

XXVIII Congress of the International Association of Theatre Critics
Minutes of the 27th General Assembly,
preceded by an Extraordinary General Assembly
Belgrade, 29 September, 2016, 9:30 AM

1. Confirmation of delegates present and eligibility

Delegates from the following Sections are present:

Arab Regional Section
Argentina
Azerbaijan
Brazil
Bulgaria (2 groups)
Canada (2 groups)
Caribbean Regional Section
China
Croatia
Czech Republic
Finland
FYROM
France
Georgia
Great Britain
Greece (2 groups)
India
Iran
Italy
Japan
Latvia
Moldova
Nigeria
Poland
Portugal
Romania (2 groups)
Serbia
Slovakia
Slovenia
South Korea
Spain
Sweden
Thailand
Turkey
USA

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Therefore, 35 Sections have a right to vote in the General Assembly. Some individual members are also present.

2. Opening of the Assembly – President's address

The president of IATC Margareta Sörenson is opening the 28th Congress and the 27th General Assembly with a word of welcome addressed to all delegates and guests. (See Annexe.)

3. Adoption of the agenda

The Secretary General explains the rules of the voting process and presents the agenda, as it appears hereafter.

Martin Morrow (Canada) proposes the approval of the agenda. Emmanuel Dandaura (Nigeria) seconds the proposal, and the agenda is approved.

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4. Extraordinary General Assembly

Proposition by the outgoing Executive Committee to add what follows (underlined) to the Articles of Association:

Article 3: General Assembly

[...]

3. The General Assembly elects the President and General Secretary and also elects 10 Member Associations to the Executive Committee.

Candidacies will only be considered if they are received by the General Secretary no later than two weeks before the General Assembly. They must contain a short statement (no longer than two paragraphs), with the reasons for the candidacy, written in at least one of the two official languages of the Association. The General Secretary will circulate statements of candidacy to the sections in advance of the General Assembly.

This proposition by the Excom was in the Minutes of its last ExCom meeting in Craiova, held on 21 April 2016, and the membership was advised that it was available on the IATC website starting with 21 June 2016.

The change is proposed by Claudia Provedinni (Italy) and seconded by Abdul Karim Ali Jawad Al Lawati (Arab Section). The change is approved unanimously, so the Secretary General announces that it will be included in the statutes.

END of the Extraordinary General Assembly.

Back to the Regular General Assembly.

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5. Adoption of the minutes of the General Assembly of 17 October, 2014, held in Beijing, China.

The minutes are adopted.

6. Secretary General's report

The secretary general reads his report, in the two languages of the Association. See in Annexe.

After some clarification from Irina Gogoberidze from the Georgian Section with regard to the planned Caucasus Section, Michel Vaïs' report is adopted unanimously.

7. General Treasurer's report, Auditors' commentary

The report presented by the General Treasurer Stéphane Gilbert is adopted, as well as the report of Auditor Irina Antonova. See in Annexe.

8. Reports of the Directors of seminars and established critics symposiums

The report of the Director of Seminars Jean-Pierre Han is presented on a very optimistic note, with details about past events as well as the forthcoming Seminar for Young Critics hosted by the Theatre Olympics in Wrocław.

The report of the Director of Symposiums mentions that the only official IATC conferences are the one associated to the Congress and respectively the one organized in partnership with IFTR in Novi Sad. The Shakespeare Studies Conference, organized by Craiova International Shakespeare Festival in partnership with IATC, is mentioned as well.

Both reports are adopted.

9. Critical Stages / Scènes critiques

Savas Patsalidis (Greece) explains the importance of the global dissemination of information about the journal. A discussion follows about the possibility of including other languages. Konrad Szczebiot (Poland) emphasizes the importance of social media in promoting the journal, as the question of financing is vital, after the support received from University of Illinois ends.

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Comfort Break – 11:30

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10. Website

Octavian Saiu (Romania), Adjunct Secretary General, will be responsible for the launch of a new IATC website, more dynamic in its functions and more appealing in its visual features. He invites national sections to communicate to him with regard to events of international relevance, in which they will be involved.

11. Discussion on the Thalia Prize

The role of the Thalia Prize committee is discussed, as well as the possibility of choosing different cultural areas each time a new recipient is selected.

12. Proposals for future activities

12.1. Future congresses

Martin Morrow (Canada) presents the context of the Congress in Banff, which will take place around the end of September, 2018.

He invites the representative of Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity, Matt Matheson, to take the floor. He explains that the centre has 80 years of existence in the Rocky Mountains, and has been a venue for collaboration and cultural exchanges.

Other invitations come from Poland (Boska Comedia Festival), Turkey and Georgia (The Georgian Showcase).

12.2. Seminars for young critics and encounters for established critics

Croatia offers to host a conference in May, 2017 within the context of Rijeka Festival, which is 27 years old.

12.3. Excom meetings

The Spring 2017 meeting will be held in Sweden, in Norrköping.

13. Election of President

Yun-Cheol Kim (Korea, Honorary President of IATC) is invited to preside the meeting for this moment.

Margareta Sörenson (Sweden) is unanimously re-elected President of IATC.

14.1 Election of Secretary General

The president presents the candidacy of Michel Vaïs, and he is unanimously re-elected Secretary General of IATC.

14.2 Election of a new honorary member

Ivan Medenica (Serbia) nominates Tomasz Milkowski for the title of Honorary Vice-President of IATC. The proposal is accepted.

15. Election of Executive Committee

The representatives of the following national sections present their candidacy:

Jean-Pierre Han (France), Jeffrey Eric Jenkins (US), Konrad Szczebiot (Poland), Peng Tao (China), Irina Gogoberidze (Georgia), Ivan Medenica (Serbia), Deepa Punjani (India), Emmanuel Dandaura (Nigeria), Martin Morrow (Canada), Manabu Noda – on behalf of Mariko Anazawa (Japan) – and Ragip Ertuğrul (Turkey).

Stéphane Gilbert (Luxembourg) and Octavian Saiu (Romania) are appointed members of the Election Committee.

The votes are counted and the representatives of the following sections will form the new Executive Committee for the next two years:

France, US, Canada, Japan, China, Poland, Serbia, Georgia, India, Nigeria.

16. Election of auditors

Irina Antonova is again elected as auditor for the next two years.

17. Membership dues

It is proposed by the Excom to leave them unchanged. Adopted unanimously.

18. Other business

None.

19. Closure of the assembly

The assembly is closed at 12:30 PM.

Michel Vaïs, Secretary General

Octavian Saiu, Adjunct Secretary General

President's speech, IATC congress, Belgrade 2016
Margareta Sörenson
President, International Association of Theatre Critics

Normally, critics are well trained observers. We note, on paper and in our memories, what we see on stage. It becomes part of the profession. So I feel sure that you already have observed some things that are evident with the IATC of today:

It is a circle of colleagues, young and old, women and men, from different continents of the globe, who work together in different team work project. Some are more active than others, and to those who candidate for the board, the executive committée, I can tell: if you like to work a lot, this is a place for you.

1. Growing

The Association of Theatre Critics is growing. Despite the difficulties and limitations critics of today is meeting in the traditional media and publication world, we are, as a collective and an association, reaching out better than before. Since the last congress two new associations were created in Latin America, Argentina and Brazil. In the Arab speaking world we have a newly created regional association embracing 13 countries. Representatives from Asian countries work since long in the board, along with European and North American colleagues, and since the last congress the Nigerian association has a representative in the board.

So, some 3000 critics in 75 countries are together working for a better, up dated, informative and creative network on theatre criticism.

This is great and lucky news, but it means also new challenges. As an association, we must be able to offer activities to members in very different cultures and in very different conditions. We must face questions in languages we might be able to use, and we must be much better in information and reach out more effciently in social media and on internet.

2. Critical stages

But we have some very strong sides. Thanks to the initiative from our honorary president Yun-Cheol Kim, we have a world wide spread web journal, it has reached its 13th issue. Critical Stages/ Scènes Critiques, it is reaching out, it is getting known and it is unique. We have had the great luck to have a sponsor in the University of Illinois, thanks to Jeffrey Eric Jenkins, head of the theatre department om this university, who has been able to make his department donate a great sum a year, which allow us to continue - combined with donations from national associations and the fund of IATC itself, which is in good state. We feel safe for the next congress period to come, but we have to create a more permanent kind of economy for the journal.

Some of us work more than others. I take this opportunities to thank the editor of Critical Stages, Savas Patsalidis, who is editing our web journal and, for free, is doing immense quantities of work. Together with his technical staff, an impressing work is being done, which we can admire on the net. And planning for the future, it feels very safe that Savas is continuing to be its editor.

We must improve our own website so it will be as beautiful as Critical Stages, more inviting and more communicating. This is the entrance door to many for our association, and once you knock on this door, you will meet with Michel Vaïs, another key person for the IATC, and a living archive for what has been happening in the association through the last decades. But we

are growing, and since a long period the general secretary has an adjunct or his many tasks, earlier Ivan Medenica, now Octavian Saiu - persons with great capacities.

3.

An almost classic and basic activity in the Association of Theatre Critics is the seminar for young critics. It is our most popular activity both to monitor and to attend, and we must be more inventive in working with such seminars in different parts of the world, which might mean with other languages than English and French - I have good hope for seminars where Spanish and Arabic can be one of the two working languages. Not only languages capacities need to be up dated - we can be more inventive in collaboration with other organisations, festivals and other events and train young critics also in workshops and producing papers, bulletins, blogs etc.

The seminar for experienced critics, such as the one at this congress, is another pillar for the organisation. We have through the years worked out guidelines for the seminars to assure their qualities, and in the hands of Ivan Medenica they have been improving. We must remind ourselves that our guidelines suggest seminars of different sizes, the big and ambitious ones, like at the congresses, but also smaller ones, round tables and other events on criticism in new contexts.

4. Thalia prize

The Thalia prize is young compared to the age of the association, celebrating its 60 years. By and by we have shaped a profile for the prize, and after awarding this time Femi Osofisan from Nigeria, I think we are ready to let the Thalia Prize for the future be international in the true sense and travel the world. That means that we need suggestions from all our brilliant member critics in different countries and continents, so that we can in time study candidates for the prize of the same high qualities as we had till now. We also must see to that the prize will be better known outside our inner circles, something that you all can help us with.

5. Other organisations

IATC is one of many organisations under the so called umbrella of UNESCO, an organisation more and more turning to education organisations. Therefore it will be fruitful for us to work with other similar cultural associations, like Assitej, UNIMA and Firth, and I am glad to see the president of Assitej, Yvette Hardie as a guest of the congress. This collaborations can also give spin off effects for national associations depending on national and local conditions.

6. Last but not least

We are highly depending on festivals and other events that would like to invite us - like this generous invitation from BITEF and its new artistic director Ivan Medenica. With the fabulous assistance of Dusanna we have had a splendid program packed with activities and performances and many among us know how demanding such a big event with all its responsibilities is. So thank you Ivan, BITEF, the Yugoslav Theatre and its team and Dusanna for perfect days.

We are now in the luxury position that we already have a place to meet for our next congress, 2018, and that is in the conference center of Banff, in Calgary, Canada. The Canadian team is already preparing and are present in this congress to study the many big and small tasks that a congress must be able to embrace - and I thank you already at this point for the preparation.

So thank you all for a lot of good team working! Our future plans look promising and we have reason to be optimistic for the IATC, even if the world around us seem more chaotic, difficult to understand and even threatening. The rights to freely express is limited, cut or threatened in so many parts of the world that we have all good reasons to continue to defend our work and our profession.

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Rapport du secrétaire général – Belgrade, 27^e Assemblée générale de l’AICT
Secretary General’s report – Belgrade, 27th General Assembly of IATC
Michel Vaïs

As usual, my report will be bilingual.

Comme d’habitude, je vais faire mon rapport dans les deux langues officielles de l’AICT. Je commence par le français.

L’AICT a donc 60 ans cette année ; j’ai fait partie du Comité exécutif les 22 dernières années, et je vais maintenant vous dire ce qui s’est passé depuis la dernière Assemblée générale, la 26^e, qui a eu lieu à Pékin, en octobre 2014.

Nous avons toujours deux réunions du Comité exécutif (Comex), au printemps et à l’automne. En mai 2015, nous nous sommes réunis en Suède (à Malmö) ; en octobre 2015 c’était en Géorgie (à Tbilissi) ; et en avril dernier, nous avons été invités en Roumanie (à Craiova). Chaque fois, l’ensemble du Comex était généreusement logé et nourri par un festival, dont nous avons pu suivre les spectacles avec intérêt. On en trouve d’ailleurs toujours des traces dans notre revue *Web Scènes critiques/Critical Stages*. La plupart du temps, plusieurs de nos membres interviennent aussi par des exposés lorsqu’un colloque est organisé, comme ce fut le cas notamment au Festival Shakespeare de Craiova, où avait lieu en même temps la remise du prix Europe pour le théâtre. Puisque j’ai mentionné l’excellente revue Web de l’AICT, dirigée par Savas Patsalidis, je mentionne aussi que je m’occupe de réviser tout le contenu en langue française de *Scènes critiques*, et que j’y écris aussi des articles à l’occasion. Mais je précise que cela ne fait pas partie de ma tâche comme secrétaire général.

Revenons au travail du Comex. Il y a eu aussi depuis deux ans des colloques et des stages pour jeunes critiques, mais je laisserai les responsables de ces activités vous en parler plus tard.

Personnellement, j’ai pris part à plusieurs événements. Tout de suite après notre Congrès de Pékin, comme j’étais de passage en Turquie, j’ai été invité à la dernière minute par un membre de notre Section turque, Emre Erdem, à faire à Istanbul une conférence sur l’éthique de la critique dramatique, basée sur notre code de pratique. Cela a donné lieu à d’intenses discussions et à des articles dans les médias qui ont fait beaucoup de bruit ! J’ai aussi été invité successivement dans deux pays du Caucase que j’aime bien : l’Arménie, pour le Congrès mondial de l’Institut international du théâtre à Erevan, et l’Azerbaïdjan, où a lieu chaque année en novembre, à Bakou, soit un colloque international, soit un festival de marionnettes. Je salue d’ailleurs nos collègues d’Azerbaïdjan qui participent à nos congrès depuis celui de Varsovie, en 2012.

Malheureusement, nous n'avons encore aucun membre en Arménie, où nous avons tout de même organisé notre congrès mondial en 2010. À ce sujet, j'ai eu des conversations avec notre collègue de Géorgie, Irina Gogobéridzé, et nous avons évoqué l'idée d'une section dans le Caucase, qui regrouperait des collègues de Géorgie, d'Azerbaïdjan et d'Arménie. La langue de travail de ces trois groupes serait « tout naturellement » le russe, langue que tous les intellectuels parlent dans le Caucase, et ces échanges permettraient de contourner une situation politique qui bloque les relations entre nous et qui parfois mène, on le sait, au bord de la guerre. Je suis sûr que, comme moi, vous trouverez qu'une section de l'AICT dans le Caucase serait une très grande victoire, qui pourrait donner des idées à la classe politique... !

I continue in English.

After Armenia, I was in Romania, to join my colleagues of our Webjournal in Cluj. We were invited by the director of the Festival Interferences, who hosted not only the editorial staff of *Critical Stages*, but also one of our seminars for young critics.

In 2015, I spent a lot of time, with our new president and other members of Excom, over some very touchy issues. The kind of issues I would prefer never to deal with... In January, we decided to react to the killing of the editorial staff of *Charlie Hebdo*, during a meeting of their board. We were deeply horrified and moved by this shooting, so, with our president and the members of our Cabinet, we wrote very quickly a press release, which was then circulated among our membership. However, this caused some strong discussions within the Excom members, and it took a lot of efforts to finally find a consensus.

After the Beijing Congress, a protest letter was sent about our Nigerian colleagues who could never get a visa for China. I am happy to see that the situation is different for this congress. There were also long discussions within the Excom before my new adjunct, Octavian Saiu, was accepted. I am happy that this is now the case. I thank our treasurer Stéphane Gilbert for having helped me in the meantime, but I surely would not continue this job without an efficient adjunct I can count on, like Octavian.

Another issue brought us very close to a catastrophe: the security of our website was threatened by some hackers who have been sending e-mails to several of our members, asking for money and pretending they were some of our colleagues. The e-mail addresses of Emmanuel Dandaura, from Nigeria, and Margareta Sörenson were thus imitated (in fact, a new address was forged for Margareta) and unfortunately, one of our colleagues fell into the trap and generously sent a consequent amount of money to the hackers.

But even before this, our website was frozen for 3 months, when we transferred it from Canada to Serbia, because the security settings are not the same in the two countries.

On a more positive tone, we now have new national sections in Argentina and Brazil; new groups sharing the national section with a former group, in Greece and Romania; and one new regional section in the Arab countries. This new association of Arab theatre critics brings together 26 critics from 13 countries. (You have all their names on the website.)

There were among the Excom members strong discussions about the representativeness of the Indian national section... This started during our congress Beijing, but I must say this is not new. Every year, in some countries, some people feel that they are not well enough represented at the IATC. For me, this is a good sign: more and more critics want to participate

in our activities! My job is just to try and help them find a way to participate, which respects our statutes.

We now have new members, individual or associates, in Russia, in Denmark, and in Iraq/Germany. (Actually, Ms Lamice El-Amari lives in Germany but was born in Iraq and often returns to her homeland. She was a member of IATC a long time ago.)

In September, 2015, a conference was organized in Argentina, by Halima Tahan, with the Buenos Aires International Festival (FIBA). Several IATC members participated, including president Margareta Sörenson.

On the initiative of Halima Tahan, a seminar was organized in the framework of the International Festival of Buenos Aires (FIBA) 2015, in Buenos Aires. During one week (Sept. 28th-Oct. 3rd), established international critics met with Argentinian critics and theatre practitioners in the conference localities of Teatro San Martín in Buenos Aires. Margareta Sörenson, Emmanuel Dandaura, Manabu Noda and Yij Young presented papers together with Brazilian and Argentinian critics. Each seminar was rounded up by a discussion on the performances seen in the festival. After the many meetings, steps were taken for a new national section of IATC both in Argentina and in Brazil.

In December, 2015, I was invited with our president to the Sultanate of Oman, for the official founding of the Arab Regional Section of the IATC. The invitation came from our colleague Jawad al Lawati, who is also the director of the Arab Theatre Festival in Oman.

Finally, after a proposition from the cabinet of IATC, I had accepted the invitation to represent the IATC at the ITI congress in Manaus, Brazil, in May, 2016, but the congress was cancelled. So, the ticket we paid for the flight is lost.

Je poursuis et je terminerai en français.

Aujourd'hui, selon le rapport de notre trésorier, nous avons 40 sections en règle, dont 4 sections composées de 2 groupes (en Roumanie, en Bulgarie, en Grèce et au Canada) et deux sections régionales, celle des Caraïbes (qui comprend 8 pays ou territoires) et celle des pays arabes, qui inclut 13 pays.

Malheureusement, la section russe semble avoir coupé le contact avec l'AICT. Elle n'a pas renouvelé sa cotisation depuis un an et personne ne la représente ici. C'est la première fois depuis que je participe aux congrès de l'AICT, en 1992 – et sûrement depuis beaucoup plus longtemps –, que je ne vois pas de Russe ici. (Les seuls qui parleront russe entre eux sont nos amis d'Azerbaïdjan et de Géorgie, et aussi du Kazakhstan ou des pays baltes.) Une autre section nationale qui a été membre depuis de nombreuses années n'a pas renouvelé sa cotisation depuis 2013 : la Chine de Taïpei. C'est dommage.

En tout cas, 40 sections membres de l'AICT, réparties dans plus de 60 pays, c'est je crois bien un record dans l'histoire de notre association. Au dernier congrès, à Pékin, il y avait 36 sections en règle, dont une section régionale.

En plus, il y a les membres associés et les membres individuels. Nous avons aujourd'hui 4 membres associés et 10 membres individuels en règle. Le dernier ayant adhéré est Christian Jade, de Belgique. Je rappelle que les membres associés sont des critiques de théâtre qui ne peuvent pas faire partie de leur association nationale pour toutes sortes de raisons, et qui sont

déjà membres d'une autre association internationale dans le domaine du théâtre. Les membres individuels vivent dans un pays où il n'existe pas de section nationale ou régionale de l'AICT. Ainsi, il y a sept pays de plus où l'AICT a un ou des membres, ce qui nous amène tout près de 70 pays. Il suffirait que certains membres individuels qui étaient en règle jusqu'à l'an dernier renouvellent leur adhésion pour que nous atteignions le chiffre magique de 75 pays !

Depuis la réunion du Comex de Craiova, en avril dernier, je n'ai pas accompli de mission à l'étranger. Comme je l'ai déjà dit, le congrès de l'Institut international du théâtre (IIT) auquel je devais participer en mai au Brésil a été annulé. J'ai donc concentré mes efforts sur la préparation de ce Congrès, avec les autres membres du Bureau : Margareta notre précieuse présidente, Stéphane notre très efficace trésorier, et mon indispensable adjoint Octavian. Bien sûr, nous avons eu la chance de pouvoir compter sur Dusana, ici en Serbie, qui est d'une efficacité redoutable. Je compte beaucoup sur Margareta, Stéphane et Octavian pour poursuivre mon travail les deux prochaines années, si vous me renouvez votre confiance.

Merci.

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AICT-IATC – Congrès de Belgrade – septembre 2016
Stéphane Gilbert

TRÉSORERIE

Membres :

Sections :	44	(Pas de nouvelles de : Albanie, Russie, Taïpei)
(en 2014 : 39)		
Membres individuels :	10	
(en 2014 : 16)		
Membres associés :	4	
(en 2014 : 5)		

Comptes :

Compte général :	21455 €
(à Pékin : 20682 €)	
Compte d'épargne :	5410 €
Compte <i>Critical Stages</i> :	877 €

Comptes approuvés par Irina Antonova, commissaire aux comptes.