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## Editorial

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Conversations

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# 2024 EDITORIAL

## Issue 20.1 Conversations

Our cover art *Summer Carousel* by Artist-Teacher **Rojia Dadashzadeh** reminds us of the fluid and entangled possibilities; unpredictability, excitement and curiosity that summer can bring and for me, it recalls languid conversations in outside cafes, under perhaps, at times, a too-warm summer sunshine, but with iced teas and great friends, doesn't it feel like time stands still but at the same time sprints past? I can spend hours listening and spinning tales that intertwine and encircle with those of my companions, weaving our different opinions together and perhaps apart, like Dadashzadeh's organic tendrils, generating and sharing thoughts, memories, imaginings and humour. As Paulo Freire (1970/2000) eloquently writes, it is through interpersonal dialogue that people can "transform and create their lifeworld, and raise their critical consciousness." Dónal O'Donoghue (2020) also tells us conversations can do many things; they can "invite questions, animate thoughts, promote mutual understandings". They can interrupt established ways of seeing, relating, interpreting, and representing. They allow us the ability to gain insights, to make obvious something that was hidden thus extending our knowledge and promoting understandings of each other.



Amy Atkinson

Amy Atkinson is a Ph.D. Candidate at Concordia University in Art Education. Amy has been a Canadian Art Teacher for over 15 years in Ontario and Internationally. Her research interests lie in the areas of Teacher Education, Research-Creation and looking at ways to support and elevate the role of Art Teachers within both schools and communities. As an artist and writer herself, Amy explores new materialities and ways to encourage sustainability within her practice.

Through this issue, we invite you to explore a series of conversations. We hope through our collection of articles, we have shared knowledge that may spark inspiration, invite questions and promote further understandings.

To start this issue, we are honoured to share the generative work of **Pam Patterson** of OCAD University. In *Art/Design Education Resiliency: "Staying with the Trouble"* which references Donna Haraway's call to commit to, and persevere in, realising connections as kin in a distressed world, Patterson reviews the

community research project, 'COVID-Anxiety', looking at the promise of laterally structured and collegially organized art educational communities of practice. Comparing their success to the failed establishment of a 'Disability Caucus' that followed, Patterson pursues an explicatory reflective writing that locates her study in time, place, and situation. She further uses these reflections to develop a metatext that identifies a theory around dialogic/dialect process use for the establishment – and potential success – of co-learning art and design educational communities of practice (CoPs).

Following is *Art/Design Education Resiliency: Co-generatively in a Community of Practice* which is a co-authored dialogic/dialectic conversation among co-founders of the Creative Research Inclusive Practices (CRIP) Lab located at OCAD University. Founders are **Pam Patterson**, Faculty of Art, and School of Graduate Studies, OCAD U; **Roman Romanov**, Faculty of Design, OCAD U; and **Matt Hawthorn**, Head Design, University of Derby. By naming their collective research practice after a form of snorkelling, they can swim the surface of discourse in play, deep diving into projects or exhibitions when paradoxical or multi-positional situations arise.

The still very recent regulated and confining pandemic years for many have operated to aggravate already existing anthropogenic anxieties. In exploring the challenges of the art educational community configurations post-COVID 19, we highlight creative works of **Joanna Black**, University of Manitoba and **Pam Patterson** in their co-exploration of generative potentials found in addressing anthropogenic and Covid-19 anxieties, as visually presented in the gallery show *Anthropogenic Anxiety*.

**Natasha Doyon** shares the results of her arts-based action research project in *What is the Impact of Online Hate?* considering how online/offline hate speech impacts new immigrant and refugee youth in Canada. In her study, Doyon shares how youth participants developed digital literacy skills to create alternative narratives by transforming online images, text, and symbols into new narratives. Through graphic illustration work, Doyon was able to encourage the sharing of stories to diffuse systemic inequalities and racism, building bridges between the youth's engagement with social media and their

embodied knowledge leading to a greater sense of belonging in their online/offline communities.

In *Craft Revival and Self-Directed Learning Among Young Women During the Pandemic*, **Sarah Pearson** summarizes a grounded theory inquiry which examines a renewed interest in craft practices. Through remote interviews with female participants in their early twenties, Pearson investigated what motivates these women to engage creatively, and how they gained knowledge about their chosen mode of creative production. Pearson's investigation cracks the surface of how craft-making and learning have been impacted by the pandemic, justifying the importance of independence, accessibility, and co-construction in teaching and learning.

The *Value of Arts-Based Methods in STEM: Formal Analysis, Open Dialogue, and Subjectivity*, discusses how researchers were invited to participate in a series of SSHRC-funded workshops delivered at the University of Guelph's School of Fine Art and Music (SOFAM), where they examined Chrysanne Stathacos' lithograph, 'Reflex Victory' (1979). drawn from the SOFAM Print Study Collection. The project led by **Christina Smylitopoulos** along with **Nakita Byrne-Mamahit, Sarah Oatley, Anna Sutton** found that over the duration of the one-hour workshop, participants demonstrated greater confidence in identifying what lay in their fields of vision with precision, exhibited greater comfort in pursuing open-ended inquiry, and became more conscious of the mutable and subjective qualities of their looking. Further reflections from project member **Sarah Mousseau** are featured highlighting the value of arts-based methodologies and contributing to the discourse on the role visual art can play in practices of teaching, learning, and research extending beyond the studio, museum, and gallery space.

In *Pre-service Elementary Generalist Teachers: Developing Competencies to Teach Visual Arts through the Studio Habits of Mind as a Stance and Artistic Disposition*, **Shruti Tandon** shares the results of an investigation into the development of perceived competency for teaching visual art in pre-service generalist teachers and their readiness to use visual arts in their future elementary classrooms. Pre-service generalist

teachers' feelings of preparedness and sense of efficacy are both important indicators of whether they will be able to meet the challenges of incorporating visual arts in their future classrooms and as effective 21st century educators. Tandon's findings illustrate that by applying Hetland's Studio Habits of Mind (2007) within learning and teaching visual arts, an optimistic shift can register in a teacher's confidence.

In our Creative Musings, **Yasuhito Nakasato** shares his *Dream-Inspired Art: Comparing Human and AI Approaches*. In Nakasato's study he recounts how he documented his dreams for two months, with the goal of uncovering how dreams are stored in the brain and attempting to gain insight into the unconscious processes that lead to their creation. Nakasato's artistic exploration has broader implications for our understanding of the creative process, the role of the unconscious in art, and the relationship between humans and AI.

For our Making Discoveries, we are thrilled to introduce our CAT Conversations sponsored by the Rita L. Irwin Art Teacher Dissemination of Knowledge Award. **Rita Irwin**, distinguished professor Emeritus of art education and curriculum studies from the University of British Columbia was presented with the CSEA/SCÉA Lifetime Achievement Award/Prix d'excellence for her body of work and scholarship during the 2022 CSEA/SCEA conference, Emergence in Ottawa. Rita Irwin was keen to use the award to further conversations in Art Education and so through a series of conversations with CSEA/SCEA Director of Publications **Mike Emme** and Director of Provincial Affiliate Liaison: **Jihane Mossalim**, Marie-France and myself were able to create, what we think is a groundbreaking opportunity for current art teachers to get together, share stories, inspirations and creative ideas.

For this edition of Creativ-tea, I sat down for a cup of tea with **Nancy Long**, an artist and a visual art and media teacher within secondary education in Montreal. Long is also pursuing her doctorate in Art Education at Concordia University. In her artwork, Long examines the overlap of nostalgia and memory by reflecting how they interact with the senses, recently steering her studio focus back to her first love of drawing. In the classroom, Long found that students were asking often for validation "is this good?", seemingly looking for confirmation

of achievement related to grades and assessments. Like many art teachers, Long was having a hard time answering those questions, because their queries seemed so vague and focused solely on the end result. By looking at the creative process of artists, Long explores how to show students that the end product doesn't just happen with the strike of divine inspiration; it's laborious, it's involved, there's change of directions, there are hurdles to go over. And that whole process, Long shares, is really where students learn.

For our Artist-Teacher, we present **Rojia Dadashzadeh** an Iranian/Canadian artist with a studio-based practice in Vancouver. Dadashzadeh works across a range of media in sculpture, painting, drawing and exhibits nationally and internationally. Dadashzadeh also teaches grades 7-12 within IB Visual Arts and Culinary Arts programs at Brockton School in North Vancouver. Her teaching and artistic practice are closely intertwined in ways that one informs the other. Alongside her creative artworks, in this issue, Dadashzadeh also shares one of her favourite units; Roots on a Plate: Family Recipe and Heritage. Written for and taught to grade eight art students, this inquiry-based unit centers on family heritage and identity with the intent to create a nurturing and culturally enriching educational experience for our young learners, fostering empathy, understanding, and respect among students while celebrating cultural diversity within an inclusive classroom environment where students can delve into their family heritage, embrace differences, and express themselves creatively.

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