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## MDC Museum Program Works To Introduce Kids To The Arts



Photo Credit: Miami Dade College Museum of Art and Design

**POSTED BY: SAKI TSOLPIDIS** APRIL 24, 2015

Coloring books and crayons are some of the simplest ways to introduce creativity to children. And one of the first lesson a child is usually taught is to color inside the lines.

Not so at the Miami-Dade College Museum of Art and Design. The museum, which hosts the GO GO! MOAD Kids pop-up program, encourages children to think outside the box.

“I try to make sure they feel like they’re creating real artwork, not just a craft. I try and replicate real art making,” Tamara Hervera, the Museum’s Education Specialist said.

GO GO MOAD was established in 2014 as an educational community and cultural outreach program. It is designed for children ages 6-12. The program is funded by the Miami Downtown Development Authority and its events are held every third Saturday of each month.

“We have limited funds, so we have to get creative with materials,” Hervera said. “But I find it is more fun that way. Artists today use alternate materials, so we want the kids to use them too.”

The “pop-up” aspect of the program means that it travels, as the goal of the program is to bring the arts to underserved communities.

“We try to make the experience meaningful because many children don’t have access to art history or real art education,” Hervera said. “I spent many years in MDC public schools and the art classes were tied to reading or math, they were not actually teaching kids about art.”

The program, coordinated by Hervera, is meant to bring the museum experience outside of its perceived pressed-and-starched confines.

“Art is for everyone,” Allison Sapper, who was milling about the exhibits with her two inquisitive children said. “It shouldn’t matter if you’re rich or poor, if you went to college or not, or even if you’re a child. Anybody can find an appreciation for art.”

Hands-on art activities tied to current exhibitions, children-friendly museum tours and lectures are some of the things the program provides for its participants.

Sapper and her children, who travelled from Opa-Locka, were attendees of the most recent event. Sapper, who was born and raised in Opa-Locka, graduated FIU with a bachelor’s in Art History, so her children already had a good idea about what to expect.



The Freedom Tower, which hosts the MDC Museum. Photo Credit: Rheume Martin/Flickr

“I try to ensure that the children will leave knowing who the artist is, what medium the artist works with and the meaning within the art” Hervera, the museum employee said. “Sometimes, families stay here all day, way after the event has ended. I encourage families to stay as long as they would like.”

Held on April 18, “Kandinsky Beats!” was an opportunity to introduce children to the works of Russian artist and father of abstract art, Wassily Kandinsky, who claimed he could “see” music.

Combining musical instruments and art, children were given a scale of colors that corresponded with notes. A simple melody would be played, the notes were called, and the children were to create figures and colors.

“The event was packed. We actually had lines for tables,” Hervera said. “We get a lot of repeats every month, families that keep coming back because they have so much fun.”

James Leary, a father who first attended last month’s event, believes this program is invaluable.

“My daughter and I came to see the Susan Chun-Lee exhibition, having no idea the GO GO Kids program even existed,” Leary said. “It’s wonderful to see the school giving back to the community in this way. We may be downtown, on Biscayne, but there are a lot of impoverished communities mere blocks away. Those kids deserve this.”

The Miami-Dade College Museum of Art and Design is located in the Freedom Tower on 600 Biscayne Boulevard, Miami, FL 33132. The museum is open Wednesday to Saturday, 12 P.M. to 5 P.M. The next event is on May 16: “Islands For My Family”, showing the works of Cuban artist Florencio Gelabert. If you’d like to volunteer, visit the MOAD website or [www.volunteerfinder.com](http://www.volunteerfinder.com), there are open calls every month.