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UnsilenceYourVoice

Legal Artistic Project



The Participants to the UnsilenceYourVoice project are:

Annemarie Arnold

Pasquale Asquino

Susanna Brunelli

Steven Calenda

Lady Dalyz

Roberto Diodati

Luigi Gallini

Roberta Gelsomino

Herrade Welschinger

Partnerships



ENUSP European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry



“Diritti alla Follia” Organization



“Code per Curiosi” Organization

Blog

The UnsilenceYourVoice **Blog**

Logo by **Roberto Diodati** – Image Cover by **Roberta Gelsomino**

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Introduction to the UnsilenceYourVoice Project

Break taboos and STAND UP for your rights

by Annemarie Arnold

UnsilenceYourVoice is a collaborative project between representatives of *ENUSP* (European Network of (Ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry), *Diritti alla Follia* and *Code per Curiosi* Organizations.

One goal of the project is the artistic expression of persons who experienced, endured and survived psychiatry.

Furthermore, the project participants relate their own experiences expressed in their artworks to the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UN CRPD).

They show how their rights articulated by the convention are violated through psychiatric practice, e.g. through forced treatment.

These experiences and violations of rights will be published in the form of e-zines, a website and a blog.

Through UnsilenceYourVoice, persons who are usually silenced by society reclaim their own voices.

[Read the full article on the blog](#)

Background to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention followed decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

[Read the full text of the Convention here](#)

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: let's make it accessible, visible and livable

by **Simona Lancioni**

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities continues to be little known, and therefore little implemented, even in those countries (such as Italy) that have ratified it. Sometimes access to information is precluded to people with disabilities themselves, who are unable to access information in ways commonly used by other people. To make up for this gap, several entities have translated the UN Convention into different languages and made these versions available online. While *Diritti alla Follia* Organization is promoting UnsilenceYourVoice, an innovative International project that, among other things, invites people with psychiatric experience to artistically reinterpret the UN Convention in light of their own experiences.

[Read more](#)

Excerpts and Memories

- » “They gave me Abilify“
- » “They leave you in the shower, naked and wet“
- » “Not enough strength to brush your teeth“

VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS based on the UN Convention CRPD

ART. 1 - autonomy, full freedom

ART. 2 - reasonable accommodation

ART. 11 - prevention of abuse through safe guards

ART. 14 - deprivation of liberty allowed “in conformity with the law“

ART. 15 - no inhumane treatment or punishment

ART. 22 - protection of privacy

Annemarie Arnold

Born shortly after the German wall had fallen, Annemarie Arnold grew up in Thuringen, former GDR. She studied Social and Cultural Anthropology, Musicology and Cultural Analysis in Goettingen and Oldenburg.

Annemarie conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Palau, Micronesia, where she studied Palauan dance practices. At the same time, she worked as an assistant for the Belau National Museum (BNM).

During the end of her Master's, Annemarie worked for a tourist company in Gran Canaria to finance the rest of her studies. Her M.A. thesis is titled “Dancing in Belau: A study about dances as representations of a nation.” After her graduation from university, Annemarie worked as a project assistant for the bureau of arts and culture of the city of Oldenburg. After that she moved to Munich to work as a cultural trainee for cultural management. She was soon hired as a cultural manager in Munich, but she decided to move back to Northern Germany in 2022, where she feels at home.

After having edited for a local newspaper, she is now interested in becoming a reporter herself. Currently, she negotiates a contract with another local newspaper.

Since 2021, Annemarie has been an individual member of ENUSP. Her idea to connect artistic expressions with legal rights of persons with intellectual-social disabilities gave rise to the project UnsilenceYourVoice.

VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS
based on the UN
Convention
CRPD

ART. 5 - Equality and non-
discrimination

ART. 12 - Equal recognition before the
law

ART. 14 - Liberty and security of the
person

ART. 15 - Freedom from torture or cruel,
inhuman or degrading treatment or
punishment

ART. 17 - Protecting the integrity of the
person

ART. 25 - Health

The lethal Injection

by Lady Dalyz

There I was
Fighting for my life
In a psychotic world
During a war

Inside and outside
Myself
Dealing with psychiatric nurses
Trying to evade the grip of the enemy

I kicked
I screamed
My voice wasn't heard
Tied to a bed

The lethal injection
Against my will
Both of my worlds crumbled
Silence

A prayer to save me
That no one would listen
Tears on my face
No air around me

I survived
But part of me died
Who am I
Without my rights



Lady Dalyz

Jennifer Dalyz Alvarez Sanchez—who's name of art is Lady Dalyz—is born in Tegucigalpa, Honduras. After her mother remarried, the family migrated to Italy. Autodidact artist: photographer, author, painter and songwriter who likes to sing her own songs. When it comes to her art, Dalyz likes to mix and create new things: always looking for beauty, the nature has proved to be an infinite source of inspiration. Her art aims to bring another point of view into people's hearts and minds.

2017 – Photographic exhibition (personal) in Amstelveen (Holland)

2019 – Exhibition of poems (solo) in Amstelveen (Holland)

2020 – Published in poetry collection “Uit het hart” (poem)

Published in poetry collection “Vruchten van Vrijheid” (poem)

Published in the collection of poems “Quarantaine in vers” (poem)

Published in poetry collection “Poezie op het spoor” (poem)

Published in poetry collection “Week van poezie 2020” (poem)

2023 – Photographic exhibition “Images on display” in Rome (Italy)

Participation in the “artist of the year in Brussels” competition (painting)

Published in art magazine 06 Kunst Magazine (poem)

2024 – Project UnsilenceYourVoice

www.ladydalyz.com

[lady_dalyz \(instagram\)](#)

[Lady Dalyz \(facebook\)](#)

THEY DON'T KNOW...

by Susanna Brunelli

This psychiatric experience was HIGHLY TRAUMATIZING FOR ME, which is why I say: **"They don't know what being in here means to me!"**

I felt disrespected for the inherent dignity, physical and metaphorical closure to the freedom to express my preferences, I was prevented from doing so mainly by my unwell state, but secondly by the environment that did not put me in a condition to feel safe, impregnated with toxic substances according to my perceived, that's why I repeat **"THEY don't know what it means for me to be in here!"**

If I had been admitted to a ward of another kind I certainly would not have been subjected to unwanted treatment, I could have chosen to take the treatment or not, I believe the head nurse would not have reminded me that I was not in a 5-star hotel, I would not have felt hit in my self-esteem which I already had very low and would not have raised my perception of being in a discriminating, stereotyping and stigmatizing place. I would have had equal protection and benefit from compliance with the regulations and equality rights, I would not have been subjected to second hand smoke that for me has a meaning that runs counter to my concept of health and well-being, I find it a harmful practice for those who do not have like me the need to smoke and feel great discomfort both physically and psychically. I was not protected and the necessary measures were not used to ensure the effective enjoyment of the right to my physical integrity.

The environment was not conducive to my recovery, considering that I used to visit my sister there many years before, this meant further suffering for me, but in the absence of social awareness towards my highly vulnerable state due to the momentary disability, everything was being carried out as per protocol, without realizing that the lack of sensitivity and attention towards the person bearing suffering aggravated my situation.

A indifference ill-tolerated by me, toward those who have the right to exercise their legal capacity, not putting me in the conditions to protect and promote my physical integrity and minimize risks by preventing further disabilities, not promoting the continuous improvement of my living conditions, proportionate and appropriate to my condition so that a progressive path to Recovery could be undertaken, by adopting reasonable accommodation and all measures to facilitate the physical, cognitive, psychological recovery, rehabilitation and social reintegration that must take place in an environment that promotes health, well-being, self-esteem, dignity as well as respect for talents, creativity, as well as physical, mental abilities, up to maximum potential.

Now that I have recovered my integrity in every area of my life I can say that **they still do not know what it meant to me to find myself in there!**

[Read the full article on the blog](#)

"RESPECT" 2024

Acrylic on styrofoam, mixed media - cm 100x100

by Susanna Brunelli



VIOLATIONS OF RIGHTS based on the UN Convention CRPD

Article 3 - General Principles

Article 4 - General Obligations

Article 5 - Equality and non-discrimination

Article 8 - Awareness-raising

Article 12 - Equal recognition before the law

Article 14 - Liberty and security of the person

Article 16 - Right not to be subjected to exploitation, violence and ill-treatment

Article 17 - Protection of the integrity of the person

Article 25 - Health

Article 26 - Habilitation and rehabilitation

Article 28 - Adequate standard of living and social protection

In the general principles of the CRPD Convention, due respect for persons with both physical and psychosocial disabilities is emphasized.

People have an equal right to live a full life according to their possibilities under conditions that are favorable and facilitate individual choices leading toward independence, autonomy and self-determination, without discrimination of any kind.

It is recognized that all people are equal before the law and are entitled, without discrimination, to equal protection and benefit from the law.

Stereotypes, prejudices and harmful practices are broken down by raising awareness, promoting training programs to acquire greater social awareness of people with disabilities, recognizing in every place and context their legal capacity.

Every person must be put in the condition that his or her wishes and preferences, freedom and personal safety are respected in accordance with reasonable accommodation in accordance with the convention, not to be subjected to mistreatment, whether verbal or physical, in the name of protection and physical and mental integrity in full respect for dignity and self-esteem and to the strengthening of respect for human rights by enhancing personality, talents creativity, as well as one's physical and mental abilities, up to their maximum potential.

No one shall be deprived of the right to enjoy the best possible state of health by minimizing risk and preventing further disability.

Susanna Brunelli

Susanna Brunelli "Translucent"

In 1980, little more than a young girl I began working in an artistic glassworks, I learned the trade of master glassmaker as a store girl, observing with curiosity and doing the most humble jobs little by little I began to do more and more challenging work under the guidance of more skilled people, until after more than thirty years of activity I arrived at making stained glass windows even of considerable size, on personal projects and those of artists of various kinds, learning diverse artistic languages.

Through restoration of historiated stained glass windows, I learned ancient painting techniques on glass, until I evolved and acquired modern techniques and became an expert in glass fusing, a work that for me was a beautiful game full of colour, creativity, art and craft, drawing and painting.

I have always been fascinated by the material glass; its characteristics resonate with my own. Glass is transparent, translucent, clean, colourful, flexible, fragile but also very durable, it can be melted, heated and cooled, stressed, oxidized, broken, shattered and reassembled, assembled, shining....

SHINE!

just like me

Creativity is a trait that has helped and inspired me to find solutions in difficult times, transformation starts from simplicity.

There is always another way of looking at things!

Now my life has changed, it is divided between creativity and my flair for helping relationships, self-improvement, training and social activism.

I am Peer Supporter and Companion to Recovery, with recognition to participation in the training course, Italian edition for experts by experience, EX IN (EXperienceINvolvement)

susi.brunelli@gmail.com

INNER PATH

by Herrade Welschinger

No, no, I will not open the door!
I don't want to be hit again!
Why don't you listen to my protests?
Why don't you listen to my despair?

Article 17 - Protection of personal integrity

Every person with disability has the right to be respected in his or her physical and mental integrity on an equal basis with others.

You open the door by force and then demand the keys.
I throw the keys out the window.
Three of your police men brutally immobilize me on the bed.
Policemen, why do you pull down my pants?
Why do you take pictures?
Why are you laughing?

Article 5 - Equality and non-discrimination

5.1 - States Parties recognize that all persons are equal before and under the law and are entitled without any discrimination to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law.

5.2 - States Parties shall prohibit all discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantee to persons with disabilities equal and effective legal protection against discrimination on all grounds.

Article 6 - Women with disabilities

6.2 - States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the full development, advancement and empowerment of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms set out in the present Convention.

Article 15 - Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

15.2 - States Parties shall take all effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent persons with disabilities, on an equal basis with others, from being subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 22 - Respect for privacy

22.1 - No person with disabilities, regardless of place of residence or living arrangements, shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, or correspondence or other types of communication or to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation. Persons with disabilities have the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Fire truck moves erratically toward hospital.
Hours of waiting.
I try to get out in case they have forgotten me.
A man in a wheelchair tells me:
If you want to get out, now is the time to run, after that it's all useless.
But there is no way to get out, the police are at the door.
Hey doctor, why are you touching my belly without asking my permission?
Why doesn't she tell me anything?
I pat her hand. She doesn't understand. She does it again, and so do I, then she leaves.
Ten people assault me, tie me up and inject me with a sedative.

Article 14 - Liberty and security of the person

14 (b) - Are not deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily, and that any deprivation of liberty is in conformity with the law, and that the existence of a disability shall in no case justify a deprivation of liberty.

After a few weeks:
Counsel, I was not informed of my rights in time.
No?
No, never mind.
I am so drugged that I have a hard time ordering my thoughts.

Article 12 - Equal recognition before the law

- 1. - States Parties reaffirm that persons with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law.*
- 2. - States Parties shall recognize that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.*
- 3. - States Parties shall take appropriate measures to provide access by persons with disabilities to the support they may require in exercising their legal capacity.*

I turn and turn, up and down the hospital corridor, overlooking the prison yards.
At the end of the corridor is a ray of sunshine.
I wish someone would get me out of here, but from the window no one can see us.
Psychiatrist, I want to go home! I want to go home!
My roommate tells me: don't sign anything, do you understand?
But I just signed a curatorship so I can get out of here.
Shortly after that she tells me: okay, you can go home, just sign here.
Three years later: Do you remember when you arrived at the hospital?
Yes, a little bit. No, not very much

Herrade Welschinger

Herrade Welschinger was born in 1977 in Paris, and still lives there.

She has performed as an actress, a singer and a dancer.

She also made studies of Spanish language, literature and civilisation until the master 2. She also studies French for strangers.

She spent two years in Spain, and wrote about the theater and his commitment in Sevilla since 1975 to 2002. After, she studies one year the politics sciences.

She also worked in schools, with children from a lot of different countries. She also realised some staging with children during their holidays.

She also helped in different social centers as a free voluntary. she plants many flowers in the city and the industrial suburbs.

She was diagnose schizophrenic after fifteen days and she is wondering how it has been possible.

Since her sickness, she feels tired and a painful body, with the strong treatment she receives, that she isn't able to work anymore.

KNOTS

[To Ronald Laing]

by Pasquale Asquino

The Sense

(art. 19: independent living; art. 16 paragraph 4: right not to be subjected to exploitation)

The forced compartmentalization of one's life experience induced by long-term psychiatric action overrides the natural role structuring of the user's personality, favoring at most an alienation from the context purely functional to material needs, and not an affective integration.

It is necessary to make sense of things

I am told after I have already lived....

From the Great Chaos emerges Order!

Soon I shall be of age again

To make sense of peeing myself

Though I know I do

Trust

(art. 22 paragraph 1: respect for private life)

The forced compartmentalization of one's life experience induced by long-term psychiatric action surpasses the natural role structuring of the user's personality, favoring at most a purely functional alienation to material needs, and not an affective integration on the contexts in which he finds himself to live.

"In life you don't have to trust anyone"

They told me about Penelope's husband...

Because all the Others including the latore

They can't be on the list

Values

(art. 24 paragraph 1- a,c: education)

If what I do is important, I have to take it out on my neighbour

Because he doesn't attribute to him the importance I attach to him

If what I do is not important

I have to take it out on myself because I don't do

Something important

What do I do?

Stand and “feel”

(art. 17: protection of the integrity of the person; art. 25: health)

In focusing attention on mental illness (the soma), which does not exist, rather than on mental health (the psyche), psychiatry implements a progressively growing split between the two, implicitly consolidating the “illness” and precluding mental health.

The more you are well

All the more

“It was better when it was worse”

Love vs Truth

(art. 23 paragraph 1-a,b: respect for home and family)

By soliciting the subrogation of feelings through those aroused by the transfer, psychiatric action precludes their authenticity, starting from preventing a more authentic sharing of life experiences.

The truth hurts

Love is passion

Love is truth

Parable

(art. 28 paragraph 1: adequate standards of living and social protection)

Psychiatric action reconstructs in the broadest sense inversely proportional to needs of the here and now, the concept of rights/duties of the individual, also in sense intergenerational as well as transcultural. This, by crossing irreconcilable instances, can also compromise the protection of one’s own survival.

To whom it will be given

From those who do not have, what they do not know they have will be taken away

Because he doesn’t value it

Sincerity

(art. 21: freedom of expression)

The ethical relativism of psychiatric action precludes the construction of an adequate scale of values, favoring random and discriminating polarizations in one’s evaluations. In the long term, however, the same in all its multiple implications weakens the possibilities of expression of this violence as at the same time limits any expressiveness.

The truth is to look for it

He who has the truth lies

He who has the Truth kill

Sacrifice

(art. 10: right to life; art. 16: freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse; art. 17: Protecting the integrity of the person)

The effect of transference in any psychiatric action tends to lead to circumstantiate the operator with whom you interact in a parental figure; however when this action it goes beyond the purely symbolic level of the psychoanalytic setting but involves interventions socio/economic ones, even explicitly containing ones, gives rise to an unavoidable dependence on the road of the unknowability, at least by the end user, of the criteria for an intervention to which he had at least initially attributed only a symbolic meaning: this could be catastrophic if taking charge ends up contemplating the refusal of the user himself, supposedly impossibility of taking charge.

“Why do you want to kill me Father?”

Isaac asked Abraham.

“Because I am your father through the intercession of a Father who decides for me whether to make a merciful father or a cruel one: Science.”

Abraham did not answer

Pasquale Asquino

I was born in Rome 53 years ago and remain scarred for life by a family of peasant origins extremely unfortunate in its ignorance and simplicity.

I began my psychiatric journey upon the death of my father, already a great invalid due to the amputation of both legs a decade or so earlier, in 1990, following unbearable panic attacks: from the public service I was referred to an analytic psychodrama group, which I attended for about 5 years. I randomly discontinued it in parallel with the progressive loss of contact with my university studies, until I underwent voluntary hospitalization (warmly recommended) in 2002 following an assault on my demented mother whom I was the only one to attend. In 2005 came the first incident of threats to my person by my then psychiatrist. After my mother's death I began a decade-long course of private individual psychotherapy aimed at active placement with psychiatric social services, in this case a day care center, where I was placed in various workshop activities and external training courses without construct.

Following an episode of psychomotor agitation at the hands of local nurses I was relocated to another day care center, which I laboriously attend to this day.

I led a reserved life and, perhaps by virtue of this, retained an albeit precarious inner balance.

A BLUE CURL

by Roberta Gelsomino

One late afternoon
I remember,
but not much the sorrow,
the pain.
Spring sun don't leave me
to the dark night of thoughts.
Dye the sky with red
And with shadow these houses.
Perfect sunshine
there is only now you, and a curl
a blue curl;
He advances slowly and firmly adorns
Funny circles that want to speak to you:
I am those, clothed in strangeness
In several stages and hiding a woman.
Little birds would defy death
But mocking fate returns:
Me confined to tenderness though a caress,
I free my essence
which appears to you dementia
and telling you the imposed madness
you understand only drawings of madness.

(September 2015)

“A BLUE CURL” 2015

Markers on paper – size A4

by Roberta Gelsomino



From the Preamble of the CRPD

The States Parties to this Convention:

(...)

- (i) Recognizing further the diversity of persons with disabilities

I was considered stupid only because at that time I preferred to simplify my way of communicating. It was decided that making art was not rehabilitative because the priority was the imposition of “being well” according to the logic of my family, talking to my family members, being a good sick child, not being able to protect myself from unhealthy and impositional relationships.

To be different is to be unique individuals, with their own way of thinking, of evaluating situations. There can be no one manifest way that defines that the person is well. Dysfunctional families cannot define these signs objectively.

Protecting one's health is a right.

Article 3. General Principles

The principles of this convention are:

(...)

(a) Respect for the inherent dignity, individual autonomy, including the freedom to make one's own choices, and independence of persons.

Being in rehab also means taking small independent steps, trying out choices and free will- this is health. It is not health to keep a person sick, and to keep them much more disabled than they already would be.

ART WAS AND IS MY HEALTH. TRY IS HEALTH. MY WAY IS RIGHT, BECAUSE IS MINE

Roberta Gelsomino

Born in 1979 in Milan.

Drawing is her life.

At the age of 14, she was visited by a psychiatrist. From that moment on, she was catapulted into an unnatural and insane dimension.

Roberta experiences the context in the beginning as an extension of the family: the doctors are kind and she does not doubt that she is loved by them.

She starts attending comics and illustration school, and realises she wants to become an artist. When she joined the art therapy workshop in 2010, her artistic work increases to incredible exponential levels both in quality and quantity of productions.

It is precisely the one treatment chosen for her, art therapy, that makes her stronger and leads her to question what is good for herself: during a period when she receives pressure from her family and the clinical side, Roberta gets tired and starts putting the pieces of a big puzzle together.

Drugs that had never solved the agitations and panic attacks, because the reason isn't in her mind. After realising, Roberta is brought 'back to order': she receives medical treatment whenever she questions the method.

She decided to stop seeing a psychiatrist. In 2016, September she stops taking psychotropic drugs for good, a choice she finds everyone against.

Throughout this history Roberta still continues to draw, and to cherish her experience until she has a chance to talk about it.

UnsilenceYourVoice is an extraordinary opportunity to do so.

Roby is happy to be part of it and thanks AnneMarie.

Roberto

Diodati

Born in Teramo 27/07/1968

Resident in Rome Lazio Italy

Website: imagoonus.it

Artistic Discipline/Art Form

Graphics Writing Poetry Music Video

Currently employed part-time as a graphic designer with a work grant at "**Lo Spiraglio Filmfestival della Salute Mentale ASL Roma 1**". Graphic skills acquired mainly as a self-taught and also, in part through graphics/multimedia workshop, in the CSM environment, where we used to realize many beautiful ideas and projects, also at the request of clients, which took place in a Mental Health Day Center then unfortunately closed due to the idiocy of certain obtuse managers, for no good reason. The same workshop that allowed me to showcase my skills and obtain a Work Fellowship. I also make small animations and motion design.

Semi-professional musician I studied with several music teachers from the age of 15 years, I play and study music for over 40 years, sound technician with certificate issued by the school **Percento Musica** in Rome, I also work as a web designer, I have made several websites, graduated in accountancy, in life I started working from the age of 15 years then I worked mainly as a welder and blacksmith first as an employee then with VAT, later from 2007 to 2014 I managed together with two partners a Recording Studio "**Skyline Recording Studio**" in Rome in the form of cultural association.

**He is the creator of the logo of the
UnsilenceYourVoice Project**





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ENUSP European Network of (ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry

'Diritti alla Follia' Organization

'Code per Curiosi' Organization

Roberto Diodati for the logo

and **all the Participants** to the Project