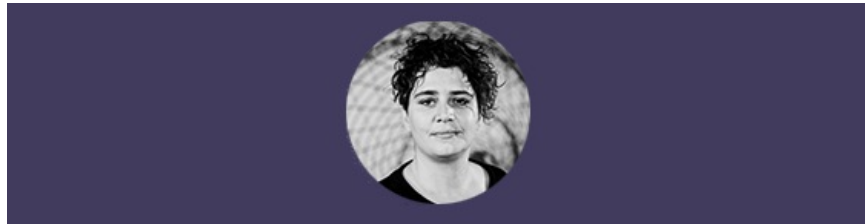




ASSITEJ

International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People

ASSITEJ Newsletter N°77, July & August 2016



## ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering for 2016 Such a Success.

By Nina Hajiyianni

July 2-9th was an incredible week, if you were with us, thank you for helping make On The Edge, the ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering for 2016 such a success. The festival was testimony to the fact that bringing people together for the purpose of theatre for young audiences can be a very special thing.

On The Edge took place in Birmingham (the UK's 2nd largest city), at Birmingham Repertory Theatre and at the City University as well as a number of other venues across the city. It included; 16 productions, 9 works in progress presentations, 91 performances to over 9,500 audience members, 56 symposium events with 100 speakers. It was attended by 400 delegates from 51 countries including 160 artists from 25 companies.

Something profound happens when you are able to immerse yourself in a week's worth of artistic experiences which acknowledge and value the position of children and young people. The impact of the work and the sense of community the festival created was perhaps more heightened because of recent events in the UK surrounding BREXIT and the negative, divisive campaign which may now see the UK leaving the European Union. This is something that has shocked and appalled arts communities across the UK and also Ireland, and we now grapple with whatever this new reality means.

The loss of funding streams is potentially damaging for arts and culture in particular, but it is the idea that our collective identity as outward looking, diverse and international has been diminished which hurts the most. As well as the prospect of real, physical borders.

Festivals not only act as a platform to showcase great work which ignites the senses, but they also bring people together over shared values. This has never felt more important than in the week of the aptly named "On The Edge".

This was the first time that an ASSITEJ Festival has taken place in either Ireland or the UK, and the first time an ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering has been the rationale for a special, once-off event. Festivals such as Kijimuna (Japan) Schaxpir (Austria) and Augenblick-mal (Germany) have all hosted the ASSITEJ Gathering as part of a festival which is already happening.

On The Edge brought TYA UK and TYA Ireland together for something new, and many, many people generously contributed to the festival's planning, development and delivery. It became a collectively owned celebration of good work and shared values. The festival and symposium did that thing of creating the conditions for meaningful discussion and international exchange, which is at the heart of ASSITEJ.

Our festival, like many others, brought people together to witness what someone else has described as 'the best of humanity'. However, like Facebook which acts like a mirror for all our own beliefs and values (also pointed out by someone else), it is a welcome cocoon - and now we have to gather strength and face the ongoing challenges presented by the outside world



We would like to express our most sincere gratitude to TYA UK and TYA Ireland for hosting the ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering 2016 and to congratulate them on the excellent and impeccable organization of the event.

The complete activity program, the performances, symposia, workshops and ASSITEJ Artistic Encounters, took place within a warm and friendly atmosphere, which in turn allowed the flow of ideas and exchange between the more than 400 delegates from over 50 countries who assisted.

Thank you On The Edge for helping ASSITEJ achieve its goals.

You can read here the full transcription of the three ASSITEJ Encounters

- [ASSITEJ Interdisciplinary Practice](#)

- [ASSITEJ Freedom of Speech](#)

- [ASSITEJ Artistic Identity](#)



## ASSITEJ Magazine 2016

**The ASSITEJ Magazine 2016, One Step Beyond Interdisciplinary Exchange** was successfully launched during the ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering at On The Edge, this July in Birmingham, UK.

**If you were not be able to attend, you still have a few days to order the magazine, which is free and you will only be charged for postage.**

**Orders should be made before July 31, 2016.**

**Please inform Steve Ball at:**

[steve.ball@birmingham-rep.co.uk](mailto:steve.ball@birmingham-rep.co.uk)



board!

## ASSITEJ Chile

ASSITEJ is happy to announce that TE VEO Chile is now a member of our association and will function as the ASSITEJ National Center in Chile. We would like to give **ASSITEJ Chile** a warm welcome. It is a pleasure to have you on

# TOWARDS

## Next Generation Residency Programme

At 2017 ASSITEJ World Congress

Opportunity

### CALL

The Next Generation Programme is an ASSITEJ initiative designed to support artistic and cultural exchange and collaboration between international artists aged 36 years or below, at ASSITEJ events. A Residency programme for 25 artists from the African continent and around the world will be held in Cape Town over the period of the Cradle of Creativity (19th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival) from 17-27 May 2017.

#### The NG Residency programme at Cradle of Creativity will include:

- Theatre for young audiences' performances by companies from Africa and the rest of the world
- Master classes and workshop sessions led by industry professionals
- Discussions, seminars and workshops around intercultural exchange, as well as the opportunity to explore some of the focus areas of the Congress which include: Storytelling and theatre, Music theatre for Young Audiences, Dance theatre for Young Audiences, Theatre for the Early Years, Theatre for Social Change, Theatre for Healing, Theatre by children for children, and Inclusive theatre
- Opportunities to experience South African culture and arts practice on the ground
- Opportunities to engage with and join both the Next Generation Network and ASSITEJ.

**Deadline: 30 September 2016**

[Read more.](#)

## The ASSITEJ International Award for Artistic Excellence

Honorary Presidents' Award -  
2017

Opportunity

### Invitation for application

The ASSITEJ Award for Artistic Excellence/Honorary Presidents' Award is given every three years for noteworthy achievement in the field of theater for children and young people, and is the most prestigious award given by the organization.

The award is given to an individual or to a company working in the field of Theater for Children and Young People, nominated by either their national ASSITEJ Center or by a professional network, which is a Full Member of ASSITEJ. **The Award for Artistic Excellence is based on innovative work done in the three years prior to the application deadline.** The committee adjudicating the award will give special priority to emerging artists, new and exciting companies, although established individuals or theaters that begin working in a new and innovative way will also be considered.

**Deadline for application by Full Members of ASSITEJ: November 10th 2016.**

[Read more.](#)

## Applause for Lifetime Achievement

ASSITEJ New Award

Opportunity

This award recognizes those who have played a distinctive and inspiring role in the world of TYA - whether as artist, designer, producer, technician, administrator, teacher, facilitator, mentor - for their outstanding body of work over time, and for their profound and lasting contribution to theatre for young audiences in their country or region. This award recognises the long, prominent, and influential career of the person concerned, and his or her particular commitment to the development of theatre for young audiences.

#### **Who can nominate?**

Each full member of ASSITEJ (national centre or network) can put forward ONE individual for this award in any three year period.

#### **Who can win the award?**

Up to three individuals can be given the ASSITEJ "Applause for Lifetime Achievement" during any given term. The award will not be given posthumously.

#### **How is this different from ASSITEJ Honorary Members?**

This award is distinct from ASSITEJ Honorary Membership, which is bestowed on persons who have made a significant and lasting contribution to the life of the organization, ASSITEJ, specifically, rather than to the field of theatre for children and young people more generally.

#### **Deadline for proposals: 10 November 2016**

[Read more.](#)

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## **Invitation to the launch of The Young Dance Network**

### **Call for Papers for ASSITEJ World Congress Day Dance Theatre for Young Audiences May 24 2017**

ASSITEJ is interested in supporting the multiple languages of dance and physicality, and their potential to cross the narrow linguistic borders that can separate us. We are interested in promoting dance as both a permanent form of cultural expression which embodies particular traditions, histories and contexts, and as a contemporary tool with which people are able to connect with one another from whatever position they may occupy in the world. We are interested to support and to engage in the significant artistic development within contemporary dance for children and young audiences which has blossomed across Europe and in other parts of the world. We feel that even in places where the contemporary dance scene is vibrant, artistic work for young audiences specifically, has not yet received appropriate attention.

There are also other opportunities within the call for papers which could be related to dance. For the full text, please see:

<http://www.assitej-international.org/en/2016/06/19th-assitej-world-congress-2017/>

#### **Deadline for proposals: 15th September 2016**

[Read more.](#)

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## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

Opportunity

For the **International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network's (ITYARN) Conference** and **International Association of Theatre for Children and Young People's (ASSITEJ) Focus Days** at the **19th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival for Children and Young People 'Cradle of Creativity'**, in Cape Town, South Africa, May, 2017.

**CRADLE OF CREATIVITY 17 - 27 May 2017**

**ITYARN RESEARCH CONFERENCE 16 - 17 May 2017**

**CONFERENCE AND FESTIVAL FOCUS DAYS 18 - 27 May 2017**



The International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network (ITYARN) in association with the University of Cape Town (UCT) and Drama

for Life, based at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), invite you to submit proposals for the Conference "*Cradle of Creativity: Examining intercultural exchange and diversity in theatre for young audiences*" in Cape Town, South Africa, 2017.

The ITYARN conference will present research into theatre for children and young people, related to this theme. Presentations and workshops will be held in the Drama Department <http://www.drama.uct.ac.za/> on the centrally-placed Hiddingh Campus of the University of Cape Town, in Gardens, Cape Town.

Proposals are also accepted from artists and theatre professionals for workshops, seminars and other events, related to a variety of different focus points, each of which will receive a day dedicated to them during the Congress.

**Deadline for proposals for the ITYARN Conference and ASSITEJ Focus Days: 15th September 2016**

To apply, go to [www.assitej2017.org.za](http://www.assitej2017.org.za)

[Read more.](#)

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## Call for submissions ASSITEJ Magazine 2017

Opportunity

### One Step Beyond: Intercultural Exchange

The title of the 19th ASSITEJ World Congress and Performing Arts Festival is the 'Cradle of Creativity', based in Africa for the first time in ASSITEJ history. Welcoming everyone back to the cradle of humanity, this event will profile Africa's best in theatre for children and youth, alongside performances from other continents.

ASSITEJ was first created because of a desire for intercultural collaboration during the period of the cold war. In the 21st century, this desire for collaboration across borders, languages, ethnicities, and personal histories seems more urgent than ever.

This magazine to be published in 2017 calls for articles that

This magazine calls for articles that

- Develop and illustrate intercultural exchange, collaboration, social change, diversity, and transformation in TYA;
- Examine connections between traditional/contemporary and local/global theatrical practices in TYA;
- Discuss the merits and disadvantages of intercultural exchange with regards to globalization, artistry, power, cultural norms and values in TYA.

Articles should

- Be between 500-700 words maximum and sent in Word and PDF (both), Times 12pt font.
- Include a title and the name of the author at the top, and a 25 word bio of the author at the end.
- All files should be named by last name of author and country.
- Submissions should be in English and in the original language of the author.
- Be accompanied by high quality photos in separate files from the article, TIFF preferred but JPEG is acceptable:

TIFF - size of the photo should not be less than 5 MB.

JPEG - Non compressed, 300 DPI - 14 x 21 cm (8 1/2 x 5 1/5 inches).

- Photos should be credited with name of photographer, company, and play.

**Deadline for submissions is OCTOBER 15, 2016.**

We will inform you of the selection of your submission by December 15,

Send to [assitejmagazine2017@gmail.com](mailto:assitejmagazine2017@gmail.com)

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## ASSITEJ Networks

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### The ITYARN Research Award

Opportunity

The ITYARN Research Award is given to honor distinguished

scholars who have contributed significantly to the development of theory and research in the field of theatre for young audiences. The nominee's collective works can be theoretical, empirical, ethnographic, critical, historical, or other scholarly research in any area of drama/theatre for young people.



The focus of the award is flexible depending on the theme of each ASSITEJ World Congress and Festival.

**The focus of the 2017 award is "Intercultural Exchange."**

- 1.- Any **ITYARN** member may submit a nomination for consideration.
  - 2.- Those nominated must be individuals who, either working independently or in collaboration with others, have made significant contributions to the body of research in theatre for young audiences under this theme.
  - 3.- Those nominated must be recommended by the nominator and at least 2 established researchers (PhD or equivalent) through letters of support that highlight the nominee's achievements in respect of their research relating to this theme.
  - 4.- The nomination should include a research CV of the nominee
  - 5.- The nominee may or may not be aware of the nomination.
  - 6.- All nominations will be held in confidence by the ITYARN Board. The nominators will be informed of the results by the ITYARN Chair.
  - 7.- It is the responsibility of the ITYARN Chair to inform the recipient of the award. This will include the names of the individual who made the nomination and the recommenders. The recipient will be honored at the ASSITEJ Awards Ceremony
  - 8.- All nomination materials must be submitted by the **deadline November 10, 2016**
- Please send all materials in ONE PDF file to [ITYARNawards@gmail.com](mailto:ITYARNawards@gmail.com)

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## ASSITEJ Inspirational Playwrights Award

Opportunity

Sponsored and adjudicated by Write Local Play Global

Highlighting the importance of playwriting in all its manifestations around the world, ASSITEJ will honor up to three persons as "ASSITEJ Inspirational Playwrights" every three years at its World Congress, starting in Cape Town in May 2017. This will be administered and adjudicated by the Write Local Play Global network in coordination with the ASSITEJ Executive committee.



The essence of our work is telling stories on our stages, and this award is created to honor particular writers who have inspired theatre for young audiences in their city, their country, their region, or all over the world.

How they have been inspirational could be very particular and individual, including:

- Writing a play or plays innovative in content and/or form that helped transform TYA in their country
- Serving as a mentor and role model to other writers
- Writing politically or socially aware work that challenges entrenched tradition or power in their country or region
- Through their writing, encouraging audiences to see other people, the world and its events in a more profound and human way.

- it will be the individual nominator who will 'tell the story' of how the playwright they nominate has been inspirational

Honoring up to three inspirational playwrights at each Congress allows ASSITEJ to celebrate its broad membership of different genders, ages, backgrounds, cultures, regions and languages. ASSITEJ members come from small and large countries, work for and with different ages of young audiences, and create theatre by a multitude of varied processes. The ASSITEJ Inspirational Playwrights will reflect not only the diversity in form and subject matter of playwriting around the world, but also its global membership of talented playwrights and theater makers.

In addition to the ceremony/reception at which the inspirational playwrights are named, the organizers of the Congress will be invited to work with the EC, WLPG and the selected playwrights to showcase their work in a creative manner, such as performances, translations, readings, etc.

Application information and further details will be available on August 1 on the Write Local Play Global website - [www.writelocalplayglobal.org](http://www.writelocalplayglobal.org)

## Next Generation Network Meeting

On Monday 4th July, the Next Generation Network held the first Alumni Sharing/ network event, celebrating collaborations emerging from the past four years' NG cohorts. The following projects were presented;

**Peter Kus** (Slovenia) - NG Okinawa 2012

Collaborating with YiHsin Lu (Taiwan) on "Bing, Bang, Boing - The Noise Making Boy"

**Paul Curley** (Ireland) - NG Okinawa 2012

Collaborating with Nina Hajjiyanni (UK) on "Happily Ever After", as well as with Hussein Nakhil (Lebanon) on "Bake!", and with Haruka Kuroda (UK) and Peter Kus (Slovenia) on "The Satsuma Project"

**Melika Ramic** (Austria) - NG Linz 2013

Collaborating with Tammy Reichling (Luxembourg) and Diana Rojas-Feile (Switzerland) on "3--times: about being a child and growing up"

**Chantal McCormick** (Ireland) - NG Delhi 2014

Collaborating with Tinna Grétarsdóttir (Iceland) on "Furðufjaðrir" / "Strange Feathers"

**Minoovash Rahimian** (Iran) - NG Warsaw 2014

Collaborating with Sharon Gavrielov (Israel) and Thom Browning (Australia) on "Mine"

The session included short clips of rehearsals and performances, as well as reflections on the benefits of participating in the Next Generation programme. Minoovash Rahimian, Sharon Gavrielov and Thom Browning presented three short films about their planned project, appealing for assistance with finding a venue to help develop the project. The audience was made up of the 2016 NG cohort, members of the ASSITEJ Executive Committee and delegates of the On The Edge festival.

The NG Network Facebook group can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/582142538574066/> and is open to anyone interested in the Next Generation programme and network.

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## National Centers

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ASSITEJ Argentina  
4th. International Theatre for Children  
and Young People Researchers and  
Critics Forum  
26 - 30 July Buenos Aires, Argentina



### [FULL General Program](#)

[Leer en español.](#)

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ASSITEJ Germany  
**Happy New Ears**  
Music Theatre for Young  
Audiences  
An International Congress  
20 - 22 November 2016, Mannheim



Will bring together participants from across Europe already active in the field of music theater for young audiences or curious to do so and national and international artists who are leading the way in the field. Experiment spaces and group discussions in conjunction with performances featured in the festival of the same will offer an environment for discussion and reflection on, amongst others, the following questions: What is contemporary Music



theatre for Young Audiences and how does it presents itself in Germany and Europe? And, how can the development of experimental work methods and new performance approaches be nurtured for the future?

**Dates:** Sunday 20th November 2016 – Tuesday 22nd November 2016

**Location:** Various venues including Nationaltheater Mannheim, Mannheim, Germany

**Registration:** [www.happynewears-congress.de](http://www.happynewears-congress.de) 20th July – 10th October 2016

**Festival Programme:** [https://www.nationaltheater-mannheim.de/de/junges-ntm/junge-oper/happy\\_new\\_ears.php](https://www.nationaltheater-mannheim.de/de/junges-ntm/junge-oper/happy_new_ears.php)



## Panoptikum

The European-Bavarian Festival for Children's Theatre  
23 - 28 January 2016, Nuremberg

Theatre Stories For All Sense

Having been held every two years since 2000, the [Panoptikum](#) festival has become a popular event to explore the wide range of children's theatre both from Europe as well as from Bavaria. It's a place to meet theatre professionals and festival organisers from Germany and abroad and enjoy the hospitable and relaxed festival atmosphere in .

The next edition is scheduled for January 23 to 28, 2018. For images of the 2016 edition please look [here](#).

[www.festival-panoptikum.de](http://www.festival-panoptikum.de)



## Let's stay awake

Children from all over  
Germany on stage at Theater  
der Jungen Welt  
12 - 15 October 2016, Leipzig



The German Children's Theater Fest is the only national festival that invites children aged 6 to 12 from all over Germany to show their productions. The Theater der Jungen Welt Leipzig, ASSITEJ Germany and the Children's and Young People's Theatre Center (KJTZ) host this prestigious event from October 12th to 15th 2016 and invite all practitioners who create performing arts with children to take part in the accompanying symposium which discusses power relations in creating work with children.

[www.kinder-theater-fest.de](http://www.kinder-theater-fest.de)

## Augenblick mal!

Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences  
25th to 30th April 2017, Berlin

Join the 14th edition of "Augenblick mal!", the German Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences. Come to Berlin and explore a bunch of inspiring performances.

In our program we have highlights from Germany and abroad. An interesting framework completes the program. From January 2017 you can find the order form for international visitors, "Explore Germany", on the website [www.augenblickmal.de](http://www.augenblickmal.de).





**AUGEN  
BLICK  
MAL!**

**THE FESTIVAL  
OF THEATRE  
FOR YOUNG  
AUDIENCES  
APRIL 21-26  
2015**



## Racism in Europe

ASSITEJ Germany and the festival Spurensuche co-operated with ASSITEJ Sweden in their international project "shadowland" which reflects on how the (performing) arts for young audiences can and need to react to racism in Europe and elsewhere. Bianca Traum and Julia Kraus Dybeck enjoyed a three week residency at COMEDIA Theater Cologne and were able to do research on communication with children from various countries who also lived in refugee shelters in Cologne. They presented their work at the national festival of independent theatres who work for young audiences "Spurensuch" and will use their research as the basis for a production shown in December in Stockholm.

<http://shadowland.nu>

[www.spurensuche-theatertreffen.de](http://www.spurensuche-theatertreffen.de)

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## ASSITEJ Italy



### In-Forma

5 - 7 September 2016, Bologna

The first three-day workshop by ASSITEJ Italy dedicated to artist, promoters and administrators.

A mix of professionalism, experience, perspectives, to strengthen and nourish the most extensive Italian network of theater for the young audience.

**Workshop lead by:** Yutaka Takei - Marzia Santone - Giuliana Ciancia - Chiara Chiappa - Marco Palma

**And more:** Face to face - Working Tables - Open Market Meetings - Plenary Assembly - Members Meeting. **For more information contact:** [info@assitej-italia.it](mailto:info@assitej-italia.it)



## SEGNI New Generations Festival

26th October - 2nd November 2016, Mantova

**Segni d'infanzia** grows up and becomes: **SEGNI New Generations Festival**

More than 30 different artistic proposals, for almost 300 performances for audience from 18 months up to 18 years

**The Animal Symbol** of Segni New Generations

Festival 2016 is the **WOLF**, drawn by the Nobel Prize of Literature Dario Fo. You can download the wolf from our web site, realize your own art work and join our contest.

For more info: <http://www.segnidinanzia.org/the-animal-symbol-2/?lang=en>



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## ASSITEJ Japan

**ricca ricca\*festa**  
International Theater Festival OKINAWA  
for Young Audiences  
25 - 31 July, Naha



The festival was originally organised with the nickname Kijimuna Festa between 2005 and 2013 in Okinawa City. In 2014 the festival moved its home to Naha City, and launched the new nickname - ricca ricca\*festa - which means 'Let's go' in Okinawan dialect.

The festival has developed an international reputation with its carefully-selected programme and it has become an important platform of TYA in East Asia. In 2016, **ricca ricca\*festa initiates Asian TYA Network programme** with the support from the Japan Foundation Asia Center to connect TYA professionals in East and South East Asia.

[www.nuchigusui-fest.com](http://www.nuchigusui-fest.com)

ASSITEJ Norway



**SAND**  
International Festival of  
Performing Arts for a Young  
Audience  
15 - 17 September, Kristiansand, Norway

Opportunity

As part of the Next Generation Placement Programme administered by ASSITEJ, SAND Festival invites a limited number of international young artists to take part in an active workshop with Lawrence Malstaf, Liv Hanne Haugen from Haugen Produksjoner and electronica musician Per Martinsen - Mental Overdrive at the SAND Festival in Kristiansand.

**Application deadline is August 1, see more information at:**

[http://www.assitej-international.org/en/ng\\_offer/exclusive-offer-workshop-with-internationally-acclaimed-scenographer-lawrence-malstaf-for-young-emerging-artists/](http://www.assitej-international.org/en/ng_offer/exclusive-offer-workshop-with-internationally-acclaimed-scenographer-lawrence-malstaf-for-young-emerging-artists/)

See you in Kristiansand from September 15-17, 2016!



ASSITEJ Sweden



**SWEDSTAGE 2016**  
23 - 25 October, 2016

**We are very proud to present the selected performances for Swedstage 2016, October 23 - 25! - Registration open! - [www.swedstage.se](http://www.swedstage.se)**

The productions show a wide range in both genres and artistic expressions and the three days in Stockholm will offer you the very best of Swedish performing arts for children, youth

and adults. All the performances are able to tour and available for an international audience.

It's our hope that the programme will give you new experiences and insights on Swedish performing arts that you can bring home.

**Looking forward to meeting you in Stockholm!**



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ASSITEJ USA



**TYA Today** is taking ad reservations for Fall 2016 issue. Join us, and be seen!

Are you a theatre company, arts organization, publisher, or freelance artist? Do you have a new show or event you'd like to promote? Consider getting the word out with our long-running publication, TYA Today. *International artists, companies, and festivals receive a 10% discount.*

SPACE RESERVATION DEADLINE FOR FALL 2016: August 1, 2016

ARTWORK DUE: August 31, 2016

ISSUE DELIVERED: Late October/Early November 2016

Pay in US Dollars by check or PayPal.

[CLICK HERE](#) For more information and to make your reservation.

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## World Cultures Connect

World Cultures Connect is a new international networking platform for the cultural and creative sectors, through which cultural managers, artists and creative professionals can promote their work and services, as well as discover and connect with new partners, tools and resources to support international work.

By creating a profile - as an organisation or individual - members can bring awareness to their work by uploading content, posting news, opportunities and events; as well as contribute to discussions, access resources such as information on mobility funding or Q&A sessions on a broad range of topics for working internationally, and network with peers through a large research directory and messaging system.

World Cultures Connect is managed by Visiting Arts and supported by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Arts Council of Ireland, Culture Ireland, Aga Khan Trust for Culture, ACPCultures+, ACP and The European Union.

Join today and start connecting!

[www.worldculturesconnect.com](http://www.worldculturesconnect.com)

Follow WCC on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)



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**Articles Section.**  
Knowledge - Experiences -



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### On The Edge ASSITEJ Next Generation Residency, A Testimony

**By Niamh Ní Chonchubhair**

They say (I've no idea who 'they' are) that "a change is as good as a holiday" and after nine days in Birmingham I can honestly say that I've never been more delighted to be exhausted. Exhausted but enthused, tired but thankful and the Next Generation programme as part of On The Edge Festival/ASSITEJ International Gathering is the change I needed and am grateful for.

I almost didn't apply. Open to "young and emerging artists interested in the practice of theatre for young audiences and international collaboration" I had written myself off (I'm 33½ in an Irish accent) but I read further. I wanted a shot at stepping in to the worlds hinted at in the bullet points of the call out. Rarely are such opportunities available to people who perhaps have already 'emerged' in one way but, like me, found a new area of arts practice and passion and were as ripe for the learning as anyone else. I won't lie, I was also looking forward to the many shows on offer as part of the programme. All of them. Being handed an envelope of tickets bearing the promise of multiple show days carefully scheduled around workshops with my next gen friends and colleagues with a fair few symposium sessions squeezed in for good measure felt like such a treat. For someone who jokes about spending much of her time facilitating other people's creativity, I was ready to play and it's just as well, as we dove straight in from day one.

We came from all over. Almost. Some of our cohort-to-be were denied visas and less than a week after the Brexit vote, this resonated more than it might have a week previously. I experienced many moments during the week when I realized that the stakes are high, for some more than others and that those of us lucky enough to be working in a country where we can do, say and go as we please have a responsibility to find ways to support and encourage those who aren't.

[Read more.](#)



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### 10 reasons: Why ASSITEJ, 10 reasons: Because...

**By Christoph Macha\***

... everyone pronounces its magic name wrongly (and enjoys doing so) and it sounds wonderful how many people on podiums, at openings and reception pronounce the name wrongly all at the same time. That makes it sound like a promise, an energy that leads to exciting experiences.

... theater for children and young people theater is theater for everyone.

... it is not self-evident that there is such a thing as professional theater for young audiences.

... it is important to grow together and become closer especially at times of global changes that make the world seem bigger and smaller at the same time. It is important how things are organized locally and nationally and we can meet others, strangers, the "other" and the unknown, ask questions and create a better "we".

... this association is about support, decency and continuity in times of a cultural mainstream that might lose its power to inspire.

... we have to work together in order to create good work, be precise and contribute, aesthetically and with the choice of our topics and themes.

... it means exchange and reflection, together about new and old ideas, it means to think over, to think forward, to think through, to ask and to encounter people and ideas.

... theater for children and young people is ancient, but also a newcomer among older traditions and established institutions that might claim to create theater for young audiences but are not interested in knowing more about our work and our professional experience.

... we educate each other, learn from each other, discover what is right and wrong and yet, we still eat French fries now and then, just because they taste good.

... it's the most beautiful network I know, because it gives me the opportunity to learn about new, old, boredom, suspense, sadness, fun, excitement, unknown and profane, complex and transcultural, intercultural and mixed-cultural (please continue extending this list, it could become a fun experiment...).

\* During the celebration for the 50 years of ASSITEJ Germany at the International Festival "Bright View" (Schöne Aussicht) 2016, Christoph Macha (Dramaturg t.j.g.theater junge generation Dresden), in answer to the question "Why do we need ASSITEJ?", gave the following 10 reasons.

