



Press release - April 2023

Winners 2023 - Puppet and mobility grants

For the 5th consecutive year, the International Association of Puppet Friendly Cities launched its mobility grant scheme.

This year, the Jury of the AVIAMA - Puppets and Mobility Grant was chaired by the City of Plzen (Czech Republic), represented by Mr. Jakub Hora, and composed of representatives of the City of Minami Awaji (Japan), the Borough of Outremont (Montreal - Canada), the City of Tournefeuille (France) and the City of Tolosa (Spain).

This international Jury is the guarantor of the orientations chosen by the member Cities of AVIAMA: to support the mobility of the artists and the innovative projects which thanks to the puppet bring answers in terms of valorisation of the cultural heritage, of educational projects or of social integration. The members of the jury have thus put forward certain selection criteria:

- The will to help young companies or artists in their artistic approach and their professionalization.
- Projects directly linked to the network of AVIAMA cities, thus allowing artists to develop their contacts.
- Projects that reflect the diversity of the puppetry arts, and that highlight solidarity, the sharing of know-how, ecology, education and the place given to women in our society.

AVIAMA received this year 15 high level applications (19 in 2022) to the Puppets and Mobility Grant. The diversity of origins is quite new and is a sign of great vitality.

The winners will each receive a grant of €2,000, a significant amount that allows us to help ambitious and professional projects, also serving as a lever to obtain other grants:

- ***Caravan of Ten Words*** led by **Blanka Josephova (Czech Republic)** / Mobility aid for the realisation of performances by students of the University of the Maison de la Francophonie in Bujumbura (Burundi), under the direction of Blanka Joseph-Luňáková.
- ***Tomorrow's Puppet In Africa*** by **Gilbert Agbevide (Togo)** / Mobility support for the development of a training cycle in the puppetry arts within the French-speaking countries of West Africa.
- ***Marching Puppets*** carried by **Thierry Fotso and the Nkeuh-ndong Company (Cameroon)** / Mobility aid to develop a training project for puppeteers in the making and manipulation of giant puppets in Yaoundé, and then in other cities in Cameroon, which could lead to an international festival of giant puppets in Cameroon.
- ***WE-ME Project*** led by **Nina Vogel (Brazil)** / Mobility support for two trips to Canada and Brazil to make a short underwater film of contemporary puppet theatre and contemporary dance.
- ***Toolbox training*** by the **Odradek company (France)** / Mobility aid for a training module for the profession of actor-puppeteer in Tolosa and Bilbao, Spain, in January 2024.

We wish the grant holders every success with their project and, on behalf of the Jury, thank all the candidates who applied this year!

The next Call for AVIAMA 2024 Scholarships will be published in October.

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