



# ASSITEJ ARTISTIC GATHERING 2023

## "TURNING POINT"

### Novi Sad & Belgrade, Serbia

### 20 - 24th November 2023

***ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023*** is calling for:

- **Productions / Performances** from the region of Southeastern Europe, as well as some Central European countries - only companies based in, or collaborating with artists from, these countries may apply;
- **Professional Exchange Programme sessions** including workshops, seminars, lectures, roundtables, meetings, networking sessions, film screenings, exhibitions, social events, and other formats related to performing arts for young audiences (sessions may be presented 'On the Ground', 'Online', or a 'Hybrid' of both).

## ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023

The *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering (AAG)* is a unique moment for international professional exchange and networking in the field of theatre and performing arts for young audiences (TYA). In each of the years between the triannual *ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Children & Young People*, *ASSITEJ Artistic Gatherings* are held in different parts of the world. In 2023, the AAG will be hosted and organised by *ASSITEJ Serbia* in collaboration with *ASSITEJ International*.

*ASSITEJ International* is the *International Association for Theatre & the Performing Arts for Children & Young People*, uniting members in more than 75 countries.

*ASSITEJ Serbia* is the National Centre of *ASSITEJ International* in Serbia, uniting public institutions, independent performing arts organisations, and individual artists and professional TYA practitioners in Serbia to develop and promote the performing arts for children nationally.

### Spotlight on Southeastern Europe

After the global *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering*, which was held in May 2022 in Helsingborg, Sweden, and before the *ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Children & Young People* being hosted in Havana, Cuba in May 2024, *ASSITEJ Serbia* and *ASSITEJ International* are excited to invite you to participate in the programme of the *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023* in Serbia. *ASSITEJ Serbia's 2023* festival, entitled "*Turning Point*", is hosting the *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023* which will put the **performing arts of Southeastern Europe into the spotlight** of the global community of theatre and performing arts for young audiences. This is a region where, since the founding of *ASSITEJ* in 1964, a large *ASSITEJ International* event has never before been held.

The *ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering* will be held in the cities of **Novi Sad** and **Belgrade**, with the main programme taking place **20th - 24th November 2023**. The *Gathering* will open on 20th November 2023 which is World Children's Day.

With each new edition that has been staged over numerous years, *ASSITEJ Serbia's* national festival - FAS - has paved the way for sharing ideas, strengthening togetherness, and community-building among artists and professionals in TYA, bringing us a step closer to realising our dream of gathering the *ASSITEJ International* community in the heart of our region. We are delighted that our wish was granted and is at the perfect time to celebrate both the **20th anniversary of ASSITEJ Serbia** and the **10th anniversary of the last General Commentary of the UN Committee for Children's Rights on the Rights to Culture (Articles 13 and 31)**.

### Why "Turning Point"?

Considering the position in which the whole world finds itself now, and the status of theatre and performing arts for children and young people, we can be sure of one thing: we are in a liminal space - a transitional space that is a part of the change from one state to another. A space of ignorance, confusion, and uncertainty - where old truths have been abandoned and new ideas have not yet emerged. This transitional space often begins with a sense of loss, crisis, fear, and meaninglessness, along with the awareness that

there is no going back. In the process, we give up old meanings, and enter the marginal space wherein new meanings have not yet been created.

Together, we are at a turning point where:

- **new generations** are taking over and becoming drivers of development;
- **new technologies** are introduced to TYA as innovative ways to tell stories and engage audiences;
- new means of engaging with **visual arts and design** are being trialled in theatre and performing arts for children and young people in relation to space, light, sound, visual identity, puppets, and/or objects;
- it is 'now or never' in regards to the **environmental, energy, and climate crisis**, one of the defining issues of our time, as well as in regards to **geo-political strife** and the **necessity to protect children's rights, women's rights, and human rights**, throughout the world.

The aims of *AAG 2023* in Serbia, are to advocate for placing theatre and performing arts for children and young people higher on the agenda of decision-makers; to foster new synergies between education and culture; to put the artists and productions of Southeastern Europe in the spotlight; and to challenge the neglect of children and young people's right to arts and culture.

# Call for Applications

## Productions / Performances

The call for performances is focused on the region of Southeastern Europe, as well as some neighbouring Central European countries<sup>^</sup>. Only ensembles / companies based in, or collaborating with artists from, these countries may apply.

The selection committee will be prioritising the participation of writers and performing arts professionals under the age of 35, as well as productions that are focused on: teenage and young adult audiences (though productions / performances suiting younger audiences will not be excluded); the use of new technologies; contemporary scenography, sound and lighting design; and / or environmental and climate themes.

The selected productions / performances will be presented live 'On the Ground' in Serbia. In addition, the selected companies will be invited to share video footage of recordings, behind-the-scenes clips, and/or trailers of the performance to be shared online with professionals via the *ASSITEJ Online* platform. It is expected that, in most cases, this may come with a disclaimer that the video production is not made to public production quality but is provided only to widen the experience further for professionals. This 'Online' format is not mandatory and is secondary to the live performance 'On the Ground'.

Representatives of young audiences will be included in the decision making on the programming.

## Professional Exchange Programme

The Professional Exchange Programme does not have a regional focus. Proposals from any institutions, organisations, or individuals from any country are welcomed. We welcome contributions presented 'On the Ground' in Serbia as well as 'Online'. It is imagined that the vast majority will be a 'Hybrid' of both - that means being:

- Presented 'On the Ground' and live-streamed to (or recorded and shared to) our *ASSITEJ Online* platform; or
- Presented 'Online' via ZOOM and broadcast to our in-person delegates in Serbia.

Please note that workshops are not recommended to be 'Hybrid' - they should be fully 'On The Ground' or fully 'Online' - all other session formats may be 'Hybrid'. In the application form, you will be asked to indicate any reasons why your session may not be able to be live-streamed or recorded.

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<sup>^</sup>*Southeastern Europe is considered to include Serbia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Kosovo\*, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Turkey, and Ukraine. Neighbouring countries in Central Europe that are invited to apply include Austria, Croatia, Hungary, and Slovenia. The call for festival participation is in line with the regional strategy of AAG 2023 - wider international selection will be invitation-based and will include only a few performances.*

*\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSC 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

We encourage workshops, seminars, lectures, roundtables, meetings, networking sessions, film screenings, exhibitions, social events, and other formats that are related to: children and young people's rights to the arts, the use of new technologies / contemporary design in theatre performing arts for young audiences; as well as those who are researching, promoting, and contributing to the green transformation of theatre and performing arts for young audiences. The selection committee will consider Professional Exchange Programme sessions according to event themes, venue capacity, geographical distribution across different regions, and thematic distribution across different topics.

We are particularly encouraging proposals that are relevant to the *AAG 2023* priorities as well as those in line with the strategies and priorities of *ASSITEJ International Networks*: [International Inclusive Arts Network](#), [International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network \(ITYARN\)](#), [Small Size Network](#), [Write Local. Play Global. \(WLPG\)](#), and [Young Dance Network](#). A call for participation in the residency programme for emerging TYA professionals will be launched separately in collaboration with the [Next Generation Network](#).

The language of the Professional Exchange Programme will mainly be English, however, other languages are welcomed if productions / contributors can provide their own translations. As event hosts, we do not have the capacity to provide translation services directly. However, we welcome and will support your own translation - this may include contributors' direct translation, a simultaneous interpreter, a consecutive interpreter, sign language interpretation, a pre-recording of your event in a different language to the one you will use live, or translated versions of supplementary resources (such as your script).

Representatives of young audiences will be included in the decision making on the programming.

## Economic Conditions

Due to financial constraints, the economic support to contributors is limited. The selected Productions and Professional Exchange Programme contributors are expected to cover their costs of participation (in terms of travel, accommodation, and per-diems). **Please note that no fees for the performances are offered by the host and that contributors will not be receiving a fee or honorarium.**

However, members of each ensemble performing at the festival and contributors to the Professional Exchange Programme will have fees waived for their participation at *AAG 2023*. The host will provide support in booking flights/travel to/from Serbia, booking accommodation in Serbia, visa support (when needed), and will provide a local troupe manager for the ensembles of the selected performances.



## Accessibility

Contributors with access needs are encouraged to apply and are asked to indicate their needs in the application form under the “Any other information you wish to share” section. After the selection, *ASSITEJ International* and *ASSITEJ Serbia* will communicate with relevant applicants to support their participation within our economic capabilities.





## How To Apply?

All applicants are asked to submit their applications through our online application platform. Please choose the correct link to apply:

[Production / Performance Application](#)  
[Professional Exchange Programme Application](#)

To assist with the preparation of your application, you can preview all the required questions here: [Preview the Application Questions](#)

## Timeline

- The deadline for applications is 14th February 2023.
- Final decisions will be communicated by 3rd April 2023.

*ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2023* is organised as part of the two projects co-funded by the *European Union* titled, 'Theatre & Performing Arts for Young Audiences: Building Collective Resilience' and 'BABEL or The Art of Listening in Theatre for Young Audiences' and is supported by the *Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia, City of Novi Sad, City of Belgrade, Serbian National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO*, and the *Institut Francais Serbia*.

