

LIGHTS AND SOUND WORKSHOP TRAINING BERLIN - GERMANY

WORKSHOP HOST; UFA-FABRIK, BERLIN

January 5th to February 16th, 2015

PARTICIPANTS;
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This is a six weeks short narrative report about the lights and sound workshop training hosted by Ufa-Fabrik in Berlin – Germany. The training was initiated by the collaborations of Ufa-Fabrik in Germany and the Baba Watoto Centre from Tanzania. Goethe-Institut Tanzania and Parapanda Theatre Lab Trust are the two partner organization that supports the efforts of the Ufa-Fabrik and Baba Watoto Centre in helping Children and Youth living in vulnerable environments under the project Fit for Life.

INTRODUCTION

The Internationales Kultur Centrum is what representing Ufa-Fabrik. This is an Institution or a Non-Governmental Organization that works with the Arts and Cultural Affairs, being headquartered in Berlin in Germany.

In pursuit of building potential to the children and youth center called Baba Watoto Centre located around Mburahati kwa Jongo Suburb, Kinondoni District in Dar es Salaam in the areas of the arts, sports and culture. This is why Ufa-Fabrik in collaboration with Parapanda Theatre Lab Trust together with the Germany's Cultural Center in Tanzania i.e. Goethe-Institut Tanzania came-up with a three year's project that goes with a title of action "Fit for Life (FFL)". The project is aimed at capacity building to the Centre together with the members of the center.

The Workshop Training on Lights and Sound in Germany for the two participants from Tanzania, was a part of the strategy of capacity building by empowering participants from the Baba Watoto Centre, but also Parapanda Theatre Lab in gaining knowledge in the areas of lights and sound that will help on increasing the quality of the Performing Art events that are staged Baba Watoto and Parapanda Theatre Lab, something which has been always brought great challenges in the industry for a long time. This is the second time for the Parapanda Theatre participant to attend workshops prepared in Germany, but it is the first time to a participant from Baba Watoto Centre.

THE FIRST WEEK

IMPLEMENTATION

This week includes a trip of the participants from Dar es Salaam where they started their journey from Dar es Salaam early in the morning of January 5th, 2015. There was a flights delay unfortunately during that day, there was almost 35 minutes delay of the flight which led the participants to arrive late in the city of Istanbul then they had no option but to wait for almost four hours in order to connect the flight to Germany. We had great reception from our hosts, in-spite of our late arrival but still they have been very patient and managed to return back to the airport twice checking on us. We are very grateful for that.

The Workshop Training officially started on Tuesday January of 6th, 2015. The first thing done in the first day of the training was to the introduction of the participants; one among the participants was well known since this was his second time participating the training, but the other participant was introduced for the first time. Immediately after the introductions, the facilitator introduced the workshop plans and the training program.

After the detailed explanation about the first week's program, the training started. The first week's training took place in a large theater of Theater-Saal. During this week, the most part of the training were;

- The facilitators described the lights and sound systems; how they works and how are they connected.
- The participants were given an assignment to open electric wires to see if all plug and connections are well tightened i.e. LNG. Also the participants were told to open all wires from the dimmer for testing.
- The participants together with the facilitator changed the ways of lights devices just to distinguish them from the sound ways in order to eliminate interferences. The participants also tested the Microphones wires and the DMX using Cable Check and the DMX stage eagle
- Making cleanness of a Mixing Desk, EQ, CD Player, Light Board, Lighting Monitor and some other devices. The participants together with the facilitator, we tested the Multi-core Plug Box.

- The participants gave the identification numbers to the LED lights ready to install/hang them on the stage. We did that under the supervision of the facilitator and also we participated in creating the lighting plan.
- The participants were given an assignment of installing LED Studio Lights and the Profile; as well as repairing them by doing wiring.
- The participants together with the facilitator installed all the lights to the dimmer especially those lights that uses dimmer and also connected the Splitter. Splitter is a communication device which is receiving all the signals of the lights and sends them to the Light Board. It is also helps increase power to the LED lights.

The Workshop Training days have been Monday to Friday at four to ten hours, but there was some changes came in-between depending on the performances schedule.

CHALLENGES

I don't know how to identify this whether a challenge or advice, but it's like this; the first money provided to the participants was provided as the trip preparation allowance. So, am advising that it is better to be explained and recognized as how it is written on the payment vouchers i.e. Per-diem Allowances for several days depending on the amount provided. So, this should be the same even through the words of mouth when given such allowances, we should not be told that we was given the allowances for the trip preparations, this is because not everyone is that much careful with the written documents like that, especially after receiving the money already. And it is much better also for the money to be provided in Euro and not in Tanzanian Shillings.

THE SECOND WEEK

IMPLEMENTATIONS

In the second week studies firstly continued in the Theater-Saal, the facilitator wanted to know what the participants understands about Sound systems, and started by asking them to describe what they know about sound and the procedures as how to connect all the devices they would want to use on stage, and he wanted one of the participants to explain that.

After the participant finished describing what they have been asked by the facilitator, he thereafter explained to them precisely how the sound systems works and how the system is connected for the event. Afterwards, the facilitator together with the participants started training on how the PA system is set for the event practically. They did the following;

1. Connecting the Mixing Desk and the PA EQ; connecting the PA EQ and the Stage Box; connecting the main signal on numbers 47 and 48 from the Stage Box to the Amp.
2. Connecting the Amp to the Speakers, but also the participants learnt the use of "AUX - Send" and the "AUX - return" to the stage monitor and the CD player. Thereafter, the participants started working as follows;
 - a. Connecting four ways of "AUX - Send" of the Monitor 41, 42, 43 and 44. Also connecting the "AUX - Send" from the Mixing Desk to the Monitor's EQ via Multi-core Cables or Snake Cables to a Stage Box.
 - b. Connecting four ways of AUX from the Stage Box to the four EQ's of the Monitor, since the Monitor have got its own Amps, therefore the signal from the EQ's of the Monitor goes directly to a Monitor. The participants also learned the functions of EQ in the frequency balance when increased or decreased.
 - c. The participants under the supervision of the facilitator learned how to use the Digital Light Board practically for lights that are using Light Dimmer which are Conventional and Organic Lights as well as the light that are not using dimmer which are Wash Lights, LED and Sport Lights. How to control and run the lights that are not using dimmer on the light board such as LED. First starts with; 1. Fixture 2. Choosing the lighting devices you want 3. Couolors; you choose the colors you want to use 4. Position 5. Intensity. If you want to mix colors on LED lighting devices, you must consider the number 1, 2, 3 and 4 above.
 - d. The participants also learned how to balance the Frequency in EQ using a special software called Smart V.6

In this second week the class moved into another theater called Variete-Salon, where they do the following;

1. Uninstalling the lights devices that hanged in-front of the stage lights which was remained and that was Fresnel Profile and LED, then we cleaned them and open their electrical plug wires to see if all the terminal are good and working i.e. LNG.
2. Cleaning all the three dimmers, testing the Multi-core Cable. We did all these together with the workshop facilitator.
3. Connecting the Multi-core with the incoming other cables to the dimmer and the Control Box, as well as making cleanliness to the working area. Machine or a device used for testing the lighting devices, Multi-core Cables and Multi-core Plug Box as well as some other devices is called Unitest 0702/Multi-tester Plus.

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

This Workshop training was practical oriented for a large part of it, and this helps the participants a lot to understand every part of the training. But also allowing questions from participants to the facilitators helps a lot including the fluent questions from the facilitators to the participants. This created a kind of Q & A sessions at several times, and all different questions were answered clearly.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

By practicing the different assignments given by the facilitators and the appreciations comes from the facilitators proving that they have made it appropriately, that's enough for the participant to take it as an achievement in their career. But also getting to know something in detail what you did not know or you might have probably knew it in a wrong way, that is also progress in achievements.

CHALLENGES OF THE TRAINING

Almost in everything we do, the challenges cannot miss since they are part of our lives. The biggest challenge here I can talk about is coming from the language. We Tanzanians do speak Swahili, while the Germans speak German and the training language is English, so, this has got a lot of challenges.

THE THIRD WEEK

IMPLEMENTATIONS

In this third week the training continued in the central theater called VARIETE SALON where participants together with their facilitators were able to do the following;

- The participants did the assignment of cleaning the sound and light equipments, Mixing desk, EQ, Light Board, Light Board Monitor and other devices.
- The facilitator gave participants a small test to connect and integrate the LED Light, Studio Par, Dimmer, Splitter, Multi-core Cables, Multi-core Plug Box as well as Digital Light Board. The facilitator left the whole plans to the participants themselves to decide as to how many lighting devices they would like to install in their own stage setting, and the participants discussed and decided to install six lighting devices on the stage; Three LED and three Studio Par lights.
- The participants did this exercise seriously, even though there were some little mistakes at the areas of connecting DMX Wires on the Light Board; instead of connecting DMX-In the participants connected the DMX-Out. But after the facilitator instructed them what to do, the whole exercise was therefore completed successfully with all the lights started working including LED lights which does not use Dimmer following the same order of Fixture. You select the lighting device and then you choose the color you want thereafter positioning the devices and finally find intensity.
- The facilitator instructed participants how to run the LED and Wash lights in the normal way of using the Fader, whereby the LED lights requires seven ways/channels while the Wash lights requires sixteen ways/channels to run all the programs contained in the lights. The facilitator briefly explained the Sport lights although it was not intended to be taught that day but he said; Sports lights requires nearly 33 ways/channels to the light board for just one lighting device which is quiet different to the other lights.
- The participants installed lighting devices to Variete - Salon Theatre; the lights installed were Frasnell Profile and LED lights and makes wiring to all these devices. The facilitator tried all the devices to see if all of them have been technically connected and installed correctly.

- The participants together with the facilitator made the lighting plan, also giving numbers to LED lights ready for installing them on the stage. The participants helped the facilitator to install the lighting devices and lifting them on the stage with a support of a string.
- The participants and the facilitator did an exercise of taking down two Wash light, the participants cleaned them all, then the facilitator tested them if they are working, then together they returned them and fixed where they were on the stage. Soon after the lighting training completed, the session moved to the Sound training immediately at the same place which was Variete-Salon.
- The participants led by the facilitator was able to set the PA System with all of its contents which are; Mixing Desk, EQ of the PA, Stage Box, Amp and Speakers. We also connected the side of the Monitor AUX-Send 1, 2, 3 and 4 to the Stage Box 41, 42, 43 and 44 and then to the EQ of the Monitor.

After this task, the facilitator jumped to another task which was to test some frequency using special software called Smart V.6 while the participants continued learning. The facilitator explained how you can use sound in Theatre Drama.

After that lesson, the class moved into a small theater called WOLFGANG NEUSS SALON, where the participants performed the following tasks;

- The participants taken down a total number of twenty one lights and leave only four lights on the stage and clean all of them before they handled them to the facilitator for a testing. After that exercise of testing all the lights and confirm that they were all working, the participants started installing them back on the stage where they fixed a total number of seventeen lights, leaving down only four lights in-spite the fact that they were all already tested and were all working.

TEACHING METHODOLOGIES

As usual, the training was more practical with some few Q & A (Questions and Answers) sessions.

ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PARTICIPANTS

This was the only theater hall that the participants were able to uninstall all the lighting devices by themselves and hang them back on the stage following the designed plan.

CHALLENGES

this was also the place whereby the challenges of the language began to go down since the working language began to be much understood.

THE FOURTH WEEK

IMPLEMENTATIONS

In this fourth week, the main duties were focused on the preparation of two different performances which was staged for four days. Therefore, one of the things that the workshop participants participated to make this week includes the preparation of those performances. Foremost in this week the participants in collaboration with the facilitators did the following things;

- The participants together with the facilitator did the exercise of focusing the lights at the Variete Salon Theatre. And here, the participants managed to learn how to operate and run the lights which are using Dimmer, and that is Conventional Lights together with the lights which are not using Dimmer, that's LED. Also they work together with the facilitator to test the Multi-core Cables in a small theatre called Wolfgang Neuss Salon.
- Adjusting and fixing the Theater Curtains at the Theatre Saal, setting the stage with some steps for the elder's performance called Altes-Eisen, taking back some devices to the basement, especially those devices which were not going to be used in the performances.
- Lifting and installing four lights that had remained at Wilfgang Neuss Salon. Make wiring to all the 24 lighting devices of Wolfgang Neuss Salon. The facilitator together with the participants both collaborated to set all the two dimmer of Wolfgang Neuss Salon, thereafter, the facilitator tested all the lights to see if connected properly. After the facilitator ensured that all the system was properly installed, the class was therefore moved to Theater Saal.

- The day when the Participants helped to install the decorative lights at the performance of the elders, fortunately that was also was the last day of rehearsals for the show, therefore they did a Dressing rehearsal, and the participants got an opportunity to learn the use of lighting and sound in the stage performance.
- These performances for the aged people were staged for two days i.e. Thursday and Friday. In the Saturday afternoon, the participants together with the facilitator cooperated in the preparations for another music performance (Concert) which was done by a famous musician here in Germany named Sebastian Krumbiegel who was doing a sound check during that noon hours.
- During the evening, the participants participated in the performance which began at 8:00pm and one of the participants stood on the lights following the instructions from the facilitator. The performance ended at 11:00pm and the following day was a continuation of the third performance of the elders which was Sunday, and the participants continued to learn how lighting and sound systems works in the stage performances.

CHALLENGES

In this week the participants did not get many challenges, but they were able to learn different challenges especially posed by the use of Digital equipment. They were able to witness how the light board which stopped working as programmed by the facilitator and make the facilitator spend many hours working on it before the show trying to put things right. This situation also repeated again in the music performance.

ACHIEVEMENTS

In this week I can say this was a unique week for participants, since this was the week in which the participants were able to finalize installing the lights devices remained at WOLFGANG NEUSS SALON, setting and installing all the four Multi-core Plug Box and make wiring to all 24 lights by themselves under a little supervision from the facilitator.

THE FIFTH WEEK

IMPLEMENTATIONS

Due to the fact that in this fourth week's calendar, there were a lot of performances that went through until a very end of the week which is Sunday. So, that case gave the participants Monday and Tuesday as the two days of resting, and then the classes started again on Wednesday whereby the participants met their facilitator in the areas of lights. The facilitator started by getting to know if the participants are also good in the field of their studies theoretically apart from practical training which was so much provided since they arrived for the training. So, he asked the participants (individually) to write down the needs and how the lights systems may be set and installed until the event is provided the intended lighting. They were asked to write down the procedures for the stage lighting. Every participant listed down all the lighting devices together with other equipments as follows;

- The types of lights mentioned were Fresnel or PC Plan Convex, Studio Par, Profile, Wash light, Sport light, LED light. Theatre lights are also known as PC, Flood light.
- Other equipments apart from lights were Dimmer, Power Cable, Multi-core Plug Box or Extension Box, Light Board, Splitter or Control Box and the last one is DMX Cable.

There was a problem in lack of confidence to one of the participants in some few areas, especially in the names of devices. Afterwards, the facilitator once again asked the participants as to what kinds of lights devices that do not use Dimmer and the answers from the participants were as follows;

- Wash Light, Sport light and LED. The facilitator explained the difference in power consumptions that LED lights consuming little amount of power comparing to Sport lights and Wash lights. But again he said that it's still Sport lights and Wash lights does not consuming much power compared to Conventional lights or lights that uses Dimmer. But also this week in the calendar, there were some performances; so, the participants got another opportunity to participate in the preparations of those performances by doing the following;

- Disconnecting the Microphone cables which used in last week's performances and that was hanged on top of the stage.
 - Disconnecting and removing the two lights devices that were used in the previous performance.
 - The participants together with the facilitator installed a total number of six Sport lights that was going to be used in the performance.
- The participants under the supervision of the facilitator, they did wiring for Six Sport lights, connecting DMX Cable together with the Power Cable. Afterwards, the facilitator concluded that task by connecting the lights and thereafter the facilitator tested the lights to see if they are working. This exercise took a little more time since the lights didn't work in the first time and the other started working without anyone switching them on. The facilitators took a little more time to find solutions to this problem and then soon later they discovered a problem in DMX Cable coming out from the splitter go to the Light Board. After all the restructuring of the systems, lights started working without any problem and the exercise became so accomplished.
 - The participants also had the opportunity to watch the Comedy Show called Emmi & Willnowsky and get to learn how lights are used in a performance which has got less action and much dialogues and music. These performances were staged for three days.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The participants have continued to win the trusts of the facilitators and get assigned to do more work such as a making wiring for some lights like Sport lights, these are very big achievements to the participants.

CHALLENGES

Yet the challenge of language to one of the participants appeared. Although that challenge didn't stop the participants from learning and understanding the lessons, but it has been a challenge.