

Lab Inside: contemporary art for children

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Museum teaching, without a museum consists of shapes, colours, signs, creativity, sharing and simplicity, has a strong foundation of over 20 years of experience.

It is these key points that are guiding **the MA*GA museum's workshops for children and families**, in the midst of the health emergency. During this season, the MA*GA Museum normally organises many activities for children and teenagers, hosting school trips during the week, and families at the weekend.

“Teaching is the MA*GA Museum's flagship activity. The Museum's staff have been doing it for 22 years, for children of all ages, and have toured Europe explaining its practices and methods to colleagues,” said **Lorena Giuranna**, the head of the MA*GA's teaching department, who is proud also of the activities they have organised for adults and teenagers, in recent years. In these days, her work is to create, as part of the interactive activities for virtual visitors to the museum (**Art Box, which includes workshops and e-books**), a special section dedicated to children: **Lab Inside**. **Creativity and concept activities are a must for a contemporary art museum.**

MATERIALS

Starting with the experience of the workshops organised at the MA*GA, the challenge is **to recreate that personal artistic research challenge in a different context**, far from the works that form the permanent collection or the personal exhibitions in the gallery, but also far from the museum's rooms and materials.

“An essential condition for our proposals now is to use **very basic materials**. We’re in the same situation, isolated and on hold, so we choose materials that can be **easily found in the drawers, fridges and attics in all houses**,” Lorena explained.

GUIDELINES AND SHARING

As the staff are unable to act in person and show, especially to children, how to move around and in what order, **each workshop is announced with a short introductory video** (which is published on the **MA*GA’s FB page**), which explains its meaning and aims, and invites the children to download the practical guide (in pdf, from the website), where each step is explained schematically, with a few effective words and a lot of pictures.

The children are then invited to send their works to didattica@museomaga.it, “**to share your own experience on MAGA’s social media page, just as people used to at weekends at the museum**,” the promoters explained.

WHAT’S NICE ABOUT LAB INSIDE

The workshops are not ordinary activities, but **opportunities to play, to teach about the pictures, linking visual art to concepts**. “Shape, colour, signs and composition are our basic elements. One of the first workshops is called **Finestre** (Windows), which was chosen to work with an object that symbolises closure, which establishes the boundary between the inside and outside,” explained Lorena Giuranna, who also holds education in high regard, choosing what is good for children.

Another fundamental aspect is that of bonds (which are demonstrated with the Weft and the Weave), **which children miss and they need to reaffirm and renew, even symbolically despite the distance of their friends, grandparents, teachers and companions**.

di Translated by Iura & Nuzzi (Reviewed by Prof. Rolf Cook)