



**ETC General Assembly in Nicosia, Cyprus:  
Advocacy for the place of Theatre in European Society with Artistic Education and Multilingualism projects**

**Paris, 25 May 2010.** Under the patronage of Mrs. Androulla Vassiliou, member of the European Commission the European Theatre Convention (ETC) organised its spring general assembly from May 13 -16 in Nicosia, Cyprus which was opened by His Excellency, the president of the Republic of Cyprus, Mr. Demetris Christofias and hosted by the Cyprus Theatre Organisation (THOC).

The topic of the general assembly : **“The place of Theatre in European Society”** lead to lively discussions between the guest speakers Gerald Lidstone, University of London, Louise de Winter, “National Campaign for the Arts”, London and the ETC delegates from 26 public theatres of 17 countries. Within a society where creative and cultural industries are in focus to help contribute to smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, it quickly become evident that the ETC shall enforce its advocacy role for the European theatres and demonstrate what theatre is contributing to society in relation to issues such as: education, economy, social mediation, beauty and well-being, European identity and multilingualism and as living European cultural heritage.

As a result of a very productive conference full with vital discussions and vibrant energy, the following three new initiatives have come to live, while three new members joined the ETC community: Staatstheater Braunschweig, Germany, Théâtre Jeune Public Strasbourg, France and the Miskolc National Theatre from Hungary.

### **1. ETC advocacy campaign**

ETC delegates agreed to develop a long-term advocacy campaign and to build up a structured partnership with European cultural policy decision makers. As first initiative, an open letter has been drafted during the GA, which will be endorsed by the ETC members and sent by the end of May to the president of the EU parliament and EU commissioners as well as to the elected MEPs and national authorities highlighting the benefits theatre offers to society and requesting a structured partnership between the public theatres of European and the EU policy decision makers.

### **2. Young Europe II edition**

ETC delegates expressed much interest to continue the successful artistic education project Young Europe with a second edition starting in October 2011 until to September 2013 in order to enlarge the ETC work field towards the creation of a European stage play repertoire for young audiences. In two workshops the member theatres have discussed several ideas and concluded that the next edition of Young Europe shall focus on the major topic of “Languages and Multilingualism” while increasing the mobility aspect between participating partners and theatre professionals. The call for ETC partner theatres to take part in the project is open until June 15.

### **3. Theatre of Languages, Language of Theatre**

Multilingualism issues within the European policies are very much linked to theatre realities in Europe. The ETC has therefore decided to act as a partner in the consortium of the “Promotion of Multilingualism” of the structured dialogue between the European Commission and the civil society, which will develop a two year work programme to determine actions to promote the platform recommendations together with the other platform members. The ETC is the only partner of a cultural institution representing performing arts and drama theatre.



ETC member delegates recognised the importance to develop activities around the multilingual questions within the network focusing on the following issues: language / multilingualism input on society, reflection in theatre productions, subtitles in development, sign language, access to culture based on languages. Two workshops in relation to these topics will be organised during the next general assembly in Tel Aviv, focussing on subtitling technologies and death and sign language issues in theatre.

**Upcoming ETC events include:**

- May 21-24 Diebe: Transfer – Translation on Stage organised by Deutsches Theater Berlin
- June 12-20 Europolis 2050: Theatre Youth Forum Bad Hersfelder Festival
- June 17-27 ETC productions will be seen at the Theaterbiennale Wiesbaden
- June 26 ETC board meeting Wiesbaden
- June 26-27 Publication: European Theatre of Today. A selection of the best 120 European contemporary plays for the stage. Presentation at the Theaterbiennale Wiesbaden
- Nov 19-23 Young Europe Festival, TJP Strasbourg

Located in the premises of the National Centre of Theatre in Paris, the ETC is a network of national theatres and theatre producing houses, which was constituted in 1988. Diversity and common cultural values unites by now 41 members of the network coming from 24 countries. The ETC promotes and defends the richness of European languages in contemporary drama and has established a wide range of artistic activities: the ETC encourages transnational mobility of artists and theatre professionals with « Staff and performance exchange programmes», disseminates European drama works and initiates paneuropean collaboration projects focusing on young audiences and young professionals to strengthen a European identification. The programme «European Theatre Public» offers all subscribers of each member theatre free entrance to a performance of another member theatre across and beyond Europe.

The ETC is jointly financed by its member organisations.

For more information, please consult the ETC website or contact Heidi Giebel, general delegate:  
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