

Sean Crowley

### **Background and Statement of Intent**

My involvement in OISTAT began in April 2003 at a meeting in Taipei. I was attending as deputy for Pamela Howard on behalf of the UK OISTAT centre. I had no idea what awaited me in Taipei or what doors would be opened during my visit.

It was a week that immediately introduced me to the ethos of OISTAT, an international exchange of ideas and practice both common to the theatre industries across the world and those uniquely different by country and culture. It introduced me to a section of the community of OISTAT whose enthusiasm and passion for their subject was matched by their warmth and friendship outside of the formal meetings. It shared furrowed brows of conversation and argument with tears of laughter. It was my first experience of OISTAT and I fell in love with it.

I have been a designer for theatre and performance for over 30 years designing both set and costumes for over 200 productions.

I was lucky enough to start working as a professional visiting design specialist with the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama over 20 years ago. This association with the College grew over a number of years and my appreciation of the possibilities of training design practitioners within a Drama School grew with it. (in the UK as in Europe this had traditionally been based in the Art School). There followed a period where I discovered what I feel are my true strengths, initially through my work with the royal Welsh College and then subsequently creating events with The Association of Courses in Theatre Design, The Society of British Theatre Designers and OISTAT by:

- Creating opportunities for the celebration and promotion of the work of design and production practitioners and students from across the World.
- Bringing established and emerging practitioners together to share their knowledge and enthusiasm.

Working with like-minded members of OISTAT, all leading specialists in their field, I was given the opportunity to organise and create Scenofest for PQ'07 which was held in the centre of the Industrial Palace in Prague and sprawled out into the rest of the city. (27000 visitors with 5000 active participants.)

In workshops/masterclasses/performance events. The same enthusiastic support enabled me to bring World Stage Design to Cardiff in 2013. (40 performances, 140 masterclasses and workshops,

6800 tickets sold, 8000 -10000 visitors.) These events have echoed everything I felt about my very first experience of OISTAT.

All this is reflected in a passion that has been at the core of my department at the Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama in that we have developed a collaborative ethos that runs through our staff and students and has been key to us supporting and running National Exhibitions in the UK over the last 6 years.

I believe in the designer as artist. I believe that, that artist needs the respect and support of the realiser, the builders, the makers the technicians the managers. I believe that, that artist, with that network of support can be allowed to flourish and explore new ways of working and create ground-breaking practice. I also believe that the artist must acknowledge and respect those who create the networks of support and who realise the vision. I believe this respect and collaborative ethos is at the core of OISTAT. I do feel we are at a point where we need to address the healing of recent and old wounds, both internally and externally, with significant collaborative partners, and I believe I may be a good person to help this process.

I will work to sustain my vision of OISTAT as an extraordinary network of like-minded creatives from across the globe who come together to make extraordinary projects, who happen to share philosophies, who rejoice at their similarities and marvel at their differences.

I feel I can offer OISTAT my experience, energy and good humour to move towards the next decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.