

Dear Diary,

We had quite an interesting day at school today. Instead of having a normal class, we went to the Museum of Fine Arts! It was so exciting! We'd never done something like that before and, to be honest, we really enjoyed it. It was an interesting experience, kind of confusing at first, because we were not used to analysing pieces of art - sometimes really complex and abstract, full of symbols and hidden messages. But, fortunately, a week before the visit, a well-prepared man called Ariel had come to school and gave us a small introduction to help us understand the paintings we were going to see during the visit. We saw lots of them and learned about various artists. Some of them even became our favourite ones!

The first artist we were introduced to was **Xul Solar**, an Argentinian painter, sculptor, writer, and inventor of imaginary languages (and some other cool stuff, too). Ariel, who turned out to be our guide as well, explained to us that Xul studied in Europe, and settled for a time in Paris. We noticed lots of symbols like crosses, ladders, fire, hearts and flags in most of Xul's paintings to represent colours and paths, for example. We really liked the fact that the painter used watercolours, which were actually not that common among well-known painters, but looked amazing. His works were generally small pictures and that makes them even more impressive. We mean, it can't be easy to make a masterpiece in a very tiny place with really watery paint!

Then we met **Emilio Pettoruti**, another Argentinian artist. His paintings were full of shapes and light, and most of them were completely geometric! It's curious how everything around us may be seen like a geometric form. Add a great use of colour, light and shapes and you got yourself cubism! Pettoruti actually belonged to this movement that was developed after the First World War, because people started to see the world in a fragmented way; interesting, isn't it? The one we liked the most was this huge painting called "*The Improviser*". Apparently, Emilio loved the enormous style.

In the same room, there was a painting by **Picasso**, a Spanish painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, stage designer, poet and playwright, who spent most of his adult life in France. He used thin lines to represent figures as he did in the one we saw.

After our path with cubism, we visited **Antonio Berni**'s room, an Argentinian figurative artist. And right there, occupying the whole wall, was hanging our absolutely favourite painting of the tour: "*Nightmare of the Unfair*" - GREAT title, by the way - a 300 x 400 cm (he took the "go big or go home" a bit too personal, but they're actually two canvas) colourful and gloomy painting. It represented

the dreams of those who shared the unjust world of Juanito Laguna, the main character of the namesake series that became a social narrative on industrialization and poverty, and pointed out the extreme disparities existing between the wealthy Argentine aristocracy and “Juanitos of the slums”. In fact, we got the chance to admire one of these paintings: “*Juanito Laguna learns to read*”. We also saw a bunch of other good works by Berni and found out he used vibrant colours and doors and windows to the outside that showed us the world from two different perspectives.

Next, we took a glance at **Jackson Pollock**’s action painting. He was an influential American painter and a major figure in the abstract expressionist movement. Pollock’s technique of pouring and dripping paint is thought to be one of the origins of the term action painting. Pity we couldn’t check out more of his work, but we’re glad we saw at least one.

Finally, we saw kinetic and optical art, which is art from any medium that contains movement perceivable by the viewer or depends on motion for its effect. This interesting and unique technique started in the sixties.

We think this experience has taught us a lot about our culture. We learned how important some of these pictures and artists were and still are nowadays to our country and history. We found out that there are many ways to express ourselves and share our ideas with the world, but art is the most beautiful way. We never thought that a picture could mean so many different things and transmit messages that could change the lives of such a large group of human beings.

We really do believe that schools should give plastic arts the importance they deserve and encourage their students to be part of more mind-opening activities like visiting an art museum.

Laura Besimsky, Alexia Feldman y Martina Castelao (2nd 5th)



"Landscape" by Xul Solar



"The Improviser" by Emilio Pettoruti



"Nightmare of the Unfair" by Antonio Berni