

INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DE LA MARIONNETTE

ÉCOLE NATIONALE SUPÉRIEURE DES ARTS DE LA MARIONNETTE
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PRESS RELEASE

THE ÉCOLE NATIONALE SUPÉRIEURE DES ARTS DE LA MARIONNETTE TAKES ON THE NAME OF MARGARETA NICULESCU

On the occasion of the 40th anniversary of the Institut International de la Marionnette.

Margareta Niculescu played a major role in the revival of puppetry from 1949 to 2013. She marked an entire era and generations of puppeteers got training through her contact.

In her honour, the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette (ESNAM), which she founded hand-in-hand with Jacques Félix in 1987, has taken her name.



Crédit photo : IIM / Christophe Loiseau

Human and artistic adventures have always been the heartbeat of the Institute. Among the artists who have marked its history, Margareta Niculescu holds a very special place. It was she who laid the foundations of the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette with Jacques Félix in 1986, a school with international influence, having trained more than 170 students (1987-2021), sometimes from the other side of the globe (34 nationalities). In the company of their partners, the Institute, the Festival, UNIMA and AVIAMA wished to pay tribute to this great lady of puppetry.

On September 25, 2021, a commemorative plaque was unveiled by Mrs. Roselyne Bachelot-Narquin, Minister of Culture, and Mr. Boris Ravignon, Mayor of Charleville-Mézières, President of Ardenne Métropole and Vice-president of the Grand-Est region, in the presence of her daughter Irina Niculescu Lewandowski, Jean-Pierre Lescot, President of the Petits Comédiens de Chiffons and Margareta's companion, as well as elected officials and leading political and artistic figures.

During her fourteen years at the helm of the Institute and ESNAM from 1985 to 1998, Margareta Niculescu initiated and implemented large-scale actions and events - creation of the IIM Publications and the Villa d'Aubilly, international meetings for puppet schools then international meetings for artistic education, the African, Brazilian and Japanese "Territoires", Music in Movement, seminars and conferences, ... – all of which have greatly contributed to the renown of the Institute and its school as well as to the recognition of puppetry arts.

Margareta NICULESCU (BIO)

Born in Iasi, Romania (1926-2018).

Studied at the Institute of Theatre and Cinema in Bucharest, Faculty of Theatre Directing.

Founding director of the Tandarica State Theatre in Bucharest (1949-1986); with the help of the Ministry of Culture in 1958, founder of the International Festival of Puppet Theatres.

Among her most noteworthy productions that contributed to the aesthetic renewal of puppetry arts, worth mentioning are: *The Five-Fingered Hand*, a crime story parody in Bucharest and Sofia; *Me and the Dead Matter*; *The Three Wives of Don Cristobal* based on F.G. Lorca; *The Book of Apollodoros*, by Gelu Naumu, a Romanian surrealist poet; *Peer Gynt* by H. Ibsen; *The Snow Queen* by H.C. Andersen in Oslo; *The Fables* based on H. Sachs in Magdeburg; and *Pinocchio* in Belgrade. Her performances focus on metaphorical expression and amplify playing space and stage techniques. A vision of cinematographic inspiration in terms of image and sequencing, fantasy, diversity of means, the poetic universe and irony, without hesitating to find a comical source in self-mockery.

In the name of UNIMA, Margareta Niculescu and Henryk Jurkowski joined with Jacques Félix to found the Institut International de la Marionnette in Charleville-Mézières in 1981. Margareta was appointed director in 1985. She would then dedicate her ideas, initiatives and actions to defining and forging the identity of the Institut International de la Marionnette, while emphasising teaching and training through the creation of the École Nationale Supérieur des Arts de la Marionnette (1987) and applying a multidisciplinary approach as the educational principle. This led to the establishment of an ambitious programme in the field of research, particularly through the creation of I.I.M. Publications in 1988, and the Villa d'Aubilly, residence for researchers and creators, in 1996. In 1990 and 1993, the Rencontres Internationales des Ecoles de Marionnettes (RIDEM – International Puppet School Meetings) took place, which later became the Rencontres Internationales des Enseignements Artistiques (RIDEA – International Artistic Education Meetings) in 1996 and 1999.

Margareta Niculescu developed international activity, furthering the development of new structures at the service of the artistic and institutional evolution of puppetry (companies, schools, publications) and thus contributing in a fundamental way to the recognition of puppetry as a fully-fledged art the cultural world.

Margareta Niculescu was actively involved with UNIMA as well: member of the Executive Committee from 1957; President of the Commission for Teaching and Training, which she founded in 1976; President of UNIMA in 2000, and Honorary President in 2004.

Lecturer, teacher, director of training courses and workshops.

Honoured by prizes and medals including the Palmes Académiques (France), the Erasmus Prize (Netherlands), the rank of Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (France), and the position of Commander of the Romanian Order of Cultural Merit (Romania).

Read more

Passing it on

By Lucile Bodson, Maragereta Niculescu and Patrick Pezin
Co-edition Institut International de la Marionnette and l'Entretemps (2009)

This book was published for the 20th anniversary of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts de la Marionnette and traces the school's memories through various testimonies.

The work can be consulted at the Institute's Research Centre, and is still on sale at the Institut International de la Marionnette.

- <https://marionnette.com/en/recherche-innovation/publications/passeurs-et-complices>

Back cover

The Institut International de la Marionnette has just celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Marionnette (ESNAM). We thought it good and useful to take advantage of this opportunity to get an overall assessment through testimonies and by tracing memories of the School.

But we also thought it necessary to reflect on the transmission practice, the basis of all teaching and an indispensable condition to prepare ESNAM for a future that corresponds to the new challenges of a knowledge-based society and a creative economy. A School for higher education in puppetry arts today becomes a space for reflection and exchange about puppetry and the theatre as well. In this sense, ESNAM cannot be imagined without the Resource Centre of the Institut International de la Marionnette, nor without the researchers in residence who come to work in Charleville-Mézières.

It is this unity and dynamic interaction of the School and the Institute make for the quality and richness of ESNAM.

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Tribute to Margareta Niculescu by Patrick Boutigny: "Margareta Niculescu, never leave us, Madame". (Pages 14 to 18)

- To consult: www.themaa-marionnettes.com/ressources/manip-le-journal-de-la-marionnette

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