



BREAKING

THE MOULD

**Key Trends
European Theatre
2024/2025**

**A Sustainable
Diverse and
Digital Sector**

**Joining
the ETC
Network**

European Theatre Highlights

Celebrating 140 Years of History



On July 8th, the **Royal Theatre "Zetski dom" in Cetinje** celebrated the jubilee of 140 years since the laying of the foundation stone. The festive celebration was conceived as a play in two acts, called 'Luča pozorišna'.

zetskidom.me

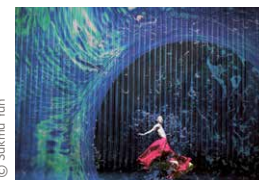
New Desires



The **Tiroler Landestheater** stages 'Verlangen' by Lisa Wentz, where Eugene O'Neill's 'Desire under the Elms' meets the Alps in a feminist revision that celebrates theatre's ability to blend regional and international perspectives.

landesttheater.at

IMPACT Forum



in **Liège**
The sixth edition of the IMPACT Forum, organised by **Théâtre de Liège**, will be back in November 2024 with the topic "AFTER THE WORLD". As we speculate on the nature of the 'next world', IMPACT places us 'after the world', exploring possible futures - an invitation to explore new artistic practices, identities and geographies through dance, theatre, performance, and visual and digital arts.

theatredeliège.be

NEW VOICES



The Fabulamundi – NEW VOICES community, led by ETC member **PAV**, continues to thrive, offering

young people unique opportunities to engage in playwriting, access art, and develop their creative skills. Next up: the Belgrade meeting from 5–7 October 2024, where partners and playwrights will gather again to plan the future steps.

fabulamundi.eu

'D(r)ugovi' in Montenegro

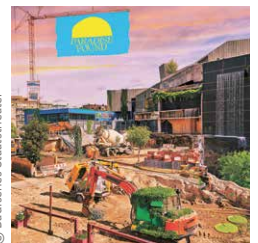


The **Montenegrin National Theatre** has begun rehearsals for the play with the working title 'D(r)ugovi'.

Written by Boris Liješević, the play will open the 2024–25 season in October on the Main Stage, and asks how a person can find themselves in an illicit situation – and how the threshold of tolerance for transgression is increased.

cnp.me

Paradise Found



'Paradise Found – Where is your paradise?' is an artwork from the city of Karlsruhe – for the city of Karlsruhe.

In a digital garden of stories found all over the city, answers to the question 'where is your paradise' are sung, spoken and danced by the various ensembles of the **Badisches Staatstheater**.

staats-theater.karlsruhe.de

Boryana at Kardjali



In the 2024–25 season, **Kardjali Theatre** will stage the Bulgarian classic

'Boryana', a cruel and shocking story that touches on the eternal theme of the war between love and money.

dktdimov.com

Declan Donnellan stages MEDEA in Sofia



The first premiere on the Main Stage of **Ivan Vazov National Theatre** for the season

2024/2025 will be the first ever production of MEDEA, created by the legendary duo Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod.

nationaltheatre.bg

Cheers to Life



Göteborgs Stadsteater presents 'Cheers to Life', an ingeniously written play by Maja Zade that captures our contemporary times with almost eerie precision. Will the evening among friends take a disastrous turn? Or maybe it will just be an ordinary night? A tragicomedy and clever mirror of our time, directed by the internationally acclaimed Latvian-American, Yana Ross, who previously staged 'A Doll's House' at Göteborgs Stadsteater.

stadsteatern.goteborg.se

Hassan and Moos



De Toneelmakerij's production 'Hassan and Moos', about best friends that go viral on TikTok as the self-proclaimed Mayo Brothers,

but whose friendship is thrown into doubt as the Israel-Palestine conflict flares up again, will tour Dutch high schools in 2025. The production premiered at ETC's Young Europe IV Festival in Nova Gorica/Slovenia in 2024.

toneelmakerij.nl

Nature and the Human Condition



The 2024/2025 season at the **Dailes Theatre** in Riga/Latvia, will

be marked by the motifs of resistance and nature, focusing on engaging both Latvian and international audiences, especially the youth. It opened with the ironic musical performance 'Stupid Life' with the participation of ETC Member CCA Dakh, and also will include eco-feminist thriller 'Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead' in April 2025.

dailesteatris.lv

International Meetings in Cluj



The Cluj-Napoca National Theatre announces that the 13th edition of The International Meetings in Cluj, focusing on the theme OTHERNESS, will take place from 16 to 20 October 2024. It will infuse in subtle or more overt ways the issues brought up by the most recent productions at the theatre.

teatrulnationalcluj.ro

Reigen re-Erected



Het Zuidelijk Toneel presents Reigen re-Erected, a modern take on Schnitzler's classic, exploring love and desire today. With green production choices and English supertitles, it promises to be both thought-provoking and entertaining.

hzt.nl

Anniversary Collaborations



In 2025, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the **JK Opole Theatre**. During this jubilee season, we invite you to many premieres, including a co-production with Divadlo Jána Palárika from Trnava. The play 'Snow Negatives,' which explores the memory of the Holocaust, will be directed by Dávid Paška.

teatropole.pl

Hope ahead!



Looking for hope, joy and resilience, on the last weekend of September 2024, **Deutsches Theater** will set sail with a new take on Fellini's 'Ship of Dreams' staged by Anna Bergmann, attend to bizarre relationship dynamics shaped by advancing climate change with T.C. Boyle's 'Blue Skies', and take a look at Sarah Calörtcher's theatre debut and Kleist Prize-winning play 'Heart of Polyester' to see whether algorithms could be a way out of the vale of tears.

deutschestheater.de

Setting Don Quixote Aflame



QUIXOTE AFLAME' by Ermanna Montanari and Marco Martinelli: a choral performance, where the city becomes a stage, that sees artists and citizens from several European countries side by side. A cry against the injustices of the world. Opening Ravenna Festival June/July 2025.

ravennateatro.com

Hamlet on Tour



British director Declan Donnellan returned to the **Marin Sorescu National Theatre** in Craiova in 2024 with a stunning 'Hamlet' production, following his acclaimed 'Oedipus Rex'. The show tours Istanbul in

November and Madrid in January.

tncms.ro

All are welcome



Alongside several classic plays, the special 2024–25 season at **Schauspielhaus**

Zürich promises three world premieres by young playwrights: 'DR. SPIELREIN', an immersive installation, '#BYEBITCH', a classroom play on bullying, and a new project by Suna Gürlér involving contemporary Swiss German literature.

schauspielhaus.ch

100 Songs



Národní divadlo – National Theatre Prague presents the lyrical play 100 Songs, directed by Štěpán Gajdoš, which looks at love from a different angle of loneliness. While the director hardly ever chooses existing texts, Roland Schimmelpfennig's play utterly captivated him.

narodni-divadlo.cz

Comedy of Errors



Kyiv National Academic Molody Theatre opened the Verona Shakespeare Festival in August 2024 with the premiere of the play "Comedy of errors" by Andrii Bilous. The show was created specifically for the festival and made a great impression on the European audience.

molodytheatre.com

Foreword



Theatre has been a backbone of European culture for millennia. In our time it plays an important role for the cultural reflection of political and social questions and for the free discourse in open societies.

It has always reflected society's complexities, struggles and triumphs. The stage offers a unique space for exploration, critique and understanding. It fosters dialogue, challenges perspectives and brings to life the very essence of democracy by allowing diverse voices to be heard.

This edition of the European Theatre Convention's Journal explores how theatre engages with today's democratic processes.

The European Theatre Convention, supported through the Creative Europe programme, is an important actor in the European performing arts. In 2024, with its new four-year action plan 'European Theatre: Break the Mould', the European Theatre Convention reaffirmed its commitment to European values.

In May 2023, the European Commission, with the support of the European Theatre Convention, organised the second European Theatre Forum in Opole, Poland. It resulted in the 'Opole Recommendations' outlining new priorities to the European Theatre Initiative, the European Commission's post-pandemic sectoral action for performing arts. They include sustainability, inclusivity, innovation and empowering new generations of artists. These recommendations will continue to guide the Commission's future work on performing arts.

The Convention has already made progress on these goals, established the 'European Theatre Talks' for discussions on key policy issues, held this year in Avignon and soon in Liège.

In July 2024, the Convention launched the "ETC Theatre Green Book", a practical tool for reducing emissions in

theatres. I commend the first nine theatres, members of the European Theatre Convention network, who earned this certification.

The Convention is also advancing gender equality through its Young Europe initiative and providing career development for young artists through the European Theatre Academy at the Avignon Festival. Additionally, the Convention is driving the sector's digital transition with the 'ACuTe' project involving ten member states. All of these actions have been supported by the EU's Creative Europe programme.

As you read this Journal, I invite you to consider the profound impact theatre can have on our democratic societies. Let us celebrate this art form as a pillar of our culture and a dynamic force in European democracy.

I wish the European Theatre Convention every success in achieving its goals in the year ahead.

Iliana Ivanova

European Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth



CapturedBodies by ArtesMobiles
 (Nina Maria Stemberger, Birk Schmithüsen)
 © Birgit Hupfeld

Breaking The Mould



I am thrilled to present the latest edition of the ETC Journal, our annual magazine which showcases the power of European theatre to drive change across society, to address pressing social issues and to foster dialogue across diverse communities.

This season we plan to BREAK THE MOULD. We want European Theatre to be brand new and fresh; innovative and ahead of the curve; done in a different way. But isn't theatre different with every new production, every new play? Of course! Take the number of modern and breathtaking re-stagings of classics, or every re-staging of new contemporary drama. The interpretations of how we look at life are as varied as there are places in the world. And this is what theatre does so passionately! It tells stories from a new angle: poetically and dramatically, tragically and ironically, or in a disturbing, controversial, beautiful and tender way.

BREAK THE MOULD for European Theatre also means something else for us. ETC's Next Theatre Generation; Sustainable Theatre; Digital Theatre; Diversity in Theatre; and simply European Theatre Programmes will make room for new visions, connecting all corners of the globe. New artistic innovations, ideas and international collaborations will connect thinkers, scientists, policy makers and experts with emerging artists and students in classrooms, to bring different stories about how we see life to audiences across Europe.

We maintain ambitious pledges for change, such as our commitment to become a climate neutral network by 2030 by using the new ETC Theatre Green Book and Self-Certification tool, and by promoting innovative practices by ETC to minimise their environmental impact. We have also partnered with the Academy for Theatre and Digitality to mainstream knowledge and a meaningful use of the latest technologies in theatre.

Photo Heidi Wiley © Pascal Gely / ETC

This edition of the ETC Journal begins with a snapshot of European theatre, through comments from leading directors and managers across Europe that form the ETC Board. You can explore the wealth of knowledge and research on these pivotal themes and discover the dramatic texts and resources that underpin our collective efforts in the section on ETC Publications.

As we navigate this crucial time for Europe, I hope that theatre makers, policymakers, and audiences alike will find inspiration and insight within these pages. The richness of European Theatre is a testament to our collective creativity and resilience. Theatre is the perfect artform for visions that inspire, create empathy and spread hope and faith in the future, instead of fear and intimidation. We want to ensure that public democratic spaces of cultural institutions such as theatres are protected spaces for all people, no matter their skin color, religion, class, sex or age. That artistic freedom and the autonomy of the arts is respected, as stated in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. That freedom of expression is protected with sufficient financial support; we are alarmed by the massive budget cuts for culture in many European countries, which will only result in the reduced creation of artistic work, and a reduced freedom of expression.

Together, in alliances across borders, languages and cultures, we have the means to do something. Together, we can ensure that theatre continues to transcend boundaries, to foster collaboration, and to transform lives across Europe and beyond. We thank the European Commission for their continued partnership and financial support entrusted in our work, enabling European Theatre to BREAK THE MOULD.

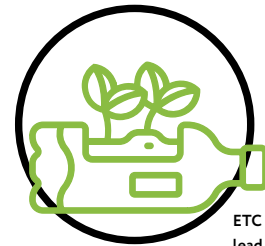
Heidi Wiley
 Executive Director,
 European Theatre Convention (ETC)

Content

Read about how Teatro Nacional D. Maria II created true dialogue with audiences about decolonisation on p10
© Filipe Ferreira, TNDMII



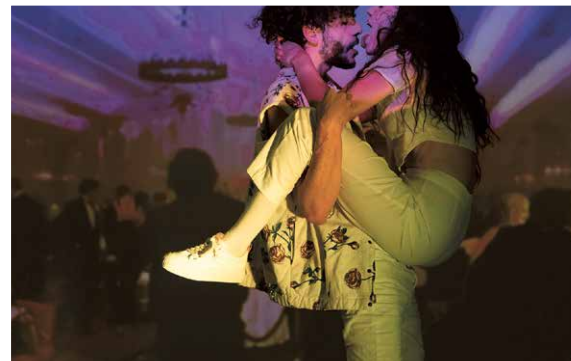
Learn about ETC's pioneering partnership with the Academy for Theatre and Digitality on p16. Photo from 'Digitalizing narrative spaces', by Fabian Raith
© Florian Dürkopp



ETC continues its work to lead European Theatres towards climate neutrality by 2030, on p24
© ETC



In-person and online workshops are key to ETC's work to share knowledge. Discover upcoming activities on p34
© David Verlič / ETC



Discover ETC's work to support the Next Generation of Theatre Artists on p20. Photo from 'I'M STILL EXCITED' by Mario Coelho, invited to the Fast Forward Festival 2023
© Alípio Padilha

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What is European Theatre Today?

Key trends for the 2024-25 season, identified by the ETC Board of Directors

From 'descobri-qué?' by Estrutura, at Teatro Nacional D. Maria II © Filipe Ferreira, TNDMII

Cláudia Belchior

ETC President & Executive General Coordinator at Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon/Portugal



European theatre today is more than a cultural expression; it is a vital force for social inclusion and mental well-being. As a powerful platform for freedom of expression, it harnesses storytelling to engage communities in open, democratic dialogue. Theatre's potential to empower individuals through participation underscores its role in fostering healthy democracies and citizens. Theatre must serve as an inclusive public space with a mission to enhance quality of life and should be integrated with healthcare discussions. A robust legal and financial framework is essential to support artists as contributors to societal well-being, normalize mental health support, and ensure safe, inclusive working environments. By embracing these roles, theatre can promote healthier citizens and contribute to more vibrant democracies, where every individual can participate and be represented.

Theatre cannot exist in a vacuum; it belongs to the cities and the communities in which our buildings are located.

IRIS LAUFENBERG

Norbert Rakowski

ETC Vice President & General Manager and Artistic Director of JK Opole Theatre, Opole/Poland



For Polish theatre creators, Europe is both a source of inspiration and a place of challenging dialogue with reality. It is a space filled with tensions, challenges, and artistic possibilities that can be explored on stage in various social and political contexts. The Polish theatre scene, known for its controversial and bold productions, often stands in opposition to government narratives, particularly on issues related to human rights and freedom of speech. In the time of war, especially here in Poland, issues related to refugees and migration, as well as questions about European values, have become central themes for contemporary creators.

If contemporary European theatre wants to keep its edge, it pays to look to children and young people to get a feel for where we stand.

PAULIEN GEERLINGS

Iris Laufenberg

ETC Vice President & Artistic Director at Deutsches Theater, Berlin/Germany



For me, theatres are a space to collectively encounter the present, explore complexity and work on increasing our tolerance for ambiguity. The aesthetic range of a theatre over a season, the different narration styles, the multiple layers of discourse, the uniquely sensory experience of a theatre visit all offer a multiplicity of access points to our present. Theatre cannot exist in a vacuum; it belongs to the cities and the communities in which our buildings are located. I see a canteen open to our neighbours, or the bar after the shows, as central spaces in our buildings, where audiences who might have come for different plays on the same evening suddenly encounter each other. I strongly believe that our role is also to offer these spaces and these moments, through theatre but also beyond it, for these chance encounters, for exchange, debate and discussion, to bridge the seemingly unmanageable political fractures in our European societies.

It is essential to continue to encourage committed and diverse artistic expressions.

TOM LEICK-BURNS

Tom Leick-Burns

ETC Secretary & Artistic Director and General Manager, Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg/Luxembourg



In light of the current societal, environmental and political challenges, it is more important than ever to support creation and new narratives that convey a deeper meaning and humanity. In a context where numerous voices aim to silence certain stories and prevent others from emerging, it is essential to continue to encourage committed and diverse artistic expressions, to hear voices that have been suppressed for too long and to accompany them with generosity and determination. It is only by allowing these new narratives to be heard that we can hope to move forward towards a more respectful society. Our theatres are not merely presenting venues for the performing arts anymore, they are also spaces to meet for dialogue, discovery and sharing in order to facilitate togetherness in harmony. We have to continue to do all we can to celebrate our institutions as places of openness and free speech where difficult questions can be addressed and where we continue to develop our relationships with artists and communities. TalentLAB” and “Capucins Libre” are other examples of our efforts to stimulate dialogue, foster new narratives and support emerging artists. They all intervene at different moments, whether at the research or project development stage, aiming to provide a safe space for exchange and growth.

Serge Rangoni

ETC Treasurer & General Manager & Artistic Director of Théâtre de Liège/Belgium

This 2024/2025 season will see the return of Théâtre de Liège’s IMPACT Forum, dedicated to art-science-technology performances. The programme will showcase Korean artists, including the great Eun-Me Ahn and her performance ‘Dragons’. This cooperation between Liège and Seoul, between Europe and Asia, responds to a reality increasingly becoming our own: the resurgence of extremism throughout the continent. This force that would isolate Europe from the world, turn it into an impenetrable fortress. As cultural institutions, it is our duty to continue to build bridges, to open up to others and never to resist interconnection. It is in this spirit our theatre now carries the official subtitle of ‘Theatre of Europe’, like a number of other European theatres, demonstrating our commitment to shaping a cultural Europe that we defend every day, through projects, collaborations, co-productions and networks that are proving more vital than ever in the defence of our democracies.



Photo Serge Rangoni © M.-F. Plissart, Tom Leick-Burns © Bohumil Kostohryz, Barbara Ferrato © Teatro Stabile Torino

Barbara Ferrato

ETC Board & Head of Artistic, Planning and Development Department at Fondazione del Teatro Stabile di Torino – Teatro Nazionale/Italy

We are used to taking freedom of expression for granted, not only in Italy but specifically in the artistic and theatrical world; unfortunately, we have to face the fact that this is not the case throughout Europe and the world, of course! There are colleagues and directors who are being removed from their places of work and replaced with people pleasing to the government in office. This is unacceptable in a world that calls itself democratic, but it is so, in theatres close to us and with whom we have been collaborating for a long time. It is very important to remain vigilant and not abandon these collaborations, including through shared projects. This must be an obligation for national theatres in Europe that still enjoy freedom of action, choices and expression. The only way to keep the variety of voices alive, which distinguishes the diversity of European countries, lies precisely in ensuring that everyone is guaranteed the opportunity to express themselves, without censorship and without limitations.



Photo Paulien Geerlings © Sanne Peper, Irene Moundraki © Elina Giouantli, Marina Maleni © Private

Paulien Geerlings

ETC Board & Head Dramaturge at De Toneelmakerij, Amsterdam/The Netherlands



If contemporary European theatre wants to keep its edge, it pays off to look to children and young people to get a feel for where we stand. For them, it’s self-evident that Europe is super-diverse, exists online just as much as offline, and poses countless obstacles as well as opportunities. Theatre is a powerful place for people to connect and broaden horizons, which is all the more urgent in times of opposing groups drifting apart into bubbles. We can pop those bubbles by sharing new voices through new texts, and by inviting the audience to share their stories, before, during and/or after the performance.

Marina Maleni

ETC Board & Theatre Development Officer, Cyprus Theatre Organisation (THOC)/Cyprus



Cyprus Theatre Organisation. Where are we? On the edge of Europe:

- » 250 miles away from Gaza
- » 50 years after the division of our island
- » 20 years after Cyprus joined the EU
- » 4 minutes away from the military line that still divides Nicosia, the last divided European capital
- » Among radical extremes rising, tragically succeeding in convincing people that they pose the solution in a war-torn Europe.
- » On fire, almost literally, due to climate change.

This framework forms the lens through which Cypriot theatre-makers must view creating theatre in 2024-2025, making it imperative to strengthen its role as a key social player for change. By collaborating, exchanging, supporting each other, provoking discussions, and discovering new ways of each one accepting the others as valuable and integral parts of who one is, European Theatre makers struggle to exist in difficult times of low funding and unemployment. Theatre strives to be a force of change, by daring in favour of freedom, inclusivity, sustainability, peace, history, culture, and humanness.

Irene Moundraki

ETC Board & Head Dramaturg, Head of Archive, Library and International Collaborations Department, National Theatre of Greece/Greece

Shakespeare said, “men are as the time is.” Based on this, I would also say that “theatre is as the time is.” New writing and new forms of creation in Europe reflect the basic characteristics of our time and our world: fragmentation and variety, diversity along with the capacity to compose and adapt, the will to reconstruct a world that absorbs features and characteristics of different kinds and origins. The need to narrate, to share a story is still here, but very often the story has a more tenuous dramaturgy, while technology is the key force driving a production. I think creating a cosmos is more important than the story itself. The next generation will move forward by having the time it needs to recreate its one dramaturgy. Theatre is linked to society. By its nature theatre requires a community – even if this is small- in order to exist. Society needs that mirror and theatre moves the world. Even through small steps.



The only way to keep the variety of voices alive, which distinguishes the diversity of European countries, is to ensure that everyone is guaranteed the opportunity to express themselves, without censorship and without limitations.

BARBARA FERRATO

National Theatres Add Dignity to Progressive Debate



Pedro Penim
© Filipe Ferreira

Pedro Penim, Artistic Director of Teatro Nacional D. Maria II in Lisbon/Portugal, discusses the role of a National Theatre in society – with a focus on ‘descobri-quê?’, a playful and powerful exploration of decolonisation.

We started work on ‘descobri-quê?’ in 2023 as part of the ‘National Odyssey’, our 18-month programme of shows, exhibitions, participation projects, conferences, and activities across Portugal. I wanted to offer a production for young people that was an artistic

gesture with a broader political impact, which would also have a lasting impact on the places we visited.

So we came to ‘descobri-quê?’. This is a dynamic, direct, and playful show of post-colonial ideas and thinking. Through the performance and a discussion element, audiences were invited to face the reality – the cruel reality – of what was done in our history, particularly in the former Portuguese territories. They were also invited to consider contentious issues like reparations, or benefits to victims of slavery and their descendants. Alongside the creators, Estrutura (Cática Pinheiro and José Nunes) and the artist Dori Nigro, we were interested in an alternative way to learn history – to break narratives that romanticise Portugal’s invasive, expansionist and colonialist past.

This is important because Portugal is currently going through big changes. The far-right is gaining a lot of space, and their narrative is deeply connected to the ‘discoveries’, as they call them. In schools, history is still being taught through this heroic frame. This was motivation for the production (‘descobri-quê?’ translates roughly as ‘what the hell did we discover?’) and for

the creation of an accompanying book which could be left in the schools and places we visited. It was a way of us saying ‘there is a hegemonic view of this history, but there is a fairer reading too’.

We got very different reactions to the play, sometimes even from teachers who would voice their disagreement. But the team was looking for true dialogue. Sometimes these projects fail because they go full force, imposing a vision and without wanting to see the other side. For us, it was beautiful to see how the performers addressed the critics, finding a way to listen and have true dialogue with audiences.

I believe that it is the responsibility of the National Theatre to mediate these big ideas, particularly in the context of political changes. Performances like this legitimise this way of looking at the national identity. And this is a powerful tool. Knowing that this performance offered in partnership with a National Theatre ensures a level of attention, and a sense of dignity in the discussion, that would not necessarily be achieved if it was an independent production.

And for me as the Artistic Director of a National Theatre, ‘descobri-quê?’ was a rare opportunity to make a difference. We seized the opportunity to not just do another show – although the artistic impulse and process is of course fundamental – but also ensure that the national theatre is a very relevant player in Portuguese society, capable of making a political and historical difference and having a real impact on, say, the integration of Brazilian communities.

Read more about the performance here:

www.tndm.pt/pt/odisseia-nacional/pecas/descobri-que/

Read an interview with the creators, Estrutura (Cática Pinheiro and José Nunes), and the artist Dori Nigro →



How did you create ‘descobri-quê?’ to ensure true dialogue with audiences – and deal with any criticism about the concepts introduced?

The show was designed specifically for this target audience, aged 10 to 15. Therefore, all the elements were designed to captivate their interest in the performance, the text, the video, the music, etc. Following each session, there was also a post-show talk, which was essential for generating a dialogue based on what was seen and dealing with possible criticism. We’ve had difficult reactions, as expected. Other reactions that were very positive. And also reactions that started out negative and, after a conversation, became more positive about the show. For us, it was essential that the show triggered reactions, but more importantly, the dialogues that emerged after the first impact. We know that it’s something that messes with solidified structures and narratives that people cling to, hence the need for post-show conversations to take place immediately at the end of the sessions, with the actors on stage and the audience in the same place.

How was the performance received?

We believe that the show did have a positive impact. We’ve had people come to see it more than once. Some students also shared with us that, after watching ‘descobri-quê?’, they had the experience of taking the discussion into the classroom and opening up a dialogue with their teachers and the rest of the class. We also received feedback from teachers who confessed that they had never thought about history through the prism



From ‘descobri-quê?’ by Estrutura, at Teatro Nacional D. Maria II
© Filipe Ferreira, TNDMII

presented in the show and that, from that moment on, they would be more careful about the way they taught. It is also worth highlighting the impact on racialised people who reported always feeling uncomfortable about this subject in the classroom. In one of the sessions for schools, a Cape Verdean girl asked to speak and said that her family was descended from enslaved people and that, finally, she wasn’t ashamed to say it, to speak openly about it. It was empowering for her.

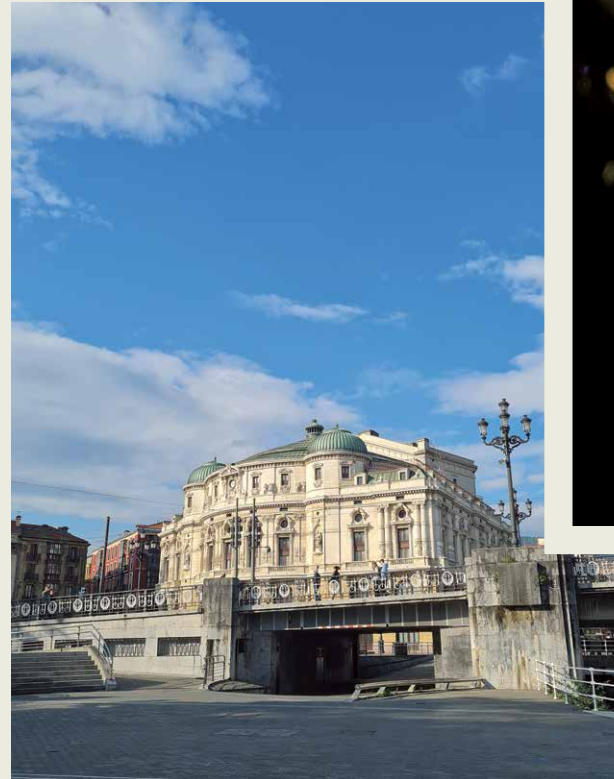
As artists, what is the value for you of creating this work in partnership with the Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, as a national theatre?

In this specific context, without the support of Teatro Nacional D. Maria II, without the Odisseia Nacional (National Odyssey), we wouldn’t be able to reach so many cities and bring this show to many people. It would be impossible to bring this theme, in the way it was presented, to this age group and, above all, to places with a scarce cultural offer. We can say that the Teatro Nacional D. Maria II’s seal of approval opened doors to us.

European Theatre

A Slideshow

From the 7th International Ancient Drama Workshop, by National Theatre Greece
© Karol Jarek



ETC Member Theatre Teatro Arriaga's buiding, in Bilbao/Spain
© Teatro Arriaga Antzokia



From the project 'DIVADLO MIMO DIVADLO!' at Národní divadlo - National Theatre Prague
© Jan Hromádko



An image from the long time communication campaign from 'Spynorsk -The Musical' at Det Norske Teatret, featuring imaginary political leader Aase Ivarsen
© Ole Herman Andersen



From 'Dragons', by Eun-Me Ahn, playing during the ETC International Theatre Conference in at Théâtre de Liège
© Sukmu Yun



Young Vic Theatre's Taking Part Neighbourhood Play group following a sharing of 'Street Party'
© Aaron Imuere



BREAK THE MOULD

The new project by ETC, the largest network of publicly funded theatres in Europe

The European Theatre Convention (ETC) is the largest network of publicly-funded theatres in Europe. Our activities bring theatres across Europe together to make productions; learn and share best practice on the key topics of our time; and collectively fight for a stronger theatre sector. Our work spans from Norway to Cyprus, and Portugal to Ukraine.

European Theatre faces a fight for its survival. As resources dwindle and challenges increase, ETC has created the project "European Theatre: BREAK THE MOULD". It offers a bold and deeply ambitious agenda – building on ETC's unrivalled knowledge and leading cultural partnerships – to break the pattern of behaviour in European theatres, implementing essential change at speed across diversity, digitality and sustainability. The project ensures the relevance of European Theatre as part of Europe's rich cultural landscape, building capacities for professionals to face the challenges of today and tomorrow. It consists of five key programmes:

- » **ETC's Digital Theatre Programme**
Experimentation with new technologies in theatre productions and processes
- » **ETC's Next Theatre Generation Programme**
Offering young artists a bridge between finishing their studies and establishing a career
- » **ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme**
Leading the way for European Theatres to become climate neutral by 2030
- » **ETC's Diverse Theatre Programme**
Promoting marginalised voices and the stories that make communities richer
- » **ETC's European Theatre Programme**
Ensuring a strong identity – and secured place at the policy table – for European Theatre

BREAK THE MOULD is a response to the needs of European Theatres, modelling new approaches and practices with a circular methodology. It aims to:

- » Increasing International collaboration
- » Accessing the untapped potential in the network
- » Providing insights and direction for policy makers
- » Proposing solutions and contributing to shared goals

BREAK THE MOULD

ETC's Digital Theatre Programme



Experimentation with new technologies in theatre productions and processes.

Artificial Intelligence is advancing at an exceptional rate. Text to image or video tools are increasingly accessible. Many processes within theatres can now be automated.

To accompany European theatres as they experiment with new digital projects, disseminate learning from professional development activities, and ensure a human-centred digital transformation, ETC has created **ETC's Digital Theatre Programme**.

This will include support for ETC members to either develop new digital productions together, or dedicate time to experiment with the latest digital theatre tools. Exclusive workshops and webinars, as well as ETC Conferences on digital theatre, will be available to ETC members and will be accompanied by bespoke advocacy and policy activities. ETC's Digital Theatre Programme is supported by a pioneering partnership with the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund/Germany, helping to guide ETC members through this process and to mainstream knowledge about and access to digital theatre.

Essential links and resources

- » **ACuTe: Culture Testbeds for Performing Arts and New Technologies (2022–2026)**
A cutting-edge digital project connecting 14 leading theatres, universities and creative arts organisations across Europe. www.acuteproject.eu
- » **Digital Theatre – Strategies and Business Models in European Theatre (2023)**
This ETC research collects responses from 19 theatres in 17 countries for the period 2019–21. www.europantheatre.eu/online-library
- » **Digital Access Research Project (DARP)**
A collaboration with metaLAB (at) Harvard University on the digital provision of theatre for underserved audiences. www.mlml.io/p/digital-access-research-project

Interview with Marcus Lobbes, Director of the Academy for Theatre and Digitality, Dortmund

Q: At the Academy for Theatre and Digitality, you work with lots of artists that embed new technologies in their work. What do you think is next for this field? Any exciting new trends?

At the Academy for Theatre and Digitality, we are constantly exploring how emerging technologies can transform artistic expression. Looking ahead, one exciting trend is the increased use of immersive technologies like augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) in theatre, creating more engaging and interactive experiences for audiences. We also see the potential for artificial intelligence (AI) to play a significant role in creative processes, from generating dynamic narratives to assisting in real-time adaptations of performances based on audience feedback. Another trend is the growing use of motion capture and digital avatars, which offer new ways to perform and interact with virtual environments. These innovations are not just tools but are becoming integral to how stories are told and experienced.

Q: ETC member theatres will have the opportunity to learn from the Academy through our upcoming partnership. Can you tell us what ETC member theatres can expect to learn from this?

The "BREAK THE MOULD" project represents a unique collaboration between the Academy for Theatre and Digitality and the European Theatre Convention (ETC). This initiative is designed to provide ETC member theatres with the opportunity to explore and integrate digital theatre into their practice. Through this partnership, we aim to share our expertise in digital tools and methodologies, offering workshops, joint projects, and mentoring opportunities. The goal is to empower theatres across Europe to embrace digital technologies, whether in production, performance, or audience engagement. This collaboration is about fostering innovation, experimentation, and a shared vision for the future of theatre.

Left side images, clockwise from Left:
Portrait of Marcus Lobbes ©Max Slobodda/ Sofia Brandes
DIS-AI-DENTIFICATION (Janne Kummer) ©Birgit Hupfeld
Palimpsest – ALL IS TRUE (Stella Lennert, Viviane Lennert, Jakob Lorenz) ©Florian Dürkopp
Hamlet.AI (Michael Rau, Michael Yates Crowley) ©Birgit Hupfeld

FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE

Liège 2024

ETC International Theatre Conference at Théâtre de Liège/Belgium, 01–06 November 2024

A conference for 100+ leading theatre professionals from 30+ European countries in the ETC network, dedicated to digital theatre, new technologies, and connections to artists from East Asia. Takes place alongside Théâtre de Liège's renowned IMPACT Festival, and the ACuTe Symposium.

AFTER THE WORLD: The Theatre of Tomorrow, is the name for the autumn 2024 ETC International Theatre Conference, organised and hosted by Théâtre de Liège/Belgium from 01–06 November 2024.

With a strong focus on digital theatre, the conference takes place alongside the Théâtre de Liège's IMPACT Festival on performing arts and new technology. Attendees enjoy the best of both events, meeting a range of invited professionals and performances from East Asia that blur the boundaries between theatre and technology.

The full ETC Conference programme includes:

- » Conference panels on the links between digital and sustainable theatre
- » The launch of ETC's programme for the next four years, including a new digital theatre programme with the Academy for Theatre and Digitality, major sustainability initiatives as part of the ETC Theatre Green Book (ETC TGB), and a focus on the next generation of theatre makers, diversity in theatre, and advocating for European theatre
- » An artistic showcase of exhibitions, dance, theatre, artist pitches and parties through IMPACT Festival, with 7 productions from South Korea, Switzerland, France and Belgium

- » Performances by Kwon Byungjun, winner of the prestigious Korea Art Prize 2023, who presents his work for the first time in Europe; Eun-Me Ahn, one of the most highly-regarded dance artists in South Korea; and interventions from Kyu Choi, Artistic Director of Seoul Performing Arts Festival 2022–2026
- » The 3rd edition of the European Theatre Talks, the meeting of high-profile policy representatives and artists.

The programme promises a dynamic mix of artistic, professional and networking events on the key topics that define our new world. Attendees will also be invited to attend the ACuTe Symposium 2024, learning from the cutting-edge cross-Europe project on new technologies.

IMPACT 2024

Dedicated to arts, sciences, technologies and society, the IMPACT Forum returns in November 2024 with a simple topic: AFTER THE WORLD. At a time when the whole world is speculating on the nature of the long-awaited "next world", IMPACT is taking history in the opposite direction to situate ourselves "after the world", in the prospect of the exploration of possible futures. This year, the festival focuses on South Korea, with an emphasis on its dynamic artistic scene, in collaboration with the SPAF (Seoul Performing Arts Festival). Attendees are invited to rediscover a sense of wonder and to be swept along by the vibrations of sensory worlds.

ETC International Theatre Conference

AFTER THE WORLD

THE THEATRE OF TOMORROW



1 > 6.11.2024



BREAK THE MOULD

ETC's Next Theatre Generation Programme



Offering young artists a path from finishing their studies to entering the European Theatre market.

It remains challenging for young theatre artists to establish a career after finishing their studies, and develop internationally on the European stage.

ETC's Next Theatre Generation programme comes in response and connects 3 long-standing ETC activities to accelerate the entry of young talents and theatre professionals into the European Theatre market. These are the European Theatre Academy, providing masterclasses and training at the Festival d'Avignon; the ETC Alumni Network, which keeps participants in ETC-funded training schemes connected for knowledge and opportunity sharing; and the Professional Development programme of webinars, talks and workshops.

ETC's Next Theatre Generation Programme is supported by a collaboration with the Fast Forward Festival for Young Stage Directors at the Staatsschauspiel Dresden/Germany, and the Theatre National de Bretagne (TNB) in Rennes/France, to guide selected artists through a professional learning programme.

Essential links and resources

- » **Fabulamundi New Voices (2023–2025)**
This cross-Europe project connects 13 partners to develop a new methodology to sustain and train a new generation of playwrights, putting dramaturgy into the spotlight.
www.fabulamundi.eu
- » **Fast Forward Festival for Young Stage Directors**
The annual festival for young European directors at Staatsschauspiel Dresden.
www.staatsschauspiel-dresden.de
- » **TRANSMISSION: Festival TNB**
A programme for young artists who are still undergoing training or starting their professional career, at the heart of the TNB Festival.
www.t-n-b.fr

Left image:
From 'Woyzeck' an overwrite by Glossy Pain
freely adapted from Georg Büchner, which was invited
to Fast Forward Festival 2023
© Sebastian Picher

**Interview with Charlotte Orti,
Curator of the Fast Forward Festival,
Staatsschauspiel Dresden**

Q: What is the aim of this collaboration between ETC, the Fast Forward Festival, and the Theatre National de Bretagne?

To share the good experiences we had with bringing together people who can be as inspiring as practically helpful to each other. Theatre is a social art form. It creates a temporary community between artists and audiences every time it takes place. The unique network of the ETC allows us to offer these encounters to professionals and artists from all around Europe. By focussing on the polyphony of the next theatre generation we explore the future issues and changes to come.

Q: 2. What support do emerging artists need as they establish themselves across Europe?

That's difficult to answer. There's no general reply except the one that emerging artists need the chance to create and become visible. The question 'how?' requires individual answers. You need to find out what you need as an artist, what kind of experience you would like to invite the audience to, what kind of theatre you're looking for, and which partners could be the right once for you to share and reach these objectives with.

Q: 3. What benefits do you see of participation in ETC's Next Theatre Generation Programme for ETC Member Theatres?

We're fortunate to be part of this network that allows us to learn from each other on a European scale. We're in a situation where everyone on the planet needs to learn how to cooperate, to support each other, to share resources and to defend their humanity against those who violate, segregate, blackmail politically or put people under pressure. If we take ourselves seriously we will benefit from our expertise, our encounters, and from the investment into the next generation.

A Thriving Career



Iris Laufenberg, Artistic Director at Deutsches Theater Berlin, is interviewed by Susannah Tresilian about the development of her career to date.

Do you have a network (work, or personal) that you feel has helped you progress through your career? Who are they and how do they help you?

When I started my work in theatre after my studies as a young dramaturge, nobody had told me that networking would be really necessary to be successful.

Actually, my first challenge, as I was starting my career, was to be seen by the 'boy-group' that was then leading the theatre I worked at in the early nineties. I quickly realised that the only chance to be seen by them was to do a great job and to work

better than all the others... and that also meant better than the other 'girls.' We found ourselves in a competition and not in a supporting situation. But there was one colleague who became my mentor. She is almost 20 years older than me – and I am still grateful for her support.

My real networking started late, while I was Artistic Director of the festival Theatertreffen in Berlin from 2002 to 2011. Since then, I have been in a network of women in leadership positions in Berlin and by now also in several other women networks.

What does a network mean to you? And what works? (Do you call it a network? A support group, perhaps? A community of allies?!)

It means a lot to me. It's very simple: just interconnecting and exchanging creates invaluable supporting effects.

How do you prepare yourself for more formalised 'networking situations'? Are you a natural networker, or do you have to prepare yourself? How has that changed with experience?

This is a wonderful question. No, I'm not a 'natural networker'. I hate small talk, and you need small talk to start a conversation. But if you are in a more formal networking situation, you don't need it as much, because you start from a shared topic: for example speaking about collaborations in theatre and exchanging experiences.

Who do you turn to when you need encouragement?

One of my networks has existed for several years: we are seven women and all of us are Artistic Directors from the three German-speaking countries (Germany, Austria and Switzerland). For years now, we have been meeting twice a year in one of the theatres we lead, simply to exchange. We trust each other and when times get tough, we rely on each other. I've had moments when it felt that every new step in my career meant starting from scratch all over again: by giving one of my colleagues from the network a call, I've been reminded of my successful work until now, and that I'm not alone.

You had the idea behind the ETC Women Directors Networking Group, back in 2021: how did you have this idea, and what are your hopes for this group?

I don't want my younger colleagues to experience the same things I did. With this group, I hope that they can speak to each other, listen to each other, learn from each other, and ultimately see that they are not alone. And I am in a position where I can support talents in this international network. I have been supporting directors, dramaturges and young playwrights all my life: I see it as my duty, but it's also a real pleasure.

How do you feel you 'Broke the Mould'? Or better: how did you reach your current position as Artistic Director of Deutsches Theater Berlin? What do you predict is needed to 'Break the Mould'?

I must trust in my internal compass, my intuition. And I check my intuition, again and again, by listening to my colleagues and their arguments, which takes time. So take your time, and then be convincing, by being honest. I would add: you shouldn't try to fulfill other people's expectations!

What works for you – maybe drawing from your experience as a dramaturge – in a working relationship with stage directors?

I don't think that you can do your work in the theatre without knowing what is going on in the world. So I am interested in their lives, in their work, in getting to know them. And they should be interested also in our work, in my work, in the work of the teams I have been working with for years. So if they don't try to get to know our ensemble of actors for instance, our teams, it will not work. And the other way around, of course.

Do you think your experience as a dramaturge reflects in your decisions around running a theatre (and being in charge of hiring stage directors)?

Absolutely: as an Artistic Director, I start with the dramaturgy. My thoughts about history start in the present, not in the past. That's why I am a fan – besides my interest for the classics – of contemporary plays. For example: Anne Mulleners¹ directed 'Die Ärztin' ('The Doctor'), a play by Robert Icke and other contemporary plays while I was artistic director at Schauspielhaus Graz and quite recently Anica Tomic celebrated our premiere with 'Nora oder wie man das Herrenhaus kompostiert' ('Nora or How to Compost the Mansion'), written by Sivan Ben Yishai, a fantastic playwright from Israel, at Deutsches Theater Berlin.

Now you are running the Deutsches Theater Berlin, what are you looking for in a director?

Art means risk: to be successful, you have to be brave as well as be true to yourself. That means that you should know yourself very well. And the further you go in your career, in your aesthetical development, you should be credible when representing your team, so you need to regularly ask yourself: are they still the right partners on your side for the next step? Is there still an exciting spark in your team? How can you connect yourself and your team with the actors of the Deutsches Theater, for instance? For me, it's the key to success.

What are your hopes, for theatre, and for the directors of the ETC Women Directors' Networking Group?

Be brave, stay connected with your intuition, check in with yourself from time to time, without losing your self-confidence. Go out, show yourself, your aesthetics and your topics, and – last but not least – your beliefs.

Susannah Tresilian is a Theatre Director, Radio Producer and Coach. She runs Envision, a coaching and training company working with women at changing points in their lives.

BREAK THE MOULD

ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme



Leading the way for European Theatres to become
climate neutral by 2030

European Theatres have the opportunity to lead the cultural sector in adapting their processes and productions to the environmental reality facing society.

ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme aims to drive the ETC Membership towards net zero emissions by 2030 across their productions, buildings and operations. Crucially, members will benefit an ambitious mixture of mentoring and peer-to-peer learning, and benefit from the large-scale rollout of the ETC Theatre Green Book as a step-by-step guide to climate neutrality. They will also be able to track their progress in a consolidated way with the accompanying ETC TGB Self-Certification process.

ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme is supported by a pioneering partnership with Renew Culture, the creators of the original Theatre Green Book.

Essential links and resources

- » **STAGES – Sustainable Theatre Alliance for a Green Environmental Shift (2022–2025)**
This Cross-Europe project connects 14 influential theatre and academic organisations to experiment with sustainable productions and integrate lessons from 'Doughnut Economics' in their buildings and working practices.
www.sustainablestages.eu
- » **ETC Theatre Green Book**
The easy to use, step-by-step tool for any European theatre to reach net-zero across the productions, buildings and operations. A European version of the well-established Theatre Green Book, created by Renew Culture.
www.europeantheatre.eu/etctheatregreenbook
- » **Sustainability and Theatre: ETC Theatre Green Book – Applied Research Study**
Exclusive case studies, tips and advice about embedding sustainability in your theatre.

Image on the left:
From 'Beneath's Place' by Young Vic Theatre
© Johan Persson

Interview with Renew Culture, ETC's expert sustainability partners

Q: How important is it for European Theatres to embed sustainability in their productions, operations and buildings now?

We know how quickly the climate crisis is affecting us, and how urgently we need to respond to it. If we don't learn how to make change for ourselves, then governments will force us to change in ways we can't control. But more important than that, the ETC Theatre Green Book has already shown how we can change theatre without compromising what we do. That means the ETC has a chance to show everyone how to achieve the transition to sustainable working.

Q: Why do you think networks like ETC are so valuable in helping theatres make progress with tools like the ETC Theatre Green Book?

Change happens through networks. If every theatre had to work out for itself how to work sustainably, it would be a massive challenge for them, and we'd make little progress. But working as a network, we can share expertise, share standards, and share what we learn. Theatres which have already made progress – like the first ETC focus group – can pass on their knowledge to others. Together, the ETC network can work much faster and more easily than any theatre by itself.

Q: The Theatre Green Book community continues to grow, with new editions outside of Europe, in Australia and Taiwan, and versions tailed for opera and dance. How can European Theatres benefit from – and contribute to – these developments?

Every network that begins to use the Theatre Green Book brings new ideas and new expertise. By linking these networks across the world we can, together, find the easiest path to near zero. What's more, the wider the reach of the Theatre Green Book, the more we can use our shared networks to influence others, and to demonstrate to the world how global theatre has risen to the climate challenge.

SHOWCASE & CONFERENCE

Athens 2025

ETC International Theatre Conference at National Theatre of Greece in Athens/Greece, 3–7 April 2025

A conference for 100+ leading theatre professionals from 30+ European countries in the ETC network. Hosted by National Theatre of Greece and takes place alongside their renowned Showcase of Greek Theatre, which consists of productions by the National Theatre with renowned artistic directors and curators.

The full ETC Conference programme will include a dynamic mix of artistic, professional and networking events on the key topics. There will be a range of performances, conference panels and speaking events.

National Theatre of Greece Showcase

The Showcase invites guests to attend performances at the National Theatre of Greece, and to meet artists involved. The aim is raise the visibility of Greek theatre abroad, hopefully leading to the participation of National Theatre of Greece productions in major festivals around the world and leading the way for future partnerships and co-productions.

The Showcase is part of a wider effort by the National Theatre of Greece to create a strong network of international collaborations, and there have been several showcases in recent years.

About the National Theatre of Greece

Greece's first state theatre company was the Royal Theatre, which opened its doors in 1901 and operated until 1908. The Theatre was reestablished under the name "National Theatre" in 1930 and opened its doors for the public in March 1932.

The National Theatre of Greece has succeeded in creating a powerful theatrical tradition. The repertory of the National Theatre aims at polyphony, promoting a dialogue between tradition, present and future. Well-known classical plays in modern concepts, never-before-performed Greek and foreign masterpieces, contemporary classics, modern Greek plays, dance-theatre performances and space for experimenting and emerging artists. The revival of Ancient Greek Drama remains a key area of interest for the National Theatre throughout the season in an effort to combine respect for tradition with new trends.

The National Theatre is always open to collaborations with foreign theatres and artists – tours, joint productions, participation in international festivals, educational programs, showcase, artistic residencies program, international workshops, these are all part of the effort to broaden an already established network. Since 2022 NTG is a member of the European Theatre Convention.

Today, there are six venues in the National Theatre in Ziller Building, in Rex Theatre and the School of Athens – Irene Papas (open air theatre).

The Drama School of the National Theatre of Greece was founded in 1930, and it has operated in tandem with the NTG since then. There are two Departments: Acting and Directing.



BREAK THE MOULD

ETC's Diversity in Theatre Programme



Empowering theatres to use different theatre formats – and a Dramaturgy of Care, rather than conflict – to invite and engage with diverse artists and audiences

Organisations and productions that reflect the diversity of local communities are essential for theatre to fulfil its public function.

ETC's Diversity in Theatre Programme continues great strides made in previous years to expand the European Theatre canon and offer new opportunities for emerging writers and audiences. ETC's award-winning artistic project for young audiences, Young Europe, will return for a fifth edition, connecting ETC member theatres across Europe to mentor emerging playwrights and create original productions for young audiences based on a 'Dramaturgy of Care' and wellbeing. New opportunities for artists in residence, and coaching sessions for professionals, will further the practical application of gender balance and diversity to European theatre practices.

Essential links and resources

- » **'Who's Joining Us?' Article in Theaterkrant**
Read the five pieces of advice by De Toneelmakerij, Artistic Lead on Young Europe, about how to make the theatre sector truly inclusive.
www.theaterkrant.nl
- » **Gender Equality in European Theatres and Artistic Programmes 2024**
This pioneering research by researchers at UC Louvain in Belgium is the follow-up to ETC's cross-Europe research on diversity, published in 2021.
www.europeantheatre.eu/online-library
- » **Planning Europe's Future Theatre**
Article in Critical Stages / Scenes Critiques about ETC's work across Europe's vibrant and diverse culture
www.critical-stages.org/29

Keynote speech by Dr. Aminata Cairo, Speaker and Lector (research professor) of Social Justice and Diversity in the Arts at the Amsterdam University of the Arts

For me, diversity means variety. That's all it means: you have a range, you have variety. You have a wealth of stories.

But what has happened is that out of this wealth of stories, there's a story that has risen and has become important. The 'dominant' story. Of course we're going to tell this story. Others become less than, silenced, overlooked, marginalised.

This dominance could be about whiteness and people of colour. It can also be about men versus women, women versus men, adults versus children, LGB versus the T. I'm from the city. You're from the rural area. I work on the fourth floor. You work on the first floor.

All of this to say, all of us are up at the top sometimes, and all of us are down at the bottom, depending on the situation. So our job is to treat all the stories out there as valid. Nobody's going to say that that's not a good idea. Of course we want equality. However, this entrenched position did not happen overnight.

So if we really want to do this work, we have to challenge ourselves, but we also have to support others. And so, how do you do that? I want to give you three things: Care, courage, and humility.

Learn about the approach theatre-makers can take to overcome these structural issues by watching the full intervention by Dr. Cairo, which was delivered at the ETC International Theatre Conference and Young Europe IV Festival in Nova Gorica in 2024.

www.europeantheatre.eu/online-library

Left side, left image:
From '(SURVIVING) THE SUBSTITUTE LESSON' by Junges!
Staatstheater Braunschweig, part of the Young Europe IV Festival
© Saša Mrak / ETC
Left side, right image:
From 'GUTZ', by Teatru Malta, part of the Young Europe IV Festival
© Saša Mrak / ETC

BREAK THE MOULD

ETC's European Theatre Programme



Ensuring a strong identity – and secured place at the policy table – for European Theatre with advocacy work and a new 4-year PR campaign

European Theatre can play a major role in bringing communities together and embodying the best of Europe.

ETC's European Theatre Programme will include a large-scale PR campaign to give European Theatre more visibility and recognition as part of Europe's important cultural and creative sector, and place theatre as a major player within cultural diplomacy and Europe's external relations. In addition, ETC's Roadshow will enable up to 12 representations of European Theatre at and with major European and international performing arts markets, offering increased access to European works from around the world.

Essential links and resources

» Opole Recommendations



The Opole Recommendations are a high-level policy document created as a result of the European Theatre Forum (ETF) 2023. The Recommendations collect the voice of the wide European theatre sector. They set out theatre's needs, concerns and priorities in a roadmap – outlining changes European institutions should make next year, by 2025, and by 2027. These ideas were expressed by the more than 200 attendees at the ETF, hosted at JK Opole Theatre/Poland from 11-13 May 2023.

» European Theatre Forum

The European Theatre Forum is a regular event organised by the European Commission, to bring theatre makers and policy makers together for dialogue. The most recent edition took place at JK Opole Theatre/Poland from 11-13 May 2023.

» ETC Statement on Artistic Freedom

Following the shock dismissal of the General Manager of ETC Member Theatre Slovak National Theatre by the Slovak Minister of Culture, ETC called on European policy makers to take steps to protect freedom of expression across Europe.

Links to all initiatives, publications and calls on www.europantheatre.eu

Left side left: European Theatre Forum 2023 graphic

© European Commission

Left side right: ETC's European Theatre Talks event at the Festival d'Avignon 2024 © Pascal Gely / ETC

A snapshot of the main recommendations, drawn from the 'roadmap' section of the Opole Recommendations.

By 2024

- » Commit to hosting the European Theatre Forum as a regular event & expand the event gradually into a European theatre market. Establish a European Theatre Prize
- » Include a Green Theatre Certification in the Creative Europe Greening Strategy, based on the ETC Theatre Green Book model. Develop a circularity requirement for materials in theatre productions funded with EU grants
- » Promote solutions on fulfilling artists' rights in a digital streaming context & support a Codex of Fair Working Conditions for cultural workers

By 2025

- » Incorporate theatre in secondary education systems and promote theatre to improve well-being. Increase structural support for European collaboration with an international dimension
- » Increase funding lines for new sustainable touring concepts & support the creation of regional platforms for arts organisations to share leftover materials.
- » Track the consequences of AI on the labour market and working conditions & provide funding for theatres to fulfil copyright obligations for digital work across borders and online

By 2027

- » Promote a large-scale cooperation project with Ukraine to rebuild its theatre sector once the war is over & develop a framework for theatre to be included in the delivery of health care
- » Harmonise regulations across Europe so that historical theatre buildings can be adapted and renovated for sustainable and inclusive purposes & create synergies across funding systems for theatres to produce less (and be more sustainable) without losing income
- » Ensure online discoverability by creating a framework and regulations to support the visibility of theatre in online spaces alongside other artforms

ETC SEASON 2024/25

Discover ETC's upcoming activities and
how to join the network



ETC Cocktail event at the Festival d'Avignon, 2024 © Pascal Gely / ETC

A Collaborative Network

ETC's activities are designed to support our Member Theatres—and, where relevant, the wider theatre and performing arts sector—by giving them opportunities to learn, share, innovate and experiment in their creative and professional development.

We focus on helping artists coproduce and scale up their capacities through international exchanges, artistic programmes and residency opportunities.

We bring together theatre professionals from across the continent to discuss and disseminate ideas at our ETC International Theatre Conferences and regular online/in-person workshops.

We continue to innovate by focusing on cross-cutting issues like sustainability, inclusion and gender equality, facilitating critical

thinking in organisations and audiences through theatre.

This season's activities are designed to continue building on the learning from last year, supporting resilience among theatre organisations and creating a more connected, sustainable world.

The programme can be discovered in more detail on our website.

ETC Activities

What activities are planned for ETC Members during European Theatre: BREAK THE MOULD?



1 Academy for Theatre and Digitality building © Hendrik Fellerhoff 2 From 'Rijnreisje', a sustainable production at De Toneelmakerij © Sanne Pepe 3 Closing ceremony at the Fast Forward Festival Forum 2023 © Sebastian Hoppe 4 From 'GUTZ', by Teatru Malta, part of the Young Europe IV Festival © Saša Mrak

The upcoming activities are designed to enable pioneering, cross-Europe artistic collaboration. Across the four years of the European Theatre: BREAK THE MOULD project will initiate and promote 28 collaborations, 54 newly created works, 76 scholarships, 12 residencies, 8 conferences, and 5 mentoring and coaching programmes.

In addition, a professional training programme with webinars and in-person workshops will be open to theatre professionals of all disciplines at ETC Member Theatres, across the key themes of digital theatre, sustainable theatre, diverse theatre, and professional development for the next generation.

ETC's Digital Theatre Activities

24 ETC Member Theatres will be able to benefit from a total of 36000 EUR in grant funding through ETC's Digital Theatre Programme. This is designed for ETC members experimenting with digital theatre and will be delivered in partnership with the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund.

How does it work?

12 teams of two ETC Member Theatres will be able to apply for a 'Development Grant', each worth 3000 EUR.

These grants are split into two strands:

- » **Laboratory Retreats (6 grants):** For teams exploring the topic of digital theatre. Each team would spend five days at the Academy to experiment with digital technologies and create new ideas for future productions.
- » **R&D Sprints (6 grants):** For teams experienced in digital work. Each team would work with the Academy to identify the technology / tools for an upcoming production, then partner with an emerging digital expert who joins as 'ETC Artist in Residence' to realise this vision. The result would be a digital theatre production at each participating theatre.

ETC Theatres would need to choose one strand and identify a suitable ETC Theatre from another country to join them before applying.

What can ETC Members learn?

Each selected team could decide to focus on a technical artistic tool, or a specific production method.

Other ETC Members will be able to learn from their experiences through interventions at ETC Conferences and in ETC Publications. There will also be webinars and an in-person workshop.

When does it start?

The call for applications for the first round of the R&D sprints will launch at the ETC Conference in Liège (01-06 November 2024). The call for the Laboratory Retreats will take place in Spring 2025.

ETC's Sustainable Theatre Activities

24 ETC Members will be able to benefit from a total of 36000 EUR in grant funding through ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme. These grants, designed for artistic experimentation and collaboration, are intended as a complement to the creation of a new 'ETC Theatre Green Book Focus Group' and new a peer-to-peer mentoring programme, which will guide numerous ETC Theatres towards climate neutrality across the performances, buildings and operations.

It is delivered in partnership with ETC's Sustainability experts, Renew Culture.

How does it work?

8 development grants of 4500 EUR are available across the entire project for teams of three ETC Member Theatres. These grants will be used for collaboration ideas and first try outs for theatres exploring sustainable productions – to test and experiment with sustainable theatre practices and create new ideas for future productions.

ETC Theatres would need to identify two suitable ETC Theatres from other countries to join them before applying.

When does it start?

The first round of ETC's Sustainable Theatre Programme grants programme will launch in Spring 2025.

ETC's Next Generation Activities

European Theatre Professionals and artists from inside and outside the ETC network will be selected to participate in ETC's Next Theatre Generation programme. They will receive grants to attend one of three dedicated programmes at major European Theatre festivals.

- » **Festival d'Avignon:** 15 scholars will join ETC's European Theatre Academy, a 4-day seminar of masterclasses, workshops, mentoring and networking at the festival
- » **Fast Forward Festival Forum:** 7 scholars will join ETC Member Staatsschauspiel Dresden's Fast Forward Festival for Young Stage Directors through a new Forum section, which is a collaboration with 3 other ETC Member Theatres.
- » **TRANSMISSION Festival:** 2 scholars will join ETC Member Theatre National de Bretagne's festival which offers a programme for young artists still undergoing training or at the start of their career.

ETC will also develop a Professional Competence Framework for Professional Development with Oulu University of Applied Science, Finland, to upscale skills and provide qualified training.

This programme will be complemented by webinars and in-person workshops for professional development.

When does it start?

The festivals will take place in November and July each season.

ETC's Diversity in Theatre Activities

8 original theatre classroom productions for young audiences, based on a dramaturgy of care rather than conflict, will be created through the fifth edition of the Young Europe programme.

The programme will bring together emerging playwrights, who will develop new classroom plays along the concept of care. They will be supported by mentors by experienced playwrights in a writer's lab. Three partner theatres will additionally be supported by 'ETC Artists in Residence' in their production process.

The ETC Theatres involved in this project will test models for participatory theatre and interactive dialogue, alongside new artistic education and talk formats to invite and engage with diverse groups.

When does it start?

The partners for Young Europe V: Dramaturgy of Care will be selected during the 2024/2025 season. Activities will kick off at the start of the 2025/2026 season, with Staged Readings of the final plays scheduled for the 2027/2028 season.

Calendar 2024/25

The key dates for ETC Member Theatres and an insight into ETC's international travels in the upcoming season

ETC Key Dates

1–6 November 2024
ETC International Theatre Conference
Theatre de Liège/Belgium

3–7 April 2025
ETC International Theatre Conference
National Theatre Greece/Greece

July 2025
European Theatre Academy
Festival d'Avignon/France

ETC... on Tour

04–07 October 2024
ETC at New Voices Meeting
Belgrade/Serbia

07–08 October 2024
STAGES Forum, Dramaten
Stockholm/Sweden

14–18 October 2024
ETC Roadshow to Hong Kong Performing Art Expo
Hong Kong

11–16 November 2024
ETC Roadshow to CINARS Biennale
Montréal/Canada

13–15 May 2025
ACuTe Symposium at Azkuna Zentroa
Bilbao/Spain



More Events

Watch out for new ETC webinars, workshops and events on our website

www.europeantheatre.eu

ETC Publications

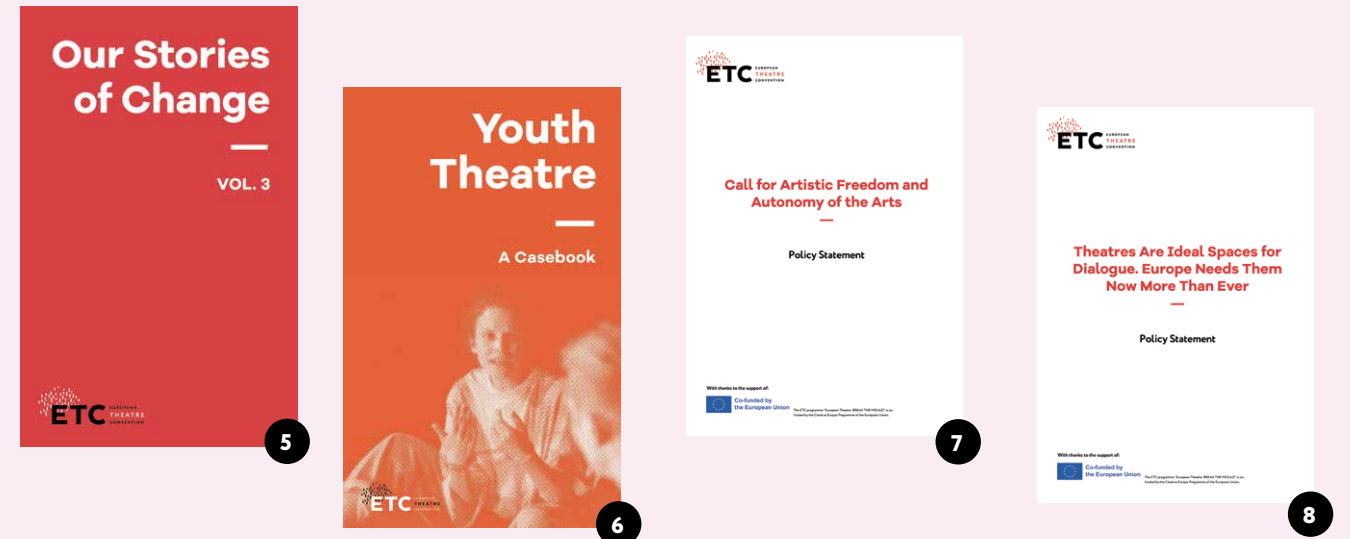
Highlighting pioneering research, casebooks and policy statements on on key topics of diversity, digital and sustainability in theatre.



Research Studies

- 1 **Sustainability & Theatre: ETC Theatre Green Book – Applied Research Study (2024)**
European theatres now have a well-tested, step-by-step guide to reach net-zero emissions by 2030: the ETC Theatre Green Book. But can this be used to enact meaningful change? And are its solutions applicable across all of Europe?
- 2 **Gender Equality in European Theatres (2024)**
Gender Equality in European Theatres (2024) is a landmark research document, an update to the ETC study published in 2021: Gender Equality & Diversity in European Theatres – A Study. It includes a statistical and qualitative analysis of gender equality in 13 ETC Member Theatres in 11 countries.

- 3 **Digital Theatre – Strategies and Business Models in European Theatre (2023)**
What is 'digital theatre'? And did European Theatres really make more of it during the COVID-19 pandemic? Written by Dr. Katie Hawthorne, and a partnership between ETC and the Academy for Theatre and Digitality in Dortmund, the study provides data on digital productions, budgets, ticket sales, investments, personnel and training.
- 4 **Performing Arts Recordings and Broadcasts: A practical manual on author's and related rights (2022)**
Written by copyright experts at the University of Liege and the University of Mons (Belgium), this study identifies legal issues and potential solutions when broadcasting performances online. Created as part of the EU-funded Prospero – Extended Theatre project, and published by ETC.



European Drama & Casebooks

- 5 **Our Stories of Change Vol. 3 (2024)**
Our Stories of Change shares stories from artists, dramaturgs, directors and theatre managers that have participated in ETC activities over the past 12 months. It aims to illustrate the human impact of TRANSFORMATIONS – Recharging European Theatres and Audiences in a Post-Covid World, ETC's programme of activities for 2021–24, co-funded by the European Union. Also available to read are Our Stories of Change Vol. 2 (2023), and Our Stories of Change (2022).
- 6 **Youth Theatre – A Casebook (2020)**
This casebook shares stories and reflections gained during the ETC project Young Europe III, which ran from 2018–20. Over two years, nine ETC Member Theatres collaborated in groups of three to develop new theatre texts and productions on the topics of rage, democracy, identity and the future.

Policy Statements

- 7 **Call for Artistic Freedom and Autonomy of the Arts**
ETC jointly signs and supports the statement, released by Culture Action Europe, which expresses concern about increasing political interventions by governments in the work of cultural organisations across Europe.
- 8 **Theatres Are Ideal Spaces for Dialogue. Europe Needs Them Now More Than Ever**
ETC's policy statement, sent to MEP candidates ahead of the European elections in 2024, stressed the beauty – and fragility – of Europe's incredible diversity, and the role theatres can play in facilitating dialogue.



ETC Library

Find a complete library of ETC publications online on the ETC website:
www.europeantheatre.eu/online-library

ETC Theatre Plays Directory

Introducing readers to the cutting-edge plays from around Europe selected by ETC's expert Drama Committee, and created as part of ETC's original projects.

Young Europe IV

Classroom Plays

Hassan and Moses

By Tomer Pawlicki/The Netherlands

Hassan and Moses make TikToks as the Mayo Brothers. But their friendship is pushed to breaking point in the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Can they reconcile and get back online? Produced by De Toneelmakerij/The Netherlands.

Gutz

By Kurt Gabriel Meli & Alex Weenink/Malta

A coming-of-age classroom play for post-secondary schools (16+) that explores young people's relationships with power, shame and the act of standing up and speaking out against the louder voices in our lives. Produced by Teatru Malta/Malta.

Little Stars

By Jaka Smerkolj Simoneti/Slovenia

A story about an incident between two high school students that doesn't thematise violence, but searches for its causes: powerlessness, bullying, body image, sexual identity and societal pressure. Produced by Slovene National Theatre Nova Gorica, Slovenia.

FAT

by Zoe Apostolidou/Cyprus

Frixos feels fine with himself, and his health is good, but this doesn't seem to matter to others, who only see a fat person in him, with all the prejudices this entails. What will this lead to? Produced by THOC, Cyprus.

Lucky

by Olga Voronkova/Belarus

Dasha and Mikita meet at a refugee centre in Poland and settle

in London. Can one truly start a new life after losing everything? Produced by Belarus Free Theatre/Young Vic, Belarus/United Kingdom.

What's Up!

by Tereza Trusínová/Slovakia

A play about two best friends, a feeling of helplessness, and uncertainty about the future. Based on interviews with professionals and a survey among people aged 14-17. Produced by Slovak National Theatre/Slovakia.

Room Rumours

by Matin Soofipour Omam/Germany

An interactive classroom play and theatre game which sends two actors and a class of students on a journey of discovery, asking questions about power and responsibility. Produced by Badisches Staatstheater Karlsruhe, Germany.

(Surviving) The Substitute Lesson

by Emel Aydoğdu/Germany

What does language do to people, how are people shaped by society? A classroom play in which different native languages meet, and a person who teaches, reports, portrays, and in the process discovers something for herself. Produced by Staatstheater Braunschweig, Germany.

Invisibilised Plays

Plays across history by non-dominant authors to diversify the theatre canon

Lucette (1997)

by Chitra Gajadin/The Netherlands

An interior monologue about a Surinamese woman whose identity is compromised by the process of integration she has

to undergo in the Netherlands. Written by Chitra Gajadin (1954) and was part of Dutch 'migrant-theatre', so was not digitalized and is no longer being printed.

Arkastos (2001)

by Rina Katselli/Cyprus

A story of an insatiable thirst; of a family, appearing to be happy, until the father suddenly disappears. Drawing from a real issue Cyprus faces, it contains the psyche of a person, thirsty during a drought, and eaten by weeds. Written in Cypriot dialect with Katselli's own made up spelling rules.

A B*tch, a C*nt, and a F*ggot (2008)

By Gregor Fon/Slovenia

The plot is about a drunken night of three old friends – a newly minted TV star, a policeman and an ordinary employee – who are not friends. A comedy that deals with the emptiness of modern life, which is a constant in modern times.

Worte (2019)

by Yade Yasemin Önder

An imaginative multilingual play about growing up in two or more languages, which is a reality for many children. The play is a linguistic experiment with inclusion and exclusion for children aged 10 and over.

The Burning Gypsy Camp (1946)

by Elena Lacková/Slovakia

A play from 1946 about the revolt of Roma communities against the police and fascists in Slovakia, which comes at time of difficulties for minorities in contemporary Slovakia.

Pocomania (1938)

by Una Marson/Jamaica

As she reacts to the loss of the love of her life, Stella navigates the shifting landscapes of imperial Jamaica, confronting themes of love, loss, displacement, manipulation, and awakening.

European Drama Collection

Contemporary European Plays

'The Frailty of Togetherness'

By Miguel Castro Caldas/Portugal

The Frailty of Togetherness (2022) stems from a desire to

discuss the most pressing and complex challenges Europe and the world is facing today: the (re)rise of populism and authoritarian models. Proposed by São Luiz Teatro Municipal/Portugal.

'Lost&Found'

By Nalini Vidoolah Mootoosamy/Italy

A play on the right to freedom of movement. A right that often becomes a privilege based on "who we are" and "where we come from". Proposed by PAV/Fabulamundi, Italy

'Snackbar'

By Magne van den Berg/The Netherlands

This play deals with the harsh realities of child sexual abuse and incest, investigating the horror of silence and celebrates the strength of those who dare to break it. Proposed by De Toneel-makerij, The Netherlands.

'A Rainy Day in Gurlitsch'

By Milan Ramšak Marković/Slovenia

Beginning as a benign dialogue play showing a dinner party in a charming middle-class home, we slowly turn to the central theme of the play: a fragmented trip through a traumatic feeling of loss. Proposed by Prešernovo Gledališče Kranj/Slovenia.

Alaska

By Evangelos Kosmidis/Greece

While written before the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, this play includes real thoughts and comments from the children and teenagers who faced war in Mariupol. Proposed by Dakh Theatre/Ukraine.

Everything OK

By Simona Hamer/Slovenia

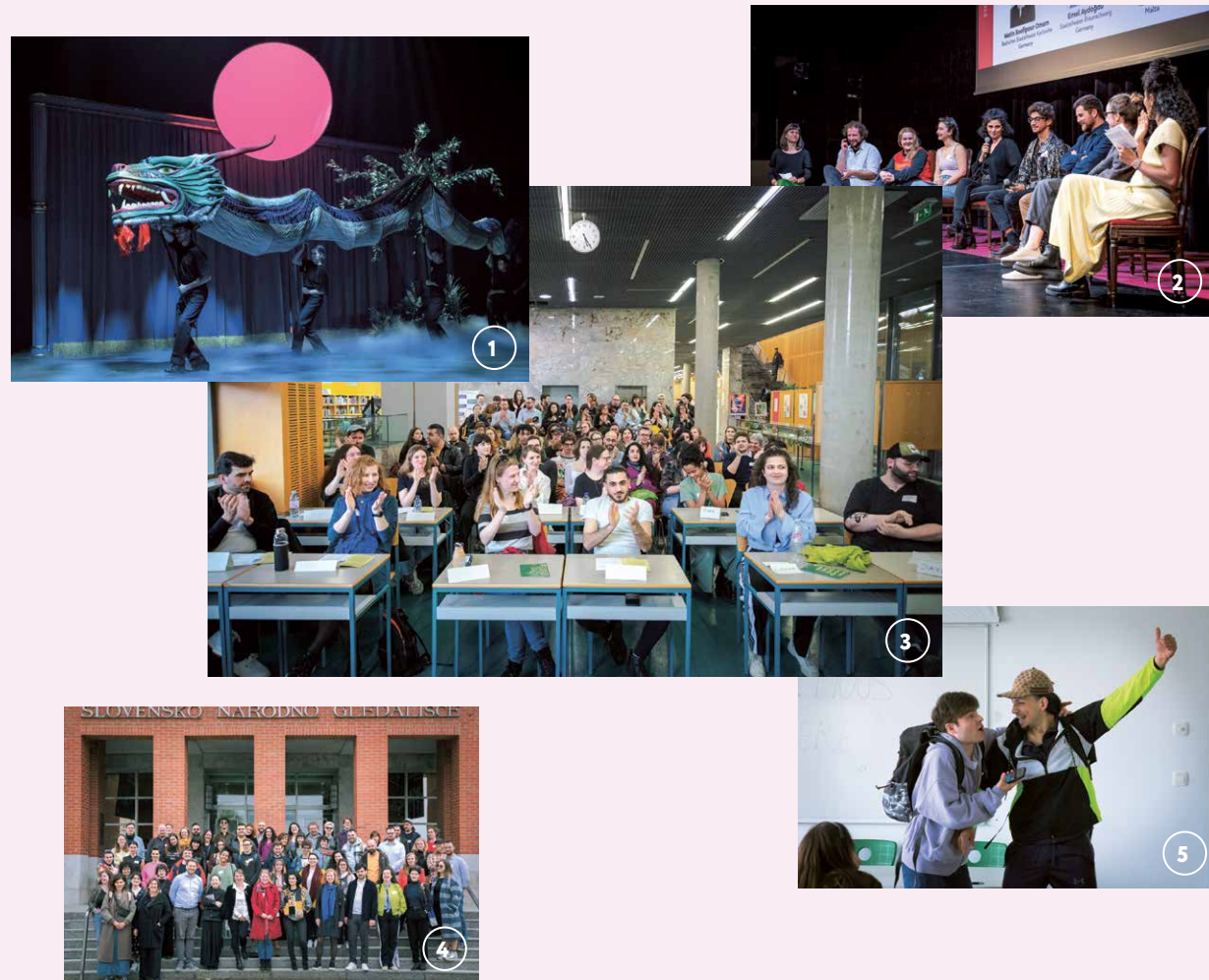
Everything OK explores the topics of (un)employment, (im)migration, discrimination and racism, patriarchy, mental health, ageism, and loneliness through three intertwined storylines. Proposed by SNG Nova Gorica/Slovenia.

For ETC Members

Full texts translated into English, are available for ETC Member Theatres on the ETC Theatre Plays Directory.

About ETC

“Uncomplicated, personal and down to earth.” ETC Members meet regularly at ETC events and conferences around Europe to network, exchange ideas and receive new artistic inspiration. Join the 60+ theatres from 31 European countries currently benefitting from ETC activities!



① From 'One More Minute' by Národní divadlo – National Theatre Prague © Petr Neubert ② Young Europe IV Panel discussion at the ETC International Theatre Conference at SNG Nova Gorica, 2024 © David Verlič / ETC ③ From the ETC International Theatre Conference at SNG Nova Gorica, 2024 © Saša Mrak / ETC ④ Group Photo at the ETC International Theatre Conference at SNG Nova Gorica, 2024 © Saša Mrak / ETC ⑤ From 'Hassan and Moos' by De Toneelmakerij, at the ETC International Theatre Conference at SNG Nova Gorica, 2024 © Saša Mrak / ETC

Joining the ETC Network

An artistic platform for creation, innovation and collaboration, which enables ETC Members to network, get inspired by new ideas, and be represented at a European level.

As the largest network of public theatres in Europe, ETC reflects the diversity of Europe's vibrant cultural sector.

Founded in 1988, ETC promotes European theatre as a vital social platform for dialogue, democracy and interaction that responds to, reflects and engages with today's diverse audiences and changing societies.

ETC fosters an inclusive notion of theatre that brings Europe's social, linguistic and cultural heritage to audiences and communities in Europe and beyond. Powerful and professional ETC governance ensures that the network will thrive and grow, taking into consideration the latest trends and developments.

ETC's new four-year programme, 'European Theatre: BREAK THE MOULD', offers our Member Theatres many opportunities.

This comprehensive, ground-breaking programme is supported by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union.

Advocacy

ETC voices the needs and concerns of the theatre community to political leaders and promotes the visibility of the sector from the local to the international level.

Your Benefits as an ETC Member

- Meet and network with colleagues from other European theatres
- Create international artistic collaborations
- Get inspired by new ideas and share best practice
- Be represented at European and international levels
- Explore new contexts, cities and perspectives

Contact Us

If you're interested in joining the ETC network, don't hesitate to contact us through the email below for more information!

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Ravenna Teatro-Centro di Produzione
PAV
Teatro Stabile di Torino – National Theatre

KOSOVO
National Theatre of Kosovo (Pristina)

LATVIA
Dailes Theatre (Riga)

LITHUANIA
State Small Theatre of Vilnius

LUXEMBOURG
Escher Theater (Esch-sur-Alzette)
Les Théâtres de la Ville de Luxembourg

MALTA
Teatru Malta (Żejtun)

MONTENEGRO
Royal Theatre „Zetski dom“ (Cetinje)
Montenegrin National Theatre

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Het Zuidelijk Toneel (Tilburg)

NORWAY
Det Norske Teatret (Oslo)

POLAND
JK Opole Theatre

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