

# MĂRȚIȘORUL

The interview with Simona Neacșu was conducted by Andrușa R. Vătuiu



Simona Neacșu is the deputy director of the "Constantin Negreanu" High School in Drobeta Turnu Severin.

**Among the creative activities carried out by the students within the “Constantin Negreanu” High School from Drobeta Turnu Severin, there is also the making of “martisoare”. Please tell me how this activity came about and what it consists of?**

The Romanian „martisor” traditions are beautiful and because we want to keep and promote them, we initiated and carried out, annually, the project entitled Snowdrop and Martisor - small rays broken from the sun, whose purpose is to develop students' ability to value and perpetuate the traditions left by the forerunners regarding „martisor”, by their involvement in pleasant and constructive actions. The children received this project with delight, the student Pădurețu Ioana, in a discussion with the press, even confessing: *We work as a team, we discover our talent and skill in making original „martisoare”, we are proud of the fruits of our work and we welcome spring with delight and joy. Giving a „martisor” we make someone happy, offering from the warmth of our soul and from our love.*

So, beyond the hours spent at school, it is a real joy to see the little ones involved in actions that develop not only skills to become useful, but also practicing an activity that inspires them to keep the traditions so ingrained in the being of the Romanians.

**Tell us about the significance of “martisor”**

The meaning of “martisor” has remained the same over time: the two intertwined threads, one white and one red, symbols of love, friendship and gratitude, announce joy and love at the beginning of spring. The white and red strings with an amulet (penny, a shell) were tied by the parents to the children's hands, given to the girls by the boys, exchanged by the girls with a sense of good wishes, health as "pure silver, like a river stone, like the shell from the waters ". The “martisor” given at the dawn of the first day of March was worn for 9-12 days, sometimes even until the sight of the first flowering tree, then it hung on the flowering branches, believing that like this would be the year of the one who wore it.

Nowadays, the “martisor” is a harbinger of spring, and its realization has become a true work of art. Therefore, we decided to intertwine the tradition with the creative desire of the students, to stimulate and encourage their creative spirit, bringing “to light” all that is best and most beautiful in a child's soul!

**I visited and photographed the “martisor” exhibition in the "Constantin Negreanu" gymnasium, where I admired hundreds of models made of various materials: paper, textiles, wood, ceramics, leather, etc. I wonder if these beauties of artistic creation also has a purpose through public exhibition or sale?**

Every year, the “martisoare” made by the students were displayed on boards in the school premises, but we also set up an exhibition for sale in the gallery of Cora Hypermarket. The activity was an unexpected success, and the handmade “martisoare” sold very well. The money raised from the sale of the “martisoare” was donated to the school children from low-income families.

**We thus close the manufacturing - display - capitalization circuit. The “martisor” tradition is part of the intangible cultural heritage. Is this tradition somehow found in the school curriculum?**

The school programs allow discussions about this tradition in various disciplines: history, Romanian language, plastic education, and primary education in the discipline *Visual arts and practical skills* has the specific competence *Realization of functional and / or aesthetic creations using basic materials and techniques* where they can propose “martisor” activities.