



Lessons from Grandfather

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Lessons from Grandfather, 24' x 36'

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Artist's Statement

This mixed media painting is part of a series of personal phenomenological inquiries into the learning made uniquely possible by art-making practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the process of making of this multilayered piece, I contemplated my evolving identity as an educator and artist-researcher while reflecting on the value of the arts for deep critical reflection, meaning-making, and epistemic noticing in times of crisis. Among the many layers that make up this piece are collaged pages from an old teacher education textbook, handwritten excerpts from a personal journal I kept during this time, and pressed, dried flowers that were given to me by my grandfather many years ago. The emergent themes that evolved from the analysis of this work included the importance of art-making as a diagnostic tool to recognize diseased ways of being in the world; how art-making enables deeper forms of symbolism and metaphor to offer lessons for moving forward with wonder despite the precariousness of current times; and a pathway to reconnection with the wisdom and lessons from my late grandfather. As a method for critical pedagogical reflection, artistic practices can connect us more deeply to ourselves, our teaching practices, and each other and can do so in times of profound disruption, trauma, and change, providing an alternate text to express the lived experience.

