

ENICPA round table meeting 2010

October 15 - 16, Prague

Hosted by Arts and Theatre Institute

by Piia Ahonen and Bianca de Waal

Participants:

Piia Ahonen	Dance Info Finland
Bianca de Waal	Theater Instituut Nederland
Martina Černá	Arts and Theatre Institute Prague
Dorota Buchwald	Institut Teatralny Warszawa
Catalina Gonzalez	Centro Documentacion Artes Escénicas de Andalucia
Sari Havukainen	Finnish Theatre Information Centre (TINFO)
Elisabeth Leinslie	Norwegian Association for Performing Arts/NAPA
Bart Magnus	Vlaams Theater Instituut
Michael Freundt	German Centre of the ITI
Monika Krawul	Institut Teatralny Warszawa
Ondrej Svoboda	Arts and Theatre Institute Prague
Dana Tomečková	Divadelný ústav

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 15

The roundtable meeting began with welcoming words from **Ondrej Svoboda** from the Arts and Theatre Institute (ATI).

Michael Freundt also welcomed all the participants and shortly described the history of the network and it's core activities, the responsibilities of the board etc.

Michael also described how the network had some years ago a big project, which consisted of creating a large database on the ENICPA website. The databases did however turn out to be too difficult to maintain.

As a result the current board has tried to make the function of the network more focused. After all, it is a network of information and documentation specialists. This means the core of the network are the meetings and the other offline activities, where exchange of know-how and informal professional training take place.

The themes for this roundtable meeting were selected last spring with this in mind: what are the current questions and challenges the different member organisations have to deal with?

After a short introductory round, Ondrej gave a presentation about the ATI. The institute just celebrated its 50th anniversary. The name was changed to Arts and Theatre Institute in 2007. The two parts of the institute work both with performing arts, but their functions are quite different.

The Theatre Institute focuses on documentation and research. It is for example the only organisation in Czech Republic that conducts theatre research. The Theatre Institute is also an important publisher of theatre books, and it has a vast library. The TI also has an international department, which does different kinds of promotional activities, e.g. organises a showcase of Czech Theatre.

The Arts Institute focuses more on cultural policy making. The AI hosts several web pages that provide practical information. It is also the Cultural Contact Point in Czech Republic.

For more information, see the [Power Point file by Ondrej](#).

After Ondrej's presentation the artistic director of the Prague Quadrennial, **Sodja Lotker** presented shortly the concept of the PQ 2011. There are some considerable changes to earlier PQs because the main venue partly burned. This has forced the PQ to spread out to several locations in the city. The

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change will make it easier to explore the theme of the PQ: in which kind of spaces do the performing arts happen today?

For more information, see <http://www.pq.cz>

The next presentation was by **Veronika Štefanová** from the bibliography department of the Theatre Institute. The department documents articles written about Czech theatre. They follow both domestic and international magazines. All the articles are noted down in a database, some articles are also scanned. The database is connected to the Czech National Bibliography.

The scanned articles can only be seen within the ATI, due to copyright issues. Also, the database search does not cover the content of the article, because they are saved as a photo file. It was mentioned that in the similar databases in the Theatre Instituut Nederland and Institut Teatralny Warszawa, searches can also be made in the contents. For example TIN saves the scanned article both as a photo and as a text file. The Polish Institute has found a way around the copyright issue by requiring user to register, if they want to browse the articles.

General Assembly

The following financial matters were discussed:

- Follow-up of budget 2010 (membership fees paid)
- Discussion & approval of proposed budget 2011

The budget for 2010 holds no surprises. The two notable things are that invoices for the membership fees 2010 have not yet been sent out and that the budget includes fees connected with the new website.

The current situation with the invoices is a result of the fact that Dries Moreels from the VTi resigned from the board. The board is in discussion with VTi and with an outside bookkeeper called Klaus Ludwig. The economic advisor of VTi has suggested that perhaps Mr Ludwig could take care of the financial matters altogether, as there is no real reason why VTi should be involved, even if ENICPA is residing "in the care of" the VTi. It was thus decided that discussion with both VTi and Klaus Ludwig will be continued, in order to find out how the situation can be handled. It was also told that the board had chosen Bianca de Waal as treasurer.

Michael then represented shortly the budget for 2011. The most notable things had to do with the new website and the travel programme.

The board explained that in their view the most important activity in 2011 should be the finishing of the new website. The project was already started in 2009, but due to several reasons the site is not up and running. The board thus suggested that ENICPA employs at least two people: one to take care of the technical side of the project in collaboration with the chosen web company (Metallic Avocado), and one who edits and collects the basic contents of the site. The technical part is already budgeted for 2010, the editing for 2011.

The budget for 2011 also includes 2 x 800 euros for the costs of the travel programme (see further below). It was suggested that the costs for administration should be raised from 300 € to 600 €, to cover the possible fees of Mr Ludwig. The budget for 2011 was approved.

Activities for 2011

Travel programme. The board represented in the roundtable meeting in Aix-en-Provence in 2009 a plan for a travel subsidy program. The idea is to support the costs of short visits between two member organisations up to 800 €. The idea is to thus support the knowledge exchange also between meetings. The current budget covers two visits per year.

In order to apply either the person travelling or the inviting organisation have to write an open application letter to the board, explaining the aim of the visit etc. In return for the 800 € the visiting

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person or the inviting body have to write a short report afterwards, reporting the results of the visit. This way possible new ideas or insights can be shared with the rest of the network.

So far no one has applied for the support, mostly because the board has not communicated about the programme clearly enough. Piia Ahonen will write a short info about the programme after the meeting and send it to all the members.

Dance Video Navigator. DVN is the last joint project of ENICPA that has been realised. It is a meta database based on rss technology, containing information about the different dance video databases of the ENICPA members. There have been recurring technical problems in the system and now the question is how to proceed with the project.

It was decided that the project should be evaluated in order to see if some parts of it could be taken in the new website. Also, Michael and Bianca will contact **Luciano Brogi**, who has been taking care of the DVN, to see what the future of the project looks like from the technical side. If the problems seem to multiply, it is probably sensible to end the project. In any case a report should be made of the entire project and it should be posted publicly on the ENICPA website.

Also **Playservice.net** was mentioned shortly, even though it is not an ENICPA project. However, several members are partners in the project, which is based on similar kind of technology as DVN, and it has also suffered from same kind of problems.

New website. In addition to the things mentioned in connection with the budget, the board told shortly about the contents of the new website. The most important thing to be transported from the old site is the list of the information centres in Europe. It has already been decided earlier that the old databases will not be brought to the new site. They are already obsolete and the upkeeping requires too much work from the members.

Instead, the website will concentrate on the ENICPA members and the meetings. It will also provide a short links lists about the different sources of European wide information about the performing arts.

Collaboration with other networks and projects. The network will continue to keep its members informed about the EU mobility pilot projects. The SPACE project is closest to ENICPA due to the fact that quite a few members are either partners or others wise connected to the project.

It seems that the new developments of On-the-move (OTM) network might make it more relevant for ENICPA, and the relationship of the two networks should be developed. However, the missions of the networks are so different that they are both needed. But it might be sensible to continue to coordinate when it comes to the scheduling of meetings etc.

The meetings in 2011. In the past few years ENICPA has held a smaller meeting in Spring (General Assembly at least) and a two-day round table meeting in the fall. At some point the spring meeting was held in connection with the IETM spring plenary meeting, but that seems no longer to be a convenient context. The board will thus see if the spring meeting could be joined with a meeting of the OTM.

It is also possible to turn the schedule around and have the bigger meeting in the spring and a smaller one in the fall, for example in connection with the planned meeting of SPACE. In any case the scheduling of the fall meeting has to be made more carefully, as the dates for this meeting conflicted with many other meetings.

If the big meeting would be held already in the spring, the host for that meeting should be found quite quickly. Dorota said that there might be something happening in Poland at the end of April / beginning of May, that could possibly provide a good context for the roundtable meeting.

The board promised to send an email to all members about the meetings and ask for suggestions. Also, the board elections are to take place in the fall of 2011, so the board will also inform about this in good time. Member organisations are encouraged to think if they could suggest candidates for board membership.

Presentations

Bart Magnus presented shortly the current situation of the Travelogue project, which deals with the statistics about touring of the performing arts in Europe, and is one part of the SPACE project. There are now two parts in the Travelogue prototype that visualise the inserted dataset. Namely, there are country profiles and a map showing where the European performing arts have toured. The prototype can be seen online:

<http://www.arts-mobility.info/map>

<http://www.arts-mobility.info/countries>

For more information, see the [PowerPoint file of Bart](#).



Piia Ahonen described shortly a project where Tanka – the Finnish Dance Database has been published as linked open data. She described some of the challenges in the project: finding the right partner, learning how to speak the same language with technical partner, dealing with corrupted data in the previous version of Tanka, etc. She also mentioned that publishing Tanka as linked data is the first part of a bigger project where Dance Info Finland aims to integrate their web performance calendar, the publishing of statistics and Tanka, by using linked data.

Elisabeth Leinslie represented Sceneweb, a database about the performing arts in Norway, currently under construction. The aim is to create a database that would especially store information about the freelance field in Norway. The database will have information about current performance and also about the historical performances. NAPA is negotiating with a few other organisations about collaboration. A beta version of the database will be published at some time during the winter 2011 at www.sceneweb.no.

Ondrej Svoboda gave an update about the state of three projects that he has already presented in previous meetings.

- 1) Cultural Heritage Project has already digitalised almost 70 000 photographs about 5 500 different performances. When the project is finished, the amount will be around 100 000. ATI made contracts about the copyrights of all the photos. The photographers were given three choices: to hand over the rights for free, to hand over but with a water mark in the photos, or refuse to give the rights to publish. Only a few photographers refused.
<http://db.divadelni-ustav.cz/Photographs.aspx?langw=en>
- 2) Ondrej showed the site <http://www.theatre-architecture.eu>, a database holding information about theatre buildings in Central Europe. Also the Theatre Institutes in Poland and Slovakia are partners in this project. The project is currently considering how to expand the database outside Central Europe.
- 3) Divadlo.cz/theatre.cz. ATI is currently working on the renovation of the site, partly in collaboration with a university. One idea is to make it more like the databases of Irish Theatre Institute, which also helps artists to promote themselves. There is also a plan to provide “last minute tickets” to performances on reduced prices.

Sari Havukainen presented some of the plans for the possible future changes of the Finnish Theatre Information Centre (Tinfo). Tinfo has a new director and the organisation is now going through a strategy process, which will mean considerable changes in the organisation and its activities. So far

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Tinfo has been an organisation for organisations, but they want to become more a proper intermediate actor between the Finnish theatre field and the promoters.

For more information, [see the PowerPoint file of Sari](#).

Roundtable discussion: how do we make selections?

Before the roundtable discussion Bianca de Waal told how the Theatre Instituut Nederland now selects 100 premieres per year, of which they collect all the possible materials. The reason behind this is the fact that there are over 1500 productions per year in the Netherlands and TIN can't collect materials from them all. Bianca explained how the selection process goes, how the selection committee works etc.

For more information, see [the PowerPoint file of Bianca](#)

It was mentioned in the discussion that the criteria for making any selection has to be based on what purpose the making of that selection serves. Also, the criteria used in making selections for promotional materials are very different from the ones used when making selections in relation to archives or databases. For example, in TIN's case their mission is to document the development of the performing arts in the Netherlands. This has defined how the selection process goes and what criteria are used.

There was some discussion of whether an archive should make any selections at all. Bianca said that they still gather the basic data about all the productions, but gather additional materials only of the 100 productions. She also said that earlier on the contents of their collections were more dependent on the activity of the companies, which lead to a more distorted picture of the whole field: some companies sent everything, some nothing.

It was noted that the situations differ from country to country. For example in Poland it would be impossible to come to terms of even who could be in the selection board. But it is clear that all the information centres have to make choices and choices are always based on some criteria. No one collects absolutely everything. For example VTi collects data about all the subsidised productions but not from those made in the commercial theatres.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 16

On Saturday most of the day was focused on promotion of the member organisations and the network.

Keynote : Online marketing

Jaroslav Pašmik talked about tools and the ways to use online marketing. He talked about the importance of strategic planning, monitoring and analysis. To not just start with it but think about what you want, from whom, how you want it and who will actually do the work. And taking care of a strong partnering between the marketing and production departments. Making use of Facebook and other social networks.

He presented some case studies of work he did for the English National Opera, The Metropolitan Opera in New York and the Czech National Theatre.

<http://cz.linkedin.com/in/pasmik>

For more details, see [Jaroslav's presentation](#) (note: several photo files)

After the lecture there was a discussion about the time it takes to do online marketing and the problem that we all already have so much work to do. To tackle this problem, The Arts and Theatre Institute let students of the Economic Faculty of the University do their research on online marketing and suggested that for the promotion on Facebook for example you could think about working with volunteers.

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After a small coffee break the second round of presentations took place.

Martina Černá from The Arts and Theatre Institute (ATI) talked about the activities of their International Cooperation and External Relations Department to promote Czech theatre and give information about it abroad and to inform the Czech about foreign theatre in the Czech Republic. She showed several examples of the ways they do this.

For more details, [see the PowerPoint file of Martina](#)

Michael Freundt from the German Centre of the ITI showed the process of moving to a new building in 2011 together with other organizations and how this should lead to new co-operations and structures and how this will change their projects, activities, publications and visibility.

For more details, see [the PDF file of Michael \(in Germany\)](#)

Catalina Gonzalez from Centro de Documentación de las Artes Escénicas de Andalucía presented a new promotion tool they've developed in cooperation with the Andalusian Cultural Platform, an online guide of the professional Andalusian Theatre and Dance Festivals. First she started with an introduction on the organization itself. The guide contains contact details of the festivals, dates, target groups etc. and digitalized posters of the festivals.

For more details, see [the PowerPoint file of Catalina](#)

Dorota Buchwald and **Monika Krawul** from the Theatre Institute Warsaw together made a very original statement that their organizations is not using any kind of special promotion. Within the 7-years long of multivarious activity, the Theatre Institute gained among the theatre community both repute and prestige, mostly caused by the extravert personality of their director, that special promotion is absolutely beyond its interests. Neither time nor money are necessary to promote the Theatre Institute.

For more details, see [the PowerPoint file of Dorota and Monika](#)

After a lovely Iranian lunch we where ready to start the round table on promotion. **Piia Ahonen** from Dance Info Finland kicked off. Dance Info Finland is planning to make the first ever communications strategy for Dance Info Finland. She shared the strategy as one tool for self-promotion: what benefits are there in the strategy and what kind of things they wish to articulate through the strategy and to whom.

For more details, see [the PowerPoint file of Piia](#)



After that the discussion followed. Bianca told that through its history TIN, because of the diversity of their activities, had problems making clear to all their target groups what all those activities are. In her opinion this could be caused by dividing these target groups and giving them different information assuming that those different groups have other interests. This does not seem to be the case anymore, so why not make one newsletter with all the activities and let the target groups themselves decide if they are interested or not?

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Also the why seems to get more and more important in organizations like ours, which had a tendency to not always raise this question: Why are you promoting something, what is the actual goal?

Because the promotion of the art forms theatre and dance is our first priority, we forget to promote ourselves: what we do, how we do it and which goals we have.

Piia is showing a format to help determine what the main objectives of your organization should be and what you should do to get there. A stronger positioning of your own organization makes it easier to cooperate with others.

Catalina raised an idea to start a project promote the network. She will organize a photo exhibition in Cadiz and was thinking to have photo's there of all the members' organizations. Michael explained that of course this would promote the organizations but not the network as such. ENICPA often is the starting point for projects between several members. It's not realistic to start projects within the network because ENICPA has no budget to hire staff to coordinate projects. So Catalina's organization initiating and coordinating this project with the use of the contacts in the network should work.

The meeting is the most important activity of the network and is giving the most benefits to the members through the exchange of experience, expertise and knowledge and so make them better professionals. It is a network of specialists and because we meet, trust is build. Which is a good starting point for projects and seeds for new and fresh ideas are planted in our minds. Last year a task group has send out questionnaires to the members to get an overview of the actual benefits the members get out of being a member of the network. These benefits will be used on the new website to attract new members and to develop the future mission of the network. Bianca will mail the members the outcome of this questionnaire in the near future.

All members are responsible for the PR of the network and take part in inviting possible new members to the meeting or other colleagues that would benefit from it. The idea was raised to have open sessions for everybody and closed sessions for the members.

Dorota mentioned that ENICPA could be more present at conferences. Michael told that that was done in the past but that is was beyond our capacity.

It was time for the concluding remarks on the two days of the meeting. Michael stressed the importance of exchange. This leads to so many new and fresh ideas, evaluating your own activities and more professionalism.

ITI Germany will start a study on independent theatre in Europe and will make use of the network for this. This as an example that projects can come out of the network but can only be initiated by its member organizations and not by the network itself. The network is the soil for projects and everything is possible!

Michael thanked Martina and Ondrej for the hospitality and the organisation of the meeting.

