

ASSITEJ INFORMATION

Newsletter 40
November 2005



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www.assitej.org

This Newsletter is also posted on <www.assitej.org>
All ASSITEJ centres are free to copy this guide at will

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARIAT

- The next Executive Committee Meeting will take place in Frankfurt, Germany, from December 2nd to 6th, 2005. If your centre wishes to put anything on the agenda, please, contact the General Secretariat as soon as possible.
- The ASSITEJ web-site has up-dated information about the new Executive Committee as well as other up-dated information regarding decisions made in the General Assembly in Montréal.
- The ASSITEJ International Festival Guide will be up-dated in February. All ASSITEJ centres will receive fill-in-forms in December and are kindly requested to return them by January 15th 2006.



Designation of "ASSITEJ International Project"

◆ "Visioni di futuro, visioni di teatro... -festival di teatro e cultura per la primera infanzia", Bologna, March 1st to 12th 2006, organized by La Baracca-Testoni Ragazzi Theatre in co-operation with Bologna City.

More information: e-mail: Antonella Dalla Rosa antonella@testoniragazzi.it or Carlotta Zini carlotta@testoniragazzi.it

See also <www.assitej.org> for more information.

Winners of the 2005 ASSITEJ Honorary President 's Award

Zeal Theatre, Australia



The Jury makes the award to Zeal Theatre for their artistic practise particularly in the creation of contemporary work that speaks powerfully to and with young audiences. The jury commends the substantial international influence this work has exerted over the past three years.

Kim Woo-ok, Korea



The Jury makes the award to Dr Kim Woo-Ok for his contribution to extending international dialogue surrounding the creation of performance for young audiences. In particular Dr Woo-Ok's important work in nurturing Asian networks into this dialogue.

The Award was presented during the 15th ASSITEJ World Congress in Montréal in September 2005.

15th Congress and General Assembly in Montréal, September 2005

New Executive Committee

Wolfgang Schneider, President, Germany

Cheela Chilala, Vice-President, Zambia

Yuriko Kobayashi, Vice-President, Japan

Tony Mack, Vice-President, Australia

Niclas Malmcrona, Secretary General, Sweden

Klaus Eggert, Treasurer, Denmark

Jeremy Turner, United Kingdom

Young Ai Choi, Korea

Stephan Rabl, Austria

Ivica Simic, Croatia

Katariina Metsälampi, Finland

Hope Azeda, Rwanda

Razi Amita, Israel

Peter Rinderknecht, Switzerland

María Inés Falconi, Argentina

Tülin Saglam, Turkey

Kim Peter Kovac, USA

Eckhard Mittelstädt, Counsellor, Germany

New working programme 2005 - 2008

Drafted by Working Party at Montreal General Assembly on 24/9/05

The goal of the working plan is the artistic development and promotion of theatre for children and young people, and therefore Congress directs the Executive Committee (EC) to carry out the following tasks, under such Working Groups as the EC considers appropriate.

- 1) Secure stable funding for the General Secretariat.
- 2) Review the current subscription system.
- 3) Increase income by identifying and develop new income sources. (Examples: fundraising, ASSITEJ supporter scheme)
- 4) Review Festival Guide.
- 5) Further develop ASSITEJ Awards, especially the Honorary President's Award, including clarification of the guidelines, and increasing participation,
- 6) Actively support the next generation of practitioners in the field of theatre for children and young people and their involvement within ASSITEJ.
- 7) Improve communication to, from, and between ASSITEJ Centres, with an emphasis on translation of ASSITEJ material.
- 8) Expand and develop the ASSITEJ web site. (Example: Create 'resource areas' with information, links to websites, links to practitioners, on topics such as conflict resolution, theatre criticism, and work for very young children.)

9) Continue to develop and expand the script database and ASSITEJ archives.

10) Actively assist in the creation of new national centres and regional networks, and in the development of existing centres and regional networks.

11) Produce and distribute the ASSITEJ Book.

12) Promote the World Children's Theatre Day; ASSITEJ International Project; ASSITEJ International Festival; Honorary Membership.

13) Produce and distribute the ASSITEJ Newsletter.

14) Investigate dormant and gatekeeper centres and assist in making them active and inclusive.

15) Organize EC meetings, review current procedures (including actively coordinating with the Congress organizer), and report on outcomes to ASSITEJ members.

16) Seek connections with parallel organizations such as UNESCO, UNIMA, ITI, FIRT, IATC, as well as theatre educational organizations.

17) Increase the visibility of ASSITEJ both within member nations as well as internationally through increased public relations activity. (Example: the EC creates a PowerPoint presentation with information about ASSITEJ on DVD).

18) Develop research on the cultural environment of contemporary children and young people (Examples: theatergoing trends; how audiences respond to theatre; what is the influence of mass media).

**Next Congress site:
Adelaide, Australia,
May 2008**

Forums in Montréal

at the 15th ASSITEJ World Congress,
September 23, 2005

The Forums at the Congress in Montréal was organised by the outgoing Executive Committee with the purpose of having an open discussion with delegates and ASSITEJ members present in Montréal.

Each Forum was introduced by a chair from the EC with comments from other EC members. After the introduction a discussion took place with possibilities for the participants to comment and to present opinions.

Each Forum was about one and a half hour long and was presented in the following order on September 23, 2005.

The notes from the Forums were taken by different note-takers and they differ in character and style. Nevertheless they reflect the discussion of every Forum.

The General Secretariat wishes to thank all note-takers for an outstanding work.

Forum A Adapting literature into theatre

***Cheela Chilala, chair
Jeremy Turner
Luiza Monteiro
Michail Bartenev***

Cheela Chilala - ASSITEJ Zambia

Cheela started by noting that this forum was a follow-up to a joint seminar held by ASSITEJ and IBBY in South Africa earlier in 2005, a record of which is published in the most recent ASSITEJ Year Book. He also noted that despite their differences, all art forms for children share some common considerations, for instance the appropriateness of theme and content.

Cheela outlined two broad types of adaptation: (i) *intra cultural adaptations* - from one art form to another (e.g. book to film, film to radio etc.) within the same culture and (ii) *inter cultural adaptations* - from one culture to another. Each of these processes has its own complications although the matter of the extent of fidelity to the original is common to both; he noted that a Bangladeshi translation of Ibsen's *Doll's House* was made culturally specific by replacing Nora's slamming of the door with the erasing of the vermilion mark on her forehead; this raises the dilemma of fidelity to specifics of the original in translation/adaptation whilst maintaining the spirit of the original.

Presentations were made by Josiane Polidori, Jeremy Turner and Luiza Monteiro

Josiane Polidori - President IBBY Canada

Josiane talked of the recent interest in Canada in adapting children's books into theatre, noting that most of these adaptations were of book where the character or characters are important.

She also touched briefly on the complicated subject of copyright and performing rights noting that in one particular instance - *The Paperback Princess* - the author had kept the performing rights of the theatre adaptation.

Josiane closed her presentation by noting that children's books can provide an interesting body of work for theatre, moving from the 'privacy' of a book to the 'open' experience of theatre.

Jeremy Turner - ASSITEJ U.K. Member of the EC of ASSITEJ International

Jeremy talked of his own work using literature for theatre - noting that what interests him is not simply adapting literature to the stage but the more creative process of making a new piece of art inspired by the original book or story. This is different from an editing process as the new theatre script has to co-exist with all the other parts of the whole theatrical experience - movement, voice, sound, shape, light.

Therefore in taking a work of literature as a starting point, very often a lot of the original has to be edited out - as if the adapter is

using a big scissors - in order to find the very essence of the story. This is then used to create a theatre-script - the structure of which is often very different from the structure of the original.

Jeremy compared of the more obvious characteristics of a story/novel and those of a theatre production, their methods of creation and their relationships with their respective audiences: a story/novel is usually indirect, reflective, descriptive and both its creative process and its relationship with its audience/reader are private; whereas a theatre production is generally more immediate, progressive, reactive, its creative process is usually collaborative and its relationship with its audience is direct and public.

Some examples of his own adaptations were:

ü the use of traditional source material performed using contemporary performance techniques;

ü the use and combination of short 'sexy, wild and noisy' excerpts from literature for teenagers with live music to create a lively, contemporary 'deconstructivist' performance;

and also other forms of adaptation including:

ü the use of music - classical, contemporary or traditional - as the inspiration / starting point when creating new theatre;

ü the use of poetry to create physical / dance theatre performances.

Luiza Monteiro - ASSITEJ Brazil. Member of the EC of ASSITEJ International

Luiza noted that there is a big trend in Brazil to adapt literature to theatre and mentioned that the 'father of children's literature' in Brazil [NAME] also creates good theatre literature for children.

Most of Luiza's presentation addressed the fascinating field of adapting oral 'literature' and its stories and conventions to the theatre. There is a long tradition of storytelling in Brazil and even now it can sometimes be found in the cities. This tradition of the 'Cantadores' came from the Iberian culture and involves telling stories to the accompaniment of musical instruments; the stories could be contemporary news, traditional tales and epics or even the lives of heroes and saints. The tradition travelled to Brazil with the Iberian immigration and as it travelled overland and through time it came into contact with other cultures from South

America and Africa; this interaction caused the mutation of the stories and the conventions of their performance.

Luiza had found contact with these performances often in markets and the red-light districts of towns. There are many different styles of performance although they all use rigid metre and rhythms. As the stories are told and retold time and time again they change and become more and more fantastic - often mixing contemporary and historic events and characters.

Luiza tries to bring some of the essence of this tradition to the stage - and to children's theatre. She accepts that there is not one particular 'method' or 'set recipe' of adapting literature to theatre, noting that the process itself is recreated in a different way each time. However, she outlines the following factors in her work of adapting oral literature into children's theatres:

- i. that each adaptation needs to 'make sense' to the audience - the children;
- ii. the need to use theatrical elements in addition to voice and gesture - e.g. musicians with acting/stage ability, puppetry - in order to make the work less abstract;
- iii. the need to bring something of the context in which these stories were originally told/shown - e.g. the open market place - to the theatre production
- iv. that adaptations and presentations need to be clear; there should be no hidden tricks but children should be shown how an image is created - e.g. an image of a boat created by using a piece of fabric.
- v. that the traditional elements of metre, rhyme and rhythm should be kept as part of the contemporary performance.

The discussion which followed can be summarized as follows (a more detailed record is given on the following pages):

1. The differences and similarities between inter-cultural and intra-cultural adaptations.
2. The difference between editing, adapting, and creating a new piece of art.
3. The main differences between, and requirements of a piece of literature and a theatrical production.
4. The commercial aspect of adapting children's literature to theatre- we are often tempted to use popular literature because it 'sells well'.
5. The moral issues in the use of 'diary theatre' - do we have the right to edit and

adapt real, personal experiences.

6. Who has ownership of the work and who is the best person to adapt - the original writer or a theatre practitioners - or a collaboration of both?

7. We should remember that some books are well known and well liked by children; how much right do we have, therefore, to change them into something totally new?

8. What does the book mean to us now, here, today? What is the underlying thought? What do we take and honour?

The whole question was best summed-up by Susan Zeder:

'How do you find the original heartbeat of the story? What are the pulse, the tone of the original and how do you find and use that in concert with your own creativity?'

Contributions from participants

Hope Azeda - Rwanda

Hope commented that cutting stories, specifically recent or contemporary oral stories, could get the writer/editor into trouble. For instance, in her country much work has been done recording people's recollections of the genocide. Sometimes it might be felt incorrect or indecent to cut or edit these stories for the purpose of theatre. However, it would be impossible to keep every piece of every story and still make good theatre. How, therefore, do you cut/edit whilst also being faithful to the source?

Maria Inez Falconi - Argentina

1. Yes we need the 'scissors' when adapting from literature to theatre; but sometimes there is confusion between adapting and editing; adapting involves the creation of a new structure.
2. In Argentina there is a problem with too many adaptations and too few new plays. Often adaptations are of traditional [European] stories e.g. Cinderella. Therefore there is a need to promote and develop original plays for theatre.

Susan Zeder - USA

Adaptation involves recreation in a different [theatrical] language. This sometimes poses a dilemma.

We recognise the need for space for original material. But this is hard, especially from the economic perspective where the two tyrannies of *time* and *title* often restrict the art.

Jackson Ndwula - Uganda

Where is the protection for the original author and her/his work in the process of adaptation?

Michael Ramløse - Denmark

The title is important. But this year [the bicentenary of Hans Christian Andersen] there are hundreds of adaptations of Andersen's fairy tales. Many are good and interesting - but we must ask the question 'Why?' Often adaptations are made just for the sake of telling the tale again - there are 1000s of ugly '... Ducklings'! If we just adapt in order to sell, it is often not interesting.

Hallveig Thorlacius - Iceland

Sometimes there is a good reason why we should adapt stories to theatre. It could be said that Iceland only gained its independence because its literature - the sagas - had survived. It is very important to keep them alive - especially in an increasingly 'Americanised' global] society.

The problem of presenting difficult, often bloody [gruesome] stories. A way has been found by using a clown's red nose and by using puppets. This has provided a way of saying anything and has liberated the [creative] process. Now I want to continue with more bloody stories.

Josiane Polidori - Canada

(Returning to the rights of the author): one well-known writer in Canada asks to read the script of the adaptation before agreeing to give permission for theatre productions. There is often collaboration between a novelist and a theatre company in the process of adaptation - where the novelist is helped to make adaptation of his/her own work [gaining from the experience and expertise of the theatre company].

Anne-Marie Riel - Canada

A lot of work has been done in collaboration with well-known authors - sometimes nice, sometimes tedious, sometimes hell! Sometimes authors are too strict in e.g. the ways characters act, or scenographie, feeling the need to put their vision, from the original books, in the stage adaptations. But we need to put our own vision in the adaptation. Yes, adaptations of favourites do sell tickets; but it is not well considered by the arts council in my country.

Pam Sterling - USA

There is a question of the moral dilemma caused by taking oral history and adapting it for theatre.

There is a current movement [in the USA] of getting community stories through story circles.

But how should we use 'interview theatre' - and its subjects ranging from genocide to urban life to perspectives on state education. 'What do we take and honour? Am I respecting your story - and its most important points?' is the underlying thought in order to maintain respect for the author and their work. - especially if the author is still alive.

Henning Fanghauf - Germany

From the country of Grimm - like Andersen - adaptations are sometimes like a disease. The outcome is often a 'production'. But is it really dramatic literature? In adapting we need to look for the 'sexy, wild and noisy' but also for the dramatic moment in the book .

Literature is psychological and descriptive but theatre is a fight between ideas or people. This must be created by stage experts.

In Germany there is a tendency for writers of children's book to make their own adaptations. If the authors are also good 'theatre artists' this is often good.

But also the commercial aspect is strong.

Sally Chance - Australia

There are many good examples of the practice of creating theatre literature operating on a continuum - with people who work with young people on one end of the continuum and professional theatre artists on the other. There are time and consultation implications to this, as one side influences the other.

Joanna Kraus USA

There are some hideous adaptations - e.g. where the *little mermaid* does not die because the death in the story is deemed to be too sad - and therefore not commercial.

We have to be true to the spirit of the source; our obligation is to light a fire in the audiences but not to destroy the original.

An example of popular 'diary theatre' is the Laramie Project in the USA - based on homophobia; there was so much material it had to be edited down to make it useful.

Maria Inez Falconi - Argentina

There are 3 reasons for adapting a book to the stage:

- i. as part of a true creative process;
- ii. there is no script writer available - or the

writer does not know how to write for theatre, therefore a book is used;
iii. economic reasons - a good title will sell a show.

We need to develop the first and to educate playwrights to develop new ideas for children's theatre.

We also need to educate adults to take children to see new plays.

Tony Graham - UK

Why do we bother to adapt at all? Not all literature is adaptable: some stories are dramatic others are not.

In adapting we need to absorb the book, look for the essence and then 'throw the book out of the window' in order to create something new; the public's expectations of a book are sometimes our worse enemy in that they restrict our work.

Vicky Ireland - UK

Authors have ownership of their books and their ideas - we should respect this or not use the book at all.

Also, children have some sort of ownership of books and their authors and have their own strong ideas about the book; they can become upset and annoyed if we 'mess it about' and recreate the book in an unrecognisable form.

Forum B

How to build relationship between theatre arts and the educational system?

Kim Peter Kovac, chair
Hagit Rehavi Nikolayevski
Yuriko Kobayashi

● Kim Peter Kovac made some opening remarks and introduced the presenters. Some issues he introduced:

→ How do we incorporate art into the curriculum?

→ Schools are important partners - how do we cultivate and nurture that relationship?

→ Schools are conservative - how can we present them with shows that are challenging and creative but are still compatible with their strict list of what is acceptable for students?

● Yuriko from Japan made some remarks:

→ New educational guidelines were introduced in Japan in 1987. This was a dramatic change for the educational system.

→ The new guidelines emphasized the power of

learning through experiencing or integrated learning.

→ The workshop idea became popular.

→ No university programs for those interested in Drama/Theatre for the Young exist in Japan - they must go abroad to places like the USA in order to study the field. Only a few theatre programs exist at the university level.

→ A theatre academy has been established, but most theatre companies have their own training schools. Question: should children's classes be added to the academy?

→ Integrated learning has been criticized - international test scores have been low in Japan and the system is demanding that they go back to basics.

→ Most teachers would prefer to teach basic classes rather than integrated classes.

→ There are many budget problems.

→ She believes that those who work in the field should work harder to convince people of the scientific reasons that this kind of learning is important. We need to find more quantitative and qualitative data to back these assertions up.

→ She believes that we should use theatre/drama learning as a way to survive in the educational system. It is strongly connected to language arts.

● Hagit from Israel made some remarks:

→ Her biggest question is: what happened to the art of theatre in schools?

→ Artists and educators have been working together for 30 years to create a cultural exchange for children.

→ Students attend many performances in school groups (10,000 performances for schools/year). Government and parental financial support helps to subsidize ticket costs.

→ She contends that there are problems with this system:

- Playwrights and directors have lost their freedom because they must cater to the schools' needs. There is too much censorship because teachers want to protect their students. Hence, many of the best plays that are challenging or confrontational are not seen by student audiences.

→ Even though some performances are good, the general experience can often be unpleasant for children. Some questions: How do the students go to the theatre? Who chooses the plays? How are the students prepared for the plays, and by whom? How are the students transported to the theatre? The experience can be loud, uncomfortable, confusing, etc. The theatre experience should

be intimate - quite magic.

→ She questions whether or not we should remove theatre from the schools in order to preserve its magic. Perhaps the experience would be better if children attended with their parents.

● Josie from Quebec made some remarks:

→ The relationship between the arts and schools is very healthy in Quebec.

→ Students must choose an artistic area to focus on.

→ Specialists are installed in the schools to teach each art area.

→ Studying an art is obligatory in the Quebec school system.

→ Working with one of these specialists will help students learn the three competencies within their chosen artistic area:

- Interpretation

- Creation

- Appreciation

→ Working with the specialists allows the students to develop more appreciation for the work of others. Their experience allows them to develop a cultural awareness that will follow them through life as they make their own choices about cultural events.

● Discussion:

→ A question for Josie about the protests that we saw outside the opening night performance. She responded by explaining that there had been some extreme budget cuts. This could change the importance of the arts in the schools and make them more of an extra-curricular activity. She stated that it is very important that they remain a necessary part of the educational system.

→ A statement from New Zealand about the state of arts education there: She is concerned about the lowering of standards and the lack of training for professionals who are interested in entering the field of drama/theatre education. One problem is that the government stipulates that arts must be part of the curriculum, but teachers have no formal training that will allow them to do this thoroughly. At one point, trained professionals did work in the schools, but their jobs were victims of budget cuts. She agreed that the magic of theater is getting lost and that challenging pieces are being overlooked in favor of other pieces that are more pleasing/easier to digest. Children leave performances looking dazed because they have experienced theatre that is quickly rehearsed and poorly performed. She is

currently working with teachers in a professional development capacity - helping them to embrace the more challenging/daring pieces. She agreed that the current methods of getting children to the theatre are wrong...perhaps pulling back from the schools a bit might help. She is also working in hospitals - training doctors to humanize themselves and become more communicative.

→ A question from the director of La Maison Quebecoise: Accessibility issues -if we are diversifying our audience, can we continue to make the art accessible.

→ A statement from Korea: Drama/Theatre for the Young is very healthy in Korea. They work very hard to combine theatre and education. The government is not usually involved - most projects are organized by small groups. Since 2002, over 70,000 students have come to his program. His program encourages young people to incorporate issues from their own lives into their creative work. Teachers are able to select their own shows and then attend a post-show workshop with their students. Large companies are also making use of drama workshops - children don't really understand what their parents are doing in the workplace, drama workshops allow them to experience a day in the life of their parents.

→ A question for Josie from France: More about the separation of school and the arts. More about the teaching artist. Josie responded that Quebec is very cultured and that they are aware of the fact that they are spoiled with their current system. It is important that the arts are taught with the same rigor as other subjects, giving students the idea that this is what they must do, rather than this is what I do in addition to my serious school work. It is also important that teachers understand that they are not working with their students in order to create a finished piece of theatre - they are there in order to teach.

→ A statement from Larry Silverman of Mexico: There are many projects that use theatre in the educational system in Mexico. There are too many contradictions within these programs, though. The government in Mexico City had an artistic commission that chose shows that children will see. There are more than 100 groups that want to participate, but 90% aren't good enough to be chosen. Because the system has changed in recent

years and become more democratic, teachers now have more voice in what choices are made for the children's shows. However, they often do not have access to information about the shows, so they have no way to make any choices. Theatre houses are empty because of this problem. The companies that have not had as good a reputation in the past capitalize upon this situation by offering low ticket prices and they pay a fee to the teachers and administrators for bringing their students to their shows. There are also no schools for children's theatre training in Mexico, which means that people need to go to the States in order to study it. The government does fund some cultural events, but there is no continuity in the funding because the government changes every few years. His company offers intensive 24 day workshops that teach people to develop a play that travels to the USA. The government funds this project.

→ A statement from Steve, the Education Director at Birmingham Rep. in England: He is concerned that we are pitting teachers and artists against each other. Rather than view teachers as the enemy, he suggests that we empower them (like we do children) by training them to use the tools that we have at our disposal. They incorporate Neelands and Heathcote's work into their workshops to help teachers. By cultivating creative partnerships and making an investment in the educational community we will overcome narrow thinking. If we don't, only privileged, white, middle-class kids will have access to theatre.

→ A statement from India: The school system in India offers a lot of literature and work experience, but not a lot of theatre. There is a movement from extra-curricular to co-curricular to in-curricular. He believes that the educational system must feel the presence of art. It is difficult to train teachers and he doesn't feel like they are making any headway. Rather than wasting time on that, can we provide theatre as a platform for children to transform themselves? Can we give them a choice when the rest of the world is telling them what they should do?

● Kim Peter Kovac made some closing remarks. Suggested that we continue the conversation.

Forum C

How to expand the scope of criticism of theatre for young audiences?

Wolfgang Schneider, chair

Tony Mack, notes

Tülin Saglam

Summary

"There are three types of readers: one who appreciates without criticising; one another who criticises without appreciation; and the intermediate one who appreciatively criticises and critically appreciates. This latter one essentially reproduces a work of art again."
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

ASSITEJ expects not only a professional approach from artists, but also from critics who review theatre for children and young people. In this lively forum, with perspectives shared by practitioners from thirteen countries, discussion moved from descriptions of contemporary conditions to examples of best practice to examination of the role of the critic. This summary traces the common themes of the discussion.

There was general agreement of the need for intelligent criticism that enables theatre practitioners to reflect on their work. Examples were given of countries and cities where critical debate does not occur, and the consequent lowering of artistic standards.

Opinions were divided on who makes the best critics. Professional journalists/writers? People who come from a theatre background? Should they have a theoretical background? What knowledge of children and young people is needed to judge the effectiveness of a play for its target audience?

What is expected of a theatre critic? What is their role? Examples were given:

→ the 'consumer guide', who lets the public know whether a play is worth the price of the ticket

→ the 'quality control expert', whose knowledge of past theatrical precedents allows them to pass judgement on quality

→ the 'performance recorder', who gives a sense of the theatrical experience

→ the 'demolition expert', who demolishes bad theatre with harsh words.

Many participants expressed concerns about the shrinking forums for theatre criticism. In newspapers and magazines around the world, there appears to be less space given to theatre criticism in general, and criticism of theatre for children and young people in particular. From the point of view of theatre critics, there are often problems in getting to shows, which may occur in the daytime, in difficult-to-get-to venues and/or in schools, where permission to attend may be needed from school authorities.

Festivals and congresses offer excellent opportunities for improving access of performances to critics, and in providing reasons to the media for increased coverage. Perhaps festival and congress organisers should further encourage participation of critics by providing forums for them, some participants argued. In this context, pointed out some participants, why were there not critical forums at the Montreal Congress?

The forum looked at the question of who is theatre criticism for. The artists? Teachers/parents? The actual audience - children and/or young people? This discussion was reflected in descriptions of various models of best practice:

→ Philip Hardy (Ireland) spoke of encouraging the active participation of children in theatre criticism with Barnstorm Theatre Company's Children's Review Panels.

→ Pamela Sterling (USA) spoke of Liz Lerman's six step process for critical response. This artist-centred approach encourages the artist to be open when receiving comments about their work of art and to move ahead in a more positive way.

→ Paul Harman (UK) spoke of the practice of peer review in the UK and its benefits. In arguing for clearer forms of critical input from children he gave examples of large sheets of paper and pens near the exit of the theatre, and being able to write on a sandwich board being worn by a performer. He felt the internet gives possibilities for immediate critical responses from children, and that children's pictures can often give added insights into their perception of theatre.

→ Michel Vais (Canada) spoke of a group process where critics agreed on a general approach to a performance. If no agreement can be reached by the group of critics, then a 'for' and 'against' review will be written by

different critics.

→ Henning Fangauf (Germany) spoke of the difficulty of getting critics to an international event and suggested an international contact list or register of critics.

If there was a vision of the role of the theatre critic in theatre for children and young people in this forum, it was not as an adversary but as an adviser and colleague who can accompany the artist on the theatrical journey.

In concluding the session, the Chair Wolfgang Schneider made five observations:

1) How do we integrate our audience into the critical process?

2) We have to look for the next generation of arts journalists.

3) Criticism of theatre for children and young people is not well-organised.

4) We have to look not just to television and newspapers for critical evaluation, but also to peer assessors.

5) Organised forums are vitally important.

"What we theatre people expect is the desire to watch us, to describe us, and to experience us. If people know more about our work, they will find a language for it."

Suzanne Osten

Forum D

The new role of theatre houses

Stephan Rabl, chair

Ivica Simic, notes

Peter Rinderknecht

Stephan introduced the forum and the topic of the new role of theatre houses. The panelists then spoke one by one about their specific theatre houses - function and concept.

Tony Graham spoke about Unicorn Theatre's new building in London.

→ Used the example of Peter Brook's vision of theatre as a tree in a clearing

→ Spoke of Carol Jenna's (?) vision of a professional theatre house for children in London.

- Why a building? Rural touring was the dominant form in the 80's. Unicorn's aim to establish regular year-round performances in a theatre intended for the purpose of presenting children's theatre.
- The architecture of Unicorn's new space was designed to fulfill the concept of a place where children would grow up and not down; a place where children will rise in their expectations of themselves and of art.
- Difficulty in defining theatre for children to funders.
- Theatre for Children must also work for adults.
- Gave the example of the Arc building in Dublin as a space that respects theatre and gives children a voice.
- Believes that children learn best through theatre, not about theatre.
- We must ask the question: Who are we designing the space for?
- Relationship between the actor and the audience, why some theatres work and some don't.
- Density, Concentration : Ingredients for a good theatre
- Brooks says a theatre needs the following elements: covered space, sense of volume, warmth, good acoustics
- 50-60% of theatre presented will be created by Unicorn
- Where is the child in the life of the theatre? Spoke of Unicorn's consultancy program: asking kids that they want in their theatre.
- Σ→ Listening to kids voices (children were represented in the theatre through their art and poetry)

Stephan Rabl : Speaking about theatre in Vienna

- Previously, theatre companies would go into schools or rent a space. They needed a new theatre house for rehearsals; symposiums; performances.
- End of the 90's - idea emerged of a theatre house in the Vienna Arts Complex.
- At new theatre house for young audiences in Vienna, Dschungel Wien, they try and incorporate various concepts at the space: installations; performances; devised ensemble work; dance, music, theatre; co-productions with national and international companies; new festivals (e.g. a festival focusing on establishing contemporary music theatre for kids); cooperation with academies; mentorship; classes for kids; seminars and dialogue.
- They have a theatre house which houses

200 kids and a more intimate space which houses 20 (?).

- Their goal is to establish new artistic concepts. They don't want to get stuck in one aesthetic or style. The company's name means being open to different ways.

Razi Amitai spoke about Mediatheque theatre in Holon, Isreal

- Background: Holon had an exodus of young couples many years ago, so to build the city back up the city started a campaign that it was the 'city for children.' Hence, everything in the city is developed very much with children in mind. For example, the Story Gardens are gardens in the city where a poet or writer met with an architect and designed the garden in accordance with the stories.
- Mediatheque was developed with the city's concept in mind. The city gave Razi a lot of money and artistic control to develop the space.
- One side of the space is a library with an ultramodern children's section, including an area for parents to read to kids and the Egg theatre - a semi-round space with sound and lighting controls that can accompany storytelling.
- The other side is the theatre. The Box theatre is a multi-functional more intimate space with 100 seats. The Main theatre has 400 seats. Kids were invited to participate in decision making about the space, like what seats were chosen. Every aspect of the space was designed with kids in mind, e.g. wide aisles.
- The walls of the main theatre are very high tech, have lights inside and can extend the scenery into the audience (i.e. a forest that stretches out into the audience.)
- He started the repertory theatre from a business plan, not an artistic plan. (5 productions per season; system of subscribers; open 7 days a week; started theatre studio for young people to take classes and workshops)
- The space includes a 'theatre road' - a guided walk throughout the theatre (including up to the catwalks) so kids can get a sense of all the different angles of the theatre.
- There is also an education department within the complex. (This was shown briefly on the power point slide show he showed to the forum audience.)

Questions and Comments from the Audience:

1.) Where did you get the money?

R: From the city

S: The city

T: The city, the lottery, and raising 8 million pounds

2.) How did you begin to get the city involved? How did you lobby?

S: 14-15 years

T: 60 years. You have to have good art, you have to convince and persuade through what you do. Have 2 or 3 good shows. The quality of the work will speak for itself. The work will sell.

3.) Who pays the tickets for schoolchildren?

S: the families and parents

R: the parents via the schools

T: Believes that the government and state should subsidize transportation and make tickets free to all kids under 12. What they do is keep prices low, which does not make business sense for them because it is hard to sustain. If funders want ACCESS then they must subsidize it.

4.) How do kids get there?

S: metro, easy access

R: special parking lot for buses

T: they chose a site that has easy access for many parts of the city (by bus)

5.) **Comment:** Jeremy Turner from the UK lives in a very small town and brought up the need for facilities outside the big cities, as well as a need for facilities for the artists to come up with their new creations

6.) In a situation where two parents are working, how can they get to the theatre?

R: plays are scheduled after work, weekends after 11:30

T: talked about the greater discussion of access - breaking down cultural taboos and habits to get people to start coming to the theatre. He believes that there should be a theatre in every city; in every town because it will change the culture...becoming part of the life blood of the city, country's culture.

7.) **Comment:** Korea has 40 million dollars to invest in a theatre space for kids. How do you reflect kids opinions when you plan these buildings?

R: Get the kids involved in some of the decisions (about the designing of the space.)

8.) How do you bridge the gap between a modern structure (such as the ones you are presenting) and the intimacy of storytelling in some cultures (such as in Africa, where stories are told around a fire)?

S: the space should be flexible and able to work in different ways for different pieces

T: It's important to think about how we listen to stories. Theatre is a group of people telling stories to another group of people.

Traditionally people tend to gather in semi-circles. The thing you have to remember is that, no matter what configuration you create, it won't work for all productions.

R: flexibility in the spaces you create

9.) How do the artists fit into this whole process?

10.) **Comment:** We are impressed with the size and scope of your theatres. But we cannot forget to think about smaller towns and having links between these larger structures and smaller operations. There should have been a fourth person on your panel representing smaller houses and smaller venues.

S: We do collaborate with other theatre houses, towns and networks

Forum E

How to profile an artistic directorship of festivals?

*Kim Woo ok, chair
Eckhard Mittelstädt
Rémi Boucher
Stephan Rabl*

Kim- Korea

→ Greeting by the panelists

→ Kim Woo Ok, artistic director of a festival in Korea for young people for 13 years, 14 shows a festival, 7 foreign/7 local companies

→ Choose plays by traveling at least 10 times a year

→ Goes to festivals but finds there are few shows

→ *Why go to these festivals if there are no shows?*

→ Some festivals have money, and have to

spend the money, but since there are few good shows, money is spent on bad ones
→ *Why do we keep doing festivals?*

Austria

→ Responsible for 30 international festivals, likes the idea of festivals
→ Does not like festivals that are too small, or too business
→ *What is the face of the festival?*
→ *What are the three major points of a festival?*
o 1. *Quality*
o 2. *Heart*
o 3. *Vision*

Started festivals because of the need: started with a clown festival, then a festival for young audiences, then a dance festival.

Many festivals miss one of the three components above, and they are OK, but festivals that are missing 2 of the three are terrible.

Germany

o In Germany, there is no such thing as a *festival* because of funding from the government. It has to be termed a meeting between artists and audience for support.
o *How do you choose a program? An international format or a local format?*

Sharing Insights, Reflections, and Experiences

Finland

There are bad shows, but who are the shows for? They are not for us, they are for the children. There are moments for artists to be in contact with local children.

Mexico

Tried to create a festival because of the need to share and exchange production elements and quality with other audiences to elevate the level of quality of theatre for youth in Mexico.

Denmark

The festival there is more institutionalized, government-oriented. There is no artistic direction in the traditional sense because all the Danish companies have a right to participate. They leave it to the audience to find the *good* shows.

Estonia

They have an ASSITEJ festival, 5 in 10 years. The festival is about educating young people in

Estonia, as well as to raise professional dialogue.

Australia

Festivals happen every two years in order for the community to recharge. There is a need, though, to integrate families in the theatre instead of only theatre in schools.

Russia

This festival is themed around the genre (fairy tales and folk tales). There is a problem with adaptation. There is not always a happy ending. It is an international festival, so the inclusion of tales from all over the world is important. This festival is biannual.

Cameroon

A festival of African countries done so they can see what others are doing, not to imitate, but to learn. Bringing families to the theatre is a great focus. There is always a fight for money.

Germany

o There is no recipe for a good festival
o There should be professional dialogue
o It should have heart
o It should have a dedicated topic
o It should have marketplace concerns
o It should have a special target

There are 2 profiles/components of a festival for young people:

1. The festival has to decide to be a festival for children & young people
2. There has to be professional dialogue between companies

So the question arises of how to profile this kind of festival?

Some suggestions were:

- The basic idea is to have performances of the highest quality possible.
- Is it a festival or a workshop?
- You have to risk something- sometimes it is financial, sometimes artistic, sometimes the focus of the festival itself

Australia

There is something that Australia has that is fundamental to creating a festival. That is the celebration of the participation of children in all art forms. The *Come Out Festival* is so large now that it cannot be killed- but it incorporates more and more art forms where the children are able to interact with a more

comprehensive list of art of by and for children. The *Out of the Box Festival* is a smaller festival developed in the grounded aesthetic of art as a direct reflection of the life of a child and not an artist's impression of a child's life.

France

The term 'delicate balance' is essential when talking about when to do a festival. A festival is a moment for the public.

What are the contradictions, worries, and the creation process now in light of this revelation?

There are too many festivals, festivals without backbone, where the only occasion is to spend money, and the festival only exists because there is nothing else going on in the community.

Festivals must be places of complete freedom.

Korea

An artistic director is responsible for the choices of the shows he/she chooses.

Austria

The most important thing to the artistic director is the quality- not the children because the children is the point to begin with. Children are the foundation you build the festival on.

Other Comments

What is a festival? It is a community coming together.

We must find a way to close the gap between the artist and the child with things like workshops and direct interaction with the artists by children.

Judgement by a jury of shows is very different than judging by children.

Festivals can be designed by artists for artists.

Festivals need to find a way to bring families to the theatre, and for multiple performances, instead of just one.

Forum F

How to network in theatre for young audiences?

Niclas Malmcrona, chair

Klaus Eggert

Jackson Ndawula

Niclas Malmcrona asked us to consider three questions:

→ How to network in YPT?

→ What are individual needs and benefits?

→ How can ASSITEJ International continue and flourish as a network centre?

● Niclas Malmcrona:

In the past meetings of the Int Executive were necessary and expensive. Can ASSITEJ now exist on the net or do meetings still have to happen? There must be a formal structure to support the organisation, but maybe the network/s can be informal?

How to improve the situation?

● Jackson Ndawula:

Meetings on an international basis are costly so regional co-operation and networking is vital.

● Klaus Eggert:

The role of ASSITEJ is shifting over the years - communication is now so much quicker - letters took days compared to instant e.mail, so the central role has changed. It is a tool to connect centres, individuals and theatres plus the exchange of artistic ideas and to oil the wheels of the machinery. Nicolas is a spider in the web, a facilitator. This will improve.

● Paul Harman, UK:

What service do we give members for their subscription fee? The UK centre only exists via membership fees, no government help. Should access to information be kept only for members or should internet information be free?

● Marina Medkova, Russia:

It's better to keep open access. Russian ASSITEJ is now more open and growing well. They need info to encourage membership and raise prestige, but still best if info free.

● Ivica Simic, Croatia:

Ivic is responsible for the creation of Epicentre, which is a networking group in SE Europe. He was influenced by seeing "The Right Shoes" created through UNETARTS, and

witnessed the power of networking. He realised he needed to work more within his region, to do something for the people living in "the black hole of Europe" - to bring artists and their creation into the light. Thus he established Epicentre, whose goals are to create artistic projects, to provide a meeting place for artists who in turn can connect and be part of a global association. Many thanks to ASSITEJ Int for helping this to happen, But it is primarily up to individuals to bring their own energy and love, to build up connections and relationships. Then there's the question of money...which is very difficult

● Niclas Malmcrona:

Yes, money is important. But countries must use the networks. Within Africa where a network has been established, some countries use it, others don't. When they use it they tend to find money for projects - therefore the more contacts you have with the rest of the world, the more money comes in.

● Marco Novelo, Mexico:

The Latin American countries and now working together towards proposals, including a S. American network..

● Henning Fangauf, Germany:

What is a network and how can it be used? If a subscription is involved should it be just be about information? It's worth thinking about the criteria, what makes us special. what does it give me?

● Philip Hardy, Ireland:

Ireland has not much Children's Theatre at the moment and ASSITEJ has opened up huge possibilities to both see work and get work seen. For him, networking is really important.

● Klaus Eggert, Denmark:

Really important that all information sent to central office is **updated**. Also, please send ideas to develop the ASSITEJ INT website to Niclas - how do you use it, can it be made better, freshened up, challenged, new things to include? All ideas welcome.

● Niclas Malmcrona:

English is the working language. Does this present problems?

● Ivica Simic, Croatia:

English is till the best language for general communication. The best thing to do is for centres to find a method to translate for members. The language problem can be

bridged if you really want it to be.

● Klaus Eggert, Denmark:

Try Universities where students are studying English. See it as a challenge

● Philip, Ireland:

Can Latin America ASSITEJ network do translation on behalf of all centres?

● Marco Novelo, Mexico:

Using English as the working language is sensible. Our job is to spread the info.

● Paul Harman, UK:

As the writer and editor of the UK ASSITEJ newsletter, I trawl the net, I flag up resources. I include both passive info and links and also encourage individuals to look for themselves. I introduce ideas such as website of the month and pose questions - the need to establish links between Europe and Latin America?

● Klaus Eggert, Denmark:

If anyone is willing to translate info into into another languages, the Centre will pass it on quickly and easily to the websites of all other centres who would benefit.

● Yuriko Kobayashi, Japan:

Please keep the working language in English. Translation in Japan is very expensive and translation into other languages would be impossible.

● Niclas Malmcrona, Sweden:

We need a formal office then informal help can also take place, i.e. helping Russia with visas and other information

● Marco Novelo, Mexico:

He has had actual experience of how helpful ASSITEJ can be working in a practical and direct way.

● Tracy Randolph, USA:

The internet is a good tool, but personal connections can be lasting. Time to meet, speak and learn in person is vital.

● Henning Fangauf, Germany:

Yes, the new generation needs to meet but does anyone use the website? When there's a common project it works, otherwise just an association whose members meet every three years,

● Ivica Simic, Croatia:
The playwrights forum was only made possible because of the existing structure.

● Niclas malmcrona, Sweden:
Needs differ in each country. There can be overload on the Centre. Basically, countries need to do their own networking. He left the festival guide updated but no-one said anything...So now he's leaving details even if they're out of date if centres can't be bothered to tell him. Is it useful?

● Philip Hardy, Ireland:
Yes, he uses the web once a week, but doesn't say he uses it as Niclas would get fed-up!

● Paul Harman, UK:
We suffer a bit reading bad English. Why don't you ask more often for us to correct?

● Niclas Malmcrona, Sweden:
Can only publish what Centres send in. We communicate every three years, but in-between you can improve connections with Gen Sec. It is free advertisement, to describe and explain what happens in your country.

● Ivica Simic, Croatia:
Networking will only work if there is a personal passionate investment from individuals to make it happen, so go home and tell someone about your time in Montreal.

SUMMARY

● What is a network?

There are virtual networks via the internet, and personal meetings. Whereas ASSITEJ is a formal structure, we also need informal structures which are driven by the membership, with the help of ASSITEJ International.

● How do we improve networking within ASSITEJ?

The role of the Central office is shifting and communication is now easier with new technology so please USE IT

● The spread of information

The web information should be free to all who wish to access it.

● Money?

Money is important but once a network is set up, the money is more likely to follow.

● What are the benefits of networking?

Sharing work, finding out what others are up

to, making the world a little smaller.

● The working language?

English was felt to still be the best working language for ASSITEJ but we must all explore other ways to aid translation. All ideas welcome.

● Use the ASSITEJ INT website

There is an urgent need to send updated information to the General Secretary so he is kept informed and can circulate it worldwide. Remember the web offers free advertising.

● How do we make it work?

The most important ingredients are personal engagement and real commitment to establish contacts and gather information for yourselves and to share with others. It is down to individuals to be proactive and make networking happen.

● And on an individual level?

Look after each other, offer hospitality, help, interest and friendship. Exchange business cards and tell as many as possible about why it was important to be in Montreal in September 2005.



AUSTRIA

Dschungel Wien - Theatre house for a young audience in the MuseumsQuartier Vienna

The house/the area:

The idea of Dschungel Wien, the new theatre house for a young audience in Vienna, grew already in 1990 within the independent children- and youth- theatre scene. After long political negotiations the decision for building the theatre house was made in 1998. In March 2003 Stephan Rabl was authorised for the artistic management and the opening took place on the 1st of October 2004.

Dschungel Wien is located in the MuseumsQuartier (MQ) Vienna. It now features almost 50 different facilities for contemporary art and culture and is one of the ten largest cultural complexes in the world, attracting some 2.7 million visitors each year. Dschungel Wien is located nearby the Tanzquartier Wien, wienXtra kinderinfo - Vienna's information point for children related issues -, the ZOOM children's museum and quartier 21 - housing various young art groups. This neighbourhood creates positive synergies.

Dschungel Wien with its 1000m² consists of two theatre venues, one seminar room and one interactive café and is surrounded by two courtyards.

Concept:

Dschungel Wien attends to the diversity of performing arts for a young audience.

Drama - narrative theatre - dance theatre - puppetry - music theatre - object theatre -

dance - figure play - performances - interdisciplinary art - installations

For children, youngsters, schools, families and young adults.

6 to 8 productions will be shown this theatrical season for following age groups:

- *Up to 6 years*
- *6 to 10 years*
- *10 to 14 years*
- *14 years and older*

The shown productions are presented by various artistic groups. Dschungel Wien shows:

- *Own Productions*
- *Coproductions (national and international)*
- *Premieres of independent Viennese theatre and dance companies*
- *Reopenings*
- *Guest plays (from the provinces of Austria and from abroad)*
- *Festivals*
- *Projects with a focus on a special subject*

The concept gets completed by artistic work with children and youngsters and dialogues for experts and prospects:

Workshops - talks with artists - theatre and dance education practitioner projects - discussions - dialogues - seminars - symposia - information events - holiday programs - platform for children and youth projects

Festivals:

Dschungel Wien Modernmusic theatre festival for a young audience.

In cooperation with the festival of contemporary music "Wien Modern"

8 to 10 international productions in November every year.

szene bunte wä hne dance festival for a young audience. 10 to 12 international dance productions in February every year

Wiener Festwochen cooperation in June 2006.

Productions/companies:

In the first season 135 different productions performed by 70 companies have been presented at Dschungel Wien.

Guest plays from following countries: Argentina/Austria/Belgium/Brazil/Czech Republic/Croatia/Denmark/France/Germany/Italy/the Netherlands/Peru/Russia/Switzerland.

Dschungel Wien shows about 40 to 60 productions in appr. 400 performances within one theatre season.

Projects:

Dschungel Wien encourages young artists, who are newcomers in the field of theatre and dance for a young audience. The main focus is on drama und dance, but also other categories like music, modern media and visual arts play a role.

“schreibzeit”, promotion of young authors in children and youth theatre.

Dance, support of new blood in choreography and dance/performance.

Drama, cooperation with Konservatorium Vienna University.

Upcoming Festivals for a Young audience in Austria:

**Dschungel Wien Modern
5th to 20th of November 2005**

Contemporary musical theater festival for a young audience 6 to 8 international productions, workshops and side events
Event organizer: Dschungel Wien and Wien Modern.

Contact and information:
<www.dschungelwien.at>

Spleengraz

International theatre festival for children and young people in Styria
First edition (biennially): 3rd to 12th of February 2006

Information: <www.spleengraz.at>

**International scene bunte waehne
Tanzfestival 2006 for Children and
Youngsters
February 23 to March 5, 2006**

Not only does Szene Bunte Wähne present dance works of the international scene but also focuses very much on the stimulation and support of up-coming dancers and companies in Austria. Its impulses have encouraged many Austrian dancers to form companies and produce for children and young people. Around 12 productions from Austria, Belgium, France, The Netherlands (to be confirmed) will be offered to an audience aged 1 to 16+ years. “Brief” a choreography with

youngsters by Ives Thuwis in cooperation with the Kopergieterij, Dschungel Wien, Gessnerallee Zürich and JES Stuttgart, will experience its Austria Premiere during the Tanzfestival. Further productions and participating companies will be confirmed in November.

Besides showing performances of established companies, scene bunte wähne Tanzfestival gives a platform to young choreographers: “AutDance” shows their first (short) pieces for children and young people. For the very first time the Tanzfestival 2006 will realize a competition for choreographers until the age of 30. The winners will receive financial support for the completion of their choreographic ideas.

Information: <www.sbw.at>

DENMARK

**Festival 2006 - Theatre for Children and
Young People, April 23-30, Nykobing F (150
kms south of Copenhagen)**

National festival including 2-3 international performances. A total of more than 400 presentations. All tickets free of charge.

Meetings, seminars, sight-seeing, lodging, guiding etc. included in a so-called Package Deal.

More info: <www.teatercentrum.dk>
(will be updated December 2005).

FINLAND

**Assitej Finland and Oulu Children’s Theatre
Festival proudly present Nordic theatre for
children and youth in Oulu, February, 20 -
26, 2006**

In the Nordic Assitej -festival in Oulu there will be a Nordic seminar about the co-operation between schools and theatres and workshops for teachers and theatre professionals linked to the seminar.

Program coming up soon in
www.ouka.fi/teatteri & www.assitejfi.org.

More information: info@assitejfi.org.

Bravo! 2006 International Childrens Theatre Festival 11.-20.3.2006 Helsinki, Finland

International guest performances from Camerun, Canada, Belgium, France...The festival programme will be published by the end of January 2006.

New Project!! HIDDEN STORIES - Children and the Second World War in the Nordic Countries

Hidden Stories is a Nordic children's theatre project exploring children's memories of the Second World War as experienced in the Nordic countries.

The project provides opportunities for intergenerational and intercultural discussion on history. *By examining war history on the grass-root level of war-time children's memories the project aims at helping all its participants in the efforts to understand our own past and present as well as today's war experiences.*

Intergenerational meeting places and...

The children and adolescents of the Second World War are now elderly people, and in many cases the younger generations know only little of their war-time experiences.

Some war-time memories may have been shared years ago but are now forgotten, some other stories have been told to the second generation but have not necessarily been forwarded to grandchildren. Many recollections have been held back for different reasons. Some experiences may have been too difficult or confusing to deal with earlier, some others might still be. Now that various war-time archives have been opened, even the stories that are known and remembered need to be related to the new ones.

... intercultural experiences...

For example Finnish "war children's" war-time experiences do not fit within the borders of one country. The Second World War connected and separated the lives of Nordic people in various other ways, too. But to what extent have younger - or even older - generations come to know about these intercultural networks of experiences?

It is noteworthy that today's refugees' war-time and post-war experiences do not fit

within the borders of one country either. For example through these people and the media, war is part of today's children's and adults' everyday life in the Nordic countries, as well. Could grandparents' experiences help to tackle even with contemporary events?

... through interviews, workshops, theatre productions, and seminars

As the *Hidden Stories* project will be based on individuals' war-time memories, the basis of knowledge and inspiration will lay in interviews. The project will then proceed to a more general level through various workshops and theatre performances. Spectator experiences and workshops at schools/day-care centres will take the process back to the grass-root level.

The *Hidden Stories* project poses the following preliminary questions: What kinds of war-time memories do the 1940's children and adolescents want to tell and discuss today? How do younger generations experience these stories? What kind of understanding of these memories could different generations enforce together? What kinds of workshops and theatre productions would all this evoke - or how would theatre processes/products affect the memories?

The general outline of the *Hidden Stories* project

- 1) One playwright/team chosen from each participating Nordic country.
- 2) First Nordic meeting for all the participants. Presentations, workshops, discussions: laying a shared base for the project (for example decisions as to how the interviews will be made, what kinds of other source materials will be used, how the artistic process and producing work will continue).
- 3) The participants continue the process in their own countries, following the plans made at the first Nordic meeting. The participants (and e.g. school children?) interview relatives, friends, colleagues, etc. who have experienced the war times.
- 4) The participants have a number of Nordic meetings where they present and discuss their findings, have workshops, rehearsals, and producing meetings.
- 5) The resulting theatre production(s) will be performed at a festival or they tour around the Nordic countries.
- 6) Throughout the project or in connection with the theatre performances there will be

projects at schools and/or day-care centres e.g. encouraging children continue the interviewing process within their own family circles.
7) Through the project or connection with the theatre performances there may be seminars open for the general public.
More information about the project:
<irina.pulkka@assitejfi.org> or
<info@assitejfi.org>

GERMANY

Frankfurt Playwrights' Forum for Children's and Young People's Theatre 2005, December 2nd to 4th 2005 in Frankfurt

"The Importance of Stories in our Changing Society"

This year's thematic focus are the literary aspects of Children's and Young People's Theatre as the National Centre for Children's and Young People's Theatre intends to open up an absolutely essential discussion about the societal relevance of dramatic writing and acting in the theatre for young people. 10 authors, among them Katrin Lange (Berlin), Martin Baltscheit (Düsseldorf), Andri Beyeler (Bern/Switzerland), Maria Inés Falconi (Argentina), Lana Saric (Croatia) and Sera Moore Williams (Wales), will present and discuss their new plays.
From 2nd to 6th December and as part of the Playwright's Forum, the Executive Committee of World ASSITEJ is meeting in Frankfurt to its first session after the Montreal Congress.

A detailed programme and a registration form can be found on the internet at
<www.kjtz.de>

For more information, please contact:
Henning Fangauf: <h.fangauf@kjtz.de>

INDIA

International Theatre Festival, 2006

The festival will be held at Bareilly, UP during 26-31 of January, 2006. Assitej Centres interested to participate may contact Mr H Chhawntluanga, President, Assitej India as soon as possible:
<chhawna@rediffmail.com>

JAPAN

Okinawa International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People, July 29 - August 7, 2006. Okinawa City

More information:
Phone : +81 98 929 0261
Fax: +81 98 929 0260

JORDAN, DENMARK AND SWEDEN

A cooperation project between Jordan, Denmark and Sweden with a festival and theatre lab taking place in Amman, February 6 - 12, 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.

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

LITHUANIA

NATIONAL ASSITEJ FESTIVAL in LITHUANIA, October 6 - 15.

In the cities and around the cities of Vilnius, Kaunas, Klaipeda, Panevezys and Alytus. For children and youth who have no possibility to see the performances in the theatre.

Seminars, workshops: Dramaturgy seminar "Contemporary plays for children and youth in Lithuania", Vilnius October 19 - 21.

The seminar leads playwright and director Kristo Sagor from Germany.

SWITZERLAND

Blickfelder - Theatre Festival for young audience, 10th March - 1st April, 2006, Bern, Chur, Luzern, Schaan, Steckborn, Zürich

Spillplätz, Basel 14 - 18th June 2006

Figura Theaterfestival 6 - 10 September 2006

TAG DES KINDES
19th 20th November 2006, Ticino, Grigione
and Italy

Seminars, workshops:

SHERLOCK
18 - 21 or 25 - 28 June 06 (place: to be
advised).

UNITED KINGDOM

The largest ever delegation from the UK - 29
writers, directors, designers and
administrators - attended the 2005 Congress
in Montreal. Professional companies and artists
from the UK have toured to events and
festivals in Hungary, Estonia, Canada, USA,
Korea, Japan, Romania, Belgium, Tunisia,
Germany and many other countries in the last
year. A meeting in London to celebrate Anglo-
Japanese exchanges attracted 80 people in
September.

Earlier in the year Larry Silverman, director of
Grupo 55, invited Guy Holland of Quicksilver
to Mexico to direct **Upstairs in the Sky** by
Carey English and Guy Holland, for 3-5 year
olds.

Quicksilver also took **Upstairs in the Sky** on a
tour of Japan as part of the **EU Theatre for
Children and Young People Festival** in
August. The opportunity was made possible by
the financial support of The British Council and
The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.
More info: <www.quicksilvertheatre.org>

Travelling Light were delighted to open their
new tour of **CLOWN** at Masca Theatre
Bucharest on 11 October. **CLOWN** is a textless
performance with dance, music and puppetry
for very young children, inspired by Quentin
Blake's wordless picture book about a ragdoll
clown's adventures in the city when he tries
to rescue his friends from a dustbin. The
performances in Bucharest were part of a new
international theatre festival organised by
Teatrul Ion Creanga to celebrate their 40th
birthday and the founding of ASSITEJ, and the
company won the prize for Best Acting
awarded by the jury of Romanian theatre
critics.
More info: www.travlight.co.uk

Action Transport Theatre Company and
Vulavulani Theatre Company from Soweto
continue to tour Tselane's *Song* to venues in
the UK.

More info:
<www.actiontransporttheatre.co.uk>

Magic Carpet Theatre will tour *Mr Shell's
Seaside Spells* by Anthony Peters, to three
children's arts festivals in Ireland in October
and November 2005 - Roola Boola Festival at
Castlebar in County Mayo, Aisling Children's
Festival, BackStage Theatre, Longford and
Leanbh 2005 at Droichead Arts Centre,
Drogheda.
More info: <www.thelinenhall.com>

Arad Goch Theatre Company from
Wales recently visited the wonderful KORCZAK
Festival in Warsaw, Poland, to perform 'From
Dawn To Dusk' which had been seen by
representatives from the KORCZAK festival in
the AGOR DRYSAU festival in Wales.
More info: <www.aradgoch.org>

The Birmingham Rep recently showed the
British premier of a bilingual play **THE BRIDGE**,
presented by Hanyong Theatre Company
presents, and written by Peter Wynne-Willson
from the UK and Ko Sun Deok from Korea. This
extraordinary, energetic and uplifting play has
been developed over three years from
research with veterans of the Korean War
from both countries.

Sera Moore Williams' play CRASH has
recently been translated and published in
German by THEATERSTÜCKVERLAG and will be
discussed at the Writer's Forum in Frankfurt
in December.
More info:
<sera.moore.williams@aradgoch.org>

Nick Wood's work continues to find new
audiences: *A Dream of White Horses* is having
a second season at Theater Ingolstadt.
Warrior Square (Fluchtwege) is still playing at
Potsdam and Hagen; new productions are
opening at Altenburg- Gera, Bremen, and Linz
in Austria; as *Trg Ratnika* it is on in
Virovitica, Croatia, and in Sarajevo; and as
Vluchtwagen it is on in Belgium in Flemish. *Mia*
is at the Thalia Theater in Hamburg.
More info: <n.wood7@ntlworld.com>

Seminars
Jeremy Turner the UK International
representative of ASSITEJ and member of the
EC was recently invited to speak at the **IV
Mercator International Symposium on
European Minority Languages - Translation
of Culture, Culture of Translation**.
More info:

<<http://www.aber.ac.uk/~merwww/>>

Saturday 19th November 2005: 9.30am - 4.30pm Warwick Arts Centre

Rare Earth - Rich Explorations - The Relevance of Theatre in Education in the 21st century.

In 1965, in the UK, at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry, Theatre In Education (TIE) was conceived & born. In the year of its 40th anniversary....Learn from the Past ~ where have we been? Act in the Present ~ where are we now? Change the Future ~ where are we headed?

An all-day event, with productive provocation towards energising exchanges provided by invited speakers, examples of practice, participatory tasks and you...University of Warwick, Coventry.

More info: <c.rossiter@warwick.ac.uk>

Links

During the Montreal Congress Paul Harman of CTC Theatre, Darlington in the North of England, formed a network of those making theatre for young people in Museums. So far nine countries have joined the exchange network and information is starting to flow. More info: <paul@ctctheatre.org.uk>

CTC is preparing a joint project with Korea National University of the Arts in 2006.

Festivals

The next festival in the UK will be TAKE OFF 2005 - 11/12 November at the Arc, Stockton and at schools throughout Tees Valley.

More info:

<<http://www.ctctheatre.org.uk/takeoff/2005/takeoff2005.htm>>

The Bank of Scotland Children's International Theatre Festival, Edinburgh, May 23 - 30, 2006

More info: <www.imaginate.org.uk>

ZAMBIA

2005 National Children's Theatre Festival

The festival took place in four towns and cities on Zambia: Livingstone, Southern Province (24th September); Kitwe, Copperbelt Province (1st October); Kabwe, Central Province;

Lusaka, Lusaka Province (22nd October).

The workshops are intended to select winners of the Ngoma Awards and Jacaranda Awards for 2005. The Ngoma Awards ceremony is a national event during which outstanding artists from various disciplines are awarded at a national level. This year the event will be held on 2nd December and will be beamed live on Zambian national television as well as some other African countries.

ASSITEJ Zambia has two Ngoma Awards - The Phillimon Mwanachingwala Award for the Best Young Male Actor; and the Tisa Chifunyise Award for the Best Young Female Actor - this named in honour of the late Tisa Chifunyise, a former vice president of ASSITEJ International.

The Jacaranda Awards are an initiative by ASSITEJ Zambia, and the inaugural ceremony will be held this year, at the Suwilanji Gardens in Lusaka, on 26th November. There are more than ten awards to be given to various members of ASSITEJ Zambia at the ceremony. It is at this ceremony that Tisa Chifunyise, a Zambian citizen who achieved a lot under ASSITEJ Zimbabwe, will be given an award posthumously - the President's Award for Achievement; also to be given the President's Award for Achievement will be the former General Secretary and first president of ASSITEJ Zambia, George Mumbuna. The event will be officiated by the Minister for Youth and Sport. The Chairpersons of the National Arts Council of Zambia and the National Youth Development Council will also be in attendance.

Other things of interest: ASSITEJ Zambia has engaged an Information Technology expert to overhaul its filing and record-keeping system and make it more efficient, reliable and user-friendly. The expert should finish the work soon.

