



# IDEA

International Drama/Theatre and Education Association  
Association Internationale d'Art Dramatique/Théâtre et Éducation  
Asociación Internacional de Drama/Teatro y Educación

[www.idea-org.net](http://www.idea-org.net)

## International Drama/Theatre & Education Day: 27<sup>th</sup> November 2008

As the President of IDEA, I'm delighted to declare November 27<sup>th</sup> *International Drama/Theatre and Education Day*. We now have a specific date to celebrate our rich and distinctive contribution to the global project of cultivating a human education, human rights and peace for all, in particular for young people, children, and excluded communities that are threatened by violence.

Of course, this is not an easy time to celebrate. All generations and continents today are painfully aware of how global warming, widening social inequality, violence, poverty and AIDS intimately touch our lives and threaten our futures. Every drama teacher, pupil, theatre artist and community seems to be placing dehumanization, increasing pressure, youth despair and unsustainable competition centre stage in his/her everyday performances<sup>1</sup>. And like 9/11, today's financial crisis threatens to turn our homes, schools and work-places into another global workshop of hopelessness or theatre of denial.

But there are also real grounds for hope. In every corner of the world, communities, schools, colleges and cultural centres are generating new performances of solidarity and cooperation, drawing on decades of experiment, research and collaboration. Industrial waste is being recycled into musical instruments and epic sculptures of vision. Rows of desks are being placed against walls to transform classrooms of fearful competition and alienation into performances of community and innovation. And theatre artists and university drama departments are working with teachers, police, prisoners and communities of special needs to nurture confidence, human rights and networks of cooperation. In all of the 90 countries that make up the present IDEA community, our capacity to offer a new paradigm of education based on artistic languages is coinciding with an emerging consensus that we need to change the world's performance before it is too late.

However, though there may be a consensus among *us* that our artistic languages need to be fully integrated into education to nurture our multiple intelligences and capacity to care and create to prepare all people for a permanently-changing, technologically-driven, 'knowledge-based' world, we cannot be naïve. In many parts of the 'developed world', the arts in education are being replaced by laptops and



<sup>1</sup> This situation motivated drama/theatre, music, visual arts and dance educators to form the World Alliance for Arts Education. See the Joint Declaration by IDEA, InSEA and ISME presented at the 2006 UNESCO World Conference of Arts in Education.



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'basic skills'. And in every region of the world, most parents and teachers still think of the arts and creative industries as elitist luxuries or irrelevant to their lives.

So when we toast IDEA Day this 27<sup>th</sup> November<sup>2</sup>, lets call on a few neighbours, teachers, journalists, industrialists, politicians or friends working outside our community of drama/theatre and education, to celebrate with us!

Let's tell, or better still, let's *perform* how our stories of drama and theatre educate and nurture, and listen to the questions of those who are not yet partners in this global project. Let's make this November 27<sup>th</sup> a day of learning to share our knowledges and enlarge the stage of transformation.

Dan **Baron Cohen**, President of IDEA  
Chair of the World Alliance for Arts Education

*The November e-bulletin has just been published. Please visit the IDEA website for latest news on IDEA 2010, IDEA's regions and recent or forthcoming conferences, festivals and opportunities!*

*Material for the IDEA e-bulletin can be submitted by IDEA members at any time. The closing date is the 21st of each month. Please send new flashes and photos to: Cathy Kariuki, IDEA Secretary: [kathy\\_wanji@yahoo.com](mailto:kathy_wanji@yahoo.com).*

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<sup>2</sup> This date is chosen to recall the 27<sup>th</sup> Article of the 'Universal Declaration of Human Rights' ('Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefit'), and the month when the 'Declaration of the Rights of the Child' was passed by the United Nations.