



KÁVA CULTURAL GROUP  
H-1022 Budapest, Marczibányi tér 5/a.  
Phone/Fax: (+36-1) 315-07-81  
E-mail: kava@kavaszhaz.hu  
www.kavaszhaz.hu

## Vision, mission, long term strategy

The long term **vision** of Káva Cultural Group is a society where people are open-minded, empathic and take responsibility for themselves and each other. Lack of these is the reason for several major social issues, such as discrimination, xenophobia, juvenile crime, aggression, alcohol- and drug abuse, etc. These problems are heavily present in Hungary.

*"Theater – just like sociology – always aimed at revealing the nature of social phenomena, in other words, it tries to find out what it means to be a human being. Therefore, in this respect, we, the drama teachers regard theater as active sociology."* (Jonathan Neelands)

**Openness, empathy and responsibility is the grass-root level fundament of active citizenship, pluralism, solidarity and civil dialogue.**

**To increase openness, empathy and responsibility in society, we need to target children and youth.** Children are the members of tomorrow's society, capable of new ideas with a developing personality. We should empower more and more children to understand the values of democracy, be sensitive to social problems, have the ability to ask valid questions and examine answers from multiple points of view, so they will become open-minded, emphatic and responsible.

To reach children, we need a tool which is interesting for them. We should teach through games, playing, activities, stories, so they get involved in a crucial learning process voluntarily, they got **enabled and empowered without noticing it**. Such a tool is Theatre in Education (TiE), where children get actively involved in a dramatic/theatrical process. Young people are not just observing, but becoming stakeholders of the jointly created simulation of reality.

Considering **disadvantaged children and youth**, their situation is even more complex. If they want to achieve their dreams, they need to have a strong sense of personal and cultural identity. They have to know who they are, where they are coming from and where they are headed. Underprivileged students need personal attention, as well as psychological, social and educational support if they are to successfully continue their studies and success in life.

**Several researches<sup>1</sup> proved that the theatre in education method is extremely efficient in the integration of multiply disadvantaged youth.** The core of the method is the active

---

<sup>1</sup> The method has been examined in the last years by pedagogues, psychologists, sociologists and anthropologists, and all the analyses concluded that **the method is extremely efficient in the improvement of the Lisbon competencies**, to which the traditional educational system has no answers. e.g. Recognising Difference: The Romani "GYPSY" Child Socialisation and Education Process By Tracy Smith, Romani Association of Australia, Prospect East, Australia Source: British Journal of Sociology of Education, June 1997, Vol. 18 Issue 2, p243, 14p. The most famous Hungarian expert, who emphasises the same theory is Réger Zita.

involvement of the children and youth incorporated into the learning process. First the children are the audience of a performance, later in a conversation they can express their opinion about it, then they have the chance to take an active role as actors, writers or directors to develop the story. The aim is to change the attitudes towards the central topic of the program - a moral, social or psychological question.

Thinking on a long term basis, within 20 years there should be **citizens** in Hungary, who:

- are able to accept anyone regardless of their ethnical or racial identity in their communities,
- therefore implement the integration of the multiple disadvantaged people,
- question the discriminative thoughts and opinions,
- are open minded,
- are creative,
- are able to see certain questions from various points of view,
- participate in decision making processes, are acquainted with the basic rules of democracy,
- are improving in their moral and social sensitivity,
- are able to organize themselves and build a strong civil society,
- are able to affect as multipliers among their own communities,
- are able to represent themselves,
- are active citizens.

Four scientific efficiency studies from the past five years, conducted by psychologists and sociologists at Káva Cultural Group showed that Theatre in Education is an effective tool to (1) increase democratic attitudes, (2) decrease drug-abuse habits, (3) increase emotional intelligence and (4) improve the quality of group cohesion. International scientific literature shows evidence that drama / theatre in education is a powerful tool in the achievement of the other long term goals.

**We employ a full time researcher to secure feedback and to make the impacts measurable, to make the results of the project visible.**

## **About Theatre in Education**

The core method of theatre in education is the active involvement of the audience into the theatrical process. Thus, **the young people are not only the observers, but also the writers of the story, which is created through action and the acting out of certain situations.** With the help of actor-dramateachers, the participants gain experience in simulated conditions. They learn from experiencing a broad range of situations in the safety of drama in education. People applying the method believe that the experiences gained during the programs are crucial for the children: they become rooted not only on an intellectual level, but also on an emotional one.

In this process theatre is always the tool, through the application of theatrical methods and techniques to achieve a central educational goal. Its aim is to deepen the understanding of the theme around which the particular program is focused. The method aims to improve the techniques of handling and solving problems, and thus plays a central role in the process of learning and of becoming an adult.

*"This work requires relevant context, preliminary inquiry, experience with children, good screenplay, conscientious rehearsals, a highly qualified director and clearly defined aims."*  
(John O'Toole)

## **Digo**

complex theatrical programme for 14-15 year old children about prejudice and discrimination

A Greek worker arrives to a tin workshop of a German village. He is a man of few words, his German is not perfect, he works a lot, and always wears a shawl over his head. The women sympathize with him, but the men don't like him at all. The Digo – that's how they call him among themselves -, is an alien because he came from the South. He doesn't belong to them, doesn't speak their language. The men of the village think that he takes their jobs and their women. They think that he has to be punished to defend themselves, and to send him back to where he came from. The audience recognizes the foolish prejudice and the hate arising from it through the story happening in a foreign country, but they can recognise easily some parallel native events too.

Fassbinder's drama is watched in three parts. The audience sees the story in different aspects each time, meeting new important characters, new details. All three theatrical scene-series are followed by an interactive drama part, when we analyse together: who are these people and why they have done what they have done? What are they afraid of? What is missing from their lives? Why can't the community receive the foreigner, the man who is different from them?

The play is based on the script titled 'Digo' by R. M Fassbinder.

The performance won a special price in the III. National Children Theatre Festival (Budapest, 2005.)

The full length of the programme is appr. 180 minutes

## **Impacts**

### **on communities of children and youth**

- Stronger democratic attitudes
- Improved emotional intelligence
- Improvement of self-esteem, communication skills and aim orientation
- Less deviant behaviour

### **Social impacts**

- Social sensitivity and active citizenship increases
- Better understanding of discrimination and segregation
- Integration of disadvantaged youth
- Foundation of two new Theatre in Education companies in the country
- More competitive adults in market economy because of improved communications skills, improved self-esteem and improved aim orientation

The project helps the application of European Union's **acquis communautaire** on the field of human rights both morally and socially, among the beneficiaries of the project: children and youth, with the following tools:

- develops local democratic institutions and local communities,
- facilitates social dialogue,
- raises social consciousness,
- propagates and emphasizes human rights,
- prevents and treats conflicts in micro-communities,
- fights against racism and xenophobia, fights against discrimination of minorities.

The project fits in the frames stated by the Lisbon Strategy, the Bologna Declaration, and all the directives of the European Union about Lifelong Learning.