

## European theatre artists emphasize responsibility of arts and humanities to envision future for Europe

### International Theatre Conference by ETC successfully concluded in Brunswig, Germany

Berlin/ Brunswig, December 2014: Over 80 theatre makers from 19 countries convened for four days from November 27 to 30 at the State Theatre in Brunswig, Germany for the annual International Theatre Conference of the European Theatre Convention (ETC). The meeting questioned the **Future of Europe**, and asked after the European elections a few months ago, and after the new European Commission took office a few weeks ago - What's in it for Europe's people? What tasks for Europe's theatres? **Calling upon the responsibility of arts and humanities to envision a future for an open and equal Europe, the situation and work of Ukrainian theatre makers and theatres has been made a focal point of the conference.** An invited delegation of artists and theatre directors presented their work, connected with partners from across Europe and engaged in an exchange of view on current artistic, cultural and political issues.

The conference, which was officially opened at a reception on Thursday, November 27 by the Minister of Culture and Science of Lower Saxony; Germany, **Mrs. Gabriele Heinen-Kljajić**, offered two thought-provoking days of debate and working sessions in and about theatre within the premises of Brunswig's Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

"In which Europe do we want to live?", asked panelist **Stefanie Carp**, festival director, requesting a vision for a united Europe that not just remains a cultural fantasy for social equality and fraternity within our nations, within the continent but also reaching beyond. In pointing out raising nationalistic movements across Europe as helpful means to manifest exclusion and elitism, theatres have the responsibility to question the individual and collective responsibility engaging in openness for the other, the foreign and the unknown without restrictions for participation. **Camille de Toledo**, founder of the European Society of Authors, underlined the importance of language and translation focusing on the many gaps, mis-understandings, and the in-betweens, the untranslatableness. This is a political challenge, acknowledging the territory of conflict in facing the realities of multiplicities of a migrant Europe "whereby the art scene takes the lead on a new conception of belonging, multiple loyalties and citizenship." "Europe is in a state of transformation and confusion" stated **Rodrigo Garcia**, artistic director of the theatre Humain trop humain in Montpellier. "People need to feel alive; they need to come together, just like Europe needs new life and energy. Theatre is a place that offers just this, stands for the essential human right to live and express ourselves in liberty, in dialogue with the society", he concluded.

The invited guests from **Ukrainian public theatres as well as the independent and fringe theatre scene** jointly stressed the valuable important exchange with European colleagues and the influence culture has on the political developments in their country. After first encounters and discussions, ideas for continuous **European**

**European Theatre Convention - Convention Théâtrale Européenne**

[www.etc-cte.org](http://www.etc-cte.org)

#### Executive office

c/o Deutsches Theater · Schumannstr. 13 a · 10117 Berlin · Germany  
T +49 (0)30 28441 460 · F +49 (0)30 28441 488  
E [convention@etc-cte.org](mailto:convention@etc-cte.org)

#### EU office

c/o European House for Culture  
Sainctelettesquare 17 · 1000 Brussels · Belgium

#### Head office

c/o SYNDEAC  
8 rue Blanche · 75009 Paris · France  
Association loi 1901  
N° Siret 379 738 230 00018 · CODE APE 913 E

#### Bank Crédit Coopératif

IBAN FR76 4255 9000 1741 0200 2023 864 · BIC CCOPFRPPXXX

**theatre networking** were elaborated to strengthen new relations and to further bridge the artistic life between Ukraine and the rest of Europe in the coming year.

Alongside the conference, theatre makers exchanged best practices and further developed skills in professional workshops focusing on "**Social cohesion and inclusion in theatre – reaching out to marginalized audiences with visual and hearing impairments**" and "**Audience development strategies in theatres of the ETC**". In interactive working sessions, new European collaborative theatre work was initiated and prepared. The upcoming European theatre festival "**The Art of Ageing**" is planned with eight theatres to take place next year in April (16-19) at the National Theatre Timisoara, Romania, a new "**European Theatre Academy**" dedicated to European theatre collaboration for young European theatre producers, directors and managers is currently developed to be organized for the first time in 2015. Furthermore, ETC theatres wish to continue the successful ETC youth theatre program "**Young Europe**" in 2016-2017. Three more festivals will be organized in 2015 by ETC theatres with contributions from the network: **International Theatre Festival** in Pristina (March), **Eurokontext.sk** in Bratislava (June) and the **Belarus Free Theatre Festival** in London (November).

On the occasion of the conference, two new theatres joined Europe's network of public theatres – the **National Croatian Theatre Zagreb** and the **Slovenian National Theatre Drama Ljubljana**.

Whilst the conference took place, the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of "**Fast Forward**", the European Festival for Young Stage Directors run at the State Theatre Brunswick. All theatre makers and conference guests were invited to seven performances from seven countries created by a young generation of European artists to enjoy the diversity of topics and aesthetic choices that European theatre has to offer.

### **More information & contact**

Heidi Wiley, General Secretary ETC, Email: [hwiley@etc-cte.org](mailto:hwiley@etc-cte.org), Tel: + 49 30 28 441 461, [www.etc-cte.org](http://www.etc-cte.org)

**Notes to Editors** –The European Theatre Convention (ETC) founded in 1988, is a non-profit-making membership organization representing the publicly funded theatre sector in over 20 countries. Its aims are to create, protect and promote the art of theatre and its linguistic diversity in Europe and beyond; to act as a transnational theatre network to foster cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue; to act as a platform for professional exchange, development and capacity building of theatre-makers in an international context and to advocate for the public theatre sector at EU, member state and local levels.

---

With thanks for the support of the project

**European networking with Ukrainian theatres and theatre makers**  
by the German Federal Foreign Office.



Federal Foreign Office

---

**European Theatre Convention - Convention Théâtrale Européenne**

#### **Executive office**

c/o Deutsches Theater · Schumannstr. 13 a · 10117 Berlin · Germany  
T +49 (0)30 28441 460 · F +49 (0)30 28441 488  
E [convention@etc-cte.org](mailto:convention@etc-cte.org)

#### **EU office**

c/o European House for Culture  
Sainctelettesquare 17 · 1000 Brussels · Belgium

[www.etc-cte.org](http://www.etc-cte.org)

#### **Head office**

c/o SYNDEAC  
8 rue Blanche · 75009 Paris · France  
Association loi 1901  
N° Siret 379 738 230 00018 · CODE APE 913 E

Bank Crédit Coopératif  
IBAN FR76 4255 9000 1741 0200 2023 864 · BIC CCOPFRPPXXX