

The MA*GA is among the 100 most visited museums in Italy

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Also in 2019, the MA*GA in Gallarate is in the ranking of the 100 most visited museums in Italy, which was published in the April issue of *Il Giornale dell'Arte*. With **102,131 visitors**, the museum in Gallarate **is ninth among contemporary art museums and sixty-fourth in the general ranking** (which sees the Uffizi Gallery in Florence at the top), **gaining 24 places with respect to 2018**.

This is an excellent result for a town of limited size, like Gallarate, if we compare it to large cities, such as Rome, Naples, Florence, Milan and Venice, which have the advantage of being an important driving force for tourism and of hosting collections full of masterpieces of ancient Italian art.

“Cultural popularity is not always measured by the number of visitors,” said **Sandrina Bandera**, the President of the MA*GA Museum, “but I have to admit that I look at this result, which has confirmed (and improved) the position achieved last year, with great pride, knowing that it’s the result of the coordinated and intelligent work of the director, Emma Zanella, and the whole staff, including the volunteers, and of the support of the town council, of the Friends of the MA*GA, its sponsors, and the National Visual Arts Award of Gallarate. For everyone, from children to adults, the MA*GA offers both the knowledge of its heritage and the experience, each time, of contemporary art, with exhibitions and events. Now, the future is not easy because the museum lives thanks to its visitors, their voices, their comments, their eyes. With the pandemic, the 2020 numbers at the museums around the world will be different. The sudden closure has put the whole system in crisis, with incalculable damage. But I’m sure that man’s intelligence and creative spirit will be able to overcome this moment. Now the digital world is offering the MA*GA public a new, and also very experiential, approach which, like a parallel track to

a visit, will last over time; but, let's be clear, it doesn't replace the joy of entering the museum and sharing the enthusiasm of a direct approach with someone. The important occasion of the creation of a Cultural Centre, which Gallarate town council is creating at the MA*GA with our support, adding to the museum activity also some services of the Luigi Majno Library, a precious, local cultural resource, will enable us to enhance the museum and to create intercultural events and services open to a wide range of artistic expressions that are interconnected. This important step forward projects us towards a new horizon with another outlet for an even larger public. As soon as possible, and only when it is completely safe, the museum will start again, with a programme of great appeal, but for the time being, for all of us who work in the museum and for our public, the achievement of 2019 is an incentive to dream about the future."

"The excellent result, in terms of visitor numbers, achieved by the MA*GA, convinces us of how good the project the museum is pursuing is," explained **Claudia Maria Mazzetti**, the Councillor for Museums. "The article also highlights that, throughout the world, the most important museums are planning their activities and functions, by looking at society, the digital world, and the numerous creative possibilities of the present. This approach comforts us and supports us in our decision to establish a pioneering Cultural Centre, that provides the town and the general public with a varied, high quality cultural offer, open to the multiple contributions of contemporary art, writing, reading, meeting and participation."

"The dramatic situation we're living through," said **Massimo Palazzi**, the Councillor for Culture, "has destroyed the false balances on which our society was largely based, and has highlighted the founding values on which to redesign the future; among these, culture, collaboration, sharing and education will form the basis of the Cultural Centre, which will have to merge the experience and professionalism of two important organisations in the town, namely the Majno Library and the MA*GA Museum, to enable the recognition of value, which, today, is expressed by the success achieved by the museum in 2019, to be confirmed and expressed in new ways in the years to come."

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