

POP IRIMIE POMPEI

Theatre director and psychologist · Originator of Therapeutic Theatre "TT"

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Profile

Theatre director and psychologist, originator of Therapeutic Theatre "TT" — a methodological system for theatre with explicit therapeutic objectives, developed over approximately two decades of practice. The system integrates experimental psychology, crowd psychology, art therapy and sensory dramaturgy, and is organised in three types classified according to the therapeutic beneficiary and the mechanism involved. It has been applied in over 3,000 performances for children, in educational programmes for children and young people, and in clinical settings.

Current research concerns the theoretical formulation of the system, the concept of calibration as a principle of dramaturgical construction, and the transmissibility of the methodology to practitioners working independently.

Research Interests

Therapeutic theatre · Applied theatre · Theatre for children and young audiences · Audience participation and agency · Actor training and theatre pedagogy · Sensory dramaturgy and immersive performance · Ethics of participation and informed consent in performance · Theatre and psychology · Performance and wellbeing

Education

MA, Directing for Contemporary Performance — University of Arts, Târgu Mureș, Romania, 2007–2009

Dissertation: Temptation (Ispita). Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sorin Crișan.

BA, Theatre Studies — University of Arts, Târgu Mureș, Romania, 2006–2009

Thesis: A History of Pantomime. Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sorin Crișan.

BA, Psychology and Psychopedagogy — Dimitrie Cantemir University, Romania, 1993–1999

Expert in Dramatherapy — Romanian Psychodrama Association, 1998–1999

Expert in Exposure Therapy — University of Wisconsin–Madison, USA, 1999–2000

Current Position

President and Artistic Director — Asociația Culturală Actus Dramaticus, Târgu Mureș, 2010–present

Direction of all productions, development and transmission of the Therapeutic Theatre "TT" methodology, training of actors, coordination of educational and clinical programmes.

Therapeutic Theatre "TT" — Methodology and Programmes

An original methodological system founded on the axiom of functional actor-spectator equality, with four founding principles — functional equality, calibrated emotional purification, authentic emotion and total sensory experience — and three types of production classified by therapeutic beneficiary: Type I (the actor), Type II (the spectator, through transfer of agency) and Type III (both simultaneously, through total sensory immersion). Methodological innovations include the Red Thread Repetition, introduced in 2025.

TT Type II performances for children — over 3,000 performances in sixteen years, approximately 180,000 child spectators.

Happy Dramatikus — theatre-based developmental programme for children aged 2-13, approximately 5,000 participations.

Act with Actus — theatre-based programme for young people aged 13-30, approximately 2,000 participations.

TT classes and courses in schools — approximately 5,000 participations.

Art therapy with hospitalised children — Pneumology Clinic no. 1, Târgu Mureş, twice weekly, 2010-2023.

"From Angel to Angel" — annual charitable programme for children from disadvantaged families, since 2010.

Creation camps — two free camps per year for high-school and university students, 2011-2025.

Cumulative total across all programmes: over 192,000 participations. These are participations, not unique participants, and represent exposure rather than outcome.

Work in Progress

Therapeutic Theatre "TT": a methodological system for theatre with therapeutic objectives — theoretical article, in preparation.

Calibration as a principle of dramaturgical construction in Therapeutic Theatre "TT" — theoretical article, in preparation.

Theatre for children as therapeutic practice — empirical study, data collection in progress.

Doctoral research — From representation to experience: Therapeutic Theatre as a methodology of scenic construction through calibrated emotional purification.

Selected Directing

Me, Sorina! (Eu, Sorina!) — TT Type I monodrama. Selected for the National Monodrama Festival, Bacău, 2022 edition.

Full performance: youtube.com/watch?v=mynfnrjvaVE

Ciri Biri and the Brave Sisters — TT Type II performance for children aged 2-8. Premiere: Teatrul Scena, Târgu Mureş, June 2025.

TT Type II repertoire for children — including Tiri Biri, Uka Puka, Ada Lada La, Polia Pitka, Fufila. Present at all ten editions of the "Children's Days" Festival, Târgu Secuiesc.

LET US HELP! — 2012. Awarded the Medaglia del Presidente della Repubblica Italiana.

Temptation (Ispita) — pantomime. Awarded at the SCENA Humour Festival, 2009, and other festivals.

Over 20 theatre productions and 10 film productions directed to date.

Teaching and Training

Visiting lecturer, Drama Class — Petru Maior University, Târgu Mureş, 2012–2014.

International workshops — 2012–2019: Germany, the Netherlands, Georgia, Italy, Iceland, Slovenia.

Actor training in Therapeutic Theatre "TT" — ongoing; formation of actors for TT Type I, II and III work.

TT classes in kindergartens and schools — ongoing.

Other Professional Experience

Executive director — Institute for Polling and Marketing, 2001–present. Over 500 surveys conducted.

Hospital administrator and psychologist — SMURD emergency service, Romania, 1999–2005. Balint groups and psychodrama.

Consultant — Harvard Medical International and the Romanian Ministry of Health, 1999–2002.

Research assistant — Laboratory of Experimental Psychology, Dimitrie Cantemir University, 1997–1999.

Distinctions

- Medaglia del Presidente della Repubblica Italiana (2012) — highest prize of the Festival Internazionale della Scuola, Rodi Garganico, Italy, for LET US HELP!
- Selection, National Monodrama Festival, Bacău, 2022, with the TT Type I monodrama Me, Sorina!
- Awards at the SCENA Humour Festival (2009) and other festivals, for the pantomime Temptation.

Skills

Directing — theatre and film; construction of participatory dramaturgy for young audiences.

Sensory devices — construction of calibrated sensory apparatus for Type III productions: low frequencies, olfactory, thermal and light modulation.

Research instruments — design of observation sheets, narrative questionnaires and informed consent procedures for work with minors.

Languages — Romanian (native), English (fluent), Hungarian (fluent spoken), Italian (good), French (intermediate).