

2020 International Performing Arts Festival for Children and Young People in Japan

## MIRAI Festival

The 20th ASSITEJ World Congress “Towards the Unknown – Beginning of the Journey”

### *All Our Futures: Children and Culture*

There has not been any time that the power of culture is as significant as it is now.

All the movements of people, things, and information have speeded up, and our society is changing rapidly. Biotechnology and artificial intelligence have now thrown up the fundamental question, “What is ‘human’?”

While issues such as poverty, immigration, refugees, destruction of the environment, climate change, have been spreading, crossing borders, the world is heading towards an era of segregation. It is our children and our future that are the most deeply influenced.

In Japan, depopulation has begun with a super-aging society that no other country in the world has ever experienced. This current will soon spread across Europe, America, and Asia, and the whole world will face an aging society in the near future. And at the same time, we need to face the severe reality that in many parts of the world the biggest cause of death amongst young people is suicide.

How shall we face the unknown future? What kind of future can we provide for children? The journey towards the unknown future has a long way to go.

In 2020, we, ASSITEJ Japan, are holding the 20<sup>th</sup> ASSITEJ World Congress and International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People in order to bring our search for the unknown future into our practice in Tokyo and other cities in Japan, where the Olympics and the Paralympics will be held during the year. We see it as the beginning of our journey, where all the participants from all over the world, ASSITEJ representatives from more than 100 countries, will share their responses to these changes impacting on children and culture, and will take together concrete steps towards overcoming them.

We all know that we can no longer build an affluent society by economy alone. Since ancient times, we have explored the essence of humanity, mapped our future, accumulated, and inherited culture and wisdom through the arts.

The encounter for children with culture is our very future.

We, ASSITEJ Japan, shall hold the 20<sup>th</sup> ASSITEJ World Congress and International Theatre Festival for Children and Young People (ASSITEJ 2020), founded on the following vision, mission, value, and goals.

## Vision

- Together we shall actualize an inclusive society where “no one is left behind” (cited from SDGs), filling the gaps for opportunities of children and young people to participate in cultural life and the arts, and there shall be no cultural discrimination or exclusion.

## Mission

- We shall protect the right of children and young people of the world who carry different cultural backgrounds to participate in the cultural life and create opportunities for them to experience cultural and artistic activities, recreations, and leisure activities.
- Children and young people shall be able to experience cultural diversity, learn social morals and ethics, and foster creativity and generosity through cultural activities, particularly the performing arts.

## Value

- We shall all learn about the dignity of others and respect freedom of expression through the performing arts.
- We shall courageously confront our fears about the “unknown future,” advocating dialogue and creative processes that will help to move us forward.
- We shall protect our culture of the past with children, young people, and adults together and cultivate our culture of the future.

## Goals

- We shall create opportunities where children and young people meet high-quality and diverse performing arts and participate in appreciation and creation processes.
- We shall foster human resources who create opportunities for every child and young person to encounter performing arts and participate in appreciation and creation, without any sort of discrimination and segregation.
- We shall expand the networks of organizations, groups, and individuals involved with performing arts for children and young people and deepen their relationships.
- We shall conduct surveys, research, valuations, and verification of measures and projects of performing arts for children and young people to improve a sustainable cultural environment.
- We shall advocate the right of the child to participate freely in cultural life and the arts (Article 31 in United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of the Child) and have it reflected in laws, ordinances, and schemes of the central government and the local government.