

Report of the UNIMA Research Commission 2008 – 2012

Research Commission worked in this structure:

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Members:

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The Research Commission formulated more its priorities, but our main ambition we all had, was to improve a communication among researchers of puppet theatre in different part of the world. So the commission accepted an intention of its President to concentrate on organising of scientific international meetings, conferences or symposiums.

First meeting of Research Commission held in ***Tampere***, Finland 28.X. – 1.XI. 2009. Research Commission was hosted by institutions of Tampere University and UNIMA Finland, co-ordinated from initiatives of RC member Mrs. ***Katriina Andrianov*** (Finland). The meeting of RC was organised at the occasion of the international conference which we decided to realise as our first activity.

Conference of Stage Animation with themes: Puppet Theatre as a part of a larger phenomenon and/or theatrical genre/ Puppetry as a modern art at the crossroads of scenic genres or as traditional craft? was our first goal. Themes of the conference were given by Research Commission, all presented RC members. K. Andrianov, J. McCormick, M.I.Cohen, I. Hledikova presented their contributions, as well as RC's correspondent A. Ivanova and UNIMA representative J. Bell.

Two activities of similar character were organised in winter 2008 and autumn 2009 in Slovakia in co-operation of Slovak UNIMA Centre and the Academy of Performing Arts.

From 4th to 6th December 2008, the ***international seminar*** on different forms of puppetry held at the Academy of Performing Arts - Department of Puppetry under the leadership of ***Ida Hledíková*** in ***Bratislava, Slovakia*** as a good occasion for meeting of researchers and students: Alain Lecucq from France, Eszter Papp from Hungary, Alice Dubská from Czech republic, Ida Hledíková and Juraj Hubinák from Slovakia presented their research work.

From 3rd – 5th September 2009 the ***International Conference on Traditional Puppet Theatre held in Banská Bystrica, Slovakia***. The event was organised in ***co-operation of Slovak UNIMA Centre***, Centre for Traditional Culture and Slovak Literary and Musical Museum as 2 days conference organised at the occasion of international puppetry festival dedicated to traditional puppeteer Anton Anderle. The conference was led by RC's member: Prof. John McCormick (Ireland) and Assoc. Prof. Ida Hledíková (Slovakia) – President of RC. Active participants, mainly members of UNIMA, came from Austria, Ireland, Italy, The Netherlands, Slovakia and United Kingdom. Costs were paid by Slovak UNIMA Centre, Centre for Traditional Culture and Literary and Musical Museum in Banská Bystrica.

Second meeting of the RC held on 23rd June 2010 in **Dordrecht**, The Netherlands, were majority of members participated. The RC initiated the organising of the second academic conference in Storrs, University of Connecticut, USA.

The RC on its meeting talked about an idea of organising a conference or academic symposium on puppetry heritage in Asia in 2012. **M. I. Cohen** offered and worked out a draft under the title **Puppetry and Heritage Today** which was sent by President of RC to General Secretary in July 2010 as it was required in Dordrecht. The event will finally be held as an academic symposium in London in autumn 2012 and is open for UNIMA.

The idea of RC to have a conference in America succeed in April 2011. **Puppetry and Postdramatic Performance: An International Conference on Performing Objects in the 21st Century** - extraordinary academic event held from April 1st until April 3rd in Storrs, University of Connecticut, School of Fine Arts and The Ballard Museum as the event for scholars, practitioners and students of puppetry and related arts. The conferences consisted of 76 contributions in 8 sessions, 2 keynote addresses – Peter Schumann and Eileen Blumenthal and closing comments of Roman Paska, 5 workshops/demonstrations, 5 performances and visits of Ballard Museum of Puppetry. The conference was moderated by scholars from universities of the USA, Canada and Australia. Participants as K. Andrianov, M. I. Cohen, I. Hledikova, K. Smith, C. Astles, A. Ivanova, M. Moran, J. Younge, M. Williams etc. represented UNIMA with their contributions and presentations. Research Commission express many thanks to the main organiser, our friend **John Bell** from UConnecticut, School of Fine Arts, to Dean Mr. David Woods, as well as Dassia Posner, Bart Roccoberon and The UConn Puppet Arts Program, Claudia Orenstein from CUNY, Jane Geiser from California Institute of the Arts and other respectable persons and bodies who organised and supported this event!

Also third meeting of Research Commission held in **Storrs**. Participants: I.Hledikova, K. Andrianov, M. I. Cohen, K. Smith and J. Younge as a guest. UNIMA representatives M. I. Cohen, I. Hledikova, J. Younge took part in a postconference meeting at Martin Segal Theatre Centre in New York; documentary films on puppetry were presented there. Ms. Claudia Orenstein managed this important event, promoting puppetry. In September 2011, two members of RC **Karen Smith** and **Ida Hledíková** presented their UNIMA activities, and puppets in an extraordinary international event - multicultural exhibition **YOU FIRST** who was organised in Los Angeles, USA in Orange County Centre for Contemporary Arts by graphic designer and artist Dali Polivka and art theorian Rob Mintz.

Directory of Puppet Theatre Researchers - the newest version 2012 comes out on DVD in March 2012 and is distributed to all respondents and UNIMA Centres. This newest version is a result of serious verification of previous editions of the Directory and contains new information and names of researchers from all over the world. This process lasted one year and was provided in two periods (April-August 2011, October 2011 - April 2012). Editor in chief was **Ida Hledíková**. A short history of the Directory and other details are specified in the Directory's Introduction. I sincerely thank to all respondents, UNIMA centres, individuals, colleagues from RC and correspondents, to Mr. Fabrice Guilliot who helped me in the last period to communicate with some national centres, my assistant who was responsible for the first contact with all respondents and verification of their data in the first period, translators, editors and graphic designer. In fine I thank all active members of UNIMA Research Commission, correspondents and colleagues for their useful work on Research Commission's road to improve the communication among researchers of puppet theatre in different part of the world and promote UNIMA.

Ida Hledíková
President of UNIMA Research Commission 2008 - 2012
31st March 2012