



Rheingold © H. Mahramzadeh

Semele Walk © M. Rittershaus

André Wilms in Max Black © H. Mahramzadeh

Successful closing of the 2nd KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen in front of a sold-out house with Klaus Maria Brandauer

After 24 days with over 30 events, the 2nd KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen came to an end this weekend with Heiner Goebbels' music theatre play "Max Black" - with André Wilms in the title role - as well as Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and Klaus Maria Brandauer in Hanover. With the motto "Unleashed Worlds", artistic director Elisabeth Schweeger has hit the nerve of the times. The interdisciplinary festival programme and the innovative formats contribute to giving the profile of the state capital Hanover a new accent and an urban flair. Following on from the universal scholar Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, the Herrenhausen Gardens will once again become a meeting place for the arts with the KunstFestSpiele, combining culture with science and nature. Over 56 international artists from 17 countries, including Argentina, Japan, Greece, Mexico, the Netherlands, Austria, England, Poland, the USA and Hungary, were guests in Hanover. With early and new music, music theatre, installations, performances and film concerts, the artistic director once again succeeded this year in presenting an extraordinary and varied programme with works specially conceived for Hanover and in further positioning the still young festival.

The overall capacity utilisation of the 2nd KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen was 77 percent. This capacity utilisation calculation is based on different event formats, which range from more intimate discussion and stroll concerts to larger music theatre pieces at the KunstFestSpiele. "Semele Walk", "A Midsummer Night's Dream", the "Metropolis" film concert and the "Sondergärten-Serenade" stroll concert were all sold out. Only a few remaining tickets were still available for numerous events, such as "Max Black", the concert with the Venice Baroque Orchestra, the film events, the guest performances by the Austrian music band Franui, as well as the guest performances by the Boys' Choir and the Handel Festival. In total, over 8,000 visitors attended the events in the garden, the gallery and the orangery as well as the Arne Jacobsen Foyer. Compared to last year, the number of visitors increased, although there were 10 fewer events on the programme this year. Around 1,600 spectators attended the public rehearsals, the premiere and the follow-up performance of "Semele Walk".

Successful KunstFestSpiele production travels from Hanover around the world. The Bavarian radio station Bayerischer Rundfunk described it as a "highly original and multi-layered puzzle play between ancient myth, baroque and ... present" is how Bayerischer Rundfunk described the opening premiere. Ludger Engels' music theatre with Couture by Vivienne Westwood, based on an oratorio by George Frideric Handel, was developed especially for the KunstFestSpiele. Following its great success in Hanover, "Semele Walk" is travelling to the Holland Festival in Amsterdam in 2012 and to the Sydney Festival in Australia in 2013. Preparations are also underway for a guest performance in London. *"Hanover glitz and glamour set the theme for the opening of the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen..."* wrote the Wall Street Journal from London.

A total of 37 musicians, singers and composers were guests at the KunstFestSpiele, 15 ensembles and orchestras - including the Venice Baroque Orchestra, Il Giardino Armonico, the soloist ensemble Kaleidoskop, the Ensemble Modern and the oesterreichisches ensemble für neue musik. Other highlights of the festival included the German premiere of the co-production with international partners "De Gehangenen" by the Belgian Josse de Pauw and the music theatre project "Rheingold" by the Hungarian director David Marton - a co-production with the Wiener Festwochen, the Staatsschauspiel Dresden and the Dresden Music Festival.

Culture as an identity-building image factor

"In its second year, the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen has once again succeeded in setting new accents in the Herrenhausen Gardens with discursive, sophisticated events and innovative formats between art, music and science that are also recognised beyond the region. The new festival creates an identity for Hanover and makes a significant contribution to further increasing the attractiveness of the state capital of Hanover," says Elisabeth Schweeger, Director of the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen.

Numerous leading national and international media have travelled to Hanover and used the festival coverage to update Hanover's image. "Herrenhausen is rebuilding its once destroyed palace as a modern science centre. With the KunstFestSpiele, it blends innovation and tradition in a way that captures the public's attention." reports the Financial Times, London. The daily newspaper Die Welt continues: *"The Old Garden as the world of tomorrow. This is how it will be when the long-defunct palace is rebuilt at the end of 2012 with the help of the Volkswagen Foundation... An interdisciplinary conference centre for science is to be created here... In preparation and as an artificial supplement, the KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen is now in its second year, four early summer weeks from the end of May with music, performance, installation and stimulation, not just of the tourist-satisfying variety. An art summer night's dream."*

In total, the festival events were attended by over 360 media representatives. ZDF, RTL, NDR, BR and Deutschlandradio reported on the festival. Media co-operations such as with the NDR in Hamburg, the Hannoversche Allgemeine and the online project "Festival Scouts" together with the Neue Presse Hannover led to a strong local and regional anchoring of the festival. With the help of social media measures such as Facebook, Twitter and online links, awareness of the KunstFestSpiele on the internet has reached an unusually high level with 160,000 hits in just two years. Over 1,000 users commented on the brilliant opening of the festival with "Semele Walk" by Ludger Engels and British fashion icon Vivienne Westwood on the Internet in just one day.

The KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen is an initiative of the city of Hanover, capital of Lower Saxony, which can be regarded as a "public-private partnership" and is supported by a consortium of sponsors. The main sponsors are: Mediengruppe Madsack, VHV Versicherungen, Hannoversche Leben, Niedersächsische Sparkassenstiftung, Nord LB, Sparkasse Hannover, VGH Versicherungen.

The Austrian Musicbanda Franui gave a foretaste of the opening of the upcoming KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen with this year's concert "Schau lange in den dunklen Himmel", which will be premiered in a staged version in Hanover in 2012. The work commissioned by the KunstFestSpiele in co-production with the Ludwigsburg Schlossfestspiele will be a special kind of song recital, a homage to Robert Schumann that offers space for a multi-layered musical and scenic language. For the first time, the East Tyrolean Musicbanda is collaborating with the Viennese author Heinz Janisch and the Berlin director Corinna von Rad.

The next KunstFestSpiele Herrenhausen will take place in the Herrenhausen Gardens in Hanover in June 2012. On the festival homepage at www.kunstfestspieleherrenhausen.de you will find current information and numerous pictures of the festival. Please also note: www.facebook.com/KunstFestSpieleHerrenhausen and www.twitter.com/KunstFestSpiele

PRESS CONTACT

Goldmann Public Relations | Zimmerstraße 11 | 10969 Berlin
T: +49 (0)30 259 357 10 | F: +49 (0)30 259 357 29|
Email: jbluhm@goldmannpr.de

The KunstFestSpiele is an event by the City of Hanover, Department of Culture