

ID4P'S

Identify 4 p's:

Passion & Participation will generate creative Power towards a Peaceful society

Introduction

ID4P's is an exciting, international cross-cultural dance & theatre school project. It is an exchange project between schools located in the 'high risk' urban areas of major cities across a number of European countries. The project is based on the importance of nurturing the potential in each young person. Our aim is to help children identify and express the unique contribution that they can make in the world. We use diversity as a source of inspiration in the process of connecting children and adults with different cultural backgrounds. The aim of the project is to enable children living in multicultural communities to experience, through the arts, the subtle nuances of diverse societies.

Importance

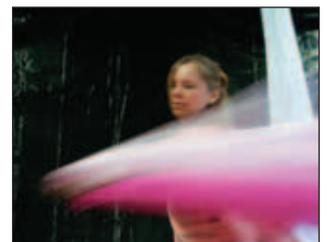
Schools have a life long learning purpose as well as the acquisition of knowledge. It can therefore be argued that another important aim of education is to work on a sustainable and peaceful society, making children and teachers aware of their own contribution, their own power and role in creating society. This is a *spiritual way of creating a future, where society is seen as an organic system instead of an industrial control-based thinking mechanism. From this educational vision we provide opportunities designed to awaken the importance of being present as well as experiencing unity in diversity. **Spiritual is defined as the development of a deep sense of meaning and purpose through a feeling of awe and wonder with nature and the acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of all living beings.*

Participating groups

In general terms the project is intended for children between 10 - 14 years of age. If a school is interested in doing the ID4p's project with the whole school, or with youngsters older than 16, we can change the format and create a special programme.

How we work, the process

The ID4P's team will deliver the format, basic materials and music for the performance. The process will be led by a group of professional international artists from different countries, ethnic and cultural background, together with two social educationalists trainers. All artists involved are able to use their given talents as instruments. Beside their proven professional artistic skills, the group is experienced and well trained in subjects like: self esteem, non violent communication (nvc), co-creating a production, nvc feed back, multiple intelligence and different learning styles. ID4P's projects will take



place in (at least) two different schools at about the same period of time. This will bring the extra insight of how rich and varied the possibilities in the different schools are: we work with the same format in both schools, with the same colourful materials and the same artists, however the children work - under supervision of the artists - on their own performance, their own dream and give their own vision of how they see the future and what is important to them! Through a web-cam connection children will introduce their school and daily environment to children from the other schools. During the project they will have a regular web cam consultation. In this way all children will be able to follow their fellow participants through the 'creating' process. They can exchange ideas with each other, share their experiences and support each other through the challenges of creating the ID4P's project in their schools. Webcam must be available in the participating schools. The project will be cut up in four phases:

1. Orientation phase
2. Producing phase
3. Performing
4. Evaluation

1. Orientation phase

This identifying period where passion and participation are the main goals will take place in the beginning of the project. We aim to trigger the passion in children by giving them many experiences in workshops in music, dance, design, drama, painting, singing, storytelling and theatre. We focus on helping to identify what makes their heart tick and encourage them to participate, for participation with passion generates creative power. During the orientating phase we invite children and their teachers to dialogue in circle times, storytelling, and philosophy in order to create an awareness of shared values needed in a sustainable and more peaceful society. We focus on positive inquiry for people appreciating what is best in itself and in themselves will discover more and more what is good. This can help in creating a future where positive decisionmaking and focus on the best becomes more common.

2. Producing phase

After the orientating phase we will start working at the dance theatre production itself. In this phase we are going to create the performance and set up a 'frame' with a central theme in which the entire performance will take place. Children, teachers and artists will work together to create the final performance. For the participating groups school life will totally take place in the light of rehearsing dance, music, drama, costume making, filming, painting the decor, selling tickets, etc.

3. Performing

Finally we will be in the exciting phase of performing. Together with the help of teachers, parents, the children and artists we will transform the school



– or gym – into a theatre. The performance will be given for the rest of the school, parents, families, neighbourhood and other people interested in ID4P's. Children will make their own video documentary with the help of professionals.

4. Evaluation

The project will be evaluated with the participating schools, organizations and artists. The film will be shown to all participating schools. The copyrights of the film will be of the ID4P's team.



Background

The idea was born in Budapest at the international 'Paths to Peace' conference in 2004 where Alexandra van der Hilst was keynote speaker and performer, followed by teacher workshops. In 2005 an ID4P's pilot project started in Holland and the UK. In this pilot, artists from New Zealand, England, The Netherlands and Indonesia worked together to offer workshops and made a small presentation at the different schools. This pilot was both particularly exciting and challenging especially for the Dutch children because they had to speak English all the time, learning to develop their second language skills 'on the job'! Above all the kids very much enjoyed the process of working in this completely different way, with artists of diverse nationalities.



Schoolyear 2007 -2008

In October of schoolyear 2007 - 2008 we worked on a more complex pilot with three schools, two in Liverpool, Stocktonwood at Spekes and St Silas Primary at Toxteth, and one school in Rotterdam Zuid, OBS De Blijvlief.



The artists experiences in short:

We enjoyed working at these schools so much and look back at very interesting and sparkling weeks with lots of wonderful miles of smiles of wonderful kids and very enthusiastic reactions of some parents, teachers and the schoolheads. We hope the kids will keep these experiences in the memory or their heart! During the workshops we had lots of good conversations with the children about working and living together, feelings of friendship, (inner) leadership, making a difference, perseverance and being succesful. What we enjoyed most is that the children really took care of each other and felt responsible for themselves, the small group they worked in, the big performance group and the material during the performance. It was good to see how some children were very shy in the beginning and opened and participated more and more during the workshops and the performance. Some children came with wonderful poems, stories, letters and hugs and....we also discovered some eXtremely talented dancers, drummers and comics in our groups!



The travels between the schools and countries and creating a performance with the kids at each school in one week time per school, was quite a job, but is was GREAT! We really felt connected with the children, we gave a lot... and we received even more from them! Seeing how much this means to kids and how much pleasure and encouragement they gained from it keeps us going!

The children were eager to know how they could lead the drums. They gave each other space to try new things and together worked out difficult patterns. Drumsolo's as well as drumming with the whole group was exciting, not only because of the sound, but also because of the fact that the young leaders and the group really wanted to make a good piece for the performance. At the end of the weeks each group was proud to show the audience what they created.



While working with pastels to music the kids designed the frontpage of their own portfolio. In their portfolio they wrote their experiences of the project. This was done differently in every school with diverse results of personal mindmaps, poems, stories, opinions and / or drawings.



In the comic acting workshops we use red noses and neutral masks. Using masks and noses offers children a helpful tool in improvising and in creating and playing a role. Children feel free to act and can concentrate on body-language. During the workshops they acted in different ways and played together without hesitation.



By using these specific materials we create an atmosphere of awe and wonder. Children are always surprised by the nice colours and possibilities of these professional materials. They forget their 'buts and ifs' and feel free to expres themselves. In dance and choreography workshops they explore and cooperate in making short dance pieces. The teachers were quite often surprised about the creativity and social skills of their pupils.



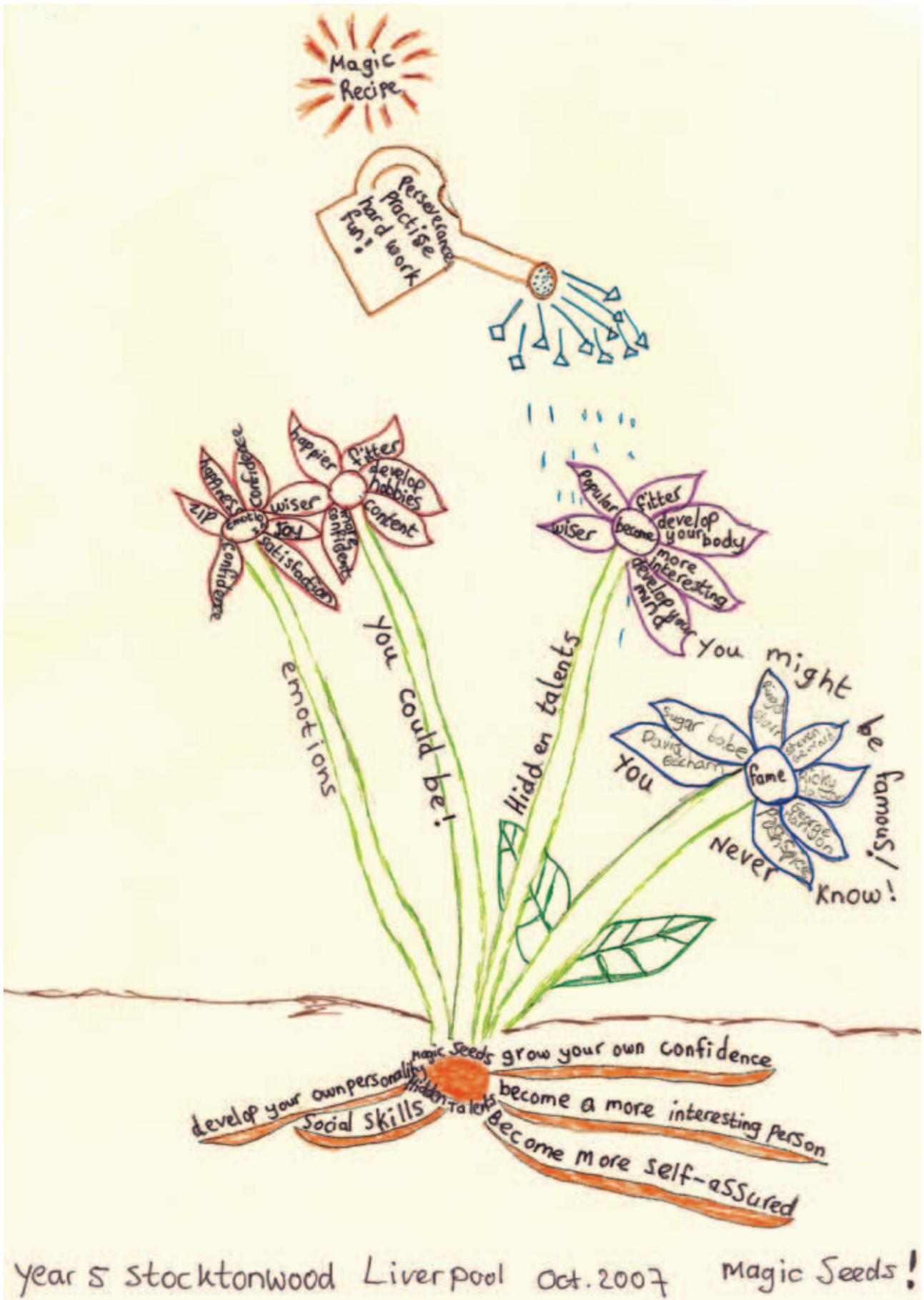
The experiences in Id4P's are based on a holistic approach of learning where one of the most important things is going into relationship, with the kids, the issues that are brought in and with the arts. It is learning by experiencing and exploring new possibilities and gaining knowledge by embodying the subject and making it your own. Learning in this way engages body, mind, emotions and spirit as a living response to different discoveries. Lots is based on the principles of improvisation and dialogue. In this dynamic process the children are encouraged to make their own decisions and develop their own ideas. We are focussed on their gifts and on sharing joy, because joy is a very powerful tool in building self-esteem and confidence in life. Our experience is what we focus on expands! When the child may be the explorer, the creative process becomes magical. One of the children in Stocktonwood Spekes described the joy in working together and what they gained from it as:

'an inside secret recipe to become succesful'



This way of working is completely different from teaching children phrase by phrase a choreography or a piece of music. It is the opposite of focussing on result and control based learning. Sometimes, depending on what school-system they are used to, children become overexcited in the beginning by working in this way. This is an understandable reaction. That's why we do some 'sound and chaos' improvising excersises in a playful way at the beginning and make 'rules' together with the kids...and remind each other during the week whenever needed. The rules we work on are: "Give what you want to get"; "Everything you do is of influence"; "You always have a choice, you are the boss of your own feelings"; "We can only understand each other if we can hear each other".





The first week of the pilot took place in Rotterdam. The children from the Blijvietschool in Rotterdam were very much looking forward to connect with the kids from the other schools to exchange experiences. Together with their teachers they prepared questions and a short presentation about their school and living in their neighbourhood. Enlarging their world is one of the goals of ID4P's. To make that easier the role of the webcam is important. Unfortunately the webcamconnection did not work in Liverpool. This was quite a disappointment, but as one of the heads promised to keep working on this problem we hope the webcam connection can be fixed soon so the children can as yet start communicating with each other. In the meanwhile one of the girls of the Blijviet emailed her letter to the English schools.



David Boyd of the Quiet Place Liverpool gave a few workshops in heartmath at each school. Children of the Blijviet were very excited about this and they loved working with a real Englishman! All teachers of the Blijvietschool were involved in what was happening around ID4P's and became curious by the stories the kids were telling. The schoolhead invited David to give a special heartmath teacher workshop.

One of the Blijvietkids discovered that filming was her preferred tool to communicate. We gave her our camera and she videotaped the process during the week. We are most grateful for the work she did and are very happy with the filmmaterial!!



In working with music, dance, drama and painting we create a joyful atmosphere where children have the permission to explore and discover their hidden talents. In this creating process children experience that attitude and thoughts are the seeds of reality. By telling themselves that they are capable of learning and doing it, for instance during the rehearsals of more complex music or dance sequences, they discover that they are indeed very capable and can do it. These kind of experiences lead to the discovery of the power of having a positive attitude, as well as the power of joy and affirmation. In creating a powerful atmosphere they learn to recognize that what they give they get back. These are all very important inner learning experiences for building on self-esteem, feelings of ownership, responsibility and inner leadership.





Alexandra van der Hilst
initiator ID4P's, choreographer,
social pedagogue, creative producer



Agnieta de Hartog
drama teacher,
comic theatremaker, actress



Winston Scholsberg
percussionist, storyteller,
actor, EQ trainer

We are dealing with the core meaning of art in learning and that is something different from teaching art, drama, how to play music or dance as a curriculum subject. Art is about how you go through things. As a deeply personal experience. It is not simply about what you see but how you see it, what feelings arise within yourself, the sounds and memories that are evoked and how you respond and choose to act on the experience or not, either of which is part of an 'intention' - a conscious choice. Does it touch your spirit and move you to stillness or action? People create their own reality through the way they think, feel and speak:

What we focus on will grow... let's focus on something positive!

ID4P's is a project from AB3 Management, Training and Projects, The Netherlands
Vondellaan 3 | 1217 RX Hilversum | The Netherlands | 0031(0)356210680