

Provisional attendance figures for 2026**273,000 visitors at the 2026 Bregenz Festival:
anniversary season may set new record**

Bregenz, 21 Aug. 2026. The Bregenz Festival comes to a close on Sunday evening, with the total number of visitors expected to reach approx. 273,000. The festival programme featured around 80 events spread over five weeks. On the lake stage, *La traviata* will have been enjoyed by 193,468 people across 28 sold-out performances; many other productions were sold out, too. Whether the anniversary season will set a new attendance record now depends on the weather: if all three remaining performances of *La traviata* can go ahead outdoors, the 80th season of the Bregenz Festival could indeed become one of the best attended in the festival's history.

A special highlight in the varied anniversary programme came on August 1, when about 15,000 visitors made it the busiest day in the festival's 80-year history. At one event alone, the big *sing-along by the lake*, 6,548 people gathered on the lakeside grandstand to sing. "I will never forget the energy and enthusiasm at the sing-along by the lake. Whether major stage productions, intimate formats, well-known masterpieces or experimental music theatre – our anniversary summer has demonstrated just how central diversity is to the Bregenz Festival. I'm delighted to see our audience taking this journey with us with such openness and curiosity," says Artistic Director Lilli Paasikivi.

***La traviata* scores a dazzling success**

Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata* was staged this summer for the very first time on the lake at Bregenz. Damiano Michieletto presented a powerful staging of the opera against the backdrop of Paolo Fantin's monumental mirror wall, shattered into countless fragments. Public interest was enormous: all performances were sold out before Easter. Provided there are no further cancellations for bad weather before Sunday evening, the opera on the lake – including the dress rehearsal and Young People's Night (with 1 weather-related cancellation) – will have been seen by 193,468 people, which corresponds to 100 percent capacity. Around 44,000 people also took part in guided tours of the lake stage and introductory talks.

Still on the bill before the festival ends on Sunday are three more performances of *La traviata*, two performances of *L'elisir d'amore* at the Theater am Kornmarkt, as well as the second and final performance of *YUM!* at the Werkstattbühne. On Sunday 23 August, the Vorarlberg Symphony Orchestra will give a matinee concert at the Festspielhaus.

Advance booking from 23 August 2026 for *La traviata* in 2027

Advance ticket sales for Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata* on the lake stage in 2027 will begin as early as 23 August 2026 at 9.00 pm, coinciding with the start of the final performance of this year's festival. The first night of the opera's second run is on 22 July 2027.

Acclaimed discovery at the Festspielhaus

Leoš Janáček's rarely performed opera *The Excursions of Mr Brouček* proved to be the discovery of this year's festival. Yuval Sharon's imaginative production delighted audiences and critics alike, while there was also high praise for Robert Jindra's musical direction, Peter Hoare in the title role, the ensemble, the Prague Philharmonic Choir and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The acclaimed first performance of the opera took place on July 23. The three performances attracted an audience of 4,495, representing 98 percent of capacity.

Disturbing visions of the future and immersive worlds at the Werkstattbühne

On 31 July and 1 August, Daniel Bjarnason and Royce Vavrek presented *The Passion of the Common Man*, a haunting vision of the future exploring the question of humanity and empathy in a technologised world. Netia Jones, together with Anne Sofie von Otter and an outstanding ensemble, created an evening of musical theatre that was both moving and deeply unsettling. In *Bach Nirvana*, on 7 and 8 August, pianist Angela Hewitt and lighting and video artist Mikki Kunttu combined Bach's piano music with abstract worlds of light to create an immersive, contemplative experience. The final event in the Werkstattbühne theatre space – on 20 and 22 August – is *YUM!* by the Chinese composer Wen Liu, a new work of music theatre blending opera, performance art and extended reality. In all, the events at the Werkstattbühne have attracted an audience of 2,808, with 98 percent of available tickets sold.

High school romance at the Opera Studio

Opening on 17 August, Gaetano Donizetti's *L'elisir d'amore* brought the gaudily colourful world of secondary schools to the Theater am Kornmarkt. Directed by Anna Kelo, the young singers of the Opera Studio reimaged the famous romantic comedy as a modern coming-of-age story about first love, self-discovery and the uncertainties of growing up. A total audience of 1,984 is expected for the four performances, all of them playing to a full house.

Spoken theatre from Molière to the present day

Vienna's Burgtheater visited Bregenz to give guest performances of Molière's *The Imaginary Invalid*, directed by Stefan Bachmann. The classic comedy was impressive for its mordant wit, astonishing relevance and the enthusiasm of the ensemble. This was followed, at the KOSMOS Theatre, by the world premiere of Natalie Baudy's *under the influence*, the winning play of the Austrian Theatre Alliance – a contemporary piece about intoxication, addiction and self-empowerment. The spoken theatre section of the programme drew a combined audience of 1,934, corresponding to 98 percent capacity.

Orchestral music at the Festspielhaus

The three orchestral concerts by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Dalia Stasevska, Eva Ollikainen and Petr Popelka, offered a musical spectrum ranging from Kaija Saariaho, Lili Boulanger and Antonín Dvořák, through Jean Sibelius and Igor Stravinsky, to Maurice Ravel and Modest Mussorgsky, including the Austrian premiere of Bernd Richard Deutsch's piece *Intensity*. The choral concert *Im Herzen des Barock* ("In the heart of the Baroque") featuring the Bavarian Radio Choir was also sold out. The orchestral concerts conclude on 23 August with a matinee performance by the Vorarlberg Symphony. A total of 5,778 visitors are expected, with 93 percent of available tickets sold.

The chamber concerts at the Lake Studio and the Kunsthau Bregenz were also in great demand. The programme comprised recitals and personalised programmes by the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Baroque with a jazz twist, Stravinsky's *The Soldier's Tale* featuring actor Moritz von Treuenfels – still fresh in the audience's memory as Samiel in last year's *Der Freischütz*. In total, the concerts attracted 1,298 visitors, which corresponds to 96 percent capacity.

Curiosity, creativity, and three sheep on the road to freedom

Alongside Young People's Night, the programme of the Young People's Festival included the STEM project, opera workshops and the Children's Festival. In June, *MähTropolis* provided a boisterous start to the season with three sheep in search of freedom. In total, 1,678 kids, teens and young adults took part in the festival's programme (excluding Young People's Night).

A look ahead to 2027: Verdi by the lake, Schoeck at the Festspielhaus

Othmar Schoeck's *Penthesilea* will open the 2027 festival on 21 July as the opera at the Festspielhaus. This rarely performed work by the Swiss composer, based on Heinrich von Kleist's tragedy with the same title, tells the story of the Amazon queen Penthesilea and her love for Achilles, which is as passionate as it is fateful. Giuseppe Verdi's *La traviata* returns to the lake stage, commencing its second run on 22 July.

Advance booking for the opera on the lake in 2027 opens on 23 August 2026 at 9.00 pm, coinciding with the start of the final performance of this year's festival.

The 2027 Bregenz Festival runs from 21 July to 22 August. Tickets are available from bregenzerfestspiele.com and over the telephone on +43 5574 4076.