

November 3, 2021

President Letter to OISTAT Members

Dear OISTAT friends,

Thank you to everyone attending to the OISTAT Online World Congress and to those who were unable to attend, please know that we sincerely miss you and hope you are all well.

OISTAT World Congress 2021 stood out for its first online edition and simultaneously translation in three languages: Mandarin, Arabic and Spanish. It was a great opportunity for non-members to join OISTAT meetings and activities, reuniting participants from over 40 countries in an amazing six-day journey!

The congress programme included sessions specially dedicated to present, reflect and debate on relevant topics and projects; among others: OISTAT's relationship with other international NGOs, sustainability, the Theatre Architecture Competition (TAC), Technical Invention Prize (TIP), the announcement of the selected designers for WSD2022 exhibition and a taste of how inspiring next WSD edition in Calgary will be through the panel "Indigenous Ways of Learning".

We also had great moments of fun during the "happy hour", the "silent disco" and in moments of improvisation. It was almost a week together to share knowledge, creativity, thoughts, joy and memories; moments to smile, to laugh, thrill and to toast. To toast the reconnecting and a new beginning, after the profound changes caused by the pandemic in the last two years, which still affects us and that will continue to reflect in the future.

On the one hand, if the immobilization imposed by the pandemic was disturbing, it has also mobilized us towards fruitful openings, untangling the way we live, work, think and relate to others, inviting us to a journey within ourselves. Perhaps a necessary break to replenish our artwork and critical view of our ambition for the world, in the world and what we want to point out or fight for.

Theatre and Performance, as Art, continually inspires, challenges and encourages us to review our way of thinking and imagining the world we want to portray. A transforming force that puts us in constant confrontation with our limits and possibilities, take us out of



our comfort zone, leads to adversity to learn to keep us active and creative in the midst of the most unfavourable conditions.

Step by step, we realised how we could get closer, and it was beautiful how much we shared our workspace and household, allowing to see throughout the window, overlooking each other`s “place” and getting to know each other a little more. We were also able to make new friends, meet more often and speak in different languages.

Over the past two years, we have probably spent more time expressing ourselves verbally – speaking, writing texts and emails – than we could through drawings, colors, shapes, materials, gestures and sounds, something that certainly affects and makes us uneasy. With that in mind, I would like this letter to be a drawing, but it would take a little longer to deliver; then... I thought ... how wonderful it would be if we could all drawing it together. I imagine this like a blank canvas with the words written in magic ink and invite you to save this moment and the words to memory, and then, release its materiality, returning to a blank canvas where we can trace a new stage for what is to come, for what we will all do together at OISTAT.

I am immensely grateful for the trust and affection of this community, manifested by the expressive approval in the elections. I am really thrilled to become the first Latin/Brazilian in OISTAT history, and the second woman, after our dear Maija Pekkanen to serve as President of this organization for a four-year term. My special thanks to the OISTAT Centre of Portugal - APCEN for the nomination, making this possible.

I take this opportunity to thank the former president and EC members; to congratulate the elected EC members and the elected Chairs of the Education commission, the Sound and Space design sub-commissions; to thank all commissions and participants for the significant program presented and, last but not least, the HQ for organizing the event so well that it ran smoothly. I also want to congratulate the candidates who were not elected this time and the OISTAT Centres for their nominations; I look forward to working with all of you, so stay close, let's talk and share our views and ideas, everyone's collaboration is very important.



With great joy and energy, I will continue - along with our incredible HQ team, the EC, GB and all the OISTAT members - the work and affection dedicated by the former President Bert Determann to this organization. It will be a pleasure and learning experience to work with the former president in this transition period, counting on his vision and knowledge.

Moving forward I wish to strengthen direct communication with OISTAT Centres and its members, Associate members and Individual members. Seeking a horizontal management as possible, taking advantage of this moment that provides facilities to expand communication, dialogue, access, inclusion and participation. And also, to promote interdisciplinary intersections within OISTAT commissions in the continuity of OISTAT projects and events, as well as to creating new and inspiring events together with all our members worldwide. Projects that are only possible because they are made by the people of the OISTAT community!

See you soon online and/or face-to-face. Let's stay connected around the world and through the following events: World Stage Design 2022, SENA 2022 and the Commissions meetings 2022 that soon will be announced.

Feel free to get in touch.

My very best wishes to you all!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aby Cohen".

Aby Cohen
President

The OISTAT logo, consisting of the word "oistat" in a bold, lowercase, sans-serif font.

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