



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Project Name:
**Preventing racism and intolerance among youth through art training
methods using marionette techniques**

Acronym:
PRIMAT

Project Number:

Participating organisations:
Association Act'DEM (Actions Diversité Echanges Mixité) - FRANCE
Riza Performing Arts - GERMANY
Koinoniki Synetairistiki Epicheirisi Syllogikis kai Koinonikis Ofeleias
SYNCHRONI VIOMATI KI POLITISTIKI EKFRASI- GREECE

Project Result - Digital Handbook

1. INTRODUCTION

Considering global issues, such as migration, social isolation, and fear of diversity and inclusive way of living, it is clear that values such as respect, tolerance, equity and equality, mutual understanding and non-discrimination have become more important than ever. Against this background, the PRIMAT project reinforces the response of youth training to one of the main challenges of today's world: the need for creation of inclusive environments where people can co-exist through mutual understanding, tolerance, non-discrimination and respect for diversity and inclusion. The suggested methodology and digital Handbook of PRIMAT is a useful tool for improving the capacity of youth trainers in art and culture to promote social inclusion and diversity and to prevent racism and intolerance among youth by using as a tool an art-training module based on marionette techniques.

2. SUMMARY

The digital Handbook of PRIMAT presents an innovative training method including a kinetic and marionette technique methodology, based on literary works that empower youth to conceptualise values such as tolerance, mutual understanding and respect for diversity. A marionette theatre piece is the result of a case study that describes step by step the approaches of the kinetic and marionette technique methodology. The creative tools are inspired by poetry, philosophical and literary texts which promote social anti-discrimination awareness and are written by poets and authors from all over the world.

This methodology of PRIMAT is grounded in the belief that artistic expression can dismantle prejudice by

embodying others' experiences. By integrating dance and puppetry with stories from diverse literary voices, participants explore empathy, identity, and social justice in a physically and emotionally engaging way.

Specifically, the Digital Handbook includes:

1. A kinetic methodology based on literary works (books, poems, essays) that promote social awareness and tolerance.
2. A marionette methodology based on the above kinetic methods.
3. Tutorial videos that support the comprehension of the methodologies.
4. A case study based on the suggested art-based training method.

2.1 OBJECTIVES

The Digital Handbook serves as an open source with the following objectives:

- to improve the capacity of youth trainers to promote social and intercultural competences, social inclusion and critical thinking through art training tools.
- to foster tolerance, mutual understanding and non-discrimination among youth, through embodiment and storytelling.
- to develop critical reflection on historical and contemporary issues of racism through literature and philosophical research.
- to improve the youth trainers' skills and competences needed to successfully involve participants with fewer opportunities in their work.
- to have open access to art-based training tools and equal opportunities and access to youth training programmes.
- to connect and cooperate with other youth trainers in art and culture from other EU countries, in a creative and safe environment.

2.2 TARGET GROUP

This handbook is addressed to youth trainers in art (dance, theatre, dance-theatre, marionette theatre) and culture (literature, poetry, philosophy, sociology), including youth trainers with fewer opportunities (economic obstacles, cultural obstacles, immigrant background). The suggested methodology is also a valuable tool for cultural, artistic and humanistic organisations that promote social justice and understanding of cultural diversity between young people.

3. ARTISTIC METHODOLOGY

Step (1) - Selection of the literary work

In the initial phase of choosing a literary work, the youth trainer, in collaboration with the participants, embarks on the important task of choosing a literary work that promotes antiracism and can serve as rich inspiration for a **dance and marionette performance**.

During the selection of the literary work, the group takes into consideration that the literary work should involve:

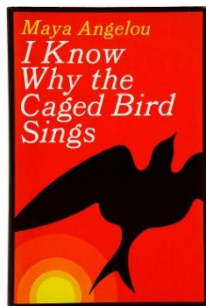
- **Diverse perspectives that promote inclusivity**
- **Thematic relevance in combination with visual and emotional resonance (in order to facilitate the kinetic and marionette techniques)**
- **Strong imagery: Metaphors, scenes or characters that can be embodied.**
- **Emotional stories: Stories of struggle, resistance, transformation or hope.**
- **Distinct characters or personifications that can be adapted into marionettes.**
- **Critical analysis**
- **Accessibility**

Step (2) - Selection of key words and main ideas

After choosing the literary work, the participants are encouraged to engage in group readings and discussions, identifying key words and sentences that promote inclusion and can apply as visual and emotional inspiration for artistic expression through movement and marionette techniques.

The trainer encourages each group to come to a final decision and extract up to 5 words OR one whole sentence from the literary work. These specific words / sentence will be from now on the core inspiration for the creation of artistic expression.

CASE STUDY



*In our case study, we chose the literary work :
„I KNOW WHY THE CAGED BIRD SINGS“
By Maya Angelou*

For the creation of the Marionette Theatre Performance we chose the sentences :

1. *„The free bird thinks of another breeze“*
2. *„But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams“*
3. *„His bars of rage, his wings are clipped and, his feet are tied,so he opens his throat to sing“*

Step (3) - Exploring the kinetic vocabulary inspired by the chosen sentences.

Creating body movements inspired by written words and sentences involves translating language into physical expression.

This step involves the dynamic process of discovering physical movements that authentically embody the essence of each selected word. This approach deepens the participants' understanding of the words, transforming them from abstract concepts into tangible experiences. By infusing movements with meaning, participants unlock a profound space for discussions centered on the social themes rooted in these words.

*** A fundamental consideration during this phase is ensuring that the chosen movements are accessible to all participants, regardless of their professional dance backgrounds. Movements should be designed to accommodate participants with varying levels of dance experience.**

Stage 1 : Each group **breaks down the words/phrase** into sensory and emotional component and answers the questions:

- What does it **feel** like emotionally or physically?

- Does it have a **tempo, rhythm, or weight**?

Example: „The free bird thinks of another breeze“ , chosen words

- *What does it **feel** like emotionally or physically? It feels like liberation.*
- *Does it have a **tempo, rhythm, or weight**? It is long, continuous and light.*

Stage 2 : Movement Exploration

The participants transform the words / phrase into movement through improvisation-based exercises, taking into consideration:

- Quality of the movement (soft, sharp, with or without resistance)
- Weight of the movement (light, heavy)
- Length of the movement (short, long, staccato/legato)



[Tutorial video 1](#)

Stage 3 : Selection of movement and exploration of variations

After the exploration phase, the participants are asked to come up with one specific movement for each word or phrase. After choosing the movements, they are encouraged to explore possible variations: moving in the whole space/ movement on spot and various directions.

The participants experiment with various variations, they reflect and decide which variation of their movement expresses strongly the meaning of the word/phrase behind it.



[Tutorial video 2](#)

Stage 4 : Sharing of the selected movements with the group – Creating a Choreography

The group gathers in a circle and one after the other is showing the movements, with their final variation. Everyone in the circle repeats the suggested movements. After one round of sharing and learning all the movements, the group starts a second round by doing one movement after the other, without stopping, but trying fluently to go from one suggested movement to the other. By the third round the participants are trying all together to discover a fluent transition from one suggested movement to the next, creating like this a series of connected movements, a choreography. The group makes as many rounds as needed, until everyone in the circle feels confident with the movements and can remember the choreography.



[*Tutorial video 3*](#)

Step (4) - Transforming the kinetic vocabulary into marionette techniques

The transformation from human body movement vocabulary into marionette techniques includes the following steps:

1. Analysis of human body movements and their translation into puppet-compatible actions:

- **1.1 Observation of body movements:** The group observes the natural body movements of the previously created choreography – series of movements.
- **1.2 Observation of marionettes' movements:** The group observes the movement possibilities of the created marionettes (joint-movements).
- **1.3 Motion Breakdown:** The participants decompose the movements into simple joint movements (e.g., arm swing, head tilt). In order to achieve a better overview of all movement possibilities, the participants gather in groups of two, standing one opposite to the other. One participant suggests one joint-movement and the other one is moving at the same time, the same way (Mirroring). After one movement suggestion, the other participant is now suggesting a new joint-movement.
- **1.4 Choreography Adaptation:** The group gathers together and starts to adapt the original choreography to the movement possibilities of the marionettes. The aim of this step is to create a choreography for the marionettes, as an adaptation of the original choreography inspired by the literary work.
- **1.5 Rehearsal with natural bodies:** The participants split into two groups. Group number 1 dances the original choreography (without marionettes) and group number 2 dances the adjusted choreography together with the marionettes.
- **1.6 Creating interactions between the marionettes and the natural bodies:** The participants are invited to explore the various possibilities of physical interaction (space, time, rhythms, mirror, synchronisation, etc) between the marionettes and the human bodies.

2. Puppet Design Using Recycled Materials

All participants are encouraged to construct the marionettes from recycled materials, such as recycled synthetic and organic material, e.g. tins and cans, drift wood from the shore.

- **2.1 Material Collection:** The participants gather recyclable items such as:
 - Cardboard, plastic bottles, straws.
 - Bottle caps, fabric scraps, string, wire.
- **2.2 Joint Design:**
 - Use of bendable materials (e.g., wire, straws) for joints.
 - Connection of the limbs with string or twine to allow for controlled articulation.
- **2.3 Balance and Proportion:**
 - Ensurance of proper weight distribution using lightweight materials.
 - Maintainance of proportional limb length for realistic movement.
- **2.4 Aesthetic Detailing:**
 - Decoration by using eco-friendly paints or natural dyes.
 - Addition of features (eyes, clothes) with paper, foil, or fabric scraps.



3. Stringing and Control Mechanism

Attachment and test control of the mechanisms for effective movement.

- **3.1 Control Bar Creation:** Use of sticks, rulers, or hangers as the marionette control bar.
- **3.2 String Placement:**
 - Attachment of strings to key body parts (head, hands, knees, feet).
 - Checking if the strings are taut and responsive to movement.



STEP (5) - Movement Choreography with human bodies together with the marionettes.

Interaction and synchronisation of the movements of the human performer with the marionette actions.

- **5.1 Performer Training:**

- The participants split in small groups and one after the other is going in the middle being a marionette itself. The other participants are manipulating the body as if it would be a marionette. As a next step, the group tries to dance this way the original choreography.

- **5.2 Mirror Exercises:**

- In this step, it is the natural body that shows the movement and the puppeteers are trying to mimic the natural movement with their puppet, by using the method of mirror.

- **5.3 Fine-tuning:**

- Adjustment of the string lengths, puppet balance, and choreographic movements as necessary.



- **5.4 Promotion of inclusion and tolerance through the choreography: Connecting the final movements with the meanings of the chosen words / sentences in order to achieve through the movements the embodied expression of anti-discrimination values and promotion of tolerance and mutual understanding.**

Step (6) – Presentation

The group is invited to show the created choreographies to the rest of the participants, in a form of an intern presentation. This phase not only allows participants to reveal their creative interpretations but also fosters a collaborative and interpretative process within the group. It encourages participants to immerse themselves in the art of expression and engage deeply with the chosen literary work's social and humanistic concepts, creating a vibrant and inclusive atmosphere for artistic exploration.



Case Study Performance presentation :
“The caged birds“

Step (7) - Reflection and Sustainability

The group gathers in a circle and with the trainer as facilitator, reflects on the process of the research and creation. The reflection can take place through discussion sessions:

- Talks about challenges, discoveries and realisations.
- Ideas about material reuse: The participants exchange ideas on how they can reuse or reimagine the puppets for future performances and workshops.
- Reflection on how art can foster tolerance and mutual understanding between humans and communities.
- Reflection on how art and sustainability can coexist creatively.



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