

# Connecting archival records with performance identifiers

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THEATER  
HISTORISCHE  
SAMMLUNG &  
ARCHIV  
TFM

theadok

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Screenshots were created by Klaus Illmayer

# Overview

- **Performance identifiers** on the example theadok.at
- **Theater archives and collections** on the example AuS-tfm Vienna
- **Connecting** information with the help of performance identifiers on the example of the HIC and the HoTS project
- **Problems** with performance identifiers
- Our current idea for an **approach**
  - Sketch
  - Challenges
  - Takeaways

# Aim of performance identifiers

- Performance identifiers a longstanding **discussion** in digital theatre studies:
  - There is the desire for an **authority file of performance identifiers** as there are ones for works and persons like GND, VIAF
  - But performances (in general: **events**) do have a more **fuzzy state** as **works** have and there is not such a big contributor base as libraries have
- **Advantages** of (persistent) performance identifiers
  - Claim to speak about **the same event**
  - All kind of **searches** especially **federated search queries** and support of **linked open data**
  - **Connecting** with all kind of **materials** that **document** or **belong** to a performance
  - Collection of **information from different sources combined** to a **dense (meta)dataset**
  - Allow different **research** approaches to **give input** to this collection of information
  - **Separate** complex information about performance from **input forms**

# Example: theadok.at

Collection of **metadata** on **theater and dance performances** in **Austria** from 1945 to around 2000 based on announcements, programs, reviews

Lot of efforts to collect the data on the performances but still very different kinds of **quality** depending on the source

<https://theadok.at>

The screenshot shows the homepage of theadok.at. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo 'theadok' and links for 'Home', 'Links', 'Imprint', and 'Privacy notice'. A yellow banner below the navigation bar contains a disclaimer: 'Theadok is currently in beta development. Be aware, that some functions, the layout of the website and some of the data needs further adaptation. If you find erroneous data or if you have some suggestions for useful functions, please contact us: [theadok.lfm@univie.ac.at](mailto:theadok.lfm@univie.ac.at)'.

The main content area features a large background image of a theater interior. Overlaid on this image is a white box with the heading 'WHAT IS THEADOK ABOUT?' and the text: 'We collect data for research on performances of theater and dance. The geographical focus is Austria. Our aim is not a complete inventory of performances in Austria, instead we work on a model to process research data on performances.' Below this text is a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search for title of performance/playtext, name of person/stage/ensemble' and a blue 'SEARCH' button.

Below the search bar, there are three columns of content, each with an icon and a title:

- DATA**: Represented by a database icon. Text: 'There is data on about 30.000 performances, that is either produced or staged in Austria. It covers the time span 1945 to 2001.' A blue link 'Read more' is at the bottom.
- SHARING**: Represented by a share icon. Text: 'Theadok is a contribution to a developing digital infrastructure for theatre research projects. Sharing data is a crucial aspect in building this infrastructure up.' A blue link 'Read more' is at the bottom.
- PARTICIPATE**: Represented by a speech bubble icon. Text: 'Theadok invites projects and individuals to work with us, if they like to put their data into a digital platform.' A blue link 'Read more' is at the bottom.

At the bottom of the page, there is a small image credit: 'Image credits: Performance: [Globe Theatre on Tour](#), Photo by [Ingrid Mereschal](#)'.

# Performance identifiers in theadok.at

## Eine Nacht in Venedig

Identifier: <https://theadok.at/performance/20050> (Last change: 01.01.2018 - 15:35)

### Inszenierung



#### Allgemeines

Sparte **Musiktheater**

#### Relationen

is realisation of **Eine Nacht in Venedig**

Collections **Theadok Import**

#### Produktionskontext

produced by **Volksoper Wien**

#### Inszenierungskontext

Aufführung **Neuinszenierung**

premiered December 1948  
48/49

**Volksoper Wien**

## Eine Nacht in Venedig

Identifier: <https://theadok.at/work/32207> (Last change: 22.12.2017 - 18:20)

### Vorlage



#### Allgemein

Vorlagentyp **Sprechtheater**

#### Titles

Originaltitel **Eine Nacht in Venedig**

Übersetzungstitel **Eine Nacht in Venedig**

#### Persons

author **Genée, Richard  
Zell, Friedrich**

Komposition **Strauss, Johann  
Raymond, Fritz**

[Log in](#) to post comments

## Verzeichnete Inszenierungen

## Genée, Richard

Identifier: <https://theadok.at/person/68564> (Last change: 22.12.2017 - 18:20)

### Person

#### Basisinformationen

Vorname **Richard**

Nachname **Genée**

#### Referenzen

GND Referenz <http://d-nb.info/gnd/119312212>

VIAF Referenz <http://viaf.org/viaf/12462945>

DBpedia Referenz [http://dbpedia.org/resource/Richard\\_Gen%C3%A9e](http://dbpedia.org/resource/Richard_Gen%C3%A9e)

#### Zusätzliche Informationen

Berufszuordnungen (Auszug von GND) **Schriftsteller / Komponist / Librettist / Kapellmeister**

Themenzuordnung (Auszug von GND) **Personen zu Literaturgeschichte (Schriftsteller) / Personen zu Musik**

Wirkungsorte (Länder) **Deutschland**  
 **Österreich**

# Performance identifiers at other places: Wikidata



Item [Discussion](#) [Read](#) [View history](#)

## Eine Nacht in Venedig (Q1306554)

opera composed by Johann Strauss II [edit](#)

[In more languages](#)

[Configure](#)

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	Eine Nacht in Venedig	opera composed by Johann Strauss II	
German	Eine Nacht in Venedig	No description defined	
Bavarian	Eine Nacht in Venedig	No description defined	
French	Eine Nacht in Venedig	opéra de Johann Strauss II	Une Nuit à Venise Une nuit à venise Une nuit a Venise Une nuit à Venise

All entered languages

### Statements

instance of [dramatic-musical work](#) [edit](#)

0 references [+ add reference](#)

[+ add value](#)

The following pages link to [Eine Nacht in Venedig](#) (Q1306554):

Displaying 29 items.

View (previous 50 | next 50) (20 | 50 | 100 | 250 | 500)

- [Q12736979](#) (redirect page) ([← links](#))
- [A Night in Venice](#) (Q16824202) ([← links](#))
- [Noč u Veneciji](#) (Q31184778) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997570](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997667](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997671](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997679](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997682](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997689](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997694](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997699](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997702](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997706](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997708](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997711](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q54997712](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q55010511](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q55010523](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q55010537](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q55010540](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q88013573](#) ([← links](#))
- [Ouverture: Eine Nacht in Venedig](#) (Q98637340) ([← links](#))
- [Q98637530](#) ([← links](#))
- [Q99372918](#) ([← links](#))
- [Eine Nacht in Venedig: Operette in drei Akten](#). Fassung von Erich Wolf;
- [Eine Nacht in Venedig: Operette in drei Akten](#). Neu eingerichtet von E. I.
- [Eine Nacht in Venedig: Operette in drei Akten](#) (Q122913889) ([← links](#))
- [Eine Nacht in Venedig: Operette in drei Akten](#). Neue musikalische Bearbeitung
- [Category: Eine Nacht in Venedig](#) (Q123461497) ([← links](#))

View (previous 50 | next 50) (20 | 50 | 100 | 250 | 500)

Item [Discussion](#) [Read](#) [View history](#)

## Eine Nacht in Venedig. Operette in drei Akten

(Q122913889)

performing arts production of Stadttheater Bern during the season 1964-1965 [edit](#)

[In more languages](#)

[Configure](#)

Language	Label	Description	Also known as
English	Eine Nacht in Venedig. Operette in drei Akten	performing arts production of Stadttheater Bern during the season 1964-1965	
German	Eine Nacht in Venedig. Operette in drei Akten	production d'art scénique du Stadttheater Bern durant la saison 1964-1965	
Bavarian	Eine Nacht in Venedig. Operette in drei Akten	No description defined	
French	Eine Nacht in Venedig. Operette in drei Akten	Produktion der darstellenden Künste des Stadttheater Bern in der Spielzeit 1964-1965	

All entered languages

### Statements

instance of [performing arts production](#) [edit](#)

1 reference [+ add value](#)

# Performance identifiers at other places: FID DK

search find discover

Work

Find

## Detailed View: Eine Nacht in Venedig

Search / Eine Nacht in Venedig

### Eine Nacht in Venedig

GND Identifier	300155344
GND Subject Category	Personen zu Musik
formOfWorkOrExpression	Operette
Biographical Details	Versionen: 1. Unversion der Uraufführung in Berlin (Berliner Fassung), 2. Version für die Erstaufführung in Wien („Wiener Fassung“), 3. eine Version von Erich Wolfgang Korngold von 1923 in der er die Oper erheblich umgearbeitet und mit einer Textversion von Ernst Marschka versehen hat, 4. eine Version von Walter Felsenstein von 1954   die originale Version wird selten aufgeführt, die bekannteste Version ist die von Erich Wolfgang Korngold   Operette in 3 Akten
Published	1883
Geographic Area Code	Osterreich
Composer	Strauss, Johann
Librettist	Genée, Richard   Zell, F.

Contributor

### Data Provider Authority File

Homepage: [German National Library](#)

Originaldatensatz: <https://id.nb.info/gnd/300155344/about>

Metadata license: [CC0 1.0](#)

Last Change: 2021-03-02

Via: [lobid-gnd](#)

Export Record

Permanent link

nacht venedig

Event

## Search Results in Events

Search Results - nacht venedig

Back to All Records

Showing 1 - 20 results of 275 for search 'nacht venedig', query time: 0.01s

### Refine Results

#### Event Type

Aufführung 156

Gastspiel 5

Premiere 2

Erstaufführung 1

#### Genre/Branch

Operette 129

Musiktheater 118

#### Contributors

Genée, Richard 118

Strauss, Johann 118

118

- 1** EVENT **Nacht in Venedig**  
Aufführung  
1978  
Karlsruhe
- 2** EVENT **Nacht in Venedig**  
Aufführung  
1927  
Frankfurt
- 3** EVENT **Nacht in Venedig**  
Aufführung  
Baden-Baden
- 4** EVENT **Nacht in Venedig**  
Aufführung  
1957

```
<rdf:RDF>
  <edm:Event rdf:about="http://performing-arts.eu/discovery/event/SLWA_4753_17589">
    <skos:prefLabel>Nacht in Venedig</skos:prefLabel>
    <edm:hasType>Aufführung</edm:hasType>
    <edm:happenedAt>Karlsruhe</edm:happenedAt>
    <edm:occuredAt rdfs:label="1978">1978-01-01T00:00:00Z_1978-12-31T23:59:59Z</edm:occuredAt>
  </edm:Event>
</rdf:RDF>
```

# Handling in (theater) archives

- Performance metadata is often only partially handled by dedicated **input fields**
- It usually can't deal with **ambiguity**
- Tendency to **record information** about persons (directors, actors), companies or theater stages but not performances => organisation of archival records
- Connection of archival objects to performance plan or to one performance - **attribution of archival objects can be unclear**
- Often there is a **strong connection with works** which may be effective with "traditional" european-style forms of theater but performances are more than this: circus, stand-up comedy, avantgardistic theater forms, amateur theater, etc.
- This all leads to an **underperforming handling of metadata on performances** and **no specific performance identifiers** => there is mostly no entity "performance" in an archival database or the corresponding data model



# Example: Theatermuseum Austria



Szenenfoto: Eine Nacht in Venedig, 22.5.1989, Fotograf/Urheber/in: Josef Palffy, Wien

Szenenfoto:

## Eine Nacht in Venedig

Szene aus "Eine Nacht in Venedig" von C. Walzel und R. Genée, Musik von J. Strauß, Volksoper

Fotograf/Urheber/in: [Josef Palffy, Wien](#)

Autor/in: [Camillo Walzel](#) (1829 Magdeburg - 1895 Wien) - [GND](#)

Autor/in: [Richard Genée](#) (1823 Danzig - 1895 Baden bei Wien) - [GND](#)

Komponist/in: [Johann Strauss \[Sohn\]](#) (1825 St. Ulrich bei Wien - 1899 Wien) - [GND](#)

Regie: [Otto Schenk](#) (geb. 1930 Wien) - [GND](#)

Datierung: 22.5.1989

Spielstätte: [Wien \ Volksoper](#)

Material/Technik: Fotopapier glänzend, S/W

Maße: 12,9 cm x 17,7 cm

Inv. Nr.: FS\_PSE164410

© Theatermuseum, Wien

Permalink (zitierbarer Link) zu dieser Seite: [www.theatermuseum.at/de/object/1502897/](https://www.theatermuseum.at/de/object/1502897/)

### EREIGNISSE

#### EINE NACHT IN VENEDIG

22.05.1989

Wien\Volksoper

# AuS-tfm: Archive and theater collections at tfm@Vienna

Established at the founding of the theatre department 1943

Was **partly lost** but many holdings were found in the last two decades by Birgit Peter, the head of Aus-tfm

No recordings of the objects were available thus we started a project (HIC) to register parts of the archive in a **digital archive information system** and also debating the national-socialism background

<https://archiv-tfm.univie.ac.at/>



# Identifiers at AuS-tfm

Das digitale Archiv TFM ist im Aufbau. Daten werden beständig eingetragen, Lücken in der digitalen Abbildung des Bestands sind deswegen möglich. Zudem können sich Inhalte ändern. Bei Fragen und für Hinweise freuen wir uns über eine Nachricht an: [archiv.tfm@univie.ac.at](mailto:archiv.tfm@univie.ac.at)

Suche nach Titel von Einträgen

## Gesellschaft der Menschenrechte v. F. Th. Csokor

Identifier: <https://archiv-tfm.univie.ac.at/record-set/7291> (last change: 01.07.2019 - 10:55)

### Record Set

#### Shared Properties

Local Identifier: 414.B078

#### Record Set Properties

Type: collection

Classification: Aufführungsdokumentation

#### Physical or Logical Extent

2 graphic records

1 other record

<https://archiv-tfm.univie.ac.at/record-set/7291>

### HIC Properties

Stempel Zentralinstitut: Ja

Inventarnummer: [B387/44](#)

### Record Set Relation

is member of

[Foto- und Graphiksammlung](#)

[NS-Bildarchiv](#)

### Agent Relations

has subject

[Csokor, Franz Theodor](#)

[Hans Dietrich & Co \[Fotostudio\]](#)

[Burgtheater \(Wien\) \(1919-1938\)](#)

### Concept/Thing relations

has subject

[Gesellschaft der Menschenrechte: Stück um Georg Büchner / Franz Theodor Csokor](#)

<https://theadok.at/performance/130941>

# Example: AuS-tfm and theadok.at

Using a dedicated **archive data model** (RiC: Records in Contexts) => does not foresee the connection of performances thus using Concept/Thing relation

Using a **manual copy & paste** way to connect data

The screenshot shows a web interface titled "Concept/Thing Relations". At the top right, there is a button "ZEILENREIHENFOLGE ANZEIGEN" and a vertical ellipsis menu. Below this, a "Concept/Thing relation" is shown with a "Relation\*" field containing "has subject" and a dropdown arrow. To the right is a "ZUSAMMENKLAPPEN" button and another vertical ellipsis menu. Below the relation, there is a "ZEILENREIHENFOLGE ANZEIGEN" button. A list of relations follows, with the first one being "Gesellschaft der Menschenrechte: Stück um Georg Büchner / Franz Theodor Csokor (7290)". Each relation has a trash icon and a red "ENTFERNEN" button. Below the list is a purple button "WEITEREN EINTRAG HINZUFÜGEN". Underneath, there is a "Concept/Thing external" section with a text input field containing the URL "https://theadok.at/performance/130941", which is circled in red. Below the input field is a small icon of a globe. At the bottom, there is a green button "CONCEPT/THING RELATION HINZUFÜGEN" followed by the text "zu Concept/Thing relation".

# Connecting archival records with performance identifiers

Example: **HIC** (FWF funded project: Historiography – Ideology – Collection. Research-based Digitizing of Historical Theater Material from the "Zentralinstitut für Theaterwissenschaft" in Vienna 1943–45)

- Some archival objects refer to performance, e.g. photographs
- Connecting them to **theadok.at** because there it is possible to add additional data

The screenshot displays the 'theadok' website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo 'theadok', a search bar, and links for Home, Lists, Imprint, Privacy notice, EN, and Log in. A yellow banner below the navigation bar contains a message: 'Theadok is currently in beta development. Be aware, that some functions, the layout of the website and some of the data needs further adaption. If you find erroneous data or if you have some suggestions for useful functions, please contact us: [theadok.tfm@univie.ac.at](mailto:theadok.tfm@univie.ac.at)'.

The main content area features a search bar with the placeholder text 'Search for title of performance/playtext, name of person/stage/...' and a blue 'SEARCH' button. Below the search bar, the title 'Gesellschaft der Menschenrechte' is prominently displayed. Underneath the title, the identifier 'Identifier: <https://theadok.at/performance/130941> (Last change: 01.07.2019 - 1)' is shown, with the URL circled in red.

The record is organized into several sections:

- Insenzierung**: A section for the production context.
- Relationen**: A section for related items, showing 'Collections' with a link to 'HIC'.
- Produktionskontext**: A section for production context, showing 'Produktionsort' as 'Wien'.
- Insenzierungskontext**: A section for performance context, showing 'Aufführung' (premiered Sat, 21.03.1931) and 'Derniere' (Fri, 15.05.1931) at 'Burgtheater Wien'.
- Personen**: A section for personnel, showing 'was directed by' as 'Herterich, Franz' and 'scenography' as 'Hauser, Carl Maria'.
- Materialien**: A section for materials, showing 'has material in archive' as 'Fotografie' with a link to 'https://archiv-tfm.univie.ac.at/record-set/7291', which is also circled in red.

# Handling of performance identifiers at tfm@Uni Vienna

Using theadok.at to:

- **Collect metadata on performances** that are relevant for the archive and collections at the tfm department using a dedicated data model for performances
- **Refer to the theadok.at performance identifier** in the different projects at the department that deal with performances, e.g. HIC and HoTS (= current project on the History of Theater Studies: Switzerland/Austria, funded by FWF and SNF)
- **List the references** to archive objects on theadok.at (but is not mandatory)

Integrating the performance identifiers in the software of the projects (in the input fields):

- Currently mostly copy & paste but also an **autocomplete field** is possible by using the **API** of theadok.at

# No satisfying situation

What are the problems - local at tfm but also in general with current approaches:

- **Complicated way to connect data** and lot of steps to handle
- **Too much information** to handle
- **Many different identifiers** to combine: persons, buildings, companies, ...
- Distinguish between **performance plan and performance**
- **Harvesting** of data can be troublesome
- Handling of **conflicting information** is challenging
- Services should support **FAIR data principles** and high quality research data
- **Complex data models** and **different interpretations** of performances
- **Vocabularies** are not **community-agreed** and are under heavy discussion
- **No accepted general authority file** for performances/performance plans

# Idea of a simple performance identifier system

For the needs of tfm@Vienna we work on a prototype of a performance identifier system:

- **Generate identifiers** based on only **few information: date - title - place**
- **Services register** at this performance identifier system and integrate their data on performances: theadok.at and AuS-tfm as most important but also the mediathek of the department (collecting source and identifier at source)
- External identifiers are **harvested**, services **register** their data at the service
- **Simple API** focused on autocomplete functions to connect performances between the services
- **Detailed information** at the source not in the performance identifier system
- Support **Linked Open Data** approaches
- In short: the performance identifier system should act as a **mediator/faciliator**



# Goals of a performance identifier system at tfm@Vienna

- **Lightweight approach:** use minimal data (title, place, date, source + identifier at source) and allow **ambiguity** (e.g. performance existed circa 1910)
- Create **simple identifiers** that point to an (once) existing entry
- Set a focus on **harvesting** of data from performance databases
- Allow **changes** and **log** them
- Keep a **history of changes** (if one entry was marked as typo but there are new ones coming with the same typo, it is maybe no typo - refer to the changes)
- **Distribute** from the system: not entering data in every service/database, only **refer to the entry in the system** with the help of the minimal data
- **Decentralised services** that can be connected (same concept and same approach)
- **Upscale** by adding more and more sources but also by connecting to the decentralised services => **federated network**



# Challenges of the approach

- We **don't use full information**, e.g. no persons - can make disambiguation tricky (looking into sources) but programming scripts could help
- Still, **sources** must be **convinced to implement** the minimal metadata **input fields** and to send changes to the identifier system
- It is now **all about the correct place**: title and date can be handled but place is complicated as it has a hierarchy inside (Burgtheater => Vienna => Austria) => need to define best practices in how to label a place
  - **Language** can become a problem
- **Curation of data** still necessary but should be easier, rule: change at source
  - **Flexibility** is important: handle different kinds of granularity of data
- Still in discussion: How to **generate identifiers** in terms of **decentralised services** (the same combination of place-title-date should get the same identifier in every of the decentralised services)
  - Decentralised approach needs a common agreement on protocols and best practices

# Takeaways

- Creating **local identifiers** is trivial if there is an entity “performance”
- **Challenge** is to **connect** these local identifiers and to handle the many cases where there is no dedicated entity performance available (as it is often the case at archives and collections)
- Unlikely that there will be an **authority file** for performances/performance plans, thus we need **solutions** to deal with this situation: **decentralised** approach seems to be helpful + **harvesting** of data + sharing and agreeing of **protocols** and **best practices** for minimal metadata
- **Complex solutions** can create more problems than anticipated, thus simple metadata and no fear for incomplete and incorrect information
- **Curation and community work** will stay and will be still important

# Thanks for listening!

Contact: [klaus.illmayer@univie.ac.at](mailto:klaus.illmayer@univie.ac.at)