



ASSITEJ

International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People

ASSITEJ Newsletter N°68, October 2015



Introduction

SANDcastles

By Vigdis Jakobsdóttir

Preparing a theatre festival is like building a sandcastle on the beach. At first it just looks like a pile of sand - a rough idea - but with hard work and collaboration it starts to take shape; impressive towers appear, windows and walls. Tunnels and ditches. You dig deep for treasures to decorate the castle; shells and beautiful stones. After hours of work it is there. Perfect. Ready to be admired by all who pass by - glistening in the afternoon sun.

And at this moment, right on cue, the tide comes in. It starts with a little friendly nibble at the castle gate and before long it has swept away every trace of the glorious structure you invested so much time, thought and energy to design and create.

With this comes a mixed feeling of sadness and joy. Sadness because your beautiful castle has gone, never to be seen again. -And joyful bliss - because now you can start all over again and build an even more magnificent castle!

The tide has now swept away the SAND festival in Kristiansand, Norway (previously simply known as the ASSITEJ festival). This year, the festival hosted the ASSITEJ executive committee's meeting. The members of the EC, as well as other guests of the festival, were met with great hospitality and an impressive programme of shows, seminars and workshops to enjoy and take part in.

Alongside the rebranding of the festival to SAND, it now is now held in collaboration with the beautiful and brand new Kilden Performing arts centre in Kristiansand. The festival has now also taken the step to become an annual festival, which is of course great news. I am sure the ASSITEJ family worldwide joins me in congratulating ASSITEJ Norway on this exciting development.

Around the world, at any given moment in time, hundreds of theatre festivals for young audiences are being carefully planned and prepared. Right now, somewhere in the world, funds are being raised, themes chosen, shows selected, theatres booked and contracts drawn up. Lights are being rigged, stages swept - all in time for the big festival week...

...and then the tide comes in.

Fortunately though, no tide is strong enough to sweep away the lasting impression a strong artistic experience can have on us all; children and adults alike.

Thank you, festival managers of the world, for building your beautiful castles again and again for us to enjoy!

DO NOT FORGET!!! DEADLINE APPROACHING ASSITEJ Magazine 2016

For next year we would like a **VISUAL Magazine**, in which the visuals are supported by text. We therefore call for **high quality pictures*** supported by articles of 500-1000 words** maximum.

Both visuals and articles should address the theme of ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2016: **On the Edge: Interdisciplinary Exchange.**

We are facing "the end of the world as we know it" and are living in rapidly changing times.

- - Are there new narratives evolving on the global spectrum?
- - On the Edge of...the world, society, art... Our focus is on ideas and practice that take us one step beyond.
- - How interdisciplinary are these new narratives: how do they cross traditional boundaries, making art and thinking across art disciplines (e.g. music, art, theatre, dance, media), research disciplines (e.g. anthropology, history, folklore, journalism), and across genres and styles.

• - How experimental, unusual and on the edge can interdisciplinary performance be?

Please send your submissions by October 31st to: assitejmagazine2016@gmail.com.

We will inform you of the selection of your submission by January 1st. We look forward to an exciting, interdisciplinary magazine.

***Pictures** | JPG format, 300 DPI, measure: 14 x 21 cm. (8 1/2 x 5 1/2 inches).

****Words** | All Contributions should be in English, we will rely on each author to provide the translation in original language and proofread this once the selection is complete.



INFORMATION OF PUBLICATIONS



ASSITEJ and ASSITEJ Korea would like to ask for cooperation to collect **information of publications** which will be used for the following:

ASSITEJ

-Keep the Secretariat informed on TYA publications all over the world

-Maintain the ASSITEJ Archives updated.

ASSITEJ KOREA

-Contribute to an article in The Journal of ASSITEJ Korea.

(This article will introduce all kinds of periodicals such as magazines, newspapers and journals printed by ASSITEJ members in other countries).

*Required information

1.Title (in the original language and English)

2.Table of Contents (in English)

3.Period: daily / weekly / monthly / biannually / annually / biennial and so on

We welcome all the information from everywhere in the world!

Please send it in by October 20, 2015 via email to sg@assitej-international.org and international@assitejkorea.org simultaneously.

ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2016



Thank you for a fabulous response to our call-outs.

Thank you to everyone who applied to be part of the Next Generation programme. We had 137 applications from 39 different countries, which is a wonderful response. We are going through the submissions at the moment and will contact all those who applied in November, to let them know the outcome.

Thanks also to those who submitted a paper to be part of the Symposium. We are working closely with colleagues from all the ASSITEJ networks on this to develop an exciting programme for the Artistic Encounter. We received 70 proposals to present work as part of the Symposium, from 22 countries.

We are liaising with companies we wish to include in the Artistic Programme, and are starting to schedule what is promising to be a diverse and exciting festival. We are presenting work in venues across Birmingham, including Birmingham REP, mac birmingham, The Patrick Centre at Birmingham Hippodrome, and The Old Rep.

ON THE EDGE 2016 is the World Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences and ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering. It takes place in Birmingham, UK from 2nd - 9th July 2016 and is presented by TYA-Ireland and TYA-UK. To keep informed about developments, visit the website and follow us on Twitter and Facebook

T: [@OnTheEdge2016](https://twitter.com/OnTheEdge2016)

F: [Facebook.com/OnTheEdge2016](https://www.facebook.com/OnTheEdge2016)

W: www.ontheedge2016.com



National Centers

ASSITEJ Azerbaijan

Members of the National Centre, Gunel Mammadova and Eshgin Guliyev participated in the "Artmigration 2015" III All-Russian Youth Theatre Forum supported by ASSITEJ - Azerbaijan National Centre on September 11-15 in Moscow.



The purpose of the forum organized by the Russian Union of Theatrical Figures is to stimulate creative youth by building relationships between them and ensure their participation in joint projects.

The shows staged by young play-directors shown at the forum were attended by a lot of young theatre experts from Russia, CIS and Baltic countries.

ASSITEJ - Azerbaijan and Kalmykia National Drama Theatre will continue mutual art relations in the new season.

On October 26-30 Azerbaijan State Theatre of Young Spectators will make a tour to Kalmykia. During the visit, the staff will show two exciting performances.

ASSITEJ - Azerbaijan got invitations to a number of International Festivals on its new season.



ASSITEJ Burkina Faso



Will support the 6th edition of **Filigrane** (Watermark), a project built by Compagnie du Fil.

Filigrane 2015 is, among other things, an accompaniment for women or girls who wish to strike out in the practice of puppetry. It is a two-stage process:

- From Nov. 16th to 26th: professionalization of shows. The participating companies will propose, beforehand, performances, which will be used as the basis of a practical work on dramaturgy, manipulation, and a general view of puppetry. At this stage, each proposition is to be presented to every company, in order to profit from an internal feedback.
- From Nov. 27 to Dec. 15th: Dissemination / Touring, public performances. A program made from the 5 shows will take place in schools and cultural spaces. All in all, the shows will be performed in 10 cities of Burkina Faso.

ASSITEJ Burkina Faso's involvement will consist in organizing performances in schools. Our association is contacting a list of interested primary and secondary schools, and will take care of logistics, in order that the shows will be played in good conditions.

Our goal is to contribute to the democratization of artistic practices, and to their insertion into the education system in Burkina Faso. **Filigrane** is in the position of being an African puppetry school having the structure for permanent training of the African puppeteer.

Artistic director: Athanase KABRE, lefil1@yahoo.fr

Coordinator: Alain HEMA, alainhema@yahoo.fr

Administration : David OUEDRAOGO, david.ued@yahoo.fr



ASSITEJ Canada / IATC

Theatre and Statelessness in Europe

Editors: Dr Azadeh Sharifi and Prof. S. E. Wilmer

With the number of refugees from the Middle East and Africa rising rapidly and demonstrations for and against refugees and immigrants taking place in many cities, migration has become a major issue in Europe. Despite the large number of deaths in sea crossings, the member states of

the European Union have thus far failed to agree to share the responsibility for housing new immigrants and asylum seekers. While a few EU states have been welcoming them, most have been constructing new barriers to keep them out, such as Spain's heightened security border fence in Melilla, Bulgaria's 150 kilometre fence with Turkey, Hungary's new 175 kilometre fence with Serbia, and Britain's enhanced Channel Tunnel defenses.

In reaction to the crisis, *Critical Stages* is hosting a special section on **Theatre and Statelessness**. We are interested in publishing articles (of about 4500 words) about how theatre makers (such as Ariane Mnouchkine, Christoph Schlingensiefel, Elfriede Jelinek, Donal O'Kelly, David Edgar, etc.) and/or theatre institutions (such as the Ruhr Triennale, the Ballhaus Naunynstrasse, the Maxim Gorki Theatre and the Theatertreffen in Berlin) have responded to this issue.

Application procedure:

Abstracts of approximately 250 words (and a brief biog) in Microsoft Word should be submitted to Dr. Azadeh Sharifi (azadeh_sharifi@web.de) and Prof. S E Wilmer (swilmer@tcd.ie)

[Read more.](#)

ASSITEJ ITALY

The IX edition of Segni d'infanzia is coming!
October 28 to November 1
in Mantova.

It's time to book your flight !

Don't lose the occasion to discover more than 25 international shows, artistic itineraries, national and international thematic meetings, amusing events like aperitifs, lunches, dinners and dancing evening! Over 250 events with artists from over 7 different countries. The 10th edition of the festival goes beyond and changes its name to **Segni d'infanzia e OLTRE** (in italian: Sign of childhood and beyond) with shows aimed at spectators from 18 months till 18 years.



NOT TO BE MISSED:

Connecting Networks, Friday October 30, at Teatro Bibiena in Mantova.

The special meeting for artists and producers. Organized by Segni d'infanzia in collaboration with Institut Français d'Italie, Ambassade de France en Italie and ASSITEJ Italia, a full day of exchange, with several different networks, coming from different parts of the world.

The program is available both in Italian and English, at the following link:

<http://www.segnidinfanzia.org/programma/>

To join us is easy!

You just need to submit the reservation format by mail, filling out the editable PDF or sending by fax until October 9.

In the reservation format you will find all the information related to the packages including hotel, meals, convivial meetings and the pass for the dancing evening!

Hurry to book the stay that suits you!

<http://www.segnidinfanzia.org/info-2/operators-area/?lang=en>

[Read more.](#)

ASSITEJ Jordan

The National Centre for Culture and Arts (NCCA)

**The 34th International Arab
Youth Congress
From 3 - 8 August 2015**



Under the Patronage of Her Majesty

Queen Noor Al Hussein; Founder and Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of King Hussein Foundation, the National Center for Culture and Arts of King Hussein Foundation in cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) held the 34th International Arab Youth Congress, under the theme **Investing in Young People as Agents of Positive Change for Human Development** with 105 participants age 13 - 17 from UAE, Pakistan, Tunisia, Sudan, Serbia, Iraq, Palestine, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Holland and Jordan.

The IAYC is a thematic event that utilizes creative activities to tackle global issues impacting the lives of youth. This year's theme: Investing in Young People as Agents of Positive Change for Human Development was selected to highlight the prevailing challenges youth and adolescents are facing in terms of education, reproductive health, civic engagement and security. The delegates participated in creative workshops including drama, dance, music and song and created a mural led by Ms. Samia AL Zaru to express their views on the theme of the congress.

The Closing Ceremony attended by Her Majesty Queen Noor Al Hussein featured a multimedia performance by the delegations depicting the outcome of the sessions and the creative workshops.

[Read more.](#)

ASSITEJ Kazakhstan

70th Anniversary opening season of Theatre
for
Children and Youth named after Gabit
Musrepov



On October 14th our theatre will celebrate the opening of its 70th season. This is the most significant event for the cultural life of the Kazakh theatre and art.

This anniversary will be celebrated throughout the season with the following special projects:

- 1) 70th opening season of theatre - with the premiere "Golden-horned saiga" (author and director Erkin Abdreshov) fairy tale for children.
- 2) For the 550th anniversary of the Kazakh Khanate staged "Raiymbek, Raiymbek!" (author Mukagali Makataev, director Murat Ahmanov) premiere of the poetic performance.
- 3) Actress and singer Aigul Imanbaeva will organize memorial evening for deceased actors who have brought the contribution to development of the theatre.
- 4) 70th Anniversary of theatre actor Zhaksylyk Kurmanbekov.
- 5) The concert program of theatre actors will be presented to the audience.
- 6) Premier of feature film about 70th anniversary of theatre.
- 7) Kazakh State Academic Drama Theatre named after Mukhtar Auevov will present a theatre performance as a gift for the 70th Anniversary.
- 8) On the eve of the celebration of the International Day of Theatre there will be a festival for the 70th Anniversary.
- 9) A competition will be organized together with the Kazakh National Academy of Arts named after Temirbek Zhurgenov, among secondary school students with the theme "Pure art is a theatre".
- 10) May 2016 will celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the theatre.

ASSITEJ Romania THEATER, STREET and CHILD

Bucharest, September 2015.

The Sun is giving energy to the city with plenty of generosity.
This is an amazing month for the cultural life of the city.
Bucharest, the capital of Romania, abounds in cultural events

that compete with each other in terms of audience, themes and content: design shows, music festivals, film festivals, theater festivals, cultural street events, themed cultural picnics and the city's annual celebration. I could go on like this until I raise your curiosity to the level of having you present in Bucharest the same month next year. Tândărică Animation Theater in cooperation with ASSITEJ Romania National Center have created in just a few days the most complex cultural event dedicated to the young audience. Also, these two institutions have celebrated together with the audience 70 years of Tândărică and 50 of ASSITEJ.



This year, the 4th edition of THEATER, STREET and CHILD Festival lasted from the late days of spring until the first days of autumn. The festival has been present in parks, but the last days brought a number of events to Tândărică Theater headquarters, situated in Lahovary Square, and also to the Itinerary Theater Hall: plays for children and young audience, play reading shows, exhibitions, debates, conferences, and a lot of meetings between the people who are writing at this moment the pages of history for children and young audience's theater. This 4th edition of the festival reunited eight state members of ASSITEJ: Austria, Croatia, Italy, Serbia, Romania, China, Republic of Korea and Japan. The themes opened for discussion were: Education through art, Animation Theater, where to?, How can you make a kid to believe in the theater movement?, Animation and visuality: the rich theater of the 21st century, Networking – the solution for efficient communication, Theater for children and young audience in Republic of Korea, Means of expression in the Chinese theater for children and young audience, Development trends in Japanese theater for children. These meetings and these themes managed to build the appetite for conversation, dialogue, and finding each other's interests between Romanian cultural managers and different international artists and guests. Also, in the same days (September 11-16), the second reunion of ASSITEJ Europe 8+ Regional Network took place. This reunion involved debates regarding the headlines of cultural area and making future plans in relation with the result of these debates. Of course, these debates are designed to build cultural bridges between our countries, by bringing our cultural specifics closer together and discovering and creating new and stronger relations between the cultures of this region. The main agenda of each representative from these eight countries, presented at the reunion, focused on intensifying the cultural cooperation between members, building new common cultural projects, developing new coproductions, creating residence opportunities for young artists, etc. It was also an opportunity for Romanian managers of children and young audience theaters to present their work, and to create new work relations with the international partners. Romanian artists, theater makers and festival managers had their chance to network with the international guests by promoting their creations, ideas or projects. THEATER, STREET and CHILD Festival has given an intense week of cultural experience, sometimes tiresome but pleasant, and very productive regarding concrete future plans.



At the end of the road -a road sign
by **Diana Kržanić Tepavac**

Every autumn, the artists, theatre makers and various audiences eagerly await for the Belgrade International Theatre Festival that takes place in the second half of September. For those who are not yet acquainted with this festival, Bitef was founded in 1967 and since then it is continually following and supporting the latest theatre trends as one of the biggest and most important European festivals that has managed to keep its place with a tumultuous evolution of performing arts. As the festival of '*New Theatrical Tendencies*', Bitef has been recognising and introducing world-renowned theatre authors and their poetics which influenced many generations of artists in the region and wider, encouraging them to explore and challenge the established image of theatre and its effect on society. As of 2000, Bitef Poliphony was established as Bitef's side program dedicated to exploring new tendencies in the field of theatre for children and youth.

This year's 49th Bitef was a turbulent and a poignant one, and not solely due to the performances that it gathered in Belgrade. It was our first Bitef without Jovan Ćirilov, one of its founders and its artistic director who passed away last year. A Bitef dedicated to the memory of Jovan Ćirilov - a teatrologist, theatre expert, philosopher, writer, poet, and a significant contributor to Serbian culture. Ćirilov was the creator of the concept of this festival and the persistent defender of many new and experimental theatrical and performative work, which he skilfully selected and brought to the festival, thereby provoking fierce reactions and often resentment among conventional and traditionalist-minded majority of the audience. However, that same audience grew with time to accept and understand, if not even love, these innovations that the contemporary theatre tumultuously brought over the last 5 decades. In his honour, the special award for outstanding/exceptional contribution to the theatre art in terms of genre, style or means of expression, was given the name of Jovan Ćirilov.

[Read more.](#)



ASSITEJ Sweden
SHADOWLAND

ASSITEJ SWEDEN
SCENKONST FÖR BARN OCH UNGA 

Over the past few years Europe has become increasingly polarized, witnessing the spread of extreme right-wing and nationalist parties in an increasing number of countries. Anti-democratic currents are being stirred up, giving rise to a political climate that encourages violence, open racism and fear.

We wish to investigate the effects, if any, this new situation is having on the performing arts for children and youth. Has performing arts for young people embraced these issues? Are they mirrored in our repertoires? Do our performances raise questions or encourage resistance? What do we see outside of Sweden?

Encouraging collaboration between companies and institutions in Sweden and in other European countries we hope to exchange knowledge, competence and experience, strengthen the artistic work and encourage performing arts for young people to counteract racism. Through public lectures, discussions, workshops, performances and festivals we wish to promote an exchange of ideas and inspiration around issues of racism and the role of the performing arts.

We are looking for new ways for theatre, dance, and circus for young audiences to connect with an important political and social issue. We wish to develop cooperation between Swedish production units and those of other European countries to lift the question of racism and to discuss directly and openly the political and artistic repercussions of the current situation with producers and artists involved with work for young people.

[Read more.](#)



Unga Klara, "X". Photo: Marguerite Seger

ASSITEJ Switzerland

Celebrated the ASSITEJ 50th Anniversary.
Zürcher Theater Spektakel, in August 2015.

We thank our member Triad Theatercompany for the musical support and everybody who has attended the festivity.



ASSITEJ Uruguay

Celebrating the 50th anniversary
of ASSITEJ International



On September 22nd, ASSITEJ Uruguay began the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of ASSITEJ International and its Uruguayan branch.

A round table was held on "Art and Education" in which different experiences that are being developed in Uruguay were exposed.

Experienced representatives of activities such as puppets and theater in high school made interesting presentations on their works and results, while psychologists working in these areas exposed their views.

The speakers talked and discussed about their projects and then showed videos about their

experiences working with public schools. The City Hall's referent of the Cultural area of Montevideo and the Ministry of Education and Culture presented their ideas, experiences and projects for the next period of government.

In the current month of October we are going to continue with these activities, and we have organized a national festival where four theatrical and musical plays for children that have been selected by the Uruguayan Critics Association, will be presented and performed.

These shows are going to be performed on October 19th and 20th in the Solis Theater of Montevideo, Uruguay, the most important theater in the country. We are happy to have achieved this goal, because it's been a long time since Uruguay held a theater festival exclusively for kids.

[View full program in Spanish](#)



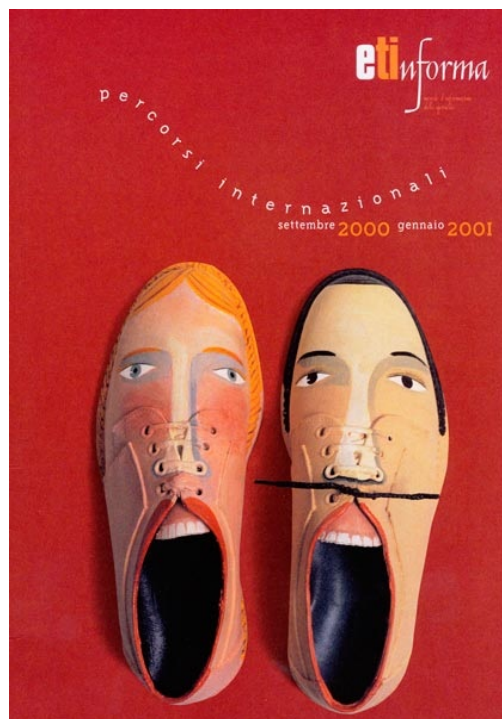
50th Anniversary Section

As part of the continuing celebrations of the ASSITEJ Jubilee, we will be including special contributions that speak about the history of our association and centers around the world.

On this occasion a selection of theatre posters from ASSITEJ archives and a contribution from ASSITEJ Norway on the controversial theme : Democracy in theatre for the very young.

We share with you illustrations of more than 30 countries.

These materials were part of the Exhibition MOVEMENTS, that took place in Berlin, during our 50th Anniversary. An exhibition by ASSITEJ Germany with material from the ASSITEJ Archives.



[View all illustrations](#)

The Red Shoes Project - democracy in theatre for the very young? ASSITEJ Norway

By Lise Hovik



The Red Shoes was an artistic research project working on the idea of improvisation and free playing as a path to good communication in children's theatre. It explored different forms of art in search for the genuine interaction between actors and children, and was deeply concerned with the possibility of equal interchange between the babies and the adult performers. In this respect the project touched upon the question of democracy in art. The project resulted in an article-based dissertation, in which one of the articles asks: *Baby theatre - a democratic artform?*

The question of democracy in theatre for the very young could be a question of the structures of power *within* an artistic work, and it could be a larger question concerning cultural politics and the market economy. I will now give a brief introduction to my research concerning this topic, together with some arguments from the article above, on aspects of democracy in theatre for the very young; democracy inside the theatre and outside in the larger community, culture and market.

Democracy in theatre

In the traditional theatre space there is a distance between spectator and stage, and the communication leans on the attentive and absorbed focus from child spectator to adult actor. This setting reflects the power structure of the old theatre democracy. When thinking about western theatre at large, it is in fact not a democratic institution anymore, although it once was in ancient Greece. In traditional bourgeois theatres the audience is not meant to be heard nor seen. We are meant to pay our ticket, be quiet, sit still and hopefully be amused. The youngest audience in this kind of theatre will not necessarily obey the power structure. They might raise their voice in protest or excitement, but unfortunately no one will really listen. I would then suggest that the political voice of the baby is neglected and not respected in the larger debate on the form and content of the show.

One answer to the question of democracy in theatre could be interactive theatre. The interaction with actors or specific sites can engage the children in different forms of dialogue or interplay, or open immersive experiences in theatre spaces. But is the idea of interaction itself a guaranty of democracy, or is it just another internal power structure, pretending to be democratic? Looking closer into the interactive forms of theatre, we often find that adult power is even stronger regarding the ways children are guided, asked or invited to participate in predestinated narratives. It might as well be a tyranny in disguise.

To explore new possibilities in interactive theatre for the very young, I have conducted three different performances throughout the research project *The Red Shoes Project* (2008-2013).

[Read more.](#)
