

EDERED Encounter August 2016 Joachimstal, Germany and Maschewo, Poland

Introduction - A report from Faye Harrison, Youth Theatre Director, Garrick Youth Theatre on her experiences as a Workshop Leader at the EDERED Encounter held this year in Germany and Poland



Report - At the beginning of August I headed to Germany and Poland for the 2016 EDERED Encounter. I wasn't sure what to expect and to be honest, felt a little nervous as I had no previous experience of working with international students. But I needn't have feared as I had a brilliant time.

The workshop tutors from 10 different European countries met for three days before the 70 students arrived. We got to know each other so we could plan and discuss our ideas of the theme of *Fluid Boundaries*. From the moment I arrived I felt perfectly at home with everyone and loved learning about the different type of theatre work in which my fellow tutors were involved. There were experts in all sorts of fields from shadow theatre to physical theatre.

On Monday morning the young performers started to arrive at our residence in Joachimstal, Germany for the week. On the first evening the students found out which of the five groups they would be working in for the Encounter. The Polish workshop leader, Michal and I headed up **Team Octopus**: our 12 students came from England, Poland, Finland, Greece, Turkey, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Switzerland and France. And what a lively and enthusiastic bunch they were!



Our performance was held by a lake with a beach and we were asked to think about the elements of fire, water, earth and air. In the water, a scaffolding structure had been built and we had rowing boats if we wanted to use them.



During the days we worked on different ideas for the final performance at Maschewo, Poland. Our group wrote and composed their own song about the struggles of being young, which became somewhat of an EDERED anthem. The students taught it to the entire company and it was sung for the finale of the show. We also worked on the ever present topic of immigration and the students' thoughts on the impact it has had on their own countries.

During the evenings we spent time together doing different activities and getting to know each other. The Market Place was great fun. Every country had their own stall with items typical of their country. We, of course, had a selection of teas which went down very well - most countries drink tea without milk but most really enjoyed it with milk. We also had a selection of souvenirs like postcards, pencils and keyrings etc. My favourite stall was the Swiss one with an epic selection of cheese and chocolate! It was great to see everyone trading and haggling and getting involved with each other.



Another massive highlight was the parade of the nationalities with flags through Maschewo before the final performance. It was an overwhelming feeling to be a part of a company of around 150 people walking through the town getting waves and salutes from

passing cars and pedestrians.



The final performance was expertly threaded together by the artistic team from the incredible work that each of the 5 groups had put together. For me, the stand-out performance was the group dressed in white boiler suits with white drama masks and pipes in their mouths that emerged from the sand making an eerie sound with the pipes. It was like something out of a horror

film! The rowing boats were used by one group and one moment with a huge impact was when the entire company made a wall of refugees trying to get through a border fence made of bamboo canes.

Overall the experience was incredible and I would highly recommend youth theatres to get involved in future EDERED Encounters. It was so wonderful to see that theatre has no barriers and that young people are so open to the ideas of other nationalities and accepting of each other's differences.



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EDERED Encounter 2016 Facebook page: www.facebook.com/747386778673971/

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12th EDERED Encounter 23 Jul – 4 Aug 2017, Aalborg, Denmark
The theme will be "Tivoli"