

# Empowering through Performing Arts

In Conflict and Crisis areas local and international



At the 37th ITI Congress, the Swiss ITI Center was allowed to make a pitch. On the basis of our previous work and the various collaborations, we presented some of the main objectives of our project through a performative live introduction with video projection.

In our search for international partners, we presented our **intercultural theater project “Empowering through Performing Arts: In Conflict and Crisis areas local and international.”**

The new team of the Swiss ITI has developed an intercultural and international theater education program with 2 modules. It is based on a trauma-sensitive approach and a reflective examination of power and gender asymmetries: On a human rights-based and decolonial foundation, theater work can activate life forces and strengthen self-confidence and community. The Eurocentric representation of colonial history has had a significant influence on us and has a profound effect on the present. This means that working internationally and interculturally requires a critical reflection on the manifold power- and gender-inequalities, because otherwise inequality and discrimination can neither be recognized nor overcome in artistic projects.

This and an understanding of the consequences of war, displacement and flight are the content of the educational program. The focus is on joint, international artistic work in the performing arts. With our theater education project, we initiate sustainable projects that strengthen solidarity and emancipatory processes within conflict-ridden areas.

## MODULE A

This basic module takes place in Switzerland and covers various topics and learning objectives:

- Safety: To create a common basis for a trusting and respectful approach to different ways of thinking, dealing and behaving
- Power and Cultural Sensibility: Recognising and defusing power structures and discrimination in the group and environment – and being able to deal with them.
- Identity and Awareness work: To develop self-reflection that serves as a basis for theatre work in conflict and crisis areas (local and international)
- Mediation: To create the basis for an inspiring and open working process in a group
- Body work: To experience the body and movement as a fundamental instrument of encounter.
- Resource-strengthening trauma pedagogy: To learn about and apply methods of resource-strengthening trauma pedagogy.

## MODULE B

This module builds on the first, applies the content and takes place abroad. The module is currently being planned.

**Background:** The moment you work interculturally, you are right in the middle of the conflict – because 500 years of colonial history cannot be wiped away with good will or conscious behaviour.

We want to enable theatre work that strengthens peace. In order to prepare a basis of trust for future work, it is important to clarify one's own cultural development and become aware of one's own starting position. The aim is to create an inspiring and open working process in which everyone can get involved with all their differences and move as freely as possible.

The more heterogeneous a group is, the greater the challenge of involving everyone on an equal footing according to their abilities and capabilities, and the richer and more creative the joint process can be. This requires a differentiated and precise awareness (also of one's own motives) and careful work – this is what we are concerned with.

**Description:** On a journey we apply the basics of intercultural theatre work (Module A). This includes, among other things

- Developing a performance together with the local theatre group.
- Finding a common theatre language in which all participants can experience and develop their own creative powers according to their skills, abilities and needs.
- To promote a sense of community in the working process and performances.

The different perspectives and experiences of the course participants from the South and the North flow into the direct concrete rehearsal work and support the participants' own reflection process, as well as continuous reflection rounds.

As mentioned, we are looking for partners and international connections. Contact us directly via mail: [info@iti-swiss.ch](mailto:info@iti-swiss.ch) and find more information here:

<https://iti-swiss.ch/en/empowering-through-performing-arts/>