



**CREATION** *Pop*

**A creative social prescription approach:  
promoting well-being of persons of older  
age through creativity-based  
intergenerational activities**

*R.3: Report on participatory theatre,  
drama and participatory methods in  
Finland, Slovenia and Spain*

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**Co-funded by  
the European Union**





# Summary of the Project

Social participation is regarded as an important and effective factor influencing older adults' welfare and health as well as a key issue in relation to the rights of older adults. Several studies indicate that diseases, mortality, and quality of life of older adults are related to social participation, thus, paying attention to the concept of social participation in society of older adults is of particular importance. One of the crucial ideas developed within descriptions of successful ageing - often mentioned in literature- concerns older adults' desire to feel included and useful. In order to achieve this, societies have to provide a supportive context for older adults with positive social relationships, engagement and inclusion. The Creation POP project aims to offer specific avenues for meeting this purpose.

The objective of this project is to provide innovative ways of social inclusion for older adults through creative arts such as theatre thus raising awareness among younger and older generations. Older adults have a lot of experience that can be shared with younger generations; their voices are important and should be heard. Since it is increasingly acknowledged that participation in the creative arts can be beneficial for well-being and health, participation of older persons in arts have resulted in health and social benefits, we wish - with this project- to develop theatre activities that produce a safe space for expressing and challenging age-related stereotypes, finding commonalities and accepting differences. This type of activities will raise awareness on social issues experienced and voiced by the vulnerable groups themselves and enabling them to provide ideas to educators/intergenerational and lifelong activities providers (and to decision-makers as well) on how to tackle them. With this project's activities and results, we want to improve the competences of educators and other adult education staff, increasing the availability of high quality learning opportunities for adults that will, at the same time, enable them to foster greater social inclusion.

In order to achieve the objectives of the project, a needs analysis of the population of older adults in all partner countries will be carried out, followed by a study of intergenerational learning. Based on the outcomes, a more tailor-made Creation POP methodology and toolkit will be designed. These will focus on approaches inspired by participatory methodology as the basis for theatrical activities that will create connections between different age generations, while also allowing intergenerational learning and exposure of social issues such as exclusion of older adults from the society. The generation of reports, the development of a methodology and toolkit will contribute to the understanding of the importance of social inclusion of older persons. To achieve the set objectives, project partners will implement activities which will enable educators/intergenerational or lifelong activity providers/facilitators to gain practical knowledge and know how to organise creative arts activities with social impact. Pilot workshops will be conducted by each project partner to test the developed Creation POP methodology and toolkit. Then, in order to present and promote the project results, multiplier events will be organized in each project partner country.

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# Executive summary

## *Objectives*

*This report presents the use of participatory drama methods in Finland, Slovenia, and Spain.*

## *Description*

In Finland, participatory drama and theatre engage individuals in exploring common themes using various techniques, fostering collaboration and empowerment across multiple levels: social, pedagogical, and personal. Amateur theatre also plays a significant role in Finnish culture, promoting interaction and personal development across generations. The working participatory drama methods include for example improvisational theatre, Playback Theatre, Theatre in Education, Process Drama, and Sociodrama.

In Slovenia, a rich tapestry of participatory drama methods has emerged, offering diverse opportunities for artistic expression, personal growth, and community engagement. Kamishibai creates a unique connection with the audience through storytelling with paintings on stage. Improvisational theatre encourages spontaneous expression and audience involvement, enhancing communication skills and teamwork. Psychodrama offers therapeutic benefits by allowing participants to address emotions and past experiences through role-play. Other methods like the KOMI method use hand puppets to promote interaction and mental well-being in older populations. Initiatives like "Glej, Starci" aim to bridge generational gaps through sharing older people's experiences via theatre. Theatre of the Oppressed is also utilized to support vulnerable groups and address societal issues.

Participatory theatre in Spain and Spanish-speaking countries intertwines deeply with social intervention and transformation, functioning to engage diverse communities in dialogue and collective action. Blurring the lines between performers and spectators, this form of theatre often incorporates non-professionals in play creation and performance, aiming to address real-life issues and empower marginalized groups. Various methodologies, such as Theatre of the Oppressed, Psychodrama, Sociodrama, Playback Theatre, and Debate Theatre, offer unique approaches to engagement and empowerment. Overall, participatory theatre serves as a dynamic tool for promoting dialogue, social justice, and community empowerment. The report also presents several examples of how participatory theatre, in its various forms, has been utilized in Spain to work with older people and develop intergenerational activities and initiatives.

## *Results and conclusions*

In Finland, Slovenia, and Spain, participatory drama is widely utilized for various societal and therapeutic goals. Participatory drama methods are used to promote community engagement, support personal development, and address many social and psychological challenges across different age groups and demographics. Additionally, they provide opportunities for interaction, joyful experiences, and meaningful social connections, while also fostering societal inclusion and

mutual understanding. Participatory drama serves as a tool for community empowerment, raising awareness, and addressing social issues within diverse cultures and societies.

# Report on participatory theatre, drama and participatory methods in Finland, Slovenia and Spain

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## Finnish practice

In Finnish drama and theatre research, *participatory drama* refers to theatrical working methods that enable people to participate in the drama work / activities to explore a common theme through dramatic fiction. A wide range of dramatic working methods can be utilised in the drama work, such as improvisation, statue work, storytelling, or drama play. The purpose of these activities is to make the experiences, thoughts, and feelings of the participants visible. *In participatory drama, there are no separate spectators and performers, but the whole group participates in the joint work.* The aim of the drama work is to make people's world of experience visible and to offer numerous opportunities for learning and insight. (1.) Finnish researcher of drama, Ventola (2.) outlines the performance and process forms of participatory theatre. In participatory theatre, the term *conventions* are often used to describe the dramaturgical structure that supports the expression, exploration and sharing of experiences among participants.

The aim is to activate participants in a holistic process of body, feeling and thinking during the activity. In participatory theatre, the core elements of the theatre process are often described as people, space, and immersion while exploring a common topic. Experientiality and the physicality of action, storytelling, the use of metaphors and symbols, discussions, action, and reflection help the participants to delve deeper into the discussion of a common topic. The aesthetics of participatory theatre are not an escape from reality, but rather a return to reality. The working method provides a form for the collective examination of reality, i.e., various everyday phenomena, and thus enables the participants to become aware of and empower themselves in relation to their own life situation. This can mean various levels of new steps taken in terms of one's own or the community's well-being or quality of life.

Participatory theatre moves somewhere between traditional theatre and drama processes, and it is characterised by a sense of community, sociability, and communication. (3.) Participatory and applied drama or theatre are working methods that allow the participant to explore a predetermined theme from different perspectives. Thus, the person or group participating in this kind of group activity does not aim to complete the performance, but the starting point is to explore a common topic or theme with the help of a competent supervisor. The work often involves a fictional world or framework through which the topic can be explored together. (4.)



As a conclusion, participatory theatre can be found on at least three distinct levels or perspectives. It can be seen as a *social activity* because participatory art can support people's participation in democratic life in many ways by providing places for critical reflection to understand reality. Participatory theatre can also be viewed as a *pedagogical activity*. The theory of active learning is based on Socrates' thinking, where learning takes place through discussions and argumentation, and the learner himself plays an active role. The Socrates' process is a form of social and peer learning.

Participatory art and theatre run close to everyday reality, which is not always beautiful or good, often quite the opposite. Through participatory theatre, various themes that violate human values, such as racism or violence, can be explored. However, good can come true as an experience of participating in the process, and that experience can support one's own growth and thus educate. In addition to pedagogical activities, ethics are thus strongly emerging, and participatory theatre can serve as a space for practising the relationship with ethics and caring. The third level of participatory theatre is simply the level of *being and exploring life*. The activities provide a terrain – or space – for studying and have dialogue about phenomena. People seek contact with themselves, other people, and the environment in which they live. Participatory theatre offers a living, experimental laboratory for imagining, playing, discussing, and wondering. Thus, participatory theatre also invites adults to nurture the ability to imagine, play and emotional skills. (5.)

The Finnish drama and theatre tradition includes particularly enthusiastic *amateur theatre* activities, and people of all ages usually participate in these activities. People are interested in theatre because it offers opportunities for interaction, developing self-expression, finding dreams and personal strengths, and offers a meaningful way to spend free time. Theatre activities can also prevent social exclusion, and for the most vulnerable people, they can provide an important anchor in a safe community. It is estimated that there are 700–800 amateur theatres in Finland, all of which have dozens, even hundreds, of amateurs. In many small municipalities, amateur theatres are also an important part of the municipality's cultural offering. (6.)

Although these amateur theatres mainly produce traditional theatre in the form of ready-made scripts and theatre performances, the interaction between generations that is an essential part of the activities also forms an interesting angle for the Creation POP project. In his doctoral dissertation, Sinivuori (2002, 7.) studied the significance of amateur theatre for its creators. Practising theatre offered experiences of success and learning. Success, in turn, strengthens self-esteem and thus makes people more mentally resilient. The theatre also provided material for processing subjective experiences and coping with them. The significance of the motives increases with age.

The working methods of participatory drama and theatre in Finland are associated with, for example: **Improvisational theatre, Playback Theatre, Theatre in Education, Process Drama and Sociodrama.**

In the table below, there are some interesting *intergenerational* participatory theatre practices from Finland.

Name of activity/ place of implementation	Content of activities	Objective of the action
<p><b>Memories of war</b></p> <p>Kokkola, Finland</p> <p>(Valo ja Salo 2010.)</p>	<p>Instructors of theatre expression travelled around the province to collect stories from people who had experienced wartime children or young people using the fairy tale method. Later, the memories were compiled into a book and a communal theatre performance was created based on them. The actors represented different generations from war veterans to primary school students.</p>	<p>Recording and sharing childhood and adolescent memories, preparing a communal and intergenerational theatre performance</p>
<p><b>Participatory drama workshops</b></p> <p>related to memories of adolescence for the older adults and older clients of the psychiatric ward</p> <p>Joensuu, Finland</p>	<p>The actor- director of theatrical expression told the group a story with familiar places, activities and topics – such as trips to the hayfield, barn, summer boat trip. The director sometimes empathised with the characters as he carried the story and the familiar rituals associated with it, and the group members also got roles in the events of the stories.</p>	<p>Reviving memories, sharing storytelling, participating in role-playing, strengthening the sense of community,</p>

<p><b>“Carnival of the Fairies”</b></p> <p><b>Drama workshop</b> designed and implemented by drama students for grandparents and grandchildren.</p> <p>Laurea, 2023</p> <p>Vantaa, Finland</p>	<p>In the workshop, grandparents and children were able to explore the carnival and help the carnival people in trouble, for example. Through bodily and emotional expression exercises and problem solving.</p>	<p>Shared fun, cooperation between grandparents and children, play, humour and strengthening problem-solving skills.</p> <p>For the students, planning and directing the workshop provided an opportunity to learn about the implementation of drama workshops and directing an intergenerational group.</p>
<p>Intergenerational</p> <p><b>Playback Theatre Workshop</b></p> <p><i>Stories of love</i></p> <p>Laurea, 2023</p> <p>Vantaa, Finland</p>	<p>Laurea's Playback theatre group, consisting of students, made visible on stage the stories of love of people over the age of 60 who participated in the workshop. As a part of Creation POP project.</p>	<p>Sharing stories, connecting with other people's experiences, strengthening cohesion and community.</p> <p>For the actors, the workshop provided an opportunity for intergenerational learning.</p>
<p>Intergenerational</p> <p><b>Playback Theatre Workshop</b></p> <p><i>Stories of overcoming life's challenges</i></p> <p>Laurea, 2023</p> <p>Vantaa</p> <p>(Testing Creation POP Methodology)</p>	<p>At the beginning of the workshop, functional, intergenerational encounters and exchanges of experiences were carried out, after which a story theatre group consisting of students made people's stories of survival visible on stage. As a part of Creation POP project.</p>	<p>Sharing stories, connecting with other people's experiences, strengthening cohesion and community.</p> <p>Strengthening resilience.</p> <p>For the actors, the workshop provided an opportunity for intergenerational learning.</p>

# Slovenian practice

## Lozem Kamishibai

Kamishibai (sl. *Kamišibaj*) is a special Japanese art form of storytelling that uses paintings on stage. Kamishibai can be used by both artists and educators, as it is a great didactic tool and an artistic challenge. The greatest benefit is to the audience, as they can enjoy the depictions and the storytelling. The Japanese say that the most important thing about kamishibai is the 'kyokan', the special connection between the audience and the performer, and the creation of a specific atmosphere which not only combines the different art forms into one, but also creates a special world of art and imagination, parallel to reality.

Igor Cvetko brought kamishibai to Slovenia in 2013 and its popularity has been growing ever since. The Slovenian Kamishibai Association (sl. Društvo KAMIŠIBAJ Slovenije) is a voluntary association of people who work in the field of art, education and therapy. Alongside the performances, they attend festivals, conduct seminars and have also made a filmed show to promote the art form. They perform plays not only for children, but also for adults and the older adults. They often find themselves in day centres for the older adults, retirement homes, cultural homes, festivals and they also perform for adults with special needs. Due to plenty of plays having a Slovenian origin, the older adults population might already be familiar with them, thus finding them more interesting. Not only are the older adults able to watch these plays, but they also have the ability to actively participate in their creation. Seniors have experienced many events and made memories that are worth passing down to younger generations and kamishibai is a great way to do it. They can draw pictures of a specific story from their life that they want to share and then perform it on stage in order to teach the younger generations and others about their history (*Kamišibaj*, n.d.).

Kamishibai in Slovenia:

- Društvo KAMIŠIBAJ Slovenije
- Ljubljana Puppet Theatre
- Zapik Theatre

Kamishibai in Slovenian literature:

- Vseslovenski kamišibaj. (2018). *Novi Medij*, 21(5), 23.
- Črnivec, T. (2018). Kamišibaj gledališče. *Didakta*, 26(197), 45–47. <http://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:doc-1MN3XF1Z>
- Kristan, M. (2017). Gledališče kamišibaj kot interesna dejavnost. *Didakta*, 26 [ 27](192), 10–12. <http://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:doc-6QT49OOK>
- Kermauner, A., Cvetko, J., & Engelsberger, J. (2018). Kamišibaj kot sredstvo izražanja za ljudi z motnjami v duševnem razvoju = Kamishibai and the development of expressive competences in persons with intellectual disability. In M. Čepeljnik (Ed.), *Umetnost kamišibaja: zbornik prispevkov* (pp. 98–113). Slovenski gledališki inštitut.

[http://www.slogi.si/upload/pageFiles/File/Kamisibaj%202018/Umetnost%20kamisibaja\\_The%20art%20of%20Kamishibai.pdf](http://www.slogi.si/upload/pageFiles/File/Kamisibaj%202018/Umetnost%20kamisibaja_The%20art%20of%20Kamishibai.pdf)

- Sitar, J. (2018). *Umetnost kamišibaja: priročnik za ustvarjanje* (1. izd.). Aristej.
- Tušar, M. (2019, May 28). Kamišibaj [Audio podcast episode]. In Oder. RTV SLO. <https://ars.rtv slo.si/podkast/oder/15104167/174617925>

## Improvisational theatre

Improvisational or improv theatre is a form of theatre where the play is unscripted and improvised by the performers. It's very spontaneous and shaped by the performers, the audience and the space and that is why it is so special – each performance is unique, even when featuring the same actors and audience members. The audience here is highly involved and can pose questions to the actors. The various techniques and methods that make it possible to create improvisational theatre performances have many uses beyond that of performance. Improvisational theatre develops: communication skills, group work, collaboration, storytelling, listening and observation skills, taking responsibility, and it can also raise awareness and help find solutions.

Theatre improvisation can also be used to address a wide range of social issues (e.g. a game of association about a particular issue, from reproductive and voting rights, to LGBTQ+ rights, climate change and more), and as a starting point for a broader discussion and offer an opportunity for participants to share different perspectives, connect and build trust.

This type of theatre is available and beneficial to everyone due to its flexibility and inclusion of different topics (Cafuta et al., 2022).

Improvisational theatres in Slovenia:

- Društvo IMPRO
- IGLU Theatre
- Ana Monro Theatre
- KUD Banda Ferdamana

Improvisational theatre in Slovenian literature:

- Bohinc, R. (2016). *Improvizacijsko gledališče v Sloveniji: diplomsko delo* [[R. Bohinc]]. <https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/lzpisGradiva.php?id=98877>
- Dimec Bogdanovski, M. (2008). Tri priložnosti impro gledališča. *Dialogi*, 44(7/8), 44–51
- Spolin, V. (1982). *Improvizacije za gledališče: improvizacijske vaje* (1. natis). Zveza kulturnih organizacij Slovenije.

## Psychodrama

Psychodrama is a well-established type of psychotherapy that has some similarities to improvisational theatre, as it allows participants to gain insight into their inner emotions through spontaneous role-play where they can resolve past frustrations and improve their relationships. This is not a theatre group, despite its inclusion of some of its elements, because it does not follow any script but is a total improvisation of what the main “actor” is feeling at that exact moment. Psychodrama allows its participants to let out frustration and repressed feelings – from past trauma, abandonment issues, extreme anger, sadness and despair, to happiness, laughter and playfulness, all experienced often by the older adults. A good thing about psychodrama is that it focuses not only on verbal communication but also on non-verbal communication, such as body movement, facial expressions, gestures, intonation, etc. It allows the participants to get into character and experience things more deeply than just through a regular conversation (*O psihodrami*, n.d.).

Psychodrama in Slovenia:

- Psihodrama
- Vladimir Milošević
- Tomi Janežič
- Slovensko društvo za psihodramo
- Psihodramski inštitut

Psychodrama in Slovenian literature:

- Moreno, J. L., & Moreno, Z. T. (2000). Skupine, njihova dinamika in psihodrama (A. Groterath & J. Ramovš, Eds.). Inštitut Antona Trstenjaka
- Milošević, V. (2018). Psihodrama: sprememba skozi akcijo. Primus.
- Pahole, M. (1999). Psihodrama kot metoda vzgoje odraslih: magistrska naloga. [M.Pahole].
- Žvelc, M., Možina, M., & Bohak, J. (Eds.). (2021). Psihoterapija (1. elektronska izd., pp. 1 spletni vir (1 datoteka PDF (IX, 607 ))) . IPSA. <https://www.ipsa.si/sl/izdelek/psihoterapija-2/>

## KOMI – method

The KOMI – method is the use of hand puppets when caring for people with Alzheimer’s or people with dementia and other mental and spastic disorders, including people in coma. The word KOMI is made of three words – communication, coma and comic and this is exactly what it aims for – mentally awakening and motivating older adults people with the help of puppets. The puppets improve the mood of the residents and staff, and improve communication between the person with dementia and the therapist or carer. Large hand puppets are ideal for 10-minute activation for people with dementia, preventing conditions such as sadness, loneliness and isolation. The method can also be learned by family members and implemented at home or in the care facility. The puppets are, of course, not a cure but a path to better understanding the patient and his world. The KOMI – method improves care in various ways: communication skills, motivation of the patient, 10-minute activation, offers validation, memory training, Alzheimer prevention, provides movement, speech

and occupational therapy, emotional access (the puppet as both a friend and an assistant), encourages humour, respect, appreciation and fun (OnisakA, 2023).

The KOMI – method in Slovenia:

- Ročne lutke (Aleksander Onišak s.p.)

## *Back to work*

Older adults are usually retired and do not have to work. Nevertheless, many pensioners possess the energy and desire work and contribute to society. Additionally, some may find themselves in need of extra income due to financial difficulties, motivating them to seek employment opportunities. That is why the Ljubljana Puppet Theatre decided to promote intergenerational collaboration and integration and welcomed the senior population to join the hostess ranks with open hands. The pensioners working there claimed that this is a great way of making new friends with students working there (and other pensioners as well), as they can learn from one another through listening. The students working there admit that they were sceptical at first, but now believe that having pensioners there is a great idea, as they are very professional, knowledgeable and have a positive impact on the kids. Both generations agreed that they can talk about different things and learn about new topics (Jovanovič, 2020).

Theatre-related organisations in Slovenia that have a “back to work” programme for the older adults:

- Ljubljana Puppet Theatre

## *Red Noses*

Slovenian part of the Red Noses Association regularly visits different nursing homes. They parade around the nursing homes, sing and dance alongside the residents or organize special performances. Even those individuals who cannot walk and are confined to their beds get to experience the joy, as the clowns create something unique for each one of them. They bring playfulness and joy to the residents who are, as a consequence, able to forget about their troubles for a while. In 2022, they also upgraded their programmes and now offer an “on-call clown” for the older adults. Here, clowns work independently and are available to residents and staff of various nursing homes. Each clown works in a particular home for a longer period of time in order to get to know its residents. The aim of this programme is to offer emotional support through humour and art (Rdeči noski, n.d.). Red noses programme has many benefits to the older adults:

- The joy and laughter that clown bring to the senior citizens increases their quality of life and wish to actively live their lives.
- The clowns have conversations with the citizens, ask about their lives and memories. Often, senior citizens are forgotten about and don't have much visitors, so this brings them comfort and a sense of belonging.
- Clowns also sing and dance together with the senior citizens, which sparks joy and covertly helps them remain mobile and agile (RED NOSES, n.d.).

## *Theatre group for the older adults Božekako*

Božekako is an amateur theatre group for the older adults that puts fun, entertainment and socialising at the forefront. They are a very inclusive group and are aware of the challenges of old age. One of their members has a brain injury and memory problems, while another has hearing problems and relies on reading lips. They accommodate this by having a prompter that helps them with their lines in case they need it. They perform their plays in various theatres, as well as visit secondary schools to share their work and create intergenerational connections (Mrevlje, 2022).

## *Glej, Starci*

The Glej Theatre has launched an innovative project called "Starci," (meaning "Old Men") which aims to bridge the gap between different generations. The two authors of the project, Tin Grabnar and Hana Vodeb, are of a younger generation, however, they are aware that aging is a universal experience and that older people's thoughts and opinions are often overlooked. That is why they thought it would be a great idea to interview older adults about their past memories. They would try to connect this snapshot of their life with other people – for example, an older woman, whose favourite memory was the birth of her child, was connected with a highly pregnant woman to have a conversation and exchange experience. The conversations were filmed and used in a live theatre performance, which varied in content depending on the participants involved. The project was met with enthusiasm from older individuals, who were eager to share their experiences and connect with younger generations. Tin said that one of the key objectives of the project is to empower an overheard generation that has been pushed into the background, to bring them to the forefront, to transfer life experiences and pass down knowledge. Perhaps the theatre is one of the last refuges where our hectic pace of life can calm down, if only for a moment (*Glej, Starci* 1.1., 2018).

## *Theatre of the oppressed*

Theatre of the oppressed aims to use theatre as a means to promote the emancipation of the individual and society. Drawing from the principles of theatre pedagogy, this type of theatre aims to develop self-awareness and a critical understanding of the world by simulating and reflecting on real-life situations. By doing so, it helps develop responsible individuals who are attuned to both personal and societal issues. Theatre of the oppressed puts the participant and their characteristics, needs and values at the forefront and their views actively shape the project's content, which is based on current issues among young people and in society at large. Here, every person is given a safe space to talk about topics that are not often highlighted (e.g. inequality, racism, discrimination). It uses theatre techniques that are adapted for non-actors and universal language of theatre in order to enable participation and interactivity.

The main goals of theatre of the oppressed are:

- Support for vulnerable individuals.
- Increasing individuals' confidence in their own abilities through active group participation.



- Empowering individuals' skills and giving them a voice.
- Psychosocial rehabilitation for vulnerable individuals and tackling their social exclusion.
- Engaging in a wide range of active leisure activities, learning social skills.
- Supporting participants in expanding their social network, learning mutual assistance and self-help.
- Breaking stereotypes (*Gledališče zatiranih*, n.d.).

Theatre of the oppressed in Slovenia:

- Zavod BOB,
- KUD Transformator

Theatre of the oppressed in Slovenian literature:

- Caserman, D., Dežman, I., Hrvatina, A., Ivačič, M., Lampič, K., Miklavčič, A., Opeka, U., & Sešek, K. (2014). *Gledališče zatiranih: opis teorij in metod skozi perspektivo socialnega dela*. Fakulteta za socialno delo.
- Alhady, H., Boal, J., Burger, J., Jurgele, K., Koritnik, P., Mlakar, N., Polajnar, B., Polajnar, B., Sešek, K., Vojevec, J. A., Weixler, E., Wrentschur, M., & Adamič, U. (Eds.). (2018). *Gledališče zatiranih na delu: gledališče zatiranih kot metoda za raziskovanje in povezovanje družbe: zbornik 1. konference gledališča zatiranih (Spletna izd.)*. Kulturno umetniško društvo Transformator. <http://www.dlib.si/details/URN:NBN:SI:doc-35BH8ZGN>
- Polajnar, B. (2011). *Gledališče zatiranih kot gledališče za družbene spremembe?: diplomsko delo* [[B. Polajnar]]. <https://repozitorij.uni-lj.si/IzpisGradiva.php?id=20040>

## Spanish practice

In Spain and in many Spanish-speaking countries, participatory theatre and, more generally, creative community processes are closely related to the theme of social intervention and transformation (López Marin, 2020 ).<sup>1</sup>

The literature often refers to Participatory Theatre as a tool for research and social intervention, due to its capacity to involve people and social groups from the broadest spectrum, generating

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<sup>1</sup> López Marin, T. I. (2020). *Teatro social como herramienta de participación ciudadana en el municipio de Murcia* [Article in RES, Revista de Educación Social]. [Social theatre as a tool for citizen participation in the municipality of Murcia - RES. Journal of Social Education](#)RES. Journal of Social Education (eduso.net)

spaces for expression and confrontation, hence triggering processes of awareness raising, popular democracy, community dynamisation and social transformation (Alejandra, 2021).<sup>2</sup>

In this sense, the concept of Participatory Theatre is framed within two larger and more generic types of theatre: Social Theatre, i.e. all theatre that tries to address in its creation and representation social issues related, many times, to current events and marginalised groups, and Applied Theatre, i.e. all theatre that is generated, practised and used with other purposes than those of entertainment or the simple classical representation, and that aims to "contribute to the development of people or groups, whose life situation requires it because they are located in an environment of segregation, oppression or vulnerability, to name a few" (González Aguirre, 2016, p. 11).<sup>3</sup>

In Participatory Theatre, in its development and in its principles, we can also recognise the features of other types of theatre movements that at various historical moments have manifested themselves, transforming the idea of conventional theatre (González Aguirre, 2016).<sup>4</sup> Here are some of the most relevant examples:

- Educational Theatre: theatre seen and practised as an educational medium as to develop processes of awareness, accompaniment, expression and empowerment of different target groups.
- Popular theatre: theatrical forms and products that are developed on the basis of themes and modes of stage construction that obey sectors of the public that are often silenced or not taken into account after the imposition of the dominant classes.
- Community theatre: Theatrical experiences that are born and generated from the initiative of the people themselves (García, n. d.)<sup>5</sup>, groups of people who feel and respond to the need to "meet, group and communicate through theatre". (Bidegain, 2011 p. 1)<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Alejandra, B. A. (2021, 15 June). *El teatro participativo como herramienta pedagógica de sensibilización para las personas con discapacidad intelectual*. <https://riunet.upv.es/handle/10251/43934>

<sup>3</sup> González Aguirre, A. (2016). *Participatory Theatre: A social research technique for strategic design*. Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México <https://ri.ibero.mx/bitstream/handle/ibero/358/016178s.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*

<sup>5</sup> García, N. M. M. (n. d.). *El teatro, sus voces y experiencias para la participación comunitaria*. <http://portal.amelica.org/ameli/jatsRepo/258/2582533002/html/index.html#:~:text=El%20teatro%20comunitario%20es%20aque,al%20hecho%20de%20de%20ser%20comunidad>.

<sup>6</sup> Bidegain, M. (2011): What is Community Theatre: Categories for the definition of the cultural phenomenon. *Anagnósis- Revista de investigación teatral*, Number 3, B-16254-2011 ISSN 2013-6986.

[http://www.anagnosis.es/pdfs/Testimonio-teatro\\_comunitario.pdf](http://www.anagnosis.es/pdfs/Testimonio-teatro_comunitario.pdf)

These theatrical forms are framed in the process by which from the first decades of the twentieth century the dramatic art in the West moved away from being a cathartic or mediatic instrument of elitarianism and expression of the ruling class in order to take role and responsibility as "active agent towards the search for the causes and effects of social conflicts" (Muñoz Bellerin, M., Cordero Ramos, N.,2017 p. 45<sup>7</sup> )

Beyond the mixture of its components, Participatory Theatre, in the Spanish-speaking world, is distinguished from other types of Social Theatre by the following:

*"The direct reference to the active collaboration between all members of the group to be investigated, at different levels. The spectators will leave aside a passive role to become fully involved in what happens in the staging, the way in which it should be represented and the possible resolutions to conflicts"(González Aguirre, 2016, p. 11).<sup>8</sup>*

This theatrical form then emphasises the participation of non-professionals in theatre in the performance experience, encompassing in one term theatrical practices that actively involve audience or community members in the creation and performance of a play.

Aimed at, or developed by, specific target groups and social contexts often associated with marginalisation, discrimination and fragility, "participatory theatre productions offer communities the opportunity to actively reflect together, using the stage as a place to explore new ways of living and express new visions of the future"(Slachmuisjlder et al., n.d., 2012, p. 3).<sup>9</sup>

Participatory theatre can involve the participation of people during the creative process and/or a direct interaction between actors and audience during the performance of the play, often based on a real problem or social conflict. In this second case, from the debate generated in the theatre, the audience is called upon to participate with opinions, suggestions or directly in the

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<sup>7</sup> Muñoz Bellerin, Manuel and Cordero Ramos, Nuria (2017). Collective theatrical creation. Method of social action and resistance with the collective of homeless people in Seville, Spain. Estudios Políticos (Universidad de Antioquia), 50, pp. 42-61. DOI: 10.17533/udea.espo.n50a03 <https://revistas.udea.edu.co/index.php/estudiospoliticos/article/view/25975/20784409>

<sup>8</sup> González Aguirre, A. (2016). *Participatory Theatre: A social research technique for strategic design*. Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México <https://ri.iberro.mx/bitstream/handle/iberro/358/016178s.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>9</sup> Slachmuisjlder, L., Search for Common Ground, Lokole Centre, USAID, Sida, UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency, & DFID: Department of International Development. (n. d.). Participatory Theatre for Conflict Transformation : Training Manual. In *ConnexUs*. Retrieved 13 September 2012, from <https://cnxus.org/es/resource/participatory-theatre-for-conflict-transformation-training-manual/>

performance as to adapt, change or correct a situation, an attitude or a behaviour exhibited during the show (Slachmuis et al., n. F., 2012 ).<sup>10</sup>

In this type of performance, the theme and the plot of the play are closely related to the target group involved and to the social conflicts that the people in that group face. The target groups can be very diverse and more or less defined, being groups of people who relate to each other and to society and who can intersect, overlap, have more or less social privileges and interact on the basis of these.

The following are different types of Participatory Theatre practised in Spain that differ mainly in the time, manner and purpose in which the interaction and participation of non-professionals takes place:

## *Collective Theatre Creation (CCT)*

It is one of the most relevant examples of the instrumentalisation of theatre in social processes. CCT is a very broad term that encompasses many stage experiences that involve non-professionals and people with fewer opportunities in the creation and production of a theatrical product and which are characterised by the union of cooperative creative methodologies with socio-political elements. This theatrical practice has its roots in the Commedia dell'Arte of the Italian Renaissance, but develops in its own way from the experiences made in the 1940s by the English director Joanne Littlewood, who, in post-war London, stimulated creative processes and created plays together with people with fewer opportunities. Between the 1960s and 1970s in Latin America, theatre and collective creation became tools of popular resistance in the socio-cultural contexts of different countries. Among many others, it is worth mentioning the following: Grupo Teatro Escambray in Cuba, Libre Teatro Libre in Argentina, Teatro Experimental de Cali (TEC) and La Candelaria in Colombia, and Augusto Boal's Teatro del Oprimido in Brazil (Muñoz-Bellerin, 2017)<sup>11</sup>.

## *Theatre of the Oppressed (TO)*

Developed in the 1970s by the Brazilian playwright Augusto Boal, and based on the epistemology of Paulo Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, TO consists of "a theoretical formulation and an aesthetic method, which brings together a system of physical exercises, games and theatrical techniques designed with the aim of making theatrical language a liberating tool and a struggle to transform situations of social injustice that place certain groups in a disadvantaged position,(...) with respect

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<sup>10</sup> Slachmuis, L., Search for Common Ground, Lokole Centre, USAID, Sida, UNHCR: The UN Refugee Agency, & DFID: Department of International Development. (n. d.). Participatory Theatre for Conflict Transformation : Training Manual. In *ConnexUs*. Retrieved 13 September 2012, from <https://cnxus.org/es/resource/participatory-theatre-for-conflict-transformation-training-manual/>

<sup>11</sup> Muñoz-Bellerin, M. (2017). *The theatrical collective creation. Method of social action and resistance with the collective of homeless people in Seville, Spain.* <https://www.redalyc.org/journal/164/16449788003/html/>

to others" (Lladó Enseñat, 2017, p. 11).<sup>12</sup>

The participatory power of Theatre of the Oppressed is based on Boal's idea that "all human beings are actors, because they act, and spectators, because they observe. We are all spect-actors"(Boal, 2001, p. 19).<sup>13</sup> In this sense, the aim is to transform the spectator into an active subject, giving him or her the power to participate, express an opinion and change the situation of injustice and oppression represented on stage. By involving the audience in a collective rehearsal of emancipation, theatre becomes capable of encouraging debate in the auditorium about the abuses perpetrated and perpetuated in society and of triggering processes of reflection and democratic and popular action for the participants in the theatrical event.

Not only the premiere of plays, but also the creative process that leads to their creation is, within Theatre of the Oppressed, a participatory practice aimed at empowering and acquiring social awareness. Through games and exercises, participants are invited to make their conflicts and experiences explicit, by sharing and analysing them. The collectivisation of individual problems, and subsequent extrapolation to a group story, makes possible to look for collective alternatives to situations that are often difficult to solve from an individual perspective (Fernández-Aballí Altamirano, 2014 ).<sup>14</sup>

Theatre of the Oppressed consists of several methodologies: Image Theatre, Forum Theatre, Legislative Theatre, The Rainbow of Desire, Invisible Theatre and Journalistic Theatre (Gonzáles Aguirre, 2016 ).<sup>15</sup>

- **Image Theatre:** the actors and actresses on stage generate collective images with their own bodies in which a conflict or social problem is represented. The spectators participate directly, analysing the image and its content with the support of the facilitator (Curinga or Joker) and looking for alternatives to what is represented. The audience, on its side, can

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<sup>12</sup> Lladó Enseñat, A. (2017). *El Teatro del Oprimido como herramienta de intervención social - Aproximación teórica y propuesta práctica* -. University of the Balearic Islands. [https://dspace.uib.es/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11201/3932/Llado\\_Ensenat\\_Ana.pdf?sequence=1#:~:text=El%20Teatro%20de%20los%20y,2009%2C%20Rio%20de%20Janeiro](https://dspace.uib.es/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11201/3932/Llado_Ensenat_Ana.pdf?sequence=1#:~:text=El%20Teatro%20de%20los%20y,2009%2C%20Rio%20de%20Janeiro).

<sup>13</sup> Boal, A. (2001). *Games for actors and non-actors*. ALBA EDITORIAL, S.I.U. <http://programadecapacitacion.sociales.uba.ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2019/02/Juegos-Para-Actores-y-No-Actores-AUGUSTO-BOAL.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Fernández-Aballí Altamirano, A. (2014). In search of horizontality. "Art D Kambi" project. *IC - Scientific Journal of Information and Communication*. [https://ipena44.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/fernandez\\_aballi\\_selecta.pdf](https://ipena44.files.wordpress.com/2014/12/fernandez_aballi_selecta.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Gonzáles Aguirre, A. (2016). *Participatory Theatre: A social research technique for strategic design*. Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México <https://ri.ibero.mx/bitstream/handle/ibero/358/016178s.pdf?sequence=1>

propose modifications, shape the image or enter into it, creating with their bodies new statues that can add or change the meaning(Boal, 2001 ).<sup>16</sup>

- **Forum Theatre:** in this methodology of the Theatre of the Oppressed, a group of actors and actresses perform a play on stage in which a social conflict is represented. At the climax, the play stops and the facilitator (Curinga or Joker) opens the debate in the room with questions and reflections that stimulate the audience to analyse and give their opinion on what has been represented (Boal, 2001).<sup>17</sup> In the search for possible alternatives to resolve the conflict by freeing themselves from oppression, the audience is invited not only to express their ideas but also to come on stage, substitute one of the characters and put their suggestions and idea into practice by improvising. This methodology has its roots in what Boal had been experimenting with in the early 1970s in Peru, which he called Simultaneous Dramaturgy:

*"The play would run until the moment of crisis, until the moment when the protagonist had to find a solution. Then we would stop the play and ask the audience what to do. Each one made a suggestion, and on stage, the actors improvised them one after the other until they tried them all out" (Boal, 2004, p. 15).<sup>18</sup>*

- **Invisible Theatre:** This is a particular form of Forum Theatre in which the play is performed in unconventional public spaces (street, bus, school playground, underground station, bar, etc.) without the spectators being aware at any time that it is a theatrical performance. In this way, the audience has the feeling of being in front of a real case of oppression or the natural expression of a social conflict and interacts spontaneously with the actors and actresses on stage. Normally, these are very small, quick and studied plays to contain the risks of a performance that mimics reality (Boal, 1980).<sup>19</sup> That is why in this methodology we speak more of a theatrical intervention than of a performance.

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<sup>16</sup> Boal, A. (2001). *Games for actors and non-actors*. ALBA EDITORIAL, S.I.U. <http://programadecapacitacion.sociales.uba.ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2019/02/Juegos-Para-Actores-y-No-Actores-AUGUSTO-BOAL.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> Boal, A. (2001). *Games for actors and non-actors*. ALBA EDITORIAL, S.I.U. <http://programadecapacitacion.sociales.uba.ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/95/2019/02/Juegos-Para-Actores-y-No-Actores-AUGUSTO-BOAL.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> Boal, A. (2004). *El arco iris del deseo : Del teatro experimenta l a la terapia*. ALBA EDITORIAL, s.l.u. <https://autogestionycooperativas.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/boal-augusto-el-arcoiris-del-deseo-1990.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Boal , A. (1980). *Theatre of the oppressed: Theory and practice*. Editorial Nueva Imagen, S.A. <https://arditiesp.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/boal-augusto-teatro-del-oprimido.pdf>

- **Newspaper Theatre:** In this methodology, news or any other communicative material from the mass media are used for the staging of a Theatre of the Oppressed play (González Aguirre, 2016).<sup>20</sup>
- **Legislative Theatre:** It is a methodology inspired by Forum Theatre to generate debates in which citizens are actively and directly introduced into the process of law-making and political decision-making. In this sense, the forum generated by the play seeks to promote the analysis of reality, the proposal of alternatives and possible political solutions to social conflict and their formalisation in the form of proposed laws that can be put into practice by the institutions. The spectator not only becomes a spect-actor but also the true owner of his or her political and social power in a process of direct democracy (Motos T., 2010).<sup>21</sup>

*"(...)Legislative Theatre, in which the citizen makes the law through the legislator. The legislator would not be the person who makes the law, but the person through whom the law is made, by the citizens, naturally!" (Motos T. , 2009, p. 20).<sup>22</sup>*

- **Rainbow of Desire:** This is the methodology of the Theatre of the Oppressed, which is dedicated to generating a change, an internal transformation in people, trying to free them from invisible oppressions that are not found outside but inside them. Theatre is used here as a therapeutic tool capable of putting the subject in dialogue with the parts of his being, the conflicts or judgements that he carries introjected, due to his personal formation, the problems of his life, but also the social context in which he lives and the preconceptions and value systems of each society (Boal, 2004<sup>23</sup>). (Boal, 2004).

Because of its therapeutic and social analysis character, Theatre of the Oppressed has much in common with Psychodrama and Sociodrama (Castillo & Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2013).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> González Aguirre, A. (2016). *Participatory Theatre: A social research technique for strategic design*. Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México <https://ri.ibero.mx/bitstream/handle/ibero/358/016178s.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>21</sup> Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, University of Valencia. IACAT Group, & Motos, T. (2010). Building citizenship creatively: El Teatro Legislativo de Augusto Boal. (Article published in *Ñaque. Teatro Expresión Educación*. Núm. 61, December 2009- February 2010, p. 18-26.

<sup>22</sup> BARAÚNA, T. and MOTOS, T. (2009). De Freire a Boal: Pedagogía del Oprimido- Teatro del Oprimido, Ciudad Real: Ñaque, chapters 4,6,7 and 8.

<sup>23</sup> Boal, A. (2004). *El arco iris del deseo : Del teatro experimenta l a la terapia*. ALBA EDITORIAL, s.l.u. <https://autogestionycooperativas.files.wordpress.com/2014/03/boal-augusto-el-arcoiris-del-deseo-1990.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Castillo, Beliza (2013) "Psicodrama, Sociodrama y Teatro del Oprimido de Augusto Boal: Analogías y Diferencias," Teatro: Revista de Estudios Culturales / A Journal of Cultural Studies: Número 26, pp. 117-139. <https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1315&context=teatro>

## Psychodrama and Sociodrama

The creation of psychodrama and sociodrama is attributed to the Romanian psychiatrist J.L. Moreno, active since the 1920s, first in Vienna and then in the United States of America (Ortega, 2023).<sup>25</sup>

The term Psychodrama refers to a method that combines theatre and psychology to explore the psychic world through theatrical action. Nowadays, Psychodrama is identified as a group therapy, in which an actor-patient can act out, and thus relive and overcome traumatic events in his or her life, as well as dreams, fantasies or thoughts. This process is made possible by the other members of the group (auxiliary egos) who, by improvising according to the director's instructions, take on the role of the various characters involved in the scene and act it out. At the end of the performance, the other participants who have observed the scene offer their own reflections and points of view to the director, expressing what they have perceived in the scene or what they found most significant (Cavaliere, 2016).<sup>26</sup>

Sociodrama is a particular declination of psychodrama that aims to explore not only the psychological dimension of the participants, but also the complex of contradictions, values and social and cultural influences that interact with the individual in his or her development and existence.

Sociodrama is therefore best suited to work with large groups and to address and analyse crucial issues in a community (gender, generational or racial conflicts, prejudices towards certain categories such as prisoners, the mentally ill, etc). The protagonist of sociodrama is not an individual (actor-patient) but the group itself as a representative of a social collective. Therefore, the focus shifts from the individual and his or her internal processes to the analysis of social roles and the way they are introjected into the culture and psyche of the people (Castillo & Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2013).<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ortega, C. (2023). Sociodrama: What it is, what it is for and how it is carried out. *QuestionPro*. <https://www.questionpro.com/blog/es/sociodrama/>

<sup>26</sup> Cavaliere, D. R. (2016, 26 August). *PSYCHODRAMMA E SOCIODRAMMA*. MALDAMORE. <http://www.maldamore.it/psicodramma-e-sociodramma/>

<sup>27</sup> Castillo, Beliza (2013) "Psicodrama, Sociodrama y Teatro del Oprimido de Augusto Boal: Analogías y Diferencias," *Teatro: Revista de Estudios Culturales / A Journal of Cultural Studies*: Número 26, pp. 117-139. <https://digitalcommons.conncoll.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1315&context=teatro>



## Playback Theatre

Playback Theatre was born in the 1970s in the United States, created by Jo Salas and Jonathan Fox from experimentations with Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed, Moreno's Psychodrama and oral traditions of indigenous cultures (González Aguirre, 2016).<sup>28</sup>

This is an original form of theatre without a previous text, improvised, in which the audience first chooses a theme that will guide the session (e.g. "fear", "dreams", "family" etc.) and then a conductor invites one at a time the volunteer spectators (the narrators) to sit on a chair on the stage and tell a story, fantasy, memory or personal conflict related to the chosen theme. A team of 4 or 5 professional actors and actresses and at least one musician, supported by the conductor's instructions, perform the narrator's story in a symbolic and impressionistic way, giving the narrator and the audience an interpretation of their experience. At the end of this short play, the narrator has the possibility to comment on what he/she liked or what he/she would like to change, inviting the actors and actresses to take up the whole scene or part of it in a different way, changing some details or emphasising some aspects. Once the narrator is satisfied, he/she returns to his/her place and the process is repeated with another person from the audience (Motos & Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, University of Valencia, 2015).<sup>29</sup>

Like Theatre of the Oppressed or psychodrama, this type of theatre, which is very effective in dealing with traumatic or difficult experiences as well as happy or funny events, found application in different non-conventional contexts linked to education, training, didactics, rehabilitation.

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*"Well, PBT is performed in many different contexts: in social service institutions, in adult education, in continuing education in corporations, in psychiatric institutions. Anywhere and everywhere: from educational centres to prisons, from hospitals to training rooms in companies, from convention and congress halls to alternative spaces.*

*(...) It is currently gaining increasing importance in socio-educational institutions, schools and universities". (Motos & Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, Universitat de València, 2015, p 125)<sup>30</sup>*

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<sup>28</sup> González Aguirre, A. (2016). *Participatory Theatre: A social research technique for strategic design*. Universidad Iberoamericana de Ciudad de México <https://ri.iberomx/bitstream/handle/iberomx/358/016178s.pdf?sequence=1>

<sup>29</sup> Motos, T. & Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, University of Valencia (2015). Playback theatre: Community building, education and psychotherapy. *Anagnórisis. Revista de investigación teatral*, 11, ISSN: 2013-6986. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=7324635>

<sup>30</sup> Motos, T. & Institute of Creativity and Educational Innovations, University of Valencia (2015). Playback theatre: Community building, education and psychotherapy. *Anagnórisis. Revista de investigación teatral*, 11, ISSN: 2013-6986. <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=7324635>

## Debate Theatre

Like others, this theatrical methodology, devised at the turn of the millennium by Moyser Aguiar, started from Moreno's Psychodrama and then took its own path (da Silva Freitas et al., 2019)<sup>31</sup>

In this type of theatre, a director begins by energising the group of spectators with the aim of facilitating a debate and the exchange of ideas and experiences around a pre-established theme or one chosen by the audience itself. In the first phase, while the debate is taking place, a group of actors and actresses interpret with dramatic actions the debated content and in this way invite the audience to transfer in a theatrical way what is being verbalised. In other words, the actors act as mirrors, reflecting with scenes, sounds, images or movements the contents and feelings that emerge from the audience. At the invitation of the director, the spectators express their opinions and feelings more and more expressively until they begin to participate directly in the scenes together with the actors and actresses. Finally, once the scenic debate has been promoted, the group of actors leaves the stage and the audience continues autonomously acting out the debate in a theatrical and analogue way, until they find a shared ending (da Silva Freitas et al., 2019).<sup>32</sup>

## Experiences of intergenerational Participatory Theatre and working with older people

Over the years, the aforementioned methodologies have found application in a wide variety of social contexts, including those related to the elderly. Their enormous potential for involvement, awareness-raising, exchange and socialisation make the theatrical forms listed above particularly effective when it comes to implementing educational, rehabilitation or empowerment processes with older people. In Spain alone, it is possible to find many examples of how participatory theatre in its different forms has been used to work with older people or to develop intergenerational activities and proposals. We report below a few examples from among the many available.

## Art Salut Intergenerational

This is an intergenerational participatory theatre project promoted by Plaudite Teatre and different primary care and educational centres around Barcelona since 2016 (*Teatre Intergeneracional*).

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<sup>31</sup> da Silva Freitas, A., Lima de Medeiros, M., & Nunes Barreto, V. (2019). Theatre-debate: A modality of spontaneous theatre. *La Hoja de Psicodrama. Journal of the Spanish Psychodrama Association*. <http://lahojadepsicodrama.es/teatro-debate-una-modalidad-de-teatro-espontaneo/>

<sup>32</sup> da Silva Freitas, A., Lima de Medeiros, M., & Nunes Barreto, V. (2019). Theatre-debate: A modality of spontaneous theatre. *La Hoja de Psicodrama. Journal of the Spanish Psychodrama Association*. <http://lahojadepsicodrama.es/teatro-debate-una-modalidad-de-teatro-espontaneo/>

2023).<sup>33</sup>The aim of the programme is to promote social cohesion and individual empowerment, combat loneliness and isolation between groups of very different ages and generate intergenerational coexistence experiences by connecting teenagers and older people in the area through the Performing Arts("The "Intergenerational Art Salut Intergenerational" programme is back, 2023).<sup>34</sup>

## *Sobre la belles*

"Sobre la bellesa" is a participatory theatre show premiered in Valencia on 3 and 4 December 2022 at the Teatre El Musical in Valencia by a group of eight people of older age(Culturplaza, 2022).<sup>35</sup>The play was the result of a month-long workshop in which 65-year-old people met to act, reflect and research together on the concepts of time,value of life and movement. The theatrical piece was born from the desire to give visibility to the bodies of older people and their capacity to store memory and tell stories. At the end of the performance, an intergenerational Celebration Jam was organised, where young and old participated in an experimental urban dance proposal and in a virtual reality metagraffiti workshop, with the aim of promoting interaction between generations. The initiative was promoted by the company Societat Doctor Alonso, which investigates the interactions between movement, poetry and society(*Societat - Societat doctor Alonso*, n. d.).<sup>36</sup>

## *PI(È)CE // Intergenerational project of stage creation (Raval)*

PI(È)CE is a project of intergenerational and intercultural stage creation with a social character that is carried out in the Raval and Poble Sec neighbourhoods of Barcelona. Every year since 2011, the project proposes an eight-month process, during school hours in various institutes and artistic spaces in the city, aimed at students and young people who meet to co-create with a group of older people. Through words and dance, through the encounter between people of different ages, origins and languages, a process of collective creation is carried out. The resulting work is premiered in

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<sup>33</sup> *Intergenerational Theatre. Ins. Jaume Botey i usuàries del CAP Amadeu Torner* (2023, 2 January). [Video]. L'Hdigital.cat. [https://lhdigital.cat/web/digital-h/televisio/veure-video/-/journal\\_content/56\\_INSTANCE\\_ZrP3/11023/15132780](https://lhdigital.cat/web/digital-h/televisio/veure-video/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_ZrP3/11023/15132780)

<sup>34</sup> Torna el programa "Art Salut Intergeneracional" per crear vincles entre gent gran i adolescents. (2023, 19 January). *L'Hdigital.cat*. [https://lhdigital.cat/web/digital-h/noticia/ciutat/-/journal\\_content/56\\_INSTANCE\\_43Th/11023/15129441](https://lhdigital.cat/web/digital-h/noticia/ciutat/-/journal_content/56_INSTANCE_43Th/11023/15129441)

<sup>35</sup> Culturplaza (2022, 25 November). Sobre la bellesa', a participative show about the passage of time with the over 65s. *Cultur Plaza*. <https://valenciaplaza.com/sobre-la-bellesa-un-espectaculo-participativo-sobre-el-paso-del-tiempo-con-mayores-de-65-anos>

<sup>36</sup> *Societat - Societat doctor Alonso*. (n. d.). <https://doctoralonso.org/es/societat/>

theatre by the whole group of young people and older people, who meet and teach other audiences and other points of view. (*PI(È)CE // Projecte intergeneracional de creació escènica*, 2021).<sup>37</sup>

Completed in 2022, the project has given life to the stable company PI(È)CE formed by some of the people who participated in the workshop in previous editions. The PI(È)CE project was carried out by the Tantarantana Theatre of Barcelona (Teatre Tantarantana, n. d.).<sup>38</sup>

## *Life Lived*

It is a participatory theatre project born during the pandemic, promoted by the Museo Universidad de Navarra and involving and starring the elderly (*La Vida Vivida*, 2021).<sup>39</sup>

In the framework of this initiative, a participatory theatre workshop was held in which no previous text was used. Instead, people over the age of 65, with no previous theatre experience, were invited to interact with an artistic and scientific team. It was through rehearsals and group interaction that a dramaturgical text was constructed and brought to life in the final play. The cast of the performance was made up exclusively of this group of people over the age of 65, who worked together for several weeks at the Museum. The objectives of this project were twofold: on the one hand, to create a show involving older people with no acting experience, based on the stories generated by their experiences during the pandemic; and, on the other hand, to develop a multidisciplinary collaborative project between a theatrical and humanistic team, made up of philosophers, doctors, psychologists and geriatricians.

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## *"Intervención Socioeducativa En Personas Mayores A Través Del Teatro"*

Proposal for socio-educational intervention with older people in a state of retirement, which seeks to work on active ageing, socialisation and lifelong learning through theatrical tools, social and participatory theatre by the University of Valladolid (Hernández Franco, 2017).<sup>40</sup> This study demonstrates the potential of the theatrical medium in the intervention with older people to stimulate their socialisation processes after retirement and to work on their personal and emotional

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<sup>37</sup> *PI(È)CE // Projecte intergeneracional de creació escènica* (2021, 18 April). WordPress.com. <https://constanzabrncic.net/piece-projecte-intergeneracional-de-creacio-escenica/comment-page-1/>

<sup>38</sup> Teatre Tantarantana (n. d.). *Programa comunitari - Teatre Tantarantana*. <https://tantarantana.com/creacio-i-complicitats/projecte-comunitari-fabrica-creacio/>

<sup>39</sup> *La Vida Vivida: Participatory Theatre Project* (2021, 24 April). [Press release]. [https://museo.unav.edu/documents/5318873/31880745/dossier\\_la\\_vida\\_vivida.pdf](https://museo.unav.edu/documents/5318873/31880745/dossier_la_vida_vivida.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> Hernández Franco, T. (2017). *Proposal for socio-educational intervention in the elderly through theatre*. University of Valladolid. <https://uvadoc.uva.es/bitstream/handle/10324/35915/TFG-G3524.pdf?sequence=1>

aspects, such as the representation of themselves, self-esteem, and other aspects that can lead to an improvement in their quality of life. In this way, the aim is to enable older people to be promoters of their own change, taking an active part in social activities and participating in the consolidation of the social fabric.

### *3 experiences of Sociodrama with older people in Seville*

In his article "Psychodrama and the Elderly: Influence of cognitive status on the implementation of psychodramatic techniques" psychologist Andrés Rivero Fernández presents his experience with the implementation of sociodrama activities with three groups of elderly people with different levels of cognitive impairment (Rivero Fernández, 2021).<sup>41</sup> The first one was carried out in a sheltered housing complex in Seville. There, Andres Riveiro Fernandes worked with people using group psychodrama techniques. The second experience was developed in a Day Care Unit in the province of Seville. The activities involved men and women, between 70 and 85 years old. The last intervention was with residents of a geriatric centre in Seville, with a diagnosis of elderly cognitive impairment, using sociodrama tools, both group and individual. The study demonstrates how, with adequate neurological and psychological knowledge, the sociodramatic method can be effectively applied to groups of older people, with or without a diagnosis of cognitive impairment (CIN).

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### *LEGACI: Legislative Theatre for Inclusive Heritage*

In the framework of the Legaci project, developed in Barcelona by La Xixa Teatre between 2021 and 2022, a study of the use of legislative theatre has been carried out with an intergenerational group on the theme of inclusive cultural heritage. Between September and November 2022 a legislative theatre workshop was developed in which people over 60 and younger people from different backgrounds met to reflect, act and generate a play on the theme of inclusive cultural heritage. The participatory theatre piece that resulted from this process was performed by the group on different occasions in the following months. (LEGACI Teatre Legislatiu, 2022).<sup>42</sup> The project also features a case study led by ISOR research team at Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB) on the benefits and potential of legislative and theatrical creative methods to stimulate the intergenerational dialogue and creativity of people regarding relevant social subjects.

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<sup>41</sup> Rivero Fernández, A. (2021). Psychodrama and the third age. *La Hoja de Psicodrama. Journal of the Spanish Psychodrama Association*. <http://lahojadepsicodrama.es/sicodrama-y-tercera-edad-72/>

<sup>42</sup> *Castig LEGACI! Teatre Legislatiu* | 16 Setembre. (s. f.). laxixateatre. <https://www.laxixateatre.org/legaci>

## *Noves Mirades*

In Barcelona, La Xixa Teatre, together with the Centre Civic Vil·la Urània and the District of Sarrià Sant Gervasi, has been organising for several years now the Intergenerational Workshop of Theatre of the Oppressed (Forum Theatre and Image Theatre) called Noves Mirades (Xixa, 2021).<sup>43</sup> This enriching experience counts every year with the participation of older people from the neighbourhood who, through games, exercises and dynamics of Participatory Theatre, research and create a Forum Theatre play on the theme of interculturality. The result is performed on stage in the following months, involving the audience in the reflection made by the workshop participants. In this way, older people strengthen their relationships and become promoters of social transformation themselves.

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<sup>43</sup>Xixa, L. (2021, 29 marzo). Inscripciones abiertas "Noves Mirades" Formación de Teatro Social. *laxixateatre*. <https://es.laxixateatre.org/single-post/inscripciones-abiertas-noves-mirades-formaci%C3%B3n-de-teatro-social>

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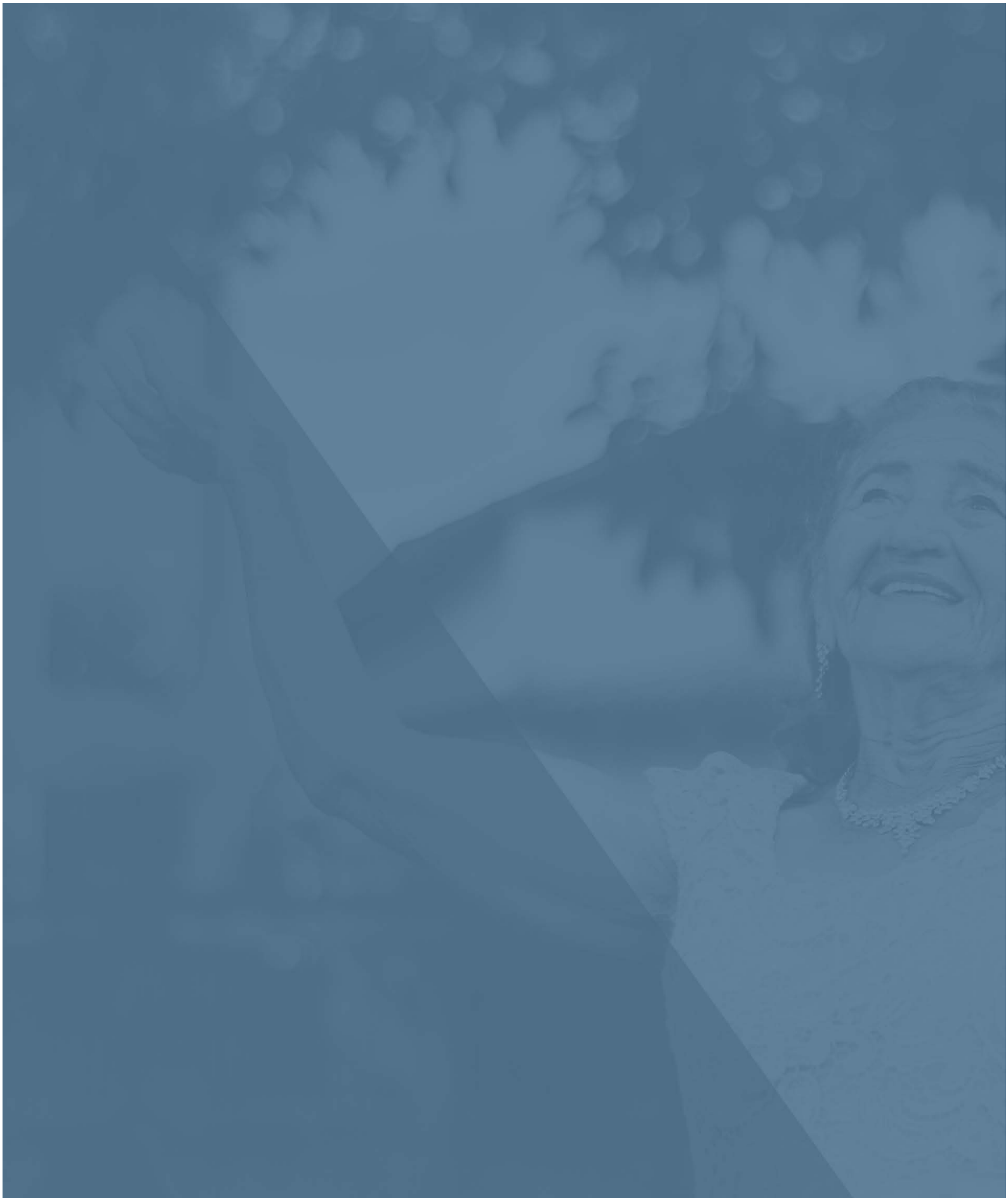
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Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



**Co-funded by  
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