

**XXVI<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Association of Theatre Critics**  
**Minutes of the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**  
**Warsaw, Poland, March 30, 2012, 10:00 AM**

Note: This is the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly but the 26<sup>th</sup> Congress, including the extraordinary 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Congress held in Seoul in October, 2006.

1. Members present and eligibility of delegates

1. Azerbaijan
2. Bulgaria Guild / Bulgaria Society
3. Canada / Quebec
4. Caribbean regional section
5. China
6. Croatia
7. Czech Republic
8. Estonia
9. Finland
10. France
11. Georgia
12. Great-Britain
13. India
14. Iran
15. Italy ANC / Italy NCIA
16. Japan
17. Korea
18. Macedonia (Former Yugoslav Republic of)
19. Moldavia
20. Nigeria
21. Poland
22. Portugal
23. Romania
24. Serbia
25. Slovakia
26. Slovenia
27. Spain
28. Sweden
29. Thailand
30. USA

Thus the quorum of one half of the qualifying member sections is reached.

2. Opening of the assembly by the President

Yun-Cheol expresses his gratitude to Tomasz and his colleagues for organizing the Congress in such a difficult financial situation, with a reduced budget. The President is very glad that we have three new national sections in this Congress – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Thailand. We have a new group in Italy as well – *New Criticism Italian Association*, now member of the Italian section. The most important task we have in the Assembly is to elect the officers of the Association: President, Secretary General, plus ten ExCom members. They must be ready to devote themselves to a hard and serious work in the next two-year period. Yun-Cheol invites the Secretary General, Michel Vaïs, to continue chairing the Assembly.

3. Approval of the agenda

Proposed by Jeffrey Eric Jenkins from the USA, seconded by Brigitte Purkhardt from Canada/Quebec. Unanimously approved.

#### 4. Approval of the minutes of the General Assembly held on June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2010 in Yerevan (Armenia)

Proposed by Ivan Medenica from Serbia, seconded by Mark Brown from GB, adopted unanimously. Matters arising from the minutes: none.

#### 5. Report from the Secretary General

It was delivered in the two official languages of IATC. See annexe, following the minutes.

#### 6. Report from the General Treasurer and the Auditors

See in the Treasurer Irène Sadowska-Guillon's Excom Report.

The Auditor, Irina Gogobéridzé, from Georgia, gave her report to the Secretary General in paper form. It stresses that IATC's accounts are in good order. After this Congress, Irina cannot be the auditor anymore because she became the head of the Georgian national section of IATC (the auditor has to be an individual or an associate member, with no right to vote). Stéphane Gilbert, from Luxembourg, accepts to be a candidate. See below, item 15.

#### 7. Reports from the directors of young critics seminars and experienced critics' conferences

Jean-Pierre gives his report on the seminars organized in the last period – St. Petersburg, Riga. There is quite a big interest for the seminars: in Warsaw they even had to refuse some candidates. He asks us to motivate young critics to take part in these activities and to inform them that there are working groups in two languages – English and French. Margareta stresses that sometimes there are problems of coordination with the organizers of the conferences. For example, at Premio Europa in St. Petersburg, there was no IATC conference but we were invited to take part in the conference organized by them. The conference in the framework of the Warsaw Congress was also organized only by the Polish partners.

#### 8. Critical Stages

Yun-Cheol reminds us that the IATC web journal *Critical Stages* was launched in 2009 and he expresses his gratitude to the first editor in chief of the journal, Maria Helena Serôdio. The main topic of the next issue will be: "Theatre and disaster", and it will be edited by our Japanese colleagues. Yun-Cheol is now the editor in chief of the journal, but he separated this huge task between a few editors responsible for certain sections. We should promote *Critical Stages* in international professional circles and widen its influence and impact.

#### 9. Web Site

Everyone seems satisfied. Ian Herbert asks if there is an option to put the papers of the Warsaw conference on the web site of the IATC. The idea will be taken into consideration.

#### 10. Proposals for activities

##### 10. 1. Congresses

October 2014 – Beijing. The Chinese section invites us in Beijing for the 27th IATC Congress. They have already asked for support from their Ministry of culture and Ministry of education. They would be honored if we accept their invitation to come to China, country with a long and rich history of performing arts.

A delegate from Nigeria expresses how glad they are of becoming new members of the IATC. They are interested in organizing a future Congress of IATC in 2016 in Abuja. They would like IATC to have more national sections in Africa by that time. They would like to organize an African regional meeting as well.

Ravi Chaturvedi supports the idea to have a Congress in Africa and offers India as a "reserve" for 2016. It could be in different places: Pune, Ahmedabad, or Vallabh Vidyanagar).

##### 10. 2. Seminars for young critics

Slovenia, Maribor – October 2012. They would organize two language groups – in English and French

Finland, Helsinki – November 2013

China, Beijing, October 2013

USA, Chicago – 2014: the month is still not proposed (the best will be in autumn). They would organize two language groups as well.

##### 10. 3. Conferences for established critics

Great Britain, Edinburgh, September 2012 (not confirmed)

Georgia, Tbilisi – September-October 2012

France, Caen – February 2013

Bolivia, Santa Cruz de la Sierra – April 2013

Romania, Bucharest – October-November 2012 or 2013 (in the frame of the national theatre festival)

### 10.3. Excom meetings

The next one is immediately after this Assembly

USA, Chicago – October 2012

Sweden, Jönköping – end of May 2013, with the Swedish Theatre Biennial (it may be during Premio Europa)

Canada, Montreal – autumn 2013 or autumn 2014

Romania, Bucharest - October-November 2013

### 11. New membership fee

For almost 20 years the fees did not change, except for a small adjustment when the dues changed from French Francs to Euros. The new fee structure follows. Proposed by Nigeria, supported by Iran, it was accepted unanimously.

**5-20 members: 100 euros**

**21-50 members: 160 euros**

**51-100 members: 200 euros**

**101-200 members: 275 euros**

**201 members and above: 310 euros**

**Associate members: 30 euros**

**Individual members: 50 euros**

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*Health break*

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### 12. Election for the Presidency

Michel asks Ian Herbert, honorary president of IATC, to chair the election. Ian presented the publication *World Scenography* and asks us to contribute to the second edition, which covers the period 1990-2005.

He asks for nominations. Margareta proposes Yun-Cheol Kim and stresses that he projected a global perspective of IATC development (a lot of new sections were accepted during his mandate in Asia), and conceived and launched the project of the web journal *Critical Stages*. It was seconded by Mark Brown and there were no other candidates. Yun-Cheol Kim was reelected by acclamation for a third term.

In his acceptance speech Yun-Cheol stresses that we should keep promoting theatre criticism and fight for a wider media space (namely through *Critical Stages*) and react to the dangers of conservative politics that theatre and criticism are focused with in the world (in Hungary, Belarus...). He will personally react whenever and wherever the freedom of speech and artistic expression is in danger. He is very glad we are widening our presence in the Caucasian region (sections in Georgia and Azerbaijan) and Asia (Thailand). We should try our best to be more present in South America. He invites us to contact him whenever needed and promises he would be quick in answering.

### 13. Election for the General secretariat

Michel Vaïs was proposed by Maria Helena Serôdio and seconded by Ivan Medenica. He is a person open to collaboration, very efficient, speaks fluently both official languages of IATC. In the absence of any other candidacy, Michel was re-elected by acclamation for an eighth term.

### 14. Election of the executive committee

The Secretary General asks that each candidate make a short speech of two minutes to introduce himself/herself. It is stressed that we should keep geographical and cultural balance in the ExCom and that each member should be able to take part in the activities of the ExCom, cover expenses for travelling to its meetings and organize different activities in his/her country or region.

These are the 12 candidate sections, with the name of the person who would sit on the Excom if elected:

Canada: Don Rubin  
 China: Zhang Xian  
 France: Jean-Pierre Han  
 Great Britain: Mark Brown  
 Iran: Katayoun Hosseinzadeh Salmasi  
 Japan: Akiko Tachiki  
 Poland: Tomasz Milkowski  
 Romania: Alicia Georgescu  
 Serbia: Ivan Medenica  
 Sweden: Margareta Sörenson  
 USA: Jeffrey Eric Jenkins  
 Caribbean Regional Section: Charles Travis Weekes

After a vote cast by secret ballot, the two following sections received the fewest votes and thus were NOT elected: Iran and Carribean Regional Section.

15. Election of an auditor.

Stéphane Gilbert, individual member from Luxembourg, is elected unanimously.

16. Other matters

None.

The Assembly was closed at 1:00 PM.

**Michel Vais**

Secretary General

**Ivan Medenica**

Adjunct Secretary General

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ANNEXE

**Michel Vais – le 30 mars 2012**

**Rapport du secrétaire général – 25<sup>e</sup> Assemblée générale de l’AICT, Varsovie**

Report of the Secretary General – 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the IATC, Warsaw

As I do usually, I will speak partly in French, partly in English.

**Après l’allocution du président, c’est le moment du rapport moral du secrétaire général. Vous savez, il y a de légères différences entre les versions française et anglaise de nos statuts. En anglais, on dit que l’assemblée écoute les rapports du président et du secrétaire général. Mais en français, on distingue entre ces deux discours. Il y a une allocution et un rapport. Le président est responsable des orientations générales de l’Association, tandis que le secrétaire général met en œuvre les décisions prises par l’Assemblée générale et le Comité exécutif. Dans mon esprit, le secrétaire général est le responsable du fonctionnement général de l’Association ; il fait le lien entre les membres.**

**Depuis notre 24<sup>e</sup> assemblée générale, à Erevan, en juin 2010, le comité exécutif (Comex en français, ou Excom en anglais) s’est réuni tel que prévu deux fois par an. Fin octobre 2010, ce fut en Slovénie, dans le cadre du Festival de théâtre de Maribor ; en avril 2011, nous nous sommes rencontrés à Saint-Pétersbourg, à l’occasion de la remise du Prix Europe pour le théâtre ; et en septembre 2011, ce fut à Tbilissi, en Géorgie, pendant le Festival international de théâtre qui a présenté une vitrine (*showcase*) du théâtre géorgien. Nous essayons d’habitude d’associer un colloque à nos rencontres : à Maribor, il y en a eu un sur l’Intercritique (*Intercriticism* en anglais) et à Tbilissi, le thème de nos discussions était : « De l’éthique à la pratique : le**

code de l'AICT ». À Saint-Pétersbourg, il y avait tellement d'activités autour du Prix Europe, qui a récompensé cette fois sept lauréats, en plus des hommages à d'autres artistes, que nous n'avons pas pu inclure de colloque propre à l'AICT dans le calendrier. Chaque fois que le Comex se réunit, plusieurs autres personnes s'ajoutent, ou sont directement invitées par les organisateurs, et nous les retrouvons toujours avec plaisir. Par exemple, depuis deux ans, nous constatons qu'il y a toujours une importante délégation chinoise à chacune de nos rencontres.

(Je continue en anglais.)

Besides the symposiums organized on the occasion of the Excom meetings, some national sections organize international symposiums to which they invite our members. They also invite journalists or critics they know, who are not necessarily members of the IATC. This is important, because it helps us speak about our work and regularly get new members to join. Since June 2010, many of our members were in Russia in September 2010. Seven editors of our web journal *Critical Stages* were in St Petersburg for the Baltic House Festival followed by a cruise on the Baltic Sea organized by our Russian section, while I was invited in Omsk, Siberia, for the Akademia Theatre Festival. Other members of the Excom were there: Mark Brown and Zhang Xian, as well as many journalists, mostly Russian, some of whom were not aware of the existence of our association. Of course, we were given time to expose our work and the advantages of participating in our activities.

In November 2010, I was invited in Azerbaijan, for the First Baku International Theatre Conference. There, I gave a workshop to some 75 journalists. We can see in this new and dynamic country a strong desire of opening to the world, namely by joining international cultural organizations. I returned to Baku the following year, in November 2011, for their first International Puppet Festival. In this occasion, I helped them get in touch with UNIMA, which apparently was not easy, and Azerbaijan then became a member.

In December, I participated with many Excom members in a symposium organized by Jean-Pierre Han in Caen, France, where we were hosted by the director of the Comédie de Caen, Jean Lambert-wild. We discussed the situation of theatre criticism in our countries in relation with the situation of our national theatres.

In February 2011, I was in Tehran, as a member of the jury of the Fadjr Festival, with our two vice-presidents, Jean-Pierre Han and Margareta Soerenson. We did not participate in a symposium, but met colleagues from various countries.

(I continue in French.)

**En mai 2011, nous avons été invités par Margareta Sörenson à Gävle (en Suède), pour la Biennale du théâtre suédois. Cela a été l'occasion d'une réunion du Bureau de l'AICT (avec le président, et les deux vice-présidents ; j'étais là comme secrétaire général, avec mon adjoint Ivan Medenica). En Suède, nous avons pu préparer la rencontre suivante du comité exécutif, à Tbilissi, avec Irina Gogobéridzé, et décider des règles entourant le prix Thalie de 2012. En même temps, nous avons eu une rencontre de quelques membres du comité éditorial de notre revue *Web Scènes critiques/Critical Stages*. Nous avons aussi pris part à une discussion publique sur le théâtre suédois.**

**À peine quelques semaines plus tard, en juin, a eu lieu en Espagne, à Salamanque, un festival nommé FACYL, auquel j'avais été invité mais je n'étais pas libre ; j'ai cependant recommandé plusieurs collègues qui y sont allés (de France, de Grande-Bretagne, de Grèce, de Serbie, de Pologne et de Russie) et qui ont pris part à une discussion sur la critique.**

**Toujours en 2011, après la réunion du Comex en Géorgie et après mon retour en Azerbaïdjan, je suis allé début décembre en Argentine, à l'invitation du Festival de théâtre expérimental Rayo Misterioso de Rosario. Là, j'ai présenté notre Code de pratique et j'ai rencontré des critiques et des artistes d'Argentine, du Brésil, d'Espagne, de l'Équateur et du Chili.**

**Enfin, en janvier 2012, je suis allé aux Émirats Arabes Unis à l'invitation du Festival de théâtre solo de Fujairah (Fujairah Monodrama Theatre Festival).**

(Je reviens à l'anglais.)

As I said before, all these travels, in addition to provide us with wonderful opportunities to discover other theatre practices, is an occasion to bring new members to our association. However, you will not be surprised to hear that if many persons say they are interested, not all pay the dues immediately. For some, it may take years...! I won't give any names here. But I am happy to name the new members who were approved by our Excom since our last General Assembly and, most important, who are now in good standing because they have paid their dues to our treasurer.

First of all, 2 new **associate members**: Mr Ravi Chaturvedi, from India and Ms Duska Radsavljevic, from the UK. Both are already members of FIRT, but not of their IATC national sections. I remind you that associate members can be invited to our congresses, but they do not receive a press card and cannot vote at the General Assembly. About

associate membership, the Excom decided to refuse membership to any person who is already a member of his or her national section.

The following 7 new **individual members** were accepted: Ms Nina Mazur, from Germany, Mr Stéphane Gilbert, from Luxembourg, Mr Abdul Karim Ali Jawad Al Lawati, from the Sultanate of Oman, Mr Liam Murphy, from Ireland and Charles FitzGerald from Northern Ireland. We also accepted Ms Catherine Bouko, from Belgium, because unfortunately, we have no more national section in this country. One other French-Speaking Belgian critic joined our French Section: his name is Mr Michel Voiturier. Mr Tabapsi Parfait, from Cameroon, also joined the IATC as an individual member. He intended to participate in the young critics seminar in Warsaw.

We also have 4 new **national sections** since our Yerevan Congress: Georgia, Azerbaijan, Zimbabwe and Thailand have been accepted by the Excom. The Georgian Critics Union has 18 members and is chaired by Ms Irina Gogoberidze, the Azerbaijan Theatre Critics Association has 12 members and is presided by Ms Maryam Alizade, the national section of Zimbabwe is chaired by Mr Stephen Chifunyise, from Zimbabwe, and counts 15 members; finally, Mr Pawit Mahasarinand, heads a theatre and dance critics association, which is the new Thailand national section of the IATC, with 11 members.

**(De retour au français.)**

**Si nous sommes toujours heureux d'accueillir de nouvelles sections nationales, il faut aussi déplorer la disparition de certaines d'entre elles. Ainsi, la section allemande de l'AICT, qui suivait fidèlement nos travaux depuis un demi-siècle, n'existe plus. (Voilà pourquoi nous avons accepté la candidature de Nina Mazur comme membre individuel.) L'association qui représentait les critiques allemands nous a avisé de sa dissolution et, malgré tous nos efforts, nous n'avons pas encore réussi à intéresser des critiques allemands à créer une nouvelle section nationale. C'est bien malheureux, car l'Allemagne est un pays où la vie théâtrale est très forte et je suis sûr que nous aimerions tous pouvoir mieux la connaître.**

**La section cubaine a aussi disparu, faute de paiement de cotisation, mais ses 15 membres se sont joints à notre section régionale des Caraïbes. Ce qui donne pour cette section un total de 27 membres, représentant 8 pays. D'autres sections nationales n'ont pas payé leur cotisation depuis plusieurs années, aussi ne peuvent-elles plus être considérées comme membres. Selon le dernier rapport de notre trésorière, c'est le cas par exemple de l'Uruguay, de la Belgique, du Mexique, du Taïpeh chinois et de la Chine de Hong Kong. Ces cinq sections n'ont pas donné signe de vie depuis plusieurs années. Je conserve cependant leur nom et leur adresse pendant quelque temps sur le site Web et dans ma liste d'envoi. On ne sait jamais : peut-être qu'en recevant de nos nouvelles ils décideront de revenir. On a déjà vu ça.**

**Cela dit, la Russie et la Croatie ont acquitté leur cotisation après quelques années de difficultés. Je suis donc heureux d'annoncer que ces deux pays sont maintenant redevenus membres en règle.**

**Par ailleurs, il y a des situations particulières dans certains pays. Nous savons que, depuis 1994, il est possible de reconnaître plus d'un groupe de critiques dans un même pays. Actuellement, c'est le cas au Canada et en Bulgarie, où la section nationale est représentée par deux délégués qui se partagent un vote. Autrement dit, les deux groupes forment ensemble *de facto* la section nationale de leur pays. Depuis notre dernier congrès, le comité exécutif a reconnu un deuxième groupe de critiques en Italie. La section italienne est donc représentée ici par deux délégués, l'un qui représente l'Association nationale des critiques et l'autre qui représente l'Association italienne de la Nouvelle critique (j'espère qu'ils accepteront ma traduction). Bienvenue à Carmelita Celi et à Sergio Lo Gatto, qui représentent ces deux groupes. Sergio Lo Gatto a d'ailleurs participé au stage pour jeunes critiques de Riga, en Lettonie (*Latvia* en anglais), en 2011.**

**(Back to English.)**

A similar situation may happen in other countries. Although we do not encourage the multiplication of groups of theatre critics, we wish to work with those who are qualified critics and want to actively participate in our activities. Of course, it is preferable that all critics of a given country unite. But we cannot judge the particular situation within each country.

**And I prefer by far having two groups like in Italy, rather than no group like in Germany.** Recently, we have received a request to accept a second group in Georgia, which claims to have 18 members, but the Excom has not taken a position yet. It is encouraging to see that so many critics wish to join us! We also have received messages from India and from Spain, mentioning some internal conflicts within these national sections. It is never easy to bring theatre critics together, and such situations are understandable. I know this through my own experience as president of the Quebec Association of Theatre Critics. Each time, Yun-Cheol Kim and I try to give some advice to our members so that they can find their own solutions.

About the Spanish section, we have received a long letter (which was published as an editorial in their magazine *ADEteatro*), exposing dissatisfactions and giving suggestions about the way the IATC should be ruled. Essentially, they claim that the IATC is becoming an association of individuals, that several groups of critics are in fact fake

associations and that the elections to the Excom are not taken seriously. Of course, I replied to the Spanish section on behalf of the Excom. I hope that, if the Spanish delegate wishes to propose some changes in our way of working, he will take the opportunity to do so during this General Assembly, in accordance with our regulations.

One word about the lists of persons in my mailing list. First of all, I always make the list visible when I send you a group message because I think anybody should be able to circulate information to all the persons in this list – and some do. Anyways, all our delegates are on our web site, so any one can pick them up from there and create their own list. The names I keep on my mailing list sometimes cause a bit of confusion. I keep the names of IATC contacts – members or non-members – in my mailing list whether or not they have paid their dues, as long as I am not asked to replace a name or an address by another valid one. I keep the names of the president/chairperson, the secretary general, the person in charge of paying the dues (this is important for our treasurer!), etc. Some addresses keep bouncing back, but I know for sure that some persons whose e-mails bounce back still strangely receive my messages. Some finally join after many years of receiving my e-mails, or send their dues after years of delinquency (e.g. Uruguay, Croatia, Greece, Lithuania, Romania, Hungary...).

On the web site, I keep the names of one or more persons of a national section, usually at their request: chairperson or president, honorary members, associate members... I keep delinquent members as long as the Excom has not decided that they should be removed. I only replace a name or change an address when asked by an authorized member of the section to do so, or when I know the person is deceased. It is NOT my intention to put the names of all members of a board of a national section, but in the case of a regional section (e.g. Caribbean), I put the names of all their members because they are from several countries. This is my policy. If you think anything should be changed, please tell me.

**(Back to French for the last time.)**

**Quelque chose de joyeux pour terminer : lorsque nous sommes allés à Caen, en France, en décembre 2010, plusieurs d'entre nous ont été très impressionnés en visitant un immeuble où sont conservées des archives théâtrales qui s'appelle l'Institut de la mémoire des écritures contemporaines ou IMEC. On trouve là, par exemple, des manuscrits d'auteurs tels Samuel Beckett et Marguerite Duras, et de metteurs en scène comme Antoine Vitez et Patrice Chéreau. L'IMEC conserve aussi cent ans d'archives du Syndicat français de la critique dramatique de 1877 à 1977. Or, comme notre association a été fondée à Paris en 1956, les responsables de l'IMEC offrent de conserver aussi les archives de l'AICT. Si cela se fait, la professeure Chantal Meyer-Plantureux se propose de lancer un groupe national de recherche sur la critique de théâtre, en France et sur le plan international. C'est un projet auquel le Comex doit travailler prochainement.**

**Je vous annonce par ailleurs qu'il y a deux personnes qui travaillent actuellement sur l'AICT : en Croatie, Mme Sanja Nikcevic donne des cours sur la critique dramatique en s'appuyant sur nos publications, et en Chine, Mme Zhu Ning rédige une thèse de doctorat sur l'histoire de l'AICT ; son directeur de thèse est d'ailleurs le délégué chinois à notre comité exécutif, M. Zhang Xian.**

**Enfin, je pense qu'il faudrait créer un groupe permanent de révision de notre Code de pratique ; le délégué russe a mis le doigt sur une phrase qui manque de clarté au sujet de possibles conflits d'intérêt entre un critique et un jury. Je pense que n'importe quel document de ce genre gagnerait à être révisé périodiquement.**

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**Et puis, depuis deux ans, j'ai aussi fait quelques traductions et révisé le contenu français de notre revue *Web Scènes critiques/Critical Stages*. Cela constitue ma modeste contribution à ce travail gigantesque lancé par notre président, et qui fait toute notre admiration.**

**Me voici donc au terme de mon septième mandat de secrétaire général. Je vous annonce que la tâche me plaît toujours autant et que je suis prêt à entreprendre un huitième mandat de deux ans, si vous m'en donnez la possibilité.**

**Merci.**