



TYA Ireland

– the national centre in Ireland of International ASSITEJ

Issue: 5, Winter/Spring 2010

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:

Emelie FitzGibbon, Philip Hardy (Chair), Marc Mac Lochlainn, Emer McGowan.

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

Happy New Year and welcome to the first issue in 2010 of our newsletter (Issue #5).

There is an air of anticipation (and indeed of fear) in Ireland as the arts community awaits funding decisions for 2010. Companies and organisations have postponed or severely trimmed elements of their programmes for this year. We are hoping that the inevitable cutbacks in funding will be somewhat tempered for Young People, Children, and Education. Why? Fair-play, an equal slice of the cake, recognition of the rights of children and young people in the arts!

In the last survey of arts provision in Ireland (2006), 54% of the population wanted the sector of arts for children and young people to be a top priority for funding. What was the response? - now 5% of arts funding goes to around 30% of the population i.e. nearly one million citizens of this state get only 5% of the arts funding. We should consider how we can tackle this discrepancy and increase the profile of our work – there was a strong call at the Gathering in Oct for the sector to become more political and more vocal (perhaps follow the farmers' example when they marched on Dublin in their tractors – we might do likewise with ice-cream vans "Art Is Not A Treat!").

Since the last issue of the newsletter TYAI has presented Gathering 09 which was hosted by Draíocht in Dublin, and we elected a new committee to support and promote the development of the sector. It is appropriate here to thank the members of the previous committee for all the effort and time devoted to establishing the Irish ASSITEJ Centre which is now TYA Ireland. I would like to take this opportunity to particularly thank Lali Morris and Muireann Ahern who have stepped down from the committee, and to thank them both for their energy and input over the past two years as we have striven to find a united voice for TYA in Ireland. I would also like to warmly welcome Marc Mac Lochlainn of Branar Drámaíochta who joins the returning committee members Emer McGowan (Draíocht, Blanchardstown), Emelie Fitzgibbon (Graffiti) and myself – there is still a vacancy on the committee which we will fill by co-option. We plan to push the needs of the sector forward over the next two years and to ensure the development in both quantity and quality of Theatre for Young Audiences in Ireland.

Your comments and suggestions are warmly encouraged. Remember to stay informed by circulating information on activities and developments through the network and the newsletter. Happy reading.

Philip Hardy - Chairperson

TYA Ireland

Spotlight on International Festivals 2010

A small sample of festivals that are on during winter and spring 2010.

International Performing Arts SHOWCASE

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania USA
www.ipayweb.org/showcase
 20-23 Jan

À Pas Contés Festival International Jeune Public

Dijon, France
www.apascontes.fr
 28th Jan -13th Feb

Momix Kingershiem

www.momix.org
 28th Jan- 7th Feb

EncuentroTeatralia

Alcala de Henares, Spain
encuentroteatralia@ariadnappc.com
 9th-13th Feb

Festival Panoptikum

Nuremberg, Germany
post@festival-panoptikum.de
 9th -14th Feb

KROKUSFESTIVAL

Hasselt, Belgium
 Gerhard Verfaillie: gerhard.verfaillie@ccha.be
 10th-18th Feb

Szene Bunte Wahne

Vienna , Austria
<http://www.sbw.at>
 26th Feb - 7th March

Festival Visioni de Futuro,

Visioni di Teatro, Bologna, Italy
 E: carlotta@testoniragazzi.it
 27thFeb - March 7th

Agor Drysau -Opening Doors

Aberystwyth, Wales
www.agordrysau-openingdoors.org
 16th -20th March

Tweetakt

Utrecht, Netherlands
www.tweetakt.net
 20th -28th March

Teater Centrum

Esbjerg, Denmark
www.teatercentrum.dk
 April 16th -18th

Fira de Teatre de Titelles de Lleida, Spain
centre@titelleslleida.com / www.firatitelles.com
 29th April - 2nd May

Danish+

Aarhus, Denmark
www.danishplus.dk
 2nd -5th May

Bank of Scotland Imagine Festival

Edinburgh, Scotland
www.imagine.org.uk
 10th-16th May

Belfast Children's Festival

www.belfastchildrensfestival.com
 21st-30 May

Spréacha

Draíocht, Blanchardstown, Ireland
www.draiocht.ie
 8th -13th June

Ciao

Oxford, UK
www.ciaofestival.org.uk
 23-27th June

“We want all children and young people to have contact with the arts – as participants and audience members. When children and young people experience high-quality arts, it helps them to develop not only their own artistic skills and cultural understanding, but also encourages the development of their talents in other aspects of their lives.

“...The future of the creative economy depends on opportunities for children and young people to participate in arts and creativity being provided today.”

Spotlight on The Lab

In winter 2009, Barnstorm's Acting Ensemble, members of Limbik Theatre Company, along with Barnstorm's Philip Hardy, Anna Galligan and writer-in-residence, Maeve Ingoldsby came together as a company of artists for The Laboratory.

The Laboratory would explore 'how' stories can be told in Children's Theatre in terms of style and form of presentation. Over two weeks the company would focus on specific theatre skills that would or could animate a story. Though story or production was not the aim of the work the Grimm's Brothers' 'Hansel and Gretel' was chosen as a conduit.

The two week laboratory began with a three day introduction to Playback Theatre delivered by Anna Galligan. Playback is an improvisational form of theatre where members of a group or community are invited to tell their personal stories and a group of actors including a musician and 'Conductor' (not unlike the role of 'Joker' in Forum Theatre) 'play back' the story using specific techniques and forms.

The team shared personal stories informed by the themes of the Grimm's fairytale 'Hansel and Gretel', such as, home, family, moments of change, being lost and finding our bravery and resourcefulness in times of crisis.

Following this, Limbik Theatre Company brought the team through its processes of devising and discovery. Again improvisation was pivotal. The Company shared their techniques and approaches for extrapolating a shared vision of material in terms of themes, setting, style and characters.

In the second week decisions were made as to how this learning would be shared with an invited audience. The showing would begin with Playback Theatre and then segments of 'Hansel and Gretel' would be shown in the various styles explored. The Chorus would not just pass commentary but would be a participating intervention in the story. There would be scenes that were devised through the use of objects, rhythm and materials. As well as scripting text for the Chorus of Crows, the playwright Maeve Ingoldsby would script a naturalistic scene for *Hansel and Gretel*.

The showing was made in Barnstorm's own theatre The Barn, and the audience of over 50 was a mix of children, actors, theatre goers and local practitioners. Each segment was introduced and the form and the process explained.

Following the showing was a feedback session. Audience members mentioned the effectiveness of "audience connection", the "fun" element, and how Playback allowed people to see their stories played back to them to create a "different story experience".

Overall many commented on the power of the simplicity that was used. The strength in the physicality also struck a chord with comments such as "it was great that they substituted action for words" recurring. It became clear that the physical style was new and different to many audience members.

The space was referenced quite a few times. "Anything can happen", "making something from nothing" and the "bare stage evokes a more fleshed out impression in the mind" were all in relation to the bare space that was presented and within which the action happened.

The chorus work was very well received and the audience were united in their approval and enjoyment of the style. The Chorus of Crows "transported" the audience and that they were "useful in telling a broken story", drew "the focus on every actor", were interestingly "synchronised" and allowed the "suspension of belief to give free reign". The use of materials to create the fire was described as 'powerful' and 'rich' with one person commenting "I could feel the heat from the fire". Not a lot of reference was made to the use of objects. This cannot be seen as a negation of the style. It may just highlight the impact of the other, more discussed, styles presented. With regard to the text scene the images evoked by the text spoken were drawn quite frequently. In the use of rhythm both the rhythm provided by the musician and actors were commented on; in particular the creation of Hansel's 'cage' and the witch's use of 'her' crutches to create rhythm.

Overall the experience proved rich for both the company of artists and the audience. Part of its success should also speak positively about the use of a core group of actors within a company. The team could move quite quickly because of its previous shared experiences. There already existed a shared language, an unspoken contract of work and an understanding of how this group works, negotiates and exists.

Anna Galligan is Theatre Outreach Officer with Barnstorm.

Branar

2010 is beginning quite busy for us here at Branar.

An Chéad Chéim

In January we re-visited our 2007 production *An Chéad Chéim*. This show is designed for 4th, 5th and 6th class, and tells the story of Myles and Danny. Myles and his mother have just moved to the new town. Myles brings with him his amazing imagination, which allow him to breathe life into ordinary house hold implements and create imaginative stories. But when Dano and Myles meet it set into play a series of events that only Myles imagination can help him stop.

Deis

In December 2009, Branar were awarded funding under the Deis scheme, to work with two traditional musicians in the development of a version of Clann Lir. We are really excited to be able to spend some time in the development of a new piece and put into practice the methodologies we developed during rehearsal of *An Seanfhear Beag*.

An Seanfhear Beag

An Seanfhear Beag will be on the road again in March 2010. We will performing in The Riverbank arts centre in Newbridge on the 9th and 10th, we hope to be in Dublin on the 8th with Irma Grothuis. There are also dates available in March for venues to take the show.

Theatre for Second level

We be putting the finishing touches to a project which began in 2009 which is funded by Ealaíon na Gaeltachta and is aimed at second level schools in our catchment area of Galway and in Gaeltacht Chonamara. The aim of this project is to create some continuity with the children we met while they were in primary school.

For more details visit: www.branar.ie



Púca Puppets

Development work continues on our new show *Stone Soup* with school workshops in Rutland Street National school just before christmas and soup making with children next week. Scheduled to open May/June, it is a collaboration with Clown / Actors Amy Conroy and Joe Moylan.

StoryBear - interactive storytelling with live drawing continues to develop with some bi-lingual performances planned for the coming year.

Niamh took a short course in Stop Animation in preparation for developing *Róisín agus an Rón* into a film, which will subsequently tour with a workshop programme. Research and experimentation



has continued around the idea of *Mary Mary's Heaven* (working title) including internet exchange, performances, live research, surveying the public's desires and dreams around the idea of Heaven in various contexts. Search *Mary Mary Calling Earth* in Youtube to view the first film (3 mins).

In order to facilitate this new work and develop practice, a Co-Mentorship Experiment was initiated with Margot Jones, Performer / Arts Therapist; Margaret Lonergan, Visual Communication Practitioner / Researcher and Emma Meehan, Performer / Researcher. Since March the group has met regularly and will work more intensively Feb-May 2010 when resident in Dublin City Council Art's Office, The Lab's Incubation Space.

For further information, please contact pucapuppets@eircom.net or tel: 01-8944922



Cork Opera House

A prince from the East on a quest to save a beautiful Princess, a struggle between darkness and light, mythical creatures, fire, water, bells and a Magic Flute – all the ingredients are combined in an exquisite production as Cork Opera House in association with Opera 2005, bring a reduced version of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* to stages throughout Cork County.

The highlights of Mozart's score will be presented in 70 magical minutes, making this small scale opera with puppets the perfect introduction to opera for school groups and families. This production has been created specifically with children ages 8 to 12 in mind, but is suitable for all ages.

Director John O'Brien has adapted *The Magic Flute* so that the singers use the nearly life-size puppets to engage with their audience in an imaginative way. "We want to present the very best of Mozart's, so world class singers and live musicians will perform the highlights of *The Magic Flute*, but with fantastic puppets and enough action to engross our young audience".

The cast, including Mary Hegarty, Nyle Wolfe and Richard Wiegold, have been working with Puppet Master Daragh Bradshaw and designer Lisa Zagone to create a magical production which will captivate all those lucky enough to see it.

Thanks to a grant from Cork County Council, *The Magic Flute* will tour County Cork, performing for school groups and general audiences. All bookings are taken by Cork Opera House on 021-4270022 or www.corkoperahouse.ie

For more info visit www.corkoperahouse.ie or tel: 021-4270022



Left and below: Barnstorm's spring children's theatre production, *Boy with a Suitcase* by Mike Kenny.

Barnstorm Theatre Company

Spring Children's Theatre Production

Boy with a Suitcase, by Mike Kenny - a play for children aged 8+ years - is the story of a 12 year old war refugee, who undertakes a long and dangerous journey to find asylum in Ireland. He carries with him only a small suitcase and a treasure of stories from his childhood.

Like his hero, Sinbad the Sailor, who undertook many perilous voyages in search of his fortune, Naz must travel half-way around the world to reach the safety of his brother in Dublin. Naz teams up with Krysia, a young girl in similar circumstances, who helps him dodge soldiers and find safe passage over mountains, across seas and through the mire of a city slum. With the help of Krysia and his stories, Naz finds his way to Dublin and his brother. But is it the 'heaven on earth' that he expects....?

A ripping yarn of adventure and stories, Naz's journey also throws a spotlight on the real dangers faced by children in other parts of the world, beyond the relative security of life in Ireland.

The production was first mounted in Feb 2009 with a short run in Kilkenny and Dublin. This new production will travel to theatre venues throughout the country and has been invited to the Opening Doors International Children's Festival in Wales.

Reviews of the production:

The play ... gave us a hint of reality as only really good theatre can do.
- Kilkenny People.

Author Mike Kenny infuses the story with wit and charm. - Irish Times

(The cast) ... maintain a breathless momentum using a series of economical theatrical devices that call for the imaginative collaboration of the audience. - Irish Theatre Magazine

The use of live music – superbly performed by Ben Samuels- sets the tone for each scene. - Irish Times

We sat mesmerised and impressed in the face of at a story well told, but also incredibly well acted. Theatre at its best. - Kilkenny People.



Ensemble Company of Actors

See the In the Spotlight item on The Lab above.

Barnstorm's Outreach Department

The Outreach Department will be continuing with its workshop programme for both its youth theatre groups and its Adult Drama Club including Master-classes in Theatre Genre for The Barn Owl Players.

The Senior Youth Theatre will be busy with rehearsals for their spring production which will run at The Barn from 15th – 17th April. Members of the Junior Youth Theatre will be perfecting their stagecraft and voice skills through a series of workshops, as they prepare for a devising process that will see them perform at the end of May. The Adult Drama Club is busily working on its first self realised production which will come into fruition during March.

Spring will also see the beginning of exploratory work on an exciting new project between artists and a local primary school. 'Townlands' is a collaborative project with visual artist Alan Counihan, artist Gypsy Ray, the pupils of Johnswell National School and Barnstorm's Outreach Department. Barnstorm will work with the pupils shaping their research, stories and family memories of their surrounding fields and townlands into a theatrical piece whose showing will coincide with the 'Townlands' exhibition.

For more details see: www.barnstorm.ie



Graffiti Theatre Company

Graffiti will be spending the first part of 2010 concentrating on the development of long-term projects. We are optimistically treating the financial insecurity as an opportunity to invest that most precious of resources, time, into our commissions and development plans. We are working with award-winning Australia playwright, Angela Betzien, on an exciting new piece for teenage audiences. Artistic Director Emelie FitzGibbon and Angela have been invited to develop the script as part of the Provincetown New Theatre for Young Audiences series in New York in June this year – the only international script in the series of three. We are all very excited about both the commission and the opportunity to develop it in NY.

Meanwhile, closer to home, Cork writer Jody O'Neill, recent winner of the Patrick Murray Bursary, is working with Associate Director, Síle Ní Bhroin, on our other new commission, *Walking Man*. This charming and unusual piece is for our younger audience. We are enthusiastically hoping to premiere both new commissions in 2011. And in case we aren't busy enough, we are also in early developmental work on a new piece for a very young audience. As Wolfgang Schneider put it at the TYA Gathering in October, we are seeking to "establish the art of simplicity" and engage the

imaginations of the very young. In common with many other production companies Graffiti is holding off on announcing its production schedule until after funding decisions have been made. So... more details in the next newsletter!

Our Outreach department is in full swing with a range of workshops in schools and both Activate Youth Theatre and Physically Phishy Youth theatre are up and running, with AYT in late development of a very intriguing new devised piece. A new Outreach development is the *Fish Tank Pilot Project* – the trial of an intermediate Youth Theatre, which started in January 2010, to help the older members of Physically Phishy (10-14 years) make the transition on to AYT (16+). The Fish Tank is a 'holding tank' for members aged 13-15 and will allow this particular age group to develop and express themselves in a way that honours the unique qualities of that age.

Throughout the National Campaign for the Arts and now as we all adjust to difficult financial challenges, Graffiti has ensured that the issue of children's cultural rights – or, more appropriately, lack of them – is on the agenda of our politicians and supporters. With children and young people bearing a lot of the burden of recession and with so many arts programmes for children wiped out we hope that all the members of TYAI will keep our politicians aware of the inadequacy of children's cultural provision in this country and its ultimate short-sightedness in the development of a nation.

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

Dog and String Theatre

The Christmas season was one of the busiest for Dog and String Theatre, entertaining more than 10,000 children and their parents at the Aillwee Caves. 2009 marked the 10th year of this marathon which lasts for over a month. It is a very challenging environment with many distractions and interruptions, constantly changing audiences of varying ages, not the ideal theatre experience!

However, this can be a great training ground and particularly so this year. It is a unique opportunity to perform for several hours a day, six days a week and try out new ideas in an unprecious and playful way.

It is so important to be connected to the wider context of one's field of work and sometimes this can be a challenge when you live in a very rural location. The TYA gathering is a great opportunity for everyone to come together and I thoroughly enjoyed my day with you all last Autumn.

An image from the installation, "If you were to chase my footsteps you would go to bed too," by Sarah Fuller 2008 (Currently devising a new production that develops these ideas into theatre.)

This time last year I attended the Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival in Edinburgh and I am returning again in February to do a masterclass in storytelling with objects with Jo Coy from Banyan Theatre. This is becoming an annual pilgrimage to see some of the world's best visual theatre, returning hopefully with inspiration to commence two new projects that utilize some of the skills and ideas explored in these workshops.

One is an intergenerational project with day care visitors and 5th and 6th class culminating in an exhibition/ performance as part of the Inishcealtra Arts Festival 2010. The other is a new experimental performance piece that is centred on life from an older person's perspective; our intention is to create a new piece of visual theatre that draws inspiration from the latter stages of life and uses physical theatre, puppetry and object theatre and shadows to explore this.

For more details visit: www.dogandstring.com

Draíocht

A number of productions are programmed for young people and families this Season in Draíocht.

Bugsy Malone ran from 4th to Sat 6th of February. Barnstorm will be in our main space once again, with their production for 8-12year olds *Boy with a Suitcase*. The production tells the story of a 12 year old war refugee, who undertakes a long journey, with only a small suitcase and thoughts of his hero Sinbad the Sailor, to find asylum in Ireland. The production runs Monday 8th to Tuesday 9th Feb with shows at 10am and 12:30pm.

Next up we have one of Ireland's most innovative and exciting bands Kíla with *Kíla play Soishín*. This children's show will run in our main auditorium Thursday 25th at 12pm. Norma Breen will bring her Stage Academy to Draíocht on Sat 27th February, with Lyngo Theatre Company in collaboration with The Lyric, Hammersmith and The Egg, Theatre Royal Bath the very next day Sun 28th February. They will bring with them the magical show *The Dust Man*, telling of the Dustman who lives on the side of the mirror where cats talk and everything floats - a place where dreams come from. The show features live music from Carlo Capelli, stage illusions from Marcello Chiarenza, and clowning around by Patrick Lynch. (Studio Space 2pm and 4pm, Age 5+)

Into March, we will have Marion Lennon School of Dance treading the boards of our main stage with classic, modern, and contemporary dance on Friday 12th and Sat 13th March. From Galway then we have Branar Drámaíochta bringing us *An Seanfhear Beag* for two performances on Sat 27th March at 2pm and 4pm. This "story of the little old man" tells the tail of a friendship between a stray dog and a lonely man with the help of enchanted puppets and live music. Coming soon after these performances will be Spréacha 2010 Fingal's international Arts Festival for Children, running from Tue 8th to Sun 13th of June.

Draíocht has lots of other events for children and young people as we continue our series of Free Saturday Family Days in the new year, celebrating Valentines day on Sat the 13th of February with a "Love is in the Air" arts day and on March 20th, a "Simple Prints" day, allowing families to explore our Artists Proof exhibition, before creating prints of their own. Schools too will have a chance to explore this exhibition and work with some of the exhibition artists with a series of Focus On...Prints Workshops during March. (Mon 8th- Thur 11th March, Primary and Secondary Schools)

With the focus still on visual arts, January will see the beginning of a Vodafone sponsored secondary school project "Make Art not Rubbish" facilitated by artist and sculptor Cris Neumann. Over this seven week project students from two local schools will learn about the environment around us, while creating works made wholly from recycled materials to be exhibited both in Vodafone's HQ and Draíocht's First Floor Gallery Space.

During the first weeks of the year we will also be running a five week after school youth project, "A Taste of Drama". This project will give young people aged between 15-18 years, with a keen interest in stage performance, an opportunity to work with a professional drama practitioner to create a piece of drama to be staged in our studio space later in the year.



Above, top to bottom: Branar's *An Seanfhear Beag*, Lyngo Theatre Company's *The Dust Man*, and Barnstorm's *Boy with a Suitcase*.

Further details for all shows and children and youth arts events can be found on our website, www.draiocht.ie or by calling Sarah Beirne, Children & Youth Arts Coordinator, on 01-8098029 or email sarah@draiocht.ie.

For full details, visit: www.draiocht.ie



The Ark

The Ark, in association with Theatre Lovett, presents the world premiere of *The Girl who Forgot to Sing Badly*. Written by Finegan Kruckemeyer, directed by Lynne Parker and performed by Louis Lovett, *The Girl who Forgot to Sing Badly* runs at The Ark from 26 January to 7 March 2010 and is suitable for ages 7+ and their families.

This production is part of The Ark's Theatre-Maker in Residence 2010: Inspire new theatre for generations. Talented actor Louis Lovett will spend part of the year as the first ever Theatre-Maker in Residence at The Ark. The residency will also include three other strands: community outreach, actor training, in association with Theatre Forum, and teacher training. Louis Lovett has a long association with The Ark as a writer, director and actor, having performed over 500 times on The Ark stage. Louis is also one of Ireland's most experienced performers for young people and his work crosses over both theatre for adults and theatre for young people.

The Girl who Forgot to Sing Badly is a commission by The Ark.

This is the story of Peggy. And the packing. And the blizzard. And the boat.

*Peggy O'Hegarty and her parents were packers.
Each day someone would call with a job and a time.
'I want 17 foxes in boxes by breakfast',
said the caller and all of the packers said: 'fine.'*

*But one day the phone it forgot to keep ringing.
And then all the boxes forgot to need stuffing.
And then poor old Peggy, she forgot to keep singing.
And she opened the curtains and found outside... nothing.*

*Because all of the people in her city were gone.
So Peggy went out to explore...*

For more information please contact The Ark, 11a Eustace Street, Temple Bar, Dublin 2, call tel: 01-6707788 or see www.ark.ie

DREAMS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY

Address by Orna Porat on the occasion of ASSITEJ International Day, 2010

The things that shape us, our character, are the ones that are locked in our memory – endeavours and events we have experienced and which have become memories.

The things we remember sometimes originate in our fellows' desire to remember. Even events at whose centre we ourselves stood reach our memory through the memory of others. We gathered them to ourselves from the memory of others, from stories they related to us.

Those with a rich imagination are even likely to remember things they have not experienced at all, but which through the power of that same imaginative memory became a real and well-remembered personal experience.

In the theatre we find all of those memories of ours anew, the real ones and the ones that are figments of personal and collective memory. That is the power of the theatre – the power to raise consciousness, associations, emotions, blocks of memory.

The theatre is one of the most important art forms in the cultural life of human society, for it is engaged in all the spheres of human life.

In children's theatre, the young audience encounters not only a familiar reality, but also a new and still unfamiliar one. They absorb refreshing impressions and discover new possibilities – the formation of a new life experience.

The theatre deepens and enriches the child's sensitivity by means of the renewed encounter with a familiar, close world that is known to him.

The theatre broadens the child's horizons by helping him to soar on the wings of imagination to unknown, distant, strange and enchanted worlds.

A visit to the theatre creates in the young audience an emotional and intellectual collective memory – vestiges of linguistic, visual and ideological associations.

In the theatre, the child relives not only his memories and personal dreams, but also memories and dreams of the human family, of his ancestors, of his nation, of the entire human race!

Children's theatre in our multicultural world has a special role to play in laying common cultural foundations that will bring the other closer: through its universal values it can convey a message of the beauty in human beings, and through acting express the secret of joy, childhood, longing and hope.

Ms. Orna Porat is one of the founders of ASSITEJ International and honorary president of ASSITEJ Israel. She is the founder of the Orna Porat Theatre for Children and Youth. Orna Porat is an Israel Prize laureate for her achievements in the theatre and her contribution to children's theatre in Israel. She is an honorary member of ASSITEJ International.

World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People March 20th, 2010

TYA Ireland is hoping to unite its members for the day with a call to allow free access for all children and young people throughout the country to shows, workshops, training (or any other activities) on March 20th to mark this day. More information to follow, and suggestions are more than welcome. Keep us informed.

President's Letter

*World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People
March 20th, 2010*

Listen everybody, look here everybody, create some space for independent thinking - and, not least, enjoy, everybody! Join in the joyous adventure - if only everybody could.

Children are our future and Theatre for Children is a creative workshop for this future. In Theatre for Children, the future is explored: in stories of everyday life, as part of an arts education - a school of seeing, of watching, of social fantasies.

Theatre for Adults reaches but a small fraction of its potential audience. Theatre for Children reaches - at best - everyone, as part of their school or kindergarten groups.

But not all schools and kindergartens are involved, not all take part. And that's the reason why we need more Theatre for Children as a natural ingredient in children's education from the very beginning: access to dramatic arts for children and young people and the possibility to play, to act, to stage yourself. Children's and young people's theatre for all!

This is what we have to advocate on the Day of Theatre for Children and Young People, in almost 100 countries all over the world, in more than 10.000 theatres for children and young people on all continents, for more than 1.000.000.000 children and young people in South and North, East and West.

Keep it up - theatre artists of the world! And give change a chance!

Professor Dr. Wolfgang Schneider
President of the International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People

The next edition of the TYA Ireland newsletter is due Summer 2009. The deadline for inclusions is 1st May 2009. Please send all your news and images to: assitej.ireland@barnstorm.ie