



Above Ian Ritchie's 120 metre needle in O'Connell Street. The General Post Office is on the right

Below Lights in front of a new 2000 seat theatre by Daniel Liebeskind



A Report on the **World Alliance for Arts Education Summit** in Newcastle Upon Tyne will appear in TYA-UK News in December.

ASSITEJ was represented by Paul Harman and Wolfgang Schneider.

Dan Baron Cohen of IDEA chaired the Summit attended by members of ISME, InSEA, IDEA and WDA – the world organisations for music, visual arts, drama and dance.

River Cities

Paul Harman attended the TYA Ireland **Gathering** in Dublin and the **World Alliance for Arts Education Summit** in Newcastle

Dublin and Newcastle have changed radically in the last ten years or so. The banks of the Liffey and the Tyne are now lined with bright shiny buildings where once there were deserted docklands. But there are differences. Dublin's growth, driven by financial services and high tech firms like Google, has now stalled. Public services are threatened. Newcastle invested £250 million in arts buildings and has re-created itself as a major tourist destination.

Walk a mile from the metal-clad Sage music centre or the steel needle on O'Connell Street and there are some run-down areas of shops and housing. But both cities show far greater energy and prosperity than was evident twenty years ago.

TYA-Ireland held its second **Gathering**

at Driaocht, a new purpose built arts centre in a huge shopping development beyond the Dublin equivalent of the M25. More people came than last time, there were four excellent and different shows from *Team*, *Graffiti*, *Barnstorm* and *Branar*, and a lot of people got to speak about the future of theatre in Ireland, and especially access to it, and about doing their work better.

If the figures are comparable, only 3 per cent of the adult population of Ireland are believed to be theatregoers – compared to over 50 per cent in the UK. With the financial collapse and cuts ahead, TYA in Ireland was looking for ways to promote the benefits of the arts for young people and to demonstrate a keenness to develop and respond to new challenges. **Gathering** certainly impressed by the clarity of the vision displayed and by the willingness of key players in government to attend and speak in support of TYA Ireland's aims. Martin Drury is now a senior officer of the Irish Arts Council and spoke passionately and with blistering clarity –as you would expect from the visionary founder of Dublin's [ARK](#) centre for young people.

Among the visitors, ASSITEJ President Wolfgang Schneider gave an illuminating overview of the complex cultural policy issues facing us. I spoke about problems of access. Gill Robertson of *Catherine Wheels* gave probably the best account of a working process ever and Jeremy Turner of *Arad Goch* explained his journey from experimental theatre, to theatre in schools and a world festival for Wales.

Ali Fitzgibbon led a large contingent from the North to complete representation from all parts of what we should no longer call 'The British Isles'. There is a desire in all parts of the UK and Ireland to work closer together, to exchange ideas and shows, to meet and talk and support each other in times of trouble.

Most of our colleagues in mainland Europe find us all a bit different, a bit strange over here, and I think we need to create a new common identity. 'Islands at the Edge of the World' is a concept still in the making but it aims to celebrate the rich cultural heritage we share, and the diversity of contemporary approach and practice rooted in a common commitment to positive relationships between theatre and education.



Check out these Websites

[Barnstorm Theatre , Kilkenny](#)

[Branar Theatre, Galway](#)

[Cahoots NI, Belfast](#)

[Graffiti Theatre, Cork](#)

[Replay Productions, Belfast](#)

[Sticky Fingers, Newry](#)

[Team Theatre Company, Dublin](#)

[Young at Art, Belfast](#)



Projects for the Islands

TYA-UK Centre of ASSITEJ invites members to propose projects we can share across our 'Islands'. Here are two possible topics:

- An international conference on training for the specific performing skills required in theatre for young audiences
- A joint catalogue or database of play texts

Use TYA UK News to air your proposal.



A Pillar Box in Mountjoy Square