



1. Would you briefly introduce yourself?

My name is Ruth Millington. I am an independent art historian, curator, broadcaster and author specialising in modern and contemporary art. My work takes me from the UK, where I live, to New York City and, most recently, Azerbaijan!

2. When and how did you discover your love of art?

I can't remember not loving art! As a child, I was always making things at home and then, as a teenager, I was lucky enough to have the most inspiring art teacher at school who introduced me to a whole world of artists and their stories.

3. What do you enjoy most about art?

Unlike other subjects, art isn't about right and wrong, or pure facts. It can open up worlds of possibilities, feelings, ideas and imagination. Looking at a great work of art is a human experience, which in an age of AI, screens and digital life, is more important than ever. It's a portal I would encourage anyone to journey through...

4. *This Book Will Make You An Artist* is your first children's book. Why did you want to write a book for children?

I started my career working in museum education, and always loved to see children's responses to famous (and lesser known) works of art in the Estorick Collection, from portraits to landscapes. I believe that all children deserve access to high quality arts education, both the practical making of art and its histories, which are too often seen as belonging to the elite but shouldn't be. I also think that art is more enjoyable if you know its back stories, like Van Gogh painting sunflowers and starry night skies to "feel alive" and alleviate his poor mental health. I hope my book takes art and its histories into the homes of many children who will see that an artist can come from anywhere.

5. What criteria did you use to select the artists for the book?

It was crucial that this book included both well known names, such as Leonardo da Vinci and Picasso, and lesser known artists, such as Janet Sobel. I also wanted to make sure that the book featured 50% female artists, and represented diverse cultures, with the likes of Esther Mahlangu and Yayoi Kusama. Beyond these criteria, the selected artists had to work in a range of media so that the accompanying activities could all be very different.

6. How did you come up with the ideas for the practical exercises?

I loved experimenting with the various styles, techniques, materials and tools of the 25 artists to come up with fun, easy to follow, creative activities. As I work with a lot of artists on my day-to-day projects, I did ask some of them for suggestions at times, but mainly I played around with scissors, glue, paper and paints at home.

7. What was your biggest challenge while working on the book?

Image rights! Securing permissions to reproduce artworks is a job in itself and I am grateful for the team at Nosy Crow who supported me with this process, particularly as we had to make some last minute changes!

8. During your studies, you specialized in modern and contemporary art. What appeals to you about these art periods?

During the late 19th and early 20th century, artists became a lot freer in how they made artworks. Rather than working to academic conventions or commissions, they used art as a space to express their unique, subjective view of the world. This period saw the birth of Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism and Surrealism, which are some of my favourite and most colourful movements!