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Editorial for the Volume 50, No. 1 Special Issue: Indigenous Perspectives and Art Education/Research/Practice

Dear Readers,

In this special edition, *Indigenous Perspectives and Art Education/Research/Practice* we are excited to present two articles that elevate Indigenous artists and their contributions to pedagogical reflection. These pieces celebrate Indigenous communities' cultural and artistic expressions and delve into art education's role in fostering reconciliation. They emphasize the power of Indigenous knowledge networks and the transformative potential of art pedagogy, intertwining personal experiences with art as inquiry to create rich, multidimensional learning journeys.

In the first feature, "Zaagi'idiwin: Reflections on Love, Indigenous Teaching Practice, and the Hoop Dance Project," the authors Hill and John, invite you into a learning experience centred on Zaagi'idiwin (love). Guided by Beany John, an Indigenous hoop dancer grounded in Anishinabek goodlife teachings, this project showcases the profound impact of Indigenous educational practices. The hoop dance becomes more than a performance; it is a living medium for storytelling, relationship-building, cultural preservation, and fostering a joyful sense of belonging through collaboration.

The second article by Rallis, Leddy, and Irwin, "Braiding A/r/tography & Métissage: Thinking Together on the Work of Sonny Assu," features a blend of the authors' three unique voices responding to the work of Sonny Assu, Ligwilda'xw of the Kwakwaka'wakw Nations. This piece explores Indigenous métissage, diffraction, and a/r/tography, illustrating how collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and researchers generate enriching, multidimensional experiences. It underscores the importance of centering Indigenous voices and presents contemporary practices as "living ideas."

On a personal note, the power of art to bridge cultures has been a force in my life. Raised away from my family's First Nation, I have used art to forge connections, reflect on my identity, and challenge the oversimplified binaries of Indigeneity in Canada. The cover image of this edition features a handmade kokum doll, a testament to this journey. Created while living with my grandma during her cancer treatment, this doll symbolizes our process of remembering and relearning from each other. She fuelled my artistic endeavours with gifts of sewing tools and quilting squares, which I used to create the doll, infused with medicinal herbs like sweetgrass and yarrow. This was more than crafting; it was a reconnection to my history, a blend of lessons and life experiences that transcended words. Juxtaposed with a group of mushrooms, the photo collage symbolizes the invisible ties to my family, the land of my upbringing, and the gentle awakening of hidden memories and cultural practices.

Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators are indispensable in amplifying Indigenous voices within art education. By supporting and uplifting Indigenous artists in meaningful ways, they help cultivate spaces of belonging and visibility. This Special Edition of CRAE calls us to listen, learn, and engage with the perspectives of Indigenous artists, fostering multidimensional ways of learning and critical knowledge engagement.

The holistic approach of Indigenous art education, as reflected in these articles, aligns seamlessly with the principles of a/r/tography—integrating art-making, research, and teaching. This comprehensive method extends Indigenous knowledge through art, with featured researchers demonstrating transparency and critical engagement, making contributions to reconciliation efforts.

I encourage you to dive into these articles, absorb their insights, and contemplate how you can support Indigenous artists in your own educational environment. By centering Indigenous voices and embracing holistic, multidimensional approaches, we can reimagine Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. Guided by Indigenous artists, art becomes a tool to navigate and understand complex ideas.

Meegwetch,

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