

Where is Nature?

*EDEN Engagement: Barcelona
Seed City Curriculum
Laura Blanch Bigas*

MAY 2023



International Teaching Artists Collaborative (ITAC)
and
Joyce DiDonato's

EDEN ENGAGEMENT

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". Seed Cities are a 1-4 day(s) event that engages the youth with one of three specific environmental issues; Urban Gardens, Urban Trees, Food Choices:

- Urban Gardens: They are youth-friendly. Among many social benefits, they bring these environmental benefits: reduce carbon use (reduced food transport); reduce water runoff; help pollinators; plants absorb CO₂ and pollutants and produce oxygen; health benefits in the food and the community building (reduced stress and blood pressure).
- Urban Trees: Trees are omnipresent and overlooked in cities—kid friendly. They can plant them, and the EDEN performance encourages that. Trees are powerful answers to heat mitigation (reduce temperatures by 8 to 10 degrees and need for air conditioning), carbon and pollution sequestration and oxygen production, water flow pollution reduction, biodiversity, and food insecurity. Health benefits include healthier air, psychological benefits, lowering blood pressure and stress.
- Food Choices: Scientists have proven that small choices make a big difference. Because many foods with a high health burden, including processed meats or red meats, also have high environmental costs, switching out 10 percent of a person's daily caloric intake can cut a person's food-based environmental footprint by over 30 percent. Between growing it, packaging it, moving it around, cooking it, and often wasting it, food production makes up about one-fifth to one-third of all annual greenhouse gas emissions globally. Eat less red and processed meats, eat more veggies and fruits, reduce food waste, and if you have a way...compost.

Teaching Artist: Laura Blanch Bigas

Time: May 23rd + 25th

Students: 60 Students, Ages 8-18

Choir: Cor Mitjans de l'Orfeó Català (8 to 10 years old) and Cors Infantil i Juvenil Palau Vincles (9 to 18)

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WORKSHOP 1 PALAU VINCLES

Coordinator: Tamar Aguilar

When: Tuesday 23rd May 2023 from 17:45 to 19:45

Where: Palau de la Música, Carrer Ortigosa, 10.

Directors: Mariona Fernández and Glòria Fernández

Workshop language: Catalan

Material:

- scrap paper with movement drawings
- 5 T-shirts of different colours
- tape roll to mark the floor/stage
- Plant pot and earth
- Music: Speaker Bluetooth and spotify playlist with sounds of nature
- Laptop and projector for Joyce's video message.

Participants:

- Number of kids 25: 14 from 8 to 12 years old plus 11 from 13 to 15 years old.



WORKSHOP 2 EL COR DE MITJANS DE L'ORFEÓ

Producer of Cor de mitjans de l'Orfeó: Alba Albert

When: Thursday 25th May 2023 from 17:45 to 19:45

Where: Palau de la Música, Carrer Ortigosa, 10.

Director of the choir: Glòria Fernández

Participants:

- Number of kids 34
- Ages from 9 to 11 years old
- Catalan main language

Workshop

Welcome & Check In (5 minutes)

- Circle: Presentation of the Session

Warm Up (20 minutes)

- Circle: introduction of theater tools
 - Body and voice (emotions, speed)
 - Space (levels and trajectories)
- Other:
 - warm up music
 - 13-15 years old leading changes when the dynamic is set.

Activity 1 (20 minutes)

- Circle: Exercise: 'What do you do?'
- Performing daily physical actions:
 - At home when we wake up
 - On our way to the school
 - When we get in the school

Activity 2 (20 minutes)

- Key question trajectory: 2 spots on the floor: House & School
- Question: Where is Nature in our urban daily life?
- Impersonating different living beings of the city: trees, birds.
 - Emotions of the living beings.
 - Speed of the living beings.
- Other:
 - from sculptures to movement
 - spotify music

Break & Joyce's Message (10 minutes)

- Setting laptop for Joyce's message

Culminating Presentations (30 minutes)

- 4 groups need to create a journey that takes their main character from home to the school and they need to place nature in every step of the way.
- Each group presents their creation.

EDEN Anthem (15 minutes)

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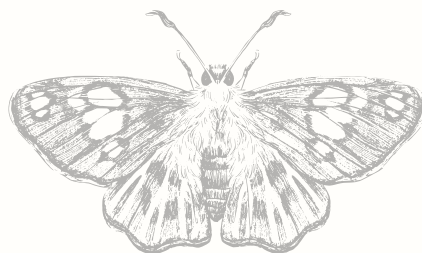
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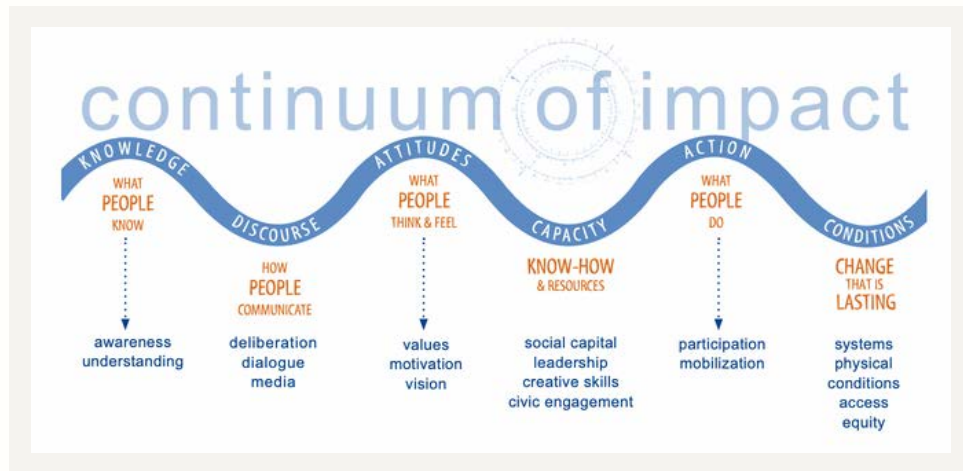
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IMPACT & EVALUATION



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?



REFLECTIONS FROM THE TEACHING ARTISTS

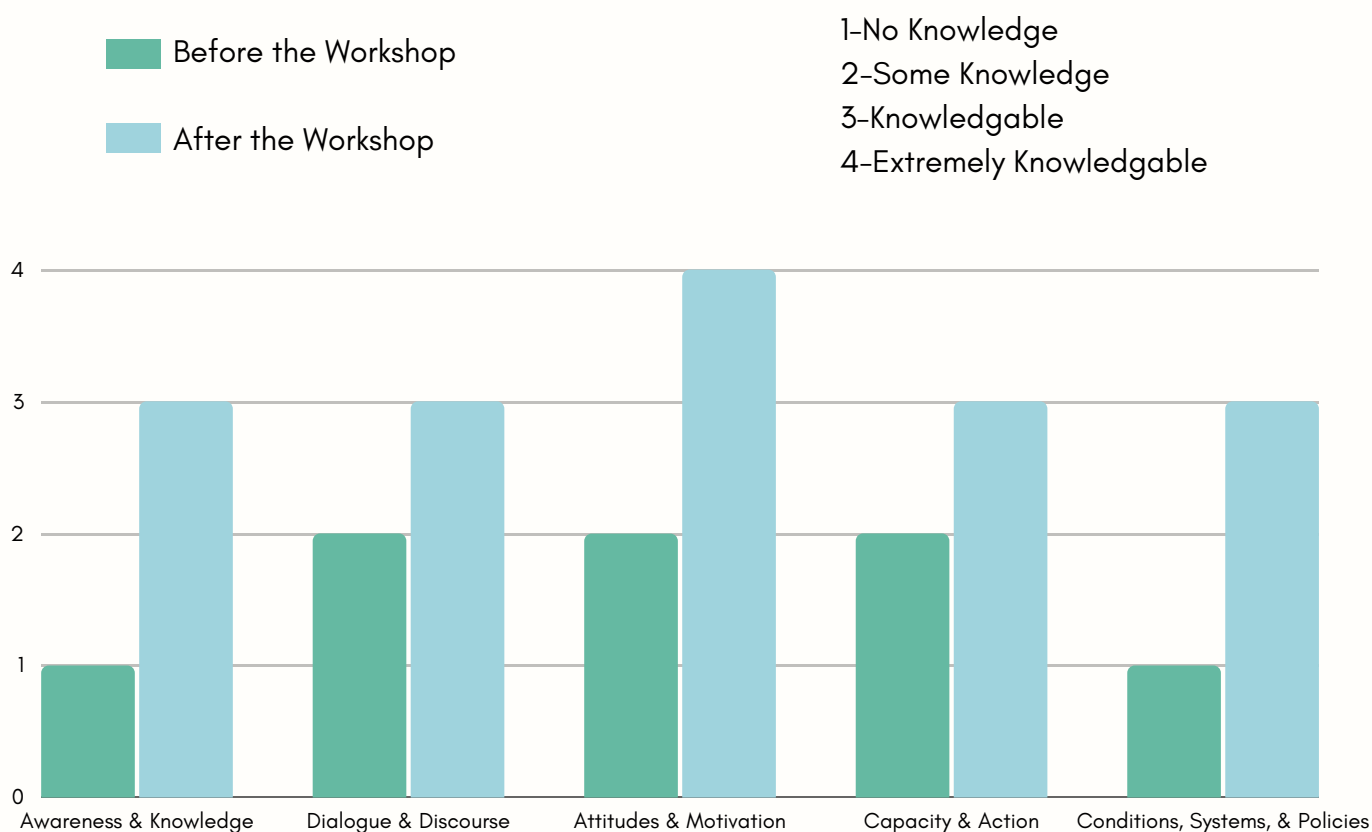
In what ways did you observe change in your participants understanding and engagement of the environmental issue you chose?

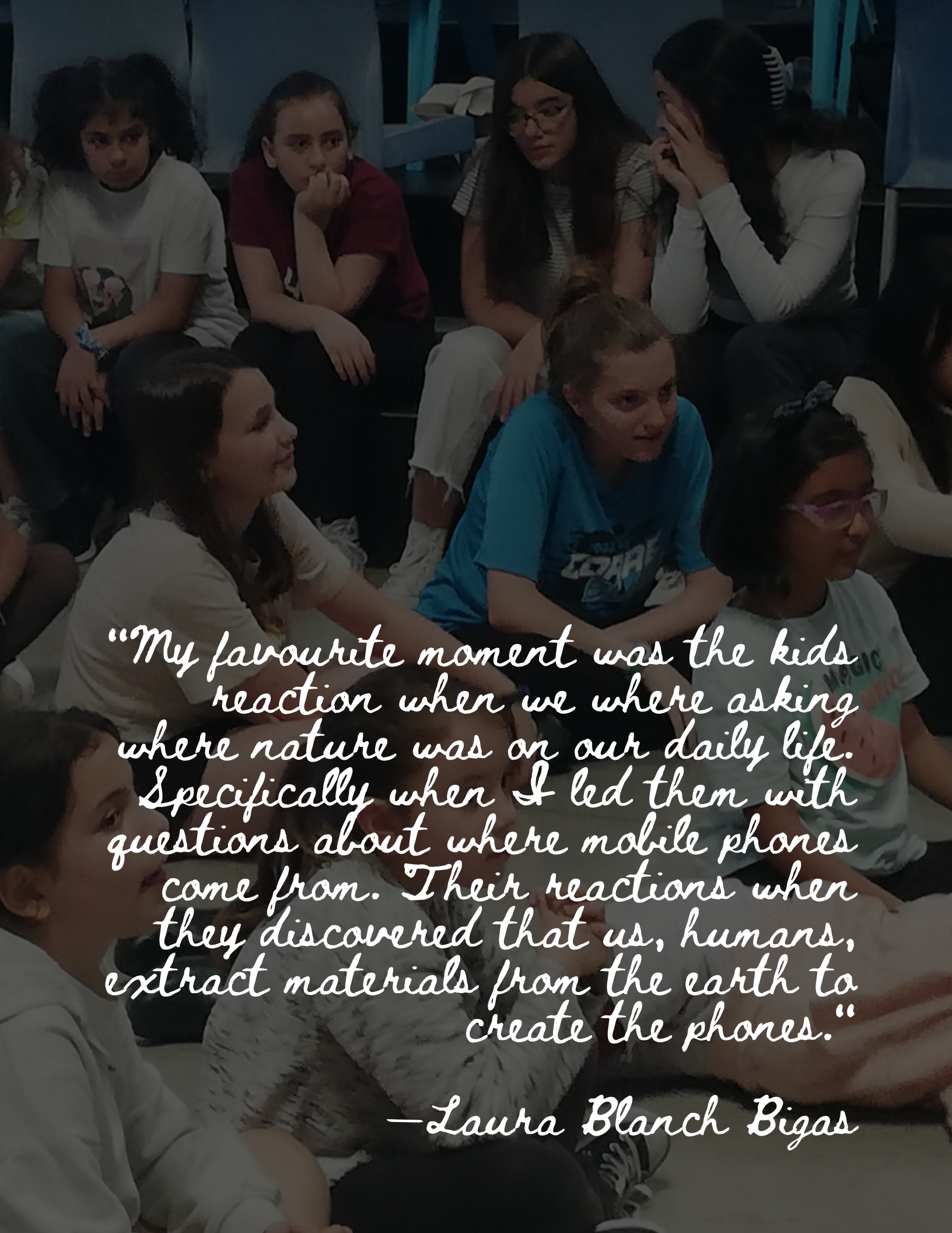
"In their approach towards nature and trees in their final performances per groups and beforehand in the comments and questions while creating them."

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

"Yes, it did. As I had just 2h with a ratio of 30 kids and with many last minute changes, I could prove myself that I had tools to adapt to the reality very quickly and at the same time made everybody comfortable and heart."

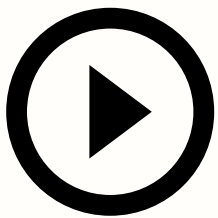
We tasked each teaching artist with evaluating their students based on the Continuum of Impact Guide. They rated their students on a scale from 1 (no knowledge of the subject) to 4 (extremely knowledgeable about the subject). The following graph reflects the teaching artists' observations of their students.



A group of diverse young people, mostly teenagers, are sitting on the floor in a dimly lit room. They are all looking towards the left side of the frame, appearing to be listening to someone off-camera. The lighting is soft and focused on the group, with the background being dark. The overall mood is one of engagement and attentiveness.

"My favourite moment was the kids reaction when we where asking where nature was on our daily life. Specifically when I led them with questions about where mobile phones come from. Their reactions when they discovered that us, humans, extract materials from the earth to create the phones."

—Laura Blanch Bigas



Watch
the
Video

ABOUT THE TEACHING ARTIST



LAURA BLANCH BIGAS

Laura is a theatre facilitator, an actress and a producer based in Barcelona. She currently coordinates a Community Arts Festival in the municipality of Salt. Previously she has collaborated in its three past editions of ICAF , the International Community Arts Festival that happens in Rotterdam. She is also the production manager of the Barcelona Dance Film Festival, Choreoscope. She studied an MA in Applied Theatre at Goldsmiths University of London and lived in the city for six years where she worked as a freelance theatre facilitator in different social contexts. Her facilitating theatre methodology is based in critical thinking, team building and promoting self-awareness.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Joyce DiDonato & Askonas Holt

EDEN Engagement
Sophie Dand

International Teaching Artist Collaborative (ITAC)
Madeleine McGirk, Eric Booth

ITAC's EDEN Engagement Project Manager & Packet Design
Katie Rainey

Teaching Artists & Curriculum Design
Laura Blanch Bigas

Choir
Cor Mitjans de l'Orfeó Català & Cors Infantil i Juvenil Palau Vincles

Education Partners
Tamar Aguilar & Alba Albert

