

ASSITEJ Information

Newsletter 43

November 2006

www.assitej.org

From the General Secretariat

- The General Secretariat will be closed from December 23 to January 1 due to Christmas and New Year vacations in Sweden.
- Claudia Mayer will be employed part-time as Executive Assistant and will work in the General Secretariat in Stockholm from January 2007. She will be responsible for contacts with the national centres and with the Executive Committee.
- The next Executive Committee Meeting will take place in Lusaka, Zambia, from May 15 - 21, 2007.
- The ASSITEJ Festival Guide will be updated in January 2007. More information and fill-in forms will be sent out in the beginning of January.

Summarized Report from the International Executive Committee Meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina October 16-22 2006

This is a short summary of things discussed in the last ASSITEJ International EC-meeting. The full minutes will be posted on the ASSITEJ International web-site : www.assitej.org.

Present EC-members

Wolfgang Schneider, Niclas Malmcrona, Klaus Eggert, Cheela Chilala, María Inés Falconi, Stephan Rabl, Ivica Simic, Katariina Metsälampi, Razi Amitai, Young Ai Choi, Jean-Marie Rurangwa, Peter Rinderknecht, Tülin Saglam, Jeremy Turner, Kim Peter Kovac, Tony Mack Eckhard Mittelstädt (counsellor), Claudia Mayer (executive assistant).

Membership matters

Upon invitation from ASSITEJ Argentina and ASSITEJ International a Latin American regional meeting was held in connection with the EC-meeting. More than 15 theatre practitioners from 12 countries throughout Latin America was present to discuss regional and international cooperation.

There were no new membership applications.

Preparations of the 16th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival 2008, Adelaide, , May 6 – 16, 'Old knowledge, New word'

Executive Director Jessica Machin, Artistic Director Jason Cross and EC-member Tony Mack gave a thorough presentation of the preparation of the 16th ASSITEJ World Congress.

The report included presentation of the performing arts festival, forums and seminars/workshops, the general assembly as well as practical matters as hotels and social gatherings.

The progress of the Congress preparations will be reported to all ASSITEJ centers and others throughout the world through the Congress Bulletins, next issue due in February 2007.

ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival 2008 web-site: www.assitej2008.com.au

Future of the General Secretariat

It was again noted that Niclas Malmcrona will step down as Secretary General in 2008 which also means the General Secretariat will move.

The EC-meeting discussed the future of the General Secretariat and the various ways of organizing it after the Congress and General Assembly in Adelaide 2008.

It was decided that the Future working group (Niclas Malmcrona, Klaus Eggert, Kim Peter Kovac and Tony Mack) will work out a proposal until the next EC-meeting in Lusaka (May 2007) and then also present it to the membership well in advance of the Adelaide-congress.

The EC-meeting decided to create a fundraising program to fund the future General Secretariat. The program will be worked out by the Future working group and it will be launched on March 20, 2007.

It was also noted that Klaus Eggert will step down as Treasurer in 2008.

The ASSITEJ International Award for Artistic Excellence – The Honorary President's Award 2008

The invitation for the 2008 The ASSITEJ International Award for Artistic Excellence – The Honorary President's Award will be sent to all centers in the beginning of 2007. Dead-line for submitting candidates will be August 30th 2007.

The EC selected a jury for the Award consisting of Young Ai Choi (Korea), Maria Inés Falconi (Argentina) and Hope Azeda (Rwanda). The jury will meet in

conjunction with the EC-meeting in Bursa, Turkey, in October 2007.

The ASSITEJ Book 2006/2007

As reported earlier the coming The ASSITEJ Book 2006/2007 will have "Next Generation" as its theme. It will be presented at the EC-meeting in Lusaka in May 2007.

The EC decided upon budget and timeframe for the production of the new ASSITEJ Book. ASSITEJ Germany will coordinate the work on the new book.

All ASSITEJ centers will receive two copies of the book at no cost and additional copies can be ordered.

National centers, festivals and theatre companies will be invited to advertise in the book at a cost from 250 USD to 600 USD. More information about advertising will follow.

Forums

Three forums were held during the ATINA-festival and the EC-meeting with participation of Latin American theatre practitioners and members of the EC: "Theatre Beyond Boundaries", "Cultural Policies" and "Playwrights Meeting".

Next EC-meeting

The next EC-meeting will take place in Lusaka, Zambia, in May 2007 in connection with a regional African workshop on puppetry.

Niclas Malmcrona, Secretary General, October 30th, 2006.



Members present at International Executive Committee Meeting in Buenos Aires, Argentina October 16-22, 2006
Photo by: Claudia Mayer

Notes From the Playing Field: On Listening, Talking and the Impossibility of Language

By Kim Peter Kovac, President of ASSITEJ/USA, a member of the ASSITEJ International Executive Committee, and Director of Theater for Young Audiences at the Kennedy Center in Washington, DC, USA

A show called *Brief*, a collaboration among teenage dancers from four countries, appeared this June at an Austrian festival. An ensemble-created collage piece, it seemed to be based on their feelings about growing up in today's world (with all the jagged passion and angst one could imagine). It was largely without words, but full of energetic and precise dancing, and I vividly remember one recurring sequence,

which included the actors flinging their right arms up to the sky, grabbing at their triceps and flinging them around the back, then throwing their whole bodies to the floor. I was struck by how articulate the sense of despair was in this crisp combination. Also, there was a repeating bit with young people coming to a microphone. Often they would start to speak, stammer, and then scamper away. Then, later in the piece, they began speaking a recurring motif: "What I want to tell you is I have no idea how to tell you what I want to tell you." For me, this was a very eloquent haiku of inarticulateness, a verbal counterpoint to the very precise message of much of the (nonverbal) dancing.

This somehow leads (follow the bouncing dancer) to the subject of talking about the work we do. Not in "public" conversations and post-show discussions, but in smaller and more intimate conversations, colleague-to-colleague or in small groups. The conversations can be both kinder and more rigorous, but I suspect they do not happen as often as they might. And if they do happen, how articulate are we?

The productions for children and young people – both in my country and all over the world - run the entire spectrum, from the breathtakingly innovative to the mind-bogglingly mundane, from world-class (I'd sell my soul to be able to write/direct/design/produce that well) to productions that, like in the American TV show 'Survivor', the tribe should really vote off the island.

The work is so much better than a dozen years ago and continues to improve, and there is a great sense of common cause toward the improvement of the field as a whole. Yet I believe that we need to better learn how to talk, and, more importantly, listen to each other.

Sometimes it's difficult to even begin to understand the impossibility of language. The more I communicate with international colleagues whose native language is not the same as mine, the more I am struck by how imprecise is our communication with each other is. It's certainly true in the USA with our shared language of English, and I'm sure it's true in other countries as well. Wasn't it Lewis Carroll's Humpty Dumpty who said, "Words mean exactly what I want them to mean?" There's much truth to that. Idioms, connotations, and jargon, all create barriers in communication. And how do you reach someone who is insecure, or simply from a different tradition?

In the early 1980s, in my former life directing avant-garde adult productions, one of my shows got resoundingly hammered by all the reviewers, one saying, "Sole blame for this debacle rests with the director . . . No one will want to come to this show except for friends of the company and they should think of excuses to be out of town." My personal pity party bemoaning the unfairness of the evil press went on for a week or so. Then someone said, "You think you're upset because the reviews were unfairly negative. Actually, deep down you know the show was dreadful and

you're only upset because they said so." Talk about cutting to the chase—but that stiletto of truth was the start of my understanding that show.

Part of bridging this communication gap is having the courage and generosity of spirit to tell a colleague what we really think, without the shallow glibness that often marks our discourse. Positive, negative, and every other flavor of comment—if they're to be effective—need a certain analytical and intellectual rigor we don't always find the time for. We're all guilty to a greater or lesser degree of sometimes giving superficial praise (because it's simpler, and, we feel, kinder) or making tacky comments (because scoring points can be fun). We're all guilty of sometimes speaking only in superlatives, analogous to the ubiquitous and therefore next-to-meaningless standing ovations. George Balanchine once said, "Why does everything have to be 'great'? Why isn't 'good' good enough? Everyone's overrated. Picasso's overrated. I'm overrated. Even Jack Benny's overrated."

If we want to effect change, we also need to speak not for ourselves, but for the listener, in ways that will be heard by that particular person at that particular moment, not just to score points. The implicit covenant is that the favor will be returned, that we will listen to—and receive—the same courtesy of clear and precise opinion in return.

But sometimes, like those hearts-on-sleeves young performers in Austria,

maybe it's best to start the conversation by saying we don't know how to start the conversation. Not coming from a place of knowing (as we often feel we have to), but from a place of not-knowing. The Dao De Jing says the Way (to the truth) cannot be known. That's theological and philosophical, and also deeply liberating. We want to come together in shared knowledge, it seems, but sometimes, coming from the place of not knowing, of inarticulateness—and admitting it—can create a starting place to a more crystalline path to understanding.

This editorial originally appeared, in a slightly different form, in TYA Today, the magazine of ASSITEJ/USA, Vol. 20, No. 2

FROM THE CENTERS

AUSTRIA

Festival:

DSCHUNGEL WIEN Modern, contemporary music theatre for young audience, 6 to 8 international productions, workshops, side events.

www.dschungelwien.at November 4-19, 2006, DSCHUNGEL WIEN, 1070 Vienna, Austria

LESOFANTENFEST of Vienna Libraries.

Austrian and international theatre, music theatre and lectures for young audience.

Free Entrance. November 11-29, 2006, Vienna Library
www.kirango.at

SZENE BUNTE WÄHNE Dance Festival,

10th edition, 10-15 productions for children and young people. Symposium about dance for young audiences in cooperation with ASSITEJ Austria.

www.sbw.at February 15-25, 2007, different theatre venues in Vienna, Austria

FRISCHWIND Festival & PERFORMING ARTS AWARD for young audiences

ASSITEJ Austria is going to establish an award in Austria. There will be 6 award categories such as –concept/idea, individual performance, achievement in the field of cultural politics;
- and according to audiences (child theatre and youth theatre).

An independent jury will nominate 10 productions which have been premiered in 2006. These productions will be presented live on stage at Frischwind Festival. There, an international jury will decide about the prizes in the named categories out of these 10. The award ceremony will take place in the frame of the upcoming Frischwind Festival.

Besides the nominated productions there will also be a FRINGE PROGRAMME presenting both Austrian and international performing arts for young audience, as well as discussions and other side events.

April 26-28, 2007, different theatre venues in Vienna, Austria www.assitej.at

Seminars, workshops:

ECHO – 3 days / 5 professional theatre workshops in Styria, Austria.
June 7-9, 2007 in Leibnitz, Styria, Austria.

AUSTRALIA

Festival:

2006 AWESOME International Arts Festival For Bright Young Things

17-26 November 2006, Perth, Western Australia. Awesome is an annual multi-arts festival for young people which takes place in Perth in November each year. AWESOME aims to inspire creativity in young people by developing arts projects that will engage them, inspire them and encourage them to think creatively. The festival includes performances by theatre companies from Australia and overseas, workshops, forums, film and

interactive media. Check out the 2006 program at www.awesomearts.com.

Seminars, workshops:

UNLOCKING THE UNIVERSAL STORY

11-12 May 2007 Adelaide, South Australia.

Young People and the Arts Australia – ASSITEJ Australia (YPAA) are proud to announce another collaboration with the Come Out Festival in 2007.

Share a moveable feast of performances, speakers and discussion which will bring to life the artistic themes of the festival and explore a world of possibilities for artists who create art with and for young people.

Arts practitioners from all youth art forms are invited to take part in a meeting of the minds that will use three outstanding shows as springboards for fresh dialogues and essential critical thought about our Young People and the Arts Sector.

Three speakers from across Australia will articulate ideas on the making and sharing of unique stories for young audiences – ideas illuminated in performances by innovative YPAA member companies.

Shows and presentations will be followed by facilitated critique of both the performances and the ideas raised by the speaker.

Full program details of Unlocking The Universal Story - including speakers and participating companies - will be announced in The November YPAA E-Newsletter, the December issue of Lowdown Magazine, and ASSITEJ Newsletter #44.

Places for Unlocking the Universal Story are very limited, and interested parties are encouraged to register initial interest by emailing info@ypaa.net

ART IN EARLY CHILDHOOD 2ND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

5-8 February, 2007, Armidale, NSW, Australia "Our People, Our Place, Our Time"

This conference celebrates art in early childhood in and across international social, cultural and historical contexts. The goal of the conference is to bring together art and early childhood/primary educators, researchers, and practitioners into an expanding and increasingly interdisciplinary discussion about early childhood and art. We will identify emerging directions in understanding how young children

experience art and how they create and communicate their ideas and experiences visually and through the arts.

INVITED SPEAKERS INCLUDE: **Dr Anna Kindler, Ursula Kolbe, Dr Barbara Piscitelli, AM.**

For further conference details, please visit the conference website at:

<http://www.artlearn.net/artEC/conference.html>

FRANCE

Festivals:

A great number of festivals will take place in France in 2006/2007. List available by E-mail (contact@atej.net)

Other things of interest:

The French center (ATEJ) set up a national survey about financial means and public subsidies near 400 French theatrical companies (October – November 2006).

The French center or ASSITEJ (ATEJ) is a member of the national "Forum pour l'éducation artistique". After a meeting during the last "Festival d'Avignon" the French center distribute actually the text "Manifeste d'intérêt général pour une politique d'éducation artistique durable et concertée". This text is available (in French only) by mail at :contact@atej.net

GERMANY

Seminars, workshops:

Frankfurt Playwrights' Forum

The traditional Frankfurt Playwrights' Forum, well known as a national and international meeting place for authors and theatre makers, takes place this year from 30. Nov. to 2. Dec. 2006. This years topic is "Creative Processes in Script Development". Best praxis models will be given by lectures and workshops and 17 playwrights from Germany, Austria and Switzerland will present their new plays. The program is at www.kjtz.de. Final date for registration is on November 22nd 2006.

Other things of interest:

Announcement for the International Directors' Seminar for Children's and Young People's Theatre

What is the Director's Seminar?

The International Directors' Seminar for Children's and Young People's Theatre is a seminar of six days length. Around 25 directors from all parts of the world come together to work on the same topic with different cultural backgrounds, different education, different methods and different approaches to Children's and Young People's Theatre.

History

Since the reunification of the two Germanys seven International Director's Seminars took place on various theatres with various topics and with nearly 175 directors' from all parts of the world. In the years before 13 International Director's Seminars took place in Berlin organised by ASSITEJ GDR. The Director's Seminars were attended by directors with very different methods and backgrounds which came together for a week to live and work together with colleagues. They shared a curiosity on each others work and methods.

2007

The Directors' Seminar 2007 will take place from May 29 to June 4. The topic will be "Heroes and idols - rituals of power and self-awareness". It will particularly have dance and movement as elements of theatre for young audiences in view.

How to apply for the Director's Seminar

Very soon ASSITEJ Germany sends out an announcement to all ASSITEJ Centres. ASSITEJ-Centers who are interested should nominate a Director to take part in this seminar. The Nominees are asked to send the application for the "International Directors' Seminar" (including a current curricula vitae) by letter, fax or email to ASSITEJ Germany at the beginning of the year when the Director's Seminar will be held. The board of ASSITEJ Germany decides who participates in the Director's Seminar with regards to the professional approach to Children's and Young People's Theatre and with regards to a representation of all continents. The Seminar's language is

English, so all participants must be able to understand and speak English. German ASSITEJ as the organizer of the "International Directors' Seminar" will bear the costs for hotel, catering, theatre tickets and leisure activities for all participants. In general travel costs have to be paid either by the participants themselves, or by their respective national centre of ASSITEJ.

Who organizes the Director's Seminar and how does it work?

The Director's Seminar is organized by ASSITEJ Germany in co-operation with the host theatre. The participants will be divided into three small groups to do practical work based on the seminar's theme. The groups will be led by people chosen from among the participants. Theatre performances by the host and other local companies will accompany and complete the daily work of the Seminar. The programme of the Director's Seminar is chosen, worked out, organized and moderated by a team of ASSITEJ Germany and the members of the host theatre.

Applications should be sent to:

ASSITEJ Germany
Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Schneider (chair)
Schützenstr. 12
D-60311 Frankfurt am Main
phone ++49/69/291538
fax ++49/69/292354
Email: assitej@kjtz.de
for further information about
upcoming seminars please contact
the General Secretary of ASSITEJ
Germany Eckhard Mittelstädt
(Email: e.mittelstaedt@kjtz.de)

IRAN

Festivals:

The 11th International Puppet Show Festival

took place in October 2006 .
" There are different puppets all over the world .The puppet " Mobarak " is one of the oldest kinds of them in Iran ." said Mr. Masimo Sauster, The President of UNIMA. He continued : The Puppet show in Iran is in a high level and it has this capacity to be presented in different countries ".

The 14th Theater Festival in memorial of the Holly Defense took place in October 2006 . "Titles and contents used in playwrights on war in Iran are not as the same in the world .Theaters on war in the world are about war and fighting while in Iran are about defending and for this it is called " Holy Defense " . Said Mrs. Chista Yasrebi , The playwright and director.

The 5th National Women Theater Festival

took place in September 2006 by the Cultural & Art Center of Municipality , in which three famous actresses were appreciated.

Other things of interest:

The National Theater seminary took place in The fine Art College of Tehran University. The aim of this Seminar is to review the national theater and fine Art college of Tehran University, and find existing deficiencies in this era .

The Puppet Opera, "Macbeth" designed and directing by Behrooz Gharibpoor will perform in FerdosiHall soon. There are more than 70 marionette puppets in this opera.

ITALY

Festivals:

Segni d'infanzia, International Children's Art and Theatre Festival, Mantua (Italy), 12-19 November 2006

The northern city of Mantua, located in the Lombardy region, will be the meeting point for eleven companies of actors coming from Canada, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Spain to express their imagination and creativity and who will invade Mantua's streets, theatres and historical buildings for eight entire days to present their parades, theatre labs, shows and exhibitions especially dedicated to children but not only for them.

LE DUE REGINE (The Two Queens) is an interesting and fascinating novelty that characterizes this year's Festival. The musical fairy tale is created by the artist

Dario Moretti with the participation of Azio Corghi, one of Italy's most talented composers. Other companies at the festival: Xirriquitela, Theatre de la Toupine, Traffik Theatre, Arsenal à Musique, Abbondanza/Bertoni, Catharina Gadelha, Josè Antonio Portillo, ACTA, Skappa.

The festival is promoted by the Municipality of Mantua and is organized by Teatro all'Improvviso, a professional company of actors working together for youth theatre activity since 1980. For information and reservation: Teatro all'improvviso - Piazza Don Leoni 18 – Mantova
Tel. 0039 (0)376 221705 -
info@segnidinanzia.org -
www.segnidinanzia.org

JORDAN

A cooperation project between Jordan, Denmark and Sweden with a festival and workshop will take place in Amman, November 22 - 28, 2006. The purpose is to develop and strengthen networks in the field of theatre for children and young people and to provide a process of theatre-making that enables the participants to connect to each other, across boundaries of geography, history and cultures. Theatre companies from Denmark, Finland, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Sweden and Syria will take part in the festival and participants in the workshop will come from the same countries.

More info: ASSITEJ Denmark
<info@asstej.dk>, ASSITEJ Sweden
<info@assitej.org.se> or ASSITEJ Jordan
<pac@nets.com.jo>.

KOREA

Festivals:

Seoul Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences, 21st July – 29th July.

The Seoul Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences has been held annually since 1993. The festival combines all genres of performances, and programs consists of the best performances for children. There

will be 10 plays performed in all. 5 from Asia and 5 from Europe.

Asian Children's Theatre Festival 2007, Seoul, 21st July – 25th July 2007

"Asian Children's Theatre Festival 2007, Seoul," which is created with the agreement by Asian Children's Theatre Alliance, the one and only organization for networking Asian children's theatre and theatre peoples, as its first festival, will be organized by ASSITEJ Korea with two major purposes: 1) to introduce Asian Children's theatre properly and extensively in the world children's theatre scenes, and 2) to market Asian children's theatre to the festivals around the world in order for Asian productions to be invited to as many festivals as possible in the world by inviting.

The Festival will be held as a part of Seoul Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences 2007, and approximately 12 pieces (5 to 7 Asian pieces and 6 to 8 local pieces) scrupulously chosen from Asian countries will be presented, and symposium and workshops (3 to 4) introducing unique Asian children's theatre and Asian artists will be arranged. The performances will be: 1) re-interpretation of Asian myths and/or traditional stories with universal theatre vocabularies, 2) world famous stories and/or western classics with Asian theatre methods, 3) non-verbal, and 4) other good quality plays.

RUSSIA

Festival:

The VIII International "Rainbow" Theatre Festival, St. Petersburg, Russia May 31 and June 6, 2007.

Dear Colleagues!

We are please to announce that the VIII International "Rainbow" Theatre Festival will be held in St. Petersburg between May 31 and June 6, 2007.

Traditionally, professional theatres for children and youth take part in the Festival –

seven Russian groups, and seven foreign. The artistic program of the festival is organized by the Advisory Council on the basis of applications and visual materials (VHS, VCD, DVD) received from interested theatres.

Particular consideration will be given to contemporary plays for teenagers and young people in dramatic theatre and modern readings of classical works.

The performances presented at the Festival will receive the attention of the leading critics of Russia. The festival itself will be covered by mass media. Within the framework of the festival, seminars for the heads of participating theatres, pedagogues and play writers will be held.

The "Rainbow" Festival has the honour to invite the heads of the theatres to participate in its seminars. All costs connected with staying in St. Petersburg (accommodation, local transport, meals) during the days of the festival will be covered by the "Rainbow" Festival.

The most outstanding performances, as recognized by the Festival Jury, will be awarded prizes at the Closing Ceremony on 6 June.

The winners in following five categories will receive monetary awards:

The best performance for the main stage

The best performance of the small form

Best female part

Best male part

New forms

We look forward to receiving your applications (with video-documentation of the performances you would like to present at the Festival) no later than **February 1, 2007**.

Those theatres selected for participation can expect the following: accommodation and 3 meals a day for three days for the company (up to a max. of 20 persons). Further, two representatives of each selected theatre may be offered living expenses for the entire period of the Festival.

Please, send your applications and video materials to:

1, Pionerskaya pl.,
191119 St. Petersburg
Russia

Tel: +7-812-7125961

Fax: +7-812-7125970

e-mail: spb-tuz@mail.ru

spbtyuz_inter@mail.ru

Svetlana Vasilievna LAVRETSOVA, Director
St. Petersburg State Theatre for Young
Audiences named after Bryantsev and the
Rainbow Festival

Tel. +7-812-7124068; +7-812-7641124

Alexey MOSKIN,
Director of the International Department
Tel. +7-812-7125961

Application

1. The full name of theatre/group/company
2. The name of performance (with date of premier)
3. Author's name(s)
4. Art director
5. Designer
6. Length of the performance (number and duration of acts)
7. Characters and performers (performance program to be included)
8. Annotation and any reviews of the performance
9. Photos of the performance
10. VHS/VCD/DVD (without major editing/special effects)
11. Brief profile of the theatre
12. Previous festivals the theatre participated in (name, city, country, date)
13. Full list of staff travelling with the company to the festival (with their duties/positions)
14. Accommodation requests (only 2 single-rooms per group will be provided)
15. Technical requirements for the performance
16. Stage preference for the performance (main stage or studio stage)

Theatre address

Contact person

Telephone number, fax, and e-mail

RWANDA

Seminars, workshop:

”Playwright Workshop on Adaptation and Writing for Certain Age-Groups”, a regional African playwright workshop, was held in Kigali, Rwanda, from November 7th to 13th with participants from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Namibia, Cameroon, Nigeria, Tanzania, Swaziland, Kenya, Uganda, Zambia, Mauritius and Botswana. Workshop facilitators were Marie Persson-Hedenius, Sweden, and Francis Imbuga, Kenya.

SWITZERLAND

Festivals:

Day of the Child, Italian Part of Switzerland and Northern Italy, NOVEMBER 18th, 19th and 20th 2006

The Day of the Child is based on an initiative of astej and is celebrated in the Italian part of Switzerland and Northern Italy. On November 20th 1989 the UN convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified – an event that is remembered in Switzerland since many years with a wide variety of actors and programs for children and teenagers.

This year, together with local partners, astej is organizing an international theatre festival for kids and teenagers. This „Mini-Festival“ is intended to be the founding cornerstone for international cooperation in the regions of Ticino, the Italian speaking part of the canton of Grisons and Northern Italy. The project „Day of the Child 2006“ offers children and teenagers in the Italian speaking parts of Switzerland and in Northern Italy the experience of high quality theatre performances and encourages active communication across cantonal and national borders.

In less than 48 hours more than 40 plays for children and teenagers will be shown on over 20 stages all across the Italian part of Switzerland and Northern Italy.

The italian-swiss Day of the Child is launched on November 18th with an international symposium and the legendary

performance of „Animal Farm“ by the Italian theatre company Teatro Due Mondi.

Participants: Stefano Cipiciani: President of the Association Premio Scenario, Managing Director of the Teatro stabile d’innovazione Fontemaggiore in Perugia, Italy.

Stefania Isola: Office of Culture and Higher Education, Canton of Ticino, Switzerland

Graziano Melano: President of the ATIG - ASSITEJ Italia, Tutor at DAMS in Turin, Italy, President of the foundation teatro ragazzi e giovani (Turin), Martha Monstein: Pro Helvetia, Swiss Foundation, Responsible for Performing Arts.

Franco Sonanini: Director of Schule und Kultur, Zürich and artistic director of the festival Blickfelder Switzerland

More information: www.astej.ch,

Informationen: Cristina Galbiati, Responsible astej antenna ticinese:

ticino@astej.ch

Esther Widmer, Secretary General astej: admin@

SPOT 23. International Theatre Festival for Young Audiences, Fribourg
19th to 23rd of SEPTEMBER 2007

There is action in the independent scene of youth theatre in Switzerland! Its members prove to be surprisingly gutsy in their choices of topics, it’s form is in constant creative innovation and there is no fear of contact between traditional and experimental forms, sometimes even throwing rigid conventions overboard. SPOT is the showcase for contemporary development in Swiss theatre for children and teenagers. A playful platform for performance as well as discussion, SPOT generates a vivid exchange of ideas between Swiss and international groups. International focal point: BRONKS from Belgium will perform two or three of their current plays and offer workshops for professionals in the world of theatre. Moreover, the successful class „How to study“ is re-launched in collaboration with theatre schools that teach in German or French. The working group „Script Write“ will be focusing on writing for the stage. There is room for the trading of experiences and advice between the performances and discussions. In close cooperation with the Swiss cultural foundation Pro Helvetia, an

international meeting of organizers and festival managers will be held.

More information: admin@astej.ch, Esther Widmer or visit www.astej.ch (starting February 2007)

UNITED KINGDOM

Festivals:

USING THE ARTS TO OVERCOME CULTURAL BARRIERS - a

CIAO!/ASSITEJ UK Forum. At this year's CIAO! Festival (in June at South Hill Park Arts Centre, Bracknell) ASSITEJ UK co-facilitated a forum on the theme of 'Arts Across Frontiers'. Contributors included members of the Arab-Hebrew Theatre of Jaffa who talked about the significance to their work in Israel of Arab and Jewish actors working alongside each other, and Jaswinder Singh talking about the importance to his work of drawing on the different cultural backgrounds of people living in the UK. Contact Karen Draisey kdraisey@yahoo.com

The 10th Belfast Children's Festival

(formerly Young at Art) will take place in Northern Ireland from Friday 25th May – Sunday 3rd June 2007. A programme of international and indigenous performance, visual arts and music will include a focus on dance and events for early years. Organisers of the festival Young at Art, will also present the unique baby rave for the third year, an interactive dance and music event for 0 – 4 years which will be available for touring internationally from March 2007. Alongside the festival, Young at Art will also host Open Space, its forum for practitioners. Two seminars/discussions will take place exploring the value and benefits of live events and performance for young audiences and how public buildings and theatres accommodate children as audiences/visitors. The Belfast Children's Festival is happy to offer complimentary tickets for events and seminars and an accommodation booking service to visitors from outside Northern Ireland. Contact openspace@youngatart.co.uk

The Midlands Arts Centre, Birmingham - TYPES Celebration Week. A week of seminars, workshops and public performances of plays for young people by new writers on the West Midlands TYPES Scheme (Theatre for Young People Enrichment Scheme). Dates & place: Monday 2nd July 2007 – Friday 6th July 2007 MAC (Midlands Arts Centre), Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham B12 9QH Contact: Philip Monks 00.44.7855 490 848 or Roisin at the Midlands Arts Centre 00.44.0121 446 3374

Birmingham Repertory Theatre and ASSITEJ UK will hold a two day conference on Friday 20 and Saturday 21 April 2007 that will examine early years theatre practise for children aged 0 to 6.

The conference will celebrate the growth of provision as well as seeking to anticipate what the future might hold particularly through exploring the different roles of Theatre practitioners, Early Years practitioners and families, and through the relationship between theatre and play in the very young.

Through performances, workshops, seminars and interactive displays, the conference will bring together the groundbreaking work of children's theatre companies and innovative practice in Early Years settings. The structure of the conference will follow the three distinct strands of theatre practitioners, Early Years practitioners and families. There will be an emphasis on activities exploring the way the different perspectives of the three strands of people attending the event can be creatively combined. Some events will be aimed at individual strands, and others will be intended as of equal interest to all.

Contact: Selene Burn , Birmingham Repertory Theatre, 00.44. 121 2452159 selene.burn@birmingham-rep.co.uk www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Other things of interest:

BIG TELLY theatre company has been touring *The Little Mermaid* to Taiwan, Denmark, Serbia and the UK before returning to Northern Ireland. Big Telly's

acclaimed water show is based on the original Hans Christian Andersen's original well-loved fairytale and is performed entirely in swimming pools.

Big Telly on 00.44.28 7083 2588 or visit www.big-telly.com

Theatre-Rites will tour *The Thought That Counts* from February to April 2007 to venues within the UK, but are also delighted to include, for the first time, performances at the Centro Cultural de Belém, Portugal (**Sunday 18 – Sunday 25 Mar 2007**). The Thought That Counts was originally commissioned by barbicantbite05 and the Young Vic for the 2005 Young Genius Season, this was one of only two commissioned productions and the only show aimed at younger audiences. Further information: Claire Templeton Tel: 00.44.20 7228 0504 www.theatre-rites.co.uk

The Unicorn, London recently held a three-week season of Swedish theatre for children called *Small Feet Go Far* featuring diverse work from companies like Unga Klara and Unga Riks (the national touring theatre for young people) as well as contemporary dance for youngsters. The festival also had playreadings (with Polka, Company of Angels, RADA, the National Theatre and Hampstead), a literature and film festival (run in conjunction with the NFT) and some seminars including Suzanne Osten, Philip Pullman and Henning Mankell on Taboos in Children's Theatre. More from Scandinavia in January 2006 when Gruppe 38, the much-loved Danish children's theatre company, will be presenting three shows at the Unicorn: *A Sonatina*, *The Little Match Girl* and *Run Chicken Run*. And from Japan - Yabuta Hirotsugu's (from Osaka) installation will appear in the foyer and in 2008 **Kazeno-ko Theatre** from Kansai have also been invited to present *Hello Maru-Chan – A World of Paper*. Contact: 00.44.20 7645 0500

ARAD GOCH theatre company from Wales are currently working in Ireland on a co-production of *WINTER PICTURES*, for 4 - 8 year olds, with **THE ARK Centre for Children's Culture** and **GLÓR Centre for Traditional Music**. *WINTER PICTURES* is a favourite in Arad Goch's repertoire; this

new production includes a specially commissioned musical score of traditional Irish music written by Emer Mayock from Ireland. The production will return to tour in Wales in late 2006 and will tour abroad in 2007. www.aradgoch.org
00.44.1970.617998

Théâtre Sans Frontières in China: *Aladin and the Enchanted Lamp* has returned from an exciting trip to China where it performed at the Shanghai International Children's Festival which also included ten other theatre companies from Japan, China, Taiwan, Croatia, Russia, Poland, Belgium and the UK. The company then went on to perform at Nanjing Culture and Arts Centre. The company has already performed *Aladin et la Lampe Enchantée* in French in the UK. If you would like any more information on our international tours please contact Helen Green on helen@tsf.org.uk or see our website: www.tsf.org.uk

UNITED STATES

Festivals:

International Showcase 2007 January 10 – January 13, 2007, Playhouse Square Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Together with IPAY, Playhouse Square Foundation's Arts Education Department is pleased to announce the exciting showcases and daily professional development opportunities that will be presented at the 29th Annual Showcase of Performing Arts for Youth. NEW! "Think Tanks" - opportunities for meaningful conversation around the topics of Presenting and Reflecting on New Work, Cultural Translation, and Work for Young Adults (ages 14-21); Post-show talk backs after selected performances; 4 days of showcases by companies representing high quality performing arts for children, youth and families from around the world; Exhibit Hall - the place for artists, agents and presenters to connect; Opportunities to network with your colleagues; Daily continental breakfasts, wine and cheese cocktail receptions, the opening night reception and the closing night party. Don't miss it! To find out more about Showcase 2007 visit www.PlayhouseSquare.org/showcase.

Bonderman Playwriting for Young Audiences Symposium at the Indiana Repertory Theatre: MARCH 1-4, 2007 at the Indiana Repertory Theatre (IRT): a showcase of four new plays from the development workshop, excerpts from other notable new scripts submitted to the Bonderman, a playwrights slam, workshop(s), cutting edge discussions, networking opportunities, and more! Visit www.irtlive.com for more.

Imagination Stage will hold the first ever International Edge Festival March 30 – April 7, 2007 at the theatre in Bethesda, MD, just outside the nation's capital. Featuring student and professional companies from around the USA and the world, the Edge Festival will include stylistically innovative and "edgy" work for young people by companies such as DynamO from Montreal and Cahoots from N. Ireland.

The 23rd annual Philadelphia International Children's Festival Sunday, April 29-Saturday, May 5, 2007 in the facilities of the Annenberg Center on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. This oldest, longest-running Children's Festival in the USA will feature performances for children by leading artists and companies performing work designed for children. The performances will take place indoors within three of the Center's theatres, as well as in other associate performance spaces, and outdoors on the adjacent Annenberg Plaza. These performances will be complemented by a broad range of outdoor, hands-on, international arts and crafts activities and international foods on the immediately adjacent Annenberg Plaza. Should you desire additional information, please contact Roy at rwilbur@pobox.upenn.edu

One Theatre World May 30-June 3, 2007. Produced by ASSITEJ/USA in association with the Flint Hills International Children's Festival and the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, Minnesota. The festival will include interactive workshops, new plays, connections with colleagues and productions in the Twin Cities, provocative discussions, TYA productions from around the world, network opportunities with

students, teacher, artists, managers from around the U.S.A. and the world, challenging topics and a special NEXT generation event

Pittsburgh International Children's Theater & Festival - The 21st festival will be May 16 to 20, 2007 with artists from Canada, Israel, United Kingdom and more. For more information contact Maranne Welch, Founding Artistic Director, Pittsburgh International Children's Theater & Festival or www.pghkids.org



Dead-line for submitting information for the Newsletter, no. 44, is February 15th 2007.
