



# SUSTAINABLE CITIES

*EDEN Engagement: Brussels  
Root City Curriculum  
Chrysa Karageorgiou*

**FEBRUARY 2022**



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". 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. For the Brussels workshops, teaching artist Chrysa Karageorgiou focused on reimagining the city with her students to be a more sustainable "green" city. The students became "eco-designers" and reimagined, through visual art-making, their city in a more sustainable way.

Teaching Artist: Chrysa Karageorgiou

Duration: Four workshops on Wednesday afternoons in February. Each workshop ran approximately 90 minutes.

Where: 10 rue Fernand Bernier, 1060 Brussels (Saint-Gilles)

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.

# WORKSHOP 1 (90 MINUTES)

## Opening/Meeting (10 minutes)

Have the group of children make a circle and sit down. Each child must say their first name and something that they like about the city of Brussels.

## Introduction of the EDEN Project & Subject (20 minutes)

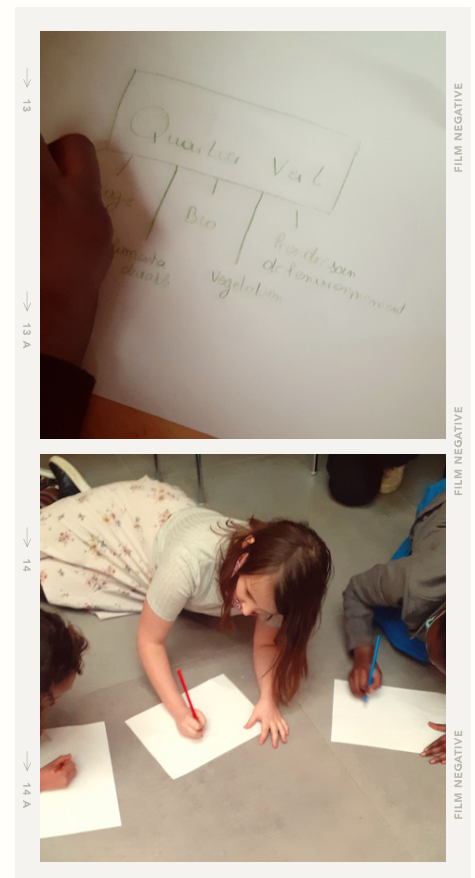
In order to be able to measure the impact of the workshops that will follow, we will create a mind map on the theme of Smart Cities (Sustainable Cities). Each child is given a piece of paper and pencil. Students will draw a circle in the middle of the sheet. In the circle we will write Quartier Vert (for younger children) and Ville Durable (for older children). We then create a mental map based on the chosen subject (Green District & Sustainable City).

## Making a Mind Map:

- Start with a blank page and pencils
- Create the heart of the map, the main theme that is placed in the center. We use positive/evocative terms (never negative).
- Draw branches from this center for all related sub-topics. These branches allow you to prioritize your ideas from what is most important to the most detailed points.
- Each branch represents an idea. We use keywords for each of the concepts mentioned. They are written legibly and quite large. You can also choose a color for each branch idea.
- A branch idea will lead you to another idea (sub-branches). Use the same color for the same ideas.

## Group Discussion:

- After collecting the children's prior knowledge on the main subject, we will have a group discussion. We try to answer the following questions:
  - What is a Green District?
  - What is a Sustainable City?
  - Why do we need sustainable cities?
  - Do you know of any green projects in your neighborhood?
- Following this discussion, we show the children images of "Green neighborhoods" or "Sustainable cities". Existing projects or future projects.
- Then, two children will read the definition of the concept of the "Sustainable City" and the "Green Quarter". We will break down all parts of the definition and analyze all parts of the concepts and issues.
  - What are the environmental and societal issues?
  - How can we help?
  - What are the habits to follow and what are the behaviors to avoid?





### Why are we here? (10 minutes)

- Following the discussion, it is important to make the link between Joyce DiDonato's show and the workshops. The objective of these workshops is to engage creatively as responsible citizens in order to imagine an eco-responsible future.
- How can different art forms help us imagine greener and more sustainable cities?
- We are going to become the eco-designers/eco-creators of our neighborhood. For this we will use different forms of art: photography, painting, collage, street art. We are going to imagine how our neighborhood could be if it were eco-responsible.

### Seeds of Hope song (15 minutes)

- The lyrics of the song "Seeds of hope" are written in English but the children who sing them are French-speaking. The discovery of the text in French is therefore essential. In order to help children understand what they are singing we read the lyrics in French. It is important to listen to their comments and thoughts around the subject of the song 'Seeds of Hope':
  - What is the message of this song?
  - What does this song inspire in you?
  - When you close your eyes, what do you see?

### Materials:

- printed and laminated sample images of sustainable cities
- A4 sheets
- normal pencils
- coloring pencils





# WORKSHOP 2 (90 MINUTES)

## Opening/Remembering (10 minutes)

- We will take time to remember our first day together.
  - What is the subject of our workshops?
  - What did we do last Wednesday?
  - Why?
- Briefly explain the schedule for the day. Then, create three subgroups (blue, green, yellow) that will work together. Each child must wear their group badge during the activity.

## In the Field (60 minutes)

- The three groups of children, accompanied by a facilitator for each group, will go on a walk in the city of Brussels in the district of Saint-Gilles. The children will observe the landscape around them during the walk. They have to choose an eco-irresponsible, unsustainable or gray place, corner, scene or behavior and take a picture of it.
- The goal is to choose a landscape ready to transform. An urban place where the imagination and creativity of eco-designers can intervene in a positive way. Cities need the critical eye of responsible citizens. Responsible citizens need creative solutions. Children are responsible, engaged and creative citizens.
- After taking the photo, each child must explain the reasons why they chose this place. Like a short interview with an expert, the child must cite the reasons why this place is considered eco-irresponsible. Their answers will be recorded as a voice message.

## Synthesis (15 minutes)

- Back in the workshop space, we will collect all the images taken in a cloud. Each group "leader" is responsible for collecting images of all the children in their group. It is important to know which child took which photo.

## Assessment (5 minutes)

- Facilitator will take a small assessment. Ask the students to say, "I liked, I did not like, my proposals, my preferences"

## Materials:

- Cameras and/or GSM
- Green, Blue, Yellow Thread (Team Badges)







Kathleen



Yunes





# WORKSHOP 3 (90 MINUTES)

## Opening/Remembering (10 minutes)

- We will take time to remember our previous two days together.
  - What is the subject of our workshops?
  - What did we do last Wednesday?
- Briefly explain the agenda for the “Create” day.

## Green Designers (70 minutes)

- The Green Designers are ready to act! Each child receives a photo taken last week, printed in black and white, A3 format. The young designers will imagine a city that is more respectful of the environment. The landscape photographed made the young people want to intervene and modify it.
- They will try to change the photographed setting by using classic art forms (painting, drawing, collage). The Green Designers will have at their disposal artistic material, natural material (leaves, sticks, pebbles), but also recycled material (plastic bottles, cardboard tubes, straws, crumpled paper, etc.).
- If a Green Designer wishes, they can completely recreate the photographed space. Based on the image that was captured during the walk, they can (on a white sheet) radically change the landscape by making a “before and after” image. If a Green Designer wishes, they can also create a sculpture of a tree or plant from the recycled material.
- Each Designer during the walk in the city recorded a voice message or a video: In this message they explained why the place photographed inspired them. This message will be broadcast when the final version of its green landscape is presented.

## Organize & Synthesize (10 minutes)

- We will store the materials and work in a secure place. If the Green Designers couldn't finish their work, we will continue next time.

## Materials:

- A3 printed pictures
- Scissors, Glue (sticks and liquid), wool, thread
- Paint, brushes, watercolor, pastels, pom poms, normal pencils, colored pencils
- A3, A4, A5 colored sheets, markers,
- Recycled material, garbage cans, natural material (leaves, sticks, pebbles)



# WORKSHOP 4 (90 MINUTES)

## Opening/Visit Green Projects in the Saint Gilles district (45 minutes)

- To close these environmental and creative meetings, we will visit “the educational garden of the printing works”.
- The Imprimerie project has existed since 2015 and the Wiels-en-Fleurs project since 2019. Their main objectives are to welcome biodiversity in the city, the well-being of the inhabitants, and the conviviality of the district. These spaces are made available free of charge to residents and the voluntary sector to carry out collective projects that fall within themes such as the environment, food, neighborhood conviviality, education and health.
- It is essential to show our eco-designers that they are not alone in imagining a greener and more responsible world. Indeed, there are many green projects in each district of the city of Brussels and it is important to show their work. The eco-designers of these four workshops have the same vision as the inhabitants who created these collective projects.

## Snack Break (10 minutes)

## Collective Moment (10 minutes)

- It is important to bring the group together and take stock of what we have seen. It is important to realize that green projects exist and that what we imagine we can achieve. Then, we will explain the organization of the rest of the workshop.

## Collective Street Art & Finalization of Work (40 minutes)

- We will split into two groups:
  - Group 1: Participants who have not had the opportunity to finalize their work will be able to complete their design. Once their work is complete, they will create a collective work of art on a large white sheet.
  - Group 2: The eco designers who have already finished their design, will participate in the creation of a collective and ephemeral work of street art. They are going to draw the floor of Bethlehem Square with chalk.
- (If it rains the designers will not create street art but they will create a large mural on a large white sheet.)
- During these two activities the participants will be interviewed on the cognitive and affective impact of these 4 workshops.

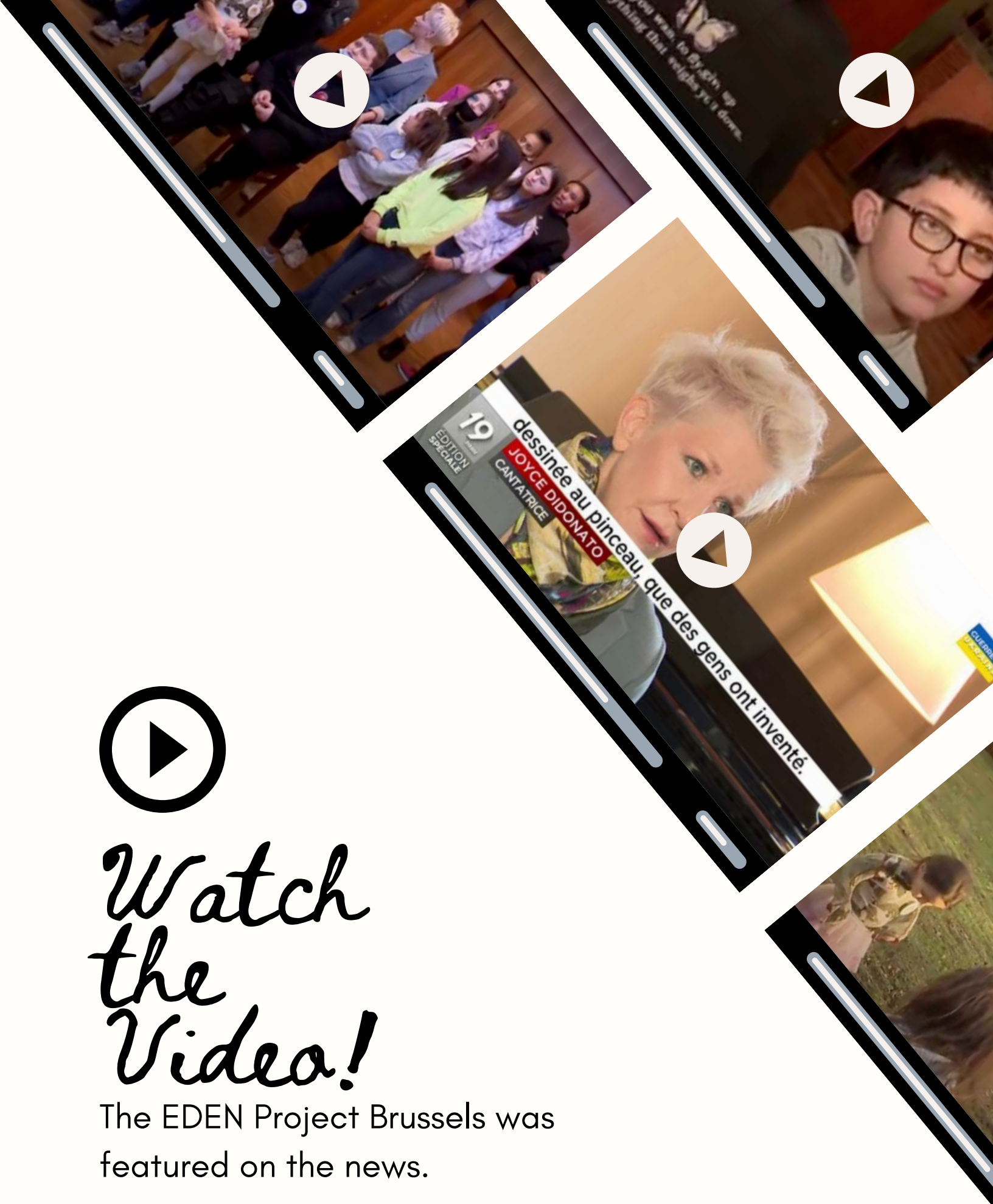
## Close (15 minutes)

- Make a small synthesis of what we experienced during these four workshops. It is important to talk about what we have done, share your impressions and thank each other. The key is to realize that together we can make the world a better place starting with our neighborhood.

## Materials

- Craft paper roll
- Chalks
- Paint brushes
- Paint
- Pastels
- Scissors

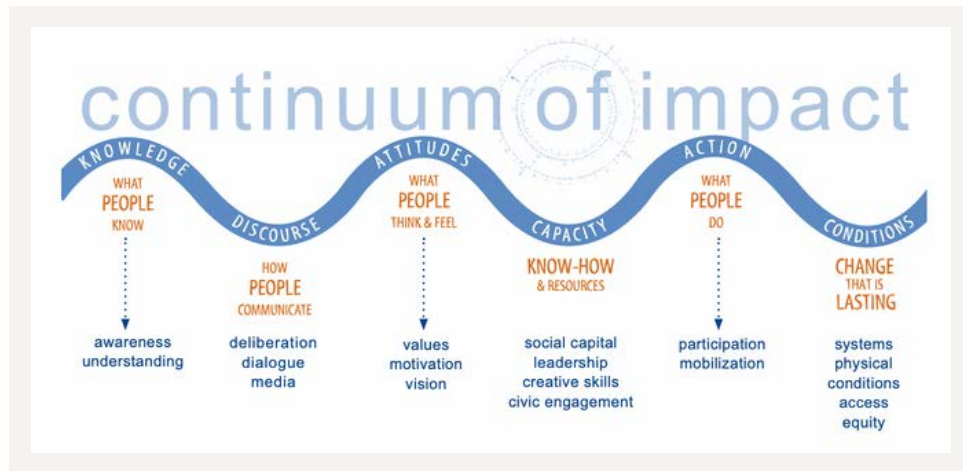




Watch  
the  
Video!

The EDEN Project Brussels was  
featured on the news.

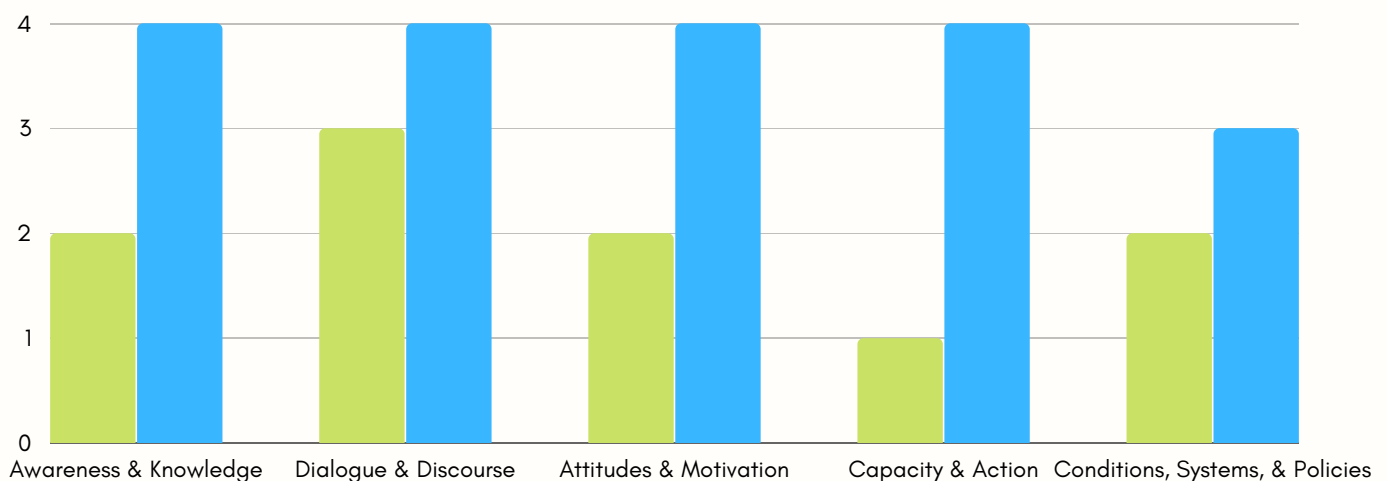
# IMPACT & EVALUATION



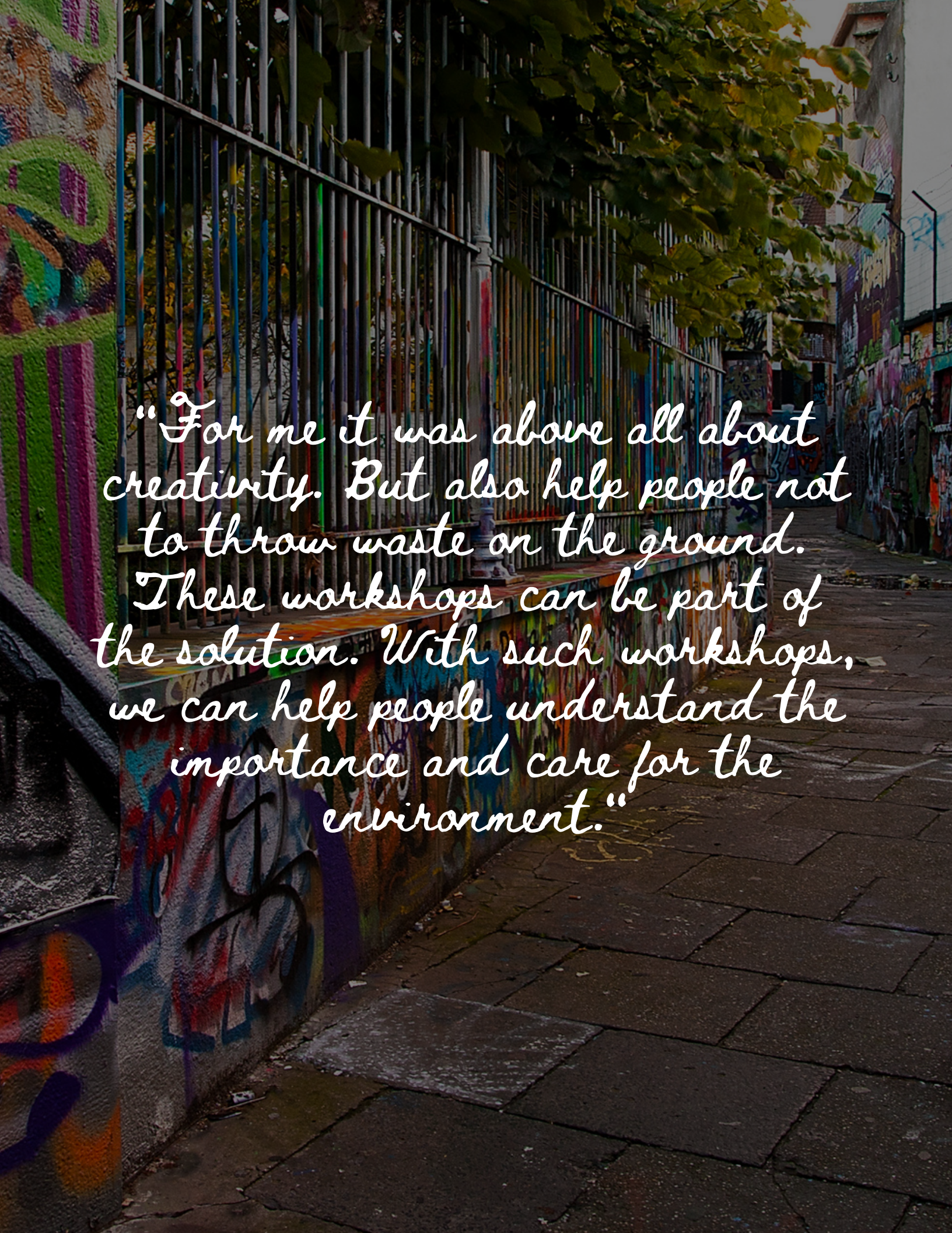
The goal of this effort is to learn about the impact that the activities have on participants. It is not gathered to impress funders, but to advance our own effectiveness in generating objective information about the power of our work. We are especially curious to learn if there is any evidence that 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?

The following graph results come from the teaching artist's observations of the students before and after the workshop series. They were asked to give their sense of the impact they saw in their students on a scale of 1 (No Knowledge) to 4 (Extremely Knowledgeable).

Before the Workshop  
After the Workshop





A photograph of a street scene. On the left, there is a wall covered in colorful graffiti. A metal fence with vertical bars runs along the wall. To the right of the fence, there are trees with green leaves. The ground is paved with dark stones. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, cursive font.

*"For me it was above all about creativity. But also help people not to throw waste on the ground. These workshops can be part of the solution. With such workshops, we can help people understand the importance and care for the environment."*



# Pre-Survey

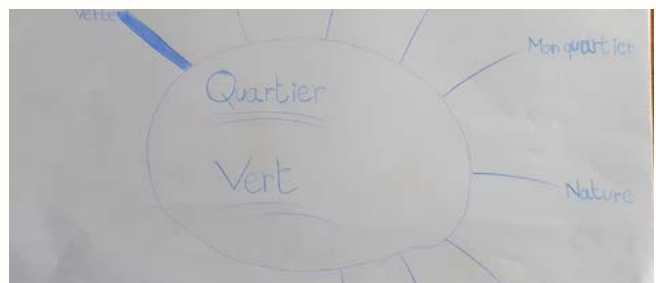
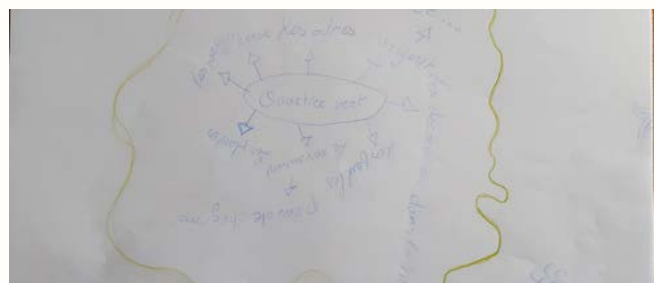
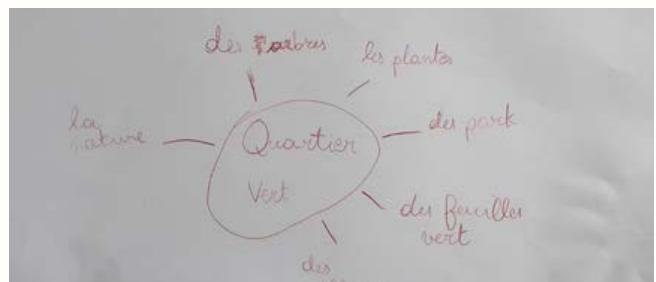
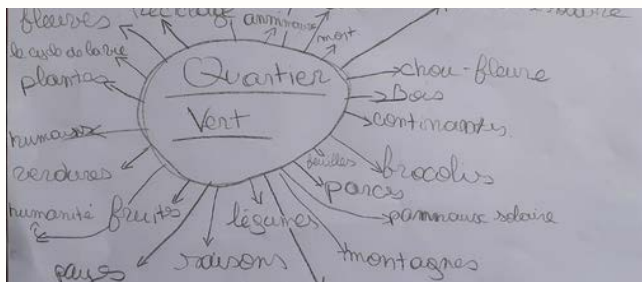
During the first workshop, teaching artist Chrysa Karageorgiou led the students in a group discussion about sustainable cities and the EDEN project (see Workshop 1 for full details). Two questions she asked the students were:

- What is a green district?
- What is a sustainable city?

The students were very forthcoming in their answers. Chrysa was surprised about the dissonance in knowledge some students had about sustainability and green initiatives.

They answered:

- "A green neighborhood has a swimming pool"
- "I once saw on the roof of a building, the inhabitants have created a vegetable garden"
- "A sustainable city is a city that uses renewable energies"
- "I think we need trees to be able to make paper to write on"
- "I wouldn't say my neighborhood is green"
- "I live next to two parks. My neighborhood is quite green"
- "I don't know the green projects in my neighborhood"
- "A green neighborhood has lots of organic shops"
- "Natural resources never end. Water will not run out. In any case, the water in the oceans cannot run out"
- "I have already visited a vegetable garden in the Boitsfort district"



# ***Post-Survey***

Seven children who participated in the four workshops were interviewed during the last workshop in order to measure the impact of this project. They were asked: what did you learn during these four workshops?

- I had heard of it before but I didn't know what a green neighborhood was and why it was called that.
- I didn't really have an idea of what a sustainable neighborhood could be. And yes what we lived these 4 weeks taught me what it was and how I can contribute.
- We also noticed that our neighborhood is very dirty.
- But we have seen that there are beautiful aspects of Brussels. Like the project we visited.
- Ah yes, it's true, I didn't know that the printing press existed. I did not know that urban gardens existed.
- I don't think that a place like we imagined in our creation exists, but there are efforts that are made to improve the neighborhood and life.
- Yes, it's true that I didn't know that before.
- And what is missing is the vegetation, the color green.
- Yes, and our neighborhood needs to be clean and more respectful of nature, humans and animals.

Three other children who participated in the workshop were interviewed during the last workshop in Bethlehem Square. They were asked: Did these workshops help you think about environmental issues?

- Yes a lot but even if I reflect, nothing will change. I don't make the big decisions. Even if we do all this, nothing will change. People will continue to pollute.

What can we do then? What are you proposing?

- Convince everyone that we have to change our attitude. That will be half the job.

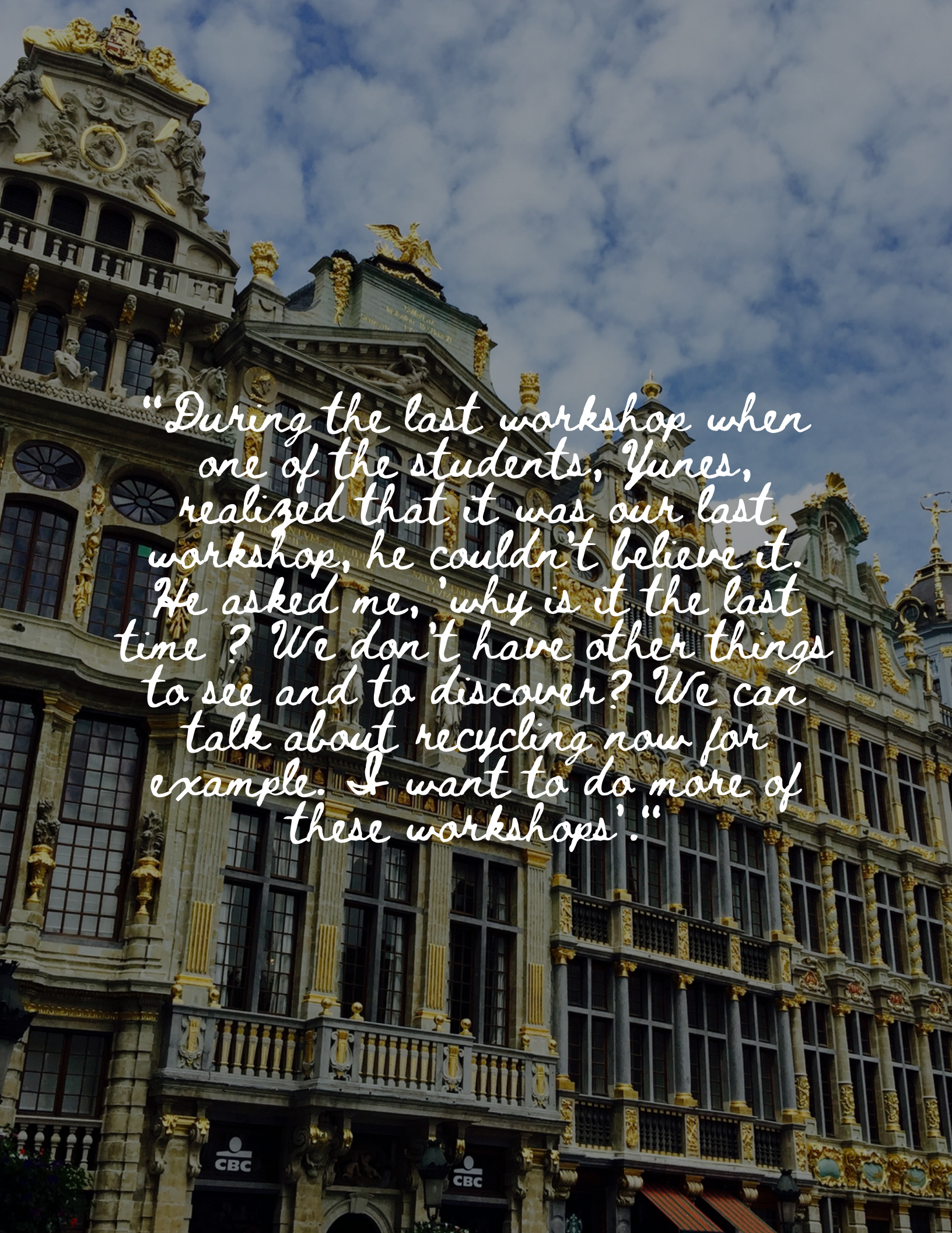
Have these four workshops taught you anything?

- Yes for me it was above all creativity. But also help people not to throw waste on the ground. These workshops can be part of the solution. With such workshops, we can help people understand the importance and care for the environment.

Did these four workshops help you?

- Baaah the subject did not concern me much but it helped me. I finally understood that it concerns everyone. I learned a lot about green neighborhoods and how we can help. We can pollute less.





*"During the last workshop when one of the students, Yunes, realized that it was our last workshop, he couldn't believe it. He asked me, 'why is it the last time? We don't have other things to see and to discover? We can talk about recycling now for example. I want to do more of these workshops'."*



# REFLECTIONS FROM THE TEACHING ARTIST

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

*"They were not aware of the term sustainable. The fact that a sustainable city is a city that respects the environment and every living being, respects the cultural background etc. Another observation is that it was the first time that they were dreaming of a greener city/neighborhood. The fact that they could use their imagination and creativity in order to make a sustainable change. Lastly, when they met the creators of a green project in their neighborhood they realized that what they dream and imagine can happen and that they are not alone in dreaming of a greener planet."*

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

*"Work wise, I imagined a series of educational and artistic workshops and the result was more beautiful than the one I have imagined. Experience wise, I did a lot of research in order to use the right environmental terms, I met great passionate people (online and in real), kids (with challenged lives or backgrounds) that shared their passion for arts."*



# ABOUT THE TEACHING ARTIST

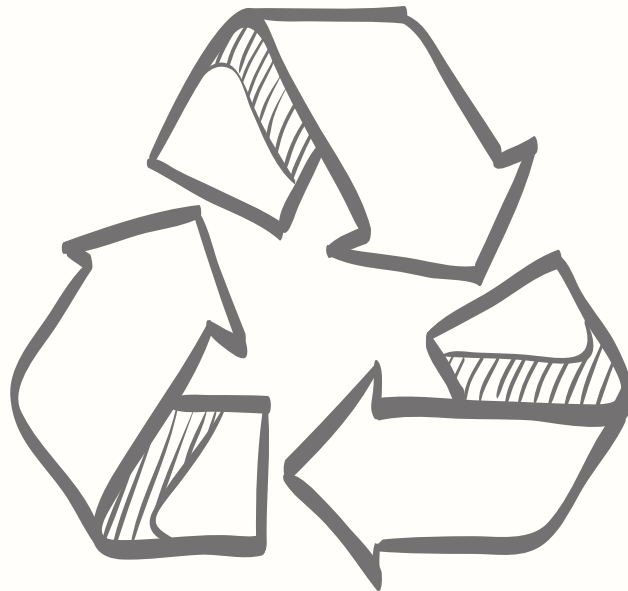


## ***CHRYSA KARAGEORGIU***

Chrysa Karageorgiou is a Teaching Artist passionate about education and culture. She is committed to defending the environment and women's issues. She loves to experiment with different kinds of art like music and photography. She believes that we, adults, should be empowering children to create positive change in their communities.

You can find Chrysa on social media here:

- Instagram: [@curiouschild\\_be](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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