Cradle of Creativity: Answering the cultural rights of the child to experience and participate in the arts

Yvette Hardie
ASSITEJ President
SACO: 2018
UNESCO CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

• Article 31: the right to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts

• To view children as cultural citizens challenges perceptions of childhood: What does it mean to be invested with the rights, privileges and duties of a citizen?

• The rights to arts and culture are indivisible from and equal to all other rights.

• What is the unique contribution of a child to society?
Notions of being/becoming intrinsic to understanding childhood: a social actor actively constructing childhood? an incomplete adult in the making? or both?

Childhood has its own unique culture, which expresses itself in very particular ways.

While a child is being enculturated into the culture/s of the society, children at different stages of development share their own sense of time, space and community which also needs to be respected as an expression of cultural diversity.
How do we serve the cultural needs of children and young people?

Children as cultural citizens

- Rights
- Duties
ASSITEJ is dedicated to the artistic, cultural and educational rights of children and young people across the globe and advocates on behalf of all children regardless of nationality, cultural identity, ability, gender, sexual orientation ethnicity, or religion.
ASSITEJ: Association International du Theatre de l’Enfance et la Jeunesse

Pre-2017 map
South African context in terms of culture for children and young people

- Lack of access to quality theatre for young audiences due to geography, economy, cultural exclusion
- Lack of artists making quality theatre specific to certain age groups – e.g. very little theatre for under 4s, very little non-didactic work for teens, very little dance theatre for children, very little work not driven by social agendas and educational purposes
- Lack of engagement between South Africa and the rest of the world in terms of TYA – very little inspiration in SA
- No international theatre for young audiences festival
- No comprehensive research around theatre for young audiences in SA
- No comprehensive audience research for certain work, for example, theatre for babies
Cradle of Creativity

19th ASSITEJ World Congress
& International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People

16 - 27 May 2017
Cape Town, South Africa
ASSITEJ World Congress taking place every 3 years, never before held in Africa
A Conference on Intercultural exchange in TYA
An International Theatre Festival
A 12 day event (a three year programme)
1390 delegates from around 100 countries
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

A World Congress
A Conference on Intercultural exchange in TYA
An International Theatre Festival
A 12 day event

1390 delegates from around 100 countries
CRADLE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL

63 productions involving
464 artists
In 3 main venues and 4 Cultural Hubs
29 South African Productions
5 international/SA collaborative productions
11 African/ and African/collaborative productions
17 non-African international productions
INTER-CULTURAL EXCHANGE
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International
YVETTE HARDIE • President of ASSITEJ International
Africa Day celebrations
Attendance:

18 562 tickets sold on Main Festival
2447 children at Fringe/Cultural Hubs
1650 young people attended 53 Workshops by 33 facilitators
7760 sponsored children/youth
1545 learners on sponsored buses
120 deaf children
30 blind and partially sighted children
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

CRADLE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL
63 productions involving
464 artists
In 3 main venues and 4 Cultural Hubs

29 South African Productions
5 international/SA collaborative productions
11 productions with African involved
17 non-African international productions
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

CRADLE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL

63 productions involving 464 artists

In 3 main venues and 4 Cultural Hubs

29 South African Productions

5 international/SA collaborative productions

11 productions with African involved

17 non-African international productions
YVETTE HARDIE
• President of ASSITEJ International
Cultural Hubs

• 2 day weekend festival
• 50 youth (18-30) trained to run four hubs
  – Vrygrond: Community Centre & Capricorn Primary
  – Atlantis: Rebecca van Amsterdam Hall
  – Langa: Guga S’thebe
  – Philippi: Ithemba Labantu
INTERNATIONAL INCLUSIVE THEATRE

I am myself, direction: J. Sobczyk, Teatr 21, photo: P. Ogrodzki
Small Size Network Theatre for Early Years
ITYARN

International Research in TYA

ITYARN conference – partnership between ASSITEJ SA, ASSITEJ, ITYARN, UCT Drama Department and Drama for Life (WITS)
PRODUCER’S FORUM
Sponsored delegates:
189 South Africans, 42 Australians

Including:
31 Next Generation participants from 21 countries
25 Magnet Theatre trainees
25 Northern Cape Artists
12 Limpopo Artists
6 Western Cape Artists
12 Free State Artists
60 After School Game-Changer Artists
10 RMB sponsored artists
20 Producer’s Bazaar Artists
36 Conference presenters
Next Generation 2017
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

Sponsored delegates:
30 Next Generation participants from 21 countries
25 Magnet Theatre trainees
25 Northern Cape Artists
15 Limpopo Artists
8 Western Cape Artists
15 Free State Artists
60 After School Game-Changer Artists
10 RMB sponsored artists
54 Producer's Bazaar Artists
NEXT GENERATION

31 participants under the age of 36
South Africa (12)
Africa (7):
Cameroon, Malawi, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda, Namibia, Zimbabwe
Rest of the world (12):
Chile, United States of America, New Zealand, India, Canada, Cuba, Denmark, UK, South Korea, Japan, Russia and Switzerland

“For the first time I got to hear a fuller range of perspectives and in the most direct way”

“The world map on my wall looks different. I am excited about where we will meet again, what we will do together and how our views of the world have changed.”
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

Sponsored delegates:
30 Next Generation participants from 21 countries
25 Magnet Theatre trainees
25 Northern Cape Artists
15 Limpopo Artists
20 Western Cape Artists
15 Free State Artists
60 After School Game-Changer Artists
10 RMB sponsored artists
54 Producer's Bazaar Artists
“A cradle of creativity becomes a cradle of humanity.”

“In Cape Town I feel it, cradled by new words and experiences, connected by wonderful people; a harbour of inspiration that allows me a community. We are guided by ancient storytelling and possibility.”
YVETTE HARDIE
President of ASSITEJ International

CRADLE OF CREATIVITY FESTIVAL

63 productions involving 464 artists

In 3 main venues and 4 Cultural Hubs

29 South African Productions

5 international/SA collaborative productions

11 productions with African involved

17 non-African international productions
FEEDBACK

Range and variety of productions
1% Mediocre
10% Satisfactory
38% Good
51% Excellent

Quality of productions:
3% Mediocre
15.5% Satisfactory
43.5% Good
38% Excellent
Distinctiveness: it was different from things I’ve experienced before
Concept: it was an interesting idea
Presentation: it was well produced and presented
Challenge: it was thought-provoking
Captivation: it was absorbing and held my attention
Local impact: it is important that it's happening here
Relevance: it has something to say about the world in which we live.
Rigour: it was well thought through and put together
Authenticity: It was authentic and engaging within its context.
Enthusiasm: I would come to something like this again
Way Forward

Collaborative Projects: Currently 15 projects underway, including:

- Water Protectors Project (performance piece about water sources and indigenous water protectors - drawing on Camissa Project, DAPL pipeline) - SA, Kenya, USA
- Playwriting Exchanges
- Storytelling exchanges using indigenous language and themes to explain and exchange their culture and heritage.

BRICS World Alliance of Children’s Theatre, signed in China in June 2017, with projects looking at the next 5 years

Individual invitations for South Africans, example:

- Lereko Mfono, resident playwright at Spinning Dot
Invitations for Productions

Currently 23 productions from Cradle have been invited to tour internationally, for example:

• Phefumla – went to Sand Festival, Norway; invited by Netherlands, and currently Belgium
• Patchwork (Pillowfort Productions)- to Kolibri festival 2018 (Hungary);
• Mbuzeni (Koleka Putuma) has been invited to the Edinburgh Children's Festival (May 28-1 June 2018) and to two German festivals
• Aha! (Magnet) To ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering, China
• Knock / Scoop (Magnet) - invited to WeeFestival, Toronto, Canada 2018
• Fingers and Toes, My Body Knows (Nicola Elliott) - invitation to Ricca Ricca Festa, Okinawa, Japan, July 2018;
• Animal Farm - interest from Tokyo and Zambia and invitations from Sweden, New York and Paris
• young@home (Hillbrow Theatre) to perform in Denmark through invitation by Lene Thiesen
• Seedfolks to the New Victory Theatre, New York
• Sparrow to ASSITEJ Artistic Gathering, China
Economic Impact

• Funding received: R13 448 955.00
• Income: R1 945 397.00
• Expenditure: R14 604 862.00
• Economic impact of festival on host economy of CT was R54 820 031.

(using SA Festivals Economic Impact Calculator)
WAY FORWARD

Six year cycle, combining

African Youth Theatre Festival (in-house festival to generate new work) with

Cradle of Creativity (international TYA festival to showcase work and foster inter-cultural collaboration between SA, Africa and the world)

2018-2019: Cape Town
2020-2021: Gauteng
2022-2023: North West Province
Yvette Hardie
President of ASSITEJ International

Thank you!

www.assitej.org.za
www.assitej-international.org
www.assitej2017.org.za