



Roots

*EDEN Engagement: Riga
Root City Curriculum
Olga Jegunova & Liene Knaze*

JUNE 2023



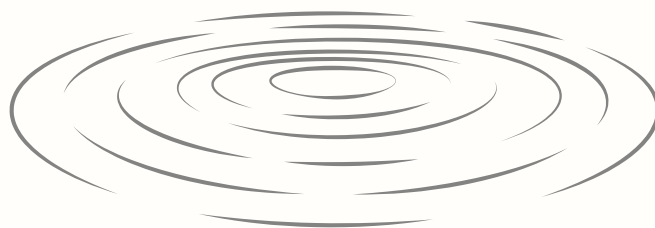
ABOUT

Three-time Grammy Award winning opera superstar Joyce DiDonato has created the global tour of EDEN, her major concert hall performance about environmentalism. Her personal commitment and partnership with ITAC has launched a re-imagining of the impact of a concert experience through teaching artist-led workshops in every city. The International Teaching Artists Collaborative (ITAC) is the world-wide network of artists who work in community and educational settings, who have the skills to bring change to communities. Together ITAC and EDEN Engagement will pilot a new approach to prove that touring can be a legitimate and powerful tool for change in communities.

Cities on the tour are designated either "Root Cities" or "Seed Cities". Root Cities are multiple day events (up to five days) that engage the youth with a specific environmental issue. The teaching artist selects a specific environmental issue they care about, which has a direct relevance for local concerns, and that has a direct link to something in the EDEN performance.

Goals: The workshops aim to accomplish two things:

1. To creatively engage community participants in the themes and visions of EDEN with such force that it changes their understandings, behaviors, and sense of agency regarding a significant local environmental issue in ways that can be documented. Workshop activities connect with the EDEN performance to amplify the impact.
2. To document the impact of the workshop series in such a way that its effect is reliably evident to those who were not present. It is the goal of EDEN Engagement to demonstrate to the concert touring industry that producers and artists can reach for more ambitious positive community impact through touring. They can generate a larger social benefit from performances than just the good experiences of the lucky few who could afford tickets. Traditional views of "outreach" have been outgrown; EDEN Engagement pioneers a new and greater value proposition for touring.



3 workshops at the School no 6 in Riga

200 children age 8 to 16.

June 15 – June 16 2023

Workshop leaders: Olga Jegunova & Liene Knaze

In order to reach every member of the choir, we have decided to divide all children in 3 groups:

Group 1 – Age 8 to 9

Group 2 – Age 9 to 10

Group 3 – Age 11– 16

Alongside the workshops, Olga will also accompany the choir during the rehearsals (where all 200 children will be singing together).

On the 1st day there will be a performance by Latvian eldest folk ensemble “Saviesi” who will be singing Latvian folk music on traditional musical instruments while wearing authentic traditional Latvian costumes. Through bringing in folk culture, we go back to the Roots of the music, beginning of the music.



Schedule

June 15

9:30 – 11:30 Workshop Group 1

12:00 – 12:20 Performance by Saviesi (in front of all 200 kids)

12:30 – 13:15 General choir rehearsal (all kids)

13:30 – 15:30 Workshop group 2

June 16

10:00 – 12:00 workshop Group 3

12:30 – 13:30 General choir rehearsal (all kids)

Description

All three workshops will have the same structure. The length of each workshop is 120 minutes. The length of each activity within the workshop will vary depending on the age and the attention span of the group (while younger make take longer to accomplish certain tasks, our goal is not to rush and push forward, rather – to support on every step of the workshop and accompany the children in this educational journey).

We have decided to create a “mosaic” of activities that together will unite into a beautiful idea of looking at the Roots of music and nature, as well as question our own identity. We will also look into possible future actions on how we can contribute to the matter and make a change. We will mix passive and active tasks and therefore will allow children to use all their learning facilities :

To Watch

Short films about folk music and nature, as well as current climate crisis issues (therefore adjusting to the modern way of education through the video format).

To Listen

Solo piano performance by Olga Jegunova (Brian Field – Glaciers, Peteris Vasks – The White scenery)

To Dance

Learning a folk dance (physical activity will activate an oxygen increase and will help the brain to accumulate more information). While collaborating with peers, this offers a healthy cardio workout and is simply lots of fun!

To Talk

Having an interactive approach – brainstorming together on current crisis issues and looking for solutions.

To Act

DIY – By creating a bag from a used T-shirt we address consumerism issues and teach children to be creative and sustainable.

In these workshops we work on creativity, communication, collaboration, intuition, concentration, imagination. The goal is to bring awareness about the climate crisis throughout the sensitivity that we have thanks to music.



STRUCTURE

Introduction

(10 min)

- Presenting Joyce's artistic work and EDEN programme
- Liene explores current climate crisis with children in the interactive form

Music and Nature

(20 min)

- Watching an excerpt from the movie about Latvian folk music and nature 2. Olga explores relationships between music and nature while showing musical examples of Vivaldi's The seasons and Debussy's La mer.
- Exploring silence as an element of music and nature - Olga plays The white scenery by Peteris Vasks.

Dance and play

(20 min)

- Children dance Latvian folk dances with live accompaniment by Liene and Olga Kadas dejas?

Forest

(15 min)

- Liene makes a presentation on Latvian forests (main Latvian recourses) and its inhabitants
- Olga improvises on piano those animals that children would ask her to illustrate.

DYI activity

(20 min)

- Making bag from used T-shirt

The water

(15 min)

- Liene makes a presentation on the water level growth
- Olga performs a composition by Brain fields - Glaciers and gives an example on how we can bring awareness through music.

Actions to stop the global warming

(5 to 10 min)

- Olga and Liene make a presentation on possible actions, giving children step-by step instructions on how to be helpful and useful.





Watch
the
Video!

IMPACT & EVALUATION

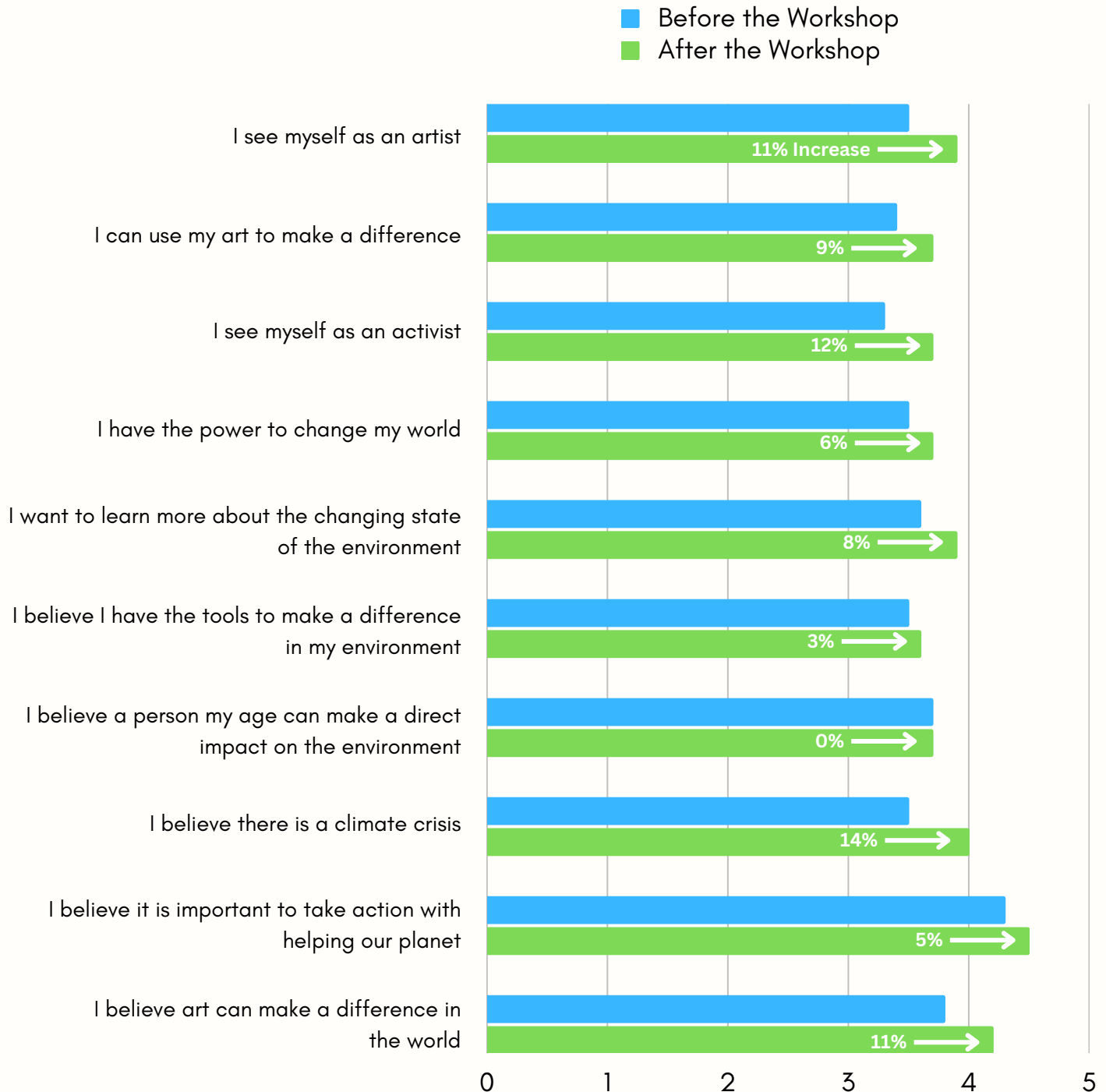


The goal of this effort is to learn about the impact that the activities have on participants. It is not gathered to impress funders, but to advance our own effectiveness in generating objective information about the power of our work. We are especially curious to learn if there is any evidence that they have the impulse to take action and/or feel they can make a difference—this is the high goal of the arts-for-climate field, and we believe teaching artists have a particularly strong contribution to the field. Teaching artists were encouraged to use the Continuum of Impact Guide as a model when thinking about impact and assessment in their workshops. We asked: Did participants demonstrate greater personal connection to this environmental issue and deepen their understanding of it? Did participants demonstrate a personal motivation to do something about this issue and show a sense that they could make a difference if they did? Did they actually take some action?



STUDENT EVALUATIONS

During this round of EDEN, students were given a survey before and after the workshops. These surveys were designed according to the outcomes provided in the Continuum of Impact Guide. Students were asked if they 1-Strongly Disagree, 2-Disagree, 3-Neither Agree or Disagree, 4-Agree, or 5-Strongly Agree with the following statements.



"I was really amazed how the participants listen to us and participated in all actions."

—Liene Knaže



REFLECTIONS FROM THE TEACHING ARTISTS

In what ways did you observe change in your participants understanding and engagement of the environmental issue you chose?

"After workshop they know more about local environmental issues and how to act more environmentally friendly."—Liene Knaze

"I felt that kids were curious to talk about their cultural roots while making a parallel to the nature and therefore a climate change. We made them think! The right action will surely follow."—Olga Jegunova

Did your EDEN experience expand your work or skills as a teaching artist in any specific ways?

"I learned how to work with smaller children with a lot of joy."—Liene Knaze

"Absolutely! Teaching 205 kids was such an amazing experience. To address such quantity, to make them listen and feel – that's such a pedagogical achievement! I feel very inspired by the whole project."—Olga Jegunova





We tasked each teaching artist with evaluating their students based on the Continuum of Impact Guide. They rated their students on a scale from 1 (no knowledge of the subject) to 4 (extremely knowledgeable about the subject). The following graph reflects the teaching artists' observations of their students.



"When I asked them to listen to the silence and they all did. We were so together during this moment of visible nothingness which surely underlines a very meaningful connection that we all created."

—Olga Jegunova

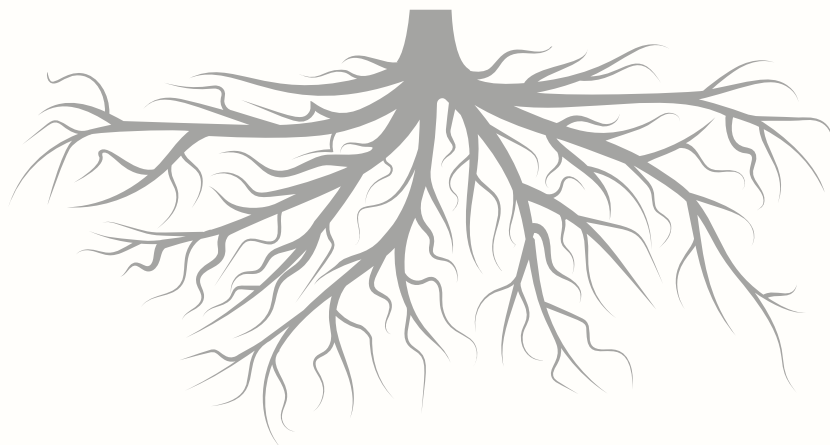


ABOUT THE TEACHING ARTISTS



LIENE KNAZE

Liene Knaze ir folkloras kopas saviešu vadītāja un vides aktīviste. Ar aizmuguri mākslā (Rīgas Dizaina un mākslas skola) un tradicionālajā kultūrā (Latvijas Kultūras akadēmija). Kā vides aktīviste viņa dodas uz skolām un stāsta par aprites ekonomiku un vienkāršiem soļiem, kā uzlabot ikdienas dzīvi. Kā arī praktisko darbnīcu veidošanu rokdarbos. Vienmēr prieks strādāt ar bērniem un jauniešiem.





OLGA JEGUNOVA

Olga Jegunova is a multifaceted Russian-Latvian artist combining various genres and disciplines. While being a classical concert pianist, she puts strong emphasis on educational projects and philanthropic work.

Alongside her award-winning pianist career, she has committed to a varied practice collaborating with other artists, publishing digitally and in print, launching a podcast as well as supporting musicians through fund-raising concerts. Olga's interactive approach to audiences is another one of her unique qualities reflected in an effort to involve them in the performance by breaking down the traditional boundaries of classical recital. This also led her to collaborating with creatives from different fields blurring the boundaries between modes of expression.

One of her recent projects is Music & Storytelling with Matthew Crampton. Together they created interactive storytelling programmes for all ages featuring greek mythology, Russian folklore and well-known stories like Peter & The Wolf and The Little Prince. Another recent project called Patience was created during the 2020-2021 corona crisis. It included recording and performing a newly commissioned piece by British composer Ben Ellin in collaboration with French photographer Gerard Uferas.

Olga has been playing piano for over 3 decades during which she performed in various genres as a soloist and in ensembles recognised by multiple international awarding bodies, artists and educational organisations. Among them are Jāzeps Vītols Latvian Academy of Music, Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg and the Royal College of Music in London. Her repertoire is therefore vast, spanning from baroque to contemporary pieces composed especially for her. Olga also is a Steinway Artist.

Another branch of Olga's creative career is music journalism and education. Having presented the Tchaikovsky contest LIVE for Medici TV, she started publishing interviews for ZIMA Magazine in print and Russian Art & Culture digitally. This evolved into her podcast exploring the history of music and contemporary musical practice where she is joined by acclaimed creatives to talk about tradition, meditation, experimentation and much more.

Olga has also created a charity supporting talented musicians of all ages and organising fundraising events digitally and live. As an open-minded and dedicated creative, Olga continuously expands her practice in an effort to enrich the music community.

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