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Untraditional Creative Partnerships – Seven Wonders of Arts and Culture in Education

The possible synergy between cultural experiences and education has been widely discussed in later years, both in a global context and more specifically among the member states and within the cultural sector in the European Union. The interest has been relatively intense in academic as well as in political circles (Bamford 2006, Lauret & Marie 2011, and Access to Culture Platform 2009).

Anne Bamford has stressed the creative potential in every child if we – the society – shape educational surroundings with the use of art. On the one hand that observation is in the theoretical and pedagogical tradition from Pestalozzi to Montessori and Reggio Emilia and there is nothing really strange about it. The perspective is the unbound potential in people which may be nursed, stimulated and cultivated by society. On the other hand, the focus on creativity and the political emphasis on entrepreneurship have had the effect that other interesting dimensions in the meeting between cultural experiences and education has not received as much attention. The problem seems to be the difficulties in understanding the complexity in successful encounters. We all like easy explanations and easy solutions but it is a misconception to expect anything easy when we want to understand what determines successful learning.

During a long time, the European Access to Culture Civil Society Platform has collected and studied examples where cultural experiences have been an important ingredient in learning processes (Access to Culture 2009). The research has demonstrated how the cultural sector is capable of producing effective and original pedagogical programmes based on the engagement with culture. The research has also shown that culture have the potential of creating learning activities which reach people in a true and real lifelong and life wide meaning: and how learning through culture offers learning of several key competences (Zipsane 2011).

In the following we will try to go a little further and offer an attempt to grasp what happens in some very creative meetings between culture and education. That is important because the creativeness which comes out of the meeting is what everybody involved always refer to when they think back. Out of a study of more than a hundred collected examples from all over Europe seven examples will be used to give a first understanding of what happens in the creative meetings between culture and education and to illustrate what creative partnerships are all about.

On the occasion of receiving the 1921 Nobel Prize in Stockholm Albert Einstein said: “*We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them*”. This line of thinking was articulated in the 1990s within international organizations such as OECD and EU where a vision was developed. It was about how challenges in modern society are created as side effects of routine day to day management and structure. The idea was that solutions should be created and shaped through new thinking and that such new thinking would probably not come from the organizations whose actions created the side effects, but by untraditional partnerships. This was particularly expressed by Jacques Delors in the report from the UNESCO Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century in relation to

lifelong learning policies (Delors 1996). The idea of untraditional partnerships connected to lifelong learning may be traced back within both UNESCO and OECD as a thinking of lifelong learning as political, economic and social considerations as such and indeed also to more current ideas about promoting creativity and innovation (Ouane 2009 and Bengtsson 2009).

With this study of extraordinary meetings between cultural experiences and education we meet **untraditional creative partnerships** and exactly that seems to be the key behind success. A closer look at the examples which we focus on in the following demonstrates how learning through art and culture is the fertilizer which Europe needs for development of key competences and inclusive citizenship.

1. Reminiscence and respectful citizenship

Since at least the 1970s there have been projects and different actions in many places throughout Europe and North America to socially activate elderly people with more or less developed symptoms of dementia. Many of the actions have used reminiscence methods as a way to stimulate awareness of the present through the reawakening of memories (Housden 2007).

Especially the work of Pam Schweitzer, who has worked on this in London since the 1980s, has been a major inspiration in many countries (Schweitzer 1993 & 1995). One interesting observation which can be made about many of the projects and activities is that they are mainly, if not always, found “inside” the system. They have been initiatives from staff in elderly care or nursing homes and have often been dependent on individual energy and devotion. Therefore the initiatives, even though have been relatively successful, have not often been long lasting. It is normally very difficult to create and sustain new thinking, new methods or new attitudes from the bottom of an organization, be it public or private.

On that background it is remarkable that since 2004, the open air museum in Århus, Denmark called “Den gamle By” – The Old Town –has taken upon itself this challenge in a creative partnership with the municipality. The basis for the activity at this open air museum is bringing two different initiatives together. On the one hand the programme focuses on holistic stimulation of all senses for the participants. On the other hand the staff is specially trained in creating space for personal expressions from the participants through listening and conversation (Lindberg 2008). In this open air museum the participants with symptoms of dementia are welcomed in full scale, three dimensional, authentic environments from the period between the 1920s and the 1940s.



© Den gamle By



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As the museum itself expresses this; the participants are exposed to a "bombardment" of impressions which stimulates all senses. They may listen to a speech of the king or a gymnastic exercise programme in the radio from the 1940s, they may listen to popular music and sing along, they look at pictures from when they were children or young, they smell or taste the bread, cookies, chocolate or coffee from their childhood or youth and they even help with some of the daily activities – washing, collecting fire wood or ironing clothes and the results are simply amazing (Borgström 2010).

The municipality has informed the museum of special needs of the participants, prior to arriving to the museum, and the programme of the day has been discussed and designed so that it fits the specific group and the museum staff has made all the necessary preparations. After the visit, the museum staff gets feed-back from the municipal staff about their experience of the visit and even how they have experienced the participants' behaviour and wellbeing afterwards. The programme itself has to be very well structured and four principles are followed in almost every detail. First of all the programme has "red treads". That could be the water which boils, the coffee beans which are ground in the old fashioned way by hand grinder, the coffee is made and the coffee drinking by the coffee table is the centre of the talk. Secondly, the programme has to be balanced between conversation, questions and reflexions together with the participants. Thirdly, it is important with continuity so that the participants experience the programme as well planned and with nothing and nobody left out. Fourthly, the participants should feel active and thereby important for the programme. As they say at the museum: That is when the participants creates and finds energy! (Lindberg 2008).

Tina Jeppesen and Dorthe Berntsen from Århus University have been looking into the effects of this particular museum reminiscence programme. They used a group of typical participants in the museum reminiscence programme and a control group who had not taken part of the reminiscence programme and gave both groups similar objects from household life to work with. Preliminary results suggest that reminiscence work has a significantly positive effect on the activation of autobiographical memories. Participants in the reminiscence programme at the museum have considerably more autobiographical memories than the control group. Furthermore, the properties of the activated memories tend to follow the same pattern among museum programme participants: that is, the mean value for specific episodic content, semantic content, time content, place content, and details are numerically lower in the reminiscence condition than in the condition of the control group. In addition, the mean value for nonspecific episodic content and spontaneous content are numerically higher in the reminiscence condition. (Jeppesen & Berntsen 2011)

Both at The Old Town and in other open air museums, who have copied the method, the same results have been seen. The participants get engaged, excited and in their own words they have a good time (Lindberg 2008 & Borgström 2011).

This programme has all the right qualities! The target group is among the weakest in society, the group is growing in numbers, and the attention it attracts from society increases. The results are threefold: First, There are indicators showing that the participants actually acquire better functioning. Secondly, they get a higher quality of life as they experience that somebody is interested in their life history and third, the tendency to violent behaviour decreases.

The programme was made possible because of an **untraditional creative partnership** between a municipality and an open air museum. In addition to the participants – the citizens

– the programme involves pedagogical staff from the museum and caretakers and nurses from the municipality. The collaboration not only includes delivering the programmes but also mutual courses for the municipal staff and the museum staff about reminiscence. This creates a common ground and common professional language for all people involved.

From the perspective of legal aims both municipality and museum are winners here. The municipality delivers a high quality product within the care for elders and the museum uses the history of society to retrieve personal memories.

2. High profile art school and community dynamics

The Guildhall School of Music & Drama is a well known and reputed school of music and drama in London founded in 1880. Students can pursue courses in Music, Opera, Drama and Technical Theatre Arts. However over the past twenty years, the Guildhall School of Music & Drama has been dedicated to widening access to music making without compromising its commitment to nurturing musical excellence. Through the use of the creative music workshop environment, people of all ages and experiences have been able to engage with inclusive live music making processes led by tutors and students from the Guildhall School.

These activities are called Guildhall Connect, are about making connections, putting people, organizations and cultures in touch with each other, thus enabling them to do better together what they would do less well alone. Through its local, national and international collaborations with schools, colleges, communities and arts organizations, Guildhall Connect has developed an artistic and educational identity that resonates with people from a wide range of backgrounds, ages and experience. The school proudly sees itself and presents itself as a *Centre for Creative and Professional Practice* (<http://www.gsmd.ac.uk/connect/>).

There are four key activity areas underpinning Guildhall Connect:

- ***Youth Music/Creative Partnerships*** with young people, teachers and parents in East London, as well as across the UK and overseas. This includes researching and evaluating inclusive creative music education practice and models of instrumental teaching and learning which encourage widespread access and participation.
- ***Arts and Community Development Project*** for Healthcare and Disability Centres, hospital patients, prisoners and young offenders, ‘third age’, parents and toddlers. These projects are also run in association with orchestral and opera education programmes and regional instrumental teaching services.
- ***MAP/making: Exploring New Landscapes in Music, Art and Performance*** in collaboration with the Royal College of Art and the London Contemporary Dance School. This project has been established to enable musicians, actors, dancers and visual artists to meet with confidence the opportunities offered by the growing market of cross-arts multi-media presentation. The processes undertaken aim to foster the development of cross-arts initiatives which are innovative and responsive to changes in arts practice.
- **Trans-cultural Collaboration and Research** is facilitating an international network of creative and performing artists who can meet, exchange skills and ideas, share resources as well as explore each other’s education methodologies. Regular

collaborations take place between staff and students at the Guildhall and performing artists from Africa, Central/South-East Asia and South America.



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The success of the initiative under the common brand Guildhall Connect is well known and widely documented. To point out one reason for the success is difficult, but it seems natural to see the broadness of activities and the clear strategy as important factors. Of course all the activities are conducted with professionalism and dedication to high quality. One would expect no less from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. It is in the meeting between this high profile organization and the engaged community that things happen.

On the one hand participants of all ages develop their artistic competences and on the other hand Guildhall staff is put under the pressure from working with people who may have less fortunate background for their participation and learning. The side effects of Guildhall Connect are not only collaborations between people who would probably otherwise never meet but also social cohesion, and a greater understanding and respect for differences. However, the real surprise for the school and the participants is about the boost of creativeness among the participants **and** the staff. Creativeness stimulated by being brought into the challenges of the meeting itself is the number one result of this **untraditional creative partnership**.



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3. Performing arts in action for community cohesion

In March 2003 Neil Beddow, Artistic Director of ACTA, was funded by Arts Council South West in United Kingdom to attend the International Festival of Community-based theatre in

Rotterdam. The visit resulted in a range of important international contacts being made between ACTA and other practitioners of participatory theatre world wide.

The most significant of these was a strong link made with Rotterdam Wijkstheater, the host and founder of the Festival. Following this link, Peter van den Hurk, the director of Wijkstheater was invited to England by ACTA in January 2004; to network, lead training sessions and discuss the comparisons and differences between the work of the two companies. Following this meeting, ACTA was invited to take a show to the next Festival of International Community-based theatre, taking place in March 2005. The Company felt that this was an exciting opportunity to develop the profile, and to present to an international audience, and an audience of peers, the participatory work taking place in the South West of England. It was decided to develop an original and relevant piece of theatre with a group of adults from disadvantaged areas of Bristol; to tour the show to disadvantaged areas of Bristol; and to take the play to the festival in Rotterdam in March 2005 (Beddow 2012).

The project's aims were to develop:

- a community tour of eight performances around disadvantaged areas of Bristol
- more intensive work with a small number of participants from these communities, developing advanced performance skills
- creating a new play which addressed issues relevant to the participants and the neighbourhoods they represented.
- Ways of building new audiences for theatre in Bristol

The project would also enable ACTA to add to the "quality debate" within the sector, by providing ACTA with an opportunity to develop a high-quality product, working with a small number of performers over a long period of time, both devising and rehearsal, and, crucially, perform (Beddow 2012).



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ACTA had been working in two areas of social housing in the City of Bristol, developing large-scale plays involving the whole community in Lawrence Weston (North Bristol), and creating small, issue-based plays with women in Hartcliffe (South Bristol). From these two projects ACTA invited six women, who had expressed an interest in developing performance skills further, and in making more theatre. They were all individuals with commitment, energy, ideas, and with a natural aptitude for performance. None of them had progressed in education beyond secondary school. All had grown up and still lived in the areas of social

housing, the council estates, they represented. None had any formal training in theatre or drama. Ages ranged from early 20's to mid 40's. The project was facilitated and directed by Neil Beddow, ACTA Artistic Director and Katie McKeogh, ACTA Drama Worker.

One of the participants, Karen, explained how that had left her feeling irritated by the patronising attitude of her old friend, who had moved away from her working class roots, but now seemed to be criticising Karen for staying behind. This story became the centre of a long discussion about identity, the importance of home, and particularly the dilemma of people growing up in disadvantaged areas - do you leave as soon as you can get away, or do you stay behind and try to make a difference. It was clear by the end of the discussion that they had found the theme for the play, and a short brainstorm created the title – *For Love Nor Money*.

Although all of the participants had worked with ACTA before and were used to the technique of devising theatre, it was the first time they had all worked together, and for some of them it was the first experience of working with ACTA Artistic Director (Beddow 2012). The women were encouraged to use their own experiences as a starting point for the development of the story. Taking the story Karen had told us, we wondered what the two friends were like at school in the late 1970's, and what were the characters of the other girls in the class? One session then focussed on a spontaneous improvisation set in the girls' toilets, with all the women playing 15 year olds. Each participant decided on a basic named character for the improvisation, with each character based on girls they had known at school – obsessed with boys, cigarettes, make-up, pop music, having small arguments and disagreements, laughing and making fun of each other and their teachers. Notes taken during improvisations formed the basis for a script, which kept, where possible, the actual words spoken in improvisation (Beddow 2012).

The play was performed in nine disadvantaged communities across Bristol, attracting an audience of 700 people, 90% of which did not previously attend theatre. The play was enthusiastically received by this new audience. Evaluation carried out during the tour demonstrated that 100% of audience members who filled in questionnaires:

- would like to see more theatre of this kind in their communities
- enjoyed the play because the issues covered were relevant to them
- rated it excellent

The impact and success of the *For Love Nor Money* project far exceeded ACTA's original expectations, demonstrating:

- the high quality achievable by participatory theatre
- the hidden, new audience for theatre in disadvantaged areas
- the demand for future work of this kind.

These findings led ACTA to change the structure of its programme of activities, and developed community touring as a significant strand of work, one that is directed at audience development, not solely participation. The project is of key importance because it enabled ACTA to:

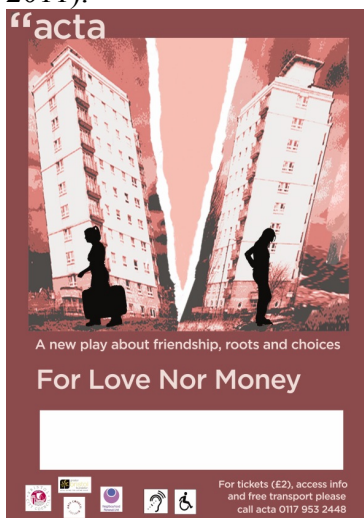
- Explore and examine key areas of a new model for the company, and evaluate its strategic importance for future development.
- develop participatory theatre to create a quality product
- develop a new audience for theatre in areas with little existing interest in theatre

- provide a ‘flagship’ group to advocate for participatory theatre
- further the debate around ‘quality’ - what criteria should be used to evaluate participatory/community-based
- raise the profile of the company on a local, national and international basis
- extend the company’s horizons, by discovering new colleagues, partners, and working methods

Participants’ evaluation has shown that involvement in the project:

- Raised self-value and self worth, with a positive impact on their whole lives
- Developed their creativity, and their confidence in being a creative person
- Gave them an identity beyond that of wife, mother, daughter – they feel proud to be a performer
- Made them more aware of social issues, both in UK and in other countries
- Gave them the most fun they’d ever had
- Gave them the opportunity to make new and lasting friendships
- Created within them a passion for community theatre, and an understanding of theatre as a whole
- Made them more interested in the arts, developed a sense of ownership and removed a fear of ‘being on the outside’
- Enabled them to learn more and understand about different subjects

The success of *For Love Nor Money* has led ACTA to develop Community Touring as a key part of the programme and a further three shows have been created and toured since 2005. The community engagement on a very local level combined with collaboration and inspiration from abroad was a fundamental pillar for the success. The process of *For Love Nor Money* demonstrates how natural it can be to shape an **untraditional creative partnership** (Zipsane 2011).



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4. Crime preventing art

The Hungarian Drama and Theatre in Education Association (HUDEA) together with The Hungarian National Crime Prevention Centre and Marczibányi Cultural Centre collaborated in the project Impulse camp during the period 2003-2005.

In the centre of the project was a complex drama camp for 11 to 16-year-olds. The main aim of this project was to offer students a learning experience based on progressive pedagogies and teaching methodology that formal school education rarely provides. During the five intense days spent together, the drama camp created a framework where the work of the drama teachers and theatre in education companies could have a major impact on how the children and young people relate to issues that are important for their age-group.

Materials were prepared for three separate groups of pupils aged 11-12, 13-14, and 15-16. Two groups of children, with no more than 45 people in each group, worked side by side with 5 – 6 drama teachers leading two sub-camps at the same site. The activities of these camps were run by the drama teachers, while the school teachers accompanying the pupils were responsible for the spare time.

The three programmes were developed by experts and based on previous work done by Round Table Theatre in Education Centre They were:

- The *Lord of the Flies* based on the novel by Golding – for 11-12-year-olds
- The *Agency for Human Problems – AHP* – for 13-14-year-olds
- *Cuckoo's Nest* based on the novel of Ken Kesey – for 15-16-year-olds

The programmes were based on theatre in education methodology, with drama teachers also working as actors and sharing parts of the narratives through theatre and then engaging the participants of the project. The pupils came from 30 different places in Hungary, from tiny villages to the capital city, which meant that they had very different social and economical backgrounds and experiences.

24 experienced drama teachers and actor-teachers working in theatre in education companies were invited to take part in the course preparing them to work in the project. These courses were also designed to make everyone familiar with all three programmes. So eventually all of the trainers worked in all three programmes, giving them further experience.



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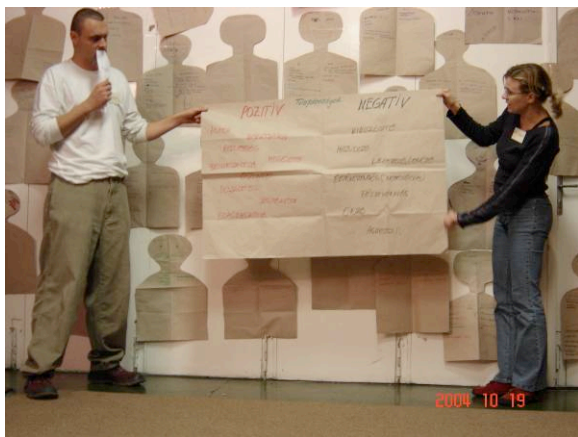
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The courses and the programme of the camp were designed by experts commissioned by the National Crime Prevention Centre and Marczibányi Cultural Centre, the professional work was led by Laszlo Kaposi.

The formal results of the project included:

- More than 1600 children participated in the project between 2003-2005
- *The International Conference on Dramatic Activities in Crime Prevention* closed the project
- A book was published with papers from the conference and material about the camps
- A DVD demonstrating the work done in the camps was published
- Research was conducted, examining the effects of the project, this was also published

The young participants in the programme had the chance to encounter issues which were close to their minds such as “easy solutions”, “needs here and now versus long term thinking” and petty crime. But as they were doing it in a theatrical drama form, the opportunities for testing arguments and for discussions were many and at the same time these opportunities involved no danger for the participants or anybody else. They also had access to adult guidance as well as from their peers at the same time (HUDEA 2007).



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The programme exploited two very simple and natural characteristics of the target group: First of all the sensitivity as the youngsters search for moral identity as a corner stone in the basis for their own identity and second the competitive edge in the age group. From the report it seems that the results were the same in all three age groups (HUDEA 2007).

The collaboration between the The Hungarian Drama and Theatre in Education Association, The Hungarian National Crime Prevention Centre and Marczibányi Cultural Centre on the Impulse camp project proved very successful. The participants achieved a broader image of art and culture as well as a mature perspective on crime. At the same time the organizing partners broadened their views and attitudes towards the potential in collaborating outside the box. What the participants expressed afterwards tends to focus on the uniqueness of the experience with the framework of the serious issues discussed during the time in the camp. The uniqueness was accomplished by the collaboration that formed the **untraditional creative partnership** in the first place.

5. Stimulating empathy for refugees through museum role play

In the beginning of 2003, Jamtli, the County Museum of Jämtland in Sweden applied for funding to the Foundation for the Culture of the Future, in order to implement a pedagogical project on the situation for refugees. In the application the aims were described in the following manner (The "Refugee" project 2004):

"Jamtli, the County Museum of Jämtland, hereby applies for funding for its project "Refugee" – a project on values and norms in relation to the refugee-question aimed at secondary school pupils. The project makes use of drama techniques in the learning process and is concerned with the formation of values and the needs of schools to deal with xenophobia among pupils. This project is incorporated into the strategic aim of the museum which involves relating a major part of its activities more fully to multiculturalism and the history of the 20th century. A key aim will be to discover the individuals covered by the categories of "asylum seeker", "immigrant" and "refugee".

By focusing on the situation for asylum seekers and by making young "Swedes" its target group, Jamtli wished to "influence their attitudes to immigrant issues in general". Jamtli had, thus, taken upon itself the task of shaping attitudes and opinions. The relatively new contribution in the case of this project was the openness with which Jamtli declared its intention of trying to influence attitudes and opinions. In particular, Jamtli believed that the use of emotional responses could influence the emotional attitude components of the schoolchildren participating in the project. It was expected that, in another context, this would provide a basis for a continued processing of the rational attitude components in these schoolchildren. However, from the beginning Jamtli was convinced that knowledge of the conditions under which refugees lived was essential and should be available to the extent that it could provide a foundation on which attitudes and opinions could be based. Through their exhibitions museums have a good deal of experience of acting as a learning environment, but to establish aims for a learning process and thereafter to decide on the form and methods of this process is a relatively new phenomenon. Another aspect has been the development of new forms – especially exhibitions- so that they operate better as learning aids, but seldom with the focus on the content aims of the learning process (Screven 2003).

Given its extensive experience with role-play, Jamtli wanted to let the target-group play at being asylum seekers and let them experience the various stages of a "normal asylum-seeker's" life. Jamtli got its inspiration from similar initiatives based on role-plays at the National Museum of Denmark in Copenhagen in the latter part of 2000 and at the Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm in the latter part of 2003 (Funch 2000, Hemmersam 2000, Ovesen 2000 and Davidsson 2003). The result of these initiatives in Copenhagen and Stockholm respectively will be addressed in the following. It is possible that these two museums were aware of and inspired by an almost identical initiative at Naxos Hallen, the cultural centre in Frankfurt in the beginning of 2000 (Staade 2004).

Jamtli carried out the project during the second half of 2004. Already in the application process, Jamtli wished to distance itself from the sources of inspiration, which is why it chose to call the project "Refugees" even in the local and regional marketing material, in preference to calling it "A Journey Like No Other", which was the title used in both Copenhagen and Stockholm. There are some major differences in Jamtli's version of the role-play compared to the others'. First, at Jamtli the role-play commenced with the participants finding themselves

at the border of the country in which they wished to seek asylum and they were confronted with a people smuggler. This was designed to minimise the risk that participants in the project actually had such experiences themselves and to indicate that they were “obvious” asylum seekers. Second, the participants at Jamtli were grouped so that there were three possible “refugee routes” – with three different types of smugglers; two who were raw and cynical while the third, in this context, could appear as relatively friendly and empathetic. In this way, conditions were created which would make the participants feel that they shared some experiences with other participants and had different experiences from others, as in real life. The third major difference in comparison was that in Copenhagen/Stockholm it was exclusively a case of performing indoors, whereas at Jamtli it was possible to utilise the great advantages of an open-air museum. This was used to some effect in connection with people smuggling and the case of transportation between the various authorities that were part of the role-play.

The role-play format had recently been used in a couple of other known contexts in connection with attempts to create a greater understanding of the asylum seeking process. In Diepholz in Northern Germany the “Labyrinth Fluchtweg” (The Refugee Labyrinth) has been created. This is an exhibition which places the visitors in the role of refugees and takes them in a coach through a number of display stations and the visitors/participants are given questions on tape to which they have to respond. In this case, the visitors pass through phases which provide general information on “typical” situations that make it necessary for people to flee their home country and discussions of concepts such as “Fortress Europe” (Labyrinth Fluchtweg 2000).



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The complete event at Jamtli was almost four hours long. To intensify the feeling of an experience it opened with a drama about people’s wartime experience in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s. Thereafter, the participants were allocated their roles and given time to acquaint themselves with their character. At the same time, the participants were given careful instruction in the methodology of role-play which emphasised in particular that they would get most out of the experience if they were active and tried to immerse themselves in their roles. It was also stressed that participation was voluntary and people could leave the role-play when they wished, particularly if they felt their emotional reactions to be too painful.

Everyone then sat together to see a slide show illustrating daily life, political uncertainty, trauma and people in flight from around the world. After this the role-play began.

The participants sit in a room that suddenly becomes dark. The people smugglers enter the room carrying pocket torches and call their respective groups of refugees together. The flight

has begun and to begin with it involves coping with the relatively harsh relations with the smugglers and other refugees whilst coming to and crossing the border. Following a number of harsh experiences the participants finally cross the border into “Svezia” where the police take care of the first part of the process.

The arrival at Transit is characterised by routine treatment. The asylum seeker undergo short interviews requiring basic information, their photos are taken, as are their hand- and fingerprints. From Transit, the asylum-seekers are transported to the asylum centre where the slow part of the asylum seekers’ existence begins in earnest. Waiting and idleness are alternated with interviews with the authorities and the attempts by special socio-pedagogical secretaries from the Immigration Board to help pass the time.

After what some of the participants think is a long, long time, they are finally called to a meeting where they are informed in writing and orally whether they have been granted a residence permit or not. As in real life in Sweden, only 2-3 people of a typical group of 25-30 participants are granted residence permits at the first instance of investigation by the authorities.

Then the role-play is over. All the participants are gathered in a neutral room and after all the files and aids used in the role-play have been collected, one of the museum’s pedagogical personnel initiates a discussion on what people have experienced. The dialogue is in part a debriefing from the delegates, in part an attempt to answer any questions the delegates may have after the role-play and in part a working through some quite simple exercises on moral questions related to the role-play (Marcus Berglund 2004). The target group for Jamtli’s project “Refugee” consisted of 16 year-old pupils at secondary schools in the county of Jämtland. Approximately 40 groups participated in the 5-6 weeks the project was held. In addition, there were a couple of adult groups who participated in specially arranged role-plays.

The overall reaction of those responsible for the project, the actors, pedagogues, school children who participated, teachers and adult participants has been highly positive. But given the aims of the project it has to be asked “what did the participants learn by taking part in “Refugee” at Jamtli?”



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If, on the basis of this perspective, we look more closely at what actually appears to happen to participants in an event such “Refugee”, the following observations can be made:

- learners are active both physically and mentally

- learning requires interaction with other learners and teachers
- the learning process involves the use of several senses
- the learner is affected emotionally

The learners are **active** participants in the learning process itself. It is almost impossible to be passive in this type of learning situation. The learners are forced to do something themselves, and it is also not enough to be active in isolation. In this type of learning process the learners interact with their surroundings and achieve a better result, and experience a more interesting process, if they cooperate with others – **interaction** is central to the learning process. It is through interaction that a learner allows his/her understanding of the situation to be measured against the equivalent perceptions of others. It is through such confrontations between their own knowledge and that of others, that the knowledge and experiences of the participants are shaped and refined. The integrity of each learner is strengthened. In the learning process, each learner is affected by responses to a variety of senses. The process involves **sensory** perception. Thus, it enables the learner to be affected at various levels of understanding where the senses relate to various levels of awareness and various degrees of understanding. Since the learner's **emotions** are affected, the learner will be stimulated to intense involvement in the learning process by letting him/herself act a part and furthermore, the learner will gain emotional experience, i.e. by relating a specific feeling to a specific situation. By convincing the participants that there is a close similarity between what they experience themselves and similar situations in the real, uncontrolled world outside the museum, the museum creates the conditions for a learning process based on activity, cooperation, sensibility and emotions. We can talk of a systematised informal learning of attitudes and opinions. It is instructive that while the main learning process takes place on an emotional level and influences opinions, attitudes and views, the creation of such assumes approximate agreement between the learners' experiences in the role-play and real life, that the learning process includes learning of both knowledge and skills.

The role-play based pedagogical method in this programme has proven to be successful at Jamtli and the programme has now been offered to all 9th grade school classes in the Jämtland region for eight years, with a participation rate of approximately 80 percent. This means that four out of five young people in the region will have had this special experience. The impact of this popular programme has been evaluated and it seems beyond doubt that the influence on the attitudes and values of the young women is particularly strong (Löfstrand 2006).

Due to the fact that the programme was designed to meet the exact needs of the compulsory school system and by letting the teachers influence the yearly revisions of the programme the museum and several reference schools have in reality but without being aware of it formed another **untraditional creative partnership**.

6. Volunteers taking responsibility for their competence development

Recognition for skills gained informally was a key feature of the first Europe-wide accreditation scheme for Environmental Volunteers. Seven project partners from five countries (BTCV (UK), Green Balkans (Bulgaria), Estonian Fund for Nature (ELF, Estonia), Hólar University College and Environment Agency of Iceland (UST) (Iceland), Elix Conservation Volunteers and KESSA DIMITRA (Greece)) worked together to develop the programme "Environments for Learning" which had the aim to develop an assessment

framework for volunteers learning informally by working on environmental projects. The project was launched across Europe in September 2008. The project outcome enable volunteers (often from 'hard to reach' groups of adults, otherwise reluctant to return to formal learning) to gain EQF compliant credits for a wide range of leadership and management skills and broad knowledge of environmental issues (<http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display>).

An excellent example of Access to Culture and validation of the learning. was provided by the work of two of the partners in Greece - ELIX and Kessa Dimitra. They have been collaborating to develop training in Project Management for volunteers, all of whom work on projects involving the maintenance, restoration or preservation of the cultural heritage of Greece. This takes the form of ancient buildings and other man made structures, but also the landscape, reflecting the mark that successive cultures have made on it. They work alongside skilled artisans and develop a sophisticated appreciation of the complex issues surrounding such work. But they also develop pride in their cultural heritage (Greek or European), and appreciation of the role of local communities as custodians of heritage on behalf of nations and the wider European Community.

Elsewhere the project partners were involved in providing trails for sustainable tourism in Iceland, the management of semi natural wildlife habitats in Estonia, the development of a culture of volunteering as part of citizenship in Bulgaria, and leadership of conservation volunteers in the UK. In a sense, all of these exposed volunteers to many cultural issues, enriching their learning experience. “Environments for Learning” enable skills gained to be recognised by environmental organisations in all European countries. The programme was developed by BTCV and all partners across Europe, based on the new European Qualification Framework. Often gained informally through practical work, volunteers’ knowledge and capabilities were assessed, accredited and recognised using a standard pan-European system (<http://www2.btcv.org.uk/display>).



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This is especially important for the younger volunteers, who often take time out before, during or after studies. It also benefits those de-motivated by studying, who learn new skills in a friendly and informal setting. They were often re-motivated to re-engage with their studies. There is probably a similarity between the needs for re-engaging with academic studies and the self-recognized needs by other non-academic students who chose to participate in the activities of the project. It is about the consciously or un-consciously recognized need for certain competences which are easier acquired outside the formal education system be it school or university (Field 2006 and, Duke, Osborne & Wilson 2006).

The five pilot areas covered by the scheme were leadership, project management, trail management, nature management and citizenship/community development.



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The informal setting in cultural and natural environments was used to substitute the classroom. The same way we can say that the cross border collaboration between NGOs, public and semi public authorities throughout Europe outside direct interference from governments made the implementation of EQF possible. The dynamics were found in the **untraditional creative partnership**.

7. Children singing their way to improved school performance

Sing Up 2007-2011 was the Music Manifesto National Singing Programme in UK, led by Youth Music, with AMV-BBDO, Faber Music and The Sage Gateshead and supported by the Government. It aimed to raise the status of singing and increase opportunities for school children throughout the country to enjoy singing as part of their everyday lives, and to support all primary schools to become 'singing schools'.



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A look at research from the Institute of Education shows the significant impact that Sing Up has had on children over the past three years. Teachers in a Sing Up school, or one of the expert practitioners who help deliver community singing projects, have first-hand experience

of the transformational effect the programme can have on children. It's reassuring, though, to have this anecdotal evidence backed up by academic research – and the findings of a new report on Sing Up's first three years (2007-2010) will demand the attention of anyone with an interest in music education and children's well-being. The study, by the Institute of Education (IoE) shows pupils who take part in Sing Up activities are on average two years ahead of their (non-Sing Up) peers in terms of singing development. There is also a noticeable impact on their self-esteem and sense of belonging, according to the report, which is based on surveys conducted at 177 schools, with responses from almost 10,000 children and 1,000 teachers (Welch, Himonides, Saunders, Papageorgi, Rinta, Stewart, Preti & Lani 2011 and CUREE 2009).

Graham Welch, lead author of the study, says it provides solid evidence for the important role that singing can play in children's personal development, and in the benefits it brings to the school community as a whole. It also shows why, in his view, Sing Up provides a model approach that should be a permanent feature of primary music education. Professor Welch says, "Children involved in group singing tend to have a positive self-image and a strong sense of belonging to a community. What makes singing special is that – unlike other collaborative activities, such as sport – there are no winners and losers. "An individual's contribution in a football team is very evident, as there are weaker members and star players, but in choral activity that doesn't happen. Although the kids in the choir will be able to tell you who the strongest individual singers are, when they're all singing together it is a collective performance – and that's how the audience perceives it." In addition to the survey of pupils and teachers, the IoE researchers visited 20 schools to explore what might make a successful, high-quality singing experience for children. The report concludes: "Overall, there is a large and growing body of empirical evidence to suggest that the Sing Up programme is having a beneficial impact on all its participants, whether child or adult." Welch, Himonides, Saunders, Papageorgi, Rinta, Stewart, Preti & Lani 2011).

According to the IoE report, high-quality singing lessons:

- Ensure that pupils' voices are heard throughout the session – when they're not singing encourage them to take part in discussions about their progress.
- Explain the key aims at the start of each session and reinforce them throughout.
- Monitor and assess pupils' musical performances, offering them positive feedback on how they can improve – and celebrate their achievements!

Sing Up training is recommended to other teachers as singing really is key to teaching, especially at a primary level, and a lot of people don't realize the benefits throughout the school. Music is normally left to one person in a school, such as the Music Coordinator, but the training helps to break down those mental barriers and makes teachers realize 'I can do this too'. Singing is definitely a life skill and not an add-on. It's a wonderful social activity that allows children to express themselves and improves their confidence. It also helps with their breathing development as well as improving their memory, speaking and listening skills. All teachers are encouraged to give singing a go, but it's vital to get the right training to help build your confidence and repertoire.

The encouragement to children and young people as they train and develop their voices boosts self confidence and thereby also their capacity to take on challenges. This brings the attention to the performance of the participants when looking at their formal education results. The positive impact from the Sing up participation is evident.



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The collaboration between private companies, public authorities and the art schools made this possible. It has become an **untraditional creative partnership** because the partners respected the roles and competences of the others.

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