

# 10th Women Playwrights International Conference Cape Town - South Africa 2015 | Newsletter #2



In your hand or, rather, on your screen, you have the second issue of the WPI News Letter. We've now change our focus from Stockholm, Sweden 2012 to South Africa 2015.

If you want to remember the week in Stockholm, or if you weren't there but want to know what happened, get **WPIC 2012 - the final report** on <http://wpic.riksteatern.se> It's a PDF that you can download and print if you like. When you need info about WPI for possible members or someone interested in supporting our network, please, feel free to give them the report.

On the next page, Lene Therese Teigen, our president residing in Norway, says Hello. The Host Committee of South Africa - Karen, Amy and Zara - gives the latest news on page 3. Marili Fernandez-Ilagan reports from the national association WPI Philippines on page 4. These News Letters are open for info, concerning all members. If you have something you want to share - for inspiration or to offer some activity - send an e-mail. Although I've left Riksteatern to become freelance, I will go on supporting WPI.

It's also a very good idea to recruit more members. Send me names, countries and e-mail-addresses to people who want to join WPI or just be put on our mailing list.

*Let's keep in touch!*

**Mireille Bergenström**

project manager of WPIC 2012 in Sweden/senior adviser  
new e-mail: [mireille@miripedia.se](mailto:mireille@miripedia.se)

**WPIC** is an opportunity to meet, to build networks, to create genuine, lasting contacts between women playwrights and theatre professionals. Our aim is to have a supporting impact on cooperations and to build bridges between people from different parts of the world.

**WPI** was founded in 1988 and held its first conference in Buffalo, New York, USA. Two hundred women from over 30 countries were in attendance. Since then, women playwrights have gathered in Canada, Ireland, Greece, Australia, the Philippines, Indonesia, India and Sweden. The 10th conference will be held 2015 in Cape Town, South Africa.

**Feel free to spread this news letter among your colleagues!**

**You can follow us on twitter @womenplaywright**



Homepage for WPI, [www.wpinternational.net](http://www.wpinternational.net)

# ***Hello all WPI-members!***

We are in the middle of february – here in Norway it is cold and snowing. We go skiing, actually right outside my house! In just a couple of days I am on my way to Australia – to the summer. Thanks to good friends I have met through WPI, I can look forward to an exciting trip and lots of interesting meetings with theatre people on the other side of the globe. (My trip come true thanks to a good system for artist's grants in my country). In Australia I will meet Catherine Fitzgerald who is part of the management committee and we will, among other things, discuss how to make a new website for WPI.

Parts of the WPI-management committee had our first skype-meeting some weeks ago – talking about website, the need for a new WPI-logo and other urgent matters. It was such a nice experience to "be together"!

In january I also had a meeting with Helena Hoogenkamp from the management committee and other WPI-members in Holland. I even got to see a performance written by one of our members – Marijke Schermer. I liked it a lot!

In this newsletter you can read the update from our host committee in South Africa concerning WPIC 2015. Now we all have to start to think about what play to submit when the time comes. We even might have to start to write a new play!

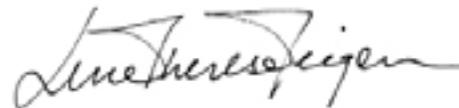
It is a great job to make a conference and on behalf of us all I am sure I can say that we look forward to 2015 and wish we all can attend. Start to save money, start to make plans on how to get travel funding, and so on.

Also, this might be the right time to organize more formal WPI regional groups. I am sure that you will be stronger together, connecting for meetings and working on a regional level. It might even support the possibilities to be part of the next conference. In this newsletter you can read our management committee member Marili Fernandez-Ilagan's report from WPI Philippines. They've had a strong organization for more than 10 years.

You might have noticed that we are running a *WPI History Project*. If you look at earlier newsletters you can read about the first conference in 1988, written by Anna Kay France right before the Stockholm conference. Margaret Hollingsworth wrote about the 2nd conference WPIC 1991 in Canada in the latest newsletter and in the next one (april 2013) we will read about the Australian conference in 1994.

In the coming newsletters we plan to publish texts covering all the WPI conferences. If you have memories or information from earlier conferences please get in contact with either Mireille, who will be producing our newsletters, or me. I think it would be so nice to share WPI stories of the past with all the WPI members – old(er) and new(er)!

***For now – work well, live well, fight and breathe!***



Lene Therese Teigen  
WPI president

**therteig@online.no**

# Greetings from Cape Town!

On a hot and sunny Cape Town afternoon two weeks ago, our first WPIC meeting took place to introduce the conference to local playwrights, directors, journalists and artists. The aim of this meeting was to start a conversation and organize on-the-ground subcommittees to start tackling the practical matters related to the conference planning.

We're pleased to report that we have had a positive response from our Cape Town artists. Many high profile theatremakers, directors and role players responded to our call and are now aware that the conference is being organized. In our meeting, we introduced the core themes that will encompass the 2015 conference. They are:

- **Beyond Words:** scripting the physical, the digital and the visual by writing new texts in non-traditional form.
- **In Other Words:** writing multilingual plays, writing for multilingual audiences and translating texts.
- **Choice Of Words:** how do we edit ourselves? What is the role of the dramaturg and the role of actors and directors in script creation?
- **Our Own Words:** writing for your own performances and scripting biographies.

We also sent out the call for artists to join one of five subcommittees in the following areas: Readings (selection of plays), Workshops (organizing speakers and panels), Organizational (adminis-

trative and logistical planning), Funding (fundraising on a local level) and Marketing (spreading the word about the conference). Once these subcommittees are established, we will let you know who they are and who will be responsible for the finer aspects of our planning.

First on our agenda, however, is coordinating a core readings committee team to read and select plays for the conference. The submission process will open sometime in September when we will send out the call for plays. Keep an eye on the WPIC website or newsletter for a reminder and the 2015 submission criteria. In the meantime, if you are interested in forming part of the reading and selection committee, send an email to [wpic2015@gmail.com](mailto:wpic2015@gmail.com) with "Readings Subcom" in the subject line. Apart from our local readings committee, we are eager to get a few international selectors who will be country specific to shortlist plays based on the criteria from their country or region.

We look forward to communicating positive results with you very soon! As usual, we'd love to hear from you, so drop us an email with any thoughts, suggestions or responses.

***Karen Jeynes Amy Jephta Zara Trafford***

Cape Town Host Committee

**[wpic2015@gmail.com](mailto:wpic2015@gmail.com)**

## Marili Fernandez-Ilagan reports from WPI Philippines

WPI Philippines is the first country section of Women Playwrights International. It was launched during the Second Asian Women and Theater Conference. The conference was held in 2000 at the National Arts Center, Los Banos, Philippines as part of an Asian Women Theater Conference Series initiated by Koharu Kisaragi of Japan. WPI members Roberta Uno, Jyoti Mhapsekar, Naomi and Ding Pajaron attended the event.

An example of the activities of WPI Philippines is *Save the Babailan Workshops*, conducted by our seasoned playwrights as their membership service fee. The workshops are for our minority indigenous Lumad and Moro emerging women. This year, they were expanded them to include urban based marginalized communities. The Babailan was our first playwright cum chanter/poet and choreographer, receptacle of stories and epics of the indigenous Lumad and Moro communities during the pre-colonial period. The Babailanes were the first who went underground, fleeing from the colonial friars who took over their role in the communities.

The Workshops, not only had impact on the survival of Community Theater but also provide spirituality and dynamism; and voice to the voiceless.

Very few Asian women have participated in the Women Playwrights International Conferen-

ces. In August 2012, the Democratic Stage in Sweden was an opportunity for four Filipina women to meet with women playwrights and theater professionals in Stockholm.

Synopses were sent to Sweden. One play was written by an emerging playwright based in Amsterdam; *Blood, Sweat and Tears* tells of a woman who is a wife trapped in violence for more than a decade, a mother in argument with her daughter on her school activism, and an illegal migrant closed to deportation.

Three came from the most prolific woman playwright south of Manila. *A Thousand Poems for Dulce's Breasts*, *Mebuyan*, *Legend of the Flesh*, and *The Lies of glory*. Another attempt was written by an actor-director; *The World Between Black and White* is about a 12-year old girl who makes a world only she can understand to break away from the cruelty of her world.

August Melody Andong, a government employee within economic development besides being a playwright and multi-media-practitioner, submitted *Nagligad Street cor. Subong Street*, which was selected for reading in the 9th Women Playwrights International Conference.

After the Sweden Conference, WPI Philippines is prepared for an one-day-meeting in April in Baguio City to plan the coming summer. Malou Jacob (WPIC Management Committee-member and Manila Conference-festival director) is set to open her reading/writing room

as a yearly summer venue grant for emerging indigenous women playwrights and as a Playwriting Prize every three years.

WPI Philippines is also proposing a collaboration of women playwrights, to bring the indigenous playwrights from the south to the north of the Philippines.

WPI Philippines should not be the last country chapter. Hopefully, other countries will consider setting up their own country WPI with the aim not only gaining the capability of hosting a future WPI Conference; but, more importantly, to conduct playwriting workshops for the next generation emerging, gifted women dramatists.

The importance that WPI Phil now gives to the elder Babailan through the playwriting workshops that provide interaction opportunities between the Babailans and the emerging young Lumad/Indigenous and Moro playwrights assure the vibrant growth of theater in the service/empowerment of the local communities.

We have stumbled on our reason for being.

We have not only launched a country chapter for WPI.

We have launched a movement!

**Marili Fernandez-Ilagan**

WPI management committee member & Asian region developer

# WPI elected for 2012-2015



Sondos, Lene, Andrea, Marcia, Valantina, Vanessa, Patricia, Helena & Sally.  
Missing: Catherine & Marili

## MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Lene Therese Teigen	President, Norway
Marcia Johnson	Vice-president, Canada
Vanessa Adams-Harris	Secretary, USA
Helena Hoogenkamp	Treasurer, the Netherlands
Patricia Olwoch	Conference Convenor, Uganda
Sondos Shabayek	Conference Convenor, Egypt
Catherine Fitzgerald	Communications, Australia
Andrea Assaf	Communications, USA
Sally Campusano Torres	Latin-America region developer, Chile
Marili Fernandez-Ilagan	Asian region developer, the Philippines
Valantina Abu Oqsa	Arab region developer, Palestine

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Sandra Shotlander, Australia  
Malou Jacob, the Philippines  
Ratna Sarumpaet, Indonesia  
Margareta Skantze, Sweden  
Meena Natarajan, USA/India

## HOST COMMITTEE/SOUTH AFRICA

Karen Jeynes, head of committee  
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