

## International Storytelling Network

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### The renaissance in the art of storytelling

*Come on, tell me a story*, we asked the child and the child to bed. Storytelling belongs to the magical land of childhood, but also one of the activities that trigger more intense creativity, imagination, communication, multiculturalism and solidarity.



The stories also pervade our daily lives. They are everywhere. And get us to see life from another perspective: more magical, more bearable, more beautiful. Some tell stories and encourage reading, others to strengthen cross-contained classroom, asking for a raise to get a loan, or for the future love partner. The truth is that we can not live without stories.

*Come on, tell me a story.* Well, you see, this is the story of a cat that had feet of cloth and tummy upside down. Do you want me to tell you again? Like a never ending story, so this business of storytelling, a story in itself with a circular life that never runs dry. Lucia, a Spanish teacher in high school in Paris, commented that his students managed to learn Spanish faster than other classes. *How do you do?* was asked the other teachers. *Storytelling.* And it is always more attractive than a fantastic story a true story, common and unremarkable. There are many people who use storytelling tool in its work: lawyers, trade unionists, social mediators, nurses. The list could be endless.

It was already said in "The Secrets of storytelling, that storytelling is a gigantic tree rooted in ancient roots. A tree whose perimeter is increasing every day with the words nutrition narrators. A robust tree that stands firm to the new technologies surrounding it. And the storyteller's voice that is entangled in the soul, from whose mouth comes words that become guide dogs that lead to beautiful land full of fantasy. What could be more powerful than the voice that is kept alive in memory for centuries?

## Thus was born the *International Storytelling Network (ICN)*

Motivated by the belief that storytelling is a vital and intangible heritage of humanity created the *International Storytelling Network* .

It all started the summer of 2009, when it became urgent project of



creating an international platform for storytellers.

Today's *International Storytelling Network* brings

together more than 800 professional storytellers from

45 countries on five continents. The largest

database in the world in this field. It is coordinated by

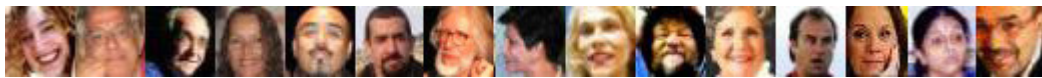
fourteen experts from eleven different countries, all with a long career as writers, researchers of folklore, illustrators, creatives, academics and storytellers. Their names are: Beatriz Montero (Spain), Antonio Rodriguez Almodovar (Spain), Armando Quintero (Venezuela), Armando Trejo (Mexico), Ana Victoria Garro (Costa Rica), Nire Collazo (Uruguay), Diego Parra (Colombia), Mayra Navarro (Cuba), Benita Prieto (Brazil), Alicia Barberis (Argentina), Alekos (Colombia-Spain), Martin Ellrodt (Germany), Geeta Ramanujam (India), and Enrique Paez (Spain).

They all decided to raise their voices and experience to launch the *International Storytelling Network* . Given the deterioration and retrogression of the oral face of new technologies and media, the storytellers are sounding the alarm to keep alive the legacy of Scheherazade and the ancient art of storytelling. These new minstrels have taken by assault the forums and Internet sites to demonstrate that the word can and should transcend all boundaries.

This platform storytellers is a network of invisible threads that makes it possible to interconnect via the Internet between storytellers around the world. But not only that. The *International Red storyteller* goes further, encourages research, the recovery of oral legacy, the promotion of reading and the value of storytelling as a world heritage site.

How is telling a story? Where can I find a story to tell? Where I can

listen to stories? On its website, [www.cuentacuentos.eu](http://www.cuentacuentos.eu), there are answers to these questions and many more. His website has several specialized sections from an exhaustive list of storytelling festivals around the world to relate current news to the world of storytelling. In the theoretical section you can find interesting articles related to oral narrative written by scholars and specialists in this field. And in Section Stories are always tales, romances castellanos, Becquer's legends, fables Samaniego, and hundreds of contemporary tales. They also include a host of links to libraries, cultural centers, associations, educational and research institutions, journals, publishers and working groups.



## Ways to tell

There are many ways to tell stories. Fortunately. And those differences are almost always specific and cultural embeddedness. The alternatives are not only in the way, technique or staging the story time, a capella, with music, objects, puppet, with *Kamishibai*, with shadows, dance-, different plausible different regions of the world, but also different objectives, scenarios and intentions.

**1. Oral memory retrieval.** In many countries it is still important work of recovery, recording, archiving and documentation of a legacy of oral tradition is about to disappear. Even your own native languages, in many cases, disappear without trace. It is estimated that every two weeks a language disappears, with the death of its last speakers. In the next 100 years will be gone Unesco estimates that half of the 7,000 languages that still exist on Earth. And all languages disappear, buried with them a heritage of ancient mythology and stories transmitted orally. This is the case for much of India, Brazil, Bolivia, Philippines, Central Asia and much of Africa. In Europe, there is hardly material to collect, because for over 300 years, from Perrault and the brothers Grimm, have been collecting hundreds of folklorists, historians and anthropologists. In countries where the work is still done, some of these collectors or folklorists have also those stories as a way of spreading the oral heritage,

traditional culture and brand identity of their regions of origin.

**2. The promotion of reading.** In many other countries - including those above, because those are not mutually exclusive - the tone of the storytelling is inserted in education through the promotion and support of reading. Narrators attempt to facilitate the approach to storytelling books and his work is largely situated in cultural and educational environments. At this point it is essential to the collaboration of libraries, cultural centers and the heads of government education and culture for the exercise of such activities. In Spain, as in Argentina or Brazil, this group of storytellers is the largest, and the only one who can live on the exercise of their profession.

**3. The story on stage.** And finally there is also, though less extension at the moment, storytelling performances that seek to provide a staging and artistic, rather than the restoration of oral traditions, or the inclusion in educational projects. They are storytellers stage, if we follow the terminology Francisco Garzón Céspedes tried to impose without much success, to turn their efforts to create one-person shows artistic intentions and his own style, sometimes bordering other stage proposals, as could be that of theatrical monologues, small-format theater, and the Comedy Club and *Stand-up comedy* . In theaters now only offer space for storytellers with stage projects, so many of these proposals are shown as discontinuous storytelling festivals or in the catacombs of pubs, from Freedom 8 in Madrid, up to Harlem Jazz in Barcelona.

It is clear that there are different ways of counting and working in the broad field of storytelling. And they are not exclusive. Can and should be proposed recovery of oral tradition, inserted projects to encourage reading, and a careful staging. For *International Storytelling Network* , all these models are valid, necessary, and full of good people working inside.





## **A rose is a rose is a rose (1)**

With regard to terminology discussions on the designation of the profession - for some seems to be very disconcerting not to give a definitive name to his office - we think it is caused by topical sterile discussions of cultural inferiority, the sex of angels again on the table. In the opinion of a few, the word storytelling, direct translation of *Storytelling* English, infantilizes and discredits the profession. RIC for the storyteller, education, promotion of reading and the recovery of oral legacy will never be a minor job. And we do not mind the variety of names exist for the same office in the whole area of the Romance languages: storytelling, storytellers, sometimes theatrical, other contemporaries, storytellers, storytellers, storytellers, jugglers, and even ethnopoetics, for the most exquisite. Discuss the term is look at the finger pointing to the moon.

Every day the *International Storytelling Network* receives five new applications to register as members of the RIC. Most are rejected because they do not meet the minimum requirements: evangelical pastors, trading companies, actors who do not have events for storytellers, puppeteers tell no tales, mime mute, librarians very occasionally read stories at its center, grandmothers tell grandchildren, teachers who have a story in class, and so much more. It is not devalue any of those jobs or dedications, absolutely necessary, but to focus as much as possible the work of storytelling. The boundaries between who is and who is not professional storyteller, in that 5% of cases "borderline" are not built with crocodiles ditches and electrified fences. The objective of RIC is working for the storytellers, not lecturing or issue certificates of competency.

## **Support and objectives**

The *International Storytelling Network* has received the explicit support of over 800 organizations and personalities, including libraries, educational and cultural centers, working groups, writers and storytellers. Among its priorities is the interconnecting bridges between the storytellers from all world cultures.



The fact that two of its main proponents, the storyteller and



writer Beatriz Montero Enrique Paez, manage the RIC from Tenerife, allowed to make special emphasis on

multiculturalism of Hispanic languages. In fact, more than half of the members of the *International Red Storytellers* are storytellers Spanish (22%) or American (45%).

The *International Storytelling Network* has subscribed agreements with the Writers School (Madrid), the *Escuela d'scripture* of the Ateneo de Barcelona, the School of Writers Alonso Quijano, the Writers Workshop in Madrid, the House of Arts, Argentina; Forum International Narrative of Mexico, the network of storytellers Germanic *Erzaehlen* , the Casa de America in Madrid, the Instituto Cervantes Madrid Public Library, the Institute Conta Brazil Vivapalabra Corporation (Colombia); *Kathalaya* Storytelling Academy ( India); Storytelling Toronto (Canada), Vancouver Society of Storytelling (New Zealand), the Seminar on Children's Literature in Guadalajara, the association of writers ANIN de Catalunya, the storytelling Tantágora magazine, the website of LIJ Gretel Autonomous University of Barcelona, Institute of Cultural Aletria Brazil storytelling School Caszacuento Montevideo (Uruguay), the Storytelling School of Barquisimeto (Venezuela), Skies of paper (Argentina) Oral Narration Forum Grand Theater Havana (Cuba) Project Tell You (Cuba) Project has Lee (Mexico), among many others.

### Short story

With the objective of making new technology an ally of the ancient tradition of oral storytelling was convened last year the first edition of

**Cuento en Corto**  
Segunda edición

ertamen *Story short* . The *International Network of storytelling School of Writers* deployed to storytellers and writers from around the world to write, count and record stories of free themes for dissemination through *Youtube* and collected on the website: [www.cuentoencorto.com](http://www.cuentoencorto.com)

On this website you can see and enjoy the videos submitted to the contest of the previous edition, and the winning video and the ten finalists. The quality of the storytelling and the texts of the stories was very high, so it was difficult to establish a single award, and special mentions were awarded to the ten finalist videos. This year will be called the second edition of the competition. Bases can be consulted on the page of the contest [www.cuentoencorto.com](http://www.cuentoencorto.com) or web *International Storytelling Network* .

New technologies, imagination and good will, can help keep alive the legacy of Scheherazade, the heroine of *The Thousand and One Nights* - and subvert the prophecy self-imposed promises us a world in which relationships are displaced by technology.

The idea of this contest is to involve all: the storytellers and writers of short stories. So the section was established *voice Dale* where writers seeking storyteller and storytellers to tell stories looking to get in touch and participate in the contest.

And like any contest, this year also have a new winner with a monetary award and a scholarship to attend a free workshop at the School of Writers .

### **An essential tool**



The *International Storytelling Network* is already a fundamental reference tool in libraries, schools, cultural councils, and educational and cultural institutions, because it contains the

largest listing of professional storytellers, with contact form, resume, photos, videos, books and performances by hundreds of professional storytellers who work for the promotion of reading, cultural expansion and literature through storytelling. It is also a news portal around the storyteller who wants to preserve the rich oral tradition using new technologies. A fusion of tradition and modernity, spoken word and written word. They have their profile on Facebook with more than 9,000 followers with friends and fans, and collecting 200 blogs megablog of storytellers. Find it on

[www.redinternacionaldecuentacuentos.blogspot.com](http://www.redinternacionaldecuentacuentos.blogspot.com)

Good news for stories, storytelling, communication and culture.

Your voice counts too. Come on, tell me a story.

### **You may be interested:**

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- VENTURA, Nuria; DURAN, Teresa: *Storytelling. A collection of stories to tell* , Madrid, Siglo XXI Editores, 2008.

(1) The sentence "Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose" was written by Gertrude Stein as part of the poem *Sacred Emily* , which appeared in the book *Geography and Plays* . "A rose is a rose is a rose" is probably the most famous quote, often interpreted as meaning "things are what they are," a statement of the law of identity "A is A".

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(C) and Enrique Paez Beatriz Monteiro

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