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CONTEXT

The first edition of Focus Atelier Chisinau took place within 3 - 9 October 2016 and addressed the topic of education. We focused on art as a pedagogical process and on how pedagogy might play a key part within the dynamics of a society.

Focus Atelier Chisinau targeted people interested in innovative pedagogical methods (teachers, students, educators), high school students in need of different ways of learning, amateurs or professionals interested in the socio-pedagogical dimension of art.

Focus Atelier Chisinau comprised 3 sections:

- **Workshop**
- **Debate**
- **Documentary Screening**

PROJECT GOALS & BENEFICIARIES

The main aims of the project:

- Deliverance of 4 hour workshops/ day along a period of 5 days, totaling 20 hours over the week, targeting groups averaging approx. 20 people/ day. The period was roughly divided into 2 days of exploring Image Theatre, 2 days of exploring Forum Theatre and Invisible Theatre, and 1 day of exploring Rainbow of Desire.
- Organization of 1 debate on Theatre for Communities w/ Lorand Maxim and George Wielgus
- Screening of 2 documentary films followed by discussions - `Our School` and `Blokada`

FUTURE IMPACT

- Focus Atelier Chişinău is the offspring of the already third successful collaboration between Reciproca and Reboot the Roots. This proves the efficiency of our collaboration and motivates us to further foster projects - now hosted in cities across various countries.
- Among the participants were theatre students, actors and pedagogues. They showed great interest regarding techniques and theory of the Theatre of the Oppressed. We are currently still in contact with some of these participants and we exchange materials such as videos and books etc. Thus we hope that some of TO tools will come in handy in their future practice and that workshops of this kind will generate further follow-ups.
- Reciproca (RO) and Reboot the Roots (GB) have now meet AZART Centre of Cultural Projects (MD), run by Rusanda Curcă, Irina Iachim and Oksana Buga. Thus a new channel for exchanging ideas and practices concerning arts dedicated to social change currently connects Cluj-Napoca, London and Chişinău; like-minded people were offered the chance to work together, a fact that encourages us to stay firm on our positions as supporters and facilitators of this cultural axe.

- **Workshop: FORUM AND INVISIBLE THEATRE**



3 –7 octomber 2016

Trainer: George Wielgus (UK) and Lorand Claudiu Maxim (RO)

Participants: 25

Location: The National Centre of Education Through Art

The workshop familiarizes around 25 participants with a number of techniques pertaining to the arsenal of Theatre of the Oppressed invented by Augusto Boal.

The participants were able to observe the power structures they face in everyday life, reconstruct and analyse them through theatre language.

They discussed both external oppression, such as that triggered by society, as well as already internalized oppression - based on which they act involuntarily. The participants were sequentially creators, viewers and spect-actors, devising scenes of Forum Theatre in small groups and testing them with the whole group.

- 1st & 2nd day

We exercised around notions such as group cohesion and attention. We started with an introduction on Image Theatre, further constructing and analyzing imagery. The topics that most persistently came out of these images dealt with family dynamics. Significant discussions sprang on inter-gender and inter-generational dynamics within the family. These were further thematized within Forum Theatre.

- 3rd and 4th day

We explored gender based oppression via Forum Theatre sessions and via one Invisible Theatre exercise. In the Invisible Theatre session we simulated versions around a possible Invisible Theatre scenario that might unfold in public space. Participants chose to play certain characters resembling citizens we may find in Chisinau's public squares. Few of them were randomly selected to play abuse scenes without the knowledge of the rest of the participants. The group was then asked to discover the Invisible Theatre scenarios and individually explore their character's attitude within this or that scenario. Sporadically, the development of the scenes was paused and further indications were given to actors.

- 5th day

This last day we had a quick review of the techniques and exercises we experienced so far. Afterwards we facilitated a session on the Rainbow of Desire technique. Starting by making a so-called "emotion machine", we played around repetitive gestures and sounds each representing an emotion. Every participant added their own specific movement, sound and emotion. We explored the collective potential of the sound-movement module, trying to reach its dramaturgical climax and gradually ending it. The machine had become "emotional".

In the second part we chose to recur to a situation within our personal memories, in which we didn't know how to act; in other words, a situation in which we felt we could not settle for a specific decision. The group was thus faced with multiple possibilities around a story's plot. One such version was turned into a concrete scene, namely: the protagonist has difficulties in deciding whether to end her marriage or not. Aided by present participants, the protagonist built imagery using as material the emotions she experienced along the above-mentioned scene. The scene was replayed, the protagonist being fully replaced by these emotions slowly leading to a dialog between the protagonist and these emotions; the aim was that of understanding them, letting them go or further making use of them. The scene was finally played again, exercising this time the protagonist's capacity to alter the reactions of other characters: husband, daughter and friend.

- **Debate: TEATRE DEDICATED TO THE COMMUNITY**



7 October 2016

Guests: Lorand Claudiu Maxim and George Wielgus

Moderator: Rusanda Curca

Location: The National Centre of Education through art

Debate about the use of theatrical tools in working with the community and these tools' role on empowering the community members in such a way that they ask questions and engage themselves into solving the problems they face. We discussed about the democratization of art, about its removal from the imperative of specific backgrounds and about making artistic practices available to any citizen.

The debate raised the topic of community as medium between individuals and the society as an ensemble; the community as a concrete intermediate for 'face to face' interaction. We thought that the ideologies of a community might differ from the ideology that rules the broader social structures, thus the community might be a source for opposing the status-quo. Finally, we talked about the risks and challenges of community theatre, exchanging some of our own experiences.

- **Documentary: BLOKADA; OUR SCHOOL**



OUR SCHOOL

8 October 2016

Directed by Mona Nicoara, Miruna Coca-Cozma

Country / Year: USA / Switzerland 2011

Duration: 1h 35 min

Production company: Sat Mic Film, LLC

Alin, Beni and Dana, three Rromani children from a small Maramureş town, are part of one of the first school desegregation initiatives in Romania. Over a four years period, Our School follows closely, with empathy and lucidity, an inexorable process that culminates in an unforeseen and preposterous ending. Approaching topics like the institutionalized prejudices, the vicious circle of poverty and hardships in education, but well anchored in the mesmerizing rhythms and profound reality of the Rromani community, the film is both a poignant bitter-sweet story about tradition and progress and a meditation on what could be a chance at a better future for us all. The film received the Sterling award for the best American production during the Silverdocs Festival in

2011. Mona Nicoara began working in the film industry as an associate producer for the Children Underground production (2001), which received the Special Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival.

Our School is her debut film. Miruna Coca-Cozma is a graduate of the school of journalism BBC, a journalist and a TV producer, currently established in Geneva, Switzerland. Our School participated in more than 60 festivals around the world, received the award for the best American production during the SilverDocs Festival, it was nominated for Best Eastern European Documentary during the Silver Eye Gala Awards and for Best Romanian Documentary during the Gopo Awards Gala.

BLOKADA

09 October 2016

Directed by Igor Bezinovic

Country / year: Croatia 2012

Duration: 1h 33 min

Subtitle: Romanian

Production company: Factum Documentary Film Project Restart

Blokada offers an unique perspective inside of one of the most massive, long-lasting and significant Croatian protests after 1971. The action began in April 2009, at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb. The fight against the commercialization of education and the academic strikes lasted for 34 days. The uprising was spread over 20 faculties across the country, and students became a politically active and relevant topic. The director followed everything up-close, from the eagerness of the preliminary meetings and the first signs of fatigue to the midnight discussions, to the initial support of most members of the faculty for the requests demanded by students to the point where they were given the cold shoulder and up to trying to have a dialogue with a Minister of education who... meanwhile vanished. Seen thus "blokada" is not just a purely physical action, but as one that unveils students their true limits and rights.

Igor Bezinovic graduated philosophy and sociology in the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb, the same college that he documents over the film Blokada.

Each film was followed by an open discussion with the audience, moderated by Oksana Buga-theater critic.

RESULTS AND IMPACT

25 participants at WORKSHOP

20 participants at DEBATES

20 participants at DOCUMENTARY

10 partners Chisinau Focus Atelier

Media appearances

Eepap.culture.pl	http://eepap.culture.pl/article/crowdfunding-campaign-focus-atelier-chisinau-centrul-de-proiecte-culturale-azart-moldova-and
Civic.md	http://www.civic.md/instruiri/34069-open-call-atelier-de-teatru-forum-si-teatru-invizibil.html
Idash.org	https://idash.org/pipermail/oberlist/2016-September/007069.html
Agentiadecarte.ro	http://www.agentiadecarte.ro/2016/09/focus-atelier-la-chisinau/
Locals.md	http://locals.md/2016/in-chisinau-va-avea-loc-focus-atelier/
Idash.org	https://idash.org/pipermail/oberlist/2016-October/007086.html
Locals.md	http://locals.md/tag/focus-atelier-chisinau/
Ecflabs.org	http://ecflabs.org/grants/projects/sb/focus-atelier-chisinau
Feedler.ro	http://www.feedler.ro/feed/4727321--focus-atelier-chisinau
Aarc.ro	http://aarc.ro/articol/film-documentar-si-ateliere-la-chisinau-intre-3-si-9-octombrie
Diez.md	http://diez.md/2016/09/05/foto-atrage-atentia-prin-teatru-invizibil-la-o-problema-publica-participa-la-focus-atelier-chisinau/
Allevents.in	https://allevents.in/chisinau/dezbatere-teatrul-dedicat-comunit%C4%83%C8%9Bii/441414906028738
Tvrcluj.ro	Regional cafe, 5 septembrie 2016 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bwB-TVjDNME
Radioconstanta.ro	http://radioconstanta.ro/2016/10/03/calendarul-zilei-3-octombrie-2/
Ziare-pe-net.ro	http://www.ziare-pe-net.ro/stiri/focus-atelier-chisinau-

	4767940.html
Wherevent.com	http://www.wherevent.com/detail/AZART-Centrul-de-Proiec%C8%9Bii-de-film-Scoala-noastra-%C8%99i-Blokada
blockadedocumentary.net	http://www.blockadedocumentary.net/english/screenings.html
Reboottheroots.org.uk	http://www.reboottheroots.org.uk/projects/ngos/republic-of-moldavia-2016/
25.md	http://www.25.md/stire/stire-diez-foto-atrage-atentia-prin-teatru-invizibil-la-o-problema-publica-participa-la-focus-atelier-chisinau/
Rador.ro	http://www.rador.ro/2016/10/03/previziunile-saptamanii-3-9-octombrie-2016/