

On the international children's and young people's theatre day 2009

A letter from the President

Communication and Imagination

Normally theatre takes place in theatres. But it does not have to. Theatre can also take place on the streets, in buses or classrooms. Theatre spaces are theatre spaces wherever they might be. Theatre can take place on a stage with sets and props; theatre can also be performed on the front edge of a stage – with or without puppets. Theatre can even be produced without anything at all, in an empty space so to speak. This is not entirely true, of course, because theatre needs actors and active audiences. Nothing can take place without this partnership! The form of communication determines the space, the imagination and the dreams. This is art, theatre art, the nuts and bolts of acting. This is also the case for theatre for young people. And this unique live experience must be particularly fostered. Children and young people refuse to be taken for a ride. They are well acquainted with virtual worlds but they also appreciate the world of the theatre. We should not be supplying them with trite fantasies but social fantasies, not with escapist dreams but socially relevant visions. It's not about didactic theatrical theories but intelligent ways of telling stories. So switch on your brains please, and get ready to enjoy the sensuous pleasures of theatre. May the International Children's and Young People's Theatre Day help to make this possible! Let us plead for interesting, innovative and inspiring material throughout the world. For, in the last analysis: all the world's a stage.

Wolfgang Schneider
President