



TYA Ireland

– the national centre in Ireland of International ASSITEJ

Issue: 2, Spring 2009

TYA IRELAND

TYA Ireland is the national association representing and promoting professional organisations and individual artists whose work primarily focuses on engaging Irish children and young people through theatre. TYA Ireland provides a crucial link between members, the arts sector, the wider community and government.

Mission Statement:

To provide access to high quality professional performing arts experiences to all children and young people in Ireland.

Aims:

- To create a Forum for the Sector.
- To increase the value / profile of the work.
- To promote and foster training and development opportunities for practitioners in the sector.
- To have an International Dimension.

TYA Ireland Committee:

Muireann Ahern, Emelie FitzGibbon, Philip Hardy (Chair), Emer McGowan, Lali Morris.

Members are listed on the webpage below. We welcome and encourage new members from within the sector and from supporters.

Membership application forms are available from:

TYA Ireland, c/o Barnstorm Theatre Company, Church Lane, Kilkenny.
T: 056 7751266
E: assitej.ireland@barnstorm.ie
W: www.barnstorm.ie/assitej.php

Introduction

2008 was an eventful year for TYA Ireland! We are very proud of the first full year of activity as the ASSITEJ Centre in Ireland, and we are looking forward to more in 2009. The first edition of the TYAI Newsletter found its way around the world reaching colleagues and practitioners in many countries.

TYA Ireland membership now stands at twenty-one with production companies, festivals, venues, and individuals. Advantages of membership:

TYA Ireland is a support network which promotes the sharing of good practice among its members and with the wider community of ASSITEJ International. These exchanges enrich and inspire the work itself and create dynamic connections and partnerships.

TYA Ireland is the collective voice of its members – advocating for the field at national and international level, raising the profile of the work and negotiating for greater support and recognition.

TYA Ireland facilitates a flow of information among its members and in the wider theatre community – information relevant to the work: festivals, contacts, venues, links, training, resources, etc.

Gathering '09

As agreed at the AGM 2008 and following the success in Cork, the gathering will be an annual event: Gathering '09 will be hosted by Draíocht in Blanchardstown, Dublin on Wed 28th and Thurs 29th October.

Again there will be a number of panel discussions, international speakers, and up to 5 performances, and this year's event will also include a practical workshop facilitated by a visiting practitioner.

There will be a maximum of 70 delegates for Gathering '09 to include speakers, panellists, members, guests, national and international visitors (further information to follow).

Master-classes in '09

There was a strong indication of interest in master-classes for members in various aspects of TYA. The committee is pursuing a number of possibilities for this year, and would ask that members notify us of potential facilitators that might be visiting or working here and could be persuaded to deliver such training inputs, eg. Bjarne Sandbourg from Teater Refleksion who is collaborating with Branar this year, or playwright Mike Kenny who has already agreed to a workshop later this year.

Being informed and keeping up-to-date with what is going on in the sector in Ireland is vital. This edition will give you information on members' activities in the next quarter. I would ask that members stay informed by circulating information on activities and developments through the network and the newsletter. Happy reading and I look forward to seeing some of the work over the next few months

Philip Hardy, Chairperson, TYA Ireland

Spotlight on Showcase

Each January, IPAY (International Performing Arts for Youth), an American organisation, runs a four day event simply called Showcase. Running since 1979, Showcase takes place in a different USA city each year and is attended by approximately 300 delegates from all parts of the USA and further afield. Delegates are made up of programmers, artists, teachers, agents, education officers... anyone who has a particular interest in work for children and young people.

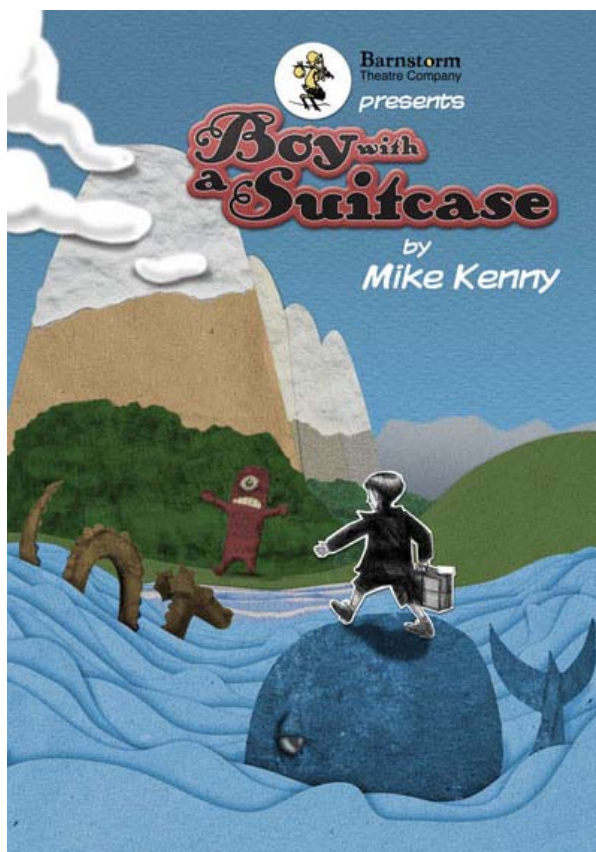
Showcase has a number of elements: there's a curated programme of performances (approximately 12 shows) from both US and international companies; a programme of Spotlights which gives other companies the opportunity to show a 10/15 minute sample of their work; the Exhibit Hall, which is in effect a marketplace where companies set up booths and try to sell their shows; and lastly there's a series of Professional Development sessions on a number of pre-selected topics that delegates sign up to participate in. Yes, there's a lot packed in to four days and you could easily start your day at 9am and keep going till 11pm that evening when the last Spotlight finishes.

Getting a piece selected to be part of the official Showcase programme is incredibly valuable to companies. US tours of 3 months and longer can be booked if your show is liked. There is a selection committee (made up of US, Canadian and European representation) who curate the programme. This group of 7 or 8 people meet for a few days in June and decide who is in and who is out. There is an application process which can be accessed on www.ipayweb.org which clearly sets out criteria.

Applications for the 2010 Festival, which takes place in Pittsburgh from the 20-23 January next, have to be in by June 3rd 2009. A number of English and Scottish companies have been selected in the past and long tours for their shows were put in place. Most would find that having an American based agent is helpful. To my knowledge, an Irish company has never been.... maybe it's time?

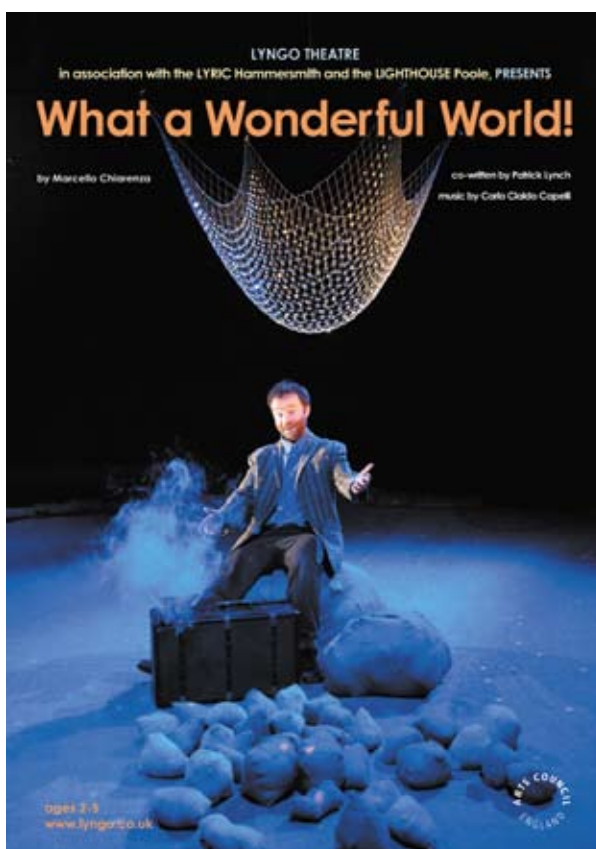
Give me a call on tel: 01-8098027 if you want to find out more information or log on to: www.ipayweb.org

Emer McGowan, Director, Draíocht and Committee Member TYA Ireland



Above: Poster for Barnstrom Theatre Company's *Boy With a Suitcase* by Mike Kenny, Spring 2009.

Below: *What a Wonderful World!* presented by Lyngo Theatre, coming to Cork Opera House in May/June 2009.



Spotlight on Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival, Edinburgh

Last month, with thanks to the Arts Council's Travel and Training Award, Dog and String Theatre attended the Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival in Edinburgh and took part in the "Language of the Shadow," a masterclass lead by Norbert Goetz from Shatten Theater, Germany.

This particular workshop was of interest as it addressed the three dimensional and dramaturgical possibilities of light and shadow; it looked at the cinematic effects of working with light. We explored different light sources, broke away from the flat screen and gained an introduction to the possibilities of working with reflected light.

The medium of experimental shadow theatre is like drawing with light. The possibilities are immense and very exciting. Norbert Goetz is a master of this very specialised art and it was a privilege to learn from somebody who has made it his life's work. His generosity and openness in sharing his discoveries and methods were exceptional.

This masterclass was run in conjunction with Manipulate, a five day international Visual Theatre Festival that annually presents a challenging, entertaining and inspiring programme encompassing puppetry, visual and physical theatre and animation. The Festival is produced in association with the Traverse Theatre - Scotland's New Writing Theatre, a natural home for Manipulate as it is a theatre that embraces challenging work and has at its helm an Artistic Director who is a supporter of the artform of puppetry for both children and adults.

Performances were held every night at the Traverse showcasing a broad spectrum of visual theatre. It was encouraging to see puppetry given equal status with other forms of theatre, and also to see full audiences for every performance. There is strong support for puppetry in Scotland and consequently there are a lot of children's theatre companies working there.

Dog and String Theatre have contributed to the festival programme in previous years with *The One That Got Away* and *The Billy Holliday Show* and look forward to going back in 2010.

As a final note, it must be said the Scottish Animation Festival is a leader in the field and has combined the provision of education in performance skills in puppet theatre with the development of audiences. It is a potential model for a similar initiative in Ireland, where a huge vacuum exists in terms of institutional support. Despite a very clear example that demonstrates the desire for the kind of entertainment provided by puppetry and the potential for its development into a serious art form, with a wide range of applications from children's audiences to healthcare, artists in Ireland are largely working on self initiated projects with scant resources.

Thanks to expanded forms of art practice which characterise the visual arts in Ireland today there is an increasing dissolution of the perceived boundaries that have demarcated one form from another. It is now possible that an awareness of contemporary forms of animation loosely herded under the title of 'puppetry' can be subject to serious critical scrutiny in exactly the same way as that applied in any other art practice.

When this happens, perhaps these forms will begin to attract the kind of support needed to mount an umbrella project similar to the Scottish Animation Festival which can breathe some oxygen into a lively and robust practice that, far from dying out in the wake of the multimedia tsunami, is not only learning from it but questioning its validity as well.

A similar and proportionate project in Ireland could see companies visiting from all over the world and the support and development of practitioners and companies here.

Sarah Fuller, Dog and String Theatre

For more information about Dog and String Theatre, please visit: www.dogandstring.com



Above and right: Norbert Goetz masterclasses.



The Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival is produced by Puppet Animation Scotland, an organisation that is dedicated to the advocacy, development and celebration of the artforms of puppetry and animation in Scotland.

Puppet Animation Scotland also organises the Puppet Animation Festival, a six week nationwide festival for children.

The Puppet Animation Festival is the UK's oldest and largest annual performing arts event for children and young people. From its origins as a week of 12 shows during the Easter holidays at the Netherbow in Edinburgh in 1984, the Festival now lasts for over a month presenting more than 250 performances workshops and films throughout Scotland, provided by leading companies from the UK, Europe and the rest of the world.

Right: Cups and Crowns present *A Hedge Called Hog* at a number of festivals and venues in May 2009.



Graffiti Theatre Company

Graffiti follows the success of its primary programme, *The Lost Ones*, with a programme in Irish, *Is Iomaí Sli* by Barbara de Barra. Directed by Associate Director, Síle Ní Bhroin, this production will be on tour in May and June.

In the midst of Graffiti's celebration of its 25th year, Graffiti as Gaeilge will celebrate its own first decade with a ceiliúradh on May 29th. The company is also preparing for two summer schools: one for 7 - 9 year olds; and the other, in association with Branar Dramaíochta, for teachers - this will focus on curriculum drama through Irish.

The Outreach team of teaching artists has a packed schedule of workshops in the next three months, while the youth theatres (Activate and Physically Phishy) will both have productions in April.

Theatre space is also very busy with in-house performances for schools, hosting a workshop from Blood + Bandages, a co-operative creative initiative in Cork, and - we hope - a workshop from La Baracca in May. For the autumn Graffiti will produce the premiere of a new commission from Ray Scannell, *Permutations and Palpitations*.

Professional guests are always welcome to our performances and workshops but please contact us in advance.

For more info visit www.graffiti.ie or tel: 021-4397111 or email: graffiti@eircom.net



Above: *The Lost Ones* by Laurie Brooks, with Karen Kelleher, Shane Falvey, Sean McNally. (Photo by Life Studio, Cork.)

Cups and Crowns

Cups and Crowns will be presenting their work in venues and festivals over the coming months:

Maimie's Cart

Bernard is a fixer, he loves to fix things. He believes that every nut has its bolt and that everything makes complete logical sense, just like his life. Maimie sees the world in a completely different way... if it's broke, why fix it? When Bernard is called upon to fix Maimie's chaotic cart, he finds a world where broken possessions have a value and where life's possibilities are endless. What will this mean for Bernard's timetabled and very logical life? This is where the story begins...

11 May 2009, Birr Theatre, Co. Offaly

A Hedge Called Hog

As a child, Pio had a vivid imagination. In her mind, she travelled to fantastical worlds and met incredible characters. But now as a grown up, she spends her life sitting at her desk in a white room with only a goldfish for company. She has lost her imagination and each day she attempts to find it, searching high and low. Can Pio find a path back to her imagination with the help of her young audience? Pio and her new friends will work together to bring colour back into her world.

15 May, Sticky Fingers Festival, Co. Down

23 May, Imaginosity, Dublin Children's Museum

25-27 May, Young at Art - Children's Arts Festival, Belfast

A Stitch In Time

Up in an attic is where this adventure begins
Where Grace is searching for interesting things
Covered in dust way, way down the back
She takes the lid of a box and finds an old hat
The hat filled her days with adventure and fun
Suddenly it was gone... what had mother done?
We'll tell you the story of our hero called Grace
and her search for the hat in the most fantastical place....

12 June, Roscommon Arts Centre, Roscommon

11, 13 and 14 June, Town Hall Theatre, Galway

For more info see: www.cupsandcrowns.ie

Barnstorm Theatre Company

Spring Children's Theatre Production

Barnstorm's latest and most ambitious production for children, *Boy with a Suitcase* by Mike Kenny (for children 8-12 years), is in full rehearsal as we go to press. *Boy with a Suitcase* depicts the story of a 12 year old war refugee, who undertakes a long journey to find asylum in another country with nothing but a suitcase containing a few belongings, and the many stories his family has told him throughout his childhood.

A gritty tale of our time, this is cutting-edge theatre for young audiences. *Boy with a Suitcase* opens in the Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny on 24 March.

Audience-led Story Development - update

Create a Story is an exciting new project involving primary schools in Kilkenny and county.

This new development in theatre-making is offered by Barnstorm in partnership with Poetry Ireland's Writer-in-Schools Project to four primary schools in Kilkenny.

Phase 1 involves the pupils in an exploration of creative writing and will culminate in each writing an original story. The writers Martina Murphy and Terry McDonagh, along with Maeve Ingoldsby have been working in the four chosen schools - St Canice's Co-ed (Kilkenny), Marymount N.S (The Rower), Scoil Naomh Bhríde (Ballyragget), and Scoil Bhríde (Paulstown).

The material (due in by Easter) will be available to all participating schools and children through the Barnstorm website, which will also act as a source for feedback and dialogue between the company and schools/participants.

Ensemble Company of Actors

Barnstorm will develop a permanent company of actors to train together; and explore performance and presentation styles/methods in the creation of Theatre for Young Audiences. The actors will begin training with the company and guest artist-tutors from July, and will be engaged until May 2010.

Barnstorm's Outreach Department

Kilkenny Youth Theatre - Productions

The KYT senior members (13-18 year olds) have chosen *Burying Your Brother in the Pavement* by Jack Thorne for their production in April, and have been rehearsing since January. *Burying Your Brother in the Pavement* is a vibrant and provocative play about grief, family, love and growing up. Runs in The Barn from 22 - 25 April.

The Junior KYT (10-12 year olds) recently created *Dirty Beasts* - three short plays devised from the popular Roald Dahl poems.



Above: *Boy With a Suitcase* by Mike Kenny, presented by Barnstorm Theatre Company - on tour from March 2009.

The group is currently engaged in devising a performance piece to be presented in mid-May at the new McDonagh Junction. "The piece is based on the exploration of myths and legends from different times and cultures, using them as dramatic texts" says director Keith Raven. The aim of the project is to give the cast the experience of creating their own work and to develop their understanding of what and where theatre can be.

Children's Review Panel

CRP members continue to explore how to deconstruct, reconstruct, appreciate and review Children's Theatre productions.

The members are currently engaged in a project of investigating *Macbeth* as an abridged script. The process has so far involved them considering the interpretation of the text so that it might be told out of its original context. That led to conceptualising stage design and costume design (still a subject of hot debate!) The project will also introduce them to the role of the director working with actors and then to the acting of short scenes from the play, based on their own design decisions.

Members are also involved with the cast and crew of *Boy with a Suitcase* through observations, discussion and advice.

Barnstorm continues its work with TASK (Training, Access & Support Kilkenny), building confidence with young people who have suffered from mental illness or depression. Having devised and scripted scenes with a professional writer in 2008, the group will explore the process of rehearsal, design and production in 2009. Barnstorm also continues to work with two Adult Drama Clubs, training in theatre skills and working towards productions.

In addition...

Barnstorm's newest addition to staff is Education Officer Keith Raven. Keith has been working with the Outreach Department over the past 18 months but now expands his duties to head up Education and Training.

For more details see: www.barnstorm.ie



Above: The international co-production of *Peter Pan*, which has its Irish premiere in Cork Opera House in June, before touring to the Civic Theatre and Mermaid Arts Centre.

Cork Opera House

Cork Opera House hosts two exciting shows this May/June.

From 30 May – 1 June (Bank Holiday Weekend), Lyngo Theatre presents *What a Wonderful World*, a highly interactive theatre work for children aged 2-5.

“Before anything new is made it must be dreamed. Welcome to the Sea of Tranquillity, where we make the new day every night. On our dream holiday you can hide your face amid a crowd of stars, or dance to our live music as we discover fire all over again. Hop on our sleeper train and take a journey through the space before time.”

What a Wonderful World is a Lyngo Theatre presentation with the Lyric Hammersmith and the Lighthouse Poole.

Then, from 3-6 June, Cork Opera House will host the Irish premiere of an international co-production of *Peter Pan*. This exhilarating show has earned glittering reviews across the UK and USA. Fusing shadow puppetry and vibrant storytelling, the adventures are played out in an ever-changing Neverland unlike any seen before on stage: a thrilling, dark and surprising new *Peter Pan* for ages 8+.

This is a co-production by Visible Fictions (Scotland), The Children’s Theatre Company (Minneapolis, USA) and renowned Italian shadow artist Fabrizio Montecchi from Teatro Gioca Vita (Piacenza, Italy). This will be Visible Fiction’s third visit to Cork Opera House; their previous shows were huge hits with audiences and critics.

Peter Pan also travels to the Civic Theatre, Tallaght (9 & 10 June) and the Mermaid Arts Centre, Bray (12 & 13 June).

For more information visit: www.corkoperahouse.ie

Púca Puppets

Founded in 1997 Púca Puppets have won several awards for their work for both adults and children. Their double-bill of glove puppet shows; *The Tortoise and the Hare* and *The City Mouse and the Country Mouse* toured as far afield as Bangkok where they represented Ireland in the Asia Europe puppet festival. The company’s puppet show without puppets *Peg! Peig!* a bi-lingual festival of nursery rhymes and children’s songs specially designed for 3–5 year olds premiered in Temple Bar, and toured successfully for over a year. Their co-production with Éigse, an adaptation of Neil Gaiman’s novella *Coraline* for older children and adults opened and toured 2006-7 and was a critical success with several sell out performances. The company also runs workshops in puppet making and performance, which they can tailor to specific needs.

Róisín agus an Rón

Written by Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, with soundtrack by Slavek Kwi and Kíla’s Colm Ó Snodaigh, the shadow-show *Róisín agus an Rón* has been on tour in March.

There are lots of stories in Gaelic lore about seals, and their themes of crossing cultures, being ‘fish out of water’, of true selves hidden or stolen, of human treatment of nature, prove an excellent theme for a contemporary shadow puppet show suitable for 7 – 10 year olds. The company have received advice and inspiration from children in Scoil Lorcáin at various stages in the process. The performances are also accompanied by workshops - an opportunity for children to respond creatively or to discover more about the making of the show.

The show is produced in association with IMRAM- Féile Litríochta Gaeilge and Poetry Ireland. Funded by Dublin City Council and Foras na Gaeilge. Also supported by collaboration with the drama department, headed by Roisín Lonergan, of Connolly House - Marino College CDVEC.

Stone Soup

A collaboration with clown-actors Joe Moylan and Amy Conroy, this is a lively re-enacting of the well loved Fable.

Amy and Joe attempt to have breakfast but with time on their hands and a shortage of food they are distracted from their difficulties when the crockery and tableware insist on telling them a story... One snowy night a kind stranger with a twinkle in her eye comes to town, seeking food and shelter only to find closed doors and supposedly empty cupboards. With help from a small boy she befriends, she teases the community into overcoming their poverty through sharing the making and eating of her very special Stone Soup.

Get in time is approx. two hours, re-setting one hour. Two shows can be performed in one day.

For more information, contact Niamh Lawlor on tel: 087-7800931 / 01-8329594 or email: pucapuppets@eircom.net

Monkeyshine Theatre

Monkeyshine Theatre will be presenting *The Bedmaker* - a theatrical experience for early years - at the Stickyfingers Festival 2009 at Narrow Water Castle in Warrenpoint, Co Down.

Six lucky children will be welcomed to climb into a curious bed in *The Bedmaker*, a highly interactive show for 3-5yrs. Climb in, cosy-up, and take part in a magical journey. *The Bedmaker* is a playful, and sensitive show for a very, very small audience sitting in a very, very big bed.

The Bedmaker evolved through creative play with children and explores the bed as a performing landscape, using clowning, storytelling and puppetry. It was developed by Helene Hugel to inspire children to recreate their bed space through their imagination.

Performances take place 16 and 17 May.

For more details visit: www.monkeyshinetheatre.com

Papilio

Papilio is a Wicklow based theatre company founded by puppeteer Anna Rosenfelder. Through theatre, workshops and cross-disciplinary collaborations, Papilio strives to create inspirational work with and for children which is both engaging and poetical, using puppets, found objects, materials, words and song.

In 2008, Papilio facilitated individually devised workshops in a wide range of venues, with a focus on arts & nature experiences for young children. During a residency at Killruddery House & Gardens in County Wicklow, *The Enchanted Tree* was created - an interactive outdoor arts installation, which was presented during the Killruddery Gardens Family Festival.

In December 2008, Papilio premiered its latest production, *Holla's House*, in an atmospheric, Mongolian-style yurt at Airfield, an urban farm on the outskirts of Dublin. *Holla's House* is a magical and intimate journey into the wonders and excitement of winter through puppetry, storytelling and live music. The show was produced in partnership with Airfield and devised in collaboration with musician Eoin O'Brien and director Kareen Pennefather.

In 2009, Papilio will tour its solo show *Amazing Rosamund* and - in winter - *Holla's House*. Papilio's next project is a theatre experience for young children aged 1 to 3.

For information and contact details, see www.theatrepapilio.com



Above: Monkeyshine Theatre presents *The Bedmaker*, May 2009.

The Ark

The Giant Blue Hand, the world premiere of the Marina Carr play, commissioned by the Ark and directed by Selina Cartmell, finishes at The Ark on 22 March following a sensational six week run and terrific reviews in national newspapers.

Following on from the success of *The Giant Blue Hand*, we look forward to The Ark and Dublin Dance Festival Children's Season taking place from 9 – 15 May, including:

From 9 – 11 May, Quebec company Cas Public will perform *The Ugly Ducklings' Dancing Cabaret* for children aged 7+ and their families. This production weaves together inventive, high energy dance, catchy tunes and stories we all know into an absorbing spectacle. Combining *The Ugly Duckling* and *Swan Lake*, six dancers and a Master of Ceremonies perform short vignettes with all the style of a 1920s German cabaret. An internationally recognised choreographer for 25 years, the works award-winning H el ene Blackburn has created for young audiences since 2001 have been particularly noted for their intelligence and appeal.

From Tuesday 12 – Friday 15 May, dance artist Cindy Cummings and percussionist Siobh an Daffy will facilitate dance and percussion workshops suitable for 2nd class and upwards. The workshops will explore movement techniques and drumming methods from around the world.

Last year Ciar an Gray's practical professional development workshop for teachers was a huge success and we are delighted to welcome him back again this year. *Projects and Projections 2*, a professional development workshop for teachers on Saturday 9 May, is aimed at promoting the use of DVD/CD ROM resources as a stimulus for teaching theatre and dance in primary schools. Ciar an Gray is a primary school teacher who has been working with young people in dance and drama for over twenty years.

For more information and tickets please contact The Ark on tel: 01-6707788 or see: www.ark.ie

For more information visit: www.ark.ie

TEAM

TEAM Educational Theatre Company has a very full year in 2009!

TEAM will tour Peter Rumney's award winning play *Jumping On My Shadow* to primary schools in spring. Concurrently, TEAM will run the interactive based drama programme *Get Real* by Carmel Winters to 4th Year post primary students.

In autumn 2009, through the support of Culture Ireland, TEAM will tour *Devotion* by Leo Butler to South Africa, visiting ten post primary schools in Johannesburg and Cape Town. Back in Ireland, TEAM will tour a new commission by Audrey O'Reilly to female post primary schools. Also in autumn, TEAM will collaborate with the Hugh Lane Gallery to create a site specific performative installation at night in Holy Child pre-school and Rutland National School. More details below:

[Jumping on My Shadow](#)

Jumping on My Shadow is a fairytale that takes place in a bakery, in a city, on a river, by the sea. A play about families and their stories, *Jumping on My Shadow* explores the experiences of the exile and refugee and deals with family ties, personal growth and finding a place in the world.

The *Jumping on My Shadow* programme gives 5th and 6th class students an opportunity to explore cultural diversity and themes surrounding inter-culturalism and the growing presence of refugee and asylum seekers in our communities.

[Get Real](#)

Get Real is an interactive web-based drama programme for young people aged 15 – 18 (4th, 5th & 6th Year) that examines teenage sexuality within the wider framework of teenage relationships – both peer and parental.

Get Real will be presented in 5 x 10 minute episodes which students download on computers in school over a 5-day period under the supervision of their teacher. Students then respond to the episode by entering the web page of each character and examining the persona projected on their Bebo-style web page. Emphasis will be placed on how safely the characters reveal themselves online and measures they might initiate to protect themselves.

[School At Night](#)

TEAM, The Hugh Lane Gallery, Holy Child pre-school and Rutland National school will collaborate on a project where children interact with artists in their school environment. The schools involved have recently moved into a new school building which is located in one of the most deprived areas in the country.

Through pre-visits and workshops, the team of artists and theatre practitioners will explore ways in which the children engage with their educational and social environment at school. This process will map their interests and expectations to refine further the direction of the project.

Following this process the school will be secretly transformed through elements of sound, live theatre, lighting, visual art installation and interactive media. The children will return to explore this mysterious space at night with their parents to find different interactive and engaging arts opportunities in each room and in the corridors. The night visit will allow them to explore their school while it is still quite new and exciting and the project will also unearth some hidden historical facts about the site (which was formerly a park, a turf depot, a bar, a launderette, a football pitch and tenements).

Through this project we hope to challenge the intimidating façade of the school as an institution of pedagogy, and promote the unexpected in the mundane.

The piece will also contain a post workshop to help evaluate the effect of the project. A detailed report will be put together summarising the findings.

[Devotion](#)

Devotion by Leo Butler is a gritty, humorous and provocative piece of theatre about conflict and its impact on the lives of young children. In a landscape devastated by war, two children are refugees in their hometown. The enemy has no face and the children have no knowledge of how the conflict started or when it will all end. On the brink of maturity they are caught in confusions of gender, faith and identity.

This play will tour to the backyards and school yards of townships designated 'previously disadvantaged' as part of a wider educational theatre programme that includes audience participatory workshops and teacher resource materials that link the play to the South African educational curriculum.

This project aims to reach a multi-cultural audience and as such will encourage and foster partnerships between different types of South African school.

For more details visit: www.teamtheatre.ie

Draíocht

March to August 2009 sees some great performances for children and young people at Draíocht. In April, *Theatre Maker and Working Actors Workshop* is a wonderfully funny introduction to *Aesop's Fabulous Foibles and Fables*. (8 & 9 April) Then Branar's *The Elves & the Shoemaker / Na Sióga agus an Gréasaí* by Marc Mac Lochlainn comes to us in mid-April. (15 & 16 April) Also in April, we'll have the European Ballet's stunning production of the fairytale *Cinderella* (24 April).

Spréacha 2009

Now in its 6th year, Fingal's International Arts Festival for children takes place from 8-14 June 2009, and promises to be full of magical performances and theatrical delights to engage and entertain children and young people from age 2-12 years.

The festival opens with *The Star Keeper*, a charming tale told through puppetry. Hailing from Quebec, Theatre De L'oeil brings us this award-winning show that tells the story of little Pretzel who rescues a little star that falls from the evening sky. (Age: 5+, 8 & 9 June)

In our studio space, Scotland's Visible Fictions will bring *Shopping For Shoes*, which tells the story of Siobhan McCluskey, a 13-year old politically passionate, petition signing, climate change protesting teenager - who also happens to fancy Shaun, also 13, but passionate about just one thing: shoes. (Age: 10+, 8 & 9 June)

From Denmark and Teater Refleksion comes *Boxy George*, whose life is simple and controlled until one day he comes across a box, then another, then another... and the boxes are coming alive, and begin to... walk! George's world is turned upside down. A beautifully presented puppet performance about finding friendship and companionship in the oddest of places! (Age: 5-10 yrs, 10 & 11 June)

From Spain comes Aracaladanza with *Visto Lo Visto*, a dance show that draws us into a fantastical world where colourful clothes of all shapes and sizes magically spring to life. Brimming with vibrant ideas, humour and creative energy, this enchanting show is set to a wonderfully original, upbeat musical score. (Age: 5+, 11-13 June)

From Denmark again, *Songs From Above* is staged by Teater Refleksion and Teater My in a beautifully created setting where we discover what it means to be little in a perfectly remarkable world. (Age: 2-4, 12-14 June)

Dance Theatre of Ireland brings us *Block Party*, a free 30-minute show involving giant toy blocks, 6 dancers and 3 musicians in a vibrantly colourful and energetic dance piece. (All ages, 14 June)

Booking opens for Spréacha shows on 30 March 2009. For bookings and a copy of the Spréacha Brochure tel: 01-885 2622 or see: www.draiocht.ie

Draíocht and Schools

This season we will be working with a Dublin 15 secondary school on the stagecraft project "The Virtual Production", a project that allows students the opportunity to shadow the countdown to the production of a show at Draíocht. As part of the project the students will also get to virtually produce a show of their own, allowing them to gain first hand experience of the design and technical elements, the creation of schedules, the managing of budgets and all that rehearsing that goes on behind the scenes before the polished piece is seen by an audience.

In late April, we will also have a Focus On... New Media workshop based around the "Sound Like Art" installation in our downstairs gallery space. Students will get the opportunity to create sound art themselves by producing some sound /and or video recordings of their own. (27-29 April 2009)

Finally, to coincide with Spréacha, we will offer a number of free workshops to the first schools who are booked into the school performances of the puppet and dance based shows (*Star Keeper*, *Boxy George* and *Visto Lo Visto*).



Draíocht and Families

On 11 April, there will be a free Family Day in Draíocht Galleries when we will be making and colouring Easter eggs and cards. In May, we will join other galleries around the country in celebrating National Draw Day. We will also have two free puppet-themed family days on the closing weekend of the Spréacha Festival, 13 & 14 June. The activities are designed for children aged 5-10 years, but younger and older siblings are welcome.

Summer Workshops

After the excitement of Spréacha has passed and school finishes up, we will be offering a number of summer workshops: "Sounds like Teen Spirit" (13-17 July) is a workshop for 14-17 year olds, where participants will work with professional sound engineers and music producers to gain a greater understanding of three areas of live music performance: live recording, vocal works, and DJ-ing. We also have "Summer Art Workshops" (27 - 31 July, for 4-6 years and 7-9 years) and "Summer Dance Workshops" that will culminate in a dance performance in our studio space (4 - 8 August, for 11-13 years and 14+ years).

For full details, visit www.draiocht.ie



ASSITEJ Book 2008/09

The ASSITEJ Book 2008-2009 is now on sale. This is a great read for anyone working or interested in the field of Theatre for Young Audiences.

The International Festivals

The main topic of the Book is covered from different angles and from different parts of the world, from South America to Japan. Reputable authors write about important themes:

Dragan Klaić writes about the rationale of festival research and international cooperation. Wolfgang Schneider tells about the Theatre Festival for a Young Audience - Results and Remarks of an Evaluation. Carsten Jensen will inform you about the Danish festival model, and Boomer Stacy about the North American scene. Ellen Bianchini, Paul Harman, Shoona Powell write about the festivals in UK, and Brigitte Dethier about the festival in Stuttgart, Germany. And more...

Report from the Congress in Adelaide

All you should know about the Congress held in Adelaide in May 2008 can be found in the Book: overall report written by Tony Mack, special reports from the Assembly by Niclas Malmcrona and the Festival by Jason Cross, summary of the talks held during the ASSITEJ International Forums, reports from the Next Generation Project, and lists of the Awardees.

Copies are €12 (including postage). Place an order for your copy by Tuesday 7 April by contacting TYA Ireland at: assitej.ireland@barnstorm.ie

BUILDING BRIDGES CROSSING BORDERS

17th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences

COPENHAGEN / MALMÖE

20 - 29 MAY 2011

www.assitej2011.info

Preparations have started on the 17th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival, with a Congress Newsletter and Congress web-site shortly up and running. Make sure to check the Congress website now and then to get the latest information: www.assitej2011.info.

For the first time ever, the Congress will take place in two cities simultaneously: Copenhagen and Malmö (connected by the Öresund Bridge) share the ASSITEJ 2011 Congress due to their close relations as neighbouring cities and the constantly increasing integration in the commercial, cultural and daily life of the population of the Öresund Region, which - due to its infrastructure and dynamism - offers all possibilities for a progressive and future-orientated congress.

This is reflected in the overall theme of the Congress and Performing Arts Festival - BUILDING BRIDGES, CROSSING BORDERS in all of its diversity of associations - and in the concrete everyday life of the Congress.

(Edited from an address by Niclas Malmcrona, on behalf of the Executive Board)

The Performing Arts Festival for Young Audiences is an international festival presenting selected high quality work from all over the world. It is the intention to bring around 30 performances to Copenhagen/Malmö during the 10 days of the festival, with 5-6 presentations of each performance.

Danish and Swedish performing arts will be presented at a special cavalcade in addition to the international performances.

Other events will include Seminars, workshops, masterclasses, lectures, readings, discussion forums etc which will take place during the whole Congress period.

Stay up to date with Congress 2011 by visiting the website at www.assitej2011.info and while you are there, sign up for the Congress 2011 Newsletter - coming soon!

TYA UK

The following is an abridged version of an article Paul Harman, recently elected Chair of the Board of TYA-UK Centre of ASSITEJ, wrote for the ASSITEJ International Newsletter.

The second stage of our reorganization in the UK [has been completed]. We decided at our last Annual General Meeting in November 2008, following a long period of discussion, that we need to have Committees working in different ways in the four different parts of the UK. For example, funding arrangements and cultural policies are now different in all four parts of the UK.

The new UK Board has two members from each of the four 'countries': England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. While each Committee will create its own artistic development events and activities, the role of the UK Board is mainly to ensure good communications between ourselves and with colleagues abroad.

A new England Committee of TYA-UK has been formed and the Chair is Dr Steve Ball of Birmingham Rep Theatre. Akua Obeng-Frimpong of Kazzum Theatre, London is the England Vice-Chair.

In Wales, a new independent development agency has been founded by the eight long established TYA companies. Gary Meredith of Gwent Theatre and Jeremy Turner of Arad Goch and Agor Drysau Festival are the representatives on the Board of TYA UK.

In Scotland, Imagine, directed by Tony Reekie, has been funded for many years by the Scottish Arts Council to provide development services for TYA in Scotland. It is now one of the largest development agencies in the world, with the annual Imagine festival in May probably one of the biggest in the world also. ASSITEJ UK has currently no company or individual members in Scotland – because Imagine has provided the link with ASSITEJ International and the rest of the world. Tony Reekie has rejoined the TYA UK Board and will establish a representative Committee for Scotland.

In Northern Ireland a new Committee will be formed by Richard Croxford of Lyric Theatre Belfast and Ali FitzGibbon of Belfast Children's Festival.

We believe this is a very positive step forward for the UK. All those serving on the UK Board are experienced artists and administrators working in all aspects and scales of theatre, from the largest regional producing theatre to a small touring company, an agency and festivals.

New: Theatre for Early Years

Wolfgang Schneider (President of ASSITEJ International) has edited a collection of essays and papers on a phenomenon which is constantly gaining complexity and relevance. "Theatre for early years. Performing arts for children from birth to three years" discusses developments and makes tangible the variety of approaches and the energy of the work that is being done in this field.

A variety of different perspectives are included in this research in performing arts from birth to age three. The authors reflect on their work, their observations, their directorship. Maybe the development of Theatre for Early Years is a new challenge to renew the language of theatre, to establish an art of simplicity for the complexity of theatre.

The book can be ordered via ASSITEJ Germany. Please send an e-mail to assitej@kjtz.de or see www.assitej.de

The next edition of the TYA Ireland newsletter is due Summer 2009. The deadline for inclusions is 12th June 2009. Please send all your news and images to: assitej.ireland@barnstorm.ie

What is ASSITEJ?

ASSITEJ is a World Theatre Network of THEATRE for CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE

ASSITEJ was established in 1965 by a global alliance of professional theatre for children and young people. Today, ASSITEJ links thousands of theatres, organizations and individuals through national centres in more than 70 countries.

The secretariat is based in Zagreb, Croatia.

Golden Jubilee of the ASSITEJ Newsletter

The 50th ASSITEJ Newsletter can be downloaded from: www.assitej-international.org/media/5235/newsletterno50_engl.pdf

New ASSITEJ International website:

For more information about ASSITEJ International, please visit the redesigned and relaunched website at: www.assitej.org

International Association of Theatre
for Children and Young People

