

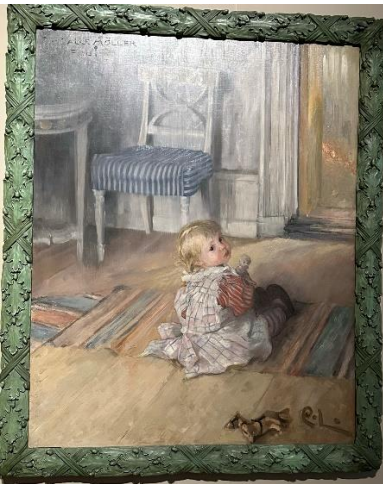
See, think, wonder, and maybe connect!

An approach that emulates the structure of our modules and the way pupils are encouraged to examine the art works that they include.

This phrase however, served as an explanation of the way they try to interest pupils in art and artefacts at the National Museum in Stockholm. There were several elements of our tour of the museum that chimed with the holistic approach we have tried to encourage.

Within the main galleries care had been taken to exhibit porcelain alongside paintings as well as gathering other objects of historical worth, especially when they helped to illuminate the life and context of a particular artist.

A very clear example of this organisation was exhibits featuring Carl Larsson – one of his paintings, Lisbet metaar – (Lisbet angling) is the main image for our module 'Nature'. Although this particular painting is currently in storage there was another that featured Lisbet, hung adjacent to familiar household artefacts and other smaller works of art. One of the supplementary paintings – 'Getting ready for a game' is hung amongst household objects very similar to those featured.



This way of displaying really helps to contextualise the paintings and importantly for children adds texture to the images, providing a different sensory awareness.

Alongside this approach is one of concentrating on one main image or alternatively zooming in on specific features. This is an approach that the National Museum have used with dementia patients ,

particularly during Covid restrictions and bringing gallery images to 'homes' through zoom. It is also a way of thinking that the UK National Gallery are using when they send communications via email and Instagram to members. A further example can be found in the UK Toolkit <https://www.getcreativewithart.org/art-education-resources.html> - Power and Strength – Still Life with Drinking Horn – where several weeks work was completed by focussing on individual elements of the painting.



One particular painting shared with us in Stockholm was 'Double Portrait of an Elderly Couple'. Working on the remit of 'See, think. Wonder' One might askHow old is elderly? Where did their food come from? Why is the meat so fatty? Do they grow grapes in that part of Europe? Did they always keep the heads and feet on birds when they ate them? A tub, a bottle and a brush – washing hands, washing plates, at the table? Were they rich? Is the lady his wife or his servant? Would those big collars be itchy? What time of day is it? What was he writing about in his book? Didn't they use forks? Are they by a window or a balcony?

If we require our eye to just focus on the corner of this painting an entirely different set of questions can arise. stark in contrast to is this a reflection of difference. There is preacher standing on either Martin Luther important theologian immediately in one crossed into another



The town square is quite the opulence of the table, cultural or religious some conjecture that the the pedestal might be himself or another of the Reformation. So painting we have curriculum area.

A special children's exhibition.

Perhaps the most exciting part of our visit was the entry into the area dedicated to schools. As well as light and airy art rooms with a range of materials there was a large mural on an end wall of an otherwise plain wide corridor and on one wall a very ordinary looking door but beyond.....



As the door opened we were greeted with a vestibule, stacked with suitcases and a large wooden door.

'Villa Curiosa'

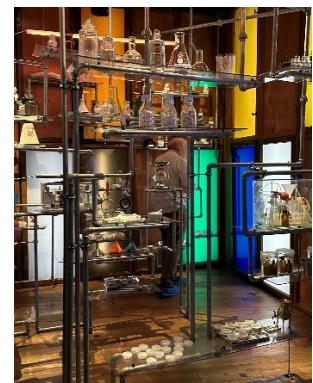
We were invited to enter through these doors, the story told to children is one of a scientist living in the residence.

The first room is lined with wooden furniture, exhibits in their own right, but also filled with a wide range of artefacts to enjoy and marvel over. There were many draws to open and miniature rooms with miniature paintings hanging and much more.....



The important aspect was that children were encouraged to **see, think and wonder**

The next room was described as the kitchen but very much had the air of a laboratory with wonderful coloured panels, as well as intriguing bottles, instruments and more..... children are able to explore and probably because they are allowed to touch, are careful.



In a small annex was a chair which looked remarkably like an old fashioned hair dryer you might see in a hair salon, with a view to clouds and sky, where you could consider your dreams.

A bathroom with a telescope which had kaleidoscope paddles and hexagonal mirrored wall sections, themselves creating part of an enormous polyhedron and numerous baths.....



An exciting way to link together science and art. I wonder what the greatest number of baths any body has counted, might be ?

The next room was a lounge / dining area and resonated well with us due to one of the images chosen.

There re further references to this and connections made in **Breakfast Time** and



in **'A tale of two visits'**.

There were three aspects to this room that struck me on entering. First was the use of the rich wall covering which had been copied from a painting. This gave a real feeling of wrapping you in to somewhere safe and special.

I next noticed the depiction of a still life which was hanging behind the arrangement. Once again adding texture and helping children to understand the 2 D interpretation of 3D objects.

Finally, and as already mentioned above was the breakfast table as seen in the painting which the Swedish Team provided as their interpretation of 'Love and Family'. Again, creating a reality for the children and many discussion points, especially about the artefacts and how they might have used. How many of them have such a grand breakfast?



The final area comprised of shelves and boxes – the scientists notes- which the children could add to. Just as we were leaving a picture on the wall pulls together with that in the corridor.

A remarkable exhibition area, one that I feel privileged to have been able to visit.

Marion Mills Global Learning Association