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FRANÇAIS

Cette page présente la traduction de l'article publié dans la version italienne de la revue, réalisé dans le cadre du projet européen Now You See Me. Les traductions sont proposées afin de faciliter la circulation des idées, le partage d'expériences et le dialogue entre les associations partenaires.

ENGLISH (UK)

This page provides translations of the article originally published in the Italian version of the journal, produced within the framework of the European project Now You See Me. The translations aim to support the circulation of ideas, the sharing of experiences and dialogue between partner organisations.

ITALIANO

Questa pagina presenta le traduzioni dell'articolo pubblicato nella versione italiana della rivista, realizzato nell'ambito del progetto europeo Now You See Me. Le traduzioni sono proposte per facilitare la circolazione delle idee, la condivisione delle esperienze e il dialogo tra le associazioni partner.

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One of the most challenging things, after many years of work, is to rediscover each day the enthusiasm and the capacity for wonder. In this respect, hosting the Now You See Me project has been an extraordinary experience for our organization.

We witnessed young people transform through art, discover new passions, and create meaningful connections. Once again, we saw how theater, music and creative handcraft activities can break down linguistic and cultural barriers, encouraging genuine intercultural dialogue.

We firmly believe that youth mobility and non-formal education are essential tools for both personal and collective development. This project has strengthened our mission: to create spaces of inclusion, learning and creativity.

Our commitment continues so that the energy and ideas born during these days can generate new opportunities for the local community and for all the young people involved. Thank you to everyone who made this experience possible. We are ready for the challenges ahead!

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The Italian stage marks the beginning of the Now You See Me journey. It starts in Altamura, a small yet vibrant city in southern Italy, setting off on a path to explore methods and approaches that view art as a tool for education and personal discovery.

In October 2024, during their preparatory meeting in the French countryside, the three organizations decided to share some of their main activities in order to present the way they work with youth communities. To select these activities, each organization reflected on its daily practice and on what most characterizes its work, highlighting three main areas: music, theater, and creative handcraft activities.

Link, Poil de Carotte, and Crooked House then worked together to select the most meaningful actions to share. Link chose to focus on musical improvisation and a collective songwriting activity; Poil des Carotte on the creation of clay masks; Crooked House on the techniques of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

However, the aim of the project was not only to exchange successful practices. It also pursued two additional objectives: understanding how to make these activities as inclusive as possible, so that they can be accessible to participants of all profiles, and developing new ideas and experimental workshops to present to the youth community of Altamura during the project's final event.

Three days of exchanges, challenges, and ideas: this is the first stage of Now You See Me.

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The Link Association has been active in the Altamura area since 2003, carrying out significant work in the fields of non-formal education and European mobility. For 21 years, Link has implemented youth exchange and volunteering projects within its territory, while also offering many young people from the local community opportunities for mobility abroad.

Over these 21 years, Link has not only developed extensive expertise in non-formal education techniques and methodologies, but has also built a strong relationship with young people in the area. They are involved not only in mobility projects, but also in various opportunities for participation at the local level.

Today, Link works with young people of different ages and backgrounds, with particular attention given to vulnerable profiles facing fewer social, economic or family opportunities.

The activities offered range from music and theater to craft workshops. Just as the tools used vary, the themes addressed also change according to the participants involved. Mental health, environmental sustainability, social inclusion and many other topics have been explored in recent projects, with the aim of developing educational programs that remain closely aligned with the needs of youth communities.

Another important role of Link is to support young people in developing their own projects. From podcasting to artistic and musical initiatives, Link assists adolescents who wish to implement a social project within their community, helping them find the tools needed to turn their ideas into reality.

Link therefore pursues a clear objective: empowering young people within the local community by helping them broaden their horizons and develop their own initiatives within their territory.

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Joy, hi! I'm Marco, a youth worker and the coordinator of this project for the Link association. Before that, however, I am a musician with a deep passion for art in all its forms. For some time now, I have been combining my love of music with my work in the field of non-formal education, an environment in which I have happily been involved for more than two years.

For this reason, I am really looking forward to sharing some of the experiments we have been working on recently during the first stage of Now You See Me, together with the wonderful team we are about to welcome. We are excited and cannot wait to get started.

Hi, I'm Nicola, and I come from Altamura. I am 23 years old, and, since I was eight, I have always had a camera in my hands. My passion — and my profession — is photography and, sometimes, videomaking.

I am always inspired by new people and new experiences. Photography allows me to express emotions that I sometimes struggle to put into words, and every shot feels like capturing a fragment of life that might otherwise fade away.

Meeting others who share my passion fills me with a deep sense of connection and curiosity.

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Hello everyone :) I'm Chiara, a member of the Link Team. I was born 23 years ago in Altamura, in southern Italy, with an endless passion for creative arts in all their forms. Creativity has always been my way of exploring the world and expressing myself. I am very curious and excited to immerse myself in this project, ready to learn, share, and grow together with all the participants!

Hello! I'm Roxane, I'm 22 years old and I am here in Italy as a volunteer for this project. I have a strong passion for manual crafts in all their forms and I love experimenting with new techniques. This passion led me to create a creative workshop within the association, where I can not only teach but also learn from the incredible people I meet along the way. I am truly excited to share creativity, exchange ideas and grow through this unique experience!

Hi, I'm Emanuele! I may look younger than I actually am, but my passion for theatre keeps me young and full of energy. I am part of the Link Team and I am here as a performer and trainer. I have been living in Altamura for five months now, and it already feels like home. I am thrilled to be part of this journey, sharing stories and creativity with such an inspiring community!

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It is therefore from more than twenty years of experience that all the resources made available by Link to the Now You See Me project originate. However, projects are not built on experience alone. Link is also fortunate to benefit from a special space: the "Agorateca", a community library located on the outskirts of the city of Altamura (Bari) and entrusted to Link's management since 2019.

This is where the association carries out a large part of its activities, welcoming both children and adults to concerts, workshops, performances, public readings, and many other cultural and educational initiatives.

From this emerges a second key resource for the association: the multidisciplinary nature of its skills and expertise. Today, Link is made up of twelve staff members, each specializing in a different field — from music and theater to reading and craft activities.

This allows the organization to open itself to many different paths, welcome numerous collaborations, and offer the community a rich and diverse range of opportunities.

Such a wealth of resources would mean little without a defining element of the association's identity: its innovative approach, combining experimentation with accessibility. The experience gained through managing international projects has enriched the organization's cultural background, encouraging intercultural dialogue and collaboration with European partners.

Furthermore, the ability to adapt to the needs of young people and to provide them with practical tools to express themselves and develop their potential represents one of Link's most valuable strengths.

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Artistic Resources

In recent years, Link has increasingly deepened the relationship between art and non-formal education, integrating it more and more significantly into its projects. Thanks to its wide range of skills and expertise, the association frequently organizes workshops in theater, music and crafts, using these artistic forms of expression as tools for community development and for strengthening personal and social skills.

This is made possible by the people who are part of the association and enrich it with ideas and new practices. Emanuele, one of the participants in the project, is a theater trainer who has been engaged for years in experimenting with techniques such as physical theater, immersive theater, social theater, and site-specific performances within the field of youth and youth worker education.

Since 1997, he has worked as a director, performer, trainer and consultant.

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This long and well-established experience enables Link to develop a wide range of international and local projects in which theater acts as a tool to stimulate empathy and communication skills, while also encouraging participants to step out of their comfort zones and gain confidence in expressing themselves.

Activities developed through music follow the same approach. Within Link, these are led by Marco, who is a musician before being a youth worker. Marco's aim is to use music as a social, cooperative, and inclusive practice: an activity that can involve everyone — musicians and non-musicians alike, young people and adults, and individuals from all kinds of backgrounds.

For this reason, supported by continuous training and a strong curiosity to explore new forms of expression, Marco has for several years been organizing workshops such as drum circles using recycled objects or instruments, circle singing, coordinated improvisation, and collective songwriting.

These activities not only foster cohesion and community building, but also help develop active listening, cooperative abilities and communication skills through sound and the shared practice of making music together.

In addition, the association benefits from other artistic skills through the work of Roxane, who specialises in hands-on workshops using clay, wood, and other natural materials. Link also collaborates regularly with external contributors who support the implementation of local and mobility projects.

The association's most valuable resource, however, lies in the dynamism and vibrancy of its local community, which includes illustrators, graphic designers, videomakers, street artists, and many other creative professionals. Link's strong roots within its community and its connections with these local actors allow the organization to renew itself year after year and to offer constantly evolving and attractive opportunities for young people — both locally and beyond.

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Presentation of the Workshops

The first stage of Now You See Me took shape through three workshops: musical improvisation and collective songwriting, clay mask-making, and Theatre of the Oppressed. Each activity was designed to encourage personal expression, collaboration, and inclusion.

The workshops were not only moments of learning, but also spaces for experimentation, sharing and personal growth. The journey culminated in a final event open to the community, where participants presented their creations and reflections, once again turning art into a bridge between different cultures and stories.

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What do you need for these workshops?
Very little, or almost nothing.

For the clay mask-making workshop, you will, of course, need clay, masks, bags, a plastic container, water, plaster, pieces of old fabric, liquid latex and, above all, a willingness to get your hands dirty.

For the musical improvisation workshop, all you need is as many unused objects as you can collect. Whether you are at home, in a cultural center, or in a public square, gather anything around you that is no longer being used: buckets, bottles, pens, spray cans, etc. We will explain shortly what they will be used for.

Finally, for the Theatre of the Oppressed workshop, you will need nothing other than creativity and improvisation.

The only workshop that requires more thorough preparation is the mask-making activity. To carry it out properly, it is necessary to prepare the molds for the masks in the morning or afternoon before the workshop begins, so that the plaster has time to dry and can then be worked on.

To do this, follow these steps:

place the masks on a surface and secure them with the face facing downwards; pour plaster into the masks until they are filled to the edge; then leave them to dry.

Once the plaster has dried, the masks should be cut open at the mouth area. After this step, they will be ready to be used for the creative work.

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The first workshop to be implemented was "One Song in One Hour", presented by Link. Marco opened the session by placing a box filled with unused objects, found in the Agorateca itself, in the centre of the room.

He then asked participants to choose one object and explore all the sounds it was capable of producing. Once these sounds had been identified, Marco guided the participants in a drum circle activity, each using their own “recycled instrument”.

After an initial round of drum circle, participants were divided into small groups and asked to create a rhythm by combining the sounds of all the instruments within their group. After a few minutes, the facilitator returned and asked them to add a word, a vocal pattern, or a sound that would give a melodic element to the rhythm they had created.

Finally, everyone gathered again in the large circle, combining the rhythms and melodies from each group and creating, in less than an hour, a kind of collective song.

Following this workshop, a session dedicated to exploring the methodology of the Theatre of the Oppressed was led by Pauline from Crooked House. Participants, divided into groups, first imagined and then performed scenes depicting situations of oppression.

Each group then presented their scene. During the performance, members of the audience had the opportunity to intervene by replacing one of the actors in order to transform the situation and attempt to end the oppression being represented.

The workshop concluded with a debriefing and reflection session focusing on the themes and experiences that had emerged during the process.

The final workshop was coordinated by Fred from Poil de Carotte. In this activity, Fred guided participants in the free creation of masks with carnival-like shapes and features, using only clay, old fabrics and latex, thus creating a unique space for imagination and free artistic expression.

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In general, the methodological approach of the project was based on the combination of artistic experiences with non-formal education techniques. Musical improvisation and collective songwriting offer a space for active listening, sonic cooperation and free expression; clay mask-making stimulates creativity and reflection on personal identity. The Theater of the Oppressed provides tools to explore social and personal issues through body language and stage interaction.

All activities are grounded in the principle of experiential learning, encouraging interaction between participants of different ages and social backgrounds. The aim is not only to learn new artistic techniques, but also to develop transversal skills such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking.

The project also seeks to create an inclusive environment in which every participant can feel free to express themselves without fear of judgment.

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The Now You See Me workshops were driven by deep motivations and genuine passions. Each activity emerged from the desire to create spaces where young people could freely express themselves, experiment, and discover new forms of communication through art.

Musical improvisation allowed participants to play with sounds, discover unexpected harmonies, and be guided by a shared collective rhythm. The Theatre of the Oppressed provided an opportunity to explore social dynamics, step into the shoes of others, and search for creative solutions to challenging situations. Clay mask-making became a journey into personal identity, a moment of introspection and sharing through hands-on creation.

The atmosphere created within the workshops encouraged sharing and solidarity within the community. Collaboration emerged naturally: each participant felt part of something greater, where individual contributions intertwined with those of others to create a collective work.

Throughout the activities, participants learned to get to know one another, to recognize their own abilities as well as those of others, and to support each other throughout the creative process. The workshops thus became spaces of listening, openness, and mutual growth, where differences turned into richness and diversity into value.

The journey was not without its challenges. Overcoming shyness, fear of judgment, and the feeling of not being good enough were obstacles that each participant had to face. Linguistic, cultural and personal barriers emerged, yet they were transformed into opportunities for learning.

Finding recycled materials for musical instruments, managing the limited time available for mask-making and ensuring that everyone was actively involved in the theatrical performances were challenges that required adaptability and creativity.

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However, every difficulty became an opportunity to find new solutions, strengthening the sense of belonging and trust within the group.

Implementing these workshops in the daily work of a youth worker means starting from the resources available, creating inclusive and stimulating learning environments, and adapting methodologies to the needs of the participants. It requires observation, active listening, and the ability to guide the group with empathy.

Even in contexts with limited resources, it is possible to build meaningful experiences by using recycled materials, encouraging freedom of expression, and experimenting with new techniques.

The essence of these workshops did not lie in the materials used, but in the energy that emerged when people engaged, shared ideas, and built something unique together. In this way, art becomes a bridge between different experiences, a tool for growth, and a means of giving voice to stories that deserve to be told.

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Three intense days of activities culminated in a final event open to the entire local community, during which participants facilitated a variety of workshops created that same morning, based on the skills they had developed throughout the project.

In the late afternoon of the final day, the Agorateca filled with people, colors, and sounds. People of all ages and backgrounds took part in the activities offered, which were divided into three categories: music, theater, and manual crafts.

Each participant was able to choose two workshops to attend, including a workshop on drawing and small clay sculptures, a session exploring the expression of emotions through theater, and an activity involving body percussion and cooperative singing.

Everything came together in a final acoustic jam session, allowing the energy and excitement of the three days to merge into a single warm and collective moment.

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The Now You See Me project attracted media attention, with two articles published on Agorateca and Link Youth. This visibility demonstrates the importance and impact of the project, which stands out for the active involvement of young videomakers and local communities.

When the media report on an initiative like this, it is not simply a matter of news coverage, but a recognition of the project's social and cultural value. Publication on platforms dedicated to youth and active participation strengthens the dissemination of the message and encourages new opportunities for dialogue and collaboration.

These articles inform the public and lend credibility to the work carried out, making the project visible to a wider audience and reinforcing its impact. In this case, the press becomes an essential ally in promoting innovative and inclusive experiences.

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Marco Lorusso:

This project reminded me how much I love combining my passion for music with youth education, experimenting with new learning methodologies through sound and collective creativity. It was exciting to see, once again, how deeply people can connect through music, without the need for words.

Nicola Lomurno:

Photography allows me to capture emotions and stories. Even though I did not have a camera with me this time, I am certain that every moment of this project will remain etched in my memory. It will be difficult to return to normal life after such an intense immersion in three very different artistic worlds.

Emanuele Nargi:

Theatre, like this work, is a constantly evolving process. Experience means little without the ability to innovate and absorb the energy of young facilitators and educators. This project gave me the opportunity to continue “stealing” from others: observing the approaches they use and seeing how they can enrich established methodologies with new ideas and inspiration.

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Chiara Lorusso:

Creativity is my language, and this project gave me the opportunity to explore it in a new and collective way. Working with different people and witnessing their growth through art has been an enriching journey, full of inspiration and exchange.

Roxane Chirac:

I love crafts, and being able to share this passion with others was something truly special. Creating with our hands, experimenting with new techniques and seeing participants express themselves through clay masks made this experience unique and deeply meaningful.

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Brief Analysis

Hosting the Now You See Me project was a stimulating and enriching experience for Link. The enthusiasm of the participants transformed the spaces of the Agorateca into a vibrant laboratory of creativity and learning.

Music, theater, and crafts made it possible to involve young people with different backgrounds, fostering an environment of exchange and mutual growth.

The most significant impact was seeing participants discover new forms of expression and collaboration, building strong connections through art.

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One of the most positive aspects

One of the most positive aspects was the way the project created connections beyond the association, revealing new opportunities for collaboration with local institutions and other youth organizations.

The final event demonstrated that art can truly become a bridge for integration, engaging a diverse audience and leaving a tangible mark on the community.

Creating an even stronger impact

Overall, the results have been extremely positive: we have witnessed the transformative power of non-formal education and art in creating opportunities for growth and dialogue.

This experience has taught us a great deal and has encouraged us to imagine new ways of interacting with the local territory, with the aim of making projects like this even more inclusive and sustainable over time.

We will continue working so that young people can find in art a universal language capable of breaking down barriers and opening new possibilities for expression.

Our commitment for the future will be to broaden participation, experiment with new approaches and create an even stronger impact within the local community.

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Mobility has allowed Link and the environment in which it operates to benefit from a variety of new perspectives. Interaction with young people from different backgrounds made the activities more dynamic and adaptable, encouraging innovation in learning methodologies. Furthermore, the inclusion of new cultures strengthened the sense of community, fostering intercultural dialogue between participants and the local community.

From the perspective of skills development, the shared experiences enhanced intercultural management abilities, improving communication and the planning of inclusive activities. Engaging with educational practices from other countries helped refine pedagogical tools and broaden the association's educational approach. Finally, the capacity to solve problems in multicultural contexts increased, making the organization better prepared to face future challenges in the youth sector.

This process also encouraged the creation of new projects and synergies, expanding the network of international collaborations and generating opportunities for continuous training for youth workers and volunteers.

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Now You See Me: the experience of the Italian participants

After the stages in Italy and Ireland, the final phase of Now You See Me took place in France, hosted by Move in collaboration with Crooked House Company (Ireland).

Throughout the project, the methodologies developed during previous meetings between youth workers were put into practice.

Six teenagers, one young leader and a great deal of enthusiasm set off from 23 June to 2 July with a single destination: France.

Thanks to the Erasmus+ programme, these seven young Italians crossed the geographical and mental boundaries of their everyday lives to experience a transformative journey between Roybon and Grenoble.

Far from home and their usual comforts, they embarked on a path of personal growth, cultural discovery, and social engagement. For many of them it was a series of firsts: their first time abroad, their first flight, their first night in an unfamiliar bed, their first shared meal with peers from other countries — and above all their first real challenge outside their comfort zone.

The project unfolded between the natural landscapes of Roybon and the vibrant cultural atmosphere of Grenoble, two settings that framed a range of remarkable experiences.

Participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in the world of street theater by actively taking part in a colorful artistic parade under the experienced guidance of a choreographer and a theatre director, in the heart of Grenoble, alongside other performers of the 37th Créac Theatre Festival.

In costume, surrounded by masks, music and performances, they marched with professional European artists, discovering the expressive power of art — and especially of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

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But that was not all!

Throughout the parade, participants were accompanied by the sounds and movements of batucada, a form of popular music with a strong social impact.

They also had the opportunity to meet BatukaVI, a batucada group made up of young people from the neighborhoods of Villeneuve and Échirolles in Grenoble, involving around 60 to 70 children and teenagers aged between 4 and 18.

The main aim of the parade was to highlight working-class neighborhoods, challenge social stigma and encourage both personal and collective responsibility.

One of the most moving and meaningful moments of the project was the workshop organized with a group of children from challenging backgrounds in the neighborhoods of Grenoble. The Italian and Irish participants became “tutors” in artistic workshops for children from a less advantaged area.

This symbolic activity allowed the younger children to feel heard and capable of facing their own challenges, while the older participants were able to test themselves and communicate through new forms of expression beyond language barriers.

With dedication, creativity and a great deal of empathy, the group successfully engaged the local children despite the language gap.

At the end of the project, the young participants were given the opportunity to democratically choose and vote on how to conclude their adventure. Once back in Italy, with new perspectives and more open hearts, the seven protagonists of this story bring home far more than a few souvenirs.

They experienced firsthand a solidary and creative Europe, learning to live with differences and to recognise them as a true source of richness.