



Open Call to Young Writers

I. Introduction

Open call to young puppet theatre authors aged 18-35!

The year 2019 marks the 90th anniversary of the creation of the Union Internationale de la Marionnette (UNIMA). To honour this date, UNIMA is holding an open competition for young writers interested in authoring a script or concept for puppet theatre that will be performed as part of the UNIMA 90th anniversary celebrations.

II. Objective

UNIMA is looking for a special script/concept for puppet theatre. This project will be workshopped into four distinct productions that will be performed in four separate geographical regions of the world: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Americas.

III. Theme

Authors are asked to use as theme, subject matter, point of departure, or inspiration for their work the values that UNIMA has sought to uphold throughout its almost 90-year-long history: namely, international friendship and a spirit of openness and cooperation across borders, social, cultural and religious affiliations or partisan beliefs.

The foundation of UNIMA in 1929 took place a decade after the devastations of World War I in a spirit of reconstruction between a Frenchman, Paul Jeanne, and a Czech, Jindřich Veselý. Twenty-eight years later, in 1957, and again in Prague, the first post-World War II UNIMA Congress elected its Presidium (now known as the UNIMA Executive Committee). The German-born Max Jacob was appointed UNIMA's president and his two vice presidents were the Soviet, Sergei Obratsov (a former combatant in the war) and the Italian, Vittorio Podrecca (an anti-fascist). The Frenchman, Jean-Loup Temporal, who also fought in the war, would also become a member of the executive branch of UNIMA along with other committed international members of the organization.

These foundational moments in UNIMA's history are open to your individual interpretation. The stories and themes they evoke can be adapted to any period and to any historical or fictional characters. Keep in mind as you conceive your play/concept that we also wish to promote both UNIMA's core values as well as the puppetry arts.

IV. Jury

One of the scripts/concepts will be selected by an international jury specially created for this project. This international jury will be composed of 7 puppetry specialists, authors and/or performers. Each jury member will read those texts written or translated into the official UNIMA language(s) (i.e. French, English, or Spanish) that they speak the most fluently.



The selected script/concept will be used as the basis for the four separate puppet productions workshopped by puppetry schools from the four geographical regions.

V. Awardee's Acknowledgement

The selected author will receive an award of 2,000 euros.

The awardee will also have the opportunity to have his/her script or concept performed, as described above, forming the basis for four productions that will be presented in an international network.

VI. Guidelines

1. Subject matter or theme: based upon or inspired by UNIMA's own history or historical foundations as well as the organization's core values.
2. Medium: appropriate for puppet theatre.
3. Duration: as guidance, your script or concept should not run to more than 40 minutes in production time.
4. Language: successful scripts/concepts are likely to be more visual and less language-based, given that the production must work across a number of cultures and speech communities. We need a script or concept in the universal language of puppetry.
5. Scripts/concepts need to be in one of the official UNIMA languages – French, English, or Spanish.
6. Stagecraft: successful scripts/concepts should have minimal technical or staging requirements, as the ultimate productions will need to be portable and cost-effective.

VII. Deadlines & Timeframe

The deadline for scripts/concepts is 15 April 2018.

The author chosen by an international jury will be announced on 20 September 2018 in Charleville-Mézières, France, during UNIMA's Youth & Heritage meeting.

VIII. Where and What to Send

Please send your script/concept in French, English, or Spanish by e-mail to: contact@unima.org. Please also provide in the e-mail the following information: your surname (family name), given name; date of birth; country; and phone number.

This personal information will not be shared with the jury but will be kept by the UNIMA committee coordinating the project.

UNIMA International will retain the selected script/concept and the rights for its use. It will be used only by this non-governmental organization and by the author.

This competition is made possible thanks to the support of the French Ministry of Culture (Direction Générale de la Création Artistique) within the framework of the European Year of Heritage.