

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

For Projects Abroad Romania



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LOVE STRINGS

7th Edition of Projects Abroad Charity Show

On the 27th of February 2014, Projects Abroad Romania Team were extremely proud and happy to present once again our Charity Show, 'Iubind Daruiesti, Daruind Primesti' (Loving is Giving, Giving is receiving), which reached its 7th edition.

Being initiated in 2008, when I started to work for Projects Abroad Romania, our concerts ended up becoming charity shows, being a great method of raising funds for our care placements that most needed it. In each edition of these shows, we try to put together several performances, being coordinated by our drama volunteers, as a result of their work with our drama group of teenagers, for a period of 2 to 4 months. Having them named 'Iubind Daruiesti, Daruind Primesti', our shows really offer moments of harmony, ballance, sharing love and gratitude for all that we represent, that we are passionate about and we can offer to our audience. The performers are usually members of our drama groups, and also special guests, singers and dancers, who add on to our theatrical moments. All the theatrical moments are in English, and the theme of each show differ in accordance to our current volunteers' skills, experience and desire on what to present.

Throughout this 7th edition, named 'Heart Strings', this year's first one, we presented a mix of drama, dance and music, as usual having as main performers the members of Projects Abroad Drama Group, coordinated by our drama volunteer, Elly Pugh from Australia. *"There are so many ways to say 'I love you', but what does this even mean? How could four letters possibly encapsulate the strongest emotion humans feel? This show explored the concept of love by unearthing truths, finding reason and pulling at heart strings"* (Elly Pugh)

The two drama performances we presented were a Monologue and a 45 min play which presented everything stated up above. The play, named 'The Waiting Room' is a story of a group of recently deceased people, stuck in limbo. They soon find that their only hope of passing on to the next life is by recalling their greatest love. A task that is easier said than done. This was performed by the members of our drama group: **Sabina Cristian, Sabina Șancu, Elena Teja, Maria Teja, Madalina Dumitru, Alexandru Ion Coca, Diana Chirovan, Miruna Icleanu, Andreea Acatrinei, Oana Juravlea, Ioan Butiu and Marius Hodoreanu**. The main theme of the monologue presented by Antonia Jeflea was built on the quotation: 'Do not go where the path may lead, instead go where there is no path and leave a trail'

Our show wouldn't have been successful without the participation of our special guests and local artists from Brasov: our two talented singers, Daniela and Irina Serban and our dancers, 'Step in2 Salsa' performance team and 'Libertango' with three of their most amazing artists. We also had the entire support of professional photographers and videographers from Brasov, Buu Photography, BBArt Studio and Julia Jugaru.

Furthermore, the show was presented by our passionate and pure Anastasia Abaitancei, together with our drama volunteer and trainer, Elly Pugh. Due to its importance, our event appeared in the local press and was very well promoted by our online press: Iubim Brasovul, Saceleanul, romanticu.org. This year's edition was held in order to raise money for Poplars Foundation, an NGO that works with and for people with disabilities.

They were also part of our show with a puppet performance through which they taught us once again that love conquers and fights everything. They brought to our sight, once again how simple and happy we should be and how grateful for everything we have we should be. So, thank you Poplars, for all that you are!

I am very happy to say that the result of our show was amazing, being able to raise 1400 lei which means approximately 320 euros. As a feedback track to how the money was used, I was just talking to Lausia, the director of Poplars, and she gave us some lovely information: They organised a Celebration for Easter with all the clients, where they had lunch and received gifts bought necessary products for their arts & crafts and occupational therapy activities and paid some of their utility bills. They are very thankful for all that they were able to do with this money. Also, as a result of our event, they succeeded in finding more local artists to organise the same events for fund raising.

So, we are happy to announce that Projects Abroad gave the start in fund raising for Poplars, through performances based on Arts. There are so many local artists who decide to sing, dance or act for a cause and we are so pleased to be one of them! We continue in organising these events, and help in fundraising for different placements which are our collaborators! We are curious to see what the 8th edition will bring, but we want to assure our audience that it will be another quality show for a worthwhile cause. In the end, I would like to mention that none of all this work would be possible without the great involvement and dedication of our Projects Abroad Team: Georgiana, Rodica, Mircea and Razvan. Hereinafter, I would like to invite you to read more about how the preparations for this show went along, in the following article, presented by our drama volunteer, Elly Pugh.



Romanian Theatrics

The following article is just an introduction to the amazing and interesting work of Elly Pugh, from Australia, a former drama volunteer, who completed her project through a performance she put on stage from scratch. Please enjoy her small text from below and feel free to check the whole article online, on our Official Blog,

<http://www.mytripblog.org/pg/blog/romania-social-manager/read/339261/romanian-theatrics-written-by-elly-pugh-australia>

Twelve teenagers. Five weeks. One performance. What's a girl to do?

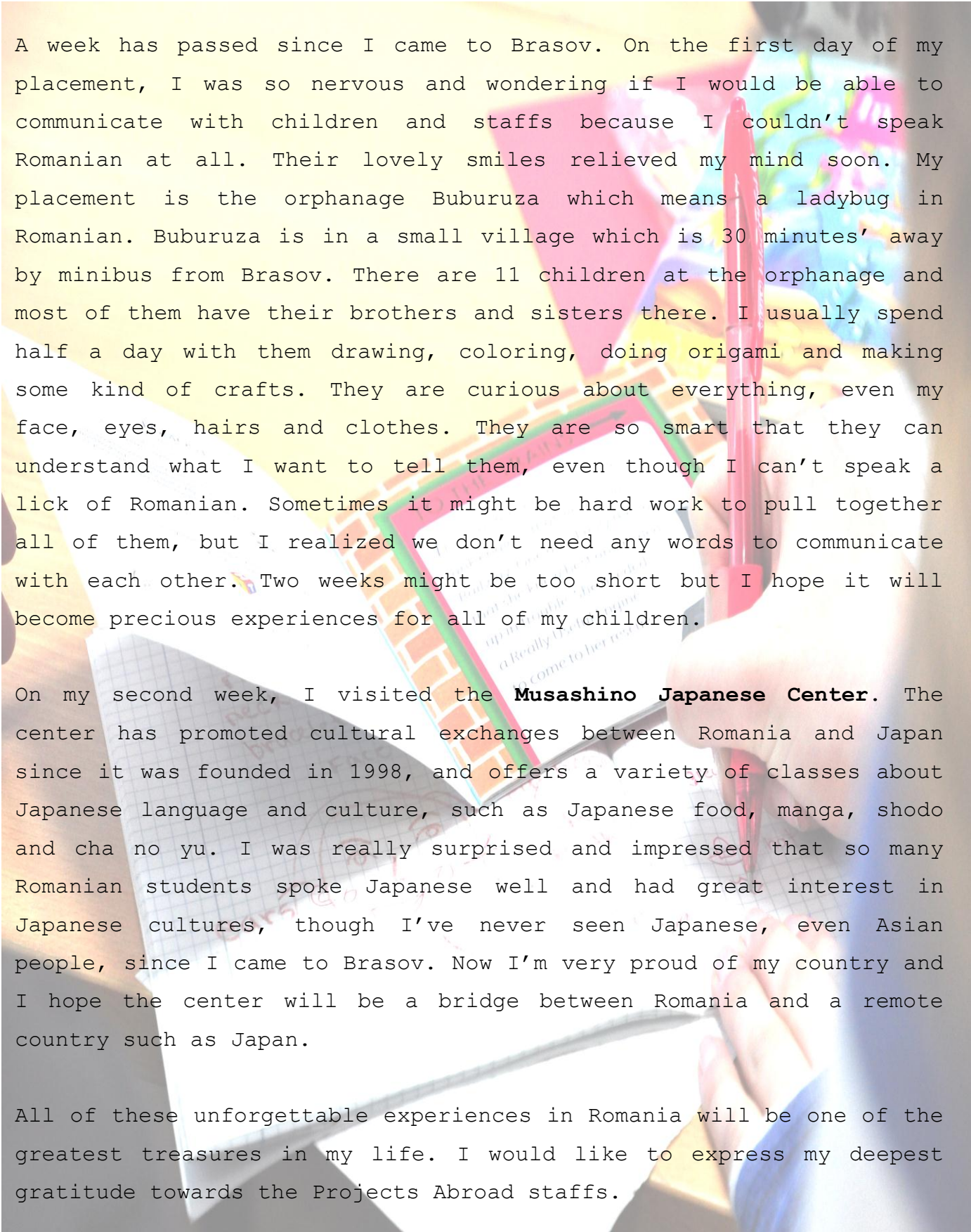
Now, if one were to volunteer for the Drama project in Romania (as I did), one would find themselves in the acquaintance of a group of highly intelligent, highly talented and highly hilarious group of youths. Operated by Projects Abroad, Black Juice Theatre Group was established some years ago by Drama coordinator Alexandra Ichim. The group houses a gradually changing cast of Brasov-ians, most in their mid to late teens, whom are all very, very interested in acting. Each year, with the help of Drama volunteers, the group puts on a play. So naturally, with my arrival, another performance was planned.

I can tell you from experience, putting on a theatrical event is nowhere near as simple as some may think it would be. Thankfully, I had a bit of a head start, with a majority of my time in high school spent on a stage and hanging around fellow drama nerds, I at least knew something about what I was doing. For those of you who can't tell their stage left from their stage right, their Oscars from their Tony's, and scratch their chins at the seemingly very violent phrase of 'break a leg', let me explain some of the complexities of organizing a performance in a breakdown of steps.



Care Updates

(written by Noriko Kimura, Japan, Care Project in Romania)

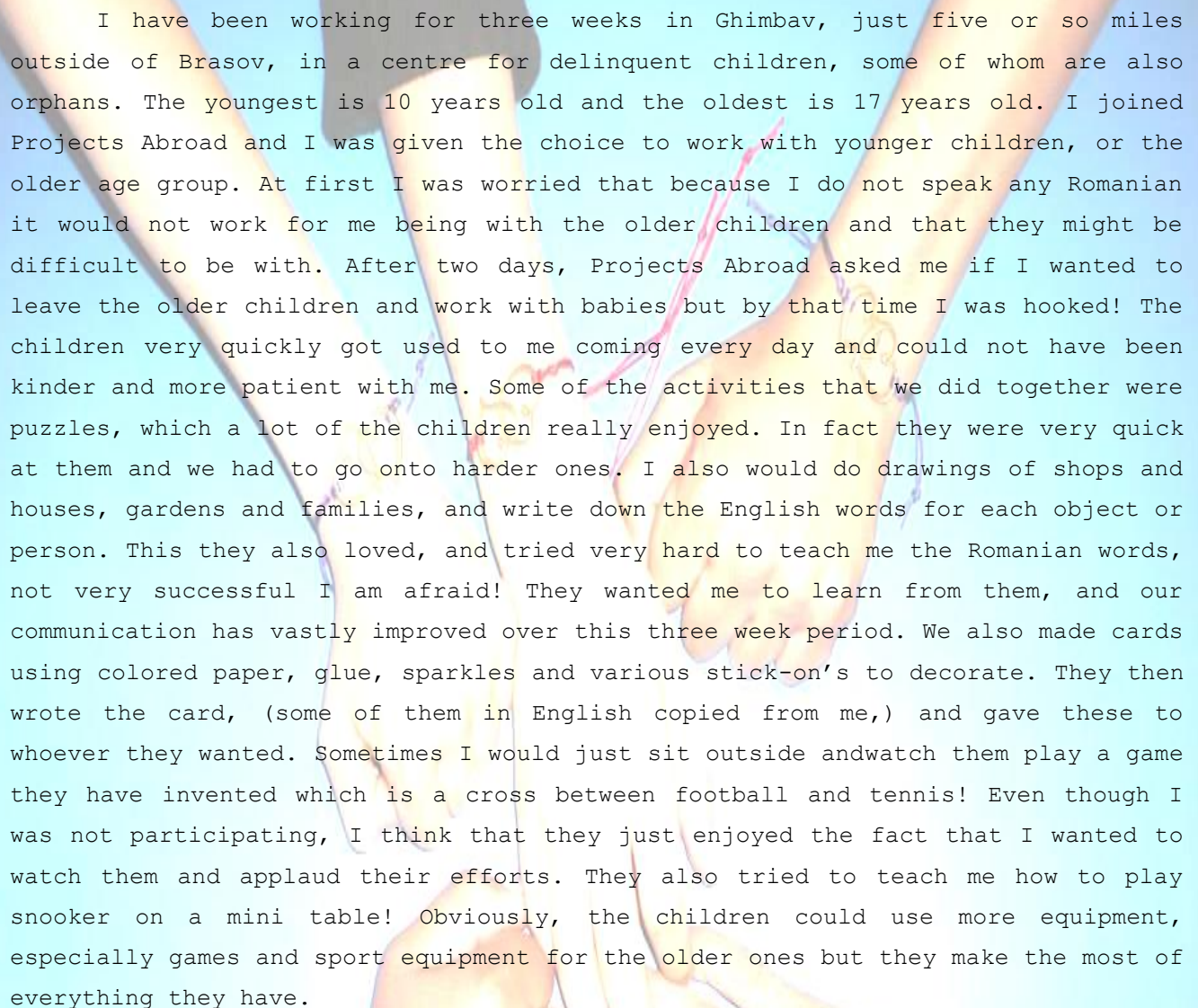


A week has passed since I came to Brasov. On the first day of my placement, I was so nervous and wondering if I would be able to communicate with children and staffs because I couldn't speak Romanian at all. Their lovely smiles relieved my mind soon. My placement is the orphanage Buburuza which means a ladybug in Romanian. Buburuza is in a small village which is 30 minutes' away by minibus from Brasov. There are 11 children at the orphanage and most of them have their brothers and sisters there. I usually spend half a day with them drawing, coloring, doing origami and making some kind of crafts. They are curious about everything, even my face, eyes, hairs and clothes. They are so smart that they can understand what I want to tell them, even though I can't speak a lick of Romanian. Sometimes it might be hard work to pull together all of them, but I realized we don't need any words to communicate with each other. Two weeks might be too short but I hope it will become precious experiences for all of my children.

On my second week, I visited the **Musashino Japanese Center**. The center has promoted cultural exchanges between Romania and Japan since it was founded in 1998, and offers a variety of classes about Japanese language and culture, such as Japanese food, manga, shodo and cha no yu. I was really surprised and impressed that so many Romanian students spoke Japanese well and had great interest in Japanese cultures, though I've never seen Japanese, even Asian people, since I came to Brasov. Now I'm very proud of my country and I hope the center will be a bridge between Romania and a remote country such as Japan.

All of these unforgettable experiences in Romania will be one of the greatest treasures in my life. I would like to express my deepest gratitude towards the Projects Abroad staffs.

Care Updates with Caroline Yates, UK



I have been working for three weeks in Ghimbav, just five or so miles outside of Brasov, in a centre for delinquent children, some of whom are also orphans. The youngest is 10 years old and the oldest is 17 years old. I joined Projects Abroad and I was given the choice to work with younger children, or the older age group. At first I was worried that because I do not speak any Romanian it would not work for me being with the older children and that they might be difficult to be with. After two days, Projects Abroad asked me if I wanted to leave the older children and work with babies but by that time I was hooked! The children very quickly got used to me coming every day and could not have been kinder and more patient with me. Some of the activities that we did together were puzzles, which a lot of the children really enjoyed. In fact they were very quick at them and we had to go onto harder ones. I also would do drawings of shops and houses, gardens and families, and write down the English words for each object or person. This they also loved, and tried very hard to teach me the Romanian words, not very successful I am afraid! They wanted me to learn from them, and our communication has vastly improved over this three week period. We also made cards using colored paper, glue, sparkles and various stick-on's to decorate. They then wrote the card, (some of them in English copied from me,) and gave these to whoever they wanted. Sometimes I would just sit outside and watch them play a game they have invented which is a cross between football and tennis! Even though I was not participating, I think that they just enjoyed the fact that I wanted to watch them and applaud their efforts. They also tried to teach me how to play snooker on a mini table! Obviously, the children could use more equipment, especially games and sport equipment for the older ones but they make the most of everything they have.

Everyone who works in the centre was kind and welcoming to me. A lot of people who work there spoke English. This was great and that's how I always felt safe and at home. I have nothing but praise for the staff, the children, and Projects Abroad who have made me feel so welcome here. After being efficiently met at the airport I was driven to Brasov, given my own mobile phone to use here, and shown my way round the centre of Brasov by the delightful Georgiana who also took me on my bus route to make sure I knew where I was going as I started my stay. Projects Abroad gave me emergency numbers, maps and bus routes in fact everything I could have needed to feel safe and cared for. I have worked for several overseas charities but none have been anything like as good as Projects Abroad. I would not hesitate to come and work here again and I would recommend this to anyone. I will miss the children very much when I go home, and I hope to come back next year if they will have me!

Hello everyone,

March was a really enjoyed and happy month for everyone!

It was a great period of time, filled with great stories that were formed through our volunteers' hard work and enthusiasm. In March, spring almost arrived in Brasov and all the activities were planned accordingly. So, we started our spring moments diving through the charity event stories written by myself and Elly Pugh, as the main organizers of the event. Then, we continued with the care updates written by Noriko Kimura from Japan and Caroline Yates from UK.

Special thanks for this newsletter go to the following people:

- Elly Pugh, Australia
- Noriko Kimura, Japan
- Caroline Yates, UK
- Catalin Buhnla - Buu Photography (partner photographer), for the professional photos we used in the current issue of the newsletter.

We would also want to invite you to join our Facebook community where we share our pictures, happenings and news, every day. The name of our networks is:

Projects Abroad Romania Official Group

We also encourage everyone to write their stories for us to publish them in our newsletters. If you want to write something about your current or past experience with us, please do not hesitate to send it to me along with your pictures to alexandraichim@projectsabroad.org



Alexandra Ichim
Communications Officer