RESEARCH IN RESIDENCE: ARTS' CIVIC IMPACT





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Advisory	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
Foreword	V
Sydney Pickering - Understanding Civic Impact Through the Lens of Indigenous Cultural Knowledge	1
Aaron Richmond - Understanding Accessibility Beyond Logistical Dimensions	7
Emma Bugg - Understanding the Transformative Role of the Arts in the Climate Emergency	10
Shanice Bernicky - Understanding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Public Arts Sector	13
Audree Espada & Missy LeBlanc - Understanding How Racialized Employees Experience Systemic Racism	16

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Given that the Research in Residence: Arts' Civic Impact Initiative has engaged individuals from coast to coast, we wish to honour all the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit who have been living on the land known as Canada since time immemorial. In this context, one of Mass auidina principles in reconciliation and development is the pursuit of collaborative action towards mutually beneficial goals for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. At the same time, we acknowledge that Mass Culture's evolving network has a long way to go. It is not a quick process, but one that requires that we pace ourselves, prioritizing making connections and increasing collective understanding of Indigenous cultural knowledge and experience. In Mass Culture's infancy, we are beginning to honour this principle by better understanding Indigenous protocol and research frameworks, building new relationships and maintaining existing ones in every province and territory, and providing tangible resources for local gatherings and dialogue.

As this initiative's steward, Mass Culture would like to gratefully acknowledge both Robin Sokoloski and Mary Elizabeth Luka for their guidance and leadership throughout the ongoing developmental research process. In addition, the trust, honesty, and highly engaged contributions made by Liz Forsberg, Gabriel Zamfir-Enache, Daniela Navia, Marke Ambarde, Zoe Some, Clare Daitch, Robin Nelson, Sarah Fairlie, and Shawn Newman have provided the backbone and intelligence needed to support this national endeavour.

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A huge thank you also to the arts organizations who generously shared their information and communities with the researchers. Creative PEI, Culture Days, Qaumajuq (Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery), Grunt Gallery, Boca del Lupo, Museum of Anthropology at UBC, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, Visceral Visions, Urban Ink, Montréal arts interculturels (MAI), and Danse-Cité. We know how busy you are making the world a better place through your artistic endeavours and we appreciate your commitment to making space for research.

Lastly, the heart of this initiative rests with the researchers: Aaron Richmond, Audree Espada, Emma Bugg, Missy LeBlanc, Shanice Bernicky, and Sydney Pickering. You all took a giant leap into the unknown and demonstrated the patience and curiosity needed to allow the research to unfold. The ways in which you came together are inspiring and Mass Culture looks forward to continuing to work with each of you.

FOREWORD

The Research in Residence: Arts' Civic Impact Initiative was officially launched in May 2021 by Mass Culture, Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canada Council for the Arts' Research, Measurement and Data Analytics section, and Canadian Heritage's Policy Research Group, with support from the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Table on Culture and Heritage, the Toronto Arts Foundation, and the Critical Digital Methods Institute at the University of Toronto.

In December 2019, the Canada Council for the Arts published its Qualitative Impact Framework. Around that same time, Mass Culture was supporting amplification of the Association for Opera in Canada's Opera Civic Impact Framework. Curiosity about how to understand Arts' Civic Impact was the impetus that initially forged an advisory group of mostly funders to create the initiative now known as Research in Residence: Arts' Civic Impact.

So, what is the Research in Residence: Arts' Civic Impact initiative? It is a multitude of things. To review a full account of the initiative to date, visit Mary Elizabeth Luka's <u>"So what is the Research in Residence project?"</u>

As the initiative moves toward its next phase in sharing the researchers' arts impact frameworks through regional roundtable discussions (sign up to Mass Culture's newsletter to receive more information), the collaborators are pleased to share this initial report on the initiative's research questions and methods.



Understanding Civic Impact Through the Lens of Indigenous Cultural Knowledge

Research Question:

To describe living information systems is to acknowledge that everything is alive and that we are all one

The reciprocal relationship with the land and all beings is a part of many First Nations cultures and core beliefs.

In this research project, I/we asked: What are innovative ways of reframing engagement and research methods in the arts sector to align with Indigenous oral knowledge practices of gathering living information systems?

Summary of Methods:

Two types of research methods have been used throughout this project: engagement methods and interpretive methods.

These two methods are approached from an Indigenous lens while still remaining distinctly separate. Indigenous knowledge-sharing (engagement methods) encompasses how we approach and take care of our participants/guests as forms of engagement, while our interpretive methods extend into forms of witnessing, inter-generational mentoring, and thematic analysis.

The Indigenous knowledge sharing methods we used to engage participants are rooted in Indigenous methodologies include Indigenous material practice, potlatching protocols, and sharing circles. We hosted four workshops that mobilized these methods.

Summary of Activities:

The four workshops were hosted by:

- Sydney Pickering, member of Lil'wat Nation, Researcher in Residence, Visual Artist, MFA Student, and Aboriginal Coordinator at Emily Carr University (ECU),
- Connie Watts, Research in Residence (RinR) Supervisor, interdisciplinary artist, writer, curator, educator, and designer (of Nuu-chah-nulth, Gitxsan and Kwakwaka'wakw ancestry), and Associate Director, Aboriginal Programs at ECU,
- Nadia Beyzaei, RinR Academic Supervisor, Sessional Faculty, and Health Design Lab Coordinator at ECU.

Four material-making workshops were taught by an instructor from Squamish between November 2022 and March 2023. Potlatch followed protocols were Sharing Circles were facilitated by Connie Watts. As said by Aaron "Splash" Nelson-Moody and Justin Wilson in Looking Back to the Potlatch as a Guide to Truth, Reconciliation, and Transformative Learning, "the potlatch is a highcontext (ancient, culturally and spiritually informed) approach designed to apply intercultural/transformative learning concnecessary for witnessing greater intergenerational learning and success."

"This is the closest to reciprocity I have gotten." -Rena Soutar

The potlatch protocols used by the Aboriginal Gathering Place team as West Coast peoples when approaching and taking care of our participants not only included hosting and gifting, but also created a space for diverse types of knowledge, voices and observations to be respected, heard, honored, and recognized.

The four workshops:

1. November 4, 2021: Rattles and Caribou Tufting Workshop with participants from the performing arts and reconciliation leads.

Conversations focused on the participants' practices and past projects.

"Working like this, in the Aboriginal Gathering Place, is quite effective because it takes people out of their comfort zone in the most generous way." -Participant

- 2. November 25, 2021: 13" Drum Making Workshop with participants from the performing arts, arts organizations, and reconciliation leads as well as an ECU Illustration student who served as a graphic note taker. Conversations focused on the limits of research within a colonial construct and how to create a different, more inclusive model.
- 3. February 18, 2022: Material Practice Projects Workshop, including seal fur, beading, and porcupine quills with participants from the performing arts, arts organizations, and reconciliation

leads as well as an ECU Illustration student who served as a graphic note taker. Conversations were focused on developing and strategizing dream projects with no limits on budget.

4. March 28, 2021: 16" Drum Workshop with participants from the performing arts, arts organizations, and reconciliation leads. Conversations built on all past workshops and the themes that had emerged as a result.

Witnessing + Intergenerational Mentoring + Thematic Analysis Interpretive Methods

Each team member (Sydney, Connie, and Nadia) had the vital role of witnessing while-- while also hosting and being part of-- the workshops throughout the project. Witnessing and mentorship are integral practices in many Indigenous communities.

In this project, we used the following Indigenous approaches in our research and practice.



Workshop 2: Live note-taking on Miro-to-note moments of dialogue (yellow sticky notes) and moments of making and material practice instruction (pink sticky notes).



Workshop 2: Post-workshop thematic analysis. Creating codes (blue sticky notes) that represent the essence of the information noted.



Workshop 2: Post-workshop thematic analysis. Clustering codes (blue sticky notes) to inform the creation of prototype themes (pink sticky notes), and refine them into potential themes (purple sticky notes).

Intergenerational mentoring is an Indigenous way of sharing and passing down living knowledge that has been practiced within the Aboriginal Gathering Place, as well as in this project with Nadia Beyzaei, as she mentors Sydney Pickering in methods of gathering and disseminating research data. The information was gathered on Miro, a digital whiteboard platform, and thematic analysis was used as the primary way of categorizing the information into themes. The snapshots below show the progression from note-taking to theming.

In addition, a third-year Illustration student at ECU was hired for two of the workshops for graphic notetaking, as an opportunity to witness and interpret conversation in a way that links to our oral knowledge-sharing traditions.

Harmonizing Community Impact Assessment Framework

This schematic of our impact assessment framework is an intersection of impacts and indicators between historic Indigenous culture and ways, the arts sector, Western artistic materials, and academia.

We have a working framework that is a visual representation of how Indigenous knowledge has the ability to weave an inherently colonial sector into research and create space for Indigenous and racialized voices in the arts and culture community. There is a blurring of hierarchy not only but experienced visually also through the creative process throughout the workshops.

"When you are working with your hands and the rest of the body is quiet, the best conversations come." -Marie Lopes

is intersectionality balance between the connection to the material that connects us to land and to the lived the experiences voiced amongst participants that are being heard and honored. As a result of these intersections. is there shared energy and harmonization of the community that is living over nonlinear time. The schematic reflects the fluidity of these living knowledge systems being shared among communities and generations that connects us as one.

Measures + Indicators

We were able to measure these approaching impacts bv research from an Indigenous epistemology and looking at relationship-building through shared experiences and dialogue as a way of capacity-building in the art sector. The indicators that allowed for the gathering of information and knowledge were storytelling, culturally safe environments, and material making.

"I learn way more because of the relationships I'm in than I do from the information and data that I am exposed to." -Jay Dodge

These indicators are examples of successes in integrating Indigenous perspectives and methods in research, an inherently colonial sector that has historically had a negative impact on Indigenous participants.

Through this approach, three key themes that surfaced throughout the workshops from the sharing of experiences between participants involved in the creative process:

- the impact society has had on the arts sector and the expectations that result from living within a consumerist/capitalist society.
- the public's perception of the arts and how this factor affects the ability to receive funding.
- how the implementation of Indigenous knowledge and methods are seen as a form of decolonization throughout the arts sector and within institutions.



Understanding Accessibility Beyond Logistical Dimensions

Research Question:

My research followed multiple creative initiatives aimed at making dance accessible for people with visual impairment. While considering the creative process and language used by each of these initiatives, I asked:

How does the exploration of dance beyond the visual enable a rethinking of accessibility beyond its strictly logistical dimensions?

Summary of Methods:

My research strategy has been to combine auto-ethnographic obser-

vation (Halder, 2017) and inclusive collaboration (Leduc, 2021) with participating members of the creative projects represented.

In the first phase of my research, from June to October 2021. I conducted a literature review that North American surveyed and European projects aimed making dance accessible to blind and low-vision communities. My understand aim was to the similarities and differences in the language used to describe these projects, their ambitions, and their creative approaches.

I also considered a range of articles addressing and reports following three thematic areas: (1) critical frameworks for studying disability, and/or promoting disability justice (Piepzna-Samarasinha, 2018; Goodley, 2014; Berne, 2018); (2) paradigms for thinking about accessibility arts with regard to blind and low-vision communities (Decottionies, 2016: Kuppers 2004; Siebers 2010); and (3) considerations of arts "value" or social "impact" in relation accessibility issues (Orsini and Kelly, 2021; Kleege, 2018; Devos, 2018).

The second phase of my research combine auto-ethnographic observation and one-on-one interviews. From October 2021 to June 2022, I attended four audio-described performances and seven working sessions organized by Danse Cité as part of "Décloisonner la multisensorialité" [Decompartmentalizing multisensoriality], a residency project aimed at making dance accessible for people with visual impairment. I conducted 10 interviews with participants in various creative projects, audience mem-

bers (2/10), audio describers (2/10), and other organizational supports (2/10). I also engaged a cross-section of blind (4/10), partially sighted (1/10), and fully sighted participants (5/10).

My analysis of this primary data was conducted through an iterative, inductive approach (Leduc, 2021). I used the interviews to pursue themes and questions that emerged within the field research. The relevance of these themes was continuously compared with other projects (Halder, 2017) and discussed in exchanges with collaborating specialists in the arts sector and acadboth emia

I am a sighted, able-bodied, white, Jewish, cisgender man, with an academic background in Western philosophy and visual art. The themes and questions that I pursued were largely oriented toward creative practices and the various words and ideas used to define them.

A novice in the field of critical disability studies, my approach to accessibility issues is largely informed by my experience working from 2006-2014 as a personal assistant for the late Torontobased artist and disability activist Judith Snow (1949-2015). While English is my first language, most of my interviews were conducted in French.

Measures

For this project, I measured how or in what ways people are attempting to make performance works accessible for people with visual impairment. My aim was not to assess whether these works succeeded or failed in becoming accessible, nor the degree to which they had an impact on a particular community. Rather, my aim was to understand how different people made sense of these successes and failures. I engaged people with diverse visual impairments, who occupy various positions within the arts sector (artists. audience members, organizational supports, etc.) and observed how they described the social impact they desired to make within their various communities.

Indicators

My indicators for this project were primarily based on language. I paid special attention to the words and phrases people used to describe their experiences. In the interviews and creative working sessions. people often described significant moments in past performances. They described moments where insights were made about making performance accessible, or moments where particular ambitions or working processes were clarified around future performances. Whether past, present, or future, my interest as a researcher was to observe how various words and concepts were used to describe the complex and often fleeting dimensions of accessibility.



Understanding the Transformative Role of the Arts in the Climate Emergency

Research Questions:

- 1. How do CreativePEI and its stakeholders conceptualize their roles in fostering transformations towards climate action and adaptation?
- 2. What indicators can be used to measure CreativePEI's impact in this space?

Research Objectives:

- Develop an impact assessment framework based on indicators identified in Research Question
 2
- Situate findings and methodological process in the broader arts impact measurement space.

Methods:

To answer the proposed research questions, a mixed methods study (Palys & Atchison, 2014) is being carried out in two phases. The two phases will allow for both a comprehensive understanding of CreativePEI's role in climate action and the development of actionable impact framework to be used by the organization. Phase 1 (currently in progress) consists of semi-structured interviews with key CreativePEI stakeholders and focuses on the first research question. In this phase to date, nine 30-60 minute interviews were conducted with CreativePFL staff board members between and February and April 2022.

The interview questions explored three themes: how participants conceptualize sustainability and climate change; what they perceive as key issues facing the arts when it comes to working on climate change; and what barriers CreativePEI faces when conducting work in this space. These themes will also be a key focus of analysis, which began in summer 2022 and which includes both a priori and a posteriori coding techniques as described by Palys and Atchison (2014).

Phase 2 of this study begins in August 2022 and will investigate the second research question. In this phase, a Delphi study will be conducted. This technique brings together a group of experts or stakeholders with the goal of deriving consensus on a specific question. Questionnaires are presented to participants over multiple stages, with development of the format and content of the questionnaires in each stage based on the results from the previous stage (Geist, 2010; Rieckmann et al., 2021; Winkler & Moser, 2016). In addition to being used as a consensusreaching tool, the Delphi technique is commonly used to predict future scenarios in various fields and disciplines (Wright, 2005). It has been used as an effective contributor to institutional planning and policy implementation (Wright, 2005). These characteristics make the Delphi technique a suitable methodology for this study, where forward-thinking combined with institutional introspection will be key to the creation of a useful impact assessment framework. The technique is useful for fields in which concrete evidence is lacking or hard to derive (eg. ways of measuring the impact of art) as it offers a way to build knowledge based on "informed opinion and subjective expert judgments as well experience-based interpretations" (Winkler & Moser, 2016, p. 64). This strategy is also useful for raising consciousness about existing practices among participants and is likely to meaningfully engage CreativePEI stakeholders in the process (Wright, 2005).

CreativePEI has previously expressed a desire to bring its community of project partners and other organizational leaders along on

this climate-engaged journey. The Delphi study will be a strong point of connection for the 20-25 participants involved. The participants will include those who took part in Phase 1, as well as a broader community of CreativePEI stakeholders such as volunteers, project partners from other organizations, and artists. In Round 1, an openended *auestionnaire* will distributed to participants asking, "What the are best CreativePEI can measure the civic impact of their climate-related work?". This will help generate ideas about which indicators could be useful in the final evaluative framework. Following this round, written responses submitted by participants will be analyzed and translated into questionnaire items for Round 2. In the second round. participants will be asked review the co-generated list and rate the items from one to ten on a Likert Scale, in terms of how well the items would contribute useful insight to CreativePEI's work, and how practically they could be monitored or measured in some way. Round 2 responses will then be statistically analyzed with a specific focus on measures of central tendency and dispersion.

Round 3 will be preceded by an inperson focus group (taking place in November 2022) during which individual ratings from the second round will be reported back to the group. This will be accompanied by presentation to share significant themes surrounding impact measurement that emerge from the literature, but which have in not vet come au the questionnaire responses. Participants will see how others in the cohort ranked items and will be offered an opportunity to revise their rankings based on discussion and reconsideration.

Following the completion of all three rounds, the findings of the Delphi study will be compared to findings from literature regarding best practices in impact measurement and then combined with the results of Phase 1 to inform the development of a final impact framework that can be used by CreativePEI.



Understanding Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in the Public Arts Sector

Research Questions:

- 1. How can an [artistic approach] be used to reimagine [equity, diversity, and inclusion] [initiatives] in the public arts sector across [Canada]?
- 2. How can Culture Days' cultural reach from coast-to-coast-to-coast and supportive structure be harnessed to develop inclusivity indicators based on participant survey data and maker space gatherings?
- 3. How does a [student-researcher] exist between the bounds of academia and the arts and culture sector?

I am not convinced that creation

and knowledge come from any single person in the public arts and culture sector. This is why I challenged myself to work with a national event promotion initiative called Culture Days. For this project, surveying the meaning of inclusivity and diversity within Culture Days and among their participating organizations requirmixed-method approach making use of Research-Creation, Critical Discourse Analysis, Focus Groups, Reverse Audio-Visual-Elicitation, and Field Notetaking. These methods allowed me to document conversations with people along the way that made the framework what it is.

Methodology:

The methodology that I selected for this initiative--Research-Creation (RC)--is one that I hold dear and through which I continue to learn. RC а rich has and burgeoning history in academia and is often deployed for its capabilities in capturing extending effective, queer, anti-colonial intervention from an inter-disciplinary perspective (Loveless. 2020). It is a method whereby research is directly informed by undertaking a creative and often collaborative project (see Chapman & Sawchuk, 2012). At its core, RC allows for Othered forms of knowledge production outside global Western epistemologies, embraces imperfection, is process driven, and rejects a definite end (Spivak, 1985). It is through this lens that I undertook research. employing following three methods:

Methods:

In the first stage of the project, I undertook a review of Culture Days' annual reports from 2010 onwards, using a Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of focus group and survey data concerning programming and digital strategies. CDA requires paying close attention to linguistic choices and consideration their social and implications (van Dijk, 2016). This method was useful because I not only analyzed the response to the auestions but the questions themselves. The analysis mapped themes and stances of both the organizations participating in the data collection and the research leads collecting the data. From this analysis, I developed some initial indicators to explore inclusivity for my proposed impact assessment framework.

I chose the Focus Group method because I wanted to bring together people who were passionate about discussing and taking action on equity, diversity, and inclusion practices in the sector. As a result, I held two maker-space gatherings with eight cultural workers collaborators, using photo-elicitation. The sessions were laced with participatory research principles that decentre the primary researcher, credit each person for their contribution, makes compensation available, and invites collaborators to engage with the project in terms of their own level of comfort and availability. Each one-hour session

was held virtually over Zoom, making use of the chat function and the collaborative web board Miro to share images, sounds, colours, and shapes as part of the artistic exercise. The session's conversations shaped my initial indicators. Prior to the gatherings, collaborators were invited to join a Discord server where they could access and share resources and converse among themselves. myself included, before and after the gatherings. I wanted to find a way to ensure that relationships were not cut-off following the virtual meetings, but instead were encouraged to flourish on their own, as support and care of collectives are required to do this work.

Photo-elicitation is a technique whereby photos are used during interviews to solicit an unprepared response (Sbriccoli, 2016). From this. I developed a sort of Reverse audio-visual-elicitation in which collaborators were asked to pick shapes, colours. textures. and sounds from online creative commons banks that they felt were emblematic of how they were feeling near the end of our conversations. All the audio-visual components will be used in the design of the creative output for the project with each collaborator's feedback and approval. Not only was this exercise used to tap into a deeper level of emotion, but it also served as a fun outlet after heavy and serious discussions.

A final method is reflexive Field Notetaking. While an essential component of all ethnographic research, I would be remiss if I did not state its importance here. We are never just researchers, operating at arm's length from our so-called 'object of study.' We are flesh-andbone beings with subjective minds, and hopes and-- possibly like me-with a nervous disposition. Notetaking documents twists and turns and calls for reflexivity every step of the way (see Taussig, 2012).

I am emboldened by the success of my methodological experimentation. It enhanced my ability to work with devoted collaborators, peers, and supervisors during this project, because it demonstrated that a community of individuals committed to drawing creative paths forward lies at the centre of the inclusive research I hope to pursue.



Understanding How Racialized Employees Experience Systemic Racism

Research Question:

How do racialized employees at visual art galleries and museums experience systemic racism within their institutions, and how does this compare with the efforts the se institutions are making towards addressing issues of systemic racism within them?

Summary of Methods:

The methodological framework for our research project is informed by Indigenous research methodologies, anti-oppression methodologies, ethics-as-practice frameworks, and research-creation frameworks. Since relationality lies at the heart

Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies, and Indigenous axiologies and methodologies center accountability on relationships, we have also been extremely cognizant of the need for a relationship-building process and to centre care throughout this project.

For this case study into the experiences of the racialized staff at Quamajuq, the Inuit Art Centre at the Winnipeg Art Gallery the data collection methods we are using are varied and include digital ethnographic and qualitative methods. To gather preliminary organizational information from the Quamajuq, we have under-

taken extensive digital data scraping of its website, and in the coming weeks we will conduct a structured survey sent to our Quamajuq contact for both organizational and participant information. In addition, we intend to gather information from some of the racialized employees at the Quamajug through multiple oneon-one semi-structured interviews that will take place via Zoom.

During this one-year research project, two key issues prevented it from moving forward in the manner that we had intended. Initially, our plan was to interview racialized cultural workers several visual art institutions including art galleries, museums, and artist-run centers across the Prairie provinces (Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan). We also intended to compensate participants appropriately for their expertise and time, considering the systemic barriers to advancement and equitable compensation bv racialized cultural workers in this sector. However, due to limitations on the use of scholarly funding to provide compensation to participants for their time and expertise, the initial scope of the project had to be reduced as it came into conflict with the goal of fairly compensating all participants. It should be noted that although we are speaking from a context as student researchers at the University of Winnipeg, the issue of fair compensation-or any compensation at all-for participants in academic research is an issue at most academic institutions and has its roots in institutionalized discrimination (i.e. and power knowledge hoarding).

We initially planned for the participants interviewed be compensated according to the Minimum Recommended Fee by CARFAC (Canadian Schedule Artists' REspentation/ Le font des artistes canadiens). However, because of limited funds, we were restricted to looking at a single art institution since there is a large between discrepancy academic research practices and industry standards with regard to participant compensation. As cultural workers and academics/researchers second, fair compensation for the interview participants is a top priority because we are intimately aware of the exploitation of

racialized cultural workers performing underpaid/unpaid labour and do not want to contribute to this discriminatory and racist practice.

Another major roadblock was the of process applying for obtaining Human Ethics Research (HER) approval through University of Winnipeg's Office of Research. While we are both skilled in ethnography, we found the HER process to be incredibly difficult. The process included several research officers examining the same application multiple times, as well as multiple revisions to concerns that had already been addressed. Due to the scope of this high-level overview of our research thus far, we plan on providing elaboration further this on complicated process at a later date. However, this has been a major roadblock that has delayed our research by nine months!

As for our next steps, we will conduct the interviews with Quamajuq employees in September 2022. Then in the following month we will transcribe, code, and anonymize all the interviews using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software program.

NVivo will also enable us to create a map of the transcripts, allowing us to share an anonymized visual representation of racialized employees' experiences and opinions of systemic racism at the Quamajug. In November 2022, we intend to present both our case study findings and our research framework at a roundtable gathering in Edmonton, in partnership with MacEwan University. Over the course of 2023/24, we also intend to write a more comprehensive research paper based on our findings from this case study.

Bibliography

The following bibliography is a living document and has organized into different sections based on broad areas of research. As co-researchers. we acknowledge that not everyone who will read our research update will have, nor need or want, academic research experience. We have chosen to present our sources in this way as a gesture towards dismantling the inaccessibility of academic research. As a living document, our bibliography will continue to grow as the research but it progresses,

will also never be complete. An updated bibliography will be shared once we have completed our case study of Quamajuq and present our findings in November 2022.

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