



**HEAR!
HERE!**

Dialogue
and
listening
platform

**THEATRE OF THE
OPPRESSED**

**WORKSHOP #7
FOR TEACHERS**

w/ Desta Haile

Wed Apr 8, 5-7pm
ONLINE

WORKSHOP #7 THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 17:00-19:00 (ONLINE)

In this workshop, led by Desta Haile, we explored methods from 'Theatre of the Oppressed' the revolutionary theatre form developed by Augusto Boal, developed in the 1970s and inspired by the work of educator Paulo Freire. According to Boal, "The theatre itself is not revolutionary, it is the rehearsal for a revolution". Boal considered theatre as a form of knowledge that can help us build our future, where spectators become 'spect-actors'. How could we use elements of it in educational and artistic work? Theatre of the Oppressed encompasses a variety of approaches and wakes up the senses and stimulates thought, dialogue, questions and new understandings.

Desta introduced different branches of Theatre of the Oppressed: newspaper theatre, forum theatre, invisible theatre, image theatre, rainbow of desire, legislative theatre and direct actions. We discussed how we can apply these in our own practices.

Theatre of the Oppressed is valuable in terms of rethinking pedagogies in (art) schools; the approaches really centre dialogue and make possible the acknowledgement and understanding of different positions not only through words but very much also through bodily presence and awareness.

Desta Haile is a British-Eritrean educator, theatre practitioner and vocalist. She volunteered at the Centre for the Theatre of the Oppressed in Rio de Janeiro in 2006 and had the great fortune to work with Boal himself. In over 15 years as an Ensemble Leader with the International School Theatre Association, she has led theatre festivals and workshops around the world from Manila to Atlanta. Desta runs Languages through Music, making resources and spaces for people to learn languages and cultures through songs.

TAKEAWAYS

ICEBREAKER GAME

Write down:

- Three things you are
- Three things you want

If done in person everyone would write their answers on pieces of paper. The facilitator goes around and collects the pieces of paper in a bowl or hat and reads out the answers anonymously.

The intention of the exercise is to see the resonances between participants, because even if they are a varied group there will likely be an overlap of answers.

DEMONSTRATIONS OF POWER

Place four chairs in the centre of the room, ask the group to arrange the chairs in a way that conveys 'power'. You can ask them to do it a few times; this shows the different creative ways power can be conveyed. Discuss the layout each time with the group and see what the arrangement means to the participants.

IMAGE THEATRE

This is an exercise to avoid words. Participants act out a word/concept (e.g. 'strength' or 'oppression'). The other participants build onto the pose physically.

RAINBOW OF DESIRE

Set up a scene with two participants – e.g. a couple sitting on a bench having a disagreement. Freeze the scene, then invite two people in to portray the inner dialogue of each person on the bench. What is each person thinking, what is behind what each person is saying?

