# Berliner Spielplan Audiodeskription conference

On the eighth of April 2022 between 9.30 a.m. and 9 p.m.

At TUECHTIG - Raum für Inklusion (KOPF, HAND + FUSS gGmbH) in the Osram-Höfe, Oudenarder Straße 16, Building D06, Floor 1, 13347 Berlin.

The event will be hybrid; the various access options are indicated in each case.

The expert panels and streams will be recorded.

# Programme

8.45 a.m. to 9.30 a.m.

On-site and digital registration

9.30 a.m. to 10 a.m.

# Video message by the patron Dr. Klaus Lederer (Senator for Culture and Europe) and welcome by the project director Imke Baumann (Förderband e. V. - Kulturinitiative Berlin)

10 a.m. to 11.30 a.m.

# Objectivity and neutrality in audio description of music and theatre performances

Keynote lecture by Univ.-Prof. Dr. Nathalie Mälzer (Institute for Translation Studies and Specialised Communication, University of Hildesheim)

The lecture will look at the current state of academic discussions on the demand for objectivity and neutrality in audio-descriptions. On the one hand, the limits of objectivity in descriptions will be examined and on the other hand, media influences on the style of description will be reﬂected.

Following the keynote lecture, students at the Institute of Translation Studies at the University of Hildesheim will discuss the challenges of describing theatre actors and the roles they portray, using concrete examples from the audio introductions and audio descriptions that were created in the project Berliner Spielplan Audiodeskription.

The students of the Institute of Translation Studies:

Jennifer Wolf (Master's programme Media Text and Media Translation).

Lena Schneider (Master's programme in Accessible Communication)

Judith Hagemeyer (Master's programme Media Text and Media Translation)

Followed by: Questions from the participants live and via chat

Where? Event room and live stream with conference software

11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.

# Audio description in theatre - staple or icing on the cake?

Audience discussion live and via interactive conference software

Moderation: Imke Baumann

Where? Event room and live stream with conference software

# 12.30 to 13.30 Lunch break

(Possibility of a joint lunch at the Schäfer Restaurant after registration)

# 1.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m. Workshop session I

# I. 1 Masterclass Audio Description

With Sylvie Ebelt (audio opera at the Musiktheater im Revier, Gelsenkirchen)

The workshop is aimed at experienced AD writers who are interested in a fruitful exchange about kniﬄght issues and challenges in describing theatrical processes. Using case studies from practice, the focus will be on, for example, the tightrope walk between mediating and explaining, seeing and interpreting, distance and illusion, but also on dealing with terms and speciﬁcations of stage technology and theatre reality, writing texts for different target groups and formats, exploring and, if necessary, expanding the boundaries of audiodescriptive habits. Your own topics are welcome; the offer is intended as a free space for joint further development!

Where? Event room live and streamed

# I. 2 Images before the inner eye

Moderation: Roswitha Röding (blind editor for audio description)

How do which sentences help to create which inner images and what role does sentence structure play in this? How can colours be made concrete for the congenitally blind? Why is audio description not street jargon? And what has changed in the evaluation of Go's and No Go's since 1999? The workshop deals with typical problems of audio-descriptive text work from the perspective of editors for the blind. The aim is to gather experiences in order to be able to present a draft for a small guideline at the end.

Where? Room 1 and interactive conference software

# I. 3 A mixed double on change and resistance

Moderation: Maura Meyer (Dramaturg, Deutsches Theater Berlin) and David Bellwood (Access Manager, National Theatre London)

Maura Meyer and David Bellwood talk about the framework conditions for accessibility and audio description in their countries. In the form of a casual dialogue, they will explore how audio description or accessibility in general changes the inner workings of a theatre, what barriers need to be overcome and what are the main aha-eﬀects they have experienced in their practice. Feel invited to participate, share your experiences and ask your own questions about the opportunities for change.

English-German and German-English translation will be provided.

Where. Room 3 and interactive conference software

3.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. Kaﬀeep break in the event room.

4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Workshop Session II

# II. 1 Seeing with your ears - A practical workshop with Lavinia Knop-Walling

In this workshop participants\* will explore the potential of darkness. Through listening, touching and moving, we will explore in a playful way what experiences we encounter in the absence of the sense of sight. The exercises encourage movement in the dark, create sound spaces and show the difficulty of descriptions. All in all, it is about the use of neglected senses and the imaginative use of dark space.

Where? Event space live and streamed

# II. 2 "What you want"- the workshop with and for the audience

Moderation: Monika Seeling-Entrich

What do visually impaired and blind audiences need at the theatre to feel welcome? What are the typical hurdles and barriers and what is the best way to reach the target group? And what about all the theatre enthusiasts who are not organised in an association...? Passionate theatre-goer Monika Seeling-Entrich discusses her experiences and wishes at the theatre from the perspective of blind and visually impaired audience members.

Where? Room 1 and interactive conference software

# II. 3 Things are happening in the Republic - models and experiences with funding and community work

Chair: Imke Baumann

Audio description is increasingly being offered at German theatres. How do different theatres finance this service? How is it received, and which approaches have proven themselves in practice when working with blind/visually impaired audiences? Are there inclusive approaches to accessibility for people with disabilities in theatre? Open discussion and exchange of experiences with, among others, Anna Chernomordik (Chief Dramaturg, Musiktheater im Revier Gelsenkirchen), Maja Polk (Artistic Production Manager, Münchner Kammerspiele), Matthias Döpke (Dramaturg, Schauspiel Leipzig), Marit Schröter (Press and Public Relations, Ernst Deutsch Theater), inquired: Alexandra Reich (Consultant of the Schauspielintendanz, Nationaltheater Mannheim).

Where. Room 3 and interactive conference software

# II. 4 In Europe and abroad: descriptors and which paths they take to audio description

Moderator: Roz Chalmers (Audio Description Trainer, UK)

This internationally experienced presenter will discuss similarities and differences in the introduction of audio description in the performing arts with colleagues from different countries in Europe and beyond. How is audio description being integrated in the theatres of different countries? What are typical problems in this integration process? Do we all have the same problems? Who is at the forefront of this? As a second step, Roz would like to stimulate an exchange on one of the core issues of audiodescriptive writing: linguistic colouring and objectivity.

The workshop will be held in English. Simultaneous translation into German will be provided.

Where. Exclusively digital!

# 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Get-together: results and break

7 pm to 9 pm

# Theatre for all - Again only a finite vision?

Panel discussion live and via conference software

The Berlin Spielplan audiodescription project ends in May 2024. But what comes after that? In an oﬀen panel, theatre partners, team and audience discuss the upcoming tasks and future prospects for establishing audiodescription in Berlin. What suggestions can we make? And from which experiences can we proﬁt? Last but not least: what concrete steps are in the pipeline?

On the panel: Barbara Fickert (blind editor and cinema blind person), Charlotte Miggel (author for audio description), Marion Mair (Director of Sales and Marketing, Deutsche Oper Berlin), Ingo Sawilla (Head of Communications, BerlinermEnsemble), Imke Baumann (Project Manager Berlin Playbill Audio Description).

Moderation: Lavinia Knop-Walling

Where. Event room and live stream with chat

# Speakers, moderators and workshop leaders

Imke Baumann, M.A. in German/Theatre Studies, was a director and dramaturg at German-speaking theatres for many years before joining Förderband e. V. as a fundraiser and project manager. The focus of her projects for the past fifteen years has been the participation of people with disabilities in culture, art and society. She regularly writes audio descriptions for exhibitions and performative Auﬀührungen and manages the project Berliner Spielplan Audiodeskription.

David Bellwood has worked in theatre for over 15 years, having started as a dancer in the world tour of Riverdance. He is Head of Access at the National Theatre in London, where he ensures that visitors, staff and creatives have equal access to all areas of the theatre. Previously he was Access Manager at Shakespeare's Globe (London) and consulted to numerous venues in the UK and internationally.

Roz Chalmers has been a freelance audio description trainer for 23 years. She is part of the audio description team at the National Theatre and the Old Vic Theatre in London. From 2007 to 2015 she was Artistic Advisor for the UK audio-description charity VocalEyes, where she led the award-winning London Beyond Sight project and developed courses and materials for audio-description training in theatres, museums, galleries and cultural venues.

Sylvie Ebelt: After studying theatre studies, German and French and moving into radio journalism, Sylvie Ebelt works as a freelance dramaturg at the Children's and Youth Theatre in Gelsenkirchen, among other places. In 2009 she was part of the founding team of the "Hör-Oper" project at the Musiktheater im Revier in Gelsenkirchen and since then has regularly audio-described opera and theatre performances as well as films.

Lavinia Knop-Walling completed her Master's degree in European Media Studies in 2017. Since then, as a blind freelancer, she has been busy with many things at once: She is a storyteller, blogger, podcaster, workshop leader and inclusion consultant. She currently works for the inclusive culture project "Find your voice" by Kulturregen Berlin gUG and is in charge of the campaign work of the Berlin Spielplan Audiodeskription. Her blog articles appear regularly on www.theaterhoeren-berlin.de.

Nathalie Mälzer lives in Berlin and is a professor of transmedia translation at the University of Hildesheim. Her research focuses on accessibility and inclusion in aesthetic communication (film and theatre), rhythm in translation, and literary, comic and audiovisual translation. She studied Comparative Literature as well as Theatre and Film Studies at the FU Berlin and at the Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris. The German-French author has translated over 50 novels and essays from French into German.

Maura Meyer has a degree in theatre education and has been active in various contexts of cultural education since 2005. As a freelance theatre pedagogue, she has realised projects at various theatres in Berlin. From 2015 to 2018 she led the cooperation project TUKI - Theatre & Kita. She has been working as a theatre pedagogue and dramaturge at the Junge DT since the 2017/18 season. She is responsible for the area of theatre and schools, provides dramaturgical support for productions and represents the topic of audio description both internally and externally.

Roswitha Röding has been involved in audiodescription in Berlin since its beginnings. In 1999, the first Hörﬁlm gGmbH seminar gave her the necessary basics. Training followed with Bernd Benecke in Munich and through the Hörﬁlm e. V. association. Since then, i.e. since 1999, she has worked as a blind editor and co-author with sighted colleagues and has extensive experience in the formats of television, Spielﬁlm, stage and exhibition.

Monika Seeling-Entrich is from Brandenburg and lives on the outskirts of Berlin. From there, she regularly sets off to the metropolis to enjoy cultural events, because art, culture, theatre and opera are a staple for her. Due to a severe visual impairment, everything has become more cumbersome for Monika Seeling-Entrich and she is glad for the company of her husband. She regularly writes evaluations for the Berliner Spielplan Audiodeskription project and is a regular at the theatre club.