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# PhD THESIS

## CULTURAL HERITAGE:
## AN ORIGINAL SETTING?
**Study of the specific problems related to Cultural Heritage sites employed by Art Performances**

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# SUMMARY

This thesis analyses the characteristics of a large-scale cultural phenomenon, illustrated by the placement of various productions from the field of Performing Arts (theatre, opera, dance, concerts, etc.) within sites classified as National Cultural Heritage or World Heritage (UNESCO List).

The research starts from the premise that the association of the two cultural components (heritage sites and performing arts) involves a series of specific problems, difficult to handle by cultural managers and public authorities, with a permanent risk of deterioration of the site or of compromising the artistic vision.  On the other hand, the paper aims to identify the opportunities embedded in such collaboration and to analyse different directions of development, in accordance with the trends observed in the cultural field in recent years. The categories chosen for this analysis are the **listed monuments** and **Cultural Heritage sites** classified according to national and/or international legislation and the events that are part of the **Performing Arts**. However, at the crossing of the two there is a third category, represented by the **Intangible Cultural Heritage**, associated in some cases with the Tangible Cultural Heritage or integrated into the performances and the cultural manifestations.

From a methodological perspective, in the stage prior to the content development were clarified the terminology and concepts used throughout the work *("cultural heritage*", *"monuments", "ensembles", "sites", "intangible cultural heritage", "natural heritage", "performing arts", "dramatic art", "comedy", "tragedy", "opera", "stage space" etc*). Special attention was paid to the national and international legal framework governing the public policy applicable to Monuments and Cultural Heritage sites (cf. Bibliography, pg. 171). The documentation included a variety of information sources, such as specialized literature related to Performing Arts and to the theory of restoration and valorisation of Cultural Heritage, national and European legislation on cultural policy, International Conventions applicable to the cultural field, reports of scientific or cultural cooperation projects following an interdisciplinary approach to the cultural phenomenon.

The research area is delimited in space and time, so as to contain relevant elements for the analysis of current issues faced by cultural stakeholders.

Although dramatic forms of expression have been researched all over the globe, the historical study that serves as reference for the critical analysis is limited to the Greco-Roman civilization, the European Middle Ages and the corresponding artistic expressions within the present-day Romanian territory. In each case, the research looked into the sites that have been used for performances and selected the ones that best exemplify the evolution of the performance, the architectural transformation of the performance venues and their relationship with the adjoining territory (environment, urban tissue, etc.) and sites that illustrate the changing relationship between artists/performance and audience. Therefore, the geography of the historical study swiftly moves from the Ancient Greece (Athens – *Theatre of Dionysus*) to the Roman Empire (Rome – *Theatre of Pompey*), from the Medieval cathedrals and monasteries to royal palaces and noble residences in France, England, Italy or Spain, without forgetting the squares of the major European cities - which became, at the time, the scene for Processions, Mysteries and Miracles. Referring to the area of present-day Romania, the historical study recalls the main archaeological sites from the Daco-Roman antiquity (Sarmizegetusa, *Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa*) but also the sites of the former Roman settlements in *Porolissum* and *Micia,* holding the ruins of amphitheatre-type constructions. For the study of the medieval period, not having identified architectural structures directly related to the Performing Arts, the paper presents the main forms of Dramaturgy documented in the selected territories, looking to maintain a coherence of argumentation in respect to the analysis of the European space in the same reference period.

On the temporal axis, the historical study begins with the classical period of the Ancient Greece (V-IV centuries BC) and with the golden age of the Roman Empire (I-II centuries AD). The chapter on the Middle Ages covers the period between the XIVth -XVIth Centuries, following the classification proposed by André Degaine and the analysis of the main theatrical expressions. As far as the present-day Romania area is concerned, the study covers the period of the Dacian Kingdom, its conquest by the Roman Empire and the transformation of Dacia into an Imperial Province (Ist-IIIrd Centuries AD). However, for the medieval period, the information being extremely fragmented and incomplete, the decision was not to enter into controversial or inconclusive topics (which are not the object of the present research) and to limit the comparative study to the elements for which we have enough information so that the necessary components for the critical analysis of the studied cultural phenomenon can

be identified. Consequently, the reference period is between the IIIrd and the XVIth Centuries.

During the research, the bibliographic and documentary sources were carefully selected so as to avoid, as much as possible, scientific and reasoning errors. For information about the Greco-Roman and European spaces, bibliographic sources by referenced authors and/or established research centres were used, including *online* archives. For information about Cultural Heritage sites from present-day Romania, databases developed and/or validated by the National Institute of Heritage were consulted and cited (e.g., *CIMEC – Gateway to Romania's Cultural Heritage* or *RAN – National Archaeological Repertoire)*. In view of providing up-to-date and interdisciplinary information, a large number of international cultural projects have been studied, among those funded in the recent years through the Cultural Cooperation (*Culture, Creative Europe*) and Research (*Horizon Europe*) programmes of the European Union.

The historical study is followed by the thorough presentation of 14 Case Studies and by the analysis of specific problems highlighted and opportunities envisaged. The Case Studies (Chapter 4) are the result of the field research carried out between 2017-2022 in Romania, France, Italy, Croatia and Greece, of the interviews conducted on these occasions and of the cultural events observed. The final selection was put together in a way that allows to present different approaches and perspectives on the cultural phenomenon studied, in view of its better understanding. The level of detail depicted resulted from the information available and the citation agreements obtained from the interviewees, using a common set of questions (cf. Table 1, pg.5). The interviews were conducted with directors and artists who performed or staged performances adapted to a Cultural Heritage site, with site managers who hosted such performances, with experienced technical staff (sound, lights, logistics) and with experts involved in defining, drafting and updating cultural legislation.

Chapters 5 and 6 analyse the problems (5) and opportunities (6) identified in relation to this type of performances and propose a classification according to the particularity of the location, most specifically, by taking into account the initial destination: either for events with an audience or with another purpose. The next chapter (7) formulates a series of recommendations resulting from the scientific research and structured into four categories: the infrastructure needed for the performance (stage, set, sound and light equipment, etc.), the audience (access,

seating and evacuation), the relationship between the artistic message and the history of the location and the needed planning.

The last chapter (8) concludes on the aspects considered fundamental for a correct contextualization and production of such events.

The main research directions pursued are highlighted through the choice of the case studies, as it follows:

- **The history of using Cultural Heritage as venue for large-scale performances** most likely begins in the medieval times, as evidenced by examples studied in Italy and France. In Italy, the use of the ruins of the Colosseum as setting for the staging of the Mysteries by the *Fratelli della Passione del Gonfalone* (Brothers of the Passion of Gonfalone) has been documented since the XIIIth Century (1264), recalling the dark age of early Christianity and the Christian martyrs who had been sacrificed there. A similar example has been documented in France, by using the ruins of the Roman Amphitheatre in Bourges (the IInd Century AD) as setting for the Medieval Mysteries, a fact attested by contemporary testimonies. (Chapter 4.1, pp. 55 - 57)

- **The strong link between the ruined Cultural Heritage and the romantic vision of the past** is highlighted in the case of Villers Abbey in Belgium – a twelfth-century Cistercian establishment and silent witness of over 800 years of troubled history, currently highlighted during the festival "*L'été théâtral de Villers-la-Ville*", founded in 1987 by Patrick de Longrée. On this occasion, the heritage site becomes the set for cultural mega-productions, which emphasize the background's theatrical features (e.g., W. Shakespeare, Goethe, A. Dumas, etc.), while using the variety of locations in Villers in order to explore new creative directions and reaching new records of audience participation (exceeding 25,000 spectators / show). (Chapter 4.2, pp. 58-60)

- **The organization of this type of performance as part of an endeavour to define the national identity** is analysed in the case of the modern Greek state through its efforts to anchor in the glory of the Athenian past, translated into a sustained effort to restore the ancient ruins and revive the tradition of the ancient theatre. The history of *the Odeon of Herodes Atticus*, located on the slope of the Acropolis of Athens, represents an illustrative example of this approach, along with other remarkable attempts, such as the ephemeral *Delphic Festival*

initiated by Angelos Sikelianos and Eva Palmer-Sikelianos. Notable is the tension between a limiting approach (which allows the use of the ancient sites exclusively for classical dramaturgy performances) and the openness towards all types of performances – both accompanied by the preservation efforts of the Greek Archaeological Service, which has drawn up already in the '80s instructions for the use of ancient sites in the context of performances. (Chapter 4.3, pp. 61-64)

- **The search for authenticity – as a central value in this type of production – is** analysed in the chapter on the historic centre of Dubrovnik (Croatia), which has been hosting since 1950 *"The Dubrovnik Summer Festival"*. During the festival, which takes place every year between the 10th of July and the 25th of August, a rich programme of classical music, theatre, opera and dance performances is presented in more than 70 locations in and around Dubrovnik, the selection criterion for the performances being their adaptability to Dubrovnik's squares, palaces, towers and parks. The case study continues with the description of various aspects related to holding a classical music concert in a space that was not designed for this use (in this case, the *Rector's Palace*) through an exchange of views with the Chief Conductor of the Dubrovnik Symphony Orchestra, Marc Tardue. The interview highlights the unique features of this type of cultural experience and its *Catharsis* potential in the case of the performances that manage to offer the audience an experience as close to authenticity as possible. (Chapter 4.4, pp. 65-70)

- **The quest for the perfect sound resulting from the interaction with the heritage site** is documented through an interview with the Swiss artist Roland van Straaten, famous worldwide for his harmonica virtuosity. With extensive experience as both composer and performer, van Straaten held concerts within many Cultural Heritage sites, explaining in the interview how he tries to find the perfect sound in each location and what are the specific problems of an open-air concert in the proximity of a cultural site – in this case, the Medici Palace in Seravezza, Italy. (Chapter 4.5, pp. 71-74)

- The **impact** mega concerts can have on **nearby cultural sites** is discussed in the case study about the Pink Floyd concert held on the 15th of July 1989, within the Lagoon of Venice. The concert was organized on the 15th of July so as to coincide with the traditional Venetian feast *Festa del Redentore (Feast of the Saviour),* which commemorates the end of the plague epidemic of 1577.

Preceded by controversy and administrative obstacles, the concert finally took place on a floating stage anchored in front of Saint Mark's Square. The audience suffocated the Square and the nearby streets and canals, reaching a record attendance estimated at 200,000 spectators. The concert also marked a record for overall audience, being broadcast *live* by RAI worldwide, with an estimate of 100 million viewers. Although impressive, the show raised many questions about the measures needed to protect and preserve Cultural Heritage in such situations. (Chapter 4.6, pp. 75-78)

- **The link between the type of heritage restoration and the possible uses in terms of performances** is highlighted in the case of the French castle Pierrefonds (Oise), restored since 1858 under the guidance of the well-known architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc. The former ruined Castle of the Dukes of Orléans underwent a process of total reconstruction in order to transform the medieval ruin into an imperial castle, imagined for the court of Emperor Napoleon the IIIrd and his wife, Empress Eugénie. The castle was rebuilt, including buildings marked on the older plans but also parts imagined by Viollet-le-Duc, all decorated with elements evocative of European Gothic architecture. Pierrefonds thus becomes an ideal, timeless castle, the Gothic elements inserted having the role of fulfilling this fairytale imaginary. Although scientifically controversial, Viollet-le-Duc's work is much appreciated by the general public and the castle is now a highly sought after setting for films, private events, concerts and performances. (Chapter 4.7, pp. 79-81)

- **The potential for interdisciplinary development around a Cultural Heritage site** is documented in the case of the Roman theatre in Orange (France). Built during the reign of *Augustus* (the Ist Century AD), the Roman theatre stands out for its impressive dimensions but also for the quality of the architectural project, including infrastructure for special effects and remarkable acoustics. The Roman theatre of Orange was spared the violence of the Middle Ages, thus being now considered the best preserved of the ancient Roman theatres and went through a series of changes over time (the building was reused for other purposes during the medieval period, including as a refuge for the population in the XVIth Century). In the IXth Century began a Clearance process, by demolishing the houses built in the interior perimeter and consolidating the ancient walls, actions followed by restoration works. Currently, the Orange

Theatre is both a research site for specialists and students and a cultural landmark. Its main function remains hosting exceptional shows, with the participation of renowned artists. However, the eclecticism of the performance program is noted, which leads to the assumption that the focus is more on using the location as a unique setting for commercially successful shows, than for a dedicated cultural program, centred on the heritage site. A more tailored approach, linked to the specificity of the site, has been proposed in recent years through the development of a program focused on acoustics with the prospect of transforming the ancient theatre into a "stage for sound innovation". (Chapter 4.8, pp. 82 - 88)

- The analysis **of the Italian authorities' efforts to protect Cultural Heritage in the context of public performances** provides examples of good practice and underlines the importance of the specialists involved in such projects. The responsibility for protecting monuments and Cultural Heritage sites lies with the Italian state, which fulfils this obligation through the central and regional administration – the Ministry of Culture and its representatives in the territory (Regional Directorates for Cultural Heritage and local structures called *Soprintendenze*). In Italy, the issue of protecting Cultural Heritage is approached differently, due to the well-defined legal framework, the quality of education in the cultural field, the high professional level of the civil servants and the involvement of civil society. Within the Ministry of Culture there is a department responsible for authorising events in listed Heritage sites and in the case of major sites (e.g., Verona) there may be Conventions concluded between the Ministry of Culture and the site manager regarding the possibilities of using the Heritage site for public performances. (Chapter 4.9, pp. 89 - 92)

- **Working with Cultural Heritage as part of a cultural ecosystem** is presented in the case of Duomo Di Milano (Italy), by analysing the activity of the organization that has managed it for over 630 years - Veneranda Fabbrica del Duomo. In order to upkeep such a monument, an extensive program of conservation, restoration and promotion is needed, including religious and profane activities. Among the latter, the *VivilDuomo* Cultural Program started in 2010 in order to highlight the Duomo's tangible and intangible heritage through sacred art and music, including also a series of concerts on the roof of the Cathedral, given by internationally renowned artists. Two different pathways are therefore distinguished in relation to performances: on one hand, the

uninterrupted tradition of sacred music concerts performed by the Cathedral's Choir (*La Cappella Musicale del Duomo*) with their *Maestro* who plays the biggest pipe organ in Italy; on the other hand, there is a more commercial, communication and marketing approach, especially notable in the case of the rooftop concerts, justified by the financial pressure induced by the necessary restoration works. (Chapter 4.10, pp. 93-101)

- The efforts of the French state for the **decentralization and democratization of culture** are illustrated by the case of the Nîmes Amphitheatre. The Roman amphitheatre, built in the first century AD, has a capacity of 25,000 seats, being one of the largest Roman amphitheatres on present-day French territory. The history of the architectural monument is similar to that of other Roman amphitheatres: after the decline of the Empire, the arenas are fortified and the city's population takes refuge behind the imposing walls to shelter themselves from barbarian invasions. Inside, houses are built, shops established and 2 churches are raised. At the end of the XVIIIth Century it was decided to restore the Roman arena as part of the plans to modernize the city. The arena was cleared, classified as a Historical Monument (1840) and subsequently rehabilitated and restored, thus returning to its original function as a location for performances. The study of the performances staged in Nîmes after the restoration of the Amphitheatre point to elements of a cultural policy focused on democratizing the access to culture and prioritizing national works and works created by French authors, to which were added works composed by foreign authors but written or staged in French. Here, too, the representation of the performance in such a unique setting allows for directorial extravagances impossible to achieve in a traditional theatre hall (e.g., including a real bullfighting moment during the performance of the opera *Carmen* by Georges Bizet). The amphitheatre currently welcomes a variety of events targeting all categories of audience, with a clear preference for hosting large-scale events and performances, which keep the strategic lines drawn at the beginning of the last century. (Chapter 4.11, pp. 102 - 108)

- **Representative of the cultural strategy of an era** – the communist period in Romania – **and the associations practiced between heritage sites and cultural events,** the legendary concert of the Romanian band PHOENIX on the 30th of May 1976 remained in the memory of the participants as being linked to

the Dacian site of Sarmizegetusa. Subsequent references being rather vague as to the exact location, the association with the emblematic site of the Romanians persisted. Chapter 4.12 describes in detail the context in which this concert took place and analyses the interlock, at discourse level, between *the educational-patriotic action* organized by the newspaper "Scînteia Tineretului", the magazine "Luceafărul" and TVR and the narrative that subsequently entered the public consciousness following the publication of Nicu Covaci's memoirs. (Chapter 4.12, pp. 109-115).

- **The effort** of the *Sonoro* Cultural Association to combine chamber music with various emblematic architectural monuments in Romania in order to **raise public awareness** is presented through the *SoNoRo Conac* tour. Initiated in 2013, the tour takes place annually in exceptional locations across Romania, choosing mainly mansions, former boyar houses and other representative monuments for the national Cultural Heritage. The central idea of the approach was to "give chamber music its original space [...]", to which was later added the desire to contribute to the reintroduction into the cultural circuit of recently restored or rehabilitated heritage buildings and a component of cultural activism, manifested through campaigns to promote successful restorations or the need to rehabilitate some monuments (e.g. the concert-event #SOSconac, held in June 2017 in the garden in front of Marghiloman Mansion in Hagiești, Ialomița County, drew attention to the urgent need to restore the historical monument). (Chapter 4.13, pp. 116-119)

- A special case is represented by the **monuments and sites listed as UNESCO World Heritage.** Chapter 4.14 analyses the specificity of this legislative framework and the way in which the international provisions are being implemented by the signatory states of the UNESCO Convention. (Chapter 4.14, pp. 120-124)

Staging a show within a classified heritage site encounters a number of difficulties from the outset. It quickly becomes obvious that some monuments or architectural ensembles were not designed for this purpose. In other cases, we notice how the show loses its artistic energy when moved to an unconventional location. Chapter 5 details the types of problems identified during the field research, the bibliographic study and through interviews with artists, cultural managers and public policy experts. To these logistical and conceptual problems are added the legal implications arising from the

classification of a monument or site as Cultural Heritage, an aspect detailed in the previous chapters regarding the applicable legal basis.

The main **problems** identified are related to:

- THE SCENOGRAPHIC SPACE: The same type of scenographic space cannot be recreated within a Cultural Heritage site as it would be in a professional theatre hall. The available surface, the specificity of the building and the state of preservation of the monument (or ruin) will condition the placement of all the elements needed for the performance. Other fundamental aspects to consider when planning performances in heritage sites are the accessibility of the venue, the conditions available for seating the audience and its evacuation in case of emergency. We note that there is currently no specific procedure in the Romanian normative framework for emergency situations arising during an event with an audience in a site classified as Cultural Heritage.

- THE INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED FOR THE PERFORMANCE (SOUND, LIGHTS): The main criterion for distinguishing between types of buildings is the existence or non-existence of electricity and of a basic infrastructure for performances, which is particularly problematic in the case of ancient and medieval sites. In the event that they have subsequently been electrified, then sound systems and lights can be installed more easily, but they will also have to be adapted to the configuration of the site. Another major difference is between indoor and outdoor performances. When events take place indoors, the difficulty lies in installing and fixing sound and light equipment without damaging the monument/site (by using, for example, self-bearing systems). On the other hand, when the show takes place outdoors, light and sound become variables that depend on weather phenomena, outdoor context, audience behaviour, etc. They can contribute to the drama of the scene – as in Greek amphitheatres, where plays are performed at sunset – or they can give rise to completely different situations. That's why both the performers and the technical staff need to be prepared for changes and for the unexpected. The specific problems of these performances are mostly related to the need to protect the classified Cultural Heritage - amid procedural and normative uncertainties - ensuring optimal conditions for the performance and compliance with safety rules. The technical staff interviewed for this chapter also evoked problems resulting from gaps and limitations in the legislative framework and operational guidelines, combined with a lack of specialized assistance from cultural heritage specialists, plus the risks related to the installation/dismantling and operation of sound equipment within a performance in unconventional locations.

- THE ACOUSTICS: there are major differences between the buildings created for performances and those initially planned for another destination, between the locations designed including a sound system and those dating back to an era before electricity, as well as between locations with a rooftop and those outdoors. In contemporary research, the difficulty posed by the state of degradation of ancient remains can be solved through historical study combined with computer techniques for predicting the sound field. Following these studies, a first identification of echo, focus and sound reinforcement areas in the ancient edifice can be carried out. In the context of problems raised by sound pressure, which can harm historical monuments and adjacent artistic elements (mosaics, pipe organ, fresco, decorations, etc.), it should be noted the opportunity to establish, by law, maximum sound values for events inside or within the perimeter of historical monuments/sites.

- UNFORESEEN SITUATIONS: The unpredictability of weather phenomena is an accepted risk when organizing an outdoor performance – sometimes producers having a backup plan, other times not being possible to relocate the performance. Another unknown factor in the case of unconventional spaces are the intrusions into the scene, much more likely to happen than in a traditional context.

- ASSOCIATION/MESSAGE: The issue of the values embedded and passed on through Cultural Heritage is extremely complex and all artists interviewed in the research phase confessed they felt a pressure to present something in relation to the hosting heritage – either an adapted version of a famous piece, or a new creation inspired by the specificity and history of the place. However, such a performance can foster positive and identity values, just as it can hurt the sensitivity of a population or minority group, stir controversy or reinforce a political statement on a given issue. It is therefore recommended that cultural managers and directors take into account, in addition to the artistic aspects, also the values represented and passed on by the Cultural Heritage within which the event takes place. The results of the 2017 Eurobarometer Special edition on Cultural Heritage[1] proved that, albeit discreetly, Europeans' attachment to the Cultural Heritage of the past is still extremely important.

At the same time, a number of **opportunities** have been identified:

- STAGING A DIFFERENT TYPE OF PERFORMANCE: The possibility to stage a different type of show and interact differently with the audience is probably the main reason triggering the efforts to organize a show in a heritage location. In a grand

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[1] Cultural heritage - December 2017 - - Eurobarometer survey (europa.eu)

location, an extravagant show can be staged, which goes far beyond the physical limits of a traditional theatre hall. The capacity of these venues in terms of the number of seats for the public is impressive, which is an argument in favour of democratizing the access to culture, but also an economic argument related to the profitability of the performance. Another argument often invoked is the authenticity or, more often, its search. Conceived as a kind of ultimate cultural experience, placing the performance in its original setting remains a dream for many creators and a goal in itself.

- ATTRACTING A LARGER AND MORE DIVERSE AUDIENCE: Attracting new audiences is, on one hand, linked to increasing the cultural legitimacy of the artistic act and, on the other hand, a financial necessity. Undoubtedly, one of the merits of the performances organized in Cultural Heritage sites is to democratize the act of culture and to broaden participation to different types of audience, other than the ones who attend the performance in its usual setting. Surveys and sociological studies show that many limitations to cultural access and participation are, in fact, psychological, entire social categories feeling excluded from cultural manifestations considered elitist. Under these circumstances, moving the performance from the conventional space of the theatre or opera hall to a unique location (castle, mansion, medieval ruin, ancient amphitheatre, etc.) is perceived as a partial renunciation of socio-cultural codes and therefore considered more approachable. The images of tourists sitting on the ground, in an informal posture, on the sun-heated tiles of the terrace of the Milan Duomo embody this accessibility, embraced by an undifferentiated audience. However, it is the mission of artists and cultural managers to propose quality events that complement the message and cultural value of the associated heritage, without falling into the trap of easiness and superficial entertainment.

- THE POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL ECONOMY: In general, the performances organised in Cultural Heritage sites are, by virtue of their exceptional character, event-performances, designed to attract a large audience and generate profit. At a closer look, however, we notice the diversity of economic variables and the difficulty of establishing a calculation formula for this profit. Information about venue capacity (number of seats) and ticket prices is often available and we may therefore calculate the revenue from the event. However, information on costs is mostly unknown, and private organisers or cultural institutions managing the sites are not obliged to disclose their balance sheets. Even with this information, for a correct calculation of profit, the exact costs related to the event should be known, which is very difficult to separate

from the total expenses of the institution/organization. Therefore, caution is recommended in defining economic indicators for calculating the profit resulting from cultural events organized in heritage sites.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the analysed case studies and considering the legal and operational framework studied, the paper proposes a series of recommendations for cultural managers and managers of Cultural Heritage sites, for artists, directors, producers of shows and technical staff involved in their realization. For easy reading, the recommendations are structured in thematic groups.

- **INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED FOR THE PERFORMANCE (STAGE, SET, SOUND AND LIGHT EQUIPMENT, ETC.)**

- Historic buildings and Cultural Heritage sites are protected by national and international law, which implies that any measure or action affecting their physical integrity is punishable according to law. Consequently, teams wishing to stage a show within or in the vicinity of such a venue must plan and use only equipment and systems that do not harm the site.
- All interventions carried out in preparation for the event must be reversible.
- The person in charge of the monument/heritage site must communicate the maximum capacity of the location (total number of authorized persons) as well as the maximum weight that can be borne by the historical structure.
- The building/placement of the stage and of the setting for the performance must not affect the heritage structures, but ensure their protection throughout the event, even if this means modifying the initial setting or installing a different stage than the conventional stage of a theatre hall.
- For light and sound equipment, self-bearing systems must be used mainly, so that they do not require fixation on the Cultural Heritage structures.
- Their transportation *in situ* will be done with maximum caution, using walkways specially designed to avoid direct contact with the historical structure and respecting the maximum accepted weight.
- All accessories (cables, generators, different types of supporting elements, etc.) must be safely placed in respect to the artists, the public and the technical staff.

- The sources of electrical power as well as all electrical equipment must be tested beforehand and all measures taken to ensure compatibility between the equipment used and in order to prevent accidents.
- The noise pressure produced during the event should not affect the heritage structures. For this purpose, each historical monument and each Cultural Heritage site should establish maximum accepted values, depending on the specificity of the building and its adjacent elements (mosaics, decorations, works of art, etc.), which they should communicate in advance to the producers of performances, so that they can be respected during the event.
- In general, the expert assistance of the person responsible for the cultural site during the preparation phase of the performance should be ensured and all restrictions applicable to the venue should be communicated to the producer and technical staff.
- For the venues which have not been designed for performances or which have not foreseen the existence of modern sound and lighting equipment, an area must be defined for the placing of specific equipment (mixer, etc.) and technical staff.
- Principles of good practice should be established at national level when organising performances for the public in locations classified as national or world Cultural Heritage, complemented by specific rules for each heritage typology.
- Education and training programmes for technical staff should also be organised at national level with regard to the specific conditions applicable to historic buildings and Cultural Heritage sites.

- **AUDIENCE ACCESS, SEATING AND EVACUATION**

- The venue selected for the event must be accessible to the general public.
- In order to avoid congestion and to allow access to all categories of public, the organizers must also provide public transport solutions to and from the location. This can be done through a partnership with the local or regional public transport company and several transport options (buses, trains, flights, etc.) should be considered.
- Special attention should be paid to persons with reduced mobility and disabilities. Facilitating the access of these categories to the event involves

ensuring a compatible infrastructure (e.g., wheelchair access ramps), offering discounts for attendants, adapting the content to the extent possible and providing support by the organizing team during the event.

- The location must be accessible enough to accommodate machinery (sound, lights, stage set, etc.) and emergency response vehicles (ambulance, fire engine, etc.).

- The seating of the audience must take into account the visibility and acoustics of the venue so that all spectators can benefit from a quality experience.

- The choice of benches/grades/chairs must take into account the characteristics of the venue, not affect the physical integrity of the heritage site and ensure, as far as possible, the comfort of the public during the performance (e.g., by using seat cushions).

- Throughout the event, the person responsible for the heritage site should ensure the supervision of the site with specialised staff.

- In the event of an emergency situation (accident, fire, extreme weather events, etc.), a specific procedure must be established to secure equipment, evacuate people and prevent material damage to the Cultural Heritage site.

- **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVE AND THE ARTISTIC MESSAGE**

- In all situations involving historic buildings and classified heritage sites or including references to intangible heritage, historical accuracy and a correct contextualization of the performance must be respected.

- Deeply subjective cultural categories – the values attributed to Cultural Heritage and the artistic creativity – should be combined in such a way as to reinforce each other, in a manner compatible with the public's expectations and local memory, and avoiding instrumentalization and abuse of the past.

- For a more complex cultural experience, associated heritage communities can be empowered within an inclusive, multicultural and sustainable approach.

- The communication campaign built around the event must be structured so as to reach the targeted audiences, including innovative information and interaction techniques and respecting the historical and cultural content agreed with the creators of the show and those responsible for the heritage site.

- Education and training programmes in the fields of cultural mediation and interpretation of Cultural Heritage should be set up at national level.

- The relationship established on this occasion between the cultural heritage site and different types of performing arts should take into account existing recommendations and examples of good practice at European level.

▪ **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

- The registration of the event in relation to the thematic and regional/national cultural routes must take into account possible synergies with other similar events and with other areas (e.g., cultural tourism).
- The financing of the show should be secured from different sources so as to minimize, as much as possible, the constraints imposed by the funders or implicit (pressure of economic profitability and profitability of the event).
- At national level, the approval procedure for such events, both at the level of regional cultural authorities and for local government and emergency services, should be clarified. This procedure should be communicated, in a transparent manner, to show organisers.

From the multitude of perspectives discussed, for the end we note those considered fundamental for a correct contextualization and production of these events:

- **Respect for the historical truth**: whether we are talking about commercial or marketing reasoning, whether is about manipulating the past for propaganda or political purposes, or whether the message is simplified to be easily perceived by the general public – in principle, there is no justification for disrespecting historical truth and falsifying the past. Of course, history is a complex narrative, on which different groups may have different attitudes or feelings, but in any context, clear and proven factual elements can be identified following scientific discoveries and research in this field. Performances organised within or near Cultural Heritage sites must respect the history of the place and take into account historical truth and accuracy.
- **Respecting the physical integrity of the heritage site**: This paper investigates only the case of classified heritage sites, protected through the national or international legal framework. Any action detrimental to the physical integrity of the classified Cultural Heritage shall be punished according to the law. Consequently, many precautions are taken in connection with the

installation of the necessary equipment for the show (stage, set, sound, lights, etc.), with the access and seating of the audience. However, the model is theoretical because practice shows us a diversity of interpretations of these rather general rules, amid the lack of clear procedures and rules regarding this specific activity. In addition, there are many locations with historical significance but which are classified as local heritage or are not classified at all, which leads to a decrease in the level of legal protection and an increased risk of material destruction.

- **Respect for the values associated with that heritage**: much harder to track, catalogue and manage than physical integrity, the moral integrity of the Cultural Heritage site is just as important as the physical integrity. Abuses are much harder to demonstrate, counteract and prevent due to the fundamentally subjective character of the values that different human groups attribute to the ruins of the national or shared past. A more constructive approach can be observed in countries that have developed in recent years the fields *of mediation culturelle/cultural mediation* and *cultural heritage interpretation*, which do not yet exist in our country.

- **Prioritizing** the cultural character of creation: part of the interdependent social ecosystem that characterizes our societies today, culture in general and cultural creation in particular are subject to various pressures, whether we are talking about economic profitability, contribution to social peace, imperatives of sustainability or concerns for environmental protection. Although these topics rank highly in the public discourse and public policy strategies, culture should not sacrifice its vitality, creativity and unique place in society and people's lives. Of course, all these perspectives, which are important for our common future, must be integrated, but at the level of priorities, the quality of the cultural act and its importance in itself (not as an indicator for other areas) should be maintained and respected.

- **Ensuring an environment that allows cultural** innovation: taking the previous argument a step further, we emphasize the need to preserve conditions that allow innovation and expression of creativity. At first glance, the multitude of restrictions that apply to Cultural Heritage, cumulated with the challenges induced by the resulting stage space, may restrict the creative area or limit it considerably. In reality, all these limitations have technical, logistical or procedural solutions. The diversity of possible situations makes standardization

extremely difficult, which can be considered an advantage because it involves developing customized solutions for each location. One solution to ensure the best possible conditions for artists would be for all categories involved in the production of a show to be consulted when drafting the specific rules of the building or heritage site.