



First screening on the Piazza Grande in Locarno, 1971; project by Livio Vacchini

# TRACES III

## PIAZZA GRANDE

Ramias Steinemann—Founded in 1946, the Locarno Film Festival is one of the oldest festivals after those of Venice and Cannes. In contrast to the others, the movie-screenings are open to the public, and some selected movies are shown outdoors on the city's main square every evening. However, this has not always been the situation. At the end of the 1960s the festival was in danger of being permanently cancelled as permission had been denied for screenings in the “Grand Hotel” park. In 1971, a special committee asked the local architect Livio Vacchini to come up with a new solution, and thus the idea to utilize the Piazza Grande arose: an open-air theater that faced the lake and transformed the adjacent buildings of the square into a scenic backdrop.



Poster for the *Festival internazionale del film Locarno*, 9–19 July, 1959

► Jim Jarmusch, *The Limits of Control*, 2008