

Michael Corlett

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Taking part in this exhibition has been an opportunity to reflect on and arrive at new realisations about what I value and what I enjoy in my own artwork and the art produced by people I work with as a facilitator. I was especially drawn to the idea of rediscovering and reclaiming my identity as an artist – which seems at times to have been completely eclipsed by the demands of my working life – through bringing into focus the ways in which my facilitation work represents an expression of my personal creativity rather than an obstacle to it.

The selection of work by myself and by service users from Grace Eyre that I have chosen to present here gives expression to various aspects of my personal passions in making and looking at art. Enthusiasm for engaging with and learning from art of the past – relating to it as alive and present rather than historical and distant – has been a constant factor in my own artwork and in my approach to teaching and facilitating.

It is a joy to introduce people to art that I love as well as to witness the vitality, spontaneity, playfulness and humour of their responses to it (as in 'Las Meninas' or 'The Knights' Battle', which borrows its composition from Uccello's 'Battle of San Romano'). The spirit of play – joyful,



spontaneous inventiveness – that I see in the way the people I work with approach making art continually delights and impresses me.

This has influenced my decision to display here a playful and spontaneous side of my own creativity – doodling – which has hitherto been a dissociated aspect of my artistic self, tucked away in a drawer, not worthy of being exhibited with 'serious' work.

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