

International Theatre Institute ITI

World Organization for the Performing Arts



Message Author for World Theatre Day 2026 – 27 March

Biography of Willem DAFOE, USA

Actor, Theatre Maker

English (original)

Willem Dafoe, Artistic Director of the Theatre Department at La Biennale di Venezia was among the founding members of The Wooster Group. Based at The Performing Garage in New York (1977-2004) they developed a distinctive approach to avant-garde theatre. He then went on to collaborate with Bob Wilson, Marina Abramovic, Richard Foreman and Romeo Castellucci. In the early 1980s, he also began working in cinema and since earned international acclaim for his versatility across both independent and mainstream films. He has received four Academy Award nominations and was awarded the Coppa Volpi for Best Actor at the Venice Film Festival in 2018. His commitment to theatre continues to shape his artistic vision and performance practice.