Back – Painted Portraits

By **Kate Gorely**

In this post teacher Kate Gorely demonstrates how to create portraits using an effective back painted technique. A great activity to explore less traditional portraiture methods that is suitable for a wide range of primary age groups.

Notes for Teachers

- ### Who is this resource for?

  Teachers and Art Educators who are introducing portraits and facial proportion.

  This activity could follow on from a session centred on careful looking and observational drawing when discussing portraiture.

- ### Artists you might want to look at to assist with this resource

  Julian Opie - A British sculptor and digital artist born in 1958 and associated with the New British Sculpture movement, and best known for portraits that reduce subjects to essential lines and color planes.

  Andy Warhol - (1928 – 1987) Was an American artist, film director, and producer who was a leading figure in the visual art movement known as pop art.

  Both these artists\' work offer inspiring examples of how we can push portrait methods and techniques, offering a real contrast to more traditional oil painting.

- **What will you need?**
    - A4 clear acetate sheets or laminating pouches
    - Black permaent marker pen
    - ipad or camera
    - A printer
    - Acrylic paints
    - Mark making tools - cotton buds, stick, sponge etc
- **How long will this session take?**

  This session takes about an hour, although could take longer or be spread over 2 sessions.

I used this session at the very beginning of a project on portraits. We found it very useful to really look at our faces and where our features are. Where abouts on our faces were our eyes and lips? Where are our eyes in relation to our ears? It also gave the children a boost in confidence in producing something original that looked like them. They were able to make choices in how they posed for the initial photograph, which colours they used and what texture added. The result was that each portrait was unique and personal.

This back painting technique could be used for other projects too – such as landscapes, illustrations and architectural drawings.

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