



EUROPEAN CONSORTIUM OF ARTS THERAPIES EDUCATION

ECArTE

18TH EUROPEAN ARTS THERAPIES CONFERENCE

9-12 SEPTEMBER 2026

PULA, CROATIA

My Journey, My Sense of Self, My Belonging: Identity in Crisis - introducing embodied ways of therapeutic self-discovery through performative techniques

Elisabeth Eitelberger

The experience will encompass a guided blend of large-scale drawing and movement to sound/rhythm, and expressive writing to articulate both collective and individual emotions, alongside the myriad factors that shape our personal and shared identities beyond stigmatisation and label.

Drawing on her extensive expertise in performance art and embodied therapeutic processes centred on trauma recovery and existential topics within Australia's multicultural context, the presenter will intertwine elements of performance drawing with storytelling and dance. With a focus on generating fast and slow movement, participants will delve into rhythm, repetition, and form by interacting with different media, while being invited to pause and reflect, as well as to activate their awareness of what visual gratification may occur when movement is expressed on paper.

The workshop underscores the critical role of ongoing self-reflective and self-reflexive practices for therapists, aimed at improving their self-awareness in trauma-related contexts, when engaging with others, exploring boundaries and barriers, giving and receiving space. It centres on the acknowledgment and visualisation of somatic, embodied responses to various stimuli, such as engaging with materials through tactile interaction, listening attentively to sounds, and cultivating a shared experience of connection that arises from a collaborative, embodied approach to celebrate autonomy within the collective endeavour, by grounding and self-regulating in the therapeutic presence of others.



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The workshop will integrate components of creative arts therapy, utilising authentic movement (a technique from dance therapy), distancing strategies (from drama therapy), bilateral movement/drawing (from expressive arts therapy), as well as sound and rhythm 2 (from music therapy) in individual, dyadic and collective encounters. Participants will gain practical insights into the theoretical underpinnings of these practices and their relevance in therapeutic contexts with emphasis on complex clinical presentations.

Biography

Elisabeth Eitelberger, MPhil, MCAT, GradDipCAT, is a registered creative arts therapist and clinical psychotherapist. Originally from Austria, Elisabeth studied Philosophy and completed a Master at the University of Vienna. She later moved to Perth, Australia, where she obtained a Master of Creative Arts Therapies from Murdoch University. With a rich artistic career over thirty years in interdisciplinary art forms, especially performance art, she operates within various institutional frameworks, emphasising complex and transgenerational trauma alongside identity