideas.

30. There is, however, dispute over the precise meaning of these verbs, as can be seen by comparing the definitions supplied by Kan (2004) with the entry in the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, vol. 2, 1968, p. 1800.

31. Oxford Latin Dictionary, vol. 2, 1968, p. 1800. Its plural *spectacula* was the original term for the amphitheatre and could thus signify the venue itself. The dedicatory inscription at Pompeii's amphitheatre, for example, refers to it as a *spectacula* (D'Arms, 1999, p. 301).

32. These figures, as those that follow, are notoriously unreliable. For example, some years earlier, UK Music (2015) reported that British music festivals held between 2011 and 2014 generated \pm 3.1 billion through direct and indirect expenditures.

33. For more on the economics of cultural tourism, see Getz (1991*a*), Crompton (1994), Richards (2001), McKercher and Du Cros (2002), Tyrrell and Ismail (2005), Bracalente *et al.* (2011), Herrero *et al.*, (2011), Kostopoulou and Kalogirou (2011), Dwyer et al (2016) and Noonan and Rizzo (2017).

34. With regard to city marketing and promotion, see: Young and Lever (2008), Bennett and Savani (2003), Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2005), Johansson and Kociatkiewicz (2011), Richards (2017b) and Gold and Gold (2020). On place marketing, see Ashworth and Voogd (1990) and Colomb (2012), 'place branding' (Papadopoulos, 2004; Lucarelli and Berg, 2011; Braun *et al.*, 2013) and 'brandscaping' (Riewoldt, 2002; Klingmann, 2007).

35. The exceptions are primarily festivals in the Caribbean or South America that have important connections with the development of European or North American festival practice. With regard to festivals from non-European or North American contexts, the following can be recommended from a substantial literature: Ashkenazi (1993), Lara and Phillips (2000), Curcio-Nagy (2004), Lochtefeld (2004), Kawano (2005), Hauptfleisch (2006), and Turner and Salemink (2014).

36. With regard to the former, see Lee *et al.* (2008), Holloway *et al.* (2010), Johansson and Kociatkiewicz (2011), Weber and Ali-Knight (2012), Hüsken and Michaels (2013), Ferdinand and Williams (2013), Mackley-Crump (2015) and Lee and Kim (2016). In respect of the importance of specific festivals for the development of the arts, see Levin (1982), Spotts (1994), Waterman (1998) and Mair (2018).

CHAPTER 2

Ancient and Modern

We believe there should be a shared national experience in the year 2000... The lesson of all national monuments, of all national celebrations, is that people want the sense of congregation, of coming together.

Virginia Bottomley1

In October 1995, the Heritage Secretary Virginia Bottomley provided the first outlines of the British Government's proposals for the forthcoming Millennium celebrations. It would be a long and torturous process with a disappointing outcome. Challenged to provide 'a bold expression of faith in the future' (Gray, 2003, p. 441), prolonged dithering by successive Conservative and Labour administrations led to the yearlong and muddled education-cum-entertainment offering housed in the Millennium Dome – a fibreglass megastructure in the North Greenwich Peninsula. It was an event that even its sponsors deeply regretted in retrospect. Yet the Minister's opening statement essentially subscribed to principles that could have been stated uncontentiously more or less anywhere, at any time, and under the aegis of almost any political or religious regime. Since time immemorial, societies have valued having places designated for temporary congregation in order to celebrate special events. It is an essential part of the long, multi-stranded and intensely plural histories of city festivals.

In this chapter, we consider the broad outlines of those histories through from classical times to the outbreak of the First World War.² There are seven sections.

The first deals with the cyclical rounds of festivals that structured urban life in classical Greece and Rome. The two ensuing parts, respectively, look at popular and courtly festivals as staged in mediaeval and early modern Europe. The fourth section examines the transgressive effervescence of carnival, an apparently chaotic festival with an intricate underlying order that spread from Catholic Europe to Africa, the Americas and beyond in the wake of colonial migrations. The fifth part notes the changing relationships between ruling elites and the general populace that occurred from the seventeenth century onwards with regard to participation in urban festivals. The penultimate section takes the example of music festivals to illustrate the new types of city-based festivals that developed from the eighteenth century onwards, ending by discussing the ideological dimensions of festival creation and management. The conclusion adds some historiographic reflections that are of relevance to the case studies that follow.

The Festive Calendar

Festivals were deeply entwined in the workings of ancient Greek and Roman society. Possessing a darker side than often recognized (e.g. Alwine, 2015), they mediated social and political relations, provided proxies for warfare if needed (Davies, 2004, p. v), supplied opportunities for reflection and self-definition (MacAloon, 1984, p. 1) and acted as media for communicating social memory. Festivals set 'the rhythm of the year ... through them divine protection of the public and private spheres was ensured and the populace was joined together in common acts centred on common symbols' (Brandt and Iddeng, 2012*b*, p. 1).³ Attendance at such events was often obligatory, but participation mirrored accepted norms concerning class, citizen status and gender. Above all, it was appreciated that festivals aligned social and cultural activity with the needs of the urban polity and were significant in the way that 'a city visualised or articulated its identity' (Laurence, 2007, p. 187).

A key expression of these trends lay in the interweaving of acts of worship with celebrations of citizenship (Robertson, 1992, p. xiii). Popular festivals in ancient Greece, like the cities (*poleis*) which staged them, were commonly dedicated to the major Olympian deities – Zeus, Athena, Apollo, Poseidon, Hera, Aphrodite, Artemis, and Dionysus. Ceremonies, feasts, processions, theatrical performances and games were staged partly as pious reflections of the mythological exploits of the gods and took place in spaces recognized by participants as being: 'set aside and consecrated to honour and worship whatever gods were deemed to be associated with the place and the activities taking place' (Beacham, 2007, p. 204; also Des Bouvrie, 2012); Frederiksen *et al.*, 2015).⁴ Plays were often set in public civic spaces (Harvie, 2017, p. 30), with the performative places thereby identified as also providing spaces for interpreting and disseminating versions of the city's official history, its founding myths and its ruling regime's authority. In this manner, for example, Athenian theatre offered

plays 'such as *Ion, Erechtheus, Oedipus at Colonus* and *Women in Assembly* ... [that] presented an image of an autochthonous, exclusive society that was also a divinely protected, hospitable and democratic state' (Martin, 2007, p. 48). However, as noted in the previous chapter, piety did not necessarily imply purely ascetic solemnity. A festival might involve public sacrifices and purifications but might equally feature sumptuous ritual meals and merrymaking. As Parke (1977, p. 13) noted: 'Not only was feasting an appropriate act of worship, but even athletics and play-acting were proper institutions for holy days'.

Roman society absorbed similar values and practices from these precedents. Making provision for festivals and associated entertainments was accepted as a central responsibility for city and state. Vitruvius, the greatest architect of the Augustan age, maintained that provision for theatre should take priority when planning the city. In the magisterial De Architectura,⁵ he specified: 'After the forum has been arranged, next, for the purpose of seeing plays or festivals of the immortal gods, a site as healthy as possible should be selected for the theatre.' Amphitheatres, one of the few building forms that the Romans invented rather than exploiting or transforming Greek and Hellenistic precursors, would have come next; constructions that symbolized skills in engineering and architecture, love of spectacle and the military tone of the society (Wilson Jones, 1993, p. 391). Over time, the larger Roman towns and cities routinely acquired an impressive array of purpose-built venues for staging festive activities. Permanent structures varied from small auditoria to enormous arenas like Rome's Coliseum and the Circus Maximus, which in their heyday respectively seated around 80,000 and 150,000 spectators (Humphrey, 1986, p. 76). Any of these, however, might be used for more than one purpose. Arenas and amphitheatres sometimes served as spaces for staging games and at other times as places sanctified by religious ritual (Laurence et al., 2011, pp. 230-284); theatres would host choral events, orations, and commerce as well as present plays or pantomimes.

In addition, special occasions demanded construction of temporary structures. These included arches, tableaux, installations and other street decorations for events such as 'triumphs' (*triumphus*), where returning commanders led their troops through the city displaying captives and war trophies (Beacham, 1999, p. 39), and arrivals (*adventus*), when the city formally welcomed the Emperor. Rather more ambitiously, special aquatic arenas (*naumachiae*) were constructed on sufficient scale to house mock sea battles. Requiring huge resources, special equipment, and its own aqueduct in the case of Rome's Naumachia Augusti (Taylor, 1997, p. 465), the *naumachiae* were primarily commissioned by Emperors to communicate a message of imperial omnipotence. Here, the ruler was apparently able to 'turn land into water, sail ships in the city centre, bring before the eyes of his subjects a distant and mythical past and even, if it please him, change the course of history' (Garello, 2004, p. 122).

In the last decades of the Republic during the first century BC, for instance, there were just forty-five regular festivals, albeit complemented by a variable

number of movable feasts that were announced each year by the relevant authorities. By the reign of Emperor Claudius (41–54 AD), their numbers had spiralled. No less than 159 days annually designated were as holidays, of which thirty-three were devoted to games given at public expense (Carcopino, 1940, p. 205; Cornell and Lomas, 2003). Even after efforts to impose some limitations under the Emperor Marcus Aurelius (121–180 AD), 135 days per annum remained designated as festivals (Parisinou, 2006, p. 345).

Social status was ever-present in festival organization. The processions usually held at the start – 'full-blooded interactive events operating in four dimensions' (Favro, 2008, p. 10) – involved the entire citizen body on parade, arranged on the basis of established social hierarchies. Venues were carefully constructed to replicate divisions within society and to support observances central to the conduct of Roman life. Their external design and seating plans symbolically represented the underlying political and social order. It took almost two centuries after the first performance of scripted plays, for instance, for the Roman Senate to allow construction of a permanent stone-built theatre, primarily because they feared that such places might act as meeting places for political groups of which they disapproved (Rehm, 2007, p. 185). When the consul Pompey (Pompeius Magnus) eventually sponsored the creation of such a structure in 55 BC, its seating pattern resembled that of a temple, thereby allowing it to escape the Senate's strictures (figure 2.1). Theatres also acted as venues for meticulously



Figure 2.1. Jan Goeree 'A Reconstruction of the Theatre of Pompey' (before 1704), pen and black ink, brush and brown wash, over traces of red chalk. (*Image*: CC Metropolitan Museum of Art)

crafted displays that asserted their founders' social standing. Architects worked with theatre managers to change the nature of the audience's gaze and influence their experience (Fleming, 1990). A semi-circular theatre that focused attention on the stage generated different expectations than, say, an amphitheatre that exposed performers to view from all around and made the spectators face each other (North, 1992).

As time passed Roman Emperors became more active not just as providers of theatre but also as participants, since this art form served as an ideal vehicle by which to present imperial dogma to Roman citizens and subjects. Augustus, the first Emperor, took a personal interest in the 'theatricalization of urban life and landscape through the provision of sumptuous and monumental buildings for mass entertainment as well as more humble shrines and performances throughout the city' (Beacham, 1999, p. 62). This went 'far beyond mere beautification or monumentalization: it bore an essential and highly theatrical expression of the ideology of the principate' (*ibid.*, p. 130). Later, theatre would also serve to propagate new narratives that would accommodate the position of the now-deified rulers within the traditional patterns of city life (Buraselis, 2012, p. 258).

Festivals also played their part in maintaining the status quo through the operation of a social compact that the poet Juvenal scornfully satirized as panem et circenses ('bread and circuses') - a formula whereby Roman rulers placated the population with entertaining distractions while apparently giving them an outlet to voice their views in a controlled public space (see Eisinger, 2000; Glancey, 2001). Novelty was at a premium given the steady proliferation of festival observances. Inter alia, the programme might include exotic animal displays, circuses, chariot races, beast hunts (particularly bears, wild boars, leopards and elephants) and gladiatorial combats, along with two regular staples: ritual humiliations of miscreants and sadistically violent public executions (Kondoleon, 1999, p. 321; Zaleski, 2014). Large-scale feasting was also a de rigueur accompaniment to festival activities. While a drain on the public purse, it was regarded as having an important social purpose as part of 'a broad array of collectivist activities that helped to define what it meant to be truly Roman, or more specifically perhaps, what it meant to be truly Roman within the rigid class structure of ancient society' (Donahue, 2003, p. 438).

Not surprisingly, the resources invested in festivals had significance for the urban economy. Besides feeding and housing small armies of slaves who worked at all levels in staging events, festivals gave direct and incidental employment to a supporting cast that included actors, acrobats and other arena performers, costume-makers, saddlers and harness-makers, grooms, animal handlers, armorers, trainers, caterers, cooks, prostitutes, hawkers, carpenters, inn-keepers, caretakers and assorted officials (Futrell, 1997; Bomgardner, 2000). Money also trickled down into local coffers from visitors drawn in by the attractions. News of special events in the arena or amphitheatre exerted an appeal that extended

well beyond the locality, with prospects for travel enhanced by the extensive road system developed for trade and administration, the establishment of common coinage, the elimination of piracy that permitted vessels free movement by sea and river, and the establishment of political stability within the Empire.

Wealthy and leisured citizens therefore had the freedom to travel widely. As Friedländer (1965, p. 268) noted: 'Travelling throughout most of the Roman Empire was easy, swift and secure to a degree unknown until the beginning of the nineteenth century'. They paid visits, for instance, to sites with political or religious resonance (scenes of important land or sea battles, temples and sanctuaries), made pilgrimages to places that offered hope for healing the sick (Grünewald, 2017), or sometimes just went to see new buildings, sculptures and paintings. Yet as with visitors to the major games and religious festivals of the Hellenic world,⁶ the key attractions for their Roman equivalents were festivals with established reputations (Casson, 1974; Feifer, 1985). When doing so, as befitted the multipurpose nature of many festivals, they were drawn by varying mixtures of curiosity, piety and seeking entertainment. At one level, it was always possible just to absorb the entertainments on offer but, at other levels, there was the prospect of deeper involvement. Religiosity was never far from the surface in Roman festivals and, subject to social status and gender, there were often opportunities to participate in accompanying rites or to make personal vows to the deities associated with the event (Scheid, 2012, p. 293).7

Commons

The annual round of Roman festivals and availability of free movement to enjoy them lasted more than 500 years. Between the fifth and eighth centuries, however, Roman sacred and secular regimes gave way to the new patterns of the mediaeval and Christianized city. Theatres, amphitheatres, forums, circuses and other structures associated with festivities either fell into disuse or were converted to other uses. Understandably change did not occur uniformly. Just as patterns of religious observances and festival calendars had always responded to regional differences in social structure and administration (Zoll, 2016, p. 629), so too was there marked heterogeneity in the speed of passage from classical to mediaeval Europe. There was certainly no immediate replacement of the ordered festivities associated with Rome by arcane revelries allegedly symptomatic of 'Dark Age chaos'. Religious rites and displays of imperial splendour survived in the eastern part of the Empire based on Constantinople where, for example, chariot racing continued well into the Middle Ages (Potter, 2006, p. 378). By contrast, the systemic crumbling of power in the Western Roman Empire saw the unravelling of larger-scale cultural festivals (Kyle, 1998, p. 55). The more costly entertainments such as arena sports vanished first, followed by less costly events based on civic or non-Christian ceremonies. Even within that broad picture, settlements such as York (Eburacum) continued much as before, whereas in

other centres all explicit traces of Roman rule and its attendant social and cultural practices soon disappeared.

So saying, festivals of one sort or another remained essential ingredients in regulating the pace and flow of life in pre-industrial towns and cities. At their heart lay the religious festivals that endowed space and place with sacred meaning through architectural, visual, and performative means (Stephenson, 2010) and fulfilled the function of 'consistent and rigorous marking of temporality' (Davidson, 2007, p. 3; Gosman, 1981). For a broad swathe of western and southern Europe, saints' days and commemorations of important events in the lives of Christ and the Virgin Mary peppered the calendar, providing ample occasions on which festival observances could animate life. The annual sequence began on New Year's Day. This was then followed by Twelfth Night (the Feast of the Epiphany), Candlemas (the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin Mary), Lady Day (Feast of the Annunciation), Shrovetide, Easter, Ascension Day, Whitsunday, Corpus Christi, Trinity, St John the Baptist, the Assumption, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, Michaelmas, All Saints, Martinmas and Christmas (Wickham, 2015, p. 323; Walsh 2000; Wieck, 2017). Added to these were saints' name days and various locally observed vigils, wakes and revels. Their practices clearly disclosed the early Church's deliberate policy of assimilating the timing, and sometimes the festive intent of pagan antecedents. Candlemas celebrations, for instance, appropriated the outward expression of rites from the Roman Lupercalia, when celebrants paraded through the streets with lighted candles in honour of the goddess Februa and her son Mars.

This could add up to schedules of events that matched those of ancient Rome. Each year, for example, Florence had no less than 112 saints' days that required some measure of observance from the faithful (Tacconi, 2005, pp. 57-59). At one end of the scale, this included the Feast of San Giovanni, the city's patron saint, which was Florence's most important civic holiday (Chretien, 1994) and the one time in the year that a mass was said in the presence of the saint's mortal remains. At the other end, it included many festivals of local import, with celebrations primarily confined to the congregations of churches dedicated to that particular saint. Secular festivities also abounded, including tournaments, street revels, horse ballets and countless processions (Nagler, 1964, p. 2). These activities might well have deep local roots, such as the armeggerie - street demonstrations of martial arts by which the major Florentine families symbolically represented their claims for local leadership and political ascendency as well as recognizing the social obligations that went with 'the ritual of celebration' (Trexler, 1980, p. 232). These meanings, however, were not always apparent to outsiders. In the eighteenth century, for example, Florence had become an internationally renowned stopping point for Grand Tourists attracted by the colour and spectacle of its festivities:

for parades and revels, and firework displays, for fancy-dress parties in the Mercato Vecchio, for mock battles in the Piazza Santa Croce, for *naumachia* on the Arno and *fâtes champêtres* on its

banks, for circuses in the Piazza della Signoria ... and for parties on the bridges where couples and lines of dancers leaped and jumped about in the energetic Florentine manner. (Hibbert, 1994, pp. 121, 125–127).

Yet nowhere could rival Venice as the proto-festival city of modern times. Situated on islands off Italy's northern Adriatic coast, by the seventeenth century the Venetian Republic was a major trading port and maritime power, with its wealth reflected in architecture, public spaces, churches, artistic life and ability to manage the lagoon and its waterways. Nicknamed the 'Queen of the Adriatic' and 'La Sereneissima' (The Most Serene Republic), it was a 'ritual city' (Ackroyd, 2010, p. 81) of pageantry, spectacle and festivals. Many of those festivals were of considerable antiquity. The Festa delle Marie, a local Candlemas festival was allegedly founded in 973 AD (Bosworth, 2014, p. 142), the Festival della Sensa sometime around the year 1000 (Visentini, 2008, p. 95), and Carnevale dating back at least to the mid-eleventh century. Other ancient but regular events, such as winter games on the ice or quasi-territorial mock battles on the bridges, have no reliable dates of foundation. Over time, these became incorporated into a formidable annual calendar organized around increasingly extended carnival celebrations, the obligatory supply of saints' name days, numerous local feasts, and special events like regattas that drew inspiration from the symbolic juxtaposition of land and water (Korsch, 2013).

On the one hand, the density of festival observances served to leaven the arduous nature of everyday life yet, on the other, festival observances were an intrinsic part of how chosen meanings of the city were represented to its citizens. Festivals helped express the 'myth of Venice', a political concept centred on notions of singularity and perfection that stressed its unique qualities 'and deployed them as a powerful weapon of propaganda'. Indeed, for Venetians: 'the myth was a precious political asset which the patrician classes used to foster a civic spirit in this densely populated, overcrowded, and cosmopolitan city' (Fenlon, 2007, p. 167; Rosand, 1977). During the heyday of its maritime power the staging and content of festivals centrally addressed the Venetian state's strategic needs. For example, any foreign states required to acknowledge the city's suzerainty were also expected to observe the feast day of St Mark, Venice's patron saint, as an outward demonstration of loyalty.8 Dogal processions (andata) effectively represented 'the Venetian constitution in motion' (Ackroyd, 2010, p. 79). As Margherita Azzi Visentini (2008, p. 83) observed, 'the doge never moved alone', with the different strata in society automatically knowing and taking up their place in the processional order. Other special events, often staged at enormous expense, employed the spectacle of numbers, wealth and landscape to serve the city's foreign policy or diplomatic needs.

The *Sposalizio del Mare* (Marriage of the Sea), formally instituted around 1317, supplies a noteworthy example (figure 2.2). Celebrated on Ascension Day, this commemorated a sea battle in 1177 in which the Venetians, acting in support



Figure 2.2. 'The Return of the Bucentaur to the Molo on Ascension Day' by Canaletto. Painted in 1730: the painting shows the return of the Doge's vessel to St Mark's after the ceremony of the Marriage of the Sea. (*Image*: CC Royal Collection)

of the Pope, prevailed against a numerically superior fleet commanded by the son of the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick I.⁹ Each year the Doge's imposing ship, the 'Bucintoro', led a flotilla in carrying out a pseudo-religious ceremony that symbolized the city's union ('marriage') with the sea. The festival served to remind Venetians about a key event in their past as well as offering a chance to glimpse their normally reclusive ruler. It also brought to life the symbiosis between Venice's 'ecclesiastical policies and foreign relations' (Redford, 1996, p. 63). Although enmeshed in a narrative that was 'by and large a fabrication' (De Vivo, 2003, p. 160), the *Sposalizio* provided a rendering of Venetian history that backed the state's 'self-proclaimed rights of dominance over trade routes in the Adriatic' (Muir, 1981, p. 124), as well as more general assertions to be a 'sovereign power equal if not superior to the greatest international authorities' (De Vivo, 2003, p. 160).

Venice was exceptional in the extent of the city's 'close interweavings of history and myth' (Fenlon, 2007, p. 167), but throughout Europe up to the nineteenth century, key local interests used city festivals as a 'kind of dialogue' to communicate their political concerns to one another (Daniel, 2004, p. 35; also Zorzi, 1986; Gold and Gold, 1995, pp. 72–74). The citizenry as a whole were required to turn out at designated moments to observe festivals in a manner defined by prevailing norms (Mänd, 2005, p. 3; Hanawalt and Reyerson, 1994). For their part, rulers were normally more concerned to impress rival regimes and consolidate local aristocratic support than to please their subjects (Hale, 1993, p. 503). The upper classes needed to be included in proceedings and have

their status recognized. The presence of the general populace was required given that the spectacle of apparent popular endorsement might well be critical to the outcome,¹⁰ even if their participation might arouse unease (Burke, 1978, p. 54). Faced with such necessities, the compromise was generally to exert control though locational or cultural mechanisms. The public could be assigned to special stands, positioned according to the wishes of the organizers. At tournaments in Brussels's Grote Markt, for instance, spectators could watch from the stands within the square, from the windows of adjacent houses or from the galleries of the town hall, with allocation to the three vantage points reflecting social status (Damen, 2016, p. 69). Alternatively, it was possible to impose highly structured ceremonial formats that specified the roles that all spectators played, circumscribed their freedom of movement and, to some extent, directed their gaze.

The games and sporting entertainments on offer also frequently contained significant symbolic undercurrents. In the Low Countries, tournaments and related military games ('hastiludes') retained their function as urban events that were not put on 'simply as amusement by or for the prince and his household but rather they provided a meeting space for the noble and urban elites where business (political contacts, marriage arrangements) could be done' (Damen, 2013, p. 70). At the same time, events related to the 'privileged practice of violence' (Sposato, 2018) were themselves notorious for attracting disorder. Notwithstanding the chivalric codes that commonly underpinned their gatherings, tourneyers were notorious for riotous behaviour that brought them into conflict with religious or secular authorities. In 1305, for example, the canons of England's Salisbury Cathedral secured a royal writ to protect them from violence spilling over from nearby tournaments, forbidding any tourneyers from lodging within the cathedral close or 'to take any victuals or other necessities from the canons' (Barker, 1986, p. 52). In a similar vein, the authorities at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge ensured that academic peace and security were maintained by banning all hastiludes within a five-mile radius of their cities (*ibid.*, pp. 52–53).

These dualities of popular entertainment and elite politics, disorder and reinforcement of power, security and conflict, transience and continuity permeated most festivals from mediaeval through to early modern times (Jacquot, 1956). For example, the Midsummer Watch the 'largest and most important annual or near-annual civic spectacle in London, in the first part of the sixteenth century' (Lancashire, 2002, p. 153), featured a colourful procession that included:

men in armour, musicians, cresset-bearers, giants, wildmen, morris dancers, swordsmen, and a varying number of 'pageants', i.e., of wood and canvas constructions, carried through the streets by porters, depicting characters and events largely from the Bible, much less frequently from English history, and from classical mythology and allegory. (*ibid*.)

Although clearly allowing for merrymaking and civic involvement, the order in which participants processed and the opportunities provided for self- or group-representation emphasized the power of the mayor and the major livery companies. It was 'a near-epic display of all things rich and luxurious, with a hint of religious fervour' (Anon, 2017).

Administration of justice supplied another, near-ubiquitous focus for civic festivities. As the seats of courts and assizes, mediaeval towns and cities provided sites where the public, in large numbers, would gather to watch the spectacle of punishment. For lesser crimes, this involved pillorying and ritual humiliations, brandings and whippings. For more serious crimes, the law invented brutal means to administer capital punishment. Killing machines like the rack or wheel delayed death as long as possible so that spectators could see the victims' prolonged sufferings. As with Roman arena sports, executions sought to provide dramatic spectacle combined with emphasizing the power of the state to inflict pain, but unlike Antiquity these procedures were rooted in Christian notions of penitence and retribution. Torture here afforded the criminal a last chance to confess and avoid eternal damnation and would remind onlookers about the sins of which all were potentially culpable (Friedlander, 2012, p. 131).

Festivals were also good for business, with associated fairs serving to amplify and deepen trading relationships (Frayn, 1993). Many had originated from acts of pilgrimage, when devotees would arrive in throngs at abbeys and cathedrals on the feast days of their enshrined saints, frequently after long and onerous journeys.¹¹ With the religious houses struggling to cope with the numbers attending, tented communities sprang up. These initially offered little more than food and shelter, but progressively took on the other aspects of commerce and entertainments typical of fairs, such as offering amusements and becoming highly lucrative marketing sites for selling agricultural commodities and hiring labour. This commercial dimension created tensions. Initially these temporary encampments were housed in available space in the graveyards, on glebes or other church properties, but with growing scale spilled over on to adjacent plots owned by the town or other landlords, causing disputes over allocation of income earned from charging rents and collecting tolls, dues and fines. In addition, the presence of large numbers of people with unusual amounts of disposable cash attracted sideshows that fostered rowdiness and licentiousness. As a result, the nature of the occasion steadily changed: 'as the fun started to take precedence the ecclesiastical authorities tried to separate them from the holy ground by decreeing that they must be held elsewhere in the community' (Roud, 2008, p. 250). In the process, the links with the saints waned and the distinction between fairs and the practices of more boisterous forms of urban festival steadily blurred.

The Bartholomew Fair was a case in point (figure 2.3). The foundation of an Augustinian Priory and Hospital at West Smithfield (London) had stemmed from a vow made by an ecclesiastical courtier of Henry I while sick on a pilgrimage to Rome and from his subsequent vision of the apostle St. Bartholomew on his

return to England. Almost immediately pilgrims, ever sensitive to the attractions of places associated with revelatory experiences, began to visit Smithfield in large numbers in search of healing and other miraculous interventions. Their presence placed strains upon the incumbent Order. In 1133, the Prior petitioned for a Royal Charter for a two-day cloth fair, timed for the celebrations of the saint's feast day (24 August), to be held within the precincts of the Priory of St. Bartholomew as a means of assisting ecclesiastical finances. Over the centuries, it expanded in size and stature. Subsequently held on the Smithfield just outside the walls of the City of London, it became the leading cloth fair in the kingdom as well as a major venue for trade in livestock. In line with the general pattern, its enlargement encouraged the growth of entertainments. By the reign of Charles I, the Bartholomew Fair lasted for two weeks with stalls that were a maze of mountebank theatre booths, prize-fight rings, musical extravaganzas, gambling dens, beer shops, circus acts, menageries and penny shows. When Wordsworth (1850, VII, pp. 679-694) visited in September 1815, he provided a panorama of 'All moveables of wonder, from all parts', which included:

All out-o'-the-way, far-fetched, perverted things, All freaks of nature, all Promethean thoughts Of man; his dullness, madness and their feats All jumbled up together to make up This Parliament of Monsters.



Figure 2.3. Thomas Rowlandson 'Bartholomew Fair', hand-coloured etching, 1807. (*Image*: CC John Nixon)

Perhaps not surprisingly, as seen below, it became a prime target for those civic dignitaries and magistrates who wished to stamp out 'rude and demoralising amusements' (Marsh, 1999, pp. 278–279).

Court

Princely spectacle provided an additional, elaborately choreographed component of many city-based festivities through to the early modern period (Rosenberg, 2010; Ruiz, 2012). During the Middle Ages, Europe's royal courts self-consciously developed patterns of observances and rituals that defined precedence and etiquette, celebrated key days in the year, and kept members of the court entertained and occupied. When doing so, the royal household travelled complete with huge numbers of courtiers, advisers, clerics, soldiers and domestic servants in order to maintain the niceties and requirements of courtly life as meticulously as possible. However, the court¹² was defined socially rather than spatially, revolving around the person who was the fount of all power, honour and patronage (Weir, 2002, p. 24) rather than being a physically fixed entity (Watanabe-O'Kelly, 2004, p. 3). Monarchs, for example, toured their realms on extended journeys known as 'progresses' in order to dispense justice, raise finance and assess the state of their kingdoms (Doig, 1996). When doing so, adherence to festival practices and protocols remained important regardless of current location, since they served as vehicles both for representing the relationship between the person and the office and as constant reminders of the dynastic relations connected with the imperatives of reproduction and succession (Braddick, 2016). In this context, hunts, masques, feasts and plays materially helped the business of arranging marriages, celebrating alliances, defusing interstate tensions and cementing dynastic survival.

Whether or not court festivals had a public dimension varied. Some observances, which lie outside the scope of the present discussion, always took place in the interior spaces of the palace, its great hall, courtyards and grounds, but others deliberately engaged with the life of the city. As such, the geographical epicentre in late mediaeval and early modern Europe was undoubtedly the Italian city-states and principalities. Booming trade and thriving local economies provided the financial basis from which ambitious ruling classes could pursue the ancient virtue of 'magnificence', whereby thinkers from Aristotle to Aquinas had identified lavish expenditure as bringing with it greatness and prestige (Strong, 1973, p. 72). Venice, Florence, Siena, Lucca, Genoa, the duchies of Ferrara, Mantua and Urbino, and the papal court of Rome led the rulers and social elite of Europe in the extent to which they employed festivals as a 'highly characteristic form of official art' (Fenlon, 2004, p. 47). This was designed partly to boost status and influence, both locally and in a regional context (Mitchell, 1979), yet was also a carefully constructed adjunct to diplomacy - much needed given the ease with which the ruling elites were overturned by invading foreign armies.

The corollary of that strategy was construction and reconstruction of the urban environment to accommodate future festive spectacle and performance. Antiquity reliably provided sources of inspiration, with active exploitation of the iconology associated with classical architecture and costume. Under the rule of the Medicis (1539–1637), the streets of Florence frequently 'assumed a theatrical aspect' (Nagler, 1964, p. 2). Cosimo I, for instance, commissioned the reenactment of the battle between David and Goliath for the Feast of San Giovanni in 1549 and subsequently chariot races at the Santa Maria Novella, suitably transformed into a Roman circus (Hollingworth, 2017, p. 305). For their part, Rome's governing class could supplement the fund of social memory supplied by the remains of the classical city with 'an unusually dense' corpus of Christian processional ritual and liturgical practice that was reinforced by the spiritual and temporal presence of the Papacy (Wickham, 2015, p. 321):

The election of the Pope and the 'taking possession' of his authority incorporated spectacular processions by way of the *Via Papalis*, the bestowing of a tiara, the public presentation of the new Pope on the steps of St Peter's, and his designation as 'the father of princes and kings, the master of the world'. Chariots representing mythological, historical (including ancient Roman) and allegorical subjects first appeared ... in processions ordered by the city authorities during the papacy of Paul II in the 1460s, and thereafter became a common feature of festival display in Rome and beyond. (Mulryne, 2015)

Notably, however, the participants in this event came primarily from the visiting royal parties, without directly involving the citizenry. By contrast, it was generally accepted that events like births, christenings, weddings, knightings, royal accessions, tournaments and the signing of treaties required public involvement even if they occasionally became uncomfortable affairs for the rulers (Dalewski, 1999; Knecht, 2004, p. 24; Mulryne *et al.*, 2004; Ghirado, 2008). As a rule of thumb, use of extramural sites varied with the court's attitude towards display,¹³ legal requirements, the event's scale, the extent to which available sites permitted control over all aspects of the festival, and the regime's sense of stability and security. For example:

Long-lived rulers who were firmly established on the throne and not in immediate conflict with forces either inside or outside their borders quite often had no need of full-dress public festivals (though they may have staged or taken part in small-scale entertainments in the intimacy of the court). Cities free from political and commercial anxiety equally did not see the need to spend huge sums of money wooing a political figure or foreign power whose influence they could do without. (Watanabe-O'Kelly, 2004, p. 5)

The extravagant pageants known as entries provide a case in point. An occasional feature of life in West European cities from the twelfth century onwards (Brown and Regalado, 1994; Knecht, 2004; Favro, 2008), entries were

another expression of the complex relationships between festivals and urban ritual. Modelled on the adventus celebrations that honoured Roman Emperors (see above), the act of royalty or foreign dignitaries passing through the city gate was taken to symbolize transition from one realm to another (Pelletier, 2013). The bill for the associated festivities normally defaulted to the citizenry, although much of the expenditure 'trickled down into the ... [local] economy' (Damen, 2016, p. 54) through giving work to the architects, painters, sculptors and musicians recruited to produce the necessary decorations, pyrotechnics, and scores for concerts (Strong, 1973).¹⁴ The entry of France's King Henri III to Venice in 1574, for example, witnessed a lavish extravaganza of scripted indulgence that was underwritten by the Venetians' need for allies against the threat of Spanish domination. Replete with feasts, plays, concerts and mock battles (Greengrass, 2004), proceedings began at the Lido: the emblematic point of entry to the Republic. After disembarking from the galley that had brought him from Murano, Henri went in company with the Doge and the Papal Nuncio for further elaborate ceremonies at a custom-made triumphal arch and loggia. Designed by Palladio and decorated by Tintoretto and Veronese with historical scenes that suggested that 'Venice was a new Rome, superior to that of classical antiquity' (Fenlon, 2004, p. 52), the architecture both flattered the visitor and furthered the political needs of the Venetian state.

Carnival

Perhaps the most intriguing expressions of the relationship between the classes within pre-industrial cities arose in connection with carnival, the street-based festival that spread through Christian Europe during the mediaeval period and gained grudging approval and participation from all segments of society. Its rationale derived from the injunction to Christians to fast and be penitent during Lent, the period of 40 days leading up to Easter.¹⁵ Perhaps to compensate for the deprivation to come, it became customary to allow a scheduled pre-Lententide festival of joy and excess, where surplus food and drink were consumed and atypically boisterous behaviour was briefly permitted. The resulting festival became known as Mardi Gras ('Fat Tuesday') in France, Entrado or Entroido (the 'Opening') in parts of Portugal and northwest Spain, as Fasching (Fasting) or Fasnacht ('Night before the fast') in the German states and Shrove Tide ('Fasting Season') in England. Nevertheless, its most common name derived from the Italian Carnivale, with derivatives including Carnaval (Spanish and Portuguese), Karneval (German) and Carnival (English). In each case, its meaning variously stemmed from the mediaeval Latin verb carnelevare meaning 'to take away [or to remove] meat', the Italian carne lasciare 'leaving or forsaking flesh 'or a number of cognates that emphasized abstinence and deprivation (Mauldin, 2004, p. 3).¹⁶

The roots of carnival lay 'somewhere between history and legend' (Falassi, 2004, p. 71), with no single point of origin necessarily more authentic than

another (Arthur, 2015, p. 47). An indication that the festival had already emerged by the mid-twelfth century is found in the *Liber Polypticus*, a collection of miscellaneous materials assembled between 1140 and 1143 by Benedict, a canon at St Peter's in the Vatican. This contained significant insights into the social practices behind proto-carnival, recounting the festivities and attendant cruelties that included *de ludo carnevarii* – the city's annual pre-Lenten ceremony (Harris, 2006, p. 57). This involved the Pope and a cross-section of the Roman citizenry processing to the Testaccio Hill, where they witnessed the killing of three animals: a bear symbolizing the devil, a bullock indicating pride and a cock representing lust (*ibid.*, pp. 57–58). The fact that this was Rome and was accompanied by popular rowdiness fuelled assumptions that carnival had direct associations with pagan festivals particularly the Bacchanalia, Saturnalia (figure 2.4), and the New Year festival, the Kalends (Harris, 2003, pp. 7–9).¹⁷ Certainly, the early Church found it difficult to stamp out the playful antics associated with



Figure 2.4. 'Saturnalia' (1783) by Antoine-François Callet. It provides an imaginative representation of a key Roman midwinter festival. (*Image*: CC Omar Magrini)

the Kalends (Chambers, 1903, pp. 259–264), but the extent of the intervening centuries made it more likely that carnival was a mediaeval 'urban and courtly reaction to Lenten rules of the Catholic Church' (Mauldin, 2004, p. 17; Kinser, 1990) rather than a conscious response to faint echoes of Antiquity.

Carnival was always celebrated in the open air, comprising 'a huge play in which the main streets and squares became stages; the city became a theatre without walls and the inhabitants, the actors and spectators, observing the scene from their balconies' (Burke, 1978, p. 182). Artists and novelists lovingly recorded the activities found in Venice's Piazza San Marco, the Place Notre Dame in Montpellier, the marketplace in Nuremberg, and the Via del Corso and Piazzas Venezia and Colonna in Rome. Jan Miel's painting of Shrove Tuesday activities in mid-seventeenth century Rome (figure 2.5), for example, identifies the underlying social stratification. The aristocracy on horseback wearing lavish costumes stand apart from the common people who are presented as the merrymakers. Panhandlers, urchins and hawkers stalk the scene (Powell, nd). The painting illustrated licence being given, but the resulting freedoms were limited.¹⁸ Here as elsewhere, typical observances featured the world turned upside down, with playful inversions of the social hierarchy (Scribner, 1978). Paupers or fools were crowned king, crossdressing was de rigueur, and people wore masks to create anonymity (actual or symbolic). Describing the Roman Carnival in his fictionalized Italian Journey, Goethe (1788) observed:

The difference between the social orders seems to be abolished for the time being; everyone accosts everyone else, all good-naturedly accept whatever happens to them, and the insolence and licence of the feast is balanced only by the universal good humour. (cited in Schroeder, 1999, p. 30)



Figure 2.5. Jan Miel 'Carnival in the Piazza Colonna, Rome', oil on canvas, Wadsworth Atheneum Art Museum, in Hartford, CT. (*Image*: Reproduced under Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication)

These gestures towards inclusivity did not mean that the divides between the social elite and the general populace, or between lay and cleric, were porous. If anything, the opposite was true. A day's escape from class boundaries showed that the existence of hierarchies represented normality and emphasized that role play was only permitted as part of an order that all knew was temporary.

Moreover, that which appeared disorderly and spontaneous was normally underpinned by unspoken principles of order and careful planning at grassroots level. Mardi Gras celebrations in New Orleans, for example, have long represented the culmination of the year's efforts to raise money for, and construct, the floats that take part in the parades. Similarly, in the Swiss city of Basel, there is the presence of a 'temporary urbanism just discernible beneath the city's urban fabric, made up of hundreds of associations, clubs and splinter groups that participate in Fasnacht every year, meeting in their clique-cellars and running educational programmes, drumming schools, lessons in public speaking and social events' (Macy, 2008, p. 270). In Valletta (Malta), longstanding neighbourhood groups hire lock-up indoor spaces to prepare their contributions, albeit with strict gender divisions: the men to work on the construction of the floats (figure 2.6); the women in separate premises to prepare their dance routines. Newcomers here as elsewhere often require persistence to gain a foothold in the proceedings.



Figure 2.6. Preparation of a carnival float in lock-up premises in Valletta, Malta, January 2015. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

From the viewpoint of ruling elites, carnival festivities were also commandeered to serve political ends. The civic powers in Florence, for example, appropriated the 1513 carnival in Florence to celebrate 'obliquely and overtly' the restoration of the Medici regime to the city (Cummings, 1992, p. 163) and again in 1566 when it was used to celebrate the marriage of Francesco de'Medici to Joanna, Archduchess of Austria. Being willing to work with the grain of carnival, of course, did not necessarily mean that municipal regimes and church authorities approved of the transgression of cultural norms and the connotations of permitted misrule associated with the Shrovetide festival (Humphrey, 2001). There were limits to the lifting of the moral curtain and indeed from time to time they used legal sanctions and ecclesiastical prohibitions to weaken celebrations of the festival or even ban it outright. The Roman carnival was banned for seven years between 1475 and 1483 due to serious street disturbances between rival groups representing the mutually antagonistic rioni (districts) of Monti and Trastevere. In 1485, two years after the feast was resumed, there was war once more in the streets before a further brief ban ensued (Mooney, 1988, p. 6). Similarly, Cologne's carnival in the 1820s was hijacked by:

a group of well-heeled young men [who] took it upon themselves to 'reform' Carnival, founding the 'Festival Committee', and setting about codifying the people's fun. 'Meetings' of the Festival Committee featured entertainments, and within a decade or so, the meetings had evolved into the fully theatrical presentations they remain today. (Abbott, 2008, p. 99)

Yet participants may have seen things differently. Lindahl (1996), for instance, warned that those who only find in carnival that which opposes elite culture will fail to recognize the dimensions of community self-celebration and self-definition essential to many such festivals. Another view that has attracted considerable interest comes from the work of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin.¹⁹ When analysing the detailed, if scatological, descriptions of Renaissance carnivals in François Rabelais's novel Gargantua and Pantagruel, he argued that the festival's topsy-turvy world could be read as an expression of social protest. Carnival, with its reversal of deference, showed that rank was not immutable. For Bakhtin (1984, p. 123): 'Carnival is the place for working out a new mode of interrelationship between individuals... People who in life are separated by impenetrable hierarchical barriers enter into free and familiar contact on the carnival square'. Although he perhaps underplayed both the ludic and violent dimensions of actual events, Bakhtin's theoretically-informed approach usefully indicated how carnival provided an opportunity for participants to glimpse things as they otherwise might be and a channel for contesting the social status quo (Ravenscroft and Gilchrist, 2009).20

Although still paving the way for Lent, over time the exact duration of the festival frequently varied in line with other objectives. While activities normally

reached their crescendo on Shrove Tuesday, the carnival season might begin many weeks earlier, mirroring the experience of fairs in stimulating longer festivals that offered a full range of pleasures. For instance, the Venetian Carnevale may have started as a one-day feast-day, but by the eighteenth century had become a baroque festival that sprawled over six months of the year. In the process, 'carnivalesque' observances – practices that share the stylistic characteristics of carnival but, strictly speaking, lack the same religious provenance or symbolic meanings – informed numerous other forms of festival that involve effervescence and processions.²¹ Once such practices become normalized, as one commentator noted: 'ever greater doses are needed to achieve the same effect' (Ground, 2016, p. 3).

The change in timing reflected more than just the decline of religiosity as a defining purpose, since carnival was also increasingly tied to the tourist agenda. It is estimated, for instance, that 30,000 people were drawn to Venice for the 1687 carnival (Burke, 1978, p. 249); figures that grew steadily in the first half of the eighteenth century when growing numbers of Grand Tourists arrived intent on absorbing the sights, gambling in the casinos and pursuing carnal delights (Tanner, 1992, p. 43). In the process, the 'ancient ritual paradigm disintegrated into a series of single, mixed, repeated events' (Falassi, 2004, p. 79), with public displays that included puppet shows, displays of exotic animals, theatre, opera, sporting events, and performances featuring acrobats, wire-walkers, clowns and minstrels (Rowen and Rowen, 1989; Gori, 2015). The wearing of elaborate masks was so prevalent amongst all groups in society that the visiting French writer Maximilien Misson declared in 1688: 'In the city, the entire population is disguised' (Johnson, 2011, p. 126).

Yet this was the zenith for the Venetian Carnevale. The city's position as a 'locus of decadent Italianate allure' (Redford, 1996, p. 6) along with the festive infrastructure of the Venetian Republic had already faded by the time Napoleon's forces invaded in 1797 and subsequently left the city under the control of Austrian proxies. While the private festivities of balls, masquerades and operas continued into the nineteenth century, the festival had declined well before John Ruskin visited in 1852 and recorded that with only about '30 to 40 masquers, besides a long nose here and there in the crowd... It was very tragical mirth' (quoted in Hibbert, 1989, p. 277). Banned altogether by Benito Mussolini's Fascist regime, it was not until 1979 that the Carnevale, including the wearing of masks and costumes, was revived (Bertrand, 2013; see also chapter 3).

The notion of carnivals as the lynchpin of wider programmes of festive events was widely accepted. In Nice on France's Côte d'Azur, the municipality recognized that the traditional carnival, which dated back at least to 1294 (Rinaudo, 2004), could act as the basis for a wider programme of events, but first needed remodelling given that the 'promenades, receptions and private shows that had been the pastimes of those who sojourned in Nice were no longer sufficient to attract a rich foreign clientele eager for parties, entertainments



Figure 2.7. Nice Carnival, 1928. (Photograph: Contemporary postcard)

and novelties'.²² In 1873, therefore, the city established a festival committee of thirty-eight to plan a more extensive winter events programme. Drawn from the city's great and good, the committee initially sought to transform the still predominantly traditional religious festival into a grander and more regulated secular festival while still being presented as an 'island of authenticity' and religious observance (figure 2.7). Private balls and parties were appended to the calendar on the lines of the old Venetian model, subsequently along with a round of new events that included, at different times, an opera season, horse races, regattas, motor and air races, and a spring festival with fairground stalls, buffets, dances, theatre, firework displays and dressing up in traditional costume. The carnival itself was rerouted to take in the stylish Promenade des Anglais, with the addition of a 'battle of the flowers':

A procession of flower-decked barouches and coaches carrying the graceful young ladies of Nice and foreign high society, who threw flowers to the crowds... Silk banners were awarded for the finest carriages. The addition [in 1889], including thousands of cut flowers grown in the hills around the city, served as an international showcase for the local flower industry and mild Nice winters.²³

If the religiously-defined version showed a natural tendency in its European heartland to metamorphose gently into carnivalesque festivals, then it was only to be expected that the global spread of carnival in line with the geography of colonialism would inject new elements into the mix. In time, carnival festivities spread to all parts of the world with the movement of settlers and the unfolding of Empires. In the process, celebrations would be shaped by a mixture of imperial

practices, with colonial regimes developing migrant festivals to 'reflect broader processes of integration and/or shifting identification' (Frost, 2016, p. 574; also Nurse, 1999), and to facilitate creative absorption of local influences. European, and subsequently North American traditions, became enriched by crossfertilizations of ideas about, *inter alia*, costume, music, masquerade and political purpose from Africa and the Americas (Harris, 2006, p. 57; also Bell, 2015).

The diffusion process had begun in the sixteenth century. Spanish and Portuguese conquests across a swathe of South America and the arrival of French settlers in both Latin America (Guiana, Guadeloupe and Martinique) and North America took carnival to the New World. The broad consensus is that the earliest diffusions were to Spanish America, where the first carnivals were held in Bogotá (Colombia) in 1539, in the Dominican Republic in 1553 and Saint Domingue (Haiti) in 1697. Trade and conquest by the Portuguese took the festival to Goa in India and to Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, the island of São Tomé and Cape Verde in Africa (Crowley, 1999). The carnival in Luanda (Angola), for example, probably dates from the street processions in 1620 that incorporated political allegory and mimicry in celebrations of the canonization of Saint Francis Xavier (Birmingham, 1988). In Brazil, where carnival developed as a primarily urban phenomenon rooted in the Portuguese entrado (Simson, 1978; Kraay, 2015), recognizable festivals emerged in Salvador de Bahia at the start of the eighteenth century and Rio de Janeiro in 1723. In French North America, Mardi Gras festivities developed in the St Lawrence valley in the seventeenth century and along the Gulf Coast in the early eighteenth century, where the first recognized carnivals were established at Mobile (Alabama) in 1703 and New Orleans in 1718. Many of these would eventually achieve international reputations.

At the outset, colonial carnivals tended to mirror events in their home countries. Faced with the rupture of links with their homelands, European settlers would seek to create familiar festivals and replicate the broad patterns of celebration, behaviour and intent of their European antecedents. This served both to soften the impact of separation from the old country and to proclaim their identity in unfamiliar surroundings. Yet over time, just as carnivals often received the input of newly invented or reinvented traditions within their European places of origin (De Coul, 2009; Dewaal, 2013), so too did they quickly absorb influences specific to their new environments. These, in turn, influenced the spirit and purpose of celebration. The popular culture and carnivals of the Americas, for example, became sites for renegotiating cultural identity. On the one hand, they absorbed feelings of resistance to the colonial and neo-colonial power structure (Nurse, 2008); on the other, they reached accommodation with pre-existing religious observances and with the social and ethnic hierarchies of the colonized nations (Sands, 1991; Samaké, 2004).

Patterns of participation also gradually changed, breaching the precarious order of colonial society (Jaji *et al.*, 2019, p. 1). Initially celebrants generally came from the ranks of the white elites, with the indigenous populations and freed

slaves only gradually being accepted as active participants. Kinser (2017) noted that by the 1850s, for instance, groups of ex-slaves had introduced their own parallel ceremonies in the central streets of Port of Spain (Trinidad) to rival the version 'celebrated by the French Creole elites and some members of the English ruling classes'. While the fissiparous relationship between the European- and African-derived versions became less overt over time due partly to proscription and partly to mutual absorption of the other's practices, tensions from underlying preconceptions persisted. In particular, the erstwhile secondary carnival in Port of Spain (see also chapter 8), 'enlivened by the characterological inventions of once-enslaved Afro-Trinidadians, became the only Carnival of consequence', with the elite that led the nation after 1956 finding the event's socially conciliatory slogan 'All o' we is one' extremely useful (Kinser, 2017, p. 36; also Martin, 1996).

Other adaptations occurring with the transnational spread of carnival included diminution of the religious content. The late nineteenth century saw carnivals founded in Montreal (1883) and in Quebec City (1894) that adopted pre-Lententide winter timing but did not carry forward any specific religious carnival tradition. Those introduced in Montreal, for example, were organized by athletic clubs and focused on promoting winter sports and other activities such as tobogganing and snowshoeing. Encouraged by the municipal government as well as being financed and actively promoted by private enterprise, they were intended to boost economic activity during the off-season by attracting visitors and to promote the interests of the city by raising awareness of the latter's commercial and industrial potential (Dufresne, 1983). Extensive advertising and tourist campaigns were aimed at both European and American audiences, with the latter felt to be insufficiently conscious of the attractions of Canadian winter sports (e.g. Anon, 1884). Reverse flows from former colonies back to Europe would also occur, affecting both the timing and content of carnival practices - a subject to which we return in chapter 8 when discussing the links between the creation of carnivalesque events and migrant identity.

Suppression

If the modern city festival is heir to a long if discontinuous cultural history, it is one that has nevertheless witnessed major swings in what would be regarded as socially acceptable. The precise dates for such movements understandably vary geographically. Focusing on Spain, for example, Vázquez (2017) argued that urban festivals only reached their zenith in the early eighteenth century before reaction set in against the dense multiplicity of festivals. Thinking more of Northern Europe, Burke (1978, p. 207) pointed to a movement starting around 1500 that sought to bring about 'the reform of popular culture'. By this, he meant 'the systematic attempt by some of the educated ... to change the attitudes and values of the rest of the population, or as the Victorians used to say, to "improve" them'.

Moves towards reform were initially led by Catholic and Protestant clerics (ibid., 222-234; Underdown, 1987) who, for different reasons, trained their sights on popular recreations of the type associated with carnival, on more boisterous folk festivals that involved song, dance, plays, bonfires, and indeed anything considered lewd. In England, for example, a royal proclamation had reduced the number of festivals as early as 1536; a course of action that was the precursor to 'the great mediaeval feast days of the saints [being] steadily whittled away ... so that little was left of them by the end of Cromwell's Protectorate' (Walsh, 2000, p. 231). In Protestant regions of Northern and Central Europe, religious festivals that did not meet the new sensitivities were swept away. Corpus Christi, for example, quickly fell foul of Reformation Eucharistic theology and saints' feast days were rigorously pruned. Yet even when unequivocally condemned, prohibition was not necessarily immediate or guaranteed. Nuremberg's town council, for instance, strenuously attempted to control or halt the annual kermis celebrations at the time of the Lutheran Reformation, but met with fierce opposition from across the social spectrum to what was interpreted as interference with traditional rights (Stewart, 1993).

Local groundswells of opinion may have initiated reformism, but the critique intensified and widened over time, aided by important social and economic changes. The first was the 'withdrawal of the upper classes' (Burke, 1978, p. 270). Although earlier eras accepted festivals as important and shared parts of the social fabric of towns and cities, fault-lines had opened by 1800, since:

in most parts of Europe, the clergy, the nobility, the merchants, the professional men – and their wives – had abandoned popular culture to the lower classes, from whom they were now separated, as never before, by profound differences in world view. (*ibid*.)

Social elites now considered themselves apart from the 'common people' and registered disapproval of the festivals and traditions in which their forbears had participated. Those divisions intensified with the advent of industrialization, which saw the pan-societal and ritual aspects of festivals recede with economic development (Crichlow and Armstrong, 2012, p. 123). This echoed the growing schisms within nineteenth century urban society. Many customs that relied on the middle, upper and 'respectable' working classes for support ceased entirely or were downsized, with reciprocity coming to be regarded as begging (Boyes, 1993, p. 28). The new organization of industrial production also worked towards the discontinuation of traditional festivals. Factory owners and other entrepreneurs saw little reason to continue to support events that primarily marked the various stages of the agricultural year (*ibid.*) and were particularly keen to stop the culture of extended revelry interrupting the work patterns of mill and factory workers (Smith, 2016).

So saying, the process of prohibition was surprisingly gradual, albeit with national variations in the extent of moral reforming zeal. The wave of new

festivals introduced in the German states and subsequently the German Reich between 1850 and the First World War, for example, transparently addressed nationalist aspirations and offered serious-minded programmes of activities (see below) but were seldom imposed as replacements for pre-existing versions. It was readily accepted that any attempts to prohibit the more spontaneous and permissive forms of festivals could alienate both festivalgoers and significant gatekeepers within society – not least because they often had economic as well as social significance (Abrams, 2002, p. 530).

Great Britain saw similar caution exercised. Communal customs such as wakes and Morris dancing (associated with drunken licence), bull running, bearbaiting and cock-squailing²⁴ (sources of cruelty to animals) were early targets of official discouragement and suppression (Boyes, 1993, p. 28). However, greater care was taken when the authorities' responded to fairs, with the treatment of London's fairs serving as a case in point. Despite their reputation for debauchery, intoxication and promiscuity, they were part of the social fabric and efforts at prohibition could encounter sharp resistance. Moreover, they were not unregulated; the local militia often stood by ready to intervene if matters got out of hand (Harcup, 2000). The ground therefore needed to be carefully prepared.

Prohibitions had already started in the mid-eighteenth century, with the Tottenham Fair (1755), Southwark (1762), and the May Fair (1764) succumbing to the efforts of Georgian aldermen and magistrates to stamp out 'rude and demoralising amusements' (Marsh, 1999, pp. 278-279). Nevertheless, in the case of the Southwark (or 'Lady') fair this was but the culmination of a 50-year campaign by local residents designed 'to preserve the Morals of their Children and Servants from being corrupted'.25 It would take a full century more to gain other significant scalps with the closure of the Greenwich, Camberwell, Bow, May and St. James's Fairs (Cunningham, 1977, p. 164), although it must be stressed that some also succumbed as much to fairground sites being lost through urban encroachment as to prohibition.²⁶ Even the illustrious Bartholomew Fair, under the control of the City of London since 1604, only finally ceased in 1855. Furthermore, when such events could not be suppressed, there was always the possibility of converting them to something that accorded better with the new morality. Smith (2016) noted, for example, how Newcastle's Town Moor Fair was re-established in 1882 as a Temperance Festival in order to encourage people not to drink or gamble. Although some traditional fair activities were permitted these were fused with newer elements that were deemed more wholesome, such as sports, competitions, brass band concerts and military displays.

Suppression of popular festivals by both proscription and creative redesign was not only associated with forces of reaction and conservative moral codes. Whether or not one agrees with Lenin's dictum that 'revolution is the festival of the oppressed' (cited in Greer, 1970, p. 370), there is no doubt that radicallyminded regimes on both right and left of the political spectrum recognized the power of festivals to energize the general populace and involve them in the

wider political project (Murray, 2016). Mona Ozouf (1988, p. 3), for example, showed that while festivals were considered fundamentally important to the new dispensations of Revolutionary France, to the serious revolutionary mind the ancient festivals 'had lost their freshness, rationale, and their ability to convey moral or spiritual values':

The popular festival meant the senseless din of coal shovels and pans; crowds obstructing the streets and public squares; barbarous 'sports' like shooting birds or tearing a goose limb from limb; the veiled threat of masks; the disgusting spectacle of people fighting over loaves of bread or sausages. In short, popular excitement disconcerted, or worse 'offended', reason. (*ibid.*)

The new schedule of festivals covered most eventualities. Some recycled the practices of older festivals with a new veneer but others looked more to establish events that rejected the 'accumulated experiences, traditions and patterns of life that had existed for centuries' (Bergman, 2019, p. 52) - often by consciously looking beyond the recent past to reconsider the lessons of previous heroic ages, most notably classical Greece and Rome. Jean Jacques Rousseau, for example, took inspiration from ancient Greece when seeking ways to express the 'general will', suggesting that public games and 'sports, festivals and ceremonies should be invented in order that the people might become imbued with the virtue of patriotism, and resist the distractions of theatres, operas or comedies' (Mosse, 1975, p. 73). Seeking divine connection was another important constituent in festival creation. The Festival of the Federation on 14 July 1790, celebrating the storming of the Bastille the previous year, saw 300 Catholic priests officiate at an Altar of the Nation built in the Champs de Mars in Paris (see also chapter 1). Wearing tri-coloured girdles over their vestments, the priests prayed for God's blessing on the Revolution. The subsequent Festival of the Supreme Being, held on 8 June 1794 (Wiles, 2011, pp. 171-177), again sought celestial approval even though intended as a full-blown deistic alternative to Christian feasts. Yet there was no single guiding set of theological strictures underpinning the four major revolutionary festivals that occurred between 1790 and 1794 (Jannarone, 2017). While sharing a ceremonial and symbolic vocabulary with the other festivals (Ozouf, 1988), for example, the Festival of Reason on 10 November 1793 rejected any form of deism, which saw Notre Dame de Paris recast as a Temple of Reason in an intentional act of dechristianization (Beik, 1970).

In many respects and despite their different forms, these events were both progressive and nostalgic. They looked forward to a new secular society but aped the princely pageants of the Italian city-states in transforming the buildings and spaces of the city through decorations and temporary structures and using them as the basis for carefully choreographed propaganda events. Superficially these festivals were 'instituted for the people; it is fitting that they participate in these with a common accord and that they play the principal role there' (Jacques-Louis David, quoted in Jarvis, 1994, p. 183).²⁷ Nevertheless, it was clear that here too
ANCIENT AND MODERN

the social classes soon ceased to mix and that the political elite kept a tight rein on the nature and flow of proceedings.

The New Order

Other developments also illustrated the point that the upper echelons of society still recognized the value of festivals even if they no longer personally wished to participate in traditional styles of socially inclusive local events. From the eighteenth century onwards and particularly from 1880 through to 1914, cities witnessed the appearance of new types of festivals. In Britain during the nineteenth century, festivals emerged that presented:

programmes of high quality classical works, interpreted by renowned performers within famous theatres or concert halls for the benefit of arts connoisseurs. There was no question but that the cultural forms and infrastructures promoted at this time were unambiguously concerned with the 'high arts'. Indeed ... support for the arts was implicit in the efforts made by social elites to exert their dominance and demarcate social boundaries between themselves and the population at large. (Quinn, 2005)

By the same token, the changing social composition of the urban population in many industrializing nations diminished the unifying appeal of civic festivals, as did 'competition from ever-growing mass leisure industry which reduced the entertainment value of civic pageantry' (Roberts, 2017, p. 444). In many cases, too, local authorities were themselves being reformed and 'revised their use of civic ceremony, celebration and commemoration in order to keep pace with contemporary culture and to maintain public interest' (*ibid.*, Roberts, 2020).

Of those that retained their connection with the locality, perhaps the most influential was the historic pageant (Glassberg, 1990; Readman, 2005; Stokes, 2013; Bartie *et al.*, 2016). Popular on both sides of the Atlantic, historic pageants drew on and reconstructed the sense of pride in and identity with place. Based on carefully selected (and selectively represented) events in local history, historic pageants deployed sanitized mixtures of dances, processions and parades, orations, theatrical performance, music and song to work towards 'the education of a community in its own past' (Withington, 1918; quoted in Boyes, 1993, p. 33).

Other forms of festival are generally built on mainstream cultural movements, reflecting wider communities of interest rather than place-based communities and addressing elite rather than popular culture. Music festivals provide a good example. In the case of Great Britain, these frequently stemmed from the linkage of the sacred and secular, with the first recorded instance being the annual service in London's St Paul's Cathedral for the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy.²⁸ instituted in 1655. While originally just a thanksgiving followed by a banquet, the musical element gradually became dominant, with

regular performances of Purcell's *Te Deum* and *Jubilate* (Blanning, 2008, p. 91). The capital would see large-scale musical events staged throughout the eighteenth century, with the works of Purcell and Handel often anchoring Jubilee festivities and public spectacle (Dean, 1959; Weber, 1989; see also chapter 1). Provincial England also experienced a steady growth of music festivals from the late eighteenth century onwards, with a period of rapid expansion that occurred between 1880 and 1914 meaning that 'there was scarcely a town in England which did not organize its own festival' (Drummond, 2011, p. 1). These ranged from large and nationally recognized gatherings – such as the Three Choirs, the Norfolk and Norwich, Birmingham, Liverpool and Leeds Festivals²⁹ – down to far smaller events that nevertheless had a large local following. As Pippa Drummond (*ibid.*) noted:

Organized on a large scale and lasting for up to four days, they employed the leading singers and instrumentalists of their time. The events were eagerly anticipated, attracting large numbers of visitors to the festival towns and having a beneficial effect on both morale and trade... That the festivals were social, as well as cultural, occasions is clear from the lavish hospitality offered and the inclusion (until the mid-century at least) of formal dances and fancy dress balls following the evening concerts. As with comparable events today, the nineteenth-century festival attracted a number of 'fringe' activities – theatrical performances, band music, flower shows and even (in the 1820s and 1830s) balloon ascents. These events, although separate from the main concerts and balls, attracted a considerable following of their own and contributed to the atmosphere of general festivity.

Ideological considerations - in the sense of discourse that mobilized ideas, beliefs and values in support of promoting and legitimizing particular views about the world - undoubtedly played a part in shaping new festivals, particularly in support of claims about power, status and national identity, belonging and entitlement (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Dicks, 2004, p. 135). While detailed consideration of the imaginative shaping of narratives of nationhood and the operation of political communities lies outside the scope of this book,³⁰ the halfcentury before the First World War saw movements in many Western counties that disseminated nationalism. Some looked to festivals as a way of propagating modernity as the bedrock of new national identity. Other nationalist movements looked more to grounding nationalism in a sense of territorial belonging, often using festivals as vehicles for public displays of costumes, dialects and local cultural practices to reinforce arguments that postulated the existence of intimate links between people and place (Fournier, 2017). This was particularly true in the states of central and southern Europe, then witnessing the processes and challenges of territorial consolidation and realignment.

The tension between nationalistic modernizers and traditionalists was readily apparent. The wave of new festivals introduced into Germany, as mentioned above, owed little to overall guidance from the state. Influenced by philosophies

ANCIENT AND MODERN

linking sport and social modernization (Kidd, 2008), their purpose was less to promote health and fitness than to instil a stricter focus and sense of purpose. For example, there was an attempt in 1897 to develop a National Festival Society as a ginger group that sought to inject competitive sports into popular festivals. However, it met limited success. While its members 'understood something of the theory of festivals ... they had little feeling for the momentum behind such celebrations' (Mosse, 1975, p. 9). As modernizers seeking to bring social change, they also encountered constant opposition from three already active groups who were aligned to more traditional nationalistic movements.

The first, the gymnastic organizations (Turnvereinen), were based on classical Greek antecedents. Founded by Friedrich Ludwig Jahn in 1811, they organized their own festivals as well as contributing to others; providing displays of gymnastic exercises always accompanied by 'the singing of patriotic or church songs, the patriotic sermon, [and] torchlight parades (Mosse, 1975, p. 83). The second were the choir societies. Established throughout the German culture region in the nineteenth century and expressing rising national pride in the German art of music, choir societies would typically stage 'a two-day festival with a concert on each day, framed by open rehearsals, musical parades, singing exercises, Garten-Musik, the presentation of memorial medals, speeches, fireworks, and tourist activities such as boat trips on the Rhine, all generously doused with Rhenish wine' (Dewilde, 2015, p. 144).³¹ The third were the sharpshooting clubs, which were loosely derived from mediaeval traditions of maintaining militias to police and protect towns from marauding groups (Imhoof, 2013, p. 25). While their military role had become meaningless, their marksmen's festivals (Schützenfests) became increasingly popular (figure 2.8). Complete with speeches, processions and shooting competitions, their festivals provided another ingredient in the powerful upsurge of nationalistic fervour:

The massive group singing of the choral societies, the unison movements of the gymnasts, the parades and marksmanship contests of the sharpshooters all provided, for participants and spectators, a sense of togetherness, of belonging to a widespread yet close-knit community, the nation as nationalists knew it. (Sperber, 2009, p. 37)

More specific festivals, such as anniversaries, tended to follow the patterns of primarily local celebrations within a national trend. The 1859 celebrations to mark the centenary of Friedrich von Schiller's birth, for example, were essentially community festivals, staged by virtue of local subscriptions. At the same time, the local festivals were infused with a collective sense of historic continuity and of 'being part of an organic whole' (Mosse, 1975, p. 89). As such, they represented 'a juncture in the discourse of German nation-building' that interlinked local celebrations with 'interpretations and fabrications of the nation' (Gudewitz, 2008, p. 587) and generally 'commandeered Germany's greatest dramatist to define a cultural conception of nationhood' (Wiles, 2011, p. 191). In turn, the German



Figure 2.8. The Bremen Marksmen's and People's Festival, 1846, wood-engraving from the *Illustrirte Zeitung*. (*Image*: Public Domain)

prototypes acted as powerful influences across other parts of central and Eastern Europe. Struggles to promote Latvian identity and independence, for example, saw communities adopting types of gathering that were closely modelled on German song festivals. As typified by events held in Riga from 1861 until 1880, these enjoyed mass public support as expressions of national aspirations although, for their part, the ruling Tsarist and later Soviet Russian regimes also recognized the power of festivals. Latvia's Communist regimes of the 1960s and 1970s, for instance, notably organized events that harmonized with the ideological outlook of the Soviet Union. Festivals would represent a 'historically-specific and historically-significant battleground for cultural and political aspirations' (Carpenter, 1996, p. 94) that persisted through to independence in the 1990s and beyond.

The tendency to look backwards, seeking to locate the roots of nations in some mythical 'golden age', often saw influential groups in society 'inventing' traditions in order to create 'the illusion of primordiality and continuity, to mask the fact that nations are invariably of recent vintage' (Edensor, 2002, p. 5). Appeal to Arthurian legend in late Victorian and Edwardian Britain supplies a good example. Shortly before the First World War, the English classical composer Rutland Boughton and his librettist Lawrence Buckley proposed a festival based on Arthurian musical dramas as a possible stimulus to an English cultural revival, with suggestions of the creation of a second Oberammergau or perhaps

ANCIENT AND MODERN

Bayreuth (Benham, 1993, p. 175). Although Letchworth Garden City, with its progressive and socialist associations was initially canvassed as a possible location, the organizers eventually chose to stage their festival at Glastonbury; a location that was itself frequently evoked as heart of the mythical land of Avalon. On 26 August 1914, Boughton's opera 'The Immortal Hour' was performed at the Assembly Rooms in what was effectively Glastonbury's first Festival. After the hiatus of the First World War, the festivals were reintroduced under Boughton's stewardship. Featuring a diet of music, masques and mystery plays sympathetic to his artistic ideals, Glastonbury's first arts festivals lasted until 1925.³²

Other expressions of similar preoccupations with nationalism and cultural revival came from those concerned with 'survivals in culture', framed around the belief that there remained, in remote corners of the land, residual bearers of the true national identity whose world-view was as yet untouched by the forces of modernity. Influenced by the ideas of German Romantic theorists such as Johann Gottfried von Herder and notions of Volksgeist ('spirit of the people'), folklore and folk music collectors on both sides of the Atlantic scoured remote rural regions in search of true expressions of the supposed national character (Gold and Revill, 2006). Festivals, while frequently including a competitive element in terms of performance, would play an important role in bringing the results to the wider public (Francmanis, 2000, 2002). For example, the Kendal Musical Competition (later the Westmorland Festival) featured an annual folk song competition from 1902 to 1906 at which distinguished collectors such as Cecil Sharp and Frank Kidson served as judges. Invited folksingers, at times, would contribute previously unheard material, thereby further assisting the collection process (Allan, 2016, pp. 48-49). Other regional musical festivals that followed the lead in staging folk song competitions (ibid., p. 50) included those at Frome (1904), Brigg (1905, 1906, 1908), Retford (1907) and Stratford-upon-Avon (1911).

Nevertheless, as suggested earlier, festivals that celebrated pre-modernity and rustic simplicity did not appeal to all concerned with the business of nation building. Examples are supplied by early twentieth century festivals in the southern states of USA that sought to promote greater knowledge of folksongs recently collected from isolated valleys ('hollers') of the Appalachians and the Ozarks by ethnomusicologists and field researchers (Revill and Gold, 2018). While there was little contemporary controversy over the idea that collected materials expressed the surviving culture of an area perceived as an important hearth of the American nation, some commentators were unhappy about the associated attribution of the music to those stereotyped as unsophisticated, poor and backward mountain people. The folklorist Vance Randolph (cited in Cochran, 1985, p. 135) might argue that:

These folklore revivals are mighty good business for the Ozarks and especially for the resort business. The professional Ozark boosters would do well to put more of this primitive stuff into their advertising and not talk too much about our splendid highways and excellent new hotels.

However, local businesses did not always see things in the same way. Taking stock of what was being offered in regional festivals, one unnamed Chamber of Commerce representative argued that: 'the "hillbilly" stuff should be eliminated, a lot of freaks should not be selected to go to the national festival as representatives of the Ozarks' (cited in Cochran, 1985, p. 135).

That was not an uncommon sentiment. Many festivals that impinged on national identity looked to the emergence of the new rather than to the past. The spirit of national progress through technology that had so forcefully underpinned the 1851 Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations in London's Hyde Park inspired many festivals designed to celebrate the modern spirit of industrialization and social change. Events from trade fairs to car shows and rallies saw the selling and marketing of products heavily overlain with celebrations of national technical prowess (Flink, 1970; Walden, 1997; Sugg Ryan, 2010). Festivals offered not only a timely opportunity to assess the current state of technology and design but also to reflect on cultural identity (Bowe and Cumming, 1998, p. 19). On the other side of the political divide, labour movement groups launched new festivals or modified old ones in pursuit of aims that sought to question and change the social order. Yet while recognizing festivals as a useful tool in encouraging political consciousness, greater worker participation and possible national regeneration, it was again recognized that progress involved embracing many traditional elements. Despite the serious-mindedness of many of their leaders, the need to encourage and retain participation rested on maintaining 'the centrality of the tavern ... and the preponderance of sideshows, amusements and traders' (Abrams, 2002, p. 58).

By contrast, it is also possible to identify numerous significant gatherings that looked beyond the parochial concerns of nationalism in favour of the idealistically motivated, redemptive and inspirational spirit of internationalism.³³ Even though the word itself was closely associated with working-class socialism (Van Holthoon and Van der Linden, 1988) and later with the rise of the Soviet Union to the status of global superpower (Mazower, 2012, p. 55), the first recorded use of the term 'internationalism' came in 1843. Defined slightly later as the 'principle of community of interests or action between different nations',34 internationalism saw expressions in pan-artistic gatherings, world scientific meetings, international labour assemblies, evangelical congregations and cultural congresses that promoted values such as universalism, humanitarianism, voluntaristic leadership and rational progress (Milner, 1990; Geyer and Paulmann, 2001). As such, it served as the moral philosophy supporting the desire to enhance peaceful cooperation through collaborative networks, shared projects and collective gatherings in reaction to the growth of militarism in the years between the Franco-Prussian and the First World Wars (Brockington, 2009).

The rhetoric stating that common interests could transcend human differences, however, did not always match actuality. While 'traditional' festivals might ostensibly celebrate the values of an international community of nations,

ANCIENT AND MODERN

such events also retained a tendency to become 'a focus for a more narrowly sectional set of religious values and beliefs' (Parsons, 2004, p. 884). Moreover, the desire to gather together to celebrate artistic excellence or innovation did not necessarily imply equality of participating individuals, groups or nations (Geyer and Paulmann, 2001, p. 3). At its broadest level, internationalism was a hegemonic force that privileged certain sets of values and propagated them at events that were nevertheless presented as having a dispassionate global outreach. The organizers of such gatherings devised carefully constructed rules of inclusion and exclusion for dealing with potential participants. By these means, they ensured as far as possible that only approved participants were attracted and that the *right* sort of internationalism prevailed. These points arise again prominently in the ensuing chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has covered a wide temporal span, ranging from festive activities occurring in the classical world, through the mediaeval and early modern eras up to the outbreak of the First World War, with related threads extending further. As ever when exploring the significance of the past, care needs to be taken over two historiographic issues, namely, with the way that history is constructed and with the lessons that can be drawn.

With respect to the former, it is conventional for festival organizers and others with insider knowledge to publish, in print or online, official histories that tell their version of the story and normally seek to validate the event's authentic status by alluding to its longstanding roots in time and place. In some cases, such traditions are part of the defining purpose of the festival, as instanced by anniversary commemorations. Equally, however, the writing of history often seeks to dignify the festival by appeal to tradition, whether established or newly invented. Even recently founded events attract narratives that seek to situate them deep in local, regional or national tradition due, at least in part, to reasons that mirror the benefits (including economic) that close association with the past is felt to confer (Lowenthal, 1985, p. xxiii; Gold and Gold, 2012a). Such categories of narrative are often dismissed as lightweight when compared with more academic expositions of festival history but share the characteristics of being strongly influenced by the context of the times and by the values of those who shape and structure the past through their utterances and writings (Munslow, 2000, p. 143). Neither offers value-free and 'objective' accounts of reality. Many accounts of the histories of festivals, for example, accord to what may broadly be termed the 'Whig interpretation of history' (Butterfield, 1931; Sewell, 2003): a style of historicizing that selectively views the past in terms of the march towards ever greater achievement and enlightenment, replete with casting heroic figures of the past as heroes who advanced the cause and villains who sought to hinder its inevitable triumph. Nevertheless, even the humblest and most straightforward

sounding festivals can be subject to what John Burrow (2009, p. xvi) recognized as 'the plurality of "histories" and the interests embodied in them'. Not for nothing, as will be seen in the ensuing chapters, have festivals routinely stimulated the creation of fringe events or counter-festivals that give scope for expressing alternative views.

Secondly, care needs to be taken before viewing contemporary festivals as straightforward successors of long-established antecedents. This chapter has clearly shown that elements of festival organization, celebration and festive display have existed since time immemorial, have clear resonances with present-day practices, and occupy places of importance in economic and cultural life. Yet regardless of continuities, modern festival creation and development cannot be locked into the iron shackles of historical precedent. To take an example, most of the provincial music festivals discussed in the previous section effectively ceased to function after the outbreak of the First World War and were thereafter only selectively revived, often altering in form and content in response to changing economic and social circumstances (Drummond, 2011, p. 1). Moreover, from his position as the former Chief Executive of the Bath Festivals Nod Knowles (2011) warned against overemphasizing the precursors of contemporary music festivals, arguing that:

Although it's tempting to go back into 19th and earlier 20th century history to look at relatively rare examples of festival promotion – the Promenade concerts in London and the Three Choirs Festival in the English midlands would be at the top of any list although there were several more – the festivals movement of the kind we know today starts very obviously in the dark, depleted days of the mid 1940s.

These thoughts have application beyond the realm of music festivals. The historical record examined in this chapter shows the nature and function of festivals as an integral part of the urban experience, with emphasis on the roles attached to them by the regal, ecclesiastical or municipal authorities that were either their sponsors or the watchdogs that ensured that festivities observed accepted codes and practices. The festivals that are described and analysed in the chapters that follow do undoubtedly display a measure of continuity, drawing on previous observances whether practised in the locality or in the wider community. However, the pace of cultural innovation and creativity is such that many forms of event which now exist have few antecedents of any real longevity with which they can be convincingly associated. In addition, there are often qualitative differences in the form and purpose of contemporary festivals when compared with antecedents. These arise, inter alia, from their involvement in the wider cultural and creative economy, from their role in promoting destinations for cultural tourism, and in serving as vehicles for place promotion and city branding.

ANCIENT AND MODERN

Notes

1. Millennium Commission (1995, p. 15), cited in Turner (2013, p. 9).

2. This chapter develops ideas introduced in a variety of earlier sources, most notably Gold (2011, 2013); Gold and Gold (2005, 2007, 2012*a*).

3. Traditionally, scholars looked with greater favour on early Greek sporting and cultural festivals, regarded as being more richly and authentically embedded in culture when compared with their later Hellenic or Roman counterparts (e.g. Gardiner, 1930; Jenkyns, 1980; Christensen and Kyle, 2014). Such views, however, ignored the centuries of development that are involved when contrasting the practices of early Greek festivals with those of late Roman societies, as well as the changes in outlook and practices witnessed in late-classical Greek society (Fox, 2005).

4. In modern times, this notion has been co-opted into narratives that, say, supported the action in Hollywood films (Winkler, 1991; Wyke, 1997) or assisted the self-conscious historicizing of the modern Olympic movement (MacAloon, 1981; Kyle, 2014, pp. 21–22).

- 5. Book 5, chapter III.1.
- 6. See Gray (1843, p. 333), Dillon (1997), Nightingale (2004) and Romero (2013).
- 7. Similar comments were made in chapter 1 about ancient Greek observances.

8. The choice of St Mark as patron saint, against two other candidates, was itself originally politically rather spiritually-inspired (see Osborne, 1999).

9. Pope Alexander III had taken refuge in the city following the advance of Frederick's forces through the Italian states to attack Rome. Venice, the narrative goes, had sued for peace on the Pope's behalf only to be met by the demand that either Pope Alexander be delivered in chains or Venice itself would also be attacked. After the maritime victory, Ascension Day witnessed a meeting in St Mark's Square at which peace was successfully negotiated (Muir, 1981, p. 105).

10. This notion is drawn from McGerr (1985).

11. The activity of pilgrimage *per se* lies beyond the scope of this book, primarily because the main emphases in much of the literature are on individual quests to glimpse the eternal, 'stepping out of ordinary time and into sacred time, the time of origins' (Durham, 2003; see also Eliade, 1959) and upon resulting personal transformatory experience, e.g. see Turner and Turner (1978), Eade and Sallnow (1991), Badone and Roseman (2004), Maddrell *et al.* (2015) and Raj and Griffin (2015).

12. Contemporary opinions about the court were decidedly mixed. The court, as defined by Cesare Ripa in 1603, was 'a company of well-bred men in the service of a distinguished superior' although, to his contemporary Tommaso Garzoni da Bagnacavallo, it was also 'the haunt of wicked foxes and the most abject hangers-on, schools of corruption and dens of iniquity' (quoted in Bertelli, 1986, p. 8).

13. The Spanish and English courts, for example, were profoundly different in the way that they gave access to visitors and others who were not part of the courtly circle to witness the splendours of majesty (e.g. see Adamson, 1999).

14. On the citizens footing the bill, see Graham and McAllister Johnson (1979), Mitchell (1979), Zerner (2004) and Bussels (2012).

15. In older calendars this was 36 days, as Sundays were excluded (Mauldin, 2004, p. 3).

16. In passing, it is worth noting that the pre-Lenten period was once not the only time in the year that the typical carnival regime of famine and glut was displayed. Walsh (2000), for example, recorded the prevalence in mediaeval England of a 'shadow' Carnival in roughly the middle two weeks of November. Centred on the feast day of St. Martin (Martinmas), it ushered in the winter revelling season rather than ushering it out.

- 17. See also comments above about Rome and social memory.
- 18. Although at times those limits might be contested, see Santino (2017).

19. For some idea of the range of topics that Bakhtin's analyses have influenced, see Elliot (1999), Holquist (2003), Webb (2005), Hufford (2010) and Bota and Bronckart (2011).

20. The notion that carnival symbolism and ritual might be held up as constituting a 'Royal Road' to developing an understanding of cultural 'deep structure' (Gilmore, 1998, p. 3) is intrinsic to the approach taken by a variety of anthropological (Costa Silva, 1982; Kertzer, 1988; Mintz, 1997) and historical writers (Le Roy Ladurie, 1980; Stallybrass and White, 1986; Hennelly, 2002). Although it might be argued that this interpretation overemphasizes the social purposes of carnival as against its ludic and subversive elements, there is no doubt that the European usage of the word 'carnival' is inescapably linked to this tradition.

21. For comments, see Ravenscroft and Matteucci (2003), Gee *et al.* (2014), Georgiou (2015) and Matheson and Tinsley (2016).

22 Caption entitled *L'art de se distraire* ('The art of distraction') from the exhibition 'Jean Gilletta et la Côte d'Azur: Paysages et reportages, 1870–1930', held at La Ville Masséna, Nice, 17 November 2017–25 March 2018. See also Potron (2017).

23. Ibid. (see note 16).

24. 'Cock squailing' involved throwing loaded sticks at tethered cockerels.

25. Daily Post, 23 August 1743; cited in CRCSTI (2014).

26. Roud (2008, p. 187), for example, noted that Barnet Fair (founded in 1588) suffered greatly from urban expansion in the late nineteenth century and was forced to move sites year by year. It should be emphasized, too, that the general picture of the decline of fairs was not invariable; indeed some continued to show undiminished vigour (Caunce, 2012).

27. The painter Jacques-Louis David was the Revolution's most significant pageant-master.

28. This was a charitable organization founded to support needy clergy and their dependents.

29. The Three Choirs festival, which rotates annually between Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester, is one of the oldest of all music festivals, with roots stretching back to the early eighteenth century (arguably 1709). Dates of foundation for the other festivals are Birmingham (1768), Norwich (1770), Liverpool (1784) and Leeds (1858). For more information, see Drummond (2011).

30. Key sources in this area include Anderson (1983), Cohen (1985), Gruffudd (1995), Maffesoli (1996), Edensor (2002) and Eagleton (2007).

31. Although strictly speaking this quotation refers to the Flemish-German choir movement in Belgium, the ensuing sentence makes the point that 'all of these elements' were also displayed in the Vlaemsch-Duitsch Zangverbond's first meeting in Cologne in 1846. For a wider European view of choir societies and nationalism, see Lajosi and Stynen (2015). For ideas about the diffusion of these societies to Germanspeaking societies in other parts of the world, see Bungert (2016).

32. There is no connection between these festivals and the modern Glastonbury Festivals founded by Michael Eavis in 1970.

33. Hoberman (1995, p. 6), for example, provided a comparative analysis that includes the Red Cross (founded in 1863), the Esperanto movement (1887), the Olympic movement (1894) and the Scouting movement (1908) under the internationalist banner.

34. Oxford English Dictionary, Vol. 8, p. 409. This meaning dates from 1851.

CHAPTER 3

Biennale

Venice, that chimera, that city of illusions where reality becomes fantasy and fantasy becomes reality. Perhaps it is because Venice is both liquid and solid, both air and stone, that it somehow combines all the elements crucial to make our imaginations ignite and turn fantasies into realities.

Erica Jong (1987, p. 17)

The Venetians were celebrated for their skill at window-dressing, and created the first glass shopfronts in the world. So their markets were great exhibitions. From the fairs of the twelfth century onwards, the goods of the city were paraded. At a later date works of art were put up for sale in the square, classical and contemporary works hanging side by side in the open air. It is entirely appropriate that Venice Biennales – of art, of film and of architecture – are still flourishing at the beginning of the twenty-first century. They are continuing a great tradition of showmanship.

Peter Ackroyd (2010, p. 143)

Foundational events are always useful for historiography. They provide fixed points in time from which to trace chosen antecedents, supply benchmarks from which to map lines of future progress, and frequently supply the basis for creating myths about the community involved in a particular development or activity. For the Venice Biennale, and hence also for a swathe of other festivals that would be subsequently influenced by it, there is little dispute that the



Figure 3.1. The Senate Room in the Caffè Florian on St Mark's Square (Venice), the location for the meeting at which the Biennale was initially proposed. (*Photo*: CC Hajotthu).

event in question was a meeting held in the Senate Room of the Caffè Florian¹ on St Mark's Square on 19 April 1893 (figure 3.1). The setting added to the standing of the meeting. Opened in late December 1720 during the first week of the Carnival, the Caffè was a surviving link to the days of the Grand Tour. It also had longstanding connections with art and politics. Its various rooms had provided space for art exhibitions and had hosted significant political meetings, notably during the struggle for independence from Austria in the build-up to the Risorgimento (Howard and de Angelis Corvi, 2018). It was therefore an appropriate place for discussions as to how the city might take positive action to mount something ambitious in the field of the arts in pursuit of its economic and political goals, perhaps by an initiative that linked back to the spirit of Venice's earlier heyday as a festival city.

The present-day Biennale grew from the initiative that then emerged. What would start as a single event grew by stages to embrace, currently, a portfolio of seven discrete festivals (see table 3.1). At its apex are the International Art and Architecture Biennales that run from May to November in alternate years. These are complemented by five prestigious but briefer events: the International Festival of Contemporary Dance (held in June), the International Theatre Festival (July–August), the Venice Film Festival (August-September), the

Festival	Year of Origin	Current Timing and Length	Location
International Art Exhibition	1895 (biennial)	May–November (188 days) 11 May–24 November 2019	Giardini, Arsenale and locations throughout the city
International Festival of Contemporary Music	1930, 1936 (from which time annually)	September–October (10 days) 28 September–7 October 2018	Ca' Giustinian (Biennale HQ), Arsenale
Venice International Film Festival	1932, 1934 (from which time annually)	August–September (11 days) 29 August–8 September 2018	Lido
Poetry	1932 and 1934		
International Theatre Festival	1934, 1936 (from which time annually)	July–August (17 days) 22 July–5 August 2018	Ca' Giustinian Arsenale
International Architecture Exhibition	1980 (biennial)	May–November (184 days) 26 May–25 November 2018	Giardini, Arsenale and locations throughout the city
International Festival of Contemporary Dance	1999 (annual)	June–July (10 days) 22 June–1 July 2018	
International Kids' Carnival	2010 (annual)	February–March (9 days) 23 February–3 March 2019	Ca' Giustinian

Table 3.1. The Venice Biennale festivals.

Source: Compiled by authors.

International Festival of Contemporary Music (September) and, most recently, International Kids' Carnival (February–March). An eighth event, a Poetry Festival, was only staged twice in the 1930s. The growth of the Biennale has also been accompanied by the spread of festival sites throughout the city. Besides the Lido, which stages the Film Festival, the Art and Architecture Biennales have expanded beyond their original base in the Giardini, to embrace the Arsenale (the old shipyard and naval base), and subsequently almost any venue in Venice with space suitable to accommodate official and auxiliary exhibitions during the festival period.

This chapter takes stock of the origins and growth of these festivals, focusing particularly on the evolution of the Biennale's multifaceted relationship with its host city and on its importance as a prototype that has been much copied elsewhere. The first of nine sections recognizes that the first Biennales built on initiatives undertaken elsewhere in terms of displaying art and exhibition design. The next part examines the resolutions to emerge from the meeting at the Caffè Florian, initially to stage a regular, national art exhibition that would start in 1894 but soon scaled up into the proposal for an international biennial that could

achieve greater benefits for the city. This section then considers the nature of the first Biennale in 1895 and successor events up to the First World War. The next three parts trace the chequered course of their development through to the 1980s. The sixth section discusses the introduction of the Architecture Biennale, to run in alternate years with the Art Biennale – an ingenious development that meant that Venice effectively has a Biennale running for around six months of *every* year. The seventh part comments on the spread of the festivals to locations scattered throughout the city, with the two concluding sections taking stock of the current scene. They reiterate the ways in which the Biennale impacts upon the city and observe that the Biennale is both beneficiary and victim of Venice's growing popularity with visitors.

Antecedents

The idea for a regular arts exhibition did not come entirely out of the blue. National academies of fine art had mounted exhibitions since 1725, when the French Acadèmie de Peinture et de Sculpture first opened its exhibition at the Louvre to the public (Holt, 1983).² Known simply as the Salon, it set the pattern to which others aspired, with more than 100 such academies offering exhibitions by 1800 (Dziamski, 2013). These institutions wielded enormous power in their day. They oversaw instruction in the fine arts and effectively conferred approval of style through the work accepted for view at their salons. Their hegemony, however, also invited reaction from those opposed to what they saw as the official salons' inherently conservative showing policies. Consequently, new 'secessionist' salons more open to avant-garde work, styles and media developed in France, Austria and particularly Germany in the 1890s, often in direct competition with the 'national salons'. Their offerings would be very different, but they were alike in retaining close connections with their host cities by remaining rooted in local artistic practices and by drawing significant crowds to view the art on show. In doing so, they made statements about the vitality and status of their cities within the art world; lessons that, in turn, were not lost on the art market.

A second readily accessible source of inspiration came from the World's Fairs. As noted in chapter 1, these high-profile events had an impact on thinking about spectacle and display and projected an orientation towards internationality. More specifically, they had routinely staged art exhibitions almost from the outset. The 1855 Exposition Universelle held on the Champs-Élysées in Paris provided a separate pavilion that showed 5.000 works by 2,054 artists from twenty-nine countries (Ratcliffe, 2008, p. 23). While that pattern was followed by many successor events, the ensuing 1867 Paris Exposition Universelle, held at the more spacious Champ de Mars, offered another model in the shape of national pavilions. Instead of a single shared building, national governments were invited to showcase their technological and design achievements in pavilions that they built at their own expense. The results were 30 pavilions constructed

in the parkland surrounding the main exhibition hall; some commissioned by the countries concerned and others provided by the French organizers. The 1878 Paris Exposition Universelle, now sprawling over 27 hectares (67 acres) of Champ de Mars and the hill of Chaillot, pursued yet another strategy – the Rue des Nations. This comprised a series of nationally designed entrances to each country's display in the Palais d'Industrie, with additional pavilions for those nations that were either not included in the Rue or that wanted more space (Roeber, 2008).

While Italy never staged a World's Fair during the nineteenth century, the praxes associated with these mega-events influenced a sequence of twenty major national exhibitions staged between 1858 and 1911 as part of a carefully orchestrated strategy of state formation. The first Esposizione, held in Florence in 1861, covered agriculture, industry and the fine arts and sought to show the outside world that the unified Italy had arrived and was a worthy trading partner (Boime, 1993, p. 171). Domestically, the Esposizioni Nazionali were intended to inculcate new relationships within society. A royal visit to open an Esposizione, for example, did not merely indicate the event's status; it was also intended to endorse the principle of the monarchy as a central institution around which Italians could rally (Coletta, 2006, p. 48). Place promotion also played its part. Cities looked to festivals as a way of furthering their rivalries. Turin staged seven exhibitions – compared with three each for Milan and Rome – not just to emphasize its economic strength and technological superiority but also to bolster its political and historical role as the cradle of the Risorgimento (*ibid.*, p. 21).

In addition to the Exposizioni Nazionali, there was a variety of smaller and more specialized exhibitions which suited cities that lacked large modern industrial economies. During Rome's exhibition in 1883, the Fifth Artistic Congress had awarded Venice an Esposizione Artistica Nazionale, which was eventually held in 1887.³ The only suitable site available in the city, rather than the islands, was the Giardini: parkland created in the east of Venice by Napoleonic decree in 1807. The plan for the Giardini (figure 3.2) shows a long temporary structure stretching along the waterfront with a wing extending to the Montagnola (hillock) on the eastern edge of the park. Designed by Raimondo d'Aronco after an architectural competition, this Greek Revivalist 'temple of art' housed the exhibition. The riding school in the north of the gardens was retained and converted into a concert hall. A restaurant constructed on the Montagnola later became the British Pavilion (Bowness, 1995, p. 19). Figure 3.3 shows the original grand entrance on the south side.

King Umberto I duly opened this immediate predecessor of the Biennale on 2 May 1887. Lasting to the end of October, it displayed around 1,800 pictures and 170 sculptures, with strong representation of work by Venetian artists (May, 2009*b*, p. 34). In his opening speech, the mayor pointed to the city's heritage, emphasizing what contemporary artists could learn from the genius of past Venetian artists. Yet ironically, staging the exhibition would itself be a learning



Figure 3.2. Plan of the 1887 Exposizione Nationale Artistica held in the Giardini. (*Photo:* Reproduced by courtesy of the British Council).



Figure 3.3. Sketch of the entrance to the 1887 exhibition. (*Photo*: Reproduced by courtesy of the British Council).

process. Despite having attracted over 100,000 visitors (*ibid.*, p. 36), lack of experience of running such an event had produced heavy financial losses and poor display strategy (May, 2009*a*, p. 18). The experience of staging a national art exhibition also brought acute awareness that the city lacked international recognition in the contemporary art market. Mounting a regular and prestigious international art exhibition could do much to support local artists by bringing the art world to Venice and creating opportunities for artists to sell their work (West, 1995; Jones, 2010). In addition, although Venice was already a major tourist attraction, staging such an exhibition could also attract wealthy and high-spending European and North American visitors.

The First Biennales

The specific rationale for hosting another, more ambitious event came from plans to launch nationwide celebrations for the silver wedding anniversary of Umberto I and Queen Margherita in 1893. It was not feasible to fit a Venetian commemorative exhibition within that time frame, but the idea had underpinned the meeting of the city's great and good that took place at the Caffè Florian in April 1893. The main contributions to that meeting had come from three individuals: the mayor Riccardo Selvatico, a poet, playwright and liberal politician committed to urban improvement, public health and economic growth (Bosworth, 2014, p. 44); Giovanni Bordiga, the head of cultural policy for the Comune di Venezia; and Antonio Fradeletto, an academic economist and politician later to become the Biennale's first Secretary-General (Plant, 2003, p. 216). After 'heated discussions' (Tavinor, 2016, p. 39), the initial outcome was a City Council resolution to stage an Esposizione Biennale Artistica Nazionale (Biennial Exhibition of Italian Art). This was tentatively scheduled for 22 April 1894. Over time, however, the horizons widened. On 30 March 1894, a further motion resolved to internationalize the exhibition by reserving a section for foreign alongside Italian artists, so that the event that eventually opened on 30 April 1895 would instead be an Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte della Città di Venezia (International Art Exhibition of the City of Venice).

A Commission composed of thirteen eminent citizens and artists oversaw the necessary arrangements for the first Esposizione, with a smaller sub-committee charged with implementing policy (Alloway, 1969, p. 31). The central figures remained those that had featured prominently in the Caffè Florian discussions. Selvatico became the Commission's President, Fradeletto its Secretary-General, Bordiga served as Fradeletto's administrator (ibid., pp. 32-33). Funding initially came from the City of Venice, albeit with hopes that the costs would be defrayed by significant income generated by admission charges, catalogue sales and commission on the sale of any of the displayed works.⁴ Due substantially to the influence of Bartolomeo Bezzi, one of the Commission's members, the Biennale's regulations were closely modelled on those adopted for international exhibitions held in Munich from 1861 onwards (Deshmukh, 2015). Bezzi was a practising artist who had previously submitted work to the Munich exhibitions and had won a gold medal in 1892 (Alloway, 1969, p. 33). Impressed with the model that Munich supplied, Bezzi proposed an exhibition of 350 works, of which 150 would come from invited Italian artists, 150 from invited foreign artists and fifty from unsolicited submissions chosen by a Committee of Patronage composed of Italian and foreign artists (West, 1995, p. 415).⁵

Accepting these recommendations, the Biennale's President issued invitations in April 1894 to artists from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, France, Netherlands, Italy, Norway, Austro-Hungary, Russia, Sweden and Spain (Becker, 2009, p. 64).⁶ In the event, 285 artists showed 516 works with nearly 60 per cent

emanating from outside Italy (Alloway, 1969, pp. 33–34). An added incentive to participate came from cash prizes sponsored both by private individuals and by public and private institutions, including the City of Venice, the Commune of Morano and the Risparmio Bank. Gold medals replaced the cash prizes in 1903 apart from the prize for journalism, which was retained in order to encourage the widest possible press coverage. In 1903, rooms were set aside in the exhibition building for the use of critics; a forerunner of the now familiar festival press centres (West, 1995, pp. 409–410). Finally, the organizers arranged travel and accommodation deals to encourage tourists to attend the Biennale.

Earlier experience from 1887 had made the Giardini the clear choice for the event space, but a recurrent exhibition necessitated a more substantial structure than the previous temporary pavilion. As shortage of time militated against staging an architectural competition, the city's Chief Engineer Enrico Trevisanato undertook the tasks of design and project management. The new Palazzo Pro Arte (figure 3.4) provided an ingenious and cost-saving solution to the immediate problem, recycling parts of pre-existing structures (the riding stables and concert hall) with addition of kiosks. A neoclassical façade replete with bas reliefs and statues completed the exterior (Plant, 2003; Mulazzani, 2014). Internally, it offered eleven galleries, a café, offices and visitor facilities.

The Esposizione Internazionale opened on 30 April and closed on the 22 October 1895, attracting 224,327 visitors. While recording an overall profit with sales of more than a third of the art works on display, critics lambasted it for its



Figure 3.4. Palazzo Pro Arte, Venice Biennale 1895. (Photo: © Regione del Veneto)

conservatism; a charge that would also be levelled at its successors up to the First World War. Ironically, however it was precisely this characteristic that contributed to its commercial success.⁷ Indeed, the reputation for being an effective marketplace quickly led to mounting pressure on space. The Palazzo Pro Arte might have met immediate needs, but it imposed severe limitations on layout and design as the exhibition steadily expanded in size and scope. The growth of regionalism in the Italian contribution, for example, saw the formation of regional committees and demand for rooms in the Palazzo pro Arte specifically to accommodate regional artists. This caused dissatisfaction amongst foreign artists who complained about being marginalized, with German artists particularly indignant at being assigned to an international room. Coupled with the rising number of art works and visitors in successive Biennales, these tensions made expansion inevitable.

Initially this was achieved by converting the lobbies and café to gallery space, incorporating the old courtyard and adding rooms on the east and west of the Palazzo, thereby expanding the building's capacity by roughly 70 per cent (from 2,450 to 4,213 square metres) between 1895 and 1909 (Martini, 2010, pp. 69-70). More fundamental action to resolve the pressures of growth then followed. Employing the World's Fairs' principle of national pavilions permitted creation of more exhibition space as well as releasing space in the central pavilion for Italian artists. Understandably, this strategy gradually altered both the nature of that pavilion and the contents of the Biennale. By 1934, the switch to the central pavilion only showing local content meant that the administrators could concentrate on managing Italian artists and special exhibitions. By contrast, the handing of foreign art was left to national commissioners who worked independently of the Biennale's committees (Alloway, 1969, p. 112). This pragmatic solution also offered considerable advantages for the balance sheet. The administrative budget fell as other countries not only curated their own pavilions, but also met the substantial costs of, first, staging their exhibitions and, secondly, maintaining buildings that were empty for long periods and exposed to saltwater corrosion. Furthermore, encouraging nations to move into their own pavilions was likely to ensure their ongoing commitment to the festival.

The Ministry of Education provided a small amount of seedcorn funding in 1907 to initiate the process of building national pavilions (May, 2009*b*, p. 20). Participating countries were invited either to design and build pavilions at their own expense or allow the city to build them, leasing them back with the understanding that the nation concerned would ultimately purchase the building. The Belgian pavilion, dating from 1907, initiated the second pattern. While designed by Brussels architect Léon Sneyer, the building was initially financed by the City of Venice and bought from them in 1908.⁸ The 1909 Biennale saw three more pavilions inaugurated, all with different financing arrangements. The Hungarian Pavilion, funded by the Austro-Hungarian government, was designed by Géza Rintel Maróti in a style resolutely drawn from vernacular traditions. The



Figure 3.5. The British Pavilion on the Montagnola at the Giardini site, 2010. Designed by Edwin Alfred Rickards in 1909, it retains something of the teahouse aesthetic. (*Photo*: CC Luu)

neoclassical Bavarian Pavilion, itself testament to the importance of the German art market and the power of the Munich secession salon (Lagler, 2009, p. 57), was built on the hillock next to the British pavilion. Designed by the Venetian municipal architect Daniele Donghi and paid for by city of Venice, it was then leased back to the Bavarians. Finally, there was the British pavilion (figure 3.5), which remodelled the now largely redundant café that had been built for the 1887 Esposizione on the highest point of land in the gardens. Funding came from a successful public appeal launched in January 1909 'for the acquisition, decoration and maintenance of a fine arts pavilion' (Bowness, 1995, p. 18), but this arrangement left an awkward legacy. Although able to buy the restaurant for £3,000 and lease the land on which it stood for a peppercorn rent of 10 shillings (50p) per annum, there was no provision of adequate funding for continuing running costs and maintenance.⁹

By the outbreak of World War I in September 1914, there had been eleven Biennales and Venice was firmly established in the international art market. Visitor numbers exceeded 400,000 in both 1909 and 1912. This achievement was substantially due to the continuing commitment of the city's politicians and civil servants, who ensured the availability of funding streams for the event. Although not yet a global event given that its participants predominantly came from Europe and North America, the pattern of achieving growth though creating national pavilions was set. Seven pavilions had been built by 1914 although the Swedish pavilion was handed over to the Netherlands after only one Biennale. A ninth country (Austria) had drawn up plans for a pavilion in 1913 but war intervened and that ambition was not realized until 1934.

The impact on the wider city also went beyond the rise in tourism during

the festival. From the outset, ancillary events were staged to coincide with the Biennale: for instance, with the Commune of Murano sponsoring an exhibition of glass in the Museo Vetrario (Plant, 2003, p. 218). However, it was decided that the city needed a permanent collection if Venice was to be established as a centre for contemporary art. To this end, the city started buying art from the Biennale, assisted by benefactors and artists donating works either bought from or shown in the Biennale.¹⁰ The first home for the new Galleria Internatzionale d'Arte Moderna was the Ca' Foscari, subsequently moving in 1902 to a larger and more suitable home in the Ca' Pesaro palace on the Grand Canal.¹¹

The First World War and After

The Biennale returned in 1920 after its absence in both 1916 and 1918. While administrative changes meant that the mayor was no longer automatically the event's president, the new appointments retained continuity with the past. The new President Giovani Bordiga was a key member of the group that met at Florian's in 1893. The Secretary-General, the art critic Vittorio Pica, was previously deputy to Antonio Fradeletto for the Biennales in 1912 and 1914. Nevertheless, change was in the air. The city no longer financed the construction of the national pavilions (Mulazzani, 2014, p. 65), with the result that their architects became predominantly non-Italian. Pica was also no traditionalist; indeed his interest in avant-garde impressionist and post-impressionist art so alarmed the more conservative faction of the City Council that they created an Administrative Board in 1922 to rein in his selections.¹² While surviving that challenge, his tenure came to an abrupt end, when he refused to accept works by the artists of the Fascist 'Novecento Italiano Group'. As a result, Pica was forced to resign from the secretariat of the Biennale in October 1927 in favour of the sculptor Antonio Maraini (Lacagnina, 2010, p. 458).

This was a harbinger of what was to follow. The rise to power of Mussolini and the Partito Nazionale Fascista (National Fascist Party) after the March on Rome in October 1922 brought major upheavals in the way that the Biennale related to the city and the nation. National policy was now about co-opting business, employers, workers and the public into the Fascist project and was intended to touch all aspects of life. Art, culture, festivals and tourism would play a major role in the new dispensation, with Venice encapsulating the regime's preoccupations when promoting Italian cultural hegemony, encouraging international tourism, and fostering a new relationship with the Italian people. From 1926 artists, like other workers in Italy, were expected to join the relevant professional labour organization; in this case the Sindacato Fascista delle Belle Arti (Fascist Syndicate for the Fine Arts). Membership conferred social and economic benefits in terms of loans, relief, pensions, retirement homes, professional status and access to the exhibitions which the Syndicate ran, along with the prizes awarded at these events, sales and commissions (Martin, 2019,

p. 140). These festivals were now part of a new hierarchical system, comprising annual festivals at the provincial level, four-yearly interprovincial exhibitions, a quadrennial of National Art in Rome (see chapter 7) and, at the apex, the Venice Biennale of International Art. For Italian artists, selection for the lower tier exhibitions allowed them to progress up the pyramid to exhibit in Venice: a policy intended to insure that only the best Italian art would be exhibited alongside the international art in the national pavilions (see Stone, 1998, 1999). The Venice Biennale thereby gained a privileged position as the only international arts festival in Italy and was protected from the ambitions of other cities such as Rome or Naples that might otherwise have sought to develop something similar (May, 2009*b*, p. 21).

Seen against this background, Pica's replacement by Maraini can be seen as part of gradually removing the Biennale from the City Council's control. Maraini, the first non-Venetian to become Secretary-General, had strong links to the Sindacato Fascista and his appointment boosted connections between the Biennale and the central government in Rome. Just over two years later, law 33 (13 January 1930) created a directly funded body, the Ente Autonomo Esposizione Biennale Internationale di Venezia, to manage the Biennale. Directly funded by central government and dominated by their nominees, the sole local representative was the *podestà* (mayor). In February 1930, the government further aligned the festival with the national agenda by appointing as Biennale President Count Giuseppe Volpi, a leading Venetian businessman who had also served as a diplomat, colonial administrator and Minister of Finance (1925–1928).

The state tasked the festival's new Fascist leadership with revitalizing the Biennale not only for international visitors but also for the Italian people. As such, it was considered important to overcome the festival's elite image and attract a broader cross section of the population. To this end a policy of subsidized rail travel and more energetic marketing was instituted in an attempt to attract greater numbers of white-collar workers and their families (Longo, 2004, p. 57). Equally, attempts were made to broaden its appeal by including the decorative arts and introducing other forms of art festivals (Stone, 1998, pp. 97–98).

Initially, the regime change in Rome had little impact on the Art Biennales' contents. Unlike Nazi Germany there was no party line on acceptable art; a point underlined by Hitler's aversion to the art on display when escorted around the Biennale in 1934. Nevertheless, the new festival regulations affecting Italian artists' eligibility to submit work, the prizes for work celebrating Fascist history and themes, and the dominant role of government and its agencies in the purchase of artworks gradually influenced the nature of the work submitted. Some groups, such as the Futurists and those working in the area of monumental public art, had little difficulty in adjusting to the new requirements (Stone, 1999, p. 197). Others felt it more prudent to apply self-censorship. Participant nations also tended to avoid selecting art for their national pavilions that might be seen as provocative in light of official sensibilities (Alloway, 1969, p. 112).

Changes to the staging of the Biennale during this period were both symbolic and practical. The Palazzo Pro Arte was transformed in 1932 to reflect the new Italy, replacing the neoclassical façade from 1914 with a plain rationalist exterior designed by the Venetian modernist architect Dullio Torres. Embellished only with the word 'Italia' flanked by the lion of St Mark and the imperial eagle grasping the fasces, the new façade's 'sober and clean harmony' reflected, in the words of Maraini, the Biennale's intention to 'avoid the superfluous, in order to tend only to the essential' (quoted in Stone, 1998, p. 62). In line with this thinking, the interior was also redesigned, removing the old Beaux Arts embellishments.

Availability of space remained a problem. The Fascist regime's wish to display the decorative as well as fine arts coupled with the growing number of countries wanting national pavilions resulted in the expansion of the Biennale across the Rio dei Giardini on to the island of Sant'Elena. When undertaking the task of designing the extension's layout, the Venetian architect Brenno del Giudice decided that a single building housing a number of pavilions would create an architectural backdrop to the new section of the Giardini. It would also provide 'a call for order' that would contrast with the scattering of buildings that hitherto had evolved (Mulazzani, 2014, pp. 14, 78). At this pavilion's centre was a space designated for the decorative arts of Venice with new national pavilions on either side. A new road linked the lagoon side of the Giardini to the historic city and St Mark's Square along the Riva dell'Impero.

The regime exploited the Biennale further as a vehicle for promoting Italian culture and leadership internationally. After the Biennale had successfully organized exhibitions in Athens (1931) and New York (1932), it was charged with organizing exhibitions abroad to make Italian art 'known and appreciated' worldwide (Di Martino, 2005, p. 32). Twenty-five such events took place between 1933 and 1942, of which eight were major touring exhibitions. Between them they covered Europe, the Americas, India and Australia (*ibid*, pp. 145–146). The Biennale's role in cultural diplomacy was further advanced by running international congresses in tandem with the Biennale to bring artists and arts managers together. These included the 1932 International Congress of Contemporary Art and the 1934 conference on 'Art and Reality: art and the state', which sought to present the Italian model of state–art relations as a 'universally applicable solution to pan-European crises of modernity' (Martin, 2019, p. 139).

Festivalization

The decision to move into new art forms after 1930 transformed the Biennale into a multi-arts festival. The new festivals were initially introduced as biennales in their own right to run in tandem with the Art Biennale. As the poster for the 1932 Biennale shows, there were originally a poetry convention and competition (July), a film festival (August) and a music festival in September that extended



Figure 3.6. Poster from the XVIII Biennale, Venice 1932, which shows the various new festivals that had been added to the programme. (*Image*: Reproduced under Creative Commons CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain Dedication).

the tourist season into the autumn (figure 3.6). By 1936 the poetry event had been abandoned as a financial liability after failing to attract sufficient visitors (Longo, 2004, p. 101), although a theatre festival (also in July) that had been introduced in 1934 more than filled the gap. In addition, the music, theatre and film festivals had all become annual events by 1936, providing evening entertainment to complement the day-time art Biennale and taking the festival to new districts of the city. They also usefully boosted visitor numbers in years when the Art Biennale was not taking place.

The Festival Internazionale di Musica (Festival of International Music), the first of the new events, was introduced in September 1930 and was heavily politicized from the outset. Its director, the composer Adriano Lualdi, represented the Fascist Union of Musicians in the Chamber of Deputies; its executive committee included Mario Laborca, who was Secretary of the Corporation of New Music set up in 1923 and holder of various positions in the Fascist musical hierarchy (Sachs, 1987, p. 27). As with the fine arts, the early festivals proceeded without any fixed position as to what music was appropriate, with audiences able to hear works by Bartók, Gershwin, Honegger, Hindemith and Kodály alongside traditional classical composers (Bosworth, 2014, p. 146).

The principal indoor performance space was the Fenice Opera House, with large audiences attending the outdoor concerts in spaces such as St Mark's Square.

The first festival achieved a small profit and created an event that was popular with musicians (Sachs, 1987, p. 90). New works were commissioned for the second festival in 1934, with the international reach of its programming drawing in North and South American composers and performing companies such as the Vienna State Opera under Clemens Krauss (*ibid.*). Yet the 1934 festival also manifested a darker undertone. Musicians from the Permanent Council for the International Cooperation of Composers met at the Venice International Festival to discuss, *inter alia*, what defined an 'international' festival and what constituted an acceptable representative national music. With regard to the latter, it was proposed that a list be drawn up of works regarded as representative of national culture, with suggestions as to which composers might not be suitable.¹³

The Biennale Teatro (International Theatre Festival) was inaugurated in July 1934. It readily absorbed Venice's long tradition for open-air theatrical spectacle in which the city was used as settings for Venetian plays or plays with Venetian subjects. For example, Max Reinhardt was invited to produce Shakespeare's 'Merchant of Venice'. One of the initiators of the Salzburg Festival (see chapter 4) and one of the proponents of 'festival theatre', Reinhardt relished the opportunity to make Venice the centrepiece for the performance by setting the action in the Campo San Trovaso (Fischer-Lichte, 2005, p. 169). The first festival also featured 'La Bottega del Caffè' (the Coffee Shop) by the eighteenth-century Venetian playwright and librettist Carlo Goldoni. Set in a Venetian square, it was well suited to the Piazza San Luca (Plant, 2003, p. 301). Not surprisingly, Goldoni was a staple of the festivals leading up to 1941.

The Theatre Festival was an important precursor in its own right (see chapter 7), yet of all the new festivals inaugurated in the 1930s, it was the film festival that had the greatest international impact. Founded in August 1932 as the Esposizione d'Arte Cinematografica (Exhibition of Cinematographic Arts), its aim was to present film, one of the newest art forms, in a festival format. Admittedly this was not an activity in which Italy excelled in 1930, but the regime had started to realize film's significance in terms of popular culture and propaganda opportunities, and had begun to establish an infrastructure of agencies, studios and legislation to protect the Italian motion picture industry. The film festival was an integral part of that strategy by the mid-1930s as both the showcase for Italian cinema and as a vehicle for putting Italy centre-stage among international film-makers (Ricci, 2008; Welly, 2017).

While Venice is regarded as the first International Film Festival (table 3.2), there had in fact been many one-off film festivals, some associated with World's Fairs, others with music festivals, industrial expos, and cine clubs (see Taillibert and Wäfler, 2016). Venice, however, was always intended to be a regular festival and would be presented in a fine arts context; a radical notion for those prone to dismiss film as merely a mechanical reproduction of reality (Favero and Moretti,

Location	Founding Year	Title	Founding Purposes
Venice	1932	Mostra Cinematographica di National represent Venezia support of Fascist i	
Moscow	1935	Soviet International Film Festival	Ideological
Cannes	1939 (1946)	Festival de Cannes (originally the Festival International du Cinéma)	Anti-fascism, support for French and European cinema
Locarno	1946	Festival del Film Locarno	Auteur cinema
Karlovy Vary	1946	Karlovy Vary International Film Festival (Mezinárodní filmový festival Karlovy Vary)	Showcasing recently nationalized Czech film industry
Edinburgh	1947	Edinburgh International Film Festival	Documentary cinema
Berlin	1951	Berlin International Film Festival (Berlinale)	Cold war politics (West Berlin)

Table 3.2.	Pioneering	film	festival	ls

Source: Compiled by authors.

2017, p. 216). Government encouragement and funding and a developing network of international contacts to nominate films for the festival ensured its continued growth, but it also developed at a propitious moment. The cinema was in a state of flux after the introduction of talking pictures in October 1927 had posed a challenge for film distribution. A new and prestigious outlet for the latest that the industry could offer would serve commercial interests both in Hollywood and other European film-making centres (see also chapter 5). Certainly the popularity of the idea was such that after the second film festival in 1934, the event switched from a biennial to an annual basis.

Various individuals are credited as the Film Festival's founders (see Plant, 2003; Favero and Moretti 2017), but three names feature in most accounts. The first, Antonio Maraini, actively promoted his own claim for authorship. In his speech at the opening of the first festival, he declared that the idea came to him at a football match when he suddenly conceived of a film festival 'thronged with a public anxious to see all that cinematographical art, which had now reached such a degree of perfection, represents' (quoted in Paulon, 1952, p. 12).

The second, Luciano de Feo, was in charge of film selection for the first two festivals. A major figure in the Italian film industry, De Feo served from 1924 as General Manager of L'Unione Cinematografica Educativa, a propaganda newsreel and documentary production company based in Rome, and from 1928 as director of the newly created Instituto Internazionale de Cinematografia Educativa, a Rome-based international body set up under the auspices of the League of Nations but underwritten by the Italian government (Martin, 2016, p. 72). This organization gave De Feo international connections that were vital for planning the festival in the three months that he had available. He later wrote

that that they needed everything to be invented from scratch '*ex novo*: a plan, a method, a style'. What he aimed to do was to discern, isolate and extol the 'pure artistic originality of films, of presenting to the public in an atmosphere of festive solemnity and at the same time of intellectual responsibility' (Paulon, 1952, pp. 16–17).

The third figure was Giuseppe Volpi. While Maraini and De Feo were interested in the festival's social and political ramifications, Volpi was also concerned with maximizing the economic impact for the city, particularly for tourism. Amongst his wide industrial and commercial interests was his vicepresidency of the Compannia Italiana dei Grandi Alberghi (CIGA), a luxury hotel chain on the Lido that had attracted European high society in the summer season but currently faced severe competition. Volpi and his associates were consequently seeking ways to maintain the Lido's competitiveness. Considerable sums had been poured into projects to improve the island's roads, provide car-ferry access and create a new golf course at Alberoni on the southern tip. Nevertheless, tourist numbers had peaked in 1925. A 1926 guidebook had devoted just a single paragraph to the Lido remarking that its proximity to Venice made it one of Italy's popular summer resorts, but it did not recommend a visit (Ellis, 1926, p. 217). Richer cultural tourists were favouring new Mediterranean resorts. Staging a film festival with the glamour brought by association with Hollywood film stars might well improve the Lido's image, extend the tourist season past its July peak and help to counter the dramatic decline in numbers of American visitors to the Lido that occurred in the wake of the Wall Street Crash (Longo, 2004, p. 200). It would be a policy that other exclusive spas and resorts, similarly losing their aristocratic clientele, would also employ in the postwar period. These included Locarno, where a film festival was founded in 1946, Karlovy Vary (1946) and San Sebastian (1953).

The film festival opened on the terrace of the Excelsior Hotel on the 6 August 1932 with a screening of Rouben Mamoulian's film 'Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde', which attracted an audience of 1,000. Around forty pictures from nine countries were shown, scheduled by nationality, which maintained the practice that already ran through the art and music festivals ((Di Martino, 2005, p. 159; Longo, 2004). At the opening of the festival, Maraini celebrated Venice's pioneering approach: 'Never before, as far as I know, has there been a programme showing films in the original edition and language evening after evening and never before have a number of films been screened one after another within the space of a few days, giving a survey of almost all the most recent and best works produced by the cinema in all countries' (Paulon, 1952, p. 12). However, Maraini's liberalism concerning uncensored film was limited and proprietorial. He reminded the government in 1933 that there were political ramifications to showing such films and that 'these very exceptional liberties' be limited to Venice alone. Certainly, by 1934 other cities were prohibited from showing uncensored films as adjuncts to their trade shows (Ben-Ghiat, 2001, p. 79).

Economically, too, there was more to this festival than attracting audiences, movie stars and tourism. As noted in chapter 1, the mainstream film industry is business-oriented and it was of paramount importance for the festival to be able to attract critics, film production companies and the foreign press (particularly from France and America). The national film industries were able to promote and sell their best products to an international audience (May, 2009a, p. 220). Despite the haste with which the first festival was organized in 1932, it acted as a marketplace with the French buying Mario Camerini's film 'Gli Uomini, Che Mascalzoni!' (Paulon, 1952, p. 15). Prizes were introduced in 1934: the Mussolini Cup for the best Italian and the Best Foreign Films; the Volpi Cup for the best actor and actress; and a selection of prizes and medals that would total thirty-four by 1938 (ibid., p. 26). De Feo wanted Venice to become a focal point in the film industry calendar, staged just before the autumn releases, promising Mussolini in 1934 that it would 'emerge as the world centre for the exchange of films' (Martin, 2016, p. 55). To assist this process and to cement Venice's commercial role, the conference on 'Art and Reality: art and the state' (see above), organized for film writers and directors, coincided with the second festival (ibid.).

The Film Festival continued to use the terrace of the Lido's Excelsior Hotel for the first four festivals, but the need for 'a seat of its own' was always recognized (Paulon, 1952, p. 18). Maraini and De Feo canvassed the possibility of building a new 2,000-seat theatre in the extension to the Giardini in Sant'Elena (Longo, 2004, p. 217), but Volpi and CIGA were determined that the festival should remain on the Lido. Eventually, the latter view prevailed and a design competition was held in 1936 for a Palazzo del Cinema to be built on a site across the road from the Excelsior. The competition was won by Luigi Quagliata, who received the commission to design and build the final structure. Cost considerations scaled back the original plan to a 1,000-seater theatre finished in an aesthetic described as 'a fascistic interpretation of the international modern style' (Goy, 1997, p. 300). Built in record time and boasting the latest sound and projection equipment thanks to sponsorships from Cinemeccanica Milan and Kodak, it was trumpeted as an exemplar of Italian Fascist efficiency and modernity (May, 2009a, p. 222). In figure 3.7, its distinctive rounded corners can still be seen behind the front additions put up in 1952 as part of extensions that were also designed by Quagliata.14

The Art Biennales generally and the Film Festivals in particular were directly affected by the deteriorating political situation of the late-1930s. The Art Biennales had seen yearly rises in visitor numbers from 172,841 in 1928 to 361,917 in 1934, but successive declines thereafter. The Italian invasion of Abyssinia (Ethiopia) in 1935 brought international condemnation and the imposition of sanctions by the League of Nations. The USA, Britain, and the USSR boycotted the 1936 Art Biennale as a consequence. They returned in 1938 but by then Italy had moved firmly into the orbit of Germany, signing an alliance in 1936 and the military Pact of Steel in May 1939. The Film Festivals would



Figure 3.7. The Palazzo del Cinema, Lido, Venice as in 2017. (Photo: John and Margaret Gold)

also experience considerable controversy. Mussolini himself had only belatedly become interested in the value of film as a propaganda medium, but by the mid-1930s firmly believed in the power of cinema as a tool for national representation. Film was declared the state's *arma più forte*; literally, its strongest weapon (Ricci, 2008, p. 47).

It was an affirmation that film festivals are more than simply projections of images in darkened rooms. The festivals of the late 1930s became sharply political events, with their screening policies and values shifting discernibly. In 1936, for example, the French accused the organizers of political bias given that Italian and German films dominated the awards (Paulon, 1952, p. 21). An ideologically-charged prize for the 'Best Colonial Film' was introduced. The Czech film 'Janoskik' (The Rebel) was withdrawn after the Hungarian government claimed it was anti-Magyar, although it was later reinstated after protests from Czechoslovakia. Yet perhaps the significant expression of politically-inspired decisions were those centred on the award of the Coppa Mussolini in 1938, when the French, British and American jurists walked out in protest at the partisan nature of the awards made. It was an event that, as is shown in chapter 5, acted as a direct stimulus for the establishment of the Cannes Film Festival.

Up to this point thirty-nine countries had shown films at Venice with American offerings dominating the screenings.¹⁵ In 1938 national representation had begun to decline with nineteen countries, eighty-three production

companies and seventy-five foreign journalists, and the 1939 festival, held immediately before the outbreak of war, was boycotted by the USA. The war did not end the Biennales, given that the Italian government was determined to retain the festival, even with a drastically different character and much lower attendances. The 1940 and 1942 Art Biennales respectively attracted 87,391 and 76,679 visitors, who mainly came from Italy, Germany and Austria. Even fewer nations participated in these two Biennales with only eleven of the national pavilions occupied in 1940 and ten in 1942, either by neutral countries such as Sweden and Switzerland or states within the German orbit (Germany, Bulgaria, Denmark, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Croatia). In the 1942 Catalogue, Maraini called these the 'nations of the new Europe: nations already proving themselves victorious on the field of battle' and that, in continuing to stage the Biennale, Italy was reaffirming its 'mission of civilization' (quoted in Alloway, 1969, p. 117). In 1942 the British, French and American Pavilions were requisitioned by the Italian Army, Air Force and Navy respectively. Their contents offered around 460 works of painting and sculpture on military themes, including 'battle camps, submarine bases, soldiers at rest and prisoners of war', with portrayals of the enemy reflecting Nazi racial ideology (Stone, 1998, p. 209).

For its part, the film festival saw a change of name in 1940 to the Italian-German Film Festival (Manifestazione Cinematografica Italo-Germanica). As with the Biennale, the participant countries in the Film Festival were occupied territories, neutral states or allies of Germany and Italy (Stone, 2002, pp. 109–110). The nature of the films shifted away from the comedies and animations of earlier years to drama and more propagandist themes, a notorious example of which was the premier of the antisemitic German film 'Jüd Süss' in 1940. The 1942 festival was renamed the Mostra di Guerra (The War Festival). Opened by Goebbels, it featured a rally dedicated to the armed forces and a special screening for military personnel (*ibid.*, p. 293). Plans for the 1943 festival remained in progress until the overthrow of Mussolini in July of that year.

Reappraisal and Revival

In the aftermath of war it often falls to the cultural sector to try to restore the civilities of life. True to form, efforts to revive existing or proposed gatherings quickly materialized across Europe even if contacts were hampered by Cold War restrictions (Moine, 2012). In the case of the Biennale, though, a range of problems remained from its recent history. Some were practical and logistic. The Giardini was in disarray at the end of hostilities, having been pressed into service as film studios. Most pavilions were either in need of repair or unusable. What was now the Mostra Internazionale d'Arte Cinematografica della Biennale di Venezia (International Exhibition of Cinematographic Art of the Venice Biennale) restarted in 1946, but could only return to the Lido in 1949 when the American forces vacated the Pallazo del Cinema and other buildings that they

were using as their headquarters.¹⁶ The Art Biennale was only revived in 1948 and even then some states were either unable to exhibit art or simply unwelcome.

More significantly perhaps, there was the need for reappraisal of what the Biennale stood for and where it and its component festivals were going next. Critical opinion generally views the interwar period of the Venice Biennale as one of dystopic descent, with Fascist ideological priorities channelling artists into a 'pre-set iconography' of themes and prioritizing public art supported by the structure of competitions (Alloway, 1969, p. 147). After 1945 the Biennale returned to artists submitting freely but with a shift away from 'the art-historical shows' (ibid.). Martini (2011, p. 121) recorded the changing views of the arthistorian Rodolfo Pallucchini, who became Secretary-General of the Biennale in 1947. Initially, he felt that the way to come to terms with the end of Fascism and the 'new climate of liberty' was to return to the origins of the festival; effectively looking backwards rather than forwards. Showing 'illustrious foreign artists' would usefully connect Italian artists with artistic movements beyond Italy from which they had been excluded thanks to Fascism. Such ideas, however, only had a short lifespan. Revisiting the same issues in 1956, Pallucchini could then announce that the 'historical-informative role of the exhibition had been achieved and it was now time to concentrate on "new art" (ibid.).

The successful re-establishment of the Biennale after the Second World War was signified by the fact that, by the 1960s, it was showing around 3,000 works, attracting huge press attention and generating substantial art sales,¹⁷ even if visitor figures of 150,000–180,000 were far lower than the 400,000 attracted in the early years. However, a variety of problems remained. The Biennale was still organized under the old 1938 Fascist statute, and the split between the 'independent' national pavilions and the chaotic main pavilion was attracting increasing criticism.

A new mood of protest, partly fuelled by student protests and radical movements, would also bring re-evaluation of the festival's management. Unrest in the industrial area of Marghera, which culminated in strikes, lockouts and demonstrations in the summer of 1968 (Bosworth, 2014, p. 209), was matched by student unrest. Architectural, business and fine arts students had all occupied their respective universities by the spring of 1968 (*ibid.*, p. 211). It was, however, the students from the Academia di Bella Arti (Academy of Fine Arts), already protesting about the conservative nature of their training, who turned their protest towards the Biennale with the launch of a Manifesto. This called for workers, students, and intellectuals to be present at the Giardini for the '*vernissage*' – the four days of private viewings and press parties, attended by dealers, collectors, journalists, critics and artists, where the art is bought and sold (Alloway, 1969, p. 25). It was this ritual of the Biennale that for the students encapsulated the commercialism and elitism that that they detested.

The authorities' response was to deploy a heavy police presence in the Giardini and the city beyond which, in turn, alienated the participating artists,



Figure 3.8. Students protesting at the 34th Venice Biennale, 1968. The photographer, Ugo Mulas, died in 1973. His photographs of the 1968 student protests were shown at the 1974 Biennale. (*Photo*: © Ugo Mulas, Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool).

a number of whom were already sympathetic to the students' critique of the Biennale. These individuals started withdrawing their work from display and the French and Swedish pavilions closed in sympathy. The disturbances abated several days after the official opening to the public and the exhibition returned to some semblance of normality, but ensuing student action on the Lido affected the start of the Venice Film Festival in August causing the abandonment of the opening ceremony. Once again, the reaction of the police impacted on the participation of film-makers and others (figure 3.8).

These events of 1968 had far-reaching effects on the Venice Art Biennale. In many ways, the student protests had underlined the need for change in elements that had concerned the Biennale's directors, staff and even politicians since 1945 (Martini, 2011, pp. 122–123). These concerned challenging the *status quo*, the nature of the exhibition content, the prominence of commercialism in the Biennale and the lack of connection with the general public and the wider city. In addition, the Venice Biennale now had competitors staging international art exhibitions. New biennials were carving out reputations as progressive spaces for art unencumbered by the baggage of tradition and complacency that had become associated with Venice. There was consensus that change was overdue (see chapter 7).

Initially the art prizes were abolished (and not reintroduced until 1986). The Biennale sales office was closed, effectively removing the commercial side of Venice from the organization itself but not, of course, eliminating it completely

from the festival itself. Themed exhibitions were introduced in the general pavilion in 1970 and 1972. Yet the most significant change came with the longawaited legal reform that replaced the 1930s legal basis of the Biennale. Law 438 'New Regulations of the Autonomous Body "la Biennale di Venezia" was passed in 1973 and came into force in 1974. It transformed the Biennale into an independent but publicly funding body removed from the close scrutiny that had previously existed. It guaranteed 'full freedom of ideas and forms of expression' (Martini, 2011, p. 126) and called for the expansion of the Biennale's activity to include architecture and dance (De Michelis and Price, 2010, p. 29). Introducing the new administrative structures meant creating a new directorship and policies; a process that, in turn, meant that there was no formal Art Biennale in the Giardini in 1974 but instead a series of radical events were staged in the city marking the end of the Allende regime in Chile and protesting against the Pinochet dictatorship. Nevertheless, once in place the new personnel were in a position to oversee major changes to the exhibitions including the introduction of architecture into the Biennale and the erosion of the geographical divide between the city and the Biennale. Henceforth the exhibitions would expand into the Arsenale and beyond.

Architecture Biennale

In contrast to other festivals, the Venice Biennale had never had a distinct architectural section. There had been a long tradition of large-scale architecture exhibitions, for example, as part of World's Fairs and, in Italy, architecture and design formed a central part of the Milan Triennial, which dated back to 1933 (see chapter 7). Admittedly, architectural subjects had featured on occasion in the Art Biennale. In 1972, for instance, the Four Projects for Venice had presented the work of Frank Lloyd Wright, Le Corbusier, Louis Kahn and Isamu Noguchi; all of whom had designed unrealized development schemes for the city between 1953 and 1970 (Pica, 1972).¹⁸

Progress towards establishing architecture as an integral part of the Venice Biennale started with the appointment of the architect Vittorio Gregotti (table 3.3), as the first director of Art and Architecture at the Biennale in 1974 at the invitation of the new Biennale President Carlo Ripa di Meana. For Di Meana this was simply an extension of the existing Biennale, but Gregotti maintained that he always thought otherwise. He asserted in a later interview that he saw the opportunity not just to introduce architecture exhibitions to the Biennale, but also to foster a development that would ultimately grow into a distinctive and separate event (Gregotti, 2010, pp. 22–23). Nevertheless, it was difficult to incorporate architecture into the existing structure of the Biennale since there was little space available in the Giardini and no tradition of working with architecture.

The space problem was solved by using the Magazzini del Sale (Salt

Warehouse) close to Santa Maria della Salute in the Zattere district (see table 3.3), where a small seven-week exhibition was mounted in September 1975. It took the form of an international competition offering ideas for the future development of the Molino Stucky, a redundant flourmill on the waterfront

Year	Curator	Theme	Venues
1975	Vittorio Gregotti	A proposito del Mulino Stucky/ Proposition for the Molino Stucky	Magazzini del Sale, Santa Maria della Salute in the Zattere district
1976	Vittorio Gregotti	Werkbund 1907. Alle origini del design; Il razionalismo e l'architettura in Italia durante il fascismo (1976); Europa-America, centro storico, suburbio (1976)	Magazzini del Sale
1978	Vittorio Gregotti	Utopia e crisi dell'antinatura. Intenzioni architettoniche in Italia	Magazzini del Sale
1980	Paolo Portoghesi	La presenza del passato/The presence of the past	Cordene dell Arsenale
1982/83	Paolo Portoghesi	Archittetura Nei Paesi Islamici	Padiglione Italia (Giardini)
1985	Aldo Rossi	Progetto Venezia	Padiglione Italia (Giardini), Veneto and Fruili
1986	Aldo Rossi	Hendrik Petrus Berlage	Villa Farsetti (in Santa Maria di Sala, nw of Venice)
1991	Francesco Dal Co	Fifth International Architecture Exhibition	Arsenale and National Pavilions (Giardini)
1996	Hans Hollein	Sensori del futuro. L'architetto come sismografo	Padiglione Italia, national pavilions
2000	Massimiliano Fuksas	Less Aesthetics, More Ethics	Arsenale and Giardini
2002	Deyan Sudjic	Next	Arsenale and Giardini
2004	Kurt W. Forster	Metamorph	Arsenale and Giardini
2006	Ricky Burdett	Cities, Architecture and Society	Arsenale and Giardini, collateral section in Palermo
2008	Aaron Betsky	Out There: Architecture Beyond Building	Arsenale and Giardini
2010	Kazuyo Sejima	People Meet in Architecture	Arsenale and Giardini
2012	David Chipperfield	Common Ground	Arsenale and Giardini
2014	Rem Koolhaus	Fundamentals	Arsenale and Giardini
2016	Alejandro Aravena	Reporting from the Front	Arsenale and Giardini
2018	Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara	Freespace	Arsenale and Giardini

 Table 3.3
 Architecture Biennales.

Source: Compiled by authors.

overlooking the Canale della Giudecca (Levy, 2010, p. 14). For Gregotti (2010, p. 24), this exhibition explicitly responded to the 1968 student protests, making it 'open to the public, to Venice and to non-specialists'. At the end of Gregotti's tenure in 1980, a further move was made to support the architectural component by creating a separate architecture department with Paolo Portoghesi as its director. Portoghesi went on to direct the first discrete international architecture exhibition, subsequently recognized as the first of the Architecture Biennales. This ran in parallel with the Art Biennale and was groundbreaking both in the nature and scale of the exhibition design and in the location employed.

'Venetianization'

To elaborate, Portoghesi's theme for the 1980 show was 'Presence of the Past', which explored the recent trajectory of architectural practice (Portoghesi *et al.*, 1980). He wanted to show real buildings rather than images of buildings (Bergdoll, 2018, p. xii). To do this he selected twenty leading architects¹⁹ who would each design a building façade up to three storeys high that would be a self-portrait of their distinctive style. These would then be assembled into a street – the Strada Novissima. Behind each façade was an exhibition of that architect's work (*ibid.*, p. 39). The result was immersive, spectacular, cinematic and popular, earning the exhibition canonical status in the history of postmodernism (Szacka, 2016).

In order to stage this first Architecture Biennale, Portoghesi needed a building with sufficiently generous dimensions. Understandably, that would need to be outside the Giardini, given that the latter was fully occupied by the Art Biennale. The most appropriate space was the Corderie dell'Arsenale, the derelict ropeworks in the old shipyards of the Arsenale (figure 3.9). Historically Venice's largest industrial space, the Arsenale had also been the city's largest employer but that role had declined dramatically by the 1950s culminating in final closure in 1957 when the strategic naval command was transferred to Ancona (Pazeri, 2009, p. 56). While some private sector businesses continued, many of the older buildings were deteriorating and by the 1970s the site was in a state of profound disrepair. Nevertheless, the Arsenale had considerable potential. It possessed large spaces with a distinctively industrial ambiance and represented a natural expansion of the exhibition given that it was within easy walking distance of the Giardini.

At the same time, it posed challenges. Portoghesi (2010, p. 36) later recalled that: 'it was still full of tanks and armaments. It was very difficult to persuade the Italian military to move them, but in the end we were successful'. For Portoghesi *et al.* (1980, p. 23), persistence was important since the move to the Arsenale was more than just a pragmatic solution, likening the Architecture Biennale to a 'Trojan horse' that gave Venetians access to a part of the city from which they



Figure 3.9. The interior space of the Corderie dell'Arsenale, June 1980, before renovation. (*Photo*: © Academy Editions)

had previously been excluded. In many ways, the shift into the Arsenale could be regarded as the start of the Venetianization of the Biennale, effectively shifting the centre of gravity of the Biennale towards the historic city of Venice and ending its detachment in the Giardini at the city's eastern tip (Ricci, 2010, p. 105).

It also represented an unprecedented opportunity for festival-led redevelopment in Venice, following the pattern that cities had used elsewhere to liberate the potential of redundant industrial, transport or port facilities as part of their regeneration strategies. The Arsenale occupied around 48 hectares (118 acres) or nearly seven per cent of the old city. Lack of progress in regenerating the site so far was due to the split ownership, multiple agencies, the daunting scale of the site, the enormous cost of renovating the buildings and the problems of installing utilities and services to allow new economic activities. Its historic importance meant that demolition was not an option, but there was still neither any planning blueprint for the Arsenale as a whole nor strategic thinking about the direction which any new investment should take. Moreover, despite the success of the 1980 exhibition, the spaces were still not in a fit state for regular public use. Work to stabilize and restore the Corderie started in earnest in 1983.
BIENNALE

The Art Biennale used the buildings in 1986, 1988 and 1990 for the exhibition of young artists' work known as the Aperto, with the Architecture Biennale using the Arsenale from 1991 onwards (table 3.3).

In 1998 the relationship between the Arsenale and the Biennale was formalized under a new law which transformed the Biennale from an autonomous body into a Culture Company. By this stage the regeneration of the Arsenale had gathered pace. The new law granted the Biennale a concession to use the southern Arsenale, with access to funding that would allow it to become directly involved in the regeneration of the Arsenale's buildings. In 1999 work began on renovating the Artiglierie (former gunneries) and Gaggiandre (wet docks), followed by the creation of two performance spaces in the old navy cinema and the Tese (sail making shops). This allowed the international exhibitions of the Art and Architecture Biennales to be shown in these new spaces rather than the more cramped conditions of the Italian Pavilion at the Giardini (Di Martino, 2005, p. 100). Ultimately too they were now able to offer more space in the Arsenale for national pavilions.

That additional space was much needed. The Giardini had added a further nine national pavilions to its grounds from 1952 to 1964, with Australia building a temporary pavilion in 1988 (which it replaced with a permanent structure in 2015) and Korea in 1995, but at this point the Giardini was deemed full (Catenacci, 2010, p. 88). Two competitions held in 1957 and 1988 invited new designs for the Giardini's Main Exhibition hall, but neither winning entry had been implemented (Martini, 2010, p. 71). Moreover the issuing of protection orders on twelve of the older structures in the Giardini in 1998 ensured that there was now no prospect of demolishing or radically altering the Giardini's layout and structure in any significant way (*ibid.*, p. 73). Nevertheless, requests from nations to participate in the Biennales with their own pavilions continued. This eventually led to releasing the geographical strictures on the festival by allowing nations to set up pavilions in the wider city; an arrangement formalized under the 1998 institutional reforms (Catenacci, 2010, p. 81).

The two festivals had yet to be added to the Biennale's portfolio. The Dance Biennale was inaugurated in 1999. Mostly staged in the Arsenale, it is a festival which, despite its name, takes place annually over a 10-day period in June. The International Kids Carnival, inaugurated in 2010, runs for nine days during the Venice Carnival and is held in the Biennale Head Quarters at Ca' Giustininian. It is different from the other Biennale festivals as it is aimed principally at Italian schools and families and is run in collaboration with universities and institutions in Venice and international partners. The city of Venice and the Biennale also collaborated over the revival of the Venetian Carnival in 1979 after a hiatus of 47 years (see chapter 2). Its reintroduction was again officially inspired, seeking to bring back the Carnavale as a central showcase for the city's culture as part of an initiative to stimulate Venice's tourist economy in the quieter months of February or March.

The original idea was that carnival should be revived on a city-wide basis, seeking to resuscitate participation from traditional supporting clubs, societies and associations that had never fully melted away. Opinions varied, however, about the project's essential character. One school of thought asserted that, despite the discontinuity, Carnavale had regained its importance, effectively reviving historic continuities and reasserting its significance for Venetian identity (Feil, 1998). Another maintained that the notion that the festival expressed the city's unchanging character was mythic. While the outward semblances of classic carnival replete with costumes and masks may have been restored, popular participation in the festival had decreased in the face of manipulation of the event by an alliance of political and touristic interests (Rubenstein, 1990). Certainly, despite the intention that carnival would be a citywide festival, the central feature of the modern event revolves around a large stage in the Piazza San Marco.

The Contemporary Festival

After surviving for over 120 years with repeated reinventions and renewals, the Venice Biennale unquestionably ranks as one of the world's most prestigious and influential arts festivals. Of the two most recent festivals at the time of writing, the Arte Biennale in 2019 attracted over 600,000 visitors (593,616 visitors to the exhibition and 24,762 to the preview week), while the 2018 Architecture Biennale had over 275,000 visitors. As currently organized, the Art and Architecture Biennales share three main elements: the curated international exhibitions, the national pavilions, and the collateral events.

In relation to the first of those elements, the practice since the 1990s has been for the International Exhibitions in the Giardini and Arsenale to be crafted by individuals from the growing cadre of internationally renowned curators. They decide the theme for the exhibition and select the artists who will address that theme (table 3.4). This policy undeniably ensures representation of diverse perspectives and voices but sees dramatic shifts from one Biennale to the next. In 2015, the Nigerian curator Okwui Enwezor chose 'All the World's Futures' as a sharply politically focused theme intended to confront global political divisions. Among other things, a space in the International Pavilion of the Giardini saw a public reading of all four volumes of Karl Marx's Das Capital. The next Art Biennale in 2017 on 'Viva Art Viva', curated by Christine Macel, presented an exhibition in which 103 of the 130 selected artists were new to the Biennale, with the intention being to seek a multitude of points of view and cultures that might confront the visitor's own identity. Figure 3.10 shows Olafur Eliasson's Green Light, an artistic workshop which used refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, students and visitors to assemble lamps in a space of 'collaborative learning ... and collective production'. Here the disquiet of visitors seeing people on display in this manner was also part of the project. In 2019 Ralph Rugoff produced 'May you live in Interesting Times', choosing just seventy-nine artists to tackle

BIENNALE

Year	Curator	Theme	Data	
Iear	Curator	1 neme	Dates	
1999	Harald Szeemann	APERTO over ALL	13 June–7 November	
2001	Harald Szeemann	Plateau of Humankind	10 June–24 November	
2003	Francesco Bonami	The dictatorship of the viewer	15 June–2 November	
2005	Maria de Corral	The Experience of Art (Giardini)	12 June–6 November	
	Rosa Martinez	Always a Little Further (Arsenale)		
2007	Robert Storr	Think with the Senses – Feel with	10 June–21 November	
		the Mind		
2009	Daniel Birnbaum	Making Worlds	7 June–22 November	
2011	Bice Curiger	ILLUMinations	4 June–27 November	
2013	Massimiliano Gioni	The Encylopedic Palace	1 June–24 November	
2015	Okwui Enwezor	All the World's Futures	9 May–22 November	
2017	Christine Macel	Viva Arte Viva	12 May–26 November	
2019	Ralph Rugoff	May You Live in Interesting Times	11 May–24 November	

Source: Compiled by authors.



Figure 3.10. Olafur Eliasson's Green light, an artistic workshop which used refugees, migrants, asylum seekers, students and visitors to assemble lamps. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

the supposed Chinese curse which has taken on a life of its own in the twentyfirst century. Its aim was to explore how art can tackle major global problems (nationalism, climate, social division) in an 'era of lies'.

The national pavilions, which constitute the second element of the Biennales, are run by foreign countries which commission work and fund and manage their own spaces. Nations can participate in the Biennale either by invitation or by applying though their relevant national bodies, but the state must be recognized at diplomatic level by the Italian government. The input of those territories

or regional bodies not thus recognized can only qualify as collateral events. As noted above, the national pavilions are now locationally divided between the Giardini (thirty permanent pavilions), the Arsenale (which can accommodate about twenty-five national contributions), and the wider city. While the pavilions in the Giardini are owned by their occupants, many of the Arsenale pavilions are leased from the Biennale. Finding accommodation elsewhere in Venice can appear formidable but the Biennale website runs a noticeboard or listing service with some 270 spaces on offer for national pavilions or collateral events. Varying in size from 15,000 to 249,000 square metres, they are scattered throughout the metropolitan area and the islands.

The collateral events, the third element, are exhibitions approved by the Biennale and that run for the duration of the festival. These include the work of individual artists and groups of artists as well as territories that are not recognized as independent states. In recent years, these have included contributions from Catalonia, Hong Kong, Macau, Scotland, Wales, Newfoundland and Labrador. The contribution from Taiwan was forced by pressure from the People's Republic of China to become a collateral event after 2003 (Wei, 2013, p. 480; see figure 3.11). If approved by the curator as contributing to the main exhibition theme, proposals are assessed, processed and finally approved by the Board of the Biennale. An admission fee²⁰ is levied on the successful projects, for which they appear in the Biennale brochure, catalogue and promotional literature and



Figure 3.11. Taiwan's contribution to the Biennale was forced by pressure from the People's Republic of China to become a collateral event at a location in the historic city after 2003. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

BIENNALE

are allowed to use the Biennale logo (Fondazione la Biennale di Venezia, 2019, p. 8). Once accepted collateral events must also go through the process of finding appropriate accommodation in the city. In this way the distinctive geography of each Biennale is shaped by the national pavilions and collateral events that spread themselves throughout Venice.

Being part of the Biennale is a useful mechanism for events to distinguish themselves from the other fringe exhibitions and events that attach themselves to the festival. This fringe can be sizeable – fifty-nine 'other events' were listed in 2013 and forty-one in 2015 – and can feature prominent works. In 2017, for example, it included Lorenzo Quinn's sculpture 'Support' (figure 3.12) comprising hands supporting the Ca'Sagredo Hotel, making reference to rising sea levels and the failing efforts of humankind to prevent disaster, and Damien Hirst's exhibition 'Treasures from the Wreck of the Unbelievable', which displayed 190 sculptures in two venues (Punta della Dogana and Palazzo Grassi). Further interplay between festival and city comes through the educational role of the Biennial College, with projects, workshops, masterclasses, internships, and summer school. Partnerships further afield also help to develop networks that benefit the creative sector in Venice and its region.

The longevity of the Biennale can be seen as a blessing and a curse. On the positive side it has the aura of authenticity that is associated with being the first of its kind and the prestige arising from its continuity. At the same time, critics readily level two main sets of criticism: about the national pavilions and about commercialism. These criticisms, in particular, merit fuller discussion.

The presence of the national pavilions has led to criticisms that the Biennale is



Figure 3.12. Lorenzo Quinn's sculpture 'Support' comprising hands supporting the Ca'Sagredo Hotel. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

imperialist, Eurocentric and anachronistic, particularly since other Biennales have abandoned national pavilions in favour of the greater freedom which overarching themes provide (see also chapter 7). Having said that, the national pavilions are not easy to set aside since they play an important role in the Biennale's funding model. Their origin, as noted above, partly stemmed from the organizers' desire to strengthen and expand international participation in the exhibition. The early participants were the key players in the art market at the time. They paid for their pavilions and were subsequently responsible for the programming, planning and staging of their exhibitions. The fact that the cost of the national contributions is borne by the exhibiting nations means the exhibition has been able to embrace a much wider geographical remit while directing its own budget at the international exhibitions in the Giardini and Arsenale. There is no doubt that the established nations in Venice are able to raise the funds for their contributions more easily than the newcomers and emerging art nations. A mixture of public, philanthropic and commercial interests, for example, combined to stage Céleste Boursier-Mougenot's spectacular artwork 'Revolutions' at the French pavilion in 2015. This comprised a series of trees, their exposed red root balls travelling around the pavilion and moving outside. This particular exhibit cost €950,000, of which €300,000 was provided by French culture ministry and €350,000 from the Institute Français (Harris and Shaw, 2015, p. 31). The remaining €300,000 was donated by private bodies including the three galleries that represented the artist: Paula Cooper Gallery (New York), Gallerie Mario Mazzoreli (Berlin) and Galerie Xippas (Paris).

Artists from the nations ensconced in the Giardini who support these criticisms of privilege and dominance have occasionally worked to subvert the concept of the national pavilion. In 1993, for example, Hans Haacke's installation 'Germania' comprised uprooting and smashing the carefully laid marble floors of the Nazi era German pavilion. In 2001 Mark Wallinger's 'Oxymoron' flew the Union Jack on the flagpole next to the British pavilion in Irish colours. In 2013, France and Germany swapped pavilions to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Elysée Treaty pact of friendship (Rivetti, 2013, p. 8). Challenging notions of statehood and identity have also given rise to controversial pavilions. The 2015 Icelandic Pavilion staged Christoph Büchels' piece 'That which is not a mosque' in a deconsecrated church. This was intended as a 'visual analogue' of a functioning mosque, yet it was treated as a real mosque by resident Muslims in the absence of a place of prayer in the historic city. It also prompted a reaction from opponents who campaigned for the removal of the 'mosque' as an unauthorized place of worship and a desecration of a Christian site. The city shut down the pavilion after two weeks on 'public health' grounds (Bailasiewcz, 2017, pp. 368-377).

Perhaps not surprisingly, European countries dominate ownership of national pavilions.²¹ By contrast, African nations have always been underrepresented, with Egypt being the sole African presence in the Giardini for most of the twentieth

BIENNALE

century. While there are undoubted attractions in acquiring national pavilions, especially for those countries wanting to showcase their artists and or establish themselves on the international art scene, there are problems in finding a suitable location. Newcomers tend to be pushed literally and geographically to the periphery, while up to 70 per cent of the pavilion costs can be accounted for by the cost of renting a suitable property. As a result, these countries have a more sporadic pattern of attendance.

The second set of criticisms, as noted above, concerns commercialism (Adam, 2017). This is more generally related to the issue of funding. It has often been pointed out that the Biennale is underfunded compared to other art festivals. For example, Ralph Rugoff's budget for the 2019 international exhibition was \in 13 million and he had 18 months to put together an exhibition lasting 198 days. This compares with documenta in Kassel, where in 2017 Adam Szymcyk had a budget of \in 45 million and four years to prepare for his exhibition that runs 100 days (Morris, 2019, p. ix; see also chapter 7). This, in turn, results in the commercial art sector playing a role in the festival which it might not otherwise have. Ironically its role in the art market has become more rather than less important to Venice after the closure of the Sales Office in 1968. The loss of commission on the sales that it brokered meant that there was growing reliance on the role of dealers, gallerists and agents giving financial support. This applies to the production of work, its shipping and installation, and promotion of their artists while in Venice, as well as footing the bill for hospitality during the previews.

Another aspect of commercialism that has come under scrutiny is the relationship between Venice and Art Basel. The mantra 'See it in Venice, buy it in Basel' referred to the practice of the art world gathering in the Venice preview days to see the new art on display and then travelling to the Art Basel in mid-June to meet with the artists and their dealers. There is a ready symbiosis. The preview period of the Art Biennale attracts some 24,000 invitees, making it one of the largest gatherings of the art world *en masse*. Art Basel is a commercial art market; in 2019, it boasted 290 galleries showing the work of over 4,000 artists and attracting collectors from over eighty countries among them over 400 museums (Art Basel, 2019). Many of the galleries whose artists are selected for Venice (either by the international curator or national pavilions) are in Basel selling their work. Venice gives a kitemark of approval and international prominence to their work. It can also accelerate an emerging artist's advancement in art market terms.

Venice may have pioneered the phenomena of the art biennial and the film festival but it now operates in a more crowded marketplace. There are now more than 200 biennials (see chapter7). Art Basel estimated in 2017 that there were over 260 commercial art fairs with a significant international component, fifty of which had been established in the previous ten years (McAndrew, 2018, p. 190). The British Council (2019) estimated there were 1,283 film festivals worldwide. When pondering why the Venice Biennale has lasted, Ricci (2010, pp. 8–9) identified four factors: the nature of the city itself attracting the arts community

'like moths to a flame'; the national pavilions, which far from being an imperial throwback, can be seen as 'a mechanism for exploring key contemporary issues of identity, ethnicity and nationhood'; the explosion of the Biennale into the Arsenale and beyond to engage the whole city in a dialogue with artists; and its multidisciplinary nature, with its festivals covering all the art forms (*ibid.*, p. 12). When posing the related question 'Does Venice Still Matter?', Harris and Rivetti (2019, ix) reported anecdotal evidence highlighting the Biennale's importance for networking and for casual encounter with a select band of co-participants. However, it is the preview days in May, before the public are admitted, when this principally happens (Harris and Rivetti, 2015, p. 17).

Undoubtedly, the Biennale has contributed to the development of the creative industries in Venice and the growth of contemporary art, artists and commercial businesses. The Venetianization of the Biennale has provided openings for consultancies and events companies to support nations and artists looking to locate outside the Giardini and Arsenale, as well as creating opportunities for hotels, palazzi and buildings more generally to rent out space for Biennale events. Embedding the Biennale in the city through its education programme means there is a social benefit to schools, colleges, universities and families with an eye to developing skills in the creative industries and encouraging participation in the arts as practitioners, managers and audiences in the future.

The steady spatial spread of the Biennale has also had a substantial impact on its host city. The creation and subsequent expansion of the Giardini site and its linking to the pedestrian and vaporetto (water bus) routes have enhanced the east of the city. The Biennale played a major role in the regeneration of the southern part of the Arsenale and its investment is creating further spaces to accommodate additional national pavilions. Accommodating the Mostra did much to reinforce the luxury tourism economy of the Lido in the 1930s and contributed to its postwar revival in the 1950s, but by the Millennium, the island was experiencing serious decline as the luxury hotels struggled to compete with rivals elsewhere. The Palazzo del Casino, which opened in 1938 on a site next to the Palazzo del Cinema, closed in 1999, but the historic building was retained and is used at festival time to house press services and as a venue for screenings for the public and professional visitors. The Grand Hotel des Bains closed in 2010 with plans, as yet unrealized, to convert it into apartments. By contrast, the Hotel Excelsior received major renovation in time for the 2018 season and remains the social focal point for the Film Festival.

Cost considerations meant that the Palazzo del Cinema has never received the radical overhaul planned in the 1950s, but smaller renovations have upgraded the interiors, increased seating capacity, updated the cinematographic technology and redesigned the foyer and entrance. In 2016 the Sala Giardino opened to the right of the Casino site – a bright red cube of a building providing a further 446 seats. Landscaping of the area in front of the Cinema was completed in 2018, with white marble, fountains, tree planting, a garden area and stone seats. This,

BIENNALE

in the architects' words, was not only to enhance the Film Festival experience but to act as a public leisure space at other times 'to give back a free public space to the inhabitants of the Lido island' (Arch Daily, 2019). During the Biennale, the two Palazzi and the Excelsior can offer two theatres of over 1,000 seats. A temporary screening theatre to the west of the Palazzo del Cinema can seat 1,768 non-accredited public visitors. A further seven spaces are available ranging in size between from forty-eight to 590 seats, along with business and meeting rooms and offices for the Venice Production Bridge, which provides services for the film industry. These include a business centre, networking, an exhibitions area and meeting rooms. At other times of the year, this complex houses Venice's main Convention Centre, offering facilities for conferences of up to 1,400 participants. Package deals with various grades of hotel accommodation plus the promise of fast connections to the historic city links the conference trade to the tourist offer.

The question of the relationship between tourism and the Biennale also merits more general comment. Tourism was once seen as the key to Venetian prosperity, but this has more recently changed in light of strategic priorities and issues of sustainability (Dente et al., 2001). Within that context, the relationship of the Biennale to the city has also changed. Until the 1990s, the Biennale was seen as playing an important role in attracting visitors from Italy and beyond, with the economic importance of this function recognized in tourism strategies at local and national levels. Yet as the twentieth century drew to a close, the challenge was no longer how to attract visitors to Venice but how to manage and perhaps even regulate their numbers. UNESCO (2011, p. 11) reported that twenty-two million visitors were coming to Venice, of whom only four million stayed in the historic city and only two million of whom had visited at least one cultural attraction. By 2019 visitor numbers, swollen by the advent of cheap air fares and cruise ships, had risen to thirty million (Etherton, 2019), with overload (figure 3.13) particularly on the 'Bermuda shorts triangle' - the Rialto Bridge to St Mark's Square and the Galleria dell'Academia - where the city's 'obligatory sights' are located (Davis et al., 2004, p. 79; Buckley et al., 2007, p. 96; Visentin and Bertocchi, 2019). In these circumstances, the Biennale is seen as important geographically in drawing visitors away from the tourism hotspots, adding to non-tourism jobs, supporting the creative industries and encouraging the refurbishment of derelict historic properties. In 2009 Paolo Baratta, the longest serving Biennale president of modern times, stated:

[A] biennale is a place where you meet things, where you touch things. If you lose that idea you don't need an exhibition. A biennale has to become, like Santiago de Compostela, a place of pilgrimage, a 'Mecca' where you have to go once in your life because the process of knowledge is completed by that sort of experience. You need to bring people together to talk and see each other. So this is my mission, to transform the biennale into a Santiago de Compostela. (Baratta, 2010, p. 196)



Figure 3.13. Tourist demand that threatens the city's carrying capacity: crowding near St Mark's Square, July 2015. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

Conclusion

Whether or not Venice can claim participation analogous to a religious pilgrimage, the Biennales and the Film Festival have successfully established relationships with the arts and audiences that have proved enduring. Given the impact of the First World War and the recession of the interwar period, imitators and competitors did not spring up in any number until after the Second World War. Once they did, Venice offered a model and a warning as other cities have both emulated and avoided its approach to international art. It was also, as chapter 7 shows, the model for many of the urban forms that other Biennales use today: the purpose-built pavilion, the use of abandoned industrial spaces, and exhibitions scattered throughout the city in galleries and available spaces.

Notes

- 1. The Caffè Florian is allegedly Italy's oldest coffee house (founded in 1720).
- 2. The first academy in Europe was the Accademia delle Arti del Disegno, founded in Florence in 1563.
- 3. It was originally intended for 1885, but this proved to be an unrealistic timescale (City of Venice, 2020).
- 4. A Sales Office would organize and promote the sales, since attracting collectors and dealers was a key goal of the Biennale. This aspect of the organization was very successful with 36 per cent of the work

BIENNALE

being sold in the first Biennale and the sales varying from 22.4 to 69 per cent up to the outbreak of the First World War (West, 1995, p. 412).

5. This was dropped after the third Biennale in favour of a smaller jury system.

6. This was extended to the USA and Switzerland for the second Biennale.

7. The introduction of special exhibitions of individual artists work in 1899 did something to counteract this charge with, for example, Renoir, Courbet and Klimt being featured at the 1909 Biennale. However, Picasso observed that he had exhibited at Venice for a few days only in 1905 as Fradeletto had ordered his painting to be removed before the opening day (May, 2009*b*, p. 21).

8. Sneyer had designed pavilions for the Liege and Milan expositions in 1905 and 1906 respectively. His offering for Venice was heavily influenced by the 1898 Secession Gallery in Vienna, designed by Joseph Maria Olbrich (Diener and Diener Architects, 2013).

9. Looking ahead, that situation was only resolved in 1932 when taken over by Great Britain's Department of Overseas Trade (DOT). In 1937, the DOT passed responsibility on to the newly formed British Council, with whom it still resides (Bowness, 1995, p. 27).

10. Although Di Martino (2005, p. 17) observed that the opportunity to buy internationally significant paintings was overlooked in favour of the oeuvre of lesser-known Italian artists. These included works such as Renoir's 'Jardin des Tulileries' or Monet's 'Les Pyramides de Port-Cotton'.

11. This had been bequeathed to the city by the late Duchess Felicita Bevilacqua La Masa for the purpose of displaying modern art, particularly that of 'young artists who are often barred entry to the important exhibitions' – by which she clearly meant the Biennale (Di Martino, 1995, p. 18). Its contemporary exhibitions, in contrast to the palace's more conservative permanent collection, did in turn influence the Biennale (*ibid.*, p. 23).

12. La Biennale di Venezia, 'History 1910-1929'. Available at: https://www.labiennale.org/en/history/ beginnings-until-second-world-war.

13. The French composer Carol-Bérard for example was upset that Darius Milhaud had represented France at the 1934 festival given that he was Jewish (Martin, 2016, p. 36)

14. Despite the aesthetics of the Palazzo del Cinema, Quagliata was an anti-fascist and the president of the Venice Biennale, Giovanni Ponti, welcomed the chance to commission him to undertake the expansion work in 1952.

15. Seventy-three of the 267 feature films shown to 1938 (27 per cent) were American along with 18 per cent of the 284 documentaries.

16. The war-time festivals (1940–1942) are no longer recognized as part of the numbered sequence of Venice Film Festivals.

17. The 1966 figure was 141 million lire or around \pm 1.4 million (Alloway, 1969, p. 14).

18. This project was revisited in the 2018 Architectural Biennale with the redisplay of the schemes and reflection on changing attitudes to historic environments.

19. The architects participating included Robert Venturi, Frank Gehry, Hans Hollein, Rem Koolhas, Charles Moore, Robert Graves, Ricardo Bofill, Robert Stern, Arata Isozaki, Léon Krier, Robert A.M. Stern, Franco Purini, Stanley Tigerman, and Maaimo Scolari (Portoghesi *et al.*, 1980, p. 38)

20. In 2019, this was €20,000 plus value added tax.

21. Fifty-one per cent at the 2019 Art Biennale 2019 and 57 per cent at the 2018 Architecture Biennale.

CHAPTER 4

Salzburg

Salzburg – a myth? The roots lie in the early nineteenth century. On the one hand, Romantic painters, writers and scientists publicise their overbrimming (*sic*) enthusiasm for the region of Salzburg in words and pictures throughout the whole of Europe. On the other hand, the political situation is changing: the prince archbishops lose their power, Salzburg is annexed to Austria – now the citizens themselves can determine public life.

The city and the Province of Salzburg place their stakes with great success on tourism and culture, the population grows, the pressure to modernise increases. The future develops within charged polarities of the desire to preserve historic architectural substance and landscape, and the city's need to adapt to the requirements of the time.

Businessmen and politicians exploit the economic potential of the 'Salzburg myth' as a crowd-pulling marketing factor – at first for the 'Seasonal City' and later for its logical successor, the Festival City.

Salzburg Museum (2009)

The above words appear on a display panel in Salzburg Museum under the heading: 'Romantic Glorification – Sustainable Economic Concept'. They are a reminder that all museums have tales to tell and this one is no exception, especially in the way that it chronicles the history of its home city. Salzburg lies at the heart of a culture-rich region of upper Austria. Local concerns about the loss

of cultural artefacts from the region had prompted the founding of the museum in 1834, initially to collect and display musical manuscripts and instruments. Once ownership passed from private hands to the municipality in 1849, this emphasis and the accompanying celebration of Salzburg as a gathering point for musical culture gradually became diluted. Increasing interest in antiquarianism, the impact of new aesthetic movements, the predilections of benefactors, and changing acquisition strategies all caused the museum's collections to expand in other directions and to convey other narratives.

Wartime destruction of the original museum building, the need to bring together its scattered collections and developments in curatorial practices provided grounds for radical rethinking about the museum's function and purpose. In 2007, it moved into the Neue Residenz, the former Prince-Archbishop's Palace and, as part of the ensuing reorganization, a gallery was devoted to interpreting Salzburg's complex and sometimes politically awkward economic and cultural history (Husty, 2010). Its aim was to engage with what was termed the city's *mythos* (Hoffmann, 2002). Transcending the ancient Greek word's straightforward meaning as 'myth', 'story' or 'legend', the notion of *mythos* in this instance embraced a set of historically contingent narratives about Salzburg that rendered 'intellectually and socially tolerable what would otherwise [have been] experienced as incoherence' (MacIntyre, 2006, p. 466). In doing so, the stories recounted through the museum's collecting policies and by the 'creative juxtaposition of objects, words, sound and space' (Kavanagh, 1998, p. 3) followed the scenario summarized in this chapter's epigraph.

In outline, Salzburg's development since the late eighteenth century was characterized as comprising a series of phases, each of which was dominated by a distinct place promotional imaginary. The sequence began with the Schöne Stadt ('Beautiful City'), charting the way that Salzburg had acted as a magnet for painters and writers influenced by Romantic sensitivities and swayed by the type of landscape appreciation that led Alexander von Humboldt to declare that this was 'among the most beautiful regions in the world' (Novotny, 1978, p. 127). Subsequent phases in the city's history were similarly characterized in terms of overarching boosterist conceptions. The arrival of the railways in 1860 brought the 'Belle Époque' tourism of the Saisonstadt ('Seasonal City'), with Salzburg increasingly favoured as a summer resort. During the late nineteenth century the city's musical associations, especially with the composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, re-emerged as a central part of Salzburg's identity. The city was thus conceived as Mozartstadt, but another significant transformation was in the offing once an annual festival (Festspiele) inspired by his music and operas had started in 1920. As a result, Salzburg became reconceptualized as a 'Festival City' (*Festspielstadt*); apparently the 'logical successor' to the previous phases.

This chapter traces the origins and significance to the city of the Festspiele; an event several decades older and considerably more embedded in the elite social calendar than most other European performing arts festivals. It charts the

way that the festival's growing economic and cultural importance made Mozart himself less of a defining factor for Salzburg's identity than the Festspiele held in his name. While other towns and cities in Austria could have laid claim to Mozart, what led to the festival developing in Salzburg is seen to rest on a particular set of circumstances arising from the immediate aftermath of the First World War and, within that context, upon the vision of its initiators. After tracing the relationship between the Festspiele and the city through the troubled interwar years and into the post-war period, this chapter notes how the festivalization process has subsequently reshaped both the city's economy and identity.

An Austrian Bayreuth?

Situated on the River Salzach at the foot of the Tennengebirge (figure. 4.1), Salzburg lay at the centre of an ecclesiastical principality that existed between 1278 and 1803. Its court, ruled over by a Prince-Archbishop, had a requirement for musicians and it was here that the composer and conductor Leopold Mozart found employment in 1743. On his marriage in 1747, Leopold moved to 9 Getreidegasse in the old town (figure 4.2), which is where his seventh child, Wolfgang Amadeus, was born in 1756. The family lived in these cramped surroundings until they were able to move in 1773 into a more spacious eightroom apartment across the river on Market Square, which provided space for teaching and concerts.¹ By this time, too, Wolfgang had also found employment at the Prince-Archbishop's court.



Figure 4.1. View over Salzburg Altstadt and Hohensalzburg Castle from the Winkler Terrace on the Mönchsberg, early twentieth century (*Photo*: Contemporary postcard)

SALZBURG



Figure 4.2. Mozart's birthplace, at 9 Getreidegasse in Salzburg, Austria, as seen in 1956. (*Photo:* Contemporary postcard)

The relationship between the Mozarts and their employers was never easy. While detailed consideration of their careers lies beyond the scope of the current discussion,² it can be noted the low pay and limited opportunities to compose the type of music that interested Wolfgang, especially operas, quickly saw him looking for opportunities to move elsewhere (Barth, 2003). After a series of lengthy musical tours that met with his employers' disapproval, Mozart finally broke with the court in 1781, only too keen to settle in 'glittering' Vienna (Gallup, 1987, p. 2). On the subject of Salzburg, he was reported to have said: 'there is no stimulus [here] for my talent. When I play or when any of my compositions is performed, it is as if the audience were all tables and chairs' (cited in Eisen, 2007, p. 440).

The disapproval was not mutual. By the mid-nineteenth century Salzburg had recognized the value of being associated with Mozart and his legacy although, admittedly, much had changed in the interim. The political power of

the Prince-Archbishops had been removed in 1803 when Salzburg became a secularized Electorate and the 1815 Treaty of Versailles had awarded the territory to Austria. Now in a region governed from Linz, Salzburg became a 'stagnant provincial town' (Glover, 2005, p. 344), with many of its musicians moving to Vienna in search of greater opportunity. As a result, musical standards soon declined. When the music publisher Vincent Novello visited in 1829 in the hope of finding unpublished manuscripts by Mozart, he remarked on the 'dearth of good music to be heard' (Selby, 2013, p. 107). Nevertheless, in a similar manner to Shakespeare's relationship with Stratford (see chapter 1), the Mozart connection was already attracting visitors keen to see where he was born and the sites of his early years. Indeed, by the 1840s it was estimated that between 50,000 and 80,000 were drawn to Salzburg each year for this reason (Hoffmann, 2002, p. 53). That process was aided and abetted by Mozart's widow Constanze, who had moved back in 1821, and actively welcomed those enthusiasts who came to visit (Selby, 2013).

The town therefore looked for more permanent ways to reclaim and capitalize on its links with its former citizen, despite him having spent his ten most productive years in Vienna. A campaign that started in 1835 to raise money for a statue finally came to fruition in September 1842, when its unveiling was accompanied by Salzburg's first Mozart festival; a three-day event in the Michaelsplatz, subsequently renamed the Mozartplatz. The celebrations included concerts, a performance of Mozart's 'Requiem in D minor' (K 626) and a memorial service for Constanze who had died six months earlier. Another initiative saw the establishment of the Dom-Musik-Verein und Mozarteum (DMVM), or Cathedral Music Association and Mozarteum, in October 1841. Wishing to address the decline in Salzburg's standing in the musical world, the DMVM looked to remedy deficiencies in musical education, to train musicians for the churches and Cathedral, and to promote the work of Mozart. It also sought to collect documents, build an archive of Mozart's work, and take measures to protect the Mozart heritage in the city.

Yet despite efforts to promote music-making and support Mozartian scholarship, Salzburg did not stage any major celebrations of his life until the 1856 Centenary celebrations for which his second son Karl Thomas Mozart, the sole remaining family member, returned (Glover, 2005, p. 371). The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (VPO) also began performing in Salzburg on an occasional basis, starting in 1877. In 1887, after a concert to mark the centenary of the first performance of the opera 'Don Giovani', the VPO's conductor Hans Richter suggested holding a permanent Mozart Festival in Salzburg and advocated construction of a festival theatre to house it (Steinberg, 2000, p. 41). By this time, however, any thoughts about festivals and their venues necessarily had an eye to developments taking place across the German border at Bayreuth, which would profoundly impact on the nature of any festival to be staged in Salzburg.

Richard Wagner's Festspielhaus (festival theatre) at Bayreuth, which opened

in August 1876, was the product of an unusually holistic approach. Besides already acting as both the librettist and composer of the music for his operas, Wagner also wanted to consolidate his control over the entire experience of producing and consuming his operas. This extended to him wishing to make the key decisions not just about festival content and performance but also about both the location and design of the theatre.

On the subject of location, Wagner wanted a small town with good communication links that was able to offer satisfactory facilities for festivalgoers. In a letter to Franz Liszt written in 1852, Wagner said that he sought: 'some beautiful wilderness ... (far from) the smoke and revolting industrial smell of our urban civilization' (cited in Smith, 2007, p. 24). He envisaged art lovers as pilgrims, coming to his theatre to focus single-mindedly on his productions without the distractions of other amusements and certainly without any other local theatrical or operatic competition. The location also needed to be in Bavaria as Wagner relied on financial backing from King Ludwig II for what was always likely to be a highly expensive venture. Ludwig himself favoured Munich but initial plans for a theatre project there fell through. Wagner looked elsewhere, with a variety of other German towns and cities making approaches to host his theatre once they had learned about the project. They included Baden-Baden, Bad Reichenhall, Berlin and, in particular, Darmstadt, which had just seen its opera house destroyed by fire and offered to build him an opera house and donate the land on which it would be built (Spotts, 1994, p. 41). Even Chicago had expressed interest (Smith, 2007, p. 24).

Few of these approaches, especially from outside Bavaria, were taken seriously. For his part, Wagner was attracted to Bayreuth. His original interest stemmed from the fact that it had an existing theatre, the Markgräfliches Opernhaus (Margravial Opera House). Built in 1748 on the Italian pattern of a self-supporting wooden box structure inside a stone building shell, it had one of the world's largest stages but Wagner regarded its 100-seater auditorium as too small for his purposes (Spotts, 1994, p. 40; Baker, 1998, p. 259). Nevertheless, the town of Bayreuth recognized that Wagner's Festspielhaus could put 'their sleepy town on the map' (Spotts, 1994, p. 40) and readily agreed to his terms: namely, that he would provide the funding for the building and the running of the festival provided that they gave him the land free of charge. Wagner described Bürgerreuth, the site north of the town finally chosen, as 'charming and enchanting' (Baker, 1998, p. 260).

The theatre itself was revolutionary, especially in terms of its interior. Wagner appropriated the overall design from work dating from 1864–1866 that Gottfried Semper had carried out for an unrealized opera house in Munich, with the Leipzig architect Otto Brückwald designing the auditorium (Rauda, 1954). This was a large fan-shaped structure with raked seats, reminiscent of a Greek theatre, that gave the 1,345 spectators an uninterrupted view of the stage (figure 4.3). Gone were the balconies and boxes of the Baroque opera houses;



Figure 4.3. The interior of Wagner's Festspielhaus at Bayreuth, c.1910. Picture shows stage design of 'Grail Temple' for Wagner's 'Parsifal'. (*Photo*: Contemporary postcard, public domain)

places where people would sit, talk and even have meals without watching the opera. The sunken orchestra pit was out of sight of the audience, so that the music would seemingly rise up magically. The gas lighting was extinguished during the performance to fix attention on the stage (Baker, 1998, p. 252; Smith, 2007, p. 31). Given the innovations in set design and 'masterful integration of the technology of illusion' (Bowman, 1966, p. 430), it can justifiably be said that it is difficult 'to overestimate the influence of Richard Wagner's Festspielhaus on theatrical production during the three-quarters of a century which followed its inauguration in August 1876' (*ibid.*, p. 429).

Festspielhaus

Nowhere was that influence felt more keenly than in Salzburg around a decade later. Hans Richter's intervention in 1887 had initiated a process that led to the formation in 1890 of a ginger group called the 'Action Committee for a Mozart Festival Theatre in Salzburg' to advance the idea of a festival. They commissioned the Viennese practice of Fellner and Helmar to produce plans for a 1,500-seat 'temple of art' on the Mönchsberg overlooking the Salzach River. Recognized professionally as an architectural studio that had designed highquality opera houses and theatres across the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Fellner and Helmar's plans replicated many of the features of Wagner's Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. The location was similarly detached, the auditorium lacked balconies

and boxes, and the exterior only essentially differed from Bayreuth in terms of greater ornamentation.

The plan drew interest but was deemed prohibitively expensive and failed to win the necessary support from potential backers in Vienna or Salzburg. Development on the Mönchsberg also caused concern among those who felt the location was inappropriate (Steinberg, 2000, pp. 41–42; Gallup, 1987, pp. 4–5). The Action Committee disbanded in 1891 without taking this particular design further,³ but the group had successfully instituted the idea of Mozart festivals. These became more regular after the turn of the century, being staged in 1901, 1904, 1906, and 1910, with a further festival cancelled by the outbreak of war in 1914. They were even then attracting star performers, with appearances from the likes of Richard Strauss, Gustav Mahler, Lilli Lehmann, Franz Schalk and Felix Weingartner (Eisen, 2007, p. 443), although the end products still lacked the status of the more ambitious and regular festivals that would emerge after the First World War.

The momentum for such festivals continued to grow, with different groups working on parallel visions. For Steinberg (2000, p. 42), the origins of the first modern Salzburg Festival can be traced to 1903 and correspondence between the poet and critic Hermann Bahr and the theatre director and filmmaker Max Reinhardt. Bahr suggested mounting a summer festival in Salzburg that would stage some of Reinhardt's successful Berlin theatre productions in the existing Stadttheater, a 700-seat Baroque theatre built in 1893 that is now known as the Landestheater (figure 4.4). While this scheme did not come to fruition, Reinhardt liked the idea of Salzburg as a theatrical location, particularly for open-air performances (Benniston, 1998, p. 203). He developed that concept in a memorandum written in April 1917 (Reinhardt, 1917) that was sent to the directorate of Vienna's Imperial Court theatres. Reinhardt suggested creating a Festspielhaus in the grounds of Hellbrunn Palace, the old summer residence of the Prince-Archbishops that was situated south of Salzburg. Quite apart from being an imposing site, it also had symbolic value since the first opera performed north of the Alps was staged in a disused quarry in the Palace's grounds in August 1617.

Reinhardt's memorandum foresaw a broader festival concept than the single composer approach employed at Bayreuth; emphatically not one that merely replaced Wagner with Mozart. Rather, he envisaged an event that embraced 'the theatrical arts [which have] not only held their own during the ravages of this war, but have proven that their existence and maintenance are essential necessities ... the arts are not merely a luxury for the rich and sated, but food for the needy' (*ibid*). He wanted to stage classic theatre with a strong element of Austrian drama, particularly mediaeval mystery and passion plays. He argued that Austrian artists were currently lending their talents to the Bayreuth and Munich festivals, with 'an obvious conclusion that the rich fruits of this plentiful Austrian source should benefit Austria itself – more than has been the case so far, given



Figure 4.4. The Stadttheater, now known as the Landestheater, as seen in August 2012. It was designed by Fellner and Helmar, who were also commissioned to undertake the plans for the Mönchsberg scheme. This more conventional 700-seat baroque State Theatre was a separate venture, but would later play a role as a venue for the Salzburg Festival. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

the lack of a Festspielhaus' (*ibid.*). He then highlighted 'the invigorating effects' that had accrued to Bavarian tourism and that a festival would 'not only benefit the City of Salzburg, but indirectly the entire Austrian Alpine region and all the touristically attractive areas of the Monarchy – some of which are far less known and visited than they deserve' (*ibid.*). The answer, he opined, would be a festival and a Festspielhaus:

not the municipal playhouse catering to everyday parties and distractions, which are and will certainly remain equally necessary (and whose importance shall by no means be diminished here), but the house for the high feasts occurring but once a year, to be celebrated with the full consecration of art, far from urban daily life and in a place appearing so blessed by natural and artistic beauty that people joyfully flock to it during their summer days of leisure, relieved of their cares and burden. (Reinhardt, 1917)

This proposal also failed to transpire, but it undoubtedly had an impact on a rival vision for a festival theatre being developed by Friedrich Gehmacher and Heinrich Damisch. Gehmacher was a high-ranking civil servant⁴ who had previously been involved with the Mozarteum and its creation of a concert hall (completed in 1914 and housed in the villa of the former interior minister, Josef

von Lasser, in the Schwarzstrasse). Damisch was a Viennese music critic who had set up the Vienna Mozart Society in 1913 (Gallup, 1987, p. 6). Together they founded the Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde (Salzburg Festival Hall Society) on 1 August 1917. Both saw Bayreuth as a source of inspiration for Salzburg: Gehmacher, that it would be 'an Austrian Bayreuth'; Damisch, that 'Salzburg should be to Mozart as Bayreuth is to Wagner' (cited in Steinberg, 2000, p. 44). They had started approaching influential individuals and possible sponsors about this project in 1916, with the proposed site for the theatre being a hill to the north of Salzburg that was already famous as a pilgrimage site due to the presence of a basilica dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Once again, the juxtaposition of town and country was apparent, with the notion of a successful festival being linked to remoteness, beauty and a pilgrimage narrative. In the event though, the increasing cost of land and the negative reactions of key associates led to the abandonment of this particular project.

It should be noted that the formal establishment of the Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde had a darker side, hinting at the antisemitism that would later rip the arts apart. The Society was created partly because of suspicions about Reinhardt's motives in pressing for a festival playhouse.⁵ These were couched in coded language, using terms such as 'superficial' and 'material' (cited in Silverman, 2012, p. 158). In an article in a Viennese music journal, Heinrich Damisch warned about what he saw as forces that might undermine the character of the festival theatre:

Only if the interest of the art remains the sole driving force, disconnected from all commercial considerations ... can the festival house become a cultural factor of lasting, great significance. However, for many reasons it is to be feared that the idea for the festival house after the World War, when the commercial and entrepreneurial urge will expand all too luxuriously, will be taken up from a side that views the realisation of this idea mainly for material reasons and carries it out with the help of speculative patrons. *(ibid.*)

Despite this undercurrent, Reinhardt's stature and contacts in both the theatrical and musical worlds made it difficult to ignore him in any serious proposals for a festival. Salzburg's Mayor Ferdinand Künzelmann contacted Reinhardt in July 1918 at the behest of the Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde to sound out his views on the proposal. He replied that the importance of Mozart should be the 'guiding spirit' of the project and that the arts should include theatre, opera and operetta as well as mystery and nativity plays. He talked of them having the 'spiritual growth of the new Austria in their hands'. In August that year Reinhardt was invited to join the Artistic Advisory Committee of the Society along with composer Richard Strauss and conductor Franz Schalk. They were joined in 1919 by the polymath Hugo von Hofmannsthal and set designer Alfred Roller, all of whom had worked on shared projects with Reinhardt in the past (Benniston, 1998, p. 206).⁶

The Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde chose the Hellbrunn Palace Garden as a possible location, especially given its associations with Salzburg's illustrious musical past. They commissioned the distinguished Berlin architect Hans Poelzig, who produced plans for a theatre including a large auditorium, outdoor performance spaces, and an Expressionist-influenced exterior of tiered arches which was reminiscent of Pieter Bruegel the Elder's sixteenth-century painting 'The Tower of Babel'. Publicity produced to promote the project described the potential Festspielhaus as 'a mountain to the Grail for the most genuine and great art' (cited in Steinberg, 2000, p. 55). In August 1922, a foundation stone was ceremoniously laid but the Austrian financial crisis effectively terminated the project (Marcus, 2018).

In the meantime, further attention had been paid to the meanings of the possible Festival. Hugo von Hofmannsthal, one of the main creative influences in the Artistic Advisory Committee, had argued for a view of Austrian identity that would rekindle the spirit of the lost cosmopolitan Austro-Hungarian Empire through culture and art.⁷ He was anxious that this message could only be translated into the Festival project if the artists on the council maintained a united front. He wrote to Reinhardt in 1919 that: 'it seems to me even more necessary that the group of artists (you, Strauss, Schalk, Roller and I) remain fully and tightly in agreement; the Salzburg citizens of the committee must have the feeling that we guide them with secure hands in a direction upon which we have agreed' (Silverman, 2010, p. 210). Notably, this group was instrumental in shaping not just the programme in the early years of the Festival but also the staging of the productions that populated that programme.

The Salzburg Festival was launched on 22 August 1920, even though the plans for the Festival theatre remained under discussion. Once the decision had been made to go ahead, the limited amount of time meant that the resulting production was a compromise between Reinhardt and Hofmannsthal's cultural and spiritual aspirations for the festival and the practical limitations of budget and time. Reinhardt and Hofmannsthal had emphasized the importance of the mediaeval Catholic roots of Austrian culture and both had pondered the contribution that a mystery play might make, with Reinhardt also feeling a nativity play would be appropriate. Their eventual choice was a reworking of an earlier production of 'Jedermann', a play written by Hofmannsthal but based on the late fifteenth-century English mediaeval morality play 'Everyman' (Wertz, 1970).⁸

Hofmannsthal's version had been previously produced by Reinhardt in Berlin's Zirkus Schuman in December 1911 to an audience of 5,000; an example of the sort of theatrical extravaganza for which Reinhardt was noted (Réthelyi, 2017, pp. 134–135). For Salzburg, Reinhardt proposed to stage the play in front of the Cathedral with the audience in the square beyond. This lent itself to largescale spectacle, with the Cathedral providing the stage set and the costumes being reused from the 1911 Berlin production (figure 4.5). It required a large



Figure 4.5. The production of 'Jedermann' at the first Salzburg Festival 1920. (*Photo:* CC Archiv der Salzburger Festspiele/Foto Ellinger)

cast but costs were reduced by giving the performers souvenirs rather than payment (Benniston, 1998, p. 218). All that was required was the permission of the Cathedral authorities, which was readily granted given that Archbishop Ignaz Reider had seen Reinhardt's 'Jedermann' in Berlin (Duchen, 2006). It seemed an eminently suitable production; a callous rich man Jedermann is enjoying a banquet when he is summoned by Death and warned that he is destined for hell. During the play, enlightenment dawns thanks to the ministrations of 'Faith' and 'Good Works' so that when he finally dies Jedermann is instead received into heaven.

To achieve his desired theatricality, Reinhardt relied on the ancient formula of appropriating the surrounding city scape to create an immersive open-air drama that Esslin (1977, p. 14) described as 'total environmental theatre'. The voice of God and Death emanated from the surrounding buildings and the voices of actors stationed on the church towers around the city, calling to Jedermann, echoed around the city. The start of the performance was timed to ensure that dusk fell as the play neared its end so that when Jedermann died, the only light was that emanating from inside the cathedral 'from the dazzlingly lit marble-and-gold interior of the Great Baroque church' with the organ playing, hymns being sung and the bells in the city churches ringing (*ibid*). Even the city's pigeons were encouraged to take wing at the moment of death. Hilde Albers-Frank, an actress who performed in the first 'Jedermann', recalls how: 'Pigeons, I guess, are on every square. Reinhardt took advantage of them. He had people stationed all

over the square, and at a certain moment, those who were near the pigeons were directed to chase them over the stage to great effect' (cited in Silverman, 2012, p. 159).

Audience accounts of the impact of this production suggest that it achieved the community spirit and a sense of renewal that Reinhardt and Hofmannsthal wanted it to generate. Even an account of the festival by a critic of Reinhardt suggested that Austrian and Jewish audience members 'ascended solemnly toward the pure, sublime evening sky beyond all faiths' (*ibid.*, p. 169). Alfred Polgar, another of Reinhardt's critics, admitted that the first festival performance created a sense of inclusivity and that 'somehow the seated individual feels his individuality reduced. Just by being there he becomes part of a community' (*ibid.*, p. 170). Such was its success that the play returned in 1921, again in 1926 and then every year until the Anschluss in 1938, after which it was deemed unsuitable given Hofmannsthal's and Reinhart's Jewish heritage.

The Early Years

This first version of the Salzburg Festival consisted of just six performances, four of which targeted wealthier visitors from Bavaria and Vienna, with the remaining two for local people. The lack of any musical programme was surprising given the nature of the discussions, proposals and the ideological foundations of the festival as a celebration of Mozart and parallel to Bayreuth. However, the intention was still to include Mozart. This was achieved in 1921 with concerts given by the Mozarteum Orchestra, but a production of one of Mozart's earliest works – the one-act comic opera 'Bastien und Bastienne' written in 1768 – was abandoned because of cost.

Unlike the other major festivals such as Venice's Biennale and the Cannes Film Festival, the Salzburg Festspiele started very modestly and, as can be seen from table 4.1, developed slowly. The content of the 1922 festival approximated to much of the original vision. Productions of four of Mozart's operas in the Stadttheater were conducted by Richard Strauss and Franz Schalk, using stage sets that Alfred Roller had designed for the Vienna State Opera. The Vienna Philharmonic visited for the first time to give two concerts in the Mozarteum (Kennedy, 1995, p. 70). 'Jedermann' was set aside in favour of another theatrical spectacular, namely, Reinhardt's production of Pedro Calderon's 'El Gran Teatro del Mundo', with a script by Hofmannsthal and the staging by Roller. This took place in the Kollegienkirche (University Church) despite some misgivings from the ecclesiastical authorities. They would be mollified by the profits being donated for the repair of the church (Benniston, 1998, p. 218), but the event still encountered criticism from the right-wing press over the use of the church by 'outsiders' (Silverman, 2010, p. 212).

The hyperinflation crisis of the early 1920s meant there was only one production in 1923: Moliere's 'Der eingebildete Kranke' ('The Imaginary

Year	Dates	Key Productions	Other Content
1920	22–26 August	Jedermann	-
1921	2–23 August	Jedermann	Orchestral concerts; chamber concerts; a serenade; a concert of sacred music
1922	13–29 August	Das Salzburger grosse Welttheater; Don Giovanni; Così fan tutte; Le nozze di Figaro; Die Entführung aus dem Serail	Orchestral concerts
1923	21–24 August	The Imaginary Invalid	-
1924	No festival	-	-
1925	13–31 August	Das Salzburger grosse Welttheater; Das Mirakel; Das Apostelspiel; Don Pasquale; Don Giovanni; Le nozze di Figaro	Ballet; orchestral concerts; chamber concerts; lied recitals; festival conference
1926	7–28 August	Jedermann; Servant of Two Masters; Turandot; Die Fledermaus; Ariadne auf Naxos; Die Entführung aus dem Serail; Don Giovanni	Ballet performances; orchestral concerts; chamber concerts; solo recitals; concert of sacred music; choir recitals
1927	30 July–28 August	Jedermann; A Midsummer Night's Dream; Kabale und Liebe; Fidelio; Le nozze di Figaro; Don Giovanni	Ballet performances; a music-dramatic presentation; orchestral concerts; a chamber concert; serenades; sacred music
1928	26 July–30 August	Jedermann; Iphigenie auf Tauris; Die Räuber; Das Perchtenspiel; Così fan tutte; Die Zauberflöte; Fidelio	Leningrad Opera Studio: Mozart's Bastien and Bastienne, Paumgartner's Die Höhle von Salamanca, Dargomyshsky's The Stone Guest and Rimsky- Korsakov's The Immortal Kashtchey.
1929	4–30 August	Jedermann; Don Giovanni; Der Rosenkavalier; Fidelio	Orchestral concerts; a chamber concert; lied recitals; serenades; concerts of sacred music; church concerts; a concert academy
1930	1–31 August	Jedermann; Victoria (Somerset Maugham); Le nozze di Figaro; Iphigénie en Aulide; Kabale und Liebe; Servant of Two Masters; Der Rosenkavalier; Don Giovanni; Fidelio Don Pasquale	Orchestral concerts; serenades; a chamber concert; concerts of sacred music ;
1931	25 July–31 August	Jedermann; Der Schwierige; Stella; Die Zauberflöte; Die Entführung aus dem Serail; Così fan tutte; Orfeo ed Euridice; Servant of Two Masters; Der Rosenkavalier; Don Giovanni; Le nozze di Figaro; Fidelio. Italian opera: Barbiere di Siviglia; Dor Pasquale; Il matrimonio segreto	

Table 4.1. The contents of the Salzburg Festivals 1920–1937.

Table 4.1 continued on page 122

Table 4.1 continued	trom	page	121
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Year	Dates	Key Productions	Other Content
1932	30 July–31 August	Jedermann; Die Entführung aus dem Serail; Oberon; Die Frau ohne Schatten; Der Rosenkavalier; Così fan tutte; Le nozze di Figaro; Die Zauberflöte; Fidelio; Orfeo ed Euridice	Ballet performances; orchestral concerts; serenades; concerts of sacred music
1933	28 July–31 August	Jedermann; Faust. Part 1; Tristan und Isolde; Die ägyptische Helena; Der Rosenkavalier; Die Frau ohne Schatten; Così fan tutte; Le nozze di Figaro; Die Zauberflöte; Fidelio; Orfeo ed Euridice; Oberon	Orchestral concerts; serenades; a lied recital; concerts of sacred music
1934	29 July–2 September	Jedermann; Don Giovanni; Faust; Fidelio; Tristan und Isolde; Der Rosenkavalier; Die ägyptische Helena; Elektra; Le nozze di Figaro; Così fan tutte; Oberon	Orchestral concerts; choral concerts; a chamber concert; lied recital; serenades; concerts of sacred music
1935	27 July–1 September	Jedermann; Falstaff; Die Entführung aus dem Serail; Faust; Tristan und Isolde; Der Rosenkavalier; Don Giovanni; Così fan tutte; Figaro; Fidelio	
1936	25 July–31 August	Jedermann; Orfeo ed Euridice; Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg; Der Corregidor; Faust; Così fan tutte; Le nozze di Figaro; Don Giovanni; Fidelio; Falstaff; Tristan und Isolde	Orchestral concerts; a chamber concert; a solo recital; a lied recital; serenades; concerts of sacred music; church concerts
1937	24 July–31 August	Jedermann; Die Zauberflöte; Le nozze di Figaro; Euryanthe; Faust; Don Giovanni; Fidelio; Orfeo ed Euridice; Der Rosenkavalier; Elektra; Falstaff; Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg	recital; lied recitals; a Mozart

Source: Compiled by the authors.

Invalid' or 'Hypochondriac'), with just four performances staged at either the Stadttheater or at Reinhardt's home in the Schloss Leopoldskron. No festival was staged in 1924, with Reinhardt's plans for a production of Karl Vollmöller's wordless play 'Das Mirakel' at the Kollegienkirche thwarted by a combination of opposition from the church authorities, lack of funds, and conflict within the Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde.

Like Venice, Salzburg readily manifested the tendency for a new festival to generate ancillary events. In this case, a group of musicians held a contemporary music festival, which stood in stark contrast to the more traditional fayre being offered by the Salzburg Festival. The initiative began in Vienna in the winter of 1922, when a group of Viennese composers, who were mainly pupils of Arnold Schönberg, decided to stage a festival of new music in Salzburg to coincide with the festival (Collins, 2018). This resulted in the International Chamber

Music Festival staged between 5 and 10 August, which was organized by Egon Wellesz, Rudolf Réti, Alfred Dent and Robert Mayer under the patronage of Richard Strauss. It presented work from twelve different countries and attracted wellknown figures from the musical world including Béla Bartók, Darius Milhaud, Paul Hindemith, Anton Webern and Dame Ethyl Smythe (Haas, 2019). At the end of the festival those present created the International Society for Contemporary Music. They went on to organize a similar festival in Salzburg's Mozarteum in 1923, with the 1924 festival split between Salzburg and Prague. Thereafter, festivals were staged annually in member countries, only returning to Salzburg in 1952 (ISCM, 2020).

Finance, however, was always a problem, relying initially on a combination of donations and ticket sales. With regard to the former, the Salzburger Festspielhaus-gemeinde had undertaken fundraising from supporters and wealthy art lovers from the outset. With regard to the latter, tickets were expensive, since they needed to be set sufficiently high to recoup funds; an aspect of the festival that attracted local criticism, albeit assuaged to some extent by admitting spectators to rehearsals free of charge (Gallup, 1987, p. 23). Approaches to government met with limited success, since the financial crisis meant there was little capital available. One of the reasons for the limited programme in 1921, for instance, had been the refusal of government to assist financially, with the festival organizers flippantly advised to find 'a rich capitalist' (*ibid.*, p. 20). Lacking any such sponsor, two opera productions and a performance of Moliere's 'La Bourgeois Gentilhome' were cancelled. One potential solution that was explored was fundraising abroad, with Richard Strauss establishing an American Committee of Friends of the Festival in 1921.

Official support for the festival was finally achieved in the mid-1920s. New funding streams enabled the festival to resume on a firmer footing from 1926 onwards, allowing a full schedule of theatrical productions annually as well as the festival expanding its musical repertoire. In this context, matters were assisted by the arrival of Franz Rehrl, the Christian Social Party's appointee as Provincial Governor of Salzburg in March 1922. Rehrl would remain until the Anschluss in 1938 and became a prominent supporter of the festival. He recognized the economic importance of the festival but also, more importantly, its potential if properly managed. In an approach that presaged later concerns, Rehrl saw the festival's funding and the availability of accommodation for visitors as being key issues for the city to resolve. He also anticipated the benefits of promoting cultural tourism to Salzburg from countries with strong currencies, particularly the USA and Great Britain. 'An Economic Policy for Tourism', a report which he commissioned in 1926, backed his proposals that that the city and province needed a coherent tourism strategy. The resulting Tourism Promotion Fund was able to channel funding to the festival. Rehrl was also adept at lobbying the national government in Vienna to accept the importance of the Salzburg Festival to the Austrian economy (Gallup, 1987, p. 29).

The demise of the ambitious scheme for a Festspielhaus in Hellbrunn did not end the quest for a dedicated performance space. Venues were limited in Salzburg and the Festival had repeatedly come up against problems when using churches for productions. A more affordable solution was to use an existing structure within the city and to that end part of the old court stables on Hofstallgasse at the foot of the Mönchsberg was converted into a theatre. Initially this comprised a temporary structure, put in place for 1925 and used for Reinhardt's production of Hofmannsthal's 'Das Salzburger grosse Welttheater'. A reworking of this structure by the architect and set designer Clemens Holzmeister created the Kleines Festspielhaus with foyer frescos by the Austrian Expressionist painter Anton Faistauer (figure 4.6).9 This was inaugurated with a Reinhardt production of Carlo Gozzi's play 'Turandot'. Holzmeister remodelled the theatre again in 1937–1938, during which its orientation was turned by 180 degrees and enlarged to accommodate 1,682 seats. By doing so, they also managed to create a stage with the same dimensions as that in the Vienna Opera's home venue, which would allow stage sets to be conveniently redeployed. Its first performance was Wagner's 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg', conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler.

The Summer Riding School (Felsenreitschule), another space in the former court stables, was next to be pressed into service. Originally a quarry, the riding school had been created in the seventeenth century by clearing a large openair space with tiers of galleries carved into the rock face (figure 4.7). It was



Figure 4.6. The foyer frescos by Anton Faistauer were destroyed after the German annexation of Austria. The photograph, taken in 2012, shows their restoration. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)



Figure 4.7. The Felsenreitschule (literally 'rock riding school') is a venue of the Salzburg Festival. The illustration shows an engraving of the site from 1712 taken from the 'Prospectus Elegantiores Splendidissimae Archiepiscopalis Urbis Salisburgensis praecipuarumque in ea Illustrium, ac maxime mirabilium, tam Sacrarum quam profanarum Aedium'. (*Image*: CC J. B. Homann)

precisely the type of large, lofty, open-air and non-traditional space that attracted Reinhardt, who first used it in 1926 for Carlo Goldoni's 'Der Diener zweier Herren' ('Servant of Two Masters'). The venue's true potential became apparent in 1933 when presenting Goethe's 'Faust', for which Clemens Holzmeister created a whole city on the stage that blended in with the surrounding trees and buildings (Esslin 1977, p. 19).

Storm Clouds

Reinhardt's triumph with Faust, however, was set against a political and cultural environment that contrasted markedly with what had gone before. The rise to power of Hitler and the National Socialists in Germany in February 1933 would impact on the Salzburg Festival, as on most aspects of life in the Germanspeaking regions of Europe, in a number of ways. On the one hand, Jewish

conductors, composers and artists were no longer able to work as professional musicians in Germany itself. This meant that Salzburg and Austria had an influx of some of the best artists in Europe, including Bruno Walter and Arturo Toscanini. On the other hand, German artists were restricted from working in Austria, with Salzburg in particular encountering disapproval as a 'cosmopolitan' festival.¹⁰

The Third Reich's foreign policy saw Austria as culturally part of the German sphere and sought to destabilize the Austrian state (Levi, 2020, p. 106), while the government in Vienna fought to preserve and promote Austria's political independence. Salzburg became a part of this struggle, with its artistic freedom seen by Vienna as a 'dynamic symbol' of its cultural difference to Germany (Gallup, 1987, p. 57). Vienna banned the National Socialist Party in Austria and forbade any demonstrations in its support. In June 1933, Germany introduced a 1,000 Reichsmark tax on its nationals if they wanted to cross the border into Austria, a move that reduced German tourism to Austria at a stroke. For Salzburg – so close to the German border – this was particularly serious as Germans made up nearly half of the usual annual audience for the Festspiele. In 1932, 15,681 German visitors had attended; this dropped to 874 in 1933 (Levi, 2020, p. 106). Despite an advertising campaign to lure visitors from elsewhere, the overall visitor numbers were down by 16,000, with many performances only half full. Only 'Faust' played to packed houses (Gallup, 1987, p. 69).

Another arena for the cultural wars was the other Mozart festivals. One of the major beneficiaries of the disapproval of Salzburg was the Würzburg Festival. Founded in 1922 just two years after Salzburg and situated just to the west of Bayreuth in Bavaria, Germany's first Mozart festival was well placed to capitalize on music-lovers' inability to travel to Salzburg (Levi, 2020, p. 26). In addition, Germany promoted a new raft of Mozart festivals for the benefit of musicians and for domestic audiences. These included Danzig, Tubingen, Flensburg, Heidelburg, Ansbach, and Bad Cannstatt (ibid.). Minor acts of sabotage directed against Salzburg were promoted to frighten off visitors. These included a failed break in at a power station that attempted to disrupt the power supply, pro-Nazi demonstrations and swastikas set alight on the surrounding mountain sides. There was also a leaflet drop from German planes on the opening day of the Festival attacking the Austrian government and urging Nazi sympathizers to refuse to pay their taxes and to withdraw their savings from Austrian banks (ibid., p. 106). In May 1934 a small bomb was detonated in the fover of the Festspielhaus.

Yet there were differences between national and local politics. Although the national government was vehemently anti-Nazi, in a conservative city such as Salzburg the changes in Germany emboldened the right wing of the political spectrum. Locally, the question of union with Germany gained considerable support, encouraging statements of resentment about 'outsiders' running the Festival and performing in it. There was also hostility towards the large number

of foreign visitors arriving in the city as a result of both the new advertising campaigns and the activities of the Salzburg Festival membership organizations that were being set up in Europe and North America.

Despite these developments, the Festival weathered the 1930s and adjusted to the new political realities in central Europe. It had achieved international status and even a certain social standing, attracting an affluent audience from around Europe and overseas that included high-profile royal and aristocratic visitors. The programme also developed. It retained its staples of 'Jedermann' and, from 1929, Strauss's 'Der Rosenkavalier', but the remainder of the programme offered a broad-based diet of opera, concerts and theatre, with new productions and a reputation for spectacular theatrical staging. Festival management became more professional and the promotion and packaging of the festival grew in effectiveness. While always an issue, public funding had been secured, and a close and supportive relationship existed between the Festspiele and the city. In 1936 Franz Rehrl guided the 'Law for the Protection of the Salzburg Festival' through the Provincial government. This enshrined the principle that permission was required for any event outside the Festspiele programme to take place in the city during the summer festival dates. Astonishingly, this law remained on the books until 1970.

In 1938, the situation changed dramatically. On 12 March, Nazi Germany formally annexed Austria into the German Reich in the process known as the Anschluss Österreichs. This was met with enthusiasm in the City of Salzburg, but posed serious problems for the Festival. As in Germany, the requirements of culture aryanization applied both to the performers and the repertoire. Rehrl was falsely accused of corruption, arrested and imprisoned. Many of the artists appearing at the festival left, causing the Festspiele to lose its regular producers, administrators and even architects. The Vienna Philharmonic and Vienna Opera were purged of Jewish members. Some key figures were abroad and did not return: Bruno Walter had been in the Netherlands and travelled on to the United Kingdom; Max Reinhardt and Toscanini were both in the USA.¹¹

The German leadership were keen that Salzburg should be, in Goebbels's words, a 'Festival of the German Soul' (Gallup, 1987, p. 108). The Nazi leadership made prominent appearances, with Goebbels, Hitler, Bormann and Speer attending in 1939. Goebbels himself became the patron of the festival and had the ultimate veto on any programming that was thought inappropriate (Gallup, 1987, p. 111). The 1938 festival had featured Wagner's 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg', conducted by Wilhelm Furtwängler, but the leadership were unhappy with Salzburg performing Wagner. Thereafter, his works were effectively banned from the Festspiele, with the emphasis switched to Mozart and Italian music, given Germany's alliance with Italy (Levi, 2020, p. 150). Mozart, it must be said, needed to be subtly aryanized. Quite apart from suspicions of his cosmopolitanism in view of his travels, influences and collaborators – such as the Jewish librettist Lorenzo Da Ponte (*ibid.*, pp. 2, 16) –

there was also the question of whether he was German or, as previously stressed in Salzburg, Austrian. After the Anschluss, this problem was removed since he could be reinvented as a symbol of the greater Germany (*ibid*, p. 26).

Now that Austria was part of Germany, Salzburg was slotted into a new hierarchy of music festivals with Bayreuth at the top and Salzburg in the second tier along with Munich, Dusseldorf, Frankfurt and Heidelberg (Gallup, 1987, p. 112). While this arrangement restricted content and approach, it did mean that its status as an officially-authorized festival ensured that government funding was available to make good any losses, with capital to invest in further building projects. For Salzburg, this would be expressed in grandiose plans for a new Festspielhaus to be built on the Kapuzinerberg, the hill on the eastern bank of the Salzach River opposite the Hohensalzburg Fortress that dominates the old town. This imposing location partly reflected the importance that the Festival had for the Nazi hierarchy but was also partly intended to symbolize the power and permanence of the new political reality. The new Festspielhaus was to be part of a large administrative complex that was to house the headquarters of the provincial government (Gauanlage), including accommodation, a stadium and in some iterations of the plan for an Adolf Hitler School. With further structures planned for the Wehrmacht (army) on the Mönchsberg, the plan was to create a 'constellation [that] was to dominate the centre of Salzburg inescapably'. A local architect, Otto Reitter, was chosen for the Festspielhaus project but the plans, like so many predecessors never got past the drawing board. It would also be the last major proposal for development at locations outside and overlooking the town in a true Bayreuth fashion. After this, all further efforts were concentrated in the city, building on the existing infrastructure and creating a concentrated nucleus of festival spaces in the centre (Salzburg Festival, 2020, pp. 11–12).

The Festival continued after the outbreak of war, but with a smaller programme and playing to much reduced audiences. By 1941, it was seen as having a morale boosting role for soldiers on leave and munitions factory workers. In 1943, the regime decreed that the event could no longer be called a festival but rather the 'Salzburg Summer of Theatre and Music'. The 1944 edition was cancelled by Goebbels at a week's notice. This was part of a decree to cancel all festivals in the Reich following the attempt on Hitler's life. Nevertheless, two events were salvaged in Salzburg. Fürtwangler was given special permission to perform Bruckner's Eighth Symphony with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra on 14 August and a dress rehearsal performance was staged two days later for Richard Strauss's three-act opera 'Die Liebe Danae'.

Revival

The American forces reached Salzburg on 4 May 1945, four days before the war ended. As a major rail junction, the city had experienced aerial bombardment since October 1944, which had destroyed or damaged approximately 1,800

buildings. These included the Cathedral and the Mozarts' family residence on Market Square. Piles of rubble still blocked many of the streets (Rabl-Stadler, 2018). The city's population, which had been around 77,000 in 1939, reached 102,927 by 1951. The rapid increase was partly fostered by the arrival of an estimated 23,775 refugees, of whom around 50 per cent were Poles, Yugoslavs and White Russians. Food shortages were widespread and pervasive (Whitnah and Whitnah, 1991, p. 13).

Salzburg became the administrative headquarters of the American Occupation Forces under General Mark W. Clark. Almost immediately, the Salzburg Festival again reared its head as a potent political symbol, with the decision to revive the Festspiele as soon as possible in 1945 to show the 'rebirth of Salzburg's famous cultural heritage' and roll back Nazi ideology (*ibid.*, p. 15). This decision was also made with an eye to what the Russians were doing in their Zone of Occupation. Given the reopening there of cinemas and theatres, the Western allies felt pressured into responding with cultural initiatives of their own (Gallup, 1987, p. 118). The Festival also provided a forum to get leaders and officers from the four Occupying Powers (America, France, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union) together in an informal context, along with Austrian officials: something that was technically contrary to regulations which banned fraternization (Whitnah and Whitnah, 1991, p. 16; Rabl-Stadler, 2018).

As the main festival venues had escaped damage from the aerial bombardment, the 1945 festival took place in familiar surroundings, with even the undamaged portion of the Cathedral available for concerts. Understandably, the programme was dictated by resources. The fact that full stage sets were available in storage for Mozart's opera 'Die Entführung aus dem Serail' ('The Abduction from the Seraglio'), for example, made it the obvious choice for performance in the Landestheater. Hugo von Hofmannsthal's 'Der Tor und der Tod' ('Death and the Fool') – which needed little in the way of sets – was performed in the Mozarteum; a choice that was also a symbolic gesture given that his work was proscribed during the period of the Anschluss.

The process of denazification lasted until the end of 1947, with artists and administrators being checked for their political affiliations, roles and activities since 1938. This included all the members of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Vienna Opera. The most sensitive issues concerned the conductors and composers who had remained in the enlarged Third Reich. Some stated that they were coerced into remaining, others claimed they had simply served the cause of music and not politics but, regardless, 'most of the more popular musicians had either attained or sustained their profile under the Nazis by accommodating themselves to the regime' (Monod, 2005, p. 85). These included Richard Strauss, Herbert von Karajan, Wilhelm Furtwängler and Clemens Krauss. Slowly some of them filtered back into the programming for Salzburg: Furtwängler returning in 1947 and von Karajan in 1948. Exiled artists were free to return. Bruno Walter, for example, conducted in 1949 and the repertoire was once again opened up

to Jewish playwrights, authors and composers. 'Jedermann' was reinstated in 1946.¹² Nevertheless, the denazification process was unevenly applied and did not necessarily remove the layers of personal animosities and mistrust that the Anschluss and earlier prejudices had generated.

In July 1950 a revised Austrian federal law put the Salzburg Festival on to a new financial and management footing with the creation of the Salzburger Festspielfonds (Salzburg Festival Foundation). This arrangement created a Directorium of up to five members to plan the Festival; a Kuratorium of local, provincial and federal officers who had power over the budget and could appoint members of the Directorium; and a Delegiertenversammlung (Assembly of Delegates) as an advisory body of bureaucrats from national, provincial and local levels. The crucial point was that the law guaranteed funding from all three tiers of government and the Tourist Fund would make up the difference between ticket sales and Festspiele costs (Gallup, 1987, pp. 140–141). Consequently, the Festival started the 1950s on a firmer financial footing than most of its rivals, albeit with growing recognition that the main European Festivals were now back on their feet and being joined by newcomers that were competing for the same international artists.

Venues

The death of Wilhelm Furtwängler in 1954 robbed Salzburg of a member of its Directorium, its most prominent conductor and a leading influence on the direction that the Festival should follow (*ibid.*, p. 139). This cleared the way for Herbert von Karajan, who had had difficult relations with Furtwängler, to become more centrally involved in the Salzburg Festival. Certainly elements of the Festspiele's management wanted von Karajan to replace Furtwängler. Von Karajan's career had blossomed since his wartime associations had finally been laid to rest. Now in his late forties, he had worked from 1948 onwards with the Vienna Philharmonic, the Philharmonia Orchestra in London, and the Lucerne Festival. From 1950 he became a regular conductor at Bayreuth. In 1954, he followed Furtwängler as the artistic director and principal conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic. His recordings, international tours and force of personality had also given him an unrivalled media presence (Osborne, 1998; Teachout, 2000).

Negotiations between Salzburg and von Karajan commenced in 1954. Von Karajan wanted the Salzburg position but only on his terms, which diverged considerably from the arrangements made with his predecessors. He wanted a three-year contract during which he would have full artistic control over the opera productions in which he was involved, including all matters concerning staging, casting and conducting. In January 1956, he presented a paper entitled 'Proposals for Salzburg Festival 1957–60', in which he set out his ideas for the opera seasons and for the involvement of the Berlin Philharmonic in the concert programme. At a stroke, that effectively ended the monopoly of the Vienna

Philharmonic Orchestra. He aimed only to offer new opera productions that had been premiered successfully elsewhere, thereby reducing the risk of financial disasters. He advocated doubling the pay offered to artists in order to access the best international performers. Finally, he proposed setting up a subscription series for the festival in order to develop a core audience of true music-lovers (Gallup, 1987, p. 158; Osborne, 1998, p. 401). Although this last idea was initially rejected, his other proposals were accepted and he was appointed Artistic Director in 1956. His term ran from 1957 to 1960, but at the end of his contract von Karajan was appointed to the Board of Governors, thereby ensuring that his influence continued to shape the festival up to his death in 1988.

A further theme that became enmeshed with the negotiations with von Karajan was the longstanding issue of improving the venues for the Festspiele. Discussions about improvements to the performance spaces had started in the early 1950s, with proposals for a major new development – the Grosses Festspielhaus – and for upgrading existing venues. The Provincial Governor Josef Klaus¹³ appointed a committee to explore options for an additional concert hall in 1953 and it seems that 'the building of the new festival hall had become a key factor in Klaus' bid to lure von Karajan back to Salzburg' (Osborne, 1998, p. 402). Critics questioned Klaus's motives, seeing it as a vanity project, by which Klaus was seeking to emulate the work and impact of his predecessor Franz Rehrl in the interwar period. Klaus justified the project by likening Salzburg to a hotel which 'does not have enough beds, and is faced with the choice of increasing the size of the hotel – or losing out to the competition' (Gallup, 1987, pp. 164–165). It is probably true though that the scheme was also part of informal discussions with von Karajan (*ibid*).

When an architectural competition was set up, the key decision was ultimately between either developing the site in town close to the existing festival halls or building away from the centre of Salzburg. Some of the entries mirrored previous imaginings with designs for imposing peripheral sites, such as the Mönchsberg and Hellbrunn. Another suggestion was for a Festspielhaus in the Mirabel Gardens.¹⁴ In the final analysis, Klaus's committee decided that the only feasible solution was to build the new theatre on Hofstallgasse. This finally committed the Festival to a concentrated 'Festival Quarter' adjacent to the other spaces used by the Festival each summer (University Great Hall and Kollegienkirche) and a short distance from the Dom Quarter (Cathedral Quarter of the Cathedral, Residenz and Kapitelplatz).

Clemens Holzmeister was commissioned to design the new Grosses Festspielhaus, which would be built on the site formerly occupied by the New Natural History Museum.¹⁵ In order to accommodate the size of stage and auditorium required, the site was enlarged by quarrying into the rock face of the Mönchsberg at the rear of the plot. The brief was for a space suitable for opera, music and theatre, which was challenging given the differing acoustic requirements of the different art forms (figure 4.8). The result was a 100 metre-

wide stage touted as one of the largest of its kind in the world, an auditorium seating 2,179 spectators that combined 'beauty [with a] model of functional adequacy and technical perfection' (Greisenegger, 2014, p. 75), and offices and workshops. It was 'a symbol for a country seeking to unite a cosmopolitan spirit and indigenous values, tradition and innovation, aestheticism and technology' (*ibid*.). The hall was controversial in that it was best suited for the large nineteenth-century orchestral works and grand opera, particularly Wagner, whereas Salzburg had developed its reputation on the smaller scale works of Mozart, which many felt would be lost in so cavernous a space (Gallup, 1987, pp. 154–156).

Between 1968 and 1970, Clemens Holzmeister substantially redesigned the Felsenreitschule (figure 4.9). The aims were to create a functional and modern stage with an orchestra pit, improved seating for the audience, boxes, a circle and a retractable roof. The tiered galleries at the rear of the stage and the naturalistic qualities of the former quarry remained. Further improvements were unveiled in 2011 with a new retractable roof positioned so as to create rehearsal spaces and storage areas. It holds a maximum audience of 1,437 people (1,412 seated and twenty-five standing).

Finally, the Kleine Festspielhaus was given a major overhaul for the twohundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Mozart's birth in 2006. The aim was to improve the acoustics for the more intimate Mozart operas while increasing



Figure 4.8. Front elevation of the Grosses Festspielhaus, Salzburg (architect Clemens Holzmeister), designed 1956, inaugurated on 26 July 1960. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)
SALZBURG



Figure 4.9. Stage and auditorium of the Felsenreitschule, Salzburg. (Photo: John and Margaret Gold)

seating capacity and improving sight lines. The result was the Haus für Mozart. Designed by Wilhelm Holzbauer and François Valentiny, the redesign wrapped two circles around the hall that effectively brought audiences closer to the stage. Its capacity was 1,495 seats, with room for eighty-five people standing. The net result of these improvements was the availability of more tickets for sale and spaces that could be used simultaneously without, as before, sound from one permeating the other. The changes also permitted larger spectacular works to be staged as well as the more intimate chamber operas.

Festivalization

The festivalization process in Salzburg was also strongly influenced by von Karajan, who spearheaded the creation of two additional classical musical festivals in the city, namely, the Salzburg Easter Festival (created in 1967) and the Whitsun Festival (1973). The former was founded as a separate entity from the Salzburg Festival, evolving into a ten-day event that ends on Easter Monday. The festival allowed von Karajan to exercise complete artistic control, with the opportunity to feature the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra in programmes that, *inter alia*, included Wagnerian operas. Since the performance of 'Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg' in 1938, his operas were not traditionally staged in Salzburg out of respect for Bayreuth. This new festival allowed von Karajan to do so in a manner

that still maintained the separate identity of the Festspiele, while being able to take advantage of the possibilities for greater scale opened up by the newly completed Grosses Festspielhaus. After von Karajan's death his successors at the Berlin Philharmonic – Sir Georg Solti, Claudio Abbado and Sir Simon Rattle – acted as directors of the Easter Festival, which includes orchestral concerts as well as choral works. In 2009 concerns about the high costs of the festival led to an audit that uncovered financial irregularities. The managing director and the technical director were both accused of fraud to the tune of €3.6 million.¹⁶ They were replaced, but in 2011 the Berlin players gave notice that they were intending to leave Salzburg and accept a more lucrative offer from the Easter Festival in Baden-Baden. The new director of the Festival immediately signed up Christian Thielemann and the Dresden Staatskapelle who made their debut in 2013 with a performance of Wagner's 'Parsifal'.¹⁷

The inaugural Whitsun Festival in 1973 comprised a three-day event over the Pentecost religious festival weekend featuring the Berlin Philharmonic. This new festival was established as a result of the success of the Easter Festival which had adopted a subscription model of ticketing – von Karajan's favourite device for building a loyal core audience. The outcome was that very few tickets were available once the preferential sales had been processed. The Whitsun Festival was meant to benefit those denied tickets at Easter. After von Karajan's death the programme was opened up to other orchestras and in 1998 the festival was taken over by the administration of the Salzburg Summer Festival. Now of four-day duration, it includes opera, choral works and concerts.

Many of the other festivals that have developed in Salzburg stay close to the city's reputation in classical music, including contemporary works (see table 4.2). The Mozarteum, for instance, introduced a Mozart Festival in 1956 to mark the bicentennial of his birth. It takes place over the course of a week that straddles Mozart's birthday (27 January). In 2019, it comprised sixty-five events and covered all genres of his work. More recent additions, however, offer a broader mix of culture. The Salzburg Culture Days, which were started in 1972, aimed to spread the cultural offer into the autumn. These range in content from classical music, opera and choral singing to popular and contemporary productions with street theatre and a children's festival. The Jazz Festival, 'Jazz and the City' was inaugurated in 1999 and offers 100 concerts over five days every October using bars and cafés in the Altstadt as well as more formal performance spaces such as the Mozarteum. The Dialoge Festival für Musik, another development founded to celebrate the two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of Mozart's birth in 2006, offers music, dance and visual art but also covers literature and film, with the intention of trying 'to break up the traditional concert protocol'.18 The emphasis on contemporary classical music is manifested in two distinctive festivals. The first, Aspekte (established 1977) is a biennial festival of contemporary Austrian and international composers. The second, Crossroads (2005) is organized around a competition for students of music composition, who can also nominate an

Festival	Year Founded	Timing	Content	Vénues
Mozart Week	1956	January	Classical music focusing on Mozart to mark the anniversary of his birth	Mozarteum; Landestheater; Grosses Festspielhaus; Felsenreitschule; Haus für Mozart; Salzburg Puppet Theatre; Mozart's Residence;
Aspekte Festival	1977	March	Contemporary music festival – 'music of our time' – Austrian and international composers	Mozarteum; Landestheater; Kollegienkirch; Müllner Kirch
Salzburg Easter Festival	1967	March/April	Classical music, orchestral concerts and opera	Grosses Festspielhaus; SZENE; University Great Hall; Museum of Modern Art Mönchsberg
Salzburg Whitsun Festival	1973	May	Classical music, concerts and opera	Haus für Mozart; Mozarteum; Felsenreitschule; Grosses Festspielhaus;
Sommerszene	1971	June	International performing arts festival (performance, dance, theatre, visual arts and music)	SZENE; ARGEkultur, Central Station forecourt
Salzburg Festival	1920	July/ August	A festival of opera, theatre, orchestral concerts and choral works	Grosses Festspielhaus; Haus für Mozart; Felsemeitschule; Landestheater; Kollegienkirche; University Great Hall; Residenz; Domplatz; Mozarteum; Hörsaal; Stefan Zweig Centre; Mozarteum University; SZENE; Museum of Modern Art Mönchsberg
Salzburg Culture Days	1972	October	First class productions and concerts - cutting across genres from Mozart to Hip-hop	Salzburg Cathedral; Mozarteum, Grosses Festspielhaus
Jazz in the City	1999	October	Opening up the Old City for Jazz – in business, open spaces and performance spaces	Mozarteum; Kavernen; Stieglkeller; churches; bars; cafés; restaurants; hotels
Dialoge Festival	2006	November	Contemporary music festival with dance, literature, the visual arts and film.	Mozarteum; St Peters; SZENE
Crossroads International 2005 Contemporary Music Festival 2005	_{al} 2005	November	International contemporary music festival featuring new compositions	Mozarteum
Salzburg Advent Singing	1946	November/ December	Alpine folk traditions reworked into an annual nativity pageant	Grosses Festspielhaus
Winterfest	2000	December/ January	Festival of contemporary circus	Volksgarten
Source: Compiled by the authors.	authors.			

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ensemble to perform their work. The sixteen winners make up the festival programme.

A number of the festivals listed in table 4.2 date from the relaxation in 1970 of the law forbidding events to take place in the summer period in competition with the Festspiele. Der Szene der Jugend, for example, was founded almost immediately as a statement of opposition to the main summer festival, with the latter seen as overly classical and extremely expensive. This festival initially offered typical fringe events, with free street performances and some cheap ticketed events (Gallup, 1987, p. 176). Over time, however, it became more professional and formal in its structure and organization, taking over the Stadtkino (an old cinema on Anton-Neumayr-Platz) in 1986 to provide offices, a theatre and other performance spaces. The festival still seeks to be avant-garde in content, attracting 12,000 visitors to 120 events in 2019.19 Many other festivals essentially fill up spaces in the festival calendar. The Winterfest, for example, occupies six weeks from November through to January with an emphasis on contemporary circus. This was founded in 2000 and takes place in the Volksgarten in the southeast of the city. Loosely attempting to be a mini-Tivoli gardens by the Salzach, it brings together international circus acts to perform in big tops with a surrounding programme of music, literature and gourmet food.

Contemporary Festival

The Salzburg Festival celebrated its centenary in 2020, sadly with a much truncated programme due to COVID-19. Nevertheless, it was an opportunity to look back at how much had been achieved over the years and gauge the distance travelled by both the Festspiele and the city. In becoming a Festspielstadt, Salzburg has retained a more focused cultural offer than most of its competitors. The classical repertoire and high arts remain firmly at the forefront of its festival programme, even if the contemporary compositions and *avant-garde* staging have sometimes shocked more conservative sensibilities. The 2019 Festival report gives impressive statistics: 199 performances in forty-three days at sixteen venues, with forty-two opera performances, fifty-five dramas, and eighty-one concerts. A grand total of 231,275 tickets were sold for performances and there were 270,584 attendances overall including the dress rehearsals and special events.²⁰

Funding, as we have seen, was generous in the post-war period until the elections of 2000 when government cutbacks reduced the subsidy to the Festspiele and insisted on a balanced budget. This has forced the festival to develop new funding streams particularly from sponsorship. The total festival budget for 2019 was €61.76 million, of which public funding made up 22 per cent of the total with the Salzburg Tourism Fund contributing a further 5 per cent. Ticket sales account for 45 per cent of revenue, sponsorship 18 per cent, and miscellaneous 10 per cent, which means that the festival generated 73 per cent of the income itself.²¹ The reliance on ticket sales has long meant that

SALZBURG

ticket prices are high – a common complaint levelled at the festival over the years. Ticket prices in 2019 varied between $\in 5$ and $\in 450$, although half of all tickets were in the $\in 5$ to $\in 150$ range. Nevertheless, over the years the support of the city has provided a set of venues designed specifically for the festival's requirements, along with periodic upgrades needed to keep abreast of technical developments. Compared to the other case studies in this volume, the festival has not had to struggle in the way Venice has with its long battle to find sufficient spaces in the city or Edinburgh fighting for customized performance spaces and having to make do with refurbishments of Victorian buildings. As always when good venues are provided, it provides opportunities for other festival events and performances to take place at other times of year.

Salzburg has sought to develop its cultural offer beyond the performing arts by investing in museums and galleries. For example, it flirted with the Guggenheim Foundation in the 1990s. This was a time when the Guggenheim was keen to create partnerships to develop galleries outside its base in New York in order to show its collections, 97 per cent of which were in storage. This was famously achieved in Bilbao, with a number of other cities seeking the 'Bilbao' effect to boost their tourist sectors (Rybczynski, 2002). In the case of Salzburg, plans were drawn up by Hans Hollein for an \$81 million gallery to grace the Mönchsberg. This postmodern statement comprised a giant rotunda carved out of the rock 'ringed with staircases and ramps' echoing the Frank Lloyd Wright Guggenheim in New York, with a cupola-styled skylight on the top of the mountain. Projected visitors numbers of 650,000 alarmed some and were greeted with scepticism by others.²² In the event, the excessive cost led to the creation of a more modest Museum of Modern Art in 2004, designed by the Munich architects Friedrich Hoff Zwink. This finally achieved what so many previous plans had failed to do; namely, occupy the space on the Mönchsberg at the spot once occupied by the Café Winkler (see figure 4.1). The project complements the Rupertinum, an early Baroque building in the centre of the Altstadt which was renovated in 1983 to supply gallery space and to hold the Museum's extensive archives and library.23

Concerns exist about overstimulating tourism, although these are nothing new in Salzburg. Complaints about the influx of festival visitors in the summer combined with increasing numbers of day visitors led to charges that the city was selling its soul to the devil; perhaps more Jederstadt (every town) than Festspielstadt (Gallup, 1987, p. 164). These fears were ramped up further after the international success of 'The Sound of Music', released by Twentieth Century Fox in 1965. The readily identifiable settings allowed Salzburg to be marketed as the 'Sound of Music City'. A brochure of that name lists fifteen film locations in and around the city including the Felsenreitschule where the von Trapp family participate in the Salzburg Festival before escaping into Switzerland (SCTO, 2016). In 2018, offical figures showed that 8.1 million tourists visited Salzburg, accounting for 29.8 million overnight stays. However, the large

numbers of day trippers to the city, particularly arriving as part of coach tours, are seen as a problem.

Understandably, this concentration of longer-stay visitors is of considerable value to the local and regional economy. A 2016 Salzburg Chamber of Commerce economic impact study²⁴ based on a survey of more than 3,000 festival visitors provided a full picture of this and other aspects of the relationship between Salzburg and the Festspiele. It estimated that festival visitors contributed €183 million to the Salzburg economy, supported 2,800 jobs and contributed €75 million in state taxes. It showed that the festival attracts a particularly loyal audience with high numbers of repeat visits, with 80 per cent of those surveyed having attended at least six festivals and 47 per cent more than twenty. On average they attend five performances and spend €550 on tickets. Their demand for 'sophisticated hotels and top-quality gastronomy' has influenced the nature of the hospitality industry (as shown by the concentration of Michelin-style restaurants) and they spend freely on high-class consumer goods, especially clothing and jewellery. They are particularly valuable tourists because of their length of stay - on average six nights compared to the overall average of 1.7 nights for Salzburg tourists. This suggests a loyal affluent visitor profile for the festivals.

Conclusion

These financial aspects of the Festival have always had resonances that go beyond economics. It was noted above that ticket prices were high and whilst it is true that half the tickets cost between \in 5 and \in 150, it is equally true that the other half cost between \in 150 and \in 450. Even by the 1960s, the Salzburg Festspiele had become the most expensive festival in Europe (Gallup, 1987, p. 162). Efforts have been made in recent years to promote greater inclusiveness by making tickets available for younger audiences and for local residents. Rehearsals and dress rehearsals have been opened up at reduced rates. By contrast, there are initiatives that offer a free festival experience such as the Siemens Festival Nights in Kapitalplatz which started in 2002. Here big screen recordings of festival performances are presented nightly to audiences of 2,500 with the Hohensalzburg Fortress as a backdrop (see figure 4.10). A free festival party, aimed at the general public, launches the festival over two days, although the event itself is strictly ticketed.

Yet it remains the case that exclusiveness comes with expensiveness. The Festspiele still retains a sense of being an elite festival for affluent patrons, with opera and classical music performed before an elegantly dressed clientele. Indeed, there is a dress code:

Depending on the event, after sunset an appropriate men's outfit would involve a tuxedo or suit. Women should also dress appropriate to the performance they are attending: for an opera, an

SALZBURG



Figure 4.10. The audience gathers in the Kapitelplatz for the Siemens Festival Nights open-air screenings of Salzburg Festival operas, August 2012. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

evening gown is a must, whereas a stylish dress or suit will suffice for a concert or play. In the afternoon or at less glamorous venues, a more casual look is quite appropriate. However, street clothes such as T-shirts, tank tops and tennis shoes are pretty much always taboo.²⁵

These expectations fuel the sense that only a well-heeled and affluent clientele are likely to meet the requirements for attendance. In this respect, the Salzburg Festspiele is unusual for a festival, but is not unique. It is a feature that it shares most notably with the City of Cannes and its International Film Festival – the subject of the ensuing chapter.

Notes

1. In Mozart's time, this was called Hannibalplatz (Hannibal Square).

2. For more information, see Keefe (2003) and Melograni (2007). On the question of the patronage for musicians offered by aristocratic and regal courts that had provided patronage for musicians throughout central and southern Europe, see Fenlon (1981).

3. The architects, however, did undertake a separate venture in Salzburg. See discussion of the Stadttheater below.

4. He had moved to Salzburg as Government director for the Arbeiter-Versicherungsanstalt (Workers Accident Insurance Company).

5. Silverman (2013, p. 162) discusses how the Salzburg Festival was conceived as an Austrian project, with deep Catholic roots distanced from 'red' Vienna and its cosmopolitan and Jewish community. Jewish

artists, writers, musicians and conductors were treated with suspicion, even Hugo von Hofmannsthal – a Catholic whose Jewish grandfather had converted to Catholicism – was often referred to as a 'career Catholic'.

6. For example, von Hofmannsthal had written the libretto for Strauss's 'Der Rosenkavalier', which was premiered in Berlin in 1911 in a production directed by Max Reinhardt.

7. As part of the connections that existed amongst the Austrian intelligentsia, see comments in chapter 6 about the Bings' visit to von Hofmannsthal's widow, Gertie, in Oxford.

8. 'Everyman' is the usual shortened title of 'The Somonyng of Everyman' ('The Summoning of Everyman').

9. VIZUS (2020) 'House for Mozart'. Available at: https://www.theatre-architecture.eu/en/db/?theatre Id=327.

10. Some like Richard Strauss were powerful enough to resist the pressure, for example, ignoring explicit instructions not to attend the Salzburg Festival in 1934 (Potter, 1983, p. 411).

11. The French government at this point considered setting up a Mozart festival in France as 'an equivalent festival to Salzburg' for Bruno Walter and Toscanini, but the idea never progressed (Levi, 2020, p. 111).

12. Walter's appearances included a performance of Mahler's 'Lied von der Erde' with Kathleen Ferrier; a partnership that was forged in the first Edinburgh International Festival in 1947.

13. Klaus became Austrian Chancellor between 1964 and 1970.

14. Salzburg Festival (2020) Available at: https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/en/photos/dreaming-of-a-fairies-temple-artistic-interventions-regarding-festival-theatres-never-built-2.

15. It had occupied the site since 1924 but was moved to a new location a short distance away at the Ursulinen Kloster (a former nunnery).

16. One fled the country and the other attempted suicide (Thompson, 2011).

17. Allison, J. (2012) Salzburg Easter Festival – after 45 years of musical history, the Berliner Philharmoniker have graced the prestigious Salzburg Easter Festival for the final time. *Daily Telegraph*, 23 April. Available at: http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/opera/9221797/Salzburg-Easter-Festival-Seven-magazine-review.html.

18. Anon (2020) Dialoge Festival für Musik. Available at: https://www.salzburg.info/en/events/tips/ dialoge-festival, accessed 9 July 2020.

19. Szene Salburg (2020) 'Profile'. https://www.szene-salzburg.net/en/profile).

20. Salzburg Festival (2019) Final Report on the 2019 Salzburg Festival. Available at: https://www.sfsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Final-Press-Report-2019.pdf.

21. Ibid.

22. Fowler, B. (1990) Salzburg Guggenheim offshoot exists in hopes and blueprint. *New York Times*, 13 August. Available at: http://www.nytimes.com/1990/08/13/arts/salzburg-guggenheim-offshoot-exists-in-hopes-and-blueprints.html?pagewanted=all&src=pm.

23. Museum der Moderne Salzburg Mönchsberg (2020). Available at: https://www.museumdermoderne. at/en/about/sites-institutions/moenchsberg/.

24. Salzburger Festspiele (2017) Motor für die Wirtschaft, Exzellenz-Infusion für den Standort. Wertschöpfungsanalyse der Salzburger Festspiele. Available at:https://www.salzburgerfestspiele.at/cms/ wp-content/uploads/2018/11/2017_wks_standortreport_salzburgerfestspiele.pdf#page=33.

25. Heuberger, J. (nd) Last but not least: dress code. Available at: https://www.salzburg.info/en/magazin/city-feeling/the-festival-for-everyone_a_3404059.

CHAPTER 5

Cannes

A film festival is more than just movies; it's also the drama that goes with them. But these turn out to be minor episodes in the bigger narrative. The promenade at Cannes, the Croisette, is a case in point. You have films from all over the world coupled with the frenetic drama of the red carpet and the delightful backdrop of the Côte d'Azur. (This last detail is not insignificant. It would be hard to imagine the myth of the movie starlet being invented at a festival on some mountain top.)

Gilles Jacob (2011, p. 9)

Interviewer: Are you attending the Cannes film festival this year? *Christina Aguilera*: I hope so, where is it being held...?¹

More perhaps than for other festive gatherings, the history of the film festival can only be told properly in light of the broader narratives that surround a single medium of communication. Throughout its formative development, film attracted enormous interest because it was popularly believed that an audience could be easily convinced about the truth of whatever message the filmmaker wanted to put across (Reeves, 1999; Moine and Kötzing, 2017). The early festivals therefore reflected the ways in which strategies of film production, distribution and exhibition were entangled with powerful interests, all keen to use cinema for their own ends (Segal and Blumauer, 2011, p. 156). Although clearly overlapping, those interests can be broadly characterized as either political or economic in orientation.

With regard first to political interests, chapter 3 showed how the regime determinedly sought to use the Mostra Cinematographica di Venezia in Mussolini's Italy as an instrument for propaganda. It was not an isolated case. The character of most of the other early festivals listed in table 3.2 (*supra*), for example, was shaped by the desire of ruling regimes to use cinema for ideological purposes (e.g. see Barghoorn, 1960; Kallis, 2011; Gutierrez, 2016). Equally, the re-establishment of peacetime relations after 1945 saw the launch of a spate of new film festivals; some intended as forums for the repair of 'the politically devastated relations ... between winners and losers' (Zarandona, 2016, p. 785) and others as tools for communicating politically-grounded belief systems. Notably the Berlin International Film Festival ('Berlinale'), initiated in West Berlin in 1951, was 'firmly rooted within the geopolitical power play of the Cold War' (De Valck, 2007, p. 72), with members of staff of the Occupying Powers playing important roles in initiating the project in the first place.

Turning to economic interests, it is important to recall the dichotomy that chapter 1 drew between film festivals with 'business' or 'audience' orientations. To some extent the distinction can never be complete since, as the writer Garson Kanin remarked, '[t]he trouble with movies as a business is that it's an art, and the trouble with movies as art is that it's a business' (cited in Costanzo, 1995, p. 79). Certainly the vast majority of film festivals broadly fit the latter category, being small-scale affairs that prioritize attracting filmgoers over the selling of films, and consciously seek to sustain local filmmaking cultures through promoting national or regional cinema (Tascón, 2015, p. 45). Nevertheless, the largest and most prestigious festivals - those that preoccupy the press and set the standards for the medium - illustrate the business model. Despite their undoubted role in defining 'great cinema' through their selection of films for showing and their award ceremonies, these festivals work closely with the film industry, typically privileging filmmakers, distributors, sales agents, sponsors, publicists, investors and celebrities above general audiences.² They effectively function as 'nodes of global business in which films circulate as commodities' (Wong, 2011, p. 129); a process described in the pre-digital world as an annual round of 'movable fests and caravans of film cans' (Elsaesser, 2005, p. 103). Moreover, the commercial realities are that key players such as sales agents and distributors are sufficiently powerful 'to decide what films will play where' (Peranson, 2009, p. 30). In such circumstances, the place of screening may be primarily significant for offering awards that confer a statement of quality, which in turn assists the selling process. From the filmmakers' point of view, there is marketable value in their movies just being selected for screening at the most prestigious events regardless of whether or not they win prizes. As Elsaesser (2005, p. 87) observed: 'No poster of an independent film can do without the logo of one of the world's prime festivals'.

For its part 'Cannes' – as the Cannes International Film Festival is generally known without further elaboration – has exemplified and indeed pioneered

and codified many of the tendencies inherent in the business model. Lauded by commentators as the 'Mecca of film festivals', Cannes is said to stand 'at the pinnacle of the industry' and to represent 'the second largest [media event] next to the Olympics' (McGrath, 2011, pp. 6, 9). Its importance to the city's economy is unquestionable. During the twelve days of the 2017 festival (17-28 May), for example, the city's resident population rose from around 74,000 to over 180,000, with the local hotels taking around 15 per cent of their annual proceeds during that period. Around 45,000 accredited participants registered for some part of the proceedings, of whom around 4,500 were journalists attending either the Festival or its selling forum (the Marché du Film). In 2017, the Marché itself had 12,360 registered participants (principally film directors, distributors and producers) and attracted the involvement of 5,402 companies.³ Less prosaically, an estimated 500 hired staff were deployed on-site at the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès alone in 2017 to undertake routine tasks of searching, surveillance and maintaining order; a figure that does not include an unspecified number of uniformed and plain clothed gendarmes and soldiers patrolling the surrounding area to add a measure of deterrence (see also chapter 9).

Servicing the demands arising from this influx creates income and employment, *inter alia*, for hoteliers, caterers, transport operators, event organizers, and vendors of festival-related products and souvenirs. The presence of an extensive cast of media professionals, captains of industry, and celebrities itself has a variety of spinoffs. First, the aura of red carpet glamour provided by the festival and the accompanying programme of glittering receptions, balls and parties allows the municipality to gain an allure by association when seeking to sell the city as a host destination for other events. Secondly, the Cannes film festival is seen as a major selling opportunity by manufacturers of upmarket products in the fields of haute couture, watchmaking and perfumery, who annually exhibit their wares at festival time; frequently but not exclusively in conjunction with the city's existing luxury goods sector. All add further multiplier effects to the festival's pecuniary impact.

The current chapter analyses the Cannes International Film Festival in light of these considerations. It opens by tracing the municipality's conscious efforts to develop the exclusiveness of its resort through positive intervention in creating facilities and infrastructure. The ensuing section examines the determined manner in which the city latched on to a late-1930s French national initiative to stage a film festival and successfully lobbied to stage it, only to see its last-minute cancellation due to the outbreak of war in September 1939. The next sections examine the rapid revival and more gradual consolidation of the initial idea after the Second World War. They show the way in which the municipal authorities recognized the importance of investing in appropriate venues to secure the festival's future as the premier in its field. We then highlight Cannes's role as a marquee event that anchors a pan-artistic and multidisciplinary programme of festivals and congresses that spans an ever-greater proportion of the year.

'Cannes is Class'

During the 1920s, an advertising slogan proclaimed: 'Menton's dowdy, Monte's brass, Nice is rowdy, Cannes is class!' Although not necessarily devised by the city itself,⁴ this oft-repeated piece of doggerel accurately reflects how those promoting Cannes would have wished to represent their resort relative to its regional rivals; namely, as somewhere with a reputation for social exclusivity that transcended merely being a brash playground for the rich. It was also an aura that the promoters of the International Film Festival tried hard to capture and put to best advantage.

While full discussion of how the Côte d'Azur acquired its association with wealth, elegance and glamorous lifestyles lies beyond the scope of the current discussion (see Nash, 1979; Löfgren, 1999; Silver, 2001; Davison et al., 2013), there is broad acceptance that the appeal of Cannes specifically originated in its accepted standing as a wintering ground for a cosmopolitan elite (Ostrowska, 2017). The key player was Henry Brougham, lately Lord Chancellor of Great Britain, even though his initial involvement came about for serendipitous reasons. Brougham first visited in 1834 accompanied by his daughter Eleanor, then suffering from the advanced stages of 'consumption' (tuberculosis). Popular medicine at that time favoured climatotherapy, with favourable climatic conditions such as those encountered around the Mediterranean held to offer at least temporary remedial benefit for serious ailments (Weber, 1899; Percebois, 2015). In December 1834, the Broughams had set out for Italy but their journey was halted at the River Var, then France's national frontier, due to the Kingdom of Sardinia⁵ imposing quarantine restrictions in response to the cholera epidemic then raging in Provence. After failing to secure his preferred option of renting a villa at Antibes until the border reopened, Brougham reluctantly found accommodation at the Auberge Pinchinat, 10 kilometres to the west at Cannes.

The trip to Genoa and Rome as originally planned was never completed. Brougham was captivated by Cannes's mild and invigorating climate, bright sunshine, clarity of light, and picturesque harbour set in a natural amphitheatre of hills. As one commentator noted: 'so pleased was his lordship with the place and its climate that he determined to buy land and build himself a house' (FMS, 1878, p. 18). In January 1835, just eight days after first arriving, he purchased an extensive plot of farmland at Croix-des-Gardes on the western edge of Cannes and commissioned Louis Larras, a local architect and civil engineer, to design an Italianate-styled villa, later named the Château Éléonore-Louise. This was completed in 1836.

Brougham spent each winter there from 1840 to his death in 1868 (Houser, 1972, p. 131), but the villa was not purely a retreat. Although disengaging from British public affairs, he became actively involved in the life of the town. Through his political connections, most notably with King Louis-Philippe, he sponsored proposals for road and harbour improvements in 1838 and was

instrumental in founding a water utility company, which helped to regulate Cannes's water supplies and to improve sanitation and public health.⁶ His residency itself drew a steady stream of titled visitors and supplied significant encouragement for other British aristocrats to follow suit and build winter homes (Ring, 2011). Their numbers quickly gained sufficient critical mass for Croix-des-Gardes to become known as the 'English Quarter'.⁷ By the 1850s, the British travel writer Captain Edmund Spencer commented on the contributions that the expatriates made to local society, even though he disparaged their ostentatious architectural taste:

English gold and English enterprise have wrought their usual wonders at Cannes, as elsewhere in the land of Gaul, where the wandering islanders have pitched their tent. Castles and villas have sprung, and are springing into existence, moulded according to the fancies of their owners, who it must be confessed, in the erection of some of their dwellings appear more solicitous to eclipse the neat, unpretending cottage of [Lord Brougham] ... than to display architectural taste and skill. (Spencer, 1853; cited in Thorold, 2008, p. 119)

Yet tasteful or otherwise, their example was closely followed by other expatriate communities, including Americans, Germans and Swiss. An area close to the Cap de la Croisette on the town's eastern margins, for example, attracted an exclusive community of aristocratic Russians that included the Empress Consort Maria Alexandrovna (Nash, 1979). They, like others, primarily came to overwinter. During the 1911–1912 season, for instance, almost half of Cannes's population of around 30,000 people were *hivernants*, of whom 30 per cent were British, 5 per cent German, 5 per cent American and 3.2 per cent Russian (Milliet-Moudon, 1986, pp. 9–10). They shaped the social calendar⁸ and exercised considerable influence over local decision-making (such as whether or not casinos should be allowed), but the key to the resort's future soon became linked to accommodating the needs of tourists.

Initially, these were primarily winter tourists. Being predominantly uppermiddle class, their arrival scarcely altered the social mix but, given that they opted for shorter stays, they sought hotels rather than commissioning villas for full seasonal occupation. This resulted in several waves of hotel construction. The first occurred in the late-1840s when the newly built Hôtels du Nord and De La Poste augmented the Pinchinat, now upgraded from an inn to a hotel. These were merely a foretaste of what was to come. A further nine establishments opened between 1859 and 1863, including the Hôtel des Princes with its luxuriant palm-fringed gardens, the neoclassical Bellevue Hôtel located in the English Quarter, and the Grand Hotel, designed in characteristically eclectic style by Laurent Vianay.⁹ The advent of a direct railway connection from Paris in April 1863, which greatly increased accessibility to the Côte d'Azur, paved the way for a new spurt of activity. A further forty-five hotels of all types opened in Cannes between 1865 and 1875 (Milliet-Moudon, 1986, p. 11). With the appearance of

abundant work in the service industries, Cannes experienced a threefold increase in population within the same period (Blume, 1992, p. 57; cited by Mazdon, 2006, p. 26).

Recognizing the possibilities and challenges that might accrue from growth, the municipality initiated a pro-active stance in order to help Cannes pursue the 'values of pleasure, wealth and refined taste' (Gade, 1982, p. 19); a stance that it has typically adopted ever since. Money was invested in appropriate landscaping and infrastructure. Plane trees were planted along the Allées de la Liberté in the old port area. In April 1864 the City Council commissioned the creation of a formal square in the town centre, which was partly created by removing the local abattoir. Over the next decade this space, then known as Lord Brougham Square,¹⁰ was landscaped with the addition of two monumental fountains and a bandstand. On the coast, the reed-fringed littoral marshes and sand dunes were gradually redeveloped from the 1850s onwards. The lengthy crescentshaped and palm-fringed Boulevard de la Croisette was completed in 1890 (Boniface and Cooper, 2005, p. 132), using infill rubble for the promenade and imported golden sand to create high-quality beaches (figure 5.1). The Croisette subsequently became the hub for further investment in luxury hotels, for example, the gothic-styled Majestic (established in 1863 but rebuilt 1926), Carlton (opened in 1911), and Martinez (opened in 1929).

Provision of high-class gambling facilities was another priority. Although only opened in 1888 the Casino des Fleurs,¹¹ located within the Hôtel Gallia in the California-Pezou district of Cannes, had closed in 1899 as part of the latter's renovation to become a resort hotel (COC, 2018). Faced with this situation,



Figure 5.1. The beach at Cannes with the Grand Hotels in the background. (*Photo*: Contemporary postcard)



Figure 5.2. Cannes Municipal Casino was inaugurated on 28 January 1907 and demolished in 1979 to be replaced by the Palais des Festivals. (*Photo:* © Municipal Archives, City of Cannes)

the municipality urgently sought to provide a successor that might stop wealthy gamblers from decamping to rival resorts along the Côte d'Azur or even further afield to Deauville and Biarritz on the Channel and Atlantic coasts, respectively. Taking advantage of a change in the gaming laws, the council sponsored the construction of the Casino Municipal. Known also as the Casino de la Jetée due to its location adjacent to the Albert-Edouard Pier in the town centre (figure 5.2), this Rococo-styled building was opened in 1907 as a broadly based entertainment centre that over time was upgraded to include a theatre and large reception rooms as well as gaming rooms (Milliet-Moudon, 1986, p. 79).

Année Zéro

Against this background the International Film Festival readily cultivated the aura of exclusiveness that the municipality tried so hard to promote, although the event's inception owed less to local initiative than to national concerns about the future of European filmmaking. France had enjoyed early leadership in the European film industry, but their American counterparts had taken significant steps towards world domination by the 1920s (Trumpbour, 2007). Notably, the major Hollywood studios had consolidated their market position by vertically integrating all aspects of the business of filmmaking from production, through publicity and distribution, to exhibition (Gomery, 1996, p. 43). Their position was further assisted by aggressive protectionism on the part of the American

government. For example, from 1920 to 1925 no more than a dozen French films a year were exhibited in the USA, of which few played to cinemas outside New York (Abel, 1996, p. 118).

Recognizing the challenge and having failed to build its own export markets, the French film industry looked for allies, in particular cooperating closely with German and Italian studios for much of the 1930s and relying heavily on sources of investment finance from those countries (Martin, 2016). The French had also participated in the Nazi-led Internationale Filmkammer (International Film Chamber) in the interests of creating a pan-European institution that could help to coordinate and expand the European market for film. The ideological slant of that body, however, produced mounting discomfort for French filmmakers; discomfort that finally became intolerable when matters came to a head at the 1938 Venice Film Festival.

As seen in chapter 3, the Venice Film Festival began in 1932 as an adjunct to the Biennale, but from 1934 onwards Rome had taken over its organization (Morandini, 1996, p. 353). The Italian Fascist government's recognition of the power of film to represent the nation and propagate its interests would affect screening policies and the award of key prizes. The signs were already apparent in 1936 when, as noted previously, the French had complained about the overrepresentation of Italian and German films in the list of prize winners. In 1937 an acclaimed French film with a powerful anti-war message, Jean Renoir's *Grande Illusion*, had been ruled out of contention for the Coppa Mussolini. Apparently at its sponsor's insistence, the prize went instead to *Scipione l'Africano*, a reverie about the Second Punic Wars that made regime-approved connections between Mussolini's Italy and the perceived glories of classical Rome.

The following year, the Venice festival authorities revealed similar ideological bias when awarding the Coppa Mussolini jointly to two films they deemed politically palatable. One, Goffredo Alessandrini's *Luciano Serra Pilota*, was a glorification of Italy's recent war in Ethiopia (for which Mussolini's son Vittorio was credited as Production Supervisor). The other, Leni Riefenstahl's epic *Olympia*,¹² dealt with the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin. Despite its iconic qualities and accepted influence on the documentary movement, the latter was in fact ineligible for the award by virtue of being a non-fiction film. The act of setting that disqualification aside further fueled convictions about the regime's awards for excellence. In protest, the French, British and American delegations walked out and announced that their countries would not participate in future Venice festivals.

A scheme for an acceptable alternative festival was quickly formulated by the historian and diplomat Philippe Erlanger. As both an accredited French delegate at the Venice Biennale and the recently appointed Director of the Association Française d'Action Artistique (AFAA) – the body that aimed to promote French cultural interests at home and abroad (Segal and Blumauer, 2011, p.

158) – Erlanger occupied a position of considerable influence in the French cinematographic establishment. His proposal was for the introduction of a Film Festival of the Free World at a suitable location in France. The idea quickly took shape for the following year once he had gained the approval of Jean Zay, the Minister of National Education and Fine Arts, and support from the American and British film industries. Implicit in the decision to establish the alternative international festival was the sense that its terms of reference would be likely to exclude films from the future Axis powers.

The next task was to find a suitable location. Despite suggestions that the festival should be staged in Paris, all other candidates selected as potential locations were spas or seaside resorts, for which the addition of a film festival, then scheduled for September, might usefully extend the tourist season (Wong, 2011, p. 39). The list included Biarritz, Deauville, Vichy, Aix-les-Bains, Le Touquet, and Algiers (then part of the French Empire) as well as Cannes. The contest, however, soon boiled down to a straightforward choice between Cannes and Biarritz (Latil, 2005, pp. 37–38). Each, it could be argued, had a glamorous appeal and had cultivated associations 'with both internationalism and a commitment to excellence in culture' (Schwartz, 2007, p. 66).

A preliminary announcement on 9 May 1939 that Biarritz had won led to feverish activity to ensure that Cannes could improve its offer. Politicians and representatives of the business community lobbied on behalf of the city. Notably, Henri Gendre, the general manager of the Grand Hotel, persuaded his colleague Georges Prade, also a councillor in Paris's local assembly, to take up matters with the Minister. Prade argued that the festival would not just 'significantly prolong the summer season', but also that:

If the festival is a success, and how can it not be, it will become a fixture. Which is not to betray a secret but to reveal a beguiling plan. An ultramodern cinema will be built, a masterpiece of technology and a true French conservatory of film. And so the first step will be complete in a cycle that should make the Côte d'Azur into the centre of one of the most important industries of modern times. The Côte d'Azur must become the Florida and the California of Europe. (Quoted in Corless and Darke, 2007, p. 14)

Hence, although maintaining that their festival would be free from ideology and nationalism and that the 'competition rules underscored that intention' (Schwartz, 2007, p. 59), the prime underpinning of the argument was municipal and national self-interest. To boost the original offer, the city council promised to use the Casino Municipal as a venue for the event with investment in stateof-the-art projection equipment. They also offered important subsidies and free accommodation to all foreign journalists and stars (Segal and Blumauer, 2011, p. 158). It was only in the medium term that the 'ultramodern cinema' would appear as promised by Georges Prade.

Their case was accepted. On 31 May 1939, the city council and the French

government signed an agreement for the staging of an International Film Festival at Cannes. For its part, Biarritz did not accept defeat passively or accept Cannes's place promotional postures as being 'Hollywood on the Côte d'Azur'. After the interruption of the war, Biarritz became the location for a short-lived counterfestival, held in 1949 and 1950, that was pointedly called the Festival of Spurned Films (Le Festival du Film Maudit). Its aim was to screen films rejected by Cannes and Venice (Latil, 2005, pp. 38–39).¹³

As announced by the AFAA in Paris at the end of June 1939, the first Cannes International Film Festival would take place over a two-week period (1–15 September 1939). As noted above, its main venue would have been the central lobby area of the Casino Municipal, which was quickly equipped as a hall suitable for large-scale screenings. A thousand seats were installed along with audiovisual equipment. The smaller theatre was also prepared as a projection room, which would be reserved for use by the Jury and the press (Périssé, 2018). It was emphasized that these were only interim measures since, from the outset, it was anticipated that a new 2,000-seater cinema would be constructed in time for the 1940 festival.¹⁴

Further details were soon released. Jean Zay would be the Festival's President, with Louis Lumière as Honorary President. Choosing the latter was a symbolic gesture. With his brother Auguste, Lumière pioneered French filmmaking and cinematographic technology (Elsaesser, 1990, pp. 63-85). As such, his appointment looked back to France's early leadership in the industry and expressed the state's continuing commitment to its future progress (Loiperdinger and Elzer, 2004). At the outset, there was a dilemma. The stated purpose for founding Cannes was to 'encourage the development of the cinematographic arts in all its forms and to create among all film producing countries a spirit of collaboration', but the festival simultaneously excluded Italy, Germany and Japan to 'ensure fair competition' (Schwartz, 2007, p. 59). France itself would compete as a co-equal nation, with films nominated by the nine participant nations, each of which had a seat on the adjudicating panel. There would have been a remarkably generous array of awards on offer: overall prizes for excellence (Grands Prix du Festival International du Film) to the directors of what were judged the best picture and the best documentary and cartoon films, with lesser awards for the best short subjects in a variety of categories. The best films of each participant country would also win prizes.15

There was little pretence that this would be a festival for the masses. Admission to the screenings of premieres would be by invitation only. Sideevents and receptions to aid and abet the selling process, especially for distributors, were strictly by ticket or badge. The key promotional strategy was to attract Hollywood glitterati to confer status on the fledgling event (De Valck, 2016). This was successfully achieved. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) rented a large vessel to transport its retinue of contracted studio actors ostentatiously across the Atlantic in a 'steamship of stars' (Corless and Darke, 2007, p. 15). A

pasteboard replica of Notre-Dame de Paris was built on the beach to promote RKO Radio Pictures' film *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (dir. William Dieterle, 1939). The Carlton, Grand and other large resort hotels staged sumptuous receptions for visitors, with the Côte d'Azur's social elite turning out to mingle with the Hollywood stars (Turan, 2002, p. 19).

The 1939 festival, however, was over before it had begun (Traverso, 2011; Loubes, 2016). The tense international atmosphere that had been building during the preparations for Cannes finally culminated in war. *The Times* (London) had already reported at the end of August that the opening screenings of films had been put back to 10 September.¹⁶ One showing of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* did take place at a private reception in the smaller theatre at the Casino on 31 August, but the German invasion of Poland the following day and the subsequent declaration of war by France and Great Britain two days later saw the start of general mobilization. The foreign participants quickly departed.

Remarkably, the project remained pending throughout the War (Bresson and Brun, 1982, pp. 27-29); indeed if there was no festival until 1946 'it was not for lack of trying' (Schwartz, 2007, p. 61). During the 'phoney war', the 'combined vested interests of Cannes hoteliers and the French film industry buoyed Erlanger in keeping the idea alive, and the festival was rescheduled, first for Christmas 1939, then for the following February, and finally for Easter 1940' (Corless and Darke, 2007, p. 15). The invasion of France in May 1940 and the subsequent occupation of the north and west of the country left Cannes under the rule of Marshal Pétain's puppet administration in Vichy. Even then, the festival idea was retained: 'a version was conceived for May 1942, not as a festival ... but as an "Exposition International du Film" (ibid). Discussions also continued with regard to creating a new central venue for film screenings. Not surprisingly given both the national and international contexts, these various initiatives also failed to materialize but the idea that there was unfinished business from 1939 persisted. One expression was the prizes that were not awarded at the time. As a token of retrieving and revalorizing the past, a panel convened in 2002 to award the Grand Prix Louis Lumière (later the Palme d'Or) retrospectively to the American film Union Pacific (dir. Cecil B. DeMille, 1939). In the process, 1939 took its place within the numbered sequence of the Cannes International Film Festivals, albeit as its Année Zéro (Vidal, 1997, p. 2).

Revival

The rapid return of Cannes after the war reflected the fact that the resuscitation of the idea for an International Film Festival fitted the immediate interests of the nation, the city and the film industry. For the nation, reinstating the festival was a gesture towards re-establishing a 'thread of continuity' by bringing back an element of pre-war normality to cultural life (Stanley-Price, 2007, p. 1) and helping to rebuild French national identity (Kelly, 2004). The need to restore

the health of a film industry that had struggled under restrictions, censorship and prohibitions imposed by the German occupation was also of paramount importance.

For the city, the decision to re-launch the festival underscored the desire to recover the possibilities offered by the original proposal, now augmented by the pressing need to resuscitate the tourism economy and re-assert Cannes's glamorous image. Indeed, some critics argued that this impulse was so strong that the early festivals 'had little to do with cinema; they were *fêtes mondaines* (social occasions) which used cinema as a pretext for their existence' (Mazdon, 2006, p. 24, citing Billard, 1997). Further urgency was added by concerns about competitors' activities. The Venice Mostra was to be revived (see below) and there were rumours that the principality of Monaco was also working on a film festival project, albeit nothing came of that scheme in the short-term.¹⁷

For the film industry, Cannes would play a significant part in cultural diplomacy. Film had featured disproportionately in negotiations over American aid to Europe in the aftermath of war and particular sensitivity had arisen in France over the sudden release of a backlog of Hollywood movies that stretched back to 1939. Yet amid bitter discussions over quotas (Ulff-Møller, 2001, pp. 135–153), it was recognized that this was a mutually beneficial moment to re-establish good relationships between the French and American film industries (Schwartz, 2007, p. 62). There was also concern to balance being a festival for the 'Free World' with flying the flag for internationalism. Despite the Cold War, Cannes remained open to films from the Soviet Union and its satellite countries. As Vanessa Schwartz (*ibid.*, p. 57) pointed out:

the history of the Festival describes the forging of a collaborative film culture. At Cannes, nations, including the United States, coexisted, cooperated, and coproduced. A confluence of certain vital elements allowed the Festival to succeed: the association of France and the Riviera with cultural cosmopolitanism, the Festival's creation of a press juggernaut, and the transformation of this spot on the Riviera into a literal crossroads for the world filmmaking community all conspired to make the Festival the world's largest film market.

These outcomes, however, were not guaranteed when the original festival concept resurfaced after the Liberation in 1944. The organizing committee, which reconvened in April 1945, optimistically proposed staging the festival in September of that year, but that proposal failed to appreciate the realities of contemporary life. Besides budgetary constraints and shortage of resources, the major hotels had been requisitioned. Cannes still served as the officers' billet in the United States Riviera Recreational Area,¹⁸ with the hotels accommodating servicemen or acting as military hospitals. Inevitable delays in re-assigning forces before demobilization plus logistic problems led to acceptance that September of the following year was more realistic. An administrative structure led by Robert Favre Le Bret (Director of the Paris Opera) was created that would oversee the

festival's re-establishment and long-term growth. Le Bret was Secretary-General until 1970 and thereafter President.

The years between 1946 and 1951 featured uncertainties caused by funding and rivalries with Venice. The first festival held between 20 September and 5 October 1946 proved a considerable success. Supported by the French state, with the government contributing 89 per cent of the event budget, it drew twenty-one participating nations. Significantly it enjoyed enthusiastic backing from the US film industry which readily understood that this was a trade fair that could not be ignored (Corless and Darke, 2007, pp. 25–26). Its firework displays, processions and generously provisioned receptions contrasted with the prevailing greyness of postwar austerity. However, what might be done as a 'one-off' statement to re-launch French cinematographic and political ambitions might not be a lasting commitment in terms of resources. The festival was granted a hybrid administrative status in 1947. Roughly equivalent to becoming a non-profit organization, it meant that the Festival 'because of its general public interest, would and could receive government money' (Schwartz, 2007, p. 64), but the sums forthcoming were not assured.

The resurfacing of the old rivalry with Venice also brought the need for careful negotiations, especially over timing. Although both international film festivals were scheduled for the autumn, the dates were staggered to minimize conflict between the two. Venice took place from 31 August to 15 September 1946 but with only limited justification for being termed 'international' since, with the exception of one American film, it screened films entirely from France and Italy. The relative standings of the two festivals, however, remained an open contest. Looking ahead, the French government clearly felt that there was insufficient demand and inadequate resources for more than one international film festival per year, with François Mitterrand, then Secretary of State for Arts and Letters, announcing that such a festival could only take place in France every two years (Latil, 2005).

Mindful that it was mutually beneficial if timings were coordinated so that potential participants did not have to choose between the festivals with regard to film screenings, the two organizing groups and their respective governments reached an accord (Bresson and Brun, 1982, p. 31). Under the new arrangement, the two festivals would operate on an alternating biennial basis, with each hosting a major international event every other year and a film week without international competition in the off year (Schwartz, 2007, p. 64). To start the sequence, Venice would have the international festival for 1947, with Cannes hosting a national film gathering (Périssé, 2018). Cannes, however, could not take up entitlement to stage an international festival in 1948 because the French government refused the necessary credits at a time of national austerity. The financial situation was similar in 1950, when again there was no international film festival at Cannes, but by then the proliferation of festivals (see table 3.2) questioned whether there was any need to behave as if there was still a global

duopoly. In 1951, it was decided that Cannes would again be annual, although would move to the spring (3–20 April). This was further adjusted to May in 1957; a timing that has remained ever since.

Finding a Home

The years immediately after 1945 saw renewed efforts to find a permanent home for film screenings. The first International Film Festival in September 1946 returned to the central hall of the Municipal Casino as had been planned for 1939, but technical hitches and conflicts of use made this only acceptable as a temporary measure. A new Palais with state-of-the-art audiovisual facilities, as promised when bidding for the festival in 1939, was thus required. Over time, there would be two such venues. The first was the Palais des Festivals which functioned from 1947 to 1982. For the purpose of differentiation, this was later called the Palais Croisette. The second was the substantially larger Palais des Festivals et des Congrès, which has served Cannes's mushrooming festival and conference programme since 1983.

The municipality played a central role in creating these venues. Times might not have been propitious for procuring a custom-built venue for the 1946 festival and negotiations with Venice also seemed to question whether such provision was strictly necessary for what was as yet a small festival that would only be international in alternate years. Nevertheless, the city council was fully aware of the noises that other French cities were making about establishing their own events. Cannes might have received the nod from central government for the 1939 festival, but there was no long-term guarantee that the state would adhere to that decision. Certainly the French government's prevailing unwillingness to pledge resources generated unease about its commitment to Cannes.

Concerned therefore to cement their city's status as *the* place for a French international film festival, the council agreed to provide resources for a formal setting that could re-assert Cannes's credentials. Understandably in light of economic and social conditions, the negotiations required for achieving that goal proved torturous. The desired location was a plot of war-damaged of land next to the Grand Hotel occupied by the derelict Cercle Nautique: an Italianate-style building from 1864 that once housed the headquarters of the socially exclusive Yacht Club de Cannes (Ruggiero, 2011). When originally chosen the municipality had owned the land on which the building stood but, as part of complex property negotiations, it had subsequently sold the freehold. The new owners, the property developers Société Fonciere Antin-Joubert, were not keen to relinquish a centrally located plot of land on which they held a 15-year leasehold agreement.

In order to end an impasse that threatened the prospects of constructing the festival venue in time, the City Council intervened directly (Murphy, 1947, p. 144). In early 1947, they made available a grant of 16 million francs (then

approximately \$135,000) to purchase the site. They further agreed on 20 March 1947 to supply loans amounting to a further 110 million francs (\$926,000) towards the building's construction. When considering what was required, however, the council made clear its determination that the new building could not be just for an annual or biennial film festival. As an architectural commentator (Anon, 1951, p. 64) noted:

having been chosen to host the International Film Festival, the municipality decided to construct a building that would allow not only this event but also other festivals such as music hall, music, broadcasting and congresses, parties, reunions [so that it] could be successful throughout the year. (Authors' translation)

The architects' remit reflected this requirement. Gridaine and Nau, the architectural practice that was appointed, had a reputation for Art Deco-style cinemas; an aesthetic that they brought to bear on their new commission (figure 5.3). The design involved a metal-framed building, with external façades in white rendering, and versatile interior space, but the project was constrained by having



Figure 5.3. Palais des Festivals (Palais Croisette). (Photo: © Municipal Archives, City of Cannes)

to adhere to the footprint, building line and foundation depths of the former Cercle Nautique. The setback from the road with the flight of steps up to the podium level, for example, effectively reflects these considerations. Four shops displaced by the building works were also to be reinstated at the front exterior of the building (*ibid*.). Its interior incorporated a multipurpose 1,600-seater auditorium that could host theatre and orchestral and music hall concerts as well as handle film premieres. There was also a smaller hall that seated 250, broadcasting studios, office and club spaces and a variety of catering and entertainment facilities to ensure some measure of animated usage throughout the year.

Given that demolition work and site preparation only started on 20 May 1947, the time for completing the building was unrealistically short given prevailing logistical and budgetary difficulties. The metal framing, for example, arrived three weeks late and overspending exhausted the available budget. The Communist Mayor Dr Raymond Picaud successfully called on support from fraternal labour unions, which worked without pay and round the clock to bring the project to fruition. As recorded in the trade newspaper *Le Film Français* (quoted in Corless and Darke, 2007, pp. 23–24):

a few hours before the opening we were still walking through debris and gravel. But at the allotted hour, after days and nights when the construction teams had only taken a few hours' sleep (during ninety days of work), the cinema was officially opened.

This account accurately captures the makeshift nature of the venue. Although deemed sufficiently complete to proceed with the festival's opening at 9.30 pm on 12 September, the building still lacked its permanent roof, the screening area had only 1,000 out of the 1,800 chairs initially planned, the balcony was incomplete and the number of offices reserved for the festival organization proved insufficient. Violent winds encountered during a storm on the final day blew off the temporary roof, causing the awards ceremony to be relocated to the Casino Municipal. Noticeably, the official opening for the new Palais was postponed until the start of the next festival in September 1949 (Périssé, 2018).

The building would host the event until the early 1980s, although the limited amount of space quickly posed a problem. In many respects, the height and footprint restrictions placed on the original design meant that the building was always likely to be too small for a rapidly expanding festival. This was due both to the rapid expansion in the number of categories of films screened,¹⁹ each requiring timetabled slots, and to the introduction of the Marché du Film. In the early years, the latter was run in parallel with the main festival, with local cinemas and other spaces suitable for projection hired to screen and sell films that were not in competition. As Schwartz (2007, pp. 97–98) noted:

Movies were bought and sold at cafés, on the beach, and at parties... The film market developed in part, as Festival organizers grasped, because the particular geography of Cannes turned the

resort into *une cité du cinema*: the dense cluster of hotels, the Promenade de la Croisette and the beach made for excellent and easy encounters among film professionals who sought to conduct the business of buying and selling films already made or developing projects and deals.

Year by year the amount of deals being stuck increased to the point at which it became clear that it would be advantageous to both organizers and participants to incorporate the commercial activity within the festival's official proceedings. In 1959, the twelfth festival formally included the Marché, even if finding space presented familiar problems. On the first occasion, the Marché involved around thirty participants and twelve buyers and was squeezed into one screening room made out of fabric at the top of the Palais des Festivals. *Ad hoc* solutions continued even for the medium-term, using informal space and the provision of pavilions in the Village International (see below).

Yet with its rapid growth into the world's foremost film market - a status already achieved by the mid-1960s - the need for greatly enlarged and customdesigned space at the Palais became increasingly urgent. This compounded the pressures produced by continually adding new elements to the festival. A more competitive edge had emerged during the 1950s, with the introduction of an overall prize (the Palme d'Or) in 1955 and creation of various new sections to reflect the plurality of contemporary film. Some of the additional sections fitted the commercial ethos of the festival, working to expand the range of competitions and increase the number of prizes on offer. Others, intended to show films of artistic merit that either did not fit existing categories or that official juries had overlooked, ran in parallel with the main festival and had their own prizes and awards. Two of the most notable were the International Critics' Week (created in 1962) and the Directors' Fortnight (created in 1969). The former, initiated by the Syndicat Français de la Critique de Cinéma et des Films de Télévision, showcases seven feature and seven short films by new directors that the organizers believe deserve greater visibility. The Directors' Fortnight derived from the political events and protests of May 1968, which saw the twenty-first Cannes festival curtailed in support of striking students and workers. This has supplied an important forum for avant-garde cinema and for promoting the work of new directorial talent. Both events sought to open film-showings at Cannes to non-professional audiences that were unable to gain admission to the mainstream festival. Partly as a delayed response, the Festival introduced an additional competition to the Palme d'Or in 1978 in the shape of 'Un Certain Regard'. Operating within rather than parallel to the main event, it annually shows twenty films regarded as offering alternative and innovative viewpoints.

This increasing differentiation and attendant proliferation of themes and threads added to the pressure placed on venues and infrastructure. By the mid-1970s the need for drastic change was readily apparent. Space was manifestly insufficient to house the festival and could not be realistically supplied given the restrictions that still applied at the former Cercle Nautique site. In addition, the

facilities and equipment available at the Palais Croisette compared increasingly poorly with rival festivals (Anon, 1983, p. 2). Thinking also went beyond film, as it had done when the existing Palais had been first mooted. Regional rivals, particularly Nice, were developing flexible, multipurpose venues that could offer extensive spaces for festivals and congresses. Each of these factors directed thinking towards a fresh start and the development of a new building on a different site; a strategy that would also solve the logistical problem of how to continue to run an annual festival while undertaking a construction process for the new Palais that might last for three to four years.

The site chosen was a six-hectare space in the city centre that would be created by demolishing the Casino Municipal, the festival's first home, and an adjacent nineteenth-century theatre. The design of the new Palais, now designated as an integrated festival *and* conference complex that would also include a replacement casino, was entrusted to an international architectural competition. Announced in early 1977, it drew statements of interest and preparatory syntheses from 112 firms or consortia. These were whittled down to a shortlist of five entrants that were invited to submit detailed working proposals. The shortlisted candidates were three French-based groups headed respectively by Henri Pottier, Henry Bernard, and jointly by Michel Andrault and Pierre Parat (ANPAR); the Japanese Metabolist architect Kenzo Tange; and an Anglo-French group led by the British architect Sir Hubert Bennett (Audouin, 1982). All had previous experience of dealing with large-scale public-sector buildings.

On 28 December 1978, the jury announced that the winner was the team directed by Bennett, formerly the Chief Architect to the London County Council (LCC), with his French partners led by his former student François Druet (Anon, 1983). Bennett was a surprising choice. Generally judged to have done his best work at least fifteen years earlier, he had since left public architecture to work as director of a private-sector property company. When at the LCC, he had also unsuccessfully opposed the brutalist concrete finish of the South Bank arts complex in London (Harwood, 2012), precisely the aesthetic advocated for the Cannes Palais.²⁰ The project drew mixed reactions from the local population over its cost and its projected appearance. This disgruntlement with the chosen design, however, was patronisingly dismissed by an architectural commentator with the words: 'such reactions are usual' (Anon, 1983, p. 2).

The construction process took four years, which included the time necessary for demolition of the Casino and site preparation. Scarcely finished when officially opened in May 1983 in time for the 36th festival, the new Palais des Festivals et des Congrès achieved two objectives. First, it opened a year earlier than its principal regional competitor, the Palais des Congrès Acropolis in Nice. Secondly, it greatly increased the space that was available for the festival, with the new Palais providing 44,500 square metres floor area²¹ as compared with the 17,465 square metres available in its predecessor. As shown in figure 5.4, the



Figure 5.4. Schematic diagram of the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès (Palace of Festivals and Conferences) as opened in May 1983. (*Image*: Authors; collection)

complex design knitted together nine functionally distinct elements on eight different levels, two of which were subterranean. Built at a cost of 420 million francs (\$55 million), it offered three main halls – the 2,400-seater Grand Théâtre Lumière, the smaller 1,000-seater Théâtre Claude Debussy, and a gala and reception hall. Besides these, there were ten different auditoria ranging in size from forty to 300 seats, four radio and television studios, a press centre, eleven conference rooms, cafés, bars and restaurants, circulation and reception areas, the new municipal casino and 1000 underground parking places. New gardens were created over the parking area.

Neither the implementation of the complex design nor the opening were without technical problems; with one critic grudgingly arguing that it was, on balance, '[a] success ... despite everything' (Anon, 1983, p. 4). It also failed to incorporate all aspects of the festival under the same roof. The Directors' Fortnight, for instance, temporarily remained in the old building, which was only demolished for new hotel development in 1988. The new building, as anticipated, was not immediately popular. Quickly dubbed 'Le Bunker' because of its 'massive and cold, almost military architecture' (Ethis, 2001, p. 124), it drew unfavourable comparisons with the appearance and more intimate spaces of its much-loved predecessor. The new Palais has itself been subsequently modified and extended, most recently in 2013-2014 when the capacity was raised to create a new floor area of 88,000 square metres, now including 35,000 square metres of exhibition space, and fifteen auditoria. Five screening theatres - the Grand Lumière, Claude Debussy, Buñuel, Soixantième, and Bazin - are now available within the Palais, each responsible for different elements in the festival programme.22

Despite the redesigns and extensions, the spirit and purpose of the original notions of restricted access and exclusion that surround the festival remain embedded in the physical reality and potent symbolism of the current Palais. Its concrete blank wall facing the Croisette led to the observation that the building effectively turns its back on the city (Audouin, 1982). Behind the wall lies a 'sacred temple' of cinematographic art (Cheyronnaud, 2001, p. 38) to which protocols, barriers, badges and accreditations allow access only to the chosen few (Ethis, 2001). Those glimpses that the wider public do gain of proceedings are carefully regulated by the fact that the Palais is a building designed to achieve controlled spectacle. As with the Hollywood Oscar ceremonies, with which it has similarities, the strategy is to let spectators gather to see the red carpet stars and to feel part of proceedings: images that are familiar from any broadcast made from Cannes.²³ The celebrities alight from their limousines, pause for photographs and wave, but then disappear into the building. The public remain on the outside, kept at arm's length and unable to witness the internal dynamics of the film industry. Tickets for screenings remain strictly controlled and notoriously difficult for the general public to acquire.

Acutely conscious of the exclusion caused by the festival's commercial bias, the festival organizers have sought to use the external spaces to increase the connection with the public. In open imitation of Hollywood's Walk of Fame, a strip of handprints of celebrity visitors complete with their signatures has been developed incrementally, with introduction of appropriate ceremonies when newcomers are inducted (figure 5.5). The red carpet, laid down on the pavement



Figure 5.5. Cannes's Walk of Fame (February 2018). The nearest plaque in the line records the handprint and signature of the Italian film director Michelangelo Antonioni. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)



Figure 5.6. The Cinema de la Plage, which provides free open-air film screenings on the beach during the Cannes Film Festival. (*Photo:* https://www.seecannes.com/events/cinema-de-la-plage-706329)

and entry steps of the building to greet the stars' arrival since 1987, is now left in place during the summer months for visitors to photograph themselves and create souvenirs. A further gesture is to permit some opportunity to see nominated films, albeit only once they are out of competition. Although they cannot experience films in the interior settings for which they were designed, members of the public can watch films free in the evening seated at the Cinema de la Plage – a giant display erected at one of Cannes' public beaches, the Plage Macé (figure 5.6). The bill of fayre includes both nominated films and classic movies. Moreover, even small changes in procedures are quickly heralded as shifting the balance towards festivalgoers, such as the organizers axing advance press previews ahead of public red carpet premieres for the 2018 festival in order to help 'give back the premiere to the public' (Goodfellow, 2018*a*).

Filling the Space

By now, little need be added about the longstanding singlemindedness that the city of Cannes has displayed with respect to using its international film festival – known simply as the Festival de Cannes since 2002 – as a catalyst for developing the city as a festival and conference centre. Investment in a proactive Convention Bureau has stimulated further events as have additions to the infrastructure in the form of the Village International. Inaugurated in 2000, the Village has provided flexible pavilion space in two main foci adjacent to the main festival site: the Riviera cluster, situated along the beach and the Croisette; and the Pantiero cluster, located along the harbour.

Not all the festivals shown in table 5.1 use the Palais as their exclusive venue.

	Congress/Festival	Timing
MIPIM	The world's property market	March
MIPTV	The world's audiovisual and digital content market	April
Festival de Cannes	The Cannes International Film Festival	May
MIDEM	The world's music market	June
Cannes Lions	The International Festival of Creativity	June
MIPCOM	The world's audiovisual content market	October
Tax Free World	Tax Free World Exhibition	October
Mare di Moda	European Beachwear and Underwear Fabrics Collections	November
MAIPC	The international market for retail real estate	November
ITLM	The International Luxury Travel Market	December

Table 51	Cannes	Festival a	nd Congress	Calendar 2018.
	Califics	i USUIVAI a	ind Congress	Calcinual 2010.

Source: Compiled by the authors.

In 2018, the Marché made use of thirty-three different screening venues ranging from nineteen to 320 seaters in three locations: at the Palais, at cinemas in town and in the Riviera cluster of the Village International. Some of the other festivals are held in the port area or the Bay of Cannes, sometimes making additional use of hotels and other venues that have independently developed major event capacity. Nevertheless, the availability of the current Cannes Palais des Festivals et des Congrès as a well-equipped and municipally-financed resource remains of the greatest importance for Cannes as a festival city, allowing 20,000 participants or delegates to attend an event at any time of year. In the process, Cannes has emerged as France's second destination for business tourism in France after Paris.

Other festivals held annually in Cannes have varying degrees of association with the Festival de Cannes. The most obvious links are with the Pan-African Film Festival. Held in early April and featuring films from the African diaspora, it permits greater exposure of films traditionally underrepresented at the international film festival. In terms of links with the arts, there is connection with the biennial International Dance Festival, now held in November. Although Cannes arguably had no longstanding tradition in classical or contemporary dance, the opening of the École Supérieure de Danse de Cannes by the ballerina Rosella Hightower in the former Hotel Gallia in 1961 supplied an organizational and functional basis on which to build an event that showcases new works. Other events have little or no direct relationship with the film festival. The International Games Festival, for example, is a public-oriented festival featuring board, video and simulation games that simply supplies another usage for the Palais (figure 5.7). By contrast, the Pyrotechnic Fireworks Festival (Festival d'Art Pyrotechnique de Cannes), founded in 1967, is a typical if lavish annual spectacle that might be found in any major seaside resort in July or August.

Other key events build on two themes that have long been significant in Cannes's development: an association with the media and a reputation for



Figure 5.7. Visitors arrive for the International Games Festival held in the Palais des Festivals et des Congrès (February 2018). (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

(social) exclusiveness. The media theme includes three major events. One, MIDEM (Marché International du Disque et de l'Edition Musicale), is a music industry trade show that currently draws around 4,800 participants and 1,900 companies to Cannes. The other two - MIPCOM (Marché International des Programmes de Communication) and MIPTV (Marché International des Programmes de Télévision) - are trade markets for the global television and digital industries held in October and April respectively. The Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity, despite appropriating the word 'festival', is a professional congress and an awards show for those working in advertising and related fields. The events that trade on Cannes's cachet for exclusiveness include: MIPIM (Marché International des Professionnels de l'Immobilier), a propertyrelated trade show that draws around 23,000 built environment professionals and developers; Mare di Moda, a European fashion show for beachwear and underwear fabrics collections; and two major professionally-oriented travel industry shows, namely, the Tax Free World Exhibition and the International Luxury Travel Market. The Cannes Yachting Festival held in the Old Port again purloins the description 'festival' to apply to what is essentially a trade show, in this case concerned with the sale of superyachts.

Considered together, these developments illustrate aspects of the city's drive to consolidate and diversify the impact of the Festival de Cannes, ranging from encouragement of filmmaking in Cannes itself to practical assistance

in the organization of new festivals, trade fairs, conferences and seminars.²⁴ Although the content and directions taken by the film festival were articulated by the cinematographic community, the event was brought to Cannes by the municipality's response to a national initiative. The festival's continuing development, as demonstrated by the provision of venues, was again achieved in close collaboration with its host city.

Conclusion

The relationship between the Cannes and Venice film festivals, so important for the creation of the former, provides an instructive final point here. When the Venice festival was in decline during the late 1960s, Robert Favre Le Bret (see above) remarked that the problem was the Venice festival's 'intellectualism', which made it unable to take full advantage of the commercial potential of popular film (Schwartz, 2007, p. 97). By contrast, Cannes's openness to the market value of film has allowed it to capitalize on the demand for an effective market for cinematographic products while still addressing issues of artistic quality and merit. In turn, it is this close and profitable alignment between the art and business of film and the proven ability to exploit that linkage to the advantage of the wider urban economy that has made Cannes of such great interest to city managers and festival organizers elsewhere. As such it has been one of the more powerful exemplars of the types of process that underpin the patterns of festival proliferation that are discussed in chapter 7.

Notes

1. Apomme (2012) The 65th Cannes Film Festival. Available at: http://apomme.com/2012/05/the-65th-cannes-film-festival/#axzz4lPzq8kq6

2. See in particular table 1.1 supra.

3. These figures come from Zarandona (2016, p. 787), Grater (2017) and Goodfellow (2018b).

4. While certainly used in advertising, with or without the final exclamation mark, the origins of this aphorism remain unclear.

5. The County of Nice, to the east of Cannes, had reverted to Piedmont-Sardinia in 1814 and remained independent of France until annexed in 1860 under the Treaty of Turin.

6. Despite his initial reasons for travel, Brougham's arrival did little to promote the cause of climatotherapy as far as Cannes was concerned. The town did experience some growth in this field, especially when combined with sea-bathing (hydrotherapy) or quackery (Milliet-Moudon, 1986, p. 17), but much less than seen in rival resorts such as Menton or Nice – the latter famously described as being inhabited by 'a colony of pale and listless English women and listless sons of nobility near death' (Gonnet, 2006; quoted in Baxter, 2015, p. 56).

7. Their numbers included Lieutenant-General Sir Herbert Taylor, who had served as first Private Secretary to several British monarchs and employed the same architect as designed Brougham's villa; the botanist and property developer Sir Thomas Robinson Woolfield; and the politician Sir John Temple Leader (Milliet-Moudon, 1986, pp. 9–10).

8. In this respect, for example, they established exclusive institutions such as the Yacht Club de Cannes, whose Royal Regattas were the high point of local social life before the film festival.

9. Then based in Lyon, Vianay moved to Cannes in 1870 and became its leading hotel architect.

10. Renamed Frédéric Mistral Square in 1963.

11. Only opened in 1888, it subsequently became a hotel.

12. Leni Riefenstahl's film Olympia comprised two parts: 1. Fest der Völker and 2. Fest der Schönheit.

13. This Festival ran twice in 1949 and 1950 (Dovey, 2015, p. 40). Thereafter Biarritz did not stage a film festival until 1979 with the founding of the Biarritz Festival Latin America.

14. Anon (1939) Film Festival in France: British Companies invited to take part. The Times, 1 July, p. 12.

15. Anon (1939) Film Festival in France: national and international awards. *The Times*, 29 July, p. 10.

16. Anon (1939) Film Festival in France: opening performance on September 10. *The Times*, 31 August, p. 6.

17. In the event, Monte Carlo did not stage any major film festivals until the next century, with the Monaco International Film Festival starting in 2001 and the Monte Carlo Charity Film Festival in 2005. It did, however, institute a Television Festival in 1961.

18. This consisted of Nice, Cannes and the Riviera coast. The enlisted men went to Nice (Emerson, 2018).

19. Detailed discussion of the screening policies or about structure of prizes for the Cannes Festival lie beyond the scope of the present discussion. For more information, see English (2005).

20. An important misattribution, seemingly caused by a journalist mishearing the name and rendering 'Cannes' as 'Caen' (in Normandy), has permeated its way into the literature, including an obituary (*The Times*, 15 December 2000) in which Bennett is credited with building a major conference centre in both cities, one after the other.

21. Of this, 8,825 square metres in the west wing were reserved for the associated casino replacement.

22. In more detail, the Grand Théâtre Lumière screens the Official Selection's feature films in Competition and Out of Competition; Claude Debussy, Un Certain Regard and the Shorts Competition as well as the Cinema Masterclass; Buñuel, the Cannes Classics and the Cinéfondation Selection; Soixantième, the Special Screening selection, day-after screenings (from the Competition), as well as tributes; and Bazin Theatre hosts the press and day-after screenings for the selection Un Certain Regard. Information from Festival de Cannes (2006).

23. Commentaries on Cannes by celebrity participants lie outside the scope of this book. More on this topic is available from Beauchamp and Béhar (1992) and Corless and Darke (2007).

24. See, for example, the following official websites: http://www.cann https://www.cannesconvention bureau.com/organizing-meeting-cannes.com/en/cannes-and-cinema/filming-policy.html; https://www.cannes conventionbureau.com/organizing-meeting-cannes.

CHAPTER 6

Edinburgh

The idea is a new one for Edinburgh, but I feel confident we will succeed in establishing our fair city as one of the pre-eminent European Festival Centres. To succeed, we require the help and co-operation of lovers of art the world over... We wish to provide the world with a centre where, year after year, all that is best in music, drama, and the visual arts can be seen and heard amidst ideal surroundings. Edinburgh will be wholly given up to Festival affairs – she will surrender herself to the visitors and hopes that they will find in all the performances a sense of peace and inspiration.

Sir John Falconer¹

My mind kept returning to the sight of the castle on the cliff at Edinburgh, not really like the castle in Salzburg, but equally memorable. The statistics indicated that the city was really a little big for a festival, but it had beauty and tradition, a native culture, enough theatres, including one that could (just barely) be an opera house, good rail connections and a number of hotels.

Sir Rudolf Bing (1972, p. 111)

If Venice has long been regarded as *the* festival city, its pre-eminence by no means goes unchallenged, with Edinburgh in particular making its own claims for being 'the world's leading festival city'.² That assertion, however, would have had little credibility when the city council first received a proposal for an arts festival in 1945. At that time, Edinburgh was well-endowed with museums and galleries, but the performing arts were poorly represented. The city, for example, lacked an

EDINBURGH

opera or ballet company and contrasted unfavourably with Glasgow, its perennial rival, which was home to the key Scottish orchestras.³ Nevertheless, when compared with other cities in war-shattered Britain, Edinburgh had retained a good cultural infrastructure and, when the possibility of creating a major European arts festival arose, had the vision to pursue the opportunity.

This chapter examines the development of Edinburgh's festivals and their relationship to the city from the nineteenth century through to present-day challenges. Its opening part surveys precursors and origins, looking at the emergence of the agreement that created the Edinburgh International Festival in 1947. The next section examines the first festivals and early festivalization, with the origins of the Fringe and the more radical People's Festival. The third part looks at how the International Festival evolved, commenting on its changing content, venues, funding and political context, with the fourth turning the spotlight on to the expansion of the Fringe. The next section examines the spontaneous festivalization that continued unabated leading, by the Millennium, to an extensive programme of national and international festivals spread across the year. The penultimate part focuses on the dramatic growth of the festivals since the Millennium, with growing coordination and public policy support. The conclusion takes stock of both the city's embrace of festivals and their impact upon the wider festival world.

Antecedents

Although there is no formal continuity, the starting point for considering Edinburgh as a festival city is often taken to be a sequence of festivals staged in the first half of the nineteenth century. The inaugural event, the First Edinburgh Musical Festival (1815), saw the London impresario Charles Ashley brought in to hire the musicians, provide the scores and conduct the performances. Supported by the elite of Edinburgh society, the programme featured sacred music performed in the morning in Parliament Hall and more varied evening concerts in Corri's Rooms (a theatre adapted for the festival). The enthusiastic response led to an extra concert being staged to satisfy demand, with over 1,000 people also paying a shilling just to view the preparations in Parliament Hall for the opening performance (McAulay, 2016, p. 43; Miller, 1996, p. xii). In the event more than 9,000 tickets were sold to 4000 festivalgoers raising almost £6,000, of which £1,500 was distributed to charities.

The success of this first venture injected energy into Edinburgh's music scene, with further profitable festivals in 1819 and 1824. Moreover, 1816 saw plans put forward for a 'Music Hall' complete with an organ to be added to the Assembly Rooms (McAulay, 2016, p. 45; Baird, 1964, p. 267). Inaugurated in October 1843 by another festival, the Music Hall was the main concert hall in Edinburgh until the opening in 1914 of the three-storey Beaux Arts Usher Hall (figure 6.1).⁴



Figure 6.1. The Usher Hall (1914, architects Stockdale Harrison and Howard H Thomson) as seen from Lothian Road. (*Photo:* CC Ham)

Other initiatives that more directly paved the way for the Edinburgh International Festival stemmed from the cultural programmes that the British Council organized during the Second World War. Led by its Scottish representative Harry Harvey Wood, assisted by the poet Edwin Muir and sculptor Hew Lorimer, they set up 'foreign houses' or meeting places where Poles, Czechoslovaks, French and Americans could socialize and be entertained by lectures, concerts, readings and drama. An exhibition in the National Gallery of Scotland in May 1941 presenting the work of soldier artists from eight allied nations was accompanied by a programme of lunchtime recitals of contemporary European music, which continued throughout the war and beyond (Campbell, 2003, pp. 245–247). In due course, Harvey Wood would play a key role as an intermediary in the process of establishing an international arts festival in Edinburgh (see below).

The original idea for such an event came though not from local sources but from the operatic venture that the English landowner and entrepreneur John Christie created at Glyndebourne, his country house in Sussex. Dreaming of creating an English Bayreuth or Salzburg (Blunt, 1968, p. 152), Christie built an opera house and gathered together a formidable group of European musical figures that included Fritz Busch as musical director, Carl Ebert as artistic director, and Rudolf Bing as general manager.⁵ Their first annual summer festival in 1934 established Glyndebourne as an opera venue but, lacking public sector
support, its viability depended on Christie's personal wealth and on affluent patrons able to afford high ticket prices. When war came, the Glyndebourne operation quickly folded. Subsequent attempts to restart once the end of war approached proved difficult. Higher personal taxation reduced Christie's ability to bankroll the company, and continued petrol rationing made it difficult for visitors to get to Glyndebourne (Bing, 1972, p. 79). In an era before sponsorship and with no public subsidy, that effectively removed the principal income streams (Caplat, 1985, pp. 142–143).⁶

Bing's solution was that if audiences found it difficult to come to Glyndebourne, then Glyndebourne should be taken to the audience. This would not be achieved by touring, as had been attempted in 1940 (see below), but by taking the operation *en bloc* to a single city. In part, this would provide a showcase for the company, but could also offer a chance to create a multi-arts international festival 'in which the other nations of the world could join in paying tribute to Britain's struggle against Hitler' (Bing, 1972, p. 106). There was an opportunistic element here. Artists and ensembles were available, but work was in short supply. Festival activity in mainland Europe was certainly limited. Bayreuth was out of action until 1951; the Munich Opera Festival could not recommence until 1950; and Salzburg, despite being continued by the American Occupying Forces, ran in reduced form (see chapter 4). In such circumstances, Bing could capitalize on his contacts and experience to bring his wish list of performers together.

Oxford was the initial choice. Readily accessible from London, it had sufficient performance spaces, congenial surroundings and enough hotels and college rooms to accommodate visitors. More importantly, Bing and his wife knew the city well. Their friend Gertie von Hofmansthal (the widow of the Salzburg Festival founder) lived there and the Bings visited her and then rented rooms nearby during the war (*ibid.*, p. 103). Meetings were held with college wardens and city officials in the summer of 1944, but Bing gave up on being able to bring 'town and gown' together (*ibid.*, p. 79) which was indispensable for the scale of festival he had in mind. Ironically, Oxford did stage the Festival of British Music in 1948 to celebrate the centenary of composer Hubert Parry's birth, but this was a university project – Parry had been an Oxford professor – and national in character (Wollenberg, 2010, p. 288).

Glyndebourne therefore needed to continue the search for a festival partner. Bing had gained valuable insight into possible locations for an international festival when organizing the 1940 Glyndebourne tour of the 'Beggar's Opera'. Opening in Brighton, the tour went on to Cardiff, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow, before ending at the Haymarket in London.⁷ His preference was for a small provincial city, ruling out large cities such as Manchester or Liverpool which he felt would swallow a festival and smaller and more picturesque cities such as York, Lincoln or Chester that lacked the necessary venues and visitor accommodation (Bing, 1972, p. 111).

The visit to Edinburgh in 1940 has become apocryphal. Bing and Christie's



Figure 6.2. Upper Circle, King's Theatre Edinburgh, March 2008 (Photo: CC Mikehume)

wife Audrey Mildmay both remarked on the resemblance between Edinburgh Castle and Hohensalzburg Castle in Salzburg. Mildmay allegedly observed 'this is the place for our festival' (Caplat, 1985, p. 143); Bing less fulsomely that Edinburgh Castle 'had a Salzburg flavour' (Bing, 1972, p. 93; see also epigraph). Admittedly Edinburgh was larger than Bing ideally wanted but it possessed advantages in terms of accommodation, transport connections and theatres, especially the Usher Hall as an orchestral venue and the King's Theatre (figure 6.2) where they had performed the 'Beggar's Opera'. The hotels were still standing at the end of the war and were of sufficient quality, in contrast to Manchester where Bing castigated the accommodation as 'filthy and ill served' (*ibid.*, p. 93). Moreover, by approaching Edinburgh, Glyndebourne could work with the British Council as a possible funding body and bypass the newly formed Arts Council: an organization that Christie disliked after its refusals to support past projects.

The process of gaining acceptance for an Edinburgh festival was set in motion at a meeting with the British Council in London in December 1944, shortly after abandoning Oxford as a potential location. Accounts vary as to who originally suggested Edinburgh. Bing (*ibid.*, p. 113) suggested that he had already run the Edinburgh idea past Christie and gained approval, whereas Harry Harvey Wood claimed that he had 'tentatively' put forward the idea of Edinburgh as a candidate (Campbell, 2003, p. 251), a view reiterated by Miller (1996, p. 1) and Bartie (2013, p. 24). Whichever is true, Harvey Wood did play a prominent role in acting as a bridge between Glyndebourne and the city's civic leadership (Bing,

1972, pp. 111–112). At the London meeting he offered to set up a meeting in Edinburgh with key people who would be useful in establishing such a project (*ibid*, 113). The offer was accepted and Harvey Wood gathered together a group of key players in the cultural life of the city (*ibid*., p. 113). They included James Murray-Watson (editor of *The Scotsman*), the playwright James Bridie, (founder of the Citizen's Theatre Glasgow and first chair of the Arts Council in Scotland), Sidney Newman (Edinburgh University's Reid Professor of Music), and Lady Rosebery (an amateur pianist and prominent cultural patron).

The first meeting with Sir John Falconer, the Lord Provost,⁸ was encouraging. Although not having previously heard of either Glyndebourne or of many of the distinguished musicians that Bing wanted to attract, Falconer recognized the possibilities that the festival presented and threw his weight behind the project (*ibid.*, p. 113). He indicated that the city would be prepared to contribute some initial finance, which in due course would turn out to be £20,000. Initially, there was a lack of understanding of the amount of time required, with Bing's estimate that the festival could not be staged until the summer of 1947 at the earliest coming as a surprise. The problems of organization and management could be met by employing Glyndebourne's administrative apparatus and opera company, but finance presented a problem. Bing's wish to attract the highest calibre performers and the attendant costs of travel and appearance were of a different magnitude from what the city was accustomed.

Yet perhaps the key factor in establishing the Edinburgh Festival was precisely the quality of artists that Bing was able to attract. At the outset, Bing thought of artists such as Yehudi Menuhin and Artur Schnabel, but his big idea was to reunite the Jewish conductor Bruno Walter with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra (VPO) – from which he had been ousted by Nazi aryanization policies in 1938 – and bring them to Edinburgh (*ibid.*, p. 85).⁹ This would be their first major international engagement after the war. In turn, Walter's agreement to appear gave other artists confidence to participate. He later described his time in Edinburgh as 'one of the most magnificent experiences since the war' (Miller, 1996, p. 31). When asked why he was so keen to take the Edinburgh engagement, Walter replied:

I felt it was enormously important. It was just after the end of the war. Regardless of anything else, I found that from the humane and cultural standpoint it was of the utmost importance and most to be desired that all ties which had been torn should be re-united. I felt it was an invitation to be obeyed, as a kind of command... The war was an interruption of very harmonious personal relationships, and when we met here for the first time after this interruption it was really a meeting of old friends who did not know if they were still friends. But they were. (*ibid*.)

First Steps

The festival was originally planned to run in September in order to extend the

holiday season (Crawford, 1997, p. 12), with its role in developing tourism and thus contributing to the Edinburgh economy featuring heavily in the early discussions and press releases (Bartie, 2013, p. 31) as they had done earlier in Venice and Salzburg. Glyndebourne and the orchestral concerts would be the centrepiece attractions, but as in Bing's original vision, it would be a multi-arts festival including 'several orchestras from the Continent, chamber groups from Europe and America, at least one imported theatrical attraction... and either Sadler's Wells or a European ballet' (Bing, 1972, p. 113). Five major spaces, all of which already existed, were earmarked for festival use. The Usher Hall staged the orchestral concerts, the King's Theatre was used for Glyndebourne's performances of 'Macbeth' and 'Figaro', the Freemasons Hall, for chamber concerts and Scottish concerts, the Lyceum for drama (the Old Vic Company), and the Empire for dance (Sadler's Wells).

Festival organizers in austerity Britain, of course, encountered problems that went beyond sorting out artists and venues, ticketing and publicity. Food rationing was in place and ensuring sufficient catering for festivalgoers required creating a Festival Club to serve meals that would augment the capacity of Edinburgh's restaurants and hotels. Rationing restrictions included fabric, with negotiations needed so that the government would de-ration curtain and drapery materials so that the major hotels could provide curtains to replace the black paint currently on the windows (*ibid.*, p. 116). Plans to floodlight Edinburgh Castle during the festival required discussions with the Minister of Fuel and Power Emanuel Shinwell in order to allow coal rations to be used for that purpose.

The first Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama (EIFMD) commenced on 24 August 1947 (figure 6.3). Being a Sunday, it opened with a morning service in St Giles Cathedral in the Old Town followed by an evening symphony concert in the Usher Hall. There then followed three weeks of performances covering the five disciplines of music, drama, dance, theatre, and opera. By any standards, producing a three week international festival from scratch covering so many areas of the arts was a remarkable achievement in a city lacking experience of staging such an event and at a time of shortages. This contrasted with festivals in Venice and Salzburg which had started small and grown organically. The fact that the festival overlooked the visual arts and choral music or failed to cover theatre and ballet in any depth is not surprising under the circumstances. These deficiencies were remedied in later years.

The opportunities to be grasped from the EIFMD were not confined to culture. The economic opportunities presented by the festival were taken seriously, particularly in drawing international visitors to the United Kingdom and providing much needed foreign exchange in a time of economic difficulty as well as injecting spending into the Edinburgh economy. The British Travel Association, the newly established Scottish Tourist Board and Thomas Cook were actively involved in festival planning. The Chamber of Commerce saw an opportunity to present window displays in Princes Street stores depicting



Figure 6.3. Front cover, souvenir programme, first Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama, 1947. (*Image*: Personal collection, John and Margaret Gold)

Scotland's 'industries, arts and crafts' (Bartie, 2013, p. 31). The Scottish Committee of the Council for Industrial Design however, went one further and staged 'Enterprise Scotland' in the Royal Scottish Museum – a customized version of the 'Britain can make it' exhibition held at London's V&A Museum in 1946 which was intended to promote British manufacturing industry and industrial design. 'Enterprise Scotland' sought to impart the same message north of the border. Designed by Basil Spence and James Gardner the exhibition presented a wide range of products from tartan to New Towns, sports equipment to HEP plants, furniture to ship building. Hailed as Scotland's 'shop window to the world' (Pathé News, 1947), the exhibition attracted 456,000 visitors (Buckley, 2007, pp. 118–119).

For Bing, Edinburgh had simply been a convenient city to host the festival, but moving to Scotland introduced a range of issues surrounding nationality, identity and ownership of which he was unaware, for example, needing 'to learn not to say English' when in business meetings (Bing, 1972, p. 86). The Arts Council also questioned how the Scottish location would impact on the festival concept. Mary Glasgow, the Arts Council General Secretary in London, questioned whether it was to be 'Scotland acting as host to distinguished foreign artists and giving them in turn the best that Scotland can offer; or is it to be Great Britain acting as host, with Edinburgh as the chosen seat of entertainment?' (Bartie, 2013, p. 29). The Arts Council generally felt that the festival should not be confined to being a 'vehicle for the promotion of the Scottish arts' (*ibid.*). Yet for Scottish artists, there was no general acceptance that this should be purely an international festival.

This prompted a series of events that shaped Edinburgh's festival experience from the outset. By announcing the forthcoming festival in 1947 as early as 24 November 1945, the organizers gave the artistic community and other potential stakeholders ample time to consider how to respond. Four initiatives indeed resulted. Two were immediately recognized as beneficial additions to the summer programme: the international Film Festival and the Edinburgh Tattoo. The others were not readily embraced by the city and somewhat relished their alternative status. One would become the Edinburgh Fringe, arguably the world's largest festival. The other was the Edinburgh Peoples' Festival, a venture that lasted only four years but that had impact on the radical left and the Scottish folk music revival of the 1950s and 1960s.

The Film Festival, the first of these initiatives, built on the presence of an already existing film community. The Edinburgh Film Guild, set up in 1930 to bring international cinema to the city, had 2,500 members by 1946 and possessed a small fifty-seater movie theatre at its newly opened headquarters in Hill Street. Although the EIFMD's performing arts focus did not include film, the Guild felt it could remedy this omission by mounting a festival that would run in parallel. After discussions with the film industry, a plan was formulated for a distinctive festival that would avoid replicating the focus of Venice and Cannes by focusing on documentary. This was a genre to which according to Forsyth Hardy, one of the festival's founders, Scotland had 'made a distinctively national contribution to the cinema' (Hardy, 1950, p. 34). As such, it would exhibit the best international examples of documentary film and reassess the 'principles and methods of the documentary movement' (*ibid.*, pp. 34–35; see also Hardy, 1992). Again unlike Venice and Cannes, it would be non-competitive and oriented towards audiences rather than business.

The Edinburgh International Festival of Documentary Films, as initially titled, ran alongside the middle week of the EIFMD. Festival management was overseen by an Advisory Committee with representatives from the principal documentary agencies and trade interests, with Cyril Ramsay Jones released by the Central Office of Information to serve as its organizer. The Festival opened on 31 August 1947 with addresses from Norman Wilson, the chair of the Edinburgh Film Guild, the documentary filmmaker John Grierson and Sir John Falconer. While the city provided no funding for this particular festival, Falconer's presence confirmed the event's status. The Playhouse, Edinburgh's largest cinema, hosted the opening and closing screenings; Central Hall on West Tollcross presented the Friday evening session; and the festival used the Guild's own Film House auditorium on intermediate days. The smaller capacity available here meant repeating the programme daily, with a matinee at 14.30 and an evening showing at 20.00. In total, the festival showed eighty-one films from eighteen countries, with careful distinction drawn between 'British' and 'Scottish' films (Kloser, nd, pp. 3, 5).

Despite suffering a then-substantial £300 loss the festival returned in 1948,

expanded by inclusion of lectures and discussions, to match the full three weeks of the International Festival. By 1950 the desire for these ancillary activities resulted in setting aside part of Film House for festivalgoers and for staging a one-day conference on educational filmmaking and the use of educational films (Hardy, 1950, p. 35). More significantly, the addition of feature films to the programme led to the word 'documentary' being dropped. From 1950 onwards, it simply became the Edinburgh International Film Festival (EIFF).

From 1950, the International Festival and the EIFF were joined by the Edinburgh Military Tattoo (renamed the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo in 2010). This had started during the second International Festival in 1948 with a series of pipe band displays in the Princes Street Gardens. In 1949, with encouragement from the Edinburgh Corporation, this matured into more ambitious performances in Princes Street Gardens and on the Castle Esplanade. The latter production, entitled 'The King's Men', featured entertainments that included music, marching, and military displays and exercises. Audiences totalled 2,500 every night, but no seating was provided. In 1950 a full tattoo was presented in parallel with the International Festival, now with stands capable of seating 6,000 spectators. Its twenty performances attracted around 100,000 visitors (Edinburgh Festival Society, 1957, p. 77). In 1952 the Tattoo developed an international dimension by inviting performers from France, the Netherlands and Canada. This variety has been the hallmark of the festival ever since (REMT, 2020).

As noted earlier, two further festivals were inspired by the International Festival but failed to get official recognition. By far the most significant was the 'Fringe'. At the outset, the International Festival's emphasis was on music despite also having 'drama' in its title and was also felt to lack significant Scottish content. In light of these circumstances, the Unity Theatre in Glasgow contacted the Festival to argue for the inclusion of Scottish theatre in the programme and to ask whether the Unity's summer season of plays could be included. Bing intimated that Scottish theatre would not be included because it was 'not up to standard', a view also prevalent in the Arts Council itself (see Storey, 2017). Later when the Unity was clearly going ahead with productions in Edinburgh during the festival, Bing invited Robert Mitchel, the theatre's artistic director, to a meeting where he tried to persuade him not to go ahead for fear of reducing standards (Bartie, 2013, p. 54).¹⁰ In due course, the Unity's plans were partly thwarted by the Arts Council withdrawing their financial support for the theatre on 11 August 1947. A public appeal raised £800 but the company still had to drop one of its productions and settle for a two-week run starting on 25 August. In response, the poet Hugh McDiarmid denounced the Arts Council from the stage on the opening night as 'cultural quislings' for their treatment of the group (Hill, 1977, p. 67).

Unity was not the only theatre company to gate-crash the Edinburgh Festival that summer. A further seven groups found spaces to perform as best they could. There is no evidence of coordination or even communication between what

Company	Type	Venue	Play
The Christine Orr Players	Amateur players, Edinburgh	Edinburgh, YMCA	Macbeth: Shakespeare
Glasgow Unity Theatre	Professional and amateur	The Pleasance Little Theatre	The Lower Depths: Maxim Gorky; The Laird O'Torwatletie: Robert MacLellan
Edinburgh Peoples Theatre	Amateur	The Pleasance Little Theatre	Thunder Rock: Robert Ardrey
Edinburgh District Scottish Community Drama Association	Amateur	The Pleasance Little Theatre	The Anatomist: James Bridie
Pilgrim Players, Mercury Theatre London	Professional	Gateway Theatre	Murder in the Cathedral: T.S. Eliot; The Family Reunion: T.S. Eliot
Edinburgh College of Art Theatre Group	Amateur	The Pleasance Little Theatre	Easter: August Strindberg
Manchester Marionette Theatre	Puppeteers	Restaurant of New Victoria Cinema	
Carnegie Trust sponsored group	Amateur	Dunfermline Cathedral	Everyman

Table 6.1.	Theatre con	npanies o	constituting	the	'Fringe'.	1947.
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Source: Compiled by authors.

were mostly amateur groups from Edinburgh, Glasgow, London and Manchester (see table 6.1). Rather, they simply took advantage of the opportunities that the concentration of artists, visitors and the press afforded in Edinburgh that year. The press applied labels to them such as Festival 'adjuncts' or as being semi-official (Moffat, 1978, p. 17), with a few prescient journalists coining the term 'fringe' to indicate either their geographical or organizational marginality. The earliest use of that word came in January 1947, when *The Scotsman* talked of 'mutterings on the fringe' of the festival by those campaigning for a Scottish contribution to the programme, with several references to further uses of the term in the *Edinburgh Evening News* in July and September (Venables, 2018). Another suggestion is that the term dates from August 1948, when the Scottish playwright Robert Kemp noted that there was 'more private enterprise' taking place 'round the fringe of the Official Festival' (cited in Bartie, 2013, p. 52). However, it was only in the 1950s that the noun 'Fringe' became the most popular word to describe the phenomenon.

The final ingredient in the early days was the Edinburgh People's Festival (or Edinburgh Labour Festival). It was founded on a radical critique of Edinburgh's sudden foray into the arts, for example, with the redoubtable Hugh MacDiarmid denouncing Edinburgh as a 'stronghold of bourgeois decadence' and railing at

the notion that 'a city which has always treated the arts so meanly should think that it can suddenly blossom forth as a great centre of world-culture' (cited in Miller, 1996, p. 19). Compared with the embryonic Fringe, the People's Festival was a more coherent, organized and ideologically charged project that aimed to provide a radical, affordable programme across the arts that would be relevant and easily accessible to the working people of Edinburgh. Unlike the other festivals starting at this time, it only ran for four seasons (1951–1954).

It was supported by a coalition of the political left involving representatives of the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), Labour Party, Communist Party and radical artists. An initial meeting led to the foundation of the Edinburgh Labour Festival Committee which organized the first festival from 26 August to 1 September 1951. It covered theatre, music, lectures, a conference on 'Towards a People's Culture' and a Festival Club, which echoed the model employed by the International Festival (Henderson, 2011, p. 38). The theatre contribution saw the return of Glasgow Unity and a Theatre Workshop production of Ewan MacColl's 'Uranium 235'. A lasting success was the Oddfellows' Hall Ceilidh that brought singers together from across Scotland to present Scottish folksong, an event immortalized by the American folk collector Alan Lomax.¹¹ The second festival was more ambitious in terms of content and length. Running for a full three weeks (17 August-7 September 1952), it included theatre, photography, art, music, poetry, film, a ceilidh, lectures and a one day conference on 'Our Cultural Traditions and Their Advancement Today'. However, dissention quickly arose over the perceived political content of the programming, in particular the charges of Communist propaganda levelled by two members of the festival committee at Ewan MacColl's play 'The Travellers', which had received its premiere at the 1952 festival. This led to the loss of funding from both the STUC and the Scottish Labour Party, which announced that involvement with the festival was incompatible with Labour Party membership. The organizers struggled to survive through 1953 and 1954, but they were ultimately unable to cover the cost of staging the festival from just private donations (Henderson, 2011). Thereafter the event folded, before revival in 2002 (see below).

Edinburgh International Festival

The Glyndebourne connection slowly weakened. Despite entreaties from the Edinburgh Festival Society for Bing to be solely employed by the festival, he adamantly retained posts with both Glyndebourne and Edinburgh until 1949 when he left to become the Director of New York's Metropolitan Opera. His successors Ian Hunter and Robert Ponsonby¹² were also linked to Glyndebourne, but Glyndebourne's artistic management role was formally ended in 1954. Their London office ceased to be used for the Festival in September 1955, although the Edinburgh staff still kept an office in London. Ponsonby, for example, was said to operate:

from the festival's secluded London premises in St James's Street, round the corner from the Ritz, from where he and his tiny staff moved discreetly to Edinburgh each August just in time for the opening concert, shunning publicity as we now know it, and employing a single part-time (and much loved) local press officer, his pockets stuffed with free tickets for needy journalists. (Anon, 2019)

The festival office remained in London until the 1990s, when it was felt more appropriate to base the entire operation in Edinburgh (Miller, 1996, p. 138). Glyndebourne had provided opera for Edinburgh between 1947 and 1951 and then again in 1953–1955 and in 1960, but had become too expensive for what was now the Edinburgh International Festival (EIF) budget, lacking the government subsidies from which many of their competitors benefitted.¹³ Moreover, the Edinburgh schedule became more difficult to align with that of Glyndebourne when the latter's summer season took off again in the 1950s.

As a curated festival, its shape reflected the background, interests and networks of each director, but was also constrained by the potential and capacities of the venues that were available, the level of public funding, the political agenda of the city authority, and the wider national and international setting. To this mix was added the role of Edinburgh as the heart of the devolved Scottish government after 1999 and opportunities and challenges provided by the wider political environment (see Zhu, 2019, p. 203).

The nature and perceived significance of the Scottish contribution to the festival programme remained vexed questions throughout the decades. Although conceived as a British festival, questions of locality and Scottishness constantly arose. As already suggested, using Scottish performers and ensembles was not a straightforward process in the 1940s as there were few companies and ensembles of professional players to draw on. There had been an abortive attempt to start a Festival Ballet in 1958, but matters improved after 1960 (Kettle, 2015, p. 9). Developments included the creation of Scottish Ballet (1962), Scottish Opera (1962), the Festival Chorus with singers recruited from across Scotland (1965), the Scottish Chamber Orchestra (1974), Orchestra of Scottish Opera (1980) and the National Theatre of Scotland (2006). Noticeably though, only the Scottish Chamber Orchestra is based in Edinburgh, whereas the remainder are based in Glasgow. This advent of the enhanced Scottish component by the mid-1960s was not welcomed in all quarters. The Observer complained that the official Festival had lost prestige and was 'more a Scottish national event' and no longer 'a great occasion for Europe's artistic elite', with its audience mainly 'Scottish bourgeoisie or students' (cited in Bartie, 2013, p. 157).

Controversies also surrounded funding, especially when involving the public sector. From the organizers' point of view, disputes have long centred on whether the benefit of public funding was worth the battles given the amounts on offer and the attempts at control that came with it. Miller (1996) charted the often fraught relationship between city councillors and the festival as

budgets were negotiated against a background of shifting political alliances. This was compounded by local government reform, whereby in 1975 Edinburgh Corporation was abolished and replaced by the Edinburgh District Council and Lothian Regional Council (with both bodies expected to fund the festival). These, in turn, were reorganized in 1996 and the City of Edinburgh Council, a more powerful unitary authority, was established. These various changes in turn had an impact that included, *inter alia*, differences in local government attitudes towards the burden of the large grants from the public purse, and varying understandings of the process of engaging artists at the international level, especially given the lack of evidence of the true costs and benefits of the festival. There was a sense that the festival was a burden which benefitted outsiders and not residents, who were in any case not interested or could not afford the tickets.

Further problems stemmed from the challenge of reconciling the financial requirements of a continuing series of internationally recognized festivals with the manifest inequalities in the city. For example, in 1987 the city published a report entitled *Poverty in Edinburgh: The Other Side of the Festival City*, which painted a bleak picture of 13.5 per cent unemployment, with disproportionately high figures amongst the young and in peripheral social housing estates such as Craigmillar and Niddrie (CEDC, 1987). It noted:

Just as we live in a two nation state so there are two cities in Edinburgh – one is Festival Edinburgh personified by the High Street and the New Town – the other is made up of people whom society has made into second class citizens. (CEDC, 1987, p. 2)

Moreover, while the evidence suggested good participation rates for the festivals from Edinburgh residents, there were glaring social class disparities, with A, B and C1 attenders¹⁴ comprising over 75 per cent of the total. The social broadening of the benefits of festival expenditure was an ongoing challenge.

With regard to venues, the availability of undamaged performance spaces had given post-war Edinburgh an advantage over other possible festival locations, but as time wore on those same spaces were a straightjacket for programming. Caplat (1985, p. 193) noted the difficulty of staging contemporary or full-scale productions and that it was only possible to present 'cut-back versions'. In 1968, for example, the Hamburg Opera had to send sixteen string players home because the orchestra pit at the King's Theatre was too small and that came after already changing their repertoire to select productions where the sets could actually fit the stage (Miller, 1996, p. 72). Similarly, the Florence Opera had to adjust their offering to fit a stage which was half the size of their own (*ibid.*, p. 74). Facilities were also a problem. In 1980 the Usher Hall organ was deemed so bad that the Italian conductor Claudio Abbado refused to use it; a problem only resolved by using the organ in St Mary's Cathedral with simultaneous broadcast to the Usher Hall (*ibid.*, p. 101).

Problems such as these aroused concerns as to whether Edinburgh could

attract the best talent, especially given competition from other music festivals. Discussions over the need for new purpose-built venues date back to the start of the festival in the late 1940s with endless sagas of enthusiastically adopted but subsequently abandoned schemes for new theatres, opera houses, and Festival headquarters. Equally, complaints about the quality and range of venues for performing arts have rumbled on. A festivals strategy document, *The Festivals and the City: The Edinburgh Festivals Strategy* produced in 2001 noted:

Through the consultation process, it became clear that some venues are considered insufficiently equipped to cater for the festivals' needs. Any attempt to address this issue through an investment programme would need to be soundly based on an analysis of the tangible benefits that would be created. It is recommended that CEC undertake a venues audit with a view to establishing the cost-benefit of further investment in individual venues and priorities for any such development programme. (GDA, 2001, p. 59)

Almost two decades later, there are still complaints. The current EIF uses six main venues – the Usher Hall, the Empire Palace Theatre rebranded in 1994 as the Festival Theatre (figure 6.4), the King's Theatre, the Royal Lyceum Theatre, the Queen's Hall and the Edinburgh Playhouse – plus its own small auditorium in the Hub (the EIF Headquarters). All of these have had major investment



Figure 6.4. The Festival Theatre building, Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, as in August 2006. The original building was the Empire Palace Theatre, but was renamed the Edinburgh Festival Theatre after the renovation with a glass front in 1994 (Law & Dunbar-Nasmith Architects). (*Photo*: CC Globaltraveller)

over the last 20 years to improve the quality of their stages. In addition, there are finally plans for a new performance space - the Dunard Centre - which is being built for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra behind Dundas House, at 36 St Andrews Square. Designed by David Chipperfield, it was planned to provide a 1,000-seat auditorium, 200-seat studio, office space, an education centre and hospitality spaces. However, things have not run smoothly, even with this flagship project. After obtaining planning permission in April 2019, Nuveen Real Estate, developers of the neighbouring Edinburgh St James (a shopping mall and hotel complex then under construction) challenged the decision and forced a judicial review. They claimed that lorry access to the Dunard Centre would see daily heavy goods vehicle deliveries being taken along a pedestrianized street and, in particular, that the development does not keep to height guidelines in the New Town, with the concert hall blocking views from the new twelve-storey Ribbon Hotel that they were already in the process of building. The parties came to an agreement before the review was completed with the Dunard development to be redesigned, although at the time of writing the council has refused to disclose the full nature of the agreement reached (Kelly, 2020).

Fringe

The Fringe continued as it had started. There was no curation, no central organization or central planning, no artistic or quality control. The only requirement was that groups or individual performers could cover their costs, find a venue and organize the required permits to perform. As a result there was an eclectic mix of amateur and professional groups, some local but with many soon coming from further afield, with the first American groups appearing in 1966. Initial growth was slow: thirteen groups by 1955, nineteen in 1959. Even so, the need for some basic coordination became apparent. Edinburgh University students tried to provide advice, accommodation and meals for performers from 1951 onwards (Shrum, 1996, p. 96). The printers C.J. Cousland started producing a programme guide for visitors in 1954 entitled 'Additional Entertainments', funded by advertising paid for by participating groups (Fisher, 2012, p. 20).

Nevertheless, it was not until 1959 that the relationship between Fringe participants was formalized with the establishment of the Edinburgh Fringe Festival Society (EFFS). Staffed initially by volunteers, groups paid £11 to join in their first year and £10 in subsequent years.¹⁵ This funded the production of a complete programme of all events taking place in Edinburgh that were not part of the Official Festival and a central box office set up in the YMCA in the New Town to augment ticket sales at venue sites. Another initiative saw the creation of a Fringe Festival Club, modelled on the Official Festival Club, which was also based in the YMCA. For a three-week membership of £0.52, performers and visitors could socialize and have meals. The EFFS also acted as an information

bureau and sent out regular newsletters to members, even producing a guide to performing at the Fringe – 'Fringe without tears' (Moffat, 1978, pp. 43–47). Understandably, the growth of the festival placed the voluntary nature of the Festival Fringe Society under strain, with fifty-seven groups producing over 100 shows in 1969 (*ibid.*, p. 80). A review of its structure carried out at that time led to its restructuring and incorporation with charitable status to allow it to receive grants and donations. In 1971, it gained its first paid administrator.

During these early years, the EIF and the Fringe had an uneasy relationship. After a brief flirtation when the Fringe productions were mentioned in its souvenir programme, the organizers of the EIF distanced themselves from the Fringe, suspicious that it was taking attention away from the International Festival and probably affecting its ticket sales (*ibid.*, p. 51). The early prominence of amateur and student groups apparently justified their stance that the Fringe was the antithesis of the EIF. From 1951 to 1969, there was no reference to the Fringe performances in the EIF brochure, their artists were warned against using the Fringe Club and the festival's director Peter Diamand was even reprimanded by his Festival Council for attending a Fringe opening party. Yet the complementarities and synergies between the two festivals gradually gained greater recognition, arguably helped by the Fringe's evolving 'efficient administrative organization' giving it some form of figurehead and identity (Shrum, 1996, p. 67).

By 1974, Fringe ticket sales had overtaken the EIF for the first time as the former steadily grew: seventy-eight groups performing in 1971, 494 in 1981, and 586 in 1994.¹⁶ Measured in terms of participation, it had risen to be the world's largest festival, with its fliers and literature readily visible throughout Edinburgh's central areas (figures 6.5 and 6.6). This growth was in part the deliberate policy of the Fringe director Alasdair Moffat (1976–1981) who, faced with the challenge of promoting a product that he had no control over and where the ethos of the festival prevented him from singling out specific acts by name in his marketing material, commented: 'it made selling on merit very difficult ... so I went for growth. Deliberately but always carefully I tried to get the number of groups into the Fringe Programme that I could' (cited in Venables, 2018).

Accommodating this growth in the city was challenging, necessitating a certain amount of imagination with respect to the meaning of the term 'venue'. The EIF had commandeered the major performance spaces. The early Fringe visitors used the smaller theatres. From then on church halls, Masonic Lodges, function rooms in public houses, temporary tents and any other spaces that could be pressed into service were used. In 1969 Edinburgh City Council allowed school halls to be used. Venue-sharing started in the 1970s, scheduling groups throughout the day to accommodate more companies. The more bizarre, the greater the publicity, with media coverage lapping up examples of performances in canal barges, buses, taxis, lifts, or toilets and in 2005 the show that 'abducted' the audience, blindfolded them and drove them in a blacked-out van to a secret venue.¹⁷



Figure 6.5. Available street sites become liberally coated with fliers for Fringe productions, August 2012. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)



Figure 6.6. A world of variety; brochures and fliers for the Edinburgh fringe. (Photo: John and Margaret Gold)

The Fringe model of open access was maintained as the festival grew, but the 1980s saw the rise of the super-venue: commercial operations which featured mini-curated festivals within large multi-venue sites. Their organizers offer a range of performance spaces and managerial services ranging from staging, technical services, marketing, public relations, and even covering the registration of the shows with the EFFS. Performers must apply to the venue, which operates a selection procedure and then sets fees to cover their services as well as taking 40 per cent of the ticket sales. This is an expensive option for performers but competition is fierce, with up to ten applications for every available slot, given that the promise to audiences of quality acts ensures good ticket sales, maximum publicity and critical scrutiny. There are currently four such super-venues, also known as the 'Big Four' (figure 6.7). The oldest of these is Assembly. Started in 1981, it occupies the Assembly Rooms in George Street, a prestigious address in Edinburgh's New Town (figure 6.8). The others are the Pleasance (1983), the Gilded Balloon (1986) and Underbelly (2000). By 2019 these four companies between them ran twenty-four locations at the Fringe with 933 shows.¹⁸

A second tier of venues developed in the 1990s. Evolving a similar formula to the Big Four, it includes operations such as Cvenues (started 1992 now with six venues), The Space (1995, seven venues) and Just the Tonic (1996, seven venues). The rise of this style of Fringe management coincided with and



Figure 6.7. Seventy-four pages out of the 146-page guide to the 2012 comedy festival guide were devoted to the Big Four offer. (*Image*: Personal collection, John and Margaret Gold)



Figure 6.8. The Assembly and restricted entry entertainment areas in George Street, Edinburgh. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

fuelled the rise of comedy generally and stand-up in particular, to the point that comedy overtook theatre in 2008 as the largest group of shows on the Fringe. That year the Big 4 super-venues combined forces to market themselves as the Edinburgh Comedy Festival with their own programme. Since then the festival nomenclature has been dropped but they still produce a joint visitor guide to their venues, amounting to 196 pages in 2019.

Given its original ethos, it is not surprising that reaction to the growing commercialization of the Fringe has generated alternative models, most notably that of the free Fringe. Pioneered by Peter Buckley Hill in 1996 with a single show in the Footlights and Firkin public house, the aim of the Free Fringe was to emancipate the performers from the payment structures that venues were imposing. There was also criticism of the flat fees charged by the EFFS which does not discriminate between type of performer¹⁹ Hill's inspiration came from recognition that public houses were losing business during the Fringe as popup bars and cafés drew in trade. He reasoned that they would welcome the extra trade that using their spare spaces (back rooms, attics and cellars) would bring. The pub would provide space, seating and basic sound and lighting, but receive no hire fee. There is no ticketing, with seats allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and a 'bucket' at the exit invites people to make a donation if they wish. The pub generates business from the audiences attending. Performers gain potentially larger audiences than if the event was ticketed in the traditional way.

The organization is run as a collective, all staff are volunteers and performers are asked to help out at venues and help distribute the 'Wee Blue Book' (the Free Fringe's programme) along with their own flyers (which they still need to produce themselves).

The impact of growth of this and other elements of the festival structure on the cityscape has been less direct than might be expected but is still significant. While the EIF has struggled to persuade the city to upgrade their performance spaces to international standards, by contrast, the Fringe has breathed new life into old buildings, found new uses for underutilized spaces and even acted as a catalyst for the repair, refurbishment and upgrading of buildings to enable summer lets at festival time. The income that this generates can have significant consequences. For example, Edinburgh University's former Veterinary Faculty, vacated in 2010, was purchased for conversion into Sommerhall – an arts centre which hosts artists' and design studios, creative industries, the Scottish performance artist Richard Demarco's archive and collection, exhibition and performance spaces, a micro-brewery, café and restaurant. Employing over 400 staff, it has since 2011 provided additional space for the Fringe specializing in theatre, dance and the visual arts and steering away from comedy in an attempt to redress the image of a 'Fringe swamped by comedy'.²⁰

The Fringe also contributes to the notion of the city being en fête during a festival. In 1947 the entertainments in the Princes Street Gardens, decorations in the city and the sacrifices made to floodlight the Castle were elements in this process. By the 1970s street entertainers had become a regular feature of the summer festivals, with performers welcomed to enhance the visitor experience through animating the streets around the National Galleries on the Mound and on the Royal Mile. The Fringe was the 'body best able to put the "festive" in Festival. In fact the Fringe became the festival' (Dale, 1988, p. 14). Today the spaces are carefully regulated by the EFFS. Street entertainers must register with the festival. While registration is free, a ballot is held daily at 10.00 during the festival to allocate pitches to performers throughout the day from 11.00 to 21.00. The street performers are divided into two groups. The first are the experienced professionals known as 'circle acts' for their ability to encourage a surrounding large circle of static spectators (figure 6.9). They compete for the five pitches available, which are allocated in 45-minute slots. The second are buskers and living statues (figure 6.10), who are allocated 30-minute slots to entertain passing crowds. In addition three stages are set up for registered Fringe groups to perform 20-minute previews of their shows. There are also spots for artists, face painters, henna artists, hair braiding and other similar activities.

Festivalization

There were already five festivals by 1951: the EIF, Film Festival, Fringe, the Tattoo, and the People's Festival. As noted previously, the People's Festival



Figure 6.9. A 'circle act' of street performers, Edinburgh, August 2012. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)



Figure 6.10. Living statue, street performer, Edinburgh, August 2012. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

only survived for four iterations before closing in 1954. Its revival in 2002 was intended as a one-off commemoration of the life and legacy of Hamish Hamilton, one of the original festival's founders, but it expanded into a regular festival with the same radical purpose as the original (Newsroom, 2006). Still funded by the trade unions, local community groups and key cultural figures of the left, it established itself in Craigmillar, one of Edinburgh's poorest areas amongst a community who felt disengaged from the Festivals in the city centre. Yet in the words of Colin Fox, one of the founders:

the truth is the People's Festival has been treated with complete disdain by the Edinburgh establishment and its media, including the local *Evening News*. Bourgeois commentators have turned their noses up at the popular culture we offer. Nevertheless, they have grudgingly been forced to recognise our innovative approach on a number of occasions. (Cited in Armstrong, 2009)

The other four major festivals, the mainstays of activity throughout the 1950s and 1960s, were the foundation from which the narrative of festivalization emerged by the end of the 1970s. Table 6.2 provides an overview, although it is actually challenging to calculate how many festivals Edinburgh actually hosts. This table identifies those that are explicitly international, receiving public funding, or promoted to festivalgoers. Some were offshoots of the original four festivals, as with the emergence of the Book Festival and the Art Festival from the EIF or the Television Festival as a spinoff from the Film Festival. Others, such as the Jazz Festival or the Mela, were founded by individuals or groups of citizens. Yet others were initiated by the municipal authorities to fill a niche, market, or calendar date that would benefit the city. These include Hogmanay and Capital Christmas.

The first of the new wave of five festivals initiated between 1976 and 1983 was the Edinburgh International Television Festival. It started when the deputy chair of the Film Festival (Gus Macdonald) managed to secure funding, and in 1976 just 175 full and 300 temporary delegates. By 2019, it had around 2,000 delegates at its three-day conference. Now sponsored by YouTube and Freeview, its organizers proclaim it as: 'the UK's foremost television event, bringing together leading industry figures and a broad, diverse range of delegates to celebrate and dissect the world of global television production' (ETVF, 2020). The Edinburgh International Jazz and Blues Festival developed from a small jazz event held in 1978 into a fully-fledged Jazz festival the following year. It was followed by the Edinburgh International Folk Festival, which was introduced in 1979. This ran into substantial debt in the 1990s after struggling to attract audiences. Failing to find backers willing to take on the accumulated deficits (GDA, 2001, p. 45), it folded in 1999. The Edinburgh International Harp Festival was inaugurated in 1981, currently taking place over five days in April at Merchiston Castle School and offering concerts, courses and workshops.

Finally, the International Book Festival started in 1983 as a biennial event,

Festival	Year of Origin	Original Dates	Current Dates	Current Location
Edinburgh International Festival	1947	August/ September	August	Festival Theatre, Usher Hall, Kings Theatre, Royal Lyceum Theatre, Queens Hall, St Cecelia's Hall, Edinburgh Playhouse, Assembly Hall, Greyfriars Kirk; The Studio Potterrow; Ross Theatre; Tynecastle Park Stadium (free opening concert); Princes Street Gardens (fireworks finale)
Edinburgh International Film Festival	1947	September	June	Filmhouse; Odeon; Traverse Theatre; Vue Cinema; Queens Hall; Festival Theatre; St James Church; St Andrews Square (free outdoor screenings)
Edinburgh Festival Fringe	1947	September	August	Over 500 venues across the city
Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo	1950	September	August	Edinburgh Castle Esplanade
Edinburgh International Television Festival	1976	August	August	Edinburgh International Conference Centre
Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival	1978	August	July	Teviot Row (Bristo Place); Festival Theatre; The Jazz Bar; Assembly Hall; George Square Spiegeltent; Princes Street and Princes Street Gardens (free Carnival); Grassmarket (free Mardi Gras); plus satellite venues
Edinburgh International Folk Festival	1979	March/April	Final edition 1999	N/A
Edinburgh International Harp Festival	1981	April	April	Merchiston Castle School
Edinburgh International Book Festival	1983	August	August	Charlotte Square and George Street
Beltane	1988	October	October	Carlton Hill
Scottish International Storytelling Festival	1989	October	October	Scottish Storytelling Centre; National Library of Scotland; Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh
Edinburgh International Science Festival	1989	April	March/ April	The Pleasance; Edinburgh University; Heriot Watt University; Royal Botanic Garden; Royal Society; Scottish Storytelling Centre; Summerhall, museums and other venues in central Edinburgh

Table 6.2. Edinburgh's major festivals.

Table 6.2 continued on page 190

Table 6.2 continued from page 189

Festival	Year of Origin	Original Dates	Current Dates	Current Location
Edinburgh International Children's Festival	1990	May/ June	May/June	Traverse Theatre; The Studio; Assembly Roxy; Scottish Storytelling Centre; National Museum of Scotland; Southside Community Centre, plus four suburban venues
Edinburgh's Hogmanay Street Party	1993	December/ January	December/ January	Princes Street and New Town (Street Party); Princes Street Gardens; Holyrood Park (procession); St Giles Cathedral; McEwan Hall; South Queensferry (Loony Dook – New Year's Day Swim)
Edinburgh Mela	1995	Aug/Sept	Aug/Sept	Leith Links
Scots Fiddle Festival	1996	November	November	The Pleasance
Edinburgh's Capital Christmas	1999	December/ January	Last edition 2012	N/A
Edinburgh's Peoples' Festival	2002	August	August	Dispersed locations across Edinburgh including arts and community centres; prisons; Stand Comedy Club; Scottish Parliament
Ceilidh Culture	2003	March	Last edition 2012	N/A
Edinburgh Art Festival	2004	August	July/August	Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art; Scottish National Portrait Gallery; Royal Scottish Academy & Scottish National Gallery; The Queen's Gallery; National Museum of Scotland; 35 other galleries and venues
Edinburgh's Christmas	2013	December/ January	December/ January	Princes Street; Princes Street Gardens; George Street and New Town; Assembly Rooms; Royal Mile; Traverse Theatre; Royal Lyceum Theatre; Playhouse; Usher Hall; Rose Theatre
Tradfest	2013	April/May	April/May	Queens Hall; Leith Depot; Usher Hall; Edinburgh Folk Club; Filmhouse; Traverse Bar; Scottish Storytelling Centre
Edinburgh Multi- cultural Festival	2019	October	October	Drumbrae Library and Community Hub; Edinburgh College, Granton Campus
Burns and Beyond	2019	January/ February	January/ February	Edinburgh Old Town; St Giles Cathedral; Assembly Roxy; Assembly Lane; Freemason's Hall; Merchant's Hall; Rose Street; Rose Street Theatre; Greyfriars Kirk

becoming annual in 1997 (see also chapter 7). The first festival, which took place in a tented village in Charlotte Square, had a single stage, thirty meet-theauthor events, 120 authors, a bookselling operation and 30,000 visitors. It was partly an offshoot of the EIF, which had staged literary events in the past but without embracing a permanent literary element. The first festival was conceived as a one-off event funded by the Scottish Arts Council and the National Book League with additional sponsorship from the book trade. It has since expanded to be the world's largest book festival, has added debates, interview discussions and an extensive children's programme to its schedule. In 2018, it attracted 260,000 visitors, 1,190 participants from sixty-two countries to events that now also have an impressive outreach and educational programme.²¹

Given that they were concerned with television, music and literature, the 1976-1983 wave of festival creations essentially reflected global as much as local festivalization trends, but other festivals shown in table 6.2 in succeeding years had a more distinctly Scottish flavour. The Beltane celebrations, for example, sought to recover and reimagine the ancient Celtic fire festival that welcomed the start of summer (1 May). At inception in 1988, it involved just five performers and fewer than 100 spectators, embracing the anti-establishment culture that existed within Thatcherite Britain rather more than Gaelic paganism. In 1993, management and creative direction was taken over by the Beltane Fire Society, which employed its first paid production manager in 2001 - by which time the festival attracted 10,000 visitors. Paid ticketing followed in 2004. Since that time, it has expanded further with celebration of the other three Quarterdays of the Scottish traditional calendar: Imbolc (1 February), Lughnasadh (1 August) and Samhuinn (1 November). Critics question as to whether the festival has been sanitized (Tinsley, 2017) and note that the festivities used Carlton Hill rather than Arthur's Seat, a known site of ancient celebration, for practical reasons of centrality and as a way of reclaiming the area for the public in the face of its reputation for anti-social behaviour and crime (figure 6.11). Yet despite these misgivings, there is a sense that reinvented tradition has contrived an event engrained in history but with an interpretation that turns the traditional into a spectacular contemporary experience.

Equally, the International Storytelling Festival that is held in October stemmed from an initiative with distinctly local roots, oriented towards galvanizing 'oral traditions in contemporary contexts as part of the development of a Scottish literary culture' (Smith, 2008). More specifically, it sought to retrieve interest in oral storytelling traditions in Edinburgh, an area of activity generally considered 'the domain of rural communities, travellers, islanders' (Kaye, 2015). The first festival in 1988, held in the Netherbow Arts Centre in the Old Town, lasted two days and attracted just 700 visitors. The following year it expanded to a week and in 1990 invited its first international artists. By 2018 there were 57,172 visitors split between paid and free events. Besides supporting an area of cultural activity in which Edinburgh excels, the Storytelling Festival interacts with other



Figure 6.11. Beltane Fire Festival bonfire on Calton Hill, Edinburgh, Scotland, May 2012. (*Photo:* CC Stefan Schäfer)

festivals. Indeed, the creation of the associated Scottish Storytelling Centre in 2005 played a significant role in helping to consolidate Edinburgh's status as UNESCO's first City of Literature (Press Association, 2004).

On a different tack, the Edinburgh Science Festival pointed to the direct relationship between festival creation and economic development. The first festival in 1989 stemmed from an initiative by Edinburgh City Council's Economic Development Department and can claim to be the first of its type. The council was grappling with the need both for economic renewal and to respond to Glasgow's energetic event-led regeneration approach of the 1980s. In 1986 Glasgow beat Edinburgh and seven other British cities to win the nomination as the European City of Culture in 1990 and staged a Garden Festival in 1988 (Gold and Gold, 1995, pp. 185-186). Having invested in new technology parks, Edinburgh wanted to respond to its rival's success by rebranding itself as a city of science. Ian Wall, a senior member of the development team, suggested a spring science festival to complement the summer arts festivals. The City Council backed the idea with funding.²² Despite scepticism about whether science would provide the basis for a popular festival to sit alongside the growing menu of festivals in the city, the first festival in April 1989 successfully started the series with ninety-nine component events. Its director, Howard Firth stressed the need to balance Edinburgh's heritage and current needs: 'the aim of the Science Festival is to highlight a direction for the city of Edinburgh, to draw on its historic strengths and its present-day developments, and put forward its

resources to assist the wider awareness of science and technology' (Robertson, 2018). Formulation of Edinburgh's science festival again had wider implications, contributing to the gradual diffusion of the idea to North America and to European cities such as Gothenburg, Belgrade, Warsaw, and Genoa. Networks also formed: the European Science Events Association in 2001, the Science Festival Alliance founded in the USA in 2009, and UK Science Festival Network in 2010.

Tourism stimulated further municipally-inspired festival creation, with consolidated efforts to boost tourism, visitor numbers and spending in Edinburgh in midwinter. This was addressed in particular by a Winter Festival with two elements: Capital Christmas appealing to the short-break market, day visitors and Edinburgh residents and Hogmanay, which was targeted at a younger, 18-35 age group (Wardrop and Robertson, 2004, p. 350). The Winter Festival appeared gradually, beginning with changes to the Hogmanay festivities. Although traditionally celebrated with gatherings at Tron Kirk on the Royal Mile, a consultant's report (KPMG, 1990) recommended a larger staged Hogmanay event to provide a focus for tourism. This was introduced in 1992 to coincide with the meeting of the European Council of Ministers in the city and immediately attracted 90,000 visitors (ibid., p. 353). The following year, a threeday Hogmanay Festival was instituted, drawing partly on Millennium Lottery funding. Organized by the Edinburgh-based Unique Events, it sought to attract visitors and tourists to Edinburgh in a quiet period, provide 'enjoyment' for residents and raise the profile of Edinburgh as a European capital (Wardrop and Robertson, 2004, p. 348). This was supplemented by Capital Christmas in 1999, an instrumentally driven combination of traditional and new activities designed to create a three-week festival leading up to Christmas. For its first outing, Capital Christmas merged into the Millennium celebrations, attracting 565,000 visitors overall (ibid., pp. 350, 353). The 2000 season saw Capital Christmas draw 288,000 visitors in its own right, 20 per cent of whom were from outside Edinburgh and the immediate region (ibid., p. 353).

Buoyed by successes in creating new festivals, the Council considered the potential for developing the festival calendar further. The 2001 Festivals Strategy document identified gaps in the calendar as 'late autumn, leading up to Christmas, and the spring period around Easter' (GDA, 2001, p. 42). Various candidates were suggested to fill these gaps: an expansion of Capital Christmas, visual arts, food, dance, and sport. Subsequently Capital Christmas was extended, rebranded as Edinburgh's Christmas and eventually taken over by Underbelly in 2013. By 2019–2020, it had turned into a seven-week extravaganza lasting from 16 November 2019 to 4 January 2020. In addition, visual Arts were added to the mix in 2004. Visual arts had been incorporated into the Edinburgh International Festival from time to time, but there was no appetite or funding to incorporate them permanently. Museums and galleries had presented their summer exhibition programmes as part of the festival experience for visitors,

but without coordination either between galleries or with existing festivals. With the encouragement of city government, lobbying by the newspaper *Scotland on Sunday* (which published the first festival programme in 2004) and funding from the Scottish Arts Council, a steering group was set up in 2003 to work on a festival idea. A co-ordinator was appointed to oversee the first festival and to produce a road map for future development (Gale, 2004, p. 1). Throughout August 2004 exhibitions were held in a total of twenty-three public, private and commercial galleries.

Another point arising from the 2001 Festivals strategy was the question of folk music and culture. While the newly arrived Scottish Executive was keen to celebrate Scotland's cultural heritage in its full diversity, traditional culture had struggled to sustain itself within the Edinburgh Festival Calendar. The Edinburgh Festival strategy was keen to reinstate a replacement for the now defunct International Folk Festival (see above) although there was uncertainty whether a 'Celtic roots' approach or a 'community/participative approach' would be best (GDA, 2001, p. 46). In 2003, Ceilidh Culture was created to fill the gap, but it too ran into financial difficulties and ended in 2012. Finally, Tradfest was set up in 2013 as another attempt to find an appropriate folk festival. Created under the auspices of Traditional Arts and Culture Scotland (TRACS), which has a remit to promote the traditional arts throughout Scotland, and with the support of the Scottish Storytelling Centre, it was conceived as a 'a re-imagining of the Ceilidh Culture festival'.²³ However reduction of TRACS's government funding in 2018 led them, in turn, to pass organization of the festival on to Soundhouse, a small organization that had programmed parts of the earlier festivals. They expanded the festival in 2019, adding a film strand. They had aimed to expand further in 2020 before the coronavirus lockdown ended the possibility of knowing whether or not a viable model had at last been created.

Post Millennium

The increased diversity of the festivals, their cost and growing reliance on the festival economy inevitably created tensions as to what Scottish and particularly Edinburgh residents received from festivals that were subsidized out of the public purse. Additional concern was also expressed about the impact of the summer festivals on normal city life, although this was only belatedly placed under formal scrutiny. In 1974 when wanting to draw up a masterplan for their own festival, the City of Philadelphia had sent representatives to Edinburgh on a fact-finding trip to evaluate the impact of the Edinburgh Festival on the city and region. They estimated that the four summer festivals (EIF, Film Festival, Fringe and Tattoo) generated £16.5 million with an additional benefit of £2.25 million derived from world-wide press coverage for the city (Bruce, 1975, p. 213).

Although summarily discounted by the Edinburgh Council, the impact analysis jointly commissioned almost immediately afterwards by Lothian

Regional Council and the Scottish Tourist Board showed that the impact of the Edinburgh Festivals in 1976 was significant even if less than in the American study (Vaughan, 1977). Their report calculated an inflow into the Edinburgh economy of \pounds 3.7 million for an outlay of \pounds 205,000 in public subsidy to the festivals, with the discrepancy attributed to the Philadelphia study employing a much higher multiplier effect than those conventionally used in British studies (*ibid.*, pp. 3, 40). The Scottish study also showed the pattern of visitors to the four festivals and the degree to which local residents engaged with the festivals. The percentage of Edinburgh and Lothian visitors was highest for the Film Festival (54 per cent), followed by the Fringe (50 per cent), the EIF (36 per cent) and finally the Tattoo (15 per cent). By contrast, the Tattoo drew in the biggest percentage of visitors from outside Scotland (70 per cent) and was the festival without public subsidy (*ibid.*, p. 14).

No further impact study appeared before the 1992 *Edinburgh Festivals Study* (Scotinform, 1992). By this time, there were nine Edinburgh Festivals, with the first four now joined by the Jazz Festival, Folk Festival, Science Festival, Book Festival, and the Children's Festival. The report estimated the economic impact for Edinburgh and the Lothian Region as £44 million in direct expenditure. The highest impact came from the Tattoo, which attracted the largest number of tourists (*ibid.*, p. 9) but the Tattoo audience showed scant interest in the other festivals (*ibid.*, p. 13). Conversely, the report showed a 'high degree of multiple ... visiting' for the other festivals, which were seen by visitors as a 'joint product' (*ibid.*, p. 9); a point leading to recommendations that that there should be 'increased joint marketing' (*ibid.*, p. 23). The report also recommended more concentrated efforts to seek sponsorship and more effort to encourage children and young people to attend the summer festivals, and it suggested that a joint Festivals Schools Liaison Officer be appointed to work with schools and families (*ibid.*, p. 24).

The context in which the festivals were taking place had changed dramatically since Edinburgh first became seriously involved in arts festivals. Industrial employment had accounted for 51 per cent of the job total in 1951. By 1982, it was down to 17 per cent and to just 7 per cent in 2001 (see Madgin and Rodger, 2013, p. 525). Like other cities, Edinburgh had accepted the need to give greater weight to cultural economic strategies and the role of festivals was beginning to be better understood. Event studies, a separate field of study that had emerged in the 1980s, promoted understanding that people were travelling specifically to participate in festivals and that these were becoming destinations in their own right. These ideas were broadly accepted by the Millennium and were certainly echoed in an economic impact study that examined the case for year round festivals (SQW/TNS, 2005). The report considered seventeen festivals operating in 2004–2005, estimating that 3.2 million visitors generated £170 million and that for every £1 public subsidy for the festivals the Scottish economy received £61 of new output – 'a good return' for the £3 million in public sector support (*ibid.*,

Year	Edinburgh Policy Documents	Scottish Policy Documents
1977	The Economic Impact of the Edinburgh Festival 1976 – A Summary Report to Lothian Region Council and the Scottish Tourist Board	
1989	Edinburgh Tourism Initiative	
1992	Edinburgh Festivals Study 1990–1991: Summary Report	
1996	Theatre Strategy	
1999	Towards the New Enlightenment: A Cultural Policy for the City of Edinburgh	
1999	A Music Strategy	
2000		The National Cultural Strategy
2001	Festivals and the City: The Edinburgh Festivals Strategy	
2005	Dance Strategy	
2005	Edinburgh's Year Round Festivals 2004–2005 Economic Impact Study. A Final Report to: The City of Edinburgh Council; Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian; EventScotland; Visit Scotland	
2006	Moving Image Strategy	Scotland's Culture
2006	Thundering Hooves: Maintaining the Global Competitive Edge of Edinburgh's Festivals. Full Report	
2007	Gaelic Arts Strategy	
2007	Inspiring Events Strategy	
2008		Scotland the Perfect Stage – A Strategy for the Events Industry in Scotland 2009–2020
2009	Cultural Venues Strategy	
2011	Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study Final Report and Edinburgh Festivals Impact Study Technical Report	
2012	Edinburgh 2020: The Edinburgh Tourism Strategy	Tourism Scotland 2020: The Future of Our Industry, in Our hands – A Strategy for Leadership and Growth
2013		Scotland the perfect stage – a strategy for the events industry in Scotland 2009–2020 revised
2014		Unlocking Potential Embracing Ambition A Shared Plan for the Arts, Screen and Creative Industries 2014–2024
2015	Thundering Hooves 2.0: 10 Year Strategy	National Events strategy – Scotland the Perfect Stage. Scotland's Events Strategy 2015–25
2015	The New Culture Plan	
2016	Edinburgh Festivals 2015 Impact Study Final Report and Edinburgh Festivals 2015 Impact Study : Technical Report	
2016	A new events strategy for Edinburgh	
2018	The Network Effect: The Role of the Edinburgh Festivals in the National Culture and Events Sectors	Tourism in Scotland: The Economic Contribution of the Sector
2019		Putting Artists in the Picture: A Sustain- able Arts Funding System for Scotland
2020	Edinburgh 2030 Tourism Strategy	

Source: Compiled by the authors.

pp. ii–iii). It also noted that 48 per cent of those sampled said that the summer festivals were 'their sole reason' for visiting Edinburgh, with a further 16 per cent declaring that they were 'very important' (*ibid.*, p. v). The report also indicated the wider role of the festivals beyond tourism as: 'mechanisms for supporting social inclusion, civic pride, creativity and innovation, multi-culturalism, promotion of the city or maintaining traditions for future generation' (*ibid.*, p. vi).

The period around the Millennium would see the launch of the 'Inspiring Edinburgh' rebranding in 2005 as well as new strategic thinking at national and local level about culture, festivals and events (see table 6.3 for the plethora of strategies produced after 2000). Together they expressed the desire to protect the Edinburgh brand as a festival city in the face of international competition, to strengthen cooperation between the major festivals particularly in regard to marketing, and to address the question of city performance venues, which were still causing concern. Within Edinburgh itself there was a desire to increase the social reach of the festivals to more marginal communities and to encourage the major festivals to develop events at other times of the year, to strengthen cooperation between the major festivals and to develop the festival calendar both by addressing the bunching of festivals in the summer but also to further diversify the festival subject matter and fill gaps in the festival year. The 2007 Events strategy set out the type of events to be encouraged. Table 6.4 provides extracts from that document, indicating the strong steer to economic impact (tourism, investment, regeneration, city brand) and social goals (diversity and education) (CEC, 2007, pp. 10-11).

Against this background came the commissioning in 2005 of *Thundering Hooves*, the most influential study of Edinburgh's festivals (AEA Consulting, 2006). The brief centred on two pressing issues: the threat to Edinburgh's position as *the* festival city from the growth of rival festivals in the UK and overseas competing for the same pool of artists, audiences and funding; and the increasing instrumental use of cultural programming (festivals and events) to

When considering a potential new event, we will assess it against our basic requirements and we will also look at whether it will:
Promote Edinburgh as a vibrant, contemporary international city
Encourage people and businesses to live in, invest in and visit Edinburgh

Table 6.4. Criteria for adding new festivals to the festival calendar.

Strengthen the city's international relations and international development work

Generate money for city, national or international charities

Interest or involve the city's diverse communities

Interest or engage young learners in our schools and help to meet our educational objectives

Help to regenerate various parts of the city

Source: Compiled from CEC, 2007, pp. 10-11.

Theme	Number	Recommendation
Long-term planning and strategy	1	An on-going forum to monitor the longer-term health of Edinburgh as a Festival City
	2	Stakeholders and funders take a more strategic view of their funding obligations to ensure that initiatives are world class in their quality and delivery – Edinburgh City Council should consider raising its cultural spend with support from the Scottish Executive
Investing in quality over quantity	3	The festivals should focus planning efforts on the creation and marketing of competitive programming
	4	No new festival should be 'embraced' as part of the city offer unless its niche and ability to fulfil that niche in the international area is clear
Talented and experienced	5	Festival boards should pay attention to succession planning in order to recruit and retain leadership from the strongest pool of eligible candidates
Focused and innovative	6	Festival strategies should address the presentation (and as appropriate programming commissioning) of new work
	7	Core funders should recognize the relationship between continued pre-eminence and innovations – and ensure that research and development requirements are adequately funded
Excellent facilities	8	That the City of Edinburgh undertake a development plan for the infrastructure (including venues) required for the success of the Festivals
Strategic promotion	9	Machinery and resources should be put in place to promote Edinburgh, the Festival City worldwide
	10	Develop a joint festivals marketing strategy
Strategic intelligence	11	Festivals continue to commission joint research on their individual and joint audiences
	12	Develop additional collaborative projects that focus on audience and educational development
Political will matched by strong leader- ship and political independence	13	Festivals and their stakeholders should invest in a programme of board development, so that board composition and modus operandi match the aspirations and achievements of the Festivals
Coordinated process of monitoring and evaluation	14	Agree criteria, priorities and processes for monitoring and evaluation of each festival's contribution to the strategic objective of retaining the City's pre-eminent economic, social and cultural goals with innovation and management effectiveness suitable to the regional, national and international fit for each festival

Table 6.5 .	Thundering Hooves	(2006) summary	of recommendations.
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Source: Compiled from AEA Consulting, 2006, pp. 45–50.

promote tourism and city brands. AEA were also asked to identify any further factors that threatened Edinburgh's position. This fear of other cities catching up and overtaking Edinburgh inspired the report's title, with its allusion to the opposition breathing down one's neck.²⁴ It analysed eleven of Edinburgh's Festivals, surveyed the offerings of eight competitors (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Manchester, Melbourne, Montreal, Newcastle/Gateshead, San Francisco, and Singapore) and examined twenty-four competitor festivals. The report's fourteen recommendations (table 6.5) partly addressed weaknesses in Edinburgh's offer such as venues, public funding or joint festival marketing, and partly pointed to more proactive strategies such as innovative programming, commissioning new work, monitoring the festivals and the city, and promoting Edinburgh globally. It also warned against mindlessly expanding the number of festivals.

The report had a considerable impact, most importantly leading to the creation of a coordinating body to help consolidate the principal festivals,²⁵ with the addition of the Scottish International Storytelling Festival. Festivals Edinburgh, the new body, was set up in 2007 with enhanced funding, its own staff²⁶ and a strategic role and agenda provided by the report. It is able to act in areas that require effective coordination – marketing, programming, strategic planning and infrastructure – as well as supplying a collective voice when lobbying for resources or support. As table 6.3 showed, Festivals Edinburgh has continued to commission impact studies (BOP Consulting, 2011, 2016) as well as a ten-year follow up to *Thundering Hooves* (BOP Consulting, 2015). These in turn have led to further initiatives to support innovation and creativity, nurture new Scottish talent and to create networks and partnerships with arts organizations, cities and even governments that would benefit not only Scottish artists but also enhance the city and even the national brand (Festivals Edinburgh, 2020).

The Contemporary Festival

In the years since the 2006 *Thundering Hooves* strategy, much has been achieved with the members of Festivals Edinburgh continuing to expand their audience numbers. Growth has been led by the Fringe, which in 2019 recorded its highest aggregate attendance at events of 3,012,490 (Ferguson, 2019). This is now dominated by comedy in terms of genre and by the Big Four in terms of ticket sales (60 per cent of the total). Assembly alone boasted 575,000 ticket sales at the end of the 2019 Fringe, closely followed by the Pleasance (560,000), Underbelly (417,000) and Gilded Balloon (265,000). The growth in numbers even applies to the Tattoo which, although unable to increase the capacity of its Edinburgh Castle site, has successfully taken its product overseas. This started with a tour to Australia (Melbourne) and New Zealand (Wellington) in 2016, going on to pursue market opportunities including China with screenings in five Chinese cities at the start of 2019 and a live display at the China International Wind Music

Festival in Shanghai in April 2019 in the hope of developing a full scale tour in the future.²⁷ Table 6.6 shows the performance of the eleven Festivals Edinburgh members. This demonstrated that four of the festivals contribute 95.3 per cent of

Festival	Dates	Attendance at Ticketed Events	Attendance at Non-Ticketed Events	1	2	3	4	Economic Impact Edinburgh 2010 £m
Edinburgh International Science Festival	31 March– 15 April	29,000	146,000	52	42	4	2	0.62
Edinburgh International Children's Festival	26 May–3 June	11,028	5,040	73	11	6	10	0.38
Edinburgh International Film Festival	20 June–1 July	56,572	10,500	50	22	17	11	2.82
Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival	13 July–22 July	33,115	34,885	60	23	7	1	1.29
Edinburgh Art Festival	26 July– 26 August	60,959	225,372	34	21	25	20	n.a.
Edinburgh International Festival	3 August– 27 August	162,963	253,300 est	45	24	19	12	20.84
Edinburgh Fringe	3 August– 27 August	2,838,839	n.a.	37	21	35	7	141.56
Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo	3 August– 25 August	220,000	-	6	18	30	46	34.37
Edinburgh International Book Festival	11 August–2 5 August	146,033	260,000	50	30	15	4	5.08
Scottish International Storytelling Festival	19 October– 31 October	32,672	24,500	38	20	16	26	0.18
Edinburgh's Hogmanay	30 December– 1 January	118,672	65,185	20	14	40	26	27.91

Table 6.6.	Festivals Edinburgh: the eleven	member Festivals in 2018.

Key: ① % audience from Edinburgh; ② % audience from the rest of Scotland; ③ % audience from the rest of the UK; ④ % audience from the rest of the world.

Sources: Compiled from CEC, 2019 and BOP, 2011, p. 72.

the economic impact between them with the Fringe alone contributing 60.1 per cent followed by the Tattoo (14.6), Hogmanay (11.8) and the EIF (11.8).

As argued by BOP Consulting (2016), the alignment of the Festivals with the Edinburgh economy requires the city to commit significant long-term public funding (*ibid.*, p. 78). The strategy judged that Edinburgh had weathered the 2008 recession better than many of its competitors, but that some of these competitors have 'strong and overt political backing for development'. This even applied close to home in the case of Glasgow and Manchester (*ibid.*, p. 77). Given that public sector investment was expected to fall in the United Kingdom, the document warned that sudden reductions in public funding are hard to replace in the short term and that donors dislike 'subsidizing public sector cuts', much preferring to reinforce public sector investment (*ibid.*, p. 78). Progressive cuts announced in 2019 that would reduce the grant to the EIF to £1.9 million by 2021 had a familiar ring. This, according to its Director Fergus Lineham, represented a £500,000 cut from its annual budget since 2016:

Is the only strategy to keep on salami slicing? If that is the case then the festival will end. There has to be a proper discussion. What's going to happen in three years' time? Will there be another 10 per cent cut and another three years later? If we'd been bouncing along at the same level for the last decade and we had to take our medicine that would be different. But you can't deteriorate a core funding base indefinitely. I'm not hearing anything contrary to that.²⁸

The counterclaim from the city council was that it was trying to balance the needs of all sectors of the community and particularly recognize the non-festival dimension of the city's cultural role. Their culture convenor Donald Wilson stated:

Things have moved on in the 70 years since the festivals were established. This is about the council looking now at exactly what we want for the city in terms of festivals and culture and making sure it is broad enough to take in everybody's views and interests.²⁹

This again underlines the problems of relying on core funding from a local authority, already committed to fund a wide spectrum of art organizations and having to balance the needs of local participatory projects with those of global arts festivals.

The 2015 strategy document (BOP Consulting, 2015) was fully cognisant of these problems when suggesting the actions necessary to improve the experience of all involved in the festivals, whether audiences, artists, social media influencers or citizens. It called for strategies in the areas of accommodation, digitizing the Festival City, and promoting Edinburgh as a Green Festival City. It stressed that city departments should coordinate their efforts to meet festival needs at peak times. This would include relatively mundane areas such as refuse collection, use of parks, public order, signage, and establishing welcome points for visitors.

It also suggested that the city should take a 'leadership role' in influencing infrastructural developments and, as far as cultural venues were concerned, 'new thinking' was required around the development and refurbishment of venues. A new concert hall and digital arts centre were picked out as urgent projects (*ibid.*, pp. 4–6).

Some of the developments relating to venues are now interpreted in terms of creating cultural quarters. The Edinburgh City Transformation Plan (CEC, 2019, p. 63) suggested, for example, that the square around Usher Hall, the nearby Festival Square and Lothian Road which together contain an important number of cultural venues constitute a hub. The area, however, lacks character or sense of place and has underperforming social spaces due to a lack of facilities to encourage 'dwell time' (*ibid*, 55). The suggested solution is to create a tree-lined boulevard along the Lothian Road linking these spaces with Princes Street Gardens at one end and the Meadows in the south, creating a focus for 'vibrant culture and leisure uses' (*ibid.*, p. 64). Other suggestions include a Literary Quarter in the Old Town in and around the proposed Literature House and Scottish Storytelling Centre and a Digital Quarter (Innovation Mile) around the University of Edinburgh's campus in the vicinity of Bistro Square, Lauriston Place and Fountainbridge.

Any overall assessment of the relationship between the festival and the city must perforce recognize that the festivals collectively have had a beneficial effect on Edinburgh's reputation, its status as a world city and its standing as a model for other cities that are looking for culture-based event strategies to revive their economies and boost tourism. Nevertheless, the growth of the festivals in recent years as trumpeted by the year-on-year increases in numbers of artists, participants and visitors does mask important challenges for Edinburgh. The question of over-tourism and the congestion on the streets in the central areas, the pressure on transport and accommodation, the impact of the growth in holiday lets (particularly Airbnb) on rents and the availability of rented accommodation to residents in the city, have all raised concern. In 2019 a report suggested that there was one Airbnb for every forty-eight residents in Edinburgh which constitutes a higher concentration than for either London or New York. In Edinburgh's New Town, itself a World Heritage site, 29 per cent of properties are short-term rentals (Pollock, 2020). This reinforces a warning given in 2017 that Edinburgh, like Venice, was turning into a hollow shell (Foote, 2017).³⁰ Other concerns have included disneyfication with the creation of a theme park Edinburgh, and the privatization of public space.

The temporary and sometimes semi-permanent privatization of public space due to festivals is of particular concern. Cities have often become integral to the event; a phenomenon certainly the case with Edinburgh where the festivals and the identity of the city have become so intertwined (Smith, 2017, p. 610). As the festivals have grown, the city has been keen to support and encourage free events to make the festivals more inclusive. Street entertainers during the



Figure 6.12. Showcase stage for Fringe performers, Edinburgh, August 2012. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

Fringe are a case in point as are parades, showcases (figure 6.12), and parties, but there are challenges. The growing scale of events places pressure on open spaces, as exemplified by Edinburgh International Book Festival. This has used Charlotte Square in the New Town since its inception without charge, but the event steadily grew from 30,000 visitors in 1983 to some 225,000 by 2013.³¹ At that point, the Committee of the Charlotte Square Proprietors raised objection to the way that the Book Festival had taken over their gardens in July, finally releasing them back to the community in September but rarely making good the damage until the following April. Their solution was to reconfigure the gardens to retain a smaller area suitable for events but to install drainage, power facilities, and pathways to reduce the impact of the Book Festival in August while at the same time allowing the proprietors to stage events at other times of the year.³² The outcome was for the Book Festival to reduce its use of the Square, but expand into the West End of George Street. This solution also worked to the festival's advantage as it increased the number of events staged to 910, a rise of 17 per cent.33

The most serious disquiet has centred on the use of Princes Street Gardens and surrounding streets. Princes Street Gardens is a pivotal space in the centre

of Edinburgh between the Old and New Towns. There was certainly a long tradition of summer entertainment, dating back to the bandstand constructed when the park was opened in the 1870s. This was replaced by the Ross Bandstand in 1935 which was in essence an outdoor concert platform. Its excellent acoustics means that it is used by a number of the Edinburgh Festivals (see table 6.2). The Virgin Money Fireworks Concert that ends the main summer festivals at the end of August, for example, uses the Ross Bandstand with 12,000 ticketed spectators in the Gardens and around 250,000 people watching the fireworks for free from Princes Street, the closed streets of the New Town and other vantage points.³⁴

Perhaps the greatest criticism has come from the increased pressure on the Princes Street Gardens from Edinburgh's Christmas and Hogmanay. These festivals have become more ambitious in recent years, inevitably requiring ticketing for the major events and extensive stewarding and security. Activity is particularly concentrated in East Princes Street Gardens, where the European Christmas Market (with a record 163 stalls in 2019), fairground rides and Santa Land are all located. Besides high prices, residents complained of memorial benches being unceremoniously removed and dumped to make way for the event and mess and degradation of the grass lawns after the temporary structures have been dismantled (Spowart, 2020). Edinburgh World Heritage weighed into the argument by saying that this form of development 'clearly disrupts this magnificent environment' and implied that its status could be put at risk (McKenna, 2019). Reports in February 2020 that the full planning permission process for the 2019 Christmas Market had still not been completed added to the disquiet (BBC, 2020).

Further frictions arose from the arrangements for the 2019 Street Party and New Year's Firework Concert, which were criticized as particularly irksome by residents who happened to live in the area cordoned off for ticket access to the event. To access their own homes during the event residents required passes with additional passes for any quests they wished to invite to their own New Year's celebrations. Underbelly, the organizers, claimed the arrangements were the same as in previous years, but Brooks (2019) suggested the uproar reflected the inconvenience that residents felt at the expansion and rising cost of the festival to their lives and the city:

the flood of responses to the Hogmanay complaints tapped into wider concerns that the pressures on public space, amenities and accommodation from the city's ever-expanding festival programme are making city centre living unsustainable for long-term residents.

Underbelly meanwhile claimed that Edinburgh City Council had saved £2 million per year since 2017 through their stewardship of Edinburgh's Christmas and Hogmanay (Spowart, 2020). This claim came to the attention of Citizen, a new campaigning group, launched in the spring of 2019, with the aim of
EDINBURGH

defending the city against over-tourism, gentrification, property developers, privatization of public space and festivalization. They noted: 'the true fault lies with the city council who have handed over wholesale large parts of the city to this one company. Hogmanay has become a hollowed-out cultural experience and the city has been reduced to a theme park.' Another observer provided similar commentary:

there are increasing indications that patience is wearing thin. The commercialization of every space in August and the strain placed on transport, litter collection and the public realm has led to more grumbles from locals than ever before. This city is cross.

Conclusion

Such comments perhaps represent an important moment of critical reflection after around seventy-five years of continuous and sometimes headlong expansion. The initiative for the Edinburgh International Festival, unlike the other case studies presented here, came from outside the city. The model was loosely Salzburg and drew on deep continental European connections, with relatively little sense initially that the chosen city would be Edinburgh. Yet the opportunity was quickly seized, with local initiatives offered by groups ready and determined to use the international event as an opportunity to showcase their own art forms. Within a few years of the first festival in 1947, the basis of a multi-arts festival programme had been created, with significant innovations that have shaped the history of the modern city festival. Edinburgh, for instance, was responsible for creating new festival forms, such as the Science Festival and, especially, the Fringe. There are now 200 Fringe festivals worldwide with an international network, the International Fringe Festival Association, set up in 2012,³⁵ a World Fringe day (11 July) since 2017, and a biennial congress launched in Edinburgh in 2012.36 All owe their existence to the spontaneous model that emerged there.

Festivalization has undoubtedly changed the city. What had been a grimy industrial city with a dual core of world-famous historic buildings in 1947 had become a postindustrial city with an economy substantially reliant on culture, where festivals complement the heritage that is ever-present. Contemporary culture is now seen as much part of the city's identity as its history and cultural heritage. From the tourism perspective this justifies repeat visitation and chimes with the rise of the experience economy: a participatory offer that engages and involves the visitors giving them memories rather than a history lesson. These changes have assisted the rebranding of Edinburgh as festival city: a creative and dynamic location, a place the art world wants to visit at festival time and where participation in the festivals is seen as a rite of passage for aspiring performers and creatives. They have aided Edinburgh in its long-term rivalry with Glasgow as to which is Scotland's true cultural hub. Despite the criticism of the international

dimension of the festival at the outset, this has been an enduring and ultimately crucial feature of all the main Edinburgh festivals. Edinburgh now relishes its role as a meeting place for the international arts community. As such, it has provided a model for other cities wanting to use culture and tourism as part of their social and economic strategies.

These changes have not come without challenges to perceived priorities in terms of funding and costs derived, *inter alia*, from over-tourism, crowding, congestion and appropriation of the public domain. There is a sense that the density of festivals in the Edinburgh festive programme might now be a problem and that the Fringe, in particular, cannot be allowed to grow indefinitely. As such, there is now debate about how the festivals should be managed in the longterm for the benefit of visitors and residents. After the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 led to the cancellation of all the Easter and summer festivals, headlines suggested a time had come for a rethink and a re-booting of the festival, for example: 'The cancellation of the Edinburgh festivals has given the city a chance to rethink them' (Pollock, 2020); or 'Edinburgh festivals face calls for overhaul before they return in 2021' (Ferguson, 2020). At the time of writing, however, it is still impossible to tell whether this will presage a genuine debate about the festivalization of Edinburgh and its consequences or whether the *status quo ante* will reappear when some form of normality returns (see also chapter 9).

Notes

1. This comes from the Foreword to the souvenir programme of the first Edinburgh International Festival in 1947, cited Miller, 1996, p. vii.

2. Edinburgh Festival City.com World leading festival city. Available at: https://www.edinburghfestivalcity. com/the-city.

3. These are the Scottish National Orchestra and the BBC Scottish Orchestra.

4. To complete the chronology, a further significant festival was staged as part of the Scott Centenary celebrations in 1871.

5. All were exiles from Nazi Germany. Fritz Busch, the conductor, had been the General Musical Director of Dresden Opera House; Carl Ebert was an actor who had trained under Max Reinhardt and had been Director of the Berlin City Opera; and Rudolf Bing, who had been working with Ebert in Berlin.

6. As it turned out, Glyndebourne's first full post-war opera season in Sussex was not until 1950.

7. Glyndebourne (2017) Performance Archive. Available at: http://www.glyndebourne.com/about-us/ our-archive/performance-archive/production/590.

8. Equivalent to Mayor in other local government systems.

9. Walter had been particularly associated with the VPO and the Vienna State Opera following his move to Austria after being forced out of Germany once the National Socialist Party came to power in 1933. As a Jewish conductor he was targeted by the new regime keen to Aryanize the main orchestras in the German Reich. However, with the *Anschlus* Walter was forced to move again and spent the war years in the United States. In 1947, denazification was still ongoing and touring opportunities severely limited.

10. The logic was that the majority of Scottish companies were amateur. The Unity Theatre itself was established in 1940 by the merging of five radical and politically committed theatre groups dedicated to producing drama portraying working people using Scottish writers, actors and producers (Scullion, 2001, p. 228). It had only formed a permanent company recruited from its existing amateur operation in the spring of 1946, after which the two companies operated in tandem.

EDINBURGH

11. Alan Lomax (2006) 1951 Edinburgh People's Festival Ceilidh. Audio CD, Continental Record Services.

12. His successor was lan Hunter, who had previously been Bing's assistant at Glyndebourne. When he left in 1955 Robert Ponsonby who had been Hunter's assistant (and before that General Secretary at Glyndebourne) replaced him.

13. The name was shortened from the Edinburgh International Festival of Music and Drama to the Edinburgh International Festival in the early 1960s.

14. This report employed the standard socio-economic classification used up until the 1990s in the UK. Category A refers to higher managerial, administrative or professional groups; B to intermediate, managerial, administrative or professional positions; C1 to supervisor, clerical, junior managerial, administrative, professional occupations.

15. Annual membership was still ± 10 in 2020.

16. Figures for 1994 assembled by Shrum (1996, p. 223) showed 586 companies, of which by far the largest contingents were from England (322), Scotland (171) and the USA (48). These together accounted for 94 per cent of all companies. Nearly two thirds of the performances were made up of theatre (36.6 per cent), comedy (13.1 per cent), exhibitions (6.1 per cent) and recitals (6.5 per cent).

17. Fringe Guru (2013) Embracing the weird. Available at: http://www.fringeguru.com/how-to/ choosing/unusual.html.

18. Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society (2019) Fringe. Available at: https://www.edfringe.com/, accessed 19 December 2019.

19. Peacock, R. (2019) The man who put the PBH into PBH's Free Fringe talks turkey as he prepares for the 20th (and last?) installation of the show that started it. *The Wee Review*, 30 July. Available at: https:// theweereview.com/interview/peter-buckley-hill/.

20. Linklater, M. (2017) Robert McDowell: people say the festival is too big. I think it could be bigger. *The Times*, 24 August 2017. Available at: https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/robert-mcdowell-people-say-the-festival-is-too-big-i-think-it-could-be-bigger-qz6nlpq2d.

21. Edinburgh International Book Festival (2018) *Annual Review 2018*. Available at: https://d3v4sx4i2y 2qe1.cloudfront.net/content/programme_pdfs/annual-review-2018.5c80fb03163e1.pdf.

22. festivalinfo.tech (nd) Science festival. http://festivalinfo.tech/science-festival/.

23. Celtic Life International (nd) Edinburgh Tradfest. Available at: https://celticlifeintl.com/edinburgh-tradfest/.

24. This is an allusion to Virgil *The Aeneid*, Book IX, line 513: 'and with the thunder of their hooves shake the broken ground'. It was originally written around 19 BC. For the quotation, see McGill (2020).

25. This included the Edinburgh Mela at this stage, but this lost its membership of Festivals Edinburgh in 2016 in the light of financial irregularities.

26. As of 2017, it had a director and seven full time staff.

27. Edinburgh Tattoo (2019) The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo proves 'The Sky's the Limit' with its first venture into China, 5 February. Available at: https://www.edintattoo.co.uk/news/the-royal-edinburgh-military-tattoo-successfully-concludes-its-first-venture-into-china, accessed 14 June 2020; Leung B (2019) Edinburgh Tattoo makes festival debut. *China Daily Global*, 16 August 2019. Available at: http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/201904/16/WS5cb535aba3104842260b66ad.html).

28. The Scotsman (2019) Edinburgh Festival funding slashed by city council 13 June 2019. Available at: https://www.edinburghnews.scotsman.com/arts-and-culture/edinburgh-festivals/edinburgh-festival-funding-slashed-city-council-545549.

29. Ibid.

30. A consultation exercise in 2019 showed resident support for a Transient Visitor Levy to tackle this problem, with Edinburgh City stating it would charge \pounds 2.00 if it was allowed.

31. Edinburgh International Book Festival (2013) *Annual Review 2013*, p. 6. Available at: https://d3v4sx4i2y2qe1.cloudfront.net/content/programme_pdfs/annual_review_2013.pdf.

32. The Scotsman (2017) Edinburgh book festival to spill out of Charlotte Square to protect historic garden. Available at: https://www.scotsman.com/whats-on/arts-and-entertainment/edinburgh-book-festival-spill-out-charlotte-square-protect-historic-garden-603879.

33. Edinburgh International Book Festival (2013) *Annual Review 2017.* Available at: https://d3v4sx4i2y2qe1.cloudfront.net/content/programme_pdfs/annual-review-2017.5aa1595540990.pdf.

34. Pooran, N. (2019) Edinburgh Festival Fireworks Concert 2019: some of the best photos of the amazing display. Available at: https://www.edinburghlive.co.uk/news/edinburgh-news/edinburgh-festival-fireworks-concert-2019-16820021.

35. This grew from an earlier network established in 2000.

36. World Fringe (2020) About World Fringe. Available at: http://www.worldfringe.com/about-world-fringe-association/.

CHAPTER 7

Proliferation

You can't escape it even if you want to. Every magazine from *Take A Break* to *Vogue* will be running 'festival style' specials. Millions of column inches of commentary ... will be expended analysing festival culture. Official media partners will broadcast the music into your living room, with their lesser digital channels showing all the stuff that used to end up on the cutting-room floor. Worst of all, if you have a nice local public park near you, chances are this summer, it'll get taken over for a festival – and returned a week later with grass looking like a field near Ypres, circa 1918. Don't worry, it'll probably grow back in time for next summer's festival.

Alex Proud (2015)

On 10 November 2019, the ocean liner Queen Mary 2 (QM2) left New York bound for Southampton. Rather than being billed as a routine eastbound Atlantic crossing or a cruise, the voyage offered passengers the prospect of joining a new venture, the inaugural 'Literature Festival at Sea'. Styled as an extension of the regular Cheltenham Literature Festival that had been held a month earlier (6–13 October 2019), the seven day 'Literature Festival Transatlantic' was promoted by a partnership that included the shipping company (Cunard Line), the Cheltenham Literature Festival and its principal sponsors, The Times Newspapers Limited. The trip's programme blended festivity and seriousmindedness, with twenty-one well-known authors, historians and journalists employed to give lectures and lead what resembled residential seminars and workshops.

The idea of 'festivals at sea' was not entirely new. Shipping companies in the USA had appropriated the word 'festivals' for themed cruises for some years (Cashman, 2017). For example, StarVista Live (an offshoot of Time Life) had been chartering cruise ships to stage on-board music festivals since 2010 and was exploring the possibilities of conducting equivalent business in Europe with a four-day music festival on a vessel sailing between Barcelona and Cagliari (Sardinia). Royal Caribbean International staged a five-day classic rock festival on the MV 'Mariner of the Seas' in 2019. Similarly, a variety of private companies such as Floating Festivals Ltd have recently been formed, offering invitations to an affluent and primarily mature clientele interested in cabaret acts, musical theatre and retrospective pop music concerts under the heading of 'festivals'.

Yet the interlinkage of terrestrial and maritime events was novel and boosted continuing efforts to make Cheltenham stand out against the competition. After all, although widely accepted as the world's oldest literary festival (see below), when looked at another way Cheltenham was also just one of more than 350 literary festivals held in the United Kingdom and Ireland during 2019, with forty-eight in October alone.¹ To be commissioned to programme an innovative prestige event with associations of luxury branding had obvious attractions. It supplied valuable additional publicity for the main festival, offered an ostensible kitemark of quality, and provided welcome additional fees for the organization's programming expertise. As a spokesperson for Cheltenham Festivals, the not-for-profit umbrella organization responsible for the city's four major festivals,² effusively noted when the transatlantic event was first announced in April 2018:

It's really exciting for us. We're putting it all together with our experience, knowledge and contacts. The reason they wanted our involvement is because of our programming nous. It reinforces the fact that ours is one of the leading literature festivals. It reinforces the quality of the programming that we put on. It's a real feather in our cap that we've been appointed to do this.³

The festival's proceedings did not necessarily endear themselves to members of the cruising community aboard the QM2 who had not been specifically drawn by that event: 'All the nice areas the previous week became like Surrey Golf Clubs with loud baying and shouting everywhere' (Trotpot, 2020). Nevertheless, the gathering succeeded sufficiently well for a successor to be scheduled for December 2020.

A new venture perhaps, but it is one that gently exemplifies familiar themes. The search for innovation is not confined to those seeking to maintain leadership in a particular genre; it is common ground whenever organizers seek to promote new festivals or consolidate existing ones in crowded markets. Just how crowded, of course, is a difficult question to answer. Calculating the number of existing events in any area of the arts or popular culture at any particular moment is difficult enough, let alone gathering statistics that reliably express the nature of their spread over the last seventy years. With that in mind the first part of this

chapter, which addresses the phenomenon of festival proliferation, considers the key problems of statistics. Thereafter, the ensuing three parts each track the development and salient features of a significant form of arts festival that has shown rapid growth since the mid-twentieth century. Respectively examining theatre festivals, literary festivals and biennales, each section examines a representative sample of key festivals in their urban setting and, in the process, opens up issues of staging and management of the events concerned.

Numbers

As noted in Chapter 1, there are no universally approved frameworks for gathering economic data on festivals. However, the problem of lack of statistical data also applies more generally since, for example, there are few agencies responsible for collecting statistics about festivals *en masse*. In many cases, it is hard even to find figures on national festival activity at a given point in time, with researchers and official bodies at best tending to resort to broad estimates. For example, FestivalNet, an online database company based in North Carolina, claims that there are more than 26,000 'festivals, art shows, art and craft shows, music festivals, and other events' in the USA per annum.⁴ By contrast, in their study of selected European nations, Ilczuk and Kulikowska (2007, p. 8) offered a reassuringly accurate-sounding figure of 163 for the festivals that are publicly funded each year in their native Poland, but provide rather less exactitude in statistics for other countries, such as France *c*.1,000, Germany *c*.240 and Russia 'over 100'.

Matters are compounded when looking to track rates of proliferation over time, for which general chronological statistics are almost completely absent and about which supposition all too easily takes the place of fact. Indeed, most commentators content themselves with supplying little more by way of description than to announce that the pace of development has been 'vast', 'huge' or 'exponential'. Even within specific genres there are disputes about the degree of comprehensiveness of the available figures, with recognition that the 'nuances involved in gathering data' can affect the 'accuracy, reliability and consistency of the data derived and the analysis compiled' (Tull, 2012, p. 38). This applies to even the most basic details. Some compendia of festivals may only reflect commercially driven events and omit those that are not-for-profit. Festivals based on new convergences of culture and technology but that draw only small numbers of participants may remain missing from statistics until they start to attract wider attention. Definition by organizational membership, used extensively by researchers when seeking to generate samples for their studies, can also yield different statistics when there are rival organizations from which to choose a suitable frame.

By way of example, Giordano and Ong (2017) examined the proliferation of light festivals; a longstanding type of event that has latterly generated considerable

interest as a means of stimulating the urban night-time economy (Evans, 2012). Using archive research, internet searches and data sets made available by stakeholder groups, they counted more than 100 light festivals worldwide. Even though claiming that their list was not comprehensive, this figure was still noticeably larger than found in other studies, primarily because their definition included events 'characterized by the presence of artistic light installation' and another sub-genre, 'events characterized by lighting projection mapping',⁵ which is often considered as a separate category (ibid., 705). Another study (Zielinska-Dabkowska, 2016) that employed the membership list of the seventy strong Lyon-based Lighting Urban Community International addressed a smaller statistical universe. Moreover, depending on the questions being asked, there is no a priori reason why an alternative consortium such as the twenty members of the International Light Festival Organisation, a more focused grouping based in Eindhoven, might not also be treated as a suitable basis for research. Each or any of those data sets could be taken as the source for inclusion or exclusion when discussing such festivals although, by the same token, the nature of the conclusions drawn will be influenced by the sampling frame employed.

Further complications come from the readiness with which arts festivals become hydra-headed beasts. For example, the Festival dei Due Mondi (Festival of Two Worlds), which the Italian-American composer and librettist Gian Carlo Menotti founded at Spoleto (Umbria, Italy) as an event to encourage young musicians, quickly metamorphosed into a pan-artistic multi-event festival. Opening in 1958 with a production of Verdi's 'Macbeth', conducted by Thomas Schippers and directed by Luchino Visconti, it grew omnivorously to cover dance, poetry, theatre, modern sculpture, visual arts and popular science besides opera and classical music (figure 7.1). In due course, it would also spread across three continents. The Italian festival was twinned for fifteen years from 1977 with an American counterpart held at Charleston (South Carolina) and later (1986-1990) with a Spoleto Festival in Melbourne (Australia). Its Charleston iteration, as noted in chapter 1, would act as a catalyst for central city regeneration. For its part, the Melbourne version developed into an International Arts Festival that was destined to become a major event in the Australian cultural calendar. Each of these festivals, in turn, generated further critical mass through fringe activity. The Spoleto USA, for example, has an associated Piccolo Spoleto running concurrently with the official programme that, in 2019, offered more than 150 additional events. These included visual arts exhibitions, performances of classical music, jazz, dance, theatre and choral music, community celebrations, poetry readings, children's activities, craft shows, and film screenings.⁶

Theatre

The growth of theatre festivals predated most other forms of festival. The introduction in 1934 of the Biennale Teatro (International Theatre Festival)



Figure 7.1. Concert in the Piazza Duomo Spoleto, the founding home of the Festival dei Due Mondi, July 2014. (*Photo*: CC Manuelarosi)

in Venice, discussed in chapter 3, provided an early example of theatre being used in the festivalization process as the Biennale organizers sought to diversify their offering. By contrast, rather more of the theatre festivals that developed in the early twentieth century were stand-alone events, often seeking to make links between particular places and specific playwrights or dramatic traditions (Michelakis, 2010). Examples include: the Festival of Greek Theatre at Syracuse (Italy, founded 1914); the Peer Gynt Festival at Vinstra (Norway, 1928); the Malvern Drama Festival (United Kingdom, 1929) with its emphasis on staging the works of George Bernard Shaw; the International Classical Theatre Festival in the arena of the Roman theatre at Mérida (Spain, 1933); and the Oregon Shakespeare Festival (Ashland, USA, 1935). In a related manner, the growth of amateur drama festivals in the United Kingdom and the USA in the 1920s, initially as competitive events for local societies, also helped establish the principle of festivals as showcases for theatrical talent (Emmet, 2002, p. 273).

After the cessation of hostilities in 1945, theatre gained from being seen as a medium able to play a constructive role in 'building the peace and ... fostering new understanding across Europe through displaying the work of an international community of artists' (Chambers, 2002, p. 272). Leaving aside Edinburgh (see chapter 6), two other festivals perhaps best embraced the idea of how theatre festivals might be used in cultural reconstruction. These were

Table 7.1 . Selected theatre festivals founded since 1945 and organized by de
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Decade Festival and Date When First Staged			
1945–1949	Avignon Festival (1947); Ruhr Festival, Recklinghausen (1948)		
1950–1959	Shakespeare Festival, Stratford, ON (1953); Théâtre des Nations, Paris (1954); Williamstown Theatre Festival (1954); Dublin Theatre Festival (1957)		
1960–1969	Adelaide Festival of Arts (1960); MESS International Theatre Festival, Sarajevo (1960); Shaw Festival Niagara-on-the-Lake (1962); World Theatre Festival, Nancy (1963); Berliner Theatertreffen (1964); Belgrade International Theatre Festival (1967); Tampere Theatre Festival (1969)		
1970–1979	Garden Theatre Festival, Los Angeles (1972); Intiman Theatre Festival, Seattle (1972); National Arts Festival, Grahamstown South Africa (1974); Festival of Fools, Amsterdam (1975); Galway International Arts Festival (1977)		
1980–1989	Zurich Theatre Festival (1980); London International Festival of Theatre (1981); Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival (1982); Vancouver Fringe Festival (1983); Almada International Theatre Festival, Lisbon (1984); Los Angeles International Festival (1984); Festival du Théâtre des Amériques, Montreal (1985); International Hispanic Theatre Festival, Miami (1986); Toronto Fringe Festival (1989)		
1990–1999	Festival Theaterformen, Hannover (1990); Oslo International Ibsen Festival (1990); Shakespeare Festival Neuss (1991); Annual Contemporary American Theatre Festival, Shepherdstown, WV (1991); Euro-Scene Leipzig (1991); Malta Festival Poznan (1991); Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival (1992); Porsgrunn International Theatre Festival (1993); Sibiu International Theatre Festival (1993); Gdańsk Shakespeare Festival (1994), Craiova International Shakespeare Festival (1994); Summer Shakespeare Festival, Prague (1994); Incanti Theatre Festival, Turin (1994); Theaterfestival Spielart, Munich (1995); Last Frontier Theatre Conference, Valdez, AK (1995); MasterWorks Festival, Cedarville Ohio (1997); Pacific Playwrights Festival, Costa Mesa CA (1998); EdgeFest, Los Angeles (1999)		
2000–2009	Baltic Circle International Theatre Festival, Helsinki (2000); Festival International New Drama, Berlin (2000); Midtown International Theatre Festival (2000); ICAF, Rotterdam (2001); New Works Festival, Palo Alto (2002); Roma Teatro Festival (2003); Shakespeare's Festival, Barcelona (2003); Zagreb World Theatre Festival (2003); 24:7 Theatre Festival, Manchester (2004); Joakimfest, Serbia (2004); Leapfest, Chicago (2004); Yerevan International Shakespeare Theatre Festival (2004); Gyula Shakespeare Festival (2005); Lókal: International Theatre Festival, Reykjavík (2008); Bucharest International Street Theatre Festival (2009); Ingmar Bergman International Theatre Festival, Stockholm (2009); Tbilisi International Festival of Theatre (2009)		
2010–2019	Hollywood Fringe Festival (2010); United Solo Theatre Festival, New York (2010); World Theatre Festival, Brisbane (2010); California International Theatre Festival, Calabasas (2011); Gateshead International Festival of Theatre (2011); Atlanta Black Theatre Festival (2012); Bitola Shakespeare Festival (2012); CPH Stage, Copenhagen (2013); Festival of Chichester (2013); Juventafest, Sarajevo (2013); Itaka Shakespeare Festival in Serbia (2014); Shake Nice! Festival, Nice (2014); FEDU Sarajevo (2015); York International Shakespeare Festival (2015), Paris Fringe Theatre Festival (2016), New Play Festival, Steamboat Springs, CO (2018)		

Source: Compiled by authors.

the Ruhr Festival (Ruhrfestspiele) in North Rhine-Westphalia and the Avignon Festival in south-eastern France.

The Ruhrfestspiele (table 7.1) emerged from the chaotic conditions prevailing in war-devastated Germany during the winter of 1946–1947. Unable to obtain sufficient coal to heat their auditoria and rehearsal rooms, three Hamburg theatres (the Deutsches Schauspielhaus, the Thalia Theatre and the Staatsoper Hamburg) enterprisingly sent representatives to the Ruhr, the major coalproducing area in Germany, to see what might be procured by unconventional means (KulturKenner, 2020). Although the precise details are hazy, essentially, they struck a deal with the miners at Recklinghausen to exchange *Kunst für Kohle* ('art for coal'). The miners supplied several cartloads that were spirited off to Hamburg under the noses of the British military authorities overseeing the area. For their part, the theatre companies agreed to return in the summer of 1947 and stage performances in Recklinghausen's Städtischer Saalbau hall at prices that workers could afford (Kift, 1996, p. 37).

The Ruhrfestspiele emerged from these semi-mythologized beginnings in the summer of 1948. It drew its financial support from the municipality, the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (from 1949), and the trade unions confederation (Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund), which was keen to promote an arts festival with a wider than usual socio-political profile. Always commencing on May Day, the Ruhrfestspiele retained its original radical credentials, albeit from 1990 grafting on a wider European perspective (Pölking, 1996). Nevertheless, the act of accommodating the demands of a growing theatre festival would have implications for the nature of the event. The size and technical limitations of the original Städtischer Saalbau hall had prompted construction of the Ruhrfestspielhaus, a new Bauhaus-styled hall completed in 1965 and financed by a privately incorporated but civically supported Friends of the Ruhrfestspiele (Freunde der Ruhrfestspiele).

As with film, investment in specialist facilities necessary to stage relatively short-lived annual festivals has economic implications. Although they achieve peak attendance at festival-time, the need to use theatres and ancillary structures in a viable manner on a twelve month basis has inevitably enhanced the trend towards diversification, both in the sense of repertoire and in allied events, which soon included art exhibitions, opera, concerts and discussion forums. Redesign during the years 1996–1998 – during which other venues in the locality were used to stage the festival – saw transformation of the Ruhrfestspielhaus to include a convention centre with a new entrance hall (figure 7.2). As such, while the Ruhrfestspiele maintains its integrity as an international theatre festival through its mainstream offerings and active fringe,⁷ the yearly programme encapsulates it within the locality's and the region's broader cultural offering (which include educational programmes).

Evolving at a similar time, the Avignon Festival embraced the same determination for post-war cultural renaissance that had inspired the



Figure 7.2. The Ruhrfestspielhaus at Recklinghausen as in 2007. (Photo: CC Daniel Ullrich)

Ruhrfestspiele and Cannes (see chapter 5). As part of an arts week, the French actor and theatre-director Jean Vilar organized the staging of three new theatrical productions in Avignon in September 1947 to accompany an exhibition of paintings. Attracting a total audience of 4,800, the plays were performed at the city's Municipal Theatre and two open-air venues, the Pope Urban V Gardens and the spectacular Cours d'Honneur of the Papal Palace (Wehle, 1984, p. 55; D'Archier, 2007, p. 12). The project's success made these modest beginnings the precursor of a nineteen day event that, in 2019, attracted a total paying audience of 110,000, contributing between €23 and €25 million to the city's economy and turning the streets of the mediaeval city into an animated space filled with performance art and ancillary street attractions (figure 7.3). The official festival (known as the 'In') featured around fifty plays staged in twenty covered and open-air locations that still included the Cours d'Honneur as a central venue. In addition, the 'Festival du Off', the 'fringe festival' started in 1966, drew 1,500 companies to perform at around 100 locations in and around the city.

Three broad elements are significant when explaining the transformation of this event into one of the world's leading theatre festivals. The first stemmed from a fortuitous political environment, in which the ideas behind the Avignon festival were clearly aligned with 'the values shared by those populating the republic' (Olkusz, 2017). Vilar and his associates⁸ hoped that the yearly festival in Provence would appeal to a wider geographical and social spectrum than was traditionally the case, given the Parisian dominance of French life. This accorded with the Fourth Republic's nascent regional policy, in particular the principle of *decentralisation théâtrale*. Initiated in 1946 although building on longstanding roots (Gontard, 1973), *decentralisation théâtrale* stood for supporting permanent regional



Figure 7.3. Street entertainments at the time of the Avignon Festival, July 2012. (*Photo*: Courtesy Sandra Rosen)

theatres that might 'function as a counterbalance to Paris's abiding supremacy in the field' (Turk, 2011, p. 260). Backed by state subsidies, it was a sustained policy that led to a 'remarkable profusion of regional theatres' (Church, 1982, p. 342).

The second and related theme was establishing a reliable funding stream. From the outset, the state and city had taken a positive interest in the festival. As with Cannes a Communist Mayor, in this case Georges Pons, had actively supported the creation of the first festival. That commitment endured, even though the proportion coming from the public purse has varied according to the prevailing financial climate (Wehle, 2013, p. 73). Currently, 44 per cent of funding comes from the festival's own powers to raise revenue (ticket sales, sponsors, non-commercial partnerships, specific partnerships, and show sales) as opposed to 56 per cent from public subventions. Of this latter component, the largest share (55 per cent) comes from the French government. As for the rest, the City of Avignon contributes 13 per cent, 14 per cent comes from the Communauté d'Agglomération du Grand Avignon (a territorial unit comprising sixteen of the city's communes), 9 per cent from the département (Vaucluse) and a further 8 per cent from the region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (Festival d'Avignon, 2019).

The third theme has been the ability to adapt to changing times. Like other

major festivals founded in the first half of the twentieth century, Avignon's organizers have proved adept at negotiating the waves of artistic and commercial change that have subsequently occurred. Artistically, the left-wing political credentials of the founding years and the felicitous timing of the emergence of the 'Off' helped when late-1960s radicalism challenged conventional practices and elites in the arts (see also chapter 3) and sought to castigate the main festival as a 'supermarket of culture' (Wehle, 2003). Subsequent developments have retained artistic freedom for the 'Off' while establishing an organizational framework that rationalizes the space and time requirements of performing companies. This was principally accomplished by founding 'Avignon Festivals and Companies' in 2007, through which amateur and professional troupes alike typically hire a venue and pay for a time slot. Yet while denying connotations of greater control, the 'fairly steep' rates charged inevitably impact on some companies' ability to participate (Turk, 2011, p. 267).

As elsewhere, the principal event provided a focus around which festivalization could coalesce. Other festivals that are scattered throughout the year include the Cheval Passion (an equestrian fair held in January), the August Jazz Festival (founded in 1991), a video festival (September), Les Luminessences Avignon (a lights festival, August–October), a mediaeval festival (October), a science festival (October), an Oktoberfest, a Christmas Fair and the Hivernales de la Danse, a winter contemporary dance festival, launched in 1978, that spawned a companion summer event from 1991 onwards. Not all, however, endured. For instance, an annual film festival was created in June 1984 and twinned in 1994 with an equivalent November event in New York to become the Rencontres Cinématographiques Franco-Américain d'Avignon. Nevertheless, despite becoming a fixture as a meeting place for experimental cinema from the USA and Europe, the Avignon Film Festival foundered in 2008 when the city council withdrew its financial support.

If the Ruhrfestspiele and Avignon were grounded in the austerity and cultural politics of late-1940s, the steadily gathering pace of new theatre festival creation shown in table 7.1 reflects two key trends.⁹ The first was continuation of the accepted tendency for 'the seasonal honouring of a single world artist' (Chambers, 2002, p. 272). The second arose from responding to the new voices of protest and calls for inclusiveness, which were the hallmark of theatrical discourse during the last quarter of the twentieth century.

With regard to commemorating great playwrights, the key development was the blossoming of Shakespeare festivals. In the period following the Second World War, the most significant moment was the inauguration of a six-week event at Stratford (Ontario) in 1953. Powerfully backed by the global Shakespearean establishment, the opening night drew an audience of more than 1,000 to a performance of 'Richard III'. Held in a huge tented structure, the first night was directed by Tyrone Guthrie, with a cast headed by Alec Guinness and a set designed by Tanya Moiseiwitsch (Jackson, 1978). By 1957, the current Festival

Theatre had opened, to be followed by numerous expansions of the festival installations and the construction of two new smaller venues (the Avon and Tom Patterson Theatres).

Further festivals followed, including those at Neuss, Germany (1991) – replete with a reconstruction of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre – Barcelona (2003), Nice (2014) and York (2015). There was also a notable cluster of new Shakespearean festivals in central and eastern Europe. Seen in the context of the upsurge in nationalism after the collapse of Soviet controlling influence in 1989–1990, the festivals instituted in Gdańsk (Poland, 1993), Prague and Ostrava (the Czech Republic, 1994), Craiova (Romania, 1994), Yerevan (Armenia, 2004), Gyula (Hungary, 2005), Bitola (North Macedonia, 2012) and Itaka (Serbia, 2014) saw local initiatives overlain with 'vectors of national (re)construction' (Procházka *et al*, 2017, p. 54). They also appealed to wider aspirations for European cultural identity,¹⁰ partly expressed by the formation of the European Shakespeare Festivals Network Foundation in March 2010 as a medium for cultural exchange and joint promotion of fourteen member festivals.

While no playwright rivals Shakespeare in terms of generating festivals, other events celebrate the work of Henrik Ibsen (Oslo, 1990), Ingmar Bergman (Stockholm, 2009) and George Bernard Shaw (Niagara-on-the-Lake, 1962). The Shaw Festival in particular is worth further comment. By contrast with the Stratford (Ontario) Festival, it had distinctly unpromising beginnings. The first performances of the 'Salute to Shaw' season in 1962 took place in the Assembly Room of the local Court House. Then equipped with wooden folding seats, rudimentary lighting and blackouts over the windows, it lacked air conditioning and plays were often interrupted by the ear-shattering wails emanating from the fire siren on the Court House roof (Conolly, 2011, p. 12). The town council also initially refused to give guarantees as to the availability of this space for any future festivals.

Typically, however, the rise in visitor numbers and growth in the potential contribution to the local exchequer saw attitudes change. Attention turned to accommodating increasing numbers of performances and enhancing the quality of the available spaces: developments that some argue have changed the character of the festival. Admittedly, improvements had occurred at the Court House Theatre, with the introduction of air-conditioning, seat cushions and risers for better sight lines, but the tiny stage – which held back the repertoire that could be performed – and inadequate backstage facilities quickly prompted plans for a new theatre. Plans that were initially drawn up in 1964 for a lakeshore 'Niagara Theatre' fell through due to funding, controversies over design and environmental protests over the chosen site at Queen's Royal Park (Conolly, 2011, pp. 46–48). After almost a decade of further plans and expressions of opposition that centred on traffic problems and damage to historic heritage (Mitchell *et al.*, 2001), a new purpose-built 850-seater Festival Theatre opened in 1973. The Court House Theatre would also remain in use and was joined for



Figure 7.4. Royal George Theatre at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, at the time of the Shaw Festival, September 2013. (*Photo:* John and Margaret Gold)

festival purposes in 1980 by the 330-seat Royal George Theatre (figure 7.4) and by the new 200-seater Jackie Maxwell Studio Theatre in 2004 (Conolly, 2011).

In the process, what had started out in 1962 as a scratch ensemble to support a one-off event had, by the early twenty-first century, turned into North America's second largest repertory theatre company. Moreover, besides keeping alive the work of a now somewhat unfashionable playwright, the Shaw Festival at Niagara-on-the-Lake was audited as raising C\$30.25 million in 2018 through earned revenues, fundraising, government grants and amortization of capital contributions (SFT, 2018, p. 19). Coupled with indirect earnings from the service sector, the festival is primarily credited with having contributed more than C\$200 million to Ontario's cultural and tourism economy, 'leveraging \$7 in local and regional spend for every dollar spent at the theatre'.¹¹

The second trend in festival creation that was alluded to above arises from the changing artistic and socio-political environments in which theatre functions (Knowles, 2020). Growth in interest in world theatre, for instance, stimulated the first Paris International Festival in 1954, subsequently retitled the Théâtre des Nations in 1956. Working with UNESCO's Paris-based International Theatre Institute (founded 1948), it expressed re-emerging internationalism: an impulse to encourage harmony through awareness and collaboration that had also underpinned the World Theatre Seasons held annually at the Aldwych Theatre (London) from 1964 to 1973.¹² A somewhat different direction prompted the

World Theatre Festival, first organized at Nancy in 1963 by the future French Minister of Culture Jack Lang. Originally focused on student theatre, it grew into an event that actively promoted radical theatre from companies round the globe during its quarter-century lifespan (Looseley, 1990). World theatre, in the sense of presenting non-Anglophone plays to wider international audiences, would also underpin the Berliner Theatertreffen (set up in 1964), Miami's International Hispanic Theatre Festival (1986) and Montreal's Festival du Théâtre des Amériques, founded as a theatre festival in 1985 but from 2007 catering for theatre and dance as the Festival TransAmériques.

The sense of radical critique also worked in two other ways. First, it encouraged festival organizers to turn their gaze inwards to challenge theatre hierarchies and the 'officially-sanctioned showcase art' of the established festivals, especially in Eastern Europe where theatre was state-controlled (Chambers, 2002, p. 272). This path had been attempted in 1947 when a Shakespeare Festival mounted in eleven Polish towns sought to show wider links with Europe and to subvert Marxist ideology and Soviet culture (Courtney, 2017). It would, however, remain an isolated gesture until the 1960s, when cultural links were again forged with the world outside the Soviet bloc. The organizers of the Belgrade International Theatre Festival (BITEF), for example, took advantage of Yugoslavia's relative cultural independence to present global theatre and *avant-garde* offerings within what was still nominally the Communist bloc (Dasgupta, 1989). First staged in 1967, BITEF became both a leading event in its field¹³ and the anchor of Belgrade's annual festival programme, which now includes events devoted, *inter alia*, to music, film, beer and literature.

Secondly, it prompted event organizers to question the nature and purpose of the exercise, seeking to democratize and expand theatre festival culture (Huffman, 2003, p. 57) by looking to build stronger links with local communities rather than national and global communities of festivalgoers. In many ways, this was not a radical departure. Theatre festival organizers, like theatre managers generally, are often 'at greater pains to emphasize the local context of the performance' than organizers of other genres of festival (Wilkinson, 2007, p. 20). Nevertheless, the resulting connections are primarily with the social elites that are the typical supporters of and audiences for theatre. Those seeking to empower the wider community or minority groups in the staging of festivals have frequently found that efforts to achieve those goals on a long-term basis can prove elusive.

The history of Los Angeles theatre festivals, which was 'littered with good intentions that fizzled' (Reyes, 1999), provides an instructive example. A Garden Theatre Festival, launched in 1972, had offered free arts events that recognized the existence and positive value of cross-cultural and ethnic differences. This functioned annually until closed in 1979, when financial irregularities in allocation of festival funds came to light. The Garden Theatre Festival was replaced in 1984 by the Los Angeles International Festival, an outgrowth of the

Cultural Olympiad that effectively comprised 'a white Beverley Hills affair on the international supermarket model' (Chambers, 2002, pp. 272–273). After three years, the American theatre director Peter Sellars took over as director of the Los Angeles festival, with a mission to shake up the festival's offerings and draw in new audiences, stating that:

Los Angeles is a pan-American, pan-Pacific city, and we want to encourage many of its citizens to reassess their collective cultural heritage and re-think the road to the future. These programs will also begin a long-term process of the cultural re-mapping of Los Angeles. (Quoted in Reinelt, 1991, p. 107)

This was done primarily by founding a fringe event, soon labelled the Open Festival. Besides the ten theatre venues of the main festival, the Open Festival offered 450 events, 500 artists spread out over 210 sites in 1987, which expanded to 700 events over 400 sites by 1990 (Reyes, 1999). The adopted approach favoured selecting:

artists who were associated with the original cultures of the neglected citizens of the city, such as the Hispanics, the Koreans, the Japanese, the Jewish, the Native Americans. Local artists were involved in the decision-making... (Chambers, 2002, pp. 272–273)

Despite its inevitable spatial fragmentation, the festival was well received by critics, with one of the organizers of the Paris Festival opining that: 'This may be year 1 of the founding of a new culture' (Phelan, 1991, p. 119). Yet the ambitious scope of the 1990 festival was largely responsible for it making a loss, in sharp contrast with the profits made by the Los Angeles International Festival. The result perhaps was inevitable: 'By 1993, the Fringe had been eliminated entirely, its participants absorbed into the larger festival ... [and] the event became a showcase primarily for Los Angeles companies' (Reyes, 1999).

So saying, echoes of the same desire to democratize and extend the scope of theatre festivals remain everywhere apparent, especially in events themed to gendered or 'ethnic' identities (Huffman, 2003, p. 57). In Los Angeles, the Edge of the World Theatre Festival (EdgeFest) was founded in 1999 by Regional Alternative Theatre (RAT) as a non-juried event that sought to promote inclusion and artistic imagination. The biennial London International Festival of Theatre (LIFT), which dates from 1981, both renewed the city's links with world theatre – largely absent since the demise of the Aldwych's offerings in 1973 – and forged new connections between world theatre and London's multicultural communities. The Atlanta Black Theatre Festival (2012) typifies a broad movement in the USA to provide a platform for the work of Afro-American playwrights and touring companies.

The inversion of centre and periphery displayed by Los Angeles Open Festival of the late-1980s discussed above has been mirrored elsewhere by the

creation of Fringe Festivals as prime events in their own right. The notion of the 'fringe', pioneered at Edinburgh (see chapter 6) and prominent under various names at Avignon, the Ruhrfestspiele and the Adelaide Festival (founded 1960), juxtaposed alternative activities with the official programme. From the early 1980s onwards, fringe festivals were founded as standalone events, most notably in North America. The first and still largest such festival in North America, the Edmonton International Fringe Festival, was founded in 1982 to give a theatrical component to Summerfest, the city's existing arts festival. This was quickly followed by two Canadian rivals, Vancouver (1983) and Toronto (1989), before the idea took hold in the USA with the Orlando International Fringe Theatre Festival, which began in 1992. The underlying rationale was much the same, namely that the fringe theatre festival concept was more permissive and enabling than the official festivals. For the organizers, it permitted use of non-specialist and sometimes unconventional performance spaces, imposed the bare minimum of administration, and required relatively little financial backing to get things started. For performers, the lack of juries and first-come first-served structure offered artists and companies an attractive degree of creative freedom (Batchelor, 2015, p. 33). For the city, removing theatre from the auditorium strengthens the symbiosis between festival and the urban environment - serving to animate the streets, provide spectacle and involve a wider public.

Literature

Literature festivals – events at which literary works are read, commented upon and discussed by specialists, authors, critics, publishers, readers, and translators (Sapiro, 2016, p. 12) – have roots that are as venerable as their theatrical counterparts. There have always been meeting places at which the traditionally private and solitary experience of reading has been placed in a social context. The reading of odes and other literary works at public gatherings was as much part of ancient Greek festivals as dance or theatre (Agócs *et al.*, 2012). The kindred activity of book fairs has origins traceable to twelfth- and thirteenth-century Frankfurt (Weidhass, 2007; Moeran, 2010), along with important gatherings appearing by the seventeenth century in Paris, Lyons, Vienna, Nuremburg and Leipzig (Laeven, 1992). Nevertheless, as the overview in table 7.2 readily testifies, little had happened in the field of literary festivals before the last two decades of the twentieth century.

As already acknowledged, the first recognizable modern literature festival, was Cheltenham. The use of the word 'festival' was one with which Cheltenham had long associations, given the existence of a national hunt horse racing festival that dates back to 1860, but the Festival for Contemporary Literature – as it was originally known – was a brand new departure. Similar to the Edinburgh Festival, it expressed a general feeling of wanting to move on from the continuing greyness of post-war austerity and to use the arts to stimulate

Decade	Festival and Date When First Staged			
1945–1949	Cheltenham Literature Festival (1949)			
1950–1950				
1960–1969	Adelaide Writers' Week (1960)			
1970–1979	Ilkley Literature Festival (1973)			
1980–1989	Harbourfront International Authors' Festival, Toronto (1980); Edinburgh International Book Festival (1983); Miami Book Fair (1984); Cúirt International Festival of Literature, Galway (1985); Melbourne Writers Festival (1986); Brave New Words, Winnipeg (1987); Hay Festival (1988); Vancouver Writers Fest (1988); Chester Literature Festival (1989); Southern Festival of Books, Nashville (1989)			
1990–1999	Off the Shelf Festival, Sheffield (1991); Prague Writers Festival (1991); Maratón de los Cuentos, Guadalajara, Spain (1992); Banff Mountain Book Festival (1994); Les Rencontres d'Aubrac, France (1994); Bath Literature Festival (1995); Norwegian Festival of Literature, Lillehammer (1995); Virginia Festival of the Book, Charlottesville (1995); Los Angeles Times Festival of Books (1996); North London Literary Festival (1996); Texas Book Festival, Austin (1996); Winnipeg International Writers Festival (1996); Festival Letteratura, Mantua, Italy (1997); Ottawa International Writers Festival (1997); Oxford Literary Festival (1997); Sydney Writers' Festival (1997); National Young Writers' Festival, Newcastle, NSW (1998); Blue Metropolis, Montreal (1999); Litquake San Francisco (1999)			
2000–2009	 Berlin International Literature Festival (2001); National Book Festival, Washington DC (2001); Festival Voix d'Amériques, Montreal (2002); Saints and Sinners Literar Festival, New Orleans (2002); Whistler Writers Festival (2002); Williamstown Literary Festival, Victoria (2003); Portland Book Festival (2005); Quais du Polar, Lyons (2005); Alabama Book Festival, Montgomery (2006); Brooklyn Book Festival (2006); Huldersfield Literature Festival (2006); Lviv International Literature Festival, Ukraine (2006); Savannah Book Festival (2008); WALTIC, Stockholm (2008); Aeronautical literary festival, Toulouse (2009) Boston Book Festival (2009); Carmel Authors and Ideas Festival (2009); Conrad Festival, Kraków, Poland (2009); 			
2010–2019	Dalkey Book Festival (2010); Louisiana Literature festival, Humlebæk, Denmark (2010); Openair Literatur Festival Zürich (2013); Bradford Literature Festival (2014); Mississippi Book Festival, Jackson (2015); Bare Lit Festival, London (2016); Cliveden Literary Festival (2017); International Literature Festival Utrecht (2018)			

Table 7.2. Selected literary festivals by decade.

Source: Compiled by authors.

a cultural renaissance. Started by the Spa Manager George Wilkinson, it was a relatively small gathering. The first five-day festival attracted around 7,000 people to nine events held in the Town Hall in early October 1949. Over the years, it steadily expanded in terms of length, activities and sponsorship (figure 7.5). By 2019, its seventieth anniversary, the now somewhat cumbersomely-retitled *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* Cheltenham Literature Festival had become a tenday multi-venue event, with a sizeable outreach programme and sponsorship agreements that included its title partner, eight principal partners and nine major



Figure 7.5. The cover of the brochure for the 2010 Cheltenham Literary Festival indicates the growing range of sponsorship that the festival was attracting. (*Image*: Personal collection, John and Margaret Gold)

partners.¹⁴ Besides the designated venues for readings and discussions, since 2011 a temporary Festival Village has been constructed in the Montpellier Gardens, which offers food, hospitality outlets and daily programmes of free activities. The presence of the Sky Arts Studio, like *The Times* newspapers part of the Murdoch publishing and media empire, has provided daily broadcasts of the festival to cable and satellite television audiences through the Sky Arts channels.

Yet compared with theatre, the national and international diffusion of the genre was slow. As seen in table 7.2, if one leaves poetry festivals aside as comprising a separate genre,¹⁵ Cheltenham remained the only major literary festival for around three decades. There was the Adelaide Writers' Week, comprising five days of discussion forums and an additional three days of readings, but this was created as an integral part of the inaugural Adelaide Festival in 1960. The Ilkley Literature Festival in Yorkshire – an English spa town explicitly drawing on Cheltenham's example – joined the list in 1973, but only as a biennial. It did not become an annual event until 1990.

Only in the 1980s did matters change significantly. The reasons essentially lay in the range of advantages available to the various stakeholders. Recognition grew within the publishing industry, increasingly dominated by large conglomerates,

that literary festivals were an essential tool in the selling of books. Akin to the film festival's relationship to the movie industry, substantial amounts in sponsorship money may be available to the organizers if their offering is considered sufficiently attractive to publishers and other agents of the book industry. For organizers, there is also the advantage that high-profile authors may have a contractual obligation to appear at festivals, often unpaid, when their books are published (Driscoll and Squires, 2018, p. 2). For the host city, literary festivals are generally undemanding and low-budget affairs. They pose low security risks and rarely require much other than spaces of sufficient size for the standard diet of readings, lectures, interviews, discussion forums, book signings, and writing workshops. Certainly *ad hot* spaces in local libraries, schools and town halls are the order of the day for most literary festivals, albeit with the caveat that enthusiastic adoption of digital technology to spread knowledge of proceedings and draw in 'live' contributions can impose its own requirements (Murray and Weber, 2017).

The first major event founded as part of the new wave of literary festivals was Toronto's Harbourfront International Authors' Festival (1980), which was rebranded in 2018 as the Toronto International Festival of Authors. Harbourfront developed into one of North America's leading literary festivals partly because of its early start - it drew on a high-profile series of public readings that began in 1974. However, while insisting that that the festival served to promote 'literature's universal and autonomous values', Stewart (2009, p. 123) speculated that part of its success also stemmed from Toronto's role as a centre for multinational publishing and, as such, 'the commercial practices of promoting, publishing and branding "literature" as an elite cultural product valid on a global scale'. The rapid diffusion of literature festivals in the Anglophone world quickly followed. It included the Edinburgh International Book Festival (1983). A successor to an International Writers' Conference that had been part of the International Festival in 1962, this is now the world's largest book festival (see chapter 6). Further new events included Galway (1985), Melbourne (1986), and two inevitable Canadian responses that were founded to compete with Toronto's initiative: Winnipeg (1987) and Vancouver (1988).

From a somewhat different standpoint, the Hay Festival indicated the undeniable flexibility of the literary festival concept. Its festival built on Hay's pre-existing reputation as a 'book town', defined as a settlement that seeks to bring in visitors by offering substantial clusters of shops specializing in second-hand and antiquarian books (Seaton, 1996, p. 382). The initial goals were therefore driven more by retailing – drawing visitors to the bookshops – than by cultural tourism. The festival's incremental growth from a small gathering drawing a thousand people to become one of Britain's largest literary festivals with between 80,000–100,000 visitors (Dashper, 2014, p. 155) understandably would bring about change.

What is now the Hay Festival of Literature and Arts is concentrated on a

site to the south-west of the town, served by park-and-ride schemes to try to minimize environmental damage from car usage and nuisance during the festival. Over time, it has taken on the trappings of international status, with sponsorship from a national newspaper (Daily Telegraph), celebrity speakers and widespread media coverage. Hay exemplifies the fact that literature festivals offer broadcasters the prospect of good but cheap programming. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) transmits programmes live from Hay on its Radio 3 and 4 networks. Moreover, the New Generation Thinkers, the result of collaboration between the BBC and the academic Arts and Humanities Research Council, are now revealed every year at Hay. Each then gives a lecture at the festival. In terms of wider outreach, Hay served as the launch site in 2019 for Europa28: a project highlighting the contribution of women in Europe to literature, science and the arts that ended with Hay Festival Europa28 held at Rijeka, Croatia in June 2020. Nonetheless, some have suggested that this increasingly global profile had come at the expense of the local community, with rising property prices and the steady closure of the second-hand bookshops - the root of the book town concept - to be replaced by antique shops and tea rooms (e.g. Jenkins, 2019).

Looking beyond the 1980s, three themes become apparent. First, the literature festival concept started to take hold in the non-Anglophone world. In the 1990s alone, new events were founded in the Czech Republic (Prague, 1991), Spain (Guadalajara, 1992), France (Aubrac, 1994), Norway (Lillehammer, 1995) and Italy (Mantua, 1997). While all stressed their international outreach, in most cases there was an element of seeking to negotiate their national cultural or linguistic identities. That focus in itself may improve their prospects of official funding. One reason why the Conrad Festival in Kraków draws strong support from both the municipality and the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage is that it symbolically repatriates the memory of a giant of English literature, Joseph Conrad, who was of Polish descent (born Józef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski) but never wrote in his native tongue. In a similar vein, the Tanpınar Literature Festival, held annually in Istanbul since 2009, invites international participants to consider literature through the lens of the work of the Turkish modernist writer Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar.

The desire to demonstrate the health and visibility of languages is also a factor stimulating the creation of literary festivals. The organizers of the Berlin International Literature Festival strongly stress internationalism, but offer support for German content and have concluding German translations read by actors when the presenters have used other languages. Coming from a different direction the Festivaletteratura, which has been held in Mantua since 1997, supports Italian literature and functions in Italian, but has progressively developed a coherent programme for English-speakers. The aim is partly to increase the appeal of the festival, but also has an eye on introducing festivalgoers to the architecture and mediaeval ambiance of this World Heritage Site in

the hope of encouraging return visits at other times. Further along the scale of cosmopolitanism, the 2020 staging of the Norwegian Festival of Literature at Lillehammer examined Spanish language literature, with Latin-American Hispanic authors such as Samanta Schweblin and Valeria Luiselli invited to act as keynote speakers.

Secondly, the distribution of festivals reveals the working of networks. Lillehammer, for instance, followed the example of cities such as Edinburgh (see chapter 6) in being designated as a City of Literature under UNESCO's Creative Cities Network. Set up in 2004 'to promote cooperation with and among cities that have identified creativity as a strategic factor for sustainable urban development' (UNESCO, 2020), the network currently has 246 cities as members under seven different categories: crafts and folk art, design, film, gastronomy, literature, music, and media arts. Of around forty Cities of Literature listed worldwide, most treat staging a literature festival as a *sine qua non* of their status. As a separate initiative, May 2020 saw the launch of a new organization entitled the Global Association of Literary Festivals. Commencing with forty-two members, its founding purpose was to provide an umbrella framework for partnership formation and information and resource exchange.

Finally, it needs little emphasis that the conditions that brought about proliferation also fuelled the creation of niche events. Science-fiction literature festivals have recently mushroomed, breaking free from their film festival equivalents, under which they were often subsumed. The organizers of the Salon du Livre Aéronautique, held annually in Toulouse since 2009, developed what was previously a trade fair into a festival by adding speakers, discussion forums and author signings of books on aeronautics. Cymera, a 2018 addition to Edinburgh's ever-burgeoning festival calendar, is devoted to science fiction, fantasy and horror writing. Festivals aimed at minority group literatures have become commonplace. Some have considerable provenance. The London International Literary Festival, for instance, now incorporates Jewish Book Week: an event with roots that go back continuously until 1952 and, discontinuously, to 1937 (Kahn-Harris, 1996). Others are much newer. Devoted to the work of feminist authors, the second New Suns Festival at The Barbican, held in October 2019, featured 'workshops, talks and screenings exploring technofeminism, storytelling, sonic ritual, gender identity, reproductive justice and indigenous knowledge' (Shin, 2019). Equally, the Bare Lit Festival, set up courtesy of crowdfunding in 2016, highlights the work of Black and Asian authors. For anyone wishing to add to the list, help is at hand. A guide lightly authored by University College London's Institute of Education under the heading '20 Bedford Way', suggests how it may be done (UCL, 2020). Entitled 'How to put on a literature festival', the guide covers planning, funding, ideas and themes, innovation, timetabling, promotion and, not surprisingly, the virtues of hiring of UCL's spaces, facilities, technical services and expertise.

Biennales

Without needing to reiterate earlier arguments about the problems of festival statistics, it must be said that, as the haziest category of festivals under consideration in this chapter, estimates about the precise number of biennales in existence tend to vary markedly. Broadly speaking biennales or biennials are large-scale art exhibitions that occur every two years, except that the term also conventionally embraces periodic events of greater duration: triennials, quadrennials, quinquennials and even, in the case of the Skulptur Projekte Münster, decennial. In addition, the festivals in question may be multidisciplinary or confined to just one art form.

In March 2020 the Biennial Foundation, a not-for-profit think tank now based in the USA, listed 271 festivals in its database (Biennial Foundation, 2020). That figure is not completely comprehensive. For example, it does not include the Manchester International Festival; presumably because although it is held every two years it does not include 'Biennale' or 'Biennial' in its title. Nevertheless, it does provide a useful reference point from which two conclusions are readily apparent. First, while the development of biennales is truly global, even including Antarctica (De Pomereu, 2019), the overwhelming majority are still held in West European or North American towns and cities. Secondly, although a handful of biennales date from before 1980, most have been founded over the last forty years and, particularly, since the turn of the millennium.

Chronologically, the Venice Biennale was indisputably the first of its kind, but there were other arts festivals that adopted similar formats before 1950 (see table 7.3). Superficially, the Pittsburgh-based Carnegie International, founded just a year after Venice, might seem like another possible nineteenth-century forerunner, but it was originally an annual survey of contemporary American art (Neal, 1995) that did not move to biennial timing until 1950. Two other Italian festivals also gave expression to regular, but non-annual timings. One, the Milan Triennial, began as a biennial architecture and industrial design exhibition in Monza in 1923, before switching to Milan and triennial status in 1933. The other, the Rome Quadriennale, was introduced in 1927 to display and promote contemporary Italian art, although its first show was not held until 1931 (see also chapter 3). Both clearly have claims to express the urge to survey contemporary art at periodic intervals, but neither exercised anything like the influence as a prototype that Venice exerted.

An indication of the ancestral respect that Venice still commands is conveyed by the consistency with which many recently founded events opt for the Italian spelling 'biennale' in the title of their festival rather than linguistic alternatives (Wyss and Scheller, 2010). That approach was pioneered by the São Paolo Biennale, the first of the new events appearing in the second half of the twentieth century. It was sponsored by Francisco 'Ciccillo' Matarazzo, an Italian-

Table 7.3.	Selected	biennales	by decade.
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Decade	Festival and Date When First Staged		
pre-1950	Venice Biennale (1895); [Carnegie International 1896]; Milan Triennial (1923); Rome Quadriennale (1927)		
1950–1959	São Paulo Biennial (1951); documenta, Kassal (1955); International Sculpture Biennale, Carrara (1957); Biennale de Paris (1959)		
1960–1969	Ars Helsinki (1961); Steirischer Herbst, Graz (1968); Tallinn Print Triennial (1968)		
1970–1979	Sculpture Quadrennial Riga (1972); Biennale of Sydney (1973); EVA International, Limerick Biennial (1977); Skulptur Projekte Münster (1977); Cerveira Internationa Art Biennial (1978); Baltic Triennial of International Art, Vilnius (1979)		
1980–1989	Fellbach Triennial Germany (1980); Fotofest, Houston (1983); Atlanta Biennial (1984); California-Pacific Triennial, Newport Beach (1984); Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement, Geneva (1985); Istanbul Biennial (1987); Munich Biennale (1988)		
1990–1999	Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art (1990); Lyon Biennale of Contemporary Art (1991); Bermuda Biennial (1994); Pittsburgh Biennial (1994); Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (1996); Florence Biennale (1997); Triennale Oberschwaben (1998); Liverpool Biennial (1999), Public Art Melbourne Lab (1999)		
2000–2009	Greater New York (2000); Oslo Architecture Triennale (2000); SCAPE 8 Public Art, Christchurch (2000); Tate Triennial London (2000); Auckland Triennial (2001); Gothenburg (2001); Manif d'art, Quebec City (2002); International Architecture Biennale Rotterdam (2001; Ruhrtriennale, Gelsenkirchen (2002); Vancouver (2002); Beaufort Triennial (2003); Brighton Photo Biennial (2003); Contour Biennale, Mechelen (2004); Glasgow International (2005); Prague Biennale (2003); Performa, New York City (2004); Athens Biennale (2005); Bucharest Biennale (2005); Arts: Le Havre (2006); Sequences, Reykjavík (2006); Turin Triennale (2006); Zero1 San Jose (2006); Lisbon Architecture Triennale (2007); Prospect New Orleans (2007); Borås International Sculpture Biennale (2008); Folkestone Triennial (2008); Asia Triennial Manchester (2008); Mediations Biennale, Poznan, (2008); OpenART, Örebro (2008); Les Ateliers de Rennes (2008); Harlem Biennale, New York City (2009); International Print Biennale, Newcastle-upon-Tyne (2009); New Museum Triennial, New York City (2009); Survival Kit, Riga (2009)		
2010–2019	The Americas, Denver (2010); Bergen Assembly (2011); Dallas Biennial (2011); Dublin Contemporary (2011); D-0 ARK, Konjic (2011); BACA Montreal (2012); Made in LA (2012); Mykonos Bienniale (2013); Bødo Biennale (2015); Bristol Biennial (2012); Chicago Architecture (2014); OFF-Biennale, Budapest (2014); Bruges Triennial (2015); Coimbra Biennial of Contemporary Art (Portugal) (2015); Desert X, Palm Springs (2015); Oslo Pilot (2015); Timisoara Biennial (2015); ARoS Triennial, Aarhus (2017); Copenhagen Ultracontemporary Biennale (2017); Fremantle Biennale (2017); Vienna Biennale (2018); Coventry Biennial (2018); FRONT International: Cleveland (2018); Porto Design Biennale (2019); Strasbourg Biennale (2018); Toronto Biennial of Art (2019); Decordova New England Biennial Lincoln (2019); Warsaw Biennale (2019)		

Source: Compiled by authors.

Brazilian industrialist who had financed the creation of the city's Museum of Modern Art (MAM-SP) in 1948. The Biennale, created three years later in 1951, complemented that initiative. A 'festival in the mould of Venice' (quoted

in Whitelegg, 2013, p. 380) would help to give global exposure to Brazilian art and further the goal of establishing São Paolo as an international art centre. At the start, the festival was directed and housed by the museum (Gil, 2019). This close alignment with the museum's goals provided initial orientation, but also brought 'significant counter-public of activists and trade unionists protesting against the event' (Whitelegg, 2013, p. 380). The reason was suspicion as to the wider cultural intent of both the Museum and the Biennale:

Founded via an accord with Nelson Rockefeller and the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York, the MAM-SP symbolized for some that the internationalist aspirations of the Bienal were inextricably linked to US cultural expansionism. The Bienal's prizes were to be sponsored by companies interested in participating in a new regime of transnational development, ushering in an influential generation of industry-linked patrons whose philanthropic intentions could not be divorced from a vested interest in forming international economic partnerships. (*ibid.*, pp. 380–381)

Greater symbolic distance was progressively created. In 1957, the festival moved to its current home in the Ciccillo Matarazzo Pavilion, one of several iconic modernist buildings designed by Oscar Niemeyer for the city's new cultural space, Ibirapuera Park (Gil 2019).¹⁶ In 1962 control of the Biennale was transferred to the Fundação Bienal de São Pauloso that, as a private non-profit institution able to receive funding from public sources, it would no longer appear as overly dependent on private patronage (Whitelegg, 2013, p. 382). The dilution of nationalistic showing policies was taken further in 2006 when the Biennale abandoned its Venetian style use of national pavilions in favour of appointing a general curator with sole responsibility for choosing the artists for the exhibition (Gil, 2019). Nevertheless, the suspicion of collusion between the festival and the art market, with the hidden agendas that this may entail, continue to exercise the attention of curators and protest groups alike (Stocco, 2019).

The 1950s saw the addition of three further festivals that would presage the forthcoming burgeoning diversity of the genre and also point to abiding problems. The International Sculpture Biennale, first held in Carrara (Tuscany) in 1957, was set up on the basis of regulations closely resembling those for the Venice Biennale. The festival originally featured an international competition where works would be exhibited before awards were made. The intention was threefold: to advance Carrara's claims to be recognized as the world's leading centre for the sculptural marble industry; to create a high-class collection by buying the prize-winning entries and displaying them in the town's Marble Museum; and to free marble from its recent associations with fascist architectural rhetoric and 'adapt it to the new demands of contemporary art' (Biennial Foundation, 2020). Over time, the Biennale's horizons have shifted beyond the sculptural marble competition and its civic ambitions to celebrate sculpture in the widest sense of the word, although the single defining focus on sculpture remains intact.

By contrast, the Paris Biennale has undergone a variety of iterations over its lifespan. It was founded in 1959 by the novelist André Malraux, then also serving as France's Minister of Cultural Affairs in De Gaulle's government. Initially intended to emphasize the work of young artists and serve as a meeting place for new talent, it instead became dominated by antique dealing, with the Syndicat National des Antiquaires remaining as its owners. As a festival, it has had a chequered history, defunct between 1984 and 2000 and periodically facing redesign. Latterly, it has converted to an annual marketing event held in the Grand Palais des Champs-Élysées covering jewellery, applied design and antiques as well as the fine arts.

The final event in the trio, documenta, was founded in Kassel as an additional attraction to accompany the 1955 National Garden Show (Bundesgartenschau). As with the many other festivals created in Germany shortly after the Second World War, it was initially intended to help reawaken local and national cultural heritage after the darkness of the Third Reich. The first of documenta's exhibitions, for example, gave sympathetic display and commentary on works explicitly ridiculed by the curators of the 1937 'Degenerate Art' exhibition in Munich (Tang, 2007, p. 249). The radical message has persisted, along with an aversion to allowing arts sales to become the force that drives showing policy. Mindful of documenta's formidable reputation as being at the cutting edge of modern art (Gardner and Green, 2016) and recognizing its local and national importance for prestige and tourism, its backers willingly bankrolled the quinquennial exhibitions to levels far beyond those received pro rata by competitors. For example, its total budget for the five-year period between 2013 and 2018 was €37 million. Of this sum, roughly half came from ticket sales and the rest from the public purse, notably from the city of Kassel, the German state of Hesse and the Federal Cultural Foundation.

To some extent, these figures are understandable in context. Biennales, like film festivals, are locked into a cycle of expenditure. While easy targets for critics and satirists, there are expectations of spending on expensive site-specific projects (figure 7.6) and provision of publicity and elite hospitality necessary to put the festival on a par with its rivals (Tang, 2007, p. 247). Nonetheless, documenta went far beyond any such cost calculations due to an ill-fated foray into Athens in 2017, when a parallel 100-day festival was run as a 'curatorial experiment on decentring contemporary art and rethinking its historical development' (Biryukova, 2019, p. 207). This episode contributed to a budget shortfall of almost €7 million that would briefly cast doubts upon the event's future (Brown, 2018). Moreover, it was claimed that there were problems with venues. The festival employs the Fridericianum Museum as its main site, with a variety of other venues pressganged into service as required. Only a small documenta-Halle, constructed in 1992 for the ninth edition, had been specifically designed for the festival. Although attendance was smaller than 2012, catering for the 891,500 visitors arriving for documenta's 100-day run in 2017 gave the impression of a festival



Figure 7.6. The Parthenon of Books was the main attraction of documenta 2017. It was situated in the Friedrichsplatz in Kassel, alongside the Fridericianum Museum. (*Photo*: CC Picasa)

running at or beyond the carrying capacity of its venues and of the surrounding city. In the words of the curatorial team in a fiery open letter issued partly as a retort to accusations of incompetence and financial mismanagement:

The exhibition venues have reached the limits of their capacity. Any demands for further growth spring from a dream of documenta to be yet another cog in the tourist and cultural industry – a generic yet profitable spectacle. (Quoted in Russeth, 2017)

Moving beyond this early trio of events there were, in common with the experience of literature and theatre festivals, relatively few new events created during the 1960s and 1970s. However, things changed rapidly in the 1980s and particularly from 1995 onwards, with new economic circumstances leading to the global diffusion of the biennale as a form of art exhibition (Filipovic *et al.*, 2010*b*). This was not necessarily apparent from the rationales that organizers of the events shown in table 7.3 offered for the founding of their new festivals. For example, Manchester's Asia Triennial proclaimed itself 'Europe's only Triennial dedicated to contemporary visual art on the theme of Asia'; the Athens Biennale 'functions as an observatory of collective issues and as a platform for the designation of the contemporary culture of the Athenian metropolis'; and the Beaufort Triennial 'is known for its monumental installations and works of art

embedded in the biotope of the Belgian coastline'.¹⁷ Conscious of the *avant-garde* traditions of modern art, many biennale organizers might also wish to assert their festivals' credentials as places where alternative, critical, or even subversive views are put forward (Gardner and Green, 2016, p. 6).

Nevertheless, the spread of biennales was also undoubtedly fostered by the joint impact of the growth of tourism and significant changes in the wider art world. With respect to the former, opinion divides as to whether the biennales are 'little more than entertaining or commercially driven showcases designed to feed an ever-expanding tourist industry' or critical sites of 'experimentation in exhibition-making, offering artists, curators and spectators a vital alternative to museums and other similar institutions' (Filipovic et al, 2010a, p. 13; Delanty, 2011). With regard to the latter, biennales are shaped in varying degree by the rise of the art fair, changes in art production and consumption, and increasing prices for artworks with the sense of art as a gilt-edged investment. Biennales, of course, have always been selling places but the spectacular growth of the globalized art market has raised the stakes. This provides opportunities for artists and their agents from a wider pool of nations¹⁸ to reach a wider pool of potential purchasers, allows nations to proclaim their credentials for encouraging creativity, and supplies exposure for a country's artists (Throsby, 1994; Robertson and Chong, 2008). Seen in these terms, biennales appear to have a recognized function as 'indispensable nodes within a dense field of mobility between artists, curators, gallerists, critics, collectors and visitors that is - especially on an international level - unprecedented in its quantity, scope and variety' (Smith, 2016).

The geographical diffusion of biennales over the last two decades broadly falls into two categories. Many were founded in established arts centres. New York, for example, gained no less than four new perennial festivals in the first decade of the twenty-first century alone: the quinquennial Greater New York in 2000, the biennial Performa in 2004 and both the Harlem Biennale and the New Museum Triennial in 2009. During the same decade, cities such as London, Rotterdam, Turin, Vancouver, Athens and Lisbon also gained new festivals. Although these events have importance in the specific fields that they represent, they essentially add to the existing roster. For the most part, they help to burnish the continuing reputation of their host cities as arts centres, help to add critical mass to the events programme, and draw in visitors at festival time, but their occasional basis means that they have little further impact *per se*.

For large cities this arguably applies even to biennales set up with a specific mission in mind, as with Prospect, an international art biennial instituted in New Orleans in 2007 as part of urban regeneration efforts after the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina (see chapter 8). Run by a not-for-profit organization (US Biennial), with generous post-disaster funding from charitable foundations, its organizers sought to balance humanitarian intervention with the requirements of an art show. In a nod to New Orleans's reputation for 'touristic revelling', it

was also decided to run the exhibition without curatorial direction (Collier, 2012, p. 368). Prospect had much to commend it as a consciousness-raising exercise, with artists readily choosing to develop themes linked to liminality and the city's cultural geography. Yet lacking a permanent home or deep-seated local support and initially plagued by substantial cost overruns (Loos, 2014), the festival – now a triennial – has delivered little that directly impinges on the scale of the city's problems.

By contrast, rather more has resulted from the spread of biennales to smaller towns and cities that previously lacked any presence in the art world. As with Kassel or Carrara (see above), the direct and indirect impact for Gelsenkirchen and Timisoara, Rennes and Bødo of hosting events designed to engage with the international art market may be somewhat greater. In the first place, they draw 'local practitioners into ostensibly globalized networks of art-world attention and financial support ... [and publicise] regions or cities previously deemed "peripheral" to the metropolitan centres of London and New York' (Smith, 2016). Secondly, it is possible that they can contribute to strategies of urban regeneration, particularly through encouraging and raising the profile of the local creative and cultural sector.

The east Kent coastal town of Folkestone in the United Kingdom provides a good example. Historically a fishing port, it attracted the lower middle class and latterly working class for traditional 'bucket and spade' seaside vacations once a direct railway connection to London opened in 1843. The resort remained popular until the advent of low-cost continental package holidays in the 1960s undermined its appeal and caused a long period of genteel decline. As elsewhere, the emerging problems were deep-seated. The shrinkage of the tourist trade fuelled rising unemployment, declining house prices 'and related imbalances in the housing market and, over time, community instability and deep pockets of deprivation' (Rickey and Houghton, 2009, p. 47). Statistically, educational achievement was in the lowest national category (Whybrow, 2016a). In terms of the built environment, an extensive amusement park on its western seafront, a sizable pier and other infrastructure aimed at the traditional seaside market became rundown. Buildings in the central part of the old town became dilapidated and were boarded up. Its port, once thriving through cross-Channel ferry services, ceased to handle passenger traffic in 1991 due to the advent of Eurotunnel and competition from Dover, its much larger neighbour. The container port closed in the late 1990s (Payne-Bird, 2013, p. 16). Nonetheless, application of policies for culture-led regeneration to seaside resorts elsewhere in England (e.g. Smith, 2004) convinced Kent County Council that the same approach had potential for Folkestone and other of its coastal towns. Within the resulting strategy (KCC, 2010), the visual arts were identified as a priority area, with investment in two key projects, Margate's Turner Contemporary and the Folkestone Triennial (Ward, 2015).

In doing so, however, it was adopting a policy that already existed. The

starting point was the saga surrounding Folkestone's struggling Metropole Arts Centre. Founded in 1995, the Metropole had failed to secure reliable public funding and struggled to attract sufficient audiences (Anon, 2002). Recognizing that the Metropole was unsustainable in its present form, a private charitable body known as the Creative Foundation was formed in 2002 to campaign for and lead a different approach. Rather than simply supply a new arts centre, it sought to embed any replacement in an ambitious cultural regeneration master plan that would place arts at the centre of a property-led regeneration strategy (Payne-Bird, 2013, p. 16). When Creative Folkestone (the renamed Creative Foundation) fully articulated that strategy, it would have five elements. There would be: two festivals, the Book Festival (run in the Autumn) and the Folkestone Triennial; Artworks (see below), a permanent outdoor exhibition of contemporary art assembled as a by-product of the Triennial; a performing arts venue (the Quarterhouse); and a Creative Quarter, based around the Old High Street and Tontine Street. The Creative Quarter was described as 'an urban village' intended for 'designers, filmmakers, musicians, web developers and artists' (Creative Folkestone, 2020). To date, around ninety buildings have been restored which, together with other leased premises, have supplied the basis for flats, studios, offices and shops aimed at the cultural and creative sector. A digital hub (The Glassworks) has also recently been created (*ibid*).

The Triennial, a key element in the profile of the scheme and its representation to the outside world, initially ran in 2008. Over the course of its first decade, the first three editions cumulatively attracted around 400,000 visitors to what has become a three-month curated summer event. Artists produce artworks for public display that address a given theme – 'Tales of Time and Space' was chosen in 2008, 'The Plot' in 2020. Leaving aside talks and fringe events, participation in the Triennial combines art display with an urban trail, with the visitor moving around the town to see the exhibits (figure 7.7). Acknowledging the example set by Skulptur Projekte Münster, the festival organizers normally commission around twenty major works for each Triennial, with the aim that, where practically viable, selected exhibits would remain in the town as part of a permanent collection.

The festival's existence and the underlying purpose that it serves as part of Creative Folkestone's regeneration strategy have not met with universal approval. As with all radical urban regeneration initiatives, there are concerns about displacement of local inhabitants, potential gentrification, and the consequences of implementing a commercially oriented creative economy approach (Whybrow, 2016*a*, p. 62). Admittedly, it is possible that annoyance with what might be seen as a 'top-down invasion by outsiders' could produce a positive effect, perhaps fuelling 'the development of a popular fringe arts movement in the town that sustains itself beyond just the limited period of the Triennial event' (*ibid*.). More prosaically perhaps, there are questions linked to the deliberate attempts to recreate the spirit of place. It may be wondered, for example, as to how much



Figure 7.7. Art at the Folkestone Triennial 2017. Picture shows one of Richard Woods's Holiday Homes, six brightly coloured house-shaped boxes, dotted around the town. (*Photo*: CC Pam Fray)

reconfiguring the town as a form of urban gallery has the capacity to generate a new and lasting identity for Folkestone (Whybrow, 2016*b*). Moreover, it is also important not to exaggerate the amount of change that culture *per se* can produce, especially given the extent that the changes in the town's fortunes have drawn in new property development capital.¹⁹

Conclusion

Two key points are readily apparent when taking stock of the evidence presented here. First, broadly similar patterns of chronology were discernible in the three types of arts festival considered in this chapter. After the brief post-war surge in event creation born of the desire for cultural renaissance, relatively few further festivals would be launched for several decades. For theatre, the late-1960s saw niche and fringe events launched in response to radical critique and the emergence of alternative voices that sought theatrical expression. For literature and the biennales, it would be the 1980s and the early years of the Third Millennium, respectively, before the mutually reinforcing interests of festival organizers and the commercial world (publishers, the art world) combined to generate new events. Once credible models were established, the way was open for city rivals and others to follow.

Secondly and related, there is a clear need to balance the general against

the specific. To take the example of the biennales, Filipovic *et al.* (2010*a*, p. 18) questioned whether it was possible to craft a singular history of their origins and spread. After all, the events in question are spread across the world and there are manifestly substantial cultural, financial and ideological differences between them. In particular, they maintained that the founding stories of individual biennales must also be told 'because despite their emphatically global ambitions, many large-scale recurrent exhibitions were made possible, or even necessary and urgent, because of decisive "local" events and issues' (*ibid*.). From that standpoint, it is possible to argue that any definition of the biennale must necessarily be 'unstable, always in flux, and difficult to articulate in terms of continuity or as something more than just the sum of its editions over time' (Hlavajova, 2010, p. 296).

Yet by contrast, it is possible to become trapped by positions that are wholly enmeshed in complexity and plurality. The festival is an infinitely malleable form of cultural gathering. Despite rapid proliferation, the recent history of the biennale, or indeed of the theatre or literature festival, shows that emerging trends and agendas see rapid expression in new events. This occurs without any irreconcilable tensions when categorizing the resulting festivals. Despite the search for freshness and novelty they remain, as argued in chapter 1, media for the transmission and reception of culture, significant ingredients in creating and maintaining place identity, and intrinsic parts of the urban economy. Further proof of that point is supplied by the ensuing chapter, which examines the appropriation of carnivalesque practices in support of group identity.

Notes

1. Figures from http://www.literaryfestivals.co.uk/.

2. These are Jazz, Science, Music and Literature. The Music Festival, established in 1945 to promote new British music, had laid important early foundations for the city's festival activities.

3. https://www.gloucestershirelive.co.uk/whats-on/whats-on-news/cheltenham-literature-festival-take-sea-1320673.

4. FestivalNet (2020) About us. Available at: https://festivalnet.com/festnet.

5. In which objects, often architectural features, are turned into display surfaces for video projection.

6. Taken from the official guidebook *Piccolo Spoleto Festival 2019*. Available at: http://www.piccolos poleto.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/PS19-program-guide-190429.pdf.

7. This distinguishes it from some of the other larger theatre festivals; it is arguable as to the extent they are festivals at all given that they are not truly periodic (Huffman, 2003, p. 60).

8. Especially the Paris-based Théâtre National Populaire (TNP), a body which Vilar headed from 1951 onwards and which had already made Avignon their 'summer residency' in 1948. The TNP's mission was to build a more democratic audience for theatre (Turk, 2011, p. 260; also Loyer, 1998).

9. Table 7.2 excludes poetry festivals, which are treated here as a separate category.

10. The Summer Shakespeare Festival was in fact the initiative of the President Václav Havel. Originally held at Prague castle, it has been based at Ostrava in the Moravian-Silesian region since 2008.

11. Shaw Festival Theatre (2018) Annual Report. Available at: https://www.shawfest.com/about/annual-report/.

12. There was also a final season in 1975.

13. The festival won a special award in 1999 under the Europe Theatre Prize project, a scheme inaugurated under the auspices and the support of the European Union. For more information see: Premio Europa per il Teatro (nd) History. Available at: http://www.premio-europa.org/open_page. php?id=249.

14. The accounts that are publicly available are aggregated for the four Cheltenham Festivals (literature, jazz, science and music) and do not reveal the specific levels of support for the individual festivals. When looking at the consolidated income of \pm 5,889,820 recorded in December 2018, however, the contributions made by sponsors, grants and patrons/members were \pm 1,316,512, \pm 839,726 and \pm 529,648 respectively. As such, ticket sales at \pm 2,784,540 represented only around 47 per cent of total revenue. Figures from: http://apps.charitycommission.gov.uk/Accounts/Ends65/0000251765_AC_20181231_E_C.PDF.

- 15. For example, see reference to the Shakespeare Poetry Festival, founded in 1953, in chapter 1.
- 16. Ibirapuera Park was a new culture park created to celebrate Sao Paolo's quadricentennial.
- 17. These quotations are derived from the various events' web pages in Biennial Foundation (2020).

18. Credit here should be given to the 1989 exhibition *Les Magiciens de la Terre*, which replaced the Paris Biennale. Held at the Pompidou Centre and the Grande Halle de la Villette, it contained a 50:50 representation of Western and non-Western artists exhibiting on equal terms (Poppi, 1991).

19. Williams, S. (2020) Work is due to start on Folkestone's seafront development which will see 84 new homes built. *Kent Online*, 24 January. Available at: https://www.kentonline.co.uk/folkestone/news/work-starts-on-multi-million-pound-seafront-2207. It is worth pointing out though that Sir Roger De Haan, who leads the Folkestone Harbour and Seafront Development Company is also chair of the Trustees of Creative Folkestone.

CHAPTER 8

Asserting Identity

In spite of the fact that it was raining at intervals, Merry-Andrew, Pantaloon and Clown persisted. In the good humour of that winter of 1833, Paris had disguised itself as Venice. Such Shrove Tuesdays are no longer to be seen nowadays. Everything which exists being a scattered Carnival, there is no longer any Carnival.

Victor Hugo Les Misérables

On 29 August 2005, television audiences round the world watched with morbid fascination as a powerful hurricane headed for the Louisiana coast.² There was nothing particularly unusual about this event. The Atlantic Basin (the Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico) regularly experiences around six such events between the start of June and the end of November and coastal towns and cities in the southern USA have developed elaborate defences. New Orleans, which stood in the way of the incoming storm, was no exception. As an amphibious city built on unstable wetlands, it perennially faces the threat posed by hurricanes (Abrahams, 2017) and hence is ringed by an elaborate system of protective levees, floodwalls and spillways. On this occasion, however, the fact that the incoming Hurricane Katrina was classified as a maximum strength category 5 storm triggered abnormally close interest.

At first, it seemed as if the city had escaped the worst of the weather. The storm passed to the southeast of the city centre and had apparently lost strength, measuring only category 3 when it reached land in Southern Louisiana and
Mississippi. These apparently comforting details, however, proved an inaccurate guide to the devastation about to be unleashed by Katrina's 225 kilometre per hour winds, torrential rains and related storm water surges. The flood protection system in New Orleans comprehensively failed (Levitt and Whitaker, 2009), leaving some parts of the city 4.5 metres underwater. New Orleans itself sustained damage to property and infrastructure in excess of \$200 billion, with over 1,200 of the estimated total of 1,833 deaths occurring within the city's boundaries (Congleton, 2006, pp. 5–6; Dyson, 2006).

The disaster had many consequences for life in New Orleans (see also chapter 7). Economically, it inflicted a severe short-to-medium term blow, primarily due to evacuations of population and lost jobs lowering the gross regional domestic product³ but also attributable to the damage directly suffered by the oil and gas industry. Socially, it forensically exposed the racialized character of the city's residential geography (Colten, 2000; Kelman, 2003). The least desirable and cheapest residential neighbourhoods in the city had long been the low-lying districts that were at greatest risk from flooding. It was these areas, inhabited by the poorest and mostly black sections of the community, which suffered the greatest loss of life and damage to property when compared with other areas; a pattern of spatial marginalization and ensuing disproportionate loss that had indeed occurred on several previous occasions in New Orleans's history (Woods, 2017). Culturally, Katrina called into question the future of New Orleans's unique and vibrant cultural sector, which was internationally regarded as the city's greatest asset. This issue was quickly thrown into sharp relief by the highly polarized debate that broke out over what to do about the city's worldfamous festival, the Mardi Gras, then due in less than six months.

One side of the argument brought together a loose alliance of groups that believed that it was morally indefensible to stage an effervescently joyous festival so soon after an event that had inflicted death, destruction and dispossession on the city's population. Their case highlighted the plight of the black working class and underclass (Nichols, 2005). They argued that the time and resources required to stage the Mardi Gras should instead be devoted to rectifying officialdom's lamentable failure to craft a comprehensive plan to rebuild the city. The goal would not just be to ensure that the levees could withstand future storms, but also to prioritize efforts to give the far-flung diaspora of ex-New Orleanais, hastily evacuated to cities as far afield as Atlanta and Houston, the opportunity to return (Taylor, 2009). They fully recognized that 2006 was a significant date in Mardi Gras history given that it was the sesquicentenary of the foundation of the modern festival but pointed out that there was no unbroken sequence of carnivals that needed to be protected. After all, there had been thirteen occasions since 1857 when Mardi Gras had been cancelled, with the most recent occurring during the Korean War. Another brief break in the sequence was therefore unlikely to call its long-term future into question.

Opposing them was an equally loose coalition that said that the show must

go on. This group included commercial interests that ranged from individual owners of the souvenir stores to the New Orleans Marketing and Convention Visitors Bureau, itself faced with having to cancel \$2 billion of business and relocate hundreds of meetings through to at least May 2006.⁴ The city had long used Mardi Gras to spearhead policies that promoted the city's economy and image. On the economic side, the argument stressed that the festival was then estimated to raise between \$750 and \$800 million a year in spending and yield \$55 million in state, city and parish revenues (Longman, 2005). Beyond any short-term losses, it might be considered that hospitality and tourism, New Orleans's largest industry with 85,000 workers, would be ideally placed to stimulate recovery through drawing in revenues and bringing levels of employment back to pre-Katrina levels. Moreover, there was a place promotional issue. The staging of Mardi Gras might be taken as symbolizing the city's indomitable spirit, clearly announcing to the American nation and wider world that New Orleans was back in business. In the words of local historian Arthur Hardy: 'Being at Mardi Gras 2006 will be like being in Times Square on the first New Year's Eve after September 11' (quoted in Nicholls, 2005).

Perhaps surprisingly, the pro-Mardi Gras campaign also drew support from community activists and groups representing the evacuees. From their collective standpoint, the idea of cancelling Mardi Gras would only have compounded the sense of loss. Despite the extent to which it is part of the national and global tourist economy, local groups and individuals view Mardi Gras as a focus that helps to preserve and anchor the city's 'creole urbanism' (Wagner, 2006). Prominent among their numbers were members of the community groups (krewes) that annually stage the balls associated with Mardi Gras and organize participation in the float parades. Specifically existing to meet carnival obligations, these historic locality-based societies operate on a year-round basis (Gotham, 2007; Islam et al, 2008). Involvement brings responsibilities and commitment of time for fund-raising to support preparation of floats, costumes and the trinkets thrown to spectators, but also gives individuals a sense of belonging to a shared cause and perhaps a feeling of exclusiveness, given that membership is by application. Inevitably, they had mixed feelings about whether or not Mardi Gras should go ahead, but thirty-one out of thirty-four krewes decided to participate. Notably the Zulu krewe, a largely African-American grouping that had more members in devastated eastern New Orleans than any other, quickly agreed to participate. Their president, Charles Hamilton, fully recognized that some of his group believed that the carnival would be a distraction from attending to more pressing needs. Nevertheless, he supported staging the Mardi Gras because: 'It's not just about fun. It's tradition, something that makes our city what it is' (quoted in Nichols, 2005).

In October 2005 the City Council came down firmly on the side of proceeding with the festivities. They unanimously supported a resolution to stage the 2006 Mardi Gras, albeit trimmed down to a six-day programme rather than

the normal eleven days of festivities. To reduce costs of policing and clearance afterwards, every parade had to use the same route. The Zulus, for example, were prohibited from rolling their floats as far as they usually did on Mardi Gras Day, which would normally have included passing housing projects still deserted after the damage caused by Katrina (Godet, 2016). The rationale given in support of going ahead emphasized a narrative of resilience, 'an interpretive framework proposed by local and national leaders and shaped and accepted by citizens in the wake of a disaster' (Vale and Campanella, 2005, p. 353). From this perspective, the 2006 Mardi Gras might be seen:

as New Orleans' post-Katrina coming out party. February 28, 2006, will mark the 150th anniversary of the first formal Mardi Gras parades in New Orleans. But more importantly, Mardi Gras 2006 will be a celebration of the rebirth of New Orleans and a demonstration of its enduring character and spirit.⁵

It was also stressed that there should be a phased return to the pre-Katrina pattern in subsequent years.

As it transpired, Mardi Gras quickly shook off the vicissitudes of 2005 and regained its good humoured but edgily transgressive character. Moreover, the significance of its role as a defining feature of community life was reinforced by the delays in rebuilding the devastated areas of housing. Mardi Gras assumed profound symbolic importance for those former residents who had still to return. As one noted in relation to the 2009 Carnival: 'I've been gone since Katrina, but I have been *coming home* (emphasis added) each year for Mardi Gras' (MGNO, 2009). For that person and others, the festival provided a way in which the dispossessed could remind the world about their continuing case. Simply by being there, by returning to spots where they and friends habitually gathered to picnic and watch the parades, they could again participate in a community of which they were once part. In the process, they retained a vehicle by which they could strive to ensure that they were not forgotten.

These wider meanings that can become associated with carnival, symptomized by this example, are an integral part of the ensuing discussion. In the first place, carnivalesque events can equip minority groups with a powerful vehicle for communicating messages to the wider community. Staging public processions with floats, banners, costume, effigies or icons makes a public statement, especially when absorbed as regular parts of the cultural calendar. Normally the events concerned involve the intrinsic characteristics of carnival – joy, revelry and an invitation to join in the festive mood. However, for a number of groups who have struggled to assert their rights, the transgressiveness also intrinsic to carnival may well gain a sharper edge; sometimes to the point at which the mood of celebration is replaced by something that is quite different.

Secondly, and more generally, carnival's deep history can be readily appropriated to support a wide range of causes and interests. It can, for example,

lend perceived threads of authenticity to events that are primarily designed to serve the tourist market. In such circumstances, pick-and-mix often applies, where the organizers select whatever elements of carnival suits their needs. Adam Thorpe (2017), for example, described the creation of an Occitan *carnavale* from scratch in a Calvinist stronghold in the Cévennes where such frivolities were traditionally discouraged. Their choice was for a fancy-dress procession led by a giant effigy of Pétassou, a harlequin-like figure that appears in Lent carnivals throughout southern France, combined with marching bands, bonfires and an attempt to revive 'half-forgotten pre-Christian rituals'. In this and other instances, demands for enhanced spectacle and effusive performance can easily be commercialized in a manner that erodes or even eclipses the traditional symbolic meanings of the event.

While focusing on the first theme of carnival and identity, this chapter also recognizes the ways in which vibrant minority group street processions can easily become commodified as part of the annual round of city festivals. The first of its three sections considers the way that Latin American and particularly Trinidadian carnival practices have been re-exported to supply statements of identity for black communities living in the USA and Europe. The second focuses on issues of national identity in relation to the St Patrick's Day Parades staged in the divided island of Ireland and by emigrant communities, especially in North America. It notes in particular how carnivalesque notions of Irishness, which were added by diasporic celebrations of the saint's day, have been imported back into the parades held in the cities of their divided homeland. The final section focuses on a more recent manifestation of the carnivalesque as it is employed in assertion of identity by the Pride Parades. It notes their origins in reaction to profound discrimination, but recognizes how over time the parades have become an opportunity for the LGBQT+ communities to declare their visibility and celebrate their sexuality in a changing moral climate.

Carnival Redux

Analysing the cross currents of influence that have occurred over centuries in the global diffusion of carnival highlights the links between the festival and the identity of its celebrants. As noted in chapter 2, emigrants from countries in Catholic Europe initially took their familiar observances with them as they acclimatized to the unfamiliar surroundings of their new homes in the American, Asian and African colonies. Over time those practices evolved into new forms. Influences specific to their new environments rather than homelands were steadily absorbed by osmosis, often by seeing how those who were originally excluded from the European-style carnival, usually because of race or social class, had innovatively devised their own distinctive versions of carnival celebrations. The changes so wrought, in turn, influenced the spirit, purpose and sometimes the timing of the mainstream events. More recently, further powerful catalysts

for change have come from engagement with global tourism. That which began as a statement of migrant identity might latterly be consumed as cultural heritage by the tourist industry, suitably aided and abetted by official state, municipal and non-governmental agencies.

Carnival in Trinidad and Tobago, for example, immediately conjures up images of vibrant costumed parades and themed masquerades ('mas'), accompanied by dancing and the sound of steel pan, calypso and soca music (figure 8.1). Its present form, however, has emerged through the complex interplay between culture, place and economy. Still retaining its traditional timing of the two days preceding Ash Wednesday, it is for some 'an assertion of identity, cultural creativity and genius of the grassroots in defiance of oppressive colonial, postcolonial, and other dominant regimes, middle-class propriety, vulgarity, and hypocrisy (Green and Scher, 2007, p. 9). For others, carnival is a place promotional asset that projects a positive image and might serve to attract investors in the nascent creative industries sector (Francis, 2015). For yet others, it is a raw material that supplies outstanding opportunities for 'culture brokers seeking foreign exchange through tourism' (Green, 2002, p. 283). Indeed, despite complaints about loss of cultural authenticity and misrepresentation of national identity (Green, 2007; Ballengee, 2019), the underlying formula was of sufficient commercial importance for the state to explore the possibility of copyrighting certain aspects of the festival 'to prevent their theft, degradation or misappropriation by both locals and foreigners' (Scher, 2002, p. 453).

Similar commercialism has steadily reshaped key elements of Brazilian



Figure 8.1. Masqueraders prepare for carnival, Port of Spain, Trinidad, February 2012 (*Photo:* Courtesy Graham Walters)

practice which, along with Trinidad, has equally exerted influence on international carnival practice. Global marketing of samba as an integral ingredient in the Rio de Janeiro carnival, for example, has impacted dramatically on the nature of this Afro-Brazilian dance form (Shaw, 1999). The 'samba schools', the organized groups that parade on Carnival night, originated among the city's poor black neighbourhoods but were progressively appropriated by the wider society, especially after the advent of lucrative competition prizes (with accompanying qualifying criteria). Although still regarded as an essential ingredient in achieving the festival's spontaneity, the samba schools progressively became 'profit-seeking microenterprises rendering services by contract to the city's tourism agency' (Raphael, 1990, p. 83). Equally, while remaining expressions of the community groups who organized their own participation in the festivities, carnival bands have also become willing and marketable participants in the culture industry. Benoit Gaudin (2004) argued that the Brazilian media, especially television, have played a decisive role in bringing this process about:

both by guaranteeing bands a source of income by paying for broadcasting rights and by encouraging them to compete with each other in liveliness and visual effects, thus making their displays more sophisticated and costly. With the development of domestic tourism in Brazil, these business-type bands, increasingly subsidized, have become the privileged representatives of the public agencies responsible for promoting the tourist sector, turning their local Carnivals into virtual postcard pictures of their cities.

Market forces, therefore, did more than just add an element of commercialism to proceedings. Rather, they effectively transformed carnival practices into forms that could be mobilized for repetition elsewhere: a development which heralded a new reciprocity between major hearths of Latin American carnival and celebrations in cities in other parts of the world. One expression of that tendency is found in the way that tourist agencies, convention bureaux and municipal regimes seek to inject something of the élan of the Rio and Trinidadian carnivals into their own carnivals by adding floats, steel bands, masquerades and the rest. The results may well have little connection with the purpose and timing of Lent, but offer exuberance intended to encourage spectators to be actively involved.⁶ Another, more profound manifestation is the existence of more than sixty 'diasporic Caribbean' carnivals worldwide, the majority of which are held in European and North American cities. In their early days at least, these strongly expressed the desire of migrant groups to announce their presence and progressively to assert their identity. Principally based on the Trinidadian model but also with nods to Jamaica and Rio de Janeiro,⁷ they were summer rather than winter events. The largest include the Notting Hill Carnival (first held in 1966), the Toronto Caribbean Carnival or Caribana (1967), New

York's West Indian American Day Carnival (1969), the Miami Carnival (1984), Berlin's Carnival of Cultures (1996) and Houston's Caribfest (2003).

New York's West Indian American Day Carnival, for example, currently draws up to two million participants to Brooklyn to partake in four nights of concerts, steel band contests, children's pageants and the highlight - the parade on Labour Day (the first Monday in September) along the Eastern Parkway in the Crown Heights district. Running through the heart of what are still predominantly Brooklyn's Caribbean black neighbourhoods, Frederick Law Olmsted's imposing thoroughfare forms an ideal processional route. Its wide highways, landscaped median strip and bench-lined double width pavements provide ample room for spectators, performers and food stalls (Kasinitz, 1992, p. 142). The event fits easily into the city's mushrooming festivals programme, providing a popular alternative attraction for a key summer public holiday. Ideologically, it is often taken to express what former mayor David Dinkins described as the city's 'glorious mosaic' of ethnic communities (ibid., p. 46), although that is a view sometimes brought into question by the festival's role as a flashpoint of discontent between Crown Heights' resident Caribbean and Hasidic Jewish communities.8 Not insignificantly, too, it is estimated that the festival contributes more than \$300 million annually to New York City's revenue for little significant expenditure other than security and policing.9

Yet it is also an event with a complex history rooted in areal change and identity politics.¹⁰ The original carnival idea emerged as part of the Harlem Renaissance, a pan-artistic, social and intellectual movement that sought to represent the reality of life for black Americans (Swartz, 1993). Carnival activities started in Harlem in the 1930s, assisted by the fact that by that time a quarter of Harlem's population was of West Indian descent. Not surprisingly given the inclemency of New York's February weather, the first festivals were staged indoors, with extravagant costume parties rather than parades. For the first street parade in 1947, the decision was made to switch to September timing, with a relatively small procession in Harlem on Labour Day. That decision placed it in direct competition with the trade unions-sponsored Labour Day parade along Fifth Avenue, but the respective celebrants were then regarded as two discrete groups. The Harlem carnivals along Lenox Avenue continued until 1964, at which point the parade permit was withdrawn after a series of violent incidents (Henke, 2001, p. 107). After a hiatus that lasted until September 1969, a new group led by Trinidadian immigrants successfully applied for a permit for the resumption of carnival parading, but now moved to Crown Heights. The first Brooklyn parade took place in September 1971.

At once it became a different event, in particular because it initially united two major celebrant groups. One consisted of the black American community who were the progenitors of the original event. Although Trinidadians had originally been instrumental in founding the Harlem event, by the 1960s it had come to reflect the flowering of black consciousness, partly linked to the movement for

civil rights (Gay, 2007).¹¹ The Harlem contingent, however, would remain involved in the new event, especially those who regarded it as a pan-African celebration that might express black solidarity. Nevertheless, their contribution tended to dwindle over time, with enthusiasms reassigned to events such as Harlem Week. Founded in 1974 as a one-day festival, by 2019 Harlem Week had grown into a month-long event featuring 111 events that included conferences, seminars, sports, music, food and dance.

The other group comprised more recent Caribbean migrants to New York City, whose numbers swelled dramatically following the passage of the 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act (the Hart-Celler Act) which abolished an earlier quota system based on national origin. The new immigration policy saw a dramatic increase in immigration from the West Indies, with the largest contingents arriving from Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Jamaica, Haiti, and Trinidad and Tobago. For most, the establishment of carnival might recapture positive features of their former home. To an extent too, this initiative was a response to the grimness of the host district. Crown Heights was victim to the severe social and environmental problems that afflicted the American inner city in the 1960s and 1970s (Kasinitz, 1992, p. 143). The flight of the middle and professional classes to the suburbs and the draining effects of post-industrial decline had seen the neighbourhood's once fashionable brownstones and freestanding villas fall into disrepair, with vistas of abandoned shop fronts and burnt-out houses (Feiling, 2009, p. 50). High unemployment, soaring crime rates, low incomes, educational underachievement and lack of investment in social infrastructure contributed to the sense that City Hall cared little about the area (Goldschmidt, 2006). The carnival project was recognized as offering an opportunity to create something positive; to make Crown Heights the centre of West Indian life in the USA as well as providing a focus for a year's activity. The cheapness of property to rent also helped to find the necessary spaces for community groups to build floats and to practice routines for mas.

By 2019, the seven-hour West Indian Labour Day Parade represented the culmination of New York Caribbean Carnival Week. Preceded by J'ouvert, an irreverent early morning festival held before the parade, the carnival itself follows Trinidadian lines. The main performers are 'bands' of masqueraders portraying or 'playing' a theme (Scher, 1999, p. 51). Flatbed trucks conveying steel bands, calypso groups or sound systems are followed by costumed performers and dancers (figure 8.2). Roadside franchises sell 'ethnic' foods and an air of relaxed disorder is carefully cultivated. The onset of rapid gentrification has undoubtedly brought change in the subtle sense that the erosion of Crown Heights' innercity grittiness has made attendance at carnival feel more comfortable for the tourist market. Yet although changes in the private rental market have displaced poorer families, 64 per cent of the population of Crown Heights remained black American in 2015, mostly of West Indian descent. Although the latter are now second or third generation, carnival retains a symbiotic relationship with their



Figure 8.2. A contingent in the 2006 West Indian-American Day Parade held annually over the Labour Day weekend in the Crown Heights neighbourhood of Brooklyn NY USA. This photo was taken on Eastern Parkway near Franklin Avenue. (*Photo:* CC Bart Koelmans).

neighbourhoods, serving to reinforce the cultural connection between the West Indian America population and their roots in the Caribbean.

Similar elements of identity politics were important on the other side of the Atlantic in the birth of London's Notting Hill Carnival. Now commonly labelled as Europe's largest street party and associated with a notably gentrified and wealthy district, it is an event than can only be fully understood against the background of Britain's colonial past, the arrival of New Commonwealth immigrants in the 1950s and ensuing intercommunal relations. Notting Hill had developed as a residential neighbourhood on London's western fringes during the nineteenth century. It offered a contrasting combination of working-class housing and larger, speculatively built town houses for the middle and professional classes, replete with mews stabling for carriages and horses. The town houses failed to appeal to their intended market and many were quickly divided up for multiple-occupancy to house private rental tenants. This occurred in the 1880s to accommodate the families of Irish labourers and again, in the immediate post-war period, for new arrivals especially from the Caribbean. Lax legislation and unscrupulous landlords allowed rack renting, by which four families might fill spaces in progressively more decrepit buildings where just one had lived previously (O'Malley, 1977, p. 9).

Besides physical decay, the area suffered from a raft of social problems. These emanated from 'poverty, rootlessness, violence and crime' (White, 2001, p. 148), alongside simmering racial tension. Discrimination and intermittent acts of racially motivated violence had periodically erupted in Britain since the late 1940s, but came to a head in several inner-city districts in the summer of 1958. Nottingham's St Ann's district experienced rioting on 23 August 1958, with civil disturbances continuing intermittently for a fortnight. Notting Hill, as the hub of London's Caribbean community, proved the next target, with six days of rioting that started on 30 August. The disturbances were initiated by attacks on black residents and on black-owned properties by white people, many of them young 'Teddy Boys'¹² who travelled into the area specifically to incite and participate in acts of violence. In doing so, the white rioters were aided and abetted by what is now recognized to have been lax or complicit policing (Jackson, 1988).

The riots and their aftermath were 'a landmark in the history of British race relations, a jarring, visceral demonstration of white racism and a spur to black solidarity, organization and self-awareness' (Sandbrook, 2006, p. 341). An indication of that more positive legacy came in the form of two separate but overlapping initiatives. In November 1958 Claudia Jones, a Trinidadian political activist and writer, founded the Caribbean Carnival Committee in direct response to the riots; in her words to 'wash the taste of Notting Hill out of our mouths' (quoted in Crabtree, 2019). Intended as a celebration of cultural identity in the face of racist intimidation, the first Carnival took place not in the locality but at the St. Pancras Town Hall (Camden) in North London on 30 January 1959. Given the British climate, the same logic applied as with New York with carnival staged as an indoor event. There was no parade, but rather a cabaret-style event that showcased elements of Caribbean music, masquerades and dancing. The accompanying commemorative programme contained a statement from Jones asking the West Indian community to ensure that the carnival would become an annual event (Ferris, 2010).

The indoor festivals continued until Claudia Jones's sudden death in December 1964, after which the underlying rationale for the project effectively merged with another initiative proposed by a white social worker, Rhaune Laslett. Her ideas for a summer Street Festival or Fayre and Pageant to be located in the streets of Notting Hill were formulated without initial awareness of the prior existence of the indoor events. Laslett also had a broader aim of multicultural unity in mind rather than of making a statement of Caribbean identity to the British public and providing a focus for 'dispirited migrants' (Taylor and Kneafsey, 2016, p. 186). The first festival in 1966 included floats contributed by the local gas board, fire brigade, and Portobello Market stall holders (Ferdinand and Williams, 2018, p. 40), with the somewhat muted recognition of the West Indian community primarily confined to a schoolchildren's parade and addition of a Trinidadian steel band.

Thereafter, the festival would be shaped and reshaped by complex alliances



Figure 8.3. Notting Hill Carnival, 2018. (Photo: CC David Sedlecký).

and negotiations based on different conceptions of the carnival.¹³ By 1969, the West Indian community's pressure for a more authentic Caribbean carnival transformed the event along Trinidadian lines, with steel pans and costumed masquerades. From 1975 until the early 1980s, it became a Caribbean fusion event, with powerful sound systems pumping out reggae music, stalls selling Jamaican beer and food, Trinidad steel pan music and mas playing (*ibid.*). This period also saw a new scale of attendance and policing. From being a grassroots event attracting around 500 people in 1966, it was estimated that a national and international audience of around half a million people came in 1975. By 2019, the two-day festival attracted 2.5 million attendees, along with 40,000 volunteers to act as stewards, medical assistants and perform other pastoral roles (figure 8.3)

These numbers, the cramped nature of the 5.6 kilometres (3.5 miles) street circuit, and Establishment fears relating to public order and illicit substances have led to periodic calls for the Carnival to be banned, rerouted or moved to adjacent open spaces where there would be entertainments but no parade. Although these requests were rejected, enhanced policing and surveillance became the rule. An event that passed off peacefully with around eighty officers in 1975 saw hundreds of police in attendance in 1976 (Gutzmore, 1982). Heavy-handed policing on the first day of that carnival, allegedly searching for pickpockets, contributed to severe civil disturbances on the second day. More seriously, they contributed to a continuing legacy of sensitivities and mistrust that has sporadically blighted the

carnival atmosphere up to the present. As Europe's largest carnival, it now ranks as the Metropolitan Police Service's most sensitive annual policing operation, with 9,000 officers in attendance in 2019 (Kilgallon, 2020).

Clearly the external developments that have changed the area have impacted, directly and indirectly, on the carnival over the half-century since its inception. These include residential turnover attributable to increased house prices; the increase in costs in order to meet concerns over security, health and safety; problems over sponsorship that are exacerbated by political change which led to decreased funding; and the changing identity of London as a world city (Postma et al., 2013, p. 13). Profound neighbourhood change is particularly important. What was a low-cost and rundown area with a substantial Anglo-Caribbean population in 1966 has gentrified into one of London's most exclusive residential neighbourhoods. The post-war West Indian migrants, the 'Windrush generation', are deceased or have moved on. Unlike Crown Heights, which despite gentrification can still point to a significant Afro-Caribbean presence, Notting Hill is now predominantly white, middle-class and professional. Its carnival lays claim to important black heritage, but only a small proportion of the area is Afro-Caribbean. Like any carnival, the event gives the opportunity for vibrant spectacle, but the sources on which it now draws are Trinidadian, Jamaican, Brazilian (especially Rio de Janeiro), African and native British among others. Now organized within a continually evolving multicultural frame, the 'cultural expressions seen at the carnival each year are also a reminder of the significant role that the Notting Hill Carnival has played in the changing political and social landscape of London and Great Britain as a whole' (ibid., p. 11).

St Patrick's Day

The commemorative day for St Patrick is celebrated in more countries than that of any other saint, primarily due to his connections with Ireland and with the far-flung extent of the Irish diaspora. In this instance, however, the relationship between the centre and what were often termed the 'exiles' (Miller, 1988) was different to the usual pattern. The spirit behind the typically raucous and carnivalesque St Patrick's Day parades, with their representation of cheerful and carefree Irishness, was essentially created by the diaspora rather than in Ireland. Indeed it was primarily on the streets of New York and Boston that the traditions now conventionally associated with the parades, along with distinctive representations of Irish Catholic identity, were invented. From there, they were subsequently imported back to Europe; not least, into Ireland itself, from whence the relevant observances have been shaped by the political realities of a divided island (Scully, 2012; O'Donnell *et al.*, 2016).

The precise origins of St Patrick's name-day celebrations are unknown, but the evolution of the festivities broadly followed the pattern discussed in chapter 2, whereby what started as straightforward religious observances steadily became

intertwined with feasting, fairs and markets. Its fortuitous timing always made it one of the more popular saint's days in the Catholic Church's calendar. Despite falling within the period of Lenten penitence, authorized acts of celebration for St Patrick saw the prohibitions against the consumption of meat and acts of merriment temporarily waived in favour of a brief resumption of carnival (McPherson et al., 2009, p. 197). Yet it must be stressed that Irish celebrations were originally non-denominational. Although nowadays principally associated with Irish republicanism and Catholicism, before partition St Patrick's Day was celebrated as much by Protestants as by Catholics, with all sections of society wearing crosses and shamrocks (arguably a symbol of the Trinity). Throughout the nineteenth century, for example, the festival was fully celebrated by the Anglo-Irish Protestant elite, with private dinners and high society balls held at Dublin Castle (Cronin and Adair, 2002, p. 6). Indeed the saint was an object of contention between the rival churches in Ireland, with both Anglicans and Catholics 'claiming him as the precursor of their own communion' (Hill, 1984, p. 50).

The movement towards a more political and denominational association between St Patrick and Irish identity came in the wake of mass emigration from Ireland. Parades appeared in towns and cities from Australia to Montserrat, with particularly large-scale events in Canada and the USA (Abramson, 1973; Marston, 1989; Dolan, 2010; Malcolm and Hall, 2019). In each case, emigrant Irish essentially sought to make symbolic links with an increasingly mythologized 'home', with the most significant developments in terms of iconography and practices appearing in North America. Although there is a record of a spring festivity to honour San Patricio at St Augustine (Florida) in March 1601, the oldest festivals held with any recurrence in what is now the USA were those founded in Boston and New York City in 1761 and 1762 respectively. Eighteen cities had parades by 1890 and, moving towards the present day, one estimate suggested that there were at least 175 St Patrick's Day parades held in the USA during the 1980s (Kelton, 1985, p. 93). At the beginning of the nineteenth century these were predominantly Protestant parades, but their character changed dramatically with the arrival of around 500,000 migrants in the 1840s in the wake of the Potato Famine (Moss, 1995). Contemporary accounts speak of the parades gradually becoming a vehicle for the new and predominantly Irish-Catholic immigrant communities to revel in the freedoms to celebrate their culture openly and even to wear green - something that at times was proscribed by the repressive British regime in the old country (Cronin and Adair, 2002).

The American parades contributed much of what might now be considered imagined Irishness (Maples, 2009), replete with marching bands, step dancers, people wearing leprechaun wigs, shamrockery and the rest. The sense of open festivity attached to the event invited mass participation from those with precious little or no association with Ireland, leading to sizeable crowds and generating commensurate trade for the hospitality industry. For instance, in 2017 the various

St Patrick Day parades in the USA generated an estimated \$5.3 billion, with enormous contributions to the tourist revenues of the major cities. The parades always had their own specificity rather than mirroring the practices associated with the homeland (Hickman, 2015). Most notably, in the USA the parades are recognized as making visible the Irish community's position in life of the major cities and within US society, along with underlining that community's 'demonstrable organisational capability and... political and market power' (McPherson *et al.*, 2009, p. 197).

The paradigm offered by this experience impacted on festivals elsewhere, both in cities with large diasporic Irish communities and in Ireland itself. The parades held annually in London since 2002, for example, illustrate the former. Perhaps inevitably, St Patrick's Day has had a chequered history in the British festival calendar due to the Irish Question and its aftermath. Modest-scale parades had been commonplace as parish events in nineteenth-century England, but then atrophied until large-scale Irish immigration to the United Kingdom in the 1950s revived interest. A brief flowering of larger events then followed but halted with the start of 'The Troubles' in Northern Ireland and onset of the Provisional Irish Republican Army's mainland bombing campaign in 1973. In the face of anti-Irish sentiment, St. Patrick's Day events became cloistered in and around Irish community centres.

The turning point came with the election of Ken Livingston as London's mayor in 2000. Livingston's manifesto had contained a commitment to support an annual landmark St Patrick's parade in central London (Hickman, 2015, p. 218). Its aim was political rather than attempting to encourage tourism, principally seeking to counter the bitterness caused by the bombing campaign and the stereotypically negative view of the Irish held by the host society. The introduction of the new American-style parade helped to make the community again visible by offering an inclusive experience of Irishness and by linking it to the prevailing multicultural agenda (Nagle, 2005, p. 563). There were objections to the representations of culture and ethnicity that it offered, but the opportunity to be 'Irish for the Day' has proved popular (ibid., p. 564; Monks, 2005). Attracting around 50,000 people, the parade now processes from Hyde Park to Whitehall with a six-hour concert in Trafalgar Square, allowing the Irish community symbolically to claim the city centre (figure 8.4). A variety of added events, including a three-day Irish film festival, bring the aggregate attendance to 125,000.

With regard to Ireland itself, St Patrick's Day continued to be celebrated across the sectarian divide although, until recently, with less enthusiasm and lavish display than exhibited by diaspora celebrations (Walter, 2008). In Dublin, for example, parades were traditionally low-key and religiously oriented. Local community groups were the main participants and, until the late-1970s, public houses and bars along the parade route were banned from opening. A 1995 government initiative achieved a dramatic change in direction, promoting a



Figure 8.4. The St Patrick's Day Parade and Festival in London in 2017. (Photo: CC Garry Knight).

full-blown St Patrick's Festival lasting several days that was largely intended to stimulate tourism and highlight the potential of the emerging 'Celtic Tiger' economy. At the outset, the organizers promised to distance the festival from the *craic* and paddywhackery reputation of its North American counterparts: an intention which they singularly failed to achieve (Cullen, 2015, p 164). Nevertheless, the St Patrick's Festival reworked the diasporic version sufficiently successfully to contemplate turning what is currently a five-day festival into a month-long 'global expression of Ireland' (Falvey, 2019). In commercial terms, it contributed €73 million to the Irish economy in 2019, with €22 million accruing outside Dublin – this set against the state's outlay of just €1.4 million. In terms of visitors, 105,000 people came from abroad, 28 per cent of whom were making return trips (*ibid*).

St. Patrick's Day, however, is also celebrated across the sectarian divide in Ulster. Although taking second place in the hierarchy of Northern Ireland's public parades behind those celebrating Orangemen's Day (12 July), observance of the festival had long been faced with maintaining an uneasy balance between the sentiments and interests of the loyalist, unionist and Protestant majority and the nationalist, republican and Catholic minority (Muldoon *et al.*, 2007). For most of the period after partition of Ireland in May 1921, St Patrick's Day celebrations were largely limited to those wishing to see the festival principally as

representing the Irish nationalist cause and the call for a united Ireland approach to Irish problems. During the 1970s, for example, parades were specifically instituted in Catholic west Belfast as a token of republican sentiment. Believing that this was an attempt to hijack St Patrick for nationalist purposes, the unionists countered by arranging their own celebration:

In 1985 the unionist Orange Order, an exclusively Protestant institution, inaugurated [St Patrick's Day celebrations] in the unionist stronghold of Antrim Town... By 2000, unionist identification with St Patrick was complete after a mural of St Patrick was unveiled in unionist east Belfast, proclaiming him to be a 'proud Protestant and Ulsterman'. (Nagle, 2006, p. 37)

This divisiveness was indirectly addressed by the peace accord known as the Good Friday Agreement. Signed by the United Kingdom and the Irish Republic in April 1998, it set a framework for coexistence between nationalists and unionists, tentatively suggesting a way forward by making room for a plural Northern Irish identity that might develop alongside being British or Irish (*ibid.*, p. 34). The St Patrick's Day parade that was instituted in Belfast city centre in 1998 could be seen as a gesture towards that goal, albeit one that had problematic beginnings.

To elaborate, there had been no tradition prior to that date of such parades in central Belfast. Recognizing the profound territoriality that surrounds use and ownership of space in Belfast, the city council designated the space around the City Hall as the site for the celebration believing it would be perceived as neutral ground (Russell, 2005). That decision proved ill-founded. As the centre of a council under unionist control, Belfast City Hall was associated with Protestant hegemony. Using that space for a St Patrick's Day celebration seemed to the nationalist community as laying symbolic claim to a space that the unionists felt obliged to resist.

After recognizing that the event had fallen short of its intended inclusiveness, Belfast City Council agreed in 2005 to finance the 2006 celebration. In this instance, the concert was moved to Custom House Square, a purpose-designed performance space without the ideological baggage borne by City Hall. Viewing the 2006 event as a pilot project, the council agreed that the event should be independently evaluated by consultants from Queen's University Belfast to see the extent to which intercommunal inclusiveness was being delivered. There was also the wider purpose of seeing whether St Patrick's Day in 2006 could become a key event in the 'Celebrate Belfast' programme (Nagle, 2006, pp. 39–40). This had four broad aims: city branding, promotion of Belfast as a city with worldclass cultural standing, attracting tourists, and expediting 'social forgetting' – a euphemism for countering sectarianism.

The reality was a set of mixed results. Continuity of the Belfast celebrations to the present constitutes a measure of success for the city council's policies for place promotion and tourist numbers, but these are not festivals likely to generate

communal bonding or shared identity. Despite continued efforts – the 'city of equals' was the adopted theme for the 2019 celebrations – the depth of sectarian schisms and persistent contestation of space make it improbable that goal could be achieved in the foreseeable future (Bryan, 2011). Nevertheless, they may have done something to assist inclusiveness. Intercommunal equity has gained through the celebrations being given public funding and access to public space: a victory perhaps for 'cultural diversity within a state that once styled itself in terms of ethnic homogeneity' (Nagle, 2015, p. 110).

Use of the St Patrick's Day parades to represent factional positions and assert identity has not been confined to the island of Ireland. Notably, it has occasionally also shaped diasporic celebrations of the event, particularly during 'The Troubles' of the late twentieth century. The Irish community in Seattle, for example, only founded their parade in 1972 in response to the events of 'Bloody Sunday' two months earlier, when a civil rights march in Derry had left thirteen protesters dead in Northern Ireland's second city. In the early 1980s, radicalization affected many of the parades when US Irish groups felt that their voice on Northern Ireland was being ignored, largely due to the Reagan government's close relationship with Margaret Thatcher's government in Britain. In 1982, for example, marchers processed down New York's Fifth Avenue silently carrying crosses and wearing H-block armbands to commemorate the deaths of Irish Republican hunger strikers in the Maze Prison. Their funereal silence, understandably, was in sharp contradistinction to the carnivalesque norms of St Patrick's Day and gained emotive power from that contrast. For their part the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the organizers of New York's parades since 1838, have sometimes appointed controversial Irish republican figures to be their Grand Marshals. These included Michael Flannery in 1983 and Pete King in 1985 (Kelton, 1985, pp. 99-102). Flannery had just four months previously been acquitted of charges of gun-running for the IRA. King was an active campaigner for civil rights in Northern Ireland and a fervent supporter of the charity Noraid, long regarded by the British government as a significant source of funds for militant republicanism.14

Pride Parades

If the St Patrick's Day parades represents a longstanding appropriation of the carnivalesque, then the Gay Pride Parades or simply 'Pride Parades' represent one of its newest manifestations. In many ways, carnival forms were always likely to be natural vehicles for promoting the rights of the LGBTQ+ communities.¹⁵ Transgressive but playful representations of gay identity, transgenderism and transvestitism have long been associated with the display of the 'world turned upside down'. Yet while an intrinsic part of carnival's traditional playful revelry, it was also an imagery that could be readily mobilized for the more serious task of challenging discriminatory social norms whenever society became prepared

to allow such activities to take place. Indeed the importance of the carnivalesque in what were known as in the early days as Lesbian and Gay Pride Days was stressed by observers as a catalyst in changing 'shame and loneliness into pride and solidarity' (Britt and Heise, 2001, p. 252).

Detailed analysis of the history of the struggle for gender equality lies outside the present discussion,¹⁶ but two landmarks have particular relevance for the appropriation of the carnivalesque. The first occurred in 1959 when the New Orleans Mardi Gras gained its first gay *krewe*. Southern Louisiana was then characterized by endemic homophobia, pervasive police harassment of gay men and a hostile judicial system. However, the specific *cause célèbre* came in 1958 when, despite the weight of evidence, a courtroom jury acquitted defendants of beating a gay tour guide to death in the city's French Quarter (Kepner, 1998). Feeling the need to associate for mutual protection, several groups took the opportunity to form *krewes* for Mardi Gras. The first was the Krewe of Yuga or 'KY' krewe (*sic*), formed in 1959. Although meeting surreptitiously, their year's highlight was a deliberately flamboyant carnival ball. They were followed in 1961 by the Krewe of Petronius, the first gay grouping to be formally registered for Mardi Gras and who, by doing so, gained legal protection to avoid police harassment when staging their carnival ball.

The second landmark came with the 1970 Christopher Street Parade or March on Stonewall, which was held to protest against unconstitutional raids on gay bars by the New York Police Department (NYPD) and, more specifically, on the Stonewall Inn in June 1969 (Armstrong, 2006). New York had several recognizably gay districts including Greenwich Village, Chelsea, and Hell's Kitchen, as well as a history of hosting 'drag balls' that went back to the late nineteenth century (Wilson, 2002). Nevertheless, homosexuality was officially illegal in New York until 1980. Being illegal was a recipe for conflict whenever the local police forces decided that they wanted to do something about it. Certainly it was not unusual for the NYPD to raid the Stonewall Inn on Christopher Street in Greenwich Village. It was a well-known meeting place for poorer and sometimes homeless sections of the gay community and could also be singled out as an illegal drinking den, given that its supplies were controlled by the Mafia. The raid on 28 June 1969, however, quickly spiralled out of control when the occupants decided to fight back. Riots ensued and continued for several further nights. In early July, an action committee established to coordinate the response to the causes of the riots took the name Gay Liberation Front, in playful reference to the Vietnamese National Liberation Front (Kissack, 1995, p. 113). On 27 July, a protest march from Washington Square Park to Sheridan Square was the first openly gay public display of its sort on the East Coast. It presaged the Pride March that was held in New York City on the first anniversary of Stonewall in June 1970 (Pilkington, 2019), along with tribute parades that were simultaneously held in Chicago and on the West Coast in Los Angeles and San Francisco.

Pride Marches have been held annually in New York and globally on the anniversary of Stonewall ever since. While there are still more than seventy countries in which such parades or marches would be banned, the US-based Gay Pride Calendar lists no fewer than 393 annual Pride Parades worldwide, of which 178 are held in North American cities.¹⁷ Although this listing covers events of widely varying size and with different client groups, almost all can be characterized as being double-edged 'parties with politics', political stages 'built on laughter and festivity' (Browne, 2007; Lundberg, 2007). On the one hand, observers emphasize the importance of Pride Parades as collective sites of ritualized community resistance that raise awareness of social injustice and discursively inform social meanings in everyday life outside the festival (e.g. Kates and Belk, 2001). This is reinforced when the parade route remains closely tied to the geography of the city. While organizers of some parades choose city centre routes to gain maximum visibility, others stay rooted in neighbourhoods with particular importance for the LGBTQ+ community. In Madrid, for example, the parades remain centred in the Chueca neighbourhood, which the official tourist body promotes as 'globally famous' particularly and as 'the epicentre of one of the most awaited parties, the Madrid LGTBI Pride Festivals'.¹⁸

Pride parades can also be vehicles used to highlight elements of active discrimination. New York's Pride Parade, for example, famously changed their routeing to match that of the St Patrick's Day Parade, when it was found that the Ancient Order of Hibernians had specifically banned overtly gay participants from its parade (Marston, 2002). More subtly, it was noticeable that the parade that celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the March on Stonewall began not in Greenwich Village or even at the Stonewall Bar where it all began but at the United Nations building, thereby eliding protection of gay rights with more general issues of human rights (Manalansan, 1995).

Yet, as before, there is more at stake than just issues of politics, cultural or otherwise, with spectators varying in the reasons why they attend the parades. Some will be members of the community. Other will be 'conscience adherents', who support the cause but are not themselves LGBTQ+ (Wahlström *et al.*, 2018). Yet others will be heterosexual spectators who feel curious, ambivalent or even negative towards homosexuality but come to see the show (Mason and Lo, 2009) – carnivalesque and hedonistic celebrations that often include public displays by participants in colourful and often outrageous apparel including 'people in drag, leather outfits, tight shorts, topless women on bikes, the wearing of sex toys and the parody of heterosexuality' (Johnston, 2005, p. 6). The spectacle can draw in huge numbers of participants, with critics arguing that the organizers' desire to accommodate the needs of tourists has steadily eroded the events' special content.

Exactly how many spectators are in attendance is difficult to gauge. The São Paulo Gay Pride Parade, for example, draws enormous numbers of spectators along its route for which estimates are notoriously approximate (figure 8.5).¹⁹



Figure 8.5. São Paulo's 18th annual LGBT Pride Parade, 2014. (Photo: CC Ben Tavener)

The 2018 parade is believed to have attracted an estimated five million spectators, with 150,000 marchers in the parade itself. New York's attendance for the fiftieth anniversary parade in 2019 drew four million spectators along the 4 kilometre parade circuit. Worldpride Madrid 2017, which marked the fortieth anniversary of the city's first Pride Parade in 1977, was assessed as attracting 3.5 million spectators – still the highest for a European LGBTQ+ festival. The larger Pride Parades are also highly commercialized given that the community's combined global spending power was estimated in 2015 at \$3.7 trillion a year (Ross, 2016). Many carnival floats are therefore sponsored by commercial corporations for commensurate sponsorship fees, with New York's sponsors alone contributing around \$2.4 million annually.

The Sydney Mardi Gras, founded in 1978, provides an instructive example of the various faces of the larger Pride Parades (figure 8.6). As with most of the parades founded in the first decade after Stonewall, its rationale stemmed from fighting outright legal proscription – acts of male homosexuality were illegal in New South Wales until 1984 – and associated police harassment. Conscious of how protest marches could degenerate into violence, the original organizers sought to emulate the spirit of American Pride Parades and give their version the ethos of a street party or Mardi Gras.²⁰ In the first instance, this proved difficult to achieve. A march involving around 2,000 people ended with a riot and at least fifty-three arrests (Markwell, 2002, p. 82).

Repeal of the legislation under which the arrests were made saw a parade of 3,000 participants the next year pass off without incident. As early as 1980,



Figure 8.6. Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, Sydney, Australia, March 2013. (*Photo:* CC Hasitha Tudugalle)

the festival had expanded to last a week, including a 'Gay Alternative Fair' and the post-parade party - a key element ever since. In doing so, familiar tensions arose as to the spirit and purpose of the event. In particular, participant groups questioned whether it should be primarily focused on political ends or emphasize fun and celebration (*ibid.*), with the latter always likely to increase its potential for the tourist market. Within a decade, the Mardi Gras had expanded dramatically, with estimates of 200,000 participants in 1989 and over 500,000 in 1993. According to one observer (Johnston, 2007, p. 6), the parade now attracts around 800,000 spectators and takes approximately four hours to pass through the city's streets. Large numbers of interstate and international travellers had started congregating for the event by the late-1980s, generating an estimated AU\$99 million (US\$55 million) for the New South Wales economy in 1988 (ibid.). By 2019, it had become a seventeen-day festival that included a Fair Day, film festival, art exhibitions, academic symposia and a health programme besides the parades and the post-parade party. Second only to the pan-artistic Sydney Festival in terms of being the nation's largest annual tourist event, it was further boosted by winning the nomination to stage WorldPride 2023 - the marquee international LGBTQ+ festival – against competing bids from Montreal and Houston.

The event retains a transgressive edge through deployment of the carnivalesque, but familiar tensions have arisen about its spirit and purpose. In particular, participant groups questioned whether it should primarily focus on political ends or emphasize fun and celebration. The latter in particular was always likely to have three implications. First, it has led to greater commercialism through garnering the support of various corporate and government sponsors that have included Qantas, Telstra, and Smirnoff: a development that has

helped defray the cost of the cultural programme but arguably has had an impact on the festival's content (Markwell, 2002, p. 87). Secondly, and related, these developments have reinforced the event's potential as an attraction in the tourist market, a substantial proportion of which comes from niche marketing of LGBTQ+ tourism: an industry estimated in 2012 to be worth around \$165 billion globally (WTO, 2012, p. 9; also Guaracino, 2007). Thirdly, Mardi Gras has made a contribution to the way that Sydney is represented to the outside world. In place of promotional efforts, the city actively propagated an imagery of a cosmopolitan and liberally minded world city with an economy driven by consumption and leisure (Waitt, 1999, 1058). Taken together, these developments have added to the viability of the festival and its appeal for its home city but, in the process, critics argue that Mardi Gras's value as an instrument for fighting prejudice and discrimination has been blunted through commodification (Markwell, 2002, p. 87; De Jong, 2017).

Conclusion

That finding supports the theme of multiple and sometimes contradictory agendas that has featured repeatedly in this chapter. Carnival is always developing, always adding new agendas and yet stubbornly retaining its enduring character. From the early eighteenth century onwards, numerous groups wishing to assert their identity have appropriated this well-established cultural form and adapted its underlying strategies for their own needs and purposes. It may be that sometimes the transgressive edge is as diminished by the process of selling as it is by the changes that occur in the material circumstances of the groups who participate, but the possibility of transgression remains there as a force that can be revived should the need arise. If nothing else, carnival remains a vital ingredient in the lives of groups of people who annually see a reminder of who they are, where they came from and frequently the distance that they still have to travel.

Notes

1. This is from the English version published in 1980 and translated by Norman Denny: the original was published in 1862.

2. Elements of this chapter draw on Gold (2011).

3. The gross regional domestic product, which measures the size of a region's economy, is the sum of value-added from all producers resident in the region.

4. From May 2018, this was rebranded as New Orleans & Company. The figures on cancellations come from New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau (2010) New Orleans tourism industry: major milestones in recovery post-Katrina. Available at: https://www.neworleansonline.com/pr/releases/releases/Milestones%20in%20Recovery%20Post-Katrina_1.pdf.

New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau (2005) The party's restarted: Mardi Gras World open.
 October. Available at: https://www.neworleans.com/articles/post/the-partys-restarted-mardi-gras-world-open/.

6. Some observers (e.g. Derrett, 2004; Lukas, 2007) dismiss this as 'pseudo-participation'. The idea of being a participant just by attending is, they feel, a caricature of classic carnival, robbing the event of 'its subversive and transgressive nature and simultaneously to display it within purported educative or judicial frameworks for instruction of the homogeneous masses' (McGowan, 2001).

7. Although Ferreira (2013; also Abrahams, 2017) also pointed to the iconographic influence of the Rio Carnival, itself traced as having derived from practices imported from Nice and nineteenth-century Paris. For more information about these influences, see Manning, 1989; Jackson, 1992; Knecht and Niedermüller, 2002; Nurse, 2004; Ferdinand and Williams, 2013.

8. Poor relations exist between Cown Heights' West Indian population and a large group of white Hasidic residents who also live in the neighbourhood. The latter object to the parade's routeing and accompanying nuisance from noise and litter; the former resent occasional outbreaks of heavy-handed policing and what they see as City Hall's tendency to take the Hasidic community's side whenever it comes to matters of intercommunity dispute (Scher, pp. 47–51).

9. Landoli, K. (2015) The West Indian carnival you don't know about. Available at: https://i-d.vice.com/ en uk/article/8xgz9a/the-west-indian-carnival-you-dont-know-about.

10. A term developed by Anspach (1979) to refer to activism by the disabled to transform both their own and society's conceptions of people with disabilities. It is understood more widely as a cultural and political approach whereby people prioritize the issues most relevant to their particular racial, religious, ethnic, gender or other identity and then mobilize in support of those issues rather than engaging in mainstream party politics (see Bernstein, 2005).

11. Other such festivals include the Harlem Week (New York City), founded in 1974; the Black Pride Festival (Washington DC, 1975); Chattanooga's Bessie Smith Strut (1981); and Milwaukee's African World Festival (1982). Other festivals celebrated by communities nationwide specifically relate to civil rights struggles: most notably, Martin Luther King Jnr's Birthday and Rosa Parks Day (established in 1983 and 2005 respectively). These are not protest rallies per se. They have a commemorative tone that reflects community pride but contain constant reminders that such festivities help carry forward the spirit of the Civil Rights movement and the right to be seen and heard (Verter, 2002).

12. The name that was given to a youth cult that appeared in the early 1950s. They took their name from the flamboyant Edwardian-style clothing that they favoured (Ferris and Lord, 2012).

13. It is not possible here to do justice to the complex shifting of alliances and cultural politics that underpinned these changes. For more information, see Pryce (1985), Burr (2006), Ferdinand and Williams (2018).

14. Founded in direct response to the start of the Troubles in 1969, the Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid) always denied paramilitary connections.

15. A note on terminology: in keeping with the goal of inclusiveness that is a defining feature of this movement, we use the acronym LGBTQ+ for the various communities concerned, standing for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning) and others. However, when dealing with particular moments in the past, we use the terms that were current at those times, e.g. Gay Pride or Lesbian Pride.

16. See Rowbotham (1977), Evans (1993), Adams (1995) and Datta et al. (2020).

17. GayPrideCalendar.com, Pride Events. Available at: https://www.gaypridecalendar.com/byname.

18. Madrid Destino Cultura Turismo y Negocio SA (2020) Welcome to Madrid. Available at: https:// www.esmadrid.com/en/madrid-neighbourhoods/chueca.

19. Posted on https://flickr.com/photos/77855978@N03/14108541924; reproduced under Creative Commons Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic licence.

20. Sargeant, C. (2020) What's in a name? Why Mardi Gras is named Mardi Gras. Available at: https:// www.sbs.com.au/topics/pride/mardigras/article/2018/02/22/whats-name-why-mardi-gras-named-mardigras. It is arguable as to whether any specific reference to the practices of the New Orleans Mardi Gras influenced that decision.

CHAPTER 9

Conclusion

So, what happens when we are jaded with the well-worn themes of music (Montreal International Classical Guitar Festival and the Montreal Reggae Festival), art (Festival Mural), dance (International Tango Festival and Burlesque Festival), film (Cinemania and International Black Film Festival) and, of course, winter (Fête des Neiges and Festival Montréal en Lumière)? There are still some oddball fêtes out there: St-Jean-sur-Richelieu Hot Air Balloon Festival anyone?

By the time we are done filling every day with a festival or a holiday (which is a type of multi-event mini-festival) and the Rogers Cup, and things that are awkwardly technical like the MUTEK digital creativity fest, and books (Salon du Livre) and parades (Santa Claus and St. Patrick's) and every culture's event known to humankind ... we may be left with something that's called 'We've Got Nothing Going on Today Festival'.

Victor Schukov (2017)

The hunt for novelty to fill the spare days in the festival calendar, of course, is not confined to Montreal. In September 2019, a press release announced that in a year's time London would have its first Mural Festival. London, it suggested, had 'long been a thriving centre of street art, but has lacked the kind of largescale festival that other big cities enjoy' (Brown, 2019). In many respects, the proposed festival represented a remarkable turnaround in public appreciation of murals and street art. Large-scale murals tended to be associated with

CONCLUSION

poorer neighbourhoods, where they are commonly deployed as statements of resistance (e.g. Delgado and Barton, 1998; Sieber *et al.*, 2012). In addition, many of those now professionally responsible for graffiti-based art would have started their careers by furtively leaving tags (nicknames or symbols) or more ambitious efforts in quiet corners of the built environment. Yet while still widely condemned in its uncontrolled form as vandalism, there has been increasing acceptance that the raw material could have considerable artistic and commercial merit when deemed to be in the *right* place (figure 9.1). Cities elsewhere, including Montreal (figure 9.2), had already latched on to that idea



Figure 9.1. Tagging and graffiti art in the Queen Elizabeth's Hall's undercroft at the Southbank Centre, London. Seen here in October 2006, when it would have been viewed as scarcely tolerated vandalism, the graffiti coating the walls is now seen as an indispensably edgy backdrop to the skateboard park that now thrives here. (*Photo*: CC Benjamin D. Esham)



Figure 9.2. Mural by Felipe Pantone (Argentina) prepared for the fourth Montreal Mural Festival, July 2016. (*Photo*: CC Benjamin D. Esham)

and had developed festivals to harness this creativity and fresh thinking. Now it was London's turn.

Strictly speaking, the press release was incorrect. It was not the first such festival in the British capital given that suburban Croydon, one of Greater London's outer boroughs, had previously staged the one-off RISE festival in 2018, which featured sixty murals dotted around the town centre (Truelove, 2018). Nevertheless, it was the first time that the heart of London would experience something described as art fairs 'taken up a notch' (Billock, 2018). Mural festivals exhibit works that may well occupy complete sides of buildings. When coupled with street art, with which they are inextricably intertwined, mural festivals take a fresh look at a contemporary art form that can be used instrumentally for a variety of purposes. These could include regeneration, urban beautification, bolstering civic pride, attracting younger tourists, inviting visitors to sample the delights of overlooked parts of the city, social inclusion and the democratization of art. The London Mural Festival would employ the familiar trope of the built environment as 'a vast canvas', promising 'a minimum of 20 new large-scale murals across the city'. These would be accompanied by the standard fayre of talks, workshops, film screenings, gallery shows and street art tours, but 'culminating with 100+ artists painting alongside live music, DJs and a series of parties'.1

Leaving aside the extent to which such activities would be likely to take place in 2020 in light of external circumstances (see below), questions arise as to how *new* is new. There were few claims for originality when explaining the rationale of the event. The publicity merely stated that it was 'introducing a new way for people to experience one of the world's biggest art movements'.² As a mural festival, it is part of a genre that was yet another product of the waves of festival proliferation that have occurred in recent decades. In 2019, for example, it is estimated that there were already around thirty major mural festivals worldwide.³ All were recently established. Although 'StreetWorks', a one-off event, was held in Washington DC in 1981, all other mural festivals were created in the twentyfirst century. In the United Kingdom the movement was led by Bristol's Upfest which, although billed as 'Europe's largest urban arts festival', only dates from 2008. In Europe, Istanbul's Street Art Festival (2007) is the sole event that is older. In the USA, the Sarasota Chalk Festival, a pavement art festival held in Florida, similarly dates from 2007.

Nevertheless when considering the type of activity undertaken here *sensu lato*, it is possible to push the clock back much further. Murals and street art generally are unusual in the extent to which they tap into a wellspring of festival traditions that dates back several millennia. Chapter 2, for example, showed how streetscapes have been used throughout the ages as tableaux, whereby political regimes of all complexions have sought to achieve their strategic goals by creating spectacle through decorating permanent buildings and temporary structures. In addition, mural festivals draw on principles of the display of public art that have

CONCLUSION

been part and parcel of approaches to managing the urban realm since the birth of modern town planning in the late nineteenth century (Miles, 1998). Hence it can be argued that while the practices that we now witness may be new, the broad functions that they serve may well be much older.

This recognition of the importance of different time frames, however, has wider implications that have to be treated with care. Any historical understanding of the relationship between festivals and their host cities needs to embrace an extensive range of processes and variables, which include recognizing the interplay between tradition and innovation. Looked at in general terms, there are many features of city-based festivals that are familiar and timeless; features that organizers fondly emphasize in order to lend a sense of authenticity and gravitas to proceedings. This applies particularly in relation to two of the major functions addressed by staging festivals: first, as channels for the transmission and reception of culture; and, secondly, as media for creating and communicating place identity. In both cases, parallels can be drawn between modern festivals and equivalents that date back to the dawn of recorded history. Even on the economic side, one can point to times in the past when the events of the festival calendar had enormous importance for the urban economy, absorbing large allocations of funds and giving employment to small armies of performers, innkeepers, supporting staff and officiaries.

Having said that, creation and development of festivals in the modern era cannot be locked into the iron shackles of historical precedent. As was also noted in chapter 2, continuities through the ages abound and are important, but the similarities are usually analogous rather than homologous. That finding applies even to events like carnival which, despite its recognizably deep historical roots, is still easily appropriated to suit the needs of changing times (see chapter 8). Attempts to explain the proliferation of festivals in such profusion in the modern world therefore tend to say more about diffusion of innovation and about the operation of processes of festivalization than they do about conformity with tradition.

With regard to diffusion, it is apparent that the key to the exponential growth of festivals has been the catalytic role played by a surprisingly small number of innovative precursors, all of which originated in or before 1950. Chapters 3–6 provided detailed portraits of four festivals that played a formative role in shaping festival practices worldwide: the Venice Biennale, the Salzburg Festspiele, the Cannes International Film Festival and the Edinburgh International Festival. To their number were added several other influential festivals founded as part of the drive for cultural renaissance that immediately followed the Second World War. These included the Ruhrfestspiele at Recklinghausen, the Avignon Theatre Festival, and the Cheltenham Literature Festival. Individually and collectively, these festivals forged partnerships with their host cities, codified practices and provided road maps for future events. They also displayed the underlying dynamic of festivalization. During the 1930s, for example, Venice added three

festivals to the Biennale that was founded in 1895. Edinburgh quickly spawned four festivals to fill perceived gaps in the original project or to respond to objections to its perceived political outlook. Moreover, almost all the precursors would develop fringe events that have embraced the wider city.

Once convincing exemplars were available, then the path was open for other cities to copy the results and organize their own events. Nevertheless, the usual reactions of rival cities were slow to materialize, with few competing events emerging for several decades. In several respects, the patterns that emerged would appear to resemble the classic three-stage, S-shaped curve favoured by those who conduct research on the diffusion of innovations (Rogers, 1962; Mahajan, 2010). Here, a long period of slow initial growth is followed by rapid expansion, when the basic concepts have become widely known and copied, and a third stage where new adoption slows as the market approaches satiation. When applied to festivals, that model broadly fits in terms of the first two phases. As shown in chapter 7, the impact of the precursors was very limited before the explosive growth that began in the last two decades of the twentieth century.

The essential stimulus for that growth of festivals was economic change. Although the precursors may have acted as a proving ground for festivalization, there was perceived to be little incentive to invest in cultural activity when the main focus was on the manufacturing economy. The dramatic increase in interest in staging festivals would only come when needing to search for alternative sources of income and employment to counter problems left by deindustrialization. Festivalization on any perceptible scale was coterminous with the rise of neoliberalist approaches to urban management in the late 1970s and 1980s. As part of more entrepreneurial policies, city managers recognized the support that staging festivals could give to the service sector in general and the cultural and creative economy in particular. Festivals therefore came to be seen as instrumental expressions of postindustrial urbanism, able to make significant contributions to the urban economy in their own right as well as being features of cultural life. As has been seen, this occurs directly through attracting cultural tourists and stimulating production of souvenirs and festival-related merchandising. It also occurs indirectly through assisting the growth of a vibrant cultural and creative sector and through promoting rebranding, by which the staging of festivals helps to improve the city's image as a place in which to live, work and invest.

This phase of dramatic growth in the numbers and types of festivals has not yet abated, with little convincing evidence that the market is satiated, even if there are occasional signs of local resistance (see below). Moreover, the pace of the diffusion process has clearly quickened. As with the example of the mural festivals considered above, the first phase of diffusion of a new festival form may now have shortened to a few years rather than taking several decades. New ideas and fusions are soon absorbed and imitative festivals develop quickly if the underlying concept is seen as being sound and attractive. This is partly due to the

CONCLUSION

increasing velocity with which ideas circulate, with online images of successful festivals being quickly communicated to a global public, especially via social media. Yet, it is also partly due to the critical mass imparted by festivalization. Subject to sensitivity over timing, staging increasing numbers of festivals in a particular place generates multiplier effects, helping to provide a sympathetic environment for the speedy adoption of additional festivals.

So saying, it is important not to exaggerate the degree of agency exercised by city authorities in guiding the process. In some circumstances, as with Venice and Cannes, the original festivals grew out of close partnerships between the organizers and the local and national states. The public sector in both cases created enabling frameworks, invested in infrastructure and retained an interest in maintaining their cities' festivals. These, however, are the exceptions. Rather more often, the prime responsibility for launching and sustaining festivals rests with organizers from the voluntary sector, perhaps working with the business community to sponsor new events. The municipal authority normally takes a more subsidiary role, giving support in the form of small amounts of finance, providing liaison officers, and establishing agencies to foster further events.

Rather more controversially, local authorities may assist the staging of festivals by making available space from the public realm. This can be for the construction of temporary venues, or provision of hospitality areas and media facilities, or for giving access to support services, or just to provide circulation spaces for the



Figure 9.3. Pedestrianizing part of the Old Town in Edinburgh for the Fringe at festival time, August 2012. (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

informal congregation of festivalgoers. Besides perhaps exposing residents in the areas in question to noise, litter and possible antisocial behaviour during the festival, there may be problems of damage to parks and gardens that persist well beyond the event until remedial action is taken. There are also issues concerned with access. Exclusion from parks or public spaces, along with road closures (figure 9.3) or shutting car parks, causes local annoyance that is compounded when restricted access is combined with ticketing, whereby residents have to apply for permits to access their own homes. In addition, although easily dismissed as being only temporary, using public spaces for festivals aligns their staging with broader trends towards privatization, commercialization, and securitization in the urban environment (Smith, 2017, 2018). As chapter 6 notes, this may well lead to calls for re-siting some festivals, curtailment of others, or a curb on establishing further events.

Reference to securitization, however, introduces an increasingly urgent and disturbing list of problems. It has been accepted since the Black September attack at the 1972 Munich Summer Olympics that large gatherings provide opportunities for terrorist and insurgent groups to carry out high visibility surprise attacks to achieve political ends. More recently, however, such attacks have gained greater virulence (Skoll and Korstanje, 2014, p. 96), freely targeting festivals as gatherings at which it is possible to engage in efficient killing, inflicting maximum casualties both to gain worldwide media coverage and create a climate of fear amongst the wider citizenry. Attacks in France, Belgium, Germany and Great Britain in 2016–2017 by ISIS-inspired groups and individuals, for example, led to profound rethinking about the security of those gathering together in public places in large numbers.

In immediate terms, this led to cancellations. France in 2015–2016, for example, saw traditional events in Paris, Lyon, Lille, Brittany, and the Côte d'Azur cancelled on grounds of security after the coordinated attacks on Paris and Saint-Denis in November 2015 (Anon, 2016). For example, Lyon's famous light festival, the Fête des Lumières, was cancelled in 2015 and took place in a truncated form in 2016. As time passed, these events re-emerged, albeit with semi-militarization of festival sites. Creation of security infrastructures and body searches has become the norm. In Nice, for example, eighty-six people were killed and many more injured by a lorry deliberately zigzagging at high speeds through the crowds during the Bastille Day Parade in July 2016 (figure 9.4). As a result, the traditional carnival and procession route along the beachfront Promenade des Anglais is now fully fortified with partly retractable anti-terrorist barriers and surveillance equipment.

Similar circumstances and choices needed to be made in the USA. In April 2013, the detonation of two homemade anti-personnel bombs near the finishing line of the annual Boston Marathon killed three people and injured several hundred others. The immediate response was postponement of other events, either out of respect or from public safety considerations while the CONCLUSION



Figure 9.4. The memorial to the victims of the terrorist attack on Nice, 14 July 2016/ (*Photo*: John and Margaret Gold)

bombers were still on the run. The longer-term reaction was to prompt lasting security measures to protect subsequent stagings of this and similar events, with investment in surveillance infrastructure and intensive use of security personnel. It also led to profound soul-searching about the appropriate levels of protection to take for other large gatherings given the possibility of copycat attacks (Jenkins, 2013).

By and large, the abiding response has been that enhanced security is the preferred option rather than cancellations that might be seen as a curtailment of legitimate civic activity in the face of fear. Notably in October 2017, festival organizers in Nevada and neighbouring states chose to proceed with their events despite an attack on the Route 91 Harvest country music festival in Las Vegas that left fifty-eight dead and 422 wounded from gunfire with another 851 individuals sustaining other injuries (Castro, 2017). Regardless of whether acts targeted at civilian populations attending festivals persist, it is probable that enhanced levels of security involving technological measures (surveillance and scanning procedures) and addition of stewards to administer access and search regimes will be considered necessary for the foreseeable future. As a consequence, the

associated higher costs will remain prominent features in the balance sheet and indeed could affect the viability of some festivals.

A further serious but as yet unresolved question about the future of festivals arose in early 2020. This book comes to an end at a point when its subject matter faces its greatest challenge in contemporary times. The outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in China in November 2019 would lead to a global pandemic in which everyday activity and contacts were quickly curtailed. 'Social distancing' became the phrase used around the world to describe the necessary preventative action. The experts opined that it would be months or even years before things returned to normal. Arts festivals, carnivals and other public gatherings were quickly postponed or cancelled. At best, by dint of considerable ingenuity, they saw a fraction of their content presented online. Many festivals lost their entire annual income, creating immediate financial difficulties from which it is clear that some events will not recover. Yet what is certain is that festivals per se will return to their host cities. History shows them to be amongst the oldest of human activities. The desire to congregate and be festive has survived wars, pestilence, proscription and disease in the past and will do again in the future. They are, after all, an essential part of what it is to be human.

Notes

1. globalstreetart.com (2019) London Mural Festival 2020. Available at: https://www.londonmural festival.com/london-mural-festival-information, accessed 24 June 2020.

2. *ibid*.

3. See Uncultured Media (2020) A guide to the best mural festivals. Available at: https://streetsq. com/a-guide-to-the-best-mural-festivals/; Wayfaring Views (2020) *Your Guide to Great Global Street Art & Mural Festivals*, 2020 edition. Available at: https://wayfaringviews.com/street-art-mural-festivals/.

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Index

Abbado, Claudio 134, 179 access restrictions 10, 96, 202-205 accommodation, see hotels adventus 37, 49 Adam, Robert 1-2 aerial bombardment 128-129 amphitheatres 34, 37, 39, 40 Anschluss Österreichs 120, 123, 127, 128, 129, 130 antiquarianism 109 antisemitism 90, 107, 117, 120, 125-126, 127–128, 139, 171, 206 archaeology 15 architectural competition 75, 78, 131, 158 arena sports 37, 39, 45 armeggerie 41 Arne, Thomas 4 arrivals 37 art sales 14, 91 Ashley, Charles 167 asymmetric conflict 29, 270-271

attendance 5, 6, 12, 13, 21, 26, 27, 39, 40, 62, 76, 78, 82, 84, 87, 90, 91, 98, 103, 105, 120, 123, 126, 127, 137, 139, 143, 169, 173, 176, 181, 182, 191, 193, 195, 199, 200, 203, 215, 216, 226, 232, 234, 236, 248, 251, 252, 254, 255, 259, 260, 261, 266 austerity 153, 172, 218, 223 authenticity 55, 101, 244, 245, 267; myths of 13, 18 Avignon Festival 216–218, 267 award ceremonies 12, 81, 88, 89, 92-93, 142, 148, 150, 151, 157, 163, 231, 239 Bakhtin, Mikhail 53, 69 balls, commemorative 4, 6, 8, 43, 54,

55, 62, 143, 242, 253, 258 banquets, *see* feasting Baratta, Paolo 105 Bardolatry 2, 8, 9

Bartholomew Fair 45-47, 59 Basel 52, 103 Basque identity 19-20 Bayreuth 33, 64, 110, 112-114, 115, 117, 120, 126, 128, 130, 133, 168, 169 Belfast 256-257 benefactors, see sponsorship Bennett, Sir Hubert 158 Berlin 11, 86, 102, 113, 115, 118, 119, 140, 148, 206, 221, 227, 247 International Film Festival 11, 86, 142 Philharmonic Orchestra 130, 133, 134 Bezzi, Bartolomeo 77 Biarritz 147, 149, 150, 165 Biennales 30, 71-107, 211, 229-237, 238, 267-268 'Bilbao effect' 137 Bing, Rudolf 140, 166, 168-173, 175, 177, 206, 207 book festivals, see literature festivals Bordiga, Giovanni 77, 81 Boston 252, 253, 270-271 Boswell, James 6 Bottomley, Virginia 36 Boughton, Rutland 64-65 boycotts 88-89, 90 brandscaping 27 bread and circuses 39 British Council 103, 107, 168, 170 Brougham, Henry 144-146, 164 Brückwald, Otto 113 budgets, see funding Busch, Fritz 168, 206

Cannes 11, 30, 31, 86, 89, 120, 139, 141–165, 174, 267, 269 Cinema de la Plage 161 International Film Festival 11, 30, 31, 86, 89, 120, 139, 142, 143, 147–161, 267

Marché du Film 143, 156, 157, 161 venues 154-164 Village International 162 Walk of Fame 160-161 cannonades 4 carnival 11, 16, 25, 29, 31, 34, 36, 42, 49-57, 70, 97-98, 240-263; etymology 49 carnivalesque 17, 19, 31, 54, 55, 238, 242, 246-263 Carrara, International Sculpture Biennale 231, 235 casinos 54, 104, 145, 146, 147, 150, 151, 154, 156, 158, 159, 165 Catalonia 27 censorship 82, 87 charivari 17 Cheltenham Literature Festival 209-210, 223-225, 267 Chicago 113 chivalry 44 choir societies 63 Christie, John 168 cine clubs 85, 174 cinemas 12, 14, 33, 88, 89, 90-91, 104, 105, 107, 129, 148, 154-164 Clarke, Rev. Edward Daniel, 8 climatotherapy 144 Colman, George 7 Cologne 25, 53, 70 colonialism 55-57, 89, 244-246 commercialism 12, 13, 25, 31, 55, 79, 91, 92, 101, 103, 156–164, 245-246, 261 commodification 9, 23, 27 convention centres 105, 215 coronavirus [COVID-19] 32, 33, 136, 206, 272 corruption 28, 69, 127 cosmopolitanism 24, 42, 118, 126, 127, 132, 139, 144, 152, 228, 262 court pageantry 47-49

cultural and creative sector 14, 27, 33, 101, 104 cultural politics 19, 20, 55, 221, 218, 263 cultural quarters 27, 131, 202 cultural tourism 2, 26, 34, 40, 68, 87, 123, 226, 268; defined 26 culture 11, 13, 14, 15-21, 22, 24, 27, 29, 30, 33, 56–58, 61, 63, 65, 69, 81, 83, 85, 97, 98, 108–109, 118, 127, 134, 149, 166, 172, 177, 188, 191, 194, 197, 201, 202, 205, 206, 210, 211, 218, 221, 222, 227, 233, 237, 238, 245, 246, 253, 254, 267 curatorship 93, 94, 98-99, 100, 103, 107, 109, 231, 232-233, 234, 235 Damisch, Heinrich 116-117 dance festivals 11, 72, 73, 93, 134, 162, 172, 186, 193, 212, 218, 221, 248 Darmstadt, 113 Debord, Guy 23 De Feo, Luciano 86-87, 88 deindustrialization 14, 95, 268 denazification 129-230 diffusion S-curve 268, 269 documenta (Kassel) 103, 232-233, 235 dress codes 138-139 Dublin 254-255 Durkheim, Émile 16–17 Ebert, Carl 168, 206 economic impact of festivals 7, 26-29, 39-40, 49, 59, 87, 138, 143, 172, 194, 195, 196, 199, 201 Edinburgh 25, 30-31, 86, 137, 166-208, 223, 226, 228, 267-268 Beltane 191 Comedy Festival 185–186 Fringe 167, 175-176, 181-186, 194.223

Hogmanay 193 International Book Festival 191, 226 International Festival 167, 172-182, 186, 194, 267 International Film Festival 86, 174-175, 186 International Folk Festival 188 International Harp Festival 188 International Jazz and Blues Festival 188 International Storytelling Festival 191-192 International Television Festival 188 Military Tattoo 175, 194, 195 People's Festival 167, 176-177, 186-188 Science Festival 192–193 similarities to Salzburg 170 street performers 186 venues, 178-181; deficiencies of 178-181 Elsinore, Denmark 9 entries 48-49 environmental damage 28, 203-204 Erlanger, Philippe 148, 149, 151 ethnicity 24, 56, 104, 221, 222, 247, 248 fairs 4, 5, 8, 9, 45-47, 59, 70, 71, 223,

253, 266 Falconer, Sir John 166, 171, 174 fan culture 11, 13 Favre Le Bret, Robert 152–153, 164 Fascism 81–90, 91, 125–128 Austria 125–128 Germany 89–90, 125–128 Italy 81–90, 91, 148–149 feasting 8, 15, 16, 36, 37, 39, 41, 42, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 51, 53, 54. 58, 60, 69, 116, 253 Fellner and Helmar 114–115, 116

INDEX

festival calendars 9, 16, 18, 30, 36, 37-38, 41, 42, 55, 88, 135-136, 162, 188, 193–194, 197, 212, 228, 243, 253, 254, 259, 264, 267 festival funding, see funding festivalization 10, 13-15, 23-24, 74, 83-90, 95-98, 133-136, 143, 161-164, 174–175, 186–194, 195, 205, 267-268, 269; defined 13-15 festivals ambulatory 22 antiquity, in 16, 22, 30, 31, 36-39, 50-51,69 architecture 11, 72, 93-95 as cultural diplomacy 4, 36, 42, 43, 47, 48, 49, 83 at sea 209-210 ballet 11, 167, 172, 178 biennials, see Biennales circus 11, 40 comedy 11, 185, 186, 199, 207 comics 11 dance, see dance festivals defined 9, 10-11, 17-18 economic aspects, see economic impact of festivals etymology 16 film, see film festivals fire 11 folk 9, 11, 30, 65-66 food and drink 9, 10, 11 gaming 11, 147 haute couture 11, 143 ice and snow 11 jazz, see jazz festivals lanterns 11 literature, see literature festivals mediaeval 36, 40 motoring 9, 11 murals 11, 264-266 music, see music festivals neighbourhood 24 nuit blanche 11

poetry, see poetry festivals programmes of 9, 13, 14, 72, 93, 97 proliferation 31, 68, 209-239 re-enactments 11, 61 revolutionary 22-23, 60 science and engineering 11, 192-193, 195, 205, 212, 218, 227, 228 sculpture 11, 212, 231 suppression of 57-61 street art 11, 266-267 street performance 11, 186-187 television 11, 157, 163, 165, 188, 191 theatre, see theatre festivals world music 11, 24 film distribution 12, 13, 25, 86, 142, 150 film festivals 9, 11-13, 25, 33, 72, 73, 83, 85-90, 142, 143-165, 174-175, 228 audience model 13, 142 business model 12-13, 88, 142, 143-165 documentary 11, 86, 107, 148, 174-175 science fiction 11, 228 filmmaking 25, 86, 88, 141, 142, 147, 150, 163, 175 film tourism 137 financial failures 26-28, 73, 83-84, 174, 177, 187, 194 fireworks 3, 4, 6, 8, 63, 162, 204 Florence 41, 47, 48, 53, 78, 106, 179 Flower, Edward Charles 8 Folkestone Triennial 235-237, 239 foundation myths 21, 39, 71 Fradeletto, Antonio 77, 81 fringe events 10, 20-21, 101, 138, 167, 175-176, 181-186, 205-206, 216, 218, 222 funding 10, 12, 25-27, 30-31, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 86, 93, 97, 102, 103, 113, 123, 127, 128, 130, 136, 146, 153, 167, 170, 171, 174, 177, 178,

179, 188, 192, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 201, 206, 207, 213, 215, 217, 219, 220, 227, 228, 231, 234, 236, 252, 257, 269 Fürtwangler, Wilhelm 124, 127, 128, 129, 130 Futurism 82 gambling 54, 104, 145, 146, 147, 150, 151, 154, 156, 158, 159, 165 games 22, 36, 40, 44 Garrick, David 1-8, 32 Gay Pride parades, see Pride Parades Gehmacher, Friedrich 116, 117 Giudice, Brenno del 83 Glasgow 167, 169, 171, 175, 192, 202, 205, 230 Glastonbury 65 Glyndebourne 168-171, 177, 178, 206, 207 Goebbels, Joseph 90, 127, 128 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von 51, 125, 126 Goldoni, Carlo 85 Grand Tour 41-42, 54, 72 Gregotti, Vittorio 93-95 Grierson, John, 174 Guggenheim Foundation 137 gymnastic organisations 63 Halloween 9 Hampton-upon Thames 1, 2 hastiludes 44 Harvey Wood, Harry 168, 170-171 Hay Festival 226-227

Herder, Johann Gottfried von 65

historiography 13, 67-68, 71, 108-

Hofmannsthal, Hugo von 118, 120,

Holzmeister, Clemens 124, 125, 131,

hieroglyphics 15

hivernants 144, 145

124, 129, 140

132

109, 117, 267-268

105, 107, 113, 123, 135, 138, 143, 149, 145–146, 151–152, 157, 162, 166, 169–170, 172 identity 11, 14-15, 19, 20, 24, 27, 29, 31, 36, 56, 57, 61, 62, 64, 65, 66, 98, 102, 104, 109, 110, 118, 134, 151, 172, 182, 202, 205, 219, 228, 237, 243-263, 267 ideology 14, 22, 30, 31, 36, 39, 62, 64, 86, 89, 90, 91, 120, 129, 142, 148, 149, 177, 221, 238, 247, 256 impact studies 25, 27, 138, 195, 196, 197-199, 201-202 inclusivity 13, 19, 52, 61, 67, 82, 96, 120, 138, 197, 203, 212, 218, 222, 254, 256, 257, 263, 268 industrialization 58, 59, 66 infrastructure 12, 29, 54, 83, 85, 128, 143, 145, 146, 157, 161, 167, 198, 199, 215, 235, 241, 248, 269, 271 Internationale Filmkammer 148 internationalism 31, 66-67, 149, 152, 220, 227 internationality 9, 13, 22, 74, 85, 86-87 invented tradition 18, 62, 64 jazz festivals 11, 134, 135, 188, 195, 212, 218 'Jedermann' 118, 119, 120–122, 127 Johnson, Samuel 3 Jones, Claudia 250 Jubilees 1-7, 32 Karajan, Herbert von 129, 130, 131, 133.134 Karlovy Vary 86 knightings 48 Krauss, Clemens 85, 129

hotels 26, 28, 65, 87, 88, 101, 105,

Laborca, Mario 84 Laslett, Rhaune 250

INDEX

legacy, event 22 Liber Polypticus 50-51 light festivals 211-212 literature festivals 9, 10, 11, 31, 134, 136, 188, 191, 192, 195, 203, 209-210, 211, 221, 223-238 Locarno 11, 86, 87 London 1 et seq., 8, 9, 44-46, 59, 61, 66, 68, 130, 158, 169–170, 173, 176, 177, 178, 202, 220-221, 228, 235, 249-252, 254, 264-265 Lualdi, Adriano 84 Ludwig II, Bavaria 113 Lumière, Louis 150, 151 luxury branding 138, 162-163, 210 magnificence, principle of 47 Mahler, Gustav 115, 140 manifestivals 19 Mardi Gras, see carnival Maraini, Antonio 81, 82, 83, 86, 87 marketing 10, 12, 27, 34, 45, 66, 82, 108, 182, 184, 195, 197, 199, 232, 242, 246, 262 masquerades 4, 8, 30, 54, 56, 245, 246, 248, 250, 251 Meana, Carlo Ripa di 93 media 11, 15, 18, 23, 25, 30, 32, 36, 74, 130, 143, 162, 182, 201, 209, 225, 227, 228, 238, 246, 267, 269, 270 media events 18 mega-events 22 memorial services 8, 112 Menotti, Gian Carlo 212 merchandizing 26, 143, 268 Midsummer Watch 44 Milan Triennial 93, 229 Millennium Dome 36 modernism 81, 82, 84-85 architecture 83, 118 art 81, 82 music 84-85

Montreal 57, 199, 221, 261, 264, 265 mop fairs 9, 32, 33 moral regimes 28, 30, 36, 47, 57-61 Mozart, Constanze 112 Mozart, Karl Thomas 112 Mozart, Leopold 110-111 Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus 109, 110-113, 114 et seg, 120, 126-129, 132, 133-136 Mozarteum 112, 116, 120, 123, 134 multiplier effects 26 multiculturalism 9, 222-223, 250, 252, 254 Munich 77, 80, 113, 128, 137, 169, 232, 270 museums 103, 108-109, 131, 132, 137, 140, 166, 173, 189, 193, 230-231, 232-233, 234 music festivals 9, 10, 14, 24, 25-26, 30, 34, 36, 61–62, 68, 70, 72, 73, 83, 84-85, 87, 122-123, 128, 135, 167, 180, 200, 210, 238, 271 Mussolini, Benito 54, 81, 88, 89, 90, 142, 148 mystery plays 65, 115, 117, 118 narratives 39, 43, 62, 67, 69, 108-109, 117, 141, 188, 243; see also historiography national exhibitions 75 nationalism 19-20, 59, 62-64, 65, 66, 70, 221 national pavilions 74, 79-80, 81, 82-83, 90, 92, 97, 99–100, 102–103, 104, 106 national salons 74 naumachiae 37 New Orleans 52, 56, 234, 240–243, 258 New York 83, 102, 137, 148, 177, 202, 209, 218, 231, 234, 247-249, 252, 253, 257, 258-259, 260 Niagara-on-the-Lake 219-220

INDEX

Nice 28, 54–55, 158, 164, 165, 270–271 Notting Hill Carnival 249–252 Novello, Vincent 112

Oberammergau 64 Olympic Games 22 online streaming 18 operas 54, 55, 60, 65, 85, 103, 109, 111, 112, 113–115, 117, 120, 123, 127 et seq., 134, 136, 138-139, 152, 161-162, 168-169, 177-180, 206, 212, 215 overcrowding 10, 28, 105, 106, 206 Oxford 169, 170 pageants 6, 33, 42, 61 Pallucchini, Rodolfo 91 parades, see processions Paris Biennale 232 participation 12, 13, 18, 23, 24, 26, 36, 44, 49, 56–57, 66, 78, 89–90, 92, 98, 102, 104, 106, 179, 182, 205, 236, 242, 246, 253, 261, 263 permanent art collections 81, 107, 193, 231, 236 pilgrimage 8, 13, 21, 40, 45-46, 69, 105, 106, 113, 117 Pica, Vittorio 81, 82 Picaud, Raymond 156 place 10, 21-24 place branding 27, 68, 197, 205, 268 placelessness 9, 21 place marketing 27, 34 place promotion 27, 34, 57, 68, 75, 108-109, 144, 150, 152, 242, 245, 256, 262, 268 Plato 16 pleasure gardens 4, 5 Poelzig, Hans 118 poetry festivals 9, 11, 19-20, 73, 83, 84, 212, 225, 238, 239 policing 63, 91, 92, 243, 247, 250, 251, 252, 258, 263

Pons, Georges 217 Portoghesi, Paolo 94–96 postindustrialism 14, 268 postmodernism 95 Prade, Georges 149 preindustrial cities 30, 41 previews 104 Pride Parades 25, 31, 257-262 prizes 78, 81, 82, 88, 89, 142, 148, 150, 151, 157, 165, 231, 239, 246 processions 3, 4, 8, 17, 21, 30, 36, 38, 41, 42, 54, 56, 61, 63, 153, 243, 244 progresses 47 propaganda 42, 60, 85-86, 89, 142, 148, 177 protestivals 19 public disorder 17, 18, 31, 44, 49-50, 52, 53, 59, 248 public houses 5, 182, 185, 254 public outrage, see moral regimes public space, encroachment on 32, 36, 269-270 use of 36, 48-49, 51-52, 60, 105, 119-120, 266-267 punishment, spectacle of 15, 39, 45 Quagliata, Luigi 88 receptions, celebrity 12, 54, 88, 143, 150, 151, 153 red carpet 160-161 regionalism 79 Rehrl, Franz 123, 127, 131 Reinhardt, Max 85, 115-120, 122, 124, 125, 127 resistance to festivals, local 10, 137, 202-205, 270 revels 40, 41 revolutionary festivals 22, 59-61 Richter, Hans 112, 114 Rio de Janeiro 56, 245–246, 252 ritual, defined 19 Roller 117, 118, 120

Romanticism 8, 109 Rome 37, 47-48, 51, 53, 75, 82, 86 rotundas 5, 6, 8, 10, 32 Roubiliac, Louis-François 1 Rousseau, Jean Jacques 60 Rubys, Claude de 17 Ruhrfestspiele (Recklinghausen) 215, 267 Ruskin, John 54 sacred places 13, 21, 41 saint's days 41, 42, 58 Salzburg 30, 31, 85, 108–140, 168, 169, 170, 172, 205, 267 Easter Festival 133-134 Festspiele 30, 31, 109, 118-140, 267 International Chamber Music Festival 122-123 Jazz Festival 134 Mozart Festival 134 Prince-Archbishops 108, 109, 110, 112, 115 venues 114-120, 124-125, 128, 130-133.138 Whitsun Festival 133, 134 samba 246 San Antonio 25 San Sebastian 11, 87 São Paolo Biennale 229-231 Schalk, Franz 115, 117, 118, 120 Scottishness 173, 175, 178, 191, 194, 199, 206 secessionist salons 74 sectarianism 254-256 security 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 44, 48, 143, 204, 226, 247, 252, 270, 271-272 security personnel 29 sedan chairs 5 Selvatico, Riccardo 77 Shakespeare, William 1-9, 32, 33, 85, 112, 213, 221 Shakespeare Birthplace Trust 9

Shakespeare Club 8 Shakespeare festivals 213, 218–219 Shakespeare Memorial Theatre 8-9 sharpshooting clubs 63 Shaw, George Bernard 2, 213, 219-220 social costs 26 social distancing 33, 272 social exclusiveness 19, 20, 24, 37, 67, 87, 137–138, 143, 144, 145, 147, 154, 160, 161, 162–164, 212, 242, 252, 256, 270 social order 18-19, 43-44, 45 inversion of 18, 51, 53 social memory 48 social status 38, 41, 44, 58, 61, 109, 143 'Sound of Music' 137 souvenirs 2, 26, 119, 143, 268 spectacle 3-4, 7, 20, 22-24, 34, 42, 43, 47, 48, 85, 118, 160, 223, 244, 266 Spoleto festivals 28, 212 Charleston 28, 212 Melbourne 212 Spoleto 212 sponsorship 5, 8, 12, 25, 27, 35, 38, 68, 78, 81, 88, 109, 117, 123, 136, 142, 144, 147, 148, 169, 188, 191, 193, 209, 217, 224, 226, 227, 229, 234, 247, 252, 260, 261 staffing 12, 22, 92, 123, 127 permanent 12, 22 volunteers 12 statistics, problems of 25-27, 91, 211-212 statues, commemorative 2, 3 St. Patrick's Day parades 31, 252-257 Stratford-upon-Avon 1–11, 32, 112; Jubilees 1-8, 10, 16 Strauss, Richard 115, 117, 118, 123, 128, 129, 140 student protests 91-92, 157 subscription funding 63, 131, 134, 181 Sydney 260-262

INDEX

terrorism 29, 270-272 theatre festivals 9, 11, 36, 72, 212-223, 225, 233, 237, 238, 267 theatres 1, 6-8, 32, 38-39, 40, 112-118, 129, 132, 133, 172, 211, 212-223, 225, 237, 238 ticket sales 25, 123, 169, 191, 215, 216, 217 Torres, Dullio 83 Toscanini, Arturo 126, 127, 140 tourism 2, 10, 26, 31, 80-81, 87, 105, 108, 109, 116, 118, 123, 126, 136, 137, 138, 145, 149, 152, 162, 172, 193, 195, 196, 197, 202, 205, 206, 220, 226, 232, 233, 234, 235, 242, 244, 246, 248, 254, 255, 256, 259, 261, 262, 266, 268 tournaments 41, 44, 48 transgression, see public disorder transparencies 4 Trevisanato, Enrico 78 Trinidad and Tobago 31, 57, 244, 245, 247-248, 251 triumphs 37 turnpikes 5 universalism 9 urban beautification 39 urban origins 21, 36-37 urban regeneration 95-97, 106, 109, 186, 234–237, 241–242

vandalism 10, 265 Venice 4, 30, 42–43, 49, 51, 54, 71– 107, 120, 137, 142, 148, 148, 150, 152–154, 164, 174, 212–213, 229, 267–268, 269 Arsenale 93, 95–97, 100, 102, 104 Biennale 30, 71–107, 120, 229, 267 Caffè Florian, meeting at 72, 73, 77, 81, 106

Carnevale 42, 51, 54, 97-98 collateral events 100-101 education programme 104 Film Festival 30, 72, 83, 85-90, 104-105, 142, 148, 148, 150, 152-154, 164, 174 Giardini 73, 75-76, 78, 83, 88, 90, 93, 95, 97, 100, 102-103, 104 International Festival of Contemporary Dance 72, 93,97 International Festival of Contemporary Music 73, 84-85 International Kids' Carnival 73,97 International Theatre Festival 72, 84, 85, 212-213 Lido 87-91, 92, 104 Poetry Festival 73, 83-84 Sposalizio del Mare 42-43 Venetianization 95-98, 104 Victor, Benjamin 6 Vienna 111, 112, 115, 120, 122-123, 124 et seq., 139 Opera 124, 127, 129 Philharmonic Orchestra 112, 120, 127, 128, 129, 130, 171 vigils 41 Vilar, Jean 216 visitors, see attendance Vitruvius 37 Volpi, Giuseppe 82, 87, 88 Wagner, Richard 113-114, 124, 127, 132, 133, 134 wakes, 21 Walpole, Horace 4 Walter, Bruno 126, 127, 129, 140, 171, 206 West Indian American Day Carnival (New York) 247-249, 252

Whig interpretations of history 67–68 Wilkinson, George 224 World's Fairs 22, 66, 74–75, 79, 85, 93

Zay, Jean 149, 150