

## Heritage & Diversity Forum HD-F

The “Heritage and Diversity Forum” (HD-F) was newly founded during the 36th ITI World Congress in Fujairah (2023). The HD-F emerged upon the split of the Network “Heritage, Indigenous and Migration” (N-HIM), which had proven to be too extensive and disparate in terms of topics.

It aims to bring together ITI members worldwide who are concerned with the cultural heritage of their home regions in all its diversity and are working on its relevance for the present.

The HD-F mission is to explore cultural heritage in the theatre and performing arts sector by focusing on the past and modern times, through the issues that arise in the applied context of heritage. Special emphasis is given to the practical and operational implementation of cultural heritage projects and events, especially through festivals, so that the complex relationships of cultural heritage in the field of theatre development to be explored in depth.

The HD-F focuses on the vast history of theatre, from ancient Greek drama until the 19th century, concentrating on identity and diversity.

During the 37th ITI World Congress and the ITI Pitches, the President of the HD-F, Mr Christos Georgiou, presented the logo and also the Goals and Objectives of the Forum.

### Goals and Objectives

Specifically, the HD-F goals are to research and study:

1. the ancient theatre as a special theatrical code and as a cultural phenomenon,
2. the surviving ancient dramatic texts in terms of philological and theatrical context,
3. theatre venues and archaeological testimonies in general,
4. the reception of ancient Greek and Roman drama,
5. traditional theatre to modern and contemporary world literature, theatre, dance, cinema, and other forms of art.

To sum up, the HD-F has eight objectives:

- 1) to research and study the history of theatre as a history of identity and diversity;
- 2) to approach theatre interdisciplinary and widely, both as a literary genre as well as a complete theatrical event but also as a cultural phenomenon;
- 3) to promote theatre's history and define the strategic framework for preserving and managing each region's cultural heritage and diversity;
- 4) to recognise the contemporary forms of theatre as part of the world's cultural heritage;
- 5) to explore the morphological and semantic elements that are used by modern directors to make ancient drama and theatrical tradition accessible and comprehensible by contemporary audiences; and
- 6) to create a field of cooperation between the professionals of the theatre and the performing arts in the approach, methodology and development of the theatre as part of the cultural heritage of each country;
- 7) to foster an inclusive notion of theatre that brings social, linguistic, and cultural heritage to audiences and communities;
- 8) to collaborate with European and international festivals and platforms that present performances ranging from ancient Greek drama through to nineteenth-century theatre.

In the framework of the ITI Pitches the collaborations and activities of the HD-F were also presented calling for new members to join and enhance the HD-F dynamics:

### Antigone Project

In order to get to know each other more concretely and to actively engage old and new members, the "Antigone Project" was agreed upon. The Project aims to create a collage of interpretations and approaches to a specific excerpt selected from Sophocles' tragedy "Antigone". More specifically, the excerpt refers to Creon and Antigone debating the merits of their positions.

Each member of the HD-F is responsible for staging/producing/playing the "Antigone" scene in a freely chosen setting (theatre, street, kitchen etc.), recording it and bringing it into a joint presentation.

During the 37th ITI World Congress and the Committees Meeting, the HD-F presented the concept of the Project aiming to invite new members to join and participate by contributing with their productions to the completion of a collage, which will highlight the diversity of artistic approaches and multicultural dimensions assumed by the ancient Greek drama as a universal heritage through showcasing "Antigone". The "Antigone Project", which was suggested by different non-European members of the Forum, is estimated to be completed at the end of 2024 and be presented to the public, via social media, in March 2025 on the occasion of World Theatre Day.

### OTHER COLLABORATIONS & ACTIVITIES

- A) A project is planned within the HD-F membership led by the Vice-President of HD-F, Matthias Gehrt: Zaza Muchemwa (Zimbabwe) will stage a production at the Krefeld-Mönchengladbach Theatre in the 2024/25 season as part of the "Non-European Theatre" series.
- B) The HD-F members decided to support the "17th International Symposium on Ancient Greek Drama" which will be organised by the Deputy Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Cyprus and the Cyprus Centre of ITI on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2024 in Nicosia. The topic of the 17<sup>th</sup> edition of the "International Symposium on Ancient Greek Drama" is: *"The role of mythos in ancient tragedy: 'mythos' as 'plot', or 'plot' as 'mythological narrative'"*? The "International Symposium on Ancient Greek Drama" began in 1990 as an activity of the then ITI Committee of Cultural Identity and Development and has since been organised, regularly every other year, by the Deputy Ministry of Culture and the Cyprus Centre of ITI. This year's edition of the Symposium will be under the auspices of the Heritage and Diversity Forum.

### MEMBERS

By the end of the Committees Meeting, held on September 19, 2024, two new members joined the HD-F, Mr Emiliós CHARALAMBIDES (Cyprus) and Mr. Ádám Berzsenyi BELLAAGH (Hungary).

Accordingly, the HD-F has today nine members from 8 countries and 3 different regions (Arab countries, Europe and Africa):

Christos GEORGIU (Cyprus), President  
Matthias GEHRT (Germany), Vice President  
Lina TAL (Jordan),  
Zaza MUCHEMWA (Zimbabwe),  
Okbaoui CHEIKH (Algeria),  
Mohamed SHASHAA (Palestine),  
Ayad Kadhim AL- SALAMI (Iraq),  
Emiliós CHARALAMBIDES (Cyprus),  
Ádám Berzsenyi BELLAAGH (Hungary)

### NEXT MEETINGS

As in 2023, Zoom meetings and conversations will be scheduled between the members focused on exchanging ideas and opinions about the projects, potential collaborations and activities towards achieving the main goals of the HD-F.

***The Activity Report is submitted by Christos Georgiou***