

The In Living Memory Mind Map

1 To think, conceive and experiment an evaluation according a mapping principle: Why?

The actors of an artistic and educational training project: artists, researchers, cultural partners, institutions, or audiences, are tied to the actions, within their own framework of potential action, their funding, their follow-up, their very own existence, and their evaluation.

Each has different levels, a different background, and a different time-lapse. We often speak of the same elements with different words, or of different elements with the same words. That is when approximations and opacities start occurring. What are these artistic creation processes that are at the heart of an articulation between various actors? What do they produce? How can we produce a clear vision that can be shared, without distorting the artistic and cultural approach that are at its essence, or leave out these approaches from taking into account the other fundamental issues in terms of the territories of intervention and mobilized publics? How is it possible to not reduce, impoverish, and grasp only one part whilst our aim is to situate ourselves within social transformation? We are necessarily brought to deal with the complex, and the whole.

Each actor usually sticks to one specific place and the collaboration only holds on to the fact of being linked to a same action, especially when it's about steps leading to the follow up and evaluation of the projects. The professional worlds coexist around one project, but rarely operate as a true mix, with forms of openings that give the possibility to start building a common language to have a better sense of what is at stake in the artistic processes developed on the different territories. Rarely do we explore together the backstage of these processes, from its construction, within the rigorous explanation.

How multiple actors, with different approaches according to their professional missions, can find themselves within common forms of work modalities, and identify the ways in which artistic actions can be built, established, and evaluated, escaping a fragmentation of the various approaches. It is often this type of segmentation of the plurality of actors that is at stake in these actions on different levels, and that makes the established processes misunderstood and vague. The impacts remain rarely exploited as transferable elements, the intervention contexts are not thought of and taken into account within the practices and the methodological forms that are offered.

The projects are often, in an incantatory mode, grounded in a spirit of fragmentation, mostly of audiences and territories, but are fixed within the lack of dialogue from those who propose them, establish them, and evaluate them. It is found at the intersection of the various professional fields that are concerned (artistic and cultural operators, the institutions, the operational partners of the social realm, education, justice, people who are in direct and daily contact with the participants, inside prison and outside its walls); all those who gravitate around actions, that can emerge from artistic, social and educational innovation. From actions that are more precise, have more sense, and take into account the importance of respective spaces, missions, constraints and various questions, that aren't necessarily contradictory. A lot of convergences arise, in the interest of the participants, with the idea that the territories and persons can be apprehended with juxtaposed angles of approach.

2 The mind map and its conception: experimentation during the In Living Memory Project

The cartography that was presented is the result of a methodology of evaluation of the impacts of an artistic process of creation and training led inside and outside of prison during the European project In Living Memory. Throughout its duration, a collaborative approach of evaluation was established to produce a tool that clarifies the effects of the artistic and educational actions, observing the ways, in which they are created, to specify the work process and be able to share them between actors coming from different professional fields.

Artists, cultural partners, the penitentiary institution (the services linked to the execution of sentences and social reinsertion as well as those in charge of surveillance, or, on another hierarchical level, those in charge of mission statements linked to the cultural, educational and artistic offers in prison), territorial collectivities (such as the regional council) can draw from this form of tools such as :

- A different support of interdisciplinary and inter-institutional communication
- A more precise comprehension of the actions
- A support tool from the participants to the actions, that can find new modalities to name, formulate, and grasp their impacts and what they imply within a project. It is essential to be able to reuse these contributions coming from a lived experience within this artistic and educational action in a more global realm of their process of social insertion. The mind map, and the steps of its upbringing, constitute a support that gives the possibility for the impacts that learners pick up on more readable as they often don't have the capacities to organize them.

This shared evaluation tool is based on the mind mapping principle, with the idea to structure the impacts that were identified under the form of a tree like structure. Its purpose is to escape the usual type of rendering, which often imprison, hierarchize or alter the effects produced by an educational action of creation. At the heart of this work are the modalities of creation of this cartography. It is drawn from a series of individual and collective interviews led with the participants, through different steps of the project, with the desire to not return expectations that had been planned by the speakers but rather, to mobilize the learner's speech. It is also a key element in the experimentation of other forms of dialogue between artistic and institutional actors. ILM gave the possibility experiment how this tool could be shared, and add an open and trans-disciplinary dimension to it. Meetings between partners of the ILM project and institutions brought about the organization of two public events that took place in June 2016 in Marseille and Kosice and gave the possibility to discuss the principles of this proposition that cannot be reduced to a simple tool. Hence, it must be thought of as the experimentation and formalization of a collective and evaluative approach, grounded within a form of rendering that is inherent to the mind map. This approach analyses the effects of an action, with all the data collection techniques that it implies, and the manner in which they can be organized, compiles a totality of methodological supports that can be transferred and applied to other projects. This said, it cannot be seen as an easy solution. Its goal is for it to be addressed as a container of identified elements in the framework of a European experimentation, with possibilities to be able to produce this type of analysis, in terms of the effective establishment of the projects, and in terms of how they impact the participants.

A mind map is

- A process of collaborative construction: everyone can take part in the creation of this evaluation and how it is formatted, drawing from the tree like structure that make up a mind map concerning the impacts of the project.
- Individual and collective interviews with the participants in the actions, led at different moments of the project, as a semi-directive form. Filmed or recorded interviews that give the possibility to preserve a material that becomes the memory of educational and artistic processes.
- Listening and transcription phase, by those who lead the project, but also in more collective moments where the various operating and institutional partners can participate.
- Analysis phase: identify, in the words of the participants, the effects produced, discuss them and return them. Once more, this work is done by those who lead the project but also in more collective moments where the various operating and institutional partners are called upon.
- Create a mind map of the impacts of the action that proposes another way to look at the project and what it produces in the participants that are involved.
- A tool for inter-institutional and inter-disciplinary dialogue.
- A tool that brings about an auto-reflexive approach for those who lead the project.
- A tool that cannot be dissociated from a global approach and that can't be reduced to a visible result: it's an evaluation, but like a construction process and a rendering that are combined, and a central part of the global methodology dealing with educational and artistic action.