

MYSTERIES & DROOLS

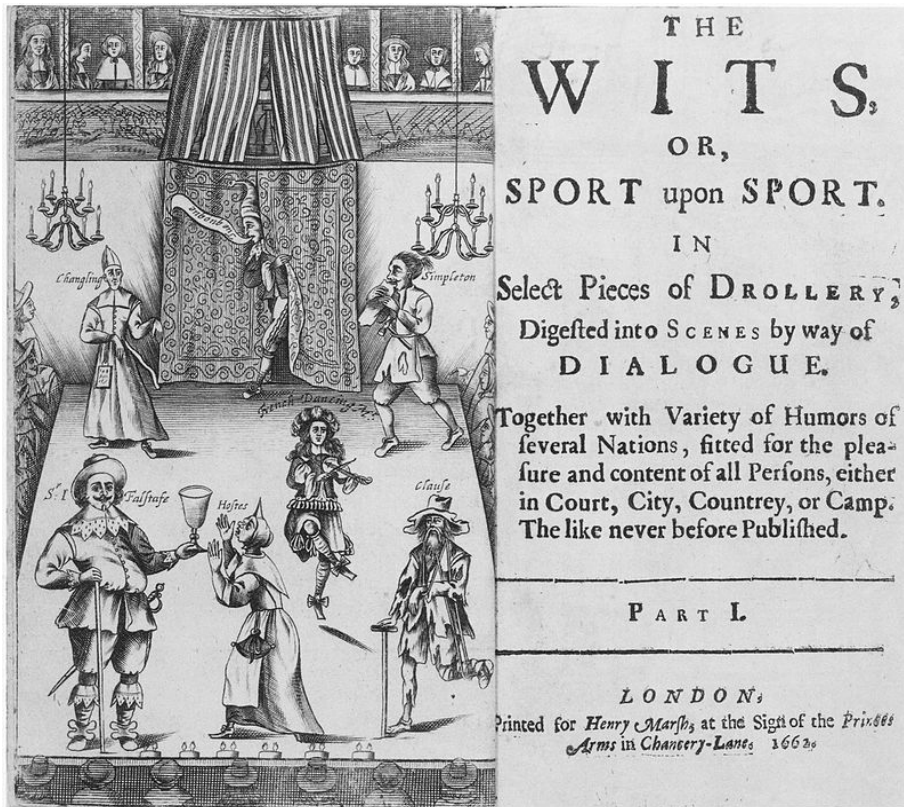
New life for the European Popular Drama, rediscovering its own roots !



DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Creative Europe / Culture Sub-programme

EACEA-45-2016



*...because, following the tradition
of medieval jesters,
mocks the power
restoring dignity to the
oppressed*

*(Nobel Prize for Literature to
Dario Fo, Stockholm 1997)*

*The world's but a tragedy,
a comedy, a droll
Where all act the scene
of toll de roll loll*

*(Midas, an English Burletta
By Kane O'Hara performed
in Northern Ireland in 1760⁹)*

I. ABSTRACT

In the history of cities, it has always been that the Square hosted the artistic and spiritual happenings of the Community. Today, this fulcrum of the Human Landscape constantly sees its centrality radically reduced: we witness the loss of the real square in favour of the virtual one.

The Street Performing Arts, one of the areas of the Cultural and Creative Industries currently in greatest ferment, represent the need of our society to reassign the Theatre to the Square, in its dimension of collective ritual, of unrepeatable event, as expression of social-man and his creativity, his ability to challenge the power (buffoon) and yet his need to relate to the transcendent (mystery).

Almost always, the Cathedral, the Palace and the Market are the elements that morphologically define the limits of the Square. They evoke the historical forces that have culturally shaped our Cities and our Europe: the Church, the Aristocracy/Bourgeoisie, and the People. Each of these forces has produced a precise genre of Entertainment "in its own image": the Sacred Drama, the Knightly Epos, the Feast of Fools.

The recent passing of Dario Fo, effective patron of the European Popular Theatre, and Jester awarded by Nobel, devoted to the history of the show his deep human and intellectual insights, as well as a general awareness that the sacred and the profane, the spirituality and the physicality, are always connected. Since the late Middle Ages, the popular success of the Miracle Play (irreplaceable tool for the catechesis of the masses), is due to the distinctive alliance between the dramatic forms of the religious event and the digressions of pure entertainment, for which jesters and buffoons with incontestable skills were involved.

Because of this, being aware that both components of rituals and transgression are inseparable in the evolution of theatrical forms and constitute the basis of contemporary theatrical culture, we entitled our project **Mysteries and Drolls**. The Mysteries and the Drolls (as demonstrated in the Theatre of Dario Fo) can today give an irreplaceable contribution to the strengthening of the European identity of the theatre, which just in the relationship between the Sacred and the Profane, the Popular and the Cultured can be adequately nourished.

The different characters and the art languages of Sacred Theatre and Popular Drama have an undeniably European feature, and they cannot be ignored by those who are today involved in theatrical creation in the context of trans-national performing arts markets. They represent valuable tools for promoting the cultural integration of EU countries, real key elements in the strategies for developing the sector and for the internationalizing the networks.

The link between Sacred Representation and Popular Drama has a dimension that spreads throughout our Continent, through a range of different countries and cultures.

In Italy, the sacred theatre saw its prelude between the 13th and 14th century, in the form of the *lauda drammatica*. Such performances already incorporated all the features of a play with actors, costumes and music. The evolution of these lyric-theatrical compositions, using increasingly 'dialoguing' dramatic forms and thanks to the increase of stage effects, led, during the Renaissance, up to the poems of the Commedia dell'Arte.

In England, the "Mysteries" of the 13th and 14th centuries anticipated some salient features of the Elizabethan Theatre, while the Feasts of Fools (or of "Innocents" as they were called in the Paris of the Court of Miracles) represented one of the rare occasions of "authorized transgression" for the people (as well as for the clergy), and helped to promote the secular art of the Buffoon in a wider synthesis between collective ritual and irrational catharsis in a context of overall unbridled fun.

The Background on which the cooperation of the Mysteries & Droll project is developed goes even further, and draws on the Spanish Misterios and Auto Sacramentales (the partnerships involves Elche, the city where one of the oldest and best-known Mysteries has been performed for 5 centuries: the Misterio de Elche, recognized as Intangible Heritage by UNESCO); to the German Fastnachtspiele (Carnival Events); and finally to the Polish Theatre of religious inspiration.

All our continent's spectacular forms of early theatre are in debt to the Square and to its greatest protagonist: Street Theatre. They have developed thanks to the craft of countless artists who have been able to successfully established deep cultural roots within the multiplicity of their techniques. These roots are not only ancient and still vibrant roots, but also trans-national roots because in constant motion, wandering across all borders by their own nature. They are alive enough, in every age and country, to transmit lymph to new forms of performance and to contribute to the process of formation of the new European Audience.

However, Street Theatre shows today several weaknesses: extreme fragmentation, lack of awareness of the potential of choral forms of performance, frequent lack of dramaturgy, and the progressive abandonment of elevated theatrical languages in favor of simpler styles of "street entertainment" and "circus entertainment".

The development of this sector of the performing arts, on a long-term basis and beyond the fashions of the moment, necessarily passes through the rediscovery of its own roots, of performing archetypal forms and the languages derived from them.

In fact, it is from the Mystery Plays that that urban spectacles derive the use of their own languages. The creativity of buffoons-authors-performers of their own texts become an integral part of the staging in the first Theatre Brotherhoods (Companies) responsible for the production of Mysteries on behalf of the religious communities.

The drama moves from the church to the churchyard and down to the Square. This is the repossession of Urban Space, the place where the religious event turns into a profane feast (from the Latin "*pro*" in front, "*fanum*" temple).

In our time the theatre "descends" once again to the Public: it is a *New art Pentecost*, whose main challenge is to be able to concentrate in itself the potential of contemporary drama, (for which the sacred traditions are a priceless asset of reference), as well as the lightness and versatility of Street Performing Arts, and its ability to perform in close contact with the Spectator.

At the dawn of the Third Millennium, the Theatre in the Square allows us to overcome again the rigid barriers between artist and spectator and to rediscover the dimension of a shared Rite in the theatrical act, useful to celebrate the Cultural Identity of a community. In this way the process of artistic production can turn into *Social event*, and the participation of the public can be extended even beyond the physical reality of the Event, in the context of what is today called "*Digital Community*".

Thanks to the rediscovery of the original languages of the Sacred Representation, Jester and Buffoon Acts, Contemporary Theatre, Dance and Music, Physical Theatre, Storytelling or Puppet Theatre, will all recuperate their own place in their primordial site of performing, in the areas of Social Life, and every time will transform these spaces in a different Square and Rite; they will give back to the Spectator an active role in the performance.

Mysteries and Drolls intends to launch a co-operation in the framework of research, training and experimentation, in a European and intercultural dimension, on the forms and languages of medieval theatre and jester arts, emphasizing the centrality of the forms of the sacred and the buffoon, for the benefit of artists and operators from all theatrical sectors. It will connect the street arts with performance on stage. But, above all, it will involve the various stakeholders of the communities and in the areas of reference, inserting them in a network of production and distribution relationships (at local, inter-regional and European levels).

Stakeholders will be involved as possible auditors, possible co-creators and performers of a programme - or programme segments aimed not only at constructing an area for the exchange of cultural products that correspond to the project's lines of inquiry, but also at defining good practice for training and the active participation of audiences.

All of this will be possible also through international creation and of co-production projects, able of achieving an absolute European visibility within the framework of the events scheduled in the program. In these projects the creative staffs of cooperating countries will be invited to share, with artists from different countries, their artistic visions and the identities of their respective theatrical culture.

The project will produce a European dimension event, the Mysteries & Drolls Festival, which will be hosted in Italy and Northern Ireland for 3 editions, in the context of two of the most important European events for the Street Arts: the Mercantia International Festival in Certaldo and the Festival of Fools in Belfast.

The project will go on to create a European market for Popular Theatre, by organizing an itinerant European showcase (in 2019 in Certaldo, Italy and in 2020 in Belfast, United Kingdom) that can be a meeting point for offer and demand between companies and programmers.

Such an ambitious activity plan will be made possible thanks to the great expertise and strong backgrounds of the partners involved, which have made them, over decades of activity, key centers for the theatre sectors which are object of the cooperation.

In addition to the already-mentioned Festivals, which represent points of reference for the whole sphere of European street performing arts, also involved are companies and training centers in Spain, Poland and Germany, all of which have many years of experience and activity, achieving high-level projects of production and professional training in the realm of contemporary dramaturgy of Sacred and Street performance.

II. PARTNERSHIP IDENTITY

The vision that underlies Mystery & Drolls, as well as the planned activities, are the result of a deep collaboration between the entities that make up this partnership. They all share the vocation towards the popular theatre. They are the protagonists of production, training and promotion projects on an international scale and in this project they are bringing all their history and their daily work to promote a theatre that, through the rediscovery of own origins, intends to recover the dimension of collective ritual, as well as its social value.

The conviction with which these five entities are supporting the work program of M&D entails not only an adherence to common values, to a shared aesthetic, or an expectancy to expand their own activity at an European level, but also the sharing of a common identity, which originates from research in the field of theatre and the performing arts, within a relationship between past and present, between popular and cultured, between sacred and secular.

In this respect each organization's involvement in the project is the result of a hard work in research, exchange and comparison, which has highlighted – first at a historical-philological level, and then at the concrete level of cooperation – the need (even more than the desirability) to connect the two International Festivals, Mercantia (IT) and Fools Festival (UK), with the three production and training centers of Teatr A (PL), Maracaibo (ES) and Tempus Fugit (DE).

From North to South, from East to West of our continent, M&D has succeeded in bringing together almost 800 years of European theatre history. From this synthesis the projects will aim to extract the best ideas for redefining the role of theatre in the society of the third millennium, its European identity and its relationship with the audience, thereby giving a small but significant contribution to its future history and the value of its activities. Therefore, it is only by defining the identities of the partnership that the project activities can be fully understood in their articulation and impact on contemporary theatre and the performing arts.

"Mercantia" is the oldest Italian Street Theatre Festival. It was born in 1986 as a Medieval-Theatre-Feast-Market, and it has always shown a preference for the theatrical genre. At that time Italy, the "land of poets and comedians", seemed to have definitively lost the tradition of urban spectacle. In spite of this Mercantia has been able to reassert the value of the "Theatre of the City", and has become the reference model for hundreds of towns and cities that have been inspired by the event over 30 years, bringing audiences back to the public square and renewing forms of drama through contamination with the dimension of the "feast".

Today Mercantia counts 45,000 paying visitors in 5 days of programming (the town has just 16,000 inhabitants). It has 250 artists / companies scheduled each year, with various experimental projects and creations, as well as excursions into experimental theatre, dance and circus. All these art sectors express a significant presence at the Festival.

Significantly Certaldo, the city that hosts Mercantia, one of the most beautiful medieval boroughs of Europe, is also the home town of Giovanni Boccaccio. In its narrow streets and courtyards we still glimpse the indomitable and transgressive spirit of the great novelist who, at the end of the Middle Ages, transformed the literature of the origins and affirmed the primacy of the tale.

From the story to the storyteller, from the drama to the theatre, is but a short step. So if at that time Certaldo was one of the European cultural capitals, immortalized in the Decameron, today, by reinventing street theatre and welcoming every year the best of European productions of this art sector, it returns to its role as "cradle of a new age" for the culture of our continent.

The Municipality of Certaldo (project leader of M&D) has directly organized the Mercantia Festival for 30 years, and the presence of this event in the project partnership constitutes a precious opportunity for the European visibility of the programmed actions. The meetings between operators, artists and audience of this important international event will be a unique chance to widen the range of stakeholders, multiply the results and consolidate them in the long period.



"The Diabolic Parade", Mercantia International Festival, Certaldo (IT) 2015

The Festival of Fools in Belfast focuses on the street and the square as performance venues and on the comical arts as poetic and artistic phenomenology. It is a great event that, since 2004, has brought together the most diverse artists from the four corners of the world to the capital of Northern Ireland. There are more than 120 events that involve the environments of the Circus, Clown, Pantomime and Physical Theatre, Puppet Theatre and Comedy, all having, as a common denominator, the irreducible and caustic humour of the clown.

The "desecrater", a figure that was so greatly opposed by the clergy of the Middle Ages, as soon as the performance moved from the church to the churchyard and then to the square, was promptly recruited by the clerical Brotherhoods engaged in staging the Mysteries, thus becoming the first professional of farce, engaged to perform parodies of the "bumpkin" (the acts of the "Frammessi") as a means of lifting the spectators from the tragic nature of the show. He thus anticipated the most current feature of modern street theatre: the possibility of a synthesis between the learned environment (of the Church and the Court) and the popular (of the churchyard and the public square), including both drama (Mysteries) and farce (Frammessi).

This synthesis took place on the very edge of madness, as recalled by a further name, that of the buffoon (fool). In fact the buffoon was the main protagonist, in England as in France, of the "Night of the Innocents" (or Feast of Fools), a celebration in which all transgression was forgiven and in which even the clerics could transmute themselves into buffoons celebrating any sort of joke and parody.

The Fools Festival of Belfast will thus be the second centre for the meeting with the European Audience and with professionals of the Street Performing Arts of the continent, thus hosting and disseminating – like Mercantia Festival in Certaldo – the creation of projects, the results of training activities, as well as the studies and networking activities that M&D intends to develop. The three production centers of Gliwice (PL), Lörrach (DE) and Elche (ES) will also act as centres of research and professional training initiatives, as well as focuses for the creative experimentation of the project.



Teatr "A" is Polish independent, professional theatre company dedicated to producing religious musical performances based on originally created scripts. Teatr A seeks to combine the popular language of a musical theatre with the experience of the European theatrical avant-garde. While referring to Polish folk culture it also incorporates originally created texts in biblical passages or extracts from old Polish literature extracts. Being inspired by folk dance choreography and music, it extensively draws upon the heritage of other cultures.

In the artistic research of the company, the sacred component is considered a necessary element for drama. While touching upon important issues it strives to establish contact with the audience by means of a most universal language. Taking its cue from drama and music performances, it moves on to explore new forms. By experimenting with elements of street performances, not shunning grotesque and turning to medieval mysteries for inspiration, it inevitably moves in the direction of "total theatre".

Throughout the period of Cooperation, Teatr A will host at its own location three professional workshops at a European level and will stage a new production (using creative staff from the cooperating countries) which will then be performed in the festivals of the network.



At the other end of the continent is the *Maracaibo Company*, based in Elche (Alicante), a city which is an indispensable partner for M & D, given that for six centuries it has been the seat of one of the oldest mysteries of history, the only one that, thanks to a Papal Decree, is still today performed inside a cathedral (the Basilica of Santa María de Elche). The Misterio de Elche, inspired by the apocryphal gospels and dedicated to the assumption of the Virgin Mary, is a lyrical drama produced by dozens of actors and singers. It culminates in a festival that involves the whole city (as well as thousands of tourists) and in 2001 was given the status of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO.

One of the most significant productions of the Maracaibo company is "Mixerí", a street performance that revives in a modern format the forms and languages of the famous religious event.

From 1996 onwards the Maracaibo Theatre has produced a series of performances based on medieval subjects-matter and using historical aesthetic materials. These are productions which play a significant role in the company's repertoire and are performed in many festivals and medieval events in Spain and around Europe.

Even Elche, through the Maracaibo company, will host activities of training, experimentation and production, allowing creative staffs of contemporary popular theatre to absorb the most characteristic elements of ancient drama and draw directly from history, thanks to the exemplary preservation of the artistic and religious heritage displayed by this community.



"Misteri d'Elx", Dormición, Asunción y Coronación de la Virgen María, Elche (ES) 2013

The European Tour of Mystery & Drolls ends with the Theatre Centre of *Tempus Fugit* of Lörrach in the German region of Baden-Wuerttemberg. The Town (a few kilometers from Basel) hosts a prestigious Carnival which revives forms of the Fastnachtspiele of medieval tradition. It is no coincidence that Lörrach is officially twinned with Chester (UK), an important point of reference for the Mystery Plays that have transmitted to the Carnivals the legacy of Pageants (oxcarts carrying the scenery represented in the "Miracle Play"). Tempus Fugit produces the shows which it presents at its centre and invites other companies to work on theatrical topics.

The centre experiments with advanced forms of entertainment linked to dance, work on the mask, story-telling and street theatre. It is a theatre of social and educational orientation, conducted by professional artists engaged in education and expression within the performing arts.

Production focuses on experimentation and the study of the choreographic movement, the forms of Popular Theatre, itinerant dramaturgy and sacred performance.

M&D will assign various engagements to Tempus Fugit, both in research and in production. This theatre of the Upper Rhine will also act as the partnership's base for the activities of training and creation, given its organizational capacity (29 employees, 17 employees, 15 interns and 150 actors and teachers) as well as its geographical location, perfectly equidistant from the locations of the other five partners.



III. ACTIVITIES

The activities to be developed in M&D may be grouped in two fundamental and complementary project lines.

The first level concerns the activities targeted at professionals of the theatre sector and street arts, and the final beneficiaries will be the users of these expressions on stage. Through the academic research and artistic experimentation that will culminate in the creation of three new international co-productions as well as a program of European training program for the artistic and creative participants of the involved countries, the European audience of the five countries involved in the project will witness the recovery of both the ritual dimension and the popular languages that restore their social function to the theatre.

The second level of proposed actions will make the impact on the audience both real and lasting, thanks initially to the great visibility attained by the two involved Festivals (Mercantia of Certaldo and Fools Belfast Festival) over decades in the international field. Their history is the history of a special relationship with a public that actively participates in the evolution of the theatrical and performance forms proposed and thus helps to shape the elements of innovation. Ever since their origins the international dimension of their activities has identified them as important reference points for the sector of Urban Theatre and popular performance at a European level. Within the ambit of M & D, this will favour a positive impact on sectors of the Theatre and Street Arts in terms of development, networking capabilities and, consequently, the constructive capacity of each operator involved.

1. Behind the scenes of Popular Drama

What does the word "popular" mean for contemporary theatre? This term is often used by insiders with a negative connotation, as a synonym for an artistic production of doubtful consistency and poor quality. But there is no doubt that any attempt of styling innovation capable of success and public recognition in recent decades, both on stages and in European public spaces, needs to achieve an effective connection between the two apparently opposing terms of the cultured and the popular. There can be no future either for expressive art that loses its social dimension or for a theatre that strays from society, locking itself in a self-referential style research.

In a period in which the role of theatre into society must be redefined, in order to overcome the obvious inadequacy of the contemporary proposals to meet new audience needs (many theatres in Europe are empty!), and in order to confront the modern forms of "cultural consumption" imposed by mass production (mostly aimed at the individual rather than the community), it would be suicidal for the European theatre to abandon the dimension of "collective ritual", as well as the languages that favour the interrelation with audiences and promote their active participation.

In his "Actor's Minimum Manual", published in Italian in 1987 and translated into almost all the languages of the continent, Dario Fo tries to transmit to new generations of actors the need to "break down the fourth wall", to pursue the "participation awareness" of the public, and to discourage the idea of "passive and anonymous consumption" of the theatrical event in the darkness of the hall. To do this the actor must reappropriate the relational techniques and the provoc-actions of the fool, of the theatre of its origins. Dario Fo dedicates his manual to the modern actor, but also to the new Audience.

The elements for creative innovation, for the cultural and social revival and for growth in terms of the entrepreneurial capacity of modern theatre, are all present in the ancient history of the art.

The intention of M&D is to bring these elements back to daylight, to ponder the nature of the relationship between ritual and performance, between spirituality and physicality of stage action, with the object of reviving their potential in contemporary productions of theatre and specifically (but not exclusively) urban theatre.

1.1 RESEARCH. Reconnect the threads of history to find a new identity for popular theatre.

Obviously, a project like M&D should base its plans of active cooperation on far-reaching research work. This has to be interconnected with the creative sectors and with the activities that enliven those sectors, in order to avoid the risk of dead wood.

The first step towards this goal is the identification of a Scientific Committee which will have an international character. Each of the project partners will appoint a person responsible for her/his own country, on the base of great skills acquired in the field of the history of medieval theatre in the respective territories.

The coordination of these activities will be operated by the Director of the Committee (the Italian actor Andrea Brugnara), on behalf of Freies Theater Tempus Fugit (DE). The work will involve research institutions from each of the countries involved in the network of M & D, participating in the project as associated Partners.

Here below we list the institutions that have expressed their willingness to participate effectively in the activities of the Scientific Committee: although they do not support the actions with their own financial resources, their commitment is complete and focused on the production of tangible results.

Fondazione Istituto del Dramma Popolare (IT)

The Institute of Popular Drama of San Miniato (Pisa) has been organizing, for over 50 years, the oldest production festival in Italy, and it occupies a unique position in the field of Italian and European theatre. All texts performed in all these years belong to a dramaturgy called "Theatre of the Spirit" with a reference to the Sacred Theatre of the origins. Their performances, which have distinguished half a century of Italian theatre history, have been directed by masters such as Orazio Costa, Luigi Squarzina and Maurizio Scaparro.

www.drammapopolare.it

Centro studi Città di Orvieto (IT)

The Foundation "Study Centre City of Orvieto" is a cultural institution having with the statutory aim of promoting and implementing research, training, cultural and artistic activities of high scientific standards, in accordance with the historical and civic traditions of Orvieto and their utility to the social and economic development of the city and the surrounding area. The post-diploma and post-graduate training activities are carried out in collaboration with universities and cultural and scientific institutions, both public and private, in the national and international field.

www.orvietostudi.it

Patronage of the Mysteries of Elche (ES)

The Patronage of the Mysteries of Elche (Misterio de Elche) is the body entrusted by the Region of Valencia to annually organize the theatrical-religious event, that has been declared a national monument in 1931 and World Heritage Site in 2001. The Patronage, as it stands now, is made up of two entities: the Patronato Rector and the Junta Rectora, with members elected by local public bodies. It houses a priceless heritage of studies and research on the Spanish Misterio and the medieval Holy Representation in general.

www.misteridelx.com

Instytut im Jerzego Grotowskiego (PL)

The Grotowski Institute in Wrocław is a municipal cultural institution which combines artistic and research projects responding to the challenges laid down by the creative practice of Jerzy Grotowski as well as documenting and spreading knowledge about his achievements.

www.grotowski-institute.art.pl

Chester University, Department of Performing Arts (UK)

The Department of Performing Arts at the University of Chester is a landmark throughout the North of England for the approach to the academic study of theatre and performing arts. The Department has strong partnerships with a number of Organisations, and links with all art sectors. In the Middle Ages Chester hosted a famous "cycle" of Mysteries consisting of 25 performances starting with the fall of Lucifer and concluding with the Last Judgement. It arrived to us in original writing and it is known as "Chester Mystery Plays"

www.chester.ac.uk/departments/performing-arts

www.chestermysteryplays.com

The objective of the research is only partly historical. Also important will be the analysis of the forms and of the dynamics that characterize contemporary popular theatre, the creation process and public perception. In this regard, throughout the duration of the project the Scientific Committee will continuously connect with artists and creative personnel involved in production and professional training activities, as well as with the partnership's two festivals, with the main production centres that will join the network of M & D, and with all the interested realities working in the theatre and Street Performing Arts.

Impact of research activity on the sector and the public.

This action aims to bring the history of medieval theatre to the attention of today's theatre producers, to stimulate the interest of institutional theatres and audiences to the popular forms, to promote, to the artists and creators of the contemporary scene, the knowledge and practice of forms derived from ancient techniques, and consequently to improve the perception of theatrical expression by the European public.

This action will produce a significant impact on the sector, given that it will define the theoretical foundations of the new pathway that M&D will propose to all the production and promotion organizations connected with the project. It will also support the professional training work and experimentations created in the three production sites of the project.

The result will also be a major benefit to the Audience, which will be helped to understand fully the value of popular performance and rediscover an approach to theatre as a protagonist.

Here below, in a concise form, we illustrate the idea of how the research work will be structured.

1.1.1 Analysis of the evolution of the actorial practice and dramaturgy between the sacred and the secular, from the Middle Ages to the Commedia dell'Arte. Historical and bibliographic research. Analysis of the sources.

Objectives: To define in scientific terms the role of the Theatre of Sacred inspiration in the birth and development of modern dramaturgy. To understand its relationship with the Street Arts, the Art of the Jester and the Fool. To create a European bibliography of the Mysteries and Middle Ages Theatre.

Working Methods: Analysis and cataloguing of ancient texts and modern studies in the various cooperating countries by individual members of the Scientific Committee. Summary of contents and sharing of same within the environment of the Committee.

Sharing of duties: each member of the committee will complete the assigned work individually or with a working team, respecting the defined objectives and the agreed timetable.

Publication of the results: Mysteries & Drolls Research Book

1.1.2 Analysis of the evolution of contemporary forms of street theatre, drama and popular comicality

Objective: To ascertain, at a philological level, the European dimension of the Popular Theatre and Street Theatre. To identify the contribution that the "Dramaturgy of the Feast" and Street Arts can give to the language of Contemporary Theatre.

Working methods: Review of the existing studies. Definition of survey criteria to be adopted for the artistic phenomenology to be analysed and for the characters of the main circuits within which they are expressed. Involvement of the partner festivals in gathering the data necessary for the realization of the study.

Sharing of duties: The Scientific Committee will define research strategies, which may include questionnaires and interviews to be submitted to artists, creative personnel and operators of the sectors concerned, especially during the International Festival M & D, annually programmed in Certaldo and Belfast.

Publication of the results: Mysteries & Dolls Research Book, M&D Training Programme, Creative residences provided by the Project. M&D International Meeting. M&D International Festival.

1.1.3 Identification of critical points in the relationship between consolidated Audience, New Audience and stage production (theatres and street)

Objective: Definition of a new approach to dramaturgy and theatrical practice, which builds upon the popular languages of the past. Promoting a new vision that places the spectator at the centre of the performance act.

Working methods: Definitions of investigation criteria to be adopted with respect to the artistic phenomenology to be analysed, and the characters of the main circuits within which they are expressed. Involvement of partners in the festival gathering the data necessary for the realization of the study.

Sharing of duties: The Scientific Committee will define research strategies, which may include questionnaires and interviews to be submitted to the spectators of festivals linked to the network, as well as to artists, creative personnel and operators of the sectors concerned.

Publication of the results: Mysteries & Dolls Research Book, M&D Training Programme, Creative residences provided by the Project. M&D International Meeting. M&D International Festival.

1.1.4 Census of activities of training, production, documentation, promotion of popular theatre in Europe

Objective: To achieve a live picture of the resources of Popular Theatre in Europe.

Working Methods: Getting the relevant contacts, sending a data collection form. Data sorting and organization of the database.

Sharing of duties: The activity of research, acquisition and preliminary organization of the data will be carried out mainly by the German partner Freies Theater Tempus Fugit. For the creation, management and publication of the on-line database a person with the necessary technical skills will be involved.

Publication of the results: Mysteries & Dolls Official Web Site. M&D International Showcase.

Strategies for implementation of the action.

The research will be carried out individually by the members of the Scientific Committee but, on the occasion of main meetings and public events, there will also be moments of work sharing. The German partner Freies Theater Tempus Fugit will coordinate the progress of work and will publish the results to be disseminated according to the various systems shown in the above diagram.

The Scientific Committee will participate in the activities of creation and training, trying to convey the acquired knowledge to the professionals to be involved case by case.

The resources allocated in the budget to the research activities are minimal because all of the travel costs, the carrying out of meetings and working sessions of the Scientific Committee, are actually absorbed by other concomitant activities that involve the partnership anyway.

The publication of the results will be made partly using the web channel, which in particular will concentrate the data related to the census of sector activities. These data will be available in the form of a searchable database, with the possibility of advanced thematic, typological or geographical research. The treatment of contents in long form will result in a publication in Italian / English / German that will be the synthesis of the 4 strands of research.

The shape of this publication will have a popularizing character and, as a "New Minimum Manual" of the popular actor, it will be addressed to the public. As such it will be also distributed within the M&D Festivals in Italy and the UK.

1.2 CREATION. Looking for a European dramaturgy of the feast: 5 theatrical cultures for 3 production projects

M&D does not intend to remain perched on the branch of philological research, but wants to bring about a transformation in the PRACTICE and CONCEPTION of the new theatre. For this reason, in the construction of the partnership the presence of centres of production has been privileged. It is only through the research applied to artistic practice that we can concretely define the paths of innovation.

The much sought-after innovation will arise from the answer to questions such as "What kind role the audience has in the play? What is the influence of the environment of performance on the nature of representation and of the character that the performing act takes, as the case may be, in a square, in a school, in a courtyard? How, in each of these environments, can you improve the relationship between the actor and the theatre users?

M&D's proposal for solving these questions, or at least for facing them and overcoming the stalemate in which some forms have incurred today, is - as mentioned in the introduction - the rediscovery of theatre's origins. Moreover, in the characters of the theatre of the origins - the Medieval Theatre – lie one of the identifying characteristics of European theatre: the dialogue between the forms of Sacred Representation and those of Popular Theatre. This is the aspect that has allowed it to evolve in each of the cultures that make up the mosaic of our Old Continent.

The dimension of the creative activities will be distinctly European. The mobility of the artistic staffs under this action will have two directions.

In the initial period of creations the directors and playwrights of the cooperating countries will move to the centres of production in Germany, Poland and Spain, in order to make the process of creation the result of a meeting between several cultures.

The second movement of the artists planned in the action, will be the performance of the produced creations in the context of the two editions of the International M&D Showcase. This will be done in two stages, after the first year of production (Certaldo 2019) in a simplified version, and the second year (Belfast 2020) in its definitive version.

Each of the production partners will develop an artistic project around a character or element of its own culture, resulting especially in the creative contamination - in terms of art language and scenic choices and solutions – of the professionals sharing the conception of the work.

1.2.1 “El Gran Teatro Del Mundo” coproduction staging in Elche (ES)

February 2018 – May 2020

The Maracaibo company will host the creative residencies for the production of a street performance inspired by the production of one of Spain's greatest playwrights of the "Siglo de Oro", Pedro Calderón de La Barca. The identification of this author, positioned far onward compared to the historical “centre of gravity” of Mysteries & Drolls, is actually justified by the nature of the play, given that it is the great Madrileño author's best-known Auto Sacramental.

The Auto Sacramental is connected to the cyclic dramas developed in the Middle Ages throughout Europe. It comprised all the characteristics of the medieval morality and it was disseminated within the ambit of the fourteenth-century processions of Corpus Christi.

The drama was based on the use of allegorical figures, so that, alongside human and religious characters, also acting on stage were Grace, Pleasure, Sin, Pain, Beauty, Fire, Earth, Water and Sky. The stories of Autos could be drawn from the most disparate sources and be inspired by secular themes, on condition that they illustrated the virtue of the sacraments and the validity of the dogmas of the Catholic Church. So the procession assembled the entire universe: the symbols materialized during the stages action, fully respecting the existing values and the hierarchy between God, the King and mankind.

This kind of Sacred Representation is particularly effective as a figurative and performing action, thus fully corresponding to the true vocation of the artistic staff of Maracaibo. At the same time it also opens to the most diverse directorial and staging interventions, giving the creative staff involved in the production ample space to make an innovative mark and achieve an absolutely contemporary creation.

Production Features

Artists involved: n. 4

Technicians involved: n. 2

Rehearsals days: n. 54

Plan for implementation of the action

1st Creative Residence: from 05/02/2018 to 11/02/2018

2nd Creative Residence: from 11/02/2019 to 17/02/2019

3rd Creative Residence: from 17/02/2020 to 23/02/2020

Show preview in Elche: May 2019

First European show premiere: Certaldo (IT), 1st M&D International Showcase 2019

Presentation of the advanced version: Belfast (UK), 2nd M&D International Showcase 2020

1.2.2 "Everyman" coproduction staging in Lörrach (DE)

February 2018 - May 2020

The work to be staged by the production centre "Freies Theater Tempus Fugit" in Germany is an English Morality play, transcript in the late 15th century, but in fact much older. Written by an anonymous author, it is a religious drama probably derived from a work of Flemish origin named Elckerlijc. But Tempus Fugit, using the techniques of street theatre and grammelot, will refer to the German adaptation that in the early 20th century took the name of Jedermann, written by Hugo von Hofmannsthal, and which is now a classic of German theatre.

Even this text, in perfect medieval style, is an allegorical representation personifying vices and virtues, constantly at odds with each other. Everyman (the common man) tries to escape the divine punishment of death trying to bribe her. However this will inevitably lead to the handoff, and he will remain in the sight of God accompanied only by spiritual virtues, while those materials will abandon him.

The shape of this Morality Play, is often able to catch the satirical feature and gives possibility to rereading able to give space to the clownish comedy.

The use of Grammelot (the expressive device that allowed jesters and buffoons to be understood even outside their territory of origin) allows you to face the language barrier that would otherwise be difficult to overcome, allowing the Italian and English audiences to enjoy the show when it will be performed in occasion of the international showcases programmed in Italy and UK.

The staging will be aimed at the maximum scene simplicity, and the number of actors involved will be deliberately limited in order to facilitate the settling of a show that is destined to travel across Europe, even beyond the conclusion of the activity plan of project.

The creative residency that foresees collaboration between Tempus Fugit and Will Chamberlain, specialist of clowning techniques, seems to be very interesting: the show, which in its long history has already approached the German culture to the English one, on this occasion will foresee the two theatre schools working side by side.

Production Features

Artists involved: n. 4

Technicians involved: n. 2

Rehearsals days: n. 45

Plan for implementation of the action

1st Creative Residence: from 12/03/2018 to 18/03/2018

2nd Creative Residence: from 18/02/2019 to 24/02/2019

3rd Creative Residence: from 16/03/2020 to 22/03/2020

Show preview in Lörrach: June 2019

First European show premiere: Certaldo (IT), 1st M&D International Showcase 2019

Presentation of the advanced version: Belfast (UK), 2nd M&D International Showcase 2020

1.2.3 "Stanislaw & Boleslaw" coproduction staging in Gliwice (PL)

The narrative texture of show produced in Poland is on the figure of St. Stanislaw, the current patron of Poland, and on its opposition, at the end of the 11th century, to the debauchery of King Boleslaw II, as Bishop of Krakow. The story that binds these two characters, who embody the temporal and the spiritual powers and the spiritual power, as

well as virtue and vice, spirituality and material satisfaction research, unfolds between legend and history, and is peppered with twists, miracles and grotesque situations (like the deposition in court of a deceased person, specifically resurrected by the Saint, as a metaphor of the primacy of divine justice).

The research of Teater A company, which has a distinctive religious frame, but that since always is active in the ambit of urban theatre, lets to deal with this creative engagement with the easiness of a dramaturgy readable by the public of any cultural and linguistic backgrounds. This will be a show based on images, with the use of choreography and simple stage machinery, fire games and actions aimed at involvement of the public.

The decisive factor, in the production path, will be the comparison with Italian and Spanish creative staffs, even for the complementarity of approaches, which synthetize in the concepts of "choral theatre" and "total theatre."

Production Features

Artists involved: n. 6

Technicians involved: n. 2

Rehearsals days: n. 60

Plan for implementation of the action

1st Creative Residence: from 02/04/2018 to 08/04/2018

2nd Creative Residence: from 15/04/2019 to 21/04/2019

3rd Creative Residence: from 20/04/2020 to 26/04/2020

Show preview in Gliwice: June 2019

First European show premiere: Certaldo (IT), 1st M&D International Showcase 2019

Presentation of the advanced version: Belfast (UK), 2nd M&D International Showcase 2020

1.3. TRAINING. Back to the buffoon, back among the people

In the activities developed by M & D, each of the cultures associated in partnership, will have the opportunity to share the identity nature of its popular theatre with the Europeans artists and creative staffs orbiting around the network in each of the involved countries. This will be even more effective and widespread in the professional training program, which will spread around in each country, addressed to professionals who want to undertake a European-sized course of study of techniques and languages in the ambit of the popular theatre, the physical theatre, the conscious use of voice (the "symphonic actor") and the comic theatre (through the fool and the jester).

In Spain, in Germany and in Poland, the cooperating organizations will host workshops every year addressed at least 30 professionals for each of the nine appointments. The workshop will be conducted by trainers from all partner countries.

With this action we intend to blaze a new path for the European actor training, driving him not to recall languages and techniques that belong to the past, but rather to recall the size of the "contact" with the Audience, which has always been the cornerstone of those languages.

Under this point of view, the experience of the street is certainly meaningful, as there is no street theatre without contact with the spectator. That's the reason for the contamination and the mixing between one and the other universe (stage and square) in this project.

Strategies for implementation of the action.

The courses will be aimed at theatre schools of the territories involved as well as professionals of the stage and of the street, coming from any European country, who intend to take part by presenting a specific application form in occasion of a call organized by the project partnership.

The notice will have a common feature in the 3 countries where the action will take place, but, in necessary, it can be adapted to the needs of each centre hosting the activities.

The notice of call will be included in a European visibility plan of the project actions, and adequately spread in each of the cooperating countries for which the partners of the project will serve as "antenna." The "antennas" of M&D will disseminate the project activities even in countries closer to them, and will be responsible to promote, in addition to the training program hosted at their own seats, the complete program of European M&D training, giving information on the modalities of participation of each of the courses provided therein.

The participants will not be required to pay training costs, except the accommodation fee for the duration of the course. The general costs of activities will be covered by the cooperating bodies, and have been adequately provided for in the project budget.

Workspaces offered by each person involved, are suitable and equipped to host high-level training activities.

The participation will be open to a limited number, and the participation requests will be evaluated, based on shared criteria, by the partner hosting the single course. These criteria will take into account the motivation, the professional expectations, the CV and the employment status of the candidate.

The sessions will have at least 40 hours of training over 5 consecutive days.

At the end of each course there will be a moment of public demonstration of the results achieved by the working group, which can culminate with a performance in the square or a short performance open to the public at the seat of partner hosting the course.

1.3.1 “Grammelot beyond the borders”, course held by Andrea Brugnera (IT)

The seminar will be aimed to teaching and to exercising of grammelot, a kind of speech-language invented by ancient comedians, able to convey the narrative, with the support of gestures, particular rhythms and sounds, without the usual verbal language.

In this key it is possible to improvise - or better, to articulate - grammelot of all kinds related to the most different lexical structures. The actor is so able to speak English, Italian, German, Spanish and Polish grammelots. Of course to do that you must acquire the basic technique, and be prepared to dedicate study and practice to it.

Trainer: Andrea Brugnera started the theatrical experience by attending the seminar in Venice (1975-77) for the actor's training in Commedia dell'Arte, directed by Giovanni Poli at the “A L'Avogaria Theatre”. From 1978 to 2009 he participated in artistic activities in Great Britain, Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Sweden, Malta, the United States, Japan and Mexico.

Date and location:

from 26/09/2018 to 30/09/2018 in Elche (ES)

from 11/03/2020 to 15/03/2020 in Lörrach (DE)

from 15/04/2020 to 19/04/2020 in Gliwice (PL)

1.3.2 “The actor priest”, course held by Jarosław Fret (PL)

With the expression "poor theatre" Grotowski meant a theatre in which the fundamental concern was the actor's relationship with the public, not the staging, neither costumes, nor lighting or special effects. Important to Grotowski was what he could be with the actor's body and voice with no supports and solely through the visceral experience with the audience.

Grotowski (an atheist) joined this concept of “poor theatre” to the concept of “priesthood” or actor’s sacredness. When the actor entered the sanctity of the stage at that moment something special happened, something very similar to the Mass in the Catholic Church. It was in this space, in the sacred relationship between the actor and the audience that the spectator was challenged to think and to be transformed by the theatre.

In this workshop, led by a follower of Grotowskian theatrical revolution, participants will experience the regime of “training” settled by the great Polish director:

1. Eliminate, do not teach anything (Negative path).
2. Intensify what already exists.
3. Create all that you need for the play in the actor’s body, with minimal use of scene stuffs.
4. Promote rigorous physical and vocal training of actors.
5. Avoid the magnificent if it does not conduce to the truth.

Trainer:

Jaroslav Fret is the founder and leader of Teatr ZAR, director, actor, responsible of the Grotowski Institute and professor at the Ludwik Solski Higher State Theatre School. He won the Total Theatre Award in the physical / visual category Theatre and the Herald Angel Award at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival in 2012. He presented his works at Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Athens, Belgrade, Edinburgh, Florence, Madrid, Paris, Sibiu and Cairo, New Delhi and Seoul.

Date and location:

from 17/10/2018 to 21/10/2018 in Lörrach (DE)

3.3 “The walking theatre”, course held by Paul Miskin (UK)

In medieval times in England starts to develop the form of Pageants, which are itinerant performances using ox-carts carrying the scenes of the mystery plays. The Pageants are the forerunners of the carnival wagons, which is a well rooted tradition all over Europe. In the contemporary Street Theatre there are many touring productions that use self-propelled scene machines, wagons, and the technique of the parade.

This workshop, aimed at designers, artists / craftsmen and actors, intends to review the techniques and technologies (both sustainable) that can be used for this type of productions. From the point of view of the actors, the course provides an overview on the techniques of street show and contact with the public, with the aim of joining the figurative techniques with the stage action.

Trainer: Founder and programmer of The Newcastle Free Festival, the city open air arts festival in Newcastle upon Tyne for 10 years. Open air events Director and programmer at British Pavilion for World Expo 92, Seville. Artistic Director at Fire Water and Rhythm an aqua pyrotechnic Bulldozer Ballet, a highlight of Birmingham year of music. Paul is one of England’s most experienced designer of large street events.

Date e location:

from 21/11/2018 to 25/11/2018 in Gliwice

from 16/10/2019 to 20/10/2019 in Lörrach

from 12/02/2020 to 16/02/2020 in Elche (ES)

1.3.4 “The poetic body”, course held by Peter Shub (DE)

Physical theatre is based on the idea that performance is about skill, celebration and play, rooted in collaboration, and made by an ensemble dedicated to discovering a collective imagination. This workshop will explore the analysis of movements, one of the fundamentals of Jacques Lecoq’s & Etienne Decroux’s approach to artistic training.

Trainer: Peter has a distinguished career as a freelance actor and director. He has worked with many leading international organizations and artists, such as Köln Comedy Schule, The Philadelphia Opera Company and the Cirque du Soleil. Peter has taught theatre widely through Europe and also offers his famous Clown workshop which is about comedy, humanity, improvisation and the rhythms of theatre.

Date e location:

from 25/09/2019 to 29/09/2019 in Elche (ES)

1.3.5 “The Jesters and the Mask”, course held by Andrés del Bosque (ES)

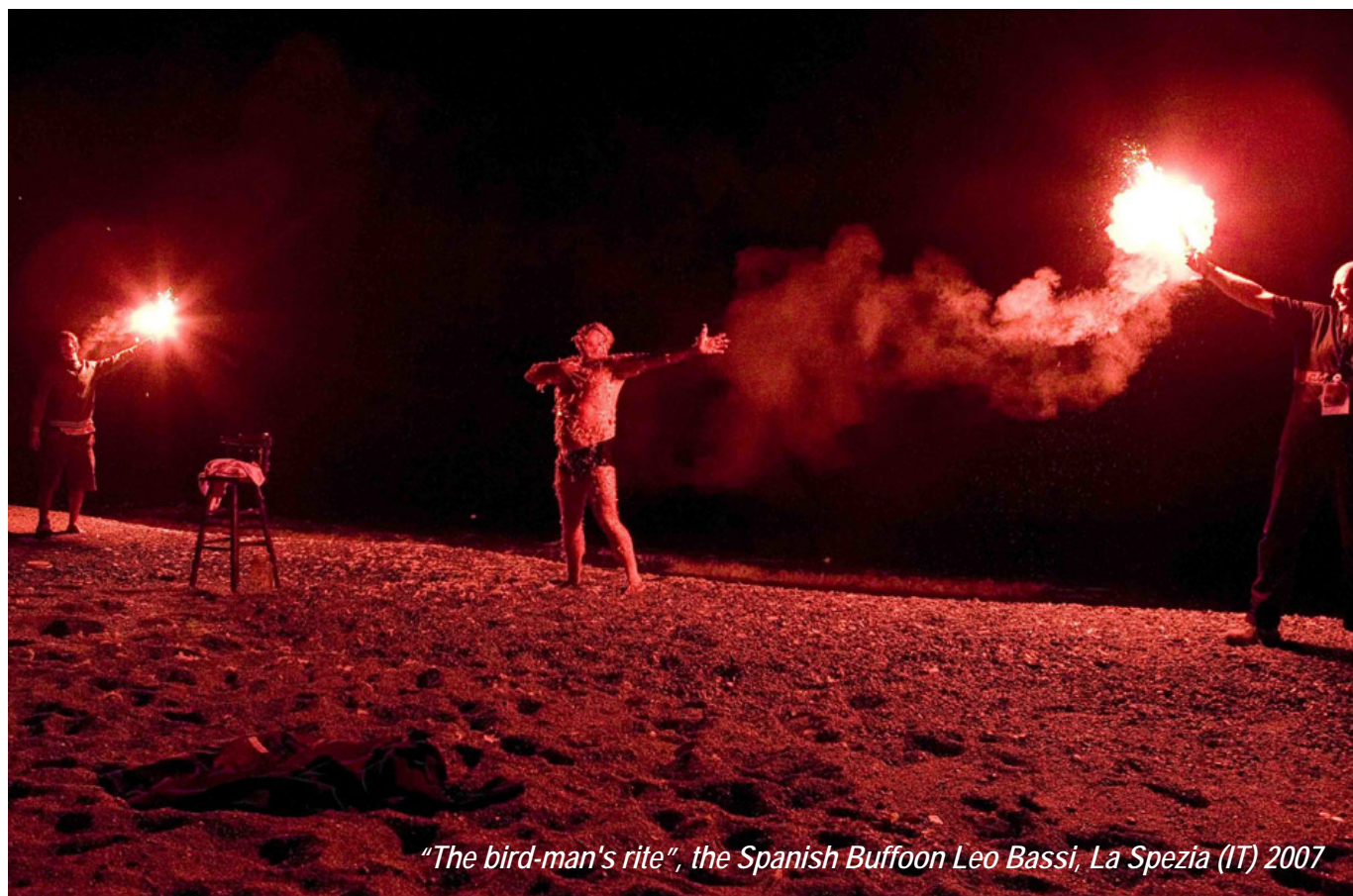
It is possible to draw a line in the theatrical tradition that comes from the sacred clowns or ritual buffoons to the modern contribution to the contemporary theatre of Jacques Lecoq, Darío Fo, Gordon Craig, Tadeusz Kantor. And we can affirm that without exception the most powerful currents of the western theatre sink their roots on this path.

Andrés del Bosque is not a teacher anymore, he is a master with whom to travel to new theatrical worlds. His courses are an experience that changes the perception of things, reality and theatre.

Trainer: Andrés del Bosque is an actor, director and playwright, professor of the RESAD (Official School of Theatre of Madrid) from 2005 to 2012, graduated in theatrical direction, master and doctor in performing arts with his thesis "In search of the lost laughter. Contributions of clown to theatricality " by the Rey Juan Carlos University of Madrid.

Date e location:

from 13/11/2019 to 17/11/2019 in Gliwice (PL)



“The bird-man's rite”, the Spanish Buffoon Leo Bassi, La Spezia (IT) 2007

2. Jesters of third millennium invades Europe.

The activity developed in the context of M&D project with the work "behind the scenes", is just the engine of a desire of action that, in economic investment as in ideals, is all directed towards the outside of cooperation, with activities aiming to obtain a significant impact both on the audience and on the sector.

In the "fight" that we propose for the innovation of contemporary forms and for the return to the unity between cultured and popular, the sector of the "official" Theatre seems at times to defend the positions acquired (for this project at least two proposals of partnership to important British theatres have failed!). Our main allies will then be the Urban theatre and the Street theatre.

The Theatre must speak to everyone and must re-learn how to do it. In addition, avoiding pedantry and self-reference, it must take charge of "formative" and "communicative" functions, addressed to whom is willing to follow it. The way it promotes itself, as well as the way it is perceived by its own audience, can determine its prosperity or its disappearance.

This explains the choice of M&D to link its activities not only to the production and research centres, but first of all to festivals having an European dimension and vocation. Festival that, as we said, have an important story and an ability to spread the message of innovation and design of our project far beyond its Audience and his circle of artists and professionals.

But the proposals done through the artistic programming, the creation and research projects, will be durable and will gain, through the public's perception, the consistency of true innovations only when the whole sector will consider them as a reason for renewal and will harbour them as strategic elements able to open new markets and to expand the existing ones. And so here's Mysteries & Drolls International Showcase.

The target of M&D is, together with the development of the market, to re-affirm the importance of cooperation, a strategy that precedes the market (and in case defines it), but which is also capable - being released from the necessity of an economic return and competition - to protect the cultural heritage and to contribute, more effectively than the market, to integration of cultures. A purpose to which we feel we can join under a general point of view, but that becomes even more urgent and necessary in the specific case of the Theatre.

2.1 FESTIVAL. Popular Drama and Farce return to enliven European squares and conquer the new audience

The occasion of best visibility and development of the programmed actions will be the International Mysteries & Drolls Festival which will see its first edition in the spring / summer of 2018. The Festival will be organized in each of the three years of activity, in May and July in the two locations of Certaldo (IT) and Belfast (UK).

The poetics of the event will be fully adherent to the general lines of the artistic and philological research that M&D intends to pursue. The programming will be an exemplification of the project in terms of theatrical proposals and performance, and will try to return the European dimension of contemporary forms of expression that appeal to popular drama, the buffoon theatre, or to ones that recall the canons of sacred theatre, through a drama that can be called "ritual" and that relies in particular on symbols and images, rather than on narrative.

The visibility of the project can rely on the communication plan of the two big events that host the action. The "Festival of Fools" and "Mercantia" are, as already mentioned several times, two great international events, capable to give an undeniable resonance at M&D, both in their respective countries, or outside of them. Within these two events, the image of the Mysteries & Drolls Festival will be clearly identifiable and traceable to the overall structure of project activities. Together with the Festival, also other activities will be conveyed, both those addressed to the public and those dedicated to the sector.

The whole communication will be geared to the promotion of the European identity of the project. The support from the European Commission, through the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, and the Creative Europe program, will be key elements on which will be carefully construct the visibility plan of the project.

In the two sections of event in Certaldo and in Belfast, there will be a substantial identity of approach and a common vision in pursuing the artistic program. We will share choices and methods and only one line of communication will be used, even though we will probably need to adjust the image of the project to the different socio-cultural context (e.g.: the Italy of medieval villages, and the northern industrial metropolis).

A trait of distinction will instead be the prevalence of comedy shows and performative shows in Belfast (view the concomitance with the Festival of Fools) compared to Certaldo program that will host dramaturgical forms complex in a wider context.

In both cases, the venues of performance will be consist of squares, streets and courtyards, although the diversity of these spaces is evident by comparing the two locations. If in Certaldo you definitely can "isolate" the show from the crowd, using the magnificent gorges of the medieval village, in Belfast prevail large and "generalists" spaces where a considerable audience, of all backgrounds and participating with more varied motivations, can be grouped. We intend to emphasize that this "confusion" of motives, intentions, expectations on the part of two publics, constitutes for the theatre of M&D an ideal environment in which to grasp its Audience Development challenge.

The program will have an international dimension, marked by the movement of the artistic staff and companies from all countries of the continent able to offer interesting productions and with modest stage requirements (given the environment and the difficulties of the journey), having clear popular inspiration. The shows from the countries of the partnership will be preferred.

The Mysteries & Drolls Belfast Festival will run for four days. Indeed, the next section of Certaldo last up to 5 days.

In each of the two appointments we will be scheduled every year at least six one man shows, five small companies, three medium events.

It is not possible to mention here all the shows and the companies involved but we hereby quote some having engaged an important role in the research on popular drama and on close interaction with the audience. They are shows coming from cooperating countries that will be surely programmed.

2.1.1 Mysteries & Drolls European Festival, United Kingdom Section in Belfast

1° Edition: from 04/05/2018 to 07/05/2018

2° Edition: from 03/05/2019 to 06/05/2019

3° Edition: from 02/05/2020 to 05/05/2020

Elements of Artistic Programme

From Italy: Kamina Teatro; Matteo Belli; Stivalaccio Teatro; Teatri 35, Teatro dei Venti; Mario Pirovano.

From United Kingdom: Bash Street Theatre, Dragon heart beats / Positive Production,

From Poland: Teatr Akt, Teatr Snów, Circus Ferus, Teatr KTO, Teatr Pantomimy Mimo

From Spain: Carros de Foc, Cia La Tal, Hortzmuga Teatro,

From Germany: Alvaro Solar, Familie Flöz, Daniel Warr

2.1.2 Mysteries & Drolls European Festival, Italian Section in Certaldo

1° Edition: from 11/07/2018 to 15/07/2018

2° Edition: from 17/07/2019 to 21/07/2019

3° Edition: from 15/07/2020 to 19/07/2020

Elements of Artistic Programme

From Italy: Teatri 35; Teatro Trabagai; Kamina Teatro, Mario Pirovano, Matthias Martelli.

From United Kingdom: Bash Street Theatre, Dragon heart beats / Positive Production, Neighbourhood Watch Stilts International, Ramshacklicious

From Poland: Walny-Teatr, Teatr KTO, Teatr Snów, Teatr Ewolucji Cienia

From Spain: Leo Bassi, Leandre Ribera, Xarxa Theatre, NSM Teatre, Esclafit Teatre,

From Germany: Familie Flöz, Katharina Witerzens, Alvaro Solar, Serious Clowns, Daniel Warr

In Certaldo section (the 2018 Edition of the M&D Festival) is also programmed the debut of a new Italian production, as result of the collaboration between the art direction of "Mercantia" (Terzostudio) and the Neapolitan company "Theatres 35". The show will be a remake of a production that company has recently dedicated to Caravaggio's Passion. This dramatic play, performed by technique of tableaux vivants, is going to play Caravaggio's pictures to take shape a itinerary among the pictures that give importance to the Art in Naples in the first half of the 17th century.

Later, the production will presented in Belfast in 2019.

2.2 SHOWCASE. Not only market: discover and join Mystery & Drolls from all over Europe

The 2019 edition of the Mysteries & Drolls Festival in the Italian section Certaldo, as well as the 2020 edition in the Belfast section, will host an International Showcase dedicated to the Popular Drama activities, promoting the cultural specificities of each countries adherent to the network in the field of medieval theatre and contemporary performing arts that the old forms still inspire.

It will be a unique and interesting opportunity for programmers from all over Europe gathered together to meet the modern clowns, the creators of the popular theatre, the representatives of the organizations that still organize today Mysteries and Sacred Representations in various countries of the continent.

We will set up an exhibition hall and all invited institutions will have the chance to show their own work and explain the character of their work. Each of the two editions of the Showcase will run for three days.

The action will be divided into four activities, each connected to a time and at a specific initiative organized within the Showcase

2.2.1 M&D Showcase (morning)

An exhibition opened to all artists and promoters, with free adhesion, free stand, free services availability and facilitated accommodation.

Inside the exhibition area we will organize meetings with each of the artistic realities, with compulsory participation for each invited programmer

The forecast is to be able to accommodate up to 50 artistic institutions

2.2.2 M&D Official performances (evening)

A Program of 20 shows, selected by the partnership of M&D networks, according to a specific call, with companies of various countries which will receive a trip refund proportioned to the distance.

The performances will take place in the evening in the M&D Festival, and then will be open to the public. But for these special events the invited operators (programmers) will have a priority access.

2.2.3 M&D Open Stage (afternoon)

An Open Stage, programmed in the afternoons, will give the opportunity, to a limited number of artists and companies, to perform in front of a qualified audience of art operators. In the afternoon, the audience of the Festival is usually scarce, so it will not be necessary to ensure priority access to invited programmers. Anyway, they will be requested to attend each at least 50% of the Open Stage events.

2.2.4 M&D New European Productions

Each of the three evenings of the International Showcase will see the debut of the co-productions staged at the locations of the Spanish, Polish and German partners. The Italian edition of the Showcase, scheduled in 2019, will host the simplified versions of the 3 performances, whilst in 2020, in Belfast, the final versions will be performed. All artists involved in the staging of co-productions will be invited to attend the events.

2.2.5 M&D International Meeting

It is an international meeting between artists, companies, programmers and training centres, aiming to define common strategies for the re-evaluation of popular performing arts.

This meeting will also be opened to members of the Scientific Committee of M & D, who will have the opportunity to explain the contents of the research, discuss with the operators the problems that have emerged regarding the state of health of the sector's activities, and progress in the data collection in cooperation with partners organizing the M&D Festival.

Strategy for implementation of the action.

All artists and companies with stable activities in EU countries and working in the sector of street arts and urban happenings may take part in the showcase, as well as the EU Festival organizers. They will necessarily have to register on the M&D web platform. Artists willing to attend the showcase must upload a video of the show to be performed.

The showcase accommodates at least 20 organizers of EU Festivals located outside the Italian territory at its own expense (flight and accommodation). To 20 Italian festival representatives, the showcase grants meals and accommodation.

The showcase hosts 20 selected groups and grants them a "refund token" proportioned to the distance, as well as accommodation to all members, encouraging participation from decentralized areas.

Performing in the Off Program is permitted for a max of 20 productions (priority for highest ranks in selection). Companies not inserted in the official program can use the showcase stalls for as long as there is available space.

The selection will be made by M&D partners through an online voting procedure and will be based on evaluations of videos uploaded by companies. The selection will take into account the geographical origin of the shows and the desirability for a company to be selected will be facilitated if the country is poorly represented in the showcase. Instead, the coefficient for shows of countries that are overwhelmingly represented will be adjusted slightly downwards.

The showcase is an initiative of cooperation, as well as an action capable of stimulating the market. The hosted programmers, in fact, undersign a special agreement in which they commit to insert in their respective programmes, at least two performances among those present at the M&D Showcase. The programmers will be absolutely free to choose the artistic product in which they are interested, with no restrictions concerning the nature and size of it.

2.3 NETWORK. Growth of the popular contemporary drama through cooperation

The partners of M&D are distributed from North to South, from East to West as "garrisons" of the entire EU territory. This "strategic positioning" of the co-operator's locations, as well as of the locations of the proposed activities, is motivated by the desire to spread the vision and approach to theatre developed during the project far beyond the countries represented in the basic partnership.

The proposed program will achieve this aim through the efforts of the partners that will re-launch the activities beyond the borders of their respective nations. The success of the program will also depend on the ability to attract, thanks to the appeal of the activities proposed, artists, creative staffs, researchers, trainers and programmers from all over the Continent.

The activities to be implemented in the 3 years of the cooperation, as they have been described in detail, are addressed to the theatre sector as a whole, with the aim of reasserting the centrality of the techniques of the origins, and of drawing on them to strengthen the bond with the European public.

We are fully aware that these intentions go beyond the limited sphere of a small-scale cooperation project. But its real European dimension will be determined by the volume of connections that will be developed during the activity plan, rather than by the economic budget available for the program. These connections, once organized within a network, will be the engine of future actions that will gradually consolidate the positions acquired and help to achieve the objective, we hope in a not too distant future.

This is why every action described here has at least one effect, a spin-off in the sense of networking. Because – as is proven by the experience that our organizations have matured over many years of cooperation – it is only through networking that one can capitalize on the achievements of a single project and produce systemic changes in the course of time.

In its activities of study and research M&D includes the creation of a census of the European popular show. The project connects research centres, it creates an international training program with experts from various countries and is aimed at a wide range of professionals across Europe.

The project also involves creative staffs from different countries working on the same creations. Finally, it promotes the encounter between supply and demand on a European scale and in a context of cooperation.

Each of the initiatives proposed includes a commitment to activities of networking, so it is worth spending the last lines of this document, to clarify how and by what means this activity will be carried out by the partnership.

2.3.1 The Antennae of Mystery & Drolls

The activities here described require specific commitments from each partner, as well as a willingness to implement a team strategy. But beyond this, it will be the specific responsibility of each organization cooperating in Italy, Germany, Poland, England and Spain, to become a real reference centre (antenna) of the project towards the reference territory, both at a local and national level, also with regard to neighbouring countries.

This action will be carried out continuously and thoroughly, with a specific involvement of the staff and communication system of the institution concerned. The communication of the program and its dissemination in the various areas of the UE for which each partner acts as a centre of reference, will be carried out in accordance with a joint project linking all five antennae.

Each antenna will be responsible, in their own language, for an informational website that will be linked to the international M&D platform. It must set up a newsletter and organize its own contact database for the promotion of the actions. It will produce printed information materials for Professionals and Audiences regarding the actions to be developed locally.

2.3.2 Global & Local

The characteristics of the M&D Project make the value of its activities at the local level a particularly delicate matter. Each country has its own cultural tradition in the field of the Holy Representation and Medieval Theatre, even if - as we have seen – some events remain almost unchanged all over the continent.

The promotion of activities pitched at a professional level and addressed to the Audience must be able to highlight the European dimension of the project without reducing the complexity and diversity of the local characteristics of the theatre of sacred origin and of the popular theatre and drama. In some of the cooperating countries the phenomenon of Sacred Theatre (for example Spain and Poland) is still a very living reality and one that intensely involves both the religious and artistic communities (Elche).

In other countries, the religious representations and the professional theatre are totally separate. For example in Italy there are many re-enactments of the Passion staged, according to the liturgical calendar, directly by the communities that host them. In England (in York but not only) the brotherhoods (or Guilds) are still today in charge of organizing the Mysteries. In these contexts the unifying vision of M&D could even provoke a preconceived attitude in the theatre professionals.

That's why we must view the actions of the program within the specificity of each of the cultural areas involved and try to find, in their respective traditions, the elements that can be considered strategic for theatrical innovation. On a European scale, the success of each of these actions will help the Audience, the Artists and other operators to compose the overall picture of the innovative proposal and to have a positive perception of the project.

2.3.3 Digital Networking

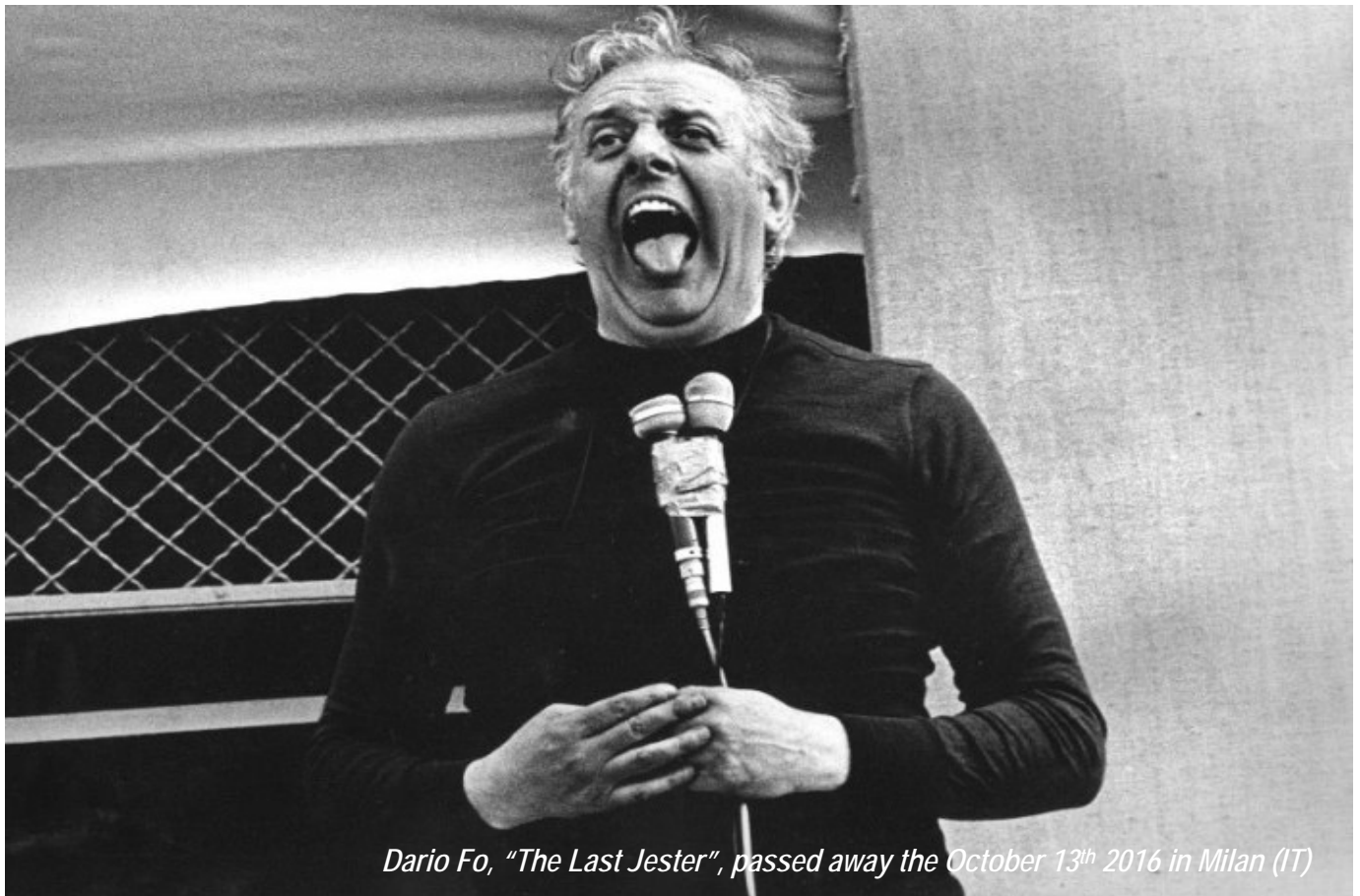
The main strategy for the sustainability of the cooperation will be the use of digital networking. Within the partnership tools such as instant messaging, e-mail, file sharing, social networking, video and audio conferencing will form the main system for networking. These solutions, which today make up the essential background for any European cultural operator, also have the advantage of being able to increase the level of documentation of the actions that are discussed, planned and implemented.

2.3.4 Social Network as resource for the Audience Development

In the development plan of the M&D activities, an important place will be given to the Social Networks. They now constitute a necessary step for any initiative that is aimed at an Audience or to a broad community of professionals. Nevertheless, it is clear that, once the Audience or the community of reference assumes a European dimension, just one platform and just a single operator will not be enough.

The approach with the Socials must be shared by the various organizations involved in the cooperation, through the planning of objectives and strategies. Having said that, each organization will communicate the actions to its own area of reference, while at the same time striving to inspire the relevant community with a positive attitude of recognition and belonging towards the wider community of the project in its European dimension.

In this way it will be possible to exploit the potential for Audience Development that the Social Network can express to full effect, overcome the geographical barriers (always a great limit to these technologies if compared to initiatives developed at an international level), and convey in the best manner even the contents located outside the local context, while at the same time promoting the socialization of knowledge and restoring the theatre to the community.



Dario Fo, "The Last Jester", passed away the October 13th 2016 in Milan (IT)

III. COMUNICATION BACKGROUND

M&D needs to address its communication into two distinct areas: on one side it must be very incisive towards EU audience, by promoting the hub and the cultural innovation that project can spread (by Festival, Creations, Research Book...), on the other it must involve the largest number possible of EU insiders to develop long-term aims within Theatre sector (by Training, Creative Residencies, EU Showcase, Networking activities). But the two work plans are intertwined when M&D wants to meet Audience and Insiders.

Viral spreading via social networks, responsive web site implemented in any cooperating countries and linked to the official platforms will be used in different ways for both above work lines. With regard to the promotion of main events and the chance to re-launch the activities of the entire project, M&D will take advantage by the strategy and communication tools of each of its partners. For this reason, in the closing of this document, we want to illustrate in detail the visibility of the Festival joined in to the project, as well as the potential of the production partners regarding the communication to street art sector.

Comune di Certaldo, Mercantia International Festival (IT)

In 2017 Mercantia International Festival will celebrate the 30th edition: an important milestone, a goal that we must celebrate at best, reaffirming and developing the contents which have made the Festival so famous and appreciated.

For this aim, the communication plays an important role both for the strong bond that the public has with Mercantia, both for the attention that media has towards the Festival.

We have a strong strategy on web and on social network. Main result are the 23,000 Facebook's "Likes", but we have also high level of involvement by followers. Mercantia is an hyper photographed event and there are private schools that organize internships in photography during the event, and all the Audience, or almost all, do not leaves from Certaldo without at least one picture. All this has brought the event to be present in active way on the web.

Our visibility is fully European and this is demonstrated by visits (more than 50,000 per year) on our English Web Site version.

If we analyze the period December 1, 2014 - November 30, 2015, the site www.mercantiacertaldo.it reached such 250,000 views, 80,000 sessions and 60,000 users. The mobile and tablet accesses are increased (+ 28,47%) becoming the first connection value 46.40% thus exceeding the connections with desktops (44,18%).

Main Italian Newspapers Involved: La Repubblica, La Nazione, Il Tirreno, GoNews, Paese Sera.

Radio: Radio Toscana, Radio Lady and Radio SeiSei

Tv broadcast: Rai Regione Toscana, TVL, Odeon TV, RTV38

Publishing: 10.000 daily brochure (50.000 in total); 30.000 flyer-maps; 5.000 posters; 1.000 banners and flags.

The Festival of Fools (UK)

The Festival of Fools employs a Coordinator who is responsible for the marketing and promotion of the activities of the project. A marketing plan is delivered from April 1st to the start of May each year, targeting a wide section of citizens of Northern Ireland and out of state visitors. 50% of the audience attending will be drawn from Belfast itself with a focus on people suffering from economic and social disadvantage.

The project is promoted by such means as 48 sheet billboards, A3 posters; A5 flyers; press adverts and radio adverts along with the production 40,000 copies of a 56 page full colour brochure, which is distributed across Northern Ireland. Additional marketing tools include beermats promoting the project which are placed in every bar in Belfast city centre. The project is promoted through a press launch including a number of interviews for The Belfast Telegraph, Irish News, BBC Radio Ulster and Ulster TV.

The social media presence of the Festival of Fools now plays a significant role in promoting the project with some 10,000 likes and followers on facebook and twitter; live broadcasts during the Festival and a specially constructed website for each edition of the Festival.

Stowarzyszenie Kulturalne Pro-Scenium / Teatr A (PL)

While carrying out projects as part of Open Offers Competition in culture, education and social policy (which is current model of granting subsidies in Poland) Theater A - represented by The Cultural Association Pro-Scenium, introduces its offer into advertising campaign of many larger (and often periodic) events in local, regional and country-wide ranges.

From its side, Theater A and The Association undertake complex advertising based on audio-visual branding, dedicated websites, activity in social media, press releases, leaflets, brochures and occasionally (because of extraordinary costs) large-sized outdoor advertisements (billboards, screens). Moreover there is also the artistic language itself - dedicated event, performance etc. Theatre A while being invited into international projects always matched the strategy of coordinators.

Asociación Cultural Maracaibo Teatro (ES)

The main target of Maracaibo Theatre has always been the public enjoyment across its spectacles and for it his effort has addressed to taken care of his works, aiming to the excellence. We work for distribution of our creations and we are present in the most important European festivals and programs. The company used all the habitual means for communication: web site, social networks, mail, press, theatrical circuits services. We manage contacts with distribution agencies and artistic representatives.

During twenty years of activity, the company has brought its productions all over the Spanish territory and also in many other countries and its street shows have been enjoyed by thousands of spectators in big events.

Freies Theater Tempus fugit e.V.

Tempus fugit presents its own projects in local newspapers, on the official theatre's web site www.fugit.de and on the homepages of its website partners. It has also built a wide network of supra-regional media contacts as well as contacts over the borders of Switzerland and France. For all its projects, it also use printed advertising.

The target groups of the theatre include: children of all ages, adults, elderly people, handicapped people, immigrants, theatre professionals as well as professionals from the educational sector (e.g. teachers, social workers...).

Tempus Fugit carry out periodically a newsletter sent to about 10,000 contacts in Germany, Switzerland and France. The Theatre web site today has around 100.000 visits, mostly from this 3 countries.