

"WATER"

A PRECIOUS FLUID, THE SOURCE OF LIFE

*EDEN Engagement: Dresden
Seed City Curriculum
Lutz Pickardt*

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: Lutz Pickardt

Date: 25th of May, 2023

Participants: Dresden Choir Philharmonie, 40 students, 8-12 years old



WORKSHOP

Introduction of me and the workshop, short name circle

- first game: say your name, create a phantasy movement, walking into the circle. Then, everybody repeats with the same posture and voice
- using the whole space, playing "mirror catching": three catchers try to touch the others who "freeze" when caught. others can liberate them, when the mirror them for at least three seconds (counting 1,2,3 ...).
- Choral play: i improvise all kinds of situations from soft to wild, holding tension, expressing emotions with body and voice, the whole group repeats

Stop and Go, Freeze, building statues. Statues and Emotions. (happy, sad, angry, envious, desperate, in love...)

building statues in 5 groups, presentation. The other guess, what is the emotion which is presented, creating stories to some of the statues.

Finally the subject: "Water": Stan in the circle, imagine to take a warm and cozy shower, Then, a chilly one, shaking.

What are your first associations about water?

Which kind of animals live in the water?

Create an animal which lives in water as a statue.

Then we hear water and whale sounds from my audio player. The children start to move as they would be the creature, alone, interacting.

I present the german song "day the sea" by the group "Fanta 4". Children close their eyes. Which kind of images come into your mind?

Again I play the same music. The whole group creates a scenery at the beach according to their phantasy, laying on the sand, playing ball, eating ice cream, playing guitar a.s.o.. enjoying the good atmosphere.

- little pause to relax, drinking water.

Showing them 2 little youtube clips about water - and their meaning for people living in the global south

1. a girl from Sudan, walking 6 hours with a camel through the desert to bring water from a fountain to her family. strong images, very few words.
2. drought in East Africa, documentation from 2022. Effects on the people, landscape, animals, interviews of local children.

Sharing, followed by a short talk.

Again working in 5 groups (supported by the teachers of the philharmony), creating "images" / tableaux vivants to bring into form what they just heard and saw).

Experiment, parallel images: Repeat an image of the beach next to a one of the drought images.

Sharing, discussion.

open situation: 5 big papers, pasted on the walls (or lying on the floor), write down or paint pictures about all kind of images or thought about water.

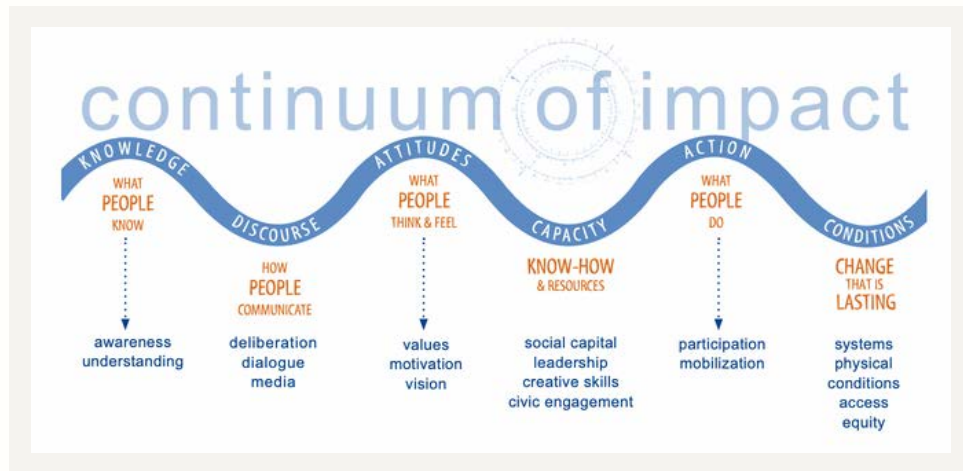
Final circle: What are your thoughts now about "water", did s.th. change in the last two hours through the workshop?

Saying good-bye.





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 ARTIST

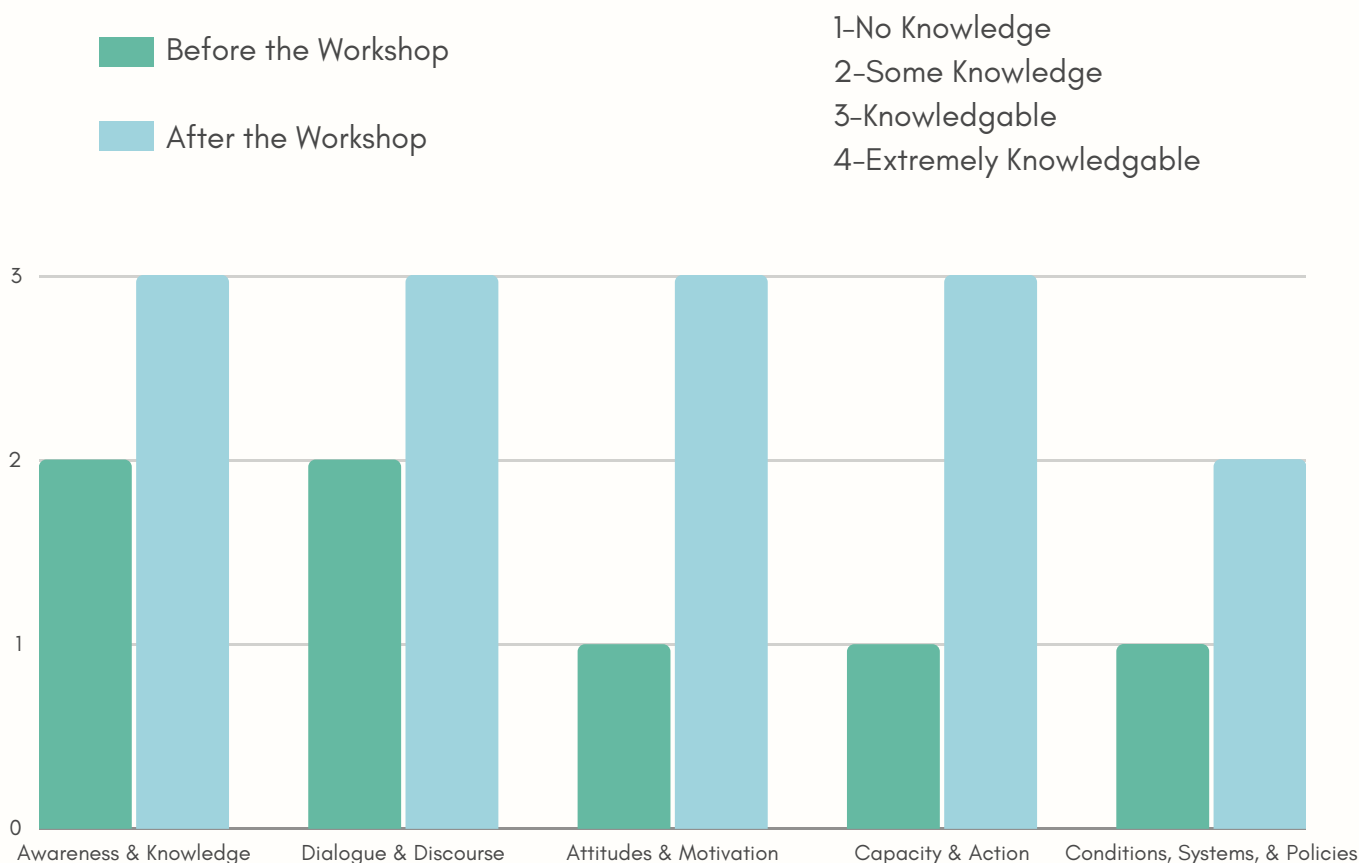
In what ways did you observe change in your participants understanding and engagement of the environmental issue you chose?

"My impression was, that the kids became very thoughtful when i first brought them into the pleasure of playing with the subject "water", and later showed them video clips about people in precarious situation in Africa because of drought and lack of proper drinking water,"

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

"Yes. for sure. Before i didn't work on environmental themes, as i didn't know how to transmit this issue into play and acting. this workshop helped me to make the first steps, and it was very encouraging."

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.



"Very engaged, playful, passionate and interested children with a huge fantasy, it was a pleasure to work with them. Would have been great to go on."

—Lutz Pickardt



ABOUT THE TEACHING ARTIST



LUTZ PICKARDT

Lutz Pickardt is a freelance voice teacher, theatre pedagogue and theatre director since more than thirty years, working in Germany and all over Europe, actually very much involved in political education, leading a three years program with Partners vom five countries to develop theatre pedagogic forms and methods as a response of antidemocratic forces in our societies. The name is #theatre.makes.politics. Website: www.lutz-pickardt.de



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