

INTERNATIONALES THEATERINSTITUT

Zentrum Deutschland

PRESS RELEASE

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Festival »Theater der Welt« Düsseldorf hands over to Frankfurt/Offenbach

At the end of »Theater der Welt« in Düsseldorf, artistic director Wilfried Schulz and programme director Stefan Schmidtke handed over the festival in Düsseldorf on Saturday together with outgoing ITI president Joachim Lux. ITI President Joachim Lux, handed over the festival to their successors in Frankfurt am Main. The Frankfurt festival directors **Matthias Pees**: Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, **Matthias Wagner K**: Museum Angewandte Kunst and **Anselm Weber**: Schauspiel Frankfurt also announced the new programme direction in a joint video statement:

»Theater der Welt 2023« is curated by Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki of Arts Commons Tokyo.

"**Arts Commons Tokyo** was founded in 2014 and consists of a majority of female, multilingual cultural practitioners, including an art and theatre producer, curator, dramaturg, researcher, administrator, translator and interpreter.

Now with fifteen members, we have successfully organised numerous interdisciplinary projects that use the language of art to illuminate the status quo of society in Tokyo, Fukushima and various other Asian and European cities.

We will be supported by Arts Commons Tokyo in assembling our team for **»Theater der Welt 2023«** in the areas of production, communication and urban projects.

As the first Asian-female team to lead »Theater der Welt«, we will take the principle of non-Western, non-binary and even non-human perspectives as an opportunity to readjust and rethink our ideas about theatre, festivals and the world.

From the point of view of operational ethics and taking into account the empirical knowledge of the global pandemic, we want to create a festival whose thematic focus we will call »incubationism«: a collective time of waiting, in which we hope for a new life and perhaps also fear future symptoms.

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We take this dual and synchronic time frame as the basis for a new ethics of care and healing and a questioning of what we can think of and perceive as »illness«. For the first time in modern history, the minds and bodies of large numbers of people have become ill. This pandemic has taught us how to deal with it and how to care not only for sick people but also for sick animals, plants, our environment and nature. Politically and ethically, the concept of care should be freed from the images of women, minorities, migrants and the underprivileged. Since traumatic effects of tragedy always arrive with a delay, we hope to create the image of a new world in Frankfurt/Offenbach 2023, together with all women artists, characterised by the effort to provide care and healing to all beings."
Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki

»Theater der Welt« - a festival of the ITI has been awarded to a different German city every three years since 1981 and is financed in equal parts by the host city, the federal state and the federal government. For the 2023 edition, the ITI organised a call for tenders for the first time, in which Frankfurt's application was successful together with Offenbach. The programme direction was also put out to international tender for the first time.

"As artistic directors of »Theater der Welt 2023« we were able to appoint Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki, a top-class international team for the programmatic and artistic direction of the festival. This central position was awarded for the first time through an open international call for applications. Of the more than 70 applications we received from 30 countries, Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki convinced us with their clear and courageous content, which critically questions the prerequisites of an international festival in a post-pandemic world and will place the moment of »incubationism« at the centre of their artistic programme. »Theater der Welt 2023« is organised by Künstlerhaus Mousonturm, Schauspiel Frankfurt and Museum Angewandte Kunst in partnership with the city of Offenbach. The curatorial team has responded to this special constellation - a novelty in the festival's history - with a multifaceted design that focuses on interdisciplinarity and diversity and aims to enter into an artistic dialogue with the different realities of life and the diverse global-local communities of the Frankfurt/Offenbach urban area. We look forward to working with Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki on a vibrant, accessible, sustainable, critical and diverse »Theater der Welt 2023« festival."

Matthias Pees: Director Künstlerhaus Mousonturm,
Matthias Wagner K: Director Museum Angewandte Kunst,
Anselm Weber: Director Schauspiel Frankfurt.

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Joachim Lux: "The concept of »Theater der Welt« once again proves to be unbreakable: It is the only German travelling festival that invites you to reinvent yourself from edition to edition! Absolutely new in Düsseldorf was the focus on children's and youth theatre. Absolutely new and great in Frankfurt is a radical change of perspective. For the first time, a Japanese curatorial team is invited here to show what they mean by »Theater der Welt«."

Yvonne Büdenhölzer, newly elected President of the German ITI Centre:
„»Theater der Welt 2023« in Frankfurt am Main and Offenbach will be a first in the history of the festival in every respect. For the first time, three equal cultural players - Schauspiel Frankfurt, Künstlerhaus Mousonturm and the Museum für Angewandte Kunst - are jointly organising the festival.

With Chiaki Soma and Kyoko Iwaki, a non-European curatorial team has been won for the first time, which stands for a change of perspective, collective working methods and a feminist orientation.“

Stefan Schmidtke: „I wish the Frankfurt/Offenbach team good luck, good nerves and joy for what will surely be a challenging preparation period!“

Wilfried Schulz: "»Theater der Welt«, is always being reinvented. This is a good time for a departure. See you in Frankfurt/Offenbach."

theaterderwelt.de
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