

VareseNews

King Midas, where rags become toys

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It is a good idea, which, as usual, comes from far away. The Nordic and Anglo-Saxon countries are the true experts in the imaginative reuse of small household objects, and this was true before the words “recycling” or “ecology” were used. But now the **King Midas** project has also come to Varese, transforming waste materials into fabulous toys, and the people of Varese can now, too, take up this good habit.

The most important project, also from the economic point of view, in the cross-border plan that was presented yesterday, is already well-known to those who had the good fortune to see it at Milan’s Children’s Museum, MUBA, and is a way to revive the good habit of creating toys and objects with small household objects. What is different in the Varese project is that **the “waste” used will come from factories:** unused, but fun objects (bobbins, cotton wool, ribbons, small components: everything is accepted), which will be transformed from industrial waste into children’s toys.

“The aim is to open a workshop where children can make toys and objects using materials salvaged from companies,” explains **Marco Quilici**, who is in charge of the project. “In this way, we get children, and later on, their families, involved in the reuse culture, where they learn to see things in a different, more creative light.”

The cross-border project, which began, first of all, in order to create workshops for schools (and which is already collaborating with the Socio-psychiatric Cantonal Organisation, in Mendrisio, Switzerland, which provides assistance and education services for the young and elderly, and which already runs a centre in our region), should also become a point of reference for families at weekends. **This is what already happens in Milan, where the King Midas workshop space is always full of families visiting.**

And for this reason, the project’s location, which has not been decided yet, could be in a place for families, like the greenhouses in the park surrounding Villa Recalcati, or in one of the other villas in the centre, like Villa Teopltitz or Villa Mylius.

As we have seen with previous experiences, such a location, with beautiful surroundings that are easy to get to, could bring a lot of hope for the future; the first King Midas project, in Reggio Emilia, has now become a **genuine holding company for the culture of creative reuse** of materials that might not yet be waste, that has design products, dedicated exhibitions and events. One of the most interesting projects is “**Saved by King Midas**”, which the organisers describe as “**the place where books never die**”.

Here, in Varese, however, the main objective is **to restimulate the imagination and bring back the poor toys that we all remember**, from dolls with button eyes, to toy soldiers made of DAS modelling clay, from footballs made of rags, to draughts played with bottle tops. And what about you? What memories can you share with future King Midas projects?

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