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Volume 5 Fall 2020

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2020

## Joker Exchange Online - Meeting The Risks and Opportunities of the COVID-19 Crisis

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### Recommended Citation

Noy Meir, Uri Yitzchak and Larcher, Anne (2020) "Joker Exchange Online - Meeting The Risks and Opportunities of the COVID-19 Crisis," *Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Journal*: Vol. 5, Article 17. Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/ptoj/vol5/iss1/17>

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*Pedagogy and Theatre of the Oppressed Journal*

*Vol. 5, Issue 1 (Fall 2020)*

## **Joker Exchange Online – Meeting the risks and opportunities of a global crisis: Patterns and Reflections on online events in times of the COVID-19 outbreak.**

Uri Noy Meir<sup>1</sup> and Anne Larcher<sup>2</sup>

*In this article, we narrate and analyse patterns of engagement and harvest key learning from the Joker Exchange Online (JEO) events on 11th April and May 2nd. We map the impact of these online events to inform future events as an effective collective response/strategy to global challenges. At the same time, we are Theatre of the Oppressed practitioners who attended/presented in the JEO, and this informs our research and engaged interest in theatre and community work on the margins of theatre, activism, and social change. The article has three parts: the first part look at the “triggers” for the Joker Exchange Online and its aims; the second part reports and analyses testimonies from JEO participants; the third part outlines key learnings, suggestions, and considerations for similar future global online events.*

*Appendices show a full schedule of sessions, a list of videos made at JEO, and share testimonials.*

*In truth the Theatre of the Oppressed has no end, because everything which happens in it must extend into life....The Theatre of the Oppressed is located precisely on the frontier between fiction and reality – and this border must be crossed. If the show starts in fiction, its objective is to become integrated into reality, into life. (Boal 246)*

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<sup>2</sup> **Anne Larcher** recently got her M.A. in theatre studies from Laval University in Canada writing her dissertation about the Transposition to digital of Forum Theatre. A seasoned engineer in IT, her research focuses on theatre combined with computer science. She was awarded 3 times at Concours d'idées d'entreprises at Laval University with different ideas in applied theatre. Now a teacher in computer engineering, she remains active in the research in applied theatre ([anne.larcher@tm-alumni.eu](mailto:anne.larcher@tm-alumni.eu)).

***PART I – COVID-19, Setting the scene for the Joker Exchange Online (JEO)***

The global outbreak of COVID-19 is a unique and highly dramatic event in global history. It is the largest global Pandemic since the Spanish flu, setting in motion a massive socio-economic crisis. Social distancing and "lockdowns" have altered daily lives across the globe, and while the virus attacks all of us, we are not all treated the same way; millions have lost their security, their jobs, and their prospects for the future.

(Huffpost, Wired)

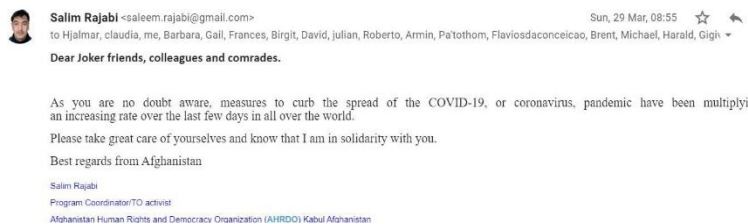
As the pandemic crisis continues, we can see how those that are socially marginalised and oppressed are the ones that are more adversely affected by it. The widening gap, between those who have and those who have not, is a constant and growing threat and risks global well-being and peace. Alongside the risks, however, new opportunities emerge; there is a sense of urgency that calls for greater solidarity locally and globally and sheds light on the interconnection of struggles and challenges. This growing sense of awakening solidarity can be seen in the Black Lives Matter movement and new grassroots uprisings which sprout up around the world (e.g. Belarus). For these grassroots movements to be able to truly shift and transform our way of being with and relating to each other as global citizens, it is necessary to create new containers across the old divides of national borders, interest groups, and ideologies. In the article, we look at ways to build such containers, by reflecting on the experience of the Joker Exchange Online (*JEO*).

The *JEO* events of April 11 and May 2, 2020 were modelled as a creative response to this global moment. *JEO* events aimed to leverage the moment of disruption to build transnational solidarity and activate new opportunities for exchange within the Theatre of the Oppressed international community of practice. The *JEO* vision was to create a digital platform for solidarity, co-learning, and decentralised capacity building inspired by Augusto Boal's vision for Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) and using the system change

framework Theory U (Scharmer) and the participatory design approach of Dragon Dreaming. (Dragon)

## It all started with 2 Sparks and a dream

The first “spark” for *JEO* came on March 29<sup>th</sup> when Salim Rajabi, TO activist and co-founder of the Afghanistan Human Rights and Democracy Organization (AHRDO), sent an email to a group of TO Joker/facilitators which transmitted a deep sense of care and solidarity. On April 2<sup>nd</sup> an open inquiry posted in the Facebook group Theatre of the Oppressed by TO Practitioner and activist Tony Cealy about TO online generated much resonance and provided a second “spark” to the *JEO* “Dream”.



The combination of these two sparks led me (Uri Noy Meir) to propose and host the first *JEO* with an intent to make visible emerging expressions of social solidarity and to create new spaces in which to share experiences of doing TO online. Two hundred fifty people registered for the zoom call and more than 100 participants filled out the pre-gathering survey before the first *JEO* on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The positive response to the first event and the help of many international TO practitioners<sup>3</sup> brought about the second *JEO* on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, the anniversary of the passing of both Augusto Boal and Paulo Freire. During this fourteen-hour-long event (from sunset May 1<sup>st</sup> in Alaska to the Sunrise May 3<sup>rd</sup> in Australia) the “main Zoom room” link was accessed 909 times, and the program page was accessed 1244 times. As it is likely that some

<sup>3</sup> Here is a partial list: Andrea Calsamiglia, Marike Minnema, Amit Ron, Louisa Kistemaker, Oksana Potapova, Keo So, Jessica Bleur, Gaynor Smith, Chen Alon, Mark Weinberg, Marc Weinblat, Tony Cealy, Nadia Cicurel.

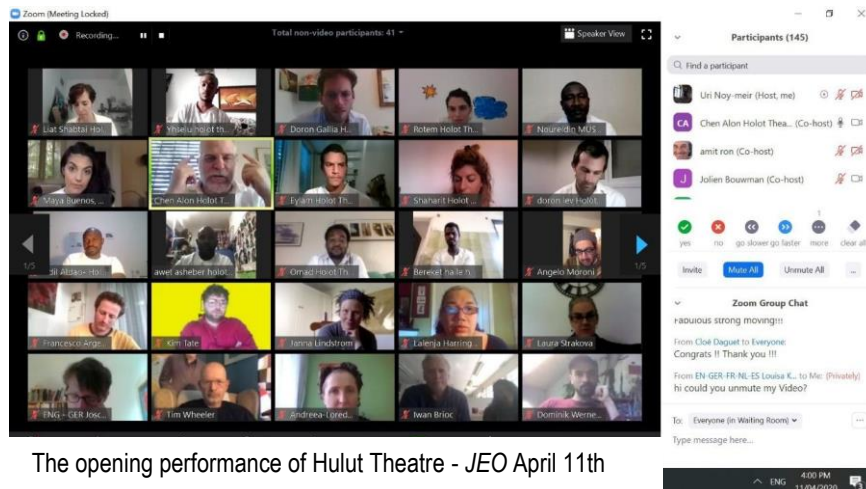
accesses/clicks came from the same people, we can estimate that 200 to 400 people and TO practitioners interacted with events on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.



Flyer for the May 2<sup>nd</sup> JEO artwork by Keo So

## ***PART II - reports, impressions, and ripples from the Joker Exchange Online (Data analysed by Anne Larcher)***

The JEO events happened in multiple times and virtual spaces. On April 11<sup>th</sup> they included a TO performance from Hulut theatre, 50 small breakout conversations as part of the Joker Café, and six longer in-depth discussions happening in the main zoom room and via other links.



The opening performance of Hulut Theatre - JEO April 11th

The second JEO on May 2<sup>nd</sup> had 29 events (workshops, conversations, performances) happening in various zoom rooms. Sessions varied in size from 5 to 100 and in character and theme. The organization team conducted several surveys throughout and after the workshop. Questions asked about personal

benefits for the participants, benefits for the practice of Theatre of the Oppressed, and patterns of engagement in the 3 months following the *JEO*. We have tried to extract the main ideas from the many answers we received in the sections below. (See Appendix A for a full list of sessions and Appendix B for a list of video recordings.)

### **Personal benefits**

Several people highlighted the sense of community and group bonding that they felt despite the challenges of distance and the IT barrier. As Naomi said, “It was amazing to be in [a] community across the globe, participants shared it was a strong workshop, and they were able to feel a sense of intimacy despite being on zoom.” The fact that some activities took place in rooms that were “locked” probably helped create the sense of intimacy highlighted by Naomi. On the other hand, some participants enjoyed “meeting” a lot of people during the day. Hector expressed happiness about this outcome: “I enjoyed seeing many people doing the work, and the desire of connection and to see each other.”

In addition to the sense of community, several people mentioned that the *JEO* would impact their TO practice. Some of the participants highlighted the ability to work in a group rather than alone. Louisa said, “I was working locally, and now I am connected to [more] people.” The ability to work collaboratively with other TO practitioners is an essential outcome of the workshop. Even if the exchange was limited to sharing experiences and knowledge, people still took advantage of this opportunity to exchange ideas with all sorts of people they would not have met if the *JEO* had not happened. Doug, a long time TO facilitator, concluded: “What I loved is being able to listen to people around the world and gather some of their thoughts and [experiences].”



Furthermore, people used the meeting as an opportunity and a call to connect and decided to work together on further action. We can quote here Barbara; “I was amazed by so [many] people from different [countries] [together] ... mak[ing] plans together.” This article itself is one of the many collaborative works that came out of the *JEO*; it is written by authors who did not know each other before the event.

Some participants highlighted the *JEO* as a life-changing experience. Tony said, “It [was] [truly] a rewarding memorable event that will always be close to my heart doing this kind of work online.” [sic]

In addition, many participants stressed the motivation they received from the event. Sooraj mentioned “I feel it brings energy and enthusiasm” and Barbara highlighted “It was positive for us – we learnt something because we wanted to influence.” It is interesting to find what came out of the workshops for the participants. To conclude, we will quote Tony again: “I found the whole experience an amazing togetherness.” (See Appendix C for additional testimonials.)



Closing ceremony of the May 2<sup>nd</sup> JEO

### **Benefits for the practice**

In this section, we will analyse the benefits of the *JEO* for the practice of TO. For most of us, the lockdown has been synonymous with zoom, teams, and other tools for online meetings. The time was auspicious for innovation and the emergence of different ways of working. Hector's testimonial confirms this: "Figuring out what we can do at this new time of social distancing." Information Technology helped "shorten" the distance, providing an opportunity for the development of TO in this new area. However, the purpose was to connect to the TO roots and "connect potential [of] [t]he collective [intelligence]." (Hector)

Roshan reminded us of the context of the emergence of the *JEO*: "When everything is shut down at this point, creating something was a source of hope." We can conclude here how important this day was for the participants and the community of practitioners. It was the opportunity to "find a way to get together in this community with different ways of doing TO."

Human beings often learn when facing difficulties and overcoming them. This learning from the challenge is



also what happened during the *JEO*. We were “able to create community when we [felt] that we [were] losing connection: create unity when the world is [experiencing] separation” wrote one participant. The strength of the group is the primary benefit of the *JEO*. The majority of participants were TO practitioners and familiar with the practice and came to feel connected as a community of practice. As Barbara said, “We did not learn much about TO, but we learn[ed] about each other and the community.” The building of the community was also highlighted by Chetna: “It is a revolution. I love how we interculturally connected.” [sic]

Several people noticed that participants belonged to several generations and the exchange between them. Intergenerational learning was mentioned by Chetna, Sooraj, and Oksana: “Different generations getting together to learn from each other and get inspiration from each other;” (Sooraj) and “[D]ifferent generations were exchanging without hierarchy, generosity to share their work and approach, openness and dialogue between different generations.” (Oksana) It is promising that these people can work together as a large community. As Warren mentioned, “[I] felt it was [great] to be part of a larger community. Spirit and energy of connecting. [Everyone] is on the same journey. An [lot] of It is very promising that a younger generation of TO practitioners is coming out and still learning from more seasoned participants. We hope that this new generation, more familiar with Information Technology, will pursue the trend of leveraging the technology to community.”

This sense of community and good feeling of connection came up several times in the testimonials collected. People noted the following: “A conversation about TO and different [methodologies] which can [inform] and enrich our practice when working with diverse communities.” (Hector) “Beautiful, interconnection, a chance to witness each other, be in community.” (Naomi) “It is about the power; it is about relationships because humans discover these things of us.” (Doug) “Incredible energy. Being

connected to so many different jokers.” (Louisa)

Bonding is indeed one of the significant benefits of the *JEO* for the practice as a whole. A community is more robust than several independent individuals. The *JEO* enabled people to hook up with like-minded people. The mid and longterm benefits to the TO ecosystem began to multiply when *JEO* participants started to launch new projects. In the next part of this article, we try to shed light on this aspect.

### **All that remains: looking back, walking forward.**

In order to evaluate and share the mid-term benefits of the *JEO*, we organised a virtual event on the QiQoChat/Zoom platforms on July 19, 2020, which allowed us to collect answers from 23 *JEO* participants more than three months after the *JEO* events.

When we asked via live zoom polling about the possibility of social dialogue online, all but one respondent felt social dialogue could be valuable in online spaces. Twenty responders thought that online spect-acting could be a valuable experience, while 3 estimated this to be partly so. This is a very promising response considering the newness of participatory theatre and TO online. All but one of our survey responders had had a chance to be part of online participatory theatre events in the past three months (more than 10 events: 6 respondents, 6-10 events: 2; 3-5 events: 9; 1-2 events: 6). Fourteen people had been able to participate as an active spectator (spect-actor) in an online event.

Most responders (20 of 23) confirmed that as *JEO* participants they felt a greater sense of community following the original events. 19 of 23 responders acknowledged that the *JEO* provided for them an opportunity to work with others. These results confirm findings from previous surveys and testimonials.

Regarding involvement in the new initiatives that came out of the *JEO*, eight responders joined more than one initiative and five one initiative. Four did not join new efforts, while six did not know about new initiatives. The fact that a significant number of participants did not know about new initiatives indicates that, despite the belief that information circulates well thanks to IT, it may not be the case. As the author of this article, I (Anne) was challenged to stay up-to-date with all the Facebook/WhatsApp/etc. messages.

### **Beyond the Joker Exchange**

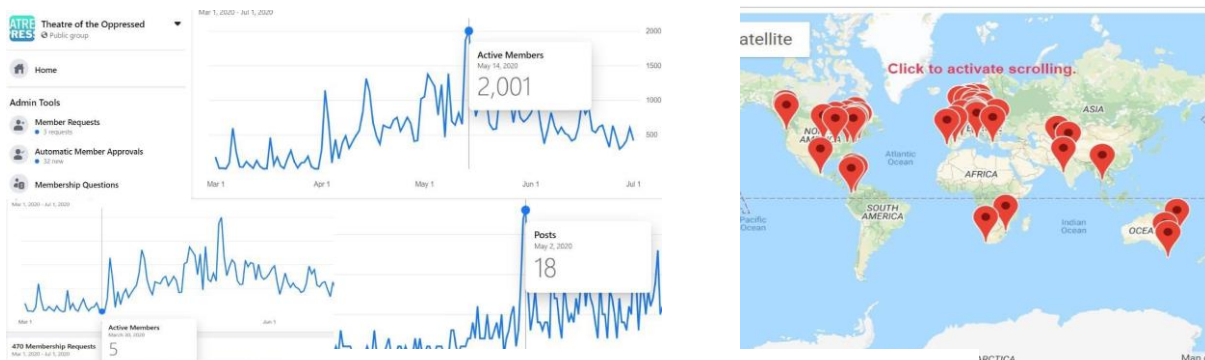
April and May saw a noticeable increase in online TO related events appearing on the international Facebook and email exchanges as a response to the needs of practitioners in TO and other participatory theatre. While such initiatives might have happened anyway, *JEO* is likely to have directly and indirectly inspired/informed them, even if only as a provocation. While many are home with limited physical and social interactions, such events helped nourish a growing sense of connection as a global community of practitioners.

Here is are highlight of initiative multiplying TO dialogues, exchanges, and solidarity online:

- Legislative Theater Radio Group: This initiative was thought of during the second *JEO* and has led to a group of TO practitioners together with technology and global well-being activists meeting weekly and develop new projects. Find out more at [daisy.world](https://www.daisyworld.org/).
- Playground for Online joking: an international group of 20-25 people, exploring and experimenting with online facilitation. The group was initiated by [Francesco Argenio Benarioio](#), after he got inspired in a *JEO* Session by Warren Linds. The group is continuing to co-build, experiment and document their practice weekly.

- A collective conversation about TO & Youth emerged from *JEO* made of educators and artist-activists from across the globe. The group interest is in promoting student learning, critical thinking, and liberatory pedagogical practices. It is designing a performance project to cultivate and support exchange between youth to explore their ideas of dignity, liberty, equity, and justice using TO/PO tools.
- Ma(g)dalenas Network is one of the most prominent international networks within the TO community working towards a feminist perspective and practice of TO. Following the *JEO* events the network has organized several live stream and Zoom events and is planning a third international online festival in September 2020. [The festival «Ma-g-dalenas en Movimiento - 10 days about 10 years of actions»](#) will “bring together feminist Theater of the Oppressed groups that are articulated with organisations and social movements committed to the struggle against patriarchal systems and sexist violence in its various forms.”
- Cardboard Citizens, one of the most established TO companies in the world, has been hosting a series of conversations live on Facebook, investigating how TO can inform a brighter path following the COVID-19 pandemic. In the series which began after the *JEO* May 2nd event, Cardboard Citizens’ founder Adrian Jackson interviewed with leading figures in the TO community, holding a much needed space of collective exchange and reflection on the [company’s FB page](#).
- ImaginAction is a US-based non-profit and an international network of practitioners. Following the *JEO* event offered an online summer school program for the first time. It is currently developing a global mentoring program that builds on ImaginAction’s decades of experience with arts, activism, and social action. The program will be offered on a [new website](#) integrating innovative social technologies and supporting social artists and activists worldwide in building transformative and regenerative communities across borders.

- In May and June, 2020 the Italian TO network met regularly via video calls to plan a day of collective action. On June 2nd in several locations across Italy Theatre groups experimented with various types of action in public spaces to critically reflect on social distancing and global crisis through creative means. The exchange is coordinated and hosted by Cicco Tedesco and Irene Ausiello.
- A well-established TP company from Barcelona, La Xixa, organized a forum theatre marathon on Zoom on 13 June 2020. [La Marató de La Xixa 2020](#) included artistic performances with Mamadou Diol, forum plays with the La Xixa revitalization team, interventions with Can Castelló, Aecom, podcasts, and more.
- Only 20 days after the May 2nd *JEO* the Super-cyclone Amphan hit the coast of India and Bangladesh creating havoc and destruction in the community of Jana Sanskriti the world's largest TO group. Sanjoy Ganguly, who spoke in the opening ceremony of *JEO* published an image of the damages, and the community responded with decisiveness and great solidarity in times of trouble. A fund raiser created by TONYC founder Katy Rubin [gathered more than 20,000 USD](#) and together with other donations from groups in Europe and Asia, Jana Sanskriti is now able to not only rebuild their theatre and centre, but support local communities in need.



Statistics from the Theatre of the Oppressed Facebook group

Overall we noticed an increase in activity and engagement during April and May. The FB group (which

existed since 2008) grew significantly in size as did the quality and deepening of exchange, dialogue, and cross-pollination within the community. Many TO practitioners and organizations have been creatively adapting their practice to the new conditions. Practitioners like Tony Cealy who has been tirelessly working to offer workshops and create [Zoom performances](#) with black men suffering from the mental and socio-economic pressures of lockdown UK. Organizations like the US based [Mandala Centre for Change](#) that have been offering workshops and virtual forum performance to [“to engage the community and inspire ... civic responsibility, and action”](#).

All these actions are signs of solidarity, creativity, and deep humanity held by the TO community of artists and activists, who in times of difficulty came together to build and to create. The *JEO* did not create that solidarity, creativity, and deep humanity but hopefully it supported it, even if for a bit. If TO is a tree ([like Boal often described it](#)) or a forest, *JEO* and similar events are like fungi – an invisible network decomposing what is no longer needed, exchanging nutrients, and building new connections, building soil, and supporting life.

### ***PART III - TO gatherings and events online: what is useful to remember? (by Uri)***

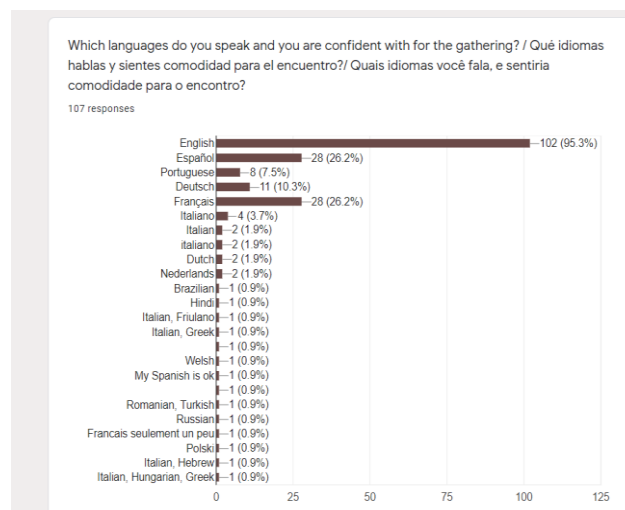
The *Joker Exchange Online* provided a learning opportunity, making visible both challenges and possibilities in online participatory TO (and related) events. It enabled the meeting of TO practitioners who might otherwise not meet (because of physical distance). It allowed the global TO community to see itself in its potentiality as a worldwide network of artist-activists acting for social justice. At the same time, *JEO* made visible some blind-spots and critical learning that are needed to create a genuinely inclusive global movement, where everyone can have a voice, where real dialogue and democracy can flourish.

### Digital inclusion: Removing barriers

Online meetings/gatherings tend to favour those with the possibility of accessing and learning the latest internet technologies for online conferences and with good network coverage in their area. E.g., community members from countries like Afghanistan did not have the ability to join because of network coverage. In the African TO network, Zoom was not a known tool, and so a WhatsApp group was created to encourage and support inclusion. Finally, some African practitioners were able to join *JEO* and participate (not without difficulty).

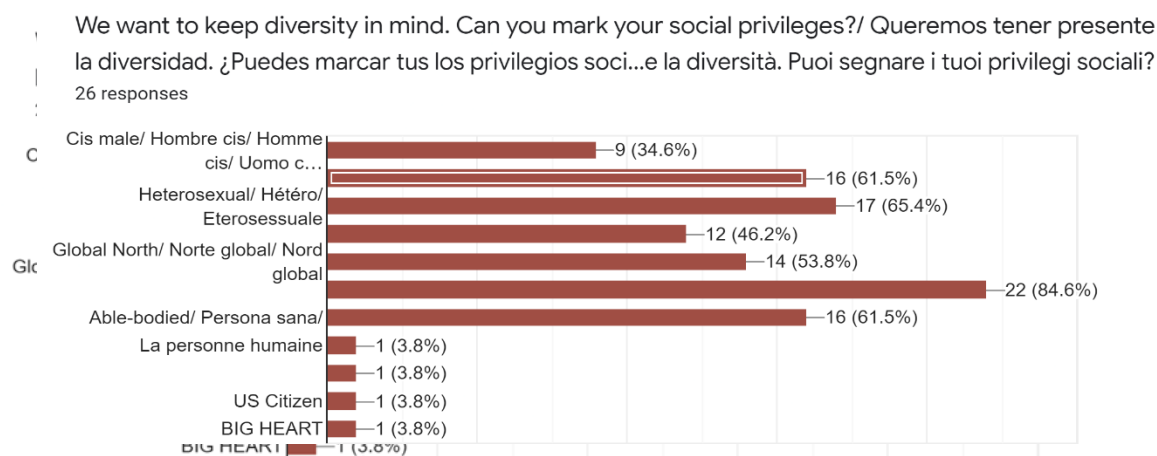
### Linguistic inclusion: Not only English

Most of the *JEO* workshops were facilitated in English and many did not have translators. While this corresponded to the results from the pre-gathering survey in which 102 from the 107 respondents replied they are most comfortable with English, it does not represent the linguistic diversity of the TO community nor the world. Specific sessions were in languages other than English, and a few others had simultaneous translation. But to offer a more inclusive gathering either the creation of more language tracks or a much more robust translation capacity will be required.



### Sharing the stage: let's talk about it.

A concern that emerged in the follow-up conversation after the first *JEO* was that the presenters had been predominantly white males. It became clear that if we did not plan accordingly, white and male predominance would be the default result. In response to this vital concern we included in the Open Call collecting offers to present, host, and facilitate during the second *JEO* a request to state “your social privileges”. The answers provided us with important insight about inclusivity and equity on the *JEO* Stage.



One-third of conversation hosts and facilitators who replied to the call identified themselves as male. Nearly two-thirds identified as white, two thirds also identified as heterosexuals and two-thirds identified as able-bodied. Slightly more the half were from the global north, but less than half indicated they feel that they have economic privileges. The most common social privilege identification was higher education (22 out of 26). Considering that the majority of the global population is from the global south, lives in poor economic conditions, and is not able to access higher education, we could do much better.

Exclusion as oppression is an intersectional, multilayered, and complex social structure. Yes, the *JEO* stage, since it mirrored our broken global system, was not a fair representation of all the people on earth, but it was trying to be, and it could be, and so can other global stages. As Augusto Boal lovingly quoted the



Chilean poet Antonio Machado “We make the road by walking.”

### **Collaboration across borders: not easy, yet necessary**

The *JEO* happened thanks to the solidarity and support of many people across the world who gave the resources and time to make it happen. Translating and communicating, technical support and conversation hosting, workshop facilitation and performing – all were equally essential to make the *JEO* happen.

It was all organised without any budget and as a cross border collaboration with many people, some of whom did not know each other before but shared interest in the future of TO and the state of the world. To be able to collaborate and work together effectively requires cultural awareness and adjustability to different rhythms and styles of organisation. I could say that as coordinator of the event, it was not easy to do that. The timing was very short, and my personal tendency to “run with it” and take a lot of the tasks on myself was not making it easier for others to support me. I do admire and thank all of those who helped make the event a magical and beautiful encounter of driven and passionate creative change-makers. My personal favourite moment in the 14 hour event on May 2<sup>nd</sup> was the break I took from hosting the event in a hammock in my garden, knowing that at the same time I was resting others were hosting people in the main room. It was exciting for me to know that after the closing ceremony (which was past our family bedtime) the after-party in the main room kept going – and even more exciting to follow from far and near some of the beautiful ripples that the event generated. Indeed we “make our way by walking” and you only learn to walk if you allow yourself to fall from time to time. It is this “celebrating our mistakes” as my dear mentor and friend Hector will say which allows us to learn and grow.

### **Theatre Online, a faint copy of the original or something completely different?**

It is not possible to complete this article without referring to a red thread which had been and still is in the centre of the conversation which led to the *JEO* events and those that followed. Theatre and TO online? Does it work? Does it make sense? Is it helpful? These questions continue to live in the many conversations and experiments that have followed the *JEO* events. The response is mixed; while some practitioners feel they have new opportunities (work wise and creatively) in this time of social distancing, others feel the complete opposite. Some inform us that they are unable to “find themselves” in this world of square screens. While I feel this conversation deserves an article in itself, I would like to add as my own consideration: maybe what is opening up as a possibility for us is something is not TO or even theatre as we know it. Maybe it something completely new, something else, something that is needed. Internet technology, like theatre, is made by people for people, and like theatre it is not about what we do, and what names we give what we do, it is about how we do what we do and what meaning we are willing to give and put into our actions.

### **Looking back with gratitude, looking forward with a smile**

I feel *JEO* benefited and helped enact a vision of the many TO practitioners that gave their time and energy to the TO global community. *JEO* events with their challenge and joy exposed both the potential and the difficulty of times of turmoil in building social solidarity. The challenges we face are increasingly interconnected and complex. It has become evident we must learn to cooperate across old boundaries and rules to better use and coordinate our personal and collective resources and energies.

Refining organisational and leadership skills, managing misunderstandings and frustrations, meeting challenges like the equal representation of diverse language, social and cultural groups for the 2020 *JEO*

events all provided a great learning opportunity for me and hopefully others. The *JEO* has made the TO community more visible with its vibrant and diverse national, regional, and transnational networks of practitioners with unique know-how and capacities. I believe that by facilitating exchange within the community both online and offline, we could “help build our future, rather than just waiting for it.” (Boal, 246)



The Japanese art of kintsugi teaches us that broken objects can be a source of exceptional beauty. (Carnazzi)  
The beauty of imperfection is that it invites us to “add-in” new “parts and fixes” which enhance and fill the world with new possibilities. I would like to see the *JEO* events as an

imperfect Social Sculpture<sup>4</sup>, and a pro-vocation of mine which can lead to new questions and new opportunities to rehearse new ways of being together online and offline. Do not ask me about the next *JEO*, yet. I feel that requires further strategic planning, and like everything else the right timing. This should not stop us from always searching for new ways to bridge the divides gaps which exist among us and within us.

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<sup>4</sup> Social sculpture is a phrase to describe an expanded concept of art that was invented by the artist and co-founder of the German Green Party, Joseph Beuys. Beuys created the term “social sculpture” to embody his understanding of art’s potential to transform society. As a work of art, a social sculpture includes human activity that strives to structure and shape society or the environment. The central idea of a social sculptor is an artist who creates structures in society using language, thoughts, actions, and objects. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_sculpture](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_sculpture)

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## Appendix A: Individual JEO sessions

April 11th 2020

List of sessions – [jokerexchange.sutra.co](http://jokerexchange.sutra.co)

### Performance

1. *No Man is Illegal*, and interactive theatre performance by Hulut Theatre

### Conversations

1. TO in education
2. "Mixing" TO
3. Theatre Online
4. Digital inclusion
5. New Activism
6. Feminist TO

May 2nd 2020

List of sessions full program at [bit.ly/JOKER2M](http://bit.ly/JOKER2M)

### Performances

1. *Identity* by Rangbhumi Theatre
2. *A Journal of the Plague Year* by Cardboard Citizens
3. *The Awakening Music* and movement journey

### Conversations

1. Joker: a neutral mediator?
2. Forum theatre online`
3. Workshops TO in with your community in quarantine - sharing ideas
4. LEGISLATIVE THEATRE and SUSTAINABILITY
5. Radio of Oppressed
6. The dialogue of TO with other methodologies such as Deep Ecology, Dragon Dreaming
7. The Politics of TO
8. Bi-monthly Forum Theatre Meetups Practice & Research Networking Event
9. La situación de Bolivia hoy
10. Le travail de BADILIKA théâtre dans la sous région de Grand Lacs et a l'extérieur de l'Afrique

## Workshops

1. Rainbow of Desires Games
2. ZOOM Theatre
3. Joker and power. A challenging relationship/ Joker y poder.
4. Rainbow of Desire workshop
5. Mixing the TO with Systemic Theatre
6. Legislative Theatre 2020: "Problematizing" Politicians, and The Role of Magic.
7. Playspace for the use of Intentional Games/Games of Presence Online
8. Uomo: scopri la tua missione
9. Closing the gap on physicality
10. Partire o Restare?
11. Stepping into and navigating metaphors
12. Stories that re-connect
13. Salute mentale ai tempi del covid - Salud mental en tiempos de covid
14. Feminist TO: concrete actions against sexist violence / Teatro de las Oprimidas acciones concretas frente la violencia machista.
15. Ableism (discrimination of disabled people) introduction and newspaper theatre experiment
16. Theatre of Witness: honoring our stories of suffering and transformation

## Appendix B: Video recordings

1. "No Man is Illegal" opening performance by Hulut Theatre *JEO April 11<sup>th</sup>* – <https://youtu.be/UfScqZbrbi0>
2. Summaries of in-depth conversation and closing *JEO April 11<sup>th</sup>* – <https://youtu.be/f5lOcOPxgKM>
3. Opening ceremony with Sanjoy Ganguly on FB live *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://www.facebook.com/Joker-Exchange-101191084923074/videos/2601193393472771>
4. Forum theatre online presentation by Anne Larcher *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8WijnsTe1r4>
5. Zoom Theatre workshop by Uri Noy Meir *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://youtu.be/nDW4iALy9Bw>
6. Legislative Theatre 2020 workshop by TONYC *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://vimeo.com/414544673>
7. The Year of the Plague performance by Cardboard citizens *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://www.facebook.com/101191084923074/videos/1117262625297701>
8. Closing ceremony and final sharings of the event *JEO May 2<sup>nd</sup>* – <https://youtu.be/roOfVwn7aQA>

## Appendix C: Testimonials from around the world

Only outside the box can we call the vibrant human soul into poetry. The Joker Exchange made me embrace the solar punk within. Sending all the random encounters the energy of the free human spirit to cultivate the gift of life. *Inger-Mette Stenseth (Norway)*

The (JE) performance encouraged us to design a workshop for the teenagers living in slums and shanties around the Andheri area of Mumbai. These children were struggling to find space in their lives, both literally and figuratively due primarily to the COVID pandemic lockdown. *Chetna Mehrotra (India)*

We felt the strength of connection among people from many places around the world who feel the urgent

need to overcome the patriarchy in all its expressions. And starting to connect over this medium has helped us see many possibilities for coordination and action. And this motivates us to carry on. *Barbara Santos and Ma(g)dalena Network, RMI (9)*

Our bodies, our minds, our hearts connect, creating the future we envision, new visions, new methods, new languages that we still don't know. Playing, being human together, creating spaces for this to happen. Following the proposal of Warren during the JE, I organised a "Playground for Online Joking" peer-group, to test our practices in online Joking and to co-create new ones. *Francesco Argenio Benario (Hungry/Greece)*

In times of confusion, this was an event that allowed for honest conversations, broadening connections and mutual support for world-wide theatre practitioners. As a facilitator and company director, it gave me hope in the resilience of the work beyond the crisis. *Emilia Teglia – Odd eyes theatre*

My research is focused on online TO. The exchange helped me in three ways. First of all, it confirmed the relevance of this research in the current society. Secondly, the practitioners who experienced online performance confirmed that my design is in the right direction. Third, it helped me create contacts and enhanced the fact that I should not approach this as a sole person but as a group. *Anne Larcher (France)*

Our presence spans an international network, including the U.S., Greece, Austria, England and India. Over weeks of zoom meetings and email discussions, we've indicated two desires which inform a majority of our proposals and objectives: (1) enhancing cross-cultural understanding among youth and (2) promoting awareness of young people's ability to challenge and change oppressive situations and narratives. *TO/PO with Youth conversation group that began in the Joker Exchange*

My participation in TO exchange helped me to continue to help people for Change, when I saw all of you Online, talking about your experience, trying to learn the method you used for change... I think that I must continue... here in Rutshuru. *Eliezer form the Congo*

It's a huge challenge about how to make it meaningful and applicable to all the different learning styles, in particular for people who find online stuff just does not light them up. *Sent anonymously*

We used some of the practices encountered during JE. We shared our practices with the participants in JE, and we received useful feedback. *Sent anonymously*

It was an opportunity to meet TO practitioners I've never met, reconnect with others I'd known before, and hear about work going on in other parts of the world I'd not known about. *-Sent anonymously*

The meeting sharpened my understanding of the need for the larger group to strengthen and encourage—the need for support and guidance. The meeting also sharpened my understanding that there is a structural conflict in the community. Between the desire to support and strengthen and the desire to act through theatre. Conflict, I believe, can enrich the community.” *Sent anonymously*