Hala Mreiwed Mindy R. Carter Sara Hashem Candace H. Blake-Amarante *Editors*

Making Connections in and Through Arts-Based Educational Research



Studies in Arts-Based Educational Research

Volume 5

Series Editor

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Kelly Clark-Keefe, University of Vermont, Burlington, VT, USA Morna McDermott McNulty, Towson University, Catonsville, MD, USA Richard Siegesmund, Northern Illinois University, Dekalb, IL, USA Arts-Based Educational Research continues to garner increased interest and debate among artists, arts writers, researchers, scholars and educators internationally. Further, the methodologies and theoretical articulations associated with Arts-Based Educational Research are increasingly employed across the disciplines of social science, education, humanities, health, media, communications, the creative arts, design, and trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research.

This book series offers edited collections and monographs that survey and exemplify Arts-Based Educational Research. The series will take up questions relevant to the diverse range of Arts-Based Educational Research. These questions might include: What can Arts-Based methodologies (such as Arts-Based Research, Arts-Informed Research, a/r/tography, Poetic Inquiry, Performative Inquiry, Arts Practice-Based Research etc.) do as a form of critical qualitative inquiry? How do the Arts (such as literary, visual and performing arts) enable research? What is the purpose of Arts-Based Educational Research? What counts as Arts-Based? What counts as Educational? What counts as Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research be responsibly performed in communities and institutions, individually or collaboratively? Must Arts-Based Educational Research be public? What ways of knowing and being can be explored with Arts-Based Educational Research? How can Arts-Based Educational Research build upon diverse philosophical, theoretical, historical, political, aesthetic and spiritual approaches to living? What is *not* Arts-Based Educational Research?

The hinge connecting the arts and research in this Arts-Based Educational Research book series is education. Education is understood in its broadest sense as learning/transformation/change that takes place in diverse formal and informal spaces, places and moments. As such, books in this series might take up questions such as: How do perspectives on education, curriculum and pedagogy (such as critical, participatory, liberatory, intercultural and historical) inform Arts-Based inquiries? How do teachers become artists, and how do artists become teachers? How can one be both? What does this look like, in and beyond school environments?

Arts-Based Educational Research will be deeply and broadly explored, represented, questioned and developed in this vital and digitally augmented international publication series. The aesthetic reach of this series will be expanded by a digital online repository where all media pertaining to publications will be held. Queries can be sent via email to Mindy R. Carter editor.aber.springer@gmail.com.

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Series Editor Foreword

When I received the invitation to join the Springer Arts-Based Educational Research (SABER) series editorial board in June 2021, I – like many people around the globe – was in an emotional and mental state of uncertainty, while simultaneously understanding that the newness of COVID-19's new normal would dissipate as we went about our days in the midst of wondering whether and when the COVID-19 pandemic would subside. I also was overwhelmed with the explicit intensity of the United States' anti-Black racism, a simultaneous pandemic layered into the fabric of U.S. culture since its inception. I actively was trying to breathe through the dual pandemics and engage research and creativity acknowledging, as Pauline Sameshima wrote in the Forward, "We are living in multiple crises and cannot ignore how our environmental, global, local and immediate circumstances direct and affect our teaching and research." We also cannot ignore how these crises and circumstances bind us. Thus, the invitation came at a time when life was heavy but also at a time when I needed to lean into creativity, art, and arts-based educational research (ABER) as they are, for me, the most normal aspects of life. I accepted the invitation and have been nurtured by the process and more specifically by the outpouring of healing and connectivity noted in Making Connections in and through Arts-based Educational Research.

The *Making Connections* editors – Hala Mreiwed, Mindy R. Carter, Sara Hashem, and Candace H. Blake-Amarante – have curated a work that highlights the authors' pivots and the potential of ABER to repair and *respair* through establishing and sustaining: CONNECTIONS. Whether through the pandemic(s), social engagement, stories, personal experiences, or pedagogical expansion, each of the 20 chapters celebrates and solidifies global connections with authors from/working in Australia, Canada, Czech Republic, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, United States, and Vietnam. Representation of such a diverse group of scholars practicing arts-based and arts-based educational inquiry suggests the COVID-19 popularized phrase, "We're all in this together", is more than a phrase signaling us to navigate the pandemic(s) with a sense of protection and care for one another. To be in this together, as noted by this text, is to understand our global connection as humans and as artists.

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Methodologically, the chapters in the book meet the aim of the American Educational Research Association ABER Special Interest Group in that they push methodological boundaries through use of narrative inquiry, performance-based arts, and arts-based educational inquiry to include trio-ethnography, ethnodrama, digital dialogue and visuals, socially engaged art, textile work, choreo-writing, a/r/tography, self-study, poetics and poetic inquiry, photo-elicitation, and others. The diverse representation of methodologies further substantiates the irrefutable importance and influence of creativity and art in research that binds, heals, and connects; and is a roadmap of sorts for established scholars and those new to and interested in the field.

I encourage those interested in this text to not only read the text but also to experience each chapter as balm – a healing and mending – and as motivation to consistently embrace creativity and the arts. I also challenge readers to sit with the methodologies, the personalization, the visuals, the poetry, and the exasperated cries for world change. Read this text not only with an eye for critically engaged arts-based inquiry but also with a heart for improving our world and our connections and a recognition that the "elixir to living through all crises has always been the arts" (Sameshima).

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Foreword

Creating New Normals: REPAIR (to go to) and RESPAIR (to hope again)

It's March 2022, two years from when life patterns in Canada started changing in response to COVID-19. Masks, prohibitions on gatherings, school closures, border restrictions, and working from home became new normals. In Canada, there were new words, like *social distancing*, and around the world, new things were created that we did not have before, like vaccines and COVID-19 passports; and my mother sewed and sewed various mask designs for friends and family. Creating new ways of being, doing things differently, and being alone were normal.

The word "pivot" arose to a lexical mainstay of COVID-19 reporting. On 23 March 2022, a Google search of the words pivot and COVID produced 104 million hits in under a second. Turning away from anticipated trajectories and taking new paths were necessary. In my own work, using the Parallaxic Praxis research model, the juxtaposition of a collection when examined concurrently can surface a dynamic agency of intertextualities and aporias (Sameshima et al., 2020). Intentionally investigating aporia is an important means of creative birth and repositioning. For example, imagine an aporia is a boulder in the middle of the road that makes the path impassable. In the journey around the rock, one is forced off the road. On the detour, one might find a flower never seen before or see a vista not visible from the road. This embodied work-around practice, as a pivot, is evident through the projects and practices described in this book.

Pivoting constructs have clearly reimagined not only the biannual Artful Inquiry Research Group (AIRG) symposium as a virtual forum of connection in higher education, sharing scholarship, practices, and researcher education amongst artists, educators, and researchers across disciplines and countries; but pivoting has also reimagined our collective relations. We are part of an alteration. There is no turning away from the 37,000+ COVID-19 deaths in Canada (Government of Canada, 2022) and over one million deaths in the USA (Worldometer, 2022). Concurrently, one month into Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the world remains in shock at the magnitude

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of aggression, scope, and scale of Russia's military assault, incomparable to anything since World War II (Herb et al., 2022). Moreover, the Canadian Climate Action Network (2022) reports further anticipated storm events, coastal erosion, heat waves, smog episodes, retreating glaciers, increased aridity, and rising sea levels, all creating devastating consequences to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of our lives. We are living in multiple crises and cannot ignore how our environmental, global, local, and immediate circumstances direct and affect our teaching and research.

And yet, I am bountifully revived and energized in recognizing how the authors and the participants and communities in the studies here have come together in support and acknowledgement of their shared loss; through a grieving process (of pain and birth), these research projects, *in* art and *through* art, have generated hope, inspiration, and compassionate positive movement. While a portion of the papers is directly related to COVID-19 research, all these works represent a courageous upstream movement, trusting in the arts as the means of bettering the world, against the current of discouraging crises.

Drawing together an incredible generative energy, editors Hala Mreiwed, Mindy R. Carter, Sara Hashem, and Candace H. Blake-Amarante bring together a striking assemblage across four themes: Connections during COVID-19, Socially Engaged Connections, Storied Connections, and Personal and Pedagogical Connections.

This book uses research in the forms of narrative inquiry, poetic inquiry, trio-ethnography, playwriting, autoethnodrama, deconstructionism, digital visual approaches, storytelling, self-reflection, choreo-writing, devised choreography, polyvocal poetic inquiry, a/r/tographic inquiry, ethnography, photo-elicitation, and more. If you are looking for a diverse collection of how arts can be used in and through research, look no further. Through its 20 beautiful chapters, this book is a powerful testament to the arts in education and healthcare considering online creative teaching pedagogies and connective research methodologies. The book also provides exemplars of the multifaceted tools of arts research practices including collaborative techniques, metaphoric practices, memory work, textiles as expression and documentation, and the artistry of creative response. Dissemination practices can include such items as policy posters and action briefs, while the technologies of digital tools, digital dialogues, and cellphilms can provide new avenues of thought. The arts can act as connectors between school-community-university partnerships, and community engagement can thrive through urban arts and transformative art practices. The arts can also mediate messages directly, as shown though visceral poetic assemblage, stories, and images. I was astonished by the scope of this collection, which not only spans work on marginalized voices, but also provides in-depth inquiries on Canadian immigrants, homework transgression, gender-based violence, child agency, and Asian hate crimes and discrimination.

I am honoured and grateful to have been invited to write this foreword because in reading the chapters, I was deeply reminded that the elixir to living through all crises has always been the arts. The authors convincingly demonstrate that the arts can move us closer to one another—they rescue us from isolation. The arts in this book foster pride, community, and hope, create learning communities that allow

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for the co-creation of new knowledge, cultivate collective resilience, and develop cultural knowledge and learnings. These research projects showcase how the arts can redirect thinking and reimagine positionality and relationality. Authors note that the arts create expansive learning, inform pedagogic design, provide diverse epistemic options, stimulate conversation, change professional ways of knowing and being, engage in deep critical reflection, and even repair relationships.

The word *repair* is most often used to refer to pairing again or restoring to a working condition. Repair can also be used to mean: "to go to another place" i.e. "After dinner, we repaired to the lounge for coffee" (Cambridge, 2022). As we consider our collective responses to COVID-19, the war, climate crises, and all our work, think of *repair*, not as going back to where we were, but as a path in and through art, to a better-not-yet. Last, consider the uncommon word *respair*, coined by a poet meaning the opposite of despair. Respair is "a renewed or reinvigorated hope, or a recovery from anguish or hopelessness" (Hawks in Friedman, 2020). As we repair, we are reminded well in these chapters that art provides respair.

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About the Editors

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Mindy R. Carter, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor and Director of Teacher Education Programs in the Department of Integrated Studies in Education at McGill University (Faculty of Education). Carter's SSHRC, MEES, and FRQSC funded research focuses on using drama and theatre education to explore critical societal issues, teacher agency, and curriculum through arts-based educational research. Carter is (2021) Recipient of the ARTS publication award through the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) and the (2022) Mentorship award winner from CSSE. Carter's latest book *Smallest Circles First: Exploring Reconciliatory Praxis Through Drama Education* was released during Spring 2022 by the University of Toronto Press.

Sara Hashem, Ph.D., is the Co-founder of the Artful Inquiry Research Group (AIRG) at McGill University. She is an Educator and Museum Specialist with extensive international experience in educational programming and museum development. Hashem currently holds the position of Pedagogical Advisor for Curriculum

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Candace H. Blake-Amarante, Ph.D., is the Knowledge Manager at Equitas— Centre international d'éducation aux droits humains, International Centre for Human Rights Education. She is an artist-researcher, who specializes in writing children's stories and plays. In most of her stories, she pursues two main goals: bringing awareness of children's rights through the arts, and incorporating, in children's literature, the voice of children with chronic illnesses. Her most recent work includes; a dialogue, "Let's not talk about it anymore" (Questions: Philosophy for Young People Fall 2022); a children's book, *The Dream Machine* (in collaboration with Dr. Argerie Tsimicalis and Shriners Hospitals for Children-Canada; Tellwell Publishing, forthcoming); a children's poem, "The Sky Smiles at Me" (LEARN Quebec, My Goodnight Bag 2021); a play on children's rights, *The Ugly Ones* (with Chelsea Woolley; Staged Reading Geordie Theatre Fest 2020); and a play for young audiences, You, Me and Victor Hugo! on the concept of censorship (Artist Mentorship Program at the Black Theatre Workshop 2018–19). She has published a short children's story, "The Blunder Family: Now Where'd I Put the Pork?" (East of the Web 2020), and a children's book, The Pheasant's Tale or ... Was it its Tail? (Green Bamboo Publishing 2017). Amarante holds a Ph.D. in political science from Columbia University, New York. Currently, she is a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children.

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