



February 6, 2015.

To whom it may concern,

I write this letter to support the initiative to digitalize the Handtheater archives in the Netherlands. After 25 years of existence, Handtheater will close in May, 2015. It is critical that their archives (videos, photos and texts) are saved for future generations of Deaf community members, adults and children, researchers, performers, historians, linguists, educators, interpreters, national and international interested parties. With your support they will be able to make their digitalized archives accessible via a website where products can be downloaded for free.

I write to you as a sociolinguist, researcher and educator involved in sign language performing arts for the last 25 years in North America. As Co-Founder and past Co-Director of the DEAF CULTURE CENTRE in Toronto Canada, I have been engaged in international award winning ASL performing arts productions (TV programs, websites, videos and DVD's). I am currently a guest researcher at the Knowledge Centre, Faculty of Education, Hogeschool Utrecht University of Applied Sciences and the Institute for Sign Language & Deaf Studies studying the NGT performing arts in the Netherlands.

In North America, there is great interest in the Dutch NGT performing arts. Although the Netherlands is small, the arts are a strong expression of this culturally rich minority group in your country. Digitization and centralized on line- accessibility of the NGT performing arts is essential:

1. to provide enjoyment for the Deaf community, Deaf children and the public for generations to come not only in the Netherlands but also internationally
2. to preserve the rich history of the Dutch Deaf community
3. to preserve drama, poetry, mime, comedy and other genres of Deaf literature from the Netherlands
4. to provide a rich data base for study by future linguists, theatre performers, dancers, poets, anthropologists and for numerous other fields of study.

I do hope you will support this important endeavor at this critical point in time in the history of Deaf performing arts in the Netherlands. This opportunity will not present itself again as archives will likely disperse and dissipate through time without this initiative.

Thank you greatly for taking this issue to heart and responding favorably to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads 'Anita Small'.

Anita Small, MSc, EdD
Owner,
Small LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS

small LANGUAGE CONNECTIONS

77 Brookshire Circle . Thornhill . Ontario . L3T 7B4 . Canada asmall@mac.com . 905 886 3010
ANITASMALL.COM