



Press Release

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Going Global: TCG/ITI-US Brings US Message to International Theatre Institute's 48th Annual World Theatre Day on March 27

"I challenge all of us to sustain the complexity of our world; to invite a multitude of diverse voices onto the stage. We must open the doors and windows of our theatres to let the world in. It is our responsibility; it is our burden and our gift."

---First time US Message for World Theatre Day by
Pulitzer Prize-winning Playwright, Lynn Nottage

International Message by Dame Judi Dench

Mayoral Proclamation issued in NYC

New York – As the United Nations declares 2010 the International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, Theatre Communications Group (TCG), which serves as the U.S. Center of the International Theatre Institute (ITI-US), invites all theatres, individual artists, government institutions and audience to celebrate World Theatre Day (WTD) on March 27, 2010.

Each year, a renowned theatre artist is asked to create an International Message for WTD. This year, ITI Worldwide, headquartered in Paris, asked Dame Judi Dench, renowned English stage, film, and television actor, to write the International World Theatre Day Message. Dench's statement will be translated into more than 20 languages, distributed to tens of thousands of audiences prior to performances and printed in hundreds of daily newspapers.

Dame Judi Dench writes, "Theatre is a source of entertainment and inspiration and has the ability to unify the many diverse cultures and peoples that exist throughout the world."

This year TCG/ ITI-U.S. has also invited Lynn Nottage, winner of the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Drama for *Ruined*, to issue her remarks on the occasion. This is the first time the US has selected an artist to deliver a national message. In her message, Lynn Nottage proposes using theatre to help accomplish the UN's Millennium Development Goals in celebration of World Theatre Day:

"As artists and global citizens, the world continues to demand our attention, and as such we must be intrepid explorers, daring to venture into uncomfortable zones to unearth difficult truths."

This year, as in the past, one way to celebrate World Theatre Day is to spread these international messages. Thanks to social networks and online resources, World Theatre Day is receiving greater attention and involvement in North America, as well as a Mayoral Proclamation in NYC. Since theatres

are experiencing an expanding awareness of belonging to the global community, TCG is also encouraging its members, colleagues and audiences to:

- Visit www.tcg.org for additional ways to celebrate WTD, including downloadable versions of Dame Judi Dench and Lynn Nottage's messages;
- On March 27, share the WTD messages with your audience and community;
- Register with the [Performing Arts Alliance](#) (PAA) and Arts Advocacy Day;
- Use the PAA web resources to contact your elected officials regarding the need for:
 - improved visa processing for international guest artists;
 - increase in funding for the Cultural Programs Division of the State Department's Office of Citizen Exchanges;
- Register for the [Human Rights Watch](#).

Founded by UNESCO in 1948, the mission of ITI is to "promote international exchange of knowledge and practice in theatre arts in order to consolidate peace and friendship between peoples, to deepen mutual understanding and to increase creative cooperation between all people in the theatre arts."

In 1961, ITI created World Theatre Day, which is celebrated annually on March 27 by ITI Centers around the world and the international theatre community. Each year, a notable theatre personality of world stature is invited to craft an international message as ITI Centers program various national and international theatre activities to celebrate this global message and to mark the occasion.

In addition to securing a national WTD message from Lynn Nottage, TCG/ITI-US is celebrating World Theatre Day by organizing – for the first time - a diverse delegation of 27 representatives from the American not-for-profit theatre community, festivals, training programs and cultural organizations to travel to and participate in the VIA program at the Festival Iberoamericano de Teatro Bogotá from March 24-28.

International Theatre Institute (ITI) was formed in 1948, when the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) joined with world-renowned theatre experts to form an international non-governmental organization in the field of the performing arts. Today, ITI consists of approximately 90 Centers worldwide. An ITI Center is made up of professionals active in the theatre life of a country and representative of all branches of the performing arts.

The first World Theatre Day International Message was written by Jean Cocteau in 1962. Succeeding honorees include Arthur Miller (1963), Ellen Stewart (1975), Vaclav Havel (1994), Ariane Mnouchkine (2005), Sultan bin Mohammad Al Qasimi (2007), and Augusto Boal (2009).

Theatre Communications Group (TCG) became home to the U.S. Center of ITI in 1999. **TCG's** mission is to strengthen, nurture and promote the professional, not-for-profit American theatre. It is a national organization with global reach that is taking proactive steps to unite the field of professional non-profit theatre with today's new world culture. TCG is represented on the US National Commission for UNESCO. To learn more about these efforts, including grant programs, publications and World Theatre Day, please visit www.tcg.org.