
This art-based video narrative inquiry sought to navigate a question posed in the call for The Performing the World Conference held in New York City in the fall of 2016. The conference invited presenters to respond to the question: Can We Perform Our Way to Power? This question was inspired by the growing appreciation for performance as an alternative modality to knowing in human development and social justice issues. The question itself however became a point-of-departure for a narrative walk and reflection into the possible understandings of performance as performance relates to power and place.


In 2011, Ecuador launched a massive social circus program as part of its “citizens revolution” and much debated philosophy of Buen Vivir (“good living”). Situating the initiative within the growing international movements of social circus and socially engaged art more broadly, this book explores how cultural policy and this unique pedagogy has been bringing about a sense of ‘togetherness’, navigating complex local, national and international supports and pressures.


In 2012, in Quebec, students and their supporters protested rising tuition through a range of tactics from picket lines and occupations to street theatre and art installations. This chapter examines the significance of the plethora of creative repertoires of protest invoked during the spring of 2012 in Quebec, the debates they occasioned, and their manifold legacies that surfaced in the years that followed.

About the ASC! Research Project: In 2013, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) provided a $2.5 million grant to support the ASC! Project: a five-year, national research initiative on art for social change, the first study of its kind in Canada. The ASC! Project brings together artists, scholars, students and change makers from diverse public and private sectors to better understand how these practices are evolving in Canada, as well as to provide information, opportunities for exchange, and resources for both practitioners and those interested in learning more about the field.
In this paper, the authors draw on a study with young people living with psychosis in rural communities to describe how participating in a Digital Storytelling (DST) research project can attend to their sense of social inclusion, contributing to their agency and possibly also to a more socially just experience of the world. They highlight the potential of DST as an engaging social research process and describe participants' experience of being involved in DST.


'Situated methodologies: A critical enquiry into art-based health research', considers the theoretical, methodological, ethical and practical challenges and opportunities of engaging in art-based health research. The articles feature data collected from a diverse sector of health care researchers, artists and their trainees, from Australia, the United Kingdom and Canada.


This article draws upon an art-based health research study that examines the work of health/social science researchers and artists who use a wide variety of art genres to create and disseminate scientific health-based research. The authors detail the tensions experienced in creative teams engaged in art-based health research projects and highlight the strategies identified by the study participants to address these tensions.


This paper focuses on the concept of 'dangerous emotional terrain', used to describe the potential negative impacts of using the arts, in this case dance, in research dissemination. We focus on a seldom-explored area – the impact on artists embodying research results of difficult lived experiences. The potential for harm to performers engaging in arts-based research requires consideration. What are our responsibilities to performers taking on this role? What are the ethical implications of engaging in such work? This paper explores these questions and identifies four strategies to tackle emotional impact: reflexive practice, creation of a safe and supportive environment, address issues of audience, and focus on balance between types of performance, and between work and home.


The authors conducted a systematic review of digital storytelling in research. A thematic analysis of results indicated that digital storytelling in research was especially appropriate for use with marginalised groups, and was most commonly used in this context. Surprisingly, although digital storytelling provides a ready-made knowledge translation product, few research projects employed the digital stories generated to this end.


In this article, the authors offer four reflections on their collaboration as they continue to bring their academic and activist commitments together in order to promote education, awareness, and change. In their collaboration, they have discovered the value of researching, conceptualizing and writing in creative ways in order to understand how the stories of individuals are always connected to social and institutional dynamics of policy and practice.


Health care workers in South Africa have a risk of acquiring tuberculosis (TB) that is twice that of the general population. Nonetheless, adherence to infection control and TB disclosure requirements remain problematic. This study examined the feasibility of an educational participatory theatre intervention to reduce the risk of occupational TB.
The complex public health challenges of the twenty-first century — including health inequities exacerbated by ongoing social injustice and emerging health threats associated with the Anthropocene — require new approaches to understand and engage the public in addressing the underlying issues. This article examines the extent to which Canadian universities are preparing future generations of population and public health practitioners and researchers to meet the demands of contemporary public health.


This paper argues that a new relationship with the microbial world requires effort and transformation of our ways of living to respect the microbial contribution to all life processes. The role of art, artists and indigenous wisdom, are critical in undertaking these efforts, to embody different perspectives and to move between and beyond disciplines. Several initiatives in Ecuador on the theme of antibiotic resistance are described to show how science, art, culture and nature can converge.


Whole-body mapping involves tracing around a person’s body to create a life-sized outline, which is filled in during a creative and reflective process, producing an image representing multiple aspects of their embodied experience. Body mapping holds promise as a qualitative, participatory research method to produce and disseminate knowledge. This systematic review identifies various implementations of body mapping in research, therapeutic, and educational contexts.


This article summarizes reflections from the arts for social change partnership, regarding 12 ethical concerns, including those related to community-university partnership, dilemmas related to the arts, and team issues. The article presents how the team has been addressing these issues, as examples of how such concerns could be approached in community-university partnerships in arts for social change.


This book chapter identifies a range of ethical issues arising from research design to dissemination. Key issues are illustrated through the use of examples of the authors’ and others’ recent and ongoing research. Questions for discussion prompt collaborative exchange and offer guidance in proposing creative responses to the challenges identified.


This research explores the various ways in which performative inquiry was implemented in a graduate organizational theories course within an educational leadership cohort at a medium-sized urban Canadian research university. Drawing on Fink's framework for significant learning experiences, the researchers used performative inquiry to enact the “Practice” and “Reflection” domains of his pedagogical model.
This process in and of itself becomes an action site of research. This piece not only playfully unpacks the objectivity of the researcher, but also offers a field of visual play that formally furthers Steven Hill’s theorizing on the idea of frames and what predetermines the frames we bring to the project of art ‘for’ social change. The underlying question that forms the spine of the interview is based on Hannah Arendt’s (1954) theory of past and future as it relates to the education of the young. What needs to be preserved in your practice or held as responsibility as it is re-imagined in the future?


Over the course of the last two decades, youth media programs have become increasingly popular as models for community-engaged digital storytelling projects. This narrative is based on the author’s experience as the creative mentor and story editor within a nationally recognized youth-run media production program. Drawing on Arendt’s (1954) thinking on the educative project and on Poyntz’s (2009) argument that holds ‘agonistic struggle’ over creative expression within a community of youth engagement is critical to developing a shared sense of the world. This narrative focuses on the collective work of story creation within a community-engaged media art practice as a vehicle for developing capacity to hold pluralistic points of view, perspective, and voice essential for the sustenance of democratic movements.


This paper focuses on the concept of ‘dangerous emotional terrain’, used to describe the potential negative impacts of using the arts in research dissemination. The authors focus on a seldom-explored area—the impact on artists embodying research results of difficult lived experiences. What are our responsibilities to performers taking on this role? What are the ethical implications of engaging in such work? This paper explores these questions and identifies four strategies to tackle emotional impact.


Using creative and participatory approaches, this study sought to understand young peoples’ experiences with cannabis while living with psychosis. The results of the research were shared in non-traditional ways including on social media platforms, via documentary film and with animation to connect with youth participants. As part of a knowledge translation strategy, youth-led messages and products were generated from the findings and shared with relevant stakeholders.


Complex Social Change: teaching, performing, exhibiting, designing, mapping is an interdisciplinary research program at the University of Lethbridge. Running from September 2012 to March 2015, the project included a series of exhibitions, video programs, public talks and panels, performances, courses, a website and a publication. For the performing arts section, the researchers sought to investigate that involvement, specifically how participation in performing arts and performance could contribute to successful activism.
Ecuador hosts one of the world's largest government-sponsored programs using circus arts to promote social solidarity and inclusion. The article notes that this program reaches tens of thousands of people annually, with approximately 1,000 participants—mostly street involved youth, but also children from marginalized communities and adults with disabilities enrolled in multi-month programs. Tensions identified related to technical skills versus social goals, and integrating traditional social work approaches with social circus techniques are discussed and the interdisciplinary research approach for a multi-year study outlined.

This article, published in a top-ranked radical Geography journal, discussed the Quebec student strike of 2012 that mobilized hundreds of thousands of students and supporters in collective action. Emphasizing the “broadr dreams of a student movement now sparking the popular imagination”, some activists began calling for a “rêve général illimité” (unlimited general dream). Dr. Spiegel argues that creative tactics altered the relationships amongst private and public space, time and responsibilities in the Quebec student strike, broadening participation by generating spaces of collective care.

This book narrates a story about women in a provincial prison in Canada, about how creative leadership fostered opportunities for transformation and hope, and about how engaging in research and writing contributed to healing. Arresting Hope reminds us that prisons are not only places of punishment, marginalization, and trauma. They can also be places of hope, where people with difficult lived experiences can begin to compose stories full of healing, anticipation, communication, education, connection, and community.

This article reflects a conversation between the two authors as they embark on an arts-based health research study to explore the theoretical, methodological and ethical challenges faced by scientists, artists and trainees who are “doing” arts-based health research. It begins with each reflecting on the importance of the arts in their lives, and then moves to a dialogue about using the arts within both research and knowledge translation.

In 2014-2015, twenty-two university students, eight with identified disabilities, undertook a year-long inclusive dance journey with a dance professor and professional integrated dance director. Together they created Unlimited, an integrated dance theatre production. Documenting the whole creative process from intense rehearsals to tearful goodbyes, the film Becoming Unlimited explores how artistic process can lead to dynamic change for the inclusion of people with disabilities on and off the stage.

In the Red

Violence, Anonymous Bodies, in the Age of Austerity: State

Published in this acclaimed humanities journal, Dr. Spiegel examines why masks were banned in the student protests in Quebec. Analyzing the role masks have played globally within protest movements, she explains how the mask ban sought to divide would-be allies in the fight against austerity measures, undercutting attempts to build a collective front. She then illustrates how creative strategies for adopting the common persona of mask - from black scarves to clown make-up - resisted the moral subjectivity that comes with individualization of debt.


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This edited collection of in-depth interviews with senior and mid-career artists engaged in arts for social change and/or community-engaged arts that unpack the unique qualities and characteristics of creative practice with community and the art of facilitation. The artists speak to the origins of their work and what needs to be preserved. The collection is intended to be a learning site for work, theory, and history of these practices.


This video was created as a forum for teaching and curriculum. In a compilation of voices and perspectives taken from in-depth interviews with artists who have long histories of practice in the field of socially-engaged art, this video seeks to examine the sensibilities of listening, engagement, and the fostering of environments of hospitality that define the work. Artists speak to the need for the refinement of facilitation skills in order to create authentic environments of engagement.


Researchers Jennifer Spiegel and Stephanie Parent team up with filmmaker Flick Harrison to explore the inner workings of social circus in Quebec. Through a series of interviews with funders, program coordinators, community workers, instructors and participants, as well as summary reflections on five years of field research, the video provides an intricate look at how the impacts reported by social circus participants are shaped by the pedagogy and partnership models undertaken. Arriving on the eve of Halloween, the video takes us into highly animated and intimate spaces of social circus workshops in four Quebec cities, following participants upside down, and documents aspects of the creation process from team building to performance. It asks: What challenges are being faced by social circus programs as an ‘art for social change’? What approaches are being taken to resolve them? And what are the ‘results’ for those who experience the work? (Subtitled in English, French and Spanish)


This digital video seeks to unpack the objectivity of the researcher and offers a field of visual play that formally furthers Steven Hill’s theorizing on the idea of frames and what predetermines the frames we bring to the project as it pertains to art and art for social change. This process in and of itself becomes an action site of research. This video features an individual interview conducted for the Art for Social Change Research Project with director, actor, and creator Steven Hill. Steven and artist/researcher Patti Fraser shared a history of collaboration that dated back to the AIDS activist movement in Canada in the late 1980’s. They collaborated together for a number of years with activist groups like the World Aids Group in order to create interactive and provocative work on issues relating to AIDS, particularly with vulnerable youth. Steven Hill is currently Co-Artistic Director of Fight with a Stick and Associate Professor in Theatre Performance in the School for Contemporary Arts at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Canada.


Judith Marcuse gave a keynote at the 2015 Creative Catalyst symposium in Toronto. The event brought together Canadian artists, designers, researchers, industry, and community members in discussion on how arts and culture catalyzes social innovation.


Four teenagers share their experiences trying to cope with chronic pain. Their thoughts are intercut with performance by dancer Vanessa Goodman in this innovative collaboration between Dr. Leora Kuttner and choreographer Judith Marcuse. Animation of the Body-Self Neuromatrix illustrates the brain’s central role in the process through different stages of healing.


Why is art for social change important? And why should we care? Participants at the launch of the ASC! research project share their perspectives and join in activities that celebrate this work.


The set of artistic practices that form the basis of inquiry within The Art for Social Change (ASC!) Research Project has been described as a spectrum of work. This spectrum contains arts practices that have been defined as participatory, socially engaged, community-engaged, collaborative, and relational (Finkelpearle, 2013). In this compilation of research interviews we hear what matters as they speak to this spectrum of work as it relates to the history of their own practice. What emerges is a unique expression of what matters as this form of work is brought into institutional and other related settings.
Doolittle, L. (2014). **Upstart: Dance, Drama and Self Advocacy.**
University of Lethbridge.
[https://vimeo.com/104985204](https://vimeo.com/104985204)


Marcuse, J. (2013). **So What is Art for Social Change?**
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxTFdzEpe-A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxTFdzEpe-A)

An exploration of art for social change using footage from the EARTH Festival, produced by Judith Marcuse Projects during the United Nations’ UNEP meetings in Vancouver. Attended by some 15,000 people, this six-day festival brought together local and international artists from 25 countries in performances, exhibitions, workshops, children’s events and dialogues…a celebration of art for social change in its many forms.

Ashoka Canada. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxTFdzEpe-A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxTFdzEpe-A)

Why should social innovators care about art? Not only can it communicate change. Art can also catalyze the social transformation we need. That’s the premise behind the emerging field of Art for Social Change, championed by Ashoka Fellow Judith Marcuse during an informal presentation with students at Quest University.

Fraser, P. (2017). **Our Health Depends on The Stories We Tell: Digitally storytelling with the art health and seniors project.**
The Muse. Beneath the Surface, Spring 2017, McMaster University.
[https://issuu.com/themuse_magazine/docs/the_muse_issue_5 /10](https://issuu.com/themuse_magazine/docs/the_muse_issue_5 /10)

Dr. Fraser writes about her experience working with seniors on the the Arts, Health, and Seniors Project - a three-year community-engaged arts research project created with the intention of contributing to the existing knowledge surrounding the connections between health and creativity with older adults.

Spiegel, JB. (2017). **Theoretical Debates Concerning Community Engaged Art: An overview in selected quotes and critiques.**
Stay tuned to the ASC! website for more information: [icasc.ca](http://icasc.ca)

This 8-page handout was prepared for discussion at a session at ASC!‘s “Arts for Changing the World” Conference, Ottawa, November 2017. It presents more than two dozen quotes from theorists, as well as some common critiques and rebuttals concerning some key approaches. Topics covered include naming the practice, naming the goals, spiritual and political guiding principles, key concepts in understanding social transformation, various theories of change, art as part of broader social movements, as well as approaches to art-as-theory/research. In each case references are provided as a resources for further information.

Yassi, A. et al. (2017). **Evaluation Toolkit.**
[http://www.ascevaluation.ca](http://www.ascevaluation.ca)

This web-based toolkit was designed for a wide variety of audiences to guide them through issues, methods and techniques of evaluation of arts for social change projects. The toolkit includes a 7-step approach, from planning to dissemination of results; animated scenarios; a mini course that includes the basics, ethics, theories, techniques and extensive information on quantitative, qualitative and arts-based methods, plus an interactive quiz, and over 50 examples, coded by art form, evaluation method, population targeted and objectives of the program.


An interim update from the ASC! project designed for public, non-academic audiences and intended to provide a snapshot of some of the ASC! project findings gleaned from the first two and a half years of the research project. The report is available in French and English.

[https://icasc.ca/resources/agewell-chataqua-exhibition-booklet](https://icasc.ca/resources/agewell-chataqua-exhibition-booklet)

The Agewell Chataqua Project questions the current aging paradigm, attempting to understand and tease apart conventions and assumptions from lived realities and experiences. The project used arts-based facilitation to support cross-sector dialogue and collaboration to help improve seniors’ wellbeing. The Agewell Chataqua Project booklet showcases photographs and statements by the creators of the 100 artworks that were exhibited and accompanied by public dialogues and workshops in Vancouver.

Hunt, S. (2015). **Parkinson’s dancers perform at High Performance Rodeo.**

An article in the Calgary Herald on a performance by members of the Dancing with Parkinson’s group led by Anne Flynn.

Anne Flynn discusses a dance show performed by people with Parkinson’s disease called “I Always Look Forward to Tuesdays.”


An edited interview with Lisa Doolittle, Callista Chasse, Jeff Charlton and Corey Makoloski on an all-abilities dance and theatre course as well as Unlimited, the mixed-abilities production that students in the course helped to develop.


An article from the University of Calgary on the Dancing/Parkinson’s research study led by Anne Flynn and Afra Foroud. The research study uses weekly dance classes as a therapeutic tool for Parkinson’s patients to improve practical motor skills and provide an avenue for social communication and emotional expression.


This presentation at an international social circus conference, and published Proceedings, draws on observations in Ecuador and Quebec, Dr. Spiegel assesses how technical and artistic skill-building, and the process-based aesthetic fostered, develop ways to cultivate particular social, ethical and aesthetic sensibilities. In keeping with insights from the past twenty years in arts for social change research, it also elaborates the questions that arise concerning how these ways of “doing and making” interact with various cultural traditions, values and aesthetics germane to the populations involved in social circus.

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**The International Centre of Art for Social Change (ICASC) is accessible 24/7, online.**

ICASC.ca is full of stimulating and useful information about our work and the community-engaged arts for social change field, including: about Art for Social Change (ASC) organizations, programs and artists; resources, videos, essays and articles; the latest research; links, networks and news; and our blog. Keep up to date! **Stay informed about the exciting field of ASC!**