



Dementia in Cultural Mediation

NEWSLETTER # 3



Newsletter Dementia in Cultural Mediation #3 March 2021.

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**We are happy to present a very special project,
shared by member of the Project Reference
Group, Elena de Ru**

ComAlong – Flanders – Belgium

Students as Buddies for people with young onset
dementia

ComAlong , a non -profit organization founded in 2017,



is a platform that aims to create a positive interaction
between people with young onset dementia and their
buddies, in particular students from universities of
applied sciences.

ComAlong teaches students to deal well and appropri-
ately with people with young onset and to take a nu-
anced look at dementia in general by giving them ad-
ditional training and focusing on possibilities instead
of loss. Increasing the quality of life of the person with
young onset and their loved ones is central to this.

This academic year too, despite the corona crisis, stu-
dents are making every effort to support people with

COMALONG IS AN IMPORTANT PARTNER OF
THE MUSEUM "HUIS VAN ALIJN" (GHENT)-
OUTREACH LAB FOR THE EDUCATION PILOT
PROJECTS AS WELL AS A WELFARE PILOT
PROJECT, STRANGE AND TRUSTED, ALSO
KNOWN AS OBJECT HANDLING. ON THE ONE
HAND, THEY TAKE ON THE ROLE OF BRIDGING
FIGURE BETWEEN EDUCATION AND THE MU-
SEUM, SO THAT THE KNOWLEDGE AND COM-
PETENCES RELATED TO HERITAGE AND WEL-
FARE CAN TRANSFER TO CARE TRAINING. ON
THE OTHER HAND, AS A SOCIAL INSTITUTION
WITH A GREAT DEAL OF EXPERIENTIAL EXPER-
TISE, THEY TAKE ON A SUPPORTING ROLE SO
THAT THE MUSEUM CAN WORK TAILOR MADE
TO THE TARGET GROUP DURING THE PILOT
PROJECT STRANGE AND TRUSTED.

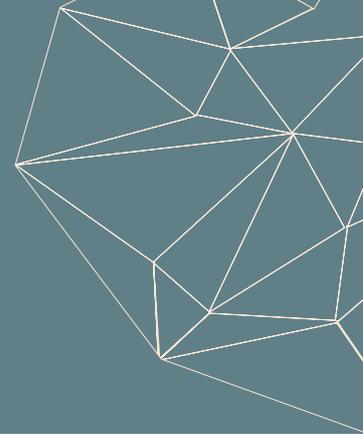
young onset dementia in meaningful activities in daily
life. The possibilities and wishes of the person living
with young onset are central and together with the
students they create beautiful moments.





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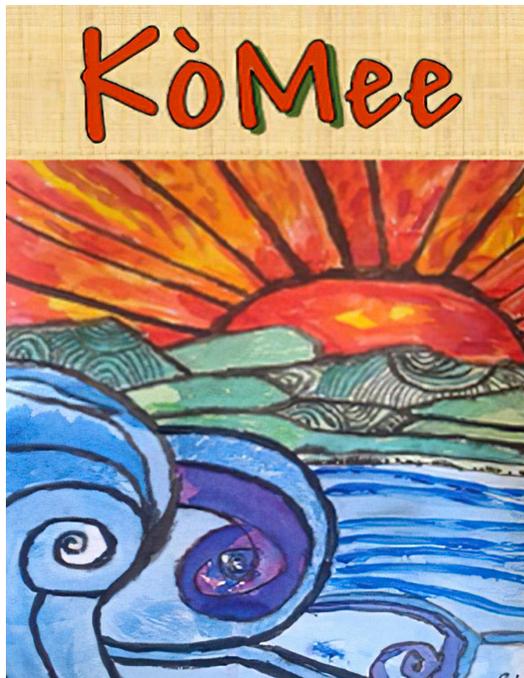
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ComAlong facilitates and organizes activities and initiates a symbiotic two-way process of communication across generations. Offering meaningful and enjoyable experiences lowers the risk of isolation and exclusion, which people with young onset often end up in.

What Students say?

It was a surprising but pleasant period in which I became acquainted with a target group that I did not know yet, but from which I learned a lot and gained a lot of satisfaction.



“We made nice things for Valentine’s Day all week, it was a nice atmosphere” “I thought it was a very nice experience and look forward to next time”

“It was very moving how happy I could make people just by being there and listening to them.”

I took B. to the museum, he could not have been happier

What I learned at ComAlong helped our whole family to deal much better with my grandfather with Alzheimer’s

“It was a real advantage that I can speak in dialect, some people liked that a whole lot.

One lady was heartbroken, me2.... so we could help each other”

“Students, that’s a wonderful thing, it couldn’t be better” Staff of Care Centre Zuiderlicht

Elena de Ru

ComAlong

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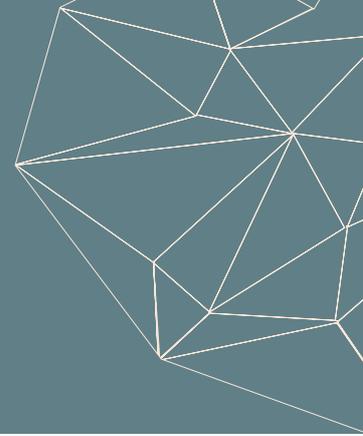
Elena is a member of the Flemish working group of people with dementia





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What is the status of Dementia in Cultural Mediation?

Since our last Newsletter project has been moving on steady, maneuvering the Corona obstacles with tongues in cheek.

In January we had our second Learning, Teaching, Training – again as a string of webinars, presenting wonderful activities from each of the partner-countries. We’re gaining more experience with the on-line-platform, resulting in a better quality of the webinars. We would have loved to visit Antwerp, hopefully we’ll manage to go there another time. Expertisecentrum Dementie Vlaanderen did a great job planning and running the LTT2 – please read a more elaborate description of this in this Newsletter.



We’ve started producing the videos for the Toolbox and have been producing a few Pilot-videos to agree on the form and content of the videos. The video-production will continue throughout autumn 2021 and hopefully be concluded at the end of 2021.

The Didactic Guidelines, closely related to the Toolbox, is also taking big leaps forward and we expect these to be finished during this autumn.

Finally we’ve started the work on the IO3 – Recommendations, where the layout and framework is being made this spring, supported by session with a focus group on barriers and enablers of cultural activities for people with dementia.



Successful online LTT i January 2021

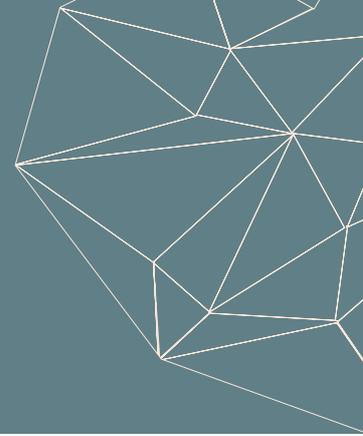
In January, the DCUM project held their 2nd LTT (Learning, Teaching, Training seminar) as an online webinar. The program was yet again, an exciting and diverse number of creative methods and tools for mediating culture for people with dementia.





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On the first day of the webinar, the following cultural areas were presented:

Annelore Boone & Els Robaey, Academie Brugge (Belgium). Title: Weekly art classes for people with dementia

Anne Thunbo. Librarian at Allerød Library (Odense, Denmark). Title: Nature, Training and Literature for people with dementia.

David Viñuales, Museo Fallero - Las Naves (Spain). Title: Museums for health.

Eusebi (Spain). Title: Ikebana

In between the presentations at the webinar, there were some much needed breaks for the participants. Some of the breaks even became very active, because physical activities such as neck'n 'shoulder exercises, as well as fun dance lessons, were directed by Kamilla Geisler. On the second and third day of the webinar, the following cultural methods were presented:

Dirk Terry, Het Lezerscollectief (Belgium). Title: Shared Reading

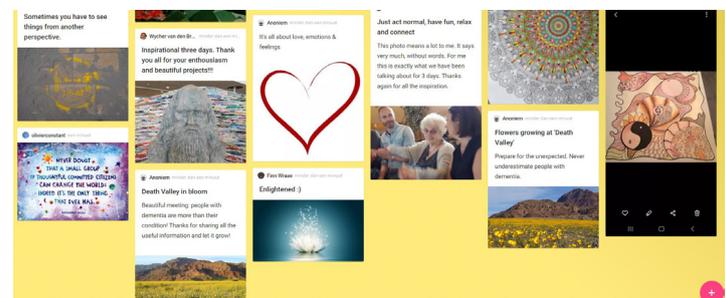
Wycher vd Bremen (The Netherlands). Title: Behavior Generator

Reinhilde Peeters, Choir and Voice (Belgium). Title: Sing to connect.

Anni Nielsen, University of South Denmark Title: Philosophical Dialogue

Evy Raes, photographer (Belgium). Title: Never seen

Odensehuis Emmen (The Netherlands). Title: Memory Walk



The 3 LTT days were rounded off with a very special evaluation exercise. All participants were asked to upload a picture summarizing the content of the three webinar days (see picture).





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Next steps of the DCUM recommendations work package

It is very important for the DCUM strategic partnership that as many cultural mediators as possible benefit from the DCUM Toolkit and the DCUM Didactic Training Material, to reach and strengthen the professional development of cultural mediation for people with dementia and contribute to social inclusion. This requires that the Toolkit Platform becomes well-known and used among cultural mediators in Europe.

In order to ensure sustainability and use of project results beyond the project period, a set of recommendations will be developed.

Within the DCUM recommendations work package good practices, relevant information and current trends are shared through social media and a DCUM recommendations guide will be developed and published. To start the work on the recommendations guide, the lead coordinator of the work package (Expertisecentrum Dementie Vlaanderen) will organize an online focus group meeting on the 27th of April to discuss enablers and barriers for experiencing art and culture. Based on the output of the focus group, the outline of the publication will be refined, and the writing process will move forward the next months.

More news on the focus group and the deliverables will follow in the next DCUM newsletter.

Dementia in Cultural Mediation on Social Media

During the last year the DCUM-project has been very active on Facebook. Due to the covid-19-effect on the project, many activities have taken place online. The use of social media has been intensified and used as an important platform to share good practices, new ideas, new tools and inspiration for cultural mediators across partner countries and interested professionals in many other countries around the world. Each project partner is responsible for the postings, activities and sharing, every month.



On Facebook you find beautiful and inspirational examples of how art meets music, how sculptures in combination with nature walks, dancing, singing and literature creating moments of happiness, all improves quality of life and desire to participate, in all stages of life of people with dementia.

Those are just a few examples of all the knowledge and material you can access here:

<https://www.facebook.com/DementiaInCulturalMediation>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/dcumproject>

