



*Press Release*

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## **At the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence Disney Celebration for the 70th anniversary of the Pinocchio film**

Walt Disney is celebrating in Florence, in collaboration with the Istituto degli Innocenti, the 70th anniversary of the Pinocchio film.

The ceremony, which involves international press, wishes to pay tribute to the Italian roots of the character created almost 130 years ago by the Florentine Carlo Lorenzini, known as Carlo Collodi.

The story of the poor puppet that through considerable trials and suffering succeeds in becoming a real child, has become an important milestone in the formation of generations of young people, and the book of the story has been translated more than any other in the world, with the exception of the Bible.

The Disney puppet therefore returns to its roots and chooses as the birthday party site a place which is truly symbolic for the history of all children; the Istituto degli Innocenti, which has for centuries been dedicated to giving hospitality, care and education to children.

Founded at the beginning of the 1400's, the Istituto was the first lay institute which provided assistance to needy children, and since then, has never interrupted its mission. Today it carries out educational and social services, studies the condition of minors and promotes the rights and culture of childhood, following the objectives of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Its Centre is the historical "Ospedale" in Piazza della Santissima Annunziata, designed by Filippo Brunelleschi and enriched over time by works of art by outstanding artists. The precious historical and monumental heritage today comprises the Mudi, the Innocenti Museum.

The Walt Disney event for the 70th anniversary of its Pinocchio is therefore an acknowledgement of Florence, not only as the puppet's birthplace, but also as seat of the first institute for the protection of children's rights.

"The Istituto degli Innocenti is particularly pleased to host the Pinocchio Birthplace Homage – says Alessandra Maggi, the Institute's President. The event celebrates the universal significance of the puppet's story, the cultural heritage of the children of the world. In this we recognise the contribution that the Walt Disney film has made, which, by re-interpreting the pinocchio of Collodi, gave forth a positive message of peace on the eve of the second world war."

"But the Pinocchio Birthplace Homage is also an occasion to pay attention again to the needy and to children's rights, too often ignored – says Maggi. The Istituto degli Innocenti appreciates the fact that Walt Disney always paid this attention and always highlighted it in its masterpieces.

Orphans are often mentioned in the Disney stories, not only to move people emotionally; the Disney films are full of hope – an indispensable sustenance for children to grow – and they know how to highlight the resources of children in difficulty who are able to survive and live their lives.

This – concludes the Presidente of the Istituto degli Innocenti – is also for us a fundamental aspect of the culture of childhood".

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