

# Festival Studies, Verena Teissl



Scientific Essay, 15.000 characters (not counting list of reference)

Or about a festival of your choice

- History and development
- Profile and intention
- Grade of internationalization

Or about aspects of biennials, film festivals, ... that you find within the Symposium and that you analyze.

Criteria: Grade of argumentation and reflection

## Three major discourses on festivals identified by Donald Getz (2010):

*"... namely the roles, meanings and impacts of festivals in society and culture, festival tourism, and festival management" (Getz 2010: 1).*

### Common perspectives:

- anthropology and sociology: festivals as *"a sacred or profane time of celebration, marked by special observances"* (Fallasi 1987 quoted in Getz 2010: 2).
- tourism and leisure industry: impacts on economy and cities (regions)
- eventsmanagement: trends like Green Events and organizational aspects

# Definition: Festival Studies

## **Our perspective & context: Festivals connected to the art's sector**

- cultural management
- cultural studies & cultural theory

## **Effects & Tasks**

- within the lines
- for the cultural production
- for the reception of art
- for creating a discourse

## **Attention, spectacle and experience**

A look at the format and its institutional base without differing between  
High-Low-Culture (de Valck 2007)

# Definition: Festival

## What do we understand by „festival“?

- „festivus“ (lat) / „festival“ stands for *„the way how something happens, cheerful, bright and pleasant“* (Elfert 2009: 23f).
- “[...] a gathering of a *relatively large crowd* in a *specific place* for a *delineated period*, during which visitors are offered an *unique experience* (planned and organized with a specific purpose), including *transformation* and play elements, making it possible for visitors to behave and feel differently than in their daily lives.” (Van Vliet 2012: 20)

# Definition: Festival



Riemanns Musiklexikon

- **Events that have the purpose of achieving special quality for establishments which would normally not have such quality staffing. The ambition for exemplary and/or sensational performances and especially the granting of special compositions might show relationships to older festive music however it differs from festivals and musical days since the purpose of the event is music itself. ."** (zit. in Nauck 2002: 2, translation by Mark Romanelli)



# Definition: Festival



FIAPF

- „By international film festival, FIAPF, understands an event: ‘bringing together films of the world, many of which originate from countries other than the organising country, that are being screened in front of audiences including a significant number of accredited international industry, press and media representatives as well as general public, - taking place for a limited duration of time, once a year or every second year, in a prior defined city’.(Mazza 2008: 12)





# Definition: Festival

## Basic description:

“1. Performances, 2. temporality / spatiality, and 3., audiences, and interactive side programs” (Elfert 2009: 21)

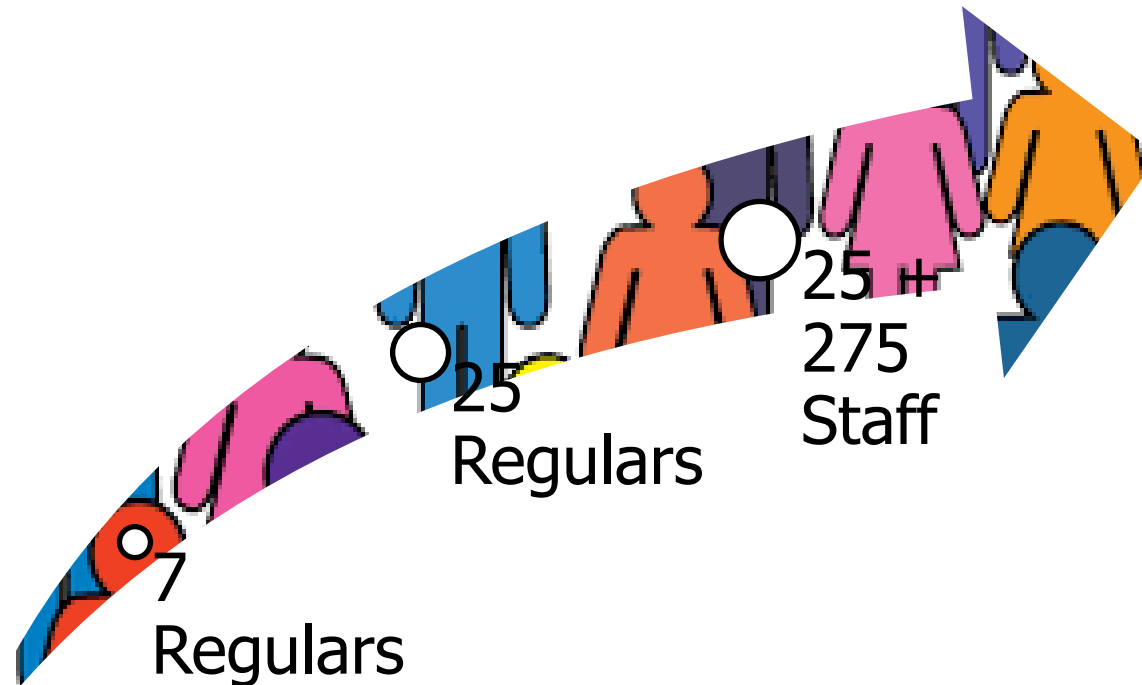




# Framework & Specifics

## Project management structure

Team: Regulars during the year and staff during the intensive period

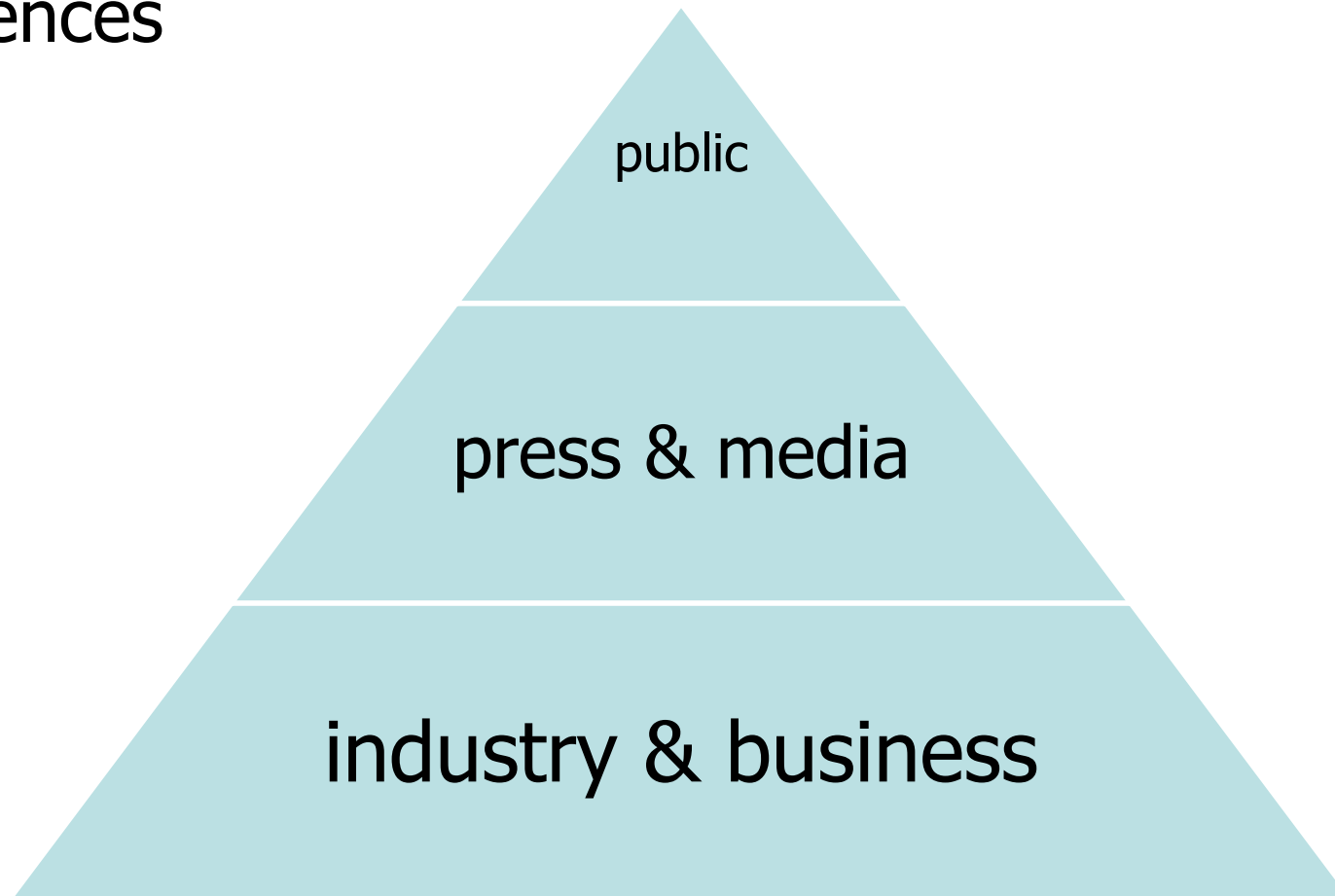


# Framework & Specifics

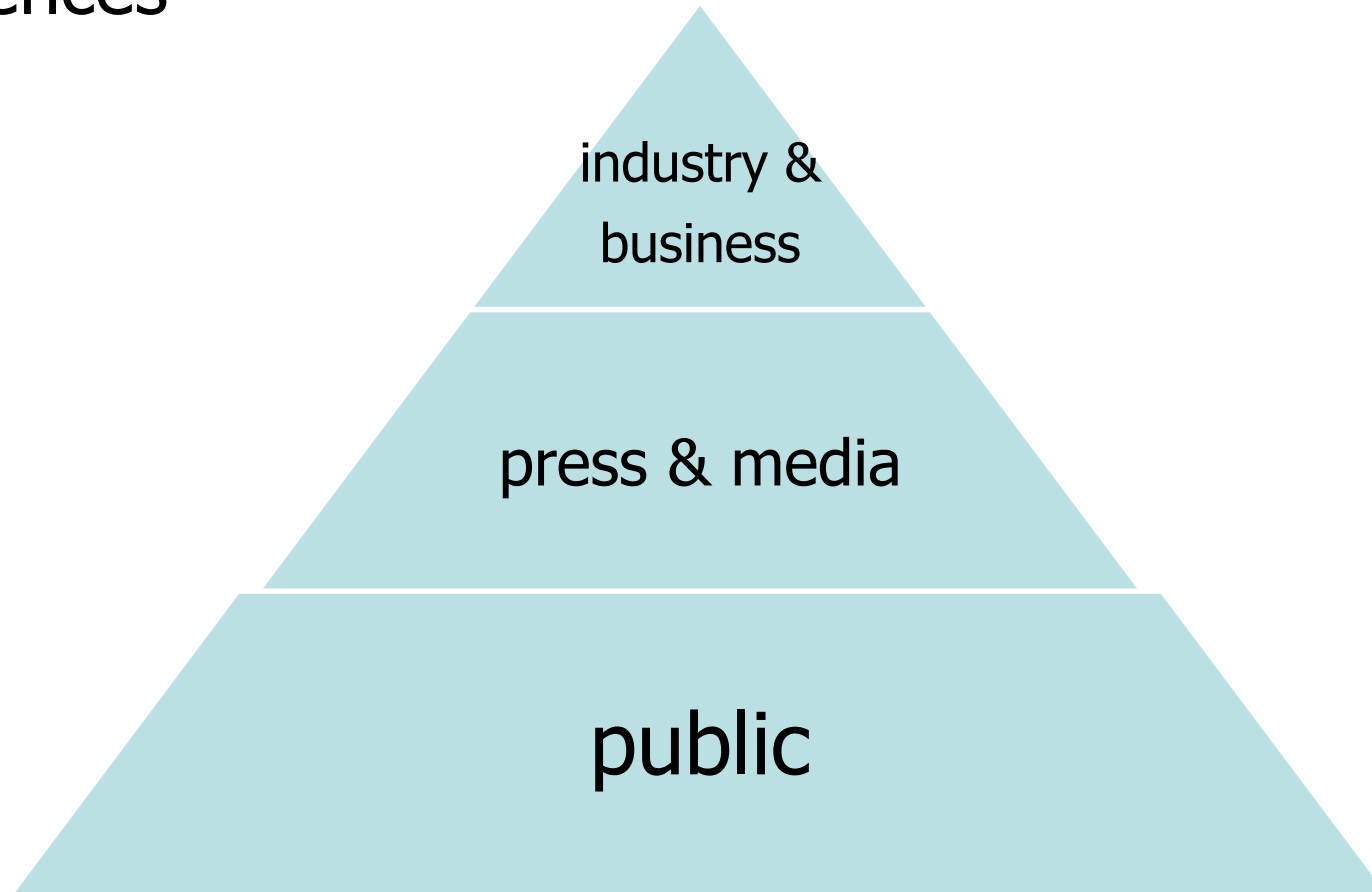
## Budget



## Audiences



## Audiences



# Framework & Specifics

## Networking structure

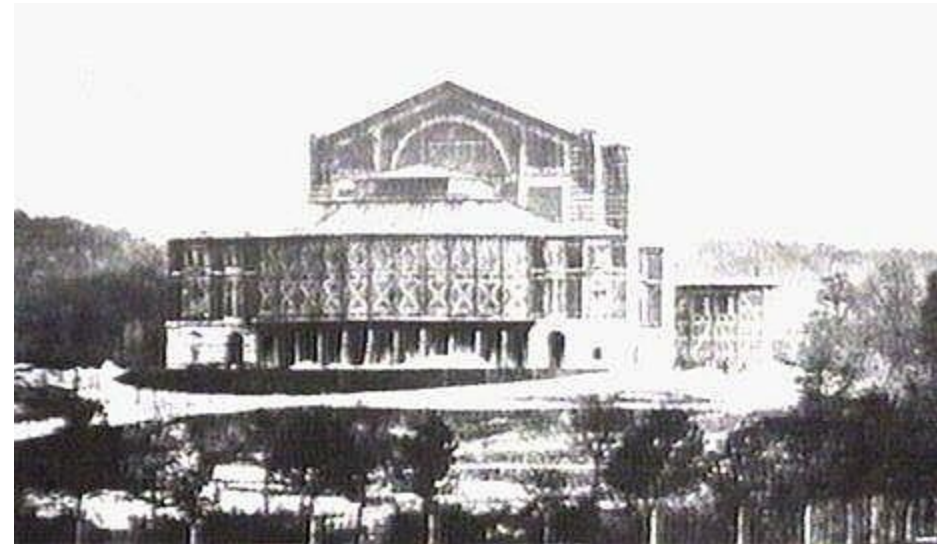
- Circuits
- Umbrella associations
- Consultants



# Development

Festivals are booming since the 1990s – how did they develop?

Great Exhibition 1851, London



Festspielhaus Bayreuth 1876



# Development



1921, Donaueschinger Kammermusiktage:  
The Amar-Quartett with Paul Hindemith



La Biennale di Venecia 1895



## **Pioneer Period:**

- Involvement of artists in the formation of festivals
- Locations in province: Spaces for experiments
- Liberation of academic dominance

# Development

## Some More Landmarks:

1925: Salzburger Festspiele – Cultural Tourism

1932: Filmfestival Venice – Cultural Industry

1947: Festival d'Avignon – since 1966 including the „Off“

1955: documenta – social policy; new concept of the curator's tasks and roles

1967: Monterey International Pop Festival – youth- & counterculture

1968: steirischer herbst – avant-garde in multidisciplinary

1979: ars electronica – technology and arts

1985: European Capital of Culture – mobile event, title event

## **Further Development and Influences:**

- Industries
- Curators
- Program policy
- Counterculture & social  
policy

## 3 periods of film festivals (de Valck):

- 1932-1968: initial festival format = national showcase
- 1970s-1980s: upheaval in the 1970s - independently organized festivals that operate both as protector of cinematic art and facilitation of film industry



# Example Film Festivals

New type of programming, partly based in the avant-garde-ideology – concern about selection mode and program policy

“Pesaro factor” =

*Festival editions and sections became mechanisms for intervention, institutionalized ways of playing issues on the international cultural agenda and with the worldwide dissemination of the festival phenomenon, signboards for competing festival images (Valck 2007: 28)*

- As of 1980s: professionalized and institutionalized formats
- As of 1990: „eventization“ and shift of emphasis (cultural tourism)

# Position

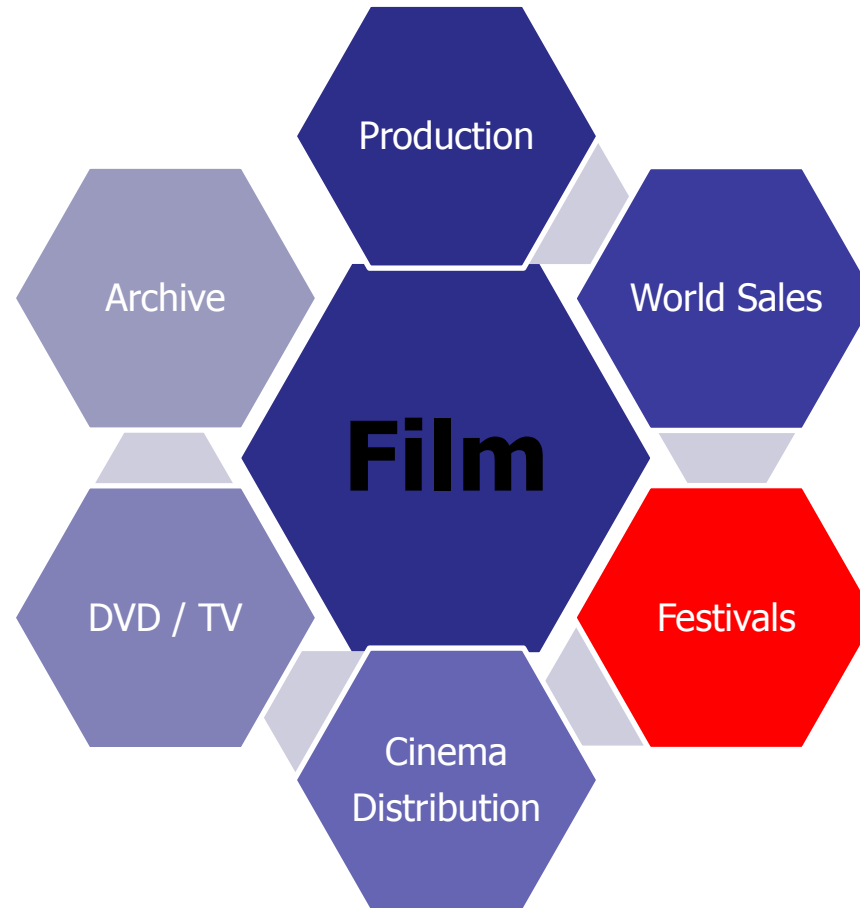


# Position

Main roles of  
the Festival:

Distribution  
& Attention

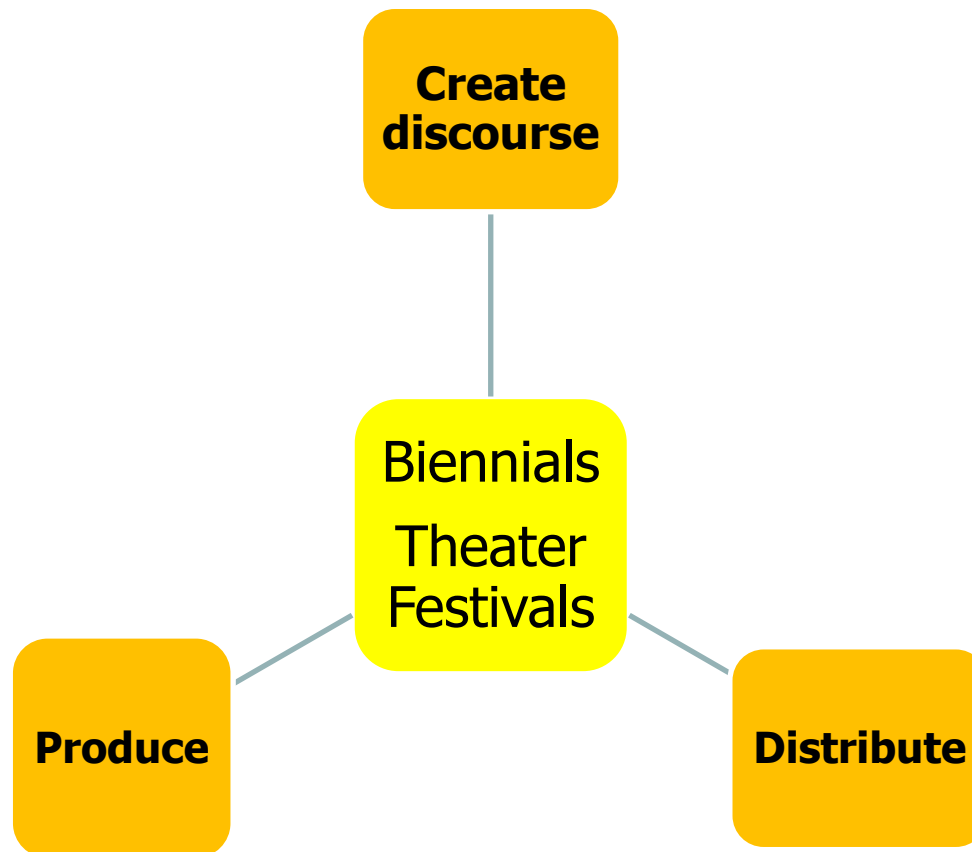
Creating a  
discourse





# Tasks

Biennials are vital and visible sites for the production, distribution, and public discourse around contemporary art.



# Tasks

## **Specifics within certain lines:**

- Renunciation of the stage as a traditional representation
- Attention for locations of the urban and scenic environment

= contemporary music festivals as of the 1980s (Nauck 2002: 7)



# Tasks



## **Festival Ankunft: Neue Musik im Hauptbahnhof Berlin**

Wenn sich Bremsgeräusche mit zeitgenössischer Musik vermischen, heißt es „Ankunft: Neue Musik“.

## **Klangspuren Schwaz: Pilgrimage**



# Tasks

- **Film Festivals** provide a mixture of commerce and art, especially when they integrate markets within the festivals

[https://www.berlinale.de/en/branche/european\\_film\\_market/index.html](https://www.berlinale.de/en/branche/european_film_market/index.html)



- **Pop Music Festivals** especially foster “showcase-festivals”

Networking and Playing / Concerts and Conference

<http://www.wavescentraleurope.com/>



# Tasks

Within some lines, festivals serve as important **cultural producers** by commissioning art pieces. This

## *producing character*

is vital for the esthetic development and for launching a discourse.

Film festivals have foundations for pre-production like

Hubert Bals Fund (Rotterdam)

Cinéfondation (Cannes)

Cine en construcción (San Sebastian)

World Cinema Fund (Berlin)



**HUBERT BALS  
FUND**

to support especially young filmmakers from economically poor regions.

# Tasks

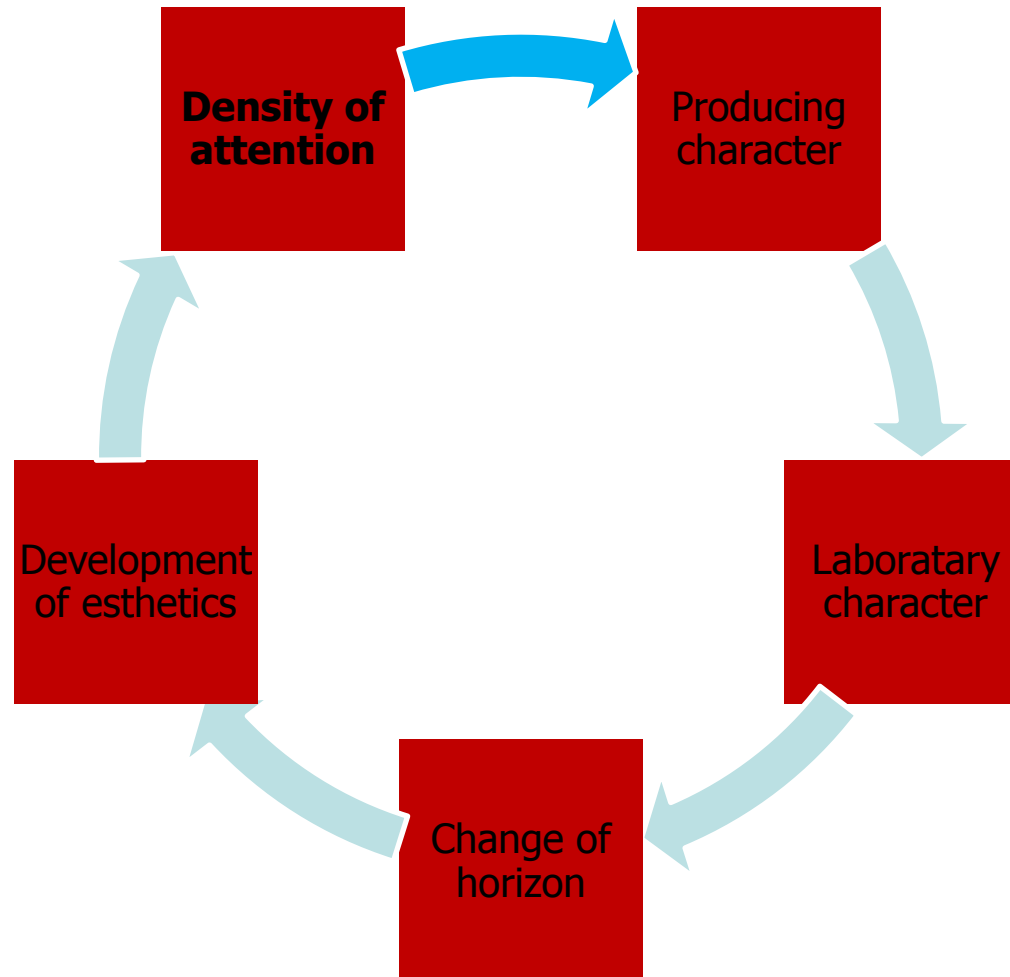
The producing character can also evoke a ***laboratory character*** – space for experiments:

Both artists and audience profit from this.

“Change of horizon” as a mode of reception = rupture of patterns that our brain fixes about narration (after Hans-Robert Jauß).

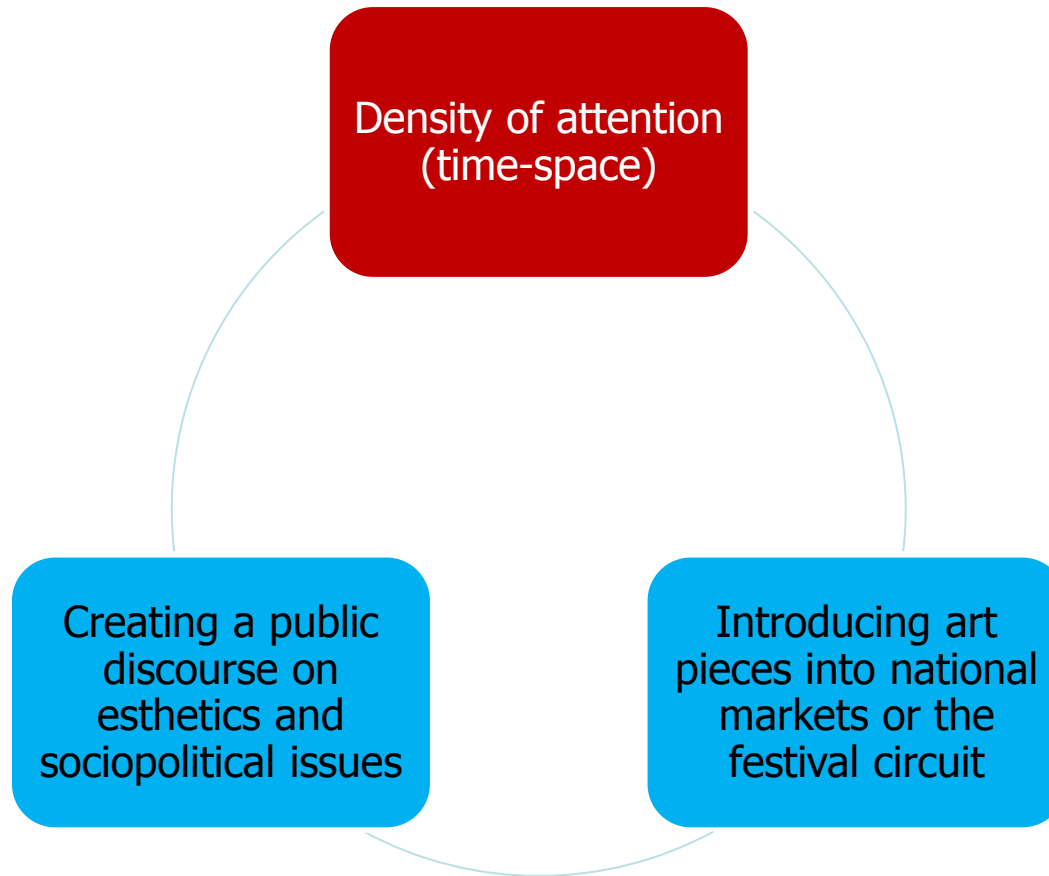


# Tasks and Effects





# Effects



# Program structure

## Program

### Main program

Competition / Premieres

Showcases

### Side Programs

Tributes / Retrospectives

“Offs”

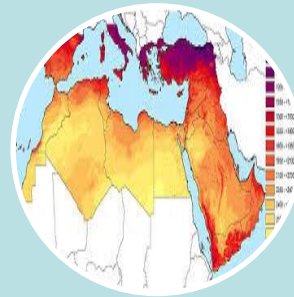
### Side Events

Discussions, workshops,  
readings, concerts, parties ....

# Alignments



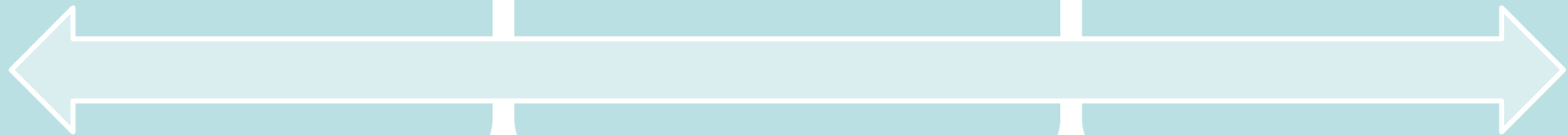
thematic



geopolitical



by lines



# Program Policy

**By criteria of selection:** national, international, thematic, geopolitical, sociopolitical, interdisciplinary, amateur

**By mode of selection:** juries, committee, curators, consultants, artistic director

**By positioning:**

- Ideological context (i.e. postcolonialism)
- Industrial interests (music- and filmfestivals)
- Esthetic interests
- ...

**By hierarchy:** competitive, types of premieres, high-end (presenting internationally renowned and famous artists), ...

order  
networking  
discourse

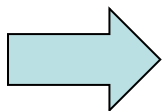
- Umbrella associations: FIAPF, Biennale Foundation

cooperating  
networking

- Festival Circuit

Die two sides of “internationalization”: distribution of the format itself and the internationalization of European programs

- Film- und Music festivals spread as of the 1950s globally
- A massive wave of new Biennials since the 1990s
- International programs in Europe are being launched since the 1950s by festivals, especially film festivals
- Since the 1990s, growing awareness about the fundamental importance to internationalize programs in correspondancy to the globalization



Cultural exchange and export of cultural concepts

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