



*ASSITEJ 2011 Congress logo*

## **ASSITEJ**

*International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People  
Association Internationale du Theatre pour l'Enfance et la Jeunesse*

ASSITEJ is a member-driven association with around 80 national centres across six continents. It attempts to unite and support a worldwide community of artists and people who make work for children and young people by offering a framework for support and exchange.

ASSITEJ links TYA UK to other national centres world wide and every 3 years the opportunity exists for people to come together at the ASSITEJ World Congress and Festival. At this time the General Assembly (delegates from each national centre) sets out a working plan for a 3 year period of activity and the elected Executive Committee is mandated to see the delivery of that programme

1500 people attended the recent 17th World Congress and Festival in Malmo/Copenhagen which saw 27 shows from across the world including from Iran, South Africa, Japan and Scotland. It also offered a host of forums and workshops offering global perspectives on subjects like the development of dance practice in relation to young audiences, an exploration of theatre practice which involves young people as artists and performers and theatre as a tool for cultural and social development. TYA UK lead a Disability Arts day 'Whose Theatre Is It Anyway', which provided keynote speakers, an installation and DVD presentations with the aim of raising awareness around disability arts and in order to share best practice. TYA UK also held an open space discussion on the future of ASSITEJ as the association is going through a necessary period of change with the aim of becoming more active and better resourced



*Fringe Festival for performances not part of the official programme, at Christiania, Copenhagen*

## Over the next 3 years

ASSITEJ has a working plan for the next 3 years which seeks to further the organisation and support the development of theatre for young audiences across the globe. The central priority of ASSITEJ is that it works for the rights of children and young people to experience theatre art which has been especially designed and created for them. It also aims to support the improvement of the conditions of theatre for children and young people all over the world particularly in places where there is little arts or education infrastructure or recognition of the artistic rights of the child.

Membership to ASSITEJ gives people working in theatre for children and young people the opportunity to learn about the work of colleagues from other countries and cultures, thus enabling them to enrich theatre for children and young people in their own country. Connected to this ASSITEJ will now hold yearly gatherings in addition to the 3 year cycle of the World Congress and festival in order to provide increased opportunities for sharing and international and intercultural collaboration. It is envisaged that there will more opportunity for international project work.



*Maria Ines Falconi, Argentina, discusses the future of the association with Vigdís Jakobsdóttir, Iceland.*

Current international projects and activity includes -

- 'New Faces' which follows the Next Generation Project and offers international exchanges for young and emerging artists through a residency programme. This was launched this year and systems are being developed to support engagement and extend reach.
- The ITYARN Research Network (open to anyone) shares research practice and opportunities and hosts conferences and seminars connected to theatre for young audiences, recent topics have included 'Taboo Subjects in Theatre for Children' which follows a workshop project between ASSITEJ centres in Latin American and Nordic Countries.
- Write Local Play Global is a new web platform which seeks to create an online community for writers and those interested in new plays for children and young people
- The development of a script database, working towards a dissemination of plays and translation of plays into different languages.

The focus for the ASSITEJ now is on how it builds on its past to determine a successful and even stronger future. There is a call for a clearer rationale for the World Festival along with more international project work, more activity and better resourcing so that strong infrastructures and systems can exist to support meaningful initiatives. ASSITEJ shares content and information from the national centres through the ASSITEJ website, Newsletter, Magazine and ASSITEJ Book, how these elements will be developed to create greater impact will also be determined also, how The World Children's Theatre Day which is promoted yearly on March 20th can be celebrated to greater effect.

Significant changes were also made to the rules of memberships at the recent Congress which makes it possible for individuals and artistic networks to become members of ASSITEJ not just national centres. This connects with a desire to increase opportunities for artistic dialogue within the association and increase opportunities for engagement and exchange.

The next ASSITEJ World Congress will take place in Poland in 2014. International meetings will take place at the Kijimuna Festival, Okinawa Japan in 2012 and The Schaxpir Festival in Linz in 2013.

The first meeting of the new Executive Committee where the working plan will be furthered will be in Makeevka and Donetsk in the Ukraine as part of the Third Ukrainian Festival of Youth, Theatre for Young People, 2011, from September 26 to October 2, supported by The Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Ukraine.



Incoming Executive Committee of ASSITEJ 2011-2014 – ***Left to Right***

Marisa Gimenez Cacho, Mexico; Etoundi Zeyang, Cameroon; Imran Khan, India; Vigdís Jakobsdóttir, Iceland; *Nina Hajiyanni*, UK; Stefan Fischer-Fels, Germany (Vice-president) Asaya Fujita, Japan; Maria Ines Falconi, Argentina (Vice-president) Kim Peter Kovac, USA (Vice-president); Yvette Hardie, South Africa (President); Diana Krzanic Tepavac, Serbia; Noel Jordan, Australia – (Treasurer); Marina Medkova, Russia; Ivica Simic, Croatia – (Secretary General)

In addition to TYA UK International Representative Nina Hajianni being elected onto the Executive Committee, Paul Harman was made an ASSITEJ Honorary Member for years of dedicated service on the Executive Committee including as Treasurer. UK Director Sarah Argent was nominated for the Presidents Award for excellence for her theatre work.

## LINKS

ASSITEJ INTERNATIONAL - [www.assitej-international.org](http://www.assitej-international.org)

ITYARN - <http://www.ityarn.org/>

TYA UK - [www.tya-uk.org](http://www.tya-uk.org)

Write Local Play Global - [www.writelocalplayglobal.org](http://www.writelocalplayglobal.org)

Kijimuna Festival - [www.kijimunafesta.com](http://www.kijimunafesta.com)

Schaxpir Festival - <http://schaexpir.at/>



Nina Hajianni's role as International Representative is to be an ambassador for all UK TYA companies and artists.

Nina was elected to serve on the Executive Committee of ASSITEJ International for the next cycle, from 2011 to 2014

If you need help in making international contacts through ASSITEJ, contact Nina [click here](#)