

## **Votez pour "Back to the Future of Heritage Theatre Technology"**

Dear theatre friends and colleagues,

The Province of Antwerp is the organiser of the Heritage Award 2024 and [theatrEurope has submitted the project](#) that runs internationally under the title "Back to the Future of Heritage Theatre Technology". The text of this Antwerp Province website is in Dutch, but you find a description of the project in English below. If this project appeals to you, you can [vote for it on the website](#). That form is also in Dutch, but, perhaps easier for you, you can also make your preference known by email to < [erfgoed@provincieantwerpen.be](mailto:erfgoed@provincieantwerpen.be) > for project < 2. theatrEurope vzw: "Back to the Future" van erfgoed theatertechnologie > . Your support hereby increases the chance of good survival of this exceptional heritage technology in the Bourla Theatre, the only one worldwide left over with a complete arsenal of wooden machinery from 1834, which can be used sustainably in contemporary productions. Votes from abroad will give extra push for saving this heritage for future use.

This project was created to defend the preservation of the unique heritage theatre technology in the Bourlaschouwburg in Antwerp and this in the good condition in which it was after the 1993 restoration by De Winter & Van Hunsel. The current planned restoration/renovation works by DRDH-Architects makes it impossible to use this heritage theatre technology for contemporary productions in the future, as I was able to do in the 1970s for productions of the KJT at the time.

The users of the Bourla Theatre, first KNS, then Blauwe Maandag Compagnie that merged with KNS in 1998 to form Het Toneelhuis, always claimed that productions that would use the heritage machinery could not be played at other locations that obviously do not have a heritage under-stage, such as the Bourla Theatre has. To counter this, workshops were created that travelled through Europe with contemporary alternatives for this heritage technology on a 3cm deep "under-stage" that can be used on any stage (see pictures below).

Unfortunately, I also foresee stability problems in the Bourla Theatre with a bold part of the new renovation plans of DRDH-Architects that has not yet been convincingly contradicted by them. And even if the building survives this daring intervention unscathed, it will have to close again for a while after a search for a new budget to restore the workability of this heritage. I will discuss my figures on these stability problems during a meeting of the OISTAT Architecture Commission in Bucharest on Friday 25 October at 12:00 (or time in Antwerp at 11:00, London at 10:00). If you would like to attend that discussion online, please email me so that I can forward you the link. If this does not fit into your agenda, you can also ask me to provide a video recording of that discussion afterwards.

You are encouraged to forward this mail to your own contacts. There can be voted until and on 5 November 2024. Thank you beforehand.

Kind regards,