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Article

A/r/tographic *currere* beyond colonial time: Four learning stories

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Abstract

Working in the spirit of sister scholarship, we enact currere through a/r/tographic methods and share our learning stories with each other. We notice significant themes of intergenerational learning, slow pedagogy, connection to Land, and deepening consciousness of time in our lives, in arts practice, and in pedagogy. With attention to Indigenous pedagogies and worldviews, we consider how the transtemporal experience of currere opens into multiple experiences of time, which can help us to slow down, connect with Land, and enact intergenerational learning. We view currere and arts practices as potential disruptions to colonial norms in education. These approaches may help educators notice prevailing cultural norms and develop alternate ways of being that resist colonial norms thereby enabling a decolonial praxis. These observations within our themes of time and arts-based practice offer opportunities for currere scholars and educators to experiment with deep time consciousness in their own research and pedagogies.

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Introduction

"Time lives in the body, not as the tick of the clock, but as a pulse in the blood. It is a thought buried deep in nerve, leaf and gene." (Farrier, 2025)

This research engages in a process of currere through a/r/tography to explore different experiences of time. Following the multi-layered nature of time that these processes uncover for us, we rearticulate our practices of artmaking and storytelling as forms of *currere* that give space to plural conceptions of time. This re-thinking of time as it applies to *currere* offers opportunities to engage with decolonial criticism, expanding on the transtemporal potential that *currere* offers to notions of time as they may be understood by Indigenous scholars (Fixico, 2003; Little Bear, 2000; Yunkaporta, 2024). Donald Fixico (Shawnee, Sac and Fox, Muscogee Creek and Seminole), in discussing Indigenous circular philosophy, asserts that,

> By studying the changes of the seasons and observing the lives of animals and plants as

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> part of nature, native logic became grounded in the central idea of a continuum of events that seemed familiar. Nature repeated itself in a continuous series of cycles and seasons of circular patterns. (Fixico, 2003, p. 50-51)

We strive to replicate this attention to cyclical patterns in our work by experiencing the recursive turns, returns and temporal patterns through a slow process of currere unfolding.

Locating Ourselves

To begin this discussion of a/r/tographic *currere* as a felt, lived experience through our engagement with arts-based practices, we situate ourselves in place. Thinking about xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), whose Land remains occupied by the University of British Columbia and in which we are embedded as researchers, the story of the tribal name shows a deep connection with the river grass. The community names the place as where "the məθkʷəy̓ grows" and we might take this to mean both the river grass and the people. For use to exist as beings is to be tied to the Land.

Cate: We are teachers and researchers who live and work on the traditional, unceded lands of the Musqueam (People of the River Grass), Squamish Nation (People of the Land) & Tsleil-Waututh Nation (People of the Inlet). We could not exist, learn, or teach in the ways we do without the stewardship of these Lands by these Peoples since time immemorial. We are grateful for Indigenous teachings from across Turtle Island that offer us different ways of seeing and the paths needed for making connections to ancestors and to place.

Brittney: A recent teaching I received from a proud Musqueam member shared that the name Musqueam relates back to the flowering plant which grows in the Fraser River estuary. These teachings have been passed on from generation to generation and explain how they became known as the People of the River Grass. As a member of the Heiltsuk Nation and a guest on this territory, I will act with care and respect for all. I raise my hands up to give thanks and to show my gratitude for the Indigenous people of Turtle Island, who have cared for these lands since time immemorial. gʔiǧiáxsix̌a (Thank you).

Shannon: As a Métis woman from Treaty Six territory in Saskatchewan, I acknowledge myself as a guest on xʷməθkʷəy̓əm Territory. That idea of being a host or being a guest is an important frame for considering our relationship to Land. It implies a reciprocal relationship, and the need for mutually understood roles and responsibilities, which might vary given whether or not one is an invited, or an uninvited guest, as most of us are here. Acknowledging the people whose Land I am on speaks to the importance of protocol in keeping good relations – we all owe that to one another.

Lori: When we give a land acknowledgement we are acknowledging both time and place and situating ourselves in the place/time. I spent time storying my personal relationship with Camosun Bog recently. As an uninvited guest, I always offer acknowledgement that I am visiting an ancestral and unceded site that is sacred to the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) people. An information board at the bog informs me that the Musqueam people arrived in this area around 10,000 years ago.

Cate: In land acknowledgments, we often say 'time immemorial' to call to mind Indigenous Peoples' conceptions of connections to place over time, going back as far as can be

remembered, or to 'time beyond memory.' It is not only a matter of how many years this connection to Land represents, but of how a People and a place coexist, affecting one another's lives such that we can sense the mutually constitutive relationship. As a white settler to these Lands, my ancestors' stories can connect me to a tradition that includes the Land, although that relationship is fractured by capitalism and colonization and immigration. I follow parallel tracks of connecting with my British and Celtic origins and learning the stories of the Lands I live on. By learning to connect through our own histories, we can position ourselves to better share relationships with all of the places we call home.

We story our places, and they story us. Places have meaning. To uncover the relationship we have, and to make meaning in place we need practices that connect us to the Land. When we move to new territories we carry stories with us, and we make new stories in new places. The stories that we share with one another and with other educational researchers grow out of our relationships to the time and place in which we are situated. Our stories in this paper emerge from a collaborative sharing of arts-based *currere.*

Thinking Through Time

As artists, teachers and researchers of a/r/tographic practice, we observe how Western notions of time can be explored through currere in relation to our pedagogies. Blackfoot scholar Leroy Little Bear points to the centrality of singularity and linearity in Western European value systems, noting that "linearity manifests itself in terms of a social organization that is hierarchical" while "singularity results in a social structure consisting of specialists" (Little Bear, 2000, p. 82). These values of singularity and linearity underlie Western-centric notions of time, resulting in cultural and social institutions whose structures dominate our experience of time and our ability to navigate time freely.

Western scholars associate circular, seasonal notions of time with the ancient Greek concept of *kairos* (Mori, 2024; Snowber, 2016, 2022). For those of us socialized by Western epistemological frameworks, we can find pre-colonial notions of time in ancient Western cultural understandings that bear more similarity to Indigenous notions of time. By creating space to foreground and consider Indigenous conceptions of time, we can reconceptualize how we understand and experience temporal realities in Western educational contexts. It is through our engagement with Apalech Clan scholar Dr. Tyson Yunkaporta's notion of "deep time diligence" that we carefully reconsider the Greek concepts of *kronos, kairos*, and *aion*. Marie Battiste reminds us that:

> … the space that is created when Indigenous and Western thought are brought together … is not a merge or a clash, but a space that is new, electrifying, and even contentious, but ultimately has the potential for an interchange of dialogue of the assumptions, values, and interests each holds. (Battiste, 2013, p. 105)

As we analyze our a/r/tographic *currere* practice from a multiplicity of perspectives (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous), we grapple with the electricity that is produced through the interplay of these different understandings and experiences of time. In so doing, we seek to respond to Donald's call for "educators [who] must be willing to experiment with curricular and pedagogical approaches that provoke their students to engage" (2021, p. 61). We take that experimental approach to this work as well, weaving in and out of one another's voices, and in and out of temporal concerns.

Given the fraught and highly contested relationship between Western and Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, we are examining how different conceptualizations of time might be understood through processes of a/r/tography and *currere*. We agree with Barad's (2007) estimation that ontologies and epistemologies are entwined with ethics, and that we must therefore take care with how we enact them in the constant becoming of the world. As the past bursts through into the present, and touches the future, thereby recolouring the past, we make art and engage in a discourse of sense-making through our lived experiences as artists, reasearchers, relatives and teachers. We consider how the notions of time that we produce or re-produce shape our understandings of who we are as artists, researchers and teachers, and the ways in which these refractive lenses can affect our ongoing teaching practices.

Methods

A/r/tographic *Currere*

Although *currere* as a methodology invites a chronological narrative through our lifetime in education, Pinar writes that, "it aims for the cultivation of a developmental point of view that is transtemporal and transconceptual" (2026c, p. 51). *Currere* asks us to consider our experiences as educators and as learners by reflecting on the past (regressive), visioning a future (progressive), and reflecting on the present (analytical), all while conceptualizing our journey in education and the political frameworks that shape us and our society (synthetical) (Pinar, 1975, 2026c). We seek to expand the scope of the temporal connections within *currere* by attending to intergenerational connnections and the way Land holds memory, while also observing the distinct way time's passage feels to each of us throughout our reflective a/r/tography experiences.

When we set out to do *currere* work together, we were drawing on the influences of a/r/tography (Irwin et al., 2023) considered through Indigenous pedagogical lenses (Battiste, 2013; Cajete, 1994; Grande, 2015; Goulet & Goulet, 2014; Leddy & Miller, 2023). A/r/tography is a methodology of research that mobilizes art processes and then grapples with educational issues through the lenses of being simultaneously Artist, Researcher and Teacher. It is a methodology committed to paying close attention to the world, to seeing myriad aspects of experience as co-constitutive and non-hierarchical, meaning that a work of visual art forms part of an inquiry without defined parameters, receptive to seeing the connections that emerge. It is thus fundamentally open-ended (Irwin et al., 2023). Deleuze and Guattari's rhizomatic worldview supports this understanding that the research, the teaching, the learning, the artmaking—all form an interlinked assemblage of relations without a dominant or pre-determined shape; this assemblage must also include the communities, places and stories of a given a/r/tography situation (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004; Irwin et al., 2006). Through a rhizomatic worldview, we find patterns of thought that pull our experiences of time, artmaking and education together into a unique axiology that runs through our entire work.

This axiology extends beyond the ways in which we collaborate with one another to deeply inform our relationships with the more-than-human world. We capitalize Land throughout this paper to acknowledge this and so as to honour Indigenous ways of relating to Land, the ways that Land holds spirit, history, memory, ways of being and knowing, not only physical and geographic meanings. As Sandra Styres (Kanien'kehá:ka-Mohawk) explains:

> Land reaches boundaries of place by embodying the principles, philosophies, and ontologies that transcend the material geography of land and the making of place or placefulness… Land is consciousness—Land is sentient (see also Styres, 2017, p. 93). Land refers to the ways we honor and respect her as a sentient and conscious being. (Styres, 2018, p. 27)

This conception of Land as more than physical geography informs our collective perspective of Land and the relationships that we cultivate in and through place. It is our living relative, our curriculum, our teacher, and our collective mother.

Through ongoing dialogue across time and place, we wove the practices of *currere* and a/r/tography with Indigenous pedagogical perspectives. As we enacted this practice, multi-layered, deeper and more nuanced understandings of the connections that we build as educators through different notions of time began to emerge. We responded to each other's stories and heard more of each other's experiences from the past and present, and as we did, new layers of understanding formed. We began to understand how a new vision could become "transtemporal and transconceptual" (Pinar, 2026c, p. 51). An a/r/tographic *currere* transcends Western notions of time, and braids together notions of "deep time diligence" (Yunkaporta, 2024), *kairos* or cyclical/seasonal time, and *aion* or ancestral time. Even as our understanding widens and deepens through these notions, we are bound by the elusiveness of experience in relation to time. As Pinar notes, "the present is transfigured – at the very moment it is grasped – into the past" (2026c, p. 60).

Our pursuit of *currere* as an analytic tool within an a/r/tographic practice consists in a "continual referring back to the reality underneath words, to our immediate experience, a perpetual placement of the attention to one's physical insides to attempt to discover what one's true emotional, cognitive—in short, psychic—state is" (Pinar, 2026b, p. 3). The artistic process helps us move beyond the Enlightenment view of the subject. *Currere* pushes us towards an expansion of who we conceive of as a 'subject.' When we recognize the deeply embedded and embodied character of our actions in the world, we become agents in relationship with place. When we share our *currere* work in writing here, the layers of our experiences and the intertwining of our responses to each other's learning stories exist all at once as part of that self-in-relation. We are proceeding as though all time is *now*.

Working in Ethically Relational Ways

We collaborate at the intersection of the Indigenous pedagogy and environmental education fields. We each hold different identities, positionalities, and relationships to our place of scholarship. We are all at different points in our careers as educators, and work in different educational contexts ranging from elementary years to post-secondary. We all work in the space of decolonial scholarship which, Indigenous scholars, Donald, Tait and Moostoos-Lafferty explain, may be understood as a practice of relationship, repair, and renewal:

> If relationship denial is indeed the fundamental organizing principle undergirding colonial worldview, and if educational institutions and their practices are largely organized in conformity with colonial forms of relationship denial, then the possibility of unlearning colonial forms of relationship denial is dependent upon curricular and pedagogical approaches that repair and renew the relationships that have been denied. (Donald et al., 2025, p. 22)

This includes our relationships to one another, to our students, relatives, the Land and all of our more-than-human kin.

Inspired by the work of Shilling et al. (2021), we write collboratively in the spirit of sister scholarship. We draw on their research as we consider how hierarchical ways of working in academia, which overlook the complex emotional work of research related to marginalized identities, contribute to overtaxing and undervaluing researchers who engage in collaborative and relational processes (Leddy et al., 2021). Through our work, we engage in dialogue, we listen to each other, share the decision-making, and give each person space to contribute as they are able. This article represents shared, collective work in the sense that we do not abide by hierarchical norms to complete tasks. We try to respect each other's autonomy and nurture our relationships in the way we work.

Each of us, as educators in different contexts, has reflected on our own pasts and made connections to both our ancestors and experiences of the past. In the present, we reflect on how teaching through arts-based practices and making meaning through arts-based activities connects us to our ancestors and ancestral arts. This ancestral connection generates pathways into new approaches that are inspired by our students, our children, younger generations, and those yet to come. Within each of our stories, a strong connection runs through past-present-future that may be understood as intergenerational learning. There is also an attention to the passage of time and the need to feel less of the frenetic pace in our busy teaching lives. Finally, our art practices have opened our attention to connections through and across time. As we iterate and bring the past forward, we stay connected with stories and places from our histories, and enact creative processes that can flow through cycles of life.

Through engaging with arts-based practices in the present, we connect with our ancestors and with future generations, which becomes a fresh collision of past and future in the present. Our experiences as both learners and educators have caused us to revisit different notions and experiences of time, and how those are layered within educational contexts and experiences. When we engage in artmaking, we move from a sense of the present—"I am here" through to a sense of "I was here" (Farrier, 2025). Art reflects changing notions of time as a process through which we become present, reflect on the past and create a vision for the future (Farrier, 2025). Artmaking can be understood as a living *currere.* It is both temporally bound and timeless, occurring both within and outside of us, in a constant state of becoming.

Problematizing Western Notions of Time

Our research points to the organic experiences of time that exceed Western clock time. Clocks are a Western tool that disrupted Indigenous societies' connections to cyclical and seasonal lifeways (Leddy & Miller, 2023). Colonial and Western capitalist temporal frameworks insist on efficiency and urgency (Donald, 2019; Jones & Okun, 2001). These frameworks continue to impact the way educators understand and enact daily social norms around keeping time and deadlines. Papaschase Cree scholar Dwayne Donald pushes deeper, suggesting that,"curriculum initiatives are predicated on the promotion of a particular kind of human being—*homo economicus*—who is primarily motivated by economic self-interest and the material gains that come with it" (2019, p. 105).

While Western thought tends to conceptualize history as a linear sequence of events, "most Native American thinking conceptualises history in a spatial fashion" (Duran & Duran, 2000, p. 91). When concerned not with beginnings and endings, but with the where-ness of events, urgency collapses. In "Dismantling Racism: A workbook for social change," organizers Jones and Okun (2001) identify urgency as a white supremacy culture norm. Okun offers this provocation towards love and connection as an antithesis to the pressures we feel within a culture of urgency:

> What are the values that we want to live into as we take action? How do we take action in ways that build and preserve connection? How can we be transparent about the pressures on us to move quickly in ways that give us more power and agency over our decisions, so those decisions are strongly grounded in an ethos of love and connection? (Okun, 2025).

The way that time operates throughout the school system tends not to be framed as a manifestation of systemic racism. Urgency and efficiency are so endemic that they are almost invisible to many educators in their contexts. However, the normative implications of this entrenchment fail to take into account the complexity of circumstances and situations that populate the lives of our students. Not everyone lives behind a white picket fence, so to speak, and our praxis must take that into account.

The inheritance of a global, imperialist, capitalist social order, although dominant or hegemonic, represents only one possible, contingent historical experience. Even through a Western historical lens, ancient Greek civilization offers an entirely different, more plural and dynamic way of conceptualizing time. For example, the circular, seasonal notion of time we read from Donald Fixico feels resonant with the ancient Greek notion of *kairos*.

Ancient Greeks considered time in three dimensions: *kronos*, *aion*, and *kairos*. First, *kronos* is the more mundane sense we think of with marking dates and the passing of time in a human life. Second, *aion* refers to sacred time, and it contains all other times, encompassing time beyond memory, or time immemorial, and as well as eternity or an expression of the unlimited future (Hatley, 2015). *Aion* is a thicker, layered and more nuanced notion of time. Third, *kairos* is the time that cycles back on itself where the present and the future both converse with the past (Coleman, 2024). I am not only who I am in the present moment, but I am all that my ancestors were and carried. What might *currere* look like if we expand the notions of past, present and future into the realms of kronos, kairos and aion (Hatley, 2015; Mori, 2024; Snowber, 2016, 2022)*?* How might Indigenous notions of time that are non-linear interact with the practice of *currere?*

Colonialism and the project of imperialism are forces that brought our settler ancestors from the sites of their origin stories. Those projects of domination have caused many of of us with settler ancestry to forget our stories about place. In that forgetting, we have lost some of the humanness our ancestors experienced through simply being situated on, or connected to Land, within stories that extend to eternal time (Hatley, 2015). We have forgotten how we are *linked by* and *participate in* the cyclical relationships of the natural world. If we invite attention to the mindful, reflective, and recursive practices that *currere* research has always nurtured, and then richly layer them across expanded notions of time and place, we stand to recover some of the wholeness of human experiences that our ancestors felt.

Stories

To begin with the past, we each wrote a learning story about arts-based teaching and learning. Each story engaged with a different aspect of educator life. Shannon reflected on teaching pre-service teachers to crochet. Lori wrote about giving a beading workshop to teachers with her Indigenous education colleague, Tracy. Cate's story was about her personal art therapy while on maternity leave. Brittney shared writings and poetry about her (m)a/r/tography research practice that connects her to Land and ancestors with her daughter. Brittney has brought her identity as mother (m) into her practice of a/r/tography – she expresses this as (m)a/r/t/ogrpahy. All of us share motherhood as an important aspect of our identities, and we cannot separate our research from this aspect of our lived realities. We use the term (m)a/r/tography to represent the presence of motherhood within our scholarship. We shared these stories with each other and then responded to each story with what we found resonant and meaningful; we also shared our emerging questions. This process allowed us to uncover themes of intergenerational learning, flow states, and different experiences and notions of time.

Cate's interest in research poetry led her to create "The Method of *Currere*" poem, which is interspersed throughout our stories in *italics* and recapitulates the temporal flow of currere through the window of our four stories in conversation. She borrows language from "The Method of *Currere*" as the headings of the stanzas, rearranging the words to explore different nuances in the conceptualization of temporality (Pinar, 1975). The verses are all borrowed from the four stories that we shared with each other, and Cate blends our phrases together at certain moments to share the emergent meanings and interpretations our stories have conspired to create. These poetic refrains invite the reader to experience some of the moments of our a/r/tographic practice that belong to the four phases of *currere.* Each of the poems takes one of these phases as the theme of its title. The storytelling phrases bring thoughts about the phases of *currere* together. The fluid movement between storytelling, a/r/tographic practice and the phases of *currere* is one way that we can show our understanding of the multidimensional and interwoven nature of learning, memory, and *currere* across temporal moments.

Findings

(M)/a/r/tography: *Currere* on the Land

The Method of Currere

Regression to the past, return to the present
Some walks are more than walks.
They are returns.
To places that know your name even when you have forgotten how to say it aloud.
Rooted in our relationship, based on a life skill,
it most certainly took patience and time,
so easy for my Grandma to teach me.
Only breath and footsteps and the slow unfolding of memory.
Struggling to communicate
a wall that I need to make dents in so that I can escape
I was never taught beading by my ancestors.
Beads are so small and fiddly—will this craft frustrate me?

Cate: Brittney's (m)a/r/tography offers a meaningful look at how arts-based practice can be a pedagogy that is guided by connections with Land and all our relations. Her walks connect to her ancestors through the teachings that the Land shares. She is connected to the stories of her People across generations. This place where she walks ties her to her mother, allowing her space to feel the grief of loss and the healing of remembered relationships. It ties her to her child as she brings her daughter to learn these lessons and connections from her own childhood alongside her.

Brittney writes:

When I invite students into land-based learning, I do not bring them to the land to teach *about* it.
I invite them to sit with the land, to listen, to notice what is already being said.
I tell them the land remembers.
I tell them art can help us remember, too.
Weaving, drawing, creating—these are not add-ons.
They are the ceremony.
They are the language we use when spoken words aren't enough.
I return to Mud Bay often.
Not because I am seeking answers,
but because I am practicing how to stay in relationship.
Because grief doesn't ask for closure, it asks for company.
This is pedagogy.
This is memory work.
This is love**.**

Brittney: Corntassel and Hardbarger (2019) open with a question posed by a Cherokee youth participant: "If we can't connect to the land, how can we connect to each other?" (p. 88). Corntassel and Hardbarger state that every Indigenous person is in a daily struggle for resurgence and it is in these everyday actions where the scope of the struggle for decolonization is reclaimed and re-envisioned by Indigenous people (Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019). Unpacking the term '*everydayness*' entails a detailed examination of land-based consciousness and struggles for resurgence within a familial context (Corntassel & Hardbarger, 2019). From that, I draw that we can foster connections to the land and relationships through everyday actions such as walking. Connecting our children and ourselves to the Land is a vital step in community resurgence and fostering relations. Relationships are at the heart of my teaching. We can learn and facilitate discussions through art. Robinson (2020) shares that Indigenous and Western knowledge can "interface through dialogical arts-based, place-based intertranslatory understanding… through arts-based research as witness" (p. 5).

In *Walking Art,* Triggs et al. (2014) talk about "*walking with all our relations*" where "in walking, multidimensional movement cannot be spatialized; its essential character is always in a state of becoming" (p.29). The places I walked/walk are constantly in a state of becoming, moving through stages and phases as I grow and learn. Triggs et al. (2014) state, "one experience always recedes into other experiences and simultaneously we feel anticipation and remembrance, approach and withdrawal, recovery and loss because most of our action is re-action" (p. 29). The lessons from the land are not explicit; they happen organically. They are tethered to place and sacred space, and hold deep meaning to my childhood and how I was

raised – to treat everything with respect and care, *all my relations*. Love is always present in the teachings and I honour my mother's teachings by passing them to my daughter through the same pedagogical approach.

Lori: Brittney has expressed a simultaneous experience of past, or ancestral time, in the present. The way in which her work as an educator is inspired by her daughter and her students connects to the future. She has this layered experience of time when she is on the land, connected to place. Artmaking helps her make sense of how she experiences place, but also memory, the past, and how that shows up in the present. Her process is iterative as she returns to Mud Bay over time. Her impressions of place as a child with her mother, transpose over or within her experiences as mother revisiting that place with her daughter. The visiting and revisiting is cyclical, occurring across and through time. Each visit becomes a re-experiencing of deep time, memory, past and present anchored in place.

While *currere* may seem linear, in practice through artmaking, we have found it to be recursive. We reflect on the past and gain insight into the present. Once we imagine a different pedagogy to enact in the future, our view of the past changes. We find that "the past is in the present is in the future," as Yolngu woman Sienna Stubbs shared in her reflection on their Aboriginal way of life in relation to ancestral time (Coleman, 2024, n.p.). If we re-consider our practice as educators within cyclical time, how might that shift our pedagogy from content delivery, and completion of credit hours towards a deeper, more resonant teaching and learning experience for our students and for ourselves? How might teaching cyclically, or with awareness that other layers of learning are present, and recursive even, reconnect us to one another? Engaging a process of *currere* to dig more deeply into processes of artmaking cultivates an awareness of and connection to these different notions of time.

Learning with patience and care

> ***Imagine a Future***
>
> *I carry her legacy with me, and I hope to continue to pass that learning along in a good way. We create, not to produce, but to offer thanks. This is not a curriculum I can package. It is a practice. A way of being.*
> *I want more moments like this, more time where I can be still and remember how to expand my heart and find openness.*

Cate: Shannon's story relates the experience of teaching crochet to her students and colleagues as part of Reconciliation education. These projects were inspired by the Tiny Orange Shirt and Tiny Red Dress projects, initiated by artists Jennifer Kent Symons and Jaime Black respectively. Though she crocheted her whole life after being taught by her grandmother (Agnes Chamney), the task of teaching the skill proved challenging. She reflects on how her grandmother's teaching, though of German and Polish descent, mirrors the values in Indigenous pedagogy of taking time together, being close and feeling safe and loved.

Shannon expresses her experiences through a reflection on the past and through a vision of the future wherein she carries forward the legacy of her grandmother's teaching. She writes:

> In the present, I can see how her way of teaching me has informed not only what I know, but how I am when I teach others – her patience and kindness have left a

> beautiful and indelible mark on my soul. And as to the future, perhaps I need to keep in mind that teaching also takes patience and time, just as learning does. Grandma never stopped believing that I could learn, that I could be taught, and that she could teach me. She had little formal education, nothing past grade eight, but she knew everything she needed to make a good life for herself and her family, to be self-sufficient, and to be self-directed. I carry her legacy with me, and I hope to continue to pass that learning along in a good way.

Lori: Shannon's story exemplifies the challenge of bringing the values of patience and connection into the Western education model. In schools, we function within linear time, or *kronos* (Mori, 2024; Snowber, 2016, 2022). Our work and learning schedules are built out of Carnegie Units. The Carnegie Unit is also known as the "credit hour" and this system of time allotment underpins much of our educational experience in both the K-12 system, and in higher education. One Carnegie Unit typically represents 120 hours of study (Carnegie Foundation, 2025). For those of us who have been educated in Canadian school systems, we have felt the power of the Carnegie Unit shape our notion and experience of structured, linear time since we were very young. When Shannon expresses her frustration at having to teach crochet to undergraduate students in large groups within a given window of time, she feels the compression of time that occurs within a Carnegie Unit. As a secondary school art teacher, I felt a similar compression in my class blocks as students became deeply engaged with their artmaking only to be broken from their reverie of creation by a bell or a deadline. As much as possible, we work within but also around the Carnegie Units that make up a timetable.

These highly colonial notions of time are structured blocks within which students are expected to learn and engage, and within which we are expected to deliver instruction and pedagogical support. In contrast, natural curiosity, connection, experience and learning are not confined to class blocks, credit hours, or Carnegie Units. It is important to notice their powerful disconnecting impact as students work to engage with their interests and the material during class time. The Carnegie Unit organization of time limits our ability to connect and support, because we know that time will be broken or disconnected at some point.

Slowing down and time travel

> ***The Present Revisited, Experienced through Multidimensional Time***
>
> *I am dazzled by their brilliance.*
> *Their shine. Their translucency.*
> *Layers of meaning in the relationships between materials, processes, plants, people and contexts that touch my life*
> *I felt the completeness, the goodness*
> *They are offerings.*
> *A beautiful and indelible mark on my soul*
> *The land is still teaching. The story is still forming. And I am still walking.*

Cate: Lori's story describes her learning curve going from day one of learning to bead a strawberry to co-teaching a workshop on beading for teachers. Tracy, her teaching collaborator who is Blackfoot, is confident this is a good activity to give teachers when they read "The Gift of Strawberries" chapter of *Braiding Sweetgrass* in their professional development book club. Brittney has reservations given her lack of knowledge and not having an existing connection to beading. Yet her experience speaks to the powerful connections that

beginning an art practice can invite into our perspective. She attests to the focus of the task, the way it keeps her attention for hours of challenging effort, and how it rewards her with a sense of fluidity when the skill becomes more manageable. Brittney writes:

> To create a finished edge, you pick up one bead at a time and add it with a special stitch to create a neat border. The process is painstaking but meditative. I feel an enforced slowing down in my mind and body. You cannot do this work quickly. After six hours of intense tunnel vision and extreme focus, my first beaded strawberry is finally complete. We'll use it as an exemplar for the teachers at the first workshop.

Like Shannon, Lori has a story that underscores the importance of learning with time and patience, though it is Lori who has to offer herself the trust and space to continue labouring for her gift of a beaded strawberry. She passes her art along to her friend Tracy, in the spirit of reciprocity, following Tracy's teaching that you must always give away your first complete beaded project.

A similarity among all the stories is that they all look to the future of how they might continue their practice and share it in the future. Though Lori did not know anyone in her family had a beading practice, she found a connection to her ancestors through this artmaking. Her story invites us to see the line of time from her grandmother to her, forwards to her colleagues, and onwards to all of their future students. While this linear narrative is a commonly rehearsed structure within Western storytelling, we can also see how this moment of beading connected her to her family history in a way she had not accessed before, acting as a kind of time travel and bringing the past forward to touch the present and the future. She writes:

> Through the act of beading strawberries, I learned that my paternal grandmother practiced beading, and other ancestors before and alongside her. There was an elaborately beaded pillow inside her sewing basket, which I still have. Engaging in the act of beading connected me to something innate that I cannot yet explain. I've made six strawberries now, and people always ask me what is next. I have not exhausted the combinations of red, green, and myriad seed colours. The strawberry is still showing me its gifts; revealing layers of meaning in the relationships between materials, processes, plants, people and contexts that touch my life.

While *currere* refers to "running a course" (Pinar, 2026a, p.xvi), the importance of slowing down is clear. The connections to the past came after the beading. Time bends back on itself from a newly beaded strawberry into the ancestral past. We need to run the course slowly to allow for that conscious reconceptualization to occur.

Artmaking as Liberatory Praxis

> ***Find Oneself and Be Free***
>
> *Time slows a little.*
> *connected to something innate that I cannot yet explain*
> *I return*
> *Not because I am seeking answers,*
> *but because I am practicing how to stay in relationship.*

Cate: I recount the way that art therapy sessions gave space to reconnect with inner strength and provided a sense of freedom while I was on maternity leave from teaching work. I compare the urgency of juggling and triaging students' needs in the classroom with the different sense of busyness that comes with taking care of a young infant, all while giving my thesis and relationships with my spouse and family some measure of attention. From these different pressure points of time scarcity, art therapy is one place that allows me to pause the frenetic pace of multiple competing demands. The drawing and poetry, inspired by Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar and community organizer Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's writing in *Rehearsals for Living* (2022), invite heart and mind to expand to the scale of the ocean and feel the interconnectedness of all the beings who follow current-like patterns in their lives. I think here of human heartbeats and airflow through the body. In this poem, I cast a spell that calls up the freedom that often eludes me.

Together We Dance

A current, a wave, freely following
The choreography of the sea,
Uncontained, unrestrained,
Overpowering

The movement of freedom is in the way I've imagined a recurring fractal pattern of nature. By drawing and writing the way I am imagining it, I unlock that sense of freedom in myself. I want more moments like this, more time where I can be still and remember how to expand my heart and find openness. There is always juggling to do, always a scarcity of time and resources relative to the demands of our inequitable and productivity-obsessed society. Having this space where I care for myself and connect deeply is a lesson in holding the time and space I need even when I am juggling.

Lori: *Currere* invites us to pause and reflect on past, present and future experiences. As a new parent, Cate, like many new parents, is cast into a role that previously was experienced by being a caregiver or child themselves, or possibly an older relative to an infant. The overwhelm is felt keenly in a linear time scale. Infants are notorious for breaking down linear time for new parents. Her art therapy practice allowed her to enter a flow state and feel her new role and reality within *kairos*, cyclical, like waves following the 'choreography of the sea.'

The mental flow of an art practice combined with Cate's attention to her interconnectedness with the world disrupt the clock time and urgency of schools and work. Even on a maternity leave without these demands, this story points to the way these models of time structure our internal sense of demands and the efficiency we often emulate when we juggle so much labour, even when we are labouring out of love. The state of mind she finds in her artmaking is hard to reach because of these internalized temporal expectations, and it offers something precious that she says she wants to cultivate: "I think it may be the work of a lifetime to become more capable of moments of freedom like this."

Discussion

Lessons for *Currere* and for the Classroom

We have found through our distinct artmaking *currere* processes that engaging with art expanded our narrative forms to include many more temporal experiences beyond a standard

linear one. If *currere* is an exercise in synthesis across time and viewing the wholeness of experience with attention to its socio-political structures, it is not surprising that we would notice the past meeting the future in a new way: even as a cycle that brings us back to ancestral memories time and again. Earlier in this paper, we posed the interrelated questions of how our consciousness of cyclical time could impact our pedagogy, how expanding our experiences of time could enrich connections to each other, and how artmaking can nurture such consciousness. Our learning stories attest to the ways that art practice can slow us down, give us meditative pause, provide focus that helps ease the urgency of other demands, and alter our sense of time in a powerful way.

Our art practices resonate with the recursive and reflexive movement that makes it possible for *currere* to interrupt some of our habitual everyday ways of being. It is this movement that offers a liberatory possibility for questioning and disrupting colonial norms. As Grumet writes:

> When, in reflection, the student brackets those assumptions and identifications with the everyday world, it is not to remove himself from that world, but to move closer to it by seeing through the structures of objectivity to the pre-objective, pre-reflective contact with the world upon which they rest. (Grumet, 2026, p. 58)

In responding to *currere's* process while interweaving Indigenous ethical connections and pedagogy, we recapitulate this practice of moving closer to the world in terms of decolonial liberatory possibility. Expanding on Grumet's point of view in relation to our learning stories, the reflective self-in-relation is witnessing their own multiplicity as interconnected with relatives, ancestors, the Land, and the more-than-human.

As with *currere* practice, this self-in-relation does not assume a stance of privileging objectivity or the artifacts of the school structures around us. By giving space and attention to a relational view of the world, we can be critical of the ways that everyday expectations and assumptions lead us to perpetuate colonial norms like productivity and urgency. We continue to navigate an education system that depends on assumptions about individual will and competitive advantage. We also question these norms when there are clearly other possibilities that can challenge the everyday habits of a hidden (namely, colonial) curriculum. We continue to assert the agency of our relational practice to, as Grumet says, "not be ruled by ... [our] myths" (2026, p.61).

One way that we depart from seeing ourselves as self-willing objective subjects is in our attention to intergenerational learning. As we shared our stories with each other, we observed how our ancestors show up for us in the present, simultaneous with moments when we engage with our students or our descendants. In the British Columbia teaching context, a ubiquitous classroom resource and poster shares the First Peoples' Principles of Learning, which were created with a view to sharing common principles for education of the diverse Indigenous Peoples across our regions. One principle they share is, 'Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors' (FNESC, 2008/2014). Another is that learning depends on 'generational roles and responsibilities' (FNESC, 2008/2014).

Each of our stories brought forth memories of people who had passed, as we recollected our own learning experiences. We all brought teachings from our ancestors into the present and

wondered about how our ancestral past informs our current teaching practice. Ancestral time could be considered 'deep time' – the long past. We began to discuss our experiences through notions of time beyond past, present and future – through 'time immemorial, deep time,' or *kairos*, and *aion.* The practice of *currere* could offer new angles if it were to include these expanded and nuanced temporal concepts alongside the past/present/future aspects of reconceptualiztion. There is a need to develop our consciousness of these Indigenous pedagogy principles through our own experiences of slowing down and connecting with ancestors, or we risk having tokenistic representation of these traditions in our schools.

Western notions of time, and certainly Western methods of schooling, do not socialize students to notice or attend to deep time. Tyson Yunkaporta (2024) discusses how Indigenous Peoples of Australia practice "deep time diligence" as a collective cultural act. He explains that it is a practice of coming together and sharing knowledge, understandings and experiences, or data sets over a long period of time (deep time) so that the appropriate stories that govern cultural behaviours can be crafted, shared and understood. He expresses a long view of history, and from an Indigenous perspective, an understanding that one's life experience exists within a very long span of time. For him, this is understood and deeply rooted in his ontology. We have begun to consider how a felt and richly experienced diligence towards deep time might create the cultural shifts that are needed in Canadian educational contexts if we hope to decolonize practice and create stronger collective connections to one another and the natural world. We have begun to reconsider our experiences through a/r/tographic *currere* in terms of deep time.

This, we find, is also reminiscent of Fixico's (2003) circular philiosophy in relation to time, which entwines the notion that all time is now with the experience of time-out-of-time, or timelessness. Michell (2023) has noted that "the fluidity of timelessness is best experienced on the land" (p. xviii), which furhter speaks to the inextricable interconnectedness between time and Land and the pedagogical potential each of them holds. Though we did not all focus on our connections with Land in our stories, there were nonetheless important ties woven throughout. By connecting with our ancestors in our art practices, we traced some of our connections to different Land and places across time. Brittney went for walks with her daughter during their art practice, which rooted her to the particular place that holds memories of her mother. Cate's art practice involved drawing fish-like shapes in a flowing pattern and waving lines like seaweed, inspired by a sense of interconnectedness with the natural world. Lori was enaged in making strawberries, inspired by a gift from the Land.

Indigenous and slow pedagogies were a common theme in all of our stories. We all experienced the desire to be patient, to have space and time to learn (FNESC, 2008/2014). In *Teaching Where You Are: Weaving Indigenous and Slow Principles and Pedagogies* (2023), Leddy and Miller explain how Indigenous and slow pedagogies embrace different notions of time than the Western ones which schools mostly follow. These pedagogies offer time for connection and exploration. They offer a sense of place and one's own physical embodiment that is rich and relational. We connect these practices to Donald Fixico's explanation of time in Indigenous worldviews . Things happen when they happen, and they take as long as they take. Experiences of artmaking, in particular, make this evident through experiences of flow, or time-out-of-time sensibilities during deep engagement. It is these deep engagements we seek to draw from here.

Place- and land-connections are also deeply storied in Indigenous pedagogies. In Stó:lō scholar Jo-ann Archibald's (2008) book, *Indigenous Storywork* , she makes clear that Indigenous stories have multiple purposes, but they most often remind us that we humans are not separate from

the Land, we *are* the land and all of the relationships that exist on it. Tewa scholar Greg Cajete (1994) suggests that there are several common foundational characteristics of Indigenous pedagogy, including "a sacred view of Nature…and elements, activities, and knowledge bases of teaching and learning [that] radiate in concentric rings of process and relationship…" (p. 29). Through our attention to these pedagogical principles we hope to contribute to furthering Indigenous resurgence, the revival of Indigenous knowledges that represent "the regeneration of the dignity and cultural integrity of Indigenous peoples…in affirming and activating the holistic systems of Indigenous knowledges…" (Battiste, 2010, p. 17).

There is a parallel here to the processes that play out through a practice of *currere*. Those "concentric rings of process and relationship" (Cajete, 1994, p.29) play out when an educator takes the time to slowly and throughtfully consider their past experiences, analyze the effects of those on the present and engage in future imaginaries. Our experience of working through the process of *currere* emerged as more of a spiral or a mobius strip whereby through a reaching back into past experiences, we grasped the intertwined lessons of *currere* and felt how they twisted back on themselves. The musings about the future point back to aspects of the past, illuminating ways of knowing that may have been previously overlooked. Through a practice of *currere*, which draws our attention to experiences over and through time, we have been able to expand, through arts-based experiences, beyond colonial concepts and systems of time into a space that allows for a multiplicity of perspectives on time to intersect.

Our stories all share experiences of a deepening connection with the living world, the Land, and a particular place in and across time. This relates to our intimate inner lives, our ancestors and children, our natural patterns and material worlds. We come to this understanding through artmaking, and through the reflective processes of a/r/tography and *currere*. We believe that we can enrich our teaching and learning with students and colleagues by sharing the significance of taking space and time, being patient, nurturing ourselves and each other. By attending to deep time. We share this approach, so others may uncover their own lessons and experiences of time by giving room to their heart and spirit as they engage in artmaking.

Conclusion

For *currere*, the lessons we find are to value the process of reflection as a mode of time travel and connection to place, not only for the resultant synthesis and sense of completion. This is another expression of *currere's* liberating force, which Pinar (1994) discusses in "The Abstract and the Concrete in Curriculum Theorizing." Because *currere* offers the inner reflective work that can uncover a deeper consciousness of one's experience and practice over time, it can make the biases inherent in our social and economic structures more obvious, and thereby make it possible for the individual to interrupt their complacency and complicity with oppressive structures. Our work suggests that *currere* can disrupt colonial strictures of frenetic, productivity-oriented temporal norms. Though we still find ourselves in workplaces and education spaces that conform to these norms, we can offer alternative perspectives and seek moments of freedom by building a conscious awareness of our experiences of different notions and qualities of time. Small strategies for listening to a student's story with our heart, taking a quiet walk to help digest the activities of a school day, or showing our students that we can take deep breaths and be mindful are all ways of building our conscious awareness to slowing down and disrupting norms of efficiency and urgency. On a structural level, we can continue to share our observations with colleagues and advocate for educators to not be pushed into

patterns of unsustainable productivity , because this attention to decolonizing norms in education is more powerful when we nurture our relationships and collaborate on behalf of our future vision of liberatory education.

As art educators, we are aware of the many ways in which the arts touch our lives every day. For each of us, this underscores the profoud importance of continuing to advocate for art education in schools becasue of the role art plays in connecting us to ourselves and to one another more deeply. In working through the process of *currere* as a/r/tographers, we found resonance with the call made by Rousell et al. (2024) for "arts educators to elevate and amplify the perspectives of marginalised bodies and ecologies, to seek out and listen to modes of expression which have been silenced, and to commit to an ongoing learning and ethical revaluation of life as the basis for creative productions of subjectivity" (p. 7). Our collective recalling and reckoning, our recursions into our own experiences and those of our sister scholars, brings the urgency of this call to the fore and leaves us emboldened to believe that we can embody that call in our praxis.

This research has also called upon us to consider the way time is experienced in our work. In as much as the shape of a clock reflects the circularity of our planet and the other orbital bodies to which it is connected, its tyrannical force stems from the addition of numeric units. This tension between the experience of time and the notion of time-as-money holds us and our students in a present that is informed only by a singular (colonial) version of the past. In our practice of *currere*, we reclaim our agency to imagine a future, together with our students, that seeks to "remain alert … to the unobtrusive trap of habitual reponse" (Grumet, 2026, p. 65) and to emancipate ourselves from the predetermined assumptions of the legacy of the 'enlightenment.'

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