

The International Association of Theatre Critics' Award – the Thalia Prize

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Excom has agreed to set up an international award, the Thalia Prize, to be presented at each IATC congress, starting in Seoul, September 2006. The plan for the award will be made public at our Turin Congress in March 2006, where the new ExCom will choose the winner from the suggestions of members. The prize will take the form of a statuette, representing Thalia, the Greek muse of comedy. The (Romanian Ministry of Culture, at the prompting of the) Romanian Section of IATC has generously agreed to sponsor the making of the statuette for the next (twenty) years.

It is awarded to honour a personality who has made a major contribution to theatre in the world, such as to change the nature of critics' thinking about theatre. So this is an award for someone who has influenced critics internationally. It is not a lifetime achievement award, to avoid conflict with the Premio Europa.

At the ExCom meeting in Reus, there was discussion of the nature of the possible winner, and opinions were divided between an influential critic (bearing in mind that we will be celebrating fifty years as a critics' organisation) of the provocative stature of the late Kenneth Tynan (the name of Eric Bentley was suggested), or (bearing in mind that we are to meet in Seoul) a representative of Far Eastern theatre who has had considerable influence outside their own country (examples: Tadashi Suzuki, Yukio Ninagawa). It is up to member sections to decide this by their nominations – your ideas matter!

Nominations are now sought from member sections, who may wish to conduct a ballot among their members (this is optional). Individual members may also make suggestions. Nominations, accompanied by explanatory citations, to be sent to the Secretary General, Michel Vais, to arrive by **1 March 2006**.

Nominated candidates will be discussed by the new ExCom in Turin, who are empowered to make additional suggestions, and who are responsible for the final shortlist. The shortlist will then be checked for availability, since a condition of the award is that the winner be able to accept it in person. The award winner will be announced in the Seoul Congress programme and invited to Seoul to receive it. We hope that the ceremony will include an acceptance speech.

Please circulate this information among your members for their nominations, with the understanding that no public mention of the prize should be made until it is formally announced in Turin in March 2006.