

Music, Identity and Cooperation: Co-Creating Gender-Inclusive Learning Through Artistic Practice

How collaborative musicking fosters gender-affirming spaces in education

This research presentation introduces *Music and Gender Identity: Practical guide for diversity in the music classroom*, a practice-based project that investigates how collaborative musical creation can support gender-diverse students and transform music classrooms into inclusive, cooperative communities. Grounded in queer theory, critical pedagogy and inclusive music education, the project asks: How can cooperative artistic practice promote gender-affirming, respectful learning environments for all students?

The research responds to a documented need: music teachers often lack tools, training and protocols to address gender diversity adequately. Drawing on interviews with experts in music education and gender diversity, analysis of institutional protocols, and a review of existing pedagogical models, the project builds up to a guide with practical strategies, musical activities, and inclusive frameworks for everyday teaching.

At the core of the research lies artistic practice as both method and output. Workshop-based musicking (vocal exploration, improvisation, movement, identity-focused composition, and guided listening) functions simultaneously as research material, as dialogic space, and as cooperative experimentation. These activities allow participants to explore their identities, negotiate meaning collectively, and understand the interconnectedness that structures musical and social relations.

Methodologically, the project integrates:

1. Co-created practical workshops, tested and refined through iterative cycles
2. Artistic experimentation, including original compositions on gender identity
3. Qualitative analysis of expert interviews and field notes
4. Evaluation of the guide by the same experts to ensure relevance and applicability

The session at EPARM will follow the same structure as the workshops developed in the research:

- A concise introduction to key concepts on gender identity and safe-space creation
- A hands-on artistic segment, where participants engage in short musical activities used in the research
- A reflective dialogue, connecting artistic practice with methodological and ethical dimensions of “making-with”.

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Research Presentations

Ultimately, the project positions cooperative musicking as a powerful tool to affirm gender-diverse identities, counteract symbolic and institutional violence, and cultivate interdependence within artistic research and educational settings.



Nico Pérez Carbonell
ESMUC (Barcelona, Spain)
nicopeca02@gmail.com

Nico Pérez Carbonell (she/her) is a composer, music educator and choral director specializing in the intersections between music, gender identity and inclusive education. Trained in piano, flute and composition, and currently completing a Master's in Ethnomusicological Research, she develops artistic and educational projects focused on gender diversity and dissident identities. Her artistic practice includes protest compositions about identity and workshops that use music as a space for expression, experimentation and belonging. As a choir director and music educator, Nico works to create safe and creative spaces where all identities can be recognized and celebrated.