

## **Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania, 23-29 March 2009**

### **Final report**

Between 23 and 29 March 2009, the AICT/IATC organised an International Training Seminar for New Professional Theatre Critics in Sfântu Gheorghe, Romania, hosted by the first edition of the bi-annual International Reflex Festival, organised by the Tamási Áron Theatre (celebrating its 60 years), and dedicated to the theme *European Theatre between East and West*. The general director, Mr Laszlo Bocsardi, and the director of communications, Mr Ottó Bodó, were the hosts of this initiative.

The Reflex Festival offered new critics an exceptional training context, during 5 days, with theatre at the core of their discussions. The repertoire of the Reflex Festival from Sfântu Gheorghe included the most prominent plays from two theatrical seasons, and some prize-winning performances from different Central European theatre cultures. In addition to the most important performances of Romanian and Hungarian theatrical culture, the festival also included distinctive performances from Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. Some East and Central European productions, considered successful among their own theatrical medium, were placed into a dialogical position with the performances of one or two important West European theatres, creating opportunities for an intellectual colloquy with different directorial schools and theatrical form languages. The new critics were invited to attend the performances that are part of the official program, together with all the other parallel activities.

The seminar had 8 participants: Ciprian Marinescu, Imola Márton and Sílvia Nastasie, from Romania; Kateřina Veselovská, from the Czech Republic; Noémi Herczog, Reka Hegyi and Robert Markó, from Hungary; and Yuh Jhung Hwang, from the Republic of Korea. The moderators were Lis Hellström Sveningsson, from Sweden, and Alice Georgescu, from Romania. According to the final report drafted by Lis, although there was only one participant from outside Central and Europe (Yuh, who offered interesting and refreshing perspectives from another angle), that homogeneity proved useful and the seminar functioned as an opportunity for a very good exchange of theatrical experiences in different ex-communist societies. Again, according to Lis's report, "Everyone worked very intensely, 5-6 hours in the seminar every day, including a lunch-break during which the discussions continued! All participants shared their presentations, texts and opinions in lively and committed discussions. Every night, after the performances, the participants took part in the public talks, even though several of them did not have English translation". The 28 March, the seminar offered the Reflex festival an open seminar on the show of *Yvonne, Princess of Burgundy*, which was not scheduled for any public talk since it was performed by the organizing Tamási Áron Theatre. The participants had an interesting talk with the director, László Bocsárdi, and six of the actors. A lot of people were attending and Romanian television covered the event that had the duration of almost two hours.

A good measure of the success of the initiative is the fact that the organisers of the Reflex Festival said they would consider proposing a new seminar for the next edition of the festival and that they found the open seminar a very interesting form which they would like to try again. In the evaluation before closing the seminar, all the participants expressed their strong feelings of having had some days of good and inspiring work and that they would take new experiences with them back home.

Paulo Eduardo Carvalho, 26 May 2009

