



Take a child to the
Theatre

March 20 

So they can see, hear, feel, think and imagine.

World theatre day

Take a child to theatre, today!

20 March 2021



Toolkit

Contact us!

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Introduction

ASSITEJ world day of theatre for children is an ASSITEJ campaign, which has been promoted and celebrated through the message “**Take a child to the theatre today**” since 2011..

This focus enables national centres, individual members, companies, arts organisations, academics, teachers, artists, practitioners and others interested in theatre for young audiences to connect with the idea of world day and ‘make the case’ for children’s entitlement to theatre and the arts.

All ASSITEJ members are invited to promote special world day messages written every year, and consider additional activity, large or small. Each year ASSITEJ centres around the globe deliver activities ranging from conferences, performances, workshops and special media events. This tool-kit aims to help you plan for world day 2021 which happens on March 20th.

Activity

The message ‘**Take a Child to the Theatre Today**’ can be promoted as a message and as a call to action, it can promote regional activity and theatre events and by linking to other information, illustrate **why** it is important to take a child to the theatre.

World Day is a global campaign. ASSITEJ has more than 80 national centres as well as professional networks with affiliates across 100 countries, which means there is unlimited possibility for profile, visibility and advocacy.

International Co-operation

World Performance Week is a concept initiated by ASSITEJ, in collaboration with other international associations involved with different art forms related to live performance, which celebrate their World Days between March 20th and March 27th.

We invite you to build partnerships with these associations in your own country and to participate in World Performance Week where this is possible.

The week includes March 20th, ASSITEJ World Day of theatre for children and young people (and the campaign “Take a child to the theatre”), March 21st, UNIMA’s World Puppetry Day, and March 27th, ITI’s World Theatre Day, which is also celebrated by other associations, such as IATC, IDEA, AITA/IATA and others. Use the unifying logo, as well as the ASSITEJ logo and the Take a Child to the Theatre Today logo, if you wish to promote the week.

By uniting the activities of these international associations, while retaining the individual character of each day, we hope to strengthen key messages around cultural entitlement connected to the March campaigns, promoting the transformative power of the performing arts for children and adults world wide, and supporting one another to reach our goals.

Download the World Performance Week logo [HERE](#).

At the occasion of the World Day of Theatre (March 27th), the International Theatre Institute (ITI), publishes a message from an artist. 2021’s ITI message, written by Hele Mirren (UK), can be read [HERE](#).





World day 2021 Tools

1) Take a Child to the Theatre Today logo



C 0	R 228	Pantone 185C
M 100	G 0	
Y 81	B 43	
K 11		



C 0	R 255	Pantone 1375C
M 40	G 158	
Y 97	B 27	
K 0		

World Day of Theatre 2021 logo has been designed by Signature Design, a graphic studio based in Cape Town, South Africa

[Download the logo on our website HERE](#)

2) World day messages

Since 2001, each year there has been a world day message written by a different theatre-related personality or advocate. This has included Peter Brook, Augusto Boal, Suzanne Osten, Suzanne Lebeau, Michael Morpurgo, Malala Yousafzai, Jenny Sealey, Francisco Hinojosa, Yoshi Oida among others. There is also a new message each year from the president of ASSITEJ:

[Read the messages on our website here](#)

These messages should be shared with all members via each national centre or network. The messages can be promoted on websites, read at events, published, shared on social media, discussed, referred to in press releases and used in any way that will promote the global campaign.

For 2021, the world day messages are written by **Yvette Hardie, and four young theatre makers and theatre lovers from across the world: Malaika Hlatshwayo (South Africa), Luisa Crobelatti (Brazil), Suzanne Versele (Belgium) and Hinata Sakai (Japan).**



Share your messages on our page!

ASSITEJ invites all its members to contribute to the WDT 2021 by giving a voice to children and young people!

Our recipe:

1° Ask a young theatre maker or theatre lover why theatre is important

2° Post his / her response on <https://www.facebook.com/ASSITEJ.International>



Message from Yvette Hardie



Yvette Hardie

President: ASSITEJ (2011-2021)

“ASSITEJ International has celebrated this day on the 20th March since 2001, and since 2012, we have themed the day with the slogan “Take a Child to the Theatre Today”. This has been a rallying call for action to increase artistic access for children and young people and to draw attention to the responsibility of the gatekeepers, sponsors and ticket-purchasers in ensuring that young audiences experience the power of the arts.

However in this topsy-turvy year, where the world as we knew it has stopped turning in its old orbits, and so much has changed for artists, for theatres, for festivals, for families, for schools, and of course most importantly for children and young people, it seems that we can no longer say “Take a child to the theatre today” with the same assurance as before.

This is not because the arts or theatre are any less important – indeed if what our message writers have to say is true, they are more important than ever – but rather that the mechanisms for sharing this experience have had to change and adapt.

So this year, on the World Day for Theatre for Children and Young People, I want to celebrate the extraordinary wealth of talent, of creativity, of resilience, of adaptability, of sheer doggedness and determination, which have seen artists finding new ways to meet their audiences this year.

They have told stories live on Facebook with interaction through live chat; they have created recorded or live-streamed interactive experiences for children to enjoy at home; they have played theatre in gardens, parks, driveways, and on the other side of windows; they have turned living rooms and bedrooms into magical spaces to be mapped and discovered, engaging the sensory imagination; they have converted youth labs online and created online libraries of videoed theatre resources; they have turned to everyday technology like the phone and ventured into Whatsapp, Tiktok and Instagram; they have sent theatre experiences in the mail, through posted packs, with creative tools aplenty; they have supported at-home learning; they have created about the pandemic and dreamt up and written the performances for when live contact is permitted again; they have taken online their festivals, play-readings, holiday camps and workshops; they have lobbied and advocated, marched and petitioned; they have stood together. They have build community solidarity by taking art to the streets. They have demonstrated their innate creativity in a myriad of ways.

So as we venture together into the “unknown future”, we ask all those who care that children and young people have access to the extraordinary imaginative wealth that the arts can bring them, to keep finding new ways for theatre and young audiences to re-encounter one another. For one thing is certain, theatre is more necessary than ever. In theatre we re-connect, making space for healing. We re-imagine, re-align and resist. We remember and re-member our common humanity.

And it is the artist in each of us that makes this possible.”



Message from Malaika Hlatshwayo



Malaika Hlatshwayo, a 14-year-old South African, who loves theatre, is a performer and has just published her first book, *The Belly Button*.

“Why is Theatre important in young people’s lives? Firstly, Theatre is a mixture of most forms of entertainment. For example there’s acting, dancing, music, poetry. All of these heal the soul in a different way for each audience member and for the performers. They also define theatre. Theatre helps us to realise the things that are happening in real life in the most calm and interesting way. What I’m saying is that people are interested in different things. One can be interested in music and might find dancing “boring”. The other can be interested in acting and finds poetry complicated and difficult to understand. But when they all come to the THEATRE, each person can relate and relax, because Theatre isn’t just about one thing, it is about all of them. So Theatre considers everybody’s interests. Coming to the youth, we all have strengths and weaknesses. When someone speaks, everybody listens. When someone moves, everybody wants to see. When someone tells a story, everybody wants to hear. Theatre helps the young ones heal from old wounds and traumatic situations. Theatre can also help us escape the new reality that is Covid-19. Theatre can help the young to see their mistakes and fix them. THEATRE shouts ART and is the best way to help people realise and relate. Theatre helps us to escape the horror of the streets and everything that comes with the streets like violence and drugs etc. THEATRE is the voice for children who feel like they are not heard or their views don’t matter. THEATRE is a way of connecting ”

T- Together
H- Healing
E- Experience
A- Ambition
T - Timeless
R- Relating
E- Escape

Message from Luisa Crobeltti



Luisa Crobeltti is 20 years old and lives in São Paulo; she is a member of Paideia since 2014 and dreams of being an actress performing in the World!

“The theater is the place where we are seen, where we scream and are heard, where dreaming and being dreamed becomes a habit of our day to day (daily life?). We young people yearn for the world and, in addition to the theater supplying the need for life, it is through it that we look inside, into the mirror that is offered to us, and we recognize our environment, our self and the other, both deeply and critically.

Sometimes, last year, the theater was the escape valve of a world that is on the edge of the precipice, but at the same time, it was through it that we managed to see the thread of hope, even though it may be the last, and we use it to show our cry for love, help and, even, to warn us of that which our president was unable to warn us about - the real situation of this pandemic.

Art has saved us from a lot, including insanity in the midst of the declared chaos.

Only in theater can we narrate the past, dialogue in the present and build the future with our own voice and body.

The future belongs to us.”



Message from Suzanne Versele



Suzanne Versele is a 23 year old student at the director's school of arts in Brussels. Last year she performed in *DROP BY DROP*, a play about their experiences during their trip

Time to look.
I can press pause, rewind, fast-forward.
Performances become moving pixels. I devour them.
Time to look for stories out of my window.
The neighbor, the neighbor's wife, the neighbor's dog.
The world gets small.
We're floundering. Over curves.
We make up stories for later.

Summer. The crisis takes a break. We breathe with it.
October. I'm just getting started. Return home!
My mask starts to itch. My stomach starts to itch.
The theater floor lies empty and we burst from ideas.
We hold them. Playing, what was it again?

I want to sit back next to you in a red chair. To be indignant.
Culture is the best way to shout.
But what if it is given a face mask to wear?
We desire more than ever.
We recreate alternatives. On-line, on-the-streets.
We recreate hope. Longer than lockdown measures.
Yet another council report becomes a piece of music.
Culture! Celebration! A bottle of champagne.
The cork is coming off. We are bubbling.
Ready to spit.

Message from Hinata Sakai



Hinata Sakai is 10 years old. She lives in Kanagawa prefecture in Japan. She is a member of a regional theatre company, "Our Town". She first appeared on stage when she was four, acting Spot-billed Duck with all her strength.

私は、演劇が大好きです。演じるのも、観るのも楽しいからです。演じている時は、無意識のうちに、心と身体が弾みます。観ている時は、話に入り込めて、登場人物の気持ちが伝わってきます。演劇がなくなったら、私の人生の4分の3がなくなってしまい、力が入らなくなります。だから、私にとって、演劇は、生きる力で、なくてはならないものです！

I love theatre so much because it is so much fun to act and to watch plays. When I am acting, my body and my heart bound unconsciously. When I am watching a play, I get myself into the story and the characters' feelings get across to me. If theatre were gone, I would lose three-quarters of my life and be discouraged; therefore, for me, theatre is the power for life and indispensable!



Social Media

By using social media (twitter, Facebook, vine, Instagram etc), individuals can promote the message 'Take A Child to the Theatre Today' and link this to the ASSITEJ site and other platforms (YouTube), which will host the media mentioned above.

A campaign around SMS (texts) could also be created to promote the message. Please use the hashtag [#takeachildtothetheatre](#).

The ASSITEJ Facebook page exists as a communication tool which Facebook friends can link to and also post on, which admins can then share through the ASSITEJ newsfeed. We want all our members to keep us updated about what they are doing for the campaign. <https://www.facebook.com/ASSITEJInternational>

Press Releases

Where possible, individuals, organizations and institutions should connect to local and national media through a press release. This could then be connected to activity within each region and be used to endorse theatre activity for young audiences.

In addition, interviews, testimonials and statements from VIPS, artists, politicians, as well as cultural decision makers, child specialists could be a good way to promote the message and establish why it is important to take children to the theatre.

Download the press release in Word format (and adapt it to your local language) : [HERE](#)

ASSITEJ Fundraising campaign

Some countries use the campaign as a rallying call to ask for donations to ensure that children and young people who otherwise wouldn't have access to theatre get an opportunity to do so on this day.

Last year ASSITEJ Italy raised 1400 euros from the campaign, through asking audiences to add a small donation to their ticket price. The money was collected and then donated to Jacaranda Theatre Arts Festival Festival in Zambia, and to SAFE (Southern African Festival for Children and Young People) in Zimbabwe, to aid audience access to these events. The determination for the funding was made by ASSITEJ Executive Committee after an open call.

Should you wish to contribute in this way, please [contact the Secretary-General of ASSITEJ](#).

We hope that as many members as possible will get behind the campaign for 2020 so that we can make as big an impact as possible which supports the rights of children and young people to engage with theatre.



Other events and activities

National Centres promote World Day in different ways around the world with some Centres running workshops, performances and special events, which are widely acknowledged.

Here are some possible activities and events which could be created to promote World Day by National Centre's and organisations:

- Award events/ceremonies highlighting good practice and special achievements in the field of theatre for young audiences
- Conferences, forums, round tables, seminars or workshop events which focus on a particular theme
- Performances, including street theatre, script readings, dance performances, on-line performances, monologues and more
- Festivals of performances
- Distribution of flyers/ printed materials with the message **Take a Child to the Theatre Today** - connected to schools or theatres.
- Other advertising opportunities potentially supported by sponsors
- Film projects linking with schools and universities where students can engage with the World Day campaign
- Drama activity/workshop in schools and theatres
- Special Fundraisers or gala occasions to raise funds to ensure that children and young people get access to the theatre.

It is important to note that the **Take a Child to the Theatre Today** campaign can be linked to events which are already happening.

We hope that as many members as possible will get behind the campaign for 2021 so that we can make as big an impact as possible which supports the rights of children to engage with theatre.

Please share whatever you do with the International office at sg@assitej-international.org, so that we are able to report on the activities of the world. Links to any photographic or video documentation should be sent to sg@assitej-international.org

We hope you enjoy your World Day celebrations!

And remember...



ASSITEJ 20th World Congress and Mirai Festival

22th march - 1st April 2021
On the ground in Japan
Online at assitejonline.org

ASSITEJ unites theatres, organisations and individuals throughout the world who make theatre for children and young people. ASSITEJ is dedicated to the artistic, cultural and educational rights of children and young people across the globe and advocates on behalf of all children regardless of nationality, cultural identity, ability, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or religion. ASSITEJ brings people together so that they can share knowledge and practice within the field of theatre for children and young people in order to deepen understandings, develop practice, create new opportunities and strengthen the global sector. The members of Assitej are National centers, Professional Networks, and individuals from around 100 countries across the world.

