

International Theatre Institute ITI

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A RAY OF HOPE

Every day should be considered a World Theatre Day, because throughout the last 20 centuries, the flame of theatre has always burned steadily in some corner of the world.

The theatre has always been under threat of extinction, especially with the rise of the cinema, television and now digital media. Technology invaded the stage and annihilated the human dimension and an attempt was made to create a plastic theatre, a sort of painting in movement that replaced the spoken word. Plays were staged without dialogue, without lights or without actors, using only dummies and dolls showcased by multiple lighting effects.

Technology tried to turn the theatre into a firework display or a fairground sideshow.

Now we are witnessing the return of actors before audiences. Today, we are seeing the return of words to the stage.

The theatre has renounced mass communication and recognized its inherent limits ; two beings facing each other, communicating feelings, emotions, dreams and hopes. Scenic art is relinquishing story-telling in favor of discussing ideas.

The theatre moves, illuminates, disquiets, disturbs, lifts the spirit, reveals, provokes and violates conventions. It is a conversation shared with society. Theatre is the first art to confront emptiness, shadows and silence to make words, movement, lights and life surge forth.

Theatre is a living creature that destroys itself as it is created, but always arises from the ashes. It is a magic communication in which all people give and receive something that transforms them.

The theatre reflects humankind's existential anguish and unravels the human condition. It is not its creators who speak through the theatre, but rather the society of the epoch.

The theatre has visible enemies, the lack of artistic education in childhood that hinders discovering and enjoying it; the poverty that is invading the world, keeping audiences away, and the indifference and neglect of governments that should be promoting it.

Gods and men used to speak to one another on the stage, but now men speak to other men. Therefore, the theatre must be grander and better than life itself. Theatre is an act of faith in the value of a wise word in an insane world. It is a demonstration of faith in human beings who are responsible for their destiny.

We have to experience the theatre in order to understand what is happening to us, to transmit the pain and suffering that is all around us, but also to glimpse a ray of hope in the chaos and nightmare of our daily lives.

Long live the officiating participants in the rite of theatre! Long live the theatre!