



Report of the UNIMA Heritage Commission's first Meeting

Location of the meeting: Meeting room Desjardins, Hotel Chicoutimi, Saguenay(Quebec), Canada.
The Commission was hosted by the FIAMS, Festival International des Arts de la Marionnette à Saguenay

Dates of the Meeting: July 22-23-24th 2015

On July 25th, the members of the Commission was presented to the public of the festival and they exposed the conclusions of the Meeting.



Members of the Commission present:
Jacques Trudeau, president (Montreal, Canada)
Henryk Jurkowski, Member of Honour (Poland)
Nancy Staub (New Orleans, USA)
Nina Malikova (Czech Republic)
Otto Van der Mieden (Holland)
Boniface Kagambega (Burkina Faso)
Dimitri Carter (Seattle, USA)

The Commission has 10 members and 8 correspondents, so since 7 on 10 members were present, quorum was obtained and we could continue with the agenda.

1/ The first day meeting was dedicated to the definition of the word "tradition" and the question: "What is tradition ?". We compared different dictionaries' definitions, from different time and we realized that the term "tradition" could be interpreted in many different ways and to have different contents depending the countries, religions and arts you are practising. We envisaged to open our commission, trying to involve some researchers, from the Scientific Research Commission, to ask the opinion of the Territorial Commissions and others UNIMA commissions, but mainly to involve the 98 UNIMA Centres and Representatives.



2 a/ On a common agreement, the members of the Heritage Commission decided to start their work using as a basis the multiples informations, archives, pictures and video already collected by UNESCO in their process aiming to a recognizing and a registration as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of more than 11 traditional forms of masks and puppetry from around the world. The exhaustive list will be communicated in New-Delhi.

2b/ The members also agree on the fact to have recourse to the different puppet art museums and puppet collectors in order to constitute an very extended data basis on traditional puppetry that the Commission would like to realize and publish on the UNIMA website.

2c/ The members agreed on realizing a questioner to be completed by the UNIMA Centres and Representatives where they will have to answer the questions about the traditions of puppet theatre in their country, its origins, its forms, its contents, their significations and their relations with social life, religion, anthropology, philosophy, psychology. Existence or not of experienced practitioners (masters). Existence of younger generations attracted by traditional puppetry to perpetuate the forms or even reinvent them. Insisting also on the forms which could disappear, replying the question why some of those traditional forms are in danger. All these informations will be a complement for the data basis.



3/ To the initiative of Nina Malikova, (redactor in chief of the Loutkar review, created more than 100 years ago) daughter of Jan Malík, UNIMA Secretary General at the very beginning of our association, the members of the Commission decided, with the aim to also celebrate the UNIMA's 90 years, to go ahead with a special project, let gathering adequate information, old as well as actual that shows how UNIMA is an association which contributed, all along its existence, and significantly since its foundation in Prague, in May 1919, to the structuration, promotion, defence and blooming of the art of puppetry in the world, (even during the 2 great wars and more recently during certain international conflicts). The proposition of the peace in the world also being one of the fundamental objectives and is inscribed in the preamble of our statutes.

4/ The members decided not to give cash grants but, as soon as the questioner would be filled by all the UNIMA Centres and Representatives, to make attestations, some Certificates of Recognition and send them to senior practitioners (masters) who have dedicated their life to make traditional forms of puppetry known and recognized, but also to young practitioners who have studied with great masters and perpetuate and reinvent with respect the older traditions. Those Certificate of Recognition of UNIMA, of high graphic quality, may help those recipients to make better known their work and to incite the governmental instances of their countries, the foundations and all others forms of grant makers to pay them more prestige and financial support.

The members of the Commission are warmly thanking the directors and all the team of the Festival international des arts de la marionnette in Saguenay to allow them to work in optimum conditions to offer a concerned and generous assistance.

Jacques Trudeau, president, St-Jean de Matha, July 29th 2015



