

## INTRODUCTION: CREATIVE ENCOUNTERS & INTERRUPTIONS

*Darlene St. Georges @ Barbara Bickel*

Artistic practices are essential and unique opportunities for broadening human perspective and meaning making and contribute to a vision of, and indeed the making of a world. Art engages us as active participants in the shaping and reshaping of our experience, “enabl[ing] us to see more in our experience, to hear more of normally unheard frequencies, to become conscious of what daily routines have obscured, and what habits and conventions have suppressed” (Greene 1995, p. 123). Artistic research practices engage us in a dialectic interplay of the visible, sensorial, textual and yet-to-be known. This “multi-textural dialogue” (St. Georges, 2019), is a poetic and visual metaphorical dialogue that embodies perception, intuition, and cultural and metaphysical phenomena to contextualize human experience; producing knowledge through a type of sensory *modus operandi* (Barrett, 2013). This is an epistemological process for exploring and coming to know the self and the world and for exploring nature and its meaning. These encounters—the images, experience, perception, memories, and intuition are a dialectically complex and critical engagement that are a metaphorical correspondence of our relational selves, situated in archetypes of human experience. Artistic inquiry, found in its many shapes and forms in this issue, are performative modes of knowledge production that give rise to multiplicity, ambiguity and indeterminacy (Boutet, 2013). These encounters interrupt singular perspectives on research and learning and teaching, pulling us out of a moment, an activity, or way of being—perhaps jarring—allowing us to encounter anew.

This issue’s open call has brought thoughtful, critical, and needed interruptions and encounters to the fore that include a diversity of experiences and issues that delve into hegemonic and marginalized spaces. The visuals and poetic articles invite readers to reflect upon trauma, reconciliation, and healing relationships, drawing from family, children, and ancestral teachings found in classrooms, homes, preschools, studios, and in books, nature, and silent spaces. The artist-authors offer us multiple ways to envision research and teaching as gateways to being, belonging and becoming.

This issue opens with a surprise ecstatic dance encounter with Sandhill Cranes preceded by a decades long interruption caused by an ill-fated encounter with a tic. Through expressive arts therapy pedagogy **Alexandra Fidyk** draws the reader into a centring dance “to let the centre of the dance meet the centre of you with the centre of your work” (p. 13). Her dreaming ruminations lead the reader to question “How might our pedagogical practices centre, round, call upon the unconscious, image, sound, storying, silence, movement, rhythm and synchrony as ways of being-becoming and knowing?” (p. 14).

Two correspondences of diffractive analysis on a radically relational arts-engaged participatory research project called Life Lines by scholar-artist **Kelly Clark/Keefe** transports the reader into a middle space of entangled analysis. The reader is pulled into an undertow, gulping for air alongside the author while she decenters self-consciousness and researcher exceptionalism. Data’s entanglements are visually offered in the turquoise water saturated front cover image.

A healing autoethnographic and a/r/tographic inquiry. **Barbara Bickel's** article interrupts time via a long-forgotten prayer book that belonged to her deceased father. In this prayer book her earliest drawings are rediscovered and she embarks on an historical arts-centred life-inquiry into her relationship with her father that draws her (and perhaps him) into a place of reconciliation and interconnected presence even in death.

**Jeff Horwat** introduces wordless narrative research through the ethos of a wordless novel. His dystopian narrative entitled *Living with the Living* draws on the power of silence and “disrupts the status-quo and creates space for other ways of knowing” (p. 51). In this narrative the main characters reflect with poignant silent visuality, philosophers and critical theorists Mari Ruti, Slavjo Žižek.

A feminist poetic inquiry next takes the reader into critical ways to teach and learn about rape culture, sexual assault and Tarana Burke's #MeToo movement in **Amber Moore's** article and poetry. The poetry cluster includes found and line poetry that disrupts resistance to facing sexual trauma through raw representation of data bits from secondary English pre-service teachers in a “study on the very raw topic of sexual trauma” (p. 78).

Trauma is transformed into a creation story in **Darlene St. Georges'** creation-centred research. The story of *Skyward* is in-process and an embodiment of the “creative-experiential-engagement and interaction” of *mé-tisage* and *storying*. It unfolds with mystery and wonderment, remembering and reclaiming the uniqueness and intra-connectivity of our subjectivities.

Telling stories of ancestry through autobiographic life writing and poetic inquiry **Maya T. Borhani** lovingly and honestly encircles herself with the mystery of her father's life in Iran. A suite of exo-autoethnographic poems open her to what she names “urgent learning” in the face of generational trauma, disrupted sense making and unanswerable questions. The poetic inquiry brings to her an enduring sense of legacy rested within a mosaic made of scattered pieces.

Restricted by covid-19 lockdowns in 2020-2021, **Alison Shield's** article re-imagines the studio as a collage, based on her research travelling across Canada to visit artist studios. In an imaginative act she makes fully present the objects that became her companions in a unique creative space of intimacy.

**Kate Wurtzel's** creative essay moves from “points of disruption to points of harmonizing with material and material bodies” (p. 119) through a relational dance of becoming on canvas with paint, colour and form between mother and young daughter. In a process of becoming artist the self is decentered and reformed educationally through trust in emergence; a concept Wurtzel embodies and relies upon in her own art teaching practice.

Story-listening and telling becomes a creative teaching and learning practice within communities of solidarity in **Rawda Harb's** poetic inquiry. In this context creating together becomes a journey of “self expression, self discovery, self healing, and a learning experience” (129). In this experience she enters seven different “rooms” of her life with her children who create and share in response. Together they disrupt and awaken deepened understandings of her ‘personality’ as roominess enables her to fully feel and be in each room.

An aesthetic and ethical principle of ‘minusio’ is explored by **R. Michael Fisher** during a site-specific artist

residency, premised on “less is more.” His article shares insights into being an artist in an educational setting (the struggles and the gifts), with a daycare and kindergarten and larger community. His intervention transports people into an empathetic relational engagement with the material of every day gravel (preferredly called stones). Ultimately an experience of ‘art-care’ between humans, nature and the elements emplaced and nourished both artist and the community.

The simple committed practice of journeying to the ocean at sunrise every day opens the possibility for powerful healing dreams to come into being. In this visual-poetic essay *Diana Tigerlily* shares the learning, healing and growth she was gifted with from this practice that was a collaboration between “the light, the water, the clouds, the reflections, the wind, the sand—[as] they all distinctly come together each day delivering a spectacle unique as a fingerprint. Every day. Tirelessly.” (p. 156). We have the opportunity each day to creatively interrupt our lives and to learn anew...

We thank the authors for their rich and inspiring contributions that engage us in aesthetic ways of knowing and becoming in the world, which is integral to our wellness and holism as a people.

With gratitude, we hope you enjoy this issue.

## References

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