

# DIFFEASY

## An exhibition by children at the Escola Aldana with Jaume Clotet espais c

28.11.2024 – 19.01.2025

I'm immersed in espais c, a programme run by the Consorci d'Educació and the Institut de Cultura de Barcelona that brings artistic practice and the public ambit of primary education into a dialogue by means of lasting processes of co-operation. In my case, the Escola Aldana has converted a space in the school into a workshop-cum-studio where I work. Between 2022 and 2024, I have benefited from the artistic mediation of La Capella and in particular the support of Judit López.

The artist has free access to the studio and in exchange has to open it for four hours a week in order to share it with the children at the school. The studio is a platform, offering a shared space and time in which the aim is to imbue the artist's practice with the children's imaginary through the process, without any expectation of a final outcome.

The Escola Aldana chose me due to the nature of my practice, which is highly plastic, comic, objectual and close to performance and play. My work focuses on leisure and entertainment and visually is carnivalesque, naïf, festive and spontaneous, as it connects the comedic method (originator-audience) with artistic production (originator-object-audience). Even so, it always contains a puzzle with multiple layers, double readings and hidden meanings that attack and

manipulate artistic, social and personal-experiential conventions.

My parents told me that when I was small, I invented the word *difàcil* (diffeasy). It's the word I now use to describe the 'formula/method' the children and I have dived into and in which we are immersed. It's a fascinating productive expedition that is exceeding all my expectations of the idea of mutual influence and the creative process.

In this respect, we could say that my role in the study is to instigate. I mustn't impose my practice on the children but instead stir them artistically and creatively. Ideas come to me because I'm thinking of them, I'm thinking about what they've done, I ponder on it and ideas come to me that seem amusing, that involve interaction, that are capable of leading to further instigation.

A game, a back-and-forth, a creative process that stretches like a piece of chewing gum (with the idea of making it more difficult) and which keeps the multidisciplinary potential constantly open: we could be making a toy, a painting, an invention, a performance, an artwork, rubbish, something personal, something to give as a gift, something for home, something for me, something for you, all at once...

The term *difàcil* does away with the distinction between art by children and that of adults. As we all share the same process and the same materials, style and authorship are camouflaged. The 'more artistic' pretensions are torn up, including the children's ('I don't know how to draw', 'I don't know how to do that') and my own ('I don't know if that would be an art project' 'there's no artistic discourse behind it'). All the while, the supposedly 'less artistic' results are praised, honoured and accepted according to the same valuation and validation.

In conclusion, *difàcil* casts doubt on the conflict between the terms *difícil* (difficult) and *fàcil* (easy), professional and amateur creation, supposedly childish and adult inventiveness, superficiality and depth, pleasure and happiness.

One day, one of the children said to me that perhaps, when I grow up, my heart will end up transforming into cardboard. That charming, poetic remark seemed to me to sum up our experience in *espais c*.

Jaume Clotet