

A Contemporary Workshop for the town, but not only

Pubblicato: Martedì 25 Febbraio 2014



Culture that livens up the town squares, creating points of discussion, opening up to the world and appearing on a wider scene. Thus begins the adventure of **Officina Contemporanea**, the new network in Gallarate of museums, theatres and associations. On **Friday, banners bearing the logo [OC] appeared on the fronts of the premises of Gallarate associations, theatres and museums**, in anticipation of the presentation evening and of the weekend (on Friday and Saturday) of initiatives that will liven up the town. "A workshop as a platform for work, not a collection and calendar of events, open to the theme of contemporaneity," explained **Emma Zanella**, the director of the **MAGA Museum**, which is leading the network of eleven organisations involved. "Gallarate is a town characterised by its interest in contemporary work, from visual art, to music, to cinema. What most distinguishes us is our history, a way of looking at and making our contemporaneity ours."

The project's strength is also in its funding, by the **Cariplo Foundation** (€900,000), who judged the idea of the network as one of the most interesting proposals, because of the strength of the work and of the planning in the network. "The call for projects led to ten being funded; **Officina Contemporanea** is the only one here in Varese Province," **Giorgio Gaspari, a Cariplo Foundation committee member**, pointed out. Among the promoters of the OC project, there are two well-established organisations, the **Teatro delle Arti** (Theatre of Arts) and the **Premio Arti Visive Città di Gallarate** (Gallarate Town Visual Arts Award), respectively in their 50th and 63th years (at the presentation, they were represented by Cristina Boracchi and Giovanni Orsini), with the support of the **MAGA Museum**, which gives a lot of exposure to contemporary visual arts.

There is a place where the town's artistic heritage is stored, the little known **Museum of the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta** (the Studi Patri are network partners), and a lively, social and cultural meeting place is **Il Melo**, which was represented at the presentation by Dr Marco

Predazzi. Then, there is the **network of schools in the town** (“We’re involving 8000 students of all ages,” explained the representative, the high school headmistress, Luisella Macchi), the **Panizzi Library Consortium** (“which brings together 13 councils,” the chairman, Maurizio Occhipinti, pointed out), the **Teatro Nuovo di Madonna in Campagna**, also a community meeting place in the outskirts of the town, the **Proscenium Dance School** (see photo: a performance of dance in the foyer of the town hall, during the presentation of the project), the **Municipal Tourist Board**, with its attention to the humour and to the humorous graphics, as the chairman, Vittorio Pizzolato, pointed out.

The challenge is by no means insignificant, to be pursued over three years, as the Deputy Mayor, Giovanni Pignataro, and Councillor for Culture, Sebastiano Nicosia, pointed out. “**At a time when there is talk of crisis, we see how strategic investing in culture is.** Gallarate has a tradition, culture means quality of life, it includes acknowledging the commitment of so many organisations. In Gallarate, the register of associations, which has just been produced, gathers together 50 that are seeking to join a network.” At the heart of Officina Contemporanea, there is also the idea of reducing the fragmentation of the cultural offering, of creating a strong image that acknowledges quality, livens up debate and creates curiosity. In the project, there is the idea of training for all of the organisations, but above all, coherent visual communication: not only banners on theatres, museums and premises, but also particular attention to the social media, starting with Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts. All of this, with reference to three different areas: “the square, intended as a metaphor for social living; crossroads, to create connection points; beyond the walls, looking beyond the town.” It all begins this weekend, with eleven different initiatives in town, including theatre shows, concerts, trials, and workshops for children.

[Redazione VareseNews](#)

redazione@varesenews.it