ABOUT THE 6th PSYCHODRAMA FESTIVAL

The Festival

Every Psychodrama Festival has its own mood, atmosphere, brought particle by particle with each participant and presenter, amateur and spectator of evening events, joining in one-word, sentence, emotion…

In the Fourth Festival in 2015, as if the main word was sadness. In the fifth Festival in 2016 - Fairy scene. In the Sixth Festival held 16-19.03.2017 - Light silence. No words.

It began as usual - from conception, waiting for applications for workshops, program... collecting team and volunteers... The expectation of the first participants. Movement between halls, the silence in the corridors during the workshops, interrupted by the noise of the action. A personal process, a personal experience, a personal conclusion. The sense of a togetherness, the sense of a community.

In this Sixth Festival there were a lot of people, who for the first time touched the method of psychodrama, they were surprised by themselves, by what was happening, by their experience unexpectedly.

There were a lot of participants and presenters, who come at every Festival - supposing, but not knowing what will happen, still curious, still inspired by the Psychodrama and the art that it creates.

For me, as an organizer, a presenter and a participant, the changing of roles was like juggling with colored balls. As if, this time, the most powerful was the role of the host – welcoming and receiving, from the meetings with the people as organizer, through the requests of the protagonists, the listening and following of other leaders in others workshops...

The mixing of people from different generations and trends - psychodrama therapists, psychodrama leaders, arts people, social and educational workers, business oriented professionals, different cultures - it happened again, and aroused that special atmosphere of the Psychodrama with excitement, creativity and confidence for whole year.

See you again at next Festival....

Inna Braneva - psychodrama therapist, Trainee psychodramatist by DEA Institut, Bulgaria
Presenter and organizer in the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.

The Hill

Just from its beginning in 2012 the Psychodrama Festival started to ask the questions „Who I am?“, “Where do I come from?“, “Where am I going to?“ There were different expectations from the festival, even criticism, different processes were happening, while the most expressed process was exactly this – the search for its own character. To what extent does it look like the traditional for the psychodrama community conferences? To what degree is it dedicated to the therapeutic focus of the psychodrama? And to what extend does it cover other areas of implementing the method, such as education, social work, different arts, management, etc.? Where is the balance? Is it too accessible, colorful, eclectic, free, and festive? ... The search of identity often was merry, but sometimes painful too, and in 2016 it was accompanied by
the feeling of internal conflict. Therefore, in 2017 I expected the Sixth Psychodrama Festival with some tension, anxiety, and sinking heart, with the question - how processes and relations will develop in the course of the event. This discomfort of mine continued until the third evening of the Festival. Then, looking at the faces of the people, both the familiar ones and of the new participants, gradually I calmed down. It seemed like almost everyone knew where and why they came, and they looked satisfied with their choice. As if, we all together have climbed the hill. And together we touched the authentic essence of the Psychodrama Festival.

Konstantin Banderov - psychodrama leader, Psychodrama Institute DEA, Bulgaria
Organizer of the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.

Openness

Open space. Inner space. Shared space. A place for sharing. A place of discovery. Of oneself and others. Warmness. Trust. Acceptance. You are opened because you feel at home. You look for and meet people’s eyes. Their inner eyes. Your inner space is opened for the eyes of others and you can feel their loving care like sunrays shining down on your hills and valleys, rivers and pathways.

You are free to express yourself. Free to exist in you full spectrum. To paint yourself in every color of your being. Colors and nuances, melodies and harmonies of your character meeting others start to emerge and resonate at places you didn’t know before.

Connection. You are connected. To yourself and others who are not others anymore. The walls between you and them start to bend and disappear. There is no “you” and “them” anymore. There is “us”. And each personality in this “us” is shining ever more brightly. When you have a truly opened shared space, there is no conflict between identity and unity. Do the rays of the sun argue which one of them is the shiniest?

Transformation. Step in this river and you’ll be transformed. Just like the river itself. Never stop changing while searching where you came from. Your spring is what you look for all your life. And it has always been there, in yourself. You are the spring. You are the source of life. You are life.

You are the playwright and the actor. Now you don’t want to play life anymore. You want to live it. No more drama in your psycho. You are reborn.

You can start your new play now.

Konstantin Kuchev graduated pop and jazz singing at the National Music Academy "Pancho Vladigerov", author of music for many theatre productions. Presenter in the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.

Emotional experiences and observations from VI-th Psychodrama festival – Plovdiv, Bulgaria

The last Psychodrama Festival in Plovdiv, Bulgaria became a traditional and very special event for me as a central meeting invitation for all Bulgarian psychodrama professionals, students and involved people. We - in my opinion as active psychodrama therapist and director – have difficult situation in Bulgarian actual group dynamic with no good enough way the places for practicing psychodrama and lack of energy for joining groups. In that way the festival is a special stage and time every winter in last 6 years to meet important friends and supporters in our efforts in practicing psychodrama. As member of the event I had chance and possibility to participate workshops and group settings, sharing ideas and experiences in
different ways of involving members into group dynamic. As participant and facilitator of workshops I had possibility to feel the spirit of the place and the meeting and to touch different waves of energy and desire. Special issue in this year spiritual wave was the experience for the festival as open questioned - possible or impossible – pause as empty place or chair and invitation to put inner scene images and personal interactions on it.

In a role of workshop-director I kept warm emotional feeling from transitional relations between scenes of locked space, empty space and will for open space as picture of harmful emotional experiences in us but also energy and efforts for new ideas and reorganization of our inner space. My feeling got in touch with this great wave of emotional insistence which made me encouraged to find new perspectives in doing psychodrama and ways of creating contact with people in groups.

My last sentence want to be about something very touchable in logistic situation during the days of Festival – there was a corridor between different rooms for workshop and everyone from us crossed this area going in or out from psychodrama sessions. This transitional space kept and holt our energy, emotions and conflicts, being in a same time place for sharing, but also place for opportunity for staying in silence. I keep this space in my mind and this become my generalized picture from our meeting in Plovdiv this year.

Svetozar Dimitrov - psychodrama director, Trainee psychodramatist by DEA Institut, Bulgaria
Presenter in the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.

The sixth Psychodrama Festival in Plovdiv ended almost two weeks ago. I can still feel the resonance of it. This year was very special for me, actually each one year, from the beginning in its particular way was special for me. I remember the first year - I was so excited, I barely slept the night before; it was my first time in a venue like this, with the most of the Bulgarian psychodrama community, and the opportunity to see the way of work of other psychodrama-therapist for the other Institutes; there happened my first and only protagonist work on a Festival by now led by Tzetelina Iossifova; it was the beginning of a special friendship with a colleague from Plovdiv (Elena) during the workshop by Svetozar Dimitrov, which started with a tango dance (we keep on dancing every year), and nevertheless the greatest psychodrama party ever, or at least by now... Then, on the second year, the anticipation of what is going to happen is risen, the expectations are higher, I think I was greedier, wanted to take as much as possible. And during the party, Inna Braneva, one of the organizers, asked me, and I remember her voice, as it is happening now – “Aren’t you going to hold a workshop next year? It’s about time”. I am still very grateful for these words, they gave me confidence to believe in myself and to dare and try. So, the third Festival came, and so our first workshop with Vanya Nikolova – such a tension, repetitions, fears, and mutual support - are there going to be any people willing to attend a workshop of no names? And the joy and happiness when everything went well. The fourth year – our next workshop with Vanya – a very intimate one, a group of seven, with a
What remains from what happened ...

protagonist work of a girl who just met psychodrama, and our feeling that we managed to trespass the Moreno’s flame. The fifth Festival: for almost a year a phrase kind of never got out of my mind – “The spellbound wood”, and it resulted in a workshop, held together with another very close friend and colleague of mine – Dessislava Kaytazova. And after all, this year’s Festival – so special for me in at least three ways: the ambivalent feeling of going to be alone in Plovdiv, I mean for the first time to be there without anyone of my closest friends and colleagues; holding a workshop alone for the first time, and Dr. David Yeroham attended it (!), and the invitation from Konstantin Banderov and Inna Braneva to lead a morning open session. Again the question was: “Me? Are you sure? I am honored, and simultaneously very afraid, but of course I accept”. The morning opening session ended with people full of energy and curiosity to discover their own world. The sixth Festival was for me by far the most emotional one, don’t get me wrong - I cry every time, because every year there are so many touching, powerful and sincere things happening, but measured by the time needed to become the ordinary me again, or so to say to get back to the roles of an assistant professor at the university, therapist, partner, daughter and so on, this year it took me three days. Of course, the effects are lasting and inspiring. And do you know something – I already got the name for the next year’s workshop! I can’t wait for the seventh Festival to come!

Svetlina Koleva - psychodrama-therapist at Foundation “Psychotherapy 2000”, Presenter in the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.

The Psychodrama Festival in Plovdiv is the most alive and most lively psychodrama forum, happening in Bulgaria. It is not just a collection of workshops in the fields of psychodrama, social work and expressive therapies, it is an authentic encounter between the honest seekers in Bulgarian psychotherapy. Well, not only for them, because everyone is invited – the beginners and the veterans, the daring and the timid, the experimenters and the conservatives. Exactly this openness and unbiasedness of the festival is one of its greatest assets - this makes it faithful to the psychodrama, to Moreno’s legacy. The psychodrama is not immune to capsulation and rigidity; it feeds on creativity and spontaneity. The psychodrama should not become static - it has to breathe, to develop, to grow, to make mistakes. This festival is the perfect place for psychodrama-in-action. As much as the festival is useful for the people that are new to psychodrama it is beneficial for the practitioners to experiment and discover something new, to provoke each other - to keep them evolving thus keeping psychodrama alive. The festival happens in the picturesque, romantic and mysterious city of Plovdiv and this adds to its enchanting atmosphere. The forum starts to spill over from the sessions into the alleys of the Old Town and Kapana district, into the restaurants and parks below the majestic hills surrounding the city.

Every year for me this festival is an oasis where I start to feel my heart again, my stomach, my throat, my body. A special place where I loosen my own monument, disintegrate and recombine myself.

Stoil Atanasov
Forthcoming graduation as a psychodrama leader from “Psychotherapy 2000” Foundation. He’s been engaged in physical theatre and psychodrama for more than 15 years. Presenter in the Sixth Psychodrama Festival.