



Questionnaire for theatre expert

Name	Stefania Vitale
Occupation	Actress
Country of residence	Italy

Please answer the following questions giving specific examples where possible:

Experience and Expertise

Outline your experience and expertise in the area of theatre

I've been working as an actress since 2005. I attended classes at Teatro Biondo, the main speech theatre of Palermo and other seminars with various teachers (i.e. Michael Margotta). I started holding acting laboratories for children and for V.I.P. 8 years ago.

What has been the impact of theatre on your own life?

Theatre has really changed my point of view. Like a camera, it took a picture of me from inside and let me understand how I am as a character, what relationship I have with myself and with the world around me. This picture becomes each year more precise and as I keep working and practicing I feel that my self-awareness increases and allows me to be more open and perceptive towards the world.

What impact do you think theatre can have on our lives and what you consider to be its instrumental value (i.e. the way theatre can be used in particular settings rather than theatre as art or entertainment)?



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Theatre is a powerful instrument to get deeper into the knowledge of yourself and of the other. You learn to read the signs of communication, you understand the value of silence, rhythm, movement and concentration.

Theatre makes you sharpen your senses, recognize and manage your emotions, sets your creative imagination free and gives you the ability to change perspective very quickly, allowing you to solve problems much more easily.

It is a wonderful kind of training that can be done at many different levels, depending on what you want to make with it and how far you want to push the knowledge of yourself.

What strategies do you use and how do you work with hard to reach groups or people who are not usually engaged with theatre or who might be reluctant to take part?

I usually start from games that can be fun for everyone and that are useful to warm up and know each other. Then I try to investigate the pupils' interests. Depending on their areas of interest I usually adjust my training program, especially the topic or "leitmotiv" of the improvisation exercises that I propose to them.

Theatre and Working with visually impaired people

Describe any experience you have had of working with visually impaired people either with theatre or in some other capacity.

I have worked as acting teacher/ trainer at the Institute of the Blind of Palermo for 4 years. Each laboratory lasted about 8 months and concluded with a final performance.

How was working with visually impaired people (if there was such work) different to the way you would normally work?

From my experience, visual impaired people are usually more in contact with their emotions, which is a positive factor. It is also true that they're often more vulnerable and susceptible. The group can work in harmony only if it is not too big and heterogeneous, otherwise there will be problems of coexistence, even if they all love attending the course.

What impact has working with visually impaired young people (if there was such work) had on your own practice?

As a trainer I suggest my pupils to do many exercises with their eyes closed, even when I'm working with non vision impaired people. Visual signs attract the highest percentage of our



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attention. Working with visual impaired people taught me to pay more attention to what I perceive through hearing, smell and taste.

What do you think is the value for visually impaired young people of working through theatre?

Visual impaired people can have benefits from working through theatre that concern the relationship they have with themselves and with the others. Moreover it is known that the creative process has a great therapeutic power. Dramatization can bring about a change in the pupils' self-concept from a negative to a positive one. Consequently, if they manage to value themselves highly, they will strive for high goals.

VISION

What do you think we should consider regarding the use of theatre in the VISION project?

The result which brings about any kind of art is a greater self-awareness. Theatre is the most total art experience as it involves movement, your breath and voice, your memory, your emotions. That's why I think theatre is the best suited art to develop awareness. It is important to consider that this is a long process, it needs time and relaxed environment to take place. It should be continuative for at least a couple of years and led by experts that share the same kind of objectives.

What do you think could be the impact of this work?

The Vision project will be of great help for increasing the expertise in the field of social inclusion, especially for those who work or live with blind or slight-sighted people. Theatre is a great resource, especially for kids who are always in need to express themselves and communicate in many different ways.

Please attach a current CV with this questionnaire!

Thanking you for your time and consideration:

The V.I.S.I.ON team

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