

Editorial

Christina Flemming  et Ardra Cole

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EDITORIAL

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Dr. Christina Flemming, *ARI* Managing Editor, is a lifelong storyteller, poet, and writer. Currently, she facilitates graduate and B.Ed. courses at Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU). She holds a PhD in Educational Studies from MSVU. A lover of words, Christina also holds a Master of Arts in English Literature and Creative Writing from Concordia University, and a Bachelor of Journalism Degree from the University of King's College. Her research explores how storytelling can help us to unhinge normative narratives. Christina sincerely treasures working closely with Ardra and feels grateful to read the beautifully crafted work of artful researchers from around the world. She also loves rosemary bagels, her partner Rose, and her daughter Matilda.

Dr. Ardra Cole, *ARI* Editor-in-Chief, is Professor, Lifelong Learning at Mount Saint Vincent University. Before returning to her home in Nova Scotia, she was Professor, Adult Education and Community Development, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, where she co-created and co-directed The Centre for Arts-informed Research. She is co-editor of the *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research* (2009) as well as a series of books on the role of the arts in research. Ardra is continually inspired and enriched by the creativity and bold thinking of emerging researchers and is committed to enhancing spaces for their work to flourish. Her favourite way to spend time is taking long walks in nature with her dogs running free and a camera in her hand.

Christina:

My six year-old daughter is primarily non-verbal and on the autism spectrum. The other kids at the daycare are constantly asking questions, *Who are you? Are you going home now? Can Matilda talk?* While all this is happening, my daughter moves through the play yard silently but deliberately.

Matilda peeks at the world through the corners of her eyes. She laughs easily. Her whole body fills with joy when she swims in the ocean. On the beach, she sifts sand through her tiny fingers. Occasionally, she finds a small crab apple to throw into the salty waves. She attempts to grab bees from where they hover over top of the wild rose bushes, and I yell, *Stop!* When I talk to her, I know she will not answer. Sometimes, I wish we could talk back and forth, but it is not untrue to say that I usually know what she is trying to tell me—even without words. She has taught me that there is still a lot that I do not understand. There are ways of being that I have yet to encounter. In the silence, there is magic.

Ardra:

I spend a good part of every day in nature in the company of dogs. As I walk the land each day and acknowledge the natural beauty around me, I observe the dogs' detailed explorations—their capacity to attend, have full sensory awareness, give themselves so completely to their quest. Humbled by the dogs' focus, presence, and attentiveness, I turn to them and their ways of being in the world, to dwell in moments of experiencing the land upon which I spend much time. As I observe their wanderings and capacity to attend to sounds and scents of which I am not aware, I am humbled by what I do not and cannot know.

In this editorial, we mention Christina's daughter and Ardra's attunement with nature through her walks with dogs as an inspirational reminder of the many ways of being and knowing beyond language that inform our understanding of the world in which we live. In the articles that follow, we take a closer look at soil, sand, and gravel, while making kinship with birds, trees, and stones. We offer inspiration to look underneath the surface of things. Across the articles in this issue, we see artful research creating connection, uncovering dangerous stereotypes, and offering us the chance to learn from the more-than-human. We hope the articles in this issue offer the chance to step back and see what lessons the silence might offer up for you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Joachim Aagaard Friis (University of Agder) begins the **Theoretical Musings** section with "Material-relational Following of an Artist-curator Relationship in Movement: A Reflection of My Relationship with the Artist Regitze Karlsen". Friis combines his interests in the methodology of "following" with his curatorial focus on ecology through an exploration of Regitze Karlsen's sculptural art that calls attention to the relationship between humans and more-than-human organisms such as compost soil, sand, and gravel. **Margaret McKeon** (Educator) and **Kedrick James** (University of British Columbia) continue the focus on the more-than-human within the context of ecological distress. Through "The Poetics of Kinship,"

they exchange a series of letters in which they explore poetically their kinship with the natural world as a call for acceptance of and respect for that which holds mystery. In keeping with new materialism, **Maureen Flint** and **Yixuan Wang** (University of Georgia) extend the concept of more-than-human beyond the natural world to their own artmaking practices. In “Artful Diffractions: (En)tangling with Reflexivity and New Materialist Philosophy” the authors engage with their varied artmaking practices as a way of reflexively understanding their relationship to their work. With the delightful title, “The Art of Coming Upon Something”, **Tanya Behrisch** (Simon Fraser University) and **David Jardine** (University of Calgary) engage in a hermeneutic dialogue in which they explore what it means to become experienced in an art form, be it oil painting, writing, or teaching. **Deborah Green** (Whitecliffe College) concludes this section with an intimate exploration of healing and self-care. In “An Exquisite Corpse: Unfolding Scarcity Using Arts-based Autoethnography” Green, accompanied by, what she calls “a motley crew of author, animangels, Darwin, and new material/posthumanists”, takes the reader on her journey toward understanding and healing from her husband’s suicide.

The **Art/Research In Action** section begins with an inspiring collaboration of **Annie Hung** and **Ching-Chiu Lin** (Simon Fraser University) and **Joan Zhang** (Retired Senior). “From Threads to Frames: Animating an Immigrant Senior’s COVID-19 Pandemic Experience” documents Hung and Lin’s use of storytelling and animation as a form of scholarly inquiry to understand and represent Zhang’s resilience through the pandemic. Highlighted here is the importance of attending to respectful and inclusive processes of translation. Similar to Flint and Wang in the previous section, in “Investigating Professional Identity Development through Arts-based Duoethnography”, **Ting Fang Chien** (Colorado State University) and **Hsiu-Chun Yang** (Taipei Municipal Shuangyong Elementary School) draw on posthumanist theory to explore, through artmaking and dialogue, their processes of identity development as early career researchers. Continuing with the role of artmaking as a medium for exploration, **Marian Tumanyan** (University of Oulu) examines how artmaking assemblages function as a tool for understanding and supporting children with self-expression in “The Capacity of Artmaking Assemblages to Enable Positive Transformations: A Case of a Finnish Schoolgirl.” **Amir Kalan** (McGill University) also draws on the medium of art as a tool for better understanding immigrants’ experience. In “‘Our Culture is a Product of Active Word’: A Poetic Inquiry into Immigrants’ Experience with Writing in a Host Language”, Kalan used poetic inquiry with a group of preservice teachers to enhance their understanding of some of the complexities of immigrants’ experiences. In “Getting Lost through the Relational Mail Art of Art/Re-search (T)here: A Decolonizing Methodology”, **Geneviève Cloutier** (University of Ottawa) and a **group of seven co-conspirators** present a call to action for researchers to co-conspire through art to re-imagine research within and outside the academy. The thread of identity development of those in underrepresented groups continues with **Shena Sanchez** and **Sun Young Gu’s** (University of Alabama) exploration, “‘To Be an Asian Girl’: Examining Identity Construction and School Punishment through Found Poetry”. The theme of resilience surfaced as the girls developed a sense of agency to defy anti-Asian sexist stereotypes. The theme of resilience is central to the next

piece, “Understanding Nursing Resilience during the COVID-19 Pandemic through Narrative and Art: A Feminist Exploration in Educational Research” in which **Carol Flegg** shares stories and collages of four public health nurses who were on the front lines during the pandemic. The research revealed the power and possibility of art-making as a process for enhancing nursing resilience. In the concluding piece in this section, we follow **Rachel Moyan** (University of British Columbia) in a months-long process depicted in “Walking-Writing-Weaving: An A/R/Tographic Reconsideration of the Human-Algorithm Relationship.” She leaves us to ponder questions about our own relationship with algorithms and the necessity of finding ways to engage in an ongoing journey of self-determination.

The **ARI Review Section** begins in an art exhibition, “Caring Futures” commissioned as part of a research project focused on examining technology, care, and welfare services. Researchers **Ingvil Hellstrand** (University of Stavanger), **Aino-Kaisa Koistinen** (University of the Arts Helsinki), and **Nora Simonhjell** (University of Agder) review the exhibit in “‘Emotion is Another Kind of Information’: (Re)imagining Care through Art Explorations”. They reveal the impact of the exhibit on them and how the artists’ work challenged and inspired new ways of thinking and feeling about the future of care work. **Alexandra Fidyk** (University of Alberta) provides a heartfelt and reverential review of *Art-Care Practices for Restoring the Communal: Education, Co-inquiry, and Healing* by Barbara Bickel and R. Michael Fisher. Fidyk’s concluding words, “Love and faith, companioned by healing, and with creativity and caring at their centre, have the potential to usher in transformative change” speak to the substance and power of Bickel and Fisher’s book. The author of the concluding piece of this issue is also the artist of our cover image. Writing from a café on Mount Myoko, Japan, **Kendrea Rhodes** (University of Flinders) uses creative nonfiction and mixed media artwork in “A Creative Review of Amelia Walker’s *Alogopoiesis*. The review alone is a work of art that compels the reader to seek out and thoroughly engage with Amelia Walker’s “necessary” read.

This issue of *ARI* was not convened as a themed issue and yet, we are struck by the weft of threads that have given thematic structure to the fabric of this issue. With respect for silence, humility, and mystery, we are honoured to share it with special gratitude for whatever magic lurked below the surface to create this harmonious collection of scholarly works. We are grateful to the authors for sharing their artful work, the Associate Editors for guiding that work through the publication process, and to the production team for adding the final polish. And, we are eternally grateful for the human and more-than-human influences in our lives that daily remind us of the limitations of language for enhancing understanding of the complex and multidimensional world in which we live.

Warmly,
Christina and Ardra

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