

The History of the Avignon Festival

The Avignon Festival is France's oldest existing and most famous, founded in 1947 by Jean Vilar.

1947 Jean Vilar가 가

Jean Vilar was invited to present one of his productions - Murder in the Cathedral by T.S. Eliot, that had already won acclaim in Paris - at the same time as a modern painting exhibition in the Palais des Papes (the Popes' Palace), organised by art critic and collector, Christian Zervos, and by the poet, Rene Char.

Jean Vilar T.S.Eliot
“ ” , 가
가 Christian Zervos Rene Char

Used to working on a small stage, Vilar initially refused the offer because he felt the Cour d'Honneur in the Popes' Palace was too vast, and "shapeless".

Vilar “ ” ,

Instead, he suggested putting on three other plays as new productions - Shakespeare's Richard II, one of the Bard's plays that was little known at the time in France; Paul Claudel's Tobie et Sara, and Maurice Clavel's second play, La Terrasse de Midi (The Midday Terrace).

Shakespeare 2 Paul Claudel Bard Tobie Sara,
, Maurice Clavel

The very first Avignon Festival in September 1947 set the scene as a showcase for unknown work and modern scripts.

1947 9

There are three distinct stages in the evolution of the Avignon festival.

1. 1947-1964 : Vilar at Centre Stage at the Palais des Papes

1. 1947-1964 :

Vilar

For 17 years, the Festival reflected the work of one man, one team, one location and thus was the embodiment of one spirit.

17

Jean Vilar's aim was to attract a young audience, a captivated and fresh audience, through a type of theatre that was different from what could be seen in Paris at that time.

Jean Vilar

He wanted to "renew theatre and collective forms of art by providing a more open space (...) to give a breath of fresh air to an art form that's stifling in waiting rooms, in cellars, in salons; to reconcile architecture with dramatic poetry."

Jean Vilar developed an attachment to the troupe of actors who performed every July before a growing and devoted audience.

Jean Vilar

7

가

Gerard Philippe - already a well-known screen actor by that time - became the festival symbol after playing title roles in Corneille's Le Cid and Kleist's Prince de Hombourg.

Gerard Philippe Corneille
"Le Cid" Kleist "De Hombourg"

The Festival spearheaded a rebirth of French theatre.

It served as a guiding light and encouraged other theatrical experiments led by "pioneers" of decentralization such as Jean Daste in Saint Etienne, Maurice Sarrazin in Toulouse, Hubert Grignoux in Rennes or Andre Clave in Strasbourg.

Saint Etienne Jean Daste Toulouse
Maurice Sarrazin, Rennes Hubert Grignoux, Strasbourg
Andre Clave " "

The theatre was given a new lease of life thanks to the work of directors sent by the state on missions to places then considered as cultural deserts.

가

Vilar did not set up a permanent dramatic arts centre in Avignon, instead he was appointed director of one of the larger theatres in Paris, Chaillot.

Vilar Avignon

Chaillot

He renamed it the Theatre national populaire.

The Avignon Festival, the TNP and the young actors became indissociable.

TNP,

The actors at the TNP included Gerard Philipe, Maria Casares, Charles Denner, Monique Chaumette, Jean-Pierre Darras, Jeanne Moreau, Daniel Sorano, Georges Wilson, Christiane Minazzoli, Michel Bouquet, Silvia Monfort and Philippe Noiret.

TNP

Many of them went on to become famous movie or television stars.

가

가

Jean Vilar took on the roles of actor, stage director and directed the institution.

Jean Vilar

Born in Sete in 1912, he trained under Charles Dullin at the Theatre de l'Atelier in Paris and his sole mission was to make theatre a public service.

1912 Sete

de l'Atelier

Charles Dullin

At Avignon he presented a series of memorable plays such as Lorenzaccio, Dom Juan, The Marriage of Figaro, Mother Courage and La Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu.

“Lorenzaccio,” “Dom Juan”, “ 가

”, “ ” “ ”

Until 1964, the TNP and the Avignon Festival had only one "boss" who relied on the work of cultural militancy, a legacy of the post-war spirit, to attract a broad public.

1964 TNP “ ”
가

Every summer, at the Palais des Papes, a cultural "liturgy", a ritual a sort of "communion" took place.

“ ”가

2. 1964-1979 : The Festival Branches Out

2. 1964-1979 :

Jean Vilar was no doubt the first one to realise that this ritual was likely to change its routine.

Jean Vilar가

Other theatre personalities were making their names in France.

가

So finally, wearied by the numerous and burdensome responsibilities he had accumulated, the director of the TNP left Chaillot in 1963, to devote his time to the Avignon Festival that he challenged constantly.

TNP 1963 Chaillot 가

Vilar deliberately dispensed with the ceremonious position attributed to the performances of the TNP, and opened up channels within the Festival for different artistic disciplines : dance, cinema and music, and gave other stage directors a chance as early as 1966, like Roger Planchon or Maurice Bejart with his "Twentieth Century Ballet".

Vilar TNP 가
, , : , 1996 Roger
Planchon "20 " Maurice Bejart

This move established the Avignon Festival also as one of the earliest dance festivals in France.

가 . 가

From that time, the Festival, with its newly acquired openness, became more difficult to manage.

The younger generation at the time were witness to this, and in 1968, Jean Vilar was in the eye of the storm.

Vilar , 1968 Jean

The Festival was not spared from the effects of the student revolts in May 1968, to the point where its founding father was called into question.

1968 5

Confusion reigned and, Jean Vilar, who had always been so open in communicating with young people, suffered to a point from which he never recovered.

Jean

Vilar 가

He passed away in 1971, after a heart attack.

1971

Paul Puaux, his assistant was however, with his years of experience at the Festival, well-placed to continue Vilar's work.

, Paul Puaux가
Vilar

In the seventies, the main courtyard was reserved for the heirs of Vilar's TNP : Georges Wilson, Antoine Bourseiller, Marcel Marechal, Gabriel Garran, Guy Retore, Benno Besson and Otomar Krejca.

70 Vilar TNP

More venues sprang up in cloisters and chapels that became new grounds breaking with Vilar's aesthetic.

Vilar 가

(e.g. Bob Wilson's Einstein on the Beach, Mephisto by Ariane Mnouchkine, La Conference des Oiseaux by Peter Brook and Les Molières par Antoine Vitez's Molière plays)

Bob Wilson “ ”, Ariane Mnouchkine
“ ”, Peter Brook “ ”, Antoine Vitez
)

where younger stage directors ventured into a theatrical world of discovery with a new sense of theatrical space for contemporary plays(e.g. Theatre Ouvert or Open Theatre directed by Lucien Attoun).

(Lucien

Attoun
)

Ouvert

At the same time, fringe theatre (known as the "off") started up at Avignon, giving various companies desired and desirable exposure at the Festival.

(“ ”)

Although they may not have been selected by the Festival committee to perform, they wanted to be a part of what had become the major summer event for theatre and to rub shoulders with the important players of the theatre world and the media, and to present their work to theatre-lovers.

가

가

3. 1980-1996 : Avignon, Home to all Forms of Theatre

3. 1980-1996 :

1980 was a turning point for the Avignon Festival.

1980

It could no longer rely on the theatrical institution to perform the previews of its productions.

The Festival received no state subsidies, and continued to be run by the municipality.

The event needed to become professional and it required modernising in order to appeal to a new generation of directors and actors.

가

Paul Puaux decided in 1979 to ensure that Jean Vilar's achievement would be remembered and he established the Maison Jean Vilar.

Paul Puaux 1979 Jene Vilar
Jene Vilar

He also chose this moment to let a younger administrator take the helm:

가
:

Bernard Faivre d'Arcier had for five years already proved his commitment to Puaux' aims.

Bernard Faivre d'Arcier 5 Puaux

The Festival secured its administrative independence by way of an autonomous legal structure.

The state took up a seat on the Festival board and over the years, the Ministry of Culture became the principal donor of public funds.

가
가

An team was build up to modernise Festival management and to keep abreast of increasingly sophisticated technical

requirements.

The main courtyard's facilities were adapted in 1982 to house Arian Mnouchkine's company, Le Theatre du Soleil.

1982 Arian Mnouchkine “

”

A new generation of theatrical and dance performers entered the limelight with directors and choreographers like Daniel Mesguish, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Georges Lavaudant, Jean-Claude Gallotta and Bausch.

Daniel Mesguish

Jean-Pierre Vincent, Georges Lavaudant, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Bausch 가

In 1985, Alain Crombecque, the former director of the Autumn Festival, took over the Avignon Festival, to remain for eight years.

1985 가 Alain Crombecque가
8

To the confidence bestowed in Crombecque's theatrical generation, he added his own mark by insisting that contemporary poets should also be part of the Avignon Festival, along with musicians and non-European artists.

Crombecque 가 가

Since that time, Avignon has opened itself more to foreign influences through works such as Peter Brook's Mahabharata, performed in a disused quarry, and the 1992 theatre and musical productions from Latin America.

)” 1992 Peter Brook “ (

But the French theatrical adventure, sometimes on a large scale, remains the focal point of the Avignon Festival with productions that would be difficult to present in other spaces, such as the unabridged version of Paul Claudel's Soulier de Satin (The Satin Shoe) directed by Antoine Vitez, or the screening of silent movies accompanied by a full orchestra.

, Antoine Vitez
“ Shoe”
가

When Alain Crombecque was appointed to take charge of the Autumn Festival (after the death of its founder Michel Guy), Bernard Faivre d'Arcier returned to Avignon at the request of the city and of the state for a five-year period (1993-1997), ably assisted by Christiane Bourbonnaud, who hails from Avignon itself, and who is also the director of the event.

Alain Crombecque 가
(Michel Guy가) Bernard Faivre
d'Arcier가 5 (1993-1997) 가

Christiane Bourbonnaud

They honed the objectives of the Festival's role by co-producing new works, as well as placing the Festival at the heart of a permanent home for theatre in France in association with the Chartreuse de Villeneuve-les-Avignon (That became an author-in-residence centre) and with an established centre for furthering theatre studies and training

in all fields of technical work connected with the theatre, Saint-Louis d'Avignon, the base for the National Theatre Centre and the Higher Institute of Theatre Techniques.

de Villeneuve (가 가

)

Saint-Louis

가 가 .

The history of the Festival is over all one of continuity, having had only four directors in fifty years, while having evolved considerably in the same period of time :

50 4 .

the Festival has indeed grown out of its exclusive beginnings - one Venue, one company - to an incredibly varied selection of different artistic offerings - fifty different shows, taking place in some twenty or so scenic sites, each with its own character.

, - 가 20 가 - 50 .

The Avignon Festival Today

First and foremost the Avignon Festival is a public theatre festival ;

what was for Vilar a festival for the people, or for Vitez an arts festival.

Vilar

, Vitez

The Festival does not follow commercial principles, providing basic entertainment or a hotch-potch of shows to attract tourists.

It is both the reflection of and the example for the whole of public theatre.

A reflection in that it highlights the creative capacity and the failings of performing arts, as each year the Festival is a culmination of partnerships with the major theatrical institutions of France (national theatres and drama centres in the provinces) as well as with a great number of independent companies, more or less well-known, receiving larger or smaller subsidies.

The fate of the Festival is intrinsically linked therefore to subsidies theatre in France.

But it is also a vanguard in that most of the performances are new productions, that go on after the Festival to be shown in other cities in France and the rest of Europe.

The Festival is at the same time, a venue for the discovery of playwrights, stage directors and actors.

It constitutes a point of convergence for several generations of artists and of audiences.

Although the theatre is the predominant discipline, the Festival has broadened its horizons to embrace other forms of stage performance, notably musicals, dance, contemporary music (though, for example, the music research workshops at the Acanthes Centre in Villeneuve-lez-Avignon) and even, in recent years, the circus.

Some years ago, the Festival opened its doors to poetry, art or theatrical history exhibitions, cinema and video art.

500 , , , TV .
* 500 Festival employees working throughout the whole month, 220 of whom are technicians from all over France.

500 .

220

They Made the Festival

* Stage directors and Actors ()
: Bartabas, Benno Besson, Peter Brook, Patrice Chereau, Alain Francon, Tadeusz Kantor, Manfred Karge, Matthias Langhoff, Jacques Lassalle, Georges Lavaudant, Arane Mnouchkine, Jean Vilar, Antoine Vitez, Geroges Wilson, Bob Wilson, Michel Aumont, Daniel Auteuil, Philippe Avron, Michel Bouquet, Maria Casares, Philippe Caubere, Alain Cuny, Jean-Pierre Jorris, Ludmila Mikael, Redjep Mitrovitsa, Silvia Montfort, Jeane Moreau, Philippe Noiret, Gerard Philipe, Daniel Sorano...

* Choreographers and Dancers (가)
: Alvin Ailey, Dominaque Bagouet, Pina Bausch, Maurice Bejart, Bill T. Jones, Carolyn Carlson, Merce Cunningham, William Forsythe, Jean-Claude Gallotta, Paolo Bortoluzzi, Jorge Donn...

Selecting the Programme

The Festival (that in Avignon has come to be known as the "in") presents a different programme every year, largely composed of new productions.

(“ ”)

Some of them are world premieres ("creations mondiales"), some of them are new productions of contemporary or repertory scripts ("creations"), while others are plays that

may have been performed abroad in their original language that have never been performed in France ("creations en France").

(“ ”) ;
(“ ”) ;
(“ ”) .

Most of the productions are selected by the Festival administration from proposals.

The Festival does not show performances seen elsewhere first and subsequently selected.

This implies a certain element of risk each year, shared with stage directors and choreographers.

가

Every evening during the Festival, one or more premieres may be shown, which explains enthusiastic curiosity sparked among so many performing arts critics and professionals who attend the Festival.

가 가

The programme selection process is lengthy, starting eighteen months before the Festival opens, with an appraisal of the proposals received or commissioned.

가

가 18

Unlike other events outside France, there is no procedure for applications.

The Festival is not an organisation that receives and then allocates space for existing productions like trade fair organisers that attribute booths.

A careful selection is made each year, according to major themes decided for any given year, and attention is given to the quality of the proposal itself (the script, stage direction, scenery, etc.)

The Festival receives several hundred proposals and looks at each one.

The "selection committee" makes a point of researching previous work, work in progress and futures work of the stage directors and choreographers by making trips around France and abroad, and with the assistance of professional consultants and on occasion, correspondents in other countries.

The profile of any Festival programme is obviously dependent on the desire of the Festival administration to give preference to contemporary scripts, or to a particular

aspect of repertory ;

가

가

to bring to the fore a particular generation or artistic form, to develop a specific theme or to show the state of performing arts in a particular country, while taking into account the inevitable financial, technical and time constraints that come into play when the proposals become productions.

1

가가

가

There is no doubt that the most burdensome constraint for a project is that of financing,

가

가

Unlike opera festivals that are able to produce almost entirely all the productions they wish to include in their programmes, the Festival, due to its budget (45million Frances per year) and its size (about 45productions) is only able to finance a small part of the cost.

45

1

4,500

However, it is committed to covering the costs of expenses (pre-purchase of the production, royalties, transport and other expenses, technical and organisation costs as well as advertising).

(

가, , ,)
 In order to meet this expense, the Festival calls on many different partners, and is fully involved in the financial plans for each production.

The need to co-produce explains why so many and varied institutions are cited in the production credits.

This is also one of the reasons why the Festival remains in close contact with performing arts centres and national theatres, as well as with associated organisations such as the France Culture radio station, Adami (an organisation providing administrative services for performing artists and musicians), the Beaumarchais foundation, the SACD (the authors and composers society) and the national employment agency's theatre section (ANPE-Spectacle).

가
 (가
) Beaumarchais , SACD(가 가
) (ANPE -)

These contacts are necessarily extended in other countries through French embassy cultural services, the AFAA (the French Association for Artistic Exchanges-French Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and the international affairs department of the French Ministry of Culture.

(AFAA())

In tandem with the main Festival is what known as the "off", that functions quite differently.

“ ”

There is no specific administration for the "off" (unlike Edinburgh's Fringe Festival), instead there is an association called Avignon-Public-Off. Since 1983, it has provided a number of services for its members, the most important being the publication and circulation of a programme listing every production shown in the "off".

" "

),

가

'

-

-

(

가, 1983

“ ”

The "off"

" "

Avignon - Public - Off

- -

Direction, Alain Leonard

B.P. 5-75521 Paris Cedex

France

Tel : +33 - 01 48 05 01 19

Fax : +33 - 01 48 05 40 67

During the festival:

Conservatoire de Musique

Place du Palais, 84000 Avignon - tel : +33 - 04 90 16 00 05

Maison du Off

18, rue Buffon, 84000 Avignon - tel : +33 - 04 90 82 21 03

In 1996, 482 shows are presented in 95 locations by 390 companies.

1996 390 95 482 .

There is no selection process for the "off".

" " .

Consequently, any theatre group can, providing they meet legal conditions applying to public performances including tax liabilities, come to Avignon during the Festival and perform if they can find a space for their performance.

' .

If they perform in a public place, they require authorisation from the city hall (that may impose conditions on the time or place of performance in order to prevent noise disturbance or for security reasons for example).

가 ().

If the performance takes place on a stage where the audience is expected to pay for tickets, the company has to make arrangements for its ticket sales point and for the time of the performances.

' .

The "off" creates a particularly theatrical atmosphere in the city.

" " .

It has taken root by branching out and using all types of

space - courtyard, cellars, apartments, warehouses - and also properly equipped theaters.

The "off" is a heterogenous mix, that can sometimes hold pleasant surprises for the performers if they catch the eye and imagination of the media or of established theatre professionals, and if the theatre-loving public, with its ear to the ground at the Avignon Festival, shows its appreciation.

" " 가 가 가 가

Of course, there are risks involved, notably due to competition from other productions and finding a suitable time and place for performing, but also in terms of the cost of the investment, with no guarantee of any return.

The "off" is highly appreciated by the audiences with their insatiable curiosity, and who love to discover new theatre, which explains why this parallel event, a "good neighbour" as far as the Avignon festival is concerned, has enjoyed such growth.

" " 가 , 가 "

There is yet a third type of performance in Avignon, plays performed by the companies based in the city all year round.

가 , 1

They are not necessarily part of the "in" Festival (although such productions may well be selected to take part in the main Festival), but they are not just visiting companies either, because they are working on their productions throughout the year, in Avignon.

“ ” () 1

These performances are listed in a special brochure "Avignon sur Festival", attached to the 1996 "in" programme.

1996 “ ” “ ”

The Festival Venues

The heart of the city of Avignon, inside the ramparts, is historic and bears an Italian influence.

The Festival has, since its creation melted with the prestigious buildings and sites, although they were never designed for theatre performances.

Rather than posing any adaptational problems, the combinations work well and, in fact, brings out the best in

both the environment and the new productions.

The Palais des Papes is a monumental edifice that receives many visitors, and the courtyard takes on a different aspect in the summer, when it becomes an open-air theatre with an audience-capacity of 2,250.

2,250

Other magnificent architectural sites, such as the Carmes and Celestins Colisters or the Chapel of the White Penitents have discovered a certain notoriety and have been restored due to their role in the Festival.

Carmes Celestins

Another site that has undergone significant restoration over a 25-year period in order to house the cultural center, is the Chartreuse at Villeneuve-lez-Avignon, that is a Festival venue for the presentation of contemporary plays.

25

Villeneuve-lez-
가

The Chartreuse

Originally a monastery founded in the 14th century by Pope Innocent 4th, the Chartreuse at Villeneuve lez Avignon faces the Palais des Papes on the right bank of the river Rhone, in the Gard county.

6

14

Villeneuve lez

Gard

Rhone

Its gardens and walls occupy 18,000m² laid out in strict style, common to all carthusian monasteries.

가 18,000m²

It has preserved the charm and tranquility of its spaces conceived for solitude and for community life, while having been adapted to accommodate both visitors and artists :

, 가 .

It is at the same time a historical monument that is open to the public all year round and also a retreat for playwrights researching or composing their plays.

1

가가 .

After fifteen years of multi-discipline activities, in 1991, the Chartreuse became the National Centre for playwrighting.

가 15 1991 ,

가 .

Its mission is to promote the scripts of living writers.

가 .

Today, the monks' cells that surround the three cloisters-small houses with gardens-serve as the residences for young playwrights and companies.

- 가 . 가

The Tinel, at one time the refectory for the Carthusian friars has been made into a rehearsal space for contemporary works later performed at either the Chartreuse during the

Festival or previewed at other times.

Tinel

가

The old Bakery and Hostel are today used as theater stages and experimental work spaces.

가

The Chartreuse is a busy place throughout the whole year.

1

Since 1991, when it was agreed to accentuate the exceptional wealth of the historical sites in the area, using the Festival as a partner-vehicle to this end, the National Centre for Playwrighting has created space for 97 resident playwrights, 20 for production (with companies) and held 173 contemporary drama reading (either in the summer or winter seasons), 30 workshops as well as publishing eight issues of Cahiers de Prospero, a review written by playwrights.

1991 , 가 가
가 가 ,
가 가가 97 20
()
173 (.
) , 30 가
Prospero .

Form the very beginning, the Festival has been associatd with the open-air.

Those peaceful, warm and starlit nights in Provence enhance the theatrical magic, but being out-door can also create

technical problems, notably when there is thunder and lightning or strong winds.

These weather conditions, specific to the region in summer, have provided material for many an anecdotal story-telling since the Festival began.

However, when the elements come out in force, at the time the artists and technicians may feel they are coping with small-scale catastrophes.

The Festival has had to face serious challenges not least of all taking on the technical costs on a scale with its ambitious projects.

It is the Festival that has responsibility for erecting and dismantling all the open-air venues, making theatre-space available as well as providing sound and lighting equipment and scenery to meet the technical specifications and sophistication of each production.

Times have changed since Vilar's day when all the players needed was a make-shift stage, a few banners floating in the wind and a few spotlights.

Vilar

Even if these stage requisites remain noble because they were designed specially for the location, the severe and stark architecture of the Palais could not be an exclusive backdrop for ever.

The Festival history is, as a result, also marked by the discovery of a certain freedom with regard to the limitations of a site, built back in the 14th century with a very different purpose in mind.

, 14 가

As the Festival rose to this particular challenge also, the public has been able to enjoy the painted silk canvases for Ariane Mnouchkine's series of Shakespeare plays, and moving floor designed for Patrice Chereau's Hamlet or the corn-field in Lluís Pasqual's Chevalier d'Olmedo.

가

,
Ariane Mnouchkine

Patrice Chereau

Lluís Pasqual d'Olmedo

In 1982, the main courtyard in the Palais was fitted with a new stage and seating.

1982

Directors have subsequently been able to make use of trap-doors, more sophisticated sound and lighting resulting in a more intense experience for the audience.

A new sound system was installed in 1995, that allows the use of high-frequency microphones hidden from the audience, and includes 650 small speakers around the theatre space.

650

1995

In 1996, the directors and artists will have an up-dated lighting system at their disposal.

1996

가

All the improvements are made while not losing sight of the aim that is to give the audience the impression of being in a tight-knight group (which they have to be when they are watching a performance that may continue into the early hours of the morning) and the performers a feeling of such well-being on stage that they forget the size of the crowd at their feet.

(

)

가

For twenty years now directors and choreographers have tended to prefer to limit seating-capacity.

20

가

Five hundred seats seems to be sufficient for them, forgetting that it is very important (and not only for ticket sales) to perform a play before a large audience.

) 500

가

(

Fortunately, the courtyard, with its revamped technical apparatus, is less forbidding to artists (their only big fear these days is to bump into a ghost or two).

(가)

가

However, if the main courtyard in the Palais des papes continues to be the venue most freely associated with the Festival and its raison d'etre, the administration has sought to diversify the dimensions and nature of the venues.

가

In so doing, the Festival organisers want to ensure that the performances are adapted to their theatre, and to prevent the public from becoming divided between those who want to see “courtyard” productions, and those who systematically frequent the smaller sites.

“ ”

Avignon was a papal residence for one hundred years, but as well as its palace and its Saint-Benezet bridge, many other palaces and livrees were built by other clerics in

former times.

100
Saint-Benezet

Avignon boasts a number of museums and a municipal opera-cum-theatre, with a beautiful Italian-style auditorium.

The city has also restored other historic monuments one being the Livree Ceccano, converted to a multi-media library, or the former Saint-Louis convent, today the administrative office of the Higher Institute of Theatre Techniques and the National Theatre Centre.

Ceccano

Saint-Louis

Moreover, Avignon, along with eight other cities in Europe, has been designated European Cultural City for the year 2000.

8

2000

Today, the Festival has mobile auditoriums that can seat around 800 (e.g. Saint Joseph's College) or 500 (e.g. Carmes Colister).

800(Joseph)

500(Carmes

)

가

It also makes use of, albeit less regularly, and according to a performance's adaptability to these venues, locations outside, but nearby Avignon.

가

One example is the Redland Quarry in Boulbon, about 15 kilometres away.

Boulbon

Redland

15km

Here, in the midst of archaic and mineral beauty, Peter Brook put on his Mahabharata in 1985.

Brook 1985 “ ()” , Peter

Not all performances are suited to open-air venues, some do require enclosed spaces, or perhaps flies and other special stage or scenery equipment.

For these reasons, the Festival also uses the Avignon Municipal Theatre (700 seats), Benoit Hall (430 seats) or the Chapel of the White penitents' (160 seats) that are fixed locations, and can be used all year round.

7 (430), (700), Benoit (160) 1

Other locations that are used by the Festival if necessary include sports halls (e.g. Saint-Joseph of Aubanel), disused churches (e.g. The Celestins' Church), and big top tents may also be part of range of locations used by the Festival.

(Aubanel Joseph), (Celestins), 가

Whenever a particular performance requires a specific setting, the Festival will locate one and equip it accordingly, so the list of venues changes slightly from one year to the next, and it is part of the enjoyment for visitors to discover new places in Avignon and its surrounding area, whether it be on the banks of the River Rhone, a wasteland, a garden, a noble house, a plaza or a warehouse.

가

Rhone

가

Such flexibility in the choice of venue encourages experimentation and dynamism in the theatre and dance worlds of today.

The Festival gives artists all over the world the opportunity to use their imagination to the full, to innovate and to test their research directly in front of a large and varied audience.

가

* The Festival's technical team is composed of about 200 technicians.

200

They are employed for the festival period, the first of them arriving in April each year.

4

This contingent works on organising the work load and with carpenters, locksmiths and electricians etc.

* About 85 of these technical staff, some specialised, others not, work on some twenty stages.

가 85 가가 20 .

* A further 110 people are allocated to what are known as "mobile teams".

110 “ ” .

They are back-up teams, helping out with the building and striking of sets, while also erecting temporary seating, stages, lighting frames, electricity feeds and arranging the area immediately surrounding the performance site.

* A workshop is open between four and five months each year, building scenery, stages and electricity casing.

4~5 , , .

The technicians work day and night shifts.

* the Festival owns a substantial amount of equipment, but this is not always sufficient or appropriate, so an exchange system has been set up with other major cultural institutions, to ensure the performances have all the material they require.

가 ,

Organisation and Financing

Since 1980, the Festival has been, in the same way as most other comparable events in Europe, a non-profit-making association (under the French Act of 1901).

1980

가

(1901

)

.

Its board is composed of members of public-grant bodies (the majority) and other people with a particular interest in the Festival such as founding members or the directors of the cultural organisations that work in partnership with the Festival.

()

,

.

Each of the public entities that subsidize the Festival - the State, the Provence-Cote d'Azur Regional Council, the Vaucluse county Council, the City of Avignon - are all represented on the Festival board that meets two or three times a years to discuss the main aims of the Festival, to be briefed on the artistic programme under preparation, to vote on a provisional budget, and to oversee its implementation.

가, Provence-Cote d'Azur

, Vaucluse

,

, 1

,

,

.

Under the terms of the Festival statutes, the mayor of Avignon chairs the board.

.

The artistic director and the organising director are both appointed for a five-year term by the board, and with the approval of the mayor of Avignon and the French Ministry of Culture.

5

Since Jean Vilar (who insisted it should be thus), the artistic director has been totally free to make the choices for the programme, and all the government bodies have always respected this independence, irrespective of the political situation of the time.

Jean Vilar()

Small is beautiful : the Festival' team is purposely limited in number, reflecting the craftsmanship-like dimension of the theatre.

: 가

Even if during the summer, the Festival may appear to operate more like a major business firm, taking on hundreds of salaried staff for several weeks (most of whom come from Avignon).

()

The permanent staff is made up of about ten or so salaried employees.

10

Some of them work out of an office in Paris (6, rue de

Braque in the Marais quarter) and some at the headquarters in Avignon (8 bis, rue de Mons).

quarter가), (6, Marais
(6, Mon가)

The Paris office houses the follow functions:

* Artistic Direction, Bernard Faivre d'Arcier and Production Management, Vincent Baudriller.

Bernard Faivre d'Arcier

Vincent Baudriller

* Avignon Festival Secretary, Monique Coutance, assisted by Maire-Helene Arbour (Press), Claire Faure (Resource Centre) and Coralie Barthelemy (Assistant to the Director).

Marie-Helene Arbour(), Monique Coutance
Claire Faure(),
Coralie Barthelemy()

In Avignon :

* Organisational Direction and Logistics, Christiane Bourbonnaud.

Christiane Bourbonnaud

* Administration, Accounting and Financial Management, Gerard Deniaux.

Gerard Deniaux

* Technical Direction, Christian Wilmart.

Christian Wilmart

The Festival budget has fortunately grown at a constant rate, with few periods of non-growth.

In the last few years, it has been boosted by increased turnover that is linked to spending (and to revenues that strictly balance the outgoings) generated by performance tours financed by the Festival when a company or drama centre or a private agent cannot.

가 (가)

It is just one more advantage offered by the Festival to productions that are considered as difficult or that are custom-made for the Festival.

가 가 .

However, one can note diverging trends in the Festival budget.

가 .

A reduction in the proportion of the budget financed by local government bodies, and especially by the City of Avignon.

, ,
.

At the beginning of the 1980s, municipal financing accounted for up to 65% of the total budget (including revenues).

1980 , 65%
().

Today, that percentage has fallen to around 15%.

15% .

However, the City of Avignon does also pay the technical costs for the Festival, and which are not included in the principal budget for the Festival, as well as investing the same amount as the State for the renewal and modernisation of equipment.

가

Vaucluse County's contribution, that had indeed reached a significant amount, is also currently on a downwards trend.

Vaucluse

The financing gap is nonetheless compensated for by an increase in grants donated by the Regional Council, that has shown an ever-growing interest in the success of the Festival.

가

가

Revenues from the Festival activities are increasing slowly but constantly.

가

Income from ticket sales remains more or less stable given that the Festival has already reached high-levels of attendance and the price of seating cannot be raised further without altering the audience profile, that would notably exclude younger spectators.

가

가

The average ticket price (two tariffs : individual or group, the latter at a 20% discount rate), is calculated on the basis of the average cost of a restaurant meal, or two or three times the price of a cinema ticket.

가 (가 : ,
20%) .

The average ticket costs between 110 and 120 francs (about 22 to 24 current dollars) and prices range from 50 francs (about 10 current dollars) to 190 francs (about 38 current dollars).

가 110 120 (22~24)
가 50 190 (10~38) .

These prices are relatively low in comparison with those charged for seats at opera festivals or rock concerts;

가 가 .

They increase sharply if calculated on the basis of household spending.

가 .

However, this specific means of calculation allows the Festival to compensate for about 35% of expenditures on productions through revenues from the sale of some 100,000 tickets.

, 가 10
35% .

Further revenues come from technical services, production sales an other sources, notably patrons of the arts or, often in the form of sponsoring.

Such means of financing have become more common in France in recent years across the board, whereas it used to be a financial tool almost exclusively for larger business firms.

The Festival first received sponsoring in 1984, peaking in the early 1990s, and dropping off (probably due to the recession) before picking up again very recently and reaching a level as befits the Festival's reputation and the benefits it can offer its sponsors.

(1984 가 , 1990)

The Festival has, since 1984, received constant support from its largest and most loyal patron, the Credit local de France, a financial institution for local government bodies.

1984 가

Since 1995, the mineral water company, Perrier (part of Nestle Sources France) has sponsored the Festival.

1995 가 Perrier()가

Its contribution is particularly apt as the Perrier underground spring is not far from Avignon, and the firm's image goes well with that of a creative Festival.

Perrier

가
가

ARTE, the European television channel makes a major contribution to European live drama and dance in its broadcast programming, and since 1995, has been a Festival partner, as has the French Post Office (La Poste).

ARTE 1995
가 .

가

La Poste has set up a foundation to promote the production of contemporary plays.

The Festival is also active in enlisting the support of companies based in Provence, and in so doing seeks to advertise the economic resources of the region.

In 1996, the Cotes-du-Rhone Interprofessional Wine committee becomes a benefactor by providing a new venue (as does Redland, with the Boulbon Quarry), a financial package and of course, its well-known products.

1996 Rhone 가
(Redland Boulbon)

가

On a case-by-case, production-by-production basis, sponsoring comes from companies or foundations both in France and abroad (e.g. the AT&T Foundation's backing for Les Danaïdes in 1996).

AT&T (1996 Les Danaïdes).

However, the French State (largely via the Ministry of Culture, and to a lesser extent via the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the AFAA) is the source that has enabled the Festival to develop.

AFAA 가()
가 .

The State's contribution to the Festival budget is the largest.
가가 가 .

The increase in state financing has come in two stages, first in 1993, and then in 1996 for the 50th Festival, and has permitted the Festival to keep up its level of creativity and also for it to act as a co-producer whenever possible.

가 가 ,
1993 , 1996 50 .
가 .

It should be noted that spending has also increased.
가 .

Not only does the Festival offer more productions to the audience, but it has also widened the choice of venues in order to enhance the theatrical possibilities of the event, while at the same time facing a regular increase in technical costs that presently account for half of all expenditure.

가
가 .

Finally, and paradoxically, more funds are needed to organise a Festival outside of the capital in the summer than to finance a season's run in Paris, due to the cost of equipping the venues, transport costs and reimbursements of expenses.

It is important, in this respect, to remember that the Festival receives no financial assistance for technical, organisational or advertising costs from any local partner.

However, the Festival does have a lot to offer to Avignon itself and to its surrounding area.

The Avignon Festival is the main summer tourist attraction, bringing to the region those migrating from the North to the South, and giving them something to stay for.

The Festival also creates hundreds of summer jobs, and accommodates, or arranges accommodation for thousands of artists and technicians, and attracts thousands of spectators (who tend to stay on average for one week) spending their money in stores, eating and drinking and visiting the region.

)

The "off" also attracts theatre companies that meet their own costs, renting expensive space in the city, and this unofficial festival also brings its own holiday-mood audience.

" "

가

'가

The Festival's economic input is so large, it is actually higher than the local government subsidy allocated to the Festival.

One last point worth noting:

가

It is impossible to translate into figures the Avignon Festival's renown, but it is clear that without the Festival, this medium-sized city in southern France would be less well-know and less well-regarded in the world, than it is today,

가

가

가

The Festival and its Public

The Festival's principal capital is its public:

가 .

a public that is sometimes, to an unaccustomed eye, difficult to distinguish from the afternoon crowd flocking to the city's main square, Place de l'Horloge, between the Hotel de Ville and the Palais des Papes, and the hub of summer activity.

Ville

,
de l'Horloge .

It is not easy to count the exact number of people who come to Avignon to see the Festival productions, because many of them will attend more than one performance (and at the "off" as well as at the "in").

가
가)

, (“ ” “ ”

Crowds draw crowds, especially in summer, and visitors are greeted with a flurry of people from all walks of life and places.

가 .

The streets are alive, noisy, hot and full of colourful posters (that are not always possible to read!) pasted up by the "iff" performers (who have often managed to climb dangerously high!), buzzing with parades and street performers (they being neither "in" nor "off").

“ ” (!)

(

“ ”) !) (“ ” .

But the Festival public is the part of that crowd that drifts off in the evening, when the plays and dances begin.

This public is large, enthusiastic and open, because the Festival is indeed targeting people on holiday, who do not have a pressing schedule, and who may get up late (all-night programmes are not unheard of at Avignon!)

가 가
(!)

One can, however, on closer inspection distinguish several different types of public at Avignon, each approaching their Festival experience in a different way.

가 가 .

There is an individual view of the city, and everyone has their favourite way round the place.

가

The Festival has its regulars, the Festival "faithful", some might even be described as pilgrims, who will organise their stay well in advance.

“ ” ,

At the other end of the scale, there are those who come to "browse" and like explorers, let themselves be guided by a spur of the moment feeling.

가

Some will only see "in" productions, others only "off", but most make their own programme, gleaning information sometimes scanty, sometimes distorted, that can lead to the circulation of rumours like a summer game, but that the professionals attending gave up playing with long ago.

“ ” , “ ”

가

가

There are multitudes of ways to experience the Festival.

가 가 .

This is part of its flexibility, but it can also give a confused image of the Festival.

Each member of the audience carries with them a fragment of the Festival's whole, because no individual can claim to see every production.

A wave of people passes through and leaves its place to the next throughout the summer, shedding as it goes rumours, impressions, feelings, even, and sometimes contradictory conclusions that later on, months later, will form a collective impression of that year's Festival.

가 ,

Therefore, the public also has its role to play, an active role.

It makes choices, discusses them with others of its group, criticises the critics, and debates for example at the end of each day in the Urban 5th orchard beneath the Palais des Papes, and it likes to meet the performers directly.

Urban 5

Avignon has always been a place for words, encounters, proclamations or collective fantasy.

가

It is place where spectators learn, in a structured way, through, for example, courses arranged by the CEMEA (an education institution that provides a programme for young people or foreign visitors) or less formally through chance meetings, and day-to-day news.

CEMEA(
)

There is no shortage of information circulating at the Festival, the Festival book shop is active, there are many lectures, and with such a media corps present (500 French

and foreign journalists) as well as the plethora of posters and leaflets for each performance "in" or "off", the choice is extensive.

(500 가) “ ” “ ”

Then it is up to each individual to decide, and this is how to tell a "specialist" from a "novice".

“ 가”가 .

How should one establish a personal programme?

First, perhaps by reading the Festival programme and then reserving seats ahead of time (about 60% of tickets are sold between three and four weeks before the opening of the Festival), but others will choose to make their decisions on the spot, just discovering an interesting "off" production instead.

(가 , 3~4 60% 가)

For the very many professionals (French and foreign) at the Festival, there are necessarily clearly identified places to meet.

가 ()

Firstly, the Festival headquarters where every morning press conferences are held to present the performances.

During the day, they may gather at saint-Louis d'Avignon where there is a full programme of forums and study sessions where all aspects of professional life in the theatre, be it drama or dance can be discussed, from economic and political issues, to artistic, technical and legal matters.

-Louis d'

This is how (and thanks to Jean Vilar who launched the idea in 1964) Avignon has become such an important meeting place for the professionals, as well as a place for discussing and deciding cultural policy.

(1964 Jean Vilar가)
가 가
가 .

Many politicians visit the Festival to meet artists and administrators in a more informal setting.

가

Political party leaders, ministers, mayors of major cities and their culture officers are among the regular visitors.

The Festival is in fact used by lobbies or interest groups to voice their opinions in public, on issues as different as Vosnia of Algeria, because the Festival is also involved in daily life outside the theatre, and the spectator has always

been considered since the Festival began, as more than a mere consumer, as an active citizen.

가

Avignon is also one of the rare places where different types of theatre-going people come together.

가

Their geographic origins are diverse, being neither Parisian nor local.

They come from all over France (and from nearby French-speaking countries, like Belgium and Switzerland (Belgian and Swiss visitors form the largest European group from outside France attending the Festival).

(

가

가

가

(

).

So Avignon is rather like a new county, with the love of theatre as its identity.

The social make-up of the public has barely changed since Vilar.

Vilar

Theatre-goers are still theatre-goers, and although the

spectrum has broadened slightly, it is largely composed of teachers and students, executives and members of the professional classes.

가 , , 가

Indeed, it is not a question of income that determines the Festival aficionado, but the level of education, and naturally, their love of art and culture.

, .

Vilar wanted to draw young people to the theatre, and those he drew are much older now, but no less enthusiastic about attending the Festival, while at the same time the event does still attract an almost constant proportion of younger members of the audience, often children of those who first came to the festival as teenagers, and for some it will be their first-ever theatre experience.

Vilar 가

, .
, .

Avignon is a three-generation festival.

3 가 .

Whereas in everyday life, different generations hardly mix, their lifestyles are so different, but that is not so at Avignon, where a collective memory of theatre is emerging from its capacity to transcend generation communication problems, from one year to the next.

가

1 , 가

After fifty years, we could say the Festival is still the same:

50

it takes place in the same city, at the same time of year, and evolves on many levels virtually imperceptibility.

1 , 가

It is like a big ship, strong in its sometimes blurred by so many parasite activities that try to jump on its bandwagon.

가 ,

Everyone has their own notion of the Festival and would like it to remain that way, a powerful souvenir that demands they repeat the experience.

가 ,

The Festival is at the centre of contradictory forces that are, in the end, only our own;

가

We want change and we want everything to stay the same, we want to make new discoveries and relieve the past.

, .

At regular intervals, the Festival is written off by those saying it is no longer what it used to be, yet people keep coming back.

가 , ‘ 가
, ‘
.

Nonetheless, although everyone projects their own fantasies and desires on to the Festival, the Festival has its own life, that of an organised institution (due to its notoriety) but that is not entirely institutionalized (due to its political and economic sensitivity).

, ()
, 가 (.

It has to adapt to an artistic and social context from which it cannot escape.

It is a morror, more or less misshapen, of the theatre-going public in France.

가

But it is also one of its vanguards through its concern for realising its ground-breaking potential.

This is done by launching its own projects and by becoming a more frequent co-producer of works that preview in Avignon, and which travel on to other parts of France and Europe.

Avignon's productions all have a life after the Festival, that has become the leader in an international network through a well-established worldwide reputation.

가 .

Behind the Festival, there is a great ambition, that one day, Avignon will be, with its partners (the Chartreuse of Villeneuve-lez-Avignon, the Jean-Vilar Centre, the Higher Institute of Theatre Techniques and the National Theatre Centre) a formidable core of European theatre, involving every step in theatre production from writing, the stage directing, to performance, to memories.

(Villeneuve-lez- , , Jean-Vilar ,) , , ,

가 가 .

The proces is already underway.

But such an ambition, with its political, financial and administrative features would be but an empty shell, if there was no current of utopia, if there was no one passionate, unrealistic and constant desire:

, , , ;

to inflame the heart of the spectator with magical happiness that will, in the space of a performance, leave, perhaps just one, eternal mark.

가 .

Artistic Director of The Festival
Bernard Faivere d'Arcier