

2018 Salzburg Easter School – PhD-Forum

in the context of the Salzburg Easter Festival 2018

19-23 March 2018, Salzburg University

The Changing Aesthetic of Innovation

“The Easter School was a very rewarding and inspiring experience, both on an intellectual and on a personal level. And all that with the added bonus of beautiful Salzburg!” – “an exhilarating week combining academia and culture” – “I enjoyed the impressive variety of topics and the fact that the participants came from very different backgrounds. I also liked that people were at different stages in their work” – “a wonderful occasion to discuss academic topics from a range of different perspectives, and seeing the rehearsal was a real treat!” – “fruitful discussions, very friendly atmosphere and perfectly well organized event”

— Participant testimonies

In the context of the 2018 Salzburg Easter Festival production of Giacomo Puccini’s *Tosca*, the Salzburg Easter School (SEAS) offers PhD students, advanced MA students and young artists an international transdisciplinary forum dedicated to fostering dialogue between the theory and practice of art. SEAS offers workshops in festival management, seminars with Europe’s creative and theatrical elite, and exclusive access to Salzburg’s Cultural Institutions and the production’s dress rehearsal. Participants will have the opportunity to present their own research in poster and oral contributions. Together we will discuss and debate the cultural and aesthetic significance of **innovation in the arts** across academic and artistic disciplines.

The 2018 Easter Festival production of *Tosca* offers an outstanding opportunity to consider the significance and dimensions of innovation in the theatrical performance in both theory and practice. From the breach of taboo which the suicide of the opera’s eponymous heroine constitutes on the diegetic level to the divided reaction by critics, many of whom opposing the opera’s visceral representations, *Tosca* has prompted controversy since its premiere at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome in January 1900. Arguably, in not conforming to the conventions of ‘grand opera’, *Tosca* initially had an irritating effect on initial audiences. Puccini’s innovative approach to opera was deemed estranging. Still, the opera was highly successful: running for 20 evenings to a packed house in Rome. *Tosca* then continued to take audiences by storm at La Scala in March; in Buenos Aires in June; and at Covent Garden in July the same year. Thus, *Tosca* serves as a prime example of how innovation functions as a polarising principle in art. Focusing on both *Tosca*’s theatrical aesthetics and its meta- and para-theatrical histories, the 2018 Salzburg Easter School offers participants a unique forum to discuss meanings and implications of innovation: How does innovation in the arts oscillate between provoking outrage and ovations? How do outrage and success correlate? How does this year’s production of *Tosca* engage with this dynamic, given the opera’s long history of success? How can a contemporary production recreate the overwhelming effects of the opera’s initial reception? How can a work of art so familiar like *Tosca* still be novel and fresh more than a century after its premiere? And what are the parameters of innovation in our own time?



TOP (L-R): Heinrich Schmidinger, President of Salzburg University © Eva Maria Griese / PhD-Students of the inaugural Salzburg Easter School in 2014 / Manfred Trojahn, Peter Ruzicka, Intendant of the Salzburg Easter Festival, Sabine Coelsch-Foisner © Brigitte Haid / Florentine Klepper, Martina Segna, Anna Sofie Tuma © Eva Maria Griese
 BOTTOM (L-R): Philipp Stözl, Paolo Bressan © Brigitte Haid / *Die Walküre*, Salzburg Easter Festival 2017 © Forster / 2014 Salzburg Easter School / Sabine Coelsch-Foisner, Programme Leader © Eva Maria Griese

The Salzburg Easter School is held on the premises of Salzburg University in cooperation with the prestigious Salzburg Easter Festival and aims to foster dialogue between the theory and practice of art. The programme combines PhD-presentations, seminars, workshops in festival management and discussions offered by Europe's cultural elite, including Peter Ruzicka (composer and artistic director of the Salzburg Easter Festival). To ensure fruitful discussions and a maximum benefit, participants are expected to study *Tosca* and read selected critical texts sent to them upon acceptance of their proposals.

We welcome proposals focusing on

- innovation as a critical category (generic, thematic and cognitive)
- Puccini's *Tosca* in the contexts of its reception, operatic history and production histories
- innovation in set, costume, lighting, stage design and choreography (both nineteenth century and contemporary)

Attendees of SEAS will also have the opportunity to enjoy a guided tour of the Autograph Collection of the Internationale Stiftung Mozarteum and Residenzgalerie Salzburg, a cultural tour of the city, and exclusive access to the Salzburg Easter Festival's cultural fringe, including behind-the-scenes insights into the production with access to a dress rehearsal of the opera production. Participants will receive a certificate and a copy of their poster. The total cost amounts to €300, which includes sessions and cultural fringe, coffee breaks and daily lunch as well as a SEAS dinner. Accommodation with breakfast can be arranged by the organisers in Salzburg's historic city centre for €55 per night in a double room. In individual cases it may be possible to offer some support, but participants are requested to seek funding from their home institutions.

If you are interested in presenting a poster and paper at the 2018 Salzburg Easter School, please submit your proposal (500 words), as well as a CV and letter of motivation (together, 500 words), to Prof. S. Coelsch-Foisner at ATELIER_GESPRAECH@sbg.ac.at by **10 December 2017**. Please note that participation is limited to 20 participants. The decision on acceptance will be communicated by mid-January.

Organised by:
PLUS Kultur/Atelier Gespräche®
 University of Salzburg, Unipark
 Erzabt-Klotz-Str. 1
 5020 Salzburg, Austria

<http://www.sbg-plus-kultur.at>
<http://kulturelle-dynamiken.sbg.ac.at/>

DSP Kolleg Cultural Production Dynamics:
<https://www.uni-salzburg.at/index.php?id=206778>