



EDUC-ACTORS: FROM CONTEXT TO TEXT.

RETHINKING
PEACE, DEVELOPMENT BASED ON SOCIAL JUSTICE,
AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION.

THROUGH THE MEETING WITH

**THE ARTS AS GENERATORS
OF A CULTURE OF PEACE**

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THE ARTS AS GENERATORS OF A CULTURE OF PEACE

[Daniel Fernández](#), February 2020.

Educational project overseen and mentored by Dr. **Federico Mayor Zaragoza**, former Director General of UNESCO, and co-chair of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

Background

The [Report of the Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights to the Human Rights Council of UN](#), presented in the General Assembly of UN on March 2018, addresses **how actions in the field of arts and culture can make significant contributions towards creating, developing and maintaining societies in which all human rights are increasingly realized.**

Need

Drawn from the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur, we agree that **there is a need of increasing arts and culture education to enhance technical excellence and to promoting human rights**, expanding the acceptance of equality and diversity, and recognizing complexity and layers of meaning. Towards the fulfillment of this need, and echoing the recommendations of the Rapporteur, we have designed the global educational initiative:

Educ-actors, from context to text. The Arts as generators of a Culture of Peace

A Peace, Conflict Transformation, Social Justice and Global Citizenship educational global initiative, informed by the Arts, which is understood as a multi-faceted communicational language which allows us to learn from the vision that emerges from individual and collective subjectivities. This proposal outlines and proposes education through artistic language and first-hand experience, in order to both learn and teach in order to critically dismantle a homogeneous and homogenized vision of the world. This is done by presenting a wide range of effective practices regarding the use of art and also by understanding the unique dual praxis characteristic of art as aesthetic and creative and as social-political sensibility.

Educ-actors emphasizes and values **intersecting competencies** such as:

- Engagement with others
- Identifying with marginalized peoples
- Capacity to understand multiple perspectives
- Critical and systemic thinking
- Development of Imagination
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Planning and adaptability skills
- Persistence
- Risk-taking
- Use of metaphors
- Active listening
- Non-violent communication.

Previous experience and pilot program 2018

Educ-actors has been developed as a pilot program implemented in Spain in 2018, tested with higher education students from the **Autonomous University of Madrid** and the **Autonomous University of Barcelona**.

Since 2005, I have worked with **students and educators in secondary and higher education contexts in Spain, The United States, Japan, Colombia, and Vietnam** using modules and the pedagogy central to this initiative. This invaluable experience has informed the pedagogies of *Educ-actors*: developing and sharing a personal experience while developing a critical stance with their

classmates based on what they have sensed, felt, and experienced during these exchanges with our educ-actors.

Seven case studies have been used, to address the interest in and importance of assessing the agency of critical and creative expressions that art offers, in processes of social transformation inspired by the culture of peace.

To achieve a meaningful communication experience with the students, **audiovisual tools** are employed in order to bring to the classroom, the first-hand experience of the protagonists of the different case studies: **video & photography educational capsules/modules have been produced**, the contents of which have been decided with its protagonists through a thorough participative action research process.

The communicative exchange between the students and protagonists is highlighted in two complementary ways. The students generate questions for the protagonists about the modules they have seen in a previous class before meeting with the protagonists. The protagonists in turn create questions for the students, questions the students reflect on and discuss in subsequent classes.

Pedagogical applications and evaluation

These sessions have been deployed with great success in global contexts, in diverse and complementary pedagogical settings:

- Sessions with High School students in Spain.
- Sessions with students in Higher Education in Spain, The United States, Japan, Colombia, and Ireland
- In professional development workshops for communicators in Vietnam.
- In professional development workshops for Peace Education trainers in Spain, Colombia, and Japan.

Evaluation by the students, professors and scholars who have hosted *Educ-actors* in diverse cultural settings (North and South America, Europe and Asia) and pedagogical spaces (University, High School, and workshops and training of trainers for educators) is encouraging:

- Much value was given to the fact that this educational model **stands for aiming to encounter first-hand narratives as a source of valuable and sensible knowledge**.
- It can be affirmed that **discovering different manifestations of the languages of the arts engaged with social and individual transformation helped them to empathically connect to diverse and legitimate meanings of social justice, reconciliation, identity, gender, culture, development**, among other transversal themes related to **co-existence** and **local/global citizenship**.

This confirms that the focus and modular structure of *Educ-actors* facilitate transversal pedagogical uses in a wide range of cultural and educational settings.

Educational Contents

Currently seven modules/capsules have been developed and used in classroom contexts with protagonists from Spain, Mexico, Colombia, Egypt, Palestine, Israel, and the Sahrawi people:

- The Art of communicating. Communication versus information. [*Inside out, from the bottom up*](#)
- Education through Art. [*Educ-actors - Lukas Avendaño. Remembering, resignifying otherness*](#). (Only in Spanish for the time being).
- Collective forms of Art. [*Educ-actors - Amr Nazeer, Bahia Shehab, Dalia Basiouny, Mira Shihadeh. \[R\]evolution*](#)
- Work of Art. Artistic installation. [*Educ-actors - Clara Gassiot. Questioning fortresses. Embroidering dialogues*](#) (Only in Spanish for the time being).
- Community Art. [*Educ-actors - Alliance of Indigenous Women in the City of Bogotá. Women weaving the word*](#). (Only in Spanish for the time being).
- Art and memory. [*Amnesia*](#).
- Art and social awareness. [*\[13\]25 In the beginning was the word*](#).

Upcoming plans for this initiative include other realms in which art emerges as critical to human relations as well as in relation to the social and natural ecosystem:

- Post-conflict reconciliation through art.
- Mediation and accompaniment in collectives and vulnerable communities through art.
- Art and ecology.
- Reduction of the post-traumatic stress of the civil society affected by the war through art.
- The use of Art as a language of research, creation of knowledge and social transformation.
- The use of Art to interpret transformation processes and memories at an individual and collective levels.

International Institutional Support

The following links showcase the global range of ideas and support that this initiative has garnered. Please click on the link to open the letters of support.

[**Rutgers University** - Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights. USA.](#)

[**The New School** - School of Media Studies. USA.](#)

[**Seton Hall University** - College of Education and Human Services. USA.](#)

[**Bergen Community College** - Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation. USA.](#)

[**Fundación Escuelas de Paz.** Colombia.](#)

[**International Christian University** – Rotary Peace Center. Japan.](#)

[**O.P.Jindal Global University** - Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Peace Studies. India.](#)

[**National University of Ireland** - Moore Institute. Ireland.](#)

[**The American University in Cairo** - Department of the Arts. Egypt.](#)

[**Educational International Cluster Perils and Possibilities of Diversity.** Israel and USA.](#)