

ITE (INTERNATIONAL THEATRE EXCHANGE) aita/iata National Centre of Great Britain

ITE OFFICERS

Kevin Dowsett	President
Aled Rhys-Jones	Vice President
Anne Gilmour	Treasurer
Marjorie Lovegrove	Secretary

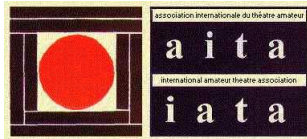
A brief statement of activities:

International Theatre Exchange, (ITE), continues to act as the 'umbrella' organisation for a number of groups and individuals wishing to enrich their love of theatre through the medium of world-wide exchange. The current ITE Vice President, Aled Rhys-Jones is the Interim English Speaking Secretary (ESS) and is standing unopposed for the post at this year's General Assembly. He has also co-ordinated the work of the aita/iata Renewal Working Group. The current ITE Treasurer, Anne Gilmour provides Secretariat support to aita/iata.

It is not possible to report on the international activities of so many diverse groups during the last two years. If, however, we take as an example the activities of one of our member groups, Theatretrain www.theatretrain.co.uk it will be possible, perhaps, to convey some idea of a committed group involvement.

Theatretrain was established approximately thirteen years ago. It enables thousands of young people throughout the United Kingdom to enhance their lives through the drama process. As an organisation it has, under the leadership of its artistic director Kevin Dowsett, embraced the importance of international work in deepening awareness of both self and others. During the past two years there have been many opportunities for members of the organisation to undertake international exchange but here, we shall focus on the activities of one group – Basildon Theatretrain. This group is situated in the county of Essex, in the South East of England not too far from London. In 2013 it was heavily involved with the splendid EDERED Encounter which took place in Ipswich. Since then, members of the group have worked in Paris, Disneyland, and Switzerland. They have hosted an exchange with Denmark and this May visited France on the preliminary leg of another exchange programme. Their animateurs, Erin Griffiths and Gemma Eves, have worked extensively abroad, particularly in New York. Erin and Gemma look forward to experiencing their first aita/iata festival in Belgium. The parent organisation continues to bring its various groups together as a whole when thousands of young people perform as one in such venues as the O2 (formerly the Millennium Dome), the Royal Albert Hall and Drury Lane.

The only GB aita/iata Associate The Questors Theatre – www.questors.org.uk – has gone from strength to strength during the past two years. During the 2014–15 season its theatre and studio staged over 23 productions. Four of the productions were part of the new directors training programme and another two were the winner and runner up of a One-Act playwriting competition. The 50th anniversary of the recently renamed Judy Dench Playhouse was also celebrated with extracts from memorable productions.



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The Questors continues its close and warm association with the Royal Shakespeare Company and their Open Stages Project www.rsc.org.uk/whats-on/open-stages, which aims to forge a closer working relationship between amateur and professional theatres. The Questors is also closely associated with the first academic research into amateur dramatics in the UK amateurdramaresearch.com. This is led by Professor Helen Nicholson of Royal Holloway, University of London and The Questors hosted a one-day workshop on evocative objects in June 2015.

ITE Member, the Little Theatre Guild (LTG) www.littletheatresguild.org also continues to grow. This is an association of 107 amateur theatres in Great Britain – The Questors was a founder member – who own their premises. LTG started in 1946 and grew out of a common idea that independently controlled amateur theatres would benefit from regular meetings to discuss problems, experiences and standards. The current President, Sir Ian McKellen, has been a most active and supportive advisor and has visited over 50 member theatres during his Presidency. LTG produces an annual Yearbook which lists all the productions staged by members. If you would like a copy contact the aita/iata secretariat secretariat@aita/iata.org.

Two other ITE Members, Central Youth Theatre (CYT) in Wolverhampton www.centralyouththeatre.co.uk and Redbridge Drama Centre (RDC) in Redbridge www.redbridgedramacentre.co.uk continue to expand and deepen the breadth of experience of the young people in their workshops. During the past two years CYT has taken part in the Soukani festival in the Czech Republic and the Hollawind Festival in Brixen, Italy. RDC students represented England at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow, Scotland and continued to work with their Eastern European partners on a film venture. RDC also hosted a most successful Festival, 'Labrynth.' This involved over 70 productions shown at 12 different venues across the borough. RDC is looking forward to representing Great Britain at the aita/iata International Festival in Westouter with their production of Journeys www.spotsopwest.org/en/redbridge-drama-centre.

We are delighted to close this report on a very happy note by sending our warmest congratulations to Kevin on his marriage this year to his lovely Irish bride, Jenny. True internationalism!

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