

DELIVERABLE 9

FRANCE FIRST

WORKSHOP



Deliverable's description:

1- PDF report 3 page min in ENG; Explanation of the purpose of the workshop, main results of the workshop, 2 agendas, signed list of participants with a detailed overview of the participation of women/men/other persons, presentations made and their indicators, as well as the duration of the event. The deliverable is linked to the task T3.3.

Lead : Cultures Eco-Actives

Writer : Anne Bouchon

Dissemination level : Sensitive

1. Purpose of the workshop

Meeting of artistic participants of partners in surroundings of Embrun, 5 days (including travelling) with presentation of an artistic proposal to children at school-Axe 2- The effect of "positive" mythologies in the audience's willingness to act in the various art forms issue to address in the workshop:

- How does the performativity of the non-humans in the forest become perceptible for the audience?
- How to have a transformative impact on forest imaginaries ?
- What are the local specificities and the link between the cultures of the partner institutions?

Objectives : Presentation of collective artistic proposals and enquiry among the audience

1. Meet in the forest with 2 local experts of the forest ; experience sharing about artistic theatre work in the forest ; with invited local professional and non professional theatre artists.
2. Experimentation, exchange focusing on finalising a french prototype of artistic proposal targeting imaginaries about the forest
3. Testing the results of the artistic prototype with a children audience at school.

2. Main results of the workshop

The workshop's results could be summarized by the following :

1 - It is possible to transform or strengthen participants' connection to the forest through carefully selected stories that appeal to the imagination and emotions, while also engaging the cognitive dimension through the morals conveyed.

As most adult participants have declared having changed or reinforced their link to the forest thanks to the workshop, the characters the children tell the stories have gone from mainly human or fancy characters to mainly animals.

By "carefully selected stories," we mean fairytales that, in addition to some poetry, feature non-human characters in the forest (the forest and the tree are not just backdrops or landscapes, but living beings in their own right that we respect. In these stories, the tree is the symbol of a living power) and a connecting symbolism. Stories in which man's place is balanced with nature are not very common in the European repertoire, but are much more common among indigenous or aboriginal peoples. As Catherin Persing writes : *"The stories we choose to tell today will influence our relationship with nature"*.

The symbolism of the fairytales chosen for this workshop were :

- The raven reveals beings and elements, making them perceptible to thought, and no longer only to the senses.
- The tree becomes the axis of the human characters' lives.
- The relationship that people had with the forest in the past when using the forest for their needs, their ritual brought people together in the forest where they helped each other (here to do the affouage).
- What if each tree was as dear to us as our family, our friends, if another bond united us to them?

"Why" fairytales are useful as well, for example why the larch loses its needles in winter.

If they carry a moral, the one that encourages respectful interaction with nature (here : the trees, the crow) should be privileged. But it seems that a moralistic view of nature can be limiting. It would be interesting to observe where and how it manifests itself.

2 - The participatory exchange of life stories enriches the experience and creates resonances among participants.

3 - Introducing shifts in language can capture attention and open minds, potentially fostering an openness to new narratives and a renewed sense of resonance with the world. It allows communicating without understanding everything, but being fully with the other human being, concentrating fully on what the other person is saying in their own language, like a mindfulness exercise. This is certainly what needs to be learnt if human beings are to communicate and respect living non-humans. Words, or rather sounds, are thrown into the space without the audience being able to interpret them. This creates a setting for something magical that transcends words. It works like a magic spell.

Giving place to failure while speaking a language, in a children's workshop, can promote them develop courage to try things out and the confidence to be able to deal with challenges.

4 - A workshop including a powerful ritual with the masks opens new ways of perception for the participants. The use of masks – preceded by other sensory approaches to foster interaction with the forest – can enhance one's sense of connection with the natural world by transforming perception (through sensory engagement). Through sensitive experiences, we can explore the complexity of the relationship between humans and plants. People described how their perception of the forest changed because of the restricted view, which they found extremely positive.

5 - A multidisciplinary approach, including fairy tales, songs, mixed with foreign language discovery and games in a children's workshop, makes a mixture of listening, discovering, feeling, listening, sensing and moving -allowing all the senses to be addressed to connect with the forest.

6- When working on humans' imaginaries in more-than-human environments, we have to account for the complexity of performance ecology : the interaction between the artist, the participants, and the place, including their respective realities, worldview and intentions.

This raised new questions for the work to be continued : When we sing or tell stories about the forest, elements of the plant and animal kingdom appear naturally, emphasising the importance of what we are singing or telling stories about. When the wind blows, it seems as if the wind is acknowledging the situation. Birds seem to enter into dialogue when the fairytale is about blackbirds. But are these responses or mere coincidences? If it is the latter, the forest would be little more than a backdrop, but we don't really let it speak. We simply use the location for its auditory, visual, and tactile qualities. What would make us change our attitude so that the 'speaking' of birds, wind and plants becomes an entity in itself?

The choice of the stories, the mask ritual, made plants the protagonists of our artistic project. How can we continue this work ? How can we abandon our anthropocentric perspective and incorporate the power of the forest into our work?

2.1 Feedback from artists

2.1.1 How to abandon our anthropocentric perspective

How can we make plants the protagonists of our artistic projects, such as workshops or performances? How can we abandon our anthropocentric perspective and incorporate the power of the forest into our work ? The project will explore what this means and how we can proceed. In doing so, we question myths, fairy tales and rites, looking for where an outdated worldview operates and seeking ways to retell and represent it. In doing so, we take detours. We do not work with a fixed system. The project needs time to grow, even if we have limited time. The project includes the encounter and the emergence of a common creative language.

The first day is like jumping in at the deep end. In our online exchange, we formulated the first ideas that enable us to venture courageously into the forest and among the people. These early attempts will later help us to question our vocabulary, our presence, and our way of being in the forest.

Some approaches seem to leave space for the forest and the plants during the encounter: Foreign languages. In this case, it is Norwegian. Words, or rather sounds, are thrown into the space without the audience being able to interpret them. This creates a setting for something magical that transcends words. It works like a magic spell. Our struggle to understand each other across language barriers reflects our lack of ecological literacy. We reveal our vulnerability and imperfection in terms of communication and understanding.

Presence of the forest: When we sing or tell stories about the forest, elements of the plant and animal kingdom appear naturally, emphasising the importance of what we are singing or telling stories about. When the wind blows or Anne-Claire talks about a storm rising in the Amazon, it seems as if the wind is acknowledging the situation. Birds (perhaps finches or robins) seem to enter into dialogue when Anne-Claire talks about blackbirds. But are these responses or mere coincidences? If it is the latter, the forest would be little more than a backdrop, but we don't really let it speak. We simply use the location for its auditory, visual, and tactile qualities.

What would make us change our attitude so that the 'speaking' of birds, wind and plants becomes an entity in itself?

The way in which we can give the forest more space in which to tell its own story, as well as the questions that arise in the process, is something that I am especially interested in. When I expect the robin to sing but it doesn't, it could be a coincidence, or it could be a sign that we have scared it away. When it sings, its presence in the forest is confirmed. When we try to listen to the birds and an aeroplane flies across the sky, the forest reveals something to us: how human noise competes with birdsong.

"The word 'fairy' means something else: it's a quality of reality revealed by the way we look at it. It's a way of catching the world and detecting the miracle in it. The sun's reflection on the sea, the wind's wheat in the leaves of a tree, the blood on the snow and the Berlan dew on a beast's fur: these are facts. We look at the world with references. They appear. Suddenly, a signal. The beauty of a form bursts forth. I call it a fairy. (...) On this curve, we were sure to catch the emergence of the marvelous." Sylvain Tesson. With the fairies, Alphonse Daudet would be also interesting to mention, with the library of cicada.

The moment when 'the fairies appear' is similar to the feeling I get when we work with the masks in the forest. The forest, with all its plants, trees, birds and insects, seems to have a different quality to how I usually experience it. I still find it difficult to explain what this is and how it can benefit us. Part of it is the feeling of connectedness and wonder. It is the feeling of resonance that Hartmut Rosa describes. The origin and consequences of these two feelings (connectedness and wonder) can be explored further.

Mask work is so consistently far removed from our everyday perception. The sharpening of our senses through restricted vision, the changing of our perception and the opening up of a new access to 'nature' that inspires respect (in me) are all part of it. The listening exercise, in which we activate our sense of hearing specifically, and the 'getting to know a plant' exercise have a similar effect. They encourage us to engage with the other living beings in the forest consciously and consistently.

Myth and Mask Ritual

We didn't have time to rework any myths or rituals, but we experienced fairy tales in the forest that we could work with (e.g., the Bear of Boscodon, the Story of the Larch). We created a powerful ritual with our masks that opened new ways of perception for the participants.

2.1.2 The fairytale to connect to the more than human world

The workshops raised as well the question of the interest of fairytales to connect people to the living world.

Why stories: for the power of the images they conjure up, for the poetry they convey, for the freedom that storytelling gives me as a storyteller. The same stories can be found on every continent. The same tale, like the tree of life and death, has several versions: Indian, African, European. There are many such stories. Patrick Fishmann, storyteller, poet, musician, songwriter and bard.

The choice of tales: What interested me in this project was choosing and telling tales in which the forest and the tree are not just backdrops or landscapes, but living beings in their own right that we respect. In these stories, the tree is the symbol of a living power. In researching and reading many of these tales, I noticed that stories in which man's place is balanced with nature are not very common in the European repertoire, but are much more common among indigenous or aboriginal peoples.

Katherin Persing: *"The stories we choose to tell today will influence our relationship with nature"*.

Poetry: essential for me, I find it in stories, poems and beauty. I try to find it in my life. It's a burst of beauty and musicality in words. Poetry, like storytelling, retains an element of mystery; it exists without the intellectual purpose of us humans, whose aim is often to understand, to possess. For me, offering poetry means offering fragility and beauty. Bruno Doucey writes *"You can be touched and moved by a poem without fully understanding it. Something has happened to us. The passage from one state to another."* (4)

Mixing cultures: working and building together, in another language, in another setting, close to the forest. Asking questions without necessarily having the answers means moving forward. Making room for others with their own rhythm and language. Listening a lot to the other person. Concentrate fully on what the other person is saying in their own language. For me, it's the equivalent of a mindfulness exercise. Listening to a language you don't understand, looking at the non-verbal language too, is a richness, an extraordinary contribution. Communicating without understanding everything, but being fully with the other human being. This is certainly what we need to relearn if we are to communicate and respect living non-humans. Working with other cultures also brings a message of peace to the world

2.1.3 Performance ecology

"In working with people in the outdoors, sometimes the [...] unawareness of the false separation between nature and culture, risk furthering neoliberal agendas that appropriates our language in order to justify colonized logics of urban or natural spaces and continued exploitation of what remains of the 'wilderness'. (Derby et.al 2015, pp. 378)

It is important to consider or to be curious about why people choose to participate in activities outdoors. One may assume that many people have their own agenda or interests in addition to the goal of the workshop itself. Everyone's stories mix and intertwine, and together these create a certain atmosphere or ecology that arises in the meeting points between the place, people and activities taking place that day. When working on sensitizing different target groups to a new or other perception of nature, these are all issues that have considerable effect.

There are different ways that performance thematize ecology and ecological issues. One (Chaudhuri, May and Arons) focus on how performance can 'represent and thematize' ecology from a 'material' standpoint whereas the other (Bottoms and Goulis) talk of 'ecological thinking'. There are some limitations in these two approaches but for Hopfinger (2017) the idea of performance ecology is a helpful term as it refers to a complex system of humans and nonhumans (...) and any one 'component' of the performance ecology is intrinsically entangled with (human and nonhuman) others. (Hopfinger, 2017). For performance to be ecological, measuring or evaluating the effectiveness of sensitizing target groups is a complex task that must be described and reflected with respect and openness for its complexity in order to assess valuable experiences".

Performance ecology is therefore not 'just' about telling stories about nature or more-than-human materials. It's also not just about promoting ecological ways of thinking, or a form of moral behaviour but acknowledging that a variety of circumstances of what we can name as ecologies (social, environmental, psychological, physical) are intertwined and are affected by the other, as well as affecting the other. Connecting to the imaginary opportunities of stories and places are dependent on many things in addition to the stories themselves, and these 'things' - these ecologies must also be considered when working with humans in more-than-human environments.

2.1.4 Failure as a starting point for our work to raise awareness of our environment

In our workshop, due to my limited knowledge of the French language, my attention fell on the strength of failure. It was obvious that the children listened with interest, while I and Rebekka spoke some funny French - they listened and looked with wide ears and eyes. I would like to focus here on failure within the workshops with people, especially children and young people. Failure seems to me to be a wonderful starting point for our work together with youngsters.

Those who experience that failure is allowed develop courage. Courage to try things out, to contribute courageous ideas and to take responsibility. When children and young people see that failure is also part of the workshop leaders' lives, they develop a realistic, healthy view of humanity - and the confidence to be able to deal with challenges. In workshops where failure is not stigmatized but understood as a normal part of the process, a culture of openness is created. In this way, we can all learn from each other and recognize that nobody is perfect. This atmosphere creates emotional security - a basic prerequisite for creative processes and genuine cooperation.

When young people fail in workshops - for example when an idea doesn't work out, a group process falters or a creative task doesn't succeed as planned - this opens up new learning spaces. The question "Why didn't that work?" promotes critical thinking, problem-solving skills and self-reflection. Mistakes thus become learning opportunities, not deficits.

Innovation rarely arises from the fear of doing something wrong. Rather, it requires spaces in which ideas can be tried out, discarded, further developed or completely rethought. This also means allowing mistakes. Workshops that provide this space promote creative thought processes and genuine personal responsibility. This is a powerful resource in the context of climate change.

In real life, things rarely go according to plan. By experiencing how to deal with failure in a protected environment - reflectively, constructively and without shame - children and young people are better prepared for the challenges outside the workshop. They learn that setbacks are not dead ends, but detours with a learning effect.

In a society that often focuses on performance and perfection, failure has a negative connotation in many people's minds. But especially in workshops with children and young people, consciously allowing and reflecting on failure can be an enormous benefit - both individually and for the group. So wouldn't it make sense to invite failure as an integral part of the workshop?

The complete reflection will be available on the final report of the project.

2.2 Day with pupils (23 rd of may)

2.2.1 Feedback from the teachers

Châteauroux les Alpes

As part of our project on the forest, the dimension of imagination and sensory experience was missing. It was through the Cultures Eco Actives association and its partners, with the project "relating forests", that this gap was filled.

We had already explored the scientific and multifunctional aspects of the forest with the ONF (National Forest Office). The measurements and calculations were very useful and interesting, but they offered a very different relationship with the forest.

Allowing students to reconnect with the world through simple sensations and emotions—without relying on calculation—seemed essential to us.

It was a very interesting experience for the pupils to hear the sounds of foreign languages rarely or never heard before.

The pupils' feedback was very positive. They expressed their joy at having been there, in the middle of the forest with their classmates. They said the facilitators were "very kind."

A big thank-you to the high-quality facilitators who, through their impeccable preparation and coordination, were able to establish a connection between the forest and the students. The rhythm and sequence of activities were well suited, allowing the students to interact meaningfully with both the facilitators and the forest. The short written production seemed very useful and relevant for upper primary students.

Thanks to this sensory dimension, the class project on the theme of the forest has found its full balance.

Puy St Eusèbe

It was appreciated to move around and change locations. The variety of activities, the use of different languages, and the accessible songs were all highlights. Each proposal was thoughtful and well-timed.

2.2.2 Analysis of questionnaires

Evolution of emotions



Emotions, pupils from Châteauroux les Alpes : blue : at the beginning ; purple : at the end

In the forest, most pupils feel peaceful, happy and free. Deceived pupils are pupils who would have better liked playing.











Emotions, pupils from Puy St Eusèbe green : at the beginning ; yellow : at the end

Pupils feel mainly peaceful and happy. In this group, more are surprised or astonished.

Frustrated pupils are pupils who would have better liked playing.

Evolution of the link to nature :

The children were asked about their link to nature :

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I feel strong | I feel safe and comfortable in the forest. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I feel good | I feel calm, happy, and relaxed. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I play or move | I build things, ride a bike, or climb. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I create | I get ideas and want to make things. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I forget everything | I stop thinking and feel free. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I use what nature gives | I collect mushrooms, wood, or fish. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  I thank nature | Nature helps me live and gives me food. |
| <input type="checkbox"/>  Nature is stronger than me | Nature feels big and powerful; I feel small. |

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 🦵 I feel strong | I feel safe and comfortable in the forest. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ⚖️ We are equal | Nature and I are both strong and important. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 🔄 We are similar | Like water, animals, and all life. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 🏠 It feels like home | The forest is my place, where I belong. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 😊 I'm with others | I feel free and close to animals or people. |

At the end of the day :

"I play or move and i use what nature gives" decrease significantly, "i feel good" increases

(5 or 6 less and more, from 37 questionnaires).

In Châteauroux-les-Alpes, "I use what nature gives" decreases significantly.

In Puy-Saint-Eusèbe, I feel good and "we are similar" increases significantly, while "it's my home", "I play and move" and "I feel strong" decrease.

Evolution of main characters of the stories

The way pupils look at the living in the forest is analysed from the main characters they tell about in their stories.

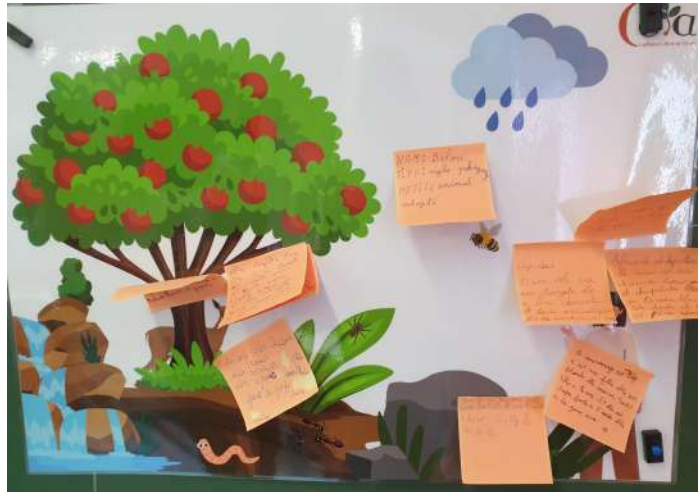
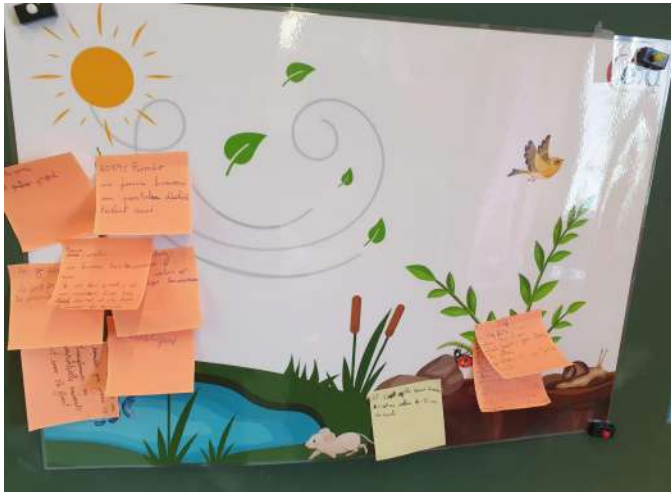
Châteauroux-les-Alpes, after the preparatory workshop with the pupils (6th of may)



Châteauroux-les-Alpes, after the 23 rd of may workshop



Puy-Saint-Eusèbe, after the preparatory workshop with the pupils (6th of may)



Puy-Saint-Eusebe, after the 23 rd of may workshop



While the main characters of the stories were mostly human beings before the project (CLA : 10 boys and 3 girls : PSE : 7 boys and 4 girls), or fancy characters (CLA : 7), after the workshop, **they were mostly animals (mostly mammals)**, with 3 fancy characters remaining.

As characters, they tell as well about 2 trees, 3 birds (among them the merle), 2 mushrooms, 1 snail and lim.

2.3 Day with adult population (21 st of may)

2.3.1 Emotions of participants



Brown : at the beginning

Blue : after mask workshop

Red: at the beginning of the afternoon

Yellow : after the participative fairytale walk

Grey : at the end, after theatre reflet

The dominating emotion during the day is "happiness", in all its forms, with some "surprised"- which can be seen as a sign of the innovation of the day.

Some emotions could be seen as a sign of “resonance” with the forest : “open”, “loving”, “inspired” or “peaceful”.

after mask workshop : 6 answers out of 15
after the participative fairytale walk : 9 out of 13

2.3.2 Analysis of the questionnaires

Among the 32 participants, 19 answered the questionnaire.

What participants were touched by :

What touched them the most is the mask workshop (5), the circle sharing objects (3), taking time (3) ; the fairytale (3), The théâtre reflet (3), and the norwegian song (2).

Words of participants about what they were touched by



The main results of the feedbacks useful for the artistic work are the following answers to what touched the participants :

“Different look with the mask”; “The neutral mask that lays us bare” ; “Wider and more focused look at the same time”

“Théâtre reflet: it’s magnificent, a lot of emotions transmitted”

“The Norwegian language “

“Reconnecting to our roots”

“A beautiful forest tale pair”

General feedback :

Out of 15 respondents, 12 would like to attend this kind of workshop again, and 3 answered why not. They mainly wrote they have no improvement suggestions as it was perfect, except for time management.

General feedback ; positive thoughts words



The transformation of the link to the forest :

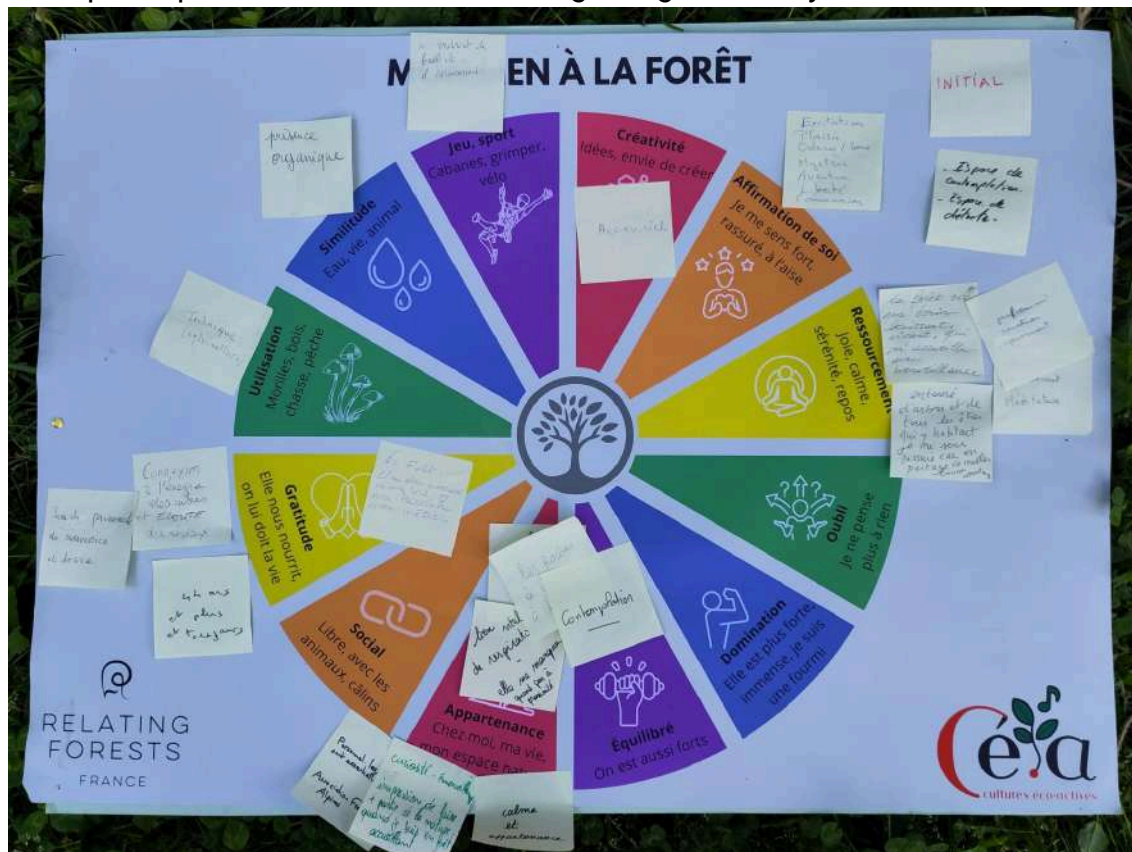
Out of 12 respondents, 5 state that it has been changed, 3 that it is stronger than before, 3 that it is in a positive continuity.

Even if most participants are already linked to the forest, some have a professional link, or a link for leisure. In their comment, the professionals say they changed their look on it and could discover another role of it.

Link with the forest of the participants before and after the workshop :

Non anthropocentric links		Before	After
	Belonging	7	3
	Similarity	1	1
Link showing a resonance with the forest			
	gratitude	4	2
	ressourcing	4	8
	creativity	1	1
	Balanced	0	1

Link of the participants to the forest at the beginning of the day



Link of the participants to the forest at the end of the day



2.3.3 Some feedbacks perceived by artists

Two feedbacks were pointed out by one artist about the mask workshop :

One participant said that the boundaries between his being and the insect and plant beings were blurred, and he felt part of the whole.

One participant expressed her discomfort with the removal of the boundary between fiction and reality, as well as between humans and nature. However, she rated her discomfort and the resulting questions and insights as positive.

3. Présentation made and their indicators

3.1 Artistic and participative content

3.1.1 Fairy Tail and songs proposed during the workshop

The fairy tales and songs proposed during the workshop aimed at creating new resonance to the forest. They were chosen for that purpose.

From Norway :

Kråkevisa

The Crow Song, also called The Man and the Crow, The Farmer and the Crow or The Big Crow, is a folk song of the type we call a medieval ballad. In the TSB catalogue it has the type number TSB F 58. The song is also known in Denmark, Sweden and the Faroe Islands.

In Norway it is one of the most widespread folk songs. The Norwegian Song Archive has registered almost a hundred text variants and over 75 melodies. Landstad has printed two fairly short variants in Norske Folkeviser from 1853. The oldest known variant is found in a Danish penny print from the 17th century. (Source: Wikipedia)

The poem has 58 verses – here is a link to them all

Bendik & Årolilja

Bendik and Årolilja is a Nordic ballad that tells of the tragic love between Bendik and Årolilja. Bendik is sentenced to death and beheaded, and Årolilja dies of grief. They are buried on opposite sides of the church, but on the graves two trees grow that intertwine over the church roof.

This is a typical knightly ballad. The material seems to be taken from the Danish old legend of Hagbard and Signe. The ending motif about the two trees is known in many types of poetry.

The ballad was recorded in several variants from Telemark in the 19th century. The oldest Norwegian version is known from Finnmark in 1698. This version lacks the ending motif. Here instead a revenge motif is introduced, as the hero's brother takes cruel revenge on the king and his men, who caused his brother's death. (Store Norske Leksikon)

Sami Poem

Source & translation: Harald Gaski

Holy places

Strange rocks

Trees

Hollows high up on the mountain

As long as we are open

We will receive messages

Many messages

As long as we see, we will learn

If birds, if animals, behave strangely

Then they come

To us

To tell us

And some places

Rock mountains

The bedrock

They let us know

From France or chosen by the french artist

The storytelling walk was a combination of walking and listening, as a link with the magnificent Boscodon forest. This forest, populated mainly by white fir and beech trees, is airy and pleasant to walk through, with moss on the ground, and is aesthetically pleasing. The forest has long been exploited by man and continues to be so. The storytelling walk is a 3 km downhill walk with stops to listen to stories and poems.

Creating a storytelling walk, like creating a show, can be compared to preparing a meal: a starter, one or more main courses, optional cheese, a dessert and always a touch of humour: the spice of life.

The Tale of the Raven: told from a viewpoint, between land and sky, facing a cliff where a large raven might be nesting and which I call by making its call several times in the tale. It's a tale that casts a different light on a bird that, in France especially from the Middle Ages onwards, was seen as a bird that brought bad luck. This is an etiological tale (or a tale of why): how did the raven become black? A tale of the white raven becoming black.

An Amerindian tale from the Lakota Indians (1). In other cultures, such as the Siberian lakuts, the raven is a hunting ally and one of the wild animals with the greatest shamanic powers, along with the eagle, elk and reindeer. Creator of the world, messenger of the gods, it guides souls through the darkness, the solar bird par excellence, among the peoples of the far north, the Celts and the Germanic peoples. It is he who brings light to the Earth and lifts men and animals out of the darkness. Each entity that populates the world will then stand out from the others by seeing it and no longer by feeling it only through touch, sound, taste or smell. "Corbeau makes elements and beings visible and therefore apprehensible through and not just through the senses":

Nastassja Martin (2)

An extract from Jacques Prévert's poem Arbres(3)

An extract from Hélène Dorion's poems Mes forêts (4)

The hummingbird tale (5): told in the forest while each participant leans against a tree.

This South American tale is also found in Africa. A legend retold in contemporary terms by Pierre Rabhi, in which each bird does its part to extinguish the fire that is ravaging the forest. In my version, it's not the forest but the tree of life, the life force of the forest that catches fire from the lightning. Colibri, who lives in this giant of life, flies to the river, picks up a drop of water as tiny as his beak and flies back and forth incessantly despite the flames to put out the fire. Then another bird will help, then another and another, and the fire will be extinguished. Everyone is involved, sucked in and drawn in by Colibri's act of courage, resistance and madness. This tale is obviously reminiscent of what we are going through, with fires starting in every country in the world and the heat rising all over the world.

The hummingbird tale was popularised by Pierre Rabhi. However, according to Patrick Fischmann, storyteller and bard, the original tale did not carry a humble and responsible message, but a call to radicalism and courage.

Patrick Fischmann: "How can we claim to change anything, and above all ourselves, without radically transforming our dreams, without directing all our energy towards a type of creation that finally puts man back into the symphony of life?"

The tale of the tree of life (6), told in a magnificent tree made up of three trees, close to the tallest larches in the forest, presented by Christophe Bernard, who works for the ONF. A poetic tale about two little old men and a gigantic tree of life. The dearest wish of these two little old men, full of love for each other, is to see the seed of the tree that has arrived in their house grow. The tree will become the axis of their lives.

We can draw a parallel between this tale and the thread of our life: our life is like a sinuous tree. Our physical body is vertical, like the tree between earth and sky.

The tale of the tree of life and death (7), told in the same place as the previous one: in a magic tree made up of 3 trees. A magnificent tree, a symbol of life in a village, is killed because of human fear. Tale collected by Louis Espinassous, storyteller, mountain leader, writer and nature educator whose philosophy is to educate in nature, outside. Louis Espinassous heard this tale told by Pierre Galinou in the forests of Ile de France, but does not know its place of origin or its culture.

For me, it's a tale with strong symbolism, about human respect for these gigantic trees, also known as "mother trees", which defy time and can be found all over the world. The walk will continue in pairs, with each pair recounting personal memories of the forest. Then the public will be invited to share their memories before the next story: two people will tell their stories: one about the violence of forest fires and the other about the ONF forestry body and the restoration of land in the mountains.

Les trois pets d'âne (8): A funny, slightly provocative tale that can be disturbing in its very down-to-earth way. The idea of telling this tale was to bring a joyful energy to our walk, to change the register, to take a step aside while remaining with a very local tale. It's an unpretentious look at Jean, "who thought he didn't know how to do anything with his life", and who finds himself in the forest to do his autumn affouage. Jean cuts off the branch he is sitting on and meets a man who makes him believe that he is going to die when his donkey farts for the third time. A funny tale, "traditional from the Hautes-Alpes", collected by Anne Lopez who collected this tale and which I found in her book, but which I had heard before from a storyteller who spoke Occitan and who made me laugh a lot.

This tale tells me about the "affouage" (wood harvesting) that the villagers still do in the autumn to cut their wood. The practice of affouage dates back to the Middle Ages. At that time, the local lord granted the inhabitants of his villages the right to collect firewood from the forests. This right applied to every household ("affouer" comes from Old French and means "to light"), hence the name of the practice. Even today, people continue to draw lots to determine which plot or plots of land they have for affouage. This tale also tells of the relationship that people had with the forest, the ritual that brought people together in the forest and where they helped each other to cut, saw, pull, push, take out and dispose of the tree trunks cut by the inhabitants. I like to remember this practice and this vital link with the forest. This work was carried out in the autumn. Accidents often happened, and a tree could fall on a person. It was better not to be alone.

Le conte de Lili (Lili's tale): a Breton tale that moves me, telling of the bond between a little girl, Lili, and her grandparents, when she realises that her grandparents have been transformed into two entwined trees. So Lili can be close to them whenever she wants. What if it were true? What if each tree was as dear to us as our family, our friends, if another bond united us to them? de Lili I'd like to believe it. I dream about it when I tell this story. I was inspired by the storyteller Alice Beaufort's version.(9)

The song "L'arbre est dans ses feuilles" (The tree is in its leaves): a very happy song with repetition and drawers, and I love the version by Zachary Richard, singer, musician, Acadian (In 1620, Acadia designated a region that included the maritime provinces of Canada). I've adapted this song with gestures. This song is a joyful sharing that brought the storytelling tour to a close.

Le merle, le genévrier, le pin et le mélèze (10) (The blackbird, the juniper, the pine and the larch): an Italian etiological tale from the Valle d'Aosta that I told on Friday to the children of Chateauroux and Puy St Eusèbe about why the larch loses its needles in winter. It's one of the tales I tell the most, and one that is often much appreciated by the audience

3.1.2 Day with adults population (21 st of may)

On the 21st of May the two German members of our group, consisting in total of 4 artists from Germany, Norway and France, hosted a workshop on masks in the morning. The afternoon was followed by a participatory storytelling walk including storytelling hosted by the French member of the group, that included performative and poetic elements, also from the Norwegian Member, and sharing of stories with and among participants. The afternoon ended with a performance from the theater local company "Theatre reflet" ("Mirror Theatre").

The day began with a **mask workshop** led by Luzie Ackers and Marianne Cornil from the company TheatreFragile. It was an experience of the mask in nature – exploring how the mask, as a tool, can offer both the performer and the audience a new perception of the living world. During the mask workshop, participants would experience that the mask sharpens our perception and refocuses our attention. By partially limiting our field of vision, the mask acts as a filter. It compels us to concentrate more on what is essential, on what is close, on what we truly see rather than on what we glance over distractedly. In a world saturated with visual stimuli, where everything is fast and accessible, the mask becomes a tool for recentring – inviting us to consciously choose what we contemplate. It led us to see differently, to notice the light between the leaves, the texture of a tree trunk, the path of a bird in flight. Far from blurring our vision, the mask sharpens our sensitivity.

On a symbolic level, the mask also frees us from our social identity. It invites us into a form of intimacy with the natural world. By temporarily erasing the face, it makes us more anonymous, more receptive, and more present.

After a shared picnic lunch, participants were invited to exchange perspectives during a **participatory storytelling walk** led by Anne-Claire Dromzée – storyteller and mountain guide with the Cie Entre-Deux – with songs contributed by Rebekka Saeter from NOBA – Norwegian BioArt Arena. Tales from here and elsewhere were told, echoing our connection to the forest.

There were many exchanges with participants, including insights on the specificities and history of the Boscodon forest shared by Hervé Gasdon, local expert on the forest, the legend of the Bear's Fountain recounted by Yoann Oliverio, local cultural mediator, an explanation of the owl counting process in Boscodon by Jean-François Lombard, representative of the Ecrins National Parc, and numerous technical contributions by Christophe Bernard, representative of the National Forestry Office (ONF). One participant shared a story about the "Abreuvoir à oiseau" -birdbath-. It was a walk that could have lasted for hours, so rich was the sharing and discovery.

At the end of the day, participants were invited to share their inner landscapes through the "Théâtre reflet" session with the Compagnie du P'tit Noyau. This interactive improvisational theatre encouraged the flow of stories within the group. A person from the audience was invited to recount a personal experience related to the forest, and like a mirror, the actors replayed the scene before us. It was a moving moment, allowing the person to relive the experience, while also receiving it through the lens of others.

The stories shared by the participants were about : emotions while owl counting , the tree of my childhood, how I encountered a tree in a very harmful way.





3.1.3 Day with pupils (23 rd of may)

Leaders : CEA (Anne and Anne-Claire, France), Théâtre Fragile (Luzie and Marianne, Germany), and NOBA (Rebecca, Norway)

On the 23rd of May the group of 5 carried out two workshops with school children that included poems, storytelling, exercises, reflection and singing. The workshop was co-created by all members of the group, with the following agenda :

STARTING POINT

STARTING POINT	TIME	RESPONSIBLE
Grounded to the earth	5 min	Anne
Emotion wheel	10 min	Anne

In total **15 min**

INTRODUCTION

·	Presentation of us	2 min	Anne Claire + everyone
·	Name presentation of us and the kids	7 min	Luzie
·	Introduce the <i>Name Game of the forest</i>	3 min	Rebekka + Anne Claire
·	Collect the Treasures	2 min	Marianne

In total **14 min**

ON THE WAY

·	L'arbre De Vie	7 min	Anne Claire
·	Song of the Crow	5-7 min	Rebekka + Anne Claire
·	<i>Bird Sounds</i>	3 min	Luzie
·	Poeme Jacques Prevert	3 min	Anne Claire
·	Walking / Encounter plant+sharing	30 / 25 min	everyone / Luzie
·	<i>Komm weisser Mai /Kom mai</i>	3 min	Luzie + Marianne

In total **50 min**

IN THE PARCEL

·	Sami poem	3 min	Rebekka + Marianne
·	Circle of Treasures	10 min	Marianne
·	<i>Tell the story of the Treasures</i>	10-20 min	Luzie & Marianne
·	Le Merle	10 min	Anne Claire
·	Give the forest a name / Word Drops	5-10 min	Anne Claire & Rebekka
·	<i>L'arbre est dans les feuilles</i>	5 min	Anne Claire

In total **55-60 min**

CLOSING TIME

Grounded to the earth	5 min	Anne
Writing the stories	40 min	Anne
Emotion wheel	5 min	Anne
In the meantime :		
Recording the stories	45 min	Marianne

In total **45 min**

The day told by one artist : The sensory experiences

At the workshop in France, the children gathered many different impressions. Our international team told stories and sang songs - in German, French and Norwegian and we offered translations. Even though not all the children understood every language, it was exciting to listen and hear the different sounds.

The forest was at the center of our attention.

Together we walked through the forest - over soft mossy ground, along a narrow path, over hill and dale, over the spring forest floor, under various trees, in spring meadows. We felt the coolness of the shade and the warmth of the sun on our skin, experienced the wind and clouds that pushed themselves in front of the sun. We were able to experience the forest with our senses.

How does the ground feel? What sounds can you hear? What does the air smell like in the forest and on the meadow?

It would be exciting for our new workshop to develop this even further and focus on this! In both workshops, I noticed that **many of the children sat in the grass and played with the plants while listening to the stories about the forest. Completely immersed in listening, some plucked and plucked and others made interesting bouquets and flower arrangements.** Others plucked the bark from a small branch they had found.

A sensory game - is there a name for it? It is a wonderful, childlike game of hands... a dreamy game that takes on a life of its own while listening.

The children sat in a circle with their eyes closed. The world became silent. Sounds came to the fore - bird calls, the soft rustling of leaves, the whisper of the wind. Some children imitated the bird calls, others simply listened. An airplane could be heard.

A gift from the forest

Each child chose an object from the forest - for example a leaf, a piece of bark or some moss. This was introduced at the beginning of the walk and in the last third of the workshop everyone sat in a circle, eyes closed, bodies close together.

The objects were passed around the circle behind their backs and they could only feel them with their hands. It was exciting to feel how different the materials were - rough, smooth, soft, hard. People laughed, giggled and secretly looked.

Only when the object was returned to everyone were the children allowed to open their eyes and see what they had previously only felt.

In this case, we then showed each other the objects and later told stories about them.

There was also a large meadow where the children could let off steam. They ran, played and laughed there - a good balance after the quieter times in the forest. Overall, it was a mixture of listening, discovering, feeling, listening, sensing and moving - a workshop in which all the senses were addressed

The day told by one of the teachers :

Pupils walked between 15 and 45 minutes to reach the forest. The welcome, led by Anne, began with a meditation and grounding session (connecting with the earth and sky), intended to prepare both body and mind to receive the subtle signals of the forest. Then pupils placed a sticker on the wheel of emotions.

Then, Rebecca invited each participant to find a plant starting with the same letter as their first name and say it aloud while performing a free gesture. Everyone repeated the gesture and name together.

Breaks were interspersed with short movements, which helped the students refocus their attention.

The next stop featured a Norwegian song led by Rebekka, followed by a fairy tale told by Anne-Claire. Then came a German song performed by Luzie and Marianne, and finally a poem in the Sámi language, spoken by an ancient nomadic people of Norway.

The activity concluded in a large clearing, where another song was shared. Then, natural elements found in the forest were passed hand to hand with closed eyes.

Pupils were invited to find a name for the forest; their suggestions were written on the leaves of a tree drawn by Luzie.

Marianne recorded the forest stories imagined by the students.

Anne initiated a brief written production activity, asking them to invent a character and describe what happened to them in the forest.

The session ended with each pupil placing a sticker on the wheel of emotions.

Giving names to the forest





3.2 Indicators

Number of people participating in total : 79

Number of people participating on 21st of may : 38 ; Male : 9 ; Female : 28 ; Non binary : 1

Number of people participating on 23rd of may : 47 ; Male : 21 ; Female : 26 ; Non binary : 0

Result indicator, objective 1 :

Audiences of presentations : 73

Part of participants declaring having changed their mind about nature after artistic proposals planned during the workshop (12 respondents): 66 %

Result indicator, objective 2 :

Number of new international experiences for artists, who work in rural areas : 1 international expérience

Number of artists, who work in rural areas, having a new international experience : min 8 professional artists, including 4 from the consortium and 4 local artists.

Result indicator, objective 3 :

Number of fairytales/ myths treated during the course of the project and artistically reworked with regard to nature-human relationships : 1 (Hansel and Gretel)

Number of (mask-) rituals treated during the course of the project and artistically reworked with regard to nature-human relationships : 1

Activity indicators

Recorded interviews to artists at the end of the workshops : Number of interviews showing the achievement of the workshops objectives : 4

Number total of artists participating in the workshop : 14 (4 professional artists from the organisation, 2 non professional artists from the organisation, min 4 professional artists as audience, min 6 non professional artists as audience) ; 2 story tellers, 1 choreographer pluridisciplinary artist, 8 stage actors, 1 theater teacher, 1 clown, 1 musician.

3.3 Bibliographical references

Texts from France (chapter 3.1.1)

- (1) Mille ans de contes sur les sentiers Texts collected and commented by Louis Espinassous
- (2) East of Dreams - Even responses to systemic crises - Nastassja Martin - Editions Les empêcheurs de tourner en rond
- (3) Arbres Poèmes Jacques Prévert published by Gallimard
- (4) Mes forêts Hélène Dorion Éditions Bruno Doucey
- (5) Contes et légendes de l'arbre Louis Espinassous Editions Hesse
- (6) Les deux vieux et l'arbre de vie: children's album by Patrick Fishmann, storyteller and poet, and Martine Bourre, illustrator.
- (7) Arbre d'amour et de sagesse Henri Gougaud Editions Seuil
- (8) Contes et légendes des Hautes-alpes Anne Lopez
- (9) Auprès de mon arbre magazine La Grande Oreille n°95 June 2024
- (10) Histoires d'arbres des sciences aux contes Philippe Domont and Edith Montelle Editions Delachaux et Niestlé and ONF

References for chapter 2.1.1 : Performance ecology

Castree, N., and B. Braun, eds. 2001. Social Nature: Theory, Practice and Politics. Oxford: Blackwell. Michael W. Derby, Laura Piersol & Sean Blenkinsop (2015) Refusing to settle for pigeons and parks: urban environmental education in the age of neoliberalism, Environmental Education Research, 21:3, 378-389, DOI: 10.1080/13504622.2014.994166 Hopfinger, Sarah (2017) Performance (in) ecology: A practice-based approach. PhD thesis.

4.Participants, agendas and duration

A 3 day workshop located in the French south alps, from 21 to 23 May 2025, prepared with children during an extra workshop on 6th of may.





