

10th Women Playwrights International Conference

Cape Town - South Africa 2015 | Newsletter #12



WPIC 2015 in Cape Town! Soon, soon!

The 2015 conference is upon us! If you are coming to Cape Town, we look forward to meeting you and sharing your work. If you are not able to join us, there's no need to feel excluded. Follow the hashtag **#wpic2015** on Twitter for up-to-the-minute updates on conference happenings, or look for Women Playwrights International Conference on Facebook to see daily photos.

In other news, we are looking for volunteers to be part of a test phase for an exciting new online networking tool for playwrights from Africa, and international researchers interested in finding work and connecting with theatre-makers from the African continent. A mobile-based site, called the **African Women Playwrights Network**, will be launched at the 2015 conference. The project is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK). If you're interested in being part of the test group of this network before its launch at WPIC 2015 (all you need is a computer/mobile phone, Internet access and 15-20 minutes), please send a mail to amy.jephta@uct.ac.za.

WPIC is an opportunity to meet, to build networks, to create genuine, lasting contacts between women playwrights and theatre professionals. Our aim is to have a supporting impact on cooperations and to build bridges between people from different parts of the world.

WPI was founded in 1988 and held its first conference in Buffalo, New York, USA. Two hundred women from over 30 countries were in attendance. Since then, women playwrights have gathered in Canada, Ireland, Greece, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia, India and Sweden. The 10th conference will be held 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa.

For daily updates, check here: www.wpicconference.com

Feel free to spread this news letter among your colleagues!



Homepage for WPI, www.wpinternational.net

WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

Dear all WPI Friends!



In less than two weeks some of us will meet in Cape Town for the 10th WPI conference since 1988. Check out the conference website www.wpiconference.com to look at the programme, register for workshops and prepare for another lifechanging week!

Our works will be presented, we will have workshops, panel discussions and key note speeches. We will get to know new people, new faces and new voices. We will finally meet for real. There are people with a lot of WPI experience, little or none. Some good old friends will meet, and new people will make good new friends. We are an ever expanding family!

We will have three specific WPI sessions during the conference. On the first day, 29th of June, we will do a WPI information session. You will meet the first conference director Anna Kay France on stage with Jyoti Mhapsekar, our conference director from Mumbai, Australian Sandra Shotlander will be with us, and many more who all have stories about our different conferences and how and why WPI was founded.

On the 1st of July the WPI Elections will take place. We are going to elect the WPI president for the next three years, along with new members of the management committee.

Finally on the 2nd of July we will talk about the future conference.





In 2012 we started a "history project", giving some impressions from the former WPI conferences in every newsletter. We have now covered all the conferences: 1988: Buffalo/USA, 1991: Toronto/Canada, 1994: Adelaide/Australia, 1997: Galway/Ireland, 2000: Athens/Greece, 2003: Manila/The Philippines, 2006: Jakarta&Bali/Indonesia and 2009: Mumbai/India. This time we will go back to the last conference in Stockholm/Sweden in 2012 as we are getting ready for our 10th conference in South Africa.

We were reminded of the value of documentation when gathering these stories, so please give attention to how you make your reports from our next conference(s) and please share!

SEE YOU SOON!

If you have any questions concerning WPI in the next days – please don't hesitate to get in contact with me, either by email or by getting to know me in Cape Town!

Lene Therese Teigen

WPI president

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WPI 2018 IN SANTIAGO DE CHILE

We proudly present SANTIAGO DE CHILE as the venue for the 11th WPI Conference in 2018 with WPI Latin America as the main organiser.

It will be the first time in the history of WPI that we have a conference in Latin America, so it is historical!

Sally Campusano, the festival director and member of the WPI management committee since 2012, will present Santiago de Chile in a session on Thursday July 2nd in Cape Town, and later the presentation will be published on our website **wpinternational.net**.

WPI Latin America will have The Centre Gabriela Mistral and The Centro Cultural Estación Mapucho in Santiago as Project Partners, and the conference will take place in May 2018.

"During the conference in Chile we want to reflect upon the relationship between territory, society and women's dramaturgy. We believe that where we live, the imaginary with whom we have lived and the role as women we occupy in society, are crucial when developing our aesthetic expressions as playwrights."

LAST PART OF OUR HISTORY SECTION:

WPIC 2012 in Stockholm, Sweden

It was a sunny week in Stockholm. The main venue was Södra Teatern, an old theatre high up on the southern island with a splendid view over the city. It became the meeting spot for 248 women playwrights from 47 different countries. We had some really intense days (and nights), starting with key notes in the morning, readings during the day and finally Open Stage in the evening.

For me as project manager this adventure started 2 1/2 years earlier. The conference in Mumbai had decided to give this event to Swedish **Riksteatern**, where I worked. *Jyoti Mapsekar* who planned that conference came to Stockholm and we had a most inspiring meeting!

The headline for the Stockholm conference was **The Democratic Stage**. Two important co-operators were invited, **Al Harah Theatre** in Beit Jala, Palestine, and **Al Madina** in Beirut, Lebanon. Alongside the work with telling the world about this event and getting many women playwrights to send their plays, we had to look for money to finance it

all. **The Writers Guild of Norway** made a generous donation which meant we could help 26 women from countries with no means of cultural support. Their attendance gave a special feeling to the whole conference!

With dramaturge readers in different places, we started the selection work. We got so many plays, 600!, and had only space for 90. It was a thorough task to choose the right texts that could represent different societies, styles, themes.

The conference took off with a reception at the City Hall (where otherwise the Nobel Prize winners have their magnificent dinner!).

Most fun was the improvised **Open Stage** in the end of the day. Thanks to *Andrea Assaf* and *Linda Parris Bailey* who organized it all, many spontaneous songs, dances, poems and stand ups were presented to the happy audience.

For me, personally, this was the greatest, nicest project I've ever worked with! The theatre was buzzing of all the women energy and friendliness. So much fun,



so many new friends, so many laughs and tears.

If you want to have a closer look on the Stockholm conference, go to the website wpic.riksteatern.se You'll find the conference catalogue, the news letters, the formal report with many photos and the informal "Staging sisterhood".

Thank you all who came and made this event so beautiful!

Mireille Bergenström
project manager WPIC 2012,
now senior adviser