

Secret Forest Society (orig. Tajno šumsko društvo)

<https://tajnosumskodrustvo.org/>

Secret Forest Society is a program of interdisciplinary workshops in nature for preschool and early school-age kids with an emphasis on the creative process, research, problem-solving, and imagination development. An unconventional approach to learning through play strengthens the connection with nature, awakens curiosity, encourages observation, teaches empathy, and develops environmental awareness. Through workshops, art intertwines with different fields such as ecology, botany, zoology etc.

Secret Forest Society promotes sustainable play, and in accordance with this idea, used materials are found in nature. Each workshop is held in a different forest location in Zagreb (which has plenty of forests within the city itself) with the aim of allowing children to get to know their city in a different way. Also, the program took place in other regions of Croatia, such as Rijeka and the earthquake-hit area of Petrinja, Glina, and Sisak. The author of the methodology and concept, and the only educator at the workshops is artist Ana Zubak.

About the educator and artist:

Ana Zubak is a multimedia artist born in Zagreb in 1982. She graduated from the Zagreb Academy of Fine Arts with the title of Master of Fine Arts Education. She studied at the Moholy-Nagy Faculty of Art and Design in Budapest, the Valand Art School in Gothenburg, and the Universität Wien in Vienna on the Urban Studies program. She is a member of the Croatian Association of Fine Artists (HDLU) and the Croatian Association of Independent Artists (HZSU). Her work is displayed at numerous exhibitions in the country and abroad.