

International Theatre Institute ITI

World Organization for the Performing Arts

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Jorge Lavelli 1992

Every curtain that is raised gives birth to hope.

In its fecund simplicity, Theatre is a mirror, which reflects us, questions us, and moves us. It is also the sum total of a piece of work and of course a playwright's message. But beyond these essential facts, it is the world in microcosm, the forum of organized society, a specially favored place of meeting and discovery. There is artifice and truth, but its nourishing source is the reality of the world.

Today, as in the past, Theatre must contribute to enlightening our minds, and to giving battle on all fronts against barbarity on our planet. Now, more than ever, it needs to make its presence felt in our societies, caught up as they are in a web of racist and exclusive attitudes and practices; it must make people think and arouse solidarity, all things which contribute to human dignity. Theatre must act as a precursor, illuminating people's self-awareness and their conscience.

At a time when for some, history is standing still, while for others it races on at a dizzy pace, Theatre can, simply but firmly, speak out in its singular, warm, intelligent and exemplary voice. This needs also to be accompanied by much soul-searching, and theatre must fight to overcome its own rigidity in certain areas by focusing its attention on the world around us.

On this World Theatre day, addressing you from the City in which the declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen was proclaimed, I extend my profound good wishes for the future of this art, which though old as civilizations, is ever being renewed. May its influence be felt far and wide, may the teaching of theatre in schools be more and more widespread and the number of theatres throughout the world multiplied by thousands.

From the struggle against immaturity there is no rest.
Every curtain that falls gives birth to a question.