

13th International Symposium of Theatre Critics and Scholars
International theatre festivals and audience development

Organised by the Sterijino Pozorje, Novi Sad, Serbia
in association with

International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC)
and
the European Festival Research Project (EFRP)
in
Novi Sad, Serbia, 28th – 31st May 2009

Topic: International theatre festivals and audience development

Convenors: Dr Dragan Klaić (Amsterdam), Chair of EFRP, and Dr Ivan Medenica (Belgrade), IATC Adjunct Secretary General.

This symposium will investigate how theatre both nurtures new audiences and develops the cultural capital/knowledge of their existing audiences. More than just a marketing operation, the topic includes programming concepts, communication strategies and educational aspects of those festivals that reach out to different constituencies and build an audience that may also be of benefit to regularly producing cultural institutions. An underlying assumption is that these festivals embody the main challenges and contradictions in cultural production and distribution today. They have an experimental potential, a special position that enables them to invent and test practices that can later be absorbed by the cultural organizations that produce and present year around. Not all festivals reach out consciously and successfully to new audiences and this symposium will therefore aim to focus on ideas, strategies and practices that are remarkable, successful and inspiring for other festival professionals

Format: the symposium will consist of four sessions, introduced by invited key note speakers (critics, researchers, festival professionals and artists), followed by research presentations, public interviews and panel discussions.

Interested colleagues (critics, researchers, festival professionals) are requested to send an outline of their paper (200 words, in English or French) to draganklaic@gmail.com and ivan.medenica@gmail.com by December 1, 2008. Authors will be notified of acceptance by December 15. The authors of proposals that are accepted will be asked to send their full paper of 2000-4000 words in English or French by March 1st, 2009. Authors are urged to go beyond a presentation of a single festival, to pursue a specific issue in the practices of several festivals, to look beyond the borders of their own country, to apply a comparative method and to stress contemporary challenges rather than dwell on historic developments. Papers will not be read at the symposium but will be made available to participants in advance, through the website of Sterijino Pozorje. Authors will be

requested to refer to the essential conclusions of their papers in the panels in which they will take part. Some authors will be invited to summarize their findings in a concise power point presentation (max 10 slides). The symposium will be conducted in English, French and Serbian, with simultaneous translation provided. After final editing by the authors, papers will be made available at the websites of the organizers: Sterijino Pozorje (www.pozorje.org.rs), International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) (www.aict-iatc.com) and at the EFRP public depository on the website of the European Festival Association (www.efa-aef.org). Options for a printed publication are under consideration.

The symposium will take place in the framework of the 54th Sterijino Pozorje Festival and its programme of national and international productions. The host is providing hotel accommodation, meals, and theatre tickets for the participants who will be responsible for their own travel costs. Transfer from the Airport Belgrade to Novi Sad (80 km) and vice versa will be provided. Arrival is on 28th May, departure on 31 May.

Sterijino Pozorje (www.pozorje.org.rs) As a permanent festival of domestic drama and domestic theatre, with a competitive character, Sterijino Pozorje was established in 1956, in conjunction with the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the birth and the 100th anniversary of the death of the great Serbian comedist Jovan Popovic Sterija. In the course of time, Sterijino Pozorje has become a highly specialized theatre institution for the development of the national theatre and advancement of dramatic literature. Sterijino Pozorje is an initiator and organiser of professional and research activities concerning theatre practices, their documentation and information. It organises and carries out the meeting of superior institutions of the performing arts professional training (Pozorje of Youth), regular expert and scientific meetings of domestic and foreign theatre experts, critics, playwrights and artists. It organises domestic and international exhibitions, publishes monographs and periodicals on the art of theatre and dramatic literature. It researches, collects, processes, keeps and publishes theatre documentation. The work of Sterijino Pozorje is carried out in several ways: The National Drama Festival, international cooperation, publishing and documentary-research work. Sterijino Pozorje Festival is held annually, at the end of May in Novi Sad. The participants of the festival are professional theatre companies and groups from Serbia and abroad, with productions based on texts by domestic and foreign authors. A five-member jury decides on *Sterija awards* for artistic achievements shown at the festival: the best play, best contemporary drama text, dramatization, adaptation, directing, stage design, costumes, stage music and five awards for acting performance.

International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) (www.aict-iatc.com)

The IATC draws together more than two thousand theatre critics, through some fifty national sections. Founded in Paris in 1956, the IATC is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, benefiting under the B statute of UNESCO. The purpose of the IATC is to bring together theatre critics in order to promote international cooperation. Its principal aims are to foster theatre criticism as a discipline and to contribute to the development of its methodological bases; to protect the ethical and professional interests of theatre critics and to promote the common rights of all its members; and to contribute to reciprocal

awareness and understanding between cultures by encouraging international meetings and exchanges in the field of theatre in general. The IATC holds a world congress every two years, seminars for young critics twice a year, as well as symposiums, and contributes to juries. English and French are the association's two official languages, and its place of incorporation is Paris.

European Festival Research Project (EFRP) is an international, interdisciplinary consortium, which is focused on the dynamics of artistic festivals in contemporary life. One of its principal aims is to understand the underlying causes of the current proliferation of festivals and its resource implications and diagnostic perspectives. EFRP focuses on those festivals that are driven by a firm artistic vision, involving international programming and which benefit from substantial support from public authorities. The consortium instigates research papers, studies, publications and debates and articulates tentative conclusions, trends, forecasts and recommendations for festival operators, public authorities (as subsidy givers) and potential sponsors. All research outcomes are being made accessible in a public depository at the web site of the European Festivals Association (<http://www.efa-aef.org/efahome/efrp.cfm>). Periodically EFRP organizes intensive research workshops on specific topics where the results of research are presented and discussed. Such workshops have taken place in Nitra (2005), Leicester and Le Mans (2006), Barcelona (2007) and Helsinki (2008). Further workshops are being planned for Moscow (autumn 2008) and for 2009-2010. An edited book on festival politics, programming, impacts and governance will be produced by the consortium and associated researchers in 2009/10.

Dr Dragan Klaić and dr Ivan Medenica
Symposium Co-Chairs

Dušana Todorović
Symposium Secretary
Sterijino Pozorje
International department
Tel:+381 21 451 273
e-mail: international@pozorje.org.rs