

ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts



After ending the ITI/UNESCO Chair contract with UNESCO and The National University of Theatre and Cinema of Bucharest/Romania due to differing viewpoints on leadership and collaboration between ITI and the Chair, and being aware that ITI could not replace the existing Chair holder, the need for a new association between ITI and performing arts universities, academies and theatre schools on a worldwide level became apparent. UNESCO was highly supportive in the creation of a new organization suggesting that it would be best for ITI along with the universities and higher education institutions involved to create a new Network under UNITWIN rather than a new Chair. The Director General of ITI looked for partners who could help ITI in the establishment of such a Network. He also followed the policy that ITI should not be in competition with the former Chair and Chair holder who was given by UNESCO the possibility to submit an application for a new Chair without ITI.

The Creation of a New Network

The partners were found in SUN Huizhu (William) and GONG Baorong, Professors of the Shanghai Theatre Academy (China), and Derek GOLDMAN, Professor of the Georgetown University (USA). Strong support was received as well from Jeffrey SICHEL from Boston (USA) who is very well connected with universities all over the world as a distinguished scholar, theatre practitioner and also member of the Theatre Training and Education Committee TECOM of ITI. The first step was to find interested educational institutions in the performing arts from around the world. Then a Charter was created that followed the goals of UNESCO and ITI, and finally all the interested institutions had to submit the needed papers on time for the submission that was presented to the UNITWIN office of UNESCO education sector, by the deadline, 30 April 2013. The National UNESCO Commission from the US sent the needed letter of support and the two institutions Shanghai Theatre Academy and Georgetown University provided the needed budget.



The Nature of the Network

The Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts is a joint collaboration of higher education and research institutions in the performing arts, UNESCO and the International Theatre Institute ITI – in alignment with the guidelines and procedures for the UNITWIN/UNESCO Chair and Network Program. The Network's main focus is higher education in the performing arts – drama, theatre, dance, music theatre, playwriting, and all related performing arts disciplines.

Its headquarters are based at the higher education institution(s) from which the coordinator of the Network is appointed. The permanent address for the Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts is: Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts c/o International Theatre Institute ITI, UNESCO, 1 rue Miollis, 75015 Paris, France.

The Network is a non-profit, non-governmental organization. It is non-political in its nature. It welcomes members from all continents, independently of their socio-economic condition, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, culture and nationality. The Network is based on democratic principles and it follows the core values of collaboration, inclusiveness, transparency and inspiration." (Charter of the Network)

The Goals of the New Network

The goals of the Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts are:

- To make education in the performing arts accessible to all populations of students regardless of socio-economic condition, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, culture or nationality
- To promote professional education in the performing arts worldwide for the enhancement of the skills of professionals in the field;
- To exchange knowledge and best practices on different methodologies for education in the performing arts;
- To develop and share innovative models for higher education in the performing arts;
- To support higher education in the performing arts all over the world, including developed and



Left: Director's Meeting during the Asia Pacific Bureau Theatre School Festival;

Right: Closing Ceremony of the Festival

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Group photo at the opening of the Performance Studies international conference at the Shanghai Theatre Academy, July 2014

developing countries – with a special focus on Africa, in alignment with the UNESCO global priority “Africa”;

- To initiate collaboration between the members of the Network;
 - To protect and promote unique manifestations of “cultural identity” as observed and demonstrated by members of the network from their cultures – in alignment with the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and the Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;
 - To create a project to designate and preserve Intangible Heritage in the Performing Arts globally – in alignment with UNESCO and ITI
 - To advocate for peace, mutual understanding and respect through education in the performing arts – in alignment with the goals of UNESCO and ITI;
 - To bring together students and educators in the performing arts and professionals of the performing arts for the benefit of the profession
- (Charter of the Network)

The Objectives of the Network

To reach these goals the Network can realize the following projects or activities – initiated and organized by its members or part of its members, regionally or internationally:

- School festivals
- Conferences
- Congresses (whenever possible in conjunction with the ITI World Congress)
- Exchange programs for educators and students of the Network
- Research projects
- Intangible Heritage research and preservation activities – in conjunction with UNESCO and ITI
- Dissemination of knowledge in print or via digital and audio-visual publications
- Exhibitions
- Competitions
- Awards
- Any other event or activity which supports the goals of the Network

(Charter of the Network)

Project Oriented Work

The members of the Network can initiate projects in a special field, according to the above goals, according to the goals of the UNESCO Sector for Culture and of the UNESCO Sector of Education (...).

All members are welcome to participate in such projects, but it is not mandatory for all members to be involved in a project. The Project groups can do their work through simple organization /coordination and can elect a leader or coordinator, who will participate in the Board sessions. (Charter of the Network)

The First Members of the New Network

From the beginning it was intended that the Network would be active all over the world, to bridge cultures and to exchange knowledge, teachers and students. The following are the first members:

Leading Institutions

- The International Theatre Institute ITI, UNESCO/ Paris/France
- Shanghai Theatre Academy, Shanghai/China
- Georgetown University, Georgetown/USA

Africa

- University of Cape Town, Cape Town/South Africa (Geoffrey HYLAND)
- University of Juba, Department Art, Music and Drama, Juba/South Sudan (Justin J.B. BUWALI)

Americas

- Universidad de Costa Rica, Facultad de Bellas Artes, San José/Costa Rica (Manuel RUIZ-GARCIA)
- Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico, Centro Universitario de Teatro, Mexico DF/Mexico (Mario ESPINOSA)
- Univesidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, Neovo León/ Mexico (Karina Esquivel JIMENEZ)
- Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes, Escuela Nacional de Arte Teatral, Mexico DF/Mexico (Gilberto GUERRERO VAZQUEZ)
- Georgetown University, Georgetown/USA (Derek GOLDMAN)

Asia/Pacific

- University of Dhaka, Department of Theatre and Performance Studies, Dhaka/Bangladesh (Israfeel Mohammad SHAHEEN)

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- Shanghai Theatre Academy, Shanghai/China (GONG Baorong, SUN Huezhu William)
- International Association for Performing Arts and Research, IAPAR, Pune/India (Vidyanidhee Prasad VANARESE)
- Toho Gakuin College of Performing Arts, Tokyo/Japan (Terfumi KOSHIMITSU)
- Ateneo de Manila University, School of Humanities, Theatre Arts Programme, Quezon City/Philippines (Ricardo ABAD)
- University of Makati, Center for Culture and the Arts, Makati/Philippines (Stanley ROVIRA)
- Chulalongkorn University, Faculty of Arts, Department of Dramatic Arts, Bangkok/Thailand (Pawit MAHASARINAND)

Europe

- Arts2, Ecole Supérieure des Arts, Mons/Belgium (Patrick ROBERT)
- Graduate School of Performing Arts of Konstantin Raykin, Moscow/Russia (Anatoly POLYANKIN)
- Institut del Teatre, Barcelona/Spain, (Merce SAUMELL VERGES, Antonio RAMON RODRIGUEZ)
- University of Ljubljana, Ljubljana/Slovenia (Alec VALIC)
- Hochschule der Künste Bern, Department of Theatre, Bern/Schweiz (Florian REICHERT)
- Scuola Teatro Dimitri SUPSI, Verscio/Switzerland (Daniel BAUSCH)
- Zürcher Hochschule der Künste, Department of Theatre, Schweiz/Zürich/Switzerland (Hartmut WICKERT)

First Leadership

The Network agreed on GONG Baorong (Shanghai Theatre Academy) and Derek GOLDMAN (Georgetown University) as directors of the new Network. Both institutions were essential in providing the needed budget for the first years. Additionally the other three key persons in the establishment of the Network are part of the smaller board of the Network: Jeffrey SICHEL and SUN Huizhu (William) as Vice Presidents and Tobias BIANCONE as President. Secretaries of the Network are XU Jiali and Petya HRISTOVA (for connection to ITI). The whole enlarged board will

be elected at the first General Assembly that will be organized in 2015.

Approval by UNESCO

Already in November 2013 the UNITWIN sector of UNESCO announced to ITI that the Network will be approved. Due to an overload of work at UNESCO the agreement between UNESCO, ITI and the 21 higher education institutions arrived at the end of April 2014. At the moment all the members of the Network have to verify the contract, agree on it, and then there will be a signatory event in the presence of Irina BOKOVA, Director General UNESCO, and all the contract partners, probably in the second part of 2014.

Relationship of the Network with ITI

From the beginning it was clear that many institutions for higher education in the performing arts were interested to be connected to UNESCO and ITI. The initiative was taken by ITI but it needed the approval of UNESCO for ITI to be able to be a member of this network, as the UNITWIN rules do not anticipate non-governmental organizations as part of such an entity. This approval was given by the Director General of UNESCO. That means that the relationship within the network is based on partnership and that ITI, while being a leading partner along with Georgetown University and Shanghai Theatre Academy, sits on equal terms with all other involved institutions.

The Network works together with the International Theatre Institute ITI, its Centres, Committees, Project and Working Groups. The Network assists and supports ITI educational projects, like the "ITI World Performing Arts Academy" and the envisioned "University Theatre of Cultures". ITI and the Network collaborate in joint performing arts projects, bringing together professionals and students.

Relationship with UNESCO

Being a UNITWIN/UNESCO Network, the new Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts is in regular contact with UNESCO, reports to the UNITWIN office at the UNESCO education sector by submitting a

Group photo at the opening of the Performance Studies international conference at the Shanghai Theatre Academy, July 2014

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Left and right: Opening Ceremony at the 9th International meeting of Higher Schools of Theatre in Mexico City

report of activities in alignment with the contract with UNITWIN/UNESCO. The first and future members of the Network are bound by this contract. The Network supports UNESCO with projects that are in alignment with the goals and programmes of UNESCO, especially in the Culture and Education Sectors.

- First General Assembly of the Network with Theatre School Festival (Spring 2015)
- Including other international theatre associations as partners (ex. International University Theatre Association IUTA)
- Call for new members in Asia/Pacific, Latin America (in progress) and other regions
- Building up the structure of the network (Board, Regional Bureaus, etc.)

Call for New Members

ITI did not start with a call to all Centres as this would have created an avalanche of work that none of the initiating partners were able to handle. That is the reason why the Director General ITI only asked the ITI Executive Council members if they are in touch with an educational institution in their sphere of interest that was interested in joining such a new network.

Portraits: The first leaders of the new Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts:

Gong Baorong and Derek Goldman, directors;
Sun (William) Huizhu and Jeffrey Sichel, Vice-Presidents

After the approval by UNITWIN it is now the time to make a call to the Centres to get new members for the Network. Please get in touch with universities, academies or any educational institution that might be interested in collaborating with a global network in the performing arts, that is in alignment with the goals of UNESCO and ITI. For more information write to: ITI: info@iti-worldwide.org or to STA: XU Jiali xujialiaviva@yahoo.com.

Submitted by Tobias Biancone and Jeffrey Sichel



The following documents are available:

- Presentation about the Network (available in PDF and PowerPoint format)
- Charter of the Network
- Letter for interested new members of the Network
- List of the current members
- Application Form

Action Plan

- Signature event with Irina Bokova, Director General UNESCO (second half 2014)
- Symposium and small theatre school project at the ITI World Congress in Yerevan (in planning)
- Promoting and realisation of the first major projects: Global Performance and Politics (Georgetown University USA), Arts and Entrepreneurship (IAPAR, India); African Performance Project (University of Cape Town, South Africa), etc.