

*" Circus magic word and transgressor of the reality that brings us over to the smile, to the fantasy, to the dream, to the miracle, to the flight ... Space and time where the impossible thing becomes visible moving away from the monotony, the ruled time, the logic, the force of the gravity, the ordinariness ... "* Invernó J., (2003, p. 15)

Having in counts the quantity of feelings that contributes the circus to the society and especially to those that we feel identified with this art, being jugglers, balancers, acrobats, clowns ... already like a hobby, formation or profession; I prepare to report the experience that I could have lived in Kassel (Germany) of Zirkutopia's hand.

As a lover of the circus, I think that I have found my role inside this one, across my formation like Social Educator I try to manage to work with the social intervention across the circus, across the called Social Circus.

For whom still does not know or has not clearly of what is this type of methodology about, I will use to explain it the example of Zirkutopia's experience and everything what I could have learned for three weeks in this real project of Social Circus with more than 20 years of experience and antiquity.

The Social Circus is the result of a union between the social intervention and the circus arts, contemplates the complete development and the civil insertion of people in vulnerable situation. In case of Zirkutopia this began near 20 years ago with the intention of promoting activities for the children with disability in Kassel, offering an alternative space out of the formal education in the educational centres and to offer this activity as active element in their free time. The projects began with a summer camp of approximately 10 days, which continues nowadays with a great success, in the level of the participants and in the final show that is celebrated, being a cultural important and relating element in the city.

With the methodology of the circus arts one gives step to the freedom and to the creativity, demanding simultaneously witness, perseverance and discipline. This type of methodology allows to the participants to express, and from their situation of marginality, to connect with the society that often excludes them. This is something that has being worked from the beginnings of Zirkutopia, that started destine to children with disability but later they offered for children without disability, promoting this way a common space between children who normally do not manage to coincide with their routines and promoting the integration of this collectives that decades ago where totally out of the possibilities in the society.

If there is something that characterizes Zirkutopia's methodology is that the participants are in the centre of a process, characterized for being playful, group, continuous and where participant feels totally involved, enjoying what he or she does and wanting to return to the next session.

Hereby, at the moment of carrying about the shows, the role of the participants, categorized as "disabled persons" changes, and the role of "Artist" appears. An artist capable of express across

the development of the circus skills product of a constant and elaborated work and leaving behind stereotypes and prejudices that the society establishes to such social groups in situation of marginalization, discrimination or inequality in the access to opportunities.

I could have observed and to experiment during these three weeks the conditions and routes that are facilitated to the kids in order to promote and develop their creativity, and that across this one, they are capable of expressing and to share it, transforming this way the reality into the direction that they wish.

I could have meet the different groups and to become intimate with many of the participants, which were wishing that there will coming the " day of the circus " to be able to be going to play, to learn and to share new common moments, which once again shows the efficiency of this type of intervention, since it offers the freedom to the participants and the professionals take charge offering resources and to develop the talents and potentials of these in the artistic, creative and expressive route.

The workers of the association are professionals of the social area who also are immersed in the essence of the circus. I could have felt very identified with they since we share a common formation, Social Educators, Social Workers, Psychologists, ... a interdisciplinary group with common aims and that also love the circus and see in it an attractive and effective tool in the social intervention.

The link with the social services of the city is constant, in fact, during the winter season, they carry out their weekly groups in a Youth Centre focused in the Non formal Education and that offers its facilities in order that different groups, associations and social institutions of the city carry out their activities in the above mentioned centre of free form.

Across public financing on the part of the Departments of Health and Youth of Kassel, as well as another type of private financings and donations, the entity could have continued in foot during all these years increasing to several groups for week in which different youngsters of the city take part, generating for them a great sense of belonging by the years.

During the summer season Zirkutopia mounts its Circus tent and mobilizes its activities there in order that the spirit and the essence of the circus also accompany along the formation and the learning process of the participants and families, like one of them, the summer camp, which is still present from the beginnings of the association as I said before.

Personally, as a professional, I think that one of the most important elements of this institution is their work and projects in a long term. The summer camp is a heap of feelings, work, effort of intensive form for 10 days that characterize the work that they have of weekly form in the workshops all the year round. And this work during the year, in a long term, can create conditions of deep changes and favour the feeling of so important belonging for the development of positive competences in the participants, characteristic and basic prop of an intervention of Social Circus.

Also they carry out a project in which they offer the circus as free practice in an institute placed in Kassel's slum in situation of risk of social exclusion, where the socioeconomic standard of living is under of the considered "basic state", high rates of delinquency and unemployment and a great multicultural context and environment, which influences directly the new generations and in which, an alternative methodology like the Social Circus could catch a big impact and achievement.

This one has been one of my favourite workshops. How the circus offers as a free space in the hour and a half that they have for break, and how boys and girls of different ages are going for a moment to try the different materials (barrel of balances, juggling staffs, ...) and to share and to learn the time that they want. It is very interesting to be able to analyze the process of many pupils of this college, which begin with approximately 5 minutes and finally they are the whole hour and a half taking part and on the next week they return running to learn so attractive abilities.

Zirkutopia offers in its workshops a playful space, of creation, oral communication and social learning. The workers guarantee that the participants enjoy a complete security(physical, psychological, social, emotive), generating in this way a space in which there can be assumed risks of sure form (as rising to a barrel, rolabola...), enjoy across dynamics and games, and generate this way a feeling of belonging.

Definitely the creation of Zirkutopia's was essential for the putting in practice of this project of social circus, managing to be today one of the cultural elements known in the city, for their social contribution and their implication with groups in risk of social exclusion, and for the use of the circus, mixing this way the artistic and the social together. As well as it links with the community, something typical of any intervention of Social Circus, like across the weekly workshops, shows, participations in events, ... a common space is promoted in the community and the empowerment is promoted of this one towards new changes orientated to its interests.

Implied workers, parents who take part in the workshops, children who have found in the circus great sense and self-confidence in their lives, many of them marked by the society for being "incapable of ... ". As well as the children's participation without any disability that they learn with their companions without establishing any type of rejection, creating bows of friendship and separating the disability, the socioeconomic, cultural situation and enjoying the of the circus arts in a healthy and respect way.

This experience has demonstrated me that with effort everything is possible, and the capacity of self-improvement from the youngest participant up to the director of Zirkutopia turns around common aims, and that thanks to these three weeks I come back with more desires of being able to promote and take to any place the Circus as element of social intervention.

And how it is said at the end of the sessions in Zirkutopia: *Und Tschüss!!*