

## Drama Transforms us

The conference in Bucharest was an opportunity to share the exciting work that Christina Gray (ECU) and I have in progress about the transformational impact of drama teaching and learning.

This version of the workshop was called



Participants are invited to explore the claims by many drama teachers that drama is transformational. They see their role as leading agentic

change transfiguring lives immediately in class and subsequently through life-wide experience. They see drama as transformative learning (Fleming, 2018; Mezirow, 1998).

*Transformation is a phenomenon that is able to create long-lasting, irreversible, pervasive consequences on individuals' beliefs, perceptions, identity, and values* (Brown, 2000; Chirico et al., 2022;

Gaggioli, 2016). The research specifically examines three core questions: 1. Who are transformed? 2. What is transformed? 3. How does transformation happen?

We had a wonderful group of willing participants (including students from

Moldova). This was part research report but mostly an opportunity to remember stories and to embody them.



There are 5 articles in progress in this project with two already accepted for publication. In the Australian Journal of Education, "When Brian Acted His Way Out of a Wet Paper Bag": The Transformational Qualities of Drama Education



<https://lnkd.in/gZBgNFAE>

The next major phase of this project is a book proposal where we provide a lead chapter focused on theorising and explaining drama as transformational learning. In that book we plan to share chapters by invited authors focused on their experiences on this theme responding to our chapter. To springboard their contributions we invite our authors to respond to one of the collected stories from the research. The book will also include all the stories from the research.

We continue to collect stories and invite others to share their stories with us.

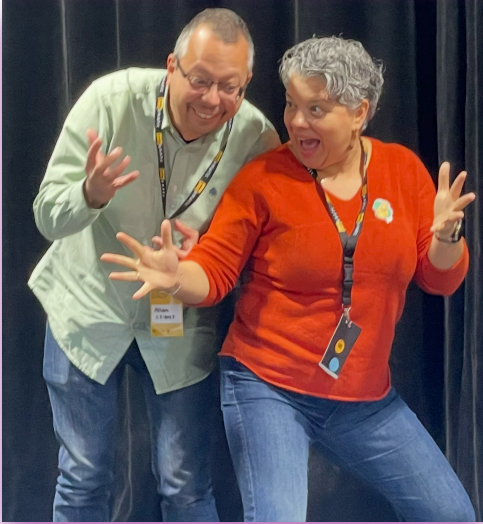


**Join us.**  
**Send your stories of drama as transformation to:**

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On this occasion (as with Singapore in July) I had my long term partner in crime, Liz, working with me while Christina was slaving away back in Perth. Always a pleasure to once again work with Liz. We have a natural working rhythm.



We were thrilled with the interest in the project and the drama created by the participants.

*It is also important to note how often during the conference there was reference to the transformational qualities of drama.*

**About the project.** This project began almost two years ago from a conversation with Christina over lunch at the Mid Century Cafe. We began by scoping her drama education students at ECU about their memories, dreams and aspirations about drama teaching. From that emerged a recurring theme of the transformational qualities of drama teaching and learning.

Next we expanded our exploration by interviewing more students and teachers (see our article mentioned earlier) Presenting the initial findings at the Drama New Zealand (2024) and Drama Australia (2025) conferences as well as the WAAE Summit in Athens (2024) and the SDEA conference in Singapore (2025) gave us opportunities for gathering further more stories of drama as transformation. The UNATC Participation Conference broadened our field yet again.

**This is an ongoing project.**

Images included in this report are from my own collection and also from IPhotographer: Maereanu larina (Instagram: rems.gf)

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**Watch out for further reports from Bucharest.**