

Report to the General Assembly – Poznan 2016

Activities Report, period 1st June 2013 – 28th August 2016

Today this Board of Directors completes its three-year term of office, that started with its election in Limoges, on **1st June 2013**.

Besides considering the term period as stated in our Statute (years 2013-2014-2015), we think it would be more interesting for all associates to have some feedback of what happened from our Assembly in Limoges until today. This allows us to present a report that shows the way done by the Association in three specific directions, fundamental for its development:

- 1. the growth of the members;**
- 2. the independency of the Association from the European project;**
- 3. the acknowledgement of its Network identity.**

- 1) The growth in the number of the members is not, by itself, a clear indicator of quality, meant as effectiveness in the pursuit of the Network objectives: promote the further diffusion of Performing Arts for Early Years and support their development in terms of artistic and ethical quality.

However, the development that we can see after the Assembly in Limoges is really interesting. On that day, 1st June 2013, the Association had 28 members from 12 countries, all of them European. Today, the members are 55 from 26 countries over 4 continents. The European countries are now 18 (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK), plus now there are members from Africa (Cameroon), America (Chile, Mexico, USA) and Asia (India, Japan, Singapore, South Korea).

An outcome that has been reached thanks to the continuous networking activity of the members, to the acknowledgment of the Network identity and to the development of the activities.

- 2) The independency of the Association from the European project was the main working path that emerged from the Assembly in Limoges for these three years. A goal to be reached over the years by taking advantage of the opportunities offered by European Projects, and thus creating an original and clear planning that allows project and Network to concretely interact.

We believe that “Small size days” are a strongly significant example of this: a project by the Association, shared and realized by the members of the Network and adopted by SSPAFEY project that support its international promotion.

- 3) The acknowledgement of the Network identity. By becoming a member of ASSITEJ International and participating in its activities, and through Small size Days and the other activities of promotion conducted by the associates, Small size is now a recognizable and acknowledged brand.

All of this is furtherly highlighted by the specific activities developed throughout these years.

1) THE EU KEEPS SUPPORTING SMALL SIZE FOR FOUR MORE YEARS, FROM 2014 TO 2018

The results of Creative Europe 2014 call for proposal, the unique program of the European Union that supports Culture, saw "*Small size, Performing Arts for Early Years*" among the 21 "Larger scale projects" selected. "Small size" ranked second with a score of 89/100.

An unexpected result, since Small size is the only project that has been funded for three times in the category "Large/multiannual" during the last 10 years, besides the first annual fund received for the "Small" category.

The project is developing from October, 1st 2014 to September, 30th 2018, and it involves directly 17 partners of 15 European Countries, to which it is important to add the Small size Network.

One of the main aims of "Small size, Performing Arts for Early Years" project is the support to the Network, by providing for the Secretariat, the website and the publications, by opening several of its activities to the members of the network, such as the Artistic Directors Meeting, and by supporting Small size days, the activities organized for ASSITEJ Gatherings, the activities of the Board (by supporting part of the costs for travel, subsistence and accommodation) and of the Assemblies. All of this is giving new impulse to the reinforcement of the Network, new opportunities for growth and development.

The Network has acquired a stronger and more defined identity in the frame of the project. A process that can and will be developed in case of further participation to Creative Europe with Small size brand, since European support – if granted – is a big opportunity for continuing to promote and develop performing arts for early years both within and outside Europe.

2) ASSITEJ INTERNATIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION TO ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Since March 2013 the association became "corresponding member" of ASSITEJ International and since February 2014, Small size Network is a full member of ASSITEJ International.

Since May 2014, the President of the Network, Roberto Frabetti, is member of the Executive Committee of ASSITEJ. An opportunity to promote Small size, but also the collaboration among the other Networks.

- **Participation to Assitej world congress 2014, Warsaw (May 2014)**

On the occasion of ASSITEJ International's 18th World Congress the Small size Network presented the following activities:

- ***Master class: The many faces of a theatre for early years... - May 28th and 29th 2014***

A two-day long practical and theoretical workshop on Theatre for Early Years addressed to artists and educational experts or teachers. The aim of these workshops was not the teaching and the transmission of a specific method to work on performing arts for early years but to give practical and theoretical suggestions in order to "activate" researches on Early Years and artistic languages, to offer theoretical reflection associated to practical activities in order to share the big developing potential of theatre for Early Years for the artistic research of Theatre for Young Audiences in general.

Workshop leaders: Andrea Buzzetti, Barbara Kölling, Karel Van Ransbeeck, János Novák, Myrto Dimitriadou, Katharina Schrott. **Facilitators:** Katariina Metsalampi, Jo Belloli, Lali Morris.

- ***International Symposium: Small size, Performing Arts for Early Years - 30th May 2014***

During the International symposium, the issue of Performing arts for Early Years has been presented and analyzed from different and complementary points of view. Thanks to the high quality and professionalism of the speakers, it was possible to give the participants a

deep, exhaustive landscape of the current situation of Performing Arts for Early Years, both from a qualitative and a political point of view.

Moderator: Alicja Morawska-Rubczak. **Speakers:** Wolfgang Schneider, Roberto Frabetti, Gerd Taube, Barbara Malecka, Yvette Hardie.

- **Participation to “Augenblick 2015”, ASSITEJ Artistic International Gathering (April 2015)**

Small size had been a part of the activities of the Artistic Gathering. Besides its presence to the Market Place in the morning of April 22nd, the Public Moment in the afternoon was a focus on collaborations with partners out of Europe, aimed at giving value to the activity of promotion and diffusion of performing arts for early years not only in EU countries but also worldwide. The experiences presented were: Helios Theatre in India, La Guimbarde in Burkina Faso, Teatro Paraiso in South America and La Baracca in South Africa.

- **Participation to “On The Edge 2016”, ASSITEJ Artistic International Gathering (July 2016)**

From July 5th to 7th, in the frame of On The Edge, Small size presented an installation titled “Why do you keep doing theatre for Early Years?”. The installation was dedicated to the relationship with early years audiences.

Videos, images and texts will be displayed in five screens focused on two important and unconventional concepts promoted by the Network:

- Children are really a good audience, even the youngest ones;
- There is no such thing as a "model of theatre for the very young".

It is important to underline the large collaboration of the members to collect videos, photos and texts.

An installation both to inform and invite feedback from delegates.

Now the files are available for all the members that want to present the installation in their seats. It is simple, because there isn't hardware to ship.

- **Collaboration among the ASSITEJ Networks**

On the occasion of the 2015 edition of the festival “Visioni” in Bologna, Small size hosted a meeting about future perspectives of collaboration between the different Assitej Networks. The meeting saw a good participation by all the Networks: ITYARN (International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network), WLPG (Write Local, Play Global), IIAN (International Inclusive Artistic Network), Next Generation and Small size as well.

The discussion, a very informal and open brainstorming, touched several points of interest, such as how the Networks can be a resource for a transforming ASSITEJ through their direct experience in international collaboration, what is and what should be the role of Networks in the frame of Assitej, and how they can entwine their different knowledge in a way that enriches all the parts involved, and opened windows to possible future collaborations.

At “On the Edge 2016” Daryl Beeton presented his new show “A square world” as a collaboration between IIAN and Small size.

- **Some important due dates**

- **ASSITEJ CONGRESS CAPE TOWN:** Application to manage the Small size days (Saturday 27th May) – deadline 15th September - Proposals from the Board for the whole Network and from the members interested
- **ASSITEJ AWARDS:** ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE - WLPG (for a relevant playwright) – APPLAUSE LIFETIME AWARD: deadline 10th November . Proposals from the Board
- **ASSITEJ MAGAZINE:** Proposals from the members interested - deadline 15th October
- **APPLICATION FOR GATHERING 2018 - Next Call**

- Announcements in the next months: **“SOLIDARITY FUND” E “TAKE A CHILD TO THEATRE – FUNDRAISING”**

3) SMALL SIZE DAYS

Born from an idea by Katariina Metsalampi, Small size days were presented in 2015 for the first time.

The Small size days – three days dedicated to shows, workshops and other activities for children from 1 to 6 years aimed at promoting performing arts for early years - will take place over the last weekend of January every year, under two concepts: **“Arts are not a matter of age but of curiosity”** and **“Space and time for little ones”**

The participation to the event is not mandatory for the members, but in 2015 (January 30th – February 1st) it was strong: 52 activities were presented by 27 members of Small size Network over 19 countries, from Helsinki to Mexico City, from London to Salzburg, from Bucharest to Ravenna... Performances, workshops and conferences engaged the audience during these three days and raised the awareness of the importance that arts have in our lives, from birth onwards
In 2016 (January 29th-31st), 65 activities were presented by 33 members of Small size Network over 19 countries.

For both editions, Irene Basilio created a video that collects images, photos and footage, and that tells about the meaning and the quality of the event in an effective way.

We hope that, year after year, the cities and the members participating will continue growing, thus creating a big, shared and unique World Event. For the communication of this event, Small size creates a specific calendar collecting all the activities promoted by the members during these three days which are then spread among the members and on website and facebook. Besides this, of course, each member cares directly of the promotion in their own country.

4) DOCUMENTATION

The end of February 2015 saw the issue of a new Small size book: **“It takes a village to raise a child. An open collection of thoughts”**. The book, available for download on Small size website, is a collection of the reports presented on the International Symposiums **“The children’s cultural citizenship”** (Newry, February, 8th 2014, on the occasion of Small size, big festival - final common event of “Small size, big citizens” project) and **“Small size, Performing Arts for Early Years”** (Warsaw, May 30th 2014, during “ASSITEJ International’s 18th World Congress”), with an introduction and an afterword to give context and unity.

5) ARTISTIC DIRECTORS MEETING 2015 AND 2016

Since August 2015, in Charleroi, the Artistic Directors Meetings (an activity of the European Project) are open to the Members of the Association. After the 2016 edition in Poznan, the next ones will be held in Ljubljana (2017) and Stockholm (2018).

The four meetings, led by Gerd Taube, director of the Children’s and Young People’s Theatre Centre in the Federal Republic of Germany, are focused on the discussion on artistic research in theatre for early years.