

ITI/UNESCO Network for Higher Education in the Performing Arts

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A Proposal of a Worldwide Platform of the ITI/UNESCO Network: Performing Arts in and Beyond the Time of COVID-19

The enormous impacts brought by the COVID-19 since the beginning of 2020 are still in the hearts and on the minds every one of us in the performing arts community. It is a time of challenges, but we have to face that these impacts will linger for a certain period, during which performing arts events, gatherings, face-to-face exchanges and meetings will still not be possible.

However, the Network cannot be off the grid now due to the COVID-19. As a matter of fact, we believe that during this particular period, the Network should play an even more vital role to connect and facilitate exchanges among its members. Under the current circumstances, we believe that there are still many other options for us even though COVID-19 is still affecting and will continue to change our lives.

The "Performing Arts In and Beyond the Time of COVID-19" proposal of the Network offers a series of online artistic and educational activities which can promote the exchanges among the members of the Network. Many of the projects aim to share the best practices of the members during this particular time.

Artistic Activities

1. The Online Student Festival

With great regret, the planned 2nd Student Festival in July 2020 at Piccolo Teatro in Milan has had to be cancelled. However, we believe holding an adapted version the Festival online can be a meaningful option since a lot of preparation works for the Festival have been done.

Format: the selected 9 participating academies together with Piccolo Teatro will submit the video of their planned productions for the Festival. The videos can be of the full performance (30-45min) or part of it (20-30min). If this is not possible, they also can send us the most representative products from their school. The videos will be streamed with the student group and the artistic director having a post-show talkback after the video.

The time of the online Festival can coincide with the planned Festival in Milan.

2. A New "Student Showcase" on the Network Website

The Secretariat of the ITI/UNESCO Network will release an open call for the productions of the students of the Network members. These productions can be inspired by the current circumstance, the impact of the virus, conveying the positive energy and creative resilience for human beings to fight against COVID-19, etc. These videos will be uploaded and shown in a new column called "Student Showcase" on the Network website. The creator of the productions will be able to reply to the comments left by the audiences.

A small artistic committee will be founded to review the products before presenting them on the site.

Faculty Educational Activities

1. Teacher's Platform for Innovation in Theatre Training

This is an initiative proposed by AKT-ZENT, member of the Network. In times of sudden and complete change of teaching practices during the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and leaders of academies need first of all practical help how to solve the situation. There is great interest in exchange of best practices. While the new reality of online teaching must be considered from a long-term perspective, the Teachers' Platform for Innovation proposes a space for self-education of teachers. Here, together with colleagues, we can open new methodological and pedagogical paths, which everyone can develop and adapt to their own teaching practice. Through open calls, participating teachers will be asked to submit, ideas, themes, or contributions.

Format: Regular meeting (once in a month) in the form of Webinar.

2. Open Performing Arts Education Resource

The Secretariat of the ITI/UNESCO Network calls for Video Courses and Related Resources and contents in the Performing Arts field. We call on all the Network member institutions to participate in Performing Arts Course videos, teaching workshops, masterclasses, program rehearsals and other related content videos. The Secretariat will collect the videos and post them on the Network Website for free study and viewing by students.

The videos can be sent (via WeTransfer, mp4, wmv video formats are preferred) along with a brief introduction to secretariat@iti-unesco-network.org. The video provider shall own the copyright of the video, and the Network will only use the content for the purpose presented in this call.

3. Masterclass and Lectures

The Network Board and the General Secretariat will regularly invite specialists and experts to hold masterclasses and lectures online. These classes will be streamed and shared within the Network members and also for emerging Artists, professional artists and whoever is interested in the ITI/UNESCO Network.

Network Publication

As decided in Shanghai during the General Assembly of the ITI/UNESCO Network, Oct. 2018 a new online journal will be created. Due to the situation we are facing now, the first issue will concentrate on *Online Performing Arts Education*.

For the creation of the journal the following issues need to be cleared: Editors (Chief, Board of Editors), Leading Editor for each issue, form and design of the Journal, use of special software, ISSN Number needs to be applied for (through Secretariat of Network), creation of email for sending the contributions, preparation of the rules for articles and contributions, sending out the call for articles, selection of the articles and contributions, timeline, etc.

The Journal will be online and available in digital form.

It is ideal that one member institution can be "the host" for one issue of the Journal, covering the cost like design, software, chief editor, etc. As long as the Journal is free to get and there is no donor for this, the articles that are published will not receive any honorarium but will provide a resource for the larger field.