



Fig. 1. Children creating a mosaic inspired by original Roman floor mosaics at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

TRAVELING THROUGH TIME WITH CHILDREN IN BELGRADE

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The education program Traveling Through Time is a series of creative children workshops including Antique Mosaics, Millefiori, Decoding Hieroglyphic and Glagolitic scripts, Archaeological excavation and conservation, Historical stroll through Belgrade and Zemun, etc. Here non-formal educational methods for children aged from 10 to 14 are used and these correspond to their school program (subjects of history, language, art, etc.).

These workshops take place in the Belgrade City Museum in collaboration with the Museums Kids Club as well as with Center "Duga" – a center that aims at helping in learning focused on orphan, deaf and blind children.

Keywords:

children workshops – non-formal education – creativity – museum – cultural heritage

*“A child you should behold
But still let him be free
The sooner you deem him a man
The sooner a man he will be...”
Rsumovic (2015)*

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Traveling Through Time* educational program is a series of cultural, educational and creative children workshops with the main aim of developing children's team learning and creativity through amusing games. By using non-formal education methods, children learn about the fields of archaeology, conservation, history, art, significant old scripts and their decoding. The children are encouraged to spark their imagination and create authentic work in a variety of media. In each workshop, children explore ideas and processes behind one ancient craft, as well as modern ways to preserve them. The workshops invite children to question, explore, experiment and solve problems as they create and interact with different crafts and with other pupils. They can express themselves creatively while learning to build their skills in a friendly team-work environment. They are also taught how and why it is important to protect cultural heritage for the next generations.

All workshops consist of Power Point presentation (Fig. 2 & 3) about the main subject and practical

work. The work is conducted in small teams so that the workshops are economical and can very easily adapted to different spaces (museum rooms, outdoor spaces, festivals, etc.).

2. ANTIQUE MOSAICS

With the workshop "Antique Mosaics" the children learn basic facts about everyday life within the Roman Empire. They develop craft abilities and creativity and at the same time they learn the basics of mosaics-making. They learn how the Romans decorated their living surroundings, which techniques they used, as well which topics or scenes they were frequently depicting on mosaics.

The Power Point presentation shows a short history of mosaics making. It also demonstrates how the mosaics are treated upon the discovery in archaeological excavations and how are they then preserved and protected. In this way, the children develop awareness about the cultural heritage that surrounds them and that needs to be kept for future generations.

Afterwards, the pupils are divided into small teams and each team makes one mosaic inspired by Roman floor mosaics. Materials used are collage papers glued onto cardboard (Figs. 4 & 5).



Fig. 2. Presentation at the Museum of Ivo Andrić (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

3. MILLEFIORI

The goal of this workshop is to teach pupils how and with which materials the glass vessels are made. Also, which glass objects and vessels were used in Roman Empire and what was their purpose in everyday life. The techniques of glass vessel decoration are also presented, e.g. different applications of molten glass, cameo, diatretum technique and especially millefiori, the so called “1000 flowers” technique.

The presentation shows different objects made of glass and the techniques of their making. Simultaneously with the description of techniques, the demonstration is made with the colored modeling clay so the pupils can easily understand the way of production and apply it later on the workshop.

Practical work comprises of the use of modern glass jars and application onto them of Roman decoration techniques. The workshop of glass jars decorating is



Fig. 3. Presentation at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

unusual and interesting for children as they learn to use colored clay for making decorations and figures in entirely new way, different to the one they are used to in conventional school (Figs. 6 to 9).

4. DECODING LETTERS: HIEROGLYPHS AND GLAGOLITIC ALPHABET

The activity is divided according two different types of writing: hieroglyphs and glagolitic.

4.1. DECODING LETTERS - HIEROGLYPHS - “THE KEYS OF LETTERING”

The starting idea of the workshop is to learn the importance of the invention of writing and its development from pictographic towards phonetic scripts.



Fig. 4. Mosaic made with plastic bags. Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 5. Works inspired on antique mosaics made by children at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

The pupils learn from the initial presentation how many types of writing existed in old Egypt; where the inscriptions and hieroglyphs can be found and seen; who deciphered the Egyptian writing; where they can find elements of Egyptian culture in Belgrade; etc.

After the presentation, the children are divided into teams named after great and important Egyptian

rulers or deities. After a short introduction about the life and work of writer Duško Radović and his aphorisms, each team needs to translate a couple of Belgrade aphorisms into hieroglyphic texts. The teams receive the text written on a cardboard and sets of pictorial hieroglyphs. They need to find the matching symbols for letters and to glue them beneath the text (Fig. 10).



Figs. 6, 7 & 8. Millefiori made by children at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 9. Children making millefiori at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

The idea of this workshop is to teach children about one ancient skill but also to connect it with something more familiar and closer in time (in this case the ancient script combined with the text about Belgrade, their hometown).

4.2. DECODING LETTERS - "GLAGOLITIC"

This workshop is similar to the previous one. It highlights importance of language and literacy but the focus is set more on development of Serbian language and Serbian Cyrillic script.

The workshop begins with a short introduction of the Cyrillic development, from the first script "glagolitic" (glagoljica) and its creators – Ćirilo and Metodije in the 9th century up to the language reforms of Vuk Karadžić in the 18th century. The presentation also includes the story of the Serbian Nobel Prize winner Ivo Andrić.

After the presentation, the children are divided in teams, named after stories or novels written by Andrić. They will be writing his quotes with "glagolitic" letters. Each team has a task to "translate" a small section of chosen from a text by Andrić, which talks about the city of Belgrade. Each member of the team writes



Fig. 10. Children playing the Keys of Lettering at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum).

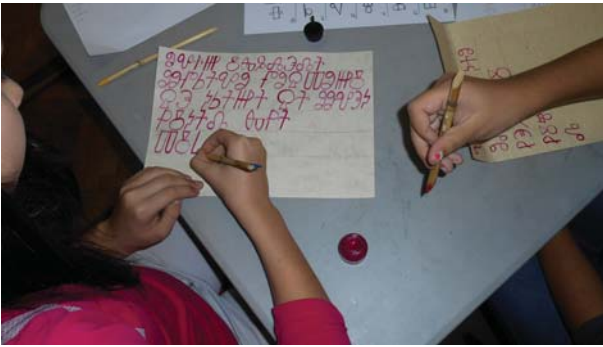


Fig. 11. Activity on glagolitic writing at the Museum of Ivo Andric (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

individual words in “glagolitic“. The entire team then joins these individual words into sentences and at the end into a whole text. Preparation includes matching of Cyrillic and “glagolitic“ letters. All writing is done through the use of quills and colored inks (Fig. 11 & 12).

5. SHARP EYE - CRAFTY HANDS

The goal of this workshop is to highlight the importance of conservation, as one of the ways of preserving cultural heritage. At the same time, it is great opportunity for children to learn and develop their skills and abilities, especially precision and patience.

The workshop starts with a Power Point introduction which shows what is the field of conservation; why we perform it; where it can be applied; why it is important; who are the conservators; where they work and what exactly are their tasks.



Fig. 12. Final text with glagolitic letters at the Museum of Ivo Andric (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

The next phase explains the activities at three different points or stations. These stations are:

- archaeological trench – simulation of archaeological excavation in the pool filled with sand and using archaeological tools
- joining the fragments of old photos of Belgrade
- search for ceramic fragments that belong to one same vessel and its reconstruction by gluing the pieces together

The kids move together visiting all of these stations and listening to the instructions for work. The next practical part of the workshop follows by pupils being separated in three teams. Each team works in one station and they exchange between stations in 20 minutes intervals. In that way, each team experiences all three tasks.



Fig. 13. Excavation during the Sharp Eye – Crafty Hands activity at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 14. Joining photographs fragments during the Sharp Eye – Crafty Hands activity at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 15. Ceramic vessels reconstruction during the Sharp Eye – Crafty Hands activity at the Residence of Princess Ljubica (Belgrade City Museum). Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 16. Stroll through Belgrade fortress and Zemun at Belgrade fortress with Center "Duga". Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

At the end, all participants get a short explanation about the photos they were reconstructing and small index of terms that were used in the workshop (Figs. 13 to 15).

The Workshop "Sharp Eye – Crafty Hands" was inspired by ICCROM training International Course on "First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis" (Amsterdam) where the author participated in April 2015. The course identifies areas of joint programming between culture and humanitarian sectors to ensure that the affected communities participate in the recovery process. The core component of the course is highly practical with simulations and hands-on exercises on damage assessment, salvage and first aid measure for sites and collections. In this workshop children learn more about first aid, risks, stabilization and restoration.

6. HISTORICAL STROLL THROUGH BELGRADE AND ZEMUN

The tour "Stroll through Belgrade fortress and Zemun" has the goal of teaching children about the history of

their town through interesting stories and anecdotes. They can learn where and how the first settlements at Taurunum and Singidunum were built; who were their first inhabitants and which people lived here throughout centuries. The children can learn about important landmarks and monuments which they see every day, as for example Gardoš tower, the "Winner" monument, the gates of Belgrade fortress, and the old foundry in Zemun, among others.

They also discover the importance of certain persons for the history of Belgrade, e.g. Despot Stefan Lazarević, Miloš Obrenović, Ivan Meštrović, Mihailo Obrenović and others (Figs. 16 to 18).

7. CONCLUSIONS

The educational program *Traveling Through Time* is a series of workshops that started in September 2014. All workshops were dedicated to children aged between 10 and 14 years old, coming from 10 schools in Belgrade. From September 2015 a program for children aged



Fig. 17. Stroll through Belgrade fortress and Zemun at Belgrade fortress with Center "Duga". Image by Jovana Mijatovic.



Fig. 18. Stroll through Belgrade fortress and Zemun at Belgrade fortress with Center "Duga". Image by Jovana Mijatovic.

from 14 to 18 years old will also be initiated. The goal of these workshops will be communication between museums and children, how they perceive museums and what would they change in exhibitions. That will be a unique chance for them to create exhibitions and be involved in collections creation and presentation. They will not only be observers but also play an active part in the world of cultural heritage.

The importance of involving children through workshops is invaluable for the future. If they learn now significance of they own history and cultural heritage, in the future they will be better keepers than we are today.

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