WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS INTERNATIONAL

WPI NEWSLETTER

June-December 2020

Reminiscing about WPI's humble beginning

by: Anna Kay France

**From the beginning of planning the First International Women Playwrights Conference (Buffalo NY, 1988), we were determined to make the conference multi-racial, multi-ethnic, crossing all the boundaries that usually separate and divide us. The original steering committee included African-American, Latin American (Chilean), and Asian (Chinese), as well as white members. We sought, and found—beyond our expectations—women who were writing plays around the world.

In the middle and end of the conference, there would be two powerful all-conference rituals, led by African, African-American, indigenous and white women playwrights. But none surpassed the sheer rush of the opening moment when, one by one, each conference—from over 30 countries, and different regions, tribes and ethnicities within those countries—stood up and spoke her name and the nation she identified with.

This was an introductory conference, bringing together an extraordinary group of women who had achieved success, even distinguished careers as playwrights, despite all the odds against them. Now they could speak directly with one another about their lives, their work, their struggles, their accomplishments. Our trio of keynote speakers included a Maori woman from New Zealand (Renee), an African-American (Alice Childress) and a Sri Lankan (Somalatha Subasinghe).

Every panel and session of the conference was made as diverse and inclusive as possible, with playwrights sharing their differing experiences and perspectives on a range of issues: "Women Playwrights as Social and Political Critics,"

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12th WPI conference is postponed until

June 2022

The safety of all women across the globe is our top priority!

In as much as we are excited to meet and embrace our fellow playwrights and theatre artists in the beautiful city of Montreal, COVID-19 pandemic remains a threat.

Thus, we opted to postpone the 12th conference.

For now, stay safe and see you in 2022!

WPI Management Committee

Reminiscing (cont.)

"Censorship and Self-Censorship," "Issues of Race and Class," "Changing Domestic and Family Roles," "Eroticism, Sexual Identity and Politics," "Lesbian Plays and Playwrights," "The Use of Humor, Comedy, Satire," "Developing and Directing Plays by Women," "Experimental Drama," "Old Forms, New Forms: What Works Today?"

The effort to be as diverse and inclusive as possible extended to every aspect of the planning process. This was undoubtedly essential to the success, the powerful impact of the conference. But it was not easy to sustain. Speaking for myself as conference director, the process of planning was at times exciting and exhilarating, but it could also be difficult, painful, and very humbling. There was simply no comfort zone. Everything we were doing—all attitudes and assumptions—would come under question. And, of course, everyone was a volunteer, there was never enough money, and logistics were a nightmare.

For future WPI conference organizers, it never really got easier. The ideals have remained. They have never been easy or simple to implement. These conferences have continued, despite such huge problems, difficulties, and obstacles that I have wondered, time and again, if the next conference could actually take place, or the one after that. And yet they have continued.

For me, personally, these WPI organizers are heroes; they have persisted against the odds. They have kept making it possible for women playwrights to come together from around the world to share their work, their experiences, their lives; to develop friendships and collaborations; to be inspired and encouraged, and to create new opportunities for themselves and others.

I think it is important to recognize and support and honor the work our organizers have done—and are doing now. And then, as we look to the future, I think we must also be prepared to rethink and re-examine what we still have to learn, how we can grow from the challenges we face now, how we need and want to change and develop as an organization. And, as we do so, how we can keep this process as open, transparent, and participatory as possible.#

Anna Kay France
WPI Advisory Committee Member
and Conference Convener
of the 1988 WPI Conference
in Buffalo, New York

12th WOMEN PLAYWRIGHTS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE MONTRÉAL 2022

Hello and Bonjour to everyone who will be joining us in Montréal in 2022!

As many of you know from the July 11th email, **we have decided to postpone the Women Playwrights International Montréal conference until June of 2022.**

Even as we all long for a bit more certainty, we are still dedicated to making WPIMontréal 2022 an enriching experience. Along with the WPI Management Committee, we are monitoring the local and global situation of COVID-19 closely. For many from the harder hit regions, future travel plans may be hard to foresee, so we are committed to making any decisions about the conference well in advance so participants will have ample time to make necessary arrangements. We understand that for now, the priority is to stay healthy and take care of yourselves and of each other.

Over the course of the past several months, as we've watched protests erupt around the world and arts organizations take action to dismantle racism and other forms of discrimination, we've been inspired to work harder to make sure WPIM pursues the values of anti-racism and equity. WPIM believes that theatre is at its best when it offers a dynamic and relevant conversation about that which matters most to us. Centering marginalized voices is crucial to this project. Our hope has always been to provide a safe place for women theatre artists to gather, to exchange ideas and conflicting opinions, even when discussing them causes discomfort—and to grow through the process.

While we recognize that we still have much to learn in our pursuit of this goal, we are dedicated to making the Montreal conference a venue for that growth. We have cast the net far and wide so that our jurors and playwrights and other contributing theatre artists reflect the diversity of women and non-binary playwrights all over the world. We have also designed programming that will address how race and geography impact women playwrights and our theatre:

- A day dedicated to Indigenous playwrights and storytellers
- A day centered around climate change that will highlight the leadership of Indigenous women and the particular impact on women of colour
- A panel featuring artists whose lived experience includes political persecution

We are thrilled to announce that WPIM will be introducing a **Writers' Playroom** for playwrights to workshop their scripts. Emerging out of the values of inclusivity and access that are at the heart of the WPIM project, the Writers' Playroom offers the playwrights whose work could not be included in the official programming of the conference an opportunity to share their work and get feedback from their peers. This new addition at WPIMontréal formalizes the tradition of ad hoc script readings at past conferences where playwrights have just found a room and asked a few friends to read their work. While not part of the official conference programming, this initiative will be organized and run by our staff, in the hopes of offering as many playwrights as possible the opportunity to participate. It will be a safe and relaxed environment for writers to share their work. A sign-up sheet will be posted where playwrights can sign up to have an excerpt of their work read aloud or to help read another playwright's work. Writers will have the opportunity to guide their own reading--WPIM staff will be there to ensure everything runs smoothly. The playroom will last a few hours each day and will overlap with other conference programming. Please note that the Writers' Playroom will not be connected to any other organization or festival except the WPIM Conference.

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WPIM will cohost an open mic every evening after full production. Here, attendees will be able to showcase raw, unfinished work in an informal and supportive setting. These open mics are an excellent opportunity to unwind and bond with artists from around the world.

Your Questions

Thank you to everyone who has reached out with excellent questions about the conference. We are currently working through all of them to create a Frequently Asked Questions document with detailed responses. In the meantime, we are including some questions and answers here. If you have any further concerns and/or questions, don't hesitate to contact us at our email address: **wpimontreal2021@gmail.com**

Please join our Facebook group where we share information about the conference, Canada, and Montréal. This is also an excellent place to start getting to know each other.

With much anticipation,

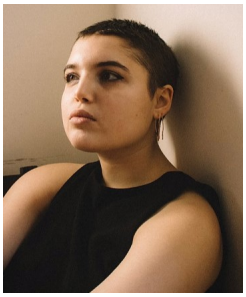
The WPIMontréal 2022 team--Ann, Laura and Ayesha

Conference Venue

Dawson College is an English CEGEP located in Montreal, Quebec. It's theatre, the New Dawson Dome Theatre, seats183 people and is home to Dawson's Professional Theatre Programs' productions as well as other multi-media events.

ADDRESS
3040 Rue Sherbrooke Quest, Montreal, Canada H3Z 1A4

Thank You Abigail!



WPIM 2022 would like to thank our former intern, Abigail Drach, for her terrific work on the Montreal conference. We wish her the best of luck as she moves on to continue her studies. We'll miss you, Abigail!

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WPIM 2022--Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's):

Cost of Attending

What is the conference fee (accreditation fee)?

The accreditation fee mentioned in each letter refers to the fee of registering for the conference. **It is $350 CAD.** This fee covers the cost of a continental breakfast, lunch and a snack each of the five days of the conference. It also covers the opening and closing ceremonies, as well as your admission to all programming.

How one might get funded for travel and accommodation; are there international grants?

There are many **local and international grants** participants can apply for. We recommend that each playwright first research which arts and travel grants are available in their home country. We will be sharing a list of international grants in the next few weeks and months. Playwrights can also apply (through WPIM) to a bursary subsidized by the Norwegian Writers Guild. We will be sending out guidelines on how to apply later next year.

What is the process for conference registration and deadlines for registering?

Online registration will open on our website in the latter part of 2021. We will share the link and registration instructions on all social media and in an email to all participants.

What accommodations will be available in Montreal?

WPIM is working with local hotels to secure a reduced rate for conference participants. Additionally, participants may choose to stay at other hotels or rent from locals. We are also working to find billeting accommodation with local artists and supporters.

How much will the other expenses cost?
(Food expenses, travel expenses, accommodation, local travel)

Food expenses will be the cost of any food purchased before or after the conference or to supplement the food provided by the conference. The average price of a full meal in Montreal is $15-20 CAD, a snack $5-10 CAD, and coffee $3-7 CAD. This also could include drinks (average price $5-15 CAD) if the participant wants to explore Montreal's nightlife.

Travel expenses will vary based on where the participant is travelling from.

Accommodation will cost about $209/night for a double room, ($105 per person) if the participant is staying at the hotels where WPIM has a group rate; we are in the process of renegotiating with hotels for 2022, so these prices may change.

Local travel expenses will depend on where participants stay and how much they explore Montreal. Public transportation costs $3.50 CAD per ride and the hotels and Dawson College are located near Atwater metro, which is wheelchair accessible. A cab ride or Uber from the hotels to Dawson College would cost approximately $10 CAD.

About the Conference

Where will the conference take place?

The conference will be held at **Dawson College** which is on Atwater and Sherbrooke in Westmount, Montreal.

How many plays and playwrights are you inviting and which parts of the world do they come from?

We have chosen 84 plays to be a part of the official conference programming at the Montreal conference. The playwrights come from every continent except Antarctica!

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Who else, other than playwrights, is being invited?

We are inviting directors, scholars, translators, actors, producers, agents and other artists and professionals who work in the theatre and performance world.

Who is going to be running the workshops and what are the topics addressed in the workshops?

Playwrights, scholars, performers, and directors will be leading workshops covering a range of dramaturgical, aesthetic, and political concerns that women and non-binary playwrights face. **MORE DETAILS TO FOLLOW.**

Full Productions

How many shows are you expecting for 'full production'? And an estimated number of audiences for each show?

There will be about 10-12 full productions at the conference, with 2-3 performances per night depending on the length of each play. The audience for each will be up to 183 people, as that is the capacity of the theatre.

What will be the system for PRODUCTION subtitles?

Super titles in English and French will be projected onto a screen above the stage. We will arrange translations with playwrights closer to the conference dates.

Staged Readings (full and excerpted)

Which languages can the staged readings be performed in?

Staged readings must be in French or English.

Will the festival hire and cast actors for readings?

Yes. WPIM will hire and cast local, trained professional actors for the full staged readings and readings of excerpted plays.

Will the actors and technicians be paid for their work?

Yes. WPIM will be paying all actors, directors and technical staff involved in the conference.

What will the topics of the Q&A be?

The question and answer period after each reading will cover whichever topics the audience wishes to ask the playwright about.

Will there be an opportunity to present the playwriting landscape of the countries each writer comes from?

Playwrights will be able to guide this however they see fit and can address the political, cultural and geographic context that they come from.

Will there be an opportunity to present/talk about other pieces of my work in the Q&A, i.e. should I be thinking of having translations of my other work ready by then?

No, the question and answer period should only address the work given a staged reading at the conference. It is fine if other plays come up or if a question addresses the playwright's career, but there is no need to bring translations of any other work.

Is there a charge for audiences to attend the staged readings?

The staged readings are free for all participants registered with the conference.

How long are the excerpted staged readings?

The excerpts should be absolutely no more than 20 minutes in performance so please time yourselves before submitting your excerpt.

Will the excerpts from plays be read/presented by actors and if so, is there a limit on the cast size?

The excerpts will be presented by professional actors. There is no limit to the cast size, although obviously huge casts cannot be accommodated.

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The Writers Playroom

What is the Writers' Playroom?

As mentioned in the preceding page, Writers' Playroom offers the playwrights whose work could not be included in the official programming of the conference an opportunity to share their work and get feedback from their peers. This new addition at WPIMontréal formalizes the tradition of ad hoc script readings at past conferences where playwrights have just found a room and asked a few friends to read their work. While not part of the official conference programming, this initiative will be organized and run by our staff, in the hopes of offering as many playwrights as possible the opportunity to participate. It will be a safe and relaxed environment for writers. A sign-up sheet will be posted where playwrights can sign up to have an excerpt of their work read aloud or to help read another playwright's work. Writers will have the opportunity to guide their own reading--WPIM staff will be there to ensure everything runs smoothly. The playroom will last a few hours each day and will overlap with other conference programming. Please note that the Writers' Playroom will not be connected to any other organization or festival except the WPIM Conference to share their work.

Can you send out letters of invitation for the playroom?

We can absolutely send out letters of invitation to help playwrights secure funding to attend the Writers' Playroom. Please contact us directly at: **wpimontreal2021@gmail.com** to request one.

Will there be a virtual playroom?

We are currently creating a system for an online Writers' Playroom where playwrights can engage before the conference takes place. This virtual playroom will be the perfect opportunity to stay connected while the conference is postponed. Please stay tuned for more details.#

WPI Montreal Host Committee
Contact Information:
www.womenplaywrightsinternationalmontreal2021.com

Facebook Group:
Women Playwrights International Conference Montreal 2021
Email: wpimontreal2021@gmail.com

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Bonjour à toutes qui nous rejoindront à Montréal en 2022 !

Comme beaucoup d'entre vous le savent par le courriel du 11 juillet, **nous avons décidé de reporter la conférence Internationale des femmes auteures dramatiques de Montréal à juin 2022.**

Même si nous désirons tous un peu plus de certitude, nous sommes toujours déterminés à faire de la conférence 2022 une expérience enrichissante. Avec le comité de gestion du WPI, nous suivons de près la situation locale et mondiale de Covid-19. Pour de nombreuses personnes originaires des régions les plus touchées, les plans de voyage futurs peuvent être difficiles à prévoir, aussi nous nous engageons à prendre toute décision concernant la conférence bien à l'avance afin que les participants aient tout le temps nécessaire pour prendre les dispositions nécessaires. Nous comprenons que pour l'instant, la priorité est de rester en bonne santé et de prendre soin de vous et des autres.

Au cours du mois dernier, alors que nous avons vu des manifestations éclater dans le monde entier et que des organisations artistiques ont pris des mesures pour démanteler le racisme et d'autres formes de discrimination, nous avons été inspirés à travailler plus dur pour faire en sorte que le WPIM poursuive les valeurs d'antiracisme et d'équité. Le WPIM estime que le théâtre est à son meilleur lorsqu'il offre une conversation dynamique et pertinente sur ce qui nous importe le plus. Centrer les voix marginalisées est crucial pour ce projet. Notre espoir a toujours été de fournir un lieu où les femmes artistes de théâtre peuvent se réunir pour échanger des idées et des opinions contradictoires, même si le fait d'en discuter provoque un malaise - et de grandir tout au long du processus.

Tout en reconnaissant qu'il nous reste beaucoup à apprendre dans la poursuite de cet objectif, nous sommes déterminés à faire de la conférence de Montréal un lieu propice à cette croissance. Nous avons jeté le filet très loin pour que nos jurés, nos dramaturges et les autres artistes de théâtre qui contribuent à la conférence reflètent la diversité des femmes et des dramaturges non binaires du monde entier. Nous avons également conçu une programmation qui traitera de l'impact de la race et de la géographie sur les femmes dramaturges et notre théâtre :

- Une journée dédiée aux autrices et dramaturges autochtones
- Une journée centrée sur le changement climatique qui mettra en lumière le *leadership* des femmes autochtones et l'impact particulier sur les femmes racialisées
- Un *roundtable* d'artistes ayant vécu des persécutions politiques

Nouvelle programmation:

Nous sommes ravies d'annoncer que le WPIM va mettre en place une salle de jeux pour les dramaturges afin qu'ils puissent travailler sur leurs textes:

Afin de privilégier les valeurs d'inclusion et d'accès qui sont au cœur du projet WPIM, la salle de jeu offre aux dramaturges qui ne participent pas à la programmation officielle du congrès l'occasion de partager leurs œuvres et d'obtenir des commentaires de leurs pairs dans un *safe space* détendu. Cette nouvelle addition à la WPIM-Montréal formalise la tradition des mises en lecture informelles organisées par les dramaturges elles-mêmes dans une salle disponible avec la collaboration de quelques amies lors des congrès précédents.

Bien qu'elle ne fasse pas partie de la programmation officielle du congrès, cette activité sera organisée et gérée par notre personnel, avec l'intention d'offrir au plus grand nombre la chance d'y participer. Les dramaturges pourront

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s'inscrire pour faire lire un extrait de leur travail à vive voix ou pour lire le travail d'une autre dramaturge. D'ailleurs, les autrices auront l'option de mener leurs propres lectures, assurées par la présence du personnel du WPIM. La salle de jeu durera quelques heures par jour et se chevauchera avec d'autres activités du congrès. Il est important de noter que la salle de jeu ne sera pas reliée à d'autres organisations ou festivals, à l'exception du congrès WPIM.

Le WPIM organisera également un micro ouvert tous les soirs après la production complète. Les participants pourront y présenter des travaux bruts et inachevés dans un cadre informel et favorable. Ces micros ouverts sont une excellente occasion de se détendre et de nouer des liens avec des artistes du monde entier.

Merci à tous celles qui ont posé d'excellentes questions sur la conférence. Nous travaillons actuellement à l'élaboration d'un document de foire aux questions avec des réponses détaillées. En attendant, nous incluons ici quelques questions et réponses. Si vous avez d'autres préoccupations et/ou questions, n'hésitez pas à nous contacter à notre adresse électronique : wpimontreal2021@gmail.com

Veuillez rejoindre notre groupe Facebook où nous partageons des informations sur la conférence, le Canada et Montréal. C'est aussi un excellent endroit pour commencer à se connaître.

Avec beaucoup d'affection et de respect,

L'équipe WPIMontréal 2022 --Ann, Laura et Ayesha

Merci Abigail

WPIM 2022 tient à remercier notre stagiaire, Abigail Drach, pour son travail exceptionnel sur la conférence de Montréal. Nous lui souhaitons bonne chance dans la poursuite de ses études. Tu vas nous manquer, Abigail!

WPIM 2022--Foire aux questions (FAQ):

Coût de la Participation

Quels sont les frais de conférence (frais d'accréditation) ?

Les frais d'accréditation mentionnés dans chaque lettre font référence aux frais d'inscription à la conférence. Ils s'élèvent à 350 dollars canadiens. Ces frais couvrent le coût d'un petit déjeuner continental, d'un déjeuner et d'une collation pour chacun des cinq jours de la conférence. Il couvre également les cérémonies d'ouverture et de clôture, ainsi que votre admission à tous les programmes.

Comment obtenir un financement pour le voyage et l'hébergement; existe-t-il des subventions et bourses internationales ?

Il existe de nombreuses subventions locales et internationales auxquelles les participants peuvent prétendre. Nous recommandons à chaque autrice dramatique de rechercher d'abord quelles sont les bourses artistiques et de voyage disponibles dans son pays d'origine. Nous vous communiquerons la liste des bourses internationales dans les semaines et les mois à venir. Les dramaturges peuvent également demander (par l'intermédiaire du WPIM) une bourse subventionnée par la guilde des écrivains

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norvégiens. Nous enverrons les directives sur la façon de présenter une demande plus tard cet été.

Quelle est la procédure d'inscription à la conférence et quelles sont les dates limites d'inscription ?

L'inscription en ligne sera ouverte sur notre site web dans la dernière partie de l'année 2020. Nous partagerons le lien et les instructions d'inscription sur tous les médias sociaux et dans un courriel adressé à tous les participants.

Quelles seront les possibilités d'hébergement à Montréal ?

La WPIM travaille avec les hôtels locaux, les hôtels Delta et le Marriott Montréal, pour obtenir un tarif réduit pour les participantes à la conférence. En outre, les participantes peuvent choisir de se loger dans d'autres hôtels ou de louer des chambres chez des particuliers. Nous travaillons également à la recherche d'un hébergement avec des artistes et des sympathisants locaux.

Combien coûteront les autres dépenses ? (Frais de nourriture, frais de voyage, hébergement, déplacements locaux)

Le prix moyen d'un repas complet à Montréal est de $15 à $20 CAD, une collation de $5 à $10 CAD et un café de 3 à 5 $CAD. Cela peut également inclure des boissons (prix moyen $6-10 CAD) si la participante souhaite explorer la vie nocturne de Montréal.
Les frais de voyage varient en fonction de l'endroit d'où la participante vient. Les frais de voyage locaux dépendront de l'endroit où les participants séjournent et de l'importance de leur exploration de Montréal.
Les transports publiques coûtent 3,50 CAD par trajet et les hôtels et le Collège Dawson sont situés près du métro Atwater, qui est accessible en fauteuil roulant.
Un trajet en taxi ou en Uber depuis les hôtels jusqu'au Collège Dawson coûtera environ 10 $CAD.

À propos de la conférence

Où aura lieu la conférence ?

La conférence aura lieu au Collège Dawson, qui se trouve sur les rues Atwater et Sherbrooke à Westmount, Montréal.

Combien de pièces et de dramaturges invitez-vous et de quelles parties du monde viennent-ils ?

Nous avons choisi 84 pièces pour faire partie de la programmation officielle de la conférence de Montréal. Les dramaturges viennent de tous les continents, sauf de l'Antarctique !

Qui autre que les dramaturges est invité ?

Nous espérons inviter des metteurs en scène, des universitaires, des traducteurs, des acteurs, des producteurs, des agents et d'autres artistes et professionnels qui travaillent dans le monde du théâtre et de la performance.

Qui va diriger les ateliers et quels sont les sujets abordés dans les ateliers ?

Des dramaturges, des universitaires, des interprètes et des metteurs en scène animeront des ateliers couvrant un éventail de préoccupations dramaturgiques, esthétiques et politiques auxquelles sont confrontées les femmes et les dramaturges non binaires.
PLUS DE DÉTAILS À SUIVRE.

Productions complètes

Combien de spectacles attendez-vous pour une "production complète" ? Et une estimation du nombre de spectateurs pour chaque spectacle ?

Il y aura environ 10-12 productions complètes à la conférence, avec 2-3 représentations par soir selon la durée de chaque pièce. Le public de chaque spectacle pourra atteindre 183 personnes, car c'est la capacité du théâtre.

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Quel sera le système de sous-titrage de la production ?

Les surtitres en anglais et en français seront projetés sur un écran au-dessus de la scène. Nous organiserons des traductions avec des dramaturges à l'approche des dates de la conférence.

Lectures scéniques (complètes et par extraits)

Dans quelles langues les lectures mises en scène peuvent-elles être effectuées ?

Les lectures mises en scène doivent être en français ou en anglais.

Le festival engagera-t-il des acteurs pour les lectures ?

Oui. Le WPIM engagera et distribuera des acteurs professionnels locaux et formés pour les lectures sur scène et les lectures d'extraits de pièces.

Les acteurs et les techniciens seront-ils rémunérés pour leur travail ?

Oui. Le WPIM rémunèrera tous les acteurs, les metteurs en scène et le personnel technique participant à la conférence.

Quels seront les thèmes des questions-réponses ?

La période de questions-réponses qui suivra chaque lecture portera sur les sujets que le public souhaitera poser au dramaturge.

Y aura-t-il une occasion de présenter le paysage dramatique des pays d'où vient chaque auteur ?

Les dramaturges pourront s'orienter comme elles l'entendent et aborder les questions politiques, culturelles et contexte géographique dont elles sont issues.

Aurai-je l'occasion de présenter/discuter d'autres éléments de mon travail dans les questions-réponses, c'est-à-dire devrais-je envisager de faire traduire mes autres travaux d'ici là ?

Non, la période de questions-réponses ne devrait porter que sur l'œuvre dont la lecture a été mise en scène lors de la conférence. Il n'y a pas de problème si d'autres pièces sont présentées ou si une question porte sur la carrière du dramaturge, mais il n'est pas nécessaire d'apporter les traductions de toute autre œuvre.

La publique doit-il payer pour assister aux lectures mises en scène ?

Les lectures théâtrales sont gratuites pour tous les participantes inscrites à la conférence.

Quelle est la durée des extraits des lectures théâtrales ?

Les extraits ne doivent absolument pas dépasser 20 minutes de représentation. Veuillez donc vous chronométrer avant de soumettre votre extrait.

La salle de jeu des écrivaines

Qu'est-ce que la salle de jeux des écrivaines ?

(Veuillez consulter les informations ci-dessus)

Pouvez-vous envoyer des lettres d'invitation pour la salle de jeux ?

Nous pouvons envoyer des lettres d'invitation pour aider les dramaturges à obtenir un financement pour assister à la Writers' Playroom. Veuillez nous contacter directement à l'adresse **wpimontreal2021@gmail.com** pour en faire la demande.

Y aura-t-il une salle de jeux virtuelle ?

Nous sommes en train de créer un système de salle de jeux en ligne pour les écrivaines, où les auteures peuvent s'engager avant que la conférence n'ait lieu.#

12ava. CONFERENCIA INTERNACIONAL DE DRAMATURGAS DE MONTREAL 2022 (WPIM)

¡Hola a todas con quienes nos vamos a encontrar
en Montreal en 2022!

Como muchas de ustedes saben, **hemos decidido posponer la conferencia internacional de dramaturgas (WPI Montreal) para Junio de 2022.**

Incluso a medida que todas esperamos contar con mayor certeza, aún estamos dedicadas a hacer de WPIMontreal 2022, una enriquecedora experiencia. En conjunto con el Comité de Gestión de WPI, estamos monitoreando la situación local y global de Covid-19. Para muchas de aquellas de regiones más golpeadas, planificar viajes en el futuro puede ser difícil de vislumbrar, es por ello, que estamos comprometidas a tomar decisiones sobre la próxima conferencia con la suficiente antelación de manera que quienes quieran participar cuenten con el tiempo necesario para planificar y hacer los arreglos que crean pertinentes. Entendemos que, por ahora, la prioridad es mantenernos saludables cuidando de nosotras mismas y de quienes nos rodean.

En el transcurso de las últimas semanas, mientras observamos cómo estallan las protestas en todo el mundo y las organizaciones artísticas toman medidas para desmantelar el racismo y otras formas de discriminación, nos hemos inspirado a trabajar más para asegurarnos de que WPIM defienda nuestros valores de antirracismo y equidad. WPIM cree que el teatro logra ser un espacio saludable cuando ofrece una conversación dinámica y relevante sobre lo que más nos importa. Poner luz sobre las voces marginadas es crucial para este proyecto.

Nuestra esperanza siempre ha sido proporcionar un espacio seguro para promover el intercambio de ideas y opiniones entre teatristas y artísticas escénicas -incluso si la misma discusión de ellas genera cierta incomodidad- de manera de poder crecer durante el proceso.

Si bien reconocemos que todavía tenemos mucho que aprender y mejorar en el logro de este objetivo, al mismo tiempo, estamos dedicadas a hacer de la conferencia de Montreal un espacio para dicho crecimiento. Hemos lanzado la red a lo largo y ancho del mundo para que nuestras miembras del jurado, dramaturgas y otras artistas teatrales que contribuyen de manera constante con nosotras, reflejen la diversidad de escritoras, mujeres y no binaries, en todo el mundo. También hemos diseñado una programación que abordará cómo la raza y la geografía impactan a las dramaturgas así como a nuestro teatro:

- Un día dedicado a dramaturgas y narradoras de pueblos originarios.
- Un día centrado en el cambio climático que resaltará el liderazgo de mujeres de pueblos originarios así como el impacto en particular en mujeres de color.
- Un panel con artistas cuya experiencia vivida incluye persecución política.

Estamos encantadas de anunciar que WPIM presentará una Sala de Juegos de Escritoras (Writers' Playroom) para que las dramaturgas lleven a cabo sus trabajos. Surgiendo de los valores de inclusión y acceso que están en el corazón del proyecto WPIM, dicho espacio ofrecerá a las dramaturgas, cuyo trabajo no pudo incluirse en la programación oficial de la conferencia, una oportunidad para compartir algún texto en proceso y recibir comentarios de parte de sus compañeras. Esta nueva incorporación en WPIMontréal formaliza la tradición de lecturas de textos ad hoc en conferencias pasadas donde las dramaturgas se reunían de manera espontánea, en alguna sala, para pedir a sus colegas que leyesen sus trabajos. Si bien no forma parte de la programación oficial de la conferencia, esta iniciativa

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será organizada y dirigida por nuestro personal, con la esperanza de ofrecer la oportunidad de participar a tantas dramaturgas como sea posible. Se llevará a cabo en un ambiente seguro y relajado para que las escritoras compartan su trabajo. Se publicará una hoja de registro donde las dramaturgas pueden registrarse para que se lea en voz alta un extracto de su trabajo o para ayudar a leer el trabajo de otra colega. Las escritoras tendrán la oportunidad de guiar su propia lectura: el personal de WPIM estará allí para garantizar que todo funcione sin problemas. La Sala de Juegos de Escritoras durará unas cuantas horas cada día y se superpondrá con otras actividades programadas en la conferencia. Ten en cuenta que dicha instancia no estará vinculada a ninguna otra organización o festival, más que con la Conferencia WPIM. Presentaremos también un micrófono abierto todas las noches después de función de producción completa. Aquí, las asistentes podrán exhibir el trabajo en bruto y sin terminar en un entorno informal y de apoyo. Estos micrófonos abiertos son una excelente oportunidad para relajarse y relacionarse entre artistas de todo el mundo.

Tus preguntas

Gracias a todas quienes se han comunicado con sus excelentes preguntas en relación a la conferencia. Actualmente estamos trabajando en todos aquellos aspectos planteados para crear un documento de *Preguntas Frecuentes* (FAQ, por sus siglas en inglés Frequently Asked Questions), con respuestas detalladas. Algunas de ellas están incluídas en este mismo boletín informativo más abajo. Si tienes más dudas o consultas, por favor, no dudes en comunicarte con nosotras a: wpimontreal2021@gmail.com

Mientras tanto, únete a nuestro grupo de Facebook donde compartimos información sobre la conferencia, Canadá y Montreal. Este es también un excelente lugar para comenzar a conocernos.

Con mucho amor,

El equipo WPIMontréal 2022 (Ann, Laura, y Ayesha)

Gracias Abigail

WPIM 2022 quisiera agradecer a nuestra interna, Abigail Drach, por su notable labor en la conferencia de Montreal. Le deseamos la mejor de las suertes en esta nueva etapa de estudios que emprenderá. ¡Te extrañaremos, Abigail!

WPIM 2022 – PREGUNTAS FRECUENTES:

COSTO DE ASISTENCIA:

¿Cuál es la tarifa de la conferencia (tarifa de acreditación)?

La tarifa de acreditación mencionada en cada carta se refiere a la tarifa de inscripción para la conferencia. **Ésta es de $ 350 CAD (dólares canadienses).**

Esta tarifa cubre el costo de un desayuno continental, almuerzo y merienda de cada uno de los cinco días de la conferencia. También cubre la asistencia a las ceremonias de apertura y clausura, así como a todas las actividades programadas.

¿Cómo se puede obtener financiación para viajes y alojamiento; ¿hay subvenciones internacionales?

Hay varias subvenciones locales e internacionales que las participantes pueden solicitar. Recomendamos que cada dramaturga primero investigue qué becas de arte y viajes están disponibles en su país de origen. Compartiremos una lista de subvenciones internacionales en las próximas semanas

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y meses. Las dramaturgas también pueden postularse (a través de WPIM) a una beca subvencionada por el *Norwegian Writers Guild*. Estaremos enviando pautas sobre cómo presentar una solicitud más adelante posiblemente el próximo año.

¿Cuál es el proceso y plazos para registrarse en la conferencia?

El **registro en línea** se abrirá en nuestro sitio web hacia el final de 2022. Compartiremos el enlace y las instrucciones de registro en nuestras redes sociales, así como a través de un correo electrónico a todas las participantes.

¿Qué alojamientos estarán disponibles en Montreal?

WPIM está trabajando con los hoteles locales para asegurar una tarifa reducida Por supuesto, también está la posibilidad de quedarse en otros hoteles o arrendar a residentes locales. También estamos trabajando para encontrar alojamiento con artistas locales y seguidores.

¿Cuáles son los otros gastos (aproximados)? (Gastos de comida, gastos de viaje, alojamiento, viajes locales)

Gastos de alimentación extras son todos aquellos ajenos a los que provea la conferencia (es decir, cualquier comida comprada antes o después del inicio o fin de la conferencia, o para complementar la comida provista por la conferencia): el precio promedio de una comida completa en Montreal es $ 15-20 CAD, una merienda $ 5-10 CAD y café $ 3-5 CAD. Esto también podría incluir bebidas (precio promedio $ 6-10 CAD) si la participante desea explorar la vida nocturna de Montreal.

Los **gastos de viaje** variarán de acuerdo a la forma en que la participante desee viajar.

El **alojamiento** costará alrededor de $ 209 / noche por una habitación doble ($ 105 por persona) si la participante se hospeda en los hoteles donde WPIM logre una tarifa grupal. Cabe mencionar que estamos negociando los valores con hoteles para 2022 por lo que estos precios podrían variar.

Los **gastos de viaje locales** dependerán de dónde se hospeden las participantes y cuánto deseen explorar Montreal y sus alrededores. El transporte público cuesta $ 3.50 CAD por viaje. Los hoteles contactados y Dawson College están ubicados cerca del metro de Atwater, que tiene vía de acceso para sillas de ruedas. Un viaje en taxi o Uber desde los hoteles hasta Dawson College costaría aproximadamente $ 10 CAD.

SOBRE LA CONFERENCIA

¿Dónde tendrá lugar la conferencia?

La conferencia se llevará a cabo en **Dawson College**, ubicado en Atwater y Sherbrooke (Westmount, Montreal).

¿Cuántas dramaturgas así como obras de teatro han sido invitadas? ¿De qué partes del mundo provienen?

Hemos elegido 84 obras para ser parte de la programación oficial de la conferencia en la conferencia de Montreal. ¡Las dramaturgas provienen de todos los continentes, excepto de la Antártida!

¿Quién más, aparte de las dramaturgas, está siendo invitadx?

Esperamos contar con directorxs, académicxs, traductores, actrices, actores, productorxs, agentes y otrxs artistas y profesionales que trabajan en el mundo del teatro y el espectáculo.

¿Quién va a dirigir los talleres y cuáles son los temas tratados en ellos?

Dramaturgas, académicxs, artistas y directorxs dirigirán talleres que abarcarán una variedad de temáticas dramatúrgicas, estéticas y políticas que enfrentan las dramaturgas (mujeres y no binaries). **(MÁS DETALLES PRÓXIMAMENTE).**

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PRODUCCIONES COMPLETAS

¿Cuántos espectáculos están previstos para 'producción completa'? ¿Cuál es el número aproximado de asistencia para cada espectáculo?

Habrá alrededor de 10-12 producciones completas en la conferencia, con 2-3 presentaciones por noche dependiendo de la duración de cada obra. La asistencia máxima de personas para cada uno de los espectáculos será de hasta 183 personas, ya que esa es la capacidad máxima de la sala.

¿Cuál será el sistema para los subtítulos de los e spectáculos?

Los súper títulos en inglés y francés se proyectarán en una pantalla sobre el escenario. Vamos a revisar el tema de traducciones con las propias dramaturgas cercano a las fecha de la conferencia.

LECTURAS DRAMATIZADAS (COMPLETAS Y EXTRACTOS)

¿En qué idiomas se pueden realizar las lecturas dramatizadas?

Las lecturas dramatizadas serán o en francés o en inglés.

¿La conferencia contará con actrices, actores para las lecturas?

Sí. WPIM contará con actores y actrices locales, profesionales y capacitadxs para las lecturas dramatizadas (texto completo así como extractos)

¿Se les pagará a las actrices, actores y técnicas por su trabajo?

Sí. WPIM pagará a todxs (directorxs, actrices, actores, personal técnico involucrado en la conferencia).

¿Cuáles serán las temáticas de los conversatorios post lecturas dramatizadas?

El período de preguntas y respuestas después de cada lectura (conversatorio) cubrirá cualquier tema que el público asistente desee preguntarle a la dramaturga.

¿Habrá oportunidad de presentar una panorámica de la dramaturgia local de cada escritora?

Las dramaturgas podrán guiar esto de la manera que consideren conveniente de manera que puedan abordar el contexto político, cultural y geográfico del que provienen.

En caso que mi texto sea leído (de manera completa o un extracto) ¿Tendré la oportunidad para presentar / hablar sobre otras piezas de mi trabajo en la etapa del conversatorio, es decir, debería pensar en contemplar traducciones de otro trabajo listo para entonces?

No, el período de preguntas y respuestas sólo se enfocará en el texto de la lectura. Puede que surjan preguntas relativas a otros textos o carrera de la dramaturga, pero no hay necesidad de llevar traducciones de ningún otro trabajo.

¿Hay algún costo para el público por asistir a las lecturas escenificadas?

Las lecturas dramatizadas son gratuitas para todas las participantes registradas en la conferencia.

¿Cuánto duran los extractos de lecturas dramatizadas?

Los extractos no deben durar más de 20 minutos, así es que tome en cuenta este tiempo antes de enviar su extracto.

¿Los extractos de las obras serán leídos / presentados por actores y, de ser así, hay un límite en el tamaño del reparto?

Los extractos serán presentados por actrices y actores profesionales. No hay límite para el número de reparto, aunque obviamente elencos numerosos no podrán ser contemplados.

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LA SALA DE JUEGOS DE ESCRITORAS

¿Qué es la Sala de Juegos de Escritoras?

(Consulte la información detallada más arriba)

¿Es posible que la organización de la conferencia envíe cartas de invitación para la Sala de Juegos de Escritoras?

Podemos enviar cartas de invitación de manera que las dramaturgas puedan postular a fondos en sus países u otros, para asistir a la Sala de Juegos de Escritoras. Póngase en contacto con nosotros directamente en: **wpimontreal2021@gmail.com** para solicitar una.

¿Habrá una Sala de Juegos de Escritoras virtual?

Actualmente estamos creando un sistema para una Sala de Juegos de Escritoras en línea donde las dramaturgas puedan participar antes de que tenga lugar la conferencia.#

THROWBACK: The participants during the 9th WPI Conference in Stockholm, Sweden (2012).

Meet Melodie Reynolds-Diarra in WPI Montreal

Melodie Reynolds-Diarra is a Wongutha, Nadju/Mirning woman from Western Australia. She made her acting debut at the age of 16 in No Sugar at Belvoir St and went on to graduate from the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA) in 1996.

She has performed in several ABC radio plays and recorded the audio book of My Place. Some of her theatre credits include Coranderrk – **We Will Show the Country** (Ilbijerri Theatre Company/Sydney Opera House), **The Dirty Mile, Chopped Liver** (Ilbijerri Theatre Company), **Black Sheep- Glorious Baastards** (Ilbijerri Theatre Company/Melbourne International Comedy Festival), **Headhunter** (Ilbijerri Theatre Company/ Polyglot Theatre), **Wild Cat Falling, Honey Spot, King For This Place, A Midsummer Night's Dream** (The Dreaming Festival/STC), Actors At Work (Bell Shakespeare), **Holy Day** (Playbox), **Stolen, Shrunken Iris, Master Builder, Quilting the Armour, Yandy** (Black Swan State Theatre Company), **Yibiyung** (Company B), **The Man from Mukinupin** (Melbourne Theatre Company), and **Jackie by Elfriede Jelinek** (Redstitch Theatre). Melodie's television credits include **Natural Justice**, **Broken Shore**, **Hard Rock Medical** and **Redfern Now** series 2.

In 2013 Melodie made her debut in an associate directing role in **The Shadow King** at Malthouse Theatre, and recently has also appeared in the successful 2017, 2018 and 2019 seasons of **Black is the New White** for Sydney Theatre Company. In 2018 Melodie's first play **Skylab** made its world premiere in Perth, as a co-production with Black Swan and Yirra Yarkin Theatre companies.

I was born in Wongatha country, Kalgoorlie, inland Western Australia red desert country, where our diet of Marlu (Red Kangaroo) is common, the tail being a delicacy. Not far away in the coastal town of Esperance in Noongar country, is where I grew up. Imagine the whitest beaches on the Australian coast where the sand is like squeaky icing sugar, with clear blue waters surrounding an archipelago of more than one hundred islands. We camp near the beach next to the dunes and fresh water creeks filled with crayfish, eating freshly caught abalone, huge silver salmon, and the odd fat bardi ("witchetty grub") out of a wattle tree.

Farther east is my Grandmothers' country, Ngadju/Mirning, where red desert suddenly drops several hundred feet into the deep blue ocean which, as a young child, I easily mistook for the edge of the world. For many years I have been invited to travel all over our continent of several hundred Aboriginal nations as a performer, but I have never been overseas. Being invited to Montreal by the Turtle Island First Nations is an honour and I am very excited to meet fellow Aboriginal artists and share ideas, thoughts, feelings and smiles.

First peoples of our Mother Earth have challenges in this society that tries to separate everything, but our spirits coming together is of a high frequency vibration that continues to strengthen and connect us all.

'Skylab' is the first play I have written, the spark was the real event of a space station crashing to earth near my hometown, and my fascination with metaphysics. Also Earth, a scientific, genetic and social experiment, is analogous to a Lab in the Sky so to speak.

The so called "junk DNA" of this Aboriginal family is activated and they proceed to manifest their reality with their conscious thoughts. I wanted to contrast the financial powers of the invaders versus the spiritual power of the Aboriginal peoples of this earth, but found it difficult to express because spiritual evolution comes from a high frequency.

How can this high frequency exist in this third dimensional context that is stuffed with material distractions, mental and emotional programming and delusions of financial power? I believe that's all our challenge to grow together with love in today's world.#

Reflection

by: Rosemary Johns

On Saturday June 6th, a Black Lives Matter march took place in Melbourne, despite COVID restrictions of no more than 20 people gathering in public.

My photo is only one small moment in a march that thousands joined to acknowledge the worldwide protest against the brutal death of George Floyd at the hands of American police. The international groundswell following his death has been a catalyst to once again highlight the systemic racism in the Australian prison system which has led to over 462 Aboriginal deaths in custody since 1991. The group I marched with were allies and supporters drawn from many different non-indigenous communities who clapped their hands to the chant led by Aboriginal bikers, "Always was, always will be, Aboriginal land".

(The invasion of Aboriginal land in 1788 was justified by British colonisers by the claim that Australia was "terra nullius" or a land that belonged to no-one. This fallacy was eventually overturned when Eddie Mabo, a Torres Strait Islander, successfully campaigned for indigenous land rights. His case was won posthumously in the High Court of Australia in 1992.)

Thousands of allies went to the march last Saturday to listen, reflect, and acknowledge the terrible history of brutality against First Nations people in Australia, the genocide that followed the frontier wars, the stolen generations, the deaths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander prisoners, and the everyday harassment of our indigenous population at the hands of police and dominant white culture.

As Australian theatre makers, we have a long history of intercultural creative practice that has brought together indigenous and non-indigenous artists. We not only march in public protests against racism, we work together to implement blind casting in our industry, demand equal opportunity for our BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) writers, encourage diverse audiences in our theatres, and celebrate BIPOC lived experience on our stages.

As Vice-President of WPI , I am one of two white women on the current Management Committee , (the other being the Canadian conference co-convener). Every week, we join our colleagues from South America, Africa and Spain in meetings chaired by our President, August Andong from the Philippines. Our mandate as a committee is to create a supportive platform for female playwrights from around the world, and particularly, to make space for voices of those oppressed by systems of privilege.

In each country, privilege is tied to social systems that use discriminatory practices to create social inequalities and the ways in which race, gender, caste, geography, culture, religion, income and sexuality are used to oppress the 'other' have different intersectional patterns.

The current worldwide protests sparked by the tragic death of George Floyd have encouraged WPI to look

Reflection (cont.)

deeply at its history, and consider whether discourses embedded in its Constitution, as well as the by-laws that govern its practices, have unacknowledged traces of dominant Western white thinking.

The organisation began with a conference in the United States and then moved to two post-colonial sites: Canada and Australia. Although the organisation has always been as vocally anti-racist as it is anti-patriarchal, what was its speaking position in the late 1980s and early 1990s? As it began in white Anglo cultures, do traces of its origins still ghost the present?

In 2022, the WPI Conference will return for the first time in eighteen years to North America. Our President, Management Committee and members come from all over the world, but in this moment of reflection, that has been triggered by recent events, we are re-examining our past to help us shape our future.

So in the upcoming conference in Montreal, WPI is taking again the challenge to open the table for discussion and face-to-face debate on the relevant issues and concerns that daunted the past, present and future of all indigenous peoples, women of colour or individuals of various races around the world.

We look forward to a constructive exchange of knowledge and experiences which will be valuable inputs to the renewal of our Constitution as a multi-lingual, truly international document for the twenty-first century. As always, we stand together in solidarity.#

Rosemary Johns
Playwright and Performer based in Melbourne, Australia

Currently, the Vice President of WPI Management Committee and Representative for Oceania Region

Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides:

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

The Evolution of Women in Theatre in Africa

by: Achiro P. Olwoch

Growing up in the 80's, going to the theatre was such a treat and it did not really matter what was showing. In Uganda we only had two functioning theatres and I remember my parents used to take me to this particular one that was owned by a theatre company that had a show every Sunday. These theatre production companies were owned and run by men and it was men who wrote the scripts. The only time that a woman would feature is if she had a part as an actress in the play. Sometimes even this was a stretch as some women roles were played by men. It was not for the lack of female actors, it was considered funny when men acted like women. The ridiculousness of their appearance and over acting amused the audiences. At that time, there was no mention of sexuality or homosexuality at all. It was a taboo subject that did not come up. So the copying of women was mainly for entertainment purposes and not trying to mimic a feminine man.

At Makerere University, (the major one at the time) there was a course 'Music, Dance and Drama' (MDD) that was only taken by students who had failed to get into any of the other courses. At least that is the way it was portrayed. This course did not even come up as a subject of discussion during career counselling. The acronym M.D.D was spelled out as 'Musilu Dala Dala' which in English means 'a very stupid person. Thus, the students who took this course were not taken very seriously.

Still there were a number of women who went ahead and did this course either by choice or having been forced to do it so they could have a University degree. They still did not feature center stage at this time as this was not a very viable profession for women. Still, there were lots of drama productions from 'all girl' schools from around the country which would be shown at the National theatre. These girls' made it seem possible that there was a place for women on the stage and that this was something that women could excel at. As a result, more and more women started writing and directing their own plays. They were often produced by men but at least their voices were being heard. Their stories were being told.

"Bridge of Roses" by Mashirika Performing Arts and Media Company during the Ubumuntu Arts Festival (2015).

Women in Theatre in Africa (cont.)

Historically, theatre in most African countries has been a vehicle for carrying forth folk lore and culture. That's why even today community theatre is very much widespread in especially the rural areas around the different countries in Africa. It has also been a place where women can express themselves and share their ideas. This is the platform that many women have exploited over the years.

Subjects of gender based violence and equality in the sexes have been written about and presented on various stages in multitudes of languages. This is the stage where many women have found their voice in the theatre. It has taken a long while coming and the journey has not been a smooth one having to fight off the competition with the men who already have a place there; but slowly and surely, the women's voices in theatre around Africa has started to be heard.
More subjects that have been addressed by women include, among others, HIV/AIDS awareness, female adult literacy, women's and children's rights, health issues such as malaria, clean water and vaccination, the household shopping basket, and new agricultural techniques. Popular theatre is also used as a way to promote political participation, including through elections, and as a means to discuss contentious issues like the impact of commercial farming on food crops, female circumcision, foreign debt and prostitution.
In some cases, performances have also focused on issues facing popular theatre itself, such as concerns about economic viability or female actors.

The concept of theatre has particular connotations in Africa due to its historical use for religious and ritualistic purposes, as well as to celebrate social events. In the pre-colonial period, a combination of activities including poetry, myths, songs, dance, acting, wrestling and even serving various dishes took place over a period of time, sometimes days or even weeks, in one all-encompassing performance. Modern theatre, particularly popular theatre or theatre for development, has evolved from these traditional activities and the term in Africa has, therefore, a broader connotation than in other parts of the world.

"Engaging with the young audience" by Mashirika Performing Arts and Media Company during the Ubumuntu Arts Festival (2015).

Today, the story of women being marginalized in the field of theatre is completely taking a 360 turn. This not just in Uganda but around Africa. More and more, women have risen in the theatre industry and are taking it by the horns. For this article, I will be using two women as a case study. Adong Lucy Judith of Silent Voices Uganda and Hope Azeda, who is the proprietor of Ubumuntu Arts festival as well as the creative director and mentor at Mashiriki Performing Arts and Media Company in Rwanda. These two women are both power houses and have made great leaps and strides in promoting theatre in their respective countries and the rest of Africa and are both re-known the world over.

Adong Lucy Judith went to University around the time MDD was considered the course for stupid people; now as a result of her success more young people are doing this course at the same University where she also taught as Lecturer. This is the same with Hope Azeda in Rwanda. Both women are not just performers but are also mentors. They are handing down their knowledge to the next generations. In a generation that is consumed with film and music; the glamour of film and music stars, young people who want to be in the entertainment industry mainly gravitate toward music and film and completely ignore theatre.

Women in Theatre in Africa (cont.)

"Generation 25" by Mashirika Performing Arts and Media Company during the Ubumuntu Arts Festival (2015).

"Light a Candle in Arts Collective" by Mashirika Performing Arts and Media Company during the Ubumuntu Arts Festival (2015). Photo by George Kamau and Daniel Ecwalu

Even the theatres that used to be a comfort in our childhood are only filled by grownups these days. The younger generation does not seem to enjoy the plays that we found extra intriguing, but these two women are making theatre sexy again. They are giving the younger generation a stake in it by teaching them and allowing them to use their voices and their talents to express themselves in theatre.

Adong's Silent Voices Uganda offers a director's mentorship and internship program every year to both emerging and established directors from in and around Africa at no cost to the participants. Each participant gets to direct a scene in a play that Ms. Adong has picked. They engage in all the basics of production from the directing to the management of the other departments engaged in producing a play. With the fact that there is little or no financing available to produce a play, the participants are taught how to handle all departments or at least given a general knowledge how to manage them in the event that they are caught in a situation where they cannot afford personnel in particular departments.

After the genocide in Rwanda, the country and the people were broken. Hope Azeda used theatre and performances to help the young people cope with the trauma they and their families had experiences.

Over the years, she has grown a number of young voices both male and female to have the freedom to express themselves in different forms of theatre. She has gone a step further and each year holds the Ubumuntu Theatre Festival inviting artists from around the world with similar voices. Her Mashiriki Performing Arts and Media Company is at the forefront for using theatre for development. They are more than just an entertainment entity and go ahead to engage communities in Rwanda and the rest of the world with their home grown methodologies. Mashiriki through different modes of performances constantly explore new ways to develop, learn and create exciting theatre.

In general, most countries in Africa do not promote theatre and theatrical activities. As a result there is little or no funding at all and artists have to fend for themselves. Also, the perception that theatre is too huge an undertaking for women is a silent reason many women shy away from it. It has been deemed that being involved in theatre marks a woman as 'unfit for marriage' and 'a woman should busy herself with

Women in Theatre in Africa (cont.)

household requirements' instead of theatre. Theatres also are mainly run by men so women do not have a powerful voice as a result. Thus, material and financial constraints end up being a huge barrier to many women to join theatre.

Still, women's organisations and women led groups use theatre to make their voices heard. They also involve women of all ages to get the points across. The messages are not only geared for women but for whole communities as well. They often manage to pull off performances that cannot otherwise be done by popular theatre companies.

Supporting women in theatre is intricate in supporting them in their communities. More and more women are going to school to study theatre because they want to make a difference in their communities. Now, the Music Dance and Drama course is not considered as a course for the stupid or disadvantaged students, it has instead become a well sought subject standing high among the other previously superior courses at the University.

Still, voices and the successes of women like Adong and Hope are an inspiration to women everywhere showing that it is possible to have a life out of the theatre and have a thriving life as a woman in theatre in a continent like Africa. These are just three women from three countries in Africa that are making a difference. There are countless other women in these same three countries as well as in the other 52 countries of Africa that cannot all be named that are involved in theatre and have transformed theatre on this continent. More and more we have a number of women involved in theatre in different departments and more and more our voices as women on the continent is being heard.#

(The opinions in this article are solely of the writer who is a theatre practitioner in Uganda.)

Achiro Patricia Olwoch
Writer, Playwright and Filmmaker in Uganda

Currently, the WPI Management Committee Representative for Africa Region

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10 provides:

Reducing inequalities and ensuring no one is left behind are integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Target 10.2 By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status.

Imprint: The WPI Philippines' Festival of Plays

by: Rosemary Johns

In 2020, just as COVID-19 was striking, I attended the *Festival of Women's Plays (*March 6-8) in Manila. It was a remarkable event, with Readathon, performances and forums in the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP).

The hospitality shown to the overseas delegates (Leticia Arbelo from Argentina, and myself, as participating playwrights with readings) was overwhelming. We met student performers who did a remarkable job (including the Theater group, Maskara Theatre Ensemble of Bacolod City who read an excerpt from my play *Tchekov at the House of Special Purpose,* the reading of Leticia's *Prisoner* and powerful actors in the evening shows: the compelling and compassionate *Nagligad St. cor. Subong St*. by August Melody Andong, the powerful *Rape Buzz* by Dessa Quesada Palm, and the vibrant , hallucinatory *Ambisyosong Langaw* set on a rubbish heap by J. Olano at Flor Salanga, to name but a few.

The playwrights works in the Readathon, revealed a deep, rich history and an incredible range of issues explored in their work, armed conflict, homelessness, ways to fight poverty, oppression, struggles of colonial and post-colonial history. The very strong extract from *Antigone versus the People of the Philippines by* Geene Sabrina Saddul Basilio, raised the question who is innocent and who is guilty. There were readings of domestic tales of *aswang*, vampire like beings from folk culture, and how to deal with sanitization in remote rural regions - in a street play about a love affair between a fly and a pile of poo.

There were discussions of playwrights as cultural warriors, coming from the space of courage and freedom, speaking to their elders and discovering the deep cultural traditions in their communities.

The playwrights ranged in age from students to senior writers. I participated in a forum with the luminous and thought-provoking Professor Luna Sicat- Cleto. I was totally engaged in the forum discussion about identity, place, and the ramifications of post conflict with speakers Leticia Arbelo, Dessa Queseda Palm and Jehanne Mutin. Jehanne spoke of a film being made in Mindanao/Marawi about the siege. Directors and actors are welcome there, yet the people affected by the siege are forbidden to go back to Marawi to see what has happened to their houses: what has been shelled, or looted, or burnt out.

Rosemary Johns with Readathon Convener and award-winning Filipino playwright Glenn Mas and the actors of Maskara Theatre Ensemble who performed *Tchekov at the House of Special Purpose*

Imprint (cont.)

With speakers, I was moved by the special message delivered by **Amelia Lapena- Bonifacio**, **National Artist for Theatre**. Amelia was the first theatre artist in the Philippines, to write for children. "I don't write for children who are bullies, but smaller children who use their brains" and her advice to writers to create relationships with visual artists, the best friends to shape your work.

I need to mention here that - apart from the forums conducted in English- performances and most plays in the Readathon were in Tagalog or Filipino.

Keseyehen or *T'boli Marriage* by the T'Boli Artists Collective

I had translators sometimes, but found myself mesmerised by following the plays in different ways, through the gestural, through choreography and cued by audience responses to actors. It meant watching and listening intently.

The richness of culture and celebration of diversity across the 7641 islands that make up the Philippines was inspirational. Captured in part by indigenous performers in the work, *Keseyehen* or *T'boli Marriage* by the T'Boli Artists Collective of Lake Sebu, South Cotabato. The diversity of form and structure - complex and compelling. It made me rethink my own approach to playwriting, and at what point does the story commence, when is the right time to tell story. Framed by the resounding statement, "It is our ignorance that will kill us".

The Philippines is truly the beating heart of WPI and I would like to extend my thanks to August Andong, WPI President, Tanya Lopez and Glenn Mas, co-convenors, Nikki Torres who ran the performances of the festival at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Tessa Belleza, all the organizers for the event. Angel who stood in, with poise and grace, for August at times, and Beverly and Sherwyn who showed me around Manila. Malou Jacob also took Leticia and me one lunchtime - to the

Multi-awarded Filipino playwright Malou Jacob, President of WPI Philippines and Member of the WPI Advisory Committee

wonderful Solidaridad Bookshop- a place of revolutionary thought and upstairs theatre meetings.

This brings me to the performance of Malou Jacob' s (Founder and President of WPI Philippines) remarkable *Batang Mujahideen* in the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino (CCP Little Theater). The play will stay imprinted on my mind.

Leticia and I were given last minute tickets to this sell out show. The work is centred around the war in

Imprint (cont.)

Mindanao and focuses on a child soldier. There was no translation but the piece was extraordinary.

The audience were seated in the round. The play was multidisciplinary - with a child size puppet, representing a child soldier, and a team of actors playing multiple roles as religious and political factions torn apart by conflict.

Anger, terror, revenge, and fear washed across the stage in a tightly choreographed suspenseful and challenging work. From the opening moments when each actor washed their hands in metal vessels passed from one actor to another, to the climactic moment as masses of spent cartridge cases and bullets fell from the lighting bars onto the stage, the work was immersive and haunting.

Ambisyosong Langaw performed by Pasay City North High School Theater Group

Rape Buzz performed by Youth Advocates Through Theater Arts (YATTA) of Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental,

In an exchange with WPI Philippines, and in celebration of our international connection - Liz Jones, AO, Artistic Director and CEO of La Mama, invited one play from the Readathon to be programmed at La Mama. The quality and rich variety of the work presented, made it difficult to choose one play only. Finally, it was decided through a discussion with Readathon convenors, playwright and theatre director Tanya Lopez and award winning playwright Glenn Mas, and myself that three short extracts from three plays would be selected. The selected works were: *Original Grace* by Dr. Elsie Martinez -Coscolluela, *The Ghost Ship* by Maria Theresa Belleza and *Tabula Rasa* by Pneuma Lorenzo.

Postscript

The innovation of the event is very exciting . Liz Jones' strong vision means that this invitation has opened up this wonderful collaboration. As Vice President of WPI it is exciting to see this come to fruition. The Filipino Playreadings are programmed for La Mama on the 5th December 2020 and the event is already sold out.#

Filipino playwrights Jehanne Mutin and Dessa Quesda-Palm together with Argentinian playwright Leticia Arbelo during the panel discussion *on Mandudulang Babae, Mandudulang Bagani* (Playwright as Woman, Playwright as Hero)

Women's Views

From March 6 – 8, I was unbelievably privileged to take part in the Festival of Plays by Women, a project of the institution I have worked and lived in for over twenty years and the members of the Philippine chapter of the Women Playwrights International. Every single woman in WPI Philippines is a friend, a colleague and a human being for which I have nothing but the highest regard.

Am I playwright? No
Am I an actor? No
Am I part of the audience? No

But I AM a woman. A woman tasked with helping, behind the scenes, to make the dreams of my beloved sisters, each a brilliant writer, come true. And so we did. We talked, we worked, we put things together.

And so it happened. The women and the artists came from all over the country. From the far south, came an indigenous group whose work brought everyone to tears. From the Visayas, a brilliant actress brought life to the words of a beautiful friend. From Manila, a woman known as a journalist showed her skills as a playwright, entrusting her work to young, underprivileged secondary school students.

And upstairs – there were still more performances. Almost better than the performances were the endless discussions.
In the fora, in the hallways of the CCP and across the street where we gathered for meals and drinks.

Stories were celebrated and friendships reaffirmed.
What a wonderful, wonderful week it was.

In the end, at the very end, the Festival of plays by women

Was about women who write and their works.
It was not about coffee and food at meetings.
It was about artists who came with enthusiasm despite all funding issues.

It was not about decor or televisions or markets
It was about a group of women, finding ways to push the interests of their gender mates, to promote the artistry of other women with the public.
It was about recognition.
It was about ownership of a project, of a work, of a cause.
And so in the end,
The works of great women artists were showcased
And WPI Philippines triumphed.....with help from my beloved CCP

BRAVO!

Nikki Garde Torres
Writer and Events Manager of the special programs, workshops and performances at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Previous projects with WPI Philippines include the 2nd Conference of Asian Women and Theatre (2000) held at the National Arts Center, Mt. Makiling, Laguna and the 6th WPI Conference (2003) in Manila, Philippines

Events around the World

WORLD MIME ORGANISATION
ORGANISATION MONDIALE DES MIMES

The third **World Mime Conference** will be held online from 10 to 13 of December 2020 in partnership with the Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre. This partnership is one of the results of the meeting of the Partner Organisations arranged by the headquarters of International Theatre Institute (ITI) in November 2019, in Shanghai. The World Mime Organization (WMO) is grateful to ITI and its role in the development of international relations and joint activities with WMO.

Excellent discussions include: the art of mime, non-verbal theatre and associated arts, tradition and new technologies. During the Conference, there will be workshops, master-classes and presentations, held by master mime artists and professors.

If you want to participate, please send us an email to office@worldmime.org.

Please send us your full name, country and email, and add some words expressing your interest and some brief information about your background.

Contact:
office@worldmime.org
www.worldmime.org
www.facebook.com/worldmime

This 112-page publication, with a foreword by Ernesto OTTONE, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture, has just been released. It focusses on Culture's role in sustainable development, the key concepts and approaches; on UNESCO Culture Conventions and Programmes towards the agenda 2030; on the overall purpose and guiding principles; it illustrates how Culture fits in the Sustainable Development Goals and informs about the methodological approach and describes the indicators. The publication is available in English, French and Spanish (online).

You may download the Anglophone and Francophone versions here:
https://www.iti-worldwide.org/pdfs/CULTURE2030IndacatorsEN.pdf

Ballet Dancer Friedemann Vogel selected to write the message for **International Dance Day 2021**

The International Dance Committee of ITI and World Dance Alliance, is taking the opportunity of giving attention to World Ballet Day which is celebrated on 29 October. They also want to inform you that the Friedemann Vogel, the outstanding and internationally celebrated Ballet Dancer from Stuttgart (Germany) has been selected to write the official message for International Dance Day 2021 – celebrated on 29 April. Friedemann Vogel is the Principal Dancer of the Stuttgart Ballet and a frequent guest artist at major ballet companies around the world including La Scala Theatre Ballet in Milan and the Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow.

If you are interested in receiving more information about International Dance Day, the message of Friedemann Vogel (when it is ready), and the International Dance Committee, please write to Email: idd2021@iti-worldwide.org

Photo credit: Yoon6photo

The Special Edition of the General Assembly is conceived as an online artistic exhibition of what the ITI Centres, ITI projects groups and partners of ITI are currently doing or planning. The exhibition is consisting of brief presentations of ITI Centres, ITI Committees, Forums and Networks and ITI Partner Organizations, as well as the keynote speeches. The whole can be watched by ITI members, friends and everybody who has an interest for it. It will be made available at first "live over Zoom on Facebook"; and after the event in a recorded form. Through this exhibition, ITI Centres, Committees, Forums, Networks and Partner Organizations of ITI can exchange information with each other as well as sharing their experience with the worldwide performing arts community.

The Goals of ITI for such a gathering online are strengthening the communication and dialogue, building up solidarity and encouraging each other at this particular period of the pandemic. ITI, the world's largest organization for the Performing Arts, is determined to take action and to demonstrate the power of the Performing Arts has for society, locally and globally.

International Theatre Institute
World Organization for the Performing Arts

ITI General Assembly Special Edition 2020

Schedule (Subject to change.)

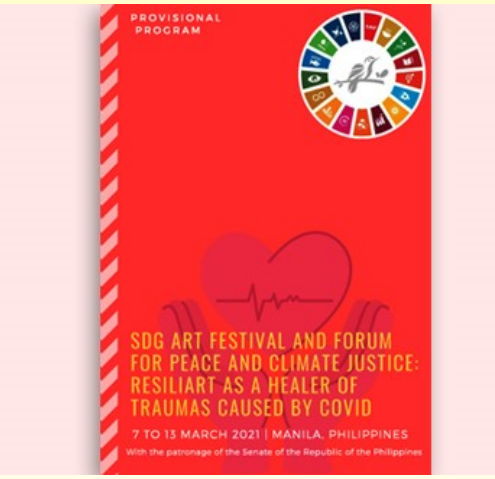
ITI General Assembly Special Edition
Thursday, 10 December to Tuesday, 15 December 2020

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 4	Day 5
Thursday 10 December	Friday 11 December	Saturday 12 December	Sunday 13 December	Monday 14 December	Tuesday 15 December
Paris, France (GMT +1) 14h00 - 16h00	Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso (GMT +0) 13h00 - 16h00	Dubai, UAE (GMT +4) 17h00 - 20h00	Shanghai Time (GMT+8) 21h00 - 00h00	Paris, France (GMT+1) 14h00 - 17h00	Paris, France (GMT +1) 14h00 - 16h00
Opening Ceremony	Video Presentations (Centres, Committees, Partner Organization & Special Projects)				*Internal Meeting* *For ITI Members only*
Speeches	Discussion				

Meeting on zoom

Streaming on LIVE

The registration is available now until Sunday, **6 December 2020.** For more details on how to participate and register, please visit: **www.iti-congress.org**



Philippine Centre of ITI – SDG Arts Festival & Forum for Peace and Climate Justice

7 to 14 March 2021
Manila, Philippines

Under the guidance of Cecile Guidote-Alvarez, President of the Philippine Centre of ITI & Artist for Peace of UNESCO, and Viktor Sebek, President of the South-South Cooperation Council for Sustainable Development (SSCC) the SDG Arts Festival & Forum for Peace and Climate Justice is already in full preparation. Together with a multitude of partners, including UNESCO and ITI, a week-long event is planned with a conference, with a performing arts festival, with an art camp and so on.

Call for Participation: If you would like to participate or if you would offer a performance for the event, please get in touch with both:

Cecile Guidote-Alvarez
(Email) cecilealvarez@icloud.com,
and Viktor Sebek
(Email) vsebek2008@gmail.com.

They will inform you about hosting and condition for the performances (max. 30 minutes).

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Rosemary Johns

Conference Conveners
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Women Playwrights International is a proud partner organization of
INTERNATIONAL THEATRE INSTITUTE
www.iti-worldwide.org