ART AND CREATIVITY IN INTERCULTURAL TRAININGS

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• • • INCA Kit

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

If you are looking for games and techniques in order to implement a training course or any other activity with a youth group, then we suggest you refer to the free publications available on these websites[1] for more information.

However, if you are looking for practical examples of how Non-Formal Education is applied in training courses or group activities; the specific competencies necessary to implement such activities; practical tips on how to solve problems that may arise during youth activities; what skills should be developed by a Non Formal Education trainer; and how to implement participatory activities using the arts to stimulate social change; then you have come to the right place!

We have organised the contents of this publication in order to highlight the pedagogical and educational perspectives that lie at the heart of the games, exercises and simulations frequently used in youth activities. Therefore, there are no lists of games or activity sheets, but examples are used in order to understand what lies beneath specific dynamics or exercises. Our materials are structured in this way, as we believe that one of the main competencies a Non-Formal Education trainer should possess is the ability to create, modify and develop the activities that s/he proposes to the participants. This includes the ability to develop activities in accordance with the specific context (hence not simply proposing a fixed sequence of exercises or games). No activity works the same way in every context. In order to do something interesting and stimulating, we have to adapt to suit the specific context we are working in. This is the work of the trainer: following his/her intuition, experience and knowledge of the tools s/he is using. Obviously, we cannot offer an absolute guide for something that only experience can teach, but someone else's experience (in this case, INCA's Network of trainers) can be of assistance.

This publication is organised into articles, interviews and collective reflections ("Ship's log") focused on important themes identified by experienced trainers. This first-hand material is used to provide an in-depth analysis of the key aspects relevant to leading Non-Formal Activities using the Arts, starting from the experiences of INCA's projects. Sometimes these contributions address practical issues (for in-

[1]https://www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/search/
http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eycb/Library/publications_en.asp
http://youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/T-kits/T_kits

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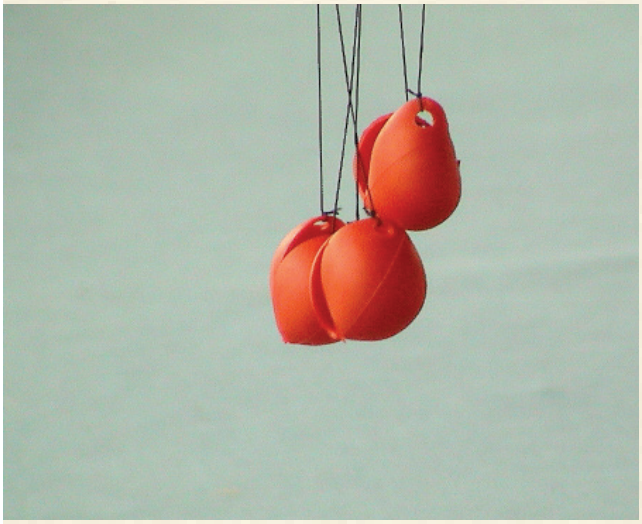
stance, how to develop and modify a single exercise in order to satisfy specific needs) or more general questions (for instance, what is feedback and how to use it in training courses). Every theme presented is enhanced with practical examples, Internet links.



Our hope is that this publication will become a useful tool to anyone interested in gaining information about the characteristics of training in Non-Formal Education and/or youth activities. Additionally, we hope that this publication will come in handy to those interested in unveiling the learning processes and dynamics of participatory activities.

Enjoy the read!
INCA team

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Creativity is inventing, experimenting, growing,
taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having fun.
Mary Lou Cook

An idea that has no place to sit is able to make the revolution.
Leo Longanesi

INCA
INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR CULTURE AND ARTS

A BIT OF HISTORY

• • • TODAY AND TOMORROW

To trace the history of INCA and explain its origins and development, we first need to present ourselves ("about us") and establish what point we are at today. In the following section we will begin to chronologically trace the events that have established INCA's network through members' description of specific projects.

The discussion of "who we are", and not "what is" INCA, is intentional. Human relations play a central role in the network, partners and the professional relationships that constitute INCA. Old friendships and new affinities give us the opportunity to work together on common projects. We may have diverse perspectives, but in the moment when we carry out the work, we share the same creative spirit and interest in artistic tools as well as the same so-

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cial commitment. The work environment becomes a shared space, which speaks of programmes, ways of life, personal choice and responsibility, of moods and needs. This complicity is one of the fundamental traits of team work. However, this is sometimes difficult to explain to those who approaching our world for the first time.

The network partners share a certain style and method, understood only through working closely together. That is why some of the new staff members are former participants of our training courses, who became members of network organisations. Consequently, many of our new members of staff are former participants from our training courses who then later become members of our network organisations. Thus, a relationship which develops from dependence with increasing responsbility until total independence. It is thus not only about collaborations between professionals, but real exchanges that go beyond the workplace. Although this choice may often slow down the effectiveness of our proposals, we believe it is an element that INCA should lose. As with all relationships, they change with time and are enriched with new experiences and energies. They are transformed as people grow and adapt to changing requirements. In recent years, INCA has begun to take on new forms. However, the central objectives of INCA remain: using artistic and creative activities as tools to analyse social issues, the international nature of activities, non-formal education and the learning objectives of the proposals. Today, as well as having the desire to develop an artistic vision – to propose and produce performance works made by INCA – the educational benefits are increased through providing the opportunity for creators to meet in residential spaces.

In a time when cuts to education and culture place the very meaning of our work into question, we believe that there is even greater importance to network, start new collaborations and search for new options to self-finance our projects. Essential to this is being open to cooperate across new continents and educational spaces (such as formal education). Of course, we continue to fight for the recognition of the Arts and culture as tools for personal and collective growth at the same time as we continue to seek new artistic forms, new routes and modus

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operandi. INCA is open to people and entities that want to share the objectives and methodologies of the network but also to those who propose innovations and new ideas.

HOWEVER, FOR INCA, THE CONTINUOUS PARTICIPATION, PRESENCE AND AVAILABILITY OF THOSE INVOLVED IS KEY TO OUR NETWORK – ACTIVE, NOT PASSIVE INVOLVEMENT.

We often associate INCA to a rhizome. Visually, as a stem or root that grows horizontally and is able to generate new plants. Conceptually, paraphrasing Gilles Deleuze's and Felix Guattari's words: a representation of knowledge that allows for non-hierarchical and multiple points of entry and exit. This theory of knowledge is based on the connections and heterogeneity of the various factors involved and on the multiplication of effects in which each multiple becomes a new subject. The subject can be isolated because it is able to regenerate itself at any point. It cannot be categorised into any other structural or generative model and it can only be mapped without being traceable. Ultimately, this provides a metaphor to explain our somewhat "abnormal" structure as an association and network – a crossroad of people in continuous turmoil.

● ● ● YESTERDAY

INCA begun as a community group in February 2005 in England. It's creation was made possible through the will of a group of young people to contribute to the process of social transformation through art and culture. The chosen name, which stands for "International Network for Culture and Arts", already contained the basic elements of the structural objectives that we pursue today – a vocation to emerge from its territorial limits, create networks and to promote the use of art and culture. INCA quickly left the boundaries of England and travelled to Italy, finding a new space and people who later came to make signigicant contributions to the dissemination and creation of the network. In fact, it was INCA Italy that developed the first projects commissioned by the European Youth Programme of the European Commission in November 2005. The team was composed of professionals from different artistic disciplines and countries, sharing a strong interest in pedagogy. From the beginning, the complementarity of the styles and techniques has been the main strength of the association.

With the success of the international training course "Tools of Animation" in Italy in 2006 – a course on Active Citizenship through technical theater and socio-cultural animation - a snowballing effect begun with the course being repeated across many European countries. This saw the birth of INCA Germany in 2007, INCA Catalunya (Spain), in 2007 and INCA Lithuania in 2009. Meanwhile, "old" partnerships were reinforced with friends who shared the same passion for the Arts, social issues and non-formal methods such as: Orma Fluens, the master in Social Theatre and Dramatherapy Rome's La Sapienza (Italy), Puzzle – (Portugal), Utopia (Turkey), Jumbo (Austria) and Artemisszió (Hungary).

In 2010, INCA called the first programmatic meeting with the intention of structuring the network, creating international working committees and renewing our "batteries." The strucutre suggested was not standardised, but layed down the foundations for defining the levels of participation and responsibilities for those in the network. Furthermore, the meeting triggered the establishment of INCA Switzerland (2010).

Over the years, we continued to outline the point

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of reference for each INCA association, be it theatre, circus, clowning, dance, body language, music and/or digital media.

From time to time, the topics chosen are explicitly linked to the interests of the organising association. Nevertheless, they will always focus on the use the Arts and culture as a means of social intervention and touch on aspects central to INCA, such as: cultural diversity, social inclusion, youth work, disability, intercultural dialogue and anti-racism. The methods used in the projects are based on non-formal, popular and Arts education. The operation of each association is independent and autonomous, but each develops local and international projects in partnership by creating working groups and following a common strategy.

The philosophy of INCA, the interest in social issues and the work done with and for young people over the years, run parallel to the objectives of our main project funders: the European Union through the Youth Programme (until 2007), the Youth in Action Programme (2007-2013), and the Council of Europe through the European Youth Foundation. With the two bodies (often co-financing), INCA has made more than 60 international projects and directly involved around 3500 participants.

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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

"IF YOU KNOW IT, IT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.... A BIT"

To introduce the educational world of INCA, its pedagogical and methodological approaches, it is important to start by clarifying what we mean by Non-Formal Education. Throughout our years of experience in the education sectors working with young people, we as INCA have invented our own definitions of non-formal education. We will present these definitions through a Q&A session with three of our trainers: Claudia Pessina, Riccardo Brunetti and Riccardo Gulletta.

Non-formal education is a specific field of education. Its value and its importance should be recognised officially, if we consider the specific skills and qualifications that can be developed through its application and its importance in the learning process. For several years the European Union and the Council of Europe have promoted various initiatives aimed at its promotion and its official recognition.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FORMAL, INFORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION?

If I think of Formal Education, schools and universities immediately come to mind. It is not an absolute definition, but in our collective imagination schools, and universities to a different extent, represent the idea of formality: frequency and mandatory checks, a marked distance between teacher and pupil, the obligation to study certain subjects, the requirement to evaluate the learning process on a quantitative basis, and the official recognition of this learning process via qualifications. If I were to represent Informal Education with a photograph, I would use typical family pictures, or a picture with my friends, and I would

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think about all that I learned from them at different times in my life. In my opinion, Non-formal Education (NFE) covers all aspects that are not included in the other two educations: learning is open, horizontal, voluntary and based on the interests and needs of the participant-student. It is qualitatively evaluated and does not provide official recognition (even if currently, efforts are being made in this direction).

WHY CHOOSE NFE?

The human being never stops learning. There are various ways to offer the basic skills required for someone to find their place in society, to better understand themselves and to learn a specific occupation. We learn a lot at school, but the formal system is based on knowledge, and less on the discovery and development of personal skills. There is another approach to learning that allows the improvement of their skills: NFE. Through participatory techniques and the arts (theatre, games, videos, music, etc.) it is possible to give the learner an active role in the learning process, and at the same time, you can learn in a more dynamic, interactive and enjoyable environment. Amongst other things, my personal experience has allowed me to understand that this approach promotes openness, group cohesion, the ability to deal with conflicts, and socialisation – all the skills that are difficult to learn in school or by reading a book.

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IS PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT TO YOU?

Participation is crucial for me in all social processes that claim to be inclusive. To participate means to be conscious of ourselves and of our own role, rights and duties in the community. Concretely, the promotion of active participation in a learning process stimulates consciousness and respects personal differences. During a training course, if a participant does not want to take part in a specific activity or debate, s/he is free to do so (thus, voluntarism is a key feature of NFE). However, it is important that s/he is conscious of this choice. For me, this awareness defines the difference between being passive and participating.

AS A TRAINER, WHY DO YOU CHOOSE NFE?

Personally, I consider NFE to be the best way to learn from participants. I come from a context of formal education, albeit super-formal: I teach at a university. In this context the learning process is mainly based on the professor, his rules, his form of teaching and his time. The student is someone who does not know and who has to learn – you are required to shape their mind to fit the material that they must learn. The teacher decides what is right and what is wrong, which then becomes manifest in the evaluation.

NFE relies much more on the user as a bottom-up process, in contrast to the top-down structure of formal education. Thus, the participants/pupils/learners not only form part of this process, but also become the main actors, allowing them to direct their learning as appropriate to them. The trainer's role, therefore, is essentially different from that of the teacher/professor as a should always have their eyes and ears open in order to respond to the ways in which their relationship with the participant guides the learning process. In this sense, the use of NFE as a method places greater attention on the participants, and consequently allows for diversity and multiple inputs. In a nutshell, in order to achieve results through NFE as a trainer, you have to be ready to debate and be prepared to face your mistakes: allowing both the participant and the trainer to grow.

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WHERE CAN I USE NFE?

NFE can be used in various, we could say all contexts and therein lays its strength. I have used it in many international training courses, with participants from various European countries addressing diverse topics related to our society (such as, work and youth unemployment, intergenerational relations, etc.) It must be said that this methodological approach can also be used in more formal contexts. For instance, in Switzerland I once used NFE during meetings in high schools to approach the theme of conflict. The use of interactive games and performance allowed students to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, as they actively experienced it first-hand.

Another example taken from my work with INCA is the use of NFE in a scientific context. The non-formal methodology makes it possible to appreciate discovery by enjoying the art of revelation through play, experimentation and teamwork. This awakens interest and reveals the wonders hidden behind natural phenomena, which are too often inculcated with detachment and contextualized in a rigid and formal way. This type of methodology can be used both with users who live in risk of social exclusion, such as: disabled individuals, adolescents with social problems, people with addictions, immigrants, unem-

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ployed people and abused women; or those working with these groups, such as: non-governmental organisations, associations and charities working in the field of human rights and intercultural dialogue. NFE can also be used in training courses and seminars that deal with issues of ecology and sustainable development. In conclusion, NFE has an almost infinite range of possible applications. How we apply it depends on our creativity, our openness and desire to know how to use it.

WHAT ARE THE LIMITS OF NFE? IN WHAT CONTEXTS IS IT UNSUITABLE?

I think there are some situations that NFE, due to its processual nature, cannot effectively be implemented. For example, if you want to reach very high professional levels or you want to produce a specific product (such as a piece of research, a book or a show), using a non-formal approach can be extremely risky. This is due to the fact that it is very difficult to develop specific skills through NFE. It is also very difficult to obtain a product clearly attributable to an author, with its own characteristics and style as the space for individuality is too broad. Styles become mixed in NFE and they come from the bottom. Therefore, if the goal is to teach someone a precise technique or to achieve a professional result, NFE is probably not the best option. Similarly, when the timeframe to develop an educational process is long (we're talking years), the use of NFE does not lead to the same results that would be obtained by formal methods. Finally, NFE is not suitable when some kind of official recognition of the learning process is necessary, as unfortunately, more often than not NFE is not acknowledged.

In summary, when the final product is more important than the process, NFE is not a suitable methodological approach. In this sense, we can define the limits of NFE in relation to the production of tangible, professional and high quality results where the level of collective participation is not relevant.

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Nothing is created, nothing is destroyed, and everything is transformed.
Antoine-Laurent Lavoisier

If you were born circle, you won't die square.
Old saying

TRAINING: INCA AND THE ANTI-RECIPE

INSPIRATIONS

It is not possible to offer the perfect "recipe" for a training course, as it is only through experience that we grow and learn from our mistakes. "Good judgement comes from experience and experience comes from bad judgement.". This chapter aims to provide a description of all the aspects that are relevant to education from the perspective of INCA. However, to be successful you will always need to do a lot of practice in the "kitchen".

In the course of life, the different moments, people and experiences we encounter, have a profound effect on our personal and professional training. Although we are often required to isolate and analyse these incidents in order to create an "official" Curriculum Vitae, it is much more difficult, for example, to talk about the long-term influences that our family, friendships and passions exert, enabling us to grow as individuals and as communities. It is probably much easier to describe the recipe we learned in the last cooking course, but it is much more difficult to define, recognise and describe its flavours and combinations. Pedagogically speaking, to give an account of the wealth of learning, the different types of methodologies used to stimulate learning are defined into *formal, non-formal and informal* methods. Each has its own specific mechanisms and contents, depending on the context and the proposed objectives.

FOR INCA, A TRAINING PROJECT SHOULD BE AN ENRICHING EXPERIENCE WHERE ENGAGEMENT IS EMOTIONAL, INTELLECTUAL AND PHYSICAL – AN INTENSE EXPERIENCE, LIVED WITH HEAD, BODY AND HEART.

A human experience that comes from the design

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and planning of activities, the encounter between trainers and participants, the ideas and discussions that arise from a creative process that involves everyone in full. We do not believe that there is a perfect method, but we believe that every learning experience, even those arising from spontaneous sessions, is part of a larger puzzle of learning. So each element can contribute to a training course: sharing experiences, active participation, practical advice, provocations, tricks, but also feelings and emotions. A training course should provide participants with precisely this complexity: a real "gym" to train their skills and emotions outside of the logic of judgement.

From an analysis of the characteristics of an INCA course we have been able to draw out the elements that are useful to apply in different contexts. The main type of training that INCA proposes is short-term courses, mainly residential and preferably, motivated by a relevant social issue, exploring the use of artistic tools and generally concludes with a final public event. The methods used are essentially those of non-formal education, but we are aware that on some occasions participatory methodologies have to be combined with methods derived from formal or informal education.

The proposed activities are based on theatre (physical theatre, social theatre, site-specific theatre, invisible theatre and performance art), clown, circus, music, dance

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and digital media. This does not mean that we offer our courses only to people who want to devote themselves to art in their lives, but we use artistic tools because we believe they are invaluable tools for the exploration of personal and group skills; for the enrichment of expressive physical and emotional abilities; the development of an intercultural language; and the analysis of complex social issues.

We believe that one of the unique ingredients of INCA's training is the special atmosphere that is generated during the execution of a course and in the mixture of artistic and teaching languages teaching – two features that open up infinite possibilities for development. The physical and temporal space that characterises a course is protected and consciously chosen by the participants in which freedom of expression, not only verbal but also physical and emotional, is the fundamental pillar along with the ability to make mistakes, to play and ultimately, to learn. Creating an atmosphere of self-confidence is essential to the personal growth of each participant, but in a group setting, as in our courses, this is not sufficient. It is essential that this is combined with a context of shared rules, in which roles, actions and personal choices define structures of socialisation, group communication and collective growth. If theatre is the action of a body in space and the unravelling of meanings from everyday life, then, all the experience in our course is a dramatic action. This means that every experience of an INCA course can potentially be an act of revealing.

For any project, the creation of a collaborative environment rests on the exploration of oneself, of others, of space and of their own and others' creativity; and the development of useful skills such as attention, observation, listening, concentration and teamwork. The whole process is participatory and based on learning by doing, a parable central to all our training courses. Participants explore their limits and learn how to recognise them, address them and play with them until, in some cases, they exceed them. The same changes are reflected in the trainers as they learn, change strategies, and tackle their limits just as a participant. From this point of view, the use of non-formal methods holds a definite advantage compared to traditional educational methods (read school, universities, or frontal lectures). In NFE we learn to use the acquired tools and to develop a relationship with these instruments, continuously questioning their usefulness and their appropriateness in a given situation. It is a valuable opportunity to learn how to learn (deutero-learning) in a group process at the same time as drawing special attention to individuals, creating sub-paths customised for each participant.

The "body" of a training course consists of specific activities that we offer in the form of workshops mostly conducted by a specialised trainer or in collaboration with two or more members of the team. These workshops are arranged around one or more of the themes specific to each project. The activities and themes should generate immediate interest amongst the organisers, trainers and participants. The strength lies in the use of artistic disciplines to integrate different tasks into the same course, thus, experiencing a mixture of languages, the overlapping of techniques in order to explore social issues covered by the training course. In the creative process, participants are able to enrich and

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diversify their own path of technical experience. This choice should be dictated by curiosity and spirit, a desire to exceed the limits often taken for granted within a specific discipline.

THIS OPPORTUNITY SHOULD NOT BE WASTED. IT IS A CHANCE TO ENGAGE WITH VARIOUS TECHNIQUES, ALLOWING ONE TO OVERLAP AND STRENGTHEN ONES SKILLS. THE ABILITY TO TRANSFER WHAT IS LEARNED INTO EVERYDAY LIFE IS THE MOST VALUABLE OF LESSONS.

Finally, for a quality-training course you need quality ingredients. They may seem tedious to mention, but they are no less important. Indeed, it is essential that trainers are professionals in their field and the management of social projects. The working and security conditions must also be adequate. The logistics must be cared for from the moment the project begins to be written. Finally, enjoying good meals everyday is essential to maintaining everyone's energy and moral.

SPICES • • •

In all the good dishes, spices add a personal touch. These elements are, however, more difficult to analyse and deal with as they are more abstract and invisible and often only recognisable through the experience and sensitivity of the organisers and trainers. It is essential to generate strong personal motivation and continuously stimulate the group by taking risks based on mutual agreement between trainers and participants. Coupled with high levels of attention, this enables the creation of a future projection of what you are doing, grounding the experience of participation elements and emphasising their short, medium and long-term value. Furthermore, it is essential to project workroom exercises and research to the outside through public presentations or direct social action.

WE COULD SUMMARISE BY SAYING THAT ESSENTIAL TO A TRAINING COURSE IS THE ABILITY TO EMPOWER THROUGH THE SHARING OF THE PROCESS.

INCA has developed different strategies in order to create a special atmosphere in the course. In each project the presence of a team of professionals specialised each in a different field of Arts education allows the synergy and contact between different languages to enhance the similarities and differences all the way through. It is no coincidence that one of the strengths of our courses, according to the opinions of the participants, is the degree of collaboration between the team members in all the combinations we offer: theatre-video, theatre-clown, circus-theatre, animation-circus, etc.

A good education depends not only on good ideas but, above all, an awareness of the opportunities offered each year according to the people who have to face. For this reason, no single set of exercises; lists or instructions appear in this publication. A good trainer is not a catalogue of techniques, but a tool to convey the proposed

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activities so that they have the greatest possible impact and open the door to new challenges. They must be ready to explore, from first-hand, the new possibilities of well-known techniques.

IN INCA WE ARE AWARE THAT THE SAME EXERCISE CAN HAVE VERY DIFFERENT GOALS AND REACTIONS DEPENDING ON THE TRAINER FACILITATING THE EXERCISE AND THE CONTEXT IN WHICH IT IS PROPOSED.

Often playing with our "characters" (the demanding, the bad-smiling, hyper-technical, the friend) and with the "colours" of the energy of all participants, we can see how individual styles of facilitation can affect the reactions of the group. For this reason, we believe that, as trainers, we have to work a great deal on our awareness of the characteristics of participants and the role they play in achieving interesting results. In this way we seek to draw a clear distinction between the figure of the trainer with that of facilitator / entertainer, figures that, especially in youth work often get very confused.

COOKING TECHNIQUES

In such a complex process it is important for trainers to be highly responsive to events. They must be flexible and willing to change the programme or educational motivation. Thus, the preparation phase of a project plays a fundamental role. The clarity of objectives, issues, and methodologies is essential for a successful project. Any project is off to a good start if a suitable group of participants are selected. It is important that the topic to be analysed is studied in depth by the trainers, who will decide whether a rough set of guidelines will be designed from which to approach to topic or if participants will simply be given the tools to run freely with the topic. In any case, in accordance with the opinions of all, we believe that a trainer has the opportunity, the right or the duty to take a stand, obviously never abusing their role or status. A trainer can also play the role of the provocateur that is aware of the discussions taking place and takes responsibility for generating debates around the topic.

For a participant, especially those who are young and inexperienced, it is important that the organisation responds promptly and fully to their questions or concerns. This places the trainer in a position of trust even before arriving at the residential. The may often be a mix of different ages and/or skills, posing different sets of requirements. However, work with a more homogeneous group is, for our modus operandi, no doubt more effective.

SERVING UP

Within the general structure of INCA's training courses, it should be noted that the very first contact with the participants is usually an unsettling and unexpected entry into a space-time out of the ordinary. We believe that the first two days of activities are the moments which provide the basis for relations between participants and trainers. Here begins the stage of acquaintance, expectations and concerns

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can be sensed, whilst the INCA style starts to emerge. Gaining a balance between activities of knowledge, icebreakers and the presentation of participants" personal and artistic journeys is one of the main objectives of this first phase. But this is a critical phase in which, as you establish a space and a common language to facilitate the exchange of ideas and collaborations, you are likely to mitigate the cultural and individual differences that would serve to enrich the analysis of the issue. However the importance of creating an environment of respect and mutual trust is key to the development of the project.

The next job occurs on different levels:

- Individual: where each participant can define their role and develop proposals;

- Small groups: (establishing cultural and personal affinity etc.) or more often working groups directed more towards achieving a "balance" rather than following affinities;

- The group as a whole.

Each level has its advantages and its limitations and only through a combination of all three do we provide balanced teaching.

- Supporting the personal journey of each participant facilitates growth and learning, making the process more rapid and profound and the advantages and limitations are highlighted with more ease. In the case of a short course, however, people who need more time to feel comfortable to express themselves do not always benefit from this method of individual work;

- With small groups, the integration of different techniques and artistic languages can be very enriching but sometimes this does not allow for the development of individual capabilities as they must focus more on management issues in making decisions;

- In the large group, the best advantage is normally the energy level, whilst the number may provide opportunities for public visibility and the possibility

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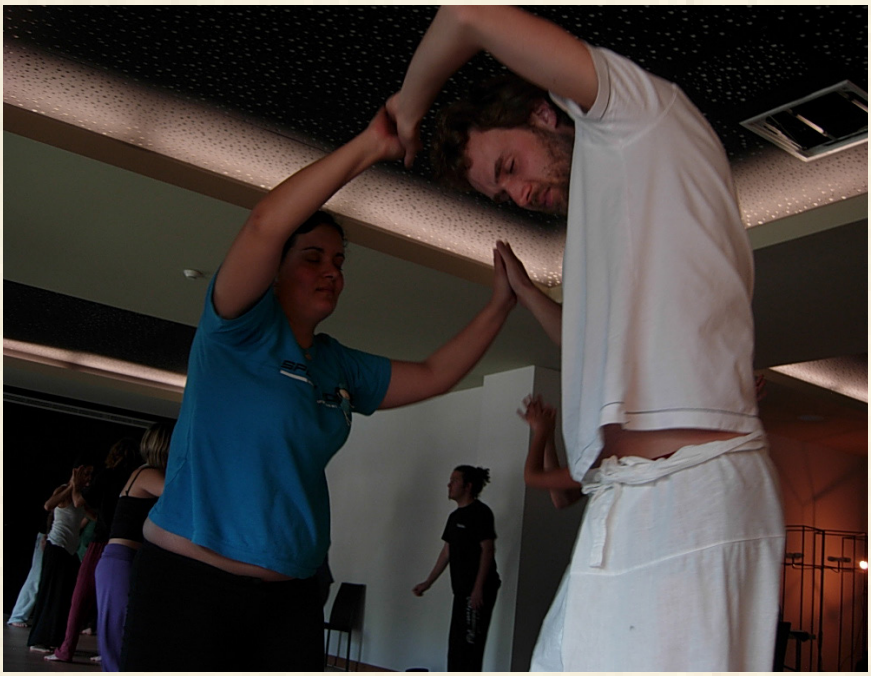
to experiment unique collective ideas. The main problem, however, is undoubtedly the coordination and excessive use of verbal language for the final choices.

As a final dynamic, our courses generally conclude with some kind of public presentation, a final container of the work or a piece of practical action for social intervention through the Arts. It is a montage of ideas, scenes, actions and proposals that have come out during the course of training. Although it is not the main goal, we believe it is important to put the elements developed during the course into practice and also, to create a relationship with external audiences which provides an opportunity for discussion and sharing. From a technical point of view, as trainers and organizers, we believe that

We have a responsibility to the public to present something with aesthetic value, regardless of the quality of our proposal. Sometimes the performances are not open to the public and instead, are carried out between the course participants - in this case we call the final event, the *rendering*..



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Throughout the year and especially as courses come to an end, we always leave room for feedback between trainers and participants, in small groups, plenary sessions and in meetings between trainers etc. Sometimes there are sensitive topics which deserve separate discussions.

A final element, which we believe is essential in the training offered by INCA, is a slight but noticeable, healthy touch of madness. It is that slight hint of madness that provides the energy for everyone to give their best, to feel free to learn, to discover a new nuance of their character or action and find new qualities to perception. And it is essential that the trainers and organisers must get involved in the first person. It is for this reason that the welcome and the closing sessions of the training courses remain an important part of "locura" made in INCA.

A BITTER AFTERTASTE • • •

It is now time to recognise the limitations of this type of training. One limitation concerns the nature of the activity and the type of courses. Working with artistic tools takes time, depth and the ability to explore the possibilities of one's body, mind and emotions. Following this, you need technical skills. In a short residential it is impossible to fully enter into this journey. Thus, when it comes to creative production, non-formal education does not often provide the best tools. The participation and the collectivisation of decision-making processes may not ensure the most professional or highest quality productions. Each NFE training course is a unique, non-repeatable path, without recipes or reference points other than the curiosity and the desire to discover. As a result, it is difficult to assess the immediate impact within quantitative parameters. The energy that is generated within a course is very strong and the challenge is maintain this energy beyond the course where you take it in your environment, you use it and regenerate it. The metabolism is slow. The practical "results" may be evident in an artistic sense but it is difficult to prove, for example, if participants are more attentive in everyday life after a theatre course, no matter how certain we are that this is the case.

Another difficulty is being able to work artistically whilst trying to address a social theme. We are used to analysing a theme through words, discussions and debates from an intellectual point of view. We believe that the use of the physical and non-verbal expressiveness have an equally important role. However, analysing a theme in this manner carries the risk that our language will be difficult for outsiders to understand and thus, limiting the opportunities for intervention. In training we believe we must achieve a balance between research and dissemination, analysis and the study of the topic. Very challenging matters indeed.

All these limitations or difficulties affect one crucial issue: the financing of these activities. In a society of haste and expertise, the first places in which cuts are made are most often the Arts and the cultural sector.

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People question why you should support forms of education that do not provide visible and practical skills that do not appear to be easily translatable into the world of work. Our answer is simple: to train the best people to change this situation. Those who place culture and human development at the centre of their education, which contribute to creating a more generous society.

WE BELIEVE THAT CULTURE IS THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDUSTRY IN WHICH WE ARE INVESTING OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS AND AS A NETWORK OF ASSOCIATIONS. IT INVOLVES ACHIEVABLE GOALS INVOLVING FIRST-HAND CONTACT: PERSON-TO-PERSON, ASSOCIATION-TO-ASSOCIATION, INSTITUTION-TO-INSTITUTION, AND PROJECT-BY-PROJECT.

Luckily we have the evaluations and feedback from former participants and institutions with whom we have worked to encourage us to continue on this path.

DIGESTIVE ● ● ●

As suggested by the chapter's opening quotes, the purpose of INCA training is transformation within certain limits. Stimulating individual change is a serious exercise, something very deep and variable. You cannot expect to change everyone – it is completely dependent on time and individual inclination. Since it's formation, INCA has specialised in training courses that are relatively short and intense - from 5 to 15 days. What can you get out of such a short space of time? Essentially, we can only offer the opportunity for change to those who participate, to those who want to be trained. Instead, what we can do in such a short space of time, rather than being called training should be called perturbation. What we are getting at here is the idea of creating a small imbalance. Metaphorically, what we offer in our courses is "the opportunity to stumble" – experiencing something that is capable of slightly shaking the balance so painstakingly built up throughout an individual's lifetime. In this sense, art and non-formal education are valuable tools. Now, of course, the process does not end with this imbalance, otherwise we probably would do more harm than good. Once you have created the imbalance - the word is fitting because sometimes our activities do literally knock people off balance physically – we then seen to help those who participate in seeking a new balance.

Contained in this simple metaphor are some of the core principles of INCA's training:

- Training is the ability to question, to open up to explore the space outside of oneself (and this applies to everyone - trainers and trainees);

- Training implies an adequate measure of risk - an exploration outside of one's comfort zone;

- A real training experience should involve the creation of a new balance - this practice is rooted in renewing self-knowledge and the will to face difficulties;

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● Training should allow participants to experience new tools and the ways in which these tools can be applied in the real world.

Here, the possibility for participants to experiment on themselves is a fundamental element of INCA training, following Dewey's idea of learning by doing and learning by playing. As aforementioned, art, with its characteristics of contact and detachment from reality (cf. the concept of aesthetic distance), is a tool that allows you to customise the training intervention in an extraordinary way. It also allows for a "dose" of perturbation in order to meet a range of very different expectations from those who are willing to risk everything to those who wish to remain secure. Let's say it again: training does not always work! Nevertheless, it is often an experience that plants the seed of change within an individual, a group or a community.

If you've never attended, we invite you to the next INCA training course.

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THE TRAINER ACCORDING TO INCA

"YOU NEVER STOP LEARNING"

If we wanted to give a general definition of a "trainer", we could say that it is a professional who works primarily in education with various groups (youth, adults, other trainers, etc.), focusing on topics specific to their field of intervention. Some trainers are professionals, others work for institutions and some work for private companies. It is increasingly common for trainers to come together as a "bag of trainers" in kinds of learning communities, where they share experiences, skills and job opportunities. Here, we would like to propose a more personal definition of a trainer. We talked with Pierluigi Ricciardi and Luca Cataldo two INCA trainers and the result is the interview / dialogue below.

When we think of as a professional trainer, the first question we ask is: "How do you become a Non-Formal Education trainer? What qualifications do you need?" The answer defines the difference between Non-Formal Education trainer and a professor who works in a more formal environment, such as a school or a university. Before being permitted to work, a professor must have certain qualifications (such as a degree or specific educational training). An NFE trainer, on the other hand, is under no obligation to attend these courses. An NFE trainer becomes 'qualified' via specific courses known as "training of trainers", organised by various associations, institutions or entities.

The "training for trainers" can be organised by the Council of Europe, the various National Councils of Youth, associations, the National Agency for the Youth in Action Programme. Most of them can be found on the portal known as SALTO-YOUTH, which also features a database of trainers available to all .

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Despite these "training of trainers" courses, and the fact that there are many trainers also work in different fields (including some "infiltrators" from the formal sector), there is no similar kind of official certification as given to formal professors. The trainer is shaped mainly by his personal experiences of training: workshops, training courses, seminars and/or international meetings. In short, it is continuous work and learning process. It is often the case that a person who is interested in NFE, becomes a trainer after participating in a training course. At first, the new trainers tend to repeat the exercises and activities, using the techniques they have learned during their time as participants. But soon, they begin to change these exercises, making them their own. The trainer is a professional in constant exploration and growth, both personal and professional. Trainers do not usually repeat the same pattern of activity every time. For example, a colleague told us that, in his development as a clowning trainer, the exercises he once used at the end of a laboratory are now part of his warm-up sequence. The INCA trainer is often specialised in a specific artistic discipline, and sometimes may specialize in non-Arts areas. For example, there are INCA trainers using science.

Specifically, how does a trainer act? What is the difference between a professor and a trainer? The trainer adapts his/her educational tools to fit the participants.

Through these tools s/he offers the opportunity to make learning experiences, helping to grow both from a professional and a personal point of view. Through games, theatre exercises and the educational use of various artistic disciplines (all made in a "safe space", which can take the form of an intensive one week course, a one-day lab, a one-day workshop at schools, a summer camp, etc.), the participant is placed in a position to discover the relevance of their new skills useful in various areas of our lives such as work, school, family, etc. These skills range from the ability to work in a group and socialise, the ability to manage conflicts and stress in a positive way and to stimulate self-confidence and awareness of our own limits.

To fulfil this role, the trainer must develop a "multidisciplinary" set of skills and competencies. Of course, it is important to be able to move between the various disciplines but more importantly, they must have a sound knowledge of their specific area of expertise in order to know exactly what they want to achieve and the reasons behind a specific exercise. For example, a theatre trainer decides, during a workshop, to use the language of *grammelot*. It is not necessary to know this technique inside out, however, the trainer must have a clear idea of the educational basis of the technique, such as, the importance of non-verbal communication. Thus, planning is central to the work of a trainer, as they should always know in what direction they want to lead the work, what kind of experiences they want participants to have and at the same time, what possibilities are created to improvise. Of course, planning and improvisation are somewhat of a paradox. To overcome this paradox, the trainer must ensure that these two skills interlink and that they are flexible in order to contextualize and make corrections if a specific sequence of exercises or a single exercise does not work. The trainer is like a juggler, they must have the ability to maintain many different coloured balls in the air at any one time, but if there is a clear sequence, a structure, and the risk of confusing participants becomes very high and the balls will fall to the ground.

The trainer also plays a social role, because he/she must be able to listen to the group, to be able to deal with the unexpected, to understand the groups' non-verbal language, to make sure that the whole group feels at ease in order to create a safe and trusted space.

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During a training course, the first moments are crucial, since a bad start can impact on the rest of the course. There are some basic rules to follow, such as giving a warm welcome, contextualising the work that will be carried out and introducing the main theme of the training. During the courses that take place over several days, we must also give practical information, schedules, defining the responsibilities of the participants and the trainers, etc. During a course the trainer must also be able to maintain their role as an educator. For example, often a trainer will need to give negative feedback to individual participants, perhaps even criticize them, and that, because of different personalities, can sometimes create tension. So to avoid this tension, the trainer can decide to give the negative feedback in general to the whole group or even direct the criticism towards another participant who is likely to accept the criticism without reacting negatively. In this way the message can arrive to the recipient in an *indirect* form.

Despite all the attention that the trainer may place on not generating negative or unpleasant situations, these will always occur. It is important that a trainer recognises their limits and understand when the moment arrives for them to stop and recognise their mistakes. When a trainer is wrong, they will generally react in two ways: returning and recreating a more proactive situation or to persevere in their error. In this case, you run the risk that the participants lose confidence in the trainer or even abandon the group. Nevertheless, the trainer must be aware that if they choose to persevere, their decision must be based on a clear and precise pedagogical objective. For example, during a theatre course, a participant was pro-

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voked by the "verdict" that she would never become an actress and she left the room angrily. Nevertheless, she continued to do theatre with passion and dedication… with other trainers. Such an attitude may or may not work: the trainers must take responsibility for the risks they choose to take, as ultimately NFE is a field in which it is mathematically impossible to foresee every eventuality.

And therein lies the charm of this multi-faceted figure, which at the same time as he/she learns and transmits knowledge, creates micro-universes where participants and him/herself grow and develop new skills together, sharing feelings and emotions. A profession that is coupled with passion. Indeed, passion is the key to getting good results, as although there are trainers who know hundreds of exercises like the back of their hand, if they do not mix these ingredients with passion the participant will not advance in their learning process as they will not grow and will not receive what the trainer is trying to transmit. The work of a trainer lies in their ability to constantly grow and learn, it is a human process, a process with a one-way ticket.

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PROCESS AESTHETIC

THE 21ST CENTURY

In the contemporary context, the world changes at paces calling for continuous adaptation. The so-called, "21st century skills", refer to those abilities necessary for survival in the present world. These skills, even if diversely defined according to different contexts, usually include *critical thinking, teamwork, self-management* of time and resources and reflection. The crossing of these features already gives training a specific taste and a precise *tonality* defining what we would like to call here the aesthetic of training. This style is well recognisable and characterises, to different degrees, all contemporary training paths.

In this chapter we would like to describe how the process of training acquires the specific ethos present in all INCA training. This ethos is connected to some key-features that define what we would try to read as the process *aesthetic* of training.

We are particularly concerned about the term *aesthetic* because the practice of applied (or social) arts often forgets that amongst its more incisive possibilities, there are those which touch on a sense of beauty (or its denial) and its affects. For instance, we increasingly come across the exercises and techniques proposed by one of the revolutionaries or even founders of social/applied art: Augusto Boal. Boal's practices have been so influential in the contemporary development of Social or applied theatre, that Social Theatre and Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed have almost become synonymous. Nevertheless, even recognising the applied geniality of Boal's techniques, who made the implicit explicit in theatrical mechanisms, it is impossible not to notice how the aesthetics play a secondary role (even if Boal claimed

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to place aesthetic at the centre of his practice, see *The Aesthetic of the Oppressed*). On the contrary, for INCA this is a crucial point, as aesthetic represents an undeniable tool in the training process and for the application of arts in social contexts.

INTENSITY

One of the most common comments made during our activities (training courses, exchanges, residencies) has been in relation to their intensity. Many participants probably expect more relaxed work, featuring long, peaceful breaks. When participating in our activity programmes, working from morning until night with short break, time begins to feel as though it is slowing down. The reason for such intensive programming is simple: we try to obtain as much as possible from the short time we have. An intense week can impact someone for the rest of his/her life. We are not claiming that this is always the case for us, but it has frequently been known to happen.

HOWEVER, THE REAL RATIONALE BEHIND THIS INTENSITY IS THAT IN ORDER TO TAKE CARE OF THE PROCESS, IT MUST BE WELL STRUCTURED.

We must provide the participants with the opportunity to face the same activity more than once and devote time to do so. The creative process needs care – attention, practice, individual and collective reflection, improvisation, presentation, feedback, modification, editing – and this care calls for hours of work. Intensity is therefore inseparable from the quality of INCA's work.

RISK AND PERTURBATION

We already mentioned that our approach to training must include risk. We will now try to explain what we mean by this. Why does this risk form an essential aspect of our pedagogical approach? We also previously mentioned that

OUR COURSES CREATE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE PERTURBATIONS,

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to which participants must practice how to react. This is connected to the idea of risk and these two factors together mark what defines the training process for INCA.

Risk, in this text, should be understood as an aesthetical characteristic of a learning process. Every activity used in training (game, exercise, simulations) can be carried out in a "safe" modality: never trespassing the boundaries of what is known, never getting out of our "comfort zone" or experimenting with anything out of the ordinary. At the centre of our approach (and for that matter, all NFE) is the invitation to experiment with these boundaries and to explore the so-called "stretching zone." Experimenting outside of one's "comfort zone" is essential when working in an intercultural context. Being aware of the flexibility of this "zone," is a crucial step in opening up to others. In our training, there must be some kind of opening towards the unknown – to accept its existence, to face it, to identify the problem of managing it, and to find strategies and tactics in order to explore it. Clearly, the unknown is defined by what a specific individual knows. Indeed, something that is unknown for one person may not be unknown for another. This is a pivotal point of the

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training process – it is the trainer's duty to understand *what* is unknown *for whom*.

Creativity is exactly that – the exploration of something unknown. Generally, what is unknown is also frightening. In daily life, after a certain age, the unknown is kept at a safe distance. A small amount may be faced in order to fight boredom but an easy get away is always kept close to hand. On the contrary, creative work must include the unknown and this calls for a certain amount of risk. In this sense risk, as we use it here, is always an *aesthetical* risk - that which must be faced in order to achieve something authentic and creative. Obviously, this does not mean placing an individual's safety at risk, but one's own possibilities in detecting personal limits. From there, steps can be taken towards understanding how these limits define us as individuals.

A key-strategy we use to invite participants to face this "unknown" is with creative tasks. This usually involves dividing participants into small groups (*working groups*) where they must produce a small piece of work (usually a short performance) collaborating with others (strangers), within a limited amount of time (usually a few hours). Working groups are almost omnipresent in INCA training courses and stimulate experimentation through direct and orientated collaboration. Noticeably, activities involving working groups are also where difficulties arise more easily and where participants face the most insidious challenges.

The moment in which the working groups present the results of their short but intense collaboration is when the perturbation process comes into play. In some training courses, this is the moment when, after collective feedback (from the other participants and the trainers), we propose to develop what the group presented, respecting some new constraints. This procedure is very similar to the one shown by Lars von Trier e Jørgen Leth in the film *The Five Obstructions*(2003). The film (which we recommend you see if you have not yet) narrates the exploration of an artistic creative modality (often rather cruel) where creativity is continuously constrained by rules to be respected. In an example from one of our projects in London in 2013, we created different kinds of constraints for the participants working on short performances, such as: expressive style (dramatic pieces that should become comical), location (outdoor pieces presented under the shade of trees and then moved to a very narrow space), or media (a multi-sensory theatre piece using only sounds). The ways that the participants find to deal with these constraints, these perturbations, is often amazing. Through simply adapting to these perturbations perfect balances can be dissolved or most frequently, problematic collaborations can be reworked. For this project in London, the majority of the participants claimed that three of the four performances were largely improved by the perturbation, while one (that was actually the most interesting in its first version) was affected negatively.

This is only one example of how a perturbation can be expressed, but the same criterion is applicable to other activities as well. For instance, during a theatrical exercise, if the trainer notices that the participants show no difficulties in its execution or exploration, usually s/he introduces a challenge to make the exer-

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cise more stimulating. As in the Danish film cited above, the choice of risk and perturbation is, once again, an aesthetical choice - the introduction of an element calling for a reaction from participants, encouraging the development of strategies and tactics to be shared.

Obviously, when proposing a perturbation or inviting someone to take a risk, different people react in different ways. There will be those who will immediately begin to look for solutions and those who will simply skate around the perturbation, ignoring it. Maybe there will even be someone who will see the perturbation as an opportunity for development, while someone else will see it as an injustice or a useless difficulty. These reactions are partially dependent upon the proportions of the obstacles, a crucial and extremely delicate aspect in this kind of training. The trainer should never try to push someone across the limits s/he cannot face for the sake of process. The ability to read the right signals allows us to understand when risk is acceptable or when we are merely *forcing the hand*. Don't ask the sun to come out at midnight:

IT IS THE TRAINER'S DUTY TO UNDERSTAND WHAT PEOPLE ARE READY TO FACE AND WHAT THEY ARE NOT AND THUS, ADJUST PERTURBATIONS AND RISKS ACCORDINGLY.

To be able to do this, the trainer must try to continually observe participants as close as possible, studying their reactions during the exercises and breaks, understanding their soft and hard aspects and gauging how ready each one is to challenge him/herself in accepting risk. In a word, understanding each person's availability to change.

This last point represents the risk in the trainer's work. Sure enough, the trainer inevitably takes on some risks. S/he must, in this *modus operandi*, necessarily change, experiment and adapt his/her already established tools. In this sense, risks must be taken on both sides: from the participant's side to explore outside of his/her "comfort zone", and from the trainer's side, in order to develop the required confidence and agility to adapt his/her propositions to the different individuals s/he faces every time. In order to achieve quality in the process, everyone must participate in the game and take responsibility for their decision to take on risk.

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THE FINAL EVENT AS PART OF THE PROCESS

The final event of a training process, whatever kind it may be, must leave doors open to the unknown. Over the years we have realised that the final event of a training course is a special moment, one out of the ordinary, offering an occasion to meet, experiment and to face something so far unknown. Therefore, the structure of the event must be developed in order to reveal a pathway towards something more sincere and transparent, towards an actual encounter with someone or something. In this sense, the product of an INCA training course, most often a performance event, is an essential part of the process as it represents a unique and special occasion for new opportunities to learn. For this learning function exactly, we must be careful that the artistic ambitions and taste do not take over the final event. The process must never be sacrificed for the product.

A key facet that allows the final event to play its training role is in its organization. It is important that the final event is either attended by an audience (if it is open) or left undisturbed (if it is closed). To obtain this, the preparation must be a combined effort between the individual taking care of the local organisation and logistics and the individual who is leading the training course. If the event is open to the public, it will be necessary to have a local

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audience who are aware of what the final event represents. Thus, they should not expect a superb quality show, but an occasion to share and, in some cases, participate. Every logistical aspect, from the location to the advertising, is critical. For instance, sometimes to give a project added value, it is important to have active participation from those who live in the place where the project is taking place. Sometimes it is useful to involve a school, sports club, activity centre or an old people's day centre, along with other local organisations. At the same time, to encourage other citizens to get involved in the project, and to enable the participants to feel apart of an event that is useful to society and the community, the final event and the whole project must be made visible. To give the right image of the project, it is important to communicate the impact and the advantages of the training to the public and, especially, to the media.

Another way to conclude a training course is an event which is dedicated to those who participated in the process from the beginning, with no external audience or observers. This kind of event is therefore invisible to the outside world and is exclusively for the trainers' and participants' use. This kind of conclusion features countless advantages and possibilities, many which still remain unexplored: the *rendering*[2]. The verb "to render" has many meanings, but three of them are essential for how we intend to use the term here:

1. a biblical meaning: to give back, to restore ("Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's");

2. a theatrical meaning: to create a sketch, a draft (e.g. a scenographical draft);

3. a culinary meaning: to cook something, to extract its essence and clear the impurities (a procedure that can be done for example, with butter).

Therefore, rendering has something to do with giving back to the work we have done and to those with whom it was developed. In this sense it is a moment of sharing. Rendering is also a draft, a structure that aims to reach something essential.

In practical terms, rendering represents a long structure of individual and collective actions, articulated along many hours and composed by well-structured and precise actions (usually performative – theatrical actions, dances, exercises) as well as less structured moments, more open to improvisation (usually directed by rules). It is an extraordinary collective structure (in the sense that it is composed by unusual, "special" actions) where it is possible to explore the opportunities inherent to what was learned during the training course it aims to conclude. It provides the opportunity to experiment with oneself in a more or less free way, within the group's collectivity. It also allows for the recognition of unusual performative occasions and to experiment in practice the skills that have been learned during the course.

[2]We learned to use the tool named rendering from two outstanding trainers - James Slowiak nd Jairo Cuesta of New World Perfomance Laboratory - and we are extremely grateful to them for giving us unique and special training and performance tool. The rendering in its present conceptualization and forms is a development of theatrical and paratheatrical research by Jerzy Grotowski

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To play its role in the process, it is important that the final event – whether it is open to the public or reserved only for the training participants – is structured to guarantee the possibility of exploring these extraordinary moments. To make this possible, there are some elements that INCA trainers have learnt to keep in mind. These elements, we believe, make the structure of an event more effective in recognising the "special" openings we have mentioned:

- An initial expression of conflict (a fight, a problem, a clash between factions);
- Performances devised during the training course;
- Collective actions already rehearsed or new ones (exercises already practiced during the training or actions to be performed for the first time during the event);
- Moments where people dress up (a disguise, a costume), and then later get rid of this mask;
- A meeting, usually explored through a specific action (a dance, or other performative action);
- Confrontation with a natural element (for instance the sun, water, fire);
- Silence.

A skilful mixture of these elements can, in our experience, offer moments which remain carved in memory for many years. But this montage should be made whilst keeping in mind, on the one hand, the aesthetic, playing a crucial role for an effective a final event, and on the other, an awareness that we are not simply staging a performance as the real product of any training course is the *training*, not the final event. In this sense, the final event really represents an additional opportunity to change, to meet and to share – an es-

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sential and unique part of the training process itself. Training quality and aesthetical quality must support, not contrast, one another.

● ● ● HUMOUR

Yes, *humour.* The ability towards irony and most importantly self-irony, is a major component of all our projects as something that enters into the process aesthetic on many occasions.

HUMOUR IS A VERY POWERFUL TOOL AND, AS ANY POWERFUL TOOL, MUST BE USED WITH CAUTION.

For instance, in the beginning, humour is crucial to break the ice and to let everyone enter into a connection with the *ridiculous.* This dimension enables individuals to share - literally, the sharing of a funny moment, of a laugh. Humour has the power to diffuse an embarrassing or tedious moment. It also allows us to laugh about ourselves and the way we are.

At the same time, however, humour can work as a distancing *mechanism, a strategy to pull us out from* a situation, a *way out*. It is again the trainer's role to understand when humour is facilitating the process (as, for instance, in exercises linked to clowning) and when it is used as a dull escape. In some moments, it is more useful and appropriate to enable sharing via other non-humorous ways, encouraging participants to stay in a situation without distancing themselves. In these cases, laughing can surely occur, but of a very different kind compared to the one triggered by a simple joke.

Ultimately, after all these risks, perturbations, and experimentations on the self, a good laugh is always quite liberating.

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To every action there is always an equal and opposite reaction.
I. Newton, III law of motion

PRACTICING CHAIN REACTIONS

THE EVOLUTION OF AN ACTIVITY THROUGHOUT TRAINING

A professional trainer has, among his/her expertise, the ability to "read" the group s/he is working with. It is essential for his/her suggestions to be flexible. The number of possible solutions a trainer can offer is a direct measurement of his/her experience and skill.

This chapter uses concrete examples from experience to demonstrate the importance of adapting and rethinking training strategies during training courses. From these examples, it is possible to draw out specific methods and general dynamics useful to leading the training/educational domain.

THE CONTEXT

As the specific context of every training project plays an essential role in any training course, we will begin by setting the scene of the course in question prior to going into detail about specific events. The course was held in Barcelona (Spain), in 2012.

In this course, our aim was to analyse the themes of conflict resolution and social cohesion through training participants (15 in total: 10 theatre

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and 5 audiovisual) in clowning and Theatre-Video. The project was structured into two intensive residential weekends, totalling in 40 hours of work involving clowning, theatre and digital media workshops. This was brought together to stage a theatre-video performance. Over two months, the participants worked to refine their performative actions, produce videos and scenographies. Additionally, with the support of the trainers, they organised the technical and logistical aspects of their piece. The final weekend was dedicated to setting up the final performance. The main course objective was not the production of a performance, but the application of experimental and multidisciplinary research to different artistic techniques in order to explore socially relevant themes.

We reviewed each participant's resume in order to select participants with a good deal of experience and background in the proposed techniques. To aid the analysis of the themes and create a common collective imaginary, we started with two reference books: Lord of the Flies by W. Golding (previously used in other INCA projects) and the *Normative on Good Citizenship* by the Barcelona City Council (published in 2006 and modified in 2011 and 2012). Three trainers led the course who specialised in clowning, theatre, and digital media.

During the preparation phase we tried to anticipate potential variables but

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it was not until the first face-to-face contact with the participants that we could really confront this.

THEATRE-CLOWN TRAINING: THE TRAINER'S IMPRESSION

After the first physical exercises, the first decision I made was to work more on the physical-structural aspects of comedy, rather than on the poetic-emotional ones, as originally planned beforehand. As many of the participants had very little clowning experience, I decided that it was necessary to spend more time on the basic elements of clowning. This specifically included the use of the red nose, as otherwise we ran the risk of underestimating its function and enchantment.

We began by trying to act spontaneously, without thought or reflection. The context, relationships, spatial-temporal conflicts and misunderstandings were used to generate comedy. The same style of comedy is evident in the work of Buster Keaton or Laurel & Hardy.

ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: WHOM YOU ARE FACING? (THE PARTICIPANTS' LEVEL OF EXPERIENCE)

One of the most intriguing challenges for us at the beginning of a training course is recognising the real preparation of a group and evaluating the suitability of the activities planned for them.

Objective elements can be established through proposing basic exercises, exploring different techniques, the observation of participants' behavior and attention level during work as well as from direct questioning regarding their previous training and experience.

On an equally important level, subjective impressions are gained through observing the participants' reactions and attitudes during breaks, how they meet new people, their punctuality, or even their choice of what to eat.

Whilst discussing a trainer's impressions could seem overly superficial and subjective, the errors in assessing groups diminish with time and experience. Taking a risk and changing something on the basis of such impressions is ultimately better than doing nothing due to laziness or fear.

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CHANGING TRAINING STRATEGIES

At the end of the first training weekend we had drafted four theatre-video scenes. These materials could be developed further to create short performances with content derived from the reference texts and featuring different interaction techniques between actors and video such as: live video, live sounds, silence and fake live.

Evaluating the process amongst trainers, we found a collective scene was lacking in order to create a common imaginary and provide a general background to the performance. Since we were leading a participative process, our intentions were not to "direct" a solution, but to facilitate the groups' collective process.

ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: SHORTAGES OR NEW NECESSITIES

The ability to recognise shortages or necessities of new elements in a creative process is an act of open-mindedness and generosity. We speak about *opening* because it means to listen to the individual participant's, the groups, and other trainer's needs, or the suggestions of an external observer. We speak of *generosity* as it immediately opens up to "extra" work: planning for the trainer, who has to look for new solutions, and more energy exertion for the participants, who have to increase their efforts to reach a new goal.

THINKING OF NEW DYNAMICS

The theatre work was inspired by "reason vs. savagery", a theme taken from *Lord of the Flies*. During the first weekend we focused on the creation of characters, working on their way of walking, physically inspired by animals. The emotional motivation in this character creation was taken from the deadly sins. Then, starting from these materials, we came up with the idea of a scene depicting a tribe organised with bizarre but intelligible rules, to introduce the four independent scenes.

Several possible dynamics can be used to arrive at this kind of montage.

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Our doubts concerned the dramaturgical functions of such a structure. We were looking for an easily repeatable unifying element, to use as an introduction, transition, and finale. We also wanted to take advantage of the presence of 10 actors simultaneously on stage and the use of different rooms and spaces of the theatre that could be used to host the presentation of the final event. Hence, we wanted this scene to be used to lead the audience from one room to the next. As a final element, we wanted to maintain both theatrical techniques and digital media in the scene.

ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: OPENING NEW PATHS

Stimulation is key to ensuring that learning is effective and shared. To open new paths does not mean to take a leap into the darkness, but to turn in seemingly uncomfortable directions, off the beaten track, with difficult access. The same trainer who raises the challenge has to start to search for the tools to overcome it. With a small temporal advantage on the participants, the trainer can think about formulating possible alternative plans and measuring risk. Once the challenge is cast s/he must be prepared to face it.

INVENTING AN *AD HOC* EXERCISE • • •

I started by studying notes, previous performance videos and asking for help from different colleagues. An actress friend of mine, Ilona Muñoz, recommended the video "Tango" by Zbigniew Rybczyński, who using mixed arts techniques. "Tango" is a video-art product where the actors enter into the scene one by one and perform an action with or without objects. The video is then edited to repeat these actions in a loop. Some 50-odd actors repeat their (recorded) action, entering and leaving the scene. The rhythmical structure is the element I considered to be most important, along with the fact that there is no direct interaction between the characters and no emotional involvement (or at least it is small in comparison to the importance of the actions). I decided to use the same focus on action to explore clown techniques, thus providing me with a basis to begin my work.

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ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: FROM IDEA TO DYNAMIC

A good idea, artistic or pedagogical (or both), to be conveyable, learnable, and shareable, has to be expressed in a language that is accessible to everyone involved. During the process of training, this language is developing step by step. For this reason, creating dynamics which turn an idea into action, enable it to be processed by the participants and the group, giving it shape and content.

A good idea will not work without a transmission dynamic, just as a good dynamic will not work if it does not start from an idea.

HOW TO AVOID COPYING

It was the moment to disassemble the elements from the video and work on them separately. The first element I identified was the relationship with space and to work on it, I chose to adapt an exercise created by a theatre director friend, Rolando Macrini. This began by asking participants to walk around the space, focussing on the idea of being at home. I asked them to imagine precise routes and familiar distances. I then gave simple instructions, such as moving from one room to another or developing small actions (e.g. picking up or dropping an object, sitting down, etc.). When the trajectories of individual actors with different imagined houses interacted in overlapping spaces, the architectural design outlined in the space became very interesting. Adding different entrances, (imaginary) doors and (real) objects already used beforehand by each character, we started to create repeatable actions. Participants were asked to enter, leave the object, exit, re-enter, pick up the object, use it, and so on. From this simple structure, the dynamic of the composition was created by the crossings between actors, the overlapping of environments and situations, the movement of objects in the scene and, mostly, the broken rhythmic intervals. Participants were encouraged to solve conflicts not through emotionality and interactions with other actors, but simply by waiting for the right moment to continue with one's own action, maintaining the sequence rhythm.

This was no easy task as it was based on repetition and not on flowing creativity. Many participants were unable to find meaning for the scene, for their own action, for their way to move or for their energy and presence.

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ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: LACK OF PARTICIPATION

This is a delicate aspect, where the "confidence" of the trainer regarding his/her propositions, and skill as well as their ability to self-critique and read the group or a single participant comes into play.

Participation should not be understood only as involvement, as interest along with physical and emotional concern, but also as a decision-making process, therefore undertaking responsibility as an individual and as a group. A trainer must be able to "discover" why a participant is not taking responsibility and provide them with the tools to choose their own way. Should this be the case even if this results in him/her giving up or to being excluded?

NEW STIMULI

In the end, we decided not to show the original video of "Tango" as we thought it could too easily lead to imitation. In fact, until that moment, it was never mentioned.

From the theatrical training point of view, we were trying to get the participants to work on themselves, on concentration, on team spirit and on the amplified perception of space and actions. Confidence on stage and about the idea itself became crucial, since the slightest doubt or daily movement (like scratching or straightening up clothes), could have drawn the audience's attention away from the theatre to the non-theatrical 'mistake'.

From the outside, the scene had particular certain strength as the audience were left with the opportunity to interpret it in many different ways. The indirect communication where the action and the message depend as much on the actor as on the spectator is an essential element for intercultural communication, keeping the context of international trainings in mind, where verbal language is not privileged.

To make the actors assimilate the scene goals and to encourage them to understand the work on the structure, we worked on feedback. First of all, indirect feedback – we spoke about the scenes throughout the weekend. We suggested keeping the proposed scenes free from elements referring to a single culture. We spoke about extracting from the various social rituals in

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different cultures those elements that could help us, from a theatrical viewpoint, to build a language as universal as possible, that is, interpretable in several ways.

SPECIFIC FEEDBACK EXAMPLE :

One of the groups worked on the theme of domestic violence representing a symbolical union (an abstract "marriage", represented by a single woman) and its negative progress.

The actress, as she was moving forward, hummed the wedding march, Mendelssohn's op. 21.

We suggested to avoid using specific elements taken from a single type of ritual (Christian, in this case), and to look for a melody that would be free from identification to the audience, in order to highlight the scene's original idea, that is, domestic violence is not exclusive to one culture but exists in all cultures.

• • •

Then, we asked the participants of the digital media group to give their opinion, since they shot the scene in order to simultaneously project some of the footage onto three walls in the space. The positive comments from their working partners, who observed from the outside, along with the comments from the trainers, fuelled an attitude change and renewed the actors' energy.

Finally, I decided to clarify the possible uses of the scene in the final montage, specifically: we could use it as a transition between the four scenes, along with the practical function of assembling/disassembling the different scenographies; or it could be a stand-alone scene to create a narrative about a tribe following its internal rules which, although incomprehensible, are perceivable from the outside.

Then I highlighted several times the "experimental" nature of the proposed variations and that the final choice would depend on the level of interest expressed by the actors themselves. I wanted to clarify that it was not subject to the director's whim, but a collective piece of work with its pedagogical/artistic contents. We entered into a new dynamic of work.

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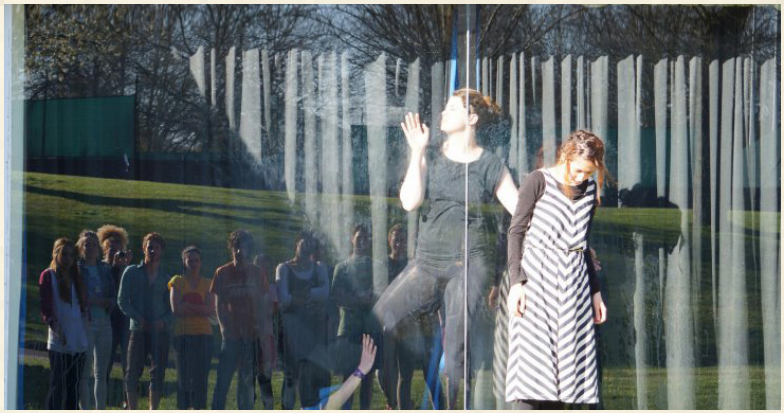
While working with participative methods it is important that contents stem from the process itself and are not imposed by the trainer. By setting common goals and then starting to move, dance, sing, play, work theatrically on our bodies, we modify and turn our thoughts into actions. Consequently, our differences of opinions in scenic relationships are addressed in a fruitful and proactive way.

When training through creative tools, this process plays a crucial role. Frequently, a deep analysis of the theme remains invisible in the aesthetic/artistic proposed choice. We often found ourselves pleased with a "comfortable" working plan, or we do not want to experiment with the communication of our idea, fearing that simplicity could turn into triteness.

Hence, form is not enough. The less the content is projected towards the outside, the more it has to be clear in the choices of who is developing the work. Those who propose actions which are difficult to understand from the outside, have to keep the message clear in order for it to be passed on. If not, the message itself leads to confusion.

On the other hand, we believe that when looking for artistic elements to create a performance, the connection with the audience (either our working partners, an external public and regardless if we are presenting or not our work to someone) cannot be disregarded, just as much as our role as artistic "investigators".



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CONCLUSIONS

The main themes that we wanted to present in our performance were: the concepts of society, communication rules, conflicts within groups and with the environment, and collaboration. In a word: conflict, resolution, and social cohesion. These themes were not clearly visible from the outside and we had no time to process them in order to get beyond this intellectual stage. The scene, in this sense, remained feeble, if not confusing.

From a theatrical point of view, the most crafted aspect was the articulation and clarity of gesture and the synthesis of action – to do in order to generate ideas, demonstrating that it is essential to think before and generate actions afterwards. From this point of view, the progress was significant, for the participants and for us.

And what if an unexpected problem surfaces during the presentation of the scene?

ASPECT TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT: TAKING RISKS

If trainers and participants end up with the right amount of enthusiasm to continue the training process by presenting the results of the course to an external public, the simple goal of team-building has been achieved.

When the degree of complicity between everyone involved is high, we can allow a certain amount of improvisation inside the proposed structure. To work on the unexpected and the possibilities it opens is beneficial for mind and body as it encourages the search for new solutions which keep the audience on their toes. The improvisation techniques help in this way to supply creative tools or, at least, "safety" procedures.

But facing the audience is not the only risk we can take. The modality and the words used to present our "performance" can heavily influence the audience's opinions. There is a great deal of difference in proposing the event as a final presentation from a training course, a work-in-progress, a theatrical piece or as a spontaneous event with no advertisements. The generated expectations and the critique will obviously be different for each context.

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THE PRESENTATION

With all its aesthetical and technical challenges, we felt that the final event for this training course was a success, especially regarding the unique energy, commitment, and quality that everyone expressed on the last weekend. The sequence we proposed made the presentation dynamic and assorted in rhythm and techniques. The organisation of the scenes and the use of space during the transitions enriched the contents of the single scenes and the collective one.

The advantage of using a defined structure was the way it left, quite paradoxically, room for improvisation. If I know where I am coming from and where I want to go and the path is clearly visible then I can allow myself to take a diversion, as I know how to get back onto the right track. With a glance to ourselves, one to our partners and another to those watching, we believe we fulfilled the objective of the final event: encouraging the audience to become an active participant in our training course.

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REVEAL TO ME WHO I AM: THEATRE, INCA AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

THE INTERCULTURAL CLASH AND THE EUROPEAN LABORATORY

Culture defines who we are right down to the bones. Usually, we use the term "culture" to refer to national or regional differences. However, culture contributes substantially to the identity formation of nations, groups, professionals, families, religious communities and individuals, to name but a few. Throughout our life, the environment in which we grow up, with its regularities and its laws, hardwires itself in our physical, mental and spiritual system. This hardwiring regulates the functioning of every individual, generating necessities and needs. Sometimes, on contact with different cultures, these needs appear to be in radical disagreement.

These differences generate conflicts that too often are solved alone power lines. Every clash that is solved involves a certain degree of compromise which, more often than not, favours the interests of the 'dominating' culture subordinating those with comparatively less power, the 'dominated.' Power, in intercultural exchanges, is most typically measured by one's access to resources or, in worst cases, coercion via brute force. Unfortunately, attempts made to create binding and shared ethical foundations (such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Union's Bill of Fundamental Rights and the definition of the *ius cogens*), are continuously clashing with the principle of local independence. Paraphrasing Bauman (from a 2011 interview), we could say that until sovereignty is constrained within national borders, it will be impossible to find a supra-national rule of law that does not simply mirror the interest of those in power.

Nevertheless, in the *post-modern* era that Europe finds itself today (or the time of *liquid life,* as Bauman would say), contact with other cultures is, other than a necessity, a unique tool for knowledge. Not simply knowledge about the *other* as since our culture is generally invisible to our own eyes until we meet this 'other', out knowledge about *ourselves* is also generated.

THE RELATIONSHIP WITH DIFFERENT CULTURES ALLOWS US TO DEFINE THE BORDERS OF OUR OWN IDENTITY.

As one of our trainers said: "In Italy I am the least 'Italian' of all my friends, but when I travel abroad I

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become as Italian as possible". However, this precious knowledge carries the potential for a series of virtually infinite conflicts. This could be manageable for a short holiday, but when we have to set up more continuous connections, it becomes a lot thornier.

Europe is an intercultural laboratory where contact became first an opportunity and then a necessity. In one of our European programmes, a series of formal and non-formal activities were developed focusing on a number of crucial issues. In every activity branded "Europe" is somehow dealing with the topic of interculture, usually work develops in relation to:

- The omnipresent *stereotypes* of other cultures that we carry. These must be recognised and substituted with a real knowledge about the 'other', who will hopefully then become welcome;

- *Non-violent conflict management* – easier said than done, too often twisted into some science of compromise;

- A series of *playful activities* based on the *simulation* of various cases where limited resources must be managed in order to achieve a certain goal, both individually and in groups;

- But, as a general norm, it seems that the main strategy used to foster intercultural exchange is the *sharing of time and experiences*, amongst members of different cultures.

Let us consider these in greater detail. Having worked on these programmes for many years, we have realised that the European Union does not have a defined cultural identity (yet?). Today, we might feel "French", "Italian", "German", "Catalan" or a "Londoner", but rarely "European". Hence, when we carry out our training projects, the cultural identity that becomes most visible is usually the trainer's, to which the geographical location of the course becomes secondary. We do not wish to ignore the existence of projects which are in fact well-rooted in their location and embedded in the local realities or emerging directly from them. We are simply saying that in INCA's training courses the full diversity of cultural identities do not emerge easily. We must add that a generic respect for the others, often a disguise for a rather ineffective sentimentalism (a dangerous version of the "politically correct" attitude), usually prevents any real and sincere contact between cultures during the implementation of these kinds of projects.

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If we use the term "culture" in an anthropological sense (as described above), we are all part of a culture and this culture is a part of us. It is the frame in which we move protected by rules, implicit codes and patterns that provide the grounds to understand one another. If we then define the "inter-" as the space for relationships then a commitment must be made to amplify exactly that space. Thus, creating the opportunity to work and reflect upon the connection between "I" and "we". Here, through a negotiation of meanings, we should experience what we desire, what we can concede and what aspects of our culture we cannot let go.

We asked ourselves how it would be possible to reveal the misunderstandings and subsequent conflicts that are often underlined by implicit clashing cultural models. More specifically, how to create "middle grounds" between subjects representing different cultures; how to build awareness regarding the value of training based on bodily experiences; how to detect specific cultural interpretations of emotions which play a role in intercultural communication and how to provide methodological tools to re-interpret ourselves when we encounter subjects representing different cultures and world views. Luckily for us, one of those instruments includes Theatre.

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THE ROLE OF THEATRE

From our point of view, art offers unique possibilities to the field of intercultural communication. They may be considered utopian, but why not? We are dreamers.

In 2006, the first training residential course organised by INCA Italy, "Tools of Animation", addressed the topic of European identity. Two methodologies that were somehow destined to be come together we adopted: Theatre, specifically clown and physical expression, and storytelling using different languages (words, images and metaphors). While writing the project, the Theatre workshops were chosen in order to facilitate research into the ways in which belonging and identity could be triggered through the body.

Theatre has always been a mirror for society, revealing the true meaning behind actions, principles and the common spiritual movements of members of any given culture. In this sense, Theatre gives back to the society this possibility for reflection, allowing for an otherwise impossible self-analysis (Peter Brook's idea, not ours!). It has always been a local phenomenon, developed in the "here and now," in reaction to current events and playing an active role in social change. In the words of Maurizia di Stefano (in "Art, Body, Interculture", *Theatre and Performance Languages in the MCE training school*):

Theatre is the effort to join emotion and reflection. Creating a performance calls for the passage through emotion and experience, thought and its processing and from all this to communication. Theatre is ritual, strong personal participation to something choral, shared, participated and collective. Theatre is de-centring, putting oneself in other's shoes, taking into account different points of view, being actors and being spectators. Theatre: because education is a performance. Theatre is proposed and practiced to highlight its training and intercultural potentialities.

A theatrical approach to the complexity of interculturality creates an *area franca* where we can process the general theme of mediation through the exchange of actions, experiences, heritage, learning and shared and unshared meanings. In a word, everything that considered "intercultural". In the Theatre we believe it is essential to adapt our body or space to the others' through songs and group work, whilst maintaining our personal line of action.

Theatre is, in this sense, a stimulus to change and to meet as it highlights how, by crossing individual scores, it is possible to build something new others. It is that trans-cultural dimension adapted from Eugenio Barba's theatrical anthropology, that transcends the idea of integration: "[…] imagine how our own identity can develop without going against our nature and our history, but expand beyond the frontiers that imprison it more than defining it." (our translation from E. Barba, *La canoa di carta*, Il Mulino, 1993; pg. 70).

Keeping Barba's suggestion in the background, every time we propose a workshop, we practice a sort of intercultural "barter", to work on the participants' differences, expressing their diverse cultures, histories, origins, ages, genders, personal and professional experiences, learning styles and implicit pedagogies. By working on the plurality of viewpoints and using difference as a resource, independent of the topics, we maintain the objective of creating a common project. This project builds from the idea that cooperation is different from the sum of the individual competences involved. *Creative synthesis*, as an alternative to compromise, allows us to experiment the possibility of an

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encounter generated by different points of view without totally belonging to any. To make this possibility emerge, we have developed some criteria that, even if they appear to be established definitions, are in a continuous development. We will now discuss where we find ourselves today, and where we would like to get to in the years to come.

INCA STRATEGIES - FIRST STAGE

When working on intercultural contact, an essential condition is the building a "safe shelter" for everybody. A space must be created which allows participants to partake in activities and to feel free to share their own experiences without any judgement. This strategy forms the basis of every INCA training course. However, since we are talking specifically about theatrical techniques, this ground rule is put into practice in concrete ways.

At the beginning, a peaceful working environment must be established, where somehow, everyone is able to feel alike. To obtain this, we propose activities which evoke a moment where differences between individuals are, for the moment at least, subsided and where everybody, independently from their culture, can feel close to the others. We establish this "common" moment at the beginning and therefore, the first activities we propose are usually very playful and simple based on children's games. In this way we make, conflicts are less likely to arise in the initial stages of work, allowing participants to get to know one another through playing, as children do. In this stage we do not even use theatrical terms. We never speak about "acting", but always about playing, interaction, and exercises – the idea of *performing* is quite displaced. For instance, at the beginning of a course, in order to make the participants learn one another's' names, we do not use "adult" techniques (e.g. name tags or circle introductions), but we propose a series of games to introduce ourselves. In this way we cut the distances between people in a playful way, starting to stimulate their creativity. For example, in a project in Austria that took place at the end of 2012, every participant had to invent a short presentation, to make the others remember their name. How would you do it?

Another way we reach this sense of "communion" with others is simply by proposing activities and exercises that are most likely unknown to many of the participants. In this way everybody finds him/herself in the position of a 'beginner' as they learn something new and share this process, space and time with others. If it transpires that someone is familiar with some of these exercises, we try to encourage him/her to explore new and unknown possibilities inside these exercises or we propose they practice them in a different way, distinct from the way they already know.

In this first stage, then, the real problem of dealing with differences is "avoided" or "postponed", to create common ground where everyone explores together and feels respected, welcome and similar. The next stage deals with introducing differences through using "distance".

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SECOND STAGE

We now reach the moment where it is possible to start approaching differences and the conflicts that may arise in the meeting. To do so, it is necessary to establish the conditions which encourage participants to let down their "politically correct" guards which so often emerge naturally in intercultural environments. In order to create meetings between differences as a project objective, we choose to operate in two different but complementary ways.

What we aim to obtain with these two types of activities is a feeling of authentic solidarity and sincere curiosity for the others. The first method, common to many intercultural approaches, is through the simulation of differences in situations of conflict. This allows us to manage diversity whilst maintaining some "distance" from reality. Thus, a kind of workshop is created in which participants can experiment in the ways they manage conflicts emerging from differences – even if these differences are not yet our own. The second method passes directly through the body – encouraging us to "experience" differences in the first person and experiment with diversity. We steer clear of daily thoughts by placing the focus purely on *feeling* and *doing*.

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FACING CONFLICTS WITH "DISTANCE"

The first way to train ourselves to creatively manage the conflicts generated by differences is based on the creation of fictional situations – simulations – or activities based on a humorous interpretation (e.g. clown exercises). In this sense Theatre is a unique tool that even when a *certain distance* from everyday reality is maintainable (thanks to role-play or the use of irony), it offers a structure that can be directly interpreted as examples of interactions that are *plausible* in reality. For instance, three of the activities we often use during our projects are "Three colours-cultures", "Malekulas" and "Building Bridges". These activities, although dressed in a playful language, are based on a similar mechanism – creating simulations which define different roles for separate groups (defined by behaviour, access to resources, thought or belief systems). Afterwards, these contrasting groups are put in the position of having to carry out a task with limited time and resources. Sometimes this task is deliberately difficult, in order to facilitate the emergence of misunderstandings and conflicts (but always *inside* the boundaries of the simulation itself). Using these kind of activities has remarkable advantages. The use of simulated situations keeps all participants more or less "safe" – they play the game by interpreting roles that they probably do not play in their daily life and they try to solve problems that look like real ones. These situations allow for the development of dynamics that appear to be close or identical to those experienced in everyday life. Through this theatrical approach, participants are able to experience the kind of disorientation someone arriving from a distant land feels when they face contradictions and misunderstandings in everyday life. Thus, if the activity works, every participant *indirectly* gets in touch with their 'self' as simulated experiences are *transferred* to real experience. The potential problem is when participants decide they do not wish to face his/her limits and keep themselves in the 'safe zone'. The game may be seen to be entertaining but it says nothing about what happens in real life.

THE BODYLINES

To diminish the voluntary or involuntary possibilities of running away, the other approach we use another type of simulation, this time directly based on creative and artistic mechanisms. It is possible to create an approach based on the body as training become a kind of neutral territory for theatricality since there is no goal to set up a show and create actors. Training privileges the process, the *pre-expressive* experience including: presence, listening, care, reacting to the space, the sounds and other bodies. It is possible to take time to practice exercises giving the space for individual's to fully observe themselves and thus, gain 'out of the ordinary' experiences via activities.

From this perspective, physical training gets it's meaning, not from simply being gymnastics, but an additional exercise of de-centering. Imagine, for instance, a "Tai-chi" sequence executed by people side to side, facing the same direction (as we would normally expect them to be). In this instance it is perceived as a relaxation or meditation practice, or possibly a dance. However, if we change their positions and place then in couples facing each other – introducing contact between the participants – the same identical sequence of movements becomes a fight, a real martial art, a relationship exercise.

The added value of the intercultural perspective is how the body can be seen as a boundary. As a

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boundary, we can conceive of how body techniques refer to implicit cultural models; how the body is a crossing between the biological, individual and the cultural; and how it is one of the essential instruments for the relationship between individual identity and collective culture. Once required to act in extraordinary, unusual ways, the body reveals the limits, closures and openings that have developed since our birth via processes of unconscious learning and enculturation. At the same time, physical training is able to activate presence as it heightens our attention to our own skills and possibilities.

For example, in the exercise "The guide and the blind", used in a project in Budapest in 2012, we facilitated the participants through a "disorienting". Participants were invited to walk with their eyes closed in a various bumpy territories where they were asked to stomp, touch, smell, taste materials of different textures, listen to noises, sounds, voices, or silence. It was an intimate journey, under the protection of a guide, followed not by vision but touch alone. This mutual relationship can range from safety to suffocation, from defence to total trust – completely down to individual perception but determined by the mutual relationship. This exploration can take place in an unknown or a familiar environment. In the latter, participants are able to build upon their existing knowledge of a familiar place via alternative senses as the typically dominant sense – vision – is not an option.

Furthermore, the body can also be the place to experiment change and cultural hybridization. For example, in a project in Turkey in 2011, we introduced a sequence called "Dancin' Pot)" (See picture Pag.61). This activity is based on the creation of a "culturally" shared sequence – a dance – followed by an exploration of diversity and a subsequent process of cultural hybridization. The main interest in this kind of activity lies specifically in the use of the body as a tool for developing relationships and exchange, without going through conventions and the flattening caused by "politically correct" attitudes.

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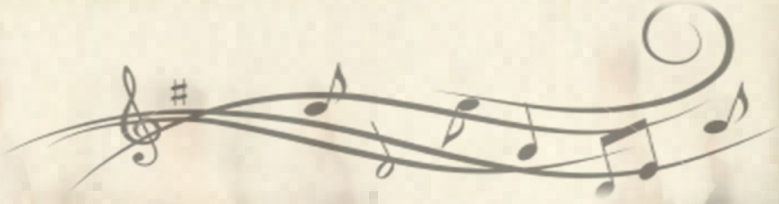
Dancin' pot

Throughout this exercise, exciting music must be played to encourage the couple to dance. So we have to choose some nice tunes. The songs should have a similar pace, to perform the same passes. It must have music continuously for about 30 minutes!



1 Invite participants to dance for a few minutes with the music, to understand what kind of dance it evokes in their bodies.

2 Then, without stopping the music, you invite participants to form pairs. Each couple, after a brief "dancing" acquaintance must invent and select (without talking!) 3-4 movements together, to create their dance routine.

3 Once they have established their routine you invite participants to practice their steps 3-4 times so that they can perform and teach it!

4 At this point, invite participants to break couples and form new ones.

5 In the new couple, invite participants to teach one another some of their moves to new partner - but without forcing the partner to execute any moves. The moves can change, depending on the new couple! Still no talking!

6 Invite couples to practice these changes in choreographic movements to assimilate the changes which will inevitably be influenced by the style of the new participant.

7 At this point participants go back to their initial couples. Invite participants to share the changes the "trip" has made.

8 It ends with dance in a circle: couples take turns in the centre to show off their dance moves in the new "hybrid" version.

Topics for discussion:
How did you feel when changing your movements? How did you feel when you returned to your original partner?
Is this an exercise related to intercultural exchange?
Are there are gains and / or losses in cultural hybridization?

To some degree, in these cases the activity is simulated but this is directed straight through the body. Thus, the reality element becomes much more present – I cannot disregard my body. My body is there to continuously testify whom I am and in what way I stand out from others. Working with and through the body allows us to appreciate, in a more direct way, the impact that these activities can have in daily life.

IS THERE A THIRD STAGE?

Every time we carry out a training project we become deeply immersed in a complex intercultural environment. Typically, the group of participants is composed of people from different nations and with different levels of expertise. The course is hosted in a country alien to the majority of participants and the work itself is carried out in a *lingua franca*, typically English, of which participants have varying degrees of understanding. It must be said, however, that in this whirlwind of cultural expressions, usually the contacts with the hosting country are so poor that they are almost irrelevant for the training course. There are some exceptions, especially when the place is characterised in ways impossible to ignore. For instance, during a course in Madeira in 2009, the environment was so engaging that many of the activities were organised outdoors. But in most cases, the strongest cultural presence is that of the trainers.

Nevertheless, the real differences in origin and identity between participants expresses itself most often outside of the 'training' space or in more social activities such as "international" nights (where every participant organises activities to present the place they live in) or in the working groups. Here we are not dealing with simulations or exercises about conflict management; we are talking about real conflicts, those we face every day, small clashes between participants that sometimes evolve into real quarrels. This has made us think that it is not at all easy or given that the precious insights and reflections reached during training activities are transferred to real life.

The point is that often, in simulations and exercises, there is a *grand absent*: our daily self. We realise that working on our own true self, on how we actually behave in our everyday life, is something extremely difficult and dangerous to tamper with during a single week's training course. Nevertheless, if theatrical work could be used in this sense, to work in an extraordinary way with our own daily self, we would succeed in transferring what we worked into daily life.

In a way, this is more similar to what happens when we work on the body. By definition, the body we exercise with and create with is our own; it is the same body we carry back home after training. Therefore, if we could work on our personal cultural conditioning, on our real identities, taking advantage of

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the opportunity to be immersed in a multicultural environment with theatrical tools at hand, maybe we could reach a point where we are no longer simulating or 'transferring' our work into everyday life as this gap no longer exists.

During the years, we developed several ideas to work on this with theatrical instruments and some of these ideas were experimented in practice. We will now briefly describe those we consider to be amongst the most interesting.

CREATIVE SYNTHESIS

Let us start with an example. In a project in London, in 2011, instead of the usual working groups we proposed working couples. Thus, we coupled the participants and asked them to develop a piece of work starting from individual suggestions. The constraint, the perturbation was the fact that the trainers assigned the partners – the participants could not choose whom they wanted to work with. One of these couples consisted of a young Swedish man, a dancer on the way to becoming a professional, and a young Slovakian woman, a fine arts student. In their individual suggestions they had referred to their own skills: the dancer executed a choreographed sequence that he probably knew very well, while the girl used her graphical abilities. Even though these individual propositions were well made, they clearly showed that neither had undergone any kind of articulated process, no real risk had been faced. In fact, it was for exactly this reason that we decided to put them together. We suggested to them that they try to explore something together that did not belong too much to either of them. The result, at the end of the project, was probably the best result among all the creative work we have seen throughout all these years. But, and this is the relevant point here, this result was reached *without making any reference to the skills the members of the couple already possessed*. The two actually decided to explore a performing dimension much closer to Theatre (but without using words), using one of the apartments where they slept during the residential course as their "set". The final piece was extremely evocative, featuring a special atmosphere that carried the observers inside an unknown family life, going beyond what was actually shown.

IF WE WERE TO NAME WHAT HAPPENED ON THAT OCCASION, WE WOULD PROBABLY CHOOSE THE TERM CREATIVE SYNTHESIS :

the possibility of finding a *third way* that is not a "compromise" between two points of view but an opening into or exploration of something unknown. This involves going towards the other without imposing ourselves and looking together for a creative way to collaborate.

TOUCHING THE TRUE IDENTITY

At the beginning of the 1940s, Gregory Bateson, defined the national character (in the essay "Morale and National Character", included in the well-known *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*) as a contrast between complementary themes, either dichotomous or threefold. He described national character as a relationship between groups, such as *dominance-submission, succorance-dependence, spectatorship-exhibitionism*, etc. We Italians, for example, are probably defined by the relationship between *cleverness-naivety* as we have a tendency to prefer the sly to the honest and we tend to judge our counterparts in this dichotomous way. But it just so happens that

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every once in a while, someone rejects this juxtaposition and they decide to become, unbelievably *honest*. This rejection can be located in the recognition of the system we have been caged into since birth which haphazardly rules our judgement. This awareness, unless it springs from some solitary epiphany, is usually gained through a comparison with the '*other*', for example, other countries.

We found the anecdote above relevant because they were not simulating: *they were actually working on their true identity.* What they did was not a game tout court, they did question their identities as "specialists" - the identities they had built up from years of study.

Over the years, we realized that training that ends up working on the actual participants' identity can be a powerful drive for change and critical thinking. With the work on the body we described above we can get close to reaching this level, but what we are talking about here is something that includes an awareness not necessarily present in the physical work. Training courses with participants coming from different cultures offer the ideal setting to develop awareness about our own differences, as we mentioned at the beginning – it is exactly when I am immersed among diverse people that my origins are more clearly revealed.

We have to admit that *direct* work on personal identity is something we have carried out a number of times, even if Theatre offers countless exercises to play with who we are in our daily life. It is would possible to think about activities as the exaggeration of our own national characters. Using an approach based on role-play (à là Robert Landy), we could play on the stereotypes a country has about its *own members*, etc. We could organise many more activities relating to the place hosting the training course, to emerge participants into another 'everyday life' that would make their own differences emerge. Through such experiences we begin to pick up on the dichotomous systems addressed by Bateson, not necessarily to encourage research into a *third way*, but to enhance the awareness of the boundaries that define us. To discover *whom we are children of,* to paraphrase Grotowski.

However, experience tells us that maybe a direct approach to these issues is not for everybody. We would need participants to be prepared to enter into a journey that would question what they feel to be certain without any kind of filter. Perhaps, such a result is already reached via *indirect* approaches: whoever has ears to hear, whoever is ready to undergo a deep reflection about him/herself, is already able to begin this journey with the indirect and creative activities we propose in our trainings. In other words, our experience tells us that, who needs to reflect about him/herself, will find it, without the necessity to work directly on it.

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10 cameras do not make a good video
Ancient INCA maxim

3 BEAMERS

THEATRE AND VIDEO IN YOUTH WORK

To write about theatre and recordings – whom, on one hand happen *hic et nunc,* through the elusive instant of theatrical doing, and on the other, become crystallised in more or less stable snippets of memory – is undoubtedly to deal with an oxymoron, a rhetorical figure that indicates the incompatibility of opposites. Moreover, the recording of live performance poses problems that once cast and still continue to cast doubts within our team. In fact, audiovisual recording is a sort of contradiction in itself, not only because theatre performance lives here and now, but also because it is emotionally perceived through binocular vision and stereophonic audio, and it is delivered to the spectators in this way. Contrastingly, audiovisual recording always presents a subjective and partial point of view. To get over this contradiction, programming methodically the actions, interventions, spaces and software programs, is an interesting challenge both artistically and pedagogically.

Our research on theatre and audiovisuals begun when we realised that, in the first projects carried out by INCA, our digital media experts' competences were limited to marginal roles. They were no doubt important, but not essential to the training process. The audiovisual part of these projects

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was confined to documenting the activities or to small installations and V-Jing. The presence of cameras and technological tools in training courses, along with the research and the discussions amongst INCA trainers resulted in the proposal of the first course allowing theatre (in it's widest sense, including: circus, physical expression, etc.) to directly interact with audiovisuals. A key feature of INCA training courses is the *experimental* element. The decision to combine these two artistic languages was almost spontaneous, since our courses were already working hybrids of physical theatre and clown, theatre and circus, interactive theatre and clown and Theatre of the Oppressed and physical expression. Moreover, in the international scene, we started to get passionate with a kind of theatre-based research using video as an integral part of performances, as a mixture of artistic languages. However, we believe that only on rare occasions, was this integration successful. Indeed, it is not surprising that we faced a number of difficulties in managing the relationship between projections, screens, specific lighting, and the presence of acting bodies.

However, perhaps this is the wrong position to start from as using two techniques does not equate to using two different languages. As in Pina Bausch's "Tanztheater", it is not about dancing in a piece of theatre or acting in a dance performance. Instead, it is about assimilating the grammars of the two languages to create a new one and this is the main challenge. With Pina Bausch dance stopped its upward drive, it's strive for aesthetical perfection and learned theatrical conflicts, allowing it to fall, to turn its glance downwards. It became ordinary and extraordinary at the same time through discovering something new and inspiring. This is the added value of fusing two methodologies. It is not the combination of two separate languages, but the assimilation, from both sides, of those magnetising elements, to generate a third, new possibility.

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Let us put some things in order. Firstly, we need to clarify the fundamental differences between the theatrical and the audiovisual languages. Theatre is a warmer language, because it deals with physical presence and the body is the main channel for information. On the other hand, in video, the information passes through a "reproduction" channel, detached from the organic part of presence and the space in which the spectators watch the theatrical action (sometimes moving in doing so). Video is a "reproduction" of reality which evokes emotions, images and visions in a different way to theatre. This difference is not only concerned with theatre and video, but also audio. The role played by audio in video should not be forgotten, for this reason, we speak of audiovisual language.

To discuss the use of theatre and audiovisual in social projects for youth, we speak directly to INCA's experience. We set our trainers the challenge of articulating theatre and video, to add a new artistic language to those already used in projects with a direct focus on training. Over the years, we have realised that the use of video is more attractive than theatre in projects with youngsters with from different kinds of disadvantaged backgrounds (economic, social, cultural, etc.). Video is a tool that is able to involve youngsters more than theatre, and therefore, appear to be an easier code to crack. The audiovisual code can hardly exclude the use of technology (while theatre can be practiced without any specific technological and/or material resources) and certainly the seduction of contemporary *techné* plays a major role in contemporary youth culture, which can consequently pose a risk for trainers, as we shall see later.

As previously mentioned, the INCA methodology started from the idea of making use of the specific skills that we already possessed as trainers. In our first projects, the audiovisual element was used only as a form of documentation, to demonstrate through images what was happening during the activities, which at that time were more focused on theatre, circus, and animation. From there, the interest of both the theatrical and

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audiovisual staff generated the need to bring theatre and video together. If theatre and video are regarded as two different languages, our artistic objective is to create a dialogue between the two and thereby, understand their points of interaction and how they can address social issues in order to arrive at synthesis of the two languages. We do not consider the social use of theatre and audiovisual together as an essential union when compared to the use of theatre or audiovisuals alone. We do not mean to claim that theatre without audiovisuals cannot be a useful tool for social change or *viceversa.*

EXERCISES OF DIALOGUE

In relation to creating this 'dialogue', our best results have been obtained when the two techniques have been used to explore a social issue within a concrete context. For instance, during the project "I-migrate" the participants created various pieces of invisible theatre to provoke certain reactions in the local community. The goal was to analyse how the topic of immigration was dealt with by local passers-by in the street. The street actions were filmed, as was the whole process, and therefore we had plenty of audiovisual material. Such audiovisual materials can be used in an *artistic* ways, as forms of documentation, or in more abstract forms. However, this was not the final objective for the "I-migrate" project. Instead, audiovisual techniques were used to gather information, to understand if the community was ready to reflect on its immigration issues, and what kind of tools it had to face them.

In another project using theatre and audiovisuals in Benevento, Italy, we visited an immigration centre, in order to see how the city was ready to welcome them and to give them information. This visit was recorded and then shown to the public that came to see the participants' work. In another project we looked at the issue of disability. Participants went to speak with local politicians, who were interviewed and shown images shot beforehand about architectural barriers in Benevento. In this case, one audiovisual tool, photography, was used as an instrument to denounce discrimination again disabled individuals.

In intercultural work, theatre and audiovisual techniques allow participants to work together on a topic and gather information in order to create subsequent actions.

Audiovisual techniques are most frequently used as dissemination tools to share experiences with others. When audiovisual techniques are used in this way, the main danger is that the work may be developed in

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a superficial way. One needs to be technically well prepared to avoid turning the work in some sort of *candid camera*, a joke, or making the whole process too muddled.

When using audiovisuals with theatre during INCA social projects, we normally encounter a number of difficulties. The main difficulty, as aforementioned, is creating a dialogue between the two languages and creating one superior to the simple sum of the two. This matter not only pertains to social projects, but it is part of the artistic domain as well. Another difficulty is linked to the different participants' background which inevitably conditions their approach to the project. Participants with a theatrical background have a much more physical approach, linked to the body; whilst participants from an audiovisual background always keep themselves focused on the "digital" aspects. Indeed, the cold part of audiovisuals and the warmth of theatre is present in every project and we must be careful to balance these two aspects.

We then have to keep the very important element of INCA's educational experience into account. In INCA's team there has been more research,

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and therefore more experience, in the use of theatre as a social tool, of its use in different kinds of artistic, social, or training projects, compared to audiovisuals. In our teams, there are usually more trainers from the theatre domain and as a result, from its beginning, INCA has grown much more organically in this domain. There is always greater exchange of opinions within the same theatre 'group' and more confrontations as well as propositions. In the audiovisual domain, there are always limits, linked to the trainers using it (who are always outnumbered by the theatre trainers) and to the different educational approaches used in every project as well as its obvious technical limitations. This strong theatre side, featuring several methodologies, can often overpower the audiovisual side which is still very much in a research stage. The result is that generally the audiovisual part is pulled by theatre. However, we have had projects when the opposite has been the case. For example, in the project "DO YOUth WORK?" the main objective was creating four short films about youth unemployment and voluntary work. From the beginning, this project was based on audiovisual techniques, still including theatre and on-screen acting. In this project we reached a satisfying balance between the use of theatre and audiovisual techniques as working methods.

When considering the learning process that a audiovisual participant can complete during a training project using audiovisuals, the most important element is learning to create a relationship with other people using a different artistic language (theatre). This happens especially during the creative process and the presentation of a product including both languages. Entering in contact with another language (theatre, in our case) enriches the tools brought by audiovisual participants. S/he obviously learns the same things about group dynamics and how to propose his/her ideas – the process of intercultural learning is the same.

Sometimes, participants from the theatrical side, with no knowledge of audiovisuals, imagine and propose ideas to the audiovisual participants that are practically unfeasible. It is necessary for all participants in a project to "experiment" with both instruments, having a direct experience of them and being able to help one another.

A final danger about building a dialogue between theatre and audiovisuals is in relation to the trainers. It is possible that the objective of integrating the two working methods gets lost, due to the *seduction* that can arise from audiovisual tools. On many occasions, we have had to refocus the attention of a fellow trainer who has begun to lose him/herself in a world of projections, digital media, audio and of the *satisfaction* that digital medium can offer. We always have to keep in mind that the

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objective of the activities is training and that aesthetics, even if it rules the whole process, has to serve the training goals we set. Therefore, we must be wary of splashing a good video in a final event, finding a technical *escamotage* as a filler during a presentation, or devoting more time to video than participants as this can make us lose sight of our educational goals.

To conclude, we would like to share a funny anecdote about a theatre and video INCA project. In Benevento, we were shooting a documentary on the theme of waste. Different *working groups,* all including a local participant, were ask to go around the city to shoot images and interview the locals about the topic. One of these groups of participants (including Lithuanians, Romanians and one Brazilian) filmed in a closed rubbish dump under seizure. The *carabinieri* (a kind of Italian police) showed up (as someone had called them) and told the group that it was forbidden to shoot videos there. They started asking for IDs and we told the Brazilian participant to stay in the car, since we knew that he had a problem with his passport and he was not allowed to enter in Italy. The *carabinieri* said to the Lithuanian (EU citizen) that he had no permission to be in Italy and they made them delete the images they had shot. An illuminating experience to say the least.

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"What interested me mostly in the artistic research to find a meeting point between theatre and audiovisuals was the experience of sharing, facing, and fighting with different artistic visions, to then find and build bridges between them. It filled me with enthusiasm – this is creation!"

"The added value of dealing with social topics through theatre and audiovisuals for me lies mainly in the fact that they offer many tools to work on the theme of communication. Not only oral or visual, but also linked to the other senses (touch, smell, etc.). Communication is the first step to deal with social topics, and in my daily work with abused and socially excluded women, these tools are priceless."

"I consider this methodology (theatre and audiovisuals in NFE) very important and I evaluate very positively the use that INCA makes of it in its projects. It is very important that different learning techniques are spread, able to go beyond the limits of formal education."

Leonie Harvey-Rolfe

"The most interesting point for me about the contact between theatre and audiovisuals was how to deal with the psychological maze we enter when we have to work with people having very different artistic backgrounds, and the reflection it triggers about the possible applications in real life."

"To deal with social topics through these artistic forms has an added value in the fact that working with these tools helps to take different perspectives and to be flexible, that is the basi sto reach social agreement."

"I consider this methodology (theatre and audiovisuals in NFE) extremely relevant and it is very positive the use that INCA makes of it: Looking for alternative solutions to real problems, in a funny way and starting from experimentation, active research, and mutual collaboration."

Maria Cerviño Ruíz

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“My main interest in looking for a point of contact between theatre and audiovisuals is basically the idea of telling the various aspects of a story through a variety of different means and genres, enhancing freedom of choice in our personal understanding of that story. The use of live-action shooting and animation, soundscaping and sound design coupled with light design are serving this interest about telling new sides of the story, as does acting or performing.”

“The added value in the use of these instruments (theatre and audiovisuals) when we deal with social topics is the universality of language: in an animation, image is usually more important than spoken word, allowing people of all classes and languages (diverse even in a similar culture) to understand the main ideas transmitted through the image.”

“Theatre and audiovisuals in NFE are an interesting methodology, closed to the one used by Onion Lullaby in some key-aspects, as the transmission of a universal meaning followed by a specific meaning of images.”

William Adams

“Theatre can be much richer with the use of audiovisuals. Contemporary art for me is any kind of art that is completed by other arts. Every kind of art needs the other art to define itself as contemporary.”

“Facing social themes using theatre and audiovisuals allows to generate a mixture of experiences and knowledge between different backgrounds.”

“It is very different the way INCA uses the audiovisual media to reveal experiences, personalities, and artistic backgrounds, that would otherwise remain hidden in the performing event. And this generates a strong and stimulating social impact.”

Vera Mormino

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This implication of the positive management of conflicts
is hard to grasp, even more so to digest:
in addition to being able to manage my discomfort well,
the thing in itself challenging,
to some extent I also have to
know how to help the other to manage his discomfort.
R. Tecchio

MANAGING CONFLICTS

A conflict. In theatre there is no action without conflict, a clash between different characters in the narrative, between a character and himself, or between a state of affairs and a desire. There is no theatre without conflict. As in the theatre, no INCA activity has ever been done without some kind of conflict, albeit small, between some of the participants, including the trainers, between a trainer and a participant, with the support staff, the organisation, and international partners, even with the institutions that finance the projects. This is because conflict itself is inherent to human relationships. Conflicts between people have always and will always exist. Generally, attitudes towards a conflict can take two forms: one negative, which leads us to see the conflict as solvable only with our victory or our defeat, and another positive, which leads us to interpret the conflict in a constructive way, that offers the opportunity to grow and improve human relations. A positive attitude toward conflict is definitely the most pedagogical, and despite the efforts that this entails, it is always the position that an INCA trainer takes. The question therefore is not whether the conflict is positive or negative, the question is whether it is perceived and addressed in a positive or negative way as violence, of whatever form, is always negative.

• • • AMONGST PARTICIPANTS

In international activities, the mere fact that participants are in contact with such diverse personalities, characters and cultures will always generate conflict dynamics within the group. A different tone of voice, a gesture that is familiar to one but not to another,

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jokes and attitudes that make only some people laugh whilst others may get angry or frustrated. In moments of informal activity, the methods of intervention used to resolve such issues depends very much on the character of each trainer and how much they decide to "teach". The trainer must behave as they see fit. For example, in most cases, intervention is unnecessary as the situation can be resolved amongst participants themselves. For a project it is important that a pleasant environment is generated, but it is not essential that everyone is friends with one another.

In the workroom, however, when we are busy and we are all vulnerable, a small disagreement can degenerate into attitudes of closure or aggression, causing the whole group to suffer. In this context, the trainer must intervene with that positive attitude mentioned earlier, facilitating a process of growth and learning, for himself as much as the participants. It is rare that a conflict between two parties is manifested in front of everyone during an activity. Typically, these situations remain latent, but can easily escalate and begin to affect the group as a whole. In general, the best time to intervene in these conflicts is during the focus groups at the end of the day (see below for a detailed description).

The situation is different when it comes to a conflict that arises between two or more participants in a small workgroup. The pedagogical objective of participants working in small groups is to promote cooperation between them as a task must be accomplished together. When participants are divided into working groups, there are always differences of opinion; everyone is convinced that their idea is the best, the most beautiful or the most effective. There are always discussions, attitudes and stubbornness. Here, the trainer can intervene in several ways. You can observe from the outside, "hidden" from participants, accompanying the process from a distance. You may identify some points on which they agree and then suggest discussing more complex solutions in the focus groups later. You may act in a more "direct" way, perhaps accompanying the group in its work step by step, to help them come to a consensus. If this is the case, you are able to deal with conflict head on, putting the situation out to the group and attempting to clarify the situation all together.

The "hidden" method to accompany a conflict in a working group is perhaps the one that, although sometimes more risky, allows the group to grow together. As they get closer to the point of crisis, they are able to seize the opportunity that this offers to bring about their own learning process, to improve human relations and to achieve their goals as a "group." In one of the last of training courses held by INCA, the group of trainers had been facing a difficult situation that had arisen in a workgroup. The task at hand was to prepare a small performance scene on a specific subject (youth work), using theatrical and audiovisual elements. In the working group in question, various conflicts had arisen, due to several factors: cultural (participants came from very different countries); generational (some participants were much older than others); gender (there was only one male participant in the group and he also happened to be the oldest); character (the participants had strong personalities); and of course artistic aesthetic (the proposals of the participants were very divergent). After a busy, but totally unproductive, day of work the group, all on the verge of nervous breakdowns, approached to trainers to ask for their intervention. The trainers invited the group to take advantage of the opportunity that was offered to them by this situation – to think about how difficult it is to work in groups and present this reflection to the other participants, of course, in the form of a performance. Despite some doubts, the group accepted the challenge posed by the trainers and at the time of presentation it was one of the most

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successful scenes (an example of creative synthesis). In addition, it was a special experience for the participants in the group in understanding how to deal with "conflicting" personalities and undertake a process of self-awareness that, although sometimes painful, allows us to grow as people.

THINK TANKS

Over the years, INCA has developed various tactics to successfully manage the conflicts that inevitably arise when working in a group. Many of these are so intricate and dependent on personal feeling that they cannot be described in a text like this. However, one of the most valuable tools that we have developed is a strategic element integral to the agenda of each training course, which we refer to as 'thinks tanks'. Despite their name, the function of these groups goes beyond mere reflection. They become a safe place where you can openly discuss issues with other participants and trainers in order to make assessments and develop your own emo-

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tional reactions and those of others. To use this tool effectively, you must keep a few basic rules in mind.

A reflection group is a subgroup of participants (usually no more than 5-6), led by a trainer who dedicates every evening, before dinner, a time varying between 30 and 60 minutes to evaluate the activities undertaken in the previous 24 hours. Each participant in a focus group is then invited to mentally retrace all these activities and to reflect on what happened, including their own reactions and those of others. This reflection focuses on your emotional experience, how you felt during the activities – the hard times and the good times. During a training course, think tanks are always formed by the participants themselves but are guided every day by a different member of training team. For example, for a three day course, participants will be divided into four groups – alpha, beta, gamma, delta – each consisting of 5-6 participants. On the first day trainer A will work with group alpha, then on the second with group beta etc. Trainer B will start with group beta, then work with group gamma the next day and so on. We have learned from experience that people are more likely to open up and tell the truth about their feelings and emotions when in a smaller group. The rotation of trainers contributes to conveying to participants that they are part of a compact team and also provides the opportunity for trainers to have closer contact with all participants.

During the course of the groups, the trainer usually guides the evaluation usually with the aid of specific methods or metaphors that stimulate and articulate reflection (e.g. comparing the day to a dish or a panorama and asking participants to justify their choice). Although the facilitator invites everyone to share his or her opinion, no one is forced to do so. The trainer's role is generally to thought-provoke and listen, even if participants request direct advise from him / her. A special role of the trainer in this context is to identify and encourage participants to share their own hardships with others and the conflicts that have arisen. In short, what they did not like about the previous activities. This process must often circumvent the tendency to be politically correct, encouraging participants to express the unpleasant and negative aspects of their experience.

Immediately after the conclusion of these think tanks, trainers gather and share within the team what happened in each group, through the opinion of each participant. This meeting is often quite long and is a moment trainers dedicate to understanding the dynamics of the group and what this means for the ongoing programming of the project.

In short, the focus groups are a way to allow participants to share what they are going through, positively address the conflicts that have arisen with participants and a trainer. At the same time, the groups offer trainers the opportunity to come into close contact with the participants, recording their reactions in order to tailor the programming of the following activities. In small groups it is much easier to talk about individual feelings and deal with situations where maybe we need to refer to an experienced project trainer. Here, the trainer can assert their more "educational" skills in order to fix individual issues with participants and they may propose an activity which aims to work directly on the theme of the conflict in question. In extreme situations, along with their fellow trainers, trainers can make some hard decisions, such as preventing certain participants from working close together. The general welfare of the group and individual well-being of each participant is a balancing act that requires constant attention.

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AMONGST TRAINERS

Although in the eyes of the participants it may seem like the trainers are in perfect agreement, a great deal of conflict occurs between trainers. This may seem obvious, but in front of participants it is better that, as conventional wisdom teaches, "the dirty clothes are washed in the family." Thus, in the workroom and during the activities, meals and informal moments, we hold off our differences. In private, however, in an almost parallel dimension in the trainer's rooms, it is essential to deal with any conflicts with our colleagues and resolve them as soon as possible. Clearly, if two or more trainers' opinions diverge, they may try to conceal this but the participants will realise sooner or later, which will consequently have an impact on their position and the group in general. It is important to make a distinction between a "difference of opinion" over a practical aspect of the programme of activities, the evaluation of a specific item, or a personal conflict. If we were to agree on everything, we would be underestimating the task, we would be unprofessional in not assuming responsibility to work the best for the project, and we would be disrespecting the participants. If the trainer asks the participants to always be active, then we must do the same - we ourselves must always give a good example.

The discussions arising between the trainers over disagreements on certain programmed activities are the basis to grow both as training professionals, and as people. In some cases, the divergence of opinion

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amongst trainers is shared with all participants, and thus all clothes must be washed "in public"! Indeed, it can sometimes be useful to offer participants the opportunity to reflect on their opinion when they have more than one point of view. However, this method is very risky and we would not recommend using it, as it can lead to confusion amongst the participants and the questioning of the trainers' authority.

However, things change if we speak of personal conflicts instead of professional disagreements. The reasons may be different, but the substance remains the same: we may be best friends with all the trainers we work with, but it is our duty to create a pleasant working environment. Therefore, we must be able to separate the problem from the person and not to customise situations of conflict. Even if we were to act to mediate a conflict, we must be objective and be friendly to all other colleagues, as we must not forget that our priority is the group and activity.

A feature of the INCA team of trainers is that, in addition to being professionals who love their work, they are also a group of old friends. The friendship between trainers can be an advantage; it allows us to solve personal issues with a smile and a handshake (plus the group receives an example of team spirit that goes beyond mere professionalism). However, it can also be a big handicap as we must not allow external factors to adversely affect our private lives in an educational activity.

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BETWEEN PARTICIPANTS AND TRAINERS

When a conflict is generated between a participant and a trainer, the situation is more complex, since the imbalance of "power" that exists between the two can aggravate the situation. Sometimes it is not an actual conflict, but a simple misunderstanding, that can be resolved quickly by simple clarification. Sometimes the way in which *feedback* is delivered to a participant or its content can generate a negative reaction, or the characters of a trainer and a certain participant can simply clash. As similarly recognised between participants, a trainer may say something to a participant who may, for cultural, linguistic or non-verbal communication perceived this as an attack when it may be nothing more than a joke, a humorous way of passing on a message. The character and the cultural background of each person involved in a training programme is a world unto itself, a universe along with many other universes. If a trainer is personally and directly involved in a clash between his world and that of a participant, it is their responsibility to resolve the issue, they cannot wait for the participant to take the first move. As no trainer is perfect, sometimes we ourselves make mistakes. In these situations the support of our colleagues is essential in getting us to notice our error, as we are able to talk openly with them and explain our point of view. Nevertheless, this does not mean that it is our sole responsibility to resolve the situation with the individual concerned.

As we have seen, conflicts are an inevitable part of international projects. There is no golden rule that guides you in resolving conflicts; it is rather the attitude that is generated towards such situations that is important. It's not a value judgement, clearly demarcating who is wrong and who is right. We are all involved, participants and trainers, in a learning process that develops not only specific skills or knowledge, but also the general values on which we characterise people in society. It is the responsibility of the trainers to accompany the participants through this learning process.

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THE FEEDBACK

When done in the right way and with the right intention, providing feedback can pave the way to great results. Participants must know what they are doing well and what needs to be improved. They must be able to really understand our thoughts and advice on how to improve, at the same time as playing a useful role in the process. Feedback should be given carefully and frequently. Giving feedback effectively is a skill and, like all skills, it requires practice in order to build confidence and pave the way for real improvement. To nip conflicts in the bud and cultivate a good work environment you need to offer feedback in a wary but intelligent way.

Giving and receiving feedback maintains contact with others and provides an opportunity to modify the actions based on the reactions of others. Now, what exactly is feedback? The definition below is rather broad and includes some technicalities given that the concept originates from cybernetics.

Giving feedback in interpersonal communication means to provide an individual or a group with a review of what has occurred, the experience that the participants had, and expose it without any judgment about the people involved. The trainer can feel good or bad about the behaviour of the participant, but it is important that not only positive or negative comments are offered. These two types of feedback are equally important as they both offer different possibilities for improvement. It is important to choose the right time for feedback. You should not wait too long after the moment in question, but at the same time you must make sure that there has been time for the experience to "cool down".

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There are several reasons why we may need feedback. For example, when someone's behaviour has had an impact on the dynamics of the group in a positive or negative way. INCA's team cares about offering feedback so that it can always be well accepted and processed by the group. In doing so, the tricky part is that it is not always easy to assess and appreciate diversity, whilst looking for quality. It is difficult for trainers as we also have fairly clear ideas of what we like and do not like.

In a project in Italy in 2008, we watched mini-theatre performances created by the participant on the basis on an activity called "fears and expectations". Then, during the feedback, we asked them to carry out some personal tasks, inspired by their performance. Each task was given in accordance with or in opposition to what they had shown. For example, a girl had presented a mini-show connected to her bad habits and her desire to abandon them. The girl, despite being quite young, wore highly distinctive make-up. We suggested she stopped using make-up for the duration of the course. Imagine how, for someone who regularly uses make-up in her everyday life, this request must have been very challenging. She accepted the task and succeeded. At the end of the course she said that this experience helped her to reflect on something related to her everyday life. In this case, the feedback involved a change in behaviour for a limited period of time. But at the same time, it had also triggered a personal reflection outside of the training course. This shows that sometimes, individual feedback is required and can enhance rather than stifle the value of the proposal in both the theatrical and personal realm.

Receiving feedback can be a difficult exercise. It should always be kept in mind that any comment on our behaviour must be an act of generosity. However offered, it is always reasonable to look for the essence of sincerity contained in a piece of feedback. In recent years we have noticed that if feedback is given in a decisive manner, for example to correct unfair or disrespectful behaviour, it is essential that the trainer responds to participants in a way that does not make things worse. Sometimes, for example, the trainer may suggest postponing the debate. This allows the trainer/participant to calm down and share concerns with confidence.

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NO DIAGNOSIS AND GOOD TIMING

As a team we try to ensure that feedback is always presented with reference to specific characteristics, behaviours or results, never referring to specific individuals. The feedback must always relate to what people do and not who they are, as feedback is not a diagnosis and our role as educators is to suggest solutions to transform actions. The formulation of feedback requires attention, it must be clear in every sentence that we are taking into consid-

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eration what people have done, always leaving space to suggests ways to improve. In a project in Austria in 2011, a young woman took some comments as a personal criticism, and soon after, left the room in the middle of the session. We decided to leave her alone for the moment. When she returned, we interpreted her return as an expression of a good attitude towards the possibility of improving the quality of the work.

Feedback completely loses its value if it is given without the ability to apply what has been suggested. It is therefore essential to give more space for those 'corrections' to be made after giving feedback. It is equally important not to fall into the opposite error where you are not giving any corrections. The feedback must be communicated in a way which is intended to demonstrate points of improvement, and should therefore have clear evaluation purposes. This is possible if an evaluation is not a mere description. However, the assessment cannot simply be articulated as "good vs. bad", but rather about why something is more or less valid.

Normally we try to avoid terms that produce emotional reactions or that might increase the likelihood of people becoming defensive. When we have come across this type of reaction, we discussed the reaction itself, rather than trying to convince, reason, or provide additional information. If you are relieved of your "defences", you must use alternative strategies. We have noticed that it is more fruitful to deal with emotional reactions in an indirect way. Very often, emotional reactions to feedback are managed outside of the room, in a more private space. The reflection groups are usually an optimal situation to manage these reactions, but sometimes an even more private and protected space is needed. For example, in a project in Budapest in 2010, we addressed some individual reactions during dinner or in private meetings with some of the participants.

Typically, the feedback is most effective when given as soon as possible after the event, occasionally evaluating whether it should be given in the session itself or in private (as some aspects of performance necessitates more discretion). Usually the participants tend to crave instant feedback, but, as we mentioned above, there are some comments that are much more effective if some distance is given between the moment in question and feedback. Other times, feedback can be given to the whole group even if directed at specific participants, giving them the opportunity to receive the message indirectly.

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BEING SPECIFIC

Feedback should be given in terms of specific actions or behaviours, its effect on the process of formation or results of the project, activity or exercise. This is key to understanding the effectiveness of feedback. Theatrically speaking, this is a very common problem in the dialogue between directors and actors.

People are not fully aware of their behaviour and often it is impossible to have direct control over it. In a project in London in 2011, during the training, quite a large number of participants were doing physical exercises looking at the floor. This behaviour hindered the development of relations between them during the exercises and fostered feelings of inadequacy and awkwardness between them. After a couple of direct invitations to observe the others while they were doing the exercises together, their gaze was spontaneously raised when they were asked to "steal movements" (copy what others were doing).

Similarly, it is completely ineffective to give vague comments on the work of participants, without a clear and simple task. Comments like "do it better", "more carefully", "do not sleep" or the like, have very little effect on most people, and are often interpreted too personally. It is much more effective to assign a simple additional task to be performed during the exercises. Of course, this requires sensitivity in order to differentiate the activities that have better effects on different participants. It is amazing how the right task can greatly increase the quality of someone's work. If the feedback relates to a performance, it should include a discussion of what are considered to be the points of "high" and "low" quality and the specific behaviours that may contribute to limit them or make them more effective. When it comes to problematic areas, normally we try to encourage the group to find ways of improving their performance themselves but if necessary, we will give direct suggestions. Discussion can lead to creating a specific plan to achieve solutions. The feedback related to the behaviours of the group or an individual can include advice on how to develop or organise alternative actions.

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THE ROLE OF THE TRAINER

Perceptions, reactions and opinions of the team of trainers regarding the process of the project or specific behaviours of the group members are generally identified as opinions and not as fact. This is even more important on the occasions when the trainers do not agree amongst themselves. In a project in London in 2012, there were some disagreements between trainers on how creativity in different types of work should be used and for what purpose. We decided that the diversity of opinions that we shared were more useful to stimulate discussion amongst the participants. We then presented our differing opinions, without hiding the potential conflicts. We were unable to reach an agreement (between trainers, nor between participants), but we were able to recognise our differences in a way that would not have been possible if they

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had not been expressed openly. Sometimes, when we try to force an agreement, we create a much deeper and disturbing conflict. We must never forget that the things we repress inevitably return to us in the form of the uncanny.

CONCLUSIONS

After so many years, we whole-heartedly agree that feedback is a two way street. It is essential to know how to ensure its effectiveness and how to make it constructive. When we consciously chose to give feedback on a regular basis, we do it with the belief that feedback is a powerful means of personal development. Done correctly, feedback should not be agonising, demoralising or daunting and the more you practice the better you become at giving it. For some of us, it will never be our preferred way to communicate to participants but the skilful use of feedback has the potential to make the project a success. In the final analysis, the ultimate goal of feedback is to produce better work, not to deny it. Answers too positive or too negative are equally un-useful as they are unlikely to develop our work. All these points must be considered when giving feedback as a trainer.

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The separation between science and art is not only objectively wrong, but it is also detrimental if you take it seriously. It subtracts to science a pleasing shape (of which Galileo was concerned) and to art its content.
Paul Karl Feyerabend

ADDENDUM: THEATRE AND SCIENCE

Art and science have always been considered independent from one another. Art is identified with creativity, imagination and freedom of expression and on the other hand, science is seen as something hard, difficult, tedious and repetitive. However, science is also research, a challenge or a game. Art can also be very technical, tiring, and repetitive. You have to be resourceful, inquisitive, free to be able to grasp the wonders of nature to which we belong. All major scientific discoveries are born from insights generated by leaps of imagination, which later grow into true works of art. Thus, science can be regarded as a collection of works of art.

The purpose of combining these two worlds is to put art at the service of science and vice versa, reproducing natural phenomena in order to understand them in a new and original artistic context. This actively involves the visitor – the public – in a process of interactive participation that will lead them, not only to "carrying out experiments," but also to take part in the experimental process itself, be it a theatrical performance or video. Through projects, installations, interactive experiments and theatre performances, art is weaved into science revealing its poetic side and shrugging (even if just a little) its proverbial, but unfortunately unfounded perceptions of science as a cold and aloof incomprehensible subject of study.

Joint work on the two methods offers added value. In combining theatre and science the foundation of active participation is created, encouraging the young and the old to innovate and create science itself via theatre as a means of expression. The idea of using theatre and science together in intercultural projects stems from a practical need to generate an under-

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standing of different scientific phenomena, tickling at our innate human curiosity which is so often stifled by unfounded feelings of inadequacy in understanding the wonders of nature. The best way to begin this journey lies in the active participation of individuals in the discovery of the phenomena themselves; not a mere (and often incorrect) description and explanation via a cold equation that translates such phenomenon into mathematics. Instead, via represetations of such phenemena (and even sometimes the process that determines that equation) through an installation, an opera or a play for example, our curiosity if arousned and this wonder creates a desire to understand and comprehend the mechanism that generated it.

To understand the value of the relationship between theatre and science in social projects, we would like to quote the words of Frank Oppenheimer, founder of the most famous science centre in the world, the Exploratorium:

"WE SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT PEOPLE FEEL THEY CAN UNDERSTAND THE WORLD AROUND THEM. MANY PEOPLE HAVE GIVEN UP WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING AND IF YOU SURRENDER TO UNDERSTAND THE PHYSICAL WORLD WAIVER ALSO TO UNDERSTAND THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL WORLD. AND IF YOU STOP AND YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE THINGS AROUND US CONTINUES TO CHANGE, WELL, I THINK THAT SOONER OR LATER IT WILL SINK."

One of the most succesful projects of this type, was most definitely "Science on Stage", an experimental piece of theatre exploring a world of renewable energies through performance and most significantly, music. With this route we created a short theatrical performance focused on alternative energy, stimulating the public's curiosity, showing how some seemingly "magical" products are created from different types of energy such as: solar, chemical, electromagnetic and mechanical. In the following phase, the public was invited to experience this at firsthand in the same space of the play, in order to discover the causes and phenomena related to actual scenes of the performance.

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THE EUROPEAN YOUTH FOUNDATION OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Today, the Council of Europe, based in Strasbourg (France) brings together, with its 47 member states, almost all the countries of the European continent. Established on the 5th May, 1949 by its 10 founding members, the Council of Europe aims to encourage the creation of a democratic and legal common in Europe, in compliance with the European Convention of Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of the individual.

The European Youth Foundation (EYF) was established in 1972 by the Council of Europe to provide financial support for European youth activities. The EYF has an annual budget of approximately € 3 million. Since 1972, more than 300 000 young people, aged between 15 and 30 years, predominantly from the member countries, have benefitted directly from the activities supported by the EYF. Its purpose is to encourage cooperation amongst young people in Europe by providing financial support to European youth activities which aim to promote peace, understanding, cooperation and respect for the fundamental values of the Council of Europe, such as human rights, democracy, tolerance and solidarity.

The EYF thus provides financial support for the following types of activities carried out by non-governmental youth organizations and national and international platforms (as well as other non-governmental structures involved in youth work) which relate to the Council of Europe's youth policy. These include:

- educational events which demonstrate the cultural, social and humanitarian character of Europe;
- activities aimed at strengthening peace and cooperation in Europe;
- activities to promote closer cooperation and better understanding amongst young people in Europe, particularly by developing the exchange of information;
- activities intended to stimulate mutual aid in Europe and in developing countries for cultural, educational and social services;

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- studies, research and documentation of youth issues.

The EYF offers NGOs the opportunity to apply for different types of grants, each with its own specific purpose, rules and expectations.

- International activities: Meetings of young people and youth workers in Europe, which contribute to the work of the Council of Europe's youth sector through its subject matter, the methodology used, and with a clear European dimension (individual publications are no longer eligible).

- Workplans: a series of activities for the following year (or subsequent years), which include international activities, pilot activities and also publications (including the development of web pages). These activities should be part of the strategy or action plan of your organisation for years to come, and help support it.

- Structural concessions: intended for the general administrative costs of an international organisation or network. This is a one-off grant to regional networks in order to establish a European structure.

- Pilot activities: the main criteria of this type of activity is that it is an "intervention" and to address a specific social issue linked to the local context in which it takes place.

The EYF supports the activities of the following types of organisations and / or networks:

- International Youth NGOs: an international organisation that has members or branches in at least 7 countries of the Council of Europe. The head office or registered office of the organisation is considered separate from the branches.

- International network of Youth NGOs: an international network can be considered as such when it comprises of at least 7 youth NGOs in 7 different countries of the Council of Europe. In the registration application to the EYF an organisation needs to have at least 6 other youth NGOs in six different member countries of the Council of Europe.

- Regional network of youth NGOs: a regional network has at least 4 and no more than 6 youth NGOs in the different member states of the Council of Europe. In the application for registration, the applicant organisation will be considered if they have more than 3-5 youth NGOs in the different member states of the Council of Europe.

- NGO national youth organisation: a national youth organisation based in a member state of the Council of Europe.

- NGOs, local youth organisation: local youth organisation based in a member state of the Council of Europe.

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PROJECT PARTNERS

INCA CATALUNYA

INCA Catalunya – International Network for Culture and Arts – was born in Barcelona (Spain) in 2007 based on a meeting of professional artists, social educators and trainers from different countries. The main purpose of the organisation is networking (locally and internationally) to promote individual growth and the development of communities through art and culture. INCA Catalunya's activities foster dialogue and a culture of peace, social inclusion, anti-discrimination, anti-racism and understanding between different cultures.
The methodology is based on non-formal and popular education principles, by means of participatory and experiential processes.
INCA works with theatre, (physical, social, performance) clown, circus, animation, dance, music, and digital media.
Its activities aim at involving youngsters and adults at risk of social exclusion because of their social, geographical, or political conditions. It also aims to involve trainers and artists willing to enrich their knowledge and to generate new strategies for social intervention.

INCA UK

INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR CULTURE AND ARTS - INCA is specialized in the implementation of training courses using theatre and performance as tools for socio-cultural intervention.

INCA has developed a vast experience in networking and has carried out activities promoting and fostering social cohesion through culture and arts. Its mission is to gather professionals and organisations using culture and arts to empower groups and communities, integrating the best practices

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from every point of view. Our objective is to promote diversity and equality for the through education and enhancing awareness via local and international initiatives. INCA is a member of the Anna Lindht Foundation in the UK.

Another objective is to encourage experienced youngsters to play a positive role in a changing world with new and growing forms of poverty and exclusion. We promote participation and the enrichment of youth using theatre, arts, and audiovisual techniques based on the methodology of non-formal education.

ORMA FLUENS

The cultural association Orma Fluens, has worked in the field of art, education and psychology since 1997. They organize workshops, scholarly seminars, theatrical performances, training courses, and collaborate with several academic institutions in the fields of training and research. Through a dense network of collaborations and working teams, the organisation explores the expressive potential of the performing arts through diverse avenues: from theatre with psychiatric patients, to specific research on the expressive body using new approaches to dance (butoh, contact); and digital technologies to traditional arts. Since 2001, Orma Fluens begun a long-term research collaboration on traditional singing and theatre arts with the group Amaranta, proposing training workshops for artists and creative work exchanges with groups and individuals. Amaranta and Orma Fluens have created several multi-awarded winning performances. From 2009, in collaboration with the "Sapienza" University of Rome, Orma Fluens established the Masters Programme in Social Theatre and Dramatherapy. Orma Fluens is a proud member of INCA's network, collaborating on many projects since its birth, supporting the creation of bridges between formal and non-formal education.

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INCA CH

The informal group INCA CH was established in October 2010 with the goal of gathering young artists and animators and non-professional educators with experience of training and Arts professionals.

The group works with animation tools (clown, juggling, mime, body language), theatre, photography and multimedia. The philosophy of the group is to motivate its members and other youngsters, in particular disadvantaged or people at risk of social exclusion, to develop their skills and to value new opportunities to cooperate through culture, arts, and active participation. The main objectives are to share local and international strategies of intervention and methodologies based on non-formal education and active participation.

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GLOSSARY

INCA • International Network for Culture and Arts

NFE • Non-Formal Education

FE • Formal Education

EYF • European Youth Foundation

COE • Council of Europe

NA • National Agency (Youth in Action Programme of the European Union)

YIA • Youth in Action (EU program)

RHIZOME • botanically, is a stem or root that develops in a horizontal manner and which has the capacity to generate new plants. For us, it graphically represent the structure of INCA

GAME • for us this encompasses all recreational and educational games

DEUTERO-LEARNING • learning to learn

RENDERING • the presentation of a model of the final piece of work which is not open to the public, consisting of a sequence of dynamic exercises and presented by, with and for the participants in a training course

YOUTH PASS • certificate of participation in a training course using methods of non-formal education within the Youth in Action Programme

FEEDBACK • any comments or suggestions given in a training course designed to take the help participants move forward with greater awareness

WORKING GROUPS • working Groups generally consist of 4-5 people who are given a task, usually performing a creative task based on a specific or group-decided theme

THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED • a philosophy that includes different theatrical techniques created by the Brazilian director Augusto Boal, former director of the Arena Theatre of São Paulo. This philosophy aims to provide tools for personal, social and political change for anyone who finds themselves in situations of oppression. One reason for the popularity of Theatre of the Opressed is the concept of activating the viewer by placing them at the centre of the play. This enables the generation of different representations of reality and the exploration of the many possibilites of transforming reality in a creative and socialible form

INVISIBLE THEATRE • this is a form of theatre, where 'invisible' performances are presented in public places where the actors are not known to the public, and as a consequence neither is the audience. Thus, the concept of an 'represenation' is not known. The main aim is to develop "sincere" reactions to (representations of) everyday facts

SITE-SPECIFIC • the term site-specific is generally used in art and contemporary creativity to indicate an intervention that is designed to fit into a precise place. The interaction with the surrounding environment is minimal and refers to all aspects of its identity, history, architecture, spatial structure and culture

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THE AUTHORS

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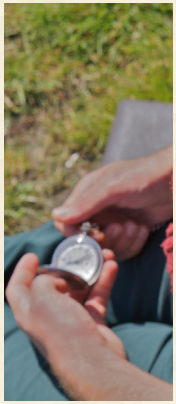

RICCARDO BRUNETTI ● ● ●

Riccardo Brunetti, PhD (Rome, Italy, 1976), experimental psychologist and theatre trainer. He teaches Psychology (General, Cognitive, of Art) at the Università Europea di Roma, for which he also runs theatrical activities. He is an expert in Educational and Social Theatre and he is the co-director of the Masters Programme in Social Theatre and Dramatherapy at the "Sapienza" University of Rome. He is a specialist in the use of theatrical tools for intercultural contact. His artistic activities are based on ethnomusicology and electronic music through field studies, seminars, and workshops with children, youngsters, and adults. Following the inspiration of the practical encounter with contemporary theatre research, he leads continuing work on singing, theatre and para-theatre with the group "Amaranta" and with the association "Orma Fluens", of which he is Vice-President. He is a founding member of the "Sourcing Within Project", led by Gey Pin Ang, since 2006, who together created the performance "Wandering Birds" in 2011. He is a founding member of INCA, with whom he organises and leads international training projects. Since 2000, he has led ethnomusicological field-research in Italy, Cuba, Bulgaria, Ireland and the USA. His most recent publication is: *How and when auditory action effects impair motor performance* (with A. D'Ausilio, F.Delogu e M. Olivetti Belardinelli) Experimental Brain Research 2010 ; *La musica e i vincoli cognitivi: Quali confini a fruizione e composizione?* (with F. Delogu). Vincoli (Sensibilia 2), 2009.

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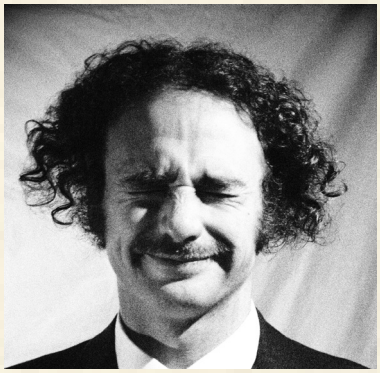

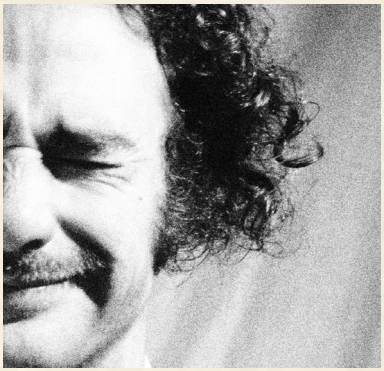

STEFANO D'ARGENIO

Stefano D'Argenio (Benevento, Italy, 1978), clown, actor and street artist since 1998. He participates in several international festivals with the juggling and physical comedy "Trisciò" with the Oggetti Smarriti Theatre company. In the artistic field he collaborates with different theatre-circus companies and with the brass band Fanfarria Contratiempo, playing the saxophone. In 2005 he moved to Barcelona, Spain where he worked in the Science and Technic Museum of Catalunya as a musicologist, and in 2006 he co-founded INCA Catalunya. As a member of the INCA team and a Salto-Youth trainer, he has carried out, organised and collaborated in around 100 international projects using art and culture for training. He works with children, youngsters, and adults on different social themes through the development of creativity. He leads the international clowning workshops "in viaggio verso il fracasso" and "Emotional Striptease" and he manages a circus marquee in which social projects, events, and artistic residencies take place.

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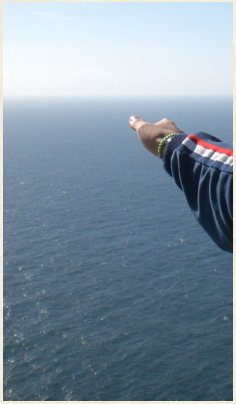

RICCARDO GULLETTA • • •

Riccardo Gulletta is Sicilian. Since his youth, he has been interested in the social issues that affect his community and the potential of art as a medium of expression. Once he graduated in philosophy and he moved to Barcelona, Spain. There, he began to come into contact with new realities and started to work in International Development and training. He is an expert in conflict resolution and Peace Education. In his life he has had the luck to meet people crazier than he is, who supported his foolish idea about changing the world through art and education. He travels often, but tries to spend most of his time in his new home in Lisbon, Portugal.

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EMANUELE NARGI

Emanuele Nargi studied theatre, dance, biomechanics, and various acting techniques (e.g. Grotowski, Barba). He completed his Masters in Performance Making at Goldsmiths, University of London. He graduated in physical and verbal theatre at the Centro Danza M. Testa in Rome (Italy). He also studied Arts and Sciences of Performance at the "Sapienza" University of Rome (Italy). He has worked with several theatre companies and research groups. He has participated in projects in the UK and Europe as an actor, director, and coordinator. He has carried out cultural and artistic projects at a local and international level. He has also held courses about "body and awareness" in mental health departments, hospitals, associations, schools, disability centres, cooperatives, cultural and art centres.

He is now a trainer, organiser, and reviewer for the UK National Agency of the Youth in Action Program / British Council, and he is part of INCA. For INCA, he takes care of the coordination of expert groups and the implementation of training programmes. He collaborates with several organisations to develop community, promote diversity, and equality. He is currently working as a freelancer and with different theatre groups in the UK as an actor and a director.

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CLAUDIA PESSINA ● ● ●

Claudia Pessina is one of the founding members of INCA Switzerland (active in Losanna, Zurich and Ticino), she has several years of experience as a journalist and communications expert in Switzerland and abroad (El Salvador). She works as trainer and animator with youngsters and teenagers, in different associations and institutions, promoting non-formal education. She is currently working on a project about the use of participatory communication and video as an educational tool.

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ART AND CREATIVITY IN INTERCULTURAL TRAININGS

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