

From UNIMA Estonia

UNIMA Estonia has to announce about a great loss that affects not only the Danish UNIMA, but also UNIMA Estonia.

On April 17 the former President of UNIMA Denmark, the UNIMA Councillor Hans Hartvich-Madsen died at the age of 73 in Tallinn.

UNIMA Estonia has had long term connections and collaboration with Hans since the Festival of the Baltic Sea Puppet Theatres in Silkeborg in 1996. The meetings with the President of UNIMA Sirppa Sivori-Asp and the presidents of the UNIMA Centres of the Nordic countries was the starting point of UNIMA Estonia. Among the others it was Hans Hartvich-Madsen to whom we are grateful for the opportunity to celebrate the 20th anniversary of UNIMA Estonia last autumn.

I'd like to share some memories about one of the most important projects we shared with Hans. I'm afraid, it is not very widely known or maybe only the participants remember it. It was the establishing after-educational courses for the young puppeteers in the Nordic countries and the Baltic area. The participants of the project were UNIMA Centres from Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Estonia. The leader of the project was of course Hans Hartvich-Madsen. 15 young puppeteers from 8 countries took part in the two one-week programmes that were held in May 2003 in Viljandi, Estonia and in September 2003 in Odsherred, Denmark. Many of them became later on the leaders of the puppet theatre in their own countries, eg. Jacek Malinowski and Robert Drobniuch in Poland, Heikki Kuusela and Janne Kuusitie in Finland and many others. There were also three participants from Estonia, an actress Külli Palmsaar among them, who became after that the member of his Thy Theater. The result was, that Hans and Külli became a couple, the last years of his life Hans lived mostly in Estonia and put up even a new puppet theatre here. His First Hand Theatre is the member of UNIMA Estonia.

On behalf of UNIMA Estonia I'd like to express our great sympathy to UNIMA Denmark and also the relatives and companions of Hans Hartvich-Madsen in Denmark.

Harry Gustavson
Former President of UNIMA Estonia