

Festival's Supervisory Board Sets Course for the Future



President of the Salzburg Festival Kristina Hammer, designated Artistic Director Peter de Caluwe
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The Supervisory Board of the Salzburg Festival Fund presented the designated Artistic Director Peter de Caluwe and President Kristina Hammer for her second term during a press conference on Friday. These important staffing decisions were made this week.

In view of the end of President Kristina Hammer's contract, the president's position was advertised at the end of April, as required by law. The Supervisory Board completed a comprehensive selection process, including a search committee and hearing, before deciding to extend Kristina Hammer's contract for another five-year period starting on 1 January 2027.

The position of Interim Artistic Director Karin Bergmann was also advertised, with a start date of 1 October 2027. Peter de Caluwe, the former artistic director of the Opera La Monnaie in Brussels, was hired for the artistic directorship. He will begin his preparatory period in October, working closely with Interim Artistic Director Karin Bergmann and the Salzburg Festival team.

The chairwoman of the Supervisory Board, Landeshaupthfrau **Karoline Edtstadler**: "The members of the Supervisory Board and I are pleased that the Salzburg Festival is now well-prepared for the coming years. In Peter de Caluwe, we have succeeded in hiring an excellent leader for Salzburg. The extension of Festival President Kristina Hammer's contract ensures staffing continuity during challenging times."

"The presentation of the new leadership team is a strong signal for the Salzburg Festival's future. President Kristina Hammer and Artistic Director Peter de Caluwe stand for professionalism, international experience and new impulses. The hearing with the Festival's new Artistic Director Peter de Caluwe was refreshing and inspiring. I was particularly

impressed by his approach to the current architectural conditions and plans, which he considers a great opportunity to break new ground, involve new visitor segments and develop creative ideas for alternative performance venues. This constructive, forward-looking perspective opens up new possibilities for the Festival,” says Mayor **Bernhard Auinger**. “Great thanks are due to President Kristina Hammer, who has acquired sponsors under difficult circumstances, securing economic stability for the Festival. I also thank Karin Bergmann, who gave the Festival calmness, a clear structure and a successful season during a challenging period. I am also grateful to the independent search committee for its transparent and convincing decision.”

Andras Babler, Minister of Culture and Vice Chancellor, says: “In Peter de Caluwe, an extremely experienced and accomplished artistic director comes to Salzburg, one who has a long-standing relationship with the Salzburg Festival. In Salzburg, he sees the necessity of tradition and renewal; Peter de Caluwe considers the imminent rebuilding phase an extraordinary chance to add a unique chapter to the Festival’s history. To him, change means first and foremost a strong team, trust and shared responsibility. I wish Peter de Caluwe a great start in Salzburg, and I congratulate Kristina Hammer on the renewal of her contract as President. I am very grateful to the members of the search committee for their professional counsel.”

Festival President **Kristina Hammer**: “I thank the search committee and the Supervisory Board for the trust they have placed in me. It is a great honour and responsibility to continue leading the Salzburg Festival into a successful future. Before us lies one of the most important transformations in the history of the Festival. The upcoming general renovation and rebuilding period challenges us, but also opens up new possibilities in artistic, economic and structural terms. Let us use this opportunity together to strengthen the Festival sustainably for the future, making it more accessible for all Salzburg’s citizens, especially for young people, who are tomorrow’s audiences.

My special thanks to our staff and all artists. During the past years, we have made a lot happen as a team – and we will continue to build upon this.

The Salzburg Festival is an international beacon, and at the same time a festival for Salzburg. I look forward greatly to working with Peter de Caluwe from October 2027. Now our task is to make this transition work well and reliably. Karin Bergmann is an interim artistic director with great experience and respect for previous achievements. Together with Lukas Crepaz and me, she bears the responsibility for stable leadership for the Salzburg Festival in artistic, organizational and economic terms.”

Peter de Caluwe looks forward greatly to his new responsibility and preparing for his artistic directorship. “I approach this task with great joy and with humility – given the history of the Salzburg Festival, its extraordinary artistic tradition and the people who have shaped it and make it happen today. The Festival has accompanied me for more than forty years, and I am deeply moved by the fact that now I will be allowed to shape its future. My compass for this task is really quite simple: the highest artistic quality and the greatest possible openness. I want to keep alive the European and humanistic idea that gave birth to the Festival, and carry it forward in our times – with curiosity, courage and trust in the power of the arts. I am interested in encounters: between generations and artistic genres, between different aesthetic languages, between artists and their audience – and also with people who may yet find their way to the Festival in the future. I envision a Festival that is deeply rooted in

Salzburg, yet open to the world – that surprises and touches people, opening new perspectives for them. That is what I look forward to, together with all those who make this Festival possible with their experience, their passion and their commitment.”