A remarkable documentary, Acting Together on the World Stage grows out of a seven-year initiative of Theatre Without Borders, Brandeis University and filmmaker Allison Lund. The film includes vivid firsthand accounts of traditional and nontraditional performances in Argentina, Serbia, Uganda, Peru, the United States (New Orleans), Australia and Cambodia. Stories are told by artists, conflict resolution practitioners, and scholars who work directly with communities struggling to make sense of their past, heal their present wounds, and build a common future. The performances in the film illustrate that theatrical works and ritual are effective resources for non-violent resistance to injustice, for the rehumanization of former enemies and for acknowledgement, remembering and healing in the aftermath of mass violence.

The film comes with a companion DVD toolkit that includes expanded interviews and performances, as well as additional stories, discussions, and analysis. The toolkit also includes PDF documents with discussion questions and guidelines for planning, minimizing risks of harm, and assessment. The film will inform and inspire socially engaged artists, cultural workers, peacebuilding scholar/practitioners, human rights activities, development workers, students of peace studies and of theatre, and whoever wishes to better understand violent conflict and the power of the arts to engender social change.

A two-volume anthology Acting Together: Performance and the Creative Transformation of Conflict offers detailed case studies of the examples featured in the film. It also includes chapters on Sri Lanka, Israel, Palestine, India, West and South Africa, Afghanistan, and on bullying in schools in the US. The anthology and the documentary/toolkit package are available through New Village Press. Please visit www.actingtogether.org.

Courageous artists working in conflict regions describe exemplary peacebuilding performances and offer tools for the creative transformation of violence.

“As we see in the performances highlighted in Acting Together on the World Stage, art is not just contemplation and transcendence, but also a form of justice that cleanses and vindicates our species in a universal way.”

Dr. Salomón Lerner Febres
President, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Peru.
Acting Together, Vol. II.