

***International Journal of Education Through Art***  
**Call for Papers**

**Special Issue: ‘Reimagining Place and Place-Based Art Education’**

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Locating art education within place-based learning disturbs standardized curriculum models and re-envision educational purposes by valuing ecology, local knowledge and relationships. Critical place-based education adds critical pedagogy to place-based learning and questions taken-for-granted assumptions about progress and our relationships with history, communities and nature. Critical place-based pedagogies aim to build meaningful, empathic connections to natural and human communities and envision alternative ways of being, restoration of ecosystems and empowerment of local communities. Artmaking becomes socially aware, reflective and transformational (Bertling 2021; Gradle 2007; Graham 2007, 2017). Developing ecologically aware and responsible art education in the Anthropocene is daunting but vitally important. This Special Issue seeks to reclaim the possibilities of place and place-based education that include Indigenous voices as a path toward reimagining art education.

A White settler understanding of place often neglects Indigenous pedagogy and ideas about the land. Place-based and environmental educators often ignore critical race perspectives and forget how much White colonizing ideologies dominate western relationships with the natural world, (Bae-Dimitriadis 2024; Kimmerer 2013; McLean 2013). In this call we are looking for a re-examination of place-based ideologies and pedagogies that include Indigenous experiences and epistemologies (Kovach 2021; Wilson 2009). This Special Issue offers a venue for scholarly and artistic collaborations with Indigenous artists, educators and scholars that might launch new ways of understanding our relationships with the places where we live. We imagine new partnerships that will foreground a human relationality that values difference and seeks to understand how our unique histories, culture and experience, position us in relation to one another.

Place, like the soil, has layers of history that includes narratives of displacement, oppression, enlightenment and progress. Our relationships with nature and place are complicated by history, ideology and ecology. For example, modern biology describes how our bodies are related to other creatures in myriad, often unpredictable ways. Bayo Akomolafe, a writer from western Nigeria, reminds us of our entanglements with organisms both within and beyond our bodies and of our unresolved ancestry. According to Akomolafe (2018), we are

'holobionts'. Holobionts are interrelated groups of organisms that act symbiotically together. These assemblages of intersecting communities challenge our identity as separable individual. We are inescapably entwined with each other and with the natural world (Akomolafe 2018; Bertling 2021; Sheldrake 2020). Ideas about place and art education have been approached from many perspectives, including ecopedagogy, natural history, the Navajo concept of *hózhó*, collecting, walking and data visualization; all designed to bring us into more profound community and deeper understanding (Bertling 2021; Cuther & Irwin 2017; Graham 2023, 2024; Pujol 2018; Springgay and Truman 2017). This Special Issue is a call for artists, teachers and scholars to collaborate in an exploration and unravelling of epistemological differences between dominate ideas about place and Indigenous approaches to place and relationality.

Possible topics for this issue might include:

### **Place-Based Art Education from Indigenous Perspectives**

Indigenous ontology and epistemology are based on the premise that knowledge is relational and culturally situated (Kovach 2021; Tuhiwai Smith 2021). A culturally responsive place-based art education involves the interrogation of power and privilege inherent in western anthropocentric relations with the land and taken-for-granted assumptions about how we construct knowledge. Decolonizing our knowledge, sense of place and educational practices is an ongoing process that highlights the perspectives of Indigenous peoples and critiques our positionality as non-Indigenous settlers (Bae Dimitriadis 2024). Indigenous scholar Dwayne Donald (2012) noted that our existing relationships with one another include perspectives on history, memory and experience that are interconnected and interreferential.

### **Ecopedagogy**

Art education conceptualized as ecopedagogy is ecologically and critically focused. Like place-based education, ecopedagogy emphasizes experiential learning and the value of the local environment, offering methods for inclusive and socially just pedagogical practices centered in the particularities and diversities of local communities and environments (Bertling 2023; Lawton 2018). Ecopedagogy, as a fusion of environmental education, critical pedagogy and art education, is a socially radical utopian project that seeks to establish a more sustainable human civilization. Ecopedagogical inquiry encourages art practices and narratives grounded in cultural knowledge, histories, lived experiences, local geographies and ecology (Bertling, 2023).

### **Walking as a Pedagogical or Artistic Practice**

There has been a resurgence in art and education that connect walking to artmaking, critical pedagogy and place (Cuther and Irwin 2017; Graham 2023; Pujol 2018; Springgay and Truman 2017). Walking artist Ernesto Pujol observed that '[t]here is a morality in walking, which starts with deciding not to stay inside, to step out into the world, to see and listen

firsthand, placing ourselves within the reality of others [...]’ (2018: 77). Artists and art educators are exploring kinship and relationality through their creative walking practice by weaving Indigenous stories and epistemology into their research, artmaking and teaching; practices that challenge western-centric ideologies about place. A walking pedagogy resists the logic of haste, fragmentation and productivity by cultivating conditions for relationality and conversation. For example, research conducted on the Croom Reserve in Australia described how walking is a practice of care, where place becomes therapeutic and restorative (Springgay and Truman 2018). Or as Joshua Graham observed: ‘My students and I walk as an artistic intervention, to work within histories and cultures, and as an act of resistance... I work with students in areas that are of ecological significance, such as the Great Salt Lake, which has declined to its lowest level in the history of record-keeping’ (2023: 34).

### **The Role of Technology in Place-Based Education**

Technology continues to shape our relationships with the natural world and with each other. How might emerging technologies support or complicate Indigenous place-based pedagogies, given how technology shapes so many of our interactions with the natural world and our teaching? How are Indigenous artists using technology for digital storytelling or mapping to reclaim land narratives? For example, contemporary Aboriginal artists from across the Western Desert of Australia draw upon mark-making traditions closely tied to their relationships with places, while at the same time using satellite imagery to inform their work. How is digital technology and social media eroding or building Indigenous traditions and connections to the land? How is technology acting as a tool of colonial or settler displacement?

### **Visual and Textual Experimentation**

We encourage contributors to experiment with imagery and text and explore how Indigenous visual languages could transform art education, documentation and scholarship. How is evolutionary biology and ecology changing our understanding of ourselves and our relationships with the natural world? How might diverse approaches to visual imagery and experimentation with text be expressed in different educational contexts, from K–12 classrooms to university classrooms, to museums, to community settings?

Submissions may be either:

Full-length scholarly articles between 4500 and 6000 words and ideally around 5600 words in length.

Visual essays (1000 words including references).

Media reviews (1000 words including references).

Timeline:

Abstract (300 words) deadline: 24 April 2026

Full article submission deadline: 1 September 2026

Publication date: October 2027

Articles should adhere to [Intellect House Style](#).

Abstracts should be submitted to Guest Editor Mark Graham at [mark\\_graham@byu.edu](mailto:mark_graham@byu.edu).

Full manuscripts should be submitted online at:

<https://submission.pubkit.co/publisher/29/journal/395/login>

Please select the Special Issue: 'Reimagining Place and Place-Based Art Education' when submitting online.

All enquiries should be addressed to Guest Editor Mark Graham at [mark\\_graham@byu.edu](mailto:mark_graham@byu.edu).

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