

Report

from UNIMA Germany

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With great grief we have to inform you that **Rolf Mäser died** in old age. He had been a board member of UNIMA GDR for many years and is therefore probably still known personally by many of you.

We also mourn for **Karl-Heinz Rother**, a great collector of puppets. He had passed on his collection a few years back to the city of Bad Kreuznach which installed a museum for puppetry Museum für Puppentheaterkultur (PUK) based on this collection. He was a great and successful advocate for the fact that puppets should not just be displayed in glass show cases but like in any other exhibition puppetry exhibits should be presented in a meaningful and attractive way. It was important for him to present puppet theatre in a way that the dramaturgy of the exhibition becomes apparent.

UNIMA Germany currently has 407 members.

Publications of UNIMA Germany:

We publish the magazine „Das andere Theater“ regularly 3 times a year. Each issue has a special topic. This topic is known far in advance so that members and other interested writers can submit articles.

Topics of the last issues:

No. 70 Paper and Toy theatre

No. 71 - no special topic -

No. 72 Amateur Puppetry

No. 73 Literature and Puppetry

No. 74 Effect of Puppets

No. 75 Puppet makers of the 20th century - working title (commemorating the 100th anniversary of Fritz Herbert Bross) - to be published in September 2010

UNIMA Germany has 7 working groups which intensively follow the spirit of UNIMA and move it to public awareness.

Working Group

Deutscher Kulturrat (german cultural council):

This council coaches representatives of German Cultural Affairs.

For the allocation of subsidies - for which all strands of the arts fight facing ongoing cuts in this sector - the public acknowledgement of puppetry art is vital. UNIMA Germany specifically supports the implementation of the medium puppetry in drama classes in schools.

It points out continually the broad variety of contemporary puppet theatres in Germany.

Contact: Frieder Paasche

Working Group

Puppet theatre and Research:

We counselled the opening of the International „Kasperjade“ in Bottrop within the framework of „Kulturhauptstadt RUHR 2010 TWINS“ and the first symposium „The Funny Character in Puppetry in Europe. A comparative study“ with participants from Hungary, Turkey and Germany was accompanied with a talk and a representative for the podium.

Further talks and events are planned in September, 5-10th: „The funny character in politics“ and in November, 27-29th: The funny character and its educational significance“.



In Magdeburg, a Mitteldeutsches Figurentheaterzentrum (centre for puppet theatre in mid-Germany) is planned. The building will soon start as an extension of the existing Puppentheater Magdeburg. Courses, an archive for central German puppet theatres, shows and festivals will shape the profile of this centre. The TheaterFigurenMuseum Luebeck published a new catalogue of its exhibits. Special publications are planned to slowly make the enormous resources of this museum accessible to the public.

Contact: Silke Technau

Working Group

Amateurs:

Amateur puppeteers are organised regionally in Germany (see addresses below). They are organising workshops, shows and festivals where amateur and professional productions are shown.

Contact: Rita Berg, Angelika Albrecht-Schaffer, Peter Räcker, Angelika Pauels

Working Group

Puppetry and Education:

A festival for school puppetry groups is held biennially in Theater der Nacht in Northeim- organised by Ruth Brockhausen.

In Bochum - organised by the dfp led by Annette Dabs - the Fritz-Wortelmann-Preis is awarded to School and Amateur puppetry productions.

Contact: Inga Hartmann, Hartmut Fischer

Working Group

Shadow Theatre:

The international centre for shadow theatre is led by Rainer Reusch; he currently tries to initiate a museum for shadow puppets in Schwaebisch-Gmuend. He passed on the organisation of his successful festival, held every three years in Schwaebisch-Gmuend to Sabine Hirtzel who had assisted him before. In October 2009 another successful edition of this festival took place.

Recently a division of this working group formed in Hannover, which is also organising an international festival. The first two happened in 2007 and 2009.

Contact: Rainer Reusch, Frieder Paasche

Working Group

Puppetry in Therapy was initiated in March 2010 at the AGM.

Contact: Barbara Scheel

Working Group

„Road of Puppetry“:

The aim is to create an internet map on which puppet theatres, venues, and puppetry museums in Germany can be found. Denmark, Norway and Latvia are joining this project.

Contact: Ruth Brockhausen

Cooperations with other organisations and associations:

In cooperation with Verband deutscher Puppentheater e.V., the Association of Professional German Puppet Theatres, we published the brochure „Figurentheater entdecken“ (Discover Puppetry), with which we are advertising the art of puppet theatre.

There is no cooperation with the dfp in Bochum (led by Annette Dabs).

Further Information from Germany

Northeim in the „Theater der Nacht“ hosted the Baltic Sea Country Festival in June 2009 organized by Ruth and Heiko Brockhausen. 10 productions from 10 countries around the Baltic Sea and from Norway were invited.

The International Figurentheaterfestival in Erlangen/Nürnberg/Fürth was threatened by financial problems of the city, but international protest caused that Siemens will finance the festival in 2011. But the further future is unknown.

In Germany every federal state is solely responsible for arts and education, there is no central management. The financial situation of every city or community immediately affects the cultural events and subsidies. The general cuts demanded by the state are severe and are passed on firstly to the cultural/arts sector.

The department for puppetry arts at the University for Music and Dramatic Arts in Stuttgart who was threatened to be folded, after a huge protest officially still exists, but due to restructuring there are no interviews and auditions for the coming academic year.

----- **www.unima.de** -----

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