

Brían Crotty

Title: **My portrait is me!**

Froebel viewed children as 'active and creative learners who learn best through activity, play, talk, and self-reflection (Bruce, 2015). It is essential to recognise and celebrate children's rights as creative learners as a crucial part of their development. Creativity nurtures empathy and appreciation of diversity, enabling children's growth. Participants of this workshop will be encouraged to consider and reflect on current approaches to children's learning through an understanding of the different ways of being creative. Article 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child states that 'the child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice'. United Nations (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. [online] OHCHR. Available at:

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>.

Visual art activities, Froebelian sensibilities and philosophy will prompt participants to reflect on creativity. My proposed workshop will ask participants to observe how modern and contemporary artists have communicated parts of their histories, sensibilities and personalities through their portraits. Participants will observe these traits through the colour symbolism or moods of the pieces and how they express ideas about identity and experience. Participants will then be encouraged to develop artworks that inspire their unique take on self-portraiture. Participants should observe colours, shapes, and symbols representing their perceived personality. Drawing, collage, and stop-motion animation will complete the artwork. Through creative and critical discussion, participants will develop reflections based on their artworks and share their examples with the group. This theme is invariably linked to 'Childhood Today' as the workshop will challenge and equip participants to develop creative and innovative practice skills and ideas to help increase all children's visibility and sense of identity. It actively engages with Froebelian principles by bringing Froebelian practices, such as play and creativity, into a conversation with theories, such as identity, inclusion and play as a form of expression.

- Aistear's theme of *Identity and Belonging*, which encourages learning about an individual's sense of self, will be explored and embraced.

Reference list

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