



Microtheatre Granollers

SUPPORT FOR THEATRICAL CREATION FROM EMERGING PLAYWRIGHTS AND YOUNG PERFORMERS

Summary

Microtheatre is a cross-cutting project initiated in 2014 and jointly developed by *Roca Umbert Fàbrica de les Arts* [Roca Umbert Arts Factory] in Granollers, a former textile factory that has been transformed into a cultural space of reference within the city, and the *Escola de Teatre Arsènic* [Arsènic Theatre School], which is an advocate for theatre as a cultural and educational tool, located in the same centre. This initiative aims to encourage and disseminate the work of new playwrights and young actors, to enable them to advance in their goal of becoming professionals in the field. To this end, professional theatre directors are also involved in the project.

The project proposes the creation of small-format theatrical performances of short duration around a single thematic axis,

developed freely by the authors and performed in a reduced stage space in the presence of a limited audience.

One of the objectives of **Microtheatre** is to contribute to the theatrical creations of new playwrights. In order to achieve this, a competition is held for them. Theatre scripts written in Catalan and based on the world of adolescents or young people are submitted, which must include a maximum of three characters and last no longer than 20 minutes.

The selection of the winning texts is carried out by a qualified jury and the prize consists of a small monetary award and the staging of the play by professional directors, working with young performers that have previously been selected. The aim of all of

this is to drive artistic creation among new playwrights and young actors.

All performances take place in the *Roca Umbert Arts Factory*. In this way, it is possible to showcase and highlight its industrial heritage and architecture, whilst achieving a dramatic and symbolic value.

City:

Granollers

Country:

Spain

Inhabitants:

63.000

Topics: Performing arts, Cultural promotion, Creativity, Youth

Granollers has been linked to the Educating Cities movement since 1990, and it is a member of the Executive Committee and the Coordination Commission of the Spanish Network



Goals

- ▶ Promote the creation of works that can be performed by young people in the different spaces of the *Roca Umbert Arts Factory*.
- ▶ Provide spaces for collaborative learning by leveraging the figure of the professional director so that young actors can advance in their path towards professionalisation.
- ▶ Achieve quality works that enable the project to be recognised as a creative platform for talent by the city and, in particular, by the sector.
- ▶ Contribute new values to the *Roca Umbert Arts Factory*.
- ▶ Create a working model that can be replicated or become a source of inspiration for new projects in other artistic fields.

Context

Granollers is the capital and the most populated city of the Vallès Oriental region, located in the province of Barcelona, within the autonomous community of Catalonia. It has a population of approximately 63,000 and enjoys a long-standing and lively cultural tradition.

The *Roca Umbert* space is situated in an old textile factory that was set up in Granollers in 1904 and remained active in the municipality until 1991. Two years later, a third of the factory was municipalised and in 2003 Granollers City Council approved the Land Use Plan that converted it into a centre for contemporary creation, which currently comprises 21,000 m² of facilities.





Methodology

The organisers launch a call for the creation of works by new playwrights. The texts must be based on a specific theme that varies depending on the edition (it may be a word, a phrase, a question...). The story must include a maximum of three characters and must not exceed 20 minutes in length. Subsequently, a professional jury (which includes representation from the Council's technical staff) chooses four of the works received to be performed. These authors also receive a cash prize.

The works are directed by professionals and performed by young people chosen by way of an open casting. The directors are hired by Granollers City Council and the performers receive the full takings from the box office for each performance.

Once the casting is finalised, the rehearsals begin. Each director chooses the space within the Roca Umbert Factory that they consider ideal for the performance of the play. This is where the final rehearsals are held with all the necessary props, decoration and lighting equipment, and where the performance will take place in front of the audience.

The advertising and setting up of the system for ticket sales is undertaken by the City Council. The performances last for four days, with four performances per day. Each performance can be attended by a maximum of 40 people (spectators can attend each of the four performances). Each spectator follows an itinerary with their group, which is a journey through all

of the works and the spaces in which they are performed. After attending the first two performances, the audience gathers in a square within the Factory where refreshments are served. Then, each group sets off to see the two remaining plays, completing the theatrical route.





★ Evaluation

The evaluation of the project is very positive. There has been an increase in the number of performances and performance days, given the warm welcome and great interest the community has shown the proposal. Tickets sell out within a few hours.

This project is about opportunities; to be able to develop and carry out creative proposals in a professional manner which, for many, is their first experience in this regard. It is an opportunity for shared knowledge, for multiple learnings, where the youngsters who participate can see their works read and directed by professionals. In terms of the young performers, they can take their first steps towards their chosen profession. The audience is also a willing participant, and lives the theatrical experience in a different, more intimate way.

The participants of the project live it as an educational, high-level learning experience — the professional directors included. Those who attend the Microtheatre (a very loyal audience), also perceive the special atmosphere generated by the project; something that makes it different.



Contact

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