



Workshops European Summer Academy

European Identity in Times of Crisis (EITC)

European Summer Academy 2017: Myths of Europe – April 29th to May 8th

Title: **Playback the Myth of Europa.** *A workshop of interactive approaches among the multicultural representatives of the European countries*

Workshop Trainer: Dr. Maria Konstantinidou, Eleni Leventi

Workshop description

The myth of Europa has inspired many artists, writers and historians throughout the centuries.

The most common version, according to Greek mythology, is the follow: the Olympian chief god Zeus, sees Europa, daughter of Agenor (king of Phoenicia), playing with her friends near the sea. Instantly impressed by her striking beauty and grace, Zeus metamorphoses in a glorious white bull and approaches her calmly while his breath has the smell of roses. Europa fascinated by its handsome flanks and gentle behavior caresses him and gets onto his back. Zeus takes the opportunity to abduct Europa and swims (with the companion of dolphins) to the island of Crete. There reveals his true identity to Europa. The mortal woman becomes another of the god's lovers. Europa gives birth to three sons – Minos, Rhadamanthys and Sarpedon.

The myth of Europa, as every myth, has a lot of symbolisms and a lot of different interpretations.

Is the myth symbolizes the sacred marriage where Zeus fertilizes the mother Earth with the element of Nature? Is the myth of Europa a report to the mythological roots of Europe regarding to the Greek civilization and the creative adventure of the European unification? Is the bull-god the President of the European Union, snatching Europa away towards an economic and cultural unification? Is Europa a naïve, passive victim or an adventurous woman that takes the bull by the horns and seeks her destiny behind the horizon? Or does the bull represent the world that is madly in love with beautiful Europa?

These are some of the questions that will motivate the participants of the workshop to reveal their own thoughts and feelings in order to build a common field of creative actions, through the elements mainly of Playback Theatre techniques but also through



Dance Movement Therapy and Psychodramatic techniques (Improvisation and Role Play Games, Body Contact and Release, Relaxation techniques etc).

This workshop will provide a safe and creative environment where the participants will share, interpret, brighten, unite, construct, play and enjoy. An environment where they will find the space to express their common inheritance as Europeans, that is, the free and restless spirit, the mobilization of emotions, the meeting of civilizations.

After all, isn't that the main symbolisms of the myth of Europa but also the main messages of the particular project that we are all participating to?

What is Playback Theatre

Playback Theatre is an improvisational interactive form of theatre in which viewers themselves turn out to be the protagonists. Members of the audience are invited to share with others a personal thought, story, incident or feeling.

Playback performers specialize in three roles: conductor, actor and musician. The Conductor of the Playback Theatre group, listens and feels with all his heart the narrator of the story and then asks from the Actors and the Musician who are on stage to enact the story, that is to play it back (hence it is called called **Playback**) using appropriate techniques and the accompaniment of improvised music. So the story comes to life in an artistic form and returns to the narrator-viewer. There is no script or score, just body movement, voice and words.

In other words, what really happens is a reflection of the narrator's story through an emotional "echo". After that, another viewer becomes narrator, then another one, and the performance goes on...

HISTORY

Playback Theatre was created and developed during the 1970s' by Jonathan Fox, an American actor and psychodramatist, and Jo Salas; it was based on Psychodrama, Narrative, Classical and Greek Classic Theatre.

APPLICATIONS

Since it was first created, Playback Theatre has spread all over the world and is used in a variety of social structures (Centres for Addictions and Rehabilitation, Centres for the Support of Young People, Socially Vulnerable Groups, Refugees, Immigrants, Volunteers, Schools, Hospitals, Orphanages, Nursing Homes, Prisons and so on), in the field of Science and Art and in every field of human life, taking the form of a performance or a training/experiential workshop.



AIM

Through Playback Theatre people can come closer, learn to express themselves, communicate, externalize their feelings and of course listen respectfully to the stories of other people.

Playback Theatre constitutes a forum for social dialogue, reinforcement of social membership and cohesion through mutual understanding and support, providing solutions to problems, discharging negative emotions, enhancing group dynamics and improving working relations while, at the same time, it bridges differences among people and promotes art and civilization.

THE IDENTITY OF "ECHO" GROUP

Inspired by the philosophy of Playback Theatre, the group **"Echo"**, trained and certified for this kind of acting, was created in September 2015 in Thessaloniki, Greece, while later on, in June 2016, took the shape of a Social Corporation.

Conductor: Eleni Leventi (psychodramatist, Playback Theatre trainer). Actors: Maria Konstantinidou, Efi Magoula, John Sempros, Katerina Tzioridou, Evi Christopoulou. Musicians: John Sempros, Katerina Tzioridou, Anna Kalymniou Photography: Paris Kampakis.

"ECHO'S" ACTIVITY

The first "Echo's" official performance was held on 21st February 2016 at the Homeless Dormitory of the Social Organization for the Support of Young People named "Arsis" in Thessaloniki. Then the group performed at the 2nd Workshop for High- and Senior High-School Teachers "Personal Development through Art" of the Centre of Advice and Orientation of Eastern Thessaloniki (9/3/2016) and at the 1st Second Chance School of Thessaloniki (25/5/2016), Red Cross of Thessaloniki, for staff members (21/11/2016), the XEN Thessaloniki, Women's Non-Governmental Voluntary Organization (22/01/2017).

Finally, open rehearsals took place in Thessaloniki at the artistic café "Red Thread Tied" (17/4/2016) and for the global initiative project of The Centre for Playback Theatre (New York) entitled "*Where are we going?*"(23/10/2016).





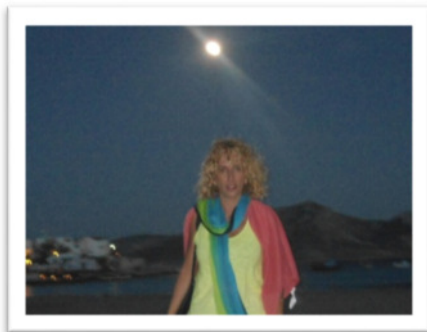
"Echo" Playback Theater



Biography



ELENI LEVENTI has a **B.A.** in Behavioral and Social Sciences, major in Psychology and is a psychodramatist. She has a large experience in the field of Playback Theatre as Co-founder, president, director and trainer of the Social Corporation "Echo" Playback Theatre. She is in private practice working with individual and groups (in Health ,Social, Education and Theatre areas) specializing to support the development of creative responses to life challenges with the implementation of Psychodrama, Playback Theatre, Role Playing and other Action and Creative methods.



Dr Konstantinidou Maria is Dance Movement Therapist, Adult Educator, Instructor of Adult Educators and Dance Researcher. She is the Director of the 1st Second Chance School in Thessaloniki and she works as DMT individually and in groups in private and social services. She gives workshops internationally.