

Report on outdoor visit to Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, Saket on July 20, 2023

On July 20, 2023, children of KG, Santa Maria went on an outdoor day trip to Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, Saket, accompanied by their teachers, *didis* and parent volunteers. The excitement among the children was already palpable on the bus ride to the museum.. As we entered the museum and the first whiff of the museum's cool air-conditioning greeted us alongwith the museum's staff, the excitement only grew and the children were already getting restless to see what lay in store for them.

We first assembled in the waiting area near the museum while the children re-grouped according to their sections in school. A staff member of the museum interacted with the children and introduced them to the idea of a museum and its purpose. As one group then proceeded on their tour inside, the remaining two groups ate their tiffin, while awaiting their turn. When our group (KG-A) made its way inside, the children's initial reactions were gasps of wonder at the sprawling works of art displayed inside. An artsy colourful peacock mural grabbed their attention and they excitedly called out the colours displayed. There were dancing puppets pegged on to the wall and the children squealed, "*Arree..yeh thogol-golnaachrahahai!!*"

We then made our way to a display of what appeared to be scenes from the Sunderbans. The first display only showed two gleaming eyes at a distance. When the children started enthusiastically guessing the creature those eyes belonged to, the second display opened up to the tiger at which the children cheered loudly. Surely, silence at the museum was not a rule they were willing to follow. And, anyway, their enthusiasm and excitement were too contagious to contain.

Next up were scenes from the aftermath of a flood and the children recollected their discussions in class on monsoon, waterlogging and flooding. They were then greeted by a scene from a rural household and they excitedly pointed out a plough, corn, and hay mats which on display.

The final display was a huge screen of a video game which proved to be most enthralling for the children. They loudly shouted out guessing the different characters and object that appeared on the screen. "It's a witch...that's a castle...there's an angel!"

After the guided tour of the museum, the children once again assembled in the waiting area and were handed sheets of paper and crayons by the museum staff to colour and draw what their own impressions of what they had seen. As they excitedly grabbed at their crayons and furiously drew snapshots of whatever they remembered, we knew that this had been a day well spent. One might wonder what children at such a young age would comprehend at a museum of art – where if I may add, even adults may have trouble interpreting the displays. A child's mind is uninhibited and unfettered and visits to museums and follow-up activities that involve recollections through drawing are helpful in letting their imaginations grow.

Our day at the museum made us forget the sweltering sun outside and as we headed back to school, the children merrily drank their fruit juices distributed by the museum staff.

Scenes from Shiv Nadar Museum

