

BALOISE SESSION – a festival makes history**2016 – Fairwell, Matthias**

In July 2016 the BALOISE SESSION lost its devoted, innovative President and festival founder, Matthias Müller, who passed away at the age of 51 after a serious illness. His long-time business partner and CEO Beatrice Stirnimann, the Members of the Board and the entire BALOISE SESSION-Team will continue to run the festival – his life's work – in accordance with his wishes, and in honour of his memory.

Matthias, your festival team will hold you for ever in their hearts!

2015 – 30 Years of Magic

Basel's boutique music festival is turning 30! Opening Night on 23 October 2015 will ring in the 30th anniversary festival edition. From then until 12 November, we will be celebrating 30 years of the festival with top quality acts and promising newcomers. This year's line-up will be announced on 26 August.

2013 – New name, same boutique festival

With the festival name BALOISE SESSION, a fresh corporate design and the modern Event Hall of the Basel Fair, a new era began for the music festival. With Opening Night on 25 October 2013 the first BALOISE SESSION kicked off with a bang.

2012 – Goodbye AVO SESSION Basel – Hello BALOISE SESSION

During the construction of the new event hall, the AVO SESSION Basel took place at the Musical Theater Basel with concert seating. The 2012 festival edition marked the end of the current festival name and the festival's partnership with presenting sponsor AVO Cigars. It was announced that starting in 2013, the festival would be called BALOISE SESSION with the new presenting sponsor Baloise and would take place at the Congress Center Basel in the new event hall designed by Herzog & de Meuron.

2011 – the music festival makes history

An anniversary book commemorating the 25th anniversary of the music festival was published in 2011. This high quality edition chronicled the highlights of 25 years of thrilling festival history with captivating photos and fascinating stories. Without the loyal support of our «Friends of the AVO SESSION Basel», this book would not have been possible.

2010 – the festival celebrates its jubilee

After 25 years, the festival was more successful than ever, repeatedly bringing the world's biggest stars to Basel. Already in 2010, 20,000 music lovers flocked to Basel to enjoy the first class programme and the intimate club-like setting.

2007 – emotional concert experiences in the comfort of your own home

In 2007, the first of a projected series of DVDS was released , featuring Solomon Burke's performance in 2003. Soon after, further DVD's were released featuring Jethro Tull, Katie Melua and Paul Anka.

2006 – Eurovision broadcasts Sir Elton John

The live broadcast of Elton John's concert throughout Europe marked the international television breakthrough of the festival. Swiss TV records all of the concerts and many are broadcasted on all five continents. Swiss radio DRS also regularly broadcasts the concerts.

2005 – 20 years of success as a music festival

After 20 years, the festival had established itself as a European festival. The festival won the International Sponsoring Award presented by FASPO in the culture category. Major headliners took the stage that year: Seal, Status Quo, Vaya Con Dios, Simply Red and a-ha.

1999 – the first TV broadcasts on SRF and 3sat

Swiss TV became the official media partner of the festival in 1999 and when it started to record all of the concerts. The TV broadcasts on SRF2 and 3sat established the Basel music festival's media presence in other German-speaking countries.

1998 – the Rheinknie Session becomes AVO SESSION Basel

AVO Cigars became the new Presenting Sponsor of the music festival in 1998, which was then renamed AVO SESSION Basel. With a new name, the festival also had a new, more international focus. At the same time, the festival management began to combine first class performers with exclusive social events to create an incomparable music experience.

1995 – the festival presents music styles from jazz to funk

The music festival, which had first focussed on blues, jazz and gospel, opened itself up to other music styles in 1995. With a new mix, including world music, soul and funk as well as internationally successful artists, the festival started to appeal more and to a younger audience and also gained in prestige.

1988 – breakthrough with international star Miles Davis

The national breakthrough came when jazz legend Miles Davis performed at the festival in 1988. Music lovers from all over Switzerland came to Basel and experts in the music scene discovered the festival. Claude Nobs, one of the founders of the Montreux Jazz Festival, was so enthusiastic about the festival that he immediately decided to become a patron.

1986 – the Rheinknie Session is born

Basel, May 1986: The first Rheinknie Session was born. Five sold out concerts thrilled music fans from northwestern Switzerland with artists like Oscar Peterson, Albert Collins and Koko Taylor. The founders of this successful concert series were Enrico Bonometti, Matthias Müller and Stephan Werthmüller. The three music lovers from the region had already made a name for themselves by organizing jazz, blues and rock concerts.