

IMPACT

IMAGINING TOGETHER

PLATFORM FOR ARTS, CULTURE AND
CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

Imagining Together / Acting Together Virtual Learning Exchange Summary

Creative Spaces Discussion Board Day 1-2 | April 21-22, 2020
Summary and Reflections by Carrie Klewin Lawrence

Co-conveners for this exchange



Partners for this exchange:



IMPACT Learning Exchanges are virtual conversations designed to offer unique spaces for sharing ideas, professional learning, and reflection on topics important to the growth and sustainability of the Art, Culture and Conflict Transformation (ACCT) ecosystem.

The Imagining Together / Acting Together Learning Exchange explored key concepts in the ecosystem: **resistance, re-humanization, reconciliation** (drawn from resources of the [Acting Together on the World Stage](#) multimedia educational initiative), and **re-enchantment** - alongside current events like **coronavirus** and **the power of the acct ecosystem**. The conversation took place in both Spanish and English, with each language having its own space. Click here to read the Spanish-language summaries.

This document is a summary of the **Creative Spaces Discussion Board DAY 1**. Here are links to summaries of the other discussion boards:

[Resistance](#)

[Re-humanization](#)

[ACCT Connections and Reflections: Coronavirus](#)

[Reconciliation](#)

[Re-enchantment](#)

[The Power of the ACCT Ecosystem](#)

[Creative Spaces](#)

Participants and discussions by the numbers

Number of participants 14	Number of comments 62
Participant Countries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● United States ● Tasmania ● Israel ● Argentina ● England ● Australia ● Philippines 	Number and names of the Facilitators
Participant Affiliations (when reported*) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documentary producer. 1. Dance and peace advocate and facilitator. 2. Independent creative artist (Tasmania) 3. Director, Program in Peacebuilding and the Arts 4. Director of the Mindanao Peacebuilding Institute (MPI) in Davao City, Philippines. 5. Educator with a passion for the transformative role the arts can and should play in social justice issues. 6. Teaching artist with a focus on children’s rights issues exploring through recycled textiles 	

- and gardening.
7. Doctoral student in the program on Conflict Management and Resolution at Ben Gurion University of the Negev (Israel)
 8. Writer and sometimes visual artist
 9. Independent writing and learning consultant
 10. Female attorney
 11. Bridge builder. Actor, director.
 12. Secretary General - Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative
 13. Peacebuilder
 14. Creativity researcher, holocaust researcher
 15. Culture and Development global lead
 16. Creative writer
 17. Teacher by profession helping to build peace through theatre and performance.
 18. Co-Director of the Conflict Information Consortium and Beyond Intractability
 19. Theatre professional and a theatre arts explorer.

**participants were asked to write an optional biography; this information is drawn from how participants in this discussion described themselves*

Questions that guided the discussion [copy from the discussion board]

We invite you to take a minute to check in with yourself, your breath, your heart, your hopes, your fears.

Wherever you are, you might like to plant your feet on the floor or on the earth, and take three deep breaths. What emerges when we are present to our breath, and to the fullness of the present moment?

We welcome your words and poems, and links to images, photographs, videos of songs and dances, stories.

- What is the present moment evoking and provoking in you?
- What creative expression, if any, would you like to offer the community that is forming in this virtual space?

Suggestions and questions for moving forward

Please note: Italicized quotations indicate quotes from the discussion board. Names of respondents have been removed for the sake of anonymity.

Healing the Earth

We need to be more creative in order to heal the earth...what does it mean to live well? Does it really mean that we need to be wealthy? Does that bring happiness? Does it protect us from suffering? Does more work mean that we live well? Does a large car or a larger house or a large boat mean (at the expense of others) mean that we are better off? If all who cannot provide all of this die, does that make us better off? There was a book that covered this 150 years ago --Scrooge found his answers in visits by three ghosts...why do we continue to try to build bigger barns?

Evaluating creative work

How do we evaluate creative work?

Observing vs. Constructing

I love how this hovers right on the cusp between the observed and the constructed. Nature and you don't have to do very much to it at all, just your subtle choices of arrangement. Is the art the shell, your arrangement of the shells, the song, the film, it's all of the above--so sensuous and deep

Creative resources mentioned [add cells as needed]

(Language of the resource) A short descriptive phrase or sentence hyperlink to the url (Example: (English) Call for collaboration in mobilizing the arts for COVID-19 communication and coping)	“Home” short film about the YMCA Jerusalem Youth Chorus – a choir and dialogue program for Israeli & Palestinian high school students in Jerusalem https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xMkqMTK1_00&feature=emb_logo
Short music video “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” – featuring nature, artifacts and art. https://onedrive.live.com/embed?cid=10852D736983F278&resid=10852D736983F278%214695&authkey=ABAmkvwDqYHInvE	Invitation for a Webinar – no longer active: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe-lCng_o7As9MaUFKYV4rb0cqxi67FcX7MSpvok5Zbv91A/viewform
Poetry from Kenya: https://youtu.be/lmpX77iahPY	Neighborhood library: https://littlefreelibrary.org/
The World from My Window – people around the world sharing stories: https://theworldfrommywindow.com/	A site taking writing submissions about the pandemic: https://discover.submittable.com/blog/covid-19-creative-calls-for-submission/

<p>A short descriptive phrase or sentence hyperlink to the url (Example: (English) Call for collaboration in mobilizing the arts for COVID-19 communication and coping)</p>	<p>Article on creative, heart-centered online meetings: https://www.brandeis.edu/ethics/peacebuildjngarts/pdfs/impact/2020_04_reflection-impact-learning-circles.pdf?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Read%20more%21&utm_campaign=Peacebuilding_and_the_Arts_Now_June2017</p>
<p>Boy Olmi's introduction: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLx-paWOO14zXnRmhcpDR4QHpjDGRBs1_i</p>	<p>Dance video – ballerinas at home: https://www.facebook.com/BalletdelOperadeParis/videos/541788006364814/?q=ballet%20de%20l%27op%C3%A9ra%20de%20paris&epa=SEARCH_BOX</p>
<p>Indigenous artist responses from Walkatjara Art Center: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-04-02/indigenous-dot-paintings-coronavirus-health-message-uluru/12110988</p>	<p>Met Opera: https://www.metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams/?utm_source=OperaStreamsNewsletterW6&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=1920_MISC&utm_content=version_A</p>
<p>Climate change project – National Water Dance 2020: https://www.nwdprojects.org/2020-nwd-event/?fbclid=IwAR3v-NfSVAXZG308_WFV0KSiiH5eeU_a2--JQUZQ2R3M9kdVmh-IG0YIHt8</p>	<p>24 Hour Play Festival: https://www.24hourplayfestival.com</p>
<p>Dance, drones and social networks: https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/stage/phoenix-art-and-politics-rise-up-in-dance-of-resistance-1.3883900</p>	<p>Personal pictures from Colorado: https://photos.app.goo.gl/EHrUAtAjjUZtBFkz6</p>
<p>6000 participants singing together: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=3475674209128822</p>	<p>“The Telling” The Electric Telescope Experimental Theatre 2019: https://vimeo.com/showcase/6827716</p>

Themes

Simplicity, nature, re-connection, community, pandemic, poetry, sharing, healing, essential, garden.

Poetry

Many poems were shared and discussed, it was the main form of art referenced in this discussion. Most of the poetry was created in-the-moment, and sometimes exchanged between participants with a very spontaneous feel to the art that was being shared and discussed.

Creative responses and reactions were offered and responded to on the following themes:

Delight, food scarcity, poetry, dance, haiku, gardening, connecting, peace, listening, reflecting,

Themes were raised in a brief manner and responded to, but not generally more than a couple of exchanges.

Concerns

What is essential?

Essential

Discussions about “essential” – both in the sense of material goods, and services of essential workers – related directly to the pandemic and our shifting world views.

I believe it is hard but necessary to state difficult truths in community. For me one is, we are not all equal in this ,and another is, essential workers have always been essential, we are just making them be in harms way even more now, while those with livelihoods stay safe.

Food scarcity, climate change, peace, connection.

Concerns were raised in a brief manner and responded to, but not generally more than a couple of exchanges.

Appendix: Summarized Discussion Thread

This is a summary of the key points in the discussion, in their original chronological order.

Day 1

- Links and poem shared.
- Gratitude for an opportunity, a moment, to lay aside 'things to be done' and prioritise taking time to listen, to reflect and to think carefully about these important themes.
- All of these [examples] give us hope.
- If we can create space for people to sing together and then follow it up with more connection and dialogue and more personalization - I think it would be very powerful.
- Discussion of gardening, food security, effects of Covid.
- I think honoring and elevating the amazing work of farmers would be a great outcome. In this time of fear (and always for those living in food insecurity), the thought of sustenance, crunchy or spicy or warm or sweet...all these needs filling the belly and the soul. I thank the farmers.
- Peace...I just want peace. I hope this virtual world will bring us closer to each other and close the gaps in our diversity. One World.
- I believe the origin of humankind and the origin of civilization are highly relevant interdisciplinary issues, encompassing both art and science. [...] This reflection-upon-reflection of Time led to the creation of a kaleidoscopic theatrical work.
- Nature is humanity and humanity is nature and we enrich each other.

Day 2

- Fort the community that is forming in this virtual space, well done, a lot we've dialogued on, a lot still needs us to dialogue on, lets unite and work together for a peaceful and harmonious world for us all including the most poor, vulnerable and marginalized.”
- Poetry has been a key tool in conducting peace campaigns before, during and post-election era in Kenya.
- We need to be more creative in order to heal the earth
- Creativity is endless, and with hope, sometimes an antidote so that we can look at what is at hand to feed us.
- Diversity is both creativity and survival.
- It is such an interesting thought in the sense of preserving history of an event, here a horrible one, through emotive words and poetry. I think of human beings and their desire to deny, ignore, hide away. Poetry can speak in a different way but also preserve history so we know and LEARN.
- I believe it is hard but necessary to state difficult truths in community.
- Sometimes I remember that it is simply the brilliance of art- voice, image, phrase, color - that is the power. Your faculties must be deadened not to breathe and smile and sway.
- Poetry often preserves the emotions that prose may lack.
- I love how this hovers right on the cusp between the observed and the constructed. Nature and you don't have to do very much to it at all, just your subtle choices of arrangement. Is the art the shell, your arrangement of the shells, the song, the film, it's all of the above--so sensuous and deep.