



EXERCISE 40/40

Research Project forty days for forty years

Artistic-Scientific Director Dr. Jurij Alschitz

<https://hybrid-theatre-training.org>

Summary

The project focuses on the development of an innovative *Hybrid-Platform* for the theatre in three phases:

I - Online education

II - Forty days of practical supervised tuition

III - Forty years of *life-long learning*

The online education will encourage a change of mindset introducing the students to the idea of *Spherical Education*. Newly developed teaching formats and specific tasks will prepare students for the intensive practical phase. Over the course of forty days of practical tuition, a *team of teachers* under the artistic direction of Dr. Jurij Alschitz will guide students towards a 'spherical understanding' of every parameter of theatre practice. The intensive laboratory situation will include the research of new learning algorithms and teaching methods. In pursuit of this highly individualized learning system, students will construct a personalized method of learning, which, in turn, will provide the foundation for over forty years of personal and professional development. Crucial to this are the keywords: *homo creativus – self-education – life-long learning*.

Target group: theatre practitioners and those interested and working with the means of theatre of any age. Any individual interested in the topics and course content can register for the online education only.

The Basics

Training – Self-Education – Homo Creativus

Back then, the renowned Philosopher Karl Popper posed the idea of three worlds: I – the world of physical objects, II – the world of our conscious experiences; III – a world composed of databases, books and libraries. Today, we often reference the phenomena of a Fourth World – the organised world or, in other words, the digital 'Selfie-World' – a world of human thought, committed to seeking out new structures in society.

Statistical studies have shown that at the end of the twentieth century, 80% of the population were trained to be part of the 'stepping system', while 15-18% felt ill at ease with becoming simply another cog in a giant social machine. Only 2-5% of the population were opposed to these subordinate, prescribed roles and attempted to take fate into their own hands by creating their own separate worlds, apart from the overwhelming social matrix. Recent studies testify that 60-70% of those asked felt they belonged to this so called 'mass grouping', but indeed 20-25% already

harboured doubts concerning the existing schema of social life as well as its respective education and work systems. All in all, these studies show a tangible resistance to existing value systems and their sliding scale of worth from which many now seek to extricate themselves: 5-10% are now pursuing their dream of independent creative lives either by pioneering new vocational fields, founding start-ups or seeking alternative pathways to maximise their creative potential.

People are no longer willing to obey someone who governs their knowledge and destiny; instead many are demonstrating their own creative initiative and a pro-active responsibility for themselves. It is obvious that our highly complex and changing society places different requirements on the independent personality.

The importance of education in society today is indisputable and takes on increasing significance, often becoming the topmost priority. Nevertheless, we see how the present system of educational specialists is geared towards yesterday - perhaps at best, today – whereas society should be preparing itself for the future, indeed for tomorrow. More and more frequently, the old systems display a deficit and an increasing incapability to deal with unusual or unconventional tasks; the moment of collapse is foreseeable.

Is our education system prepared for this? Generally speaking, old templates are being renewed and one update simply follows the next. Curricula are re-worked, revised and finally accredited after years, but are fated to be outdated even from the very moment of their first appearance. The re-launches of training programmes fail to change our course of thinking or to inspire the development of fundamental new ideas and understandings.

In all honesty, we must admit that the period in which education generated the great classical philosophers of our age has come to an end: we are standing at the end of the glorious 'Enlightenment'. Is this accomplished mission, e.g. the transferal to a new cultural level a virulent question for us? If so, we should take this evolutionary transition confidently, professionally and, in so far as possible, without hasty attempts at resolution, half-hearted reforms or amateurish revolution. Our initiative has to be directed towards revitalising the entire system in parallel with contemporary teaching, whilst also creating alternative forms of education.

The ever-growing demand of modern societies with their changing needs to educate a new generation is already leading to innovative teaching formats being implemented across schools, institutes and universities. In this context, initiatives which merely concentrate on changing the levels of education will never alter the existing, fundamental concepts behind education; a quantitative growth in educational establishments is scarcely possible without lowering the quality of the education itself. Equally, a formalist reduction in the number of training institutes would also be an error. We see that the situation must undergo complete change. Or - we have to pursue new educational pathways concurrently and in parallel to existing or traditional teaching formats.

For any variant of problem-solving, one fact is obvious: modern technology plays a central role and demands widespread change. The core of this change corresponds to a gradual shift of the word training towards an emphasis on the concept of *Self-Education*. Ultimately, the latter will be dominant. I dare to predict that the most amazing discoveries of the twenty-first century will flourish in the wake of new concepts like Self-Education and Self-Knowledge.

The process of independent learning coined in the previous century by individual spontaneity is now categorized into many diverse forms and systems of scientific process. We can therefore assume that

Self-Education will occupy a significant portion of human activity and a dominant position in society. Self-Education will become the foundation on which the position of the individual in society, its newly defined role as well as its intellectual, emotional and creative potential must be re-assessed.

The extent to which society places ever higher demands on the individual also reflects increasingly pressing issues related to a person's independent educational activity. Personality develops in many diverse forms and if it is to be based on the framework of Self-Education, this in turn will help a new form of culture within society to emerge by producing a new type of personality generated in a new socio-cultural context. With the aid of people who are themselves able to integrate new elements into culture, the principle of Self-Education will help birth a new style. The person with knowledge will become a new entity to produce new connections and interrelationships: the Homo Sapiens therefore becomes a Homo Creativus.

Creative thinking and intuition distinguishes us from robots. Those will survive whose work is linked to creativity – going far beyond a creative association with extant knowledge. In this way, the transfer of skills already belongs to yesterday's training programme.

To be successful in today's world without the all-important 'I' is unthinkable, but equally impossible to do so without a coherent perception of the world. The cross-linking of the self within the process of Self-Education is the way towards the development of a whole personality; it permits free movement in the field of knowledge and in the networks of human existence and culture.

It will take time until this idea is alive and viable. Today, however, people are not predicated or have not yet learnt to exist without a coach – this motivation is not yet highly enough developed – but the desire is increasing and will take its place as the formative cornerstone of educational concepts over the coming fifty years.

Hybrid Education

Today, *Hybrid Education* is the subject of extensive and global discussion concerning how we can unite the old and the new. It provides a platform to consider how we can use technology appropriately without losing conventional achievement as we seek to take into account the completely new means of thought and communication produced by younger generations.

Until now, theatre with its direct, human and physical contact – one of the deepest and most ancient means of analogue communication – has not yet provided an answer besides the use of some modern technology on-stage. But how about the re-structuring of its own composite means, be it the mental, emotional or psycho-physical processes?

Above all, general discussion about *Hybrid Instruction* tends to focus on the effectiveness of learning, as well as how to improve knowledge accumulation. At the moment however, in a world where the acquisition of knowledge no longer enjoys top priority, it is absurd to align technology and educational reform with a quantitative transference of knowledge. Instead, *Hybrid Instruction* deals rather more with how we can manage factual knowledge (which multiplies daily at an exponential rate) and connect it with creative pathways. We no longer ask 'what have you learnt?', but rather 'what new connections could you generate?'

The foundational basis of any new training programme must be the development of individual creativity and the ability to create one's own systems of learning.

We have left the analogue world behind and now move in a hyperspace of communication, amongst the coordinates of hypertexts and hyper-knowledge. This will inevitably lead to a new space-time perception, thereby bringing with it a unique spherical understanding of the world and its objects.

The Self-Education of an artist implies that each individual creates their own unique foundation, from which basis they will evolve their own learning system. Using all the available parameters of performance, each artist will be the creator of his/her own conception of spherical knowledge.

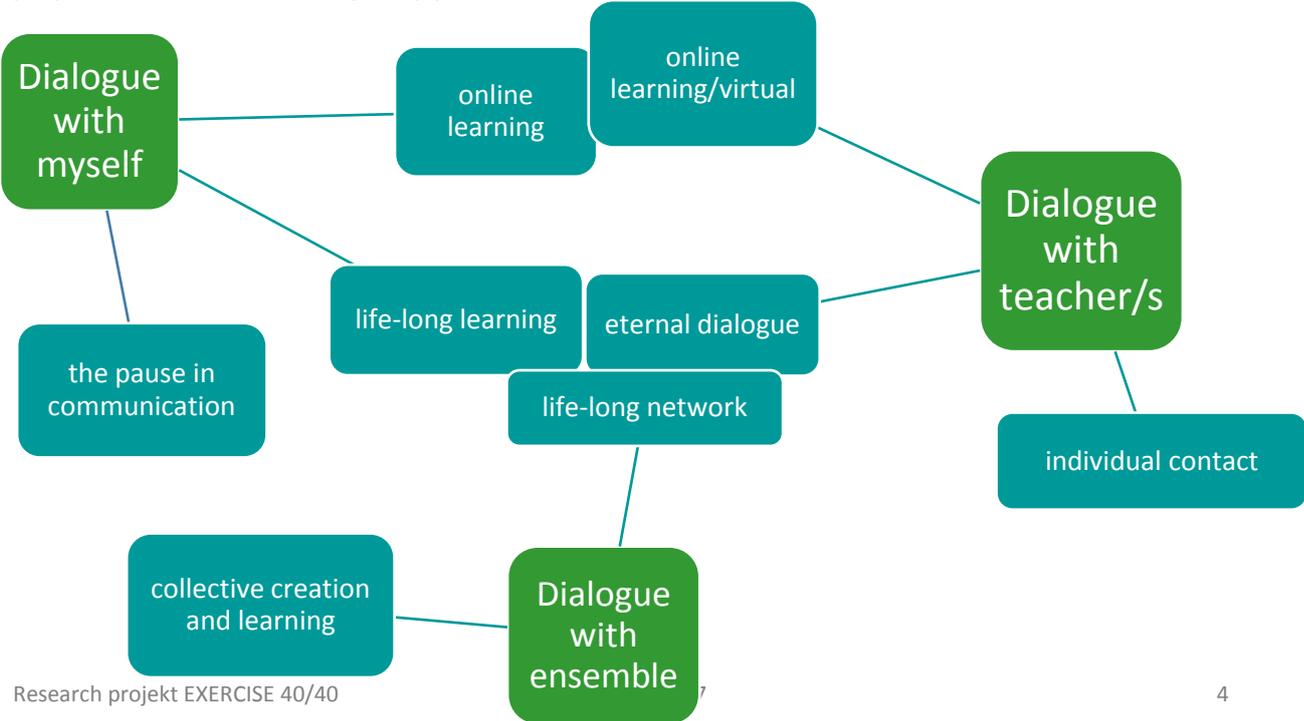
Life-Long Learning - a Selfi

Education itself is a never-ending process. Vocational training or Higher Education on the other hand suggests that this process could be completed after receiving a certificate or a Diploma. Consequently, *life-long learning* programmes are now an integral part of the education system, especially when viewed in terms of continuous education, a general broadening of the horizons, as well as training for a so-called *second career*.

Above all however, the concept of *life-long learning* should relate to a changed understanding of the learning process. *Self-Education* runs through life’s entirety as a constant process, building on a modified creative consciousness and drawing on life as a source of inspiration as aforementioned. This transformation of consciousness exists to facilitate an independence from systems which strive to make us products of the ‘learning outcomes’ and consumers of knowledge. We must take leave of the understanding that knowledge can be passed on like a commodity or even that knowledge can give security or guarantees.

In contrast therefore, the Homo Creativus uses the mass of new impulses and information to conceive unusual connections which, in turn, are constantly changing, re-configuring and creating his own new knowledge. Divorced from the traditional canon of knowledge, the state evoked through *life-long learning* can react creatively to changes made on the basis of one’s own spherical system and acquired ability to plan or respond to constantly shifting connections.

The suggested programme 40/40 will take into account these principles. Following a comprehensive online-preparation phase, students will take part in a forty day intensive programme which will prepare them for the coming forty years.



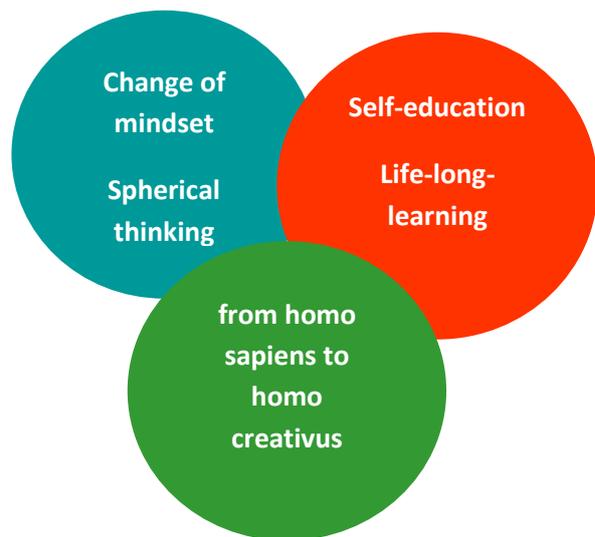
The programme of the EXERCISE 40/40

Hybrid-Platform for Theatre

The EXERCISE 40/40 is a new model of *Self-Education* which sets out to change the consciousness with its linear and analogue modes of thinking making it correspond to the demands of a generation related to hyperspace, hypertext and spherical thinking.

It is based on the three columns:

The basic idea of the Hybrid-Platform for Theatre reflects fundamental and essential changes to pedagogical education. Whilst the application and testing is aimed at theatre professionals in the broadest sense, the EXERCISE 40/40 is definitively geared towards actors, directors and theatre educators. At the same time, the course does not limit itself and is aimed at all interested individuals, irrespective of age, prior education or nationality.



The programme is split into three phases:

I Online Education

Over the course of two months, students will take part in an intensive online programme of studies, composed of different elements: lectures will run between four and twelve minutes dealing with a variety of topics and using different teaching mediums– texts, music, visual components. Above all however, the online study course will set tasks whose solutions cannot be solved via the internet, but through the creative power of the student’s engagement instead. It is here that the personal dialogue really begins with the *team of teachers*. Students are further encouraged to submit questions which will be answered in classroom lectures for all.

For the many students to whom theatrical practice is not their desired aim, the course remains an appropriate and suitable format. The programme will be under constant review as well as being continuously monitored, expanded and updated.

For the participants interested in theatre practice and performance – actors, directors and trainers – the online education phase is an opportunity to develop their autonomy and to prepare intensively for their meeting with Dr. Jurij Alschitz and the *team of teachers*. Students are responsible for commencing their own ‘conversion’ described here in this context as the transformation of mind-set and conscious perception.

II 40 Days of Practical Tuition under the artistic direction of Dr. Jurij Alschitz and the *European Team of Teachers*.

At designated locations across Europe, Asia and Latin-America, co-operating institutions will arrange the perfect working conditions for the course.

Depending on the number of applicants, we will assemble groups of approximately twenty-four participants. The forty-day course has been conceived as an intensive twenty-four hour programme and will focus on the exploration of learning algorithms, e.g. to balance the rhythm of receptivity both in the group, in dialogue situations and alone: ensemble learning and group work such as joint lectures and creative production will alternate with moments of solitude in pause, stillness; and with reflection in dialogue with the teacher, between students and in dialogue with myself. (Compare fig. of the dialogue principle above)

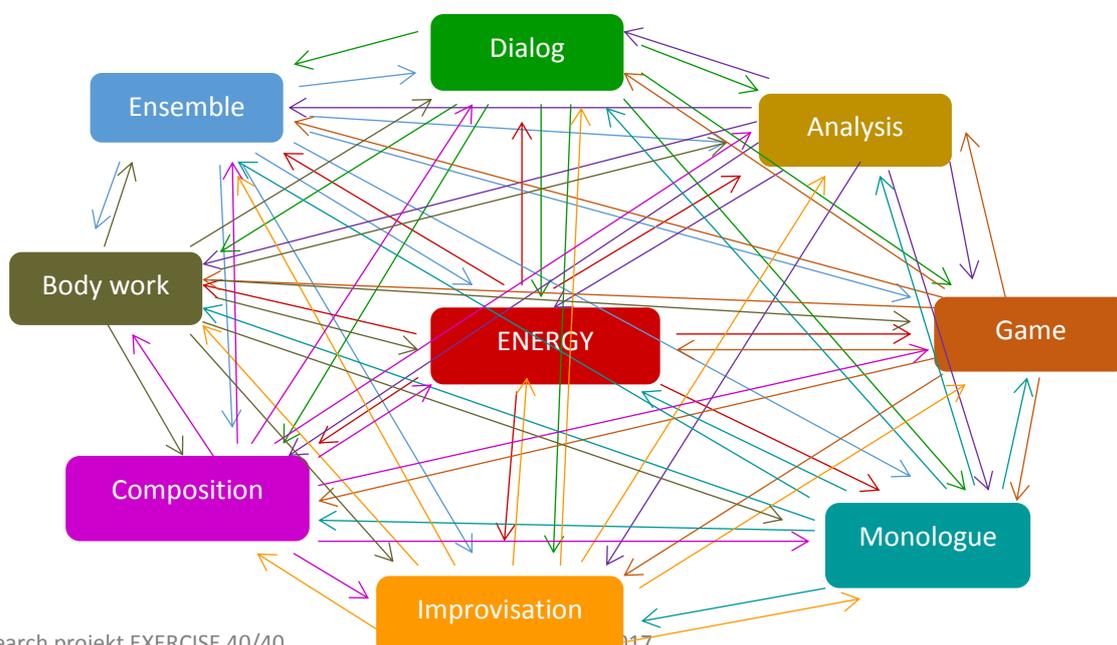
A parallel research subject for invited specialists is the effects of a specific diet to stimulate creative production.

Learning objectives reflect less on the nuts and bolts taught in every reputable academy, but instead on the capacity to create novel combinations, compounds and interrelationships. The ultimate goal is to enact a change in consciousness which yields a more holistic, spherical understanding or *hyper-knowledge*.

Note: Knowledge is not simply a question of information transference; such an understanding must be consigned to the past. Knowledge cannot be passed on one to one. More to the point, the contact between teacher and the individual serves to open up and facilitate the discovery of new knowledge, in which both the dialogue and the energy of creativity remain key components in this interplay.

Knowledge of the sphere is infinite. The EXERCISE 40/40 offers a platform from which the practice of infinite knowledge and endless new combinations can be discovered: *Spherical Thinking* in hyperspace. Knowledge is not a fixed entity, but rather experienced, extended and re-opened again in each and every new moment. Owing to these molten properties, let us call it *Liquid Knowledge*.

The teaching on offer will consequently follow the laws of the spheres in the pursuit of *Spherical Teaching*. Lessons will enshrine a commitment to this combinatorial approach both in the content and form and through the use of a *team of teachers*, who, by following hyperlinks and group teaching methods will harness a diverse range of impulses and, in the shortest time possible, set in motion the multitudinous vibrational resonances of their students. The forms of mediation are based on the knowledge of the wave and resonance theory and are closely connected with the above mentioned research of learning algorithms.



III 40 Years

Provided it is accompanied by a change of mindset, the principle of *Self-Education* is infinite and harbours an intensive and more diversified energy in comparison to a 'completed' course of studies. It is how people become their own *life-coach*.

Self-Education paves the way for the development of a self-determined creative human being.

The programme aims to induct students into a *life-long* support network curated by the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT and in a co-dialogue with its associate teachers. It will also provide students with the necessary knowledge capabilities to take charge of their own further development by entering into personal and practical dialogues at any given time. Furthermore, the EXERCISE 40/40 will encourage the development of an international participants' network which we may call the 'Hyper-Ensemble'.

The programme will be implemented by the World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT and in association with the International Theatre Institute, the World Organization for the Performing Arts. This offers a new artistic dimension to the World Association as well as all students and co-operating partners.



Contact: Christine Schmalor, programme director

World Theatre Training Institute AKT-ZENT

research centre of the International Theatre Institute ITI

Artistic Direction Dr. Jurij Alschitz

Skalitzerstr. 97, D-10997 Berlin, T/F +49 (0)30 – 612 87 274

e-mail: akt.zent@berlin.de

www.theatre-culture.org

<https://hybrid-theatre-training.org>