

Bund Deutscher Amateurtheater (BDAT) / German Association of Amateur Theatre

Work report 2012 / 2013 for the General Assembly of the Central European Committee (CEC) taking place on 22nd August 2013 in Monaco

Introductory remark:

The self-image of amateur theatre in Germany has changed enormously in recent years. Thanks to events organised by our association, we have managed to considerably improve the social and cultural political significance of amateur theatre. Amateur theatre plays an important role in cultural education and is a central instrument of cultural work by amateurs in Germany.

Social inclusion projects and inter-generational initiatives, as well as the development of artistic skills are key tasks performed by our association.

About 2,400 theatre groups of all types and genres of performing arts, including more than 500 children's and youth theatre groups, form the basis of BDAT's cultural political and educational political actions. BDAT is funded by the Minister for Culture and the Media (BKM), the Ministry of Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) and the Foreign Office.

We would like to mention only a few, internationally relevant events from our vast array of projects. For BDAT, international theatre work is a central working field. Both the Board (Norbert Radermacher) and the Education Officer (Stefan Schnell) supervise international theatre work, for which they are responsible within BDAT.

International projects and actions

In 2012/2013, BDAT initiated and carried out the following projects:

- 27. – 29.04.2012: 1st European networking conference "European Forum Amateur Theatre" (EFAT) in Berlin
- 16. - 18.11.2012: Meeting of the working group of German speaking amateur theatre associations (AddA): Austria, Germany (BAG + BDAT), Switzerland, South Tyrol (Italy) in Berlin
- 08.12.2012: Work meeting of theatre makers and representatives of German and Polish theatre institutions in Berlin. Preparation of Polish theatre organisations to become members of AITA/IATA - CEC
- 07. – 10.02.2013: Council-Meeting of AITA/IATA in Berlin, themes were, among others, "Archive of AITA/IATA"
- 26. – 28.04.2013: Working session "European Forum Amateur Theatre" (EFAT) attended by representatives of the three European Regional Committees (CEC, NEATA, CIFTA) in Berlin

- 03. – 07.07.2013: “Theatre Days of European Cultures“ in Paderborn und CEC board meeting. Theatre groups from Georgia, Croatia, Russia, Austria, Israel and Germany took part in the festival
- 03. – 07.07.2013 In Paderborn (D) and from 8th to 14th July 2013 in Narbonne (F): German-French youth theatre project, motto: ”Poetry Slam“

International Festivals

With Foreign Office funds, BDAT managed to finance theatre festivals in Germany and abroad.

BDAT funded the following festivals that took place in Germany:

- 26.03.- 01.04.2012: “Theatre days by the lake“ in Friedrichshafen, with a theatre group from Latvia
- 16. – 20.05.2012: 8th theatre festival in Donzdorf “Brücken bauen!“ (building bridges), with groups, among others, from Egypt, Iran and Poland
- 14. – 17.06.2012: 5th German children’s theatre festival in Rudolstadt, with groups from Burkina Faso, Uganda and Russia
- 17. – 20.10.2012: 16th International theatre encounter in Lörrach, with groups from Turkey and Iran
- 27. – 30.09.2012: 29th Hanau International amateur theatre days in Hanau, with groups from Latvia and Russia
- 27.11. - 02.12.2012: “Bunte Bühne Fellbach” (coloured stage Fellbach), with groups from Tunisia and Russia

In 2012/2013 the travelling expenses of German amateur theatre groups that participated in the following theatre festivals abroad were funded by BDAT:

- Fiesta del Teatro – Zárate 2012, from 25th October until 1st November 2012 in Zárate and Campana (Argentina)
- 15th European Children’s Theatre Encounter, from 6th until 20th July 2012 in Seferihisar (Turkey)
- International peace theatre festival bina mira from 16th until 22nd September 2012 in Banja Luka (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- 16th International Children’s Theatre Festival of Performing Arts, from 4th until 7th January 2013 in Mumbai (India)
- Harare International Festival of Arts and workshop from 26th April until 5th May 2012 in Harare (Zimbabwe)
- “Zwischenstation /InBetweenPlaces“, guest performance & workshop from 7th until 13th October 2012 in Bialsko Biala (Poland)

- 17th Bursa International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People from 8th until 13th October 2012 in Bursa (Turkey)
- Liverpool International Theatre Festival from 16th until 20th May 2012 in Liverpool (Canada)
- The World Festival of Children's Performing Arts from 31st July until 5th August 2012 in Toyama (Japan)
- Theatre festival "82. Jiráskův Hronov" from 31st July until 6th August 2012 in Hronov (Czech Republic)
- International Theatre Landscape Festival "The Secrets of Krestoovaya Mountain" from 20th until 26th July 2012 Gubakha (Russia)
- International youth theatre festival "Trumpas Sujungimas" from 10th until 13th May 2012 in Rokiskis (Lithuania)
- 21st International Amateur Theatre Festival István Horváth jr. from 28th June until 1st July 2012 in Kazincbarcika (Hungary)
- II. Policer Festival – Theatrical Ellipse of Creativity, from 5th until 8th July 2012 in Police (Poland)
- Senior citizen theatre festival "mittendrin", from 12th until 15th October 2012 in Sulzberg (Austria)

Another main focus of BDAT is setting up an amateur theatre archive, at the national and international level. The archive is to be sorted and made available for research purposes on a long-term basis. BDAT is in the process of collecting corresponding material and documents. Some of the AITA/IATA archive material is already in Berlin. Additional material will be sent to Berlin from Tallinn and Helsinki in the months ahead. However, we will presumably only be able to store and evaluate the material from October 2014 on, when BDAT will have the necessary space. In my opinion, the documentation of amateur theatre at national and international level is a long-term but very important task!

Thanks to personal contacts in Warsaw (Poland), we have managed to interest the Polish amateur theatre scene again in AITA/IATA. With the support of BDAT, they have applied for membership in AITA/IATA.

Norbert Radermacher
President of BDAT

Berlin, 31st July 2013