



CROSSING PATHS

Italy, Denmark, the United Kingdom and the European Union for a project dedicated to the young, to the issues of poverty, social inclusion and interculture through the arts

coordinator



co-organisers



with the support of the Culture Programme of the European Union: May 2010 – October 2011



Programma «Cultura»

in cooperation with local, national and European institutions



other local, national and international partners

Platform for Intercultural Europe Bruxelles
 Culture Action Europe
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 Human Rights Nights Film Festival
 Intercultural Centre Massimo Zonarelli
 DCAI – Danish Centre for Arts & Interculture
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<http://crossingpaths.itcteatro.it>

The Project. Crossing Paths is a project dedicated to youngsters, to the themes of poverty, social inclusion and interculture, and to the possible role of theatre and the arts as tools for personal growth, against social disease, apt to foster social inclusion.

After years of international projects and thanks to the support from the Programme Culture of the European Union, **Teatro dell'Argine** (Italy - coordinator), **Taastrup Teater** (Denmark - co-organiser) and **Badac Theatre** (United Kingdom - co-organiser) have finally opened themselves to Europe!

The Themes and the Crossing Paths.

- theatre as a tool for growth, communication and intercultural dialogue addressed to the young;
- poverty and social exclusion (theme of the European Year 2010);
- interculture;
- active exchanges of artistic methods and practises with companies and theatres all over Europe;
- networking with organizations, institutions, associations dealing with educational and social matters, both on a local and on an international level;
- interweaving different knowledges and practices: artists, educators, philosophers, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, pedagogists mixing up their work and enriching it thanks to reciprocal thinking and knowledges.

Actions.

1. Theatre Workshops and Shows with Youngsters
2. The Conference
3. The Network and the Event
4. The Final Ceremony and the Show *Inverted*
5. Crossing Paths Showcase for Schools

1. Theatre Workshops and Shows with Youngsters



First, the project is about forming **three groups of youngsters** (one in Italy, one in Denmark, one in the United Kingdom), who will participate to a theatre workshop about the issues of poverty, social exclusion and interculture. During the 18 months of the project, each group will also work with the teachers and directors of the other two countries, who will go to the partners' cities both for **artistic and methodological exchanges**, and for **working directly with the youngsters**.

After a couple of months, the groups had become **four**: one group of Italian kids was added to the original three to balance the participants' ages.

At the moment, **two groups of kids aged 12-13** and **two groups of young aged 17-21** are part of the project.

The workshops will give birth to **four shows**, that will be performed **in May 2011 from 23rd to 28th** in the occasion of the **Festival of Schools in ITC Teatro** (in San Lazzaro di Savena, Bologna, Italy), the biggest festival of this kind in Italy. So, in May almost 40 artists and youngsters from Denmark and the United Kingdom will finally meet with their Italian colleagues in Italy, to exchange opinions, emotions, thinkings.

2. The Conference



Among the most important objectives, there's the conference of **May 21st 2011** (organized by Teatro dell'Argine in collaboration with Bologna University - Faculty of Education and Department of Music and Performing Arts) about the project issues.

Very important personalities will take part to the conference, experts who have given a strong contribution to these matters in different fields:

Miguel Benasayag (philosopher and psychoanalyst) and **Claudio Misculin** (Accademia della Follia)

Alessandro Dal Lago (sociologist)

Marco Revelli (historian and sociologist)

Mimmo Sorrentino (director and playwright) will hold their speeches in the morning. Besides, there'll be a video speech by **Mario Mazzoleni** (Centre of rieducation for minors in conflict with the law, Santa Cruz, Bolivia).

In the afternoon, some **working groups** will be coordinated by very special guides, such as **Armando Punzo** (*Compagnia della Fortezza: theatre with prison inmates*), **Gabriele Del Grande** (journalist and writer: *Fortress Europe*), **Emanuele Valenti** (*Punta Corsara: theatre in the hard area of Scampia in Naples*), **Massimo Marino** (journalist and critic), **Paolo Billi** (*Teatro del Pratello: theatre with minor prison inmates*), **Alessandro Argani** (*Teatro delle Albe*), **Hassan Abbad** and **Khalid Dahoub** (*Chantiers Sociaux Marocains*), **Federica Zanetti** (Bologna University), **Laura Gobbi** (University of San Marino), **Gerardo Guccini** (Bologna University), **Milena Magnani** (writer), **Alessandro**

Castellari (reader), Luca Lambertini (social worker, journal "Gli Asini"), Mauro Boarelli (historian, working at the Culture Section of San Lazzaro di Savena Town Council), Gianpaolo Vulcano (Library Salaborsa) and Nicola Bonazzi, Micaela Casalboni, Pietro Florida and Andrea Paolucci of Teatro dell'Argine.

➤ How can I participate?

The conference is **opened to everybody**, though specifically thought for teachers and workers and experts in the educational, social, theatre fields. **Participation is free, subject to registration.**

3. The Network and The Event



One of the most important objectives of Crossing Paths is constructing a network of **associations, cooperatives, schools, universities, institutions, ngos, intercultural or social centres, theatre companies, artists or just individuals dealing with educational or social or artistic issues or works.** The network tries to chart, know and foster the meeting of those organizations who work in the same field or in close fields and could benefit from one another's activities, know-how and competences.

➤ How and why should I join the network? Procedures, advantages and a final event to come to the fore

Joining the network is **free**. Besides, joining a European network gives some credits to those organizations that are going to apply for European fundings.

Each member will get a **dedicated page on the website**, where it can describe its own activities; will get a **monthly newsletter** keeping it up to date about the project; and will get the opportunity to **participate to the final event: *Humanity Fair: fair of other humanities.*** This is a sort of informative/performative event dedicated to the network members: each of them will get a tent, in which it can expose everything it likes about its own activities. Around the place, the young actors of the project will perform short scenes, poetry and dialogues. This event will be on **May 22nd 2011** in the Parco della Resistenza in San Lazzaro di Savena (Bologna, Italy).

If you want to join the network, just contact Giulia Ventura (giulia.ventura@itcteatro.it) and send her some details about you and/or your organization:

- **NAME and LOGO** of the organization or the person;
- **CONTACTS:** address, telephone and/or fax numbers, e-mail and website addresses, contact people;
- **DESCRIPTION** of the activities (10 lines in English are enough);
- **PHOTOS** of the activities, with English captions.

4. The Final Ceremony and the Show *Inverted*



The final day of the big May event will be on **May 29th 2011:**

- at **5.00pm**, there'll be the traditional **Award Winning Ceremony of the Theatre and the Visual Arts Contests of the Festival of Schools**; the Italian, Danish and English teams will of course be there as special guests, together with the Mayors of Taastrup and San Lazzaro di Savena;
- at **9.00pm**, Taastrup Teater will perform the show *Inverted*, a poetic and comic clown performance about feeling excluded, strangers, different, out of place.

Inverted

Two clowns from different universes, meet... in this world. One is looking for the most fantastisc spot in the world, where she can settle down. And feel she belongs. The other one is running away from the turmoil of the world, finding it hard to be accepted. Communication is very difficult, because language and culture don't actually match. So the never ending tragic-comic story about how we need to communicate, so we can survive and let a better life evolve from it... can begin.

Replace fear of the unknown with curiosity... is our goal.

The performance is full of poetry, mischief, beauty and pain... and hopefully a lot of laughter, when the audience recognize themselves.



5. Crossing Paths Showcase for Schools



In the Festival programme, the Crossing Paths Showcase will be inaugurated: it will include, besides the four project groups, **all the companies of kids and teens who will perform shows about the project issues.**

Being part of the Festival and the Crossing Paths Showcase is **free, subject to application and subsequent registration.** The only limit is the timetable. For information, please contact Giulia Pompili (giuliap@itcteatro.it)



TdA in Europe

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Detailed Description of the Project

CONTEXT AND ORIGIN

With the accession of 10 new Member States on 1 May 2004, the diversity of the Union greatly increased, with an immense richness of cultural, social and linguistic diversity. Moreover, European societies are undergoing major demographic changes resulting in an ageing and shrinking working-age population and sustained immigration flows. In such a context, the shared values that hold European societies together, such as freedom, fairness, tolerance and solidarity, became more important than ever. The sociological, economic and cultural aspects of youth life have changed significantly as a result of demographic changes (ageing of societies due to the combined effect of a lower birth rate and increased longevity) and changes in the social environment, individual and collective behaviour, family relationships and labour market conditions. Young Europeans need tools for expression; after all, these are precisely the people who are primarily affected by economic change, demographic imbalance, globalisation or social exclusion. Young people in Europe form part of societies, open to outside cultural and economic influences and they are a particularly receptive group when it comes to tackling discrimination, more especially racism and xenophobia, and are particularly committed to a multicultural society.

Crossing Paths is perceived as a frame where young European citizens are given the chance of direct, personal experience of what European citizenship and its values mean in practice and mainly through exchange and mobility schemes.

Crossing Paths challenges the development of social themes and issues such as intercultural dialogue and social inclusion, tolerance, peer and non formal education through the international language of performing arts. The project involves children, youth and adults in three different Member States: Italy (Compagnia Teatro dell'Argine - Co-ordinator), Denmark (Taastrup Theatre - Co-organiser n. 1), United Kingdom (Badac Theatre - Co-organiser n. 2). The partners were selected in order to represent different realities in Europe and yet dealing and facing the same problems on a daily basis.

Through artists mobility actions, **Crossing Paths** aims to improve the quality of inter-personal relationships among children, youth and adults, promoting the active participation of people in civic society and the values of tolerance and solidarity to foster intercultural dialogue through performing arts, interpreted as a tool to achieve greater European integration and more active European citizens.

The question of fighting discrimination, solidarity, equality and multiculturalism are values that are generally endorsed by young people. They are the heart of European integration, but also of cooperation with the rest of the world. In this sense, **Crossing Paths** wants to fulfil the expectations of young people to protect universal fundamental rights. Consequently, intercultural dialogue is perceived here as a mean to promote and protect those rights and values.

Nowadays, the distinction between youth and adult cultures is becoming indistinct, new moving and sometimes heterogeneous cultures have developed. It is assumed that new cultural patterns will be less age-bound than they are today. However it remains to be an important task to enable young people to shape and express their own cultures, but also to understand other cultures.

Therefore **Crossing Paths** wants to work primarily with children and youth to develop an intercultural path to be addressed to adults through the performance, in order to spread a common intercultural dialogue message using the international language of acting.

GENERAL OBJECTIVE

Effectively, the objective of **Crossing Paths** is to encourage young people to make an active contribution to European integration, to develop intercultural dialogue and understanding, strengthening fundamental values such as human rights and combating racism and xenophobia, developing a sense of solidarity, encouraging a spirit of enterprise, initiative and creativity, fostering the recognition of non-formal education, and developing cooperation, also international cooperation through the international language of theatre and drama.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- intercultural understanding
- strengthening of fundamental values
- cooperation, exchange and development on a European level of artistic methods and practices in Social Theatre and non formal education through drama
- support of trans-national mobility of people working in the cultural sector
- encouragement of trans-national circulation of artistic and cultural work and products
- non formal education and peer education to social inclusion, integration and tolerance
- support to anti-racism actions
- encouragement of understanding of cultural diversity and fundamental common values, enhancing mutual understanding and respect among young people from different countries and help them to explore identities
- involvement of people with fewer opportunities
- support to the dissemination of theatre culture and art as a working method for the fostering of intercultural dialogue
- increased involvement of teachers in non-formal education activities and awareness of non-formal education importance

THEME

The chosen theme overall is intercultural dialogue and social inclusion.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Preparatory activities and apv

The project Crossing Paths will begin 01/05/2010. A kick off meeting (APV) for the steering committee is planned in Italy in the beginning of May 2010. The first month will be used for the Italian partner to organise and prepare the meeting, and for the other partners to discuss the project internally in the organisation.

During the APV the actions and methods to follow and to implement are discussed in order to adopt common guide lines for the three partners:

- systematic research and mapping of the European territory concerning activities related to intercultural dialogue through theatre on a local level and identification of compatible already existing events;
- set up a database with stakeholders contacts (schools, theatre operators, relevant volunteering associations and NGOs);
- analysis of educational needs among stakeholders;
- discussion on the possibilities of having a Ph.D. researcher or student doing case-study research on Crossing Paths;
- preparation of proposals on educational materials and educational activities;
- set up of a calendar for the implementation of activities at local level (workshops);
- planning for artist exchange between partners
- set up of a calendar for the implementation of activities at trans-national level (Festival of School Theatre in Bologna and possible participation in the ASSITEJ 2011-festival and conference);
- set up of a web site with blog kept updated with the activities of the European work group.

Workshops for children and youth

Each partner organizes a path of performing arts workshops as schools extra-curricula activities for pupils, developing the theme of intercultural dialogue, social inclusion and tolerance; drama becomes the mean of communication among the three groups and within the groups among the participants. As a matter of fact each participant group is formed by children and youth with different origins and backgrounds. Taastrup Theatre works with pupils and their families from a nearby housing-project in order to supply skills to the pupils and contribute to a balanced development of the neighbourhood.

Compagnia Teatro dell'Argine (IT) carries on activities with asylum seekers and immigrants in and outside schools. Badac Theatre (UK) has engaged with for teenagers dealing with social inclusion issues.

The workshops are also a trans-national exchange field for theatre operators and artists, since each partner association plans to host one or more artists or theatre operators for a period from a partner country to interact within the local activities. Each partner will choose two artists among the other partners which will also have the key role of exchange supervisor for the production and for other activities. This does not mean that he/she will be the only one following and assisting the production. It is of main interest for all three theatres to learn by close exchange of experiences during the production. It will be natural that the exchange supervisors are also the persons that will be hosted for a period by the partner.

National and European networks for exchange and development

During the project a network will be established in each country centred around the use of Social Theatre and non formal education through drama in schools to attend the theme of intercultural dialogue and social inclusion. Each partner has already a good informal network with various stakeholders from schools, volunteering association, universities and others which are interested in this theme. The project gives the resources to strengthen the network by building up a website, newsletters together with the offer of various activities, workshops and courses. The network will clearly include the schools and other stakeholders connected to the productions made through the workshop for youth and children, but may also have other stakeholder groups.

- organisation of educational events in order to awake schools/teachers on a local level: workshops implementing experience and practical education for teachers and theatre operators in order to establish new methods and approaches to intercultural dialogue; analysis of educational needs among stakeholders; preparation of educational materials and educational activities proposals; the set up of a European working group, developing the theme of intercultural dialogue in schools, where teachers and theatre operators can take part in order to develop paths and events for life long learning, education and fostering of intercultural dialogue;
- steering committee meetings: four meetings are planned for the steering committee in order to evaluate the state of the art and discuss the planned activities and changes, if needed.

EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

The evaluation activities are carried on both at local and trans-national level.

- Local level: the evaluation activities at local level are carried on within each partner's working group through practical activities (evaluation games) which are appropriate for a young crowd and offer an instant evaluation of the state of the art allowing improvements and changes to the planned schedule and method in a very short time and reflect clearly the mood and the involvement of the participants. As far as adults are concerned, discussions and questions times are planned.
- Trans-national level: the working group studies the evaluation reports elaborated at local level, analysing the situation globally during the steering committee meetings.
- As soon as we are able, we will start to use contacts to the universities in order to present Crossing Paths as a possible case for a Ph.D.-study or a research project within the Science of theatre and drama. This will open up for a mutual benefit, where the project will both get the analytical resource, and a good way to disseminate the experiences in academic circles.

WORKING METHODS

- Experience learning and training: participants work and learn together through practical activities. The use of this intercultural working method not only provides the participants with an opportunity to explore several issues, cultures and identities, but can also ensure participation of all young people on an equal basis, regardless of their language abilities or other

- skills. Working together side by side to achieve a common goal allows the participants to learn from diversity and overcome cultural and social barriers;
- Non-formal education: works with the aim of communicating contents and creating the conditions for **Crossing Paths** to be a place for discovery, experience, understanding and inspiration, accessible to all. The activities are based on an informal educational approach. In the interactive workshops the teacher invites the participants to conduct the activity first-hand and guide them through a process of description and understanding of intercultural dialogue. Experiences in the workshops are based on exploration and discovery, not on the verification and formalization of principles and laws. Intercultural dialogue parts from the emphasis on social issues. From here a series of group activities, conceptually connected one to the other, lead to a deeper understanding of the initial issue. Our methodology is based on exploration, observation and active involvement, and our aim is to help participants to use their knowledge and abilities to interpret and learn from cultural diversity through drama and play the lead in their own learning process.
 - Peer education: peer means equal, meaning we all learn together and that all our contributions are of equal worth; it's the non-formal learning process that gives empowerment, confidence and independence to young people whatever their background (in terms of ethnicity, culture, religion, belief, education, etc...). Hence the link to cultural diversity. It is the most suitable system to allow young people to learn, not from an educator, but from each other through discussions and practical activities, among which performing arts and drama. It is underpinned by the principle that young people are the experts on their own lives and are therefore the best starting point in any learning process; it gives young people the opportunity to utilise their skills and share their knowledge (information) with their peers and other members of their community; it helps create positive images of young people, it helps to change attitudes and behaviours towards young people and encourages adults to recognise the value that young people's contributions bring to society at local, national and international levels. **Crossing Paths** considered as a cultural diversity project aims to challenge negative views and opinions, stereotypes and prejudices about ethnicity, culture, belief, etc.; it aims to change attitudes and behaviours towards certain groups of people by working towards creating positive images of those groups and by encouraging other community members to recognise the value that those groups' contributions bring to all levels of society in different dimensions. Peer education is non-conventional learning in an inspirational way, which encourages people to "learn to learn". Its focus is on groups and "equal teaching equal", all people share the responsibility, therefore it is not only for young people, it is for everyone. **Crossing Paths** adopts this method to transfer the message from youth (actors) to adults (audience).

INTERCULTURAL DIMENSION

Crossing Paths foresees a strong intercultural dimension on more than one level. As a matter of fact the three involved groups from Italy, Denmark and United Kingdom carry on an interaction among them in order to implement the planned activities which are developed locally with youth coming from different countries as well, sometimes Third Countries. Therefore the intercultural dimension foresees two stages: each group works locally including people from Third Countries; each group performs in the different partner countries bringing the intercultural dimension from European to extra-European. The intercultural dimension in **Crossing Paths** aims to develop participants as intercultural actors or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity. It is based on perceiving the interlocutor as an individual whose qualities are to be discovered, rather than as representative of an externally ascribed identity. The activities implemented through **Crossing Paths** are developed on the basis of respect for individuals and equality of human rights as the democratic basis of social interaction. So performing arts with an intercultural dimension help students, teachers, actors, parents, stakeholders and all the participants at the project to acquire the social competence needed to communicate what they want to express in correct and appropriate ways, the ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality.

IMPACT

Crossing Paths leads to youth encounters that bring young people into contact with other cultures and other realities and provide them with opportunities to discuss specific themes. Young people can thus learn a lot from each other and are able to discover and explore similarities and differences between their cultures. Such an experience can help fight negative prejudices and stereotypes. Moreover, the effect of such a youth encounter on the local population can give rise to more positive awareness of other cultures and have an impact not only on young people themselves and their associations' activities, but also on the local communities involved.

MULTIPLYING EFFECT

Crossing paths proposes on one hand cooperation between the partners on the production of three school theatre plays, on the other hand parallel network activities which aim at the artistic exchange and the development of the mentioned drama and education methods. Both of these will create multiplying effects.

For the first part, families of the participants are involved strongly, as the first social effect of the project. The audience, therefore the local communities, adults, local authorities, decision makers and stakeholders in general are then reached by the message that youth spread out with their workshops and their final performances. Also the schools and operators of the education sector are actively involved in order to evaluate and consider a non-formal education tool, such as performing arts, to be included along side with regular curricula activities.

The network set up at national level will be in close contact with the European dimension and the other networks. This is assured by the exchange of artists as well as for newsletters and websites reporting both local and European activities. In the creation of the network we will focus on openness to participation from all in the network and possibly back-up activities or initiatives from other actors. This means that the project creates an entrepreneurial spirit in the network encouraging to start projects, studies or cooperation.

FOLLOW-UP

Setting up of a permanent European working group, where teachers and theatre operators can take part in, in order to develop paths and events for life long learning, education and fostering of intercultural dialogue. There are already existing contacts of potential future partners in the following MS: France, Germany, Poland, Belgium, Norway and Romania.

The European working group will develop a network of theatre operators, teachers, schools, artists and students that will develop social awareness towards social inclusion, fight against racism and xenophobia through performing arts, increasing the chance for youth and artists mobility across Europe.

VISIBILITY

- Workshops
- 17th Assitej World Congress and performing arts festival for young audiences.
- Cooperation with platform for intercultural Europe
- Festival of School Theatre
- Guide lines
- Web site with blog
- Newsletter
- Setting up an information campaign throughout European schools to foster the power of drama practice as a tool for intercultural dialogue
- Video documentary

At all these stages of the **Crossing Paths**, the Culture Programme (2007-2013) receives visibility through the use of the official logo, the mention of it, and ad hoc activities during workshops.

DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

- Festival of School Theatre
- Guide lines
- Web site, (integrated with the most known existing platforms, and the chance to have space within)
- Creation of video for educational purposes for schools and theatres
- Newsletter
- Setting up an information campaign throughout European schools to foster the power of drama practice as a tool for intercultural dialogue

INCLUSION OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FEWER OPPORTUNITIES

Taastrup Theatre works with pupils and their families from a nearby housing-project in order to supply skills to the pupils and contribute to a balanced development of the neighbourhood.

Compagnia Teatro dell'Argine (IT) carries on activities with asylum seekers and immigrants, in and outside schools.

Badac Theatre (UK) has engaged with teenagers dealing with social inclusion issues.

Young people with fewer opportunities are involved at each stage of the implementation of the project, since the aim and the soul of the project is social inclusion of those living in disadvantaged situations, developing the theme of intercultural dialogue through the performing arts.

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