

## Intergenerational Community Theatre – Process Diary (03 april-30 june)

### Intergenerational Community Theatre -*Age Against The Machine*

European Network of Cities CERV, Funding ID: 101138625 (2024-26)

#### 1. SESSION 1, SPRING AWAKENING (PART I)

**Place:** Sede do Sport Lisboa e Évora, Évora, PT **Date:** 03/04/2024 **Hour:** (14:00-16:00)

#### **Group:**

**Members of the team present:** 3 coordinators (Isabel Bezelga, Teresa Furtado, Ana Moya) and 2 assistants ([Diana Oliveira](#), Isabel Guedes)

**Participants:** 4 students from U Évora (Performative Studies), 15 Senior persons

**Structure of participants:** all women apart from 1 man

(It is an homogeneous group all coming from Alentejo region)

**Total number of participants:** 19 persons

**Total number of team members:** 5 persons



### Topics session and goals:

To discover the meaning of “awakening” and “rebirth” into a different, energetic and challenging physical reality, such as when we were young in a spring located in time and space, travelling through the memory of each participant. The “body-emotion - place-society-tradition” come together in a unique concept, where the young-adolescent body speaks of a geographic place (a location in space-time), the place speaks of a vital emotion, the emotion explains a tradition and local festivity experienced in the spring of life and in spring as the climatic season of the year where the landscape of that specific place was reborn and awakened. Through an exercise of evocation, a climatic season that repeats itself every year in a geographic location, transports us to a season in each person's life, in a social and historical context over time.

**Keywords:** Awakening to a new state, Youth, memory travel, body-emotion.



### Methods, techniques and exercises:

We work in the field of the symbolic-emotional, memories and traditions, the sensorial-corporeal, the contextual (geographic, historical and social). Exercises: 1. Awakening (in pairs young and senior); 2. The Line (revising the passage of time); 3. The mirror (in pairs young and senior); 4. Enjoy the vitality of rebirth.

### **Summary of the artistic activities developed:**

First, we introduced ourselves in a personal presentation (names of people, age, family, etc.) and team members. We continued with a body stretching exercise. Then it was exercise 1. “Awakening” in pairs (one wakes up the whole body slowly and the other observes), the last thing to open were the eyes. In a circle we sang and recreated the sounds of nature that awakens in spring. We worked on each one's dream, thinking about our partner's dreams. Together in a close circle, we share one personal secret. 2. In the exercise “The Line” we evoked temporal memories through body expression and voice (individually and in pairs). We finished in a circle by sharing a word that summarised the session for them.

### **Report of the participants responses and evolution:**

We observed a lot of enthusiasm from the participants to start the project. All participants are women except one man (the husband of Maria José Romão). In the personal presentation, participants give their names, age, and spontaneously they decide to say how many sons and daughters they have, if they have grandchildren, or if they are widowed. Once the activities began, in the first exercise in pairs, with eyes closed, we observed how many senior people were unable to close their eyes because they didn't want to lose control, or for fear of being judged, or doing the exercise badly. Some of them asked their other partner if they were doing the exercise well. For all participants, oral expression was very fluid throughout the session, both in singing, making sounds imitating the spring, and sharing dreams and secrets. When sharing orally, they felt very confident. We observed that for them it is easier to combine words with movement. In the line exercise, when the memories were spoken, it was easier for them.





#### **Team impressions, comments and observations:**

In the first half an hour of the session we had to fill in documents for image permission, and sign their names and presences in the summary sheet (however we didn't succeed to have all the sheets signed because the participants didn't bring their IDs). We also could not complete all the activities planned for this session, such as the exercise to talk about a memory located in a geographical space when they were young and a memory located in space nowadays that talks about new starts, awakening to something new. This exercise will be developed in session 2. During this session, and in the exercise "the Line", we changed the concept of adolescence into the concept of being young, or feeling young. We center our attention on how we move along a time-frame of memories and how to perform them in the physical space of a line.

#### **Sharing intergenerational and intercultural experiences:**

We learned about our dreams and secrets that are common for both youth and seniors, such as the secret to travel to China or to Brazil, or the dream with the moon and the seaside (among others).

#### **Unexpected results and challenges during the implementation:**

In general, we have seen that they all need positive reinforcement to feel more confident in participating. In the exercise "the line", we observed fear of standing alone and individually in front of the public (the other participants). When they went out in pairs or threes the

activity was more enjoyable for them. Could be that they felt a certain complexity in the activity and they still did not have the capacity (working simultaneously with memory and body movement) to develop it. There is still a lot of fear when it comes to sharing movement and body expression with others.

**Results at the level of the self, the community and the regional-cultural social context:**

Why are we solely women in the group? Our South context, regional Alentejo context, has an influence on that? How do they define themselves in their first presentation? They talk about themselves through the children and grandchildren they have. Why are so many women alone? Many are already widows. If they are straight in their sexual orientation, where or what happens for this to happen? And where are our companions? We talk about the importance of intergenerational groups, and in relation to gender diversity and sexual orientation?

**Problems with the topics by participants:**

Nothing to report in this first session.



**Dialogue among different topics (intersectoriality) and transversality in the themes:**

Nothing to report in this first session.

**Evaluation of the workshop by participants (statements):**

In a final exercise, we asked them, in a holding hands circle, to share with one word, the essence of how they felt in this first session. The answers were very positive: Liberty, Happiness, Company, Sharing, Memory, Pleasure (among others).

**Ideas for upgrading exercises or continuing next session:**

Focus on the fact of the feminine and the women's world at the senior stage in Alentejo

**Ideas for a dramaturgy:**

Still to be discussed with the members of the team