On Friday 7th June and Saturday 8th of June, the Arts Education Research Group in the School of Education, Trinity College, Dublin in association with TYA (Theatre for Young Audiences) Ireland and Barnstorm Theatre Company will present a unique two-day exploration of *The Role of Fairytale in Contemporary Theatre* as part of Ireland’s Presidency of the European Union.

The special guest for the symposium is Ms Erika Eichenseer, the cultural curator at Oberpfalz in Bavaria, who will present on her recent discovery of 500 fairytales from Franz Xaver von Schönwerth. The Von Schönwerth collection, which was locked away in an archive in Regensburg for 150 years, was assembled over more than four decades, during which time Von Schönwerth travelled the Oberpfalz region of Germany faithfully transcribing oral tellings of the stories. He was a contemporary of the Grimm Brothers and in 1885 Jacob Grimm said about him: "Nowhere in the whole of Germany is anyone collecting [folklore] so accurately, thoroughly and with such a sensitive ear." His collection includes local versions of famous tales such as Cinderella and Rumpelstiltskin, along with others, such as ‘The Flying Chest’, which are completely new to a modern audience. We will present a rehearsed reading of part of “The Flying Chest” during the symposium.

Please see below a 2012 Guardian newspaper article about Erika Eichenseer and the Von Schönwerth collection of tales.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2012/mar/05/five-hundred-fairytales-discovered-germany

*The Role of Fairytale in Contemporary Theatre* symposium brings together theatre makers, academics, educationalists and psychologists to explore and debate this theme over two days, and we are delighted that Stephen Minton has agreed to participate in the conference.

Olivier award-winning playwright Mike Kenny will give the keynote address. Mike Kenny has adapted many fairytales for young theatre audiences, most recently *A Murder of Crows*, a re-working of the Hansel & Gretel story rooted in famine Ireland, in collaboration with Barnstorm Theatre Company.

Annamaria Murphy of Kneehigh Theatre Company (Cornwall, UK) will present on how the company adapts fairy stories for general audiences, leaving the ‘dark bits’ in.

“What is the role of fairytale in contemporary theatre?” will be debated during a panel discussion comprised of theatre-makers, theatre programmers and academics. Do young audiences need the ‘dark bits’ of the fairytales left in, or do we serve them better by leaving the more challenging material out? At this juncture, what do young audiences need from fairytale?

Details about the event are available at: [http://www.tya-ireland.org/world-day-2013/](http://www.tya-ireland.org/world-day-2013/)

For further information please contact our colleague, Niamh Barrett at symposium.dublin@gmail.com or on (086) 2857212.

We are looking forward to this exciting event in the School.