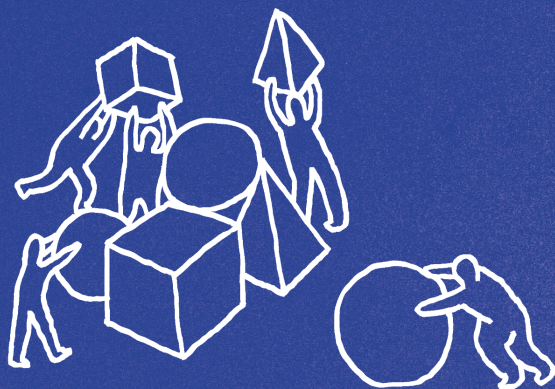


Just TRY:

a handbook for performative critical practice
for young people

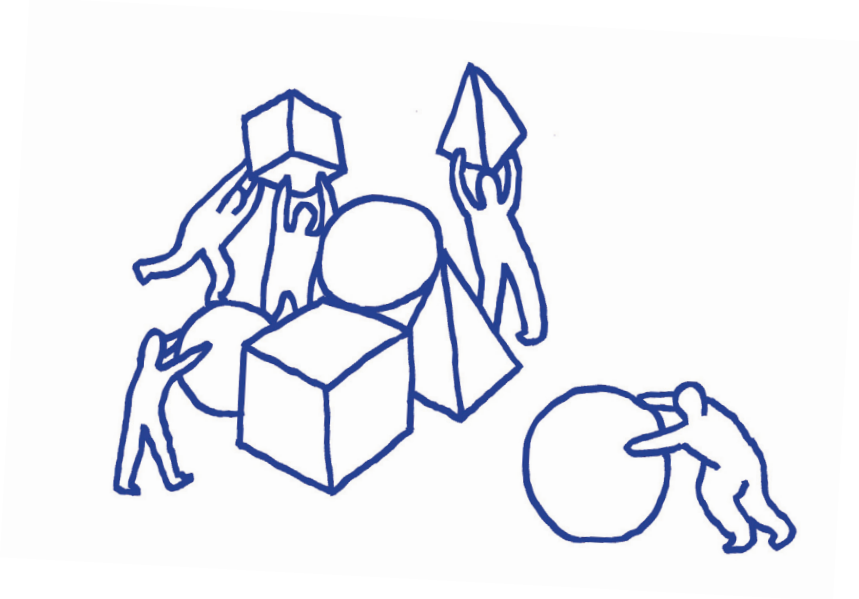


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WHAT IS TRY?

TRY to connect



The partnership brings together organizations from Serbia (Eho animato and Tri groša/Threepenny), Greece (ArtCanAct), North Macedonia (Peripetija), and the Czech Republic (ViceVersa). It is a collaboration between European artists focused on building stronger connections with young audiences in the performing arts.

In all partner countries, there is a clear lack of cultural programs for young people aged 13 to 20, especially in performing arts, as well as a strong need to improve and rethink how artists communicate and engage with young audiences, both in these countries and across Europe. The TRY project is based on ideas and contributions from several European countries. It offers different strategies and models for participation and interaction, aiming to reconnect theater with young people in various contexts.

Thanks to the transnational character of the project and different contexts that were taken into account, this handbook offers a variety of experiences, models and strategies for artists, but also for educators, to use and further develop relationships with their youth audiences

TRY to engage



The project is based on the idea that the development of artistic practices is inseparable from the development of the audiences and vice versa. It is a two-sided process and a dialectic one, and that is where the participative method of this project comes from - direct involvement of youth and artists in the co-creation is a crucial element.

All of the activities are derived from the strong need to connect with young audiences that the partners have recognized through their practices and continuous work in the sector. Creating art for young audiences is not appreciated enough for the potential it has for young adults. Lack of motivation is grounded in the very low number of artistic programs dedicated specifically to youth audiences (e.g., Belgrade has only one professional theater for youth, Skopje has two, while the situation is a bit better in Athens and Prague), scarce budgets on the national and local level dedicated to youth programs, as well as absence of affirmation of the professional environment.

These systemic problems, alongside the general social fear of teenagers' perspective rooted in generational gaps which is becoming wider with unstoppable technological progress, results in poor fruits regarding both the quality of performing arts production for this audience, as well as for the very audiences' interest in the performing arts.

The goal of TRY is to offer new models of creation of organic, empowered, empathic connections and building direct communication channels between artists and audiences, making it possible for them to exchange feedback on their mutual perceptions. In order to do so, we apply methods of participation, gamification, direct co-creation, as well as creative use of digital approaches (virtual co-lab). Gamification is a specific focus in this project - it is an effective way to connect learning processes with creative ones, while it is also increasing interaction, motivating participants and strengthening teamwork.

TRY to innovate



Digital languages, digital art formats and digital dramaturgies are an important part of addressing youth audiences, bearing in mind that some activities might be much more suitable and convenient within digital models of collaboration compared to live ones. The project has a strong transnational online presence, using digital approaches and virtual co-lab to maintain creative process continuation within international teams throughout the whole timeline. A virtual co-lab serves as a gamified map of the creative process that is continuously fed with new content.

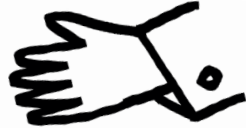
TRY to speak up



The focus topic of artistic and cross-disciplinary research that connected the groups transnationally was what both artists and youth indicated as one of the strongest taboos nowadays – money. Through creative workshops and knowledge sharing with the experts input, the groups examined and deconstructed the concepts of monetization and socio-economic inequalities, as well as facts and emotions that we associate with money as a means of exchange and communication. The research inputs were prepared by experts in different fields that offered a wide variety of perspectives (economists, historians, designers, psychologists etc).

Theatre has an important potential to engage youth and artists in reflecting on the important socio-economic issues of today's world, including consumerism, poverty and political and personal implications of inequalities. The proposed questions are relevant transnationally and transgenerationally, Three co-creations allowed the groups to share and offer their creative reflections based on the cross-disciplinary research of the topic.

TRY to reach out



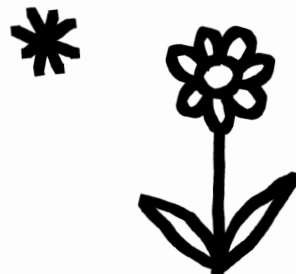
Diversity is an important priority that is embedded in the structure of the project and inherently linked to the practices of partner organizations. An Open Call was published prior to the commence of the project to invite teenagers and young adults with different backgrounds to participate in the program. The choice of participants has been made based on criteria of diversity and inclusivity, which would reinforce the dynamics of the group.

TRY to grow



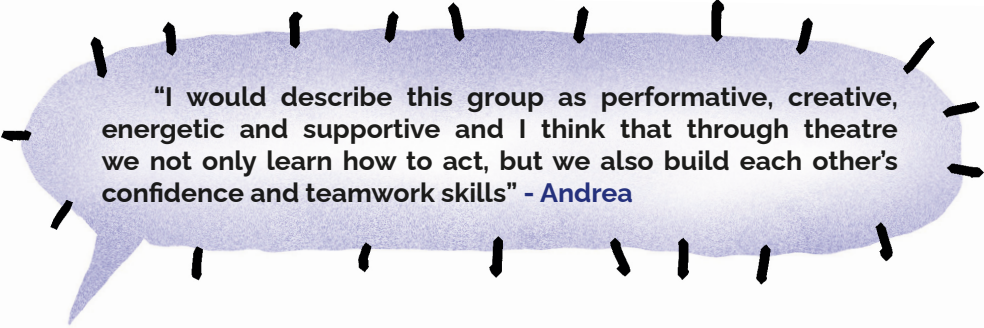
TRY offers opportunities for capacity building for creators in performing arts and drama educators working with and for young audiences. This handbook containing valuable data and knowledge is just one of them. It is important to say that we encourage the use of this handbook in peer-to-peer creative processes, as well as for educators in other disciplines interested in applying theatre techniques in their educational method.

TRY online directory promotes growth in the sector, by helping artists, researchers and educators in this specific field to learn and develop their methods, find partners, and have an overview of achievements in order to build on the efforts of their colleagues.



BACKGROUND

Core philosophy of the TRY method



"I would describe this group as performative, creative, energetic and supportive and I think that through theatre we not only learn how to act, but we also build each other's confidence and teamwork skills" - Andrea

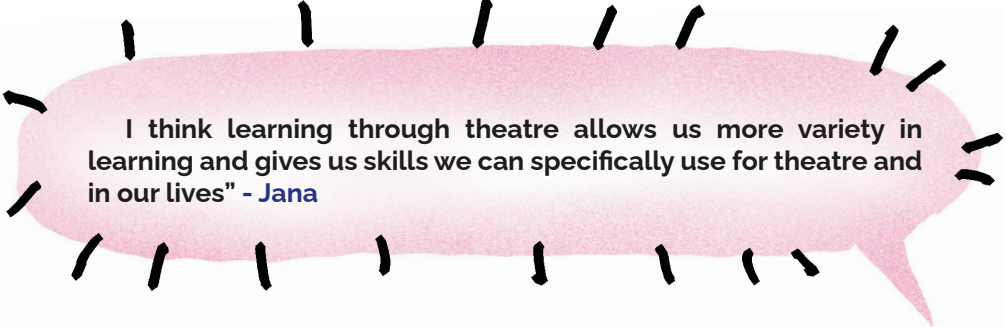
TRY method emerges from the conclusion that young people learn with ease if they are invited to step into experience rather than simply observe it. TRY method understands theatre not as a stage for performance, but as a field for discovery: a shared time-space where imagination, thought, and relationship meet. Participation is therefore not a requirement but a medium - everyone is present as a contributor, shaping and being shaped by the collective work.

At its heart is a hypothesis about creative and critical thought acting as intertwined forces in stage processes. We make and we question, we invent and we analyze. Through this rhythm of imagining and reflecting, participants learn to see themselves and the world with greater nuance. Curiosity is treated as both method and attitude. We investigate themes, experiences, and questions that matter, letting inquiry move the creative process. Competition has no place here, not because excellence is unimportant, but because comparison narrows the horizon. Learning grows in relation, not rivalry. In this environment, collaboration becomes a way of knowing, and mutual support becomes a condition for insight.

The atmosphere deliberately holds a paradox: it is relaxed yet attentive, informal but purposeful. Ease allows authenticity to surface; focus gives it direction. The tone is playful not as an escape from seriousness, but as a gateway to it. Joy, humor, surprise, and fun are seen as pedagogical forces—modes through which inhibition dissolves, trust forms, and deeper thinking becomes possible.

In all of this, the aim is not to train performers, but to cultivate young people who can explore, articulate, question, and imagine. Theatre becomes the scaffolding for this becoming, a practice through which agency, creativity, and reflective awareness are rehearsed and embodied.

Theoretical framework



I think learning through theatre allows us more variety in learning and gives us skills we can specifically use for theatre and in our lives" - Jana





Our interest in methodology was sparked by **Jacques Rancière's** idea of the "**ignorant schoolmaster**", which unsettles the usual divide between the one who knows and the one who learns. Instead of assuming that knowledge moves in one direction, it treats learning as something that happens between people who are paying attention together. The facilitator does not operate as an expert who leads others toward predetermined insights, but as someone who shares the space of inquiry, posing questions, offering structure, and exploring alongside participants. Another concept by Rancière that is relevant for us is that of the "**emancipated spectator**". Theatre becomes a meeting ground where meaning is made collectively—where different experiences, observations, and interpretations matter equally. In this approach, what guides the process is not authority but curiosity, not instruction but shared investigation. The result is a learning environment in which everyone, adults included, is involved in thinking, making, and discovering.

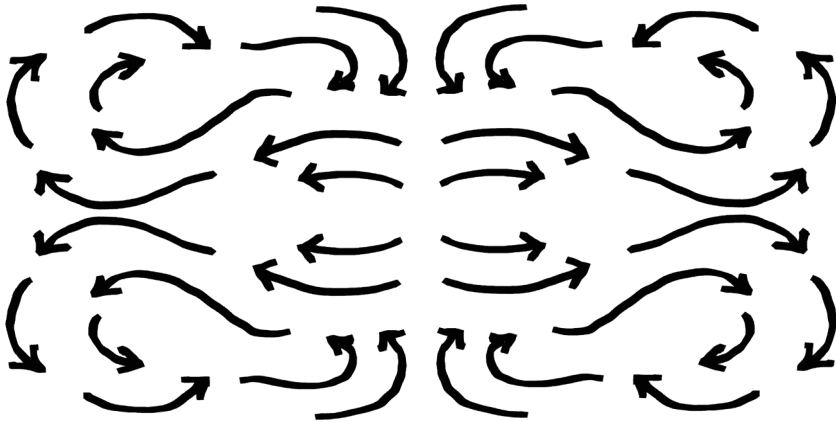
A parallel thread in this framework comes from **Cornelius Castoriadis's** thinking on the **social imaginary**. He suggests that societies, like individuals, are not simply shaped by inherited structures but continually recreate themselves through shared acts of imagination. Applied to this practice, theatre becomes a space where such acts are exercised and made visible: participants invent stories, roles, meanings, and relations that did not exist before. Rather than conveying fixed truths or models, the work invites young people to notice how worlds are built — how gestures, agreements, and interpretations form the fabric of collective life. In this view, learning is less about absorbing content and more about engaging in the ongoing activity of creation. The educator's task is to hold open this space of imagining, where diverse contributions can take shape and where meaning is neither given nor guaranteed but made together, provisionally and playfully.

Another complementary angle we found in the **game theory**, although approached here not as a predictive model of strategic competition, but as a lens through which to observe how meaning and agency emerge within shared rules. In simple games, participants operate inside systems they did not fully design, yet their actions continually redefine how the game unfolds — a dynamic that mirrors Castoriadis's insight that societies are self-instituting, continually remaking the norms that shape them. Likewise, the unexpected moves or "interruptions" within a game echo Rancière's notion of politics: the moment when those without a predetermined place reshape the logic of the situation.

Seen this way, theatre-based learning becomes a kind of open game in which rules are present but negotiable, outcomes undetermined, and significance constructed collaboratively. Participants do not merely follow structures; they test, bend, and sometimes reinvent them. What matters is not winning or mastery, but recognizing that worlds — whether games, scenes, or societies — are made through action, imagination, and encounter.

To achieve this, one needs to set up a state of **Flow**. Flow is a psychological state of deep engagement and optimal experience, described by psychologist **Mihály Csikszentmihályi**. It occurs when a person is fully absorbed in an activity, to the point that time seems to pass differently, self-consciousness decreases, attention is completely focused on the task, the activity feels intrinsically rewarding. While in a Flow, people are not passively relaxed, nor anxiously over-stimulated — they are actively and joyfully concentrated. According to Csikszentmihályi, flow is most likely to occur when the following conditions are present:

-  **balance between challenge and skill** - Flow emerges when the challenge is high enough to be engaging, but not so high that it creates anxiety, and not so low that it causes boredom – “a Flow channel”
-  **clear goals** - the person understands what they are trying to do, what counts as success in that moment
-  **immediate feedback** - the activity provides constant feedback through the body, through others' reactions, through the unfolding situation itself. Improvisation, in particular, offers continuous feedback, and it is the all-place favorite activity for the participants
-  **deep concentration** - attention becomes fully focused on the present moment, essential for being immersed in the activity



Pedagogically, Flow is important because it supports deep learning, enhances intrinsic motivation, allows skills to develop organically, fosters creativity and problem-solving. Csikszentmihályi argues that people learn best when they are actively engaged and emotionally invested, rather than externally pressed. The activity is experienced as rewarding in itself – it doesn't need an external reward.

Eventually, we applied **David A. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory** in organizing educational and creative processes. We have divided activities according to Kolb's models of learning by cycle. Theatre as a syncretic, complex and dynamic activity found all four models or styles convenient and useful:

- ➔ **Diverging** style combines concrete experience and reflective observation. We mostly apply it in brainstorming and discussions, since it requires using imagination and shifting perspectives while discussing topics.
- ➔ **Converging** style combines abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. We reach out to it when we deal with technical tasks, and find it very useful for problem solving and practical application.
- ➔ **Accommodating** style connects concrete experience and active experimentation, especially important in the creative process as it is naturally action-oriented and intuitive.
- ➔ **Assimilating** style relies on abstract conceptualization and reflective observation and it was widely used during the research of the topic, especially with guest-lecturers and the virtual co-lab project.

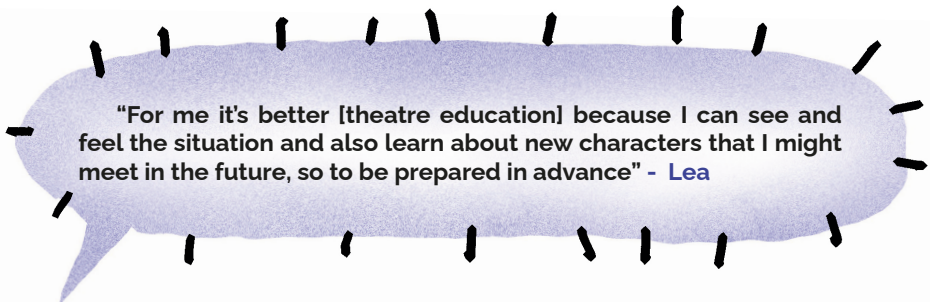
STARTING PREMISES



At the outset of the project, we formulated a set of premises to be examined. These were derived directly from the theoretical framework presented earlier. The quotations accompanying each premise are drawn from participant interviews. Additional excerpts can be accessed by scanning the QR code.



Young people perceive theatre practice as a heuristic process—one grounded in exploration, discovery, and experiential learning. They demonstrate a strong awareness of the broader social value of theatrical methods, techniques, and tools, recognizing their relevance beyond the artistic sphere.



Young people experience theatrical space-time as an environment of intimacy, belonging, and safety. Within contexts that encourage a reduction of self-consciousness, they report feeling more authentically themselves, while cultivating a sense of confidence and agency. They place clear value on meaningful engagement in the process rather than on the evaluation of performance outcomes.

"I think in theatre you can be yourself. We move, we talk like we are all friends. I think this is very important for us" - Ana

"I am surrounded by people who want to do the same thing that I want to do, and I feel more comfortable in my body and it makes me feel amazing" - Elena



Young people actively reflect on their learning processes, recognizing the somatic dimension of theatre practice as particularly attuned to their ways of understanding. This approach affirms the body as a legitimate site of knowledge and positions lived experience as a meaningful epistemological method. The theatrical framework offers what might be described as structured freedom—akin to the dynamics of play—establishing clear parameters while preserving openness for creativity. Through ongoing attunement to one another, participants naturally cultivate respect for differing skill levels and collaborate in pursuit of shared goals. A sense of enjoyment emerges as essential to both learning and creation. When the nervous system is relaxed and participants feel connected within the group, the processes of learning and making art unfold with an organic and unforced quality.

"I think it [theatre education] is more fun. And actually, it is easier to learn, because you are living it, you try to live it" - Despoina

"It is great that you can see what you learn, this helps a lot to people who have troubles with it" - Maria Markella

"I think it is better, because you get first-hand experience." - Ana Marija

FOUR AGREEMENTS



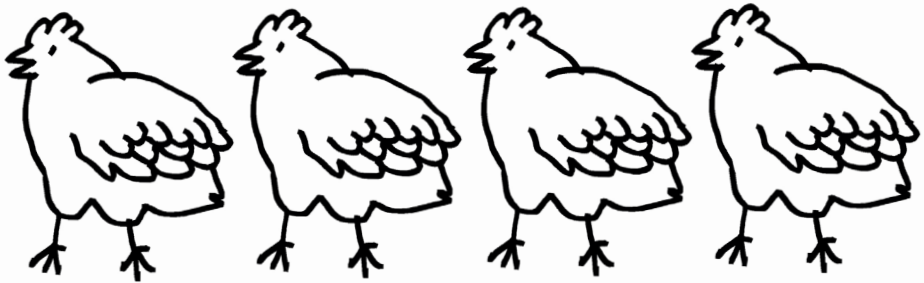
One does not need to begin with a passionate attachment to the topic of creative research.

Interest helps, certainly, but it is not a prerequisite. A subject that appears fascinating to one person may feel inert to another. What matters is not the topic itself but the angle from which it is approached. What often animates research is not the theme alone, but the friction within it. We encourage participants to locate or construct a tension, an inner contradiction, or a paradox that cannot be resolved too quickly. When a topic becomes a site of uncertainty, it acquires depth. This aligns with the view found in inquiry-based learning and phenomenological traditions, where knowledge emerges from something that resists simple explanation. The emphasis rests less on what one chooses to explore and more on how one engages with it. Any topic is legitimate; what matters is the method, the mode of questioning, and the readiness to stay with complexity. In this practice, research is treated as a movement, an unfolding process shaped by curiosity, attention, and the courage to probe the unresolved, rather than as the pursuit of a pre-given answer.



“Less is more” principle

Creative and intellectual growth tends to flourish when participants are given space to act, choose, and interpret for themselves. Autonomy is not an absence of structure, but a condition in which structure becomes enabling rather than directive. The facilitator’s task is to prepare carefully, to formulate instructions that are strong, clear, and open enough to invite genuine exploration. This preparation does not aim at having participants reproduce a predetermined vision; instead, it creates a field in which unexpected forms of thinking and making can arise. In this approach, guidance works like what Rancière calls shared attention: it points toward questions without prescribing answers. A well-designed prompt, a precise constraint, or a simple rule can generate far richer outcomes than elaborate explanation. Our experience suggests that when participants are invited to trust intuition, experiment, and follow emergent impulses, their responses often exceed what could have been orchestrated through direction alone. Thus, “less is more” does not imply withdrawal, but a shift in posture: from transmitting content to holding a space where participants’ own intelligence can unfold.



➔ **Aim slightly beyond what feels certain.**

Creative work benefits from a gentle stretch — a movement toward something that feels just outside one's current reach. This is not a demand for exceptional performance, but an invitation to treat learning as a horizon that shifts as we approach it. Curiosity becomes the driving force: when participants are guided by the questions that matter to them, motivation grows naturally, and risk-taking becomes less intimidating. The role of the facilitator is to cultivate a climate where stepping beyond the familiar is normalized rather than dramatized. A supportive framework — where exploration, trial, misstep, and revision are shared experiences — allows the so-called “comfort zone” to expand organically. The aim is not to leave safety behind, but to build a form of comfort that includes uncertainty, experimentation, and the pleasure of discovering what one did not yet know one could do.

➔ **Use the whole body as much as possible**

When we say this, we do not necessarily mean to style bodies in space in perfect images or in a smooth and beautiful movement. From the observer's point of view during the act, it is about basic body relations and immanent culturally constructed concepts that unconditionally produce meanings (example: horizontal/vertical; up-front/down-back; from left to right, etc...). For the executor of the movement, it is about sensation evoked in specific relation evoked in a situation conditioned from the formal parameters: a space occupied by a body, level of a body, direction, tension and tempo and rhythm, if moving. All of it has the power to send a message even if not intended to.

PHASES IN PLANNING

PREPARATION

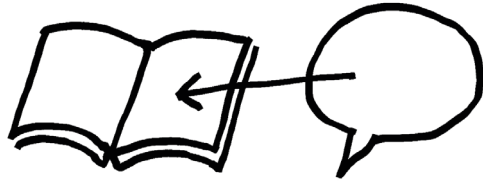
1. TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITIES

Do not underestimate the importance of a well-designed team building process, especially when participants begin the creative work without knowing one another. In the case of the TRY project, much of this foundation was established during the kick-off camp. Simply being away from home created a kind of blank space — a setting outside their usual routines, unmarked by familiar expectations or social roles — where new impressions, experiences, and relationships could form with ease. Although the days followed a structured program, we deliberately left ample unstructured time for the group to discover its own rhythms, conversations, and dynamics. Allowing this space is essential: trust and cohesion cannot be engineered solely through planned activities — they also grow in moments of spontaneity and shared downtime. For facilitators, the most challenging aspect is recognizing when to step back. Letting go of control, even temporarily, can feel risky, yet it is precisely in these unsupervised intervals that genuine connection, initiative, and group identity begin to unfold. Creating the conditions for this to happen is as crucial as any exercise or workshop that follows.

2. INTRODUCING TO THE TOPIC AND THE METHODS

In the case of the TRY project, the central theme was predetermined and lay beyond the primary fields of expertise of the lead mentors and facilitators. The decision to involve specialists from sociology, anthropology, economics, journalism, and psychology proved constitutive for the process, transforming the research into a genuinely interdisciplinary endeavor. Through lectures and workshops, facilitators and participants engaged in a shared learning journey, supporting one another in a peer-to-peer dynamic. This configuration reshaped the traditionally hierarchical structure of creative production into a more balanced distribution of power and agency.

ENGAGEMENT & REFLECTION



→ **Active reading method** (reading and commenting on the literature related to the topic)

We engage in collective reading aloud, each participant contributing a paragraph in turn. After each coherent unit of meaning, we pause briefly to reflect on the impressions and insights drawn from the text. All participants are invited to share interpretations, pose questions, and propose possible responses. Reading may be interrupted at any point, even mid-sentence, should an unfamiliar word or challenging phrase hinder comprehension. Drawing analogies, making connections, and referencing prior reading experiences are strongly encouraged, fostering an active and dialogic engagement with the material.

→ **Meeting experts** (lectures and workshops with experts from different fields related to the topic)

This method enables us to conduct our research with care and responsibility. The format of each meeting remains flexible: at times it takes the form of an in-person encounter, while in other instances experts share their knowledge through an ex-cathedra lecture or an interactive, practice-based workshop. When collaborators are based internationally, online video platforms provide an effective alternative. All formats are welcomed, provided they ensure a sense of comfort and mutual engagement for both experts and participants. The primary objective of this approach is to cultivate a deep and well-grounded understanding of the case study. Once such understanding is established, the subsequent creative process unfolds with greater clarity and ease.



Fieldwork

Fieldwork turned out to be one of the most interesting and resourceful research activities. It involved visiting special places of interest, such as museums, galleries, archives, public monuments; conducting ethnographic interviews with one another, experts and anonymous subjects. Fieldwork for pedagogical practice means more than collecting data, it is learning by doing through an immersive encounter, and learning by traveling and dwelling in spatially-demarcated fields, both real and digital.

The fieldwork consisted of several different activities: visits to museums and archives relevant to the research, field interviews in public spaces as well digital archeological diggings.



Interview Methodology

A semi-structured interview method was used to explore participants' views on "Money," combining guided questions with open discussion. While a set of prepared questions provided a common framework, participants were also encouraged to express their personal opinions freely and to develop open discussions around the topic. The participants prepared the necessary materials and equipment for the interviews, including GDPR consent forms, informational QR codes to provide interviewees with details about the project, note-taking materials, and mobile phones for audio recording when consent was given. Interviews were conducted in public spaces, where participants gradually built confidence in engaging passers-by. The activity involved a diverse group of interviewees (ages 19–75), enriching discussions with varied perspectives. Participants found the process meaningful, as it encouraged reflection, dialogue, and spontaneous exchanges among strangers. Educationally, the experience strengthened communication, social, and research skills, while promoting active citizenship and critical thinking. Overall, it was a rewarding activity that participants were eager to repeat.

Socratic dialogue method

It takes the form of a cooperative, question-driven dialogue designed to foster critical thinking and self-reflection. For this method to be effective, it is essential to cultivate attentive listening and to periodically summarize what has been expressed—not merely as a gesture of acknowledgment, but as a means of reflecting ideas back to the group. Such moments of synthesis provide an opportunity to clarify perspectives, illuminate recurring themes, and identify emerging patterns within the discussion.

Taking reflective notes

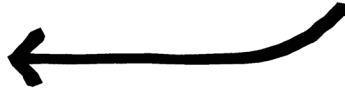
Writing reflective notes involves documenting not only the content of an activity, but also the manner in which the event is - or might be - experienced. In composing these notes, we encourage the use of a personal voice, poetic language, and even fictionalized scenarios. Often, such reflections evolve into preliminary sketches for future monologues or dramatic situations, serving as a bridge between lived experience and artistic creation.

Documenting AV notes

In today's world, everyone constantly uses their phones to capture images and sounds. By documenting the research through audio or video recordings, participants not only create an archive but also generate a rich pool of potential sources for inspiration in the creative process. These materials can be used as originally recorded or reinterpreted and edited to suit new purposes. This approach naturally intersects with some of the techniques employed in field research.

If using phones feels too commonplace or mundane, we encourage providing researchers with dedicated recording equipment, such as sound recorders, microphones, or cameras. The devices need not be elaborate or costly; their mere presence often alters the experience, lending a heightened sense of purpose and engagement to the act of documentation.

* CONVERGING RESEARCH CONTENT INTO CREATIVE FORM



In our case, its expression within the field of performing arts carries a distinctly anthropological orientation, examining human behavior and their roles within the community. The creative process functions as an experimental space, allowing for trial and error while generating new knowledge. The overarching method involves applying the insights gained through the methodological steps described above to various formal configurations, in search of the format that feels most resonant and appropriate.

During the TRY project, three groups explored two different methods of the creative process. The groups from Greece and Serbia chose devising methods, developing material for the performance through involving the participants and performers in the creation of all the stage elements, including text, music, costume, choreography, props and set design. Not all young authors appeared on stage. Some of them were in charge of the technical control of the show. The group from North Macedonia engaged a playwright in the later phases of the process, who was in charge of composing an original play from the results of the research of the participants. Here is the word by Kalija Kiselički, the North Macedonian playwright, about her engagement in the creative process:

"Blue Monday" began with a single word "money" and a direct invitation from director Borjan Stojkov to explore what that word means to young people standing at the threshold of adulthood. The task was open yet precise: to create something that speaks honestly to a generation navigating precarity and the quiet violence of everyday choices. Because injustice hits hardest when you are young, when everything feels urgent and wrong and you refuse to pretend otherwise. And then you grow up, and the system doesn't silence you by force but it slowly convinces you that it was never worth the noise. I refuse to believe that.

I approached the process by building a structure where fragmented narratives could coexist, focusing on characters caught in cycles of friendship, obligation, and self-deception.

This structure was grounded through research sessions with the young actors from "Prva Proba" studio, whose lived experiences gave the language its authenticity. The rhythm between the personal and the collective remained central: Nora, Iva, and Kiki are individual voices, but their exhaustion, longing, and resilience echo something much wider and deeply shared.

From there, the text evolved through continuous dialogue with the director and the creative team, each rehearsal reshaping and deepening the material. One of the main challenges was preserving emotional immediacy while allowing the text to carry symbolic weight, and maintaining a strong authorial voice while keeping it open enough to be transformed in the room. That tension is exactly what made the process alive. What emerged belongs to everyone who entered that space and offered something real. This play is, in the deepest sense, ours.



Engaging with other creative medium

As part of the creative process of the project, it was considered important for participants to encounter and experiment with a variety of artistic mediums. Theatre, by its nature, is an interdisciplinary art form that often combines elements of music, movement, visual arts and increasingly, digital technologies. For this reason, the project aimed to expose participants to different forms of artistic expression and encourage them to explore creativity beyond performance alone.

Within this framework, a practical workshop was designed to provide an open and experimental environment where participants could work with physical materials and engage in hands-on creative activities. Specifically, participants were invited to design and create their own versions of "money" using various craft materials. The activity encouraged them to reflect on the symbolic, social as well as cultural meanings associated with money while simultaneously exploring visual expression and design. Despite the participants' age group, the activity generated a high level of enthusiasm and engagement. Working with simple materials, such as paper, scissors, glue, and drawing tools, allowed participants to reconnect with tactile forms of creativity that are often overlooked in adult learning environments. This process served as a reminder that hands-on activities should not be limited to early education, but can play a valuable role in stimulating imagination, critical thinking and creativity in young adults as well.

The creative outcomes demonstrated thoughtful reflection and a strong sense of humour. Participants produced imaginative and visually engaging designs, often incorporating satire, symbolism and personal interpretations of value and exchange. Through this activity, they were able not only to experiment artistically but also to engage critically with the thematic focus of the project.

CLOSING

1. SHARING THE EXPERIENCE WITH THE COMMUNITY

Open rehearsal / work in progress sharing

Sharing a work in progress through an open rehearsal is a well-established method for both receiving valuable feedback and promoting the work. This approach allows participants to incorporate constructive input before the final performance aiming to enhance the overall quality of the work. The open rehearsal involves inviting a diverse audience, including participants' friends, artists, colleagues, theatre makers and actors. Guests are invited to engage physically in part of the creative process while observing other sections of the rehearsal. The session will conclude with an open circle, where participants and observers can share reflections, exchange ideas and provide constructive feedback on the work being developed. This method is used not only to improve the final performance but also to foster collaboration, dialogue and create a deeper understanding of the artistic process for all involved.

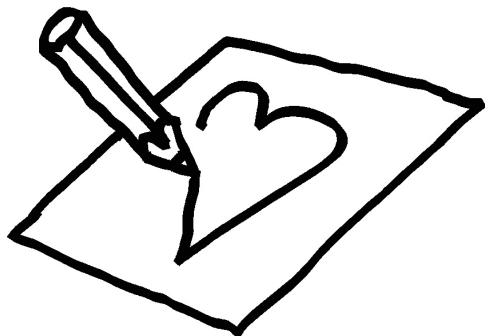
Post performance Q&A session

The post-performance Q&A session is designed to actively engage participants in discussing and reflecting on the creation of their performance. It provides an opportunity for them to receive immediate feedback from the audience, while also developing the ability to respond thoughtfully and confidently to questions on the spot. Beyond enhancing participants' communication and presentation skills, the Q&A serves as an important tool for disseminating the outcomes of the TRY project, as it allows the performers to highlight the various elements, processes and branches of the project that the audience may not be aware of, thereby this activity will deepen the understanding and promote awareness of the project's objectives and impact.



POSTER for the fast feedback

As an additional, more informal method of gathering audience impressions, a feedback poster was placed at the exit of the performance space, accompanied by pens and an open invitation for the audience to leave written reflections immediately after the show. This approach created a low-threshold, accessible entry point for participation. Audience members could respond spontaneously, without the pressure of speaking publicly, which resulted in a number of warm, personal, and poetic comments. At the same time, this method revealed certain limitations. The openness of the format meant that responses were not guided toward specific topics or questions, making it more difficult to extract targeted feedback. Positive and simple impressions were frequently shared, while more critical or complex reflections were less present. Writing feedback in a public space, immediately after a performance can make audiences less inclined to articulate impressions and critique. Despite these challenges, the poster functioned as a gesture of openness and hospitality, extending the performance into a shared reflective space and allowing the audience to leave a visible trace of their experience.





FEEDBACKS FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

Here are what some of our participants said regarding their participation in the project:

If someone asked me what TRY is for me, I wouldn't know where to start answering. Apart from saying "Theatre Reconnecting with Youth," which it truly is, through it a thousand other things were created. It is a programme, an experience through which I met many people with similar interests and formed new lifelong friendships. I have reshaped what art means to me simply because, over the past two years, I was exposed to so many new experiences. For me, TRY is something unique and truly valuable.

- Maria Markella

The TRY programme is the first time in my life that I have been involved with theatre. I decided to participate because I wanted to engage in something creative and challenge myself. I was afraid to open up to new people, to share my ideas in order to create a small sketch together, to move and express myself freely in front of others. The programme gives me a space where I can confront my anxieties and behave spontaneously, where I can truly be myself. Through our improvisations, we have explored different ways of behaving, speaking, expressing ourselves, and moving. This has made me realise the way I exist within a space: I became aware of how much I tend to withdraw and make myself as small as possible so as not to disturb anyone. Afterwards, it helped me approach social situations with confidence and enthusiasm. More than anything, improvisation has taught me not to be afraid of the new and the unexpected, but to grow and evolve together with it. I enjoy every moment we spend together, knowing that through our fun and shared experiences I am discovering new things and cultivating myself.

- Aris

My name is Kyriakos, and I will keep it brief. The programme Theatre Reconnecting with Youth helped me greatly to become a much better version of myself than I was before. Through the trips, the meetings, and the discussions we had, I believe that I both received and offered many beautiful things. The people who organised the programme, as well as us participants, will certainly remember it and will have many wonderful stories to share for years to come. Through the programme, I had the opportunity to meet people I would probably never have met otherwise, but most importantly, I discovered things about myself that I didn't even know existed within me.

- Kyriakos

My participation in the TRY project has been a journey of self-discovery, personal growth, and love for theatre and for the people who create art. Through the two meetings that took place abroad, we built valuable friendships that will stay with us forever. We came closer to other Balkan cultures and discovered that we have far more things that unite us than divide us. Through the workshops we took part in, both during the camps and throughout the entire duration of the project, I learned in a very creative way about money, social inequalities, the economy, and many other topics that have given me a clearer understanding of the society I live in, especially as I grow older and begin to become more independent. Theatre and the other art forms that were used as learning methods during the project brought me closer to myself and to my own limits, while helping me broaden my horizons and develop my critical thinking. The TRY project offered me many tools and experiences that I carry with me in my daily life, and I am truly happy that I chose to remain part of this journey for two whole years. I met people who supported me, helped me, and introduced me to new and unforgettable experiences. It was certainly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, and I hope that other young people my age will also have the chance to participate in something so magical, at least once in their lives.

- Lenia

My name is Jana Ahmed Ali, and for me the TRY programme has been a meaningful experience of personal and social development. Through my participation, I had the opportunity to express myself creatively, collaborate with different people, and feel that I belong to a group that promotes inclusion, respect, and acceptance. TRY is not simply a programme; it is a safe space where free expression, self-confidence, and active participation are encouraged. At the same time, the programme has offered me valuable tools on both a personal and social level.

- Jana

For me, the TRY programme was an opportunity to meet new people who were different from me and to learn many things from the programme. The environment of the programme is encouraging and supportive, and it helped me express myself more openly and collaborate with people who have different experiences and perspectives. At the same time, TRY provided me with important skills, such as better communication, a stronger sense of teamwork and self-confidence. Overall, the programme had a significant impact on me, and I believe that what I gained from it will help me in the future, both on a personal and professional level.

- Adriana

I haven't felt for a second like someone was giving me orders during the TRY programme. I felt free to share all my ideas and to experience something truly new while participating in the creation of the final performance, since I was taking several roles. I was a performer, but also a costume designer, and I was very engaged in the process of co-directing the play. All of us contributed a lot and in various fields. It is also important to mention that I met amazing people in the programme and made a lot of new friends that I like spending time with.

- Dimitrije

The TRY programme will stay with me as one of the best memories ever and an experience worth retelling. Everything began with the trip to Skopje, where I met people from Greece and North Macedonia that became my friends forever. By bringing all our cultures together we made our journey through some serious topics fresh, creative and fun.

- Anja

Participation in the TRY programme was a great experience. It brought me many new friends, but also opportunities to research on some ideas and concepts that I was genuinely interested in. Questions we raised and discussions we developed around them made me discover some new things about myself and the world around me. It was very interesting to think and speculate through games.

- Ana V

The TRY experience brought me great memories, new friendships and interesting processes. Collaboration with people from other cultures enriched my imagination and creative potential. I feel privileged by being in the company with all of them.

- Ana M.

The TRY programme is one of the best things that has happened to me! Hanging out during rehearsals, creating a performance, the whole process itself, premiere at the Bitez Theatre, explosive applause, costumes, everything was unforgettable! I am truly thankful for the opportunity I was given and I hope that I will experience something like this again and again and again.

- Vasilije

The most important part from the TRY project for me was gaining new experiences, meeting new people and their cultures and the opportunity to work with people that could help me to improve as an actress. The experience I gained from the play from the TRY project is unforgettable. The great teamwork with my colleagues and friends, also the open minded approach of the director and all of the crew made me feel comfortable to work with them and I think that had the biggest impact on me.

- Elena Kochareva

I personally enjoyed the process of creating the play the most, since that was the phase in which I had the most involvement. I really love the art of theater and the work that goes into creating something genuinely special for the audience, and seeing and being a part of that whole process was a wonderful and unforgettable experience. It was really interesting seeing how much the end product evolves and differs from the starting idea. With theater you can truly take a deep dive into small details that can have a large impact on your role's behaviour and working together with the whole team just makes it all that much easier. I felt that in this whole process, all of us just got to be ourselves and everyday at the rehearsals you could simply zone out and block out everything that is happening around you, outside of that magical building, and do something that you are truly passionate about.

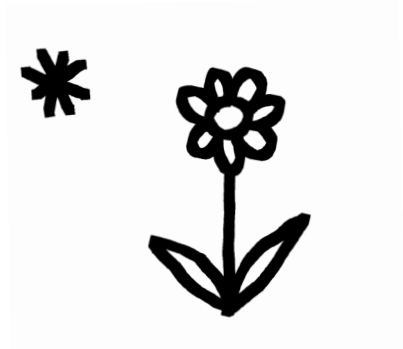
- Teo Manev

It was important to me that I had the opportunity to experience something new, to meet wonderful people, and to learn how to express myself in a different way. I wasn't at the camp in Skopje, but the camp in Belgrade was still an unforgettable experience full of laughter, socializing, and new friendships. Every day brought something new and interesting. The rehearsals were a journey filled with effort and creativity, and the performance was the moment when everything came to life in front of the audience. The biggest impression on me was our teamwork and everything we achieved, as well as the incredible energy that followed us throughout the entire project.

- Sasha Dimitrievska

What mattered most to me was gaining new skills and forming friendships with people from other countries. The camp in Belgrade left lasting memories and a sense of closeness, as if we were all one family. It also played a key role in the creation of our performance. The rehearsals were relatively more demanding than the performances, but one cannot exist without the other, right? In the end, all the effort paid off in the final result. The most memorable moment for me was the preview performance, because familiar and beloved faces from the audience were watching me.

- Lea Stojkov







RECOMMENDED TOOLS

We prepared two lists of creative tools to share with you. One list is made by participants, the other by facilitators. They are given here as practical descriptions, more focused on the mechanics of the tool, which we recognized as suitable in various contexts. Although three project groups approached the process with different methodologies, we relied on more or less the same techniques and tools.

* PARTICIPANTS' RECOMMENDATIONS:

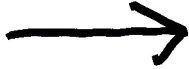
Here are the participants' personal recommendations. When we invited them to give their contribution, we never specified which referential framework to relate to as we wanted to see how they themselves understand what is the most important for them. In the examples below you can see that by creating autonomously the referential field they relate to, they actually situate themselves into social, political, epistemic, embodied, ethical and imaginative frames. We will try to offer some categories as we notice them through the analysis of their answers:

-  **Meta-observative tools** – some of the answers show how young people understand creative tools as a way of knowing, of accessing the reality, of acting truthfully and of relating to others. The theatre practice for them is a laboratory for their personal social experiments, where they explore their ethics, social norms in playful research.
-  **Embodied performative tools** – staged situations and improvisations hold a high ranking in the evaluation of tools. There is a high preference to use body and voice in expressing their identities, rather than explanation, to practice spontaneity, intuition and relation awareness and they emphasize 'thinking on the spot' (being witty and both engaged and engaging)
-  **Symbolic and imaginative tools** – objects and spaces become metaphors. This tool is important because in a collective process one needs to negotiate their personal imagination in a collective, to find a visible form for inner states and recognize common ground through imagination, while the meaning emerges through interpretation.
-  **Research-based and knowledge-oriented tools** – importance of engagement outside the workshop circle, engagement with external sources and expertise. They enjoy mixing factual knowledge with artistic interpretation and expanding their referential world beyond themselves.

NAME OF THE CREATIVE TOOL

HOW TO USE IT

Improvisation



To do different improvisation exercises with different topics



By using your body, your voice and actions



Imaginary items/status



1. Everyone picks an item and imagines this item is something else. They present the item and the crowd guesses what it is.

2. Each person is given a number corresponding to their status from 1 to 10. They have to act the status out and other people have to guess.



The life story of money



Each person gets a different amount of money and represents it through a story about where it comes from. It can be dirty money or clean money and it can be used purposefully or for participating in corruption.



WHEN TO USE IT

WHY YOU LOVE IT

When you need to boost your creativity.

It opens your mind, improves your creativity, helps you understand other people's way of thinking, improves your acting skills and thinking on the spot.

All the time.

Because it brings some things we are unaware of thinking and believing to the surface and also makes our acting skills better.

This tool is good to use when you want to activate the imagination or when you need to develop a new character.

It's creative and interesting to extend an emotion or a character's potential.

When you make a performance

It shows the reality of the world we live in, the worth of money and the real picture of corruption.

NAME OF THE CREATIVE TOOL

HOW TO USE IT

Dream market



We acted out our market of dreams. The way it was made revealed how much we can relate and recognize in each other's dreams.



Inspiration from historical texts



Brainstorm, find key points in a text we are interested in, create a presentation mixing art and historical facts



Going to different unique places aka Field Research



You go there, talk to professionals, look at the stuff



The Party



Three different people act out three different characters. The host of the party has to guess them.



WHEN TO USE IT

WHY YOU LOVE IT

Thoughts on public spaces.

It showed me that if it doesn't matter for us, the for who is?

Anytime we need historical facts and inspiration for our projects and art creations

We got to learn about history and be creative.

When you want to learn and take inspiration

Change of environment and scenery and learning something new.

To get closer to each other and have fun.

Because it's funny and everyone is creative in their own way.

**NAME OF THE
CREATIVE TOOL**

HOW TO USE IT

**Social justice
represented**



We get to know how the world works, how someone in a certain position feels and why they act the way they act. It shows how much changes how people treat others and how they get treated themselves.



Taking interviews



Asking people questions, learning about others



**Our personal
experiences
related to
corruption**



Asking people questions, learning about others
Have our mentors talk to us about our personal experiences and help us understand them better



WHEN TO USE IT

WHY YOU LOVE IT

As food for thought in our society. Also, in theatre when given a role, knowing how to act depending on their wealth status, how they carry themselves, act, feel, are

It shows the reality we are living in. The reality that poor people, the working class, get treated with disrespect. How they take them for granted and expect everything from them. Whereas the wealthier people walk on clouds, demand everything, get everything. I love how it doesn't present an idealistic world, it presents our world, our life. It's not a fairytale or a make believe fantasy. It's our truth, and theatre is all about truth.

When meeting people

Because it is interesting how people with different ages react and answer the different questions

Maybe turn them into scenes

Because people will probably relate



FACILITATORS' RECOMMENDATIONS

Here are facilitators' personal recommendations. While describing how they could happen and evolve, we kept in mind the multiutility of the tools, their flexibility and the quality to bend according to many different frameworks.



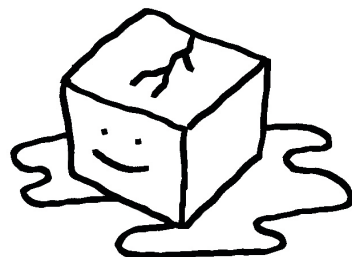
ICEBREAKERS AND WARM-UPS

We recognize the crucial role that ice-breakers and warm-up activities play in setting the tone and influencing the flow of a workshop.

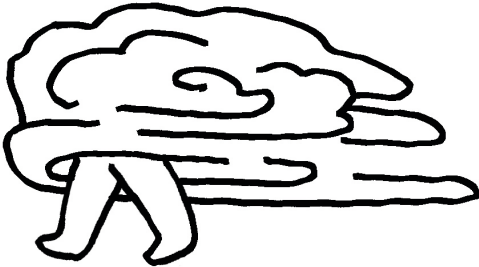
In our experience, **Sociograms** are particularly effective. Sociograms are brief, interactive surveys in which participants position their bodies in relation to the space and to others. This method is not only engaging, but also highly informative within a short period. Through simple, focused questions, participants get to know each other, recognize shared experiences, and begin to build connections that strengthen group cohesion. Participants can also be encouraged to bring their own questions into the space, inviting others to respond and share their perspectives.

Questions can be framed in a binary format (yes/no; this/that), where the space is divided into two sections and participants respond by choosing a side or by stepping in/out of a line or a circle. Alternatively, questions can employ a scale between two extremes (ranging from least to most, or from beginning to end), which requires participants to communicate and collaborate in forming an accurately ordered line.

Because this practice cultivates awareness of both spatial dimensions and the relationships between bodies within that space, it offers nearly limitless possibilities for varied applications.



Additionally, sociograms encourage consideration of multiple perspectives, highlighting the diversity of viewpoints within the group. Sociograms can also be useful in evaluation of the activities.



The exercise **Walking brainstorm** turned out to be an excellent transition from the warmups to immersion into the topic. The walking bodies occupy the space by their constant moving, while the ball travels from one moving body to another. The goal is to keep the ball moving through the space while giving short answers to the proposed prompt. The person that catches the ball should give a quick answer in the moment of passing it on. By keeping the focus on physical activities, walking and playing with the ball, the cognitive work is shifted to free and almost automatized response. At the same time, as it is a collective task to keep the ball in the air, the dynamics of the group start to form and strengthen. As a result the individuals start to feel supported by the whole group and safe to express verbally and share their answers without the fear of judgement.

It is important to say that the games related to creating a physical trust had an essential role in overall team building. They worked not only on body relaxation, but also on the groups' energy, readiness and confidence. The game that became an all-favorite is **Falling and Flying**. The game starts with careful familiarization with the body mechanics of being a falling body and catching a falling body or supporting an elevating body, then comes the introduction of instructions "Falling" and "Flying", conducted in pairs or small groups. When the group feels confident the participants disperse in the room and call out at any time "Falling" or "Flying", setting the people nearest to them responsible to execute this action. It is important to leave enough time for everybody to feel safe and included in this process, which can lead them to a very unique and liberating experience.

LEARNING TOOLS



Wrestling with Biases

This is an engaging and dialectic exercise for deconstructing most common biases in the public, normative and desirable discourses. By choosing an adequate premise or prompt for your research, you encourage the participants in exhausting the statement until it starts unfolding in illogical manners. The more you get into contradictions and paradoxes, the more the discrepancy between the language and the real act becomes revealing. This is the door to critical thinking that leads to potential social and political change.

The example that gave us a lot of interesting material was:
“Money is not important. The important thing(s) is/are...”



Peer observing and learning

Peer observing is recognized as an essential learning tool. During certain activities, participants are given a task and then divided into two or more groups so that some participants perform while others take on the role of active observers. This practice encourages participants to engage as attentive audience members, supporting those on stage by creating a focused and responsive atmosphere. At the same time, it prepares them for the role of the “spect-actor”, where audience members are not passive but actively involved in the theatrical process. Through observation, participants learn to reflect on what is happening on stage, identify different performance choices and provide meaningful and constructive feedback after the completion of the task. This process strengthens collective learning, critical thinking and collaborative reflection among the group.

CREATIVE TOOLS

→ Museum of Objects



This is a thorough and deep exercise which relies on transposing the human, personal experience onto an object related to it. The method itself is very flexible and it can be applied to different prompts. The chosen object should represent a memory and be a focal point of the story told as a response to a prompt. The exercise builds intimacy, gives a lot of sensual material convenient for shaping it into a relatable, personal and emotional content.

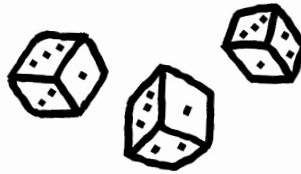
Considering the topic of money, our prompt was to present “the most valuable object”, opening a space for interpretation and gently unsettling fixed ideas of what value means.

→ The Status Scale

This theatrical exercise explores the embodiment of different levels of financial and social status. Each participant is secretly given a number from 0 to 10, where 0 represents the lowest status and 10 the highest. When the scene begins, participants enter the space embodying the status assigned to them through their posture, movement and behavior. The exercise initially focuses on physical expression, allowing participants to explore how status can be communicated through the body. As the activity develops, participants may begin to interact with one another, first physically and later verbally, observing how their character’s status influences their relationships with others. Through this process, participants experiment with how status dynamics shape both physical presence and communication on stage. This exercise helps build confidence in representing specific character types while deepening the understanding of how social status can inform body language, stage presence and both physical and verbal interaction between the actors.

→ Games as starting points

Using a game as a starting point can be an effective way to introduce participants to theatrical practice. By deconstructing and reconstructing the rules of well-known games, new theatrical conditions can be created that encourage participation in a playful and accessible way. Instead of focusing on “performing,” participants concentrate on following the rules and objectives of the game, which shifts their attention toward action, interaction and problem-solving within the activity. As a result, their reactions and choices on stage tend to become more natural, spontaneous and authentic. This approach helps reduce the pressure often associated with performing in front of others, while simultaneously supporting creativity, collaboration and confidence in the theatrical process.



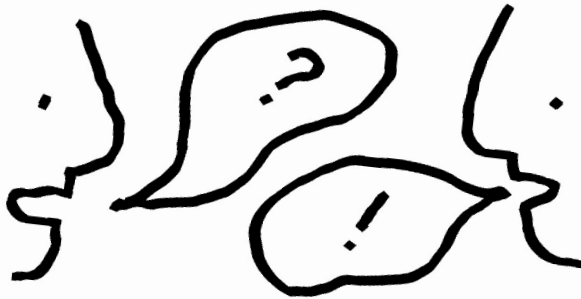
→ A Game of Our Own

Creating a game through group consensus is a valuable strategy for building cohesion, encouraging expression, and exploring group dynamics. It fosters communication and connection while serving as a reflection of the group process itself. Participants are invited to imagine and design a new game together, collectively defining its rules and structure. The game can be cognitive or physical, competitive or collaborative, highly structured or open-ended. It may include props, music, or operate without them. Through this process of co-creation, the group develops a shared sense of ownership and identity, which in turn strengthens cohesion and mutual understanding.

→ Improvisation exercises

Among many applications of the improvisation method, we have found these three variants that we call Questions, Press Conference, and Film Noir especially useful. Their purpose can be used to develop scenes directly, but they are also practical for encouraging quick thinking, listening, and creating a sense of presence on stage (all games follow the rule “Yes, and?”). More importantly, they help performers relax and become more comfortable with each other, given the fact that the main characteristic of these games is fun.

“Questions” is a game in which the main rule is that all communication must take the form of immediate-response questions. The audience suggests a location, and the game begins. If a player takes too long to ask a question or fails to end a sentence with a question mark, they lose. The game helps actors stay present and respond without overthinking. It reduces the pressure to be correct and shifts the focus toward interaction.



In the **“Press Conference”** game, three journalists are the only players who know a secret—the identity and press statement of the “Celebrity” character. The Celebrity, however, does not know who they are and must figure it out through the hints embedded in the journalists’ questions. This information is gathered from the audience. The game develops group awareness, confidence, and trust, as one performer relies on the others to build the situation together.

“Film Noir” begins with a few mysterious prompts from the audience, which two performers use to create a scene. There is one key twist: the audience can hear the characters’ internal monologues, just like in classic noir films. This game allows actors to explore expression within a clearly defined genre while challenging them to conceal information in their actions and reveal it through their inner thoughts.

Beyond their theatrical function, these games also create a safe environment in which mistakes are easily accepted and quickly brushed off, helping to reduce anxiety and build confidence within the group. Performers begin to trust both themselves and one another. This is especially important for young performers who may not yet feel secure in their abilities.

EVALUATION TOOLS

We have already highlighted the usefulness and practicality of sociograms for the quick and concrete collection of data for evaluation in a variety of situations and for different purposes. In addition to these, we also suggest a few other tools.

Suitcase of...(fill in with your own ideas and needs)

This exercise is a playful example of how you can collect your evaluation data. First you identify the data you need and be sure to name it clearly and precisely. We suggest printing little forms for the participant to fill in, with short and simple questions regarding your survey.

The results of our exercise Suitcase of Tools is presented in this handbook in the section Participants' recommendations.

The form was presented like this:

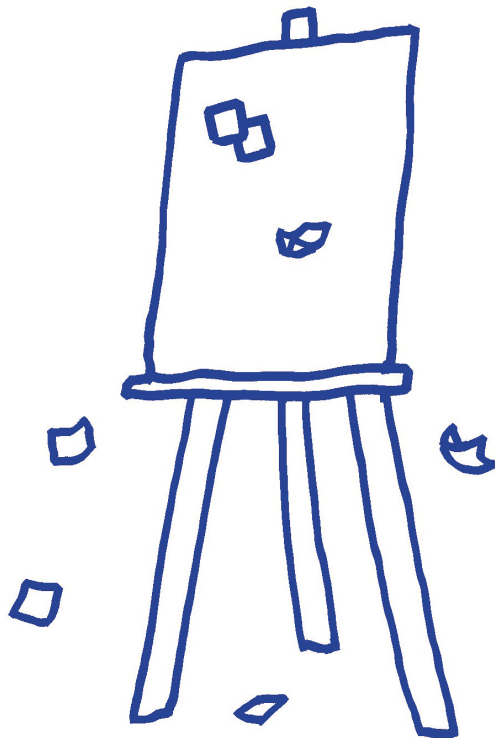
NAME OF THE CREATIVE TOOL
HOW TO USE IT
WHEN TO USE IT
WHY YOU LOVE IT

According to your needs, you can make your own questions.

Additionally, you can organize a session in which the participant will have more time to elaborate on their answers. It is especially fruitful if Q&A and high interaction are encouraged.

➔ Visual representation of engagement

A simple visual method can be used to measure the level of engagement and enthusiasm of participants throughout the sessions. At the end of each session, participants are invited to place a coloured sticker on a shared chart or board to represent how engaged they felt during the activity. Each colour corresponds to a different level of engagement, previously defined with the group (for example: not engaged, little engaged or very engaged). Colors can also represent the type of engagement (for example: fun, learning, creative mode). This visual representation allows facilitators to quickly observe patterns of participation and interest across the sessions, while also giving participants an easy and accessible way to reflect on and express their experience.



VIRTUAL COLAB EXPERIENCE





Digital collaboration as a shared digital stage, archive, and playground



Parallel to the ongoing workshops and performances creation, another activity took place - **Virtual CoLab**. It was imagined as the digital heart of the TRY project, a space where artistic research, collaboration, and reflection could continue beyond physical meetings. It is a gamified, interactive research map and archive of the creative process where participants continuously upload creative inputs, exchange ideas, and co-create across borders. The intention was both practical and conceptual:

- To **overcome** geographical distance and sustain collaboration between participants from different countries
- To **extend** the life of encounters beyond workshops and camps
- To **work** within a digital language native to Gen Z
- To **explore** how topics like money, value, and worth translate into online forms

The **Virtual Co-Lab** combined several roles:

-  **Process map:** tracing how ideas develop over time
-  **Creative playground:** allowing creative experimentation and expression
-  **Archive:** collecting materials (videos, texts, GIFs, sound, illustration...)
-  **Digital performance:** designed as a storytelling experience for an individual "viewer-player"

It was not just a tool, but a methodology: How do we transform learning, theory, and discussion into interactive, personal, creative experiences accessible to everyone online?

The final co-creation, **The Elevator Game**, as well as the working groups sessions were built around a balance between personal experience and introspection, knowledge and information, and storytelling and creative expression.

HOW WE ORGANIZED THE WORK

The initial plan was to organize 5 transnational groups (9 participants per group), mixed from all partner countries to meet once every two weeks for 10 months online and create together. We have also created a WhatsApp channel with subgroups for each Working Group.

In reality, dropouts and irregular attendance lead to unstable group compositions and it created a difficulty in maintaining continuity. So, after some experimenting with the method and way of organization, we decided to reduce and restructure groups. During Belgrade feedback camp, a final CoLab team of 8 participants formed, allowing for closer mentorship and clearer roles.

Each session wove together themes explored during: creative camps and in person meetings, live local creative workshops and online lectures by experts and enriched them with personal perspectives.

We used an already existing platform - Padlet as the main tool because it is intuitive and accessible, allows for visual adaptations and embedding of many different file types and is easy for participants to upload content and collaborate. At the same time, it comes with limitations such as restricted interactivity compared to custom-built platforms and gamification features that are still developing.

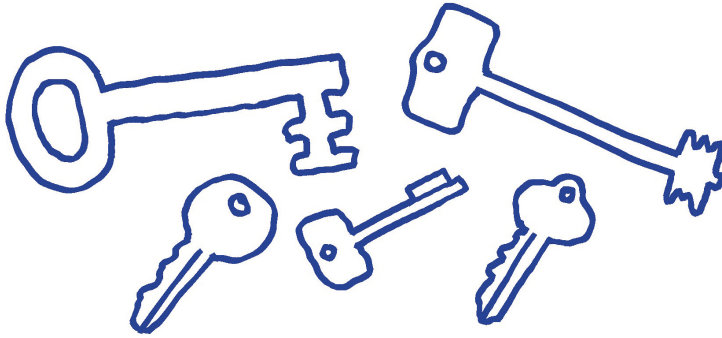


A KEY DRAMATURGICAL CONCEPT

The baseline storytelling structure of The Elevator came from an idea that emerged from a theatre game during the Skopje Creative Camp. Two characters, one from a privileged position and another from an underprivileged position, move through the same situations, but experience them differently. The Elevator takes them from one floor to another, allowing them to experience different social situations and reflect on their position. During the game creation, we especially took care of the balance between knowledge, experience and fun, combining game quests, quizzes and tasks with the digital storytelling.

Participants were encouraged to work across multiple formats, allowing different talents to emerge: texts, drawings and illustrations, short videos, sound pieces / audio recordings, GIFs, memes, animation and others.

This diversity was crucial: Participants could develop their personal talents and interests in different artforms. CoLab became a space for multiple talents, not only "talkers," but makers, designers, performers.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- 1. Think of the digital space as a stage, not a storage.**
Design experiences, not just uploads.
- 2. Keep groups small and flexible.**
Online collaboration depends on intimacy and engagement.
- 3. Always provide structure.** Freedom works only inside a clear frame
- a defined pattern of the base storyline, and within it, freedom to create
- 4. Combine formats.** Let participants choose how they express themselves
- list of formats is neverending.
- 5. Accept fluctuation.** Online participation is never stable, design for that
- allow space for flexibility of groups and methods.
- 6. Don't compete with live experience.** Digital should be a different experience, not a weaker version of IRL experience.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Learning and creative processes, no matter how well prepared you are or how relevant your experience may be, do not always run smoothly. Challenges and limitations are natural and should be expected, so try not to feel stressed or discouraged when they arise. Just as we present mistakes and obstacles to young participants as welcome parts of the learning and creative process, we aim to keep the same perspective as facilitators and mentors when we encounter them ourselves. We strongly believe that the approach to solving a problem evolves from the perspective you take on it. We decide to see the obstacles as chances for improvement and transformation.

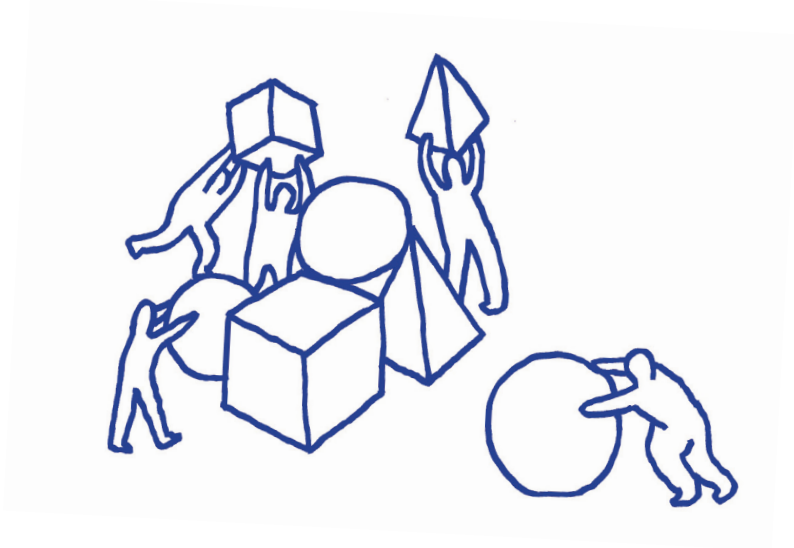


Time and Duration

The overall duration of the project is an important factor to consider in evaluating the process. On the positive side, the extended timeframe allowed for a deeper and more thorough understanding of the project's goals and methodologies. It created space for experiments, giving the team and participants the opportunity to try different approaches, reflect on what worked or did not work and reshape certain structures along the way. This gradually led process helped to build knowledge through practice and experience. Additionally, the longer duration allowed participants to invest more time in building strong relationships, fostering trust and collaboration both within their local and international groups.

At the same time, the extended duration also presented certain challenges. For some participants, the long timeframe led to a gradual decrease in enthusiasm and active engagement, for the others did not turn out as sustainable, due to pursuing their further academic education abroad, far away from the local context. As a result, a number of participants ceased their involvement in the project, which also required organisational adjustments and shifts within the groups. This evaluation on time highlights the importance of maintaining motivation and consistent communication throughout long-term collaborative processes. On the other hand, newly included participants truly brought the positive shift in the dynamics of the existing group. They were accepted with joy, which proved that the core team was built on healthy foundations.

Whatever obstacle, challenge, or limitation you encounter, try to accept it as an opportunity to practice flexibility and improvisation, while continuing to keep your goals in mind. It is also important to remember that a goal is not necessarily the same as a result. The goal can remain constant, while the outcome may change its form, as it often depends on conditions beyond your control. Rather than feeling anxious about this, embrace it as a natural part of your creative journey.



BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER

Dear reader, as we bring this handbook to a close, we hope you have found it both engaging and useful, and that you will continue to return to it whenever you need. We invite you to explore and reshape the material we have provided, selecting and adapting what best serves your own process, workshop, or any encounter you wish to create within this framework.

Above all, don't forget to enjoy the process. **Good luck!**



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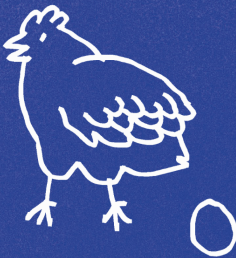
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