

LADDER

LOCAL AUTHORITIES AS DRIVERS FOR DEVELOPMENT
EDUCATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

“IN A BETTER WORLD”

A JOURNEY WITH THE LADDER PROJECT
PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION THROUGH CULTURE

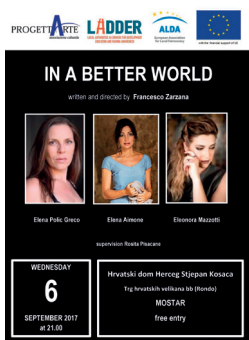
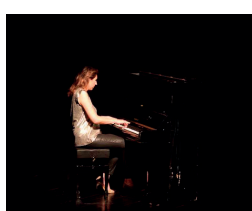


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*NO ONE LEAVES HOME UNLESS
HOME IS THE MOUTH OF A SHARK
[...]
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND,
THAT NO ONE PUTS THEIR CHILDREN IN A BOAT
UNLESS THE WATER IS SAFER THAN THE LAND*

FOREWORD



Antonella Valmorbida
Secretary General of ALDA



Sofia Caiolo
LADDER Project Manager

Since its conception phase, LADDER has been designed as much more than yet another project. The proof is in the pudding – its three years of implementation, together with its outstanding outputs, recommendations, and follow up are the best measure of our success.

Thanks to jointly coordinated, timely efforts LADDER became visible and present in all the countries included in the project and beyond. We saw it everywhere – and all the time. LADDER reached the local communities and – following the spirit and the methodology of the project – it included many of those who had never been involved in European activities or in development cooperation.

Local governments are at the centre of our approach, working together to promote global responsibility and citizenship. LADDER community has been a key actor at the European level in the definition and strong emphasis given to the localization of the Sustainable Development Goals, and our path naturally crosses the UN Agenda 2030. We have been working hand-in-hand with all main stakeholders at the EU and global level.

The three years of life of LADDER confronted all of us Europeans with a set of tough challenges. The sense of economic and political insecurity influences everyone's life and choices, often making people focus on their personal, hyper-local issues. But there is no wall, border, or fear which can make our world better – only through a global vision and cooperation can our main problems be addressed. **LADDER offers a platform of meeting and dialogue** where Europeans and representatives of the Neighbourhood South and East meet and identify together common solutions, using the huge potential of the cooperation between local authorities and civil society.

LADDER is the European platform working on a strong and impact-oriented education towards global citizenship development and responsibility. Thanks to its methodology and cascade effect, it reaches the local communities – where change takes place.

This handbook gathers the work of LADDER's community on advocacy related to six main themes, the project "thematic paths" – namely Youth in Development, Migration, Citizen's Participation in Development, Environmental and Sustainable Development, Private Cooperation in Development, and European Year for Development 2015 & Follow Up.

As the leader of LADDER consortium, in ALDA we believe the voices and outputs of these paths can be extremely helpful in crafting new successful policies and practices, **empowering local communities to shape a better future, more inclusive and sustainable**.

We want to share the take-home message that working together, besides all prejudices, threats and fears, is more than an opportunity – it is the solution. Globalization means also global responsibility, and it affects all the aspects of our living together on this planet, including social and economic issues, environment, migration, demography, and many more.

Let's capitalize on what we have done so far, and move ahead together for even greater results.

ABOUT ALDA



ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy is an organization dedicated to the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level. It focuses on activities that facilitate the cooperation between local authorities (LAs) and civil society organisations (CSOs).

ALDA was established in 1999 at the initiative of the Council of Europe to coordinate and support the network of Local Democracy Agencies, which are self-sustainable, locally registered NGOs acting as promoters of good governance and local self-government. Today, ALDA is a key stakeholder in the field of local democracy, active citizenship, and cooperation between local authorities and civil society.

ALDA is a membership based organization gathering more than 250 members (including LAs, Associations of LAs, CSOs, and Universities) coming from more than 40 countries. It is funded through membership fees and project funding from the EU, the Council of Europe, and other public and private donors.

Most of our work is based on the method of multilateral decentralized cooperation. This method involves a multi-stakeholder approach that focuses on partnerships between LAs and CSOs, which creates synergies and helps reaching common goals successfully.

ALDA works in most of the EU and European Neighbouring countries. At the EU level, ALDA's activities focus on the promotion of Active European Citizenship, while the activities run in the European Neighbourhood, namely Western Balkans, Eastern Partnership and Mediterranean area focus on good governance, empowerment of citizens, participation in public life, and decentralisation.

Many LDAs are located in the Western Balkans, but ALDA is increasing its activities and projects in the European Neighbourhood. In the EaP countries, LDAs have been established in Kutaisi (Georgia), Gyumri (Armenia), and Dnipropetrovsk (Ukraine). In 2017 two new LDAs have been established in Cimişlia (Moldova), and Kairouan (Tunisia), while the opening of two other LDAs is foreseen in Ukraine and Morocco. ALDA is also leading several other projects and developing partnerships in other European Neighbouring countries, such as Belarus, Azerbaijan, Algeria, and Turkey.

For more information, please visit www.alda-europe.eu.

ABOUT LADDER



co-funded by the EU

Among the many activities and projects that ALDA manages, a key part of its work is dedicated to Sustainable Development. This is mainly represented by the LADDER project which stands for Local Authorities as Drivers for Development Education & Raising awareness, coordinated by ALDA and funded by the DEAR Programme of DG DEVCO, under Lot 5 – "Global Learning and Advocacy Projects Led by a Local Authority or Association of local authorities". Its total budget amounts to 3.88 million Euros (€).

LADDER aims to create a multi-stakeholder network of Associations of LAs (both national and European) and alliances of CSOs that can act as multipliers at local level. Launched in 2015 in parallel with the European Year for Development, it addresses major issues identified in the EC Communication "A Decent Life for all: ending poverty and giving the world a

better future", thus developing a synergetic and effective programme.

The 3-year project started in January 2015 and it runs until December 2017. The final beneficiaries of LADDER are ordinary citizens across the EU & non-EU countries. The project is meant to raise citizens' awareness on global issues (short-term), to promote their engagement in global challenges & poverty eradication (mid-term) and to lead to a change of attitudes towards global and development challenges (long-term). To do so, the following specific objectives have been identified:

- 1 To strengthen the cooperation between LAs and CSOs and to build their internal capacities to act as "drivers for change" in DEAR;
- 2 To inform and raise citizens and communities' awareness on their role and responsibility on global issues, as well as about the interdependencies between the EU and developing countries, by exploring and testing the most adequate methods of non-formal education.

The project includes a variety of activities that contribute to achieving its mission. Particularly, the project's activities are divided into five dimensions, as described below:

- Research;
- Capacity building & peer-to-peer learning;
- Advocacy;
- Grass-root actions;
- Cultural component.

The strong commitment of the 27 co-applicants and the active involvement of the 19 associates (including their respective networks) ensure the timely implementation of the project and the fulfilment of its objectives. Among the several

actions implemented it is important to mention a series of capacity building trainings and focus groups, exchange meetings, conferences and events that have been taking place at international, national and local level. In addition to this, in order to engage the local level and encourage citizens to take part in the project, not only a slogan competition for pupils was launched and a network of citizen journalists willing to write about global issues was established, but also a re-granting scheme has been implemented at the local level for all 28 EU Member States. As the title of the project implies, LADDER operates in the context of development education and awareness raising, and as such is inherently linked to the Sustainable Development Goals – the defining framework for global development until 2030.

ABOUT DEAR



Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) aims to inform EU citizens about development issues, mobilise greater public support for actions against poverty, give citizens tools to engage critically with global development issues, foster new ideas and change attitudes.

DEAR activities play a key role in EU development assistance. They are deployed in order to raise public awareness about development issues and promote development education in the EU and acceding countries. The EU has set up a dedicated programme for this purpose.

The DEAR programme is taken forward primarily through actions implemented by non-state actors and local authorities in the EU and acceding countries.

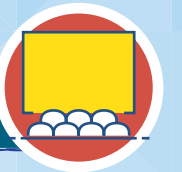
Its objectives are to:

- **Inform EU citizens about development issues and foster awareness** and understanding of global development and recognition of interdependence;
- **Mobilise greater public support for actions against poverty** and fairer relations between developed and developing countries;
- **Change attitudes**, providing the European public with tools to engage critically with global developments and supporting the emergence of new ideas on development issues.

Why is "DEAR" important?

In an era of globalised and interconnected societies, it is of utmost importance to promote Citizen participation and awareness while stimulating their involvement in development issues. DEAR is addressing the roots of inequality and calls for action and awareness raising on development, promoting actions in line with the principle of justice, solidarity, understanding and mutual respect.

LADDER CREATIVE COMPONENT



THEATRE PLAY "IN A BETTER WORLD"



theme
human rights and tolerance

plot
A young refugee woman crossing the sea for a better life in Europe.
On the tragic journey she loses her partner but **saves two children.**
She **brings them safely to Europe** where they can live safely.

goal
raise awareness on DEAR and migration



LADDER'S CULTURAL COMPONENT

This storybook is fully dedicated to the cultural component, the fifth dimension of the LADDER project, it summarises all activities and results achieved.

LADDER integrates a creative component, which aims at reaching a wider public through visual art, music and theatre. The purpose is, to raise awareness and to inform the public on the topics addressed by the project through the universal language of art.

For the purpose of this initiative, the LADDER project has paired up with the Italian cultural association *Progettarte*. After having participated in different LADDER events and meetings in 2015, *Progettarte* in charge of the creative component of the project created a theatre play that served as a tool for development education, awareness raising and mutual understanding. Based on the DEAR and LADDER approach Mr Francesco Zarzana, President of *Progettarte*, wrote the play "In a better world". After two initial performances in 2016, the play truly started its European tour in 2017 with 8 further representations. Approximately 700 spectators in 8 different countries attended the play.



Francesco Zarzana, Elena Polic Greco, LADDER Partner Moncef and Eleonora Mazzotti after performance at LADDER's South Eastern Europe path special initiative in Belgrade, Serbia – October 2017.

The theatre performance is a key component of the LADDER project since it represents an opportunity to raise citizens' awareness through the universal language of the arts. "In a better world" is a choral performance which mixes lyrics, poems, chant and music to make its audience aware of global issues. "In a better world" tells the story of a young migrant woman who tragically loses her love on her trip to Europe, but saves the lives of two little children. The play deals in a unique way with the ever-current topic of refugees and migration, giving it a hopeful dimension. It invites the audience to reflect on this humanitarian tragedy and invokes engagement for tolerance and human rights. Two videos that are solely about LADDER's objectives and activities, open and close the performances, leaving the audience inspired for further actions and individual involvement.

"In a better world" was not only successful because it used the universal language of art to deal with burning issues, but because the play was also translated and performed in 4 different languages: Italian, English, French and Spanish. That way lyrics and poems could convey the message in different mother tongues, succeeding in reaching a broader audience.

Storybook

The storybook – as part of the project's cultural component – aims at describing step by step the journey of "In a better world" from its conception in 2015 until the final performance in 2017. This storybook illustrates not only the play itself, but also the entire process of creation and implementation. It comments on the synergy art and development education created, gives insight into methodologies and personal experiences of the people who were directly involved in the play: art director, actresses, musicians, assistants.

PROGETTARTE



The cultural association *Progettarte* was founded in 1999 in Modena, located in the Emilia Romagna region in Northern Italy. It is a cultural non-profit association which operates purely for the purpose of promoting culture and art. *Progettarte's* main objective is the promotion and diffusion of knowledge in its cultural and artistic form, with special focus on dramatic writing, books and theatrical language. The objective is more precisely to promote research, debate, intellectual growth, cultural update, planning and valorisation of artistic interest as well as cultural activities.

Progettarte has produced ten theatre plays, all written and directed by Francesco Zarzana who is the current President of the association. Simultaneously, Mr Zarzana has organised the literature festival "Buk festival" for the past 11 years, this festival is considered one of the most important Italian cultural happenings. The "Buk festival" was created in order to promote the diffusion of small and medium publishing houses, giving space and voice to hundreds of small publishers, which present their rich cultural offer in Modena every year. "Buk" is not only an exposition, this event hosts many initiatives such as book presentations, lectures and debates about current topics. On top of this it hosts a reading and literature creative "atelier" as well as meetings with famous authors and renowned cultural representatives.

Progettarte is at the service of the public administration, cultural institutes, theatres, associations and professionals. This association, which co-ordinates projects of artistic and cultural value, has the know-how of organising cultural activities and events in the realm of small and medium publishing, theatre and cinema.

Francesco Zarzana's Biography

Francesco Zarzana is a writer, playwright and director. He lives in Modena and is the president of the cultural association *Progettarte*. Mr Zarzana is also founder and superintendent of the "Buk Festival" Small and Medium Publishing. He wrote several theatre plays for the association and published many books, mainly in Italian but also in French.



Art Director Francesco Zarzana

Francesco Zarzana realised and directed the documentary film "Tra le onde nel cielo" (2016) which tells the forgotten tragedy of the Italian Swimming athletes from the Olympics' National team, which died in the Lufthansa airplane crash in 1966. The documentary was presented at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2016 and was aired on the Italian TV channel Rai Storia in November 2016, reaching an audience of almost 2 million spectators.

Francesco Zarzana wrote the text of the final song, carrying the same title as the documentary "Among the waves in the sky". This song, sung by Eleonora Mazzotti, is also part of the "In a better world" play and was performed by the singer at every representation. The entire cast for the play consisted of: Fabiana Spoleitini (actress), Elena Aimone (actress), Laura Sirani (singer), Sabrina Paravicini (actress), Angélique Cavallari (actress), Elena Polic Greco (actress), Valérie Marie (pianist) and was assisted by Rosita Pisacane and Dorothee Sourisseau.

ART AND DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

The creative dimension of the LADDER project, combines two components, namely development education and art to create a powerful synergy. The play "In a better world" reunites these two components.

"Art enables us to grow, reflect and evolve in our understanding of ourselves, each other, and the world we live in."

Art as a Therapy (2013) by Alain de Botton and John Armstrong

Art in general is a useful tool for education, it incites new questions, it is self-participative and can convey morals. Art is an incentive for critical thinking and can transmit visionary ideas, therefore it is able to contribute significantly to cultural and political education. Through the universal language of music, theatre, chant etc., art can reach out to people through informal education. It empowers people to receive and advocate for societal change. The synergy art and education creates, is increasingly recognised and art is increasingly used as a tool in education.

This special connection was revealed in several actions implemented within the LADDER Project. Some of these can be seen within the framework of LADDER's Re-granting Scheme. This action of the project, foresaw LADDER's financial support and promotion of micro-projects implemented at the local level by grassroots organisations and local actors addressing issues related to development education. For example, the association SALAAM Film & Dialog (Denmark) organized the project "SALAAM Film festival". This project used cinematography, showing movies about today's globalised world, to promote intercultural understanding and stressing connections between the global and the local level. Several screenings showed in community centres gave space to dialogue regarding the aired themes and completed the synergy of art and education.



Photo exhibition "The Syrian Exodus: Fighting for survival" in Spain – December 2016.

Another good example of the Re-granting Scheme where art and development education have been successfully combined is the photo exhibition “The Syrian Exodus: Fighting for survival” coordinated by *Fons Pitius de Cooperacio* (Spain). The photo exhibition about refugees used photography as a tool to raise awareness regarding the refugee crisis. It promoted a positive attitude towards the arrival of migrants among the visitors.

The project “So young, so equal!” by the Network of Associations *Zagor* in Croatia, also used art to convey a message. The project was created as an answer to inequality of women in rural areas which is manifested in reduced economic independence of women, violence against women, reduced availability to access services in the field of reproductive health, low-political participation of women and gender stereotypes. Through workshops and creative activities young people were made aware of these inequalities. The project’s activities enabled young people to acquire knowledge about gender equality and provided them with a creative tool to express themselves on the matter.



Workshop participant at creative painting workshop at ‘So young, so equal!’ project in Croatia, fighting gender inequality

LADDER’s cultural component follows this ideal and acknowledges that arts play a fundamental role to support a person’s creative abilities, self-expression and learning abilities. They are a necessary tool especially when we want to give access to knowledge to a broader audience and trigger reflection. Dorothee Sourisseau, artistic assistant in the play, highlighted this alternative channel art takes to convey messages:

“[...] The theatre language has, in my opinion, an extraordinary force: it can reach out to the public which does not usually spend time in cultural places and at the same time it is less involved with European policy subjects or social matters.”

Development Education

The concept of development education has transformed over time due to the changing definition of ‘development’ itself and the change of aims pursued by international cooperation. Development education is an expression where specific activities are defined by associations and NGOs active in development. The main objective they pursue is an ‘equitable’, ‘sustainable’ and ‘human’ development. On the basis of this interpretation, development education and culture can create powerful synergies. Art allows it to embody the meanings of both words ‘education’ and ‘development’ in order to make it available to everyone.



Audience during video airing at the Performance in Modena, Italy – November 2016

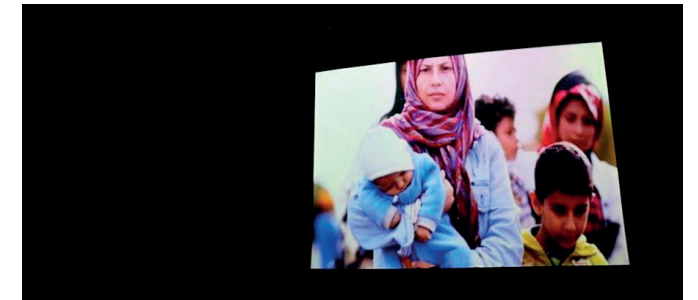
Development education is an expression where specific activities are defined by associations and NGOs active in development.

‘Art development education’ is by no means synonymous of profitability and should never follow this aim, culture has a great responsibility in the transmission of messages. For example, music as well as theatre has a great influence on listeners which reaches people throughout different age groups. Theatre addresses its audience and the wider public directly, telling stories which encourage personal reflection. It stimulates awareness and knowledge concerning foreign cultures and promotes mutual understanding. Arts offer a new perspective, a new focus on the society we live in. Arts are equally accessible to everyone, without social or financial criteria. To quote art director and playwright Mr Zarzana:

“With Culture, we prepare our world for future generations by leading people to communicate and understand each other. We encourage personal reflection and new ways of thinking.”

Following educational aims were pursued through the play:

- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, rule of law, effective and capable institutions
- Raise awareness on the human tragedy of the refugee crisis
- Fight xenophobia and exclusion of minorities and migrants



Screening of video material during performance in Palermo, Italy – April 2017

The “In a better world” play was a great added value to LADDER’s objective of raising awareness and fostering development education.

“IN A BETTER WORLD” – HOW EVERYTHING STARTED...

Since the beginning, since the first official LADDER meetings in 2015 in Modena (Italy), Brussels (Belgium), Donegal (Ireland) etc., Mr Zarzana had the possibility to deepen his knowledge on LADDER themes and the project’s aims. He got in touch with LADDER partners, asked questions, took notes and studied the materials they provided him with.

This was the starting point of the play. As play writer and director Francesco Zarzana got inspired by the concepts LADDER stands for such as DEAR and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). He described the commencement as follows:

“I began to write the ‘In a better world’ script in February 2015, just after the LADDER project had been launched during the literature ‘Buk Festival’ in Modena (Italy). It was a great opportunity for me, I knew the project’s goals and how they could be transformed into theatre language within this creative component. I immediately tried to imagine a performance that would put together different artistic modes such as music, word, gesture, chant and poetry.”

After exchanging with LADDER partners and associates on topics such as development education, awareness raising, citizen participation and sustainable development, themes which reflect the SDGs, Mr Zarzana had a clear idea of the field and the aim. Consistent with the LADDER and DEAR goal, he created the play “In a better world”.

THE PLOT

Mr Zarzana’s vision, while writing “In a better world”, was one of a journey, his intention was to embark readers and spectators on a path and follow a route. This journey starts with a video which explains what LADDER is: its aims, its purpose and the people working on this project. The video had to be straightforward so that the audience immediately understood which themes and topics were about to be seen and listened. Then the scenic arts commenced, the acting and piano melody immediately created a powerful atmosphere. Finally, poetry officially opened the show and directly addressed the audience, announcing the commencement of the journey.



Life vests from refugees on the island of Chios

The plot of the play is based on a true story, the kind of story often propagated in media since the beginning of the refugee crisis in Europe.

The plot of the play is based on a true story, the kind of story often propagated in media since the beginning of the refugee crisis in Europe. It narrates the tragic destiny of a young migrant woman, who crosses the sea on one of the refugee routes. On the way, she loses her partner. However, this is not a desperate story, she saves the lives of two little children and safely makes it to Europe in the end. This tragic story, which is representative of many others, gives a hopeful dimension: the main character makes it to Europe and wants to start a new life in a better world for her and the children she saved. The extensive text in the central part gives space to Amal's story (the young refugee woman), narrating in a hopeful tone.



Elena Mazzotti during rehearsals in Tours, France – March 2017.

But this tale is not only about despair, it is a story of a young girl and her vision.

Through the universal language of art, Mr Zarzana wanted to tell people and make them reflect on current occurrences in the world. He achieved this by narrating this true story of a young migrant woman who reached Europe among few survivors on a barge. This human history is representative of many migrant and refugee destinies, as they witness many tragedies in the course of their lives. Francesco Zarzana emphasised the hopeful point of view in the play:

"But this tale is not only about despair, it is a story of a young girl and her vision. She wants to contribute to make the world a better place and work all together to eliminate poverty, give access to education for everyone, fight for gender equality and equal rights for everyone, water must be accessible to everyone, protect the seas, the oceans and natural resources."

The play's message is: If everyone on this planet helps to achieve these aims, then through common effort we can do it and leave a better world to our children and coming generations. All artists and people involved in the play share and support this message. Everyone worked with great care and professionalism to convey this message through the scenes at every performance.

LADDER INVOLVEMENT IN MIGRATION

The current migration crisis in Europe and worldwide, makes it a top priority for ALDA's action. For this reason, the cultural component deals with the matter of migration and development. Within the LADDER project, a branch of its advocacy component is entirely dedicated to this topic. The migration advocacy theme, also referred to as a 'thematic path', is composed of a network of organisations, which work together to raise awareness on the issue of migration.

The path coordinator – Solidarity Overseas Service Malta (SOS Malta) coordinates activities within the Migration Thematic Path, which seeks to build a body of knowledge to enable local, national and European authorities to impact policies and practices related to migration and development. Migration is a multifaceted development issue, intrinsically related to the SDGs. It is not solely discussed as a European security issue, but as a global development issue and one that is fundamentally about human development and human rights. The results of this path are statements, contribution to policy processes and the formulation of several recommendations addressed to different stakeholders involved in the policy drafting related to migration. The path also organised the conference "Migration and development EYD 2015 – The year of local action for global solutions" in November 2015 (Malta) and published a toolkit "Good practice guide for LAs engaging with migration and development".



Migration Path special initiative: "Migration and Development: EYD 2015 – The year of local action for global solutions" event 11-13 November 2015 – Sliema, Malta

The association ALDA is involved and active in the migration issue, as it is operating in the Mediterranean region and the Western Balkan area, both very much affected by the migration routes. The aim is to explore the positive effect migration can have on the community and find a sustainable way of managing it.

METHODOLOGY: HOW DOES AN ART DIRECTOR WORK?

To gain insight into the implementation of the play, the following part explains the different phases that led to the debut of "In a Better World". The producer of the play was involved in every step of creation. In the case of this play Mr Zarzana acted as the producer as well as the author. He was involved in every step of the creation starting with the writing and ending with his involvement in each art of stage production.

Rhythm and 'Dramatic Pauses' in the play

As everyone who stages a play, Mr Zarzana first interpreted the producer's image in its essential and formal unity, penetrating it, cue by cue, word by word, placing at every passage of the drama material the right evidence. The following step was the selection and juxtaposition of the artists, choosing them according to their character, different talents and providing them with the explanation about the play. The next important aspect was to create within the play a precise rhythm of pauses. 'Silence' is a vital element for maintaining a harmonious articulation of the entire piece. Setting 'dramatic pauses' at the right moment is vital to accentuate revealing moments and build up dramatic tension.



Elena Polic Greco at 3rd performance at the occasion of the annual assembly of LADDER's Spanish partner Fons Mallorquí in Mallorca, Spain – March 2017.

As the producer, Mr Zarzana spent his entire energy investigating the cue intonation, which is essential in order to characterise more humanly and theatrically the roles created by the author. Only once he had perfected this priority, he took care of light effects, the striking accessory and the stage setting.

Text Analysis and Protagonists' Action

After this the next task that needed to be faced, was the text analysis. The action can be interpreted in different ways: it can take romantic shapes, shapes of destruction, etc., this dynamic defines the motivations of the action's subject towards the object. The subject is always animated as a person, a group of people or a social group whereas the object can be a person or an abstraction, like for example 'Power' that can be represented by a character.



Eleonora Mazzotti and Elena Polic Greco during performance at LADDER's South Eastern Europe path special initiative in Belgrade, Serbia – October 2017.

Then the 'supporting' and 'opposing' factors needed to be identified. Those are the forces helping the subject to develop its action and those that on the contrary are the obstacles to the subject. Immediately after this phase, the text had to be readapted in order to take into consideration the available cast and other external factors. One of the revisions that can be taken into account is the elimination of characters of minor importance, attributing their cues to other protagonists. At this point the play can be subdivided into acts and scenes. It facilitates the cooperation between actors and technical staff, as it offers the possibility to pick precise text fragments to work on. Usually acts are indicated in Roman numbers and scenes in Arab numbers (e.g. II, 6). A new scene begins every time that the actors' number in the action changes, in other words when protagonists enter or return behind the stage. Mr Zarzana generally prefers to rehearse specific scenes and not entire acts, not necessarily following the right order.

Understanding the initial concept of DEAR and SDGs was a milestone in order to grasp the concept of "In a better world".

Sharing ideas with the Team

Once Mr Zarzana had a very clear idea of LADDER and the play he wrote, he explained it thoroughly to the rest of the team. During a meeting with the technical staff (light technician, costume director, make-up artist, producer assistant) he illustrated the content and the visual idea he had in mind. He started by the scenes’ harmonisation, the costumes and make-up. Then he shared the experience gained through his participation at the LADDER conferences and proved essential for all the people involved in the play. Understanding the initial concept of DEAR and SDGs was a mile stone in order to grasp the concept of “In a better world”. As art director Mr Zarzana stressed the importance of this communication with the team:

“I had to provide them with an interpretation of the production this is indispensable orientation for everyone’s activity. At that point it is vital to listen to different opinions or advice and leave enough space for general discussion. That way, in addition to benefit from ideas that could reveal themselves ameliorative to the initial hypothesis, the staff gets involved immediately and is able to give the best for the project’s success.”

The rehearsals

During the first meeting, the script was already handed out to everyone. The meeting with the actors was held in order to distribute the roles and have a first conversation which marks the beginning of rehearsals. During this essential starting point, the director illustrated once more the sense and the message LADDER and Progettarte wanted to bring across through the play. The artists supported from the very beginning the messages of mutual understanding between different cultures and a sustainable, fairer world which the play wanted to convey.



Last directions given by Mr Zarzana at rehearsals before the performance in Tours, France – March 2017.”

Without rushing towards acting in the scenic space, Mr Zarzana made sure that the actors first familiarised themselves with the role and with the meaning behind the words. This is a crucial step to find the best way of vocalising the text. He gave interpretation and intonation directions, so that the interpretation took shape. He also provided guidance with regards to the right rhythm, specifying pauses and explaining

how to join dialogue sentences between them and how every character has to get in contact with the others. This method facilitated the task of ‘memorising’, as it eases the learning process for the actors who need to know every passage by heart.

For the convenience of the show, everybody had to stand upright during rehearsals as the posture has an impact on breathing and therefore the voice. The direction script was continually enriched by all the director’s indications relating to the text (cutbacks, additions, variations), to the actors (gestures and intonations) and to technical aspects (variations of the lights, musical cutaways etc.). Throughout the rehearsal phase, they were highly susceptible to variation. In order to allow the director to follow with due attention the actors’ job, another essential role is the one of the assistant. This assistant should carefully take notes of the director’s indication every aspect of the production needs to be recorded. In the LADDER play, once this person had been chosen, this adjustment favoured enormous time savings and was a valuable tool for the work of the stage director.



Fabiana Spoletini and Elene Polic Greco at rehearsals in Tours, France – March 2017.”

After the finalisation of the script, came a very delicate moment: the final ‘distribution’ of the roles, during which the different parts are allocated to the actors. Mr Zarzana has worked for a long time with the same team of artists and had a precise idea of the distribution he wanted to do. This phase is fundamental to the show itself and must be mastered very carefully. Indeed, a wrong distribution of even just one role can endanger the installation’s success. The director must not be misled by actors’ expectations (who very often take their own ‘role’ for granted in terms of relevance). He must make prove of intuition and experience, sensitivity and authority to assign the parties, in a way that every character is entrusted to enact them in the best possible way. As if every performer is a musical instrument with its characteristics, with its timbre, its ‘vocation’ and of course its experience. Eventually, to some actors it had to be explained in a persuasive way, the reasons for why a specific role had been attributed to him or her. It is very important to convince the actor

that the choice is set, not only from a direction point of view, but also to enhance his or her performance regarding acting skills. Mr Zarzana, having worked for several years with the artists, had a precise idea in mind.

To be prepared for all of these delicate tasks, Mr Zarzana pre-disposed the direction notes. The direction notes, not to be confused with the plot text, allow a better fruition of the drama text and the stage transposition. These notes stress the privileged themes and set the play’s formalities, they reflect conceptual and aesthetic connections with adopted solutions at the level of the acting style and other formal arrangements (scenes, costumes, make-up, lights). Writing such notes is very useful because they trace an exact path to follow. This way Mr Zarzana and his team had a complete and coherent framework, setting up a performance in which every part is in harmony.

MUSIC, LANGUAGE – SPREADING THE VISION OF A BETTER WORLD

The play is not only communicating in its dramatical dimension, but also accentuating language and music. It mixes these three different modes to reach its audience through text, poems, chant and musical partition. But the original text of the play was also translated into different mother tongues rendering the message accessible to more spectators.

Musical partition

Music takes a central role in the play and several songs performed during the play have been specifically composed for the project and are accompanied by piano compositions. The piano player, Valérie Marie composed the original music for the performance therefore the music became another ‘actor’ in the scenes. The key component music, alternates throughout the play with movingly acted parts. At one point these two elements – music and acting – merge and create a special duet between singer and actress. Moreover, emphasising some acting parts with live music, permitted the discretion that is required to create a precious ‘carpet’, on which word and action could lie down. This gave to the audience an experience of authentic emotions.



Valérie Marie singing during 5th representation in Palermo, Italy – April 2017.”

The selection of songs which are live performed by Eleonora Mazzotti, a singer with extraordinary vocal abilities and a great stage presence, have been chosen conjointly with the artist. The end of the show is marked by an original song written by Mr Zarzana and Eleonora Mazzotti, set to music by Valérie Marie and arranged by Lorenzo Maiani, the title is “Among the waves in the sky”.







Valérie Marie, Elena Mazzotti and Elena PolicGreco receiving applause at performance in Modena, Italy – November 2016.

Translation

After the writing process was finished and after reworking and revising it many times, the text needed to be translated. The text of the play was initially written in Italian by Mr Zarzana. Thanks to Giuseppina Di Napoli, responsible for the translation of the play from Italian into English, the sense of the words written, the nuances and sensations could be preserved in its English version. Thanks to the great work of Dorothée Sourisseau and Arianna Cervetti the play was also translated and performed in other languages, namely French and Spanish. This way it was able to reach a broader audience and the artists proved to be multi-talents performing in four different languages always with the same message of humanity and kindness in view of a fairer world.

Final arrangements

A first preliminary performance was rehearsed in November 2015, in Toulouse, where the entire cast was working on the text and on the music together with the French piano player Valérie Marie. Then, in April 2016 one month prior to the official Paris debut, the proper production started in Mantua.



IN A BETTER WORLD

LOCATION: a theatre with a stage (preferably 6x8 m) or a room big enough to set up at least 100 chairs.

- Stage of 6x8 m
- 100 chairs for the audience
- n° 1 projector with a screen to project videos and subtitles if necessary
- n° 1 piano or piano keyboard
- n° 2 high black stools (preferably) or n° 2 black chairs
- n° 2 lapel microphones (preferably) or simple microphones
- n° 2 lecterns
- basic lights on stage

On stage one pianist, one singer and one actress.

Technical Sheet of the play with all requisites and technical requirements for each performance.”

Elena Polic Greco, an actress with great charisma and stage presence, had not only the task of ‘telling’ the story in its dramatic dimension, but more than the drama she had to introduce the audience to a hopeful perspective. Each performance was composed by a different member of cast and various artists were inserted in the play such as: Fabiana Spoletini, Elena Aimone, Laura Sirani (singer at performance in Palermo), Sabrina Paravicini (actress at performance in Palermo), Angélique Cavallari (actress at performance in Paris). This enabled Progettarte to share the LADDER project with multiple performers and each one, through his specificity and artistic sensitivity, contributed in a different manner to the play.



Eleonora Mazzotti performing at annual assembly of the Fons Mallorquí de Solidaritat i Cooperació (LADDER's Spanish partner) in Mallorca, Spain – March 2017.

The play evolved and the first performances were in France, Italy and Spain at the occasion of different events. Each show was accompanied by great emotions on behalf of the performing team and the audience was thrilled and wanted to talk with the artists after the show to listen and share experiences regarding Amal's story. Mr Zarzana concluded:

"It is true that 'In a better world' has not the presumption of changing the world, but it will certainly be another drop into the ocean of positive change... and the ocean is made of myriads of drops!"

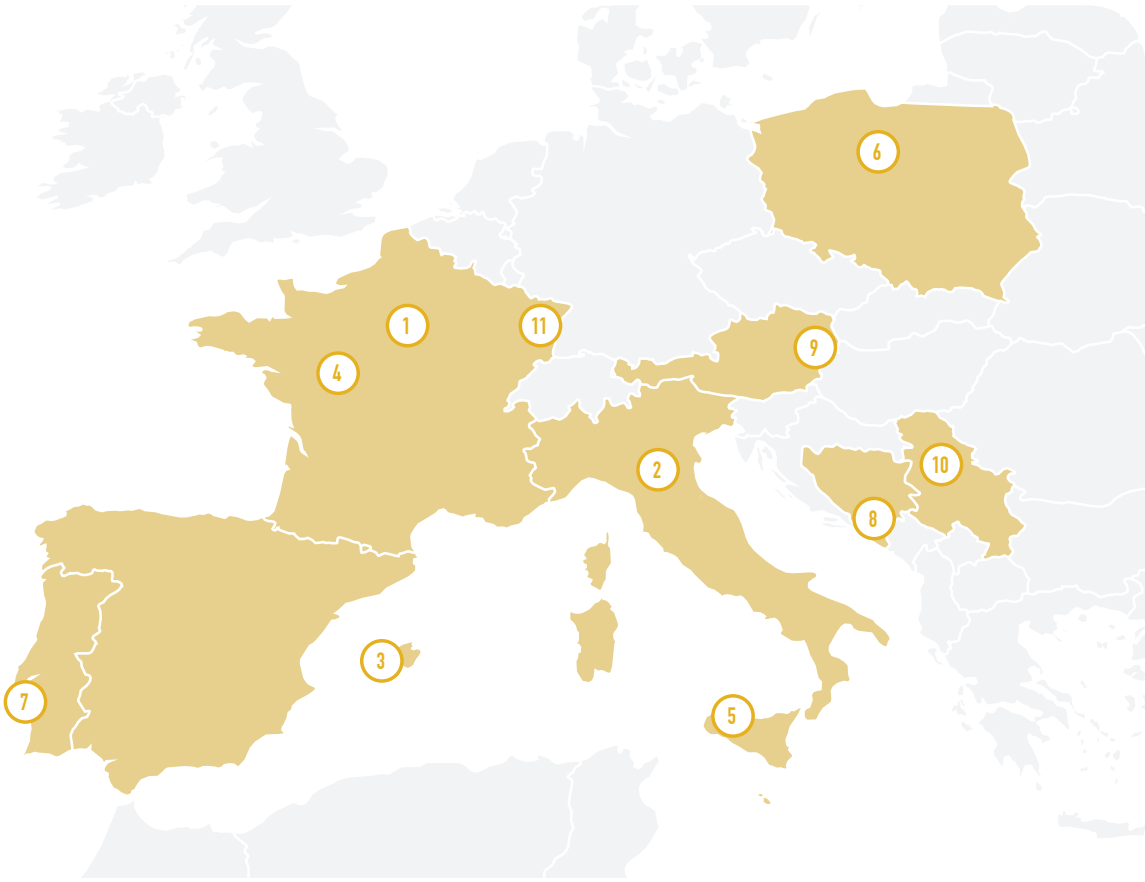
"IN A BETTER WORLD" TOUR: 11 PERFORMANCES TO SPREAD LADDER VALUES

The topic of 'travel' and 'journey' is not only centre of the "In a better world" play, but the the path of the play was characterised through the journey through European cities. It was not solely about performing the show at LADDER initiatives, but it was staged in cities and places not directly involved in the project. The cast went and performed in Paris, Modena, Mallorca, Tours, Palermo, Torun, Lisbon, Mostar, Vienna and Belgrade. This allowed the team to spread the LADDER message all over Europe. The team was composed of five to six people, who moved between Italy and France for rehearsals, as the artists live in these two countries. The organisational apparatus had long preparation work which was not limited to the logistical aspects related to travels, but it solved all those technical problems unavoidably connected to every performance: lights, microphones, the possibility to show videos and the transportation of a piano.

The "In a better world" play will not end with the LADDER project, it will continue to spread our message in European theatres and motivate more people to create a better world.

The departure was always the most exciting moment for everyone. The majority of the cast arrived a day prior to the play and had dinner all together. These were wonderful moments because it was the occasion to review what the play had reached so far within the LADDER framework, the work that had been achieved so far but it was also the opportunity to talk about next steps together. Mr Zarzana described the end of each show and the preparations to return back home as "very melancholic moments". On the one hand the team felt joyful because they succeeded to perform once more, on the other hand they knew some time would pass until the next reunion to repeat together another wonderful experience. But the end of the performances is not the end of the message of humanity and hope, as art director Zarzana stated:

"The "In a better world" play will not end with the LADDER project, it will continue to spread our message in European theatres and motivate more people to create a better world."



The tour of the play 2016-2017 in the framework of the LADDER project:

①	11 May 2016	Théâtre de l'Archipel, Paris (France)
②	27 November 2016	La Tenda, Modena (Italy)
③	15 March 2017	Sala Polivalent des Porrassar, Mallorca (Spain)
④	17 March 2017	Salle Ockeghem, Tours (France)
⑤	5 April 2017	Teatro Jolly, Palermo (Italy)
⑥	11 May 2017	Sala Wielka, Torun (Poland)
⑦	25 May 2017	Teatro Municipal Joaquim Benite, Lisbon (Portugal)
⑧	6 September 2017	Hrvatski dom Herceg Stjepan Kosaca, Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
⑨	23 September 2017	Klavier Galerie, Vienna (Austria)
⑩	10 October 2017	Sremski Karlovci, Belgrade (Serbia)
⑪	21 November 2017	Villa Quai Sturm, Strasbourg (France)

THE AUDIENCE

Each event represented an occasion to reflect on topics such as human rights, tolerance and equality. Throughout the play, the audience was provided with a message of hope and peace, encouraging dialogue between refugees and the receiving society. The performances were the moments when artists had the opportunity to reach out to the public. These valuable encounters always represented an opportunity for citizens and artists to have informal discussions, share experiences and opinions on this global matter that concerns us all. Many spectators felt the need after the play to go and exchange with the artists, which is the initial aim of the play: to engage critical thinking and exchange.



Audience at 5th performance of the play in Palermo, Italy – April 2017."

Many spectators felt the need after the play to go and exchange with the artists, which is the initial aim of the play: to engage critical thinking and exchange.

The spectators deeply admired the artistic work produced by the cast and – at the same time – they were touched by the play. “In a better world” inspired the audience to reflect on the tragedy of the European refugee crisis which represents ‘our reality’. A person from the audience stated that the play was about fraternity, friendship and respect towards the other, all themes highly related to LADDER. This spectator concluded mentioning that this cultural component enriched the project and was a welcomed alternative way to work on the aims of the project as opposed to trainings and meetings. Others acknowledged the relevance of the play, as it is dealing with the very current topic of migration and refugees.

The audience was very keen to exchange after each performance. Furthermore, Dorothee Sourisseau, artistic assistant in the play, described the encounter with spectators in the following way:

“The public involved: “In a better world” represents an occasion to get in touch with the audience, which is already biased regarding the migration issue. I noticed it through the presence of a heterogeneous audience which is used to different shapes of artistic militancy and sometimes totally alien to it. I liked to communicate with people after the play to listen to

their experience, they found it accessible and moving. I know that in the future, the migration question will not have the same echo in their head anymore. I also know that they will approach theatre in a different way. It enabled some people to understand their own wishes. There was a form of admiration as they realised that it is the type of project, they would have loved to support if life had given them the opportunity. “In a better world” goes further than the simple artistic play. The play wakes and awakes!”

The play rose awareness regarding the desperate situation of refugees, migration, SDGs and DEAR among the audience but also among the artistic team involved.

“In a better world” goes further than the simple artistic play. The play wakes and awakes!



Valérie Marie, Elena Polic Greco, Elena Mazzotti and Fabiana Spoletini after the 7th performance in Almada, Portugal – May 2017.

Voices from the audience:

“La storia è molto toccante e la cosa più impressionante è che tratta la nostra realtà.”

“The play is really able to DEAR! I really like it.... I love it!”

“It was really amazing. The voice of the singer was great and the story was really touching.”

“La pièce théâtrale parle de fraternité, amitié, respect de l'autre, éducation... qui est en fait la thématique de LADDER. La pièce théâtrale a enrichi le projet ! On a fait des training, focus group et autre chose mais le théâtre c'est une autre façon de passer notre message.”

“Coinvolgente!”

“It was a beautiful and moving show. It is very necessary for everyone to know about this topic”

“In a better world is really about the topic of the day. Migration is really all over the world and the play passed on the message in a strong and effective way!”

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES OF ARTISTS AND CREATIVE TEAM MEMBERS

FRANCESCO ZARZANA (ART DIRECTOR), ITALY



“What I like the most about my profession as art director, is that it gives me the opportunity to meet exceptional people. Also, the writing part; writing makes me travel to faraway lands and makes me dream. Of course, being the art director comes with great responsibility and is sometimes challenging, but you also get the chance to live wonderful moments of great emotion.

Why did I decide to participate in the cultural component of the LADDER project? Because this project gave me the opportunity to deepen my knowledge and explore very important and current topics. I managed to integrate these topics in dramatic language and share them with our audiences all over Europe.

Of course, the entire “In a better world” tour and the LADDER experience was amazing. But my greatest memory from this project, I mean the most emotional moment, was the performance in Palermo (Italy): all seats had been taken in the audience and at the end of the show the spectators would come to congratulate us and celebrate this moment and the event with us. I also recall really well the great kindness with which the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Serbia approached us.”

ROSITA PISACANE (ASSISTANT), ITALY

“When art-project president Francesco Zarzana told me in 2015 ‘Pisa (he calls me by my nickname) prepare your luggage we’ll travel a lot!’ I did not imagine that travelling would have an explorative connotation and meant seeing different places, colours and people.



We had just been informed that we had the chance, together with other 27 Partners and 19 Associates, to be part of one of the most monumental European projects ever: LADDER. This meant that we would be busy for the next three years, acting as multipliers to raise awareness regarding development and education. But how could we succeed? Our cultural association was used to working with visual art, books and theatre. In which way could we contribute to create a better world?

But we know that culture sometimes takes unusual paths and is able to reach people’s hearts from a young age on. That is how “In a better world” was born. For the first time, a theatrical touring show would act as a vehicle for a very important message, to raise citizen’s awareness for nowadays crucial themes: peace, immigration, environment, development. We would achieve it through the universal language of art, music and words. Elena Polic Greco, Fabiana Spoletini and Sabrina Paravicini’s words, Valérie Marie’s piano notes and Eleonora Mazzotti’s voice.

For every journey I put a great deal of enthusiasm into my suitcase, to make this show not only a performance, but also a project, a mission.

Paris, Modena, Mallorca, Tours, Palermo, Torun, Lisbon... Many cities and many countries, each time a different show because each time it was shaped by the surrounding context, the current period and art. Each performance strengthened the message and every time it became clearer and stronger. The same artists were witnesses and messengers of this peace-tolerance message which they wanted to spread out from the stage. From the stage, it reached the audience, each time differently too, which was then able to reflect on difficult and important themes – theatre wizardry. For every journey I put a great deal of enthusiasm into my suitcase, to make this show not only a performance, but also a project, a mission.



Elena Almone, Elena Mazzotti and Fabiana Spoletini after performance at LADDER Tool Fair in Torun, Poland – March 2017.

‘Pisa prepare the luggage we’ll travel a lot.’ And I also had to work a lot. But during these three years, LADDER gave me the opportunity to meet extraordinary people. It enabled me to travel and to discover ‘the other’, learning that we can and we have to do more and that every little piece, even the smallest one, is essential to complete the picture of a better world.”

DOROTHÉE SOURISSEAU (ASSISTANT) FRANCE



“Integrating a European project is an exciting adventure! Getting in contact with different cultures, different points of view, but also to be dedicated to common values and defend them is the personal mission which led me all along. Being part of the “In a better world” adventure is for me an enormous chance to convey my beliefs and convictions through culture.

A very important meeting: I met Francesco Zarzana in 2016 during a European meeting in San Sebastian organised by Like (European Cities and Regions for Culture) – the cultural cities and institutions network. During the event Zarzana presented different ALDA missions, amongst which the LADDER project. After some brief exchanges, we understood that we had a lot in common regarding our personalities, our journeys and our aspirations. So, we decided to collaborate on the play “In a better world”. That was the moment when the adventure started for me.

My first steps in the project: My first commitment in the project was to conduct the performance organisation in Tours, a French city, where I lived. At that time, I was the president of a local cultural and creative actors’ network. I was delighted to host the play in Tours and it was very emotional. I have always dreamt of getting involved, defend my values and pass them on through theatre. Francesco gave me the opportunity to do so.

I had the chance to translate the play into French, my mother tongue. My job, within different projects, is writing. Through my words I aim at changing things and raise awareness. Therefore, I was grateful to do this work, it represented the first step towards a big change in my life. It encouraged my desire to go further in this field and to commit myself to do the best I can; to communicate the messages and mentor the projects which I believe in. Francesco Zarzana’s project dealt with a current topic suffused by a big sensibility: migration. That is why I am very happy to participate in it!

The importance of the LADDER project: I have always worked in the field of culture and arts. I was the director of several cultural projects and artists’ manager in turn. This big contact to a field, sometimes misunderstood by the general public, leads to make questions about the gateway which could be erected within the artists, the writers as well as the public. “In a better world” is one of these gateways.

The LADDER project provides an opportunity to different countries and actors to get involved in their own way; to interact or to ask about the world’s different points of view,

about Europe, about democracy or about liberty. Sometimes it allows us to change mentalities or to question the way we act in a local or global context. Nowadays, we live in a very fragile and sensitive period in which extremes are enhanced and false messages are propagated to fuel fear. LADDER is the occasion to denounce this kind of propaganda and radical messages and I am extremely happy to have had the opportunity to work within its framework.



Poster advertising the show in Vienna, Austria – September 2017.

Nowadays, we live in a very fragile and sensitive period in which extremes are enhanced and false messages are propagated to fuel fear. LADDER is the occasion to denounce this kind of propaganda.

The involved artists: Meeting the artists was an unbelievable moment! Francesco had been able to find sensitive and open-minded people, who were able to share authenticity with the audience as well as with the team. I felt immediately integrated in this project. These meetings were the beginning of other future collaborations. It created a lasting connection between us.

Tours (France) and Vienna (Austria): I had organised a first representation in a very famous little room (thanks to Tourangelles), the magnificent location of Johannes Ockeghem’s room. He was a Flemish composer in the Middle-Ages as well as treasurer of the collegiate church of St. Martin,

in Tours. This iconic figure, who had travelled Europe is known all around the world due to his charitable gesture: he shared his cape with a person in need. In my opinion this name is a symbolic figure for LADDER. It symbolises sharing, altruism, hope and offers a special echo to “In a better world”. We are invited to turn around to other people’s needs and offer help to those who are less fortunate than us. Johannes Ockeghem’s room was built in an old church, which gave a sumptuous frame to the representation.



Last arrangements in Centre Musical Jean de Ockeghem in Tours, France – March 2017

The performance in Vienna, one of the cribs of classical music was organised in cooperation with the piano manufacturer *Feurich*, to offer a wonderful chest to the musical plays set free in the play. This was another opportunity to reach different spectators and to get in touch with everyone who takes part in the company. I like to incorporate private companies in the artistic creation path just like for the Vienna performance, but without losing the militant and citizens-based approach to the event.

A new perspective thanks to ALDA: After “In a better world” my ambition is to get involved in a new path at a European scale. I wish I could organise the cooperation of various artistic disciplines and companies, to make it possible for European artists to exchange and to grow through the contact with other sectors. Being in touch with the corporate world would allow them to simultaneously become actors and financiers of their militancy. I hope I get the opportunity to lead this project with ALDA, an association who is committed, for a long time now, to the defence and promotion of local democracy, giving them a global ambition.”

ELEONORA MAZZOTTI (SINGER), ITALY



““In a better world” has the honour and the responsibility of telling fragile topics which are on the daily agenda in Europe. It does it through music, theatre, poetry and chant. The universal languages of art go straight to the heart without filters or superstructures, which may be the reason why they are so powerful. It invites to reflection only by the means of art suggesting it, without any ideological imposition.

Voyage, presented in its different meanings, is the show’s leitmotif. It is set out by migrants, who fight for a better future, who follow an equal way and want to be given a chance.

Nowadays, each of us has its own experience with these stories that are not so far away from us. That is the wizardry. Thanks to the audience’s attention and warmth, we tried to fulfil our duty at best. Thanks to Francesco Zarzana’s direction and texts, we communicated a message of positivity and hope. That is why we can and we have to fight for a better world. Change begins with us and it can go really far.

I tried to touch the spectators’ heart through the song I am interpreting. I give the voice to the lyrics, chosen ad hoc for the pièce, this song is extremely important for myself and for the journey we have set out. I sing Michael Jackson’s *Earth Song*, a strong example of how notes and words can let us meditate on humans’ wreaking havoc on the earth and its inhabitants. At the same time, we need to dream and *I believe I can fly* is the right piece to accompany the soft verses of the Italian writer and intellectual Vincenzo Cerami.

The universal languages of art go straight to the heart without filters or superstructures, which may be the reason why they are so powerful.

My own journey within the LADDER project was a great experience and I met exceptional professionals, which enabled me to learn and to improve step by step. “In a better world” also gave me the opportunity of experimenting with Jewish chant, expression of a culture rich of meanings which is thrilling for a fond of semiotics like me.

The tour gave us the gratification of listening to voices from various countries, which accommodate different traditions from ours. That is why the trip was so fascinating, because it spoke the language of welcome, hospitality and culture. It is an important opportunity for those who want to contribute to the creation of a better world for our children. So, let us continue the journey!”

ELENA POLIC GRECO (ACTRESS), ITALY

“I was invited to participate in the LADDER project by Francesco Zarzana. Since the very first moment, I understood how important the dissemination of this wonderful play was for him and all his colleagues. We spent long working hours rehearsing, working on the text and its meaning in order to be able to diffuse the right message through the play. The play we performed was very important to us artists, because it allowed us to get to know all the initiatives and aims that the LADDER project is promoting. This is a unique opportunity in the world of art, as this kind of European project combines art, culture and the powerful messages of the Sustainable Development Goals. LADDER and “In a better world” gave us the possibility to discover different countries, languages, cultures, and be united in the same aim: transmit to the audience through the language of theatre LADDER’s objectives. Personally, I had the privilege to play this text in English for almost all the performances, but also, in French, Spanish and Italian. Every time I went on stage, it was very emotional because I knew that I was doing a very important and useful thing for the international community.”

ELENA AIMONE (ACTRESS), ITALY



“I participated in “In a better world” for two performances, in Torun (Poland) and in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and both times I felt strong emotions. Sharing with Francesco Zarzana and the other artists the rehearsal, the trip, the suspense in the theatre, the excitement of acting in a foreign language that is not my mother tongue; all this filled me with great excitement and wonderful sensations. The emotion did not even stop at the end of the performance because the audience was often waiting for us to greet us, congratulate us and ask questions. Everything confirmed that we had not just done a wonderful artistic job, but that we also conveyed sensitivity

which reached the audiences’ heart. For my part, I personally know a lot about the themes that should be part of our everyday life (fight against poverty, education for everyone, etc.), unfortunately too often we do not take these matters into consideration. Now I can conclude that this artistic and enriching work made me feel more responsible and aware of what is happening in the world.

I focus my attention on the issues that concern all of us.”

FABIANA SPOLETINI (ACTRESS), ITALY



“In a better world” is an unforgettable experience. A journey, an artistic and human adventure, thanks to which I was not only able to travel to different European countries, but I also got a better understanding of what we call ‘boundaries’; they are artificial constructions which we impose or from which we suffer.

When Francesco Zarzana got in touch with me and offered me to participate in the project, I did not hesitate. He had put together this wonderful artistic team, composed of Elena Polic Greco, Eleonora Mazzotti, Valérie Marie (pianist), and together they created “In a better world”. But I didn’t expect to live such an adventure.

*Projects like this awake
the desire to get involved,
to participate actively
in the fight for a better word.*

I still have a vivid memory of the train ride that brought me to Tours. It was the 11th March 2017. It was not the first performance of the “In a better world” tour, but it was my first time. Emotion, anxiety, curiosity and then... Finally, meeting Elena Polic Greco and Eleonora Mazzotti; I learnt a lot from these two artists. Meeting Francesco and his assistant Rosita was a pleasure. In the end I also got to know Dorothée, she integrated the team and accompanied us to the other European appearances in Paris, Torun, Mallorca, Palermo, Lisbon...

Projects like this awake the desire to get involved, to participate actively in the fight for a better word. Lending my own voice and body to bring Francesco Zarzana’s play alive has been a nourishing experience. A hopeful drop in this ‘mare nostrum’ where sadly real tragedy changes the lives of human protagonist. Amal is an emblem for men and women, who survived crossing the sea but had to pay a high price. It attributes enormous responsibility to us as human beings

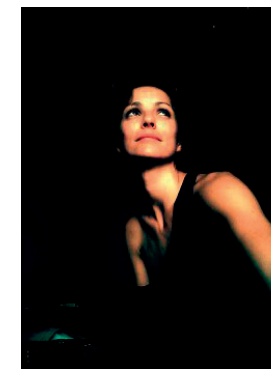
and world citizens: taking care of humanity and our planet. I will always keep Amal’s story, told through the voices of Elena Polic and Elena Aimone, with me. And it is wonderful to know, that her story narrated with the words written by Francesco and interpreted by my two dear Elenas, entered into many spectators’ hearts.

Life and poetic stories, this is “In a better world”. A universal language that joined different languages, people, places and cultures. It deals with us and the other. About the ‘me’ within the other, about the ‘other’ within me. As Rimbaud wrote in “Lettre du voyant”: ‘Je est un autre’ this makes us aware of the importance and necessity of otherness in order to discover the other and ourselves.

My wish is that projects like “In a better world” and LADDER in general continue to spread. These projects give art the opportunity to advocate the right cause. As an actress, I am proud that I was able to contribute to the opera. It was not only a professional but above all a human and self-evolving experience. A journey you do not want to end. But the traces it has left in me are indelible.

« I see them clearly in my memories of my journey... Indelible sign of the roads that I have travelled, as they are eternal proof of a journey. »

LAURA SIRANI (SINGER), ITALY



“And is a word enough to change the world? And are our feelings enough without changing our point of view, but simply acknowledging them?”

How many times do we forget that we are surrounded by natural and human wonders, without tasting the beauty life is giving us without asking for anything back? How many times do we consider life as a burden, while those are the moments in which we are reminded of being alive? We are often too enticed by the chaotic confusion of daily life which deluges us with images, slogans, orders and impositions. And what are our real needs?

*An hour of attention to pity, does
not mean to live commiserating
but living with and for passion,
improving our life and the lives of
those who surround us.*

“In a better world” brought my attention back to what I knew from the mass media, but what I had forgotten in that drawer which is full of ‘Things-I-don’t-like’, of words said to frighten me or us of strangers. An hour of attention to pity, does not mean to live commiserating but living with and for passion, improving our life and the lives of those who surround us. Do we have to open our eyes and hearts to destinies that live far from their homes but are part of us? Yes! Because we have to remember that the world has been conceived without boundaries and people born on this earth are free! Free like everyone’s life should be, everyone chooses to become bearer of what he learnt and to whom he can give its positive and altruistic vision of himself towards the others and the exterior.

I am speaking of that feeling which does not start from the ear but from the heart. It helps to live with courage, using fear as motivation to do that ‘radical’ change which produces well-being for oneself and for others. It can be both material and spiritual. We can nourish a body until it bursts, but only when we nourish the soul thanks to encounters and knowledge we begin living to learn, we need both in order to get in touch with a universal ‘love food’.

Shakespeare said ‘We are such stuff as dreams are made on’. And dreams are soul and material, joy, faith and sacrifice. A sacrifice that reminds us that we are made of flesh and soul and we have the right and the loving obligation of nourishing both of them, reaching out a helping hand to others in need. And when you least expect it that same hand reaches out to us when we are in need. “In a better word” reminds us of who we are, and the meaning our lives can have, when choosing the right direction towards a humanity that feeds body and soul with everyone’s help.”

VALÉRIE MARIE (PIANIST), FRANCE



“On a beautiful spring day, Francesco Zarzana contacted me, asking if I could compose music for a European and educational project. A project that brings hope, positivity and points out important societal issues. It is a project which carries the message ‘we are the actors of our lives’! What a wonderful message... At the same time, it is a realistic, pragmatic, utopian and positive project.

The play “In a better world” was born. And what a wonderful show! Travelling through Europe for the 10 scheduled performances, spreading the ‘right word’, what could give more enthusiasm to a composer? Once the plot was created,

Francesco sent me his texts and a selection of poetry. At once I was captured and absorbed by the story about migrants, about these poor people who ran away from their homeland to survive and save their lives. The words strung together and I had a lump in my throat, emotion submerged me. There was no doubt, it was a very important moment in the show, I needed to reflect on the suffering of these terrible fates. So, I let my heart speak, I let the notes run through my fingers. I searched and probed around, I spent days and nights looking for the right vibes, those of Amal and Amir, of their fights, their desires. I became them and the melody emerged. I joined them into the sky, what emotion...

Afterwards, an introduction to the show had to be found. Another piece, a very different part of sweetness, a caress. We could not have commenced this show in a different manner. Something wonderful, graceful. That's what I needed to compose, grace.

A third composition that comes almost at the end of the play, had to transmit a positive message: the necessity for education, our responsibility towards others, the creation of a better world, about young people who arrive with wish and hope. A soft, happy and joyous theme. Then finally the composition of a song! The wonderful voice of vocalist Eleonora Mazzotti and Francesco Zarzana's beautiful lyrics guided my fingers and 'Among the waves in the sky' took shape.

The realisation of this song required a lot of work. It is not a fast song, this was a team work process. A lot of going out – coming back, a lot of exchanges, a lot of phone-calls, too much time and work, but in the very end 'Among the waves in the sky' was born, and wizardry too. At that point rehearsals began in Mantua in March 2016. Piano compositions, texts, songs, poetry, videos. Everything of it with happiness and wizardry flitted between us.



Valérie Marie, Elena Polic Greco, Angélique Cavallariand, Elena Mazzotti at premiere in Paris, France – May 2016."

Then, in April 2016, the first representation was in Paris, France, in the Archipel theatre, which was attended by many LADDER contributors. What a great feeling to play for the first time in Paris! Afterwards we went to Italy, Sicily, Spain, Poland, Portugal, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. Seeing all of these countries and perform the show in situ, this project was an enchantment! Unforgettable moments, human and artistic encounters and connections. How much time did we spend all together to create, rehearse and work on it.

It was a dream for me and for many others among us. A dream which came true thanks to Francesco Zarzana, who chose me as composer for the music, and thanks to the LADDER project.

Unforgettable! I will never forget it, thanks for everything! Thank you very much!"

A dream which came true thanks to Francesco Zarzana, who chose me as composer for the music, and thanks to the LADDER project.

ORIGINAL SCRIPT OF THE PLAY

IN A BETTER WORLD

Airing of the video about the LADDER project

SONG "LOVE SONG" (O. HAZA) sung by Eleonora Mazzotti

PIANO MUSIC "AMONG THE WAVES IN THE SKY" (V. MARIE) piano by Valérie Marie

If every world I write,

I can do so that you can read it,

dirt with your eyes,

I will always have hope

to be able to get into your soul

and move your heart.

And, if these words shalt thou emotion

that invades your life,

you told me things I have seen from my eyes

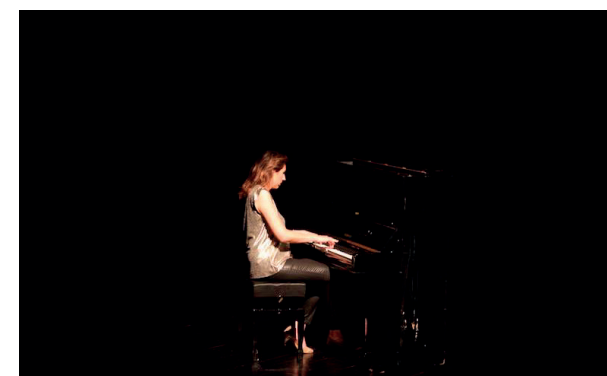
that, with the complicity of the hands,

I wrote on a sheet of paper,

to be always available to you,

at any time when you need

to hear my words.



I loved walking in the desert.

I loved admiring this immense,

boundless,

arid part of my land.

I often went there.

I felt the need to find you,

to have the meeting of the minds,

finding only cold,

immobile,

figures, crossing sand dunes

and some small oases to recover from my fatigue

and to resume my trip with dignity.

The desert helped me to reflect on the dramas of reality,

on my dramas,

on the continual battles with earthly issues,

with my issues.

I released myself from human bonds,

subjecting myself to profound physical and mental constraints,

simulating hunger and thirst,

my skin being scorched by the skin,

simulating the terror of violent clashes with horrible beings.

The vision of an empty,

enormous,

immense,

landscape, without any sign of life,

incomparable

and without discussion.

You are a traveller within nothingness,

in the unknown,

even if you study the way to go,

you have no connection with the path,

as the desert has no roads,

to find the way, you must follow the heavens,

the sun,
the moon,
the stars.
To the east,
if you look for gentle, soft, light encounters.
To the west,
when you want direct confrontation,
on the front line,
against a cold,
trivial,
and harsh reality.
To the north and south
whether you want to proceed or to retreat.
But always in the desert,
knowing neither end nor beginning.
Encountering mirages,
which occur in plain daylight,
in the shadow of the camel,
the mirages disappear,
their admirable images fade,
searching ...
they are our dreams ...
before the return to nothingness.
And the long,
deep reflections
with a gaze to the unknown,
far-off horizon.
Without ever asking why,
only seeking the journey's destination.
Imagine yourself that your goal will be the sea,
the waves,
the ocean,
the flat expanse of salt water,
full of life.
Yes, life
where the waves crash against the beach,

which is made of sand,
just like the desert.
Like my desert.
My quest is forced search for the border between the sea
and the desert itself.
The ideal place for prayer,
contemplation,
the complete annihilation of physical things,
to delve into spiritual matters,
slow breathing,
slowing the heartbeat down
whispering light words.



SONG "I BELIEVE I CAN FLY" (R & B R. KELLY)
sung by Eleonora Mazzotti

My name is Amal
I was forced to flee from the war
together with my family.
I did some small poorly paid jobs.
Once, a group of bikers tried to kidnap me on the road.

The war forced me to flee
and the people who once welcomed me
have now become hostile.
As the months passed,
I became even more scared.
But, in spite of everything,
I still had hope,
because I was in love with him.
My boyfriend's name was Amir,
his name means "prince"
and he was my prince
he promised me that he would keep me safe in Europe,
where we would get married,
he would work,
while I would continue studying
and together we would build a new life.
I knew the risks.
Many migrants had already lost their lives
trying to sail across the great sea.
For the second time in my life,
I felt I had no choice but to flee.
Amir paid the traffickers with his life savings,
Securing a place on an old fishing boat cost a lot of money,
and it was so crowded that I had to bend my knees and pressed them against my breasts.
Amir held my hand and he never left me alone.
After two days sailing I started to give up hope.
The third day I told Amir:
"I am afraid we won't succeed. I am afraid we will end up sinking".
He comforted me telling me about the wonderful life that awaited us in Europe, we would get married and we would be happy.
The fourth day a smaller ship
in worse conditions approached us.
When the traffickers ordered us to move on to the other ship, we refused.

So they left angrily,
but later they returned to punch a hole in our fishing boat.
They screamed: "Let the fish feast on your flesh" and they laughed.



In just a few minutes, the fishing boat capsized and sank.
The sea turned black.
I heard people screaming
and the waves crashing.
I was about to drown.
Amir found an air mattress.
He held my hand and swam to stay float.
There were lifeless bodies everywhere.
One hundred of us were hanging onto anything we could find.
We prayed for someone to come save us.
The night passed and a new day arrived,
but no one came
and we started to lose hope.
I saw men taking off their life jackets and letting themselves drown.
A man who felt that his time was drawing near came to me.
"Please, take my baby boy! His name is Sami. I am very tired and I can't make it anymore".
Then he gave up and he let the sea take his life.
After a while Amir was completely exhausted too.

Now it was my turn to encourage him,
telling him to fight and to cling to the hope of our fu-
ture together.
But Amir, my dear prince, could not resist any longer.

“I am sorry, my love, for bringing you here. Please,
forgive me.” Then he let himself drown before my very
eyes.

Later, on the same day, a woman swam towards my air
mattress holding an eighteen-month-old baby in her
arms.

“Save Maram’s life”, she told me, “I will not survive”.
Life is so strange!

I can’t swim, I have just watched my boyfriend drown,
and now I am responsible for 2 lives.

The 2 babies cried, they were upset, they were hungry
and thirsty.

I told them stories and talked with them.

One day passed and then another.

The fourth day I saw a commercial ship coming.

I shouted for almost two hours.

The ship’s lights have finally found me.

The men who saved me couldn’t believe I was still alive.

Little Sami didn’t survive: he died in the ship’s
infirmary.

However, Maram survived. There were only eleven
survivors of that shipwreck.

Eleven out of the almost five hundred on board.

Nobody has ever investigated the accident and the
world’s attention was focused on something else.

Today I received a message.

It was from Maram’s uncle: “I believe you saved my
niece’s life.”

Little Maram who I saved is now in an orphanage in
Europe and she is finally safe.

She will reach her uncle who sought refuge in Sweden
with his family as soon as possible.

And I am happy for her.

I may never see her again.

But saving her was a bit like saving myself.

And I always think that no one
who flees from wars and persecutions
should die at sea seeking safety.

SONG “NUMI NUMI” (J. ENGEL)
sung by Eleonora Mazzotti



PIANO MUSIC “PULSATIONS” (V. MARIE)
piano by Valérie Marie

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty’s rose might never die,
But as the ripper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory;
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed’st thy light’s flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou, that art now the world’s fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, mak’st waste in niggarding.
Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world’s due, by the grave and thee.

There is always a need for space to broaden our minds,
when the long journey begins

to discover the wonders that God created
always seeking to escape our confines
and to think of the universe,
trying to find out where it ends,
and you realize that you will never find the horizon,
remaining forever fascinated
you start to think,
that the greatest wonder that God created
is in our mind,
because it was able to imagine this journey!
I now see my footprints in the desert...
I see them clearly in my memories of my journey.
Indelible signs of the roads that I have travelled.
The sand can be whipped up and fly away fast,
transported by the hot wind,
but the wind will never erase my tracks
as they are eternal proof of a journey that has begun
and from an incomplete destiny,
traces from a never-ending story.
In my mind, I can still see clearly
the first footprint that I left
but the last has not happened yet
no when,
no how,
no why inside me.
I left one after another,
aware or ignorant of their meaning,
more solid and certain of the gold-coloured grains
upon which I have walked.

SONG “EARTH” (M. JACKSON) sung by Eleonora Mazzotti

Nobody joined this world without crying
Nobody is wondering why this world is not a better
place
But this world is in the hands of those people who are

brave enough to dream
taking the risk to follow their dreams.
This world is full of pain
but also full of victories
The world is a beautiful place and it’s worth keeping
fight for it.

The world is in our hands
We should improve it
It’s a great responsibility
Together we will be able to succeed
Let’s eradicate hunger and poverty
Education should be granted for everyone
We should not forget gender quality
Water must be affordable for everyone
Let’s protect the sea, the oceans and marine resources
Together we will be able to succeed
And we will leave a better world for our children
Let’s get the travel started

SONG “IN VIAGGIO” (F. MANNOIA) sung by Laura Sirani

Even the journey has its own music
Even the journey has its own song
With an old voice it drives away the terror of the
shipwreck
An old voice, a distant language.
Listen to it poet, listen!
Make the journey in spring...no!
Dying winter hides behind spring,
for the last bite,
and haste brings you to the sea...
Listen to it poet, listen!
Don’t take all your belongings on the ship
Leave most, take only little
If you face a disaster among the waves
too much weight will seal your fate

if you leave in spring, leave the rest to your children
I would have left it to you
You have come back to life in them
But you can't see it
Because the sea sweeps the memories away
Listen to it poet, listen!
It's time to travel
Only when the crow alights on the tree and sinks its
claw into the branch:
now the sea is navigable!
Navigable is the sea
and Ahab sets off on his meagre chase
and Ulysses sets sail,
the miners descend to the cave,
the pilgrim travels toward his destination
and thousands of airplanes travel to faraway lands.
Autumn and winter
with summer closed into bundles,
block the trains.
However the sea is navigable
but I do not sing its praises
Listen to it poet, listen.
The distant language you cannot understand
Because the sea sweeps the memories away
But the sound still tells us the story



PIANO MUSIC "EMOTIONS" (V. MARIE)
played by Valérie Marie

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

Everyone has the right to education.

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Right to life, freedom and safety should be guaranteed for everyone.

Everyone has the right to a nationality. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, included his own, and to return to their own country.

In a better world

In a better world

SONG "AMONG THE WAVES IN THE SKY" (F. ZARZANA – E. MAZZOTTI – V. MARIE – L. MAIANI) sung by Eleonora Mazzotti

For more information:
www.ladder-project.eu
[#LADDERproject](https://twitter.com/LADDERproject)
ladder@aldaintranet.org
www.alda-europe.eu

Contact details:
ALDA Office in Brussels
Rue Belliard 20
Brussels 1040
Belgium

