

European Challenges and Opportunities

(E)Portfolio by Henrique Apolinário

Reporting on the attendance to  
Xponorth – Scotlands Leading Creative Industries Festival, in  
Inverness, 7 & 8 June 2017



## Personal Identification

My name is Henrique Apolinário, I'm a Portuguese creator in the areas of theatre and music, I also teach and develop research in these areas. I try to develop a network of people in my city of Porto with whom I can work with in the order to convey an experimental art and life experience to ourselves and the general audiences. Lately I have been working on the matters of dream, animism, and altered states of mind.

## Introduction

After a selection process, in which several young people from around S. João da Madeira submitted their eclectic ideas and projects, six were selected to participate in Xponorth, attending freely to conference panels, concerts, interactive presentations, films. Beyond the specter of the event, we also had the opportunity to dialogue with people deeply involved in the areas of creative industries, cultural projects and other socially relevant practices.



## My Project

Called “Place of the Now”, while I’m still not sure about the title, it at least reflects what theatre and arts are about, being here and now, aware of ourselves and the ones around us.

This project is focused on the creation of a performance/theatre show, through practices and experiences with teenagers of S. João da Madeira in the areas of theatre, writing, and *devising* (collaborative theatre creating method). The inspiration for the work will be selected works of João da Silva Correia, a writer that lived and wrote about S. João, its people, and the surrounding areas of northern Portugal. It will be expected to establish real connections with places, social issues and solutions, all through the process of creating a *site specific* theatre show. The purpose of this project is to enhance awareness of young people to their surroundings, to make more powerful connections with audiences, and to learn how to act creatively on ones environment.



## Mobility

### Itinerary:

Arriving in Dundee airport, the group was greeted by Mark and Peter, we took a long journey through the beautiful landscapes of the Highlands and had the first encounter with our hosts, immediately sharing their exciting views on creation, teaching, the event, and a lot of humorous tales and facts about Scotland. Arriving in Inverness we had a valorous welcome and were very well accommodated. The following days were dedicated to visiting lake Ness, exploring Inverness, attending Xponorth and visiting Edinburgh.



## Expectations

I went to Xponorth with the expectations to find relevant knowledge and know how on matters of music teaching, cultural management, and other social/cultural experiences. I also had the urge to get to know the creative atmosphere of the country. As always, it gets more interesting when you least expect, what most impacted me was getting to know a tiny bit of the creative live of the Highlands and Islands, this was possible thanks to the various showcasings of Xponorth and to projects such as the Highland Youth Arts Hub, presented to us by Stacey Toner and of course speaking with people in general. I actually didn't get a lot of useful knowledge out of the conference panels. I think this has to do with the specified audience that was involved, this is, creative people of Scotland.

It feels that the whole event is based on the how to reach out to your audience and buyers, and not on creating itself, that would be interesting for me If I was creating, publishing, selling, teaching, in Scotland, but since I'm not, only few pragmatic connections to my life were made, still, they were important ones: thinking locally as in the model of HYAH, contacting people I met in order to teach and perform in Scotland, improving my online portfolios, getting acknowledged by the Portuguese Authors Society as well the Artist Rights Management in Portugal.



### Plus, Minus, Interesting

Some of the plus minus and interesting things were already exposed in the upper article, still I would like to add some more.

In the Plus section we have the terrific hospitality and patience of our hosts, who delivered us a great experience of their country, and enriched our knowledge on any realm that was discussed. The music and film showcasing were a great surprise; I didn't expect such variety and abundance of quality in just two days' time. The opportunity to connect with some people will definitely make it easier for me to perform and/or teach in Scotland. Witnessing that the young people of H&I are getting to perform, learn, engage with artists and communities was also very inspiring.

In the minus area I would include the conference panels, as I have already explained, they just weren't directed at my personal experience and desires in the creative world. Getting to know people and talk with them in order to get something out of it is a weird feeling, sometimes I felt people were encouraged to talk with others like in a dating service, maybe it's my personal feeling, but sometimes this felt unnatural.



Interesting, the way bars connect with the event was very powerful, there are similar events in Porto, but they are much more commercial, this is a great way to make a music festival.

## Evaluation

The whole experience was relevant to my personal endeavors, In terms of learning experience I don't feel it was the right event for me, but the most important thing is that I felt the possibility to further connect with people in Scotland and Portugal.





## Final Considerations

I find it amazing that one sometimes needs to leave his country in order to connect with its country. The most promising result of this experience is that I was able to establish a dialogue with the city hall of S. João da Madeira in order to initiate a performing arts program directed to a group of young people, and a group of mentally disturbed people in the city, and for that I am deeply grateful to this program.

Henrique Apolinário, 18/7/2017