



Santa Maria  
della Scala

**EDU**

# **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM 2025-2026**

## **SCHOOLS**

- **PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY**
- **LOWER AND UPPER SECONDARY**



## THE MUSEUM COMPLEX

Santa Maria della Scala was one of the first reception centers (xenodochium) in Europe. Founded around the year 1000 to assist pilgrims and travelers along the Via Francigena, as well as to provide shelter and care for the poor and sick, the ancient hospital played an important social role by taking in abandoned children (so-called *gettarelli*) and supporting their growth, education, and upbringing until adulthood.

Over the centuries, Santa Maria della Scala upheld its extraordinary mission dedicated to personal care, eventually specializing exclusively in hospital care in more recent history. Since the 1990s, after its healthcare functions were phased out and departments relocated, the complex has undergone significant study and restoration, led by architect Guido Canali, aimed at transforming it into a major museum and cultural center. Santa Maria della Scala can therefore be seen as a reflection of the city's history: a place where architecture, artworks, and history tell a continuous story up to the present day, offering a unique insight into cultural anthropology.

## CHILDREN'S ART MUSEUM (San Leopoldo Hall)

The Children's Art Museum was established in 1998 with a cultural offering based on themed exhibitions and related educational activities. From the very beginning, its mission has been to open up art and artistic culture to the world of childhood. In 2007, the museum moved to Santa Maria della Scala, gaining a dedicated space for its Collection in the San Leopoldo Hall. The Collection showcases a wide range of artistic expressions: from sculpture to painting on canvas or panel, from photography to video and installations. The common thread linking the works is not time or chronology, but theme, allowing for an open dialogue between past and present.

## EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The Educational Services offer a wide range of activities, organized by audience, thematic areas, and age groups, all available for consultation on the museum's website.

**Schools** - The topics are addressed using specific teaching methodologies and cover a range from archaeology to ancient art, as well as modern and contemporary art. Schools of all levels can request educational projects tailored to their specific teaching needs.

**Families** - Scheduled events and on-demand programs for children and families, including tours, activities, and creative workshops.

**Accessibility** - A section dedicated to cultural offerings and programs entirely aimed at people with disabilities and, more broadly, vulnerable groups.

**Training** - The museum acts as a bridge between art and the public, offering workshops, internships, traineeships, and special projects led by artists, industry specialists, and education experts.





**VISITS-ATTIVITIES-LABORATORIES  
PRESCHOOL AND  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**



**SEA VIEWS (new)**

How can we describe the sea? We will try to answer this question by diving into three artworks (*The Fisherman and the Princess* – Wanli, *Giulia's Painting* – Capogrosso, *The Little Mermaid*–Paul S.), all of which share the sea as their setting. During the workshop, amidst emotions and horizons, the children will enrich the original paintings with their own perspectives by painting with tempera and brushes on acetate sheets.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them at a later time.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

**BABY ANIMALS AND CHILDREN (new)**

This colorful collection of Chinese woodblock prints offers a rich and varied panorama of characters from the imagination of this distant country. The playful figures of animals and children, traditionally used to decorate everyday objects in Chinese folk culture, will serve as inspiration for a workshop where the class group will explore the basics of woodblock printing (ancient printmaking technique).

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them at a later time.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

**CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE COLLECTION (new)**

A journey through the San Leopoldo Hall to discover the Children's Art Museum Collection, its history, and a selection of works by contemporary artists. Through multiple sensory channels along with engaging stories and in-depth exploration, children will discover a heritage that spans from ancient to contemporary art, all connected by a common thread: the world of childhood.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30



## PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY

### **STORIES ON A JOURNEY (new)**

A journey through artworks and stories from distant lands: from the paintings of *The Short-Tailed Hare* by Mikidadi Bush, evoking the African atmosphere of Tanzania, to the ink drawings by women from India's Mithila region with the *Myth of Ganesh*, and the Japanese canvases of *The Fisherman and the Princess* by Wanli. In the workshop, children will create a watercolor painting, incorporating characters inspired by the artworks seen in the Collection, bringing their own personal story to life.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### **THE LITTLE SEAGULL AND THE CAT (FROM PAINTING TO FAIRY TALE)**

An educational activity designed to offer a multisensory interpretation of selected excerpts from the story "The Little Seagull and the Cat," supported by unique raised artworks created by Letizia Masi and tactile panels accompanied by Braille captions. This narration is renewed each time through the senses of sight, hearing, and touch. Children will be invited to create a clay artwork incorporating key elements of the story.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum for firing and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30





## SANTA MARIA DELLA SCALA

### THE FRESCO: TECNIQUE AND THE STORY OF THE ANCIENT HOSPITAL (new)

By examining some frescoes in the museum, we will uncover the basics and secrets of this ancient technique, as well as the stories they depict. During the workshop, the children will try to create a sinopia (the preparatory drawing for a fresco) using a basic outline and will paint it with natural pigments.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### LITTLE EXPLORERS AT SANTA MARIA

In this guided visit, younger children will have the chance to explore all levels of the building, experiencing an adventurous journey that begins in the frescoed rooms on the ground floor and leads all the way down to the corridors of the top floor. The vast spaces and interwoven passageways—along with the evocative, maze-like tunnels carved into the underground—will set the scene for this exploratory walk, which ends with a search for missing details on the postcards each child will receive as a keepsake.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Preschool and lower primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### DISCOVERING SANTA MARIA DELLA SCALA

A guided tour through the main exhibition spaces: from the *Pellegrinaio* (with frescoes by “Il Vecchietta” and Domenico di Bartolo), to the *Fonte Gaia* by Jacopo della Quercia, and down to the ancient storerooms that now house the National Archaeological Museum and the City Museum. A journey through time and space to discover the history of this “city within a city”, a model of care and hospitality, but also of organization and efficiency. From the fourth to the first level, we will explore all the vast spaces of the building, immersing ourselves in the atmosphere of a medieval hospital.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Primary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### THE ANCIENT TECHNIQUE OF PAINTING

How did artists paint on wood? How were colors made in the Middle Ages? By stepping into the shoes of a young workshop apprentice—and taking inspiration from artists like Paolo di Giovanni Fei, Lorenzo di Pietro (known as “Il Vecchietta”), and Taddeo di Bartolo—each child will create their own artwork while discovering the materials used in that era: natural pigments, oils, preparatory sketches and drawings, pouncing tools, and brushes.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### ALONG THE VIA FRANCIGENA: PILGRIMS FOR A DAY

How was a pilgrim on the Via Francigena welcomed in medieval Siena and hosted at Santa Maria? We will find out by visiting some of the museum’s most iconic rooms—the *Cappella del Manto*, *Sagrestia Vecchia*, and *Pellegrinaio*—where the children will take part in hands-on activities to earn the “travel stamp” of the ancient hospital.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour with itinerant activity

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### FROM FRESCOES TO THE TABLE

An original way to discover everyday life inside the ancient medieval hospital through ingredients, recipes, and dishes. Guided by the frescoes, we will follow the entire process of food production and preparation: from cultivating plants in the Herb Garden (*Orto dei Semplici*), to the arrival of raw materials from the *Grange*, and finally to the table of the Poor People’s *Mensa*. All of this will serve as the basis for creating a “scroll” on kraft paper where participants will write down the ingredients of an ancient recipe.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Primary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30





## NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

### DISCOVERING ETRUSCAN WRITING

Inside the National Archaeological Museum, we will observe and analyze some epigraphic artifacts to discover the language, customs, and traditions of the Etruscan civilization. Then, in the workshop, using the engraving technique, children will create an inscription by reproducing the alphabet of this ancient people on a clay tablet, enriched with a phrase or their own name translated into the Etruscan language.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum for firing and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour with itinerant activity

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### LARTH'S GAME

An engaging game to learn about the ancient Etruscan civilization. Through quizzes, puzzles, and many other fun activities, we will explore various aspects of this ancient people: from customs like the banquet, to their art—especially the imagery on funerary urns—and their unique writing system.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour with itinerant activity

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### MYTHS...US GREEKS

A journey among Etruscan urns preserved in the National Archaeological Museum, which tell us ancient stories and legends from Greek mythology. From *The Seven Against Thebes* to *Medusa* and *Pegasus*, from *Hippolytus* to *Iphigenia*, we will discuss the meaning and function of myths, as well as the interaction and influence between these two civilizations.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Upper primary school students

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30





**VISITS-ATTIVITIES-LABORATORIES**  
**LOWER AND UPPER**  
**SECONDARY SCHOOL**





### **CONTEMPORARY ART IN THE COLLECTION (new)**

A journey through the San Leopoldo Hall to discover the Children's Art Museum Collection, its history, and a selection of works by contemporary artists (L. Pancrazzi, L. Ballarin, S. Gupta, etc.). Through multiple sensory channels, engaging insights, and curiosities, students will explore a heritage that spans from ancient to contemporary art united by a common theme: childhood and adolescence.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### **CHINESE WOODBLOCK PRINTING: HISTORY AND TECHNIQUE (new)**

The 1950s woodblock print collection by Chinese artist Yu Shao (1919–1992) will serve as a key to understanding the origins and evolution of this ancient printing technique. After visiting the exhibition, the class will explore the basics of woodblock printing in the workshop, using traditional Chinese folk imagery, especially figures of baby animals and children.

\* It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them at a later time.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### **THE SELF YOU SHOW**

An activity designed to introduce students to contemporary art, the artists and works in the Children's Art Museum Collection, and to encourage reflection on the self. Stories, narratives, and different perspectives will guide us in discovering the artists (Gasparro, Modica, Pancrazzi, Pischedda) and their creations serving as inspiration for an introspective project in which students will paint themselves in the mirror, expressing something that represents them: a self-portrait as a form of self-definition.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30





## SANTA MARIA DELLA SCALA

### THE FRESCO: TECHNIQUE AND THE STORY OF THE ANCIENT HOSPITAL (new)

“Painting on walls is the most masterful and beautiful form,” wrote Giorgio Vasari when describing the art of fresco painting. In this activity, we will explore the stories depicted in the frescoes by Domenico di Bartolo, Il Vecchietta, and Domenico Beccafumi, as well as the different phases involved in creating a fresco. During the workshop, students will create a preparatory drawing for a fresco and color it using natural pigments.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### DISCOVERING SANTA MARIA DELLA SCALA

A guided tour through the main exhibition spaces: from the frescoes of *Pellegrinaio*, to the *Fonte Gaia* by Jacopo della Quercia, and down to the ancient storerooms that now house the National Archaeological Museum. A journey through time and space to discover the history of this “city within a city”, a model of care and hospitality, but also of organization and efficiency. From the fourth to the first level, we will explore all the vast spaces of the building, immersing ourselves in the atmosphere of a medieval hospital.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### THE ANCIENT TECHNIQUE OF PAINTING

How did people paint on wood in the Middle Ages? How were colors prepared? By stepping into the role of a workshop apprentice—taking inspiration from artists such as Paolo di Giovanni Fei, Lorenzo di Pietro, known as *Il Vecchietta*, and Taddeo di Bartolo—each student will create their own artwork while discovering the materials used at the time: natural pigments, oils, preparatory sketches, pouncing tools, and brushes.

\*It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum to allow the paint to dry and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

## LOWER AND UPPER SECONDARY

### ALONG THE VIA FRANCIGENA: PILGRIMS FOR A DAY

How were pilgrims on the Via Francigena welcomed in medieval Siena when they arrived at Santa Maria? We will find out by visiting some of the museum's most significant rooms—such as the *Cappella del Manto* and the ancient portal, the *Sagrestia Vecchia* and the *Tesoro del Santa Maria*, the *Pellegrinaio* and its famous fresco cycle. Here, the class will take part in hands-on activities to earn the “travel stamp” of the ancient hospital.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour with itinerant activity

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### WATER AND VIRTUES: THE FOUNTAIN BY JACOPO DELLA QUERCIA

An activity designed to learn about the artist and the history behind the creation of the fountain. We will analyze the historical and artistic context of the work and focus on the multiple meanings it aimed to convey: the celebration of water, the civic virtues, and the origin story of Siena. Then, in the workshop, the children will work with clay to create a contemporary-style relief panel while respecting the original themes.

\*It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum for firing and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### FROM FRESCOES TO THE TABLE

An original way to explore everyday life inside the ancient medieval hospital—through ingredients, recipes, and dishes. Thanks to the frescoes, we will follow the entire process of food production and preparation: the cultivation of plants in the *Orto dei Semplici* (Herbal Garden), the arrival of raw materials from the *Grance* (farm estates), and finally the table of the *Mensa dei Poveri* (Poor People's Refectory). This journey will serve as the basis for creating a kraft paper scroll featuring an ancient recipe, which the students will illustrate and decorate using tempera paints.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30





## NATIONAL ARCHAEOLOGICAL MUSEUM

### DISCOVERING ETRUSCAN WRITING

Inside the National Archaeological Museum, we will observe and analyze several epigraphic artifacts to discover the language, customs, and traditions of the Etruscan civilization. Then, in the workshop, children will use the engraving technique to create an inscription by reproducing the alphabet of this ancient people on a clay tablet, enriched with a phrase or their name translated into the Etruscan language.

\*It is recommended to leave the artworks at the museum for firing and collect them later.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour and workshop

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

### MYTHS...US GREEKS

A journey among Etruscan urns preserved in the National Archaeological Museum, which tell ancient stories and legends from Greek mythology. From *The Seven Against Thebes* to *Medusa* and *Pegasus*, from *Hippolytus* to *Iphigenia*, we will discuss the meaning and function of myth, as well as the interaction and influence between these two civilizations.

DURATION: 1 hour and 30 minutes

TYPE: Guided tour

TARGET GROUP: Lower and upper secondary school

MAX PARTICIPANTS: 30

# INFORMATIONS AND CONTACTS

## BOOKING PROCEDURE

Please contact the Educational Services office of Santa Maria della Scala

Monday to Friday – 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Phone: +39 0577 534531 – Email: [educazione@santamariadellascala.com](mailto:educazione@santamariadellascala.com)

Follow us on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn – [@santamariadellascala](#)

## COSTS AND PAYMENT METHODS

The cost for visits and visits with workshops is €5.00 per participant (free for teachers, chaperones, and persons with disabilities).

Payment can be made directly at the Santa Maria della Scala ticket office on the day of the activity or in advance via bank transfer.

*Notes:*

- Please inform us of any disabilities (motor or cognitive) to facilitate your welcome.
- Please report any allergies or intolerances related to materials used in the workshops.

## PROGRAMA DESIGN BY

Davide Falletti, Maria Chiara Scopelliti and Stefania Villani

Supervised by Chiara Valdambrini and Michela Simona Eremita



## INFO AND CONTACTS

Monday to Friday  
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Phone: 0577 534531

Email: [educazione@santamariadellascala.com](mailto:educazione@santamariadellascala.com)

Cover: Detail of the sinopia from the artwork Madonna del Manto,  
by Domenico di Bartolo, 1444, Santa Maria della Scala  
Above Chinese Folk Art in daily life – Matrioska (Rong Bao Zhai),  
by Yu Shao, 1957, Collection of the Museum of Children's Art