

Theatre as a Tool for Healing and Resilience

How theatrical engagement aids refugees in coping with displacement and change.

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Overview:

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2. Theatre and Playback theatre
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Introduction

The Syrian refugee crisis, triggered by the devastating war that began in 2011, has become one of the most severe humanitarian crises of the 21st century.

Millions of Syrians have been forced to flee their homes, seeking safety and refuge in neighboring countries and beyond. This ongoing crisis has had a profound impact on the region and the world, raising complex challenges related to displacement, human rights, and international cooperation.

One of the affected countries in the region was Lebanon, a small country already struggling with its own economic and political problems.

Lebanon was definitely not ready to host 1,5 million refugees, which made it even more difficult for them to adapt and survive in the host country.



Why theatre?

Theatre can be a powerful tool for displaced refugees to process trauma, build community, and develop resilience. By providing a safe space for expression, exploration, and storytelling.

During the theatrical exercises, a person can act out situations that they have lived in the past or are living now, embodied or/and through spoken words.

This process can help them to:

- **Understand themselves better**
- **Connect with others**
- **Adapt to their environment**

Playback theatre




Playback theatre is a community-building interactive form of improvisational theatre in which a personal story told by a group member is transformed into a theatre piece on the spot by other group members.


Playback theatre combines artistic expression and social connection based on story-telling and empathic listening, thus bringing together modes proven to promote healing.

Actors sitting on boxes or chairs




Cloth tree 

Teller's chair 

Conductor's chair 



Acting area

 Musician

.....AUDIENCE.....

Playback theatre works on:

Connecting People

- Shared Experience
- Diverse Perspectives

Creating Safe Spaces

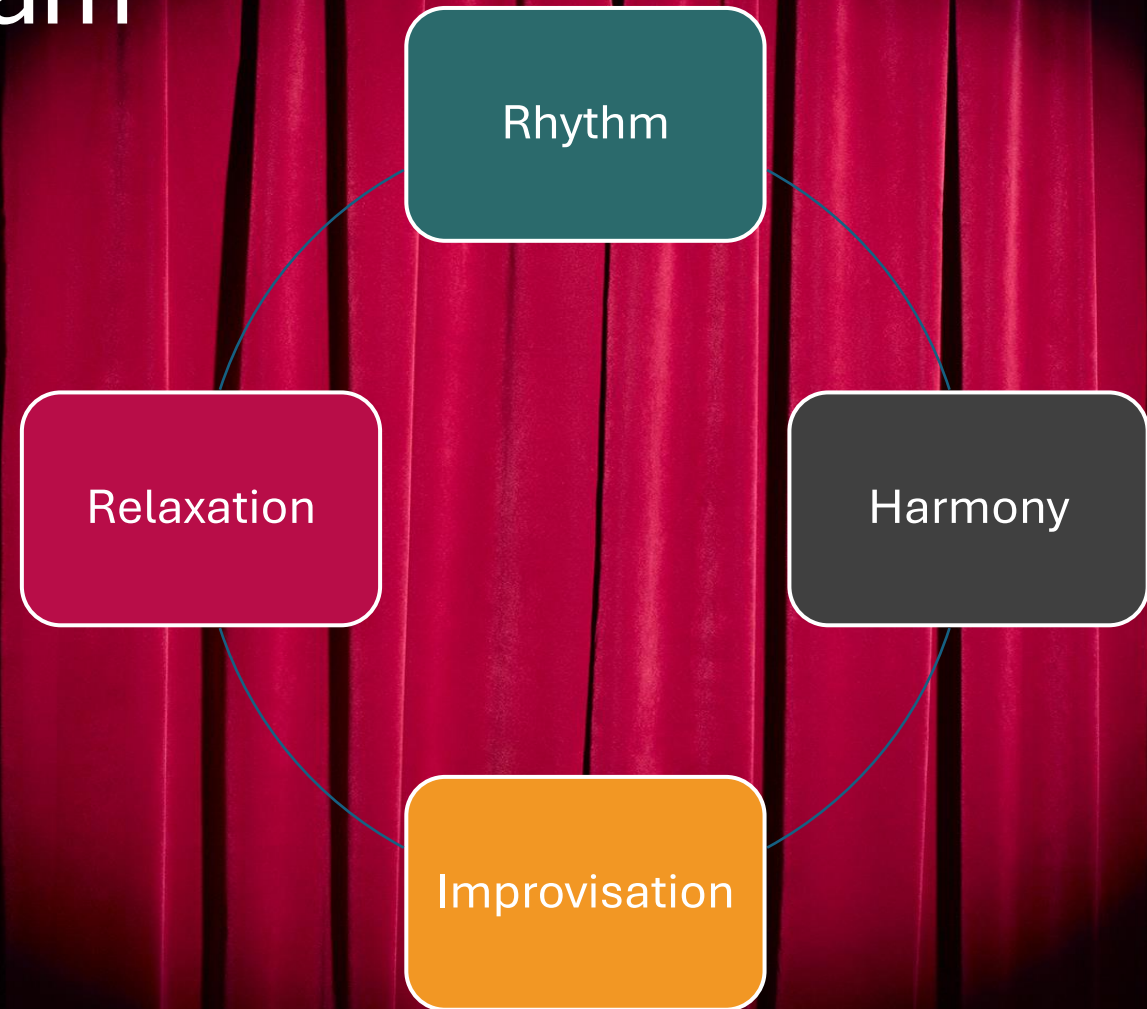
- Listening with Compassion
- Transforming Stories

Bridging Differences

- Breaking Barriers
- Inclusivity

Psychosocial support through drama and theatre techniques program

- Psychosocial support through visual arts leverages the concept of sublimation, a defense mechanism that helps individuals better cope with psychological challenges. This approach involves creating an external medium for expressing internal processes using artistic techniques. Each session focuses on four key foundations to effectively establish this medium.



- This program was build of 12 sessions, each session consists of four parts and includes several different activities:

1. Warm up and group building (including games and improvisation exercises)
2. Relaxation
3. Main activity (using playback theatre)
4. Closing ritual



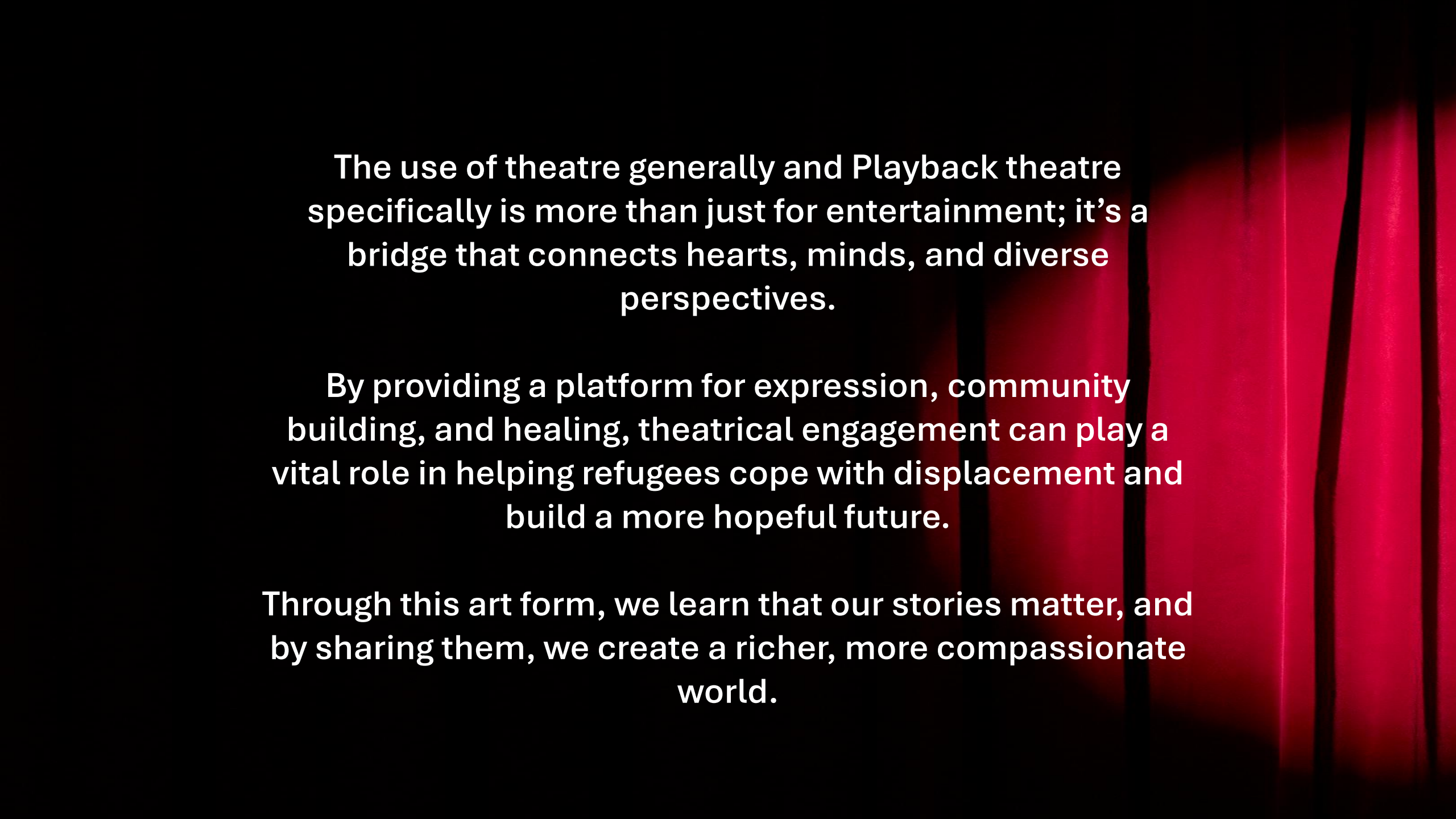
Work axes:

The relationship to oneself:	1. Self-expression 2. Strengthen of self-confidence 3. Image of one's own "being/I" 4. Personal space
The relationship with the other:	5. Harmony 6. Accepting the other 7. Group Building 8. Loss and mourning (by persons)
The relationship with the environment:	9. Loss and longing (for places) 10. Adaptation and acclimatization 11. Social cohesion 12. Productivity in society







The background of the slide features a close-up of red, vertically pleated curtains. The lighting is dramatic, with the center of the curtains being brighter and the edges fading into a dark shadow, creating a sense of depth and texture.

The use of theatre generally and Playback theatre specifically is more than just for entertainment; it's a bridge that connects hearts, minds, and diverse perspectives.

By providing a platform for expression, community building, and healing, theatrical engagement can play a vital role in helping refugees cope with displacement and build a more hopeful future.

Through this art form, we learn that our stories matter, and by sharing them, we create a richer, more compassionate world.

A background of red curtains with vertical folds, set against a black background. The curtains are illuminated from the center, creating a gradient of light and shadow.

Thank you for being here