

## The MAGA building; the situation as it stands

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At a little over one month since the fire in Gallarate's Museum of Art, the MAGA, in Via De Magri, on 14 February, technicians and experts are still at work, carefully assessing what needs to be done (also in terms of the financial cover from the insurance companies), **for the moment, excluding the idea of a temporary roof**, after the go ahead for the initial work to prevent any further rain damage. **Here is an update on the building** and also on a related matter of transferring the library to the premises of the former Gallery of Modern Art (the GAM).

**Point one: checks are still in progress.** At the moment, the experts appointed by the Council, by the insurance company, by the maintenance company, and, above all, **by the Court** are gathering data. After delivery of the report by the court expert, it should be possible to **remove the seals from the part of the building that is still under sequestration (the roof)** and to give the go ahead for the work. The first checks to be completed are those that relate to the statics of the building, that is, checks to confirm that there is no danger of any kind to any damaged parts. In the meantime, the town council is getting ready to go ahead with the work; on Tuesday 19 March, the council leaders established the rules and safety regulations for the council employees that will have to enter the building in the future.

**Point two: a temporary roof.** Although this was initially suggested, it currently seems to have been rejected, in anticipation of a permanent solution. The Mayor, Edoardo Guenzani, explained, "Already on the Monday after the fire, we had an estimate for a temporary roof, which would have cost €250,000. However, following checks, it was discovered that **this would not have been covered by the insurance company.**" The only choice that the council has left (which does not appear to be certain, however) is that the temporary solution may be seen by the insurance companies as necessary to prevent further damage to the structure.

In the meantime, however, just a few days after the fire, initial work was carried out to create a **physical barrier to prevent the rainwater** that had come in through the damaged roof from flooding the storeys below. The physical barrier was built inside the building. On the matter of how long it will take to rebuild the roof, the Mayor explained, "For the moment, no decision can be taken."

In the meantime, the intention is to **make the undamaged part of the building useable again, starting with the new wing** (which also includes the entrance hall; on the left, in the photo), which was not directly damaged, as it is separate from the old building, which was burnt. **"Today, to all intents and purposes, the building is unfit for use. We need to check the equipment** (electricity, mechanical and surveillance systems, and lifts) and the certifications. For our part, we'd like the building to be declared habitable ... yesterday, but it all depends on the checks that need to be done."

This is the situation, so far, of the building in Via De Magri. **Then, there is the MAGA Museum, intended as the cultural institution**, for which, a reduction in the contribution has

been planned, given the extraordinary situation (but the spending review is an indication also for the future, *Sinistra Ecologia e Libertà* said in a note); the Zanella Foundation have got the activities going again, by reformulating them in relation to the alternative spaces available, including those of other cultural organisations and private associations in the town which have been made available, such as the cooperative MELO, and the Museum of Native Studies (photo: the sign in Via Borgo Antico). An appeal has also been made to involve other partners, in addition to the town council. In any case, this is a matter that we will come back to.

Returning to the premises, Via De Magri is unfit for use; **the MAGA has returned to the small, more modest premises of the former GAM**, in Viale Milano (photo: the press conference at the end of February, in the entrance hall). It had been planned to transfer the library to the former GAM, indeed, the work was about to be scheduled, and the go ahead had already been given to transfer the spaces occupied by the Immigration Office of the nearby Public Safety Department. **“The work to create the library premises had been planned for July and August; of course, they’ll go ahead, but with a delay.** In the meantime, on with the work of transferring the Immigration Office; I had the confirmation a few weeks ago. If we reach an agreement on how to divide up the spaces with the MAGA, **I hope that the delay of the new library is minimal** and that we complete the transferral by autumn.” Of course, in the meantime, the town council will have to find premises, temporary or otherwise, for the MAGA.

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