1. CONTEMPORARY PORTRAIT & SELF REPRESENTATION

DURATION

140' to 170'

INTRODUCTION
GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In this workshop, participants will discuss portraits, portraits in contemporary art, self-representation and social media. They will be invited to analyse the concepts of identity and self-representation and discuss examples of self-representation in the digital era and in social media. Active participation, critical thinking and imagination will be encouraged. The workshop has two parts:

a) Discussion regarding these issues.
b) Hands-on group activity on identities.

GOALS

› To raise awareness about identity construction and self--representation in life and social media through examples of portraits in contemporary art.

› To raise awareness about the manipulation underlying portraits with the intention of strengthening and empowering the message.

› To cultivate critical thinking regarding identity stereotypes.

PREPARATION

Before the activity:

› Collect portrait images from contemporary art, from the internet. Please inform your participants in respect to images' copyrights.

› Materials to develop the portrait (glue, magazines, colour pencils, painting ink, cardboard, brushes, or other).

› Prepare a private social media platform to share the participants' photographs (e-portfolio, padlet...).

Prepare the space/room:

› Chairs and tables.

› Internet access.

› Video projector and a computer.

› One smart phone per group of participants (minimum).

OPTIONAL: image edition apps.

DIGITAL SKILLS

LEVEL 1: basic use of digital tools.

STEP BY STEP

45' to 50'	The facilitator shares a brief presentation of the workshop. Example: "This workshop has two parts: in the first part we will discuss the relationship between portraits and personal identity. We will also question the manipulation of images on social media. We will explore: › The concepts of identity and self-representation. › We will discuss how self-representation evolves in the digital era and in social media. › We will discuss examples of portraiture in contemporary art. › We will try to understand how, through the portrait, we imply active participation, critical thinking and imagination. › In the creative part, we will do an hands-on activity: "the game of identities" - "Be somebody else" or "Be yourself".
	The facilitator invites participants to the discussion. Examples: "what is a portrait? What is a selfie? What does identity mean? Why do we share our pictures on social media?" Facilitators can add various questions to help students critically approach the issues. Tip: The facilitator can use resources on portraiture. Please see descriptions and reference links.
	The facilitator asks "do you have an instragam account? or any other social media platform? Have you seen manipulated images?" and then invites participants to find examples on social media that are connected with image manipulation. A discussion follows.
30' to 35'	The facilitator shares examples of contemporary art while engaging participants in a discussion: *Examples:* "Let's try to question why these portraits were created: Who is portrayed? Why was that person portrayed? Who made the portrait? How does the contemporary portrait differ? What has changed?"
45' to 60'	The facilitator proposes the hands-on activity: Creativity time! "Be Somebody Else" vs "Be Yourself". Participants will be divided in groups of 3 to 5. The facilitator presents two options and asks participants to choose: (a) "Be Somebody Else": to play roles and take photographs of themselves as somebody else (i.e. a portrait from art history such as the Mona Lisa or the portrait of a famous actor/singer etc. or create "personifications" of ideas and/or feelings (i.e. victory, pride, melancholy, happiness) (ideas here), (b) "Be Yourself": to express themselves by creating a self-portrait in various ways. They can be inspired by the contemporary portraits previously presented.
20' to 25'	The facilitator asks participants to share and comment on the results with the group and, then, promotes a reflection on what happened: "Here are some questions that you could think of" "Carrying out "the game of identities" made me think differently about the initial questions?" "What did I realise through the experience of the game that I had not thought about before?"

Ethics
The participants works can be shared online with the consent of participants or it can be kept offline. For more on privacy and personal data protection, consult Educator's Guide Part 1, point 4, p. 5.

Other options
This workshop can be carried out in two sessions, in which the facilitator carries out the first part and then introduces the hands-on activity, which can be done at home. Participants bring their works into the second session to present and discuss together.

Assessment
Here the facilitator can find resources to carry out the assessment of the workshop.

Description and reference links
Resorces on portraiture:

https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/portrait

https://www.nationalgallery.ie/what-we-do/press-room/press-releases/winners-zurich-portrait-prize-and-zurich-young-portrait-prize

https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/teen-blog/2016/portraits

https://aestheticamagazine.com/maximum-identity-flux

For a Project Called 'Selfie Harm,' the Photographer John Rankin asked teens to Photoshop their own portraits. What they did was scary:

https://news.artnet.com/art-world/rankin-selfie-harm-1457959

http://www.visualdiet.co.uk/selfie-harm/