



```
<a name="volpini"></a>
<div id="volpini" class="subpage" style="display: none;">
<div class="title">

</div>
<div class="floorplan">

</div>
<div class="backarrow">
<a onclick="close_page('volpini'); return false" href="#studentmap">

</a>
</div>
<div class="student_content">
```

<p>
Discovering an outsider
</p>

As a graphic designer and illustrator I was asked, a few years ago, to give guest workshops in a pre-school in Italy, guiding the children to make illustrations for books. This experience highlighted some aspects of how drawing activities are conducted and perceived already in the early stage of three to six year old children, both by teachers and children. The visual language, which is seen as a fundamental expressive tool for children, is often reduced in its powers by the teacher’s recommendations and ways of pointing out what is “right” or “wrong”, or by the attention to the outcomes more than to the processes. Firstly, the urgency to liberate children’s creativity and visual communication, and secondly, the need to empower children in ways of using their creative languages, made me go into the pre-school again, to see how a creative practitioner can “shake things up”.

In my research project I investigated how an outsider – a creative practitioner, an artist, a designer – can collaborate with teachers to create more compelling and playful drawing activities. I relied on the background theories and pedagogical experiences of the Reggio Emilia approach and of the, so-called, Signature Pedagogies. The outsider figure that emerges from my project is deeply engaged with the educational context. I brought into the pre-school my own artistic signature, but this was connected to several different key aspects – from the setting of the space to the continuous dialogue with teachers and from the use of the time to the ways of communicating. In that sense the outsider, as he/she appears from my research, is capable of being inside school with a critical consciousness of the hybridity of being from the outside and of the empowerment that can be created, but also of the importance of re-positioning him/herself in working with children.

External critic: Chloé Briggs is an artist and a teacher. She is Chair of Foundation, Paris College of Art and she manages different projects concerning drawing, like

Drawing is Free.

Bringing together the bodily gesture, the image and the voice, Erica presents a reflective exercise for visitors who are invited to go through her motions as an educator and researcher. There will be two demonstrations of the exercise during the time of the Graduation Presentation.

```









</div>
```