

Against Exclusion

**A "heptalogue", or play in seven acts,
pro-created, produced and performed
from September 2012 to September 2014**

by

The participants of the *Against Exclusion* project

A Product of the

Grundtvig Learning Partnership
Against Exclusion (2012-2014)

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Lifelong
Learning
Programme

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Prologue

“Exclusion” ... Is this just another fashionable term that everyone is talking about? What exactly does it mean? Who or what is being excluded and against who or what are we fighting to combat it?

These were the questions and issues that were discussed and debated by six national teams over a two-year period from September 2012 to September 2014.

2012:

The partner organizations have been selected, the project document written, the venues chosen. The stage is set for the opening night.

A logo has been created.

But wait ...

One letter has stepped out of line. The letter ‘**C**’ has fallen from its place. Why? Has it been excluded? Who will catch it? What does this ‘**C**’ stand for?

Questions, and more questions. Well, we have two years to find the answers ...

The curtain rises in Greece, the cradle of thespian culture. What more fitting venue could there be to launch a project dedicated to helping disadvantaged people through the medium of art and the theatre?

The audience is ready, so ...

... curtain up and let the show begin!

Act I

Greece

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Italian Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 1-4 November 2012

Place: Athens and Piraeus, Greece

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 1 November 2012

Place: Taverna Tzitzikas kai Mermigkas, Athens

A babble of noise and voices, a bustle and commotion as the members of the different partner organizations appear on the scene and introduce themselves to each other in an atmosphere of excitement and expectation. Pleasantries are exchanged, information shared, laughter mingles with animated gestures in

a myriad of sounds and languages. The wine flows freely, giving rise to unexpected incantations and impromptu speeches.

The project is launched! And no one is excluded. The evening closes in an aura of eagerness and enthusiasm for the work to come.

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 2 November 2012. Morning.

Place: arktos.edu.gr, Piraeus

The participants arrive and gaze in wonder from the balcony of the meeting venue at the lively port of Piraeus. For those whose breath this view had taken away, help was at hand in the form of warm-up exercises to revive the circulation and our energy for the work to be undertaken. Suitably strengthened, we applied ourselves to the tasks in hand.

And there was plenty to do: scheduling the dates of the forthcoming meetings, approving the logo, assigning specific tasks to each of the partner organizations, etc. etc. ...

In a series of team-building activities and workshops, the project partners had the chance to become acquainted with one another and to reflect on their clearly defined roles and

responsibilities, recognising what they could contribute to the project, both individually and collectively, by sharing individual expertise and accepting diversity.

Each partner organization first introduced itself and its work, and individual members then told us what they believed would be their personal contribution to the project.

Afterwards, different definitions of “exclusion” were discussed, as well as the ways in which art and the theatre can be used as a medium for inclusion, thus developing a common understanding of the goals to be achieved.

Time: Friday, 2 November 2012. Afternoon.

Place: arktos.edu.gr, Piraeus

After lunch taken at the venue and the chance to admire the harbour from the terrace, the dates and venues for future meetings were discussed and scheduled, taking into account both the requirements of the project in terms of meeting at regular intervals and the individual planning needs of each partner organization.

The project website was then presented by *Athena* and accompanied by discussions concerning the uploading of photos, videos and written material to document the project's

progress.

On the train journey back into Athens, many of us were saddened by the sight of stray dogs, abandoned by their owners, lying apathetically on the platform of one of the stations along the route. Animals, too, can all too easily be excluded and cast aside ...

Time: Friday, 2 November 2012. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Arcadia, Athens

This first day ended with a communal dinner, sitting outside in downtown Athens. Was the date really 2 November? Our hosts had obviously consulted the oracle to provide wonderful weather for us. This was surely a good omen for the start-up of our project!

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 3 November 2012. Morning.

Place: Piraeus

The day commenced in a serious way with attention to administrative matters revolving around different methods for evaluating the meetings and monitoring the progress achieved, the planning and allocation of work as presented in the Project

Application, and the assigning of specific tasks to each individual organization. The participants were then asked to evaluate the kick-off meeting (SWOT analysis).

Basic “rules” for cooperation and teamwork for the project as a whole were agreed upon, with due consideration for each partner organization’s specific wishes and needs.

The meeting was rounded up with the Steering Committee session, during which important project-related matters were addressed and discussed.

Time: Saturday, 3 November 2012. Afternoon.

Place: Athens

After such detailed attention to administrative matters, it was time for a break. Eager to get to know Athens better, we gladly accepted our hosts’ invitation to discover some hidden corners of the city in a walking tour conducted by a local student, who showed us “his Athens”. More specifically, this was part of the “This is My Athens” programme within the Athens Development and Destination Management Agency activities. It numbers 400 residents of Athens and aspires to create a lively local network of citizens who cherish their city and wish to share their favourite parts of it with visitors from around the world.

Time: Saturday, 3 November 2012. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Mani-Mani, Athens

The kick-off meeting ended with a communal get-together in the city centre.

The stage had successfully been set for what promised to be an interesting and fruitful project stretching over the next two years.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 4 November 2012

Place: Athens

Traffic chaos – a fully-fledged strike by all transport systems, including taxis, was in process! But not even this well-meant attempt by the Greek team to keep us in their country could prevent us from leaving this attractive venue.

Inspired and invigorated by the results of the first meeting and eager for those to come, with a last look back at the mighty Acropolis we took off for our home countries.

Act II

Romania

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Italian Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Polish Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki - Polish Art Centre*, Łódź

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 25-28 April 2013

Place: Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 25 April

Place: Ursus Brewery, Cluj-Napoca

Bear and beer were the themes of this first evening, staged in a local brewery. Amid large shiny copper cauldrons dispensing the local brew, the participants greeted each other enthusiastically

and exchanged news and views following on from the first meeting in Athens. Known faces renewed their acquaintance, while new ones were introduced and cordially welcomed.

Well-padded with food and drink and curious about what lay in store, the partners wended their way back to their respective hotels.

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 26 April 2013. Morning.

Place: Ethnological Museum, Cluj-Napoca

The ethnological backdrop gave participants a first opportunity to become acquainted with Romanian culture and heritage. Inspired by this setting and the interesting titbits of information gleaned from our guide, in a presentation given by our Romanian hosts we then gained more specific insight into their efforts to integrate different marginalised sectors, such as women, the Roma, the sick and the disabled, into local society.

This generated an animated debate and numerous questions. After such food for thought, it was time for the thought of food, so we turned our attention to culinary pleasures over lunch in an old part of this charming city, enjoying a leisurely walk through the centre before returning to work in the late afternoon.

Time: Friday, 26 April 2013. Afternoon.

Place: APM Office, Cluj-Napoca

The afternoon session focused on the web-site and the choice of the different materials to be included in it for the purpose of disseminating information about our project to a wider audience.

Other administrative matters, such as the intermediate report, were also discussed during this session.

Time: Friday, 26 April 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Hanul Dacilor, Cluj-Napoca

After a hard day's work and much insight into Romanian traditions and the situation of disadvantaged persons in this country, the dinner taken in a typical restaurant with an abundance of local food and drink offered a welcome opportunity to meet and converse with the friends and families of our hosting organization.

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 27 April 2013. Morning.

Place: Hotel Beyfin, Cluj-Napoca

When the participants arrived at the meeting, they were greeted by a strange sight. People in the room were ironing! Does this project include domestic chores? Had something been left out of

the Project Document? The situation soon became clear when the process of encaustic art was explained and demonstrated. This technique is an ideal way of fostering and encouraging artistic talent and creativity in people who are often unable to use more traditional tools such as brushes or pencils. Under expert guidance, local participants – disabled, in a wheelchair, or otherwise disadvantaged – helped us to manoeuvre the special irons in hot wax to produce brightly coloured, attractive designs. This can be done simply for enjoyment, or for commercial purposes, to develop specifically tailored greeting cards, wall pictures and fabric designs, etc.

This workshop gave us a fascinating insight into our Romanian partners' work with marginalised people and their endeavours to foster the creativity and self-confidence of persons on whom fortune had not always smiled.

Time: Saturday, 27 April 2013. Afternoon.

Place: Salt Mine, Turda

The visit to the former salt mine located at Turda, a short way from Cluj, was a cool experience, in more ways than one. The average temperatures underground in the vast former salt mine were very low and provided a welcome relief from the unexpectedly warm weather outside. The visit gave us the opportunity to see another slice of Romanian culture and a former lucrative source of income, which gave work to many local people.

Time: Saturday, 27 April 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Chios, Central Park, Cluj-Napoca

On a voluntary basis, some of the group met for dinner, sitting outside in an attractive park overlooking a lake, where the events of the past two days were reviewed and more information on our host country was exchanged.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 28 April 2013

Place: Cluj-Napoca

Impressed and inspired by the visit to what was for many of us a little-known venue, we all went our separate ways. Some to investigate the country's capital at Bucharest, others to risk a chance encounter with Dracula further down the road, others directly to their homeland, but all to the tune of "See you at the next meeting!"

Act III

Germany

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Italian Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Polish Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki - Polish Art Centre*, Łódź

Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 27-30 June 2013

Place: Tübingen and Reutlingen, Germany

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 27 June

Place: Gasthausbrauerei Neckarmüller, Tübingen

The welcome dinner, held in a typical *gasthaus* near the Neckar, gave us our first glimpse of this attractive river. Amid “*Prosits*”

and “*Grüße*”, local food and drink were consumed and the stage was set for the meeting of the next two days. However, we could not linger too long since the next morning heralded an early start to the day ...

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 28 June 2013. Morning.

Place: LAG TheaterPädagogik Zentrum, Reutlingen

The first event of the day led us to witness two theatre productions performed by local school children within their “Gewaltige Spiele” theatre festival. A certain amount of confusion ensued, since the teachers intervened in the children’s performances by appearing on stage but pretending to be invisible. Was this an attempt to re-invent Brecht’s “Verfremdungseffekt”, or rather a mistrust of the children’s ability to perform on their own? Such thoughts gave rise to an interesting discussion in the afternoon session.

Time: Friday, 28 June 2013. Afternoon.

Place: LAG TheaterPädagogik Zentrum, Reutlingen

After the official welcome by LAG and an overview of its work, an avid discussion ensued about the morning’s performances and the role teachers should play in working with children with different backgrounds or needs. The discussion then moved

on to the status and role of theatre pedagogy in the different partner countries and the problems encountered in raising funds for programmes and projects geared to helping disadvantaged persons.

This was followed by a theatre workshop, complete with limbering up exercises, getting-to-know-you activities and attention to body movements.

Afterwards, the project partners had the opportunity to update each other with news and views from their own individual organization and to gain mutual ideas and inspiration from these reports.

The day ended with the Steering Committee, which guided us through project-related issues, taking a look both at the status quo and the tasks that were to be accomplished before the next meeting.

Time: Friday, 28 June 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Wurstküche, Tübingen

Conversation over dinner revolved around the events of the day and, in particular, the performances given by the school children in the morning.

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 29 June 2013. Morning.

Place: LTT Landestheater, Tübingen

The morning session had a practical bent and a distinctly hands-on approach, during which we gained further insight into the theatre pedagogy work carried out by LAG. In a theatre workshop conducted by one of LAG's members, the mirror was turned to face us, so to speak, so the focus was more on us as teachers than on the students as consumers. This gave us the opportunity to reflect on how we work and interact with people, so as to achieve optimal results.

This self-awareness sparked a number of questions, reflections, comments and ideas.

Time: Saturday, 29 June 2013. Afternoon.

Place: City centre, Tübingen

The meeting-point by the Neckar bridge was the starting-point of an interesting walk through the attractive city centre of this old university town. The boat trip on the Neckar gave us a chance to get a closer look at this lovely river.

Time: Saturday, 29 June 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Wurstküche, Tübingen

The get-together in a typical restaurant rounded off an interesting and pleasant day, both on stage and off stage.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 30 June 2013

Place: Tübingen

“Parting is such sweet sorrow”, as Shakespeare maintained in *Romeo and Juliet*.

And so we all went our separate ways, animated by the stimulating workshops and lively interaction. But the parting was not for long as, after the summer break, the next meeting in Siena was just a couple of months away.

Act IV

Italy

The Cast

Members of the Italian Hosting Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Polish Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki - Polish Art Centre*, Łódź

Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 17-20 October 2013

Place: Siena, Italy

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 17 October 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Compagnia dei Vinattieri, Siena

What more perfect place could there be to launch our 4th meeting than the magnificent Piazza del Campo! And, indeed,

twice a year, this lovely square serves as an arena for the dramatic spectacle of the Palio horserace, where the main actors are horses. By the end of the race, after just 1 minute and 13 seconds, they have often dispensed with their riders, thus occupying the stage and crossing the winning-post on their own.

From here it was just a short walk to our welcome dinner, where we had the opportunity to sample Tuscan pastas and savour the local wine amid the laughter and joy of renewing our existing acquaintances with our project partners and forming new ones.

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 18 October 2013. Morning.

Place: Corte dei Miracoli, Siena

Our hosts introduced us to laLut and the work they do, which was followed by an explanation of the venue at Corte dei Miracoli, or “court of wonders”, a former psychiatric hospital. This is aptly named, as we discovered, for here, as the next few hours were to demonstrate, miracles can still be wrought ...

During the first workshop, in a series of exercises involving members of laLut, the theatre group of educators and users of Siena’s psychiatric services, and us as project partners, we

gained a deeper insight into the invaluable work carried out by our hosting organization and project coordinator and experienced first-hand the kind of activities they regularly conduct with their clients. The exercises ranged from coordinating movements and rhythm, as well as improving concentration and focus, to enhancing visual and listening ability.

After some fairly energetic exercises and covering a lot of space in the room, the lunch provided at the venue offered a welcome break and the chance to discuss the morning's activities.

Time: Friday, 18 October 2013. Afternoon.

Place: Corte dei Miracoli, Siena

Suitably refreshed after our lunch-break, we resumed our activities with a second workshop involving the theatre group of educators, medical assistants, users of Val d' Elsa's psychiatric services and, again, ourselves as project partners. This time the exercises took on a more advanced form, inviting both clients and members of the audience to build statues, sculptures and other theatrical formations, with due regard for body awareness, breathing techniques and the creative use of space. The exercises were both instructional and amusing and a good time was had by all.

Time: Friday, 18 October 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Gallo Nero, Siena

The communal dinner provided a further opportunity to watch live theatre, contributed by one of laLut's members, a professional actor, who, clad in mediaeval costume, entertained the dinner guests with quips and quotes from Italian literary culture.

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 19 October 2013. Morning.

Place: Corte dei Miracoli, Siena

After a brief discussion of any organisational matters that needed attention, the scene was enlivened with a further theatrical workshop combining some elements from the previous day and adding some new ones. This time, the call was “over to you”, as the stage was occupied mainly by members of laLut and the partner organizations, the latter putting into practice what they had learnt the previous day and adding some new elements under the expert guidance of our hosting organization. The emphasis lay on improvisation and innovation and some budding actors emerged from the process.

This was followed by an animated discussion on the pros and cons of such exercises and their positive effects on the recipients' mental and physical well-being. Indeed, for many

of us participants, it was a real eye-opener to work with laLut's clients and to participate in their practical work.

Flushed and breathless from the physical efforts involved in such activities, the participants enjoyed a relaxing lunch at Orto de' Pecci, which is not only a haven of peace and natural beauty in the centre of town, but a venue that also has a long history of rendering services and activities for people with psychiatric disabilities.

Time: Saturday, 19 October 2013. Afternoon.

Place: Siena

The afternoon provided the opportunity to become better acquainted with this charming city and to delve into its rich and complicated history, with a guided walking tour arranged by our hosts.

Time: Saturday, 19 October 2013. Evening.

Place: Pizzeria Nonnomede, Siena

The final dinner gave us a taste of an "authentic" Italian pizza and gave rise to animated questions and discussion about the events and activities of the well-coordinated and extremely project-related programme.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 20 October 2013

Place: Siena

With a last fond look at this lovely city perched on a hill and cries of “See you in Vienna”, the participants went their different ways in different directions using different modes of transport.

Act V

Austria

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Italian Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Polish Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki - Polish Art Centre*, Łódź

Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 12-15 December 2013

Place: Vienna, Austria

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 12 December 2013. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Reinthaler, Vienna

From Siena to Vienna...

From mediaeval to baroque...

From pastas to pastries...

In a typical *gasthaus* located just behind the Opera House in the heart of town, the participants had their first taste of Viennese *stimmung* with Wiener Schnitzel and Apfelstrudel. Amid accusations of “Where’s the snow?”, the hosting partners answered a barrage of eager questions about the meeting agenda and the celebrated Christmas markets, which everyone wanted to visit.

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 13 December 2013. Morning.

Place: Volkshochschule Döbling, Vienna

Despite the – for some cultures – ominous date, the “mirror hall” reflected a bright atmosphere upon arrival, further enhanced by the welcome aroma of fresh coffee. The meeting was opened by the hosting organization with an extensive overview of “Social Inclusion in Austria” and an explanation of what is being done (or not done) to assist excluded persons. This was followed by a discussion round and comparisons with the situation in the relevant partner countries.

Time: Friday, 13 December 2013. Afternoon.

Place: Volkshochschule Döbling, Vienna

After lunch taken at the venue, the theme of “social exclusion” was further exemplified in the next workshop, which explored

the aspect of communicating with socially excluded persons and invited audience participation and discussion, working in small groups.

Afterwards, it was “over to you”, with a call to members of the partner organizations to demonstrate and share some of the exercises and activities they typically use with marginalised groups. The results were not only interesting but frequently humorous!

A specialised workshop on speech training then showed how this knowledge can be used to boost self-confidence and achieve impressive results when working with disadvantaged persons. There was also ample opportunity to implement and practise the practical tips and breathing exercises given.

Time: Friday, 13 December 2013. Later that afternoon.

Place: Karl-Marx-Hof, Vienna

The visit to the Karl-Marx-Hof offered a fine example of an early social housing project to alleviate the appalling living conditions for workers at the time. Built between 1927 and 1930, this vast complex, which is around 1km in length and contains over 1,000 council flats for some 5,000 people, is also of historical interest as it was the scene of intense fighting between the two main political factions during “The Austrian Civil War” in 1934.

Time: Friday, 13 December 2013. Evening.

Place: Heuriger Restaurant Mayer am Pfarrplatz, Vienna

Hungry and thirsty after their walking tour, the participants eagerly took up the invitation to meet at a typical *heuriger*, or Viennese wine tavern, located nearby. In this attractive pub-style venue, formerly the residence first of Beethoven and then of Robert Stolz, characterised by local wood, *wurst* and wine, the evening became lively when some members of the group burst into song and some new operatic stars were born.

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 14 December 2013. Morning.

Place: Volkshochschule Döbling, Vienna

The morning's activities focused on working with marginalised groups in the form of speaking activities, taking what we had learnt and experienced in Reutlingen and Siena one step further by accompanying actions with words. After a few tips for handling "impromptu speaking", participants were invited to put them into practice by speaking on a given topic for a couple of minutes with very little preparation time beforehand. The next stage of the exercise was to secretly choose a celebrity or well-known figure from public life, alive or dead, that one had always wanted to meet, and to prepare some questions for him/

her. A participant was then selected to “become” that person and to answer the questions spontaneously and without any preparation. This generated several lies and a lot of laughter ...

The next workshop also focused on the spoken word by encouraging the participants to take part in improvisation theatre and to create short impromptu scenes and dialogues revolving around pre-set topics. Here again, laughter proved to be the best medicine!

The meeting ended with a special ceremony and the awarding of Olympic “gold medals” in the form of chocolate Mozart coins.

Time: Saturday, 14 December 2013. Afternoon.

Place: City centre, Vienna

After an infusion of workshops and with Advent in full swing, the general wish was for a leisurely stroll through the centre of town and a “walk-shop” through the Christmas markets. Still no sign of snow, but it was cold enough to down a mug of steaming mulled wine, or *glühwein* in local jargon.

Time: Saturday, 14 December 2013. Evening.

Place: Café-Restaurant Palmenhaus, Vienna

To ward off the cold weather, in an impromptu action the group opted to meet for dinner in the tropical atmosphere of

an enlarged greenhouse. Comfortably seated beneath exotic palms, we indulged in good food, choice wine and idle talk in true Viennese style.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 15 December 2013.

Place: Vienna

“Sag’ beim Abschied leise ‘Servus’” ...

is the opening line of a popular song which advocated saying farewell softly. Written by the Austro-German composer Peter Kreuder in 1936, it was immortalised by the much-loved Viennese actor and singer Hans Moser.

The time had come to say goodbye and, this time, there would be a long wait until our next reunion in Poland in June. So, all round, it was “Happy New Year and see you in 2014!”.

Act VI

Poland

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki - Polish Art Centre*, Łódź

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

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Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 8-11 June 2014

Place: Łódź, Poland

Scene 1

Time: Sunday, 8 June 2014

Place: Restaurant Galicja, Łódź

The welcome dinner in a converted factory within the *Manufaktura* building complex set the tone for our introduction to the red-

brick city of Łódź and gave participants an ideal opportunity to practise the correct pronunciation of this formerly so important textile town. With an intake of vodka, our pronunciation improved ... Since the date of the meeting had been ideally chosen to coincide with the *International Biennale* dedicated to “Therapy and the Theatre”, some of the partners left early to catch their first glimpse of this event in the form of street theatre performed by a local group, while others continued to enjoy the atmosphere and ruminate with curiosity as to what the next two days of performances would bring.

Scene 2

Time: Monday, 9 June 2014. Morning.

Place: Nowy Theatre, Łódź

After the official inauguration of the *International Biennale XI*, we had the opportunity – alternating between the Large Stage and the Small Stage – to watch performances by groups of actors who were mentally or physically disabled, which, of course, ideally complemented the theme of our *Against Exclusion* project. The morning’s performances included *Confession in the Wood*, which depicted the struggle between a sculptor and his creations to juxtapose the norms of convention with more modernity, amid the underlying religious connotations, and *Billy the Invalid*, which focused on a young cripple who, despite his

disabilities, was determined to play the lead role in a film to be made about his home village.

Time: Monday, 9 June 2014. Afternoon.

Place: Nowy Theatre, Łódź

After lunch taken in a quaint small restaurant in a hidden corner of town and an initiation into the secrets of borscht, the performances continued. For us, the highlight was *Something Is Rotten in the State of Denmark*, performed by Compagnia dei Girasoli, which is affiliated to our Italian partner organization laLut. Based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the script had been written by two of our colleagues and most of the roles were played by their psychiatric patients, some of whom we had met and worked with during our project meeting in Siena in October 2013. The play itself was a great success and our Italian colleagues deserve a big round of applause for having brought all the actors to Łódź for this event!

Time: Monday, 9 June 2014. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Servantka, Łódź

Dinner offered the opportunity to become acquainted with Ukrainian specialities, while the conversation revolved around the performances of the day and gave rise to animated discussion.

Scene 3

Time: Tuesday, 10 June 2014. Morning.

Place: Nowy Theatre, Łódź

More interesting performances were in store for us and the morning's offerings included *Talismans*, an impressive and moving play, accompanied by some lovely singing, about the difficult – and often dangerous – life of pearl fishers at sea. Many of the actors from this Saudi Arabian group were blind and had to be guided around the stage by a seeing person. The next performance presented a humorous re-telling of *Chinese Fairytales* by a Polish group from Skierniewice and the morning ended on an even more comic note with the attempt by well-padded males from Nowe Miszewo to emulate the sylph-like movements of swans in *Swan Lake* and other well-known ballets under the heading *Does the Music Have to Be Serious?*

Time: Tuesday, 10 June 2014. Afternoon.

Place: Ksiezy Mlyn, Łódź

After lunch in an Art Deco restaurant located in an old bathhouse within the Central Textile Museum, we gained an insight into Łódź's former glory as a flourishing industrial and textile centre with a visit to the Młyn Księży, or "Prince Mill Complex", a typical example of 19th century red-brick architecture, accompanied by a local guide. The walking tour included a glimpse of the

famous Film Academy, which had spawned such legendary directors as Roman Polanski and Andrzej Wajda.

The next item on the agenda was an open-stage Steering Committee session, during which important project-related matters were discussed and dealt with.

Time: Tuesday, 10 June 2014. Evening.

Place: Fabryka Sztuki, Łódź

The day ended with a further performance, *Nie/Widomi*, given in a red-brick former factory by partially blind actors and dancers, thus further emphasising the fact that theatre and art need not stay in the realm of the fit and healthy.

Scene 4

Time: Wednesday, 11 June 2014. Morning.

Place: Jewish Cemetery, Łódź

The visit to the massive Jewish cemetery, one of the largest of its kind, as well as to Radegast Railway Station, from where thousands of people were deported to the Nazi death camps, was a sobering experience, expounding only too clearly the fate of persons considered outsiders from society.

Time: Wednesday, 11 June 2014. Evening

Place: Teatr Wielki, Łódź

The evening brought some light relief in the form of a lively and colourful performance of Rossini's *Barber of Seville* at Teatr Wielki.

Act VII

Italy

The Cast

Members of the Hosting Team · *laLut - Libera Università del Teatro*, Monteriggioni

Members of the Austrian Team · *Lothar Tschapka Training & Coaching KG*, Vienna

Members of the German Team · *LAG Theaterpädagogik - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft TheaterPädagogik Baden-Württemberg e.V.*, Reutlingen

Members of the Greek Team · *Athena Social Care*, Athens

Members of the Polish Team · *Poleski Ośrodek Sztuki* - Polish Art Centre, Łódź

Members of the Romanian Team · *PJFAIMMC - Patronatul Judeteam al Femeilor de Afaceri din Intreprinderile mici si Mijlocii Cluj*, Cluj-Napoca

Local participants, organizers and helpers

Time: 10-13 July 2014

Place: Siena, Italy

Scene 1

Time: Thursday, 10 July 2014

Place: Restaurant Trattoria Papei, Siena

“Small is beautiful”, as the saying goes. And so it was that a small – but definitely beautiful – group of participants assembled

for the last time on the magnificent arena of the Piazza del Campo, which, just a few days before, had played host to the famous Palio horserace and would soon be staging it again. The fierce rivalry between the 17 competing *contradas* was completely alien to our project, which, right from the start, had been characterised by a feeling of harmony and striving for a common goal.

The welcome dinner just a stone's throw away enabled us to eat, drink and make merry before embarking on the final report and other tasks to be completed before the project's conclusion.

Scene 2

Time: Friday, 11 July 2014. Morning.

Place: Scuola Santa Chiara, Siena

Equipped with all the relevant data and information and motivated by the results of the project and what we had achieved, the participants put pen to paper and set about writing the final report, documenting the achievements and consolidating the project outcomes and products. Ideas and suggestions were pooled and incorporated so as to ensure that nothing was “excluded” or forgotten, while any pending matters were enumerated and discussed.

Time: Friday, 11 July 2014. Afternoon.

Place: Scuola Santa Chiara, Siena

After a brief respite for lunch in a shady nook, work on the final report continued in the afternoon. Possibilities for a follow-up programme or future project were also discussed and favourably received, since the cooperation between the project partners had been exemplary and the results very positive.

Time: Friday, 11 July 2014. Evening.

Place: Osteria del Gatto, Siena

A leisurely walk through the city centre led us to our dinner venue, where we could unwind off-stage. Afterwards, an extra-mural activity presented itself in the form of a concert comprising Sardinian sacred songs and Luigi Boccherini's *Stabat mater* at St Augustine's Church. A marvellous setting for a lovely performance!

Scene 3

Time: Saturday, 12 July 2014. Morning.

Place: Complesso Museale Santa Maria della Scala, Siena

Against the backdrop of this interesting and attractive museum, which, until some 15 years ago was still being used as a hospital,

we had a meeting with representatives of the *Siena 2019 Capitale della Cultura* project, where we had the opportunity to hear more about Siena's bid to become European Capital of Culture in 2019. This project is akin to ours in that it seeks to link art and well-being and to promote Siena not only as a place of history and culture, but also as a venue for health and relaxation. Equipped with promotional T-shirts, we were all set to go forth and multiply the reasons why Siena should host this event. After the meeting, there was still enough time to visit the museum and view some local artefacts.

Time: Saturday, 12 July 2014. Afternoon.

Place: Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

After lunch taken in a small restaurant in a quiet side-street, our exploration of Siena continued with a visit to the Palazzo Pubblico, one of the most perfect examples of early Gothic architecture in Italy. Its impressive frescoes lining the inside walls depict a vivid journey through Tuscan history.

Time: Saturday, 12 July 2014. Later that afternoon.

Place: Monteriggioni

For those whose thirst for culture had not yet been quenched, an excursion to the town of Monteriggioni, famous for its towered walls and mentioned in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, was

organised by our kind hosts. After drinking in the view of the Tuscan countryside spread-eagled before us, there was time for an aperitivo in the attractive main square, where a visiting orchestra serenaded us with their music.

Time: Saturday, 12 July 2014. Evening.

Place: Restaurant Pizzeria Tialoca, Siena

And then, suddenly, it was time to return to Siena for *Il Cenacolo*, or *The Last Supper*, with our project partners. This event, taken at a typical pizzeria, was documented, not with paintbrush and easel, but with countless photographs.

Scene 4

Time: Sunday, 13 July 2014.

Place: Siena

And now it's the final countdown and time to say goodbye. This time without the accustomed cry of "See you at the next meeting" but, instead, expressing the desire to see each other again and relive these two years of effort and hard work spent in creating our product. For, as the poet Robert Browning puts it in *By the Fireside*:

"Oh, the little more, and how much it is!
And the little less, and what worlds away!"

Epilogue

So, after two years of involvement with this subject, let us again review the original question: What is “exclusion”? ... Exclusion is a very real and threatening aspect of society, has damaging effects on humanity as a whole and no efforts should be spared to combat it.

2014:

The partner organizations have assembled for the last time, the final report has been written, the results reviewed and tabulated. The curtain is about to fall.

But, wait ...

What about the ‘**C**’ that fell out of the logo? Did anyone manage to catch it and bring it back into line again? What does this ‘**C**’ stand for?

To quote T.S. Eliot in *Murder in the Cathedral*, “Now is my way clear, now is the meaning plain”, now we have the answer. It stands for “caring”, “commitment”, “cooperation” – all the things we have striven for and enjoyed in the course of this project. No wonder the ‘**C**’ stood out so vividly!

And so, slowly, and not a little sadly, one by one the partner organizations leave the stage as the curtain falls on a successful and satisfying project. Our lingering farewells voice the firm hope that, despite our physical distances, different locations and diverse languages, we will somehow, somewhere, meet again...

For this, truly, is inclusion!

AGAINST

e x c l u s i o n

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