

Cultural inclusion through accessible theatre

Escola de Gente is a theatre project that works on the full inclusion of persons with disabilities not only by enabling them to visit and enjoy theatre, but also by actively participating in creating an inclusive culture by publishing all kind of accessible material and advocating for an inclusive education system.

«Culture without accessibility is a sad reality; persons with disabilities, including children, lack not only access to information, but also to inspiration.» (Claudia WERNECK)

Escola de Gente

Organisation:	Escola de Gente
Country/region of origin:	Brazil
Beneficiaries targeted:	Persons with disabilities
Approach/model/solution:	Inclusive theatre plays and workshops provide access to culture and inspiration

FACTS & FIGURES

- 21 awards received. In 2011 won the National Human Rights Award from the Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic, in the category 'Rights of Persons with Disabilities'
- 15 accessible books published
- Implemented in 16 countries around the world
- Since 2003 more than 60,000 persons with and without disabilities have attended the performances and more than 400,000 persons were reached in total

PROBLEMS TARGETED

Visiting and enjoying theatre plays is not an easy activity for persons with disabilities. Actively participating in creative cultural activities and theatre is even more difficult for children and young adults with disabilities.

PROJECT

Escola de Gente enables actors and audience members with and without disabilities to participate in and enjoy theatre. It publishes accessible materials, conducts research, organises communication workshops for youths and advocates for an inclusive education system. The stories told on stage address themes like discrimination and inclusion. Descriptive subtitling, sign language interpreters, audio description, programs in Braille and multimedia materials play an essential part.

CURRENT SITUATION & OUTLOOK

Early in 2013, both the Ministry of Culture and the National Congress of Brazil described the initiative as a guiding light in the field of accessibility and included it in their public policy plan. It then became a national campaign for the democratisation of culture through accessibility, with its own national day celebrated on September 19 each year. The campaign is also endorsed by Brazil's major TV network, TV Globo. Furthermore the project's website was one of the five finalists for the National Web Accessibility Award [Todos@web] hosted by W3C Brazil (categories: Institutions, Entertainment, Culture, Education, Information, Blogs).



Sign language interpreter and descriptive subtitles at a performance of 'A Different Friend?' (João Miranda / Escola de Gente)

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