

Indigenous Artistic Methodologies

By: Quill Christie



1. The practice of ongoing self-location:

- As a facilitator and teacher it is important to speak from your own contextual knowledge base.
- It is Indigenous protocol to introduce yourself to the extent you feel comfortable...where you come from, nation, clan, who you are and how this shapes the knowledge you will share but this self-location must extend further.
- This self-location is ongoing and should be a constant thread throughout- this opens up the space, you speak from your experiences and in turn open the space for other experiences to feel validated, you contribute to a non-hierarchical, non-authoritarian methodology of arts-based facilitation.
- This means you are bringing in your own ontological framework not as an absolute but in humility. This means you are speaking from your nation-specific and self-specific teachings.

2. Place-centered methodologies

- With self-location practice we bring in our own ontological framework of the world including the nations we come from. We must also be attentive to the lands we practice from. If we are visitors to the territory it is essential to practice accountability through artistic programming to the host nations.
- Try to include as many people from the territory within programming. If you're opening with an elder, try to get an elder from the territory. If you cannot accommodate others into arts-based education, establish a relationship with the community on your own.
- Weave territorial accountability throughout arts-based education. Always start with a meaningful acknowledgement and beyond this, see how you can collectively show gratitude to the territory through artistic creations. Center this accountability throughout.
- If you are a visitor on the territory do not appropriate the host nation(s)' conceptions of art-making. Follow the practice of self-



location and speak from your own experiential knowledge while allowing other knowledges to emerge.

3. Let's focus on relationships: A decolonizing relational artistic praxis

- Acknowledge the relationality of decolonization. Acknowledge the relationality of Indigenous knowledges. Acknowledge art-making as a relational praxis that demands accountability to all our relations.
- Ask yourself, what relationships has settler colonialism sought to destroy and how can be repair, restore and strengthen these relationships through art-making?
- Create specific methodologies centering on radical relationship building: How can you facilitate relationship building to each other? To the self? To community and nation?

4. Art-making as governance: Accountability as methodology

- Situating art-making as an enactment of governance both over the self and extending outwards to community and nation. Art is a method of knowledge transmission that has always been an essential component of our governance structures.
- Art is thus an avenue for enacting accountability. Framing artistic practice as governance demands we conceptualize our work as accountable to: our selves, each other, our nations, the territory we are on, etc.
- Queering methodologies: responsibility especially to uphold those members of our communities (two-spirit, gender non-conforming, trans, women-identified) through artistic practice. How can the art you choose to make embody accountability to all our relations?

5. Art education within the institution

- Recognizing the art institution as a pillar of capitalism and colonialism that actively perpetuates erasures, exclusions and distortions of Indigenous peoples.



- Refusal of assimilation within museums- rejection of the institution's approach and framework for their arts education programs.
- Mindfulness of how much labor you put into translating an Indigenous approach to arts-education to a colonial institution.
- Autonomous space model: give us the space and resources that we rightly deserve because you profit off of stolen Indigenous land and get out of our way.



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