

The Importance of Art and Child Development!

By: Jonathan Monje

Salvador Dali's art can generate both emotional and psychological responses through critical analysis and contemplation. This can spark interest towards anyone who visits The Dali, leaving lasting impressions which can lead to possible re-occurring visits in the future. With progression and awareness at the forefront of our ongoing mission, it's important to reach out to audiences outside of our regular attendees.

With events such as Home School Day, this offers opportunity to reach out to a younger audience, allowing children and their parents to engage in complex surrealism and experience those psychological responses correlating with Dali's work and art in general.

Being a part of the Volunteer process, it filled my heart to witness the plethora of children that fluttered around the museum. Faces struck with wonder and excitement as children worked alongside each other participating in collaborative art activities as well as visiting the 3rd floor galleries, and parents who were more than delighted to share the experience.

It's important to highlight these events that put emphasis on not only awareness towards the museum, but events that also leave a positive and permanent footprint on the individuals in our community. Children being so receptive to information at a young age are one of the most important audiences we can reach. We have the opportunity to not only create future visitors but also the chance to teach and engage, inevitably coinciding with their view towards art as a whole. If executed precisely we can positively affect their development in terms of interpreting, criticizing, visualizing information, and how to make choices based on it.

Seeing the importance in exposing younger generations to art, I conducted some research on a few key aspects that explain how exactly introducing art at a young age can positively affect kids. It might shed some light on the importance of integrating events/activities we hold at The Dali geared towards younger crowds as well as informing you on the psychological and physical advantages. The concepts to explore involve emotional development, motor development, and cognitive development.

EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

When it comes to tangibly creating art, young kids find a sense of satisfaction from producing art, this is through the control children have over the materials they use and the autonomy they have in the decisions they make. The positive reinforcement was very apparent while helping with the Home School Day event. They were developing positive reinforcement through viewing and producing art. The collaborative art projects allowed kids to take turns continuously adding onto a blank canvas, along with other activities. In turn this supports cognitive emotional

development. This development can be understood through not only the self, but through productive group engagement.

MOTOR DEVELOPMENT

Making art allows children to work on basic motor skills by developing their muscle groups on skills and techniques that require use of coordination and strength. Developing motor dexterity and control can also be seen using fingers, hands, and wrist. Finally, working on hand-eye coordination becomes another crucial element when introducing children to creating art. Joan Bouza Koster is an experienced early childhood education instructor and has conducted research on these two elements. Koster puts emphasis on motor development through producing art and states its important involvement in children, “As children decide how to make parts fit together into a whole, where to place objects, and what details to include, they learn to coordinate what they see with the movements of their hands and fingers.”

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Creating and observing art provides a sensory exploration activity. With this concept in mind, studies and clinical research suggests that at virtually every stage of life art can foster openness to novelty as well as encourage connections to people, places, things, and concepts. Among other positive outcomes, art can promote the ability to take multiple perspectives. This concept is important considering it offers art as welcoming a commercial sense of belonging, self-awareness, and fostering an open mind-set. These are all factors that correlate with our progressive mindset.

Through these various concepts, it's easy to realize how crucial it can be to allow children to participate in art and the importance of our art education department. The affect art has on developing young minds in general and across all mediums of artistic expression share the same reactions. Emotional, motor, and cognitive developments are all part of mental maturation. Though they each serve different functions individually, they are all affected cohesively and grow alongside each other.