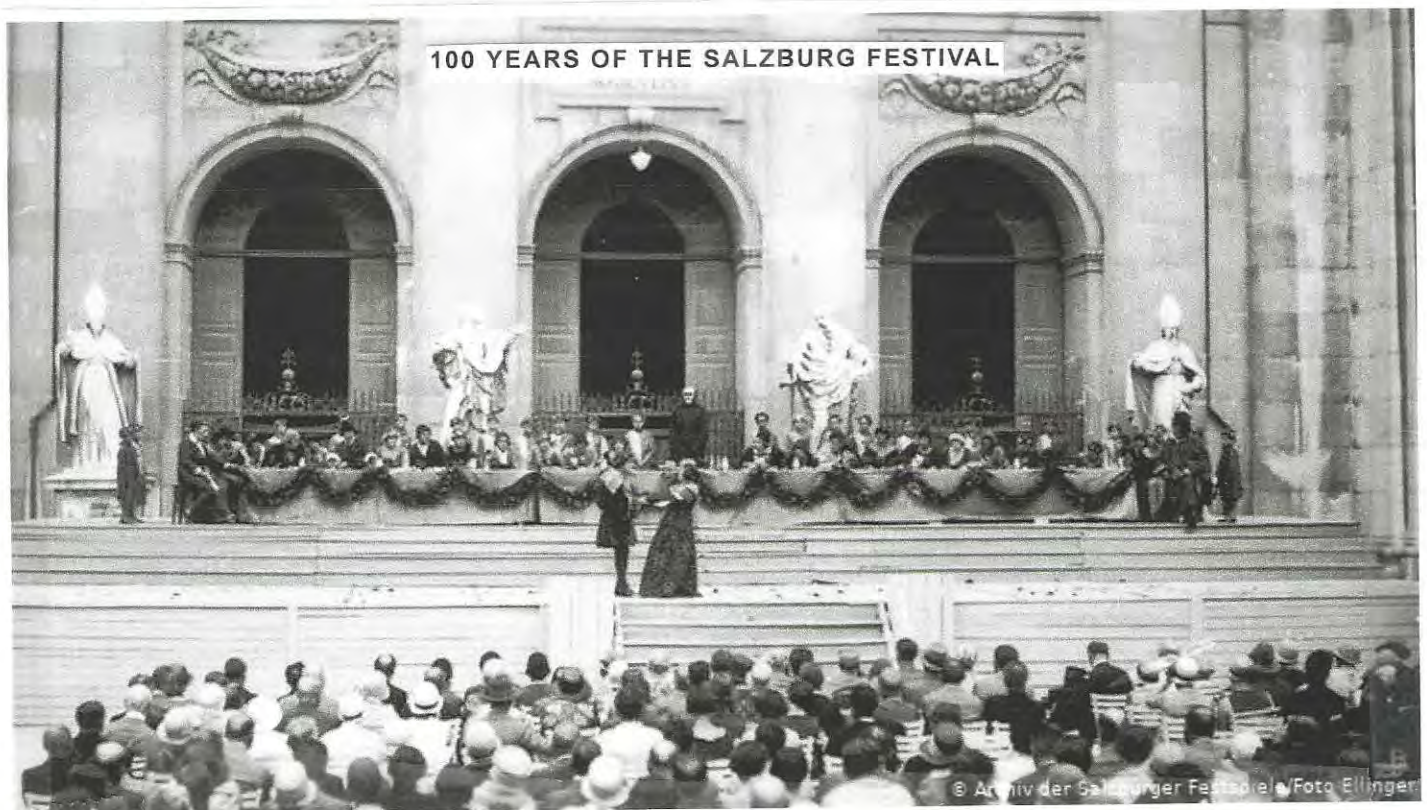


“Bei uns ist immer was los!”

## Salzburger Festspiele / Salzburg Festival (held for 5 weeks starting, in late July)

# How the Salzburg Festival came to Salzburg 100 years ago

During World War I, a poet, a composer and a director had a common dream — and out of it came what was to become arguably the world's most prestigious arts festival.



Can culture create identity, unite the peoples, fill humanistic ideals with content? Can it strengthen the European idea? Those are the questions people from the culture scene and politicians alike ponder in our turbulent era, at a time when what has long been taken for granted seems to be waning and people speak of a loss of values. As illustrated by the [Salzburg Festival](#), the answer is an emphatic "yes."

### World War, loss of values, contemplation

The situation was not all that different in 1917, about a century ago — but for the fact that Europe was at war at the time. In the midst of that calamity, three men dreamed of a cosmopolitan Europe and a festival that would bring peace.

Their names were Hugo von Hofmannsthal, [Richard Strauss](#) and Max Reinhardt. Hofmannsthal was a much-celebrated poet, writer and librettist who had a great influence on his generation. Strauss was the most famous composer of his time and Reinhardt the foremost director and impresario.

The vision was shared by opera director Franz Schalk and stage designer Alfred Roller, who also participated in establishing what was to be known as the Salzburg Festival.