

## 6. EDUCATION [CredAbility]

*I have been studying how I may compare*

*This prison where I live unto the world"*

*William Shakespeare: 'Richard II'*



### ***CredAbility (2012-4)***

*[Funded through the Leonardo Transfer of Information Programme of the EU]*

Coordinator:	Christine Cellier, SEEDS for Growth (2012-13)/ Alan Clarke, The College of Teachers (2014)
Partners/countries involved:	7 partners from Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, UK (England & Northern Ireland)
Meetings:	2012 Belfast; 2013 Vilnius; 2013 Berlin; 2014 Riga; 2014 London
Core partners:	The College of Teachers, London; SEEDS, London; Prison Arts Foundation, Belfast; Aufbruch, Berlin.
Centres of transfer:	Vilnius Pedagogical University; Latvia Culture College, Riga;
Publication:	Training Programme accredited at Levels 3 & 5 by TCOT
Outcomes:	Background research; website; piloting; accreditation of training programmes; online course; promotional video.

*CredAbility is a European collaboration to develop training for artists and others working in prisons, particularly in countries such as Lithuania and Latvia with limited experience of delivering prison arts.. Core partner organisations contributed both their specialist knowledge and their cultural situation to the project, enabling the development of a comprehensive training programme that supports prison arts across Europe. From the basic preparation needed to work in prisons, through critical thinking and innovation theory to the practical application of art-forms in a prison context, the course aims to cover theory and practice with equal weight. By embracing both the traditional and radical potential of this type of activity, the course will not only offer practical skills to learners, but also challenge preconceptions about the purpose of prisons, the role of arts within them, and the position of the prisoners themselves.*

<b>CRED EDUCATION ROOM 1</b>
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**FINAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**September 2014**

*Undertaken by Die Berater, Austria*

*The present report is the fruit of the external evaluation work performed in the frame of the EU LLP/Leonardo da Vinci project CREDability. The purpose is to contribute to the overall evaluation strategy of the project team providing a complementary view with the added value of an external perspective.*

**Project achievement and transfer of innovation**

It can be said that the CREDability project has successfully mastered to implement genuinely innovative educational offers for delivering arts in prison in Lithuania and Latvia. Also the partners in Northern Ireland, the UK and Germany, who were mainly involved in the development of the training concept, benefited from the creation of a comprehensive training course. **The creation of an accredited training course for the qualification of artists to deliver course in prison can be highlighted as the main achievement of the CREDability project.**

From the partners comments and from conference participants' feedback it can be said that this accreditation helps to give more value to work, which has already been done, but has often been neglected. The CREDability training course can be seen as a chance to make arts course in prison an acknowledged educational offer, which is professionally provided and also monetary honoured.

The CREDability partnership has made important steps towards achieving a sustainable impact and there are positive signs that the training concept developed in the project will be carried on - maybe in a modified or to national needs adapted version. Involvement in networks on prison education and other topic related projects will help to address relevant stakeholders. Nevertheless it has to be said that the funding of training activities is seen as major challenge for the further implementation of the CREDability training.

Concerning the project's achievements there is evidence provided with the deliverables that CREDability has achieved in leaving a trace in the partner institutions and institutional environments. Besides the personal learning of members of the partnership and the transfer of innovation into the participating institutions, especially in Latvia and Lithuania, CREDability has also been able to achieve an impact in the field of delivering arts in prison and prison education.

**In general, partners reported that the accredited training programme for delivering arts in prison had been the most valuable part of this project.** To develop and design a new course that did not exist prior to the project and to provide a good qualification for artists to deliver trainings was highlighted in the partner feedback sheets. Especially the project partners from Latvia and Lithuania appreciated the innovative aspect of the training programme since this was a really new approach to work with in their countries and project activities opened the doors to new stakeholders and relevant target groups for their work in prison.

To assess the quality of project products not only from the project partners' perspective but also from target groups and beneficiaries, the final CREDability conference (5-6 September 2014, London) was used to gain feedback of the conference participants about the CREDability training course and material. The conference participants showed a high interest and the majority responded with enthusiasm on the new training offer for artists. The main benefit of the CREDability Training model which was highlighted by conference participants, is the added value which is given to arts courses in prison. An accredited training course to qualify artist to deliver arts course in prison was seen as a great chance to raise the profile of this work, to make it more appreciated and to give more professionalism to this kind of prison education. Opportunities for self-reflection and the improvement of confidence of the teaching artists as well as the chance to use this training to qualify students and young artist were mentioned as other benefits of the CREDability training model.



CRED EDUCATION ROOM 2

**The CredAbility Training Course for Artists Working with Prisoners**

[published by TCOT]

**BACKGROUND**

Prisons are notoriously difficult places, not only for the prisoners but also for those working in them on a permanent or occasional basis. For artists aiming to use their skills and experiences for the benefit of inmates it is crucial to be prepared for this in order for their interventions to be effective. The *CredAbility* project has created a structured, comprehensive training programme to provide the necessary support for artists and others delivering arts in prisons. Having initially been developed in the UK, the programme is currently being adapted for testing by a variety of organisations in different European countries: *aufBruch*, a theatre group which organises performances in German prisons; the *Latvia Culture College* who provide in-service teacher-training programmes, including in the arts; and the *Vilnius University of Educational Sciences* with a particular focus on arts therapy.

**TRAINING FRAMEWORK**

The training programme, covering artistic, creative and arts-related therapeutic activities, is divided into three modules, two core and one elective. These modules cover a range of topics and themes and can be adapted to appropriate needs and situations, including the different cultural and national environments, prisoner profiles (male or female, juvenile, long-term, etc.) and art-forms. Module 1 (Core) focuses on the background information and generic skills needed to deliver these activities; Module 2 (Core) on the critical thinking and personal reflection required to prepare artists for such work; and Module 3 (Elective) on the practical issues related to the actual delivery of arts to prisoners. This module generically covers all art-forms and can be adapted to the specific areas of expertise practiced by artists. Further elective modules can be developed to cover other aspects, such as issues relating to delivery in particular prison environments, eg a women's prison or juvenile centres.

**MODULE 1: Preparing to deliver artistic, creative, multimedia & therapeutic activities in a prison context**

- 1.1 The role & history of prisons within their justice system
- 1.2 The different types of penal institutions and categories of prisoners
- 1.3 The ethics of creating art with prisoners
- 1.4 The rationale & justification for delivering artistic, creative & therapeutic activities to prisoners
- 1.5 The specific conditions/problems of working in prisons & organising artistic, creative & therapeutic interventions with prisoners
- 1.6 The skills needed, including pedagogic ones, to deliver artistic, creative & therapeutic activities with prisoners, including creating & presenting art-form products

**MODULE 2: Critical thinking related to delivering artistic, creative & therapeutic activities to prisoners**

- 2.1 The learner's critical position & rationale for working with prisoners
- 2.2 Identifying where & how the learner's aims are best placed
- 2.3 The level of critical thinking to be expected in a prison environment: from the learner, the prison service, the participants, and the obstacles to critical thinking to be faced
- 2.4 What adopting a critical, reflective daily practice means to deliverers/ teachers/ trainers/ artists, specifically within the context of a prison (see also 3.5)
- 2.5 How critical reflective thinking is instilled in the participants in artistic, therapeutic & creative activities in a prison context, including beyond the immediate interventions

**MODULE 3: Delivering artistic, creative and therapeutic activities to prisoners**

- 3.1 The history of artistic, creative & therapeutic activities in prison: nationally & internationally
- 3.2 Identifying the requirements for delivering artistic, creative and therapeutic activities to prisoners inside & outside the prison environment
- 3.3 Organising & delivering artistic, creative and therapeutic interventions with prisoners
- 3.4 Creating and presenting art-form products with prisoners
- 3.5 Developing artistic, creative and therapeutic skills with prisoners
- 3.6 Reflecting on the impact of artistic, creative & therapeutic interventions with prisoners

CRED EDUCATION ROOM 3

**CREATIVITY HEALS!**

**A survey of artists & arts organisations working in prison**

*Collated by Dr Alan Clarke, International Consultant, The College of Teachers*

*In preparation for the CredAbility course project partners in the UK, Germany [DE], Lithuania [LT] and Latvia [LV] surveyed artists and arts organisations in 4 different countries as to how their work would impact on prisoners. Below are some of their responses.*

**THE BENEFITS OF ART**

- "I think everyone deserves a chance to express themselves. I think art is a human being's innate method of expression." *[Rhoda Villegas, Visual artist, UK]*
- Theatre requires the participants to engage in a process that asks who we are and what are our roles within the society - there is no other better way for a person to confront ways of behaviour in a non clinical, enforced way." *[Mike Moloney, Theatre & Circus Practitioner, UK]*
- The arts, facilitated by a knowledgeable practitioner, who can give undue positive regard, and exhibit empathy and honesty, can enable such clients to explore their feelings, from a safe distance, at their own pace, in their own language. This can enable them to integrate the shadow aspects, and feelings of their nature, instead of repressing them, leading to a more whole and balanced person." *[Kyra Hall-Gelly, writer and arts therapist, UK]*
- Art intensifies the examination into the working of mechanisms which unfortunately are no longer questioned and enables the individual and also society as a whole to wake up and ask existential questions about human existence. *[DE]*
- I see the artistic process as very appropriate for getting to know yourself anew and for learning to express yourself. The collective pressure of a project with the reward of a public performance, the negotiation of roles, putting yourself in another's shoes, being allowed to give creative ideas a free run - all this is an experience of great potential for everyone, but especially for those who no longer believe in themselves and in whom others no longer believe. *[DE]*
- There has always been an interest in every man's inner world. I observe client change through art therapy sessions. Often the client has a great "hidden" artistic talent, mostly concerned with learning about the subtleties of life. *[LT]*

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

- Creativity heals. [LT]
- To find the future, we need to look into prisons. Therefore it's important to provide information and resources for people creating art in and around the Latvian prisons [Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress, LV]

## THE PRISON EXPERIENCE

- I was attracted by the honesty of prison, in that, those inside have had to face up to what they've done, as opposed to those outside, us, often surviving by hiding a lot of who we are. And I wanted to use my experience and skills to offer others a chance to experience their own greatness. [Nuala McKeeve, Irish actor & comedienne, UK]
- Never forget that once you are inside a jail you are in the world operated and dominated and controlled by officers; it's their world and no matter how infuriating or annoying you find the way the officers have organized this world, you have to obey its rules: this means you have to bend, you have to go with the flow, you have to work with the officers and their rules. Never use force: always use charm. Prisoners are far easier to deal with but then they need you so they would be. [Carlo Gébler, Irish writer, UK]
- I thought prison is an environment where the human needs reach the extreme and art could be an ideal way to channel these needs to a positive and transformative direction. [Vasiliki Gkotsi, visual artist, UK]
- For practising artists the place in which the activity takes place, in this instance a young offenders institution, must be taken into account in their work, because a closed institution demands different and more complicated precautions than a theatre. Close cooperation and constant communication between those responsible in the institution and the artists is therefore essential, in order to achieve a successful outcome to their work. [Production Leader, DE]

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

- What the project participants/ artists need to understand about prison institutions: There should be no competition and no conflicts in the cooperation with the inmates, along the lines of "We're the goodies, those in the prison system are the baddies". A trusting cooperation is essential. Projects taking place in prisons must recognise the rules of detention and the limitations which go along with them. [DE]
- 'Lots of arts made in prisons are autodidact art, e.g. wooden knives, leather arts etc. Mostly it's an expression of emotions of prisoners. While working in prison, I discovered, that there are also some talented inmates, whose art pieces are more intimate than classical prison drawing. [Sandra Konstante, visual artist, art therapist, LV]
- 'To develop contact with the inmates, especially when you want to exhibit their art, takes a very long time, because we need to trust each other, and this is certainly more complicated for them than for me. [Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress, LV]

## THE BENEFITS FOR PRISONERS

- I want to let the offenders know that although they made mistakes, that doesn't mean that they are no good and can't change. I think the artwork could also let them know that they are not alone. [Kinga Szopinska, visual artist, UK]
- I had direct experience of the criminal justice system as a teen, including a period of incarceration and as clichéd as it sounds the opportunity to engage with the arts was the beginning of the creation of a new story for myself. The arts can easily absorb all perjorative labels including 'offender' or 'mental' and that is why I want to work in prison so that I may facilitate that process for another. Creating a space where it is possible to begin forming a new life-affirming identity, and also to begin the process to owning their story/history through creative exploration and catharsis. [Mulika Harnett, Expressive sound artist, UK]
- When it worked, it was great. It was hard to dip in and out of the guys' lives. The work we did required some self-introspection and it was difficult to have enough time to get the guys to that level of openness. And once or twice when they did, it was horrible to have to pack up and send them back to their cells, having just opened up some painful stuff in conversation. More time and a more caring approach from the whole prison system would have made the big difference. It's not just teaching, it's much more than that. [Nuala McKeeve, Irish actor & comedienne, UK]



## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

- Arts projects in the Young Offender Institutions need to have a therapeutic character. They are part of the treatment of the inmates and as well contributing to positive public relations [DE]
- Convicted persons are the most disadvantaged people in the earth who have experienced little love and care, it is a crime committed against the other person, they are the life of the suffering of the hostages who do not know to get out of the vicious circle. I think that the creation and the process of learning ... provide a new look at the environment and others. [LT]
- (Art) makes a positive contribution to prisoner rehabilitation, the prisoners, taking place in arts classes get both practical and philosophical benefits. On practical side, they become part of a project that's happening within the prison and in the community. The philosophical benefit of arts in prison projects is the strength it offers those prisoners committed to their rehabilitative processes and "going forward". [Zina Ceske, visual artist, LV]

## BENEFITS FOR ARTISTS

- ... working on the inside to inform practice on the outside ..." [Genevieve Rudd, Community visual artist, UK]
- Those people who find themselves inside have a world of experience which I don't know. I am interested in how they perceive their world. Hopefully they have the opportunity through theatrical forms to make this world transparent in a way that is enriching for both parties. [DE]
- For a time doing away with prisons, with locking people up - use power differently - I know that working in prison is a lot of work - but to help rebuild these stranded people, to learn to live with guilt, etc. - my experiences were after 7 hours of rehearsing that all my energy had gone, everything was drained out of me, but that wasn't a bad thing, the reward of this experience was healing! For all the participants! [DE]
- There is more room for creativity in prisons than in palaces, according to Dostoevsky. [DE]
- It was very challenging for me, but I saw, that I deliver some happiness there and for myself it's also the evidence of my professional development" [Zina Ceske, visual artist, LV]

### **WHAT ARTISTS NEED TO PREPARE THEM FOR WORKING IN PRISON**

- Never say behind a prisoner's back what you are not prepared to say to his face. *[Carlo Gébler, Irish writer, UK]*
- An awareness of the role of social control played by the prison system eg how racism and sexism is upheld and maintained through incarceration. An awareness of emotional literacy, for the well-being of those incarcerated and for the well-being of the artist." *[Leah Thorn, writer, UK]*
- In order to better understand the rules and ways of communicating in a "total institution", it would be helpful to me if someone who knows the institution from the inside prepared me. I could have spared myself some mistakes and faux-pas. *[DE]*
- It only makes sense when you are not afraid of prisoners. Above all you should trust in the intelligence of the prisoners in order to accept their constant self-doubt honestly. *[DE]*
- "Art is anger management", and it works very well by itself, but the artist should take in mind that for centuries the world has designed prison as a place to reinforce the feeling that you are worthless. You will still face that at every step. *[Sandra Konstante, visual artist, art therapist, LV]*
- 'Teaching arts is a specific profession, and teaching arts in prisons is even more challenging. The artist should be prepared emotionally to enter the prison and to get used to the security rules and those cell blocks around. Generally its enough with official instructions from prison officers about does and don'ts, but the some certified courses with the opportunity to exchange this experience with colleagues would be valuable. *[Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress, LV]*

### **MAIN CHALLENGES FOR ARTISTS WORKING IN PRISON**

- Prisons are reservoirs of grief: the griefs are the prisoners' and there is never a big enough receptacle (reservoir) to hold their grief: it over flows and its soaks everything it touches including artists working with prisoners: sometimes there is so much grief one feels one might drown in it: however, one's job in a prison, above and beyond the artistic practice one is involved with promulgating, is to be a human being, to engage with the grief and to do everything in one's power to stop the prisoner (all prisoners) being drowned by it. *[Carlo Gébler, Irish writer, UK]*

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

- One of the challenges can be to stay centred in your empathy and understanding mode even when the person/group you work with feel negative towards themselves and the system - to stay strongly positive without slipping to their mood. Your empathy level needs to be high as well as your strength in order to draw them into your transformative way of facing facts." *[Vasiliki Gkotsi, visual artist, UK]*
- Situations can change on a daily basis which can affect the mood and rhythm of a prison institution and the individuals within that institution. A practitioner has to be able to think on their feet and be prepared to adapt their plan for a particular day as a result of this. Sometimes one can face hostility from the prison staff, who don't always recognise the value of the work that an arts practitioner is undertaking within the prison. *[Carmel George, drama practitioner, UK]*
- Another challenge is the amount of prisoners who are coming to class under the influence of drugs. It is obvious to those of us running sessions, so it would seem that they shouldn't be sent to class by the officers on the landing but they are. This can cause interruptions to session work and cause annoyance to other prisoners. *[Mary Nugent, psychological educationalist, UK]*
- The situation in the individual detention and correction centres is very different and can't be applied in the same way. The information about each place of activity and the application of their rules is important. The inmates aren't different in their artistic abilities from other amateurs, therefore pedagogical aptitude is needed in different circumstances. *{DE}*
- None of your educated middle-class self-indulgence, the project must be useful for its own sake. *[DE]*
- Lack of people willing to engage in artistic activities and staff to properly carry out such activities, lack thereof. *[LT]*
- Convicted persons fall into the next world, both inside and thoughts for escape from prison. *[LT]*
- Prison arts programmes are not widely accepted by government and corrective services decision-makers as having merit, rehabilitative or otherwise. One of the icebreakers in this system is Prison Fellowship Foundation Latvia and individual initiatives of some artists and art therapists. *[Gita Senka, Latvia Culture college, prison arts project manager]*
- Often art in prison is best seen as hobby to keep people occupied and at worst- as a waste of time. *[Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress]*

### FINAL WORD

- I think it is a privilege to do this work. To work with people in extreme situations/ bored out of their heads / in such different circumstances than most of those who we meet - it gives us as artists a different take on the world. It is important for the work to be recognised and paid however, not simply a do-good volunteer thing. The prisoners appreciate the fact that professional artists are paying attention to them." *[Carol Rowntree Jones, creative writer, UK]*
- I think it is very important for all parties, including official authorities, artists and educational institutions, to face social inclusion in practice. If arts in prisons can inspire positive change, so that offenders can change attitude to processes around to better, its already a great point to start. We need experiences through various art forms, and if they are powerful enough, I think it can help transform the thinking and aspirations not only of offenders but also of volunteers and community in general. *[Sandra Plota, director of Latvia Culture College, LV]*



*The English artist Hannah Hull discusses the CredAblty course in Lithuania*

CRED LECTURE HALL 1

**"We are artists, not teachers!"**

*by Dr Alan Clarke, European projects manager for The College of Teachers*

*[published in Not Shut Up prison arts magazine, May 2014]*



*Alan Clarke during the piloting course at Goldsmiths College*

*'Often art in prison is best seen as hobby to keep people occupied and at worst- as a waste of time. '*

*Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress*

Some months ago when discussing the development of an accredited training programme for artists working in prisons as part of the *CredAbility* project, objections were raised by the German partner about artists undergoing teacher training. After much discussion, I gradually began to realise that the problem was not only one of definition (what do we mean by "teaching") but also cultural.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

In the UK, we have a long tradition of using the arts in education, not just for developing art-form skills but also as a generic teaching method. I remember in the late '50s witnessing the impressive work that the Brian Way's children's theatre group did in schools, and later in the '70s experiencing an eye-opening session by the influential drama practitioner Dorothy Heathcote using improvisation with junior pupils. So when I myself started teaching, mainly in further education, I was very conscious that students taking for example a course in Performing Arts were gaining not only the competencies to carry out specific art-form tasks but more importantly acquiring basic life skills - communication, problem-solving, working with others, taking personal responsibility for their actions.

On the other hand in Germany, there is a different educational tradition. The school curriculum focuses on more traditional academic subjects, mainly delivered in formal ways. The opportunities to explore creative areas comes outside of school hours, often through arts practitioners and external groups. I encountered this when working with community media and arts organisations in Berlin who delivered specialist programmes to schoolchildren in their free afternoons. For them a clear division exists between the role of "the teacher" and "the artist".

This resistance of artists to being teacher-trained is not unique to Germany. In a recent pilot of the *Credability* training programme run by the *Prison Arts Foundation (PAF)* in Northern Ireland, the tutor experienced resistance from some of the 20 professional artists on the course. Again they used similar arguments: "We've been working effectively as artist in prisons for x years; why do we suddenly have to be taught how to teach?" In their case, apart from providing them with a unique opportunity to develop new skills for free, the situation in Northern Irish prisons now demands that anyone delivering to prisoners there must have some form of teaching qualification. Nevertheless the grumbles still persist.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

To counter this, I point out that using teaching methods does not turn an artist into a teacher per se, it simply enables her or him to be more effective. Once artists decide to communicate their skills to others, they inevitably draw on pedagogical strategies. This is especially true of delivering artistic interventions to prisoners, whose literacy and communication levels are generally very poor, whose awareness is often weakened by drugs or alcohol, and who are often resistant to the 'normal' methods used in the outside world. Just as school teachers need to be properly prepared and have a range of approaches to cope with the many situations they will encounter in the classroom, so artists too need to have a large tool-box of strategies in order to function effectively in a prison context.

*"When it worked, it was great. It was hard to dip in and out of the guys' lives. The work we did required some self-introspection and it was difficult to have enough time to get the guys to that level of openness. And once or twice when they did, it was horrible to have to pack up and send them back to their cells, having just opened up some painful stuff in conversation. More time and a more caring approach from the whole prison system would have made the big difference. It's not just teaching, it's much more than that. "*

*Nuala McKeever, an Irish actor & comedienne*

Providing the basic understanding of what artists need to work with prisoners is the underpinning rationale behind the *CredAbility* initiative. To prepare for the programme, research from previous European projects was reviewed, and online questionnaires circulated to artists via the magazine *Arts Professional* providing further justification and background information. Building on a previous training programme for artists developed by *Anne Peaker Centre* and *Escape Artists*, the project aimed to transfer a revised version of this programme to organisations in Germany (*Aufbruch theatre group*), Latvia (*the Latvia Culture College*) and Lithuania (*the Lithuanian University of Pedagogical Studies*). The UK partners consisted of *SEEDS for Growth*, *PAF* in Belfast and *The College of Teachers (TCOT)*, through whom international accreditation would be organised. After a suitable training framework had been developed, sections of it were piloted at Goldsmiths University in London, at the Free University in Berlin and also in Latvia and Lithuania, plus a comprehensive pilot in Northern Ireland, mentioned above. Not only did these help clarify the content of the final programme but also provided invaluable feedback from the participants.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

*"The arts, facilitated by a knowledgeable practitioner, who can give undue positive regard, and exhibit empathy and honesty, can enable such clients to explore their feelings, from a safe distance, at their own pace, in their own language. This can enable them to integrate the shadow aspects, and feelings of their nature, instead of repressing them, leading to a more whole and balanced person."*

*Kyra Hall-Gelly, writer and arts therapist, UK*

The three-module framework selected by *CredAbility* at Level 3 (for those new to working in prisons) and Level 5 (for more experienced practitioners) is in line with TCOT's international accreditation format, consisting of two core modules and one elective. The first core module - **"Preparing to deliver artistic, creative and therapeutic activities in a prison context"** - covers the basic information and skills an artist working with prisoners would need. These include the history of their justice system and the various types of penal institutions; the ethics and rationale behind prison arts; the specific conditions which artists meet in prison; the skills, including pedagogic, needed to deliver arts interventions; and the funding and organisational support available for such activities.

*"Never forget that once you are inside a jail you are in the world operated and dominated and controlled by officers; it's their world and no matter how infuriating or annoying you find the way the officers have organized this world, you have to obey its rules: this means you have to bend, you have to go with the flow, you have to work with the officers and their rules. Never use force: always use charm. Prisoners are far easier to deal with but then they need you so they would be."*

*Carlo Gébler, Irish writer, UK*

Whilst Module 1 deals with external issues, the second core module - **"Critical thinking related to delivering artistic ... activities to prisoners"** - covers the personal motivation of the deliverer; the artist's critical position and how her/his aims are best applied; the level of critical thinking to be met in prisons and the consequences of these for the deliverer; and how critical attitudes can be encouraged in the prisoners through artistic interventions.



## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

*"I was attracted by the honesty of prison, in that, those inside have had to face up to what they've done, as opposed to those outside, us, often surviving by hiding a lot of who we are. And I wanted to use my experience and skills to offer others a chance to experience their own greatness."*

*Nuala McKeever*

The third, elective module - **"Delivering artistic ... activities to prisoners"** - is concerned with how artists can use their specific art-form (or forms) to effectively impact on prisoners. These include an understanding of art has been used in prisons historically and internationally; identifying the specific requirements for delivering arts interventions, including identifying effective practice; the actual organisation and delivery of prison arts, including creating and exploiting art-form products; the encouragement of art-form skills in prisoners; and the ability to objectively evaluate the impact of what has been achieved.

Assessment is through a series of practice-orientated tasks, supported by some theoretical reflections, linked to the content of the three modules and externally moderated by TCOT. The programme can be delivered in a relatively short period - roughly 12-16 sessions for Level 3, 18-20 for Level 5 - making it particularly attractive for those with limited time.

*"Teaching arts is a specific profession, and teaching arts in prisons is even more challenging. The artist should be prepared emotionally to enter the prison and to get used to the security rules ... certified courses with opportunities to exchange experiences with colleagues would be valuable."*

*" Edīte Neimane, Latvian theatre director and actress*

*The accredited training programme was publically launched at the CredAbility Conference at The College of Teachers in the Institute of Education in central London on 22<sup>nd</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup> August, 2014. A version of the programme focusing on the use of ICT and multimedia in prisons was later developed as part of the PriMedia Network.*

CRED LECTURE HALL 2

CREDABILITY PRISON ARTS CONFERENCE

*"Effective interventions in prison arts"*

22<sup>nd</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup> August 2014 at the College of Teachers, London

*Despite late changes of venue and dates due to organisational issues, the Final Conference of the CredAbility project was a huge success, combining presentations on the theory and practice of prison arts from a range of artists, educators and practitioners from across Europe.*

**Conference aims**

- To launch CredAbility's internationally accredited training programme
- To share examples of effective practice developed by artists and educators from across Europe, including Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Northern Ireland and England
- To debate key issues relating to prison arts with a panel of international experts
- To identify the creative potential of inmates through an exhibition of prisoner art by the Prison Arts Foundation and Not Shut Up, the largest magazine for prisoner arts in the UK
- To present performances and workshops reflecting the role of arts in European prisons

The Conference was divided into three sections:

- 1) CURRENT PRACTICE IN PRISON ARTS (organised in collaboration with Not Shut Up prison arts magazine): an exhibition of prisoner arts from Northern Ireland & England; a demonstration of an art project from Belgium; a poetry reading and scene from "Not Shut Up", a play written and acted by ex-prisoners; performance of "The Insider" by Alan Clarke reflecting the plight of the prisoner through international literature.

*"Someone comes out of prison and says - like I did - I am an artist. It is a massive thing for me to be able to say that."*

*Dean Stalham, Writer, "Not Shut Up"*

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

- 2) PRISON ARTS ISSUES: an overview of the CredAbility project by the coordinator; a key-note speech by Carlo Gebler, an Irish writer-in-residence from Northern Ireland; a panel discussion on key issues with experts from a wide range of arts, prison and education organisations.

*The prisoners we are working with know us as people, not associated with the prison, not members of the prison team, we are ordinary human beings that are coming in and working with them because we trust them and they trust us. At the end of the day the prisoners need to develop trust across all of the relationships, not just between the artist and the prisoner but between the artist and the prison staff and the prison staff and the prisoner, and that goes back to talking about feelings. An awful lot of people in prison are there because the system has let them down, they've not got trust or confidence in anybody or anything.*

*Alison Smyth, Director, Prison arts Foundation, Northern Ireland*

- 3) PRISON ARTS PRACTICE: a selection of workshops from across Europe, including Prison Theatre (Germany), Song Writing (Northern Ireland), Urban Dance (Lithuania), Ceramics (Northern Ireland) and Critical Thinking (England). The Conference was attended by over 60 people and the feedback was very positive. The event was filmed and formed the basis of the promotional video.

*"You come into a prison, see the project and realise that they can produce art or things for which they can get respect. But the biggest therapeutic effect is for the audience in that they change their view of the prison, of the inmates."*

*Holger Syrbe, AUFBRUCH, Germany*

*"Urban dance stems from times back in the days when it was a really rough time In America There is a lot of violence in this art form. I was trying to connect them that they would feel this is not something I give you like try to make your thing, but is not their thing. So I was trying to connect them with the symbolic that was in the dance, which came from the violence but not anymore. If it can become a tool for those young people to understand that violence can become something else."*

*Laurynus Zakaviieus, Urban Dance, Lithuania*

*Keynote Speech at the CredAbility Conference*

*by Carlo Gebler*

INTRODUCTION

*What I'm trying to do is to help people to understand how to get the material that is deep within them - buried - out and in a shape and a form that works on the page, how to tell stories if you like. One of the things about prison is that it is a really crude device, it is a built environment that forces people to turn their attention inwards.*

Why do we work in jails? We want to help men and women in jail to prosper emotionally. There's the undeniable truth of experience, what we learn when we're in a jail - that half of the demon which is part of the predisposition. ...

Of the 4 elements that make up the psyche, the most important element is the feeling function because feelings are your tool for discrimination. We navigate our way through life with our feelings. And it is damage to the feeling function that is the constant amongst all men and women who are in prison ...

I have seen what making artefacts does. I have seen its benefits. I have never ever, ever met one person who has been improved by punishment alone. Never. ...

But it wasn't punishment that did the transforming. It was the reading, the writing, the painting, the making, the creating, the thinking, the educating AND - top the list - the feeling that went alongside the punishment ...

We know that making art, especially when it's informal, when it's done, as art has always been done, as the best art has always been done, for the love of it, because the maker wants to make the best artefacts they can make, or that they have the power to make, we know that doing that achieves wonders. And how do we know this? Well, we can see it with our own eyes. We can see that making art, making things is balm to the troubled soul. And it can transform the prison experience from a negative to a positive, and that's a really truly remarkable thing. And it can even reduce recidivism.

<p><i>"Feeling is missing In all subjects in the education curriculum except the creative arts. I believe that every subject should be taught by feeling. and if art is feeling let's get feeling on the curriculum."</i></p> <p><i>Merron Mitchell, ex-Head of Offender Learning, the Manchester College</i></p>
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CRED SEMINAR ROOM 1

PILOTING THE CREDABILITY TRAINING PROGRAMME

Piloting in 5 countries

Piloting was implemented in each of the partner countries. An initial piloting workshop with students at *Goldsmiths University in London* was followed by an 8-week trial of Module 2; alongside this students at the *Free University Berlin* undertook an 8-week pilot of Module 1. A piloting workshop took place at the *Lithuanian University of Pedagogical Sciences* (LUAS) with inputs from TCOT and PAF from the UK, and a short pilot with a mixture of elements was run by the *Latvian Culture College* (LCC). The most comprehensive pilot was organised by the *Prison Arts Foundation* (PAF) in conjunction with the *Belfast School of Art* in spring 2014 with 20 experienced artists, 8 of whom eventually submitted work for official accreditation at Level 5. All the pilots were evaluated for the effectiveness, with the results uploaded onto forms on the website and a summative report provided by the German partner, *aufBruch*. Video examples of piloting in all countries was also produced. This information formed the basis of the final training programme.

Target audiences

The main target audience of the piloting was artists wanting to work in prisons, although other transfer target groups were also included.

- *Aufbruch* in Germany, although including a few artists, ran their pilot course primarily for **students** at the Free University, Berlin.
- The *Lithuanian University of Pedagogical Sciences* provides courses for **art students and therapists** so that their focus was more on this group; their piloting workshops however also included **prison staff**, an important additional group.
- The *Latvia Culture College* run courses for **arts trainers** so that their focus expanded the coverage to this group.
- The UK piloting also reflected a wide spectrum: in London's *Goldsmith College* the pilot course participants were mainly **students** with little experience of prisons;
- in Belfast the *Prison Arts Foundation* ran its students programme almost entirely for **experienced artists** already working in the Province's prisons.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

### National differences

Geographically, initial research revealed that there were wide differences in the context and circumstances under which prison art takes place in different countries. This was reflected in both the piloting strategies and the exploitation potential of the partners. In Northern Ireland the main focus was on experienced artists, in England on students and artists with limited experience, in Germany on professional artists and students, in Lithuania on university students, in Latvia on arts trainers and facilitators.

### Institutional differences

The other differentiating factor was the range of organisations involved in the project: LUES and *The College of Teachers* are part of large educational establishments dealing with academic students and postgraduates and in-service teacher trainees respectively; LCC is a training organisation for arts practitioners; PAF a charity providing arts provision to Northern Ireland's 3 prisons; and SEEDS a small community-based organisation. This also had an impact on the project processes and outcomes, especially in the variety of piloting strategies used.

## ENGLAND

### PREPARATION

The Critical Thinking Module (Module 2) was initially developed by Hannah Hull, an artist and postgraduate student at Goldsmiths University. Working with TCOT and SEEDS she played a major part in identifying the key elements of the Unit and agreed to pilot it with students at Goldsmiths.

### PILOT

In autumn 2012 piloted the module at Goldsmiths University for 5 sessions of 2 hours each. The target groups were primarily arts students although also included artists and teachers, and went through a selection process to ensure a good range of representatives from the target group. The students were assessed primarily through case studies of arts organisations working with prisoners, examples of which are included in CRED SEMINAR ROOM 3.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

### NORTHERN IRELAND

#### PREPARATION

The first CredAbility transnational partner meeting, hosted by PAF in Belfast in 2012, combined partner and project introductions and identified initial actions with a visit to a local prison. The meeting was supplemented by visits to *Hydebank Women's Prison and Young Offenders Centre* where partners were able to attend visual arts and ceramics sessions with inmates.

#### PILOT

The training programme in 2014 was organised by PAF in conjunction with the *Belfast School of Art*, which was registered with TCOT as a training centre, and run by Nancy Law on behalf of PAF. The students, mostly artists working in prison, were awarded accreditation on successful completion of the course.

### GERMANY

#### PREPARATION

The Berlin meeting in 2013, concentrated on evaluating the results of the piloting already undertaken. It was included a review of the piloting process, a visit to witness theatre work in Charlottenburg Prison, and attendance at a piloting session at the Free University. Important insights into effective arts practice were gained through the visit to the theatre projects in prison.

*[Details of the PILOT are to be found in CRED SEMINAR ROOM 2.]*

### LITHUANIA

#### INTRODUCTION

The Lithuanian partner organised a two-day conference on the theme of "Delivering Arts in Prisons" at the *Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences* in Vilnius in April 2013. All the penitentiary institutions, universities, art schools and arts associations in Lithuania were invited to participate and there were about 100 participants, including representatives from the *Lithuanian Music Therapy Association*, the *Lithuanian Association for Art therapy Application* and the *Lithuanian Dance and Movement Association*. It proved very important opportunity for dissemination of ideas and delivering experiences in prison arts.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

### PREPARATION

The 2nd meeting in Vilnius, focusing mainly on evaluating the initial research, was divided into four parts: internal project organisation, demonstration workshops, a performance of a piece reflecting the plight of prisoners, and a 2-day conference for interested Lithuanian parties. The meeting and subsequent conference proved very effective both in demonstrating the potential of the partners' practice and expertise and in introducing the idea of a focused training programme for artists working in prison to a Lithuanian audience.

### LATVIA

#### PREPARATION

This meeting towards the end of the project focused almost entirely on the administration and implementation of the remaining tasks. The topics covered included: the completion of the promotional video; the internal and external evaluation process; the impact of international accreditation for the partners; the final conference in London; copyright issues; dissemination and publication of final outcomes; and the exploitation strategy.

#### PILOT

Latvia Culture College offered short courses for artists working in prisons, and those, interested to participate in non formal arts education activities in prisons. Two course themes are suggested: 1) theory of prison as ever changing environment with necessity for artistic activities to change behaviour of convicted and; 2) art management for successful exposition of prisoners artwork in public environment. In the future it is planned to offer full programmes at level 4, on the educational theme of 'culture manager with specialisation in realisation of projects for marginal society groups''





**CRED SEMINAR ROOM 2**

**PILOTING IN GERMANY**

**Theatre in Prison: Art and punishment – punishment and art**

***An introduction to trainers piloting the CredAbility course in Germany***

by Agnes Bohley, Freie Universitaet Berlin



**General Introduction**

This course is intended to give an overview of the history of and the development within both, the prison system and the theatre in Germany, analyses both systems as institutions, deals with the ethics and philosophy of punishment and theatre arts and offers insights by practitioners working with theatre inside prisons. Its aim is to offer students the possibility to think both, the prison and the theatre, together and by dealing with similarities and differences between both institutions to form their own opinion of the usefulness and adequacy of theatre activities insight prisons. If the students should decide by the end of the course to go further and to develop their own theatre in prison project, the course also intends to give them practical advice as to which methods of theatre work inside prison, who to approach when planning a project, potential financial sources for projects inside and very basic tools and methods for evaluation of the project.

*The course ran over 8 weeks and each session lasted approx. four hours. It worked best with a mixed group of students, including both academic students and theatre practitioners without previous experience of working in prisons. NB Selected exercises from each session below.*

### **Session 1: History of institutions beginning with the 18<sup>th</sup> century**

CONTENT: History of the prison/penal system in Germany - history of the German theatre within purpose built houses

How are institutions defined? Very brief overview of the historical development of prison and theatre as institutions in Germany since the 18<sup>th</sup> century: Why and how were both, punishment and art institutionalised and put away from the public market place into purpose built houses?

Communal chart creation: If we define both theatre and prison as institutions, which terms spring to mind for each of them to define them? And which terms define both, theatre and prison as institution?

### **Session 2: Ethics**

CONTENT: Theatre, prison/penal justice system and philosophy; the terms freedom and liberty in justice and in art/aesthetics;

Concepts of freedom/liberty: the determination and the definitions of freedom in the prison justice context and the aesthetic/theatre context - freedom to something and freedom from something.

### **Session 3: History of Art in Prison:**

CONTENT: Methods and concerns/objectives, an overview over the sector - internationally

Overview of theatre in prison historically worldwide: theatre in Australia, theatre in Russian prison camps, theatre on prison islands in Greece, San Quentin Drama Workshop, main developments in Europe since the late 90s

### **Mid-term extra session: visit to the prison**

Visit to the dress rehearsal of DER SEEWOLF - EINMAL IM LEBEN in JVA Plötzensee (prison)

### **Session 4: The three pillars of the German justice system:**

CONTENT: Penal law, penal procedure and prison/penal system and their theatricality; toolbox: which laws, regulations and the like are relevant to artists wanting to work in the prison?

GUEST SPEAKER: Janina Deininger, head of the social-pedagogic department and of the public relation department of the youth prison in Berlin

### **Session 5: Art by prisoners - practice I:**

CONTENT: financing projects, production processes (prescribed projects, open projects, independent projects etc.), dealing with the public

GUEST SPEAKER: Guest: Sibylle Arndt, producer at aufBruch (see W2D CELL 6)

**Session 6: Art by prisoners – practice II:**

CONTENT: theories of acting and their employment in the context; issues of hierarchy, authority, (self)expression and the like in prison; trouble shooting – how do I deal with a situation like...; dos and don'ts.

GUEST SPEAKERS: **Peter Atanassow**, actor and director, artistic director of *aufBruch*; **Dirk Harms**, Clergyman and theatre pedagogue, artistic director of theaterlabor Schwerte in Schwerte Prison; **Till Baumann**, author and forum theatre practitioner, works in the youth prison in Raßnitz

The whole session was dedicated to a very practical approach: all three directors did short exercises with the participants to explain their methods (Harms=theatre pedagogue, Baumann=forum theatre, Atanassow="classical" directoral style).

- Dirk Harms showed a warm-up and explained via a text and images from his last production how he is working with the inmates with masks;
- Till Baumann gave a brief practical introduction to statue theatre and showed images from his work with forum theatre in German prison;
- Peter Atanassow showed the speech training/elocution training he employs when working in prison and did a short chorus work with the participants.

After these practical inputs a group discussion with all three directors followed which focused on the similarities and differences in the work they are doing. One of the strands of the discussion was that, although all three use different methods they all want to create an innovative piece of theatre with the inmates for a public audience and they all face very similar problems with the prison system. In all cases, the prison system is seen as a partner and not as an opponent.

**Session 7: Art by prisoners – practice III:**

CONTENT: Stage aesthetics in walls: stage- and costume design and their feasibility/realisation

GUEST SPEAKER: Holger Syrbe, stage designer, artistic director of *aufBruch*

COURSE SPEAKER: Dr. Janina Möbius, academic field researcher on theatre in prison in Mexico City

**End of term extra session**

Visit to a rehearsal of the latest production by *aufBruch* "Lord of the Fies" in the youth prison Berlin.

**Session 8: „Does it work or is it only looking good?“**

CONTENT: Theatre and (social-)scientific evaluation by example of theatre by prisoners

CRED SEMINAR ROOM 3

PILOTING IN ENGLAND

*Organised by Hannah Hull at Goldsmiths University, London*

*The students on the piloting course run by Hannah Hull, a process-based artist, at Goldsmiths University where she was a postgraduate student were asked to provide case studies of arts organizations and individual artists working with prisoners or ex-prisoners. Below are a few examples from these case studies. (Although the questions reflect issues of more concern to some artists than that of a prison arts facilitator, the answers produced are very insightful.)*

**'Restored' - a performance by inmates of Doncaster Prison**

*by Bethany MacDonald Shepherd*



**The project**

*Restored* was a devised theatre performance that took place at HMP & YOI Doncaster. Through the use of applied theatre, prisoners were asked to put themselves in the shoes of their victims. Over the period of one month, they took part in games and storytelling exercises in order to create an original piece of theatre that explored issues surrounding restorative justice. The piece was then performed for other prisoners at the facility. The project was led by Second Shot Productions, which is an applied theatre company based within HMP & YOI Doncaster. .... It enabled prisoners to play out situations and outcomes that would inform their future decisions, and it also brought these ideas to their peers within the prison.

### **How have the artists been true to the art form?**

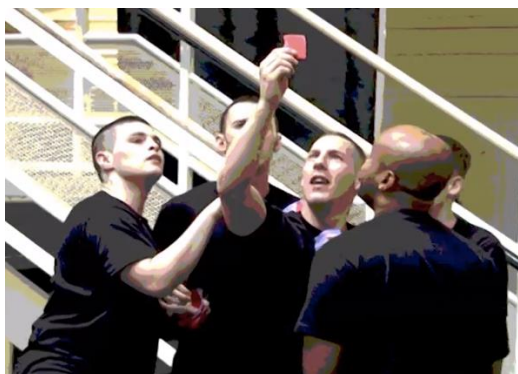
Through the use of storytelling techniques, interviews, and real-life relationships, Second Shot Productions was able to devise and create *Restored*. Because the aim of the piece was to explore restorative justice, the project can be seen as an example of 'Forum Theatre' which is described by Augusto Boal as 'a forum for teaching people how to change their world.' Therefore, as a specific type of theatre, *Restored* was completely truthful to its form. ...

### **How have they compromised the art form?**

Through the eyes of a West End theatre producer, applied theatre projects could possibly be seen as 'amateur'; the sets are minimal, the scripts are rudimentary, and the performances are unlikely to win Oliviers. But in the context of *Restored*, theatre is purely the vehicle with which the subject of restorative justice is explored. Priorities then become something else; relationships and dialogue between prisoner and 'victim' (the victims informed the piece but did not perform in it), examples of reparation and rehabilitation for other prisoners, and an experience for the participants to draw on in the future as they make new choices in their lives.

### **How could they have changed their project to avoid these compromises?**

For the purposes of the project, I do not believe that *Restored* needed to change in any way; I do not feel it made compromises. However, if after the main priorities had been addressed and there was an opportunity to present the piece to the general public and art world, a theatre producer/director might look closer at increasing the production value in terms of scenery, props, lights, acting, etc. in order to tell the story to audiences in the best possible, most 'artistic' way. In doing this, the project becomes vastly different and the audience becomes the priority above the participants.



**Gavin Turk: stitch project using prisoners in collaboration with Fine Cell Work**

*by Amber Jay Stevens*

**The project**

Essentially, this is a conceptual project which draws inspiration from another conceptual project by the artist Alighiero Boetti. Turk, like Boetti, is challenging notions of authorship and authenticity, whereby he becomes the instigator and the prisoners are the workforce tasked with creating the art.

**How have they been true to their art form?**

Having a primarily conceptual practice that continues to challenge ideas of identity and ownership, this project is not a departure from Turk's normal practice and in this way could be seen as being true to his art form. ... He describes the project in a very simplistic way, which seems neither to mislead nor dress the project up as something other than what it is. He is also open about his artistic influences and inspiration for designing the project.

**In your opinion, how have they compromised their art form?**

... Much of his other work seemingly seeks to push boundaries or contribute a fresh perspective on the themes that he is concerned with. In this instance however, there almost feels like a lack of substance or debate surrounding the work; where much of his work, by its very nature, encourages debate and a questioning approach from the viewer. Whilst it is clearly exciting for the inmates involved to be participating in a project such as this, it feels as though very little is made of the partnership with Fine Cell Work or the fact that Turk is working with prisoners as oppose to any population that could be used for the purpose of stitching tapestries as a mode of questioning authorship and authenticity.

**How could they have changed their project to compromise?**

Elaborating on the project in interviews or giving a more in depth statement about the work, his reasons for wanting to work with prisoners etc, might reveal this critical perspective; however the sparse and simplistic answers given don't convey much of an interest in working with this population, nor do they convey his enthusiasm for working with these concepts and concerns.

Outside In

*By Kass Boucher*

**The project**

This was a collaborative project supported by the "*Writers in Prisons Network*" between young men at HMYOI Portland and young men and women at Bryanston School, an independent boarding and day school for boys and girls aged 13-18. The Head of Learning and Skills at HMYOI Portland wanted a book produced with writing from the prisoners and from sixth formers at Bryanston School. The YOI was keen that the project should be directed by the young people themselves. The young people compared their apparently contrasting lives and set the parameters for the book.

The project was to produce a ninety page book in five days of workshops with the prisoners at the YOI and one day of workshops at Bryanston. On the final day the groups met up and wrote a couple of final collaborative pieces talking about life on both sides of the fence, discussed their experience in the project and what form the book should take. The result is 'Outside In' published by Bar None Books. While many may see this as a social experiment, for me it was an opportunity to see and publish fresh writing from young writers produced in a most unusual situation.

**How have they been true to their art form?**

The project identified and nurtured talent. It brought together two seemingly 'different' groups to produce an anthology of work. From a creative point of view this is a great way to spark ideas and encourage experiential reflection: a valuable resource for creative writing. The project also appears to have encouraged writing in different forms, allowing participants to discover and experiment with various styles and genres and, therefore, find their own creative 'voice' as a writer. Affording participants a certain amount of editorial control, with intervention appearing to be restricted to 'shaping' the work produced, allowed them to explore other aspects of the writing process, such as audience and editing. It facilitated the publication of new writing by young people, writing that was described as being 'incredibly honest,' and it is hoped that many of the participants will continue to write.

### **How have they compromised?**

The aim was to produce a book. The result is the book. However, publication is not necessarily a pre-requisite for writing creatively. Many people write for years with no expectations of publication. To state this 'aim' for the project can narrow its creative potential. To impose criteria for publication upon this type of project or workshop can also impose restrictions upon its creative potential; it brings the audience to the fore, influencing the nature and content of the output. The project is referred to as collaboration. However, we could question whether asking two groups of people to write about their disparate experiences and publish them together is, in fact, a creative 'collaboration' or more a creative juxtaposition. Moreover, the facilitator states that the work of the six-form students was not shared with the young offenders, and vice versa, until the final day of the project meaning that the majority of the work was produced within the isolation of the participants' usual writing context.

### **How could they have changed their project to avoid these compromises?**

It would be interesting to know what the selection criteria were for both sets of participants, particularly those from the YOI, to ascertain to what extent they may have compromised the artistic outcomes of the project. The aims of the project could also be reconsidered so that the emphasis is on writing as a form of self-expression rather than for publication. Another suggestion would be to bring the two groups of participants together more during the writing process to produce and workshop written pieces in sync.

### **Comparison between Blantyre House and HMP Bronzefield.**

*by Vasiliki Gkotsi*

#### **The project**

Comparing the art experiences of Blantyre House, an open prison with art studio facilities and HMP Bronzefield



### **How they have been true to the art form?**

BLANTYRE HOUSE: The artist and art tutor responsible for the art studio and the personal art projects, made sure to give a great opportunity to each inmate by providing a range of mediums such as drawing, watercolour, oil paints, assembles and sculpture. She encouraged the inmates to develop personal artworks according to their ideas and expressional needs and gave them general directions for each project. She offered an enormous space of freedom to explore possibilities and respected their choices even when they didn't look realistic.

BRONZEFIELD: Nathalie Roset, artist-in-residence, organized the women prisoners to design and decorate a terracotta figure during a two-week period set aside by the art tutors to focus on making work for submission to the yearly Koestler Awards. This project is very specific with a particular theme and target with results from drawings to paintings.

Both projects are faithful to the various art forms they use as well as to the different approaches and methods of art. The first allows the theme to be arranged by each inmate who freely explores possibilities and the second one is focus on a specific theme and target.

### **How do they compromise?**

BLANTYRE HOUSE: The first project resulted in a very mixed exhibition of inmates who presented what they wanted without focusing to a bigger picture of an exhibition. Some exhibits were standing without a purpose other than the desire of the artist. A concept of showing "all I have done", even if the themes or the levels would look different, was at some cases obvious. The critical thinking was limited in a personal and in a group level of understanding. It seemed that the established freedom of expression was a way beyond the exploration and the growth of the work, failing to focus on specific artistic choices, which will lead inmates to have a more tangible result.

BRONZEFIELD: In the second project we see the opposite. The specific result is achieved in only two weeks time, which leads to an instant satisfaction and confidence but limits the personal expression and a greater search on personal themes and preferred mediums.

## EUROPEAN PRISON ARTS

### **How they could have changed their project to avoid their compromises?**

**BLANTYRE HOUSE:** In the first case they could have given more time and focus on how to develop critical thinking in their work, evaluating their work in comparison with other artists creating similar work. In addition, they could have taken a greater responsibility for the final appearance of their work no matter the level of the work. This could have been achieved by rehearsing the hanging of their work and observe it during the process of the work and developing a group communication encouraging an inner support between the inmates.

**BRONZEFIELD:** At the second case, we have a clear target to achieve and it needs to be clear that this exploration is specific and limited and that following steps or instructions is only a limited part of art. Here, it depends on the ability of the artist to inspire improvisations and medium's explorations balancing expression with the final results within the time frame.

## SUBJECTS OF OTHER CASE STUDIES

**Burnbake Trust's 'Prison Art Project'** - Nicole Artingstall

**Jeremy Deller, war artist** - Cat Roisetter

**'Prison Landscapes' by Alyse Emdur** - Deborah Aguirre Jones

**LOCKDOWN by Dread Scott** - Evan Ifekoya

**Art Intervention: AS220 Youth** - Jacqueline McCullough

**Janie Paul & Buzz Alexander project** - Jodie Sadler



## PARTING WORDS

*But one day I'll be free from this cell, one day I'll serve out my time,  
Though the number that they gave me will tell I'm never free from my crime;  
Not free - but the pain will recede, my life begins to repair  
And show others how much we all need song and dance in the air.*

Dear visitor

I hope you have enjoyed wandering round our exhibition, discovering exhibits which have impressed you, surprised you, even inspired you to undertake creative work of your own. In these dark times, especially for those unlucky enough to spend much of their time behind bars, we need things to cheer us up, make us feel that our world isn't quite as bleak as we often perceive it, that there is someone out there prepared to listen and empathise.

The 6 Wings that you have wandered through demonstrate only a small amount of the art work and ideas produced in prisons all over Europe and beyond by teachers, artists, prisons staff, inmates and ex-prisoners. For many they have provided encouragement for them to pursue their creative talents outside the prison, for others an escape from the stresses inside jails, for all a way of discovering the positive side of their nature which art can encourage.

I wish you a safe journey home and hope your visit has provided something for you to carry forward with you once you pass out of the prison gates.

*And these bars that won't let me go,  
These bars that won't let me go by,  
One day they'll melt like the snow  
And we'll sing and we'll laugh and we'll fly.*

*Movable Barres Blues*

Alan Clarke,  
Museum Curator