



PROJECT OUTLINE - “I WANNA BE YOUR BORDER”

by Associazione Etre (Italy)

April 2014

This case study and project idea has been developed by Erica Bernardi on behalf of
Associazione Etre.

Below is an outline of a planned international and collaborative audience development project – **“I Wanna be your Border”** - between Scotland, Catalonia, Flanders and Lombardy. The project is due to commence in 2015.¹

The project aims to develop a reflection on the idea of ‘borders’ involving young people (people under 25 from Italy, Spain, the UK and Belgium) and their communities. The sense of a European cultural cooperation project on the idea of ‘borders’ is essentially to call into question the nineteenth-century conception of space and territory, focused on the nation state.

“I Wanna be your Border” was first born as an internship planning exercise. This was following an internship at IETM international network for contemporary performing arts under the mobility program for artists, technicians and organisers - Creative Cast Away - that Associazione Etre has presented in cooperation with Lombardy Region.



¹ Note – at the time of writing, final funding for “I Wanna be your Border” was still tbc.

Associazione Etre (<http://www.etreassociazione.it/fenetre/>) is a new network of Italian companies developing a performing art residency project in the Lombardy Region.

Etre was founded in 2008 with the financial support of the Cariplo Bank Foundation, and it has currently 20 Residencies associated.

Etre's main activities include:

- promoting and supporting the form of residency;
- encouraging culture and performing arts in modern society;
- creating connections and developing projects with other performing art organizations all around the world;
- providing services for our Residencies;
- presenting Luoghi Comuni Festival;
- planning projects on a worldwide scale.

Objectives – “I Wanna be your Border”

- To develop a debate around the idea of borders, through specific activities via schools, communities, universities and media.
- To offer to young people opportunities for aggregation and culturally significant experiences, developing more cohesion between them through creation and dialogue.
- To promote new forms of mobility among audiences, thanks to a multi-regional co-creation process with the artists and a crossing borders 2h performance (30 minutes in each different region).
- To reach audiences that reside far away from performing arts' places
- To foster the involved communities' social cohesion
- To create a network between involved countries' schools, universities and cultural organisations
- To promote good practice in audience development.

Project Description –

The border is the product of the historical perception that people have of themselves and the term has multiple meanings: it is the boundary between nation-states, regions, provinces or municipalities, but also the boundary between what is known and what it is not. The border may be a physical border, such as a boundary, or a figurative one, such as the one posed between different cultures sometimes living together and sharing the same space.

The project will focus on both the physical one and the figurative one and it will help the young people and the communities involved to design a more European dimension and to feel a part of this dimension, thanks to a process of co-creation with the artists. The project will involve mainly people under 25 and will involve performances, discussions, open rehearsals and a specific communication strategy (that will involve a wide variety of target groups). A documentary will be shot and will furnish proof of the whole process.

Target audience –

- 1) High Schools: One class from each country will participate in artistic workshops and a public debate. Working with high schools will also help reach the following potential audiences - other students, parents, other local high schools.

- 2) Universities: Fifteen undergraduate students from each country will participate in art workshops and with one researcher and one teacher in a public debate. Working with high schools will also help reach the following potential audiences - other undergraduate students, student associations, other local universities.

- 3) Stakeholders: Three stakeholders (major, politicians, cultural associations representatives) who will participate in interviews and public debates. These stakeholders will also reach out to their network to help develop an audience.

- 4) Cultural professionals: They will be involved in the creative process and in its production, in transnational mobility process, in the synthesis phase. This will offer an opportunity to reach out to wider cultural professionals as potential audiences (via their networks).
- 5) General audience: Public debates and open rehearsals will be offered to the general audience. There will be a special offer to those under 25. Social networks will be utilised to reach a wide audience.

The process -

As this project has evolved from the work of an audience development intern, the first stage has included desk research into good practice in audience development. Firstly, organisations with innovative audience development projects were contacted then further desk research was carried out around Europe to further explore examples of audience development practice.

After seeking inspiration from the work of **La Transplanisphère (FR)**, **Riksteatern – Swedish National Touring Theatre (SW)**, **Theatre de Liege (BEL)**, the project began to take life. La Transplanisphère (FR) has been involved in a detailed interview in Brussels about its audience development activities and EU projects, the other two were painstakingly studied thanks to EENC and OMC reports.



National Touring Theatre of Sweden



Theatre de Liege – 2043



Theatre de Liege – Le Misanthrope

Key activities and planned timings -

Activity 1 - PM and coordination - From September 2015 to August 2017 (24 MONTHS)

Activity 2 - Start up - From September 2015 to October 2015 (2 MONTHS)

Activity 3 - Residence and production in Scotland - November 2015 (4 WEEKS)

Activity 4 - Residence and production in Catalonia - January 2016 (4 WEEKS)

Activity 5 - Residence and production in Flanders - February 2016 (4 WEEKS)

Activity 6 - Residence and production in Lombardy - March 2016 (4 WEEKS)

Activity 7 – Casting call, performers' selection and final product's creation in Lombardy - From April 2016 to August 2016 (5 MONTHS)

Activity 8 - Tour and all inclusive under 25 special offer - From September 2016 to December 2016 (4 MONTHS)

Activity 9 - Communication strategy - From September 2015 to April 2017 (19 MONTHS)

Activity 10 - Final evaluation and conference - From May 2017 to August 2017 (3 MONTHS)

Intended outcomes -

- Creation of a network that will facilitate possible collaborations even after the end of the project
- Four partners' increased visibility in the European performing arts system
- Incentive to accelerate cultural policies around this issue of borders in the regions involved
- Development of an intercultural dialogue on a such a relevant political topic
- Development of a larger sense of inclusion among different social groups (variety of levels and ages) in the communities involved
- A new format of production and transnational circulation of cultural and artistic products
- Aggregation of new audiences and existing audiences
- Tourism development in the regions involved
- Incentive of downstream production forms such as the crowdfunding promoted by the organisations in their territories, in order to fund an all-inclusive under 25 special offer to make young people able to travel and see the final product in the 4 European regions
- Involvement of a multi-cultural audience in very different, geographically distant European regions via shared experiences
- Collective elaboration of a formal European cooperation model in the field of audience development, inspired by concrete experiences
- Collective elaboration of an historical reflection on the borders and on people's perception of them.

We recognise that in order for effective practice to be established the following ambitions must be met -

- To build closer relations between organisations and already existing audiences
- To reach a larger and diversified audience
- To try to attract new audiences by identifying the most important channels to reach them
- To build bridges between the audiences themselves via shared experiences and resulting networking process
- Translate, in terms of communication strategies, complex messages into simple messages
- To be more inclusive to reach disadvantaged audiences

- To develop a long-lasting interest in performing arts
- To offer to the audience the opportunity to co-create with the artists, offering people a opportunity to produce with other incentives.

It is recognised that the whole project is very detailed and very ambitious. The measure of its success will depend very much on the 4 organisations, the stakeholders involved and the final budget that is available.

By Erica Bernardi (supervised by Fabio Ferretti, Director, Associazione Etre)

For more information contact:

ASSOCIAZIONE ETRE

via Cantù 4 – Santa Maria Hoè – 23889 (LC)

progetti@etreassociazione.it