

Attending Assitej In-Forma in Milan 2019

From October the 25th to the 26th I had the privilege to attend Assitej In-Forma held in Milan created by a co-operation of thirteen companies local to the area.

The background – Why did I come?

In these days the field of making theatre for young audiences is undergoing a lot of changes in Denmark. In order to respond to those changes in a constructive and creative way, the members of Assitej Denmark have expressed a wish and need to come together for a seminar, or longer format that what is currently the annual general assembly. A format much like Assitej In-Forma.

Louis Valente who is the General Secretary of Assitej International as well as the Secretary of Assitej Denmark had attended Assitej In-Forma 2018 held in Lecce. Since he was very inspired by the format, he proposed that a member of the board of Assitej Denmark would possibly attend the 2019th edition in order to get some more inspiration to start the process of creating a new Danish format to meet the wish of our members. I personally found this very interesting, and as I speak a fair amount of Italian I was the lucky one to be sent. Fortunately, the request for my attendance was met and welcomed by the organizers of Assitej In-Forma.

My experience – What was I looking for?

Overall, I was interested in looking at both the structure and the content of In-Forma, but I also wanted to understand the background and evocation that had led to create it. The plan was for me to attend In-Forma as if I was “normal” member of Assitej Italy, just to get a sense of it all. So I did, and I took part in many different sessions during the days with much pleasure, I experienced the variety of the content and the different formats: talks, workshops, debate, lectures, best practise, all led by people within the association or experts from outside the field. During the lunch and dinner breaks I was able to talk to several members and organisers of In-Forma itself, which deepened my understanding of the background and structure of the format.

In short - What did I find?

First of all, the organisation of my attendance and stay was very well planned and taken care of by the staff, I felt very welcome. Of course, it would take up a lot of space to write about everything I learned, but in short, I found out that In-Forma came out of a sort of rebirth of Assitej Italy, and also was responding to general national changes in the field of making theatre for young audiences. I learned how each edition of In-Forma is a proposal and is chosen by the national members. I learned about the structure and finances, and the overall thoughts behind the format. I spoke to many different members and found that the overall purpose is to meet, engage and develop. – I also learned that the bell that signals the end of the sessions is absolutely crucial!

The future - What is next?

I have concluded that a format inspired by In-Forma would be very relevant in Denmark. Of course, it would have to fit the Danish situation, but I felt the background of In-Forma resonates with the situation we are facing in Denmark now. The next thing is that we have formed a small team of board members and associates who will be responsible for developing a first version of this new format, and we have our first meeting in November. I will do a small presentation of In-forma at this meeting, and from that we will start the process of creating a Danish format planned to be held in September 2020. Therefore I would once again like to thank the team and crew of Assitej In-Forma for this generous and inspirational opportunity.

With love

Vika Mia Dahlberg-Hansen

Vice Chairman of Assitej Denmark