





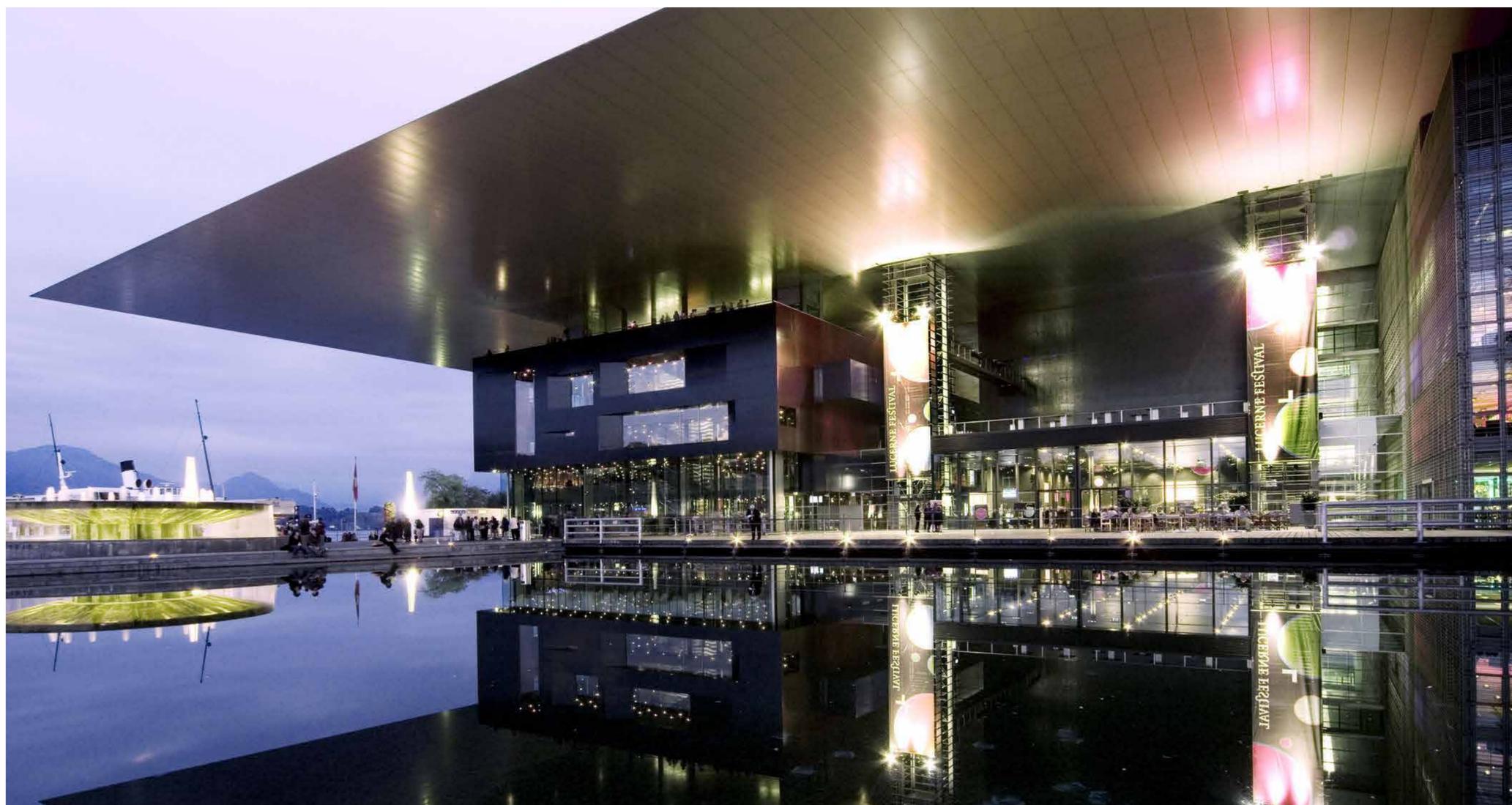
*The stage of the Eglise. Credits: Nicolas Brodard*

## **SUMMER MUSIC FESTIVALS: A MULTI-DOLLAR BUSINESS**

How Salzburg, Verbier, and Lucerne Festivals are the pearls of Europe

In summer, Europe blooms with music festivals, which are an important source of income for cities. The Arena opera festival (June 19 - Sept 6), for example, has allowed Verona to become the fourth most important tourist city in Italy...

*By Piera Anna Franini*



*KKL Luzern by night. Credits: Georg Anderhub, Lucerne Festival*

In summer, Europe blooms with music festivals, which are an important source of income for cities. The Arena opera festival (June 19 - Sept 6), for example, has allowed Verona to become the fourth most important tourist city in Italy. Even Salzburg would not have reached 6.5 million tourists a year had it not been for the driving force

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behind festivals, which can now be considered multinational corporations.

Nestled in idyllic places, Switzerland's two extraordinary events, the Verbier Festival and the Lucerne Festival, have now become a gathering place for leading performers from around the globe. Some 120,000

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visitors make their way to Lucerne every year to attend the three festivals. Seat occupancy at concerts on the last Whitsunday edition in Lucerne rate reached 91 percent with about 8,400 visitors, a percentage that could be even higher this summer in light of the special guests and performers billed between August 14 and September 13: the Berliner Philharmoniker, Boston Symphony, Wiener Philharmoniker, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, and the San Francisco Symphony. However, Verbier events have a more intimate atmosphere. The city is home to the youth orchestra and academy, where renowned artists pass on their skills to the next generation and where audiences have a wide choice of activities from early morning till late at night. The July 17 to August 2, 2015 edition of the Verbier Festival will open with a concert directed by James Levine, the famous Met conductor in New York, who has chosen Verbier for his return to the European scene after more than eight years.

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## Some figures

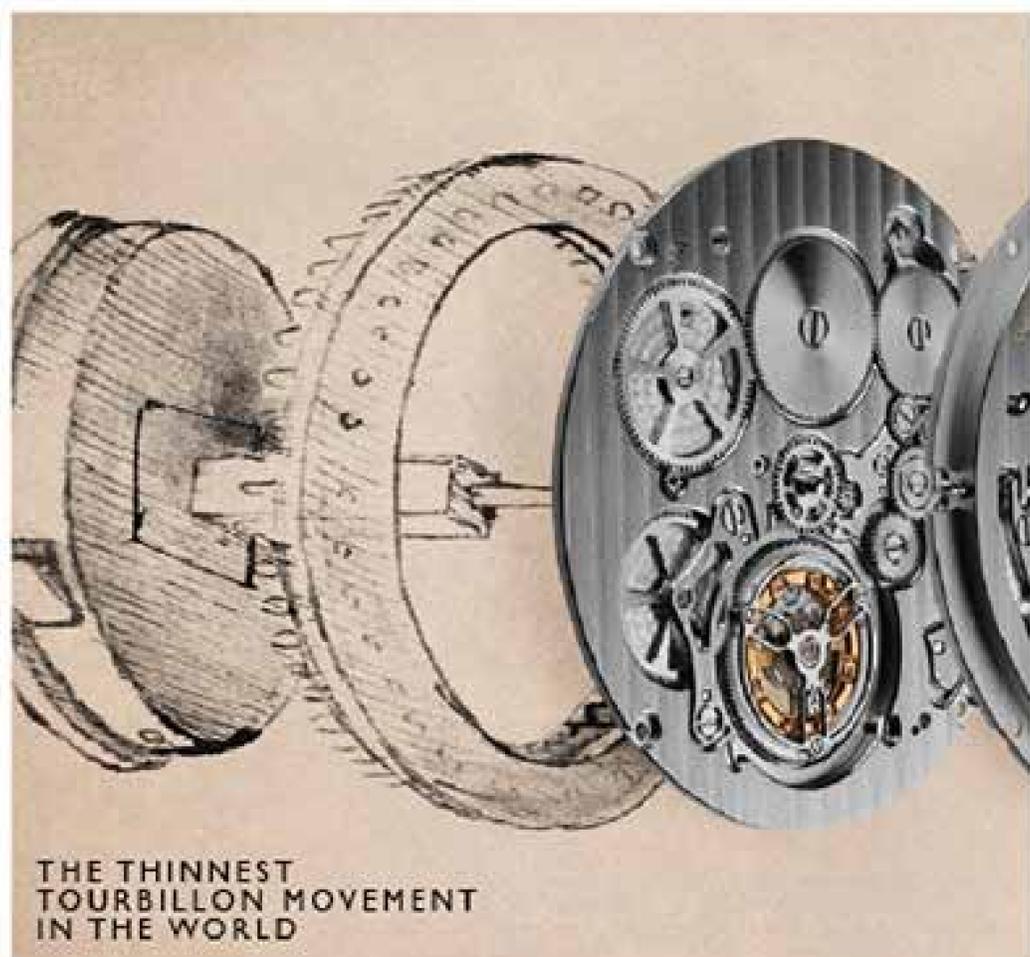
Music festivals are mainly about art, but they also contribute significantly to the gross domestic product by attracting large crowds of visitors to cities where money is spent on hotel accommodation, restaurants, and in retail shops, thus contributing to the local economy. According to a survey carried out by McKinsey, the financial impact in 2013 was equivalent to CHF 36 million, and produced a visibility that no other event has been able to offer so far. It is estimated that over one million spectators followed the Verbier Festival over the Internet. The opera season at the Verona Arena has an estimated annual turnover of around EUR 400 million, and 73.2 percent of visitors come to Verona mostly for the festival.

In Salzburg, the Easter, Whitsunday, and Summer festivals account for half of the city's revenue from tourism (Euro 680 million).

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*Norman Reinhardt. Credits: Dirk Brzoska*



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OCTO  
*finissimo*  
TOURBILLON

*«Details make perfection, and perfection is not a detail»*  
Leonardo da Vinci

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*Program presentation Whitsun Festival 2016 in the SalzburgKulisse with  
Sven-Eric Bechtolf, Helga Rabl-Stadler, Florian Wiegand  
Credits: Salzburger Festspiele / Andreas Kolarik*

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By providing 226 year-round jobs and more than 3,600 summer jobs, the Salzburg Festival is undoubtedly an important source of employment in the region. *"Since its foundation, it has become an artistic and economic drive for the entire region and its overall economic impact has grown to Euro 276 million,"* says festival President, Helga Rabl-Stadler. 72.5 percent is the amount of regular visitors to the Salzburg Festival, but the number of spectators to the Whitsunday Festival - run by mezzo-soprano Cecilia Bartoli - is also on the rise. Bartoli's format was such a success that she has been appointed director until 2021.

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It was in Salzburg that Bartoli made her debut with *Norma*, and she was later awarded the opera Oscar in 2013 at the Opera Awards in London. Next year, the festival will be dedicated to *Romeo and Juliet*, with a premiere presentation of the *West Side Story* musical by Leonard Bernstein to counterbalance the drama staged in May, which is dedicated to *Iphigénie en Tauride* by Gluck.

With cultural tourists tending to spend considerably on accommodation, dining, and various other expenses, we reach an average spending power, on

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*KKL Luzern and Mount Pilatus. Credits: Priska Ketterer, Lucerne Festival*



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*The Hameau. Credits: Aline Paley*



*VFMCO rehearsal*

the part of each visitor to Salzburg, of about Euro 317 per day. Three quarters of this sum (Euros 235 or 45.4 percent) is spent on accommodation, while 28.9 percent goes toward on eating out. Shopping accounts for

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16.9 percent, and the remainder is spent on transportation and other costs (3.4 percent and 5.4 percent). To that, we add the cost of around Euros 550 that each visitor spends daily to buy festival tickets.

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