Dance Land: Community-based Dance, Youth, and Relationships with Land

By

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We acknowledge and respect the Lək̓ʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Lək̓ʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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abstract

In 2015, the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) announced 94 Calls to Action, one of which called upon the Canada Council for the Arts to fund Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to collaborate on projects that contribute to the reconciliation process. Reconciliation is a highly contested term, and before and after this announcement, several Canadian scholars and artists recognized Indigenous land sovereignty as central to this critical discussion. This inquiry is inspired by the work of these scholars and the spirit of the TRC Call to Action 83. In collaboration with a local 'Native Friendship Centre' and community youth programming, this arts-based inquiry aimed to explore how youth can use expressive movement to explore their relationships with land.

To explore these collaborative processes, I co-designed Dance Land as a method grounded in critical facilitation of community-based dance that was informed by critical place inquiry and engaged Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth participants in exploring their relationships with land. This emergent process revealed that the youth participants' creative decision-making and my critical facilitation were rooted in embodied ways of knowing. This way of knowing is highlighted by dance scholar Barbour as *thinking in movement.* Thinking in movement can be attributed to relationality within Dance Land's dance making process. Findings suggest that embodied ways of knowing can help youth explore their relationships with land. In the final chapter, implications for CYC are discussed.

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acknowledgements

I am grateful for the opportunity to undertake student research on Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux, and Treaty 8 and Treaty 10 territories, the ancestral and traditional territories of the Cree and Dene, as well as Métis homeland, the ancestral and traditional lands of Métis Peoples. I am humbled by the generosity and support of the youth who danced with me and my community partners, the Lac La Biche Native Friendship Centre and the Lac La Biche Family and Community Support Services. The collaborative work between these two organizations made insightful and critical conversations with Donna Webster, Anita Polturak, Winston Desjarlais, Christine Martin, and Hannah Rauser possible. I thank the Canet Foundation for financial support to realize this inquiry. I am especially grateful to Elder Emma Rayko, whose conversations, guidance, and meeting in person impacted my understanding of and appreciation for the land I was working on.

I thank Dr. Alison Gerlach for her countless hours of work to guide me through the challenges of structuring and presenting this inquiry as academic writing. I greatly appreciate Dr. Gerlach's dedication to seeing me complete the defense of this thesis.

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To my pillars of strength - father and mother Jim and Sophie Hamar, and daughter Sophie. My heart is filled with humility and love for receiving their love. I thank Debra Hamar, my sister who has a huge heart and beautiful mirror, and Gordon Celesta who is an endlessly supportive friend.

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dedication

This thesis is lovingly dedicated to my father, James G. Hamar.

I am grateful for the gift of critical thinking you have given me. Your reflections on and discussions about subjects that many of the adults in my life avoided and at times diminished have instilled burning curiosity in me: “Ya got that right!”.

area 1: dance and personal experience

Exploring dance as a way for Indigenous[1] and non-Indigenous youth to share personal experiences is significant for fostering deeper understandings of one another on land colonially known as Canada, and reflecting on the implications this may have in the field of Child and Youth Care (CYC).

with you

you fly

across the room

i think

i swim through air

you twist

your limbs

i curl

hold knees

[1] Shea Murphy's (2022) insight on the terms *Indigenous* and *Native* tell us that

> The terms, in other words, are used not to define identifiable, physical beings who stably adhere to particular phenotypes or hold a specified "blood quantum" or speak or don't speak an Indigenous language that their ancestors spoke or are from or of a particular place, be it rural ("the rez") or urban space (or, more compellingly, "hub," to follow Rayna Ramirez's conceptualization) or who are claimed by (or disenrolled from) a community. It attends instead to the meaning that Indigenous peoples—that is, the beings identified/fying as "Indigenous"—continually produce. This disarticulation of Indigenous from stable meaning, and assertion of it as an analytic that is embodied through circulations both of the rhetoric of words and of the rhetoric of Indigenous people's actions, serves neither to reject nor embrace the term but to understand it, and its embodied circulations, as constituting understanding around peoples called "Indigenous" in relationship to a political history that seeks, in multiple ways, to erase both the physical peoples and the knowledges that "Indigenous" names. (p. 37)

we run and run and

run and run

and run

now

i am water

fluid pathways

lead

you roll

across the floor

i breathe

quietly

water

turns to

clay

turns to

petals

turns to

frogs

i creep

beyond

disbelief

you shaking

me shifting

not knowing

my fluid

swimming

limbs

fly[2]

who am I?

I am a daughter of first-generation Ukrainian immigrants who contributed to the settlement of what is colonially known as Canada within Treaty 6 territory on the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux, and Treaty 8 and 10 territories, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree and Dene, as well as Métis homeland, the ancestral and traditional lands of Métis Peoples, colonially known as Lac La Biche, Alberta. I am an occupier who holds white privilege and benefits from the ongoing legacies of colonization. I am also a contemporary[3] dance artist

[2] I use expressive forms to build relationships to readers through collaborative meaning-making. This activity creates space to "resee/refeel sociology", and in Laurel Richardson's (1993) words, this thesis does not simply talk about these issues, it is these issues.

[3] Shea Murphy (2022) explains that,

who understands the world through dance because it values knowing human movement as a meaning-making experience and a way to understand a topic that cannot be understood in other ways (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2008).

why dance?

This inquiry evolved out of my dance career where I have embodied the effects of a Eurocentric approach to contemporary dance training, choreography, and presentation. I also embraced the effects of a Eurocentric approach to contemporary CYC education and practice later in my life (de Finney et al., 2018). This approach to CYC was discussed by a group of scholar-activists who are Indigenous, Chicanx, and diasporic South Asian, who clearly stated that government systems of *settler states*[4] provide *transcarceral social services systems*[5] that "uphold and implement official state policies, including those of cultural genocide, forced assimilation, state surveillance, and the incarceration of marked, non-white bodies" (de Finney et al., 2018, p. 29). Within the field of CYC, White (2015), who is a non-Indigenous CYC scholar, described social justice as a foundational principle in constant need of reconsideration, and called upon practitioners to attend to the historical, political, and institutional relations that organize

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> *Contemporary* as applied to dance is also a term with its own complications and limitations, as I and other dance scholars have vigorously argued, particularly in how it is often articulated as a binary to "traditional." Both terms are deeply imbricated in understandings (of temporality, of either/or instead of and/and) authorizing colonizing histories… Chatterjea… describes how the "aesthetic category of 'contemporary dance' (really meaning Euro-American modern/contemporary dance" may "seem to gesture toward a broad inclusivity" but in fact remains culturally specific, requiring that anything outside of its "particular look" and signifiers "translate into those term." (Terminologies, para. 3)

[4] De Finney et al. (2018) explain,

> Countries like Canada, the US, and Australia are colonial settler states in which colonialism cannot be thought of as an event in the past because "the settler never left" (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 5). In a settler state, colonial rule is reasserted every day of occupation through violent acts and policies (Amadahy & Lawrence, 2009). In Canada, for example, while they live in one of the world's wealthiest countries with a global reputation for upholding children's rights, Indigenous children and youth experience disproportionate rates of poverty, policing and incarceration, underhousing, and racialized discrimination, as well as "epidemic" rates of gender and sexualized violence (Allan & Smylie, 2015; Anaya, 2013). (p. 29)

[5] De Finney et al. (2018) define *transcarceral social services systems* as places where "racialized, gendered, sexualized, and ableist violence [is experienced] in various state-run, government-funded colonial systems, including the criminal, legal, education, immigration, health care, and child welfare systems" (p. 29).

their lives and often recreate white privilege. Reflecting on my white privilege within overlapping careers in dance and CYC, I sought a deeper understanding of connections between settler-Indigenous relationships in Canada and dancing. Dangeli (2015) is an Indigenous scholar and dance artist who illuminated a publication by Shea Murphy (2007) who is a non-Indigenous dance scholar, titled *The People Have Never Stopped Dancing*, as "the most thorough and multifaceted investigation of Aboriginal dance history in Canada and the United States from the late nineteenth century to contemporary performance today" (p. 18-19). In the area of dance research, Shea Murphy (2022) described what "potentially helpful work" by non-Indigenous people can look like:

> This means not just taking Indigenous ideas up for personal (or artistic, or academic) enrichment but rather seeing how—as we start to follow or even just see paths beyond supremacy separationist dualisms and hyperseparations and the colonialist extractions they have led to—our practices change… It means being beholden to the lands where we reside, even as those who are settlers (or "arrivants") to those lands work—in whatever big or small ways possible—to undo the vampiric terms of our ongoing residence. (p. 17)

I continually question dominant ways of doing contemporary dance and what it means to *be beholden to the lands where I reside*. In this inquiry, I explore dance's potential to support youth in sharing experiences with one another.

we fall

immersed

between

entangled arms legs hip sockets

joy

I strangle my nature

proud

I overcome the pain

belief

I reach for freedom

display

all I learn

excel

I make myself small

coiling tightly

against inner war

steeling myself

to steal from others

listen

no listen

to the body

and feel

where others lie

where I run

and fall

stand

why land?

My need to question my white privilege and understand more about the land I live and work on motivated me to critically explore the concept of reconciliation at personal and professional levels. My motivation was further inspired by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Call to Action 83: “We call upon the Canada Council for the Arts to establish, as a funding priority, a strategy for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to undertake collaborative projects and produce works that

contribute to the reconciliation process" (TRC of Canada, 2015, p. 9). The TRC used a definition of *reconciliation* that was outlined in the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (*TRC*, 2014b) as:

> An ongoing individual and collective process [. . . that] require[s] commitment from all those affected including First Nations, Inuit and Métis former Indian Residential School (IRS) students, their families, communities, religious entities, former school employees, government and the people of Canada. Reconciliation may occur between any of the above groups (par. 4).

The pursuit of justice was a major force behind the 2008 formation of the TRC (*TRC*, 2014a). In contrast, Mi'kmaq lawyer, professor and activist Palmater (2021) noted that the same report that put forward this Call to Action also "found that, in all of its dealings with Indigenous peoples, Canada has engaged in genocide—cultural, physical and biological" (para 5). This recognition of injustice drives me to critically explore the concept of reconciliation and the arts.

Call to Action 83 highlights the problematic concept of reconciliation and the impact of the role of the arts in relation to the TRC's reconciliation process. Some Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and artists have critiqued this role and recognized that the arts, and the term *reconciliation*, offer a space where troubling conversations about relationships between Indigenous and settler peoples can take place. Hill and McCall (2015), who are a Métis artist and settler scholar respectively, approached the subject of reconciliation as:

> A problematic narrative about Indigenous-settler relations, but also a site where conversations about what a just future looks like *must* occur. In this context, we believe that given the prominences of the arts as an avenue through which reconciliation is promoted, contested, and reimagined, artists and writers have much to contribute as actors in the struggle over and against this complex discursive field (p. 2)

The potential for the arts to facilitate critical conversations about reconciliation compelled me to explore a subject that is central to a reimagination of relations between Indigenous and settler peoples -

Indigenous land rights (Hill & McCall, 2015; Robinson & Martin, 2016). I recognize that the scope of this exploration cannot achieve *real reconciliation* that, as Palmater (2018a) explained,

> Requires truth be exposed, justice be done to make amends and then Canada's discriminatory laws, policies, practices and societal norms be reconciled with Indigenous rights, title, treaties, laws and jurisdiction. That process of truth, justice and reconciliation will be painful. It requires a radical change. Nothing less than the transfer of land, wealth and power to Indigenous peoples will set things right. (para. 1)

While this inquiry does not attempt to *transfer land, wealth and power to Indigenous peoples,* my thesis aims to contribute to discussions on the embodied practice of dance to explore relationships with land.

coalesce

words

dive

fall

catch

swing

gather

lead

duet

to

trio

to

quartet

to

corps

iamrunningnowistop

spin and merge

ideas

and

ideas

of

ideas

reading this thesis

I describe the sections of my thesis as *areas* to express their inherent overlap and interconnectedness. My literature review in area 2 focusses on Indigenous scholarship that contests reconciliation in Canada and highlights Indigenous and non-Indigenous literature that points to critical artistic responses to the Canadian TRC Call to Action #83. This area also looks at literature on the origins of contemporary dance and foregrounds scholarship on Indigenous dance. The value of dance participants working as artists who are informed by personal experience is highlighted. Area 2 also explains the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of this inquiry, including arts-based research (ABR) and its relationship to the performance genre, embodiment theories, and critical place inquiry[6]. In area 3, I describe my methods and in area 4, I present my findings. In area 5, I discuss the implications of the findings, including the implications for the field of CYC. I finish area 5 with concluding thoughts.

what is Dance Land?

As a dance facilitator and student researcher, I invited Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to engage in a collaborative art and dance-based exploration process that I called *Dance Land*. I created realistic parameters for Dance Land that chose to focus on individual youths' experiences of relationships with land in a collaborative community-based dance process. Different lived realities and perspectives exist for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youths' experiences of relationships with land (Garneau, 2016), and I intended to facilitate Dance Land in a way that offered spaces where youth could share whatever ideas they chose. Dance Land is my thesis research, and my student researcher positionality is rooted in my experiences as a dance artist who seeks to explore possibilities for embodied scholarship and embrace arts-based research that is informed by critical place inquiry (Snowber, 2018; Tuck and McKenzie, 2015).

[6] Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explain that critical place inquiry is "an approach to place in research that is explicitly political in its intentions and ethical obligations to land, people, and other species" (p. 150).

In this inquiry I partnered with the Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Center and Lac La Biche Family and Community Support Services who hosted Dance Land as a complement to their existing programming for 13–17-year-olds. Four youth and three Youth Support Workers engaged in five 120-minute community-based dance sessions over a two-week period in late November and early December of 2021. I describe this more fully in area 3, Dance Land as method.

Inspired by the spirit of the TRC Call to Action 83, this arts-based inquiry probed how community-based dance with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth could explore their personal relationships with land. The artistic process was guided by this question:

- How can youth use expressive movement[7] to explore their relationships with land?

where did they dance?

Dance Land took place on Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux, and Treaty 8 and Treaty 10 territories, the ancestral and traditional territories of the Cree and Dene, as well as the ancestral and traditional lands of Métis Peoples. This area is colonially known as Lac La Biche County, Alberta. The County shares borders with Beaver Lake Cree Nation, Heart Lake Cree Nation, Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement and Kikino Métis Settlement. The Métis government of Alberta (AB) gained recognition from the federal government to self-govern in March of 2024 (Parliament of Canada, C-35). However, Chief Tony Alexis of Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation called for a withdrawal of Bill C-35 because the bill "fails to acknowledge the distinct values and rights of First Nations people. Due to the lack of consultation with First Nations, it also represents a significant step backward from Canada's commitment to reconciliation" (Alexis, 2024). The federal government's decision is an example of ongoing colonial power relations in nation-to-nation

[7] "… the meaning of an expressive movement in dance derives from, and in its turn contributes to, a whole cultural tradition and the life of a society" (Best, 1974, p. 131).

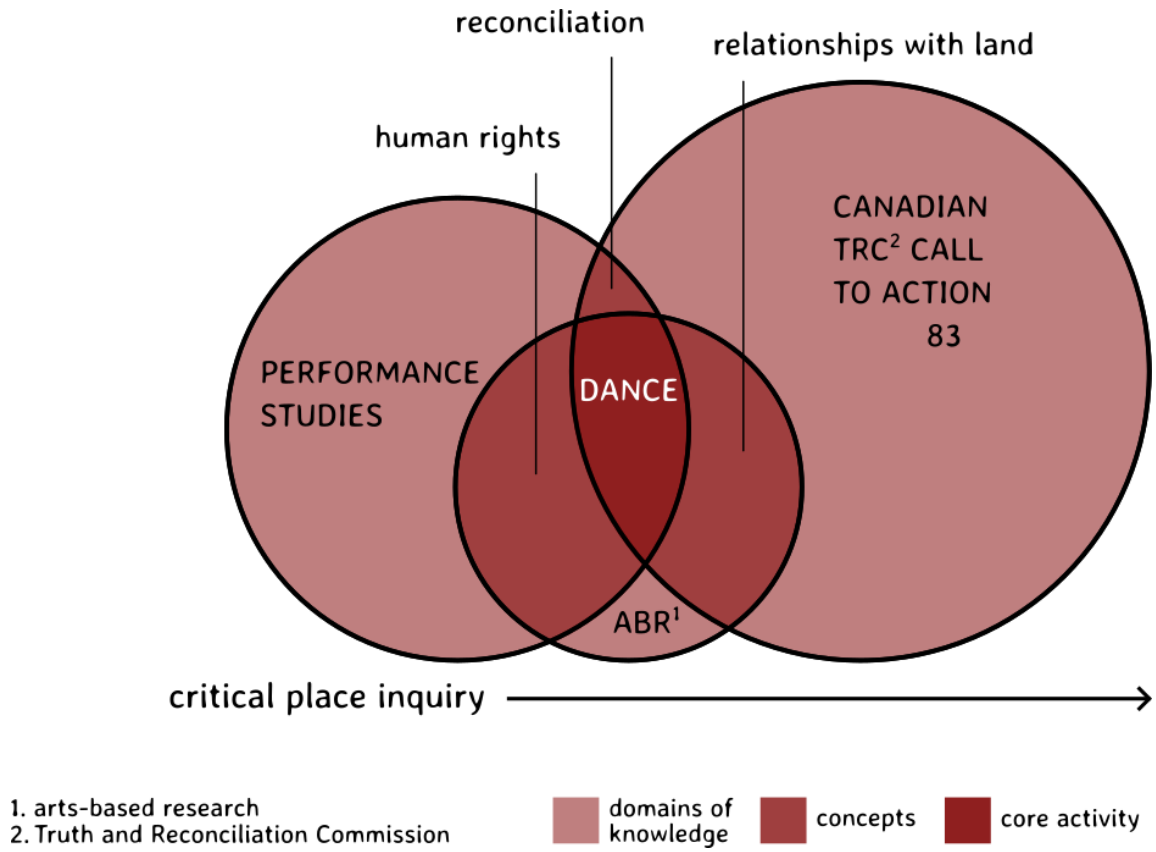
interactions. This inquiry took place in-person on what is currently recognized as Treaty 6, Treaty 8, and Treaty 10 territories, and Region 1 of Métis Nation Alberta, at the Bold Center, 8702-91 Avenue.

area 2: preliminary review of selected literature

The interrelated nature of my literature review and the methodology informing this inquiry aims for a holistic viewpoint that acknowledges dissonant and resonant relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and is represented visually in Figure 1. This viewpoint is reflected in the inclusion of an ABR methodology and critical place inquiry as inseparable from a review of the literature informing this inquiry.

Figure 1

Dance Land inquiry domains of knowledge, concepts, and core activity



Understanding community-based dance in the setting of this inquiry requires a review of the following domains of knowledge: (a) call to action 83: differing perspectives on reconciliation; (b) performance studies: a different way of viewing dance (c) arts-based research: dance as critical place inquiry.

Call to action 83: differing perspectives on reconciliation

Given that my inquiry is inspired by the spirit of the Canadian TRC call to Action 83, the following section outlines critiques of the concept of reconciliation. I draw on scholarship from Tuck and Yang (2012), Coulthard (2014), McIvor (2020), Garneau (2016), Dewar (2017), Robinson and Martin (2016), Mowatt (2024), Shea Murphy (2007/2018), and Tuck and McKenzie (2015) to include Indigenous and non-Indigenous as well as aesthetic viewpoints on the concept of reconciliation, differing relationships with Indigenous lands, and the critical place issue of settler colonialism.

critiques of the concept of reconciliation from Indigenous and non-Indigenous viewpoints

Scholarship by Tuck and Yang (2012), who are Indigenous and settler scholars respectively, discussed a critical understanding of reconciliation in relation to decolonization. Decolonization is focussed on being accountable to Indigenous sovereignty and futurity, whereas reconciliation is focussed on the outcome of decolonization for the settler[8]. Tuck and Yang (2012) explained that non-

[8] Tuck and Yang (2012) explain that,

> The settler, if known by his actions and how he justifies them, sees himself as holding dominion over the earth and its flora and fauna, as the anthropocentric normal, and as more developed, more human, more deserving than other groups or species. The settler is making a new "home" and that home is rooted in a homesteading worldview where the wild land and wild people were made for his benefit. He can only make his identity as a settler by making the land produce, and produce excessively, because "civilization" is defined as production in excess of the "natural" world (i.e. in excess of the sustainable production already present in the Indigenous world). In order for excess production, he needs excess labor, which he cannot provide himself. The chattel slave serves as that excess labor, labor that can never be paid because payment would have to be in the form of property (land). The settler's wealth is land, or a fungible version of it, and so payment for labor is impossible.6 The settler positions himself as both superior and normal; the settler is natural, whereas the Indigenous inhabitant and the chattel slave are unnatural, even supernatural. (p. 6)

Indigenous peoples making *decolonization a metaphor*[9] "problematically attempt to reconcile settler guilt and complicity, and rescue settler futurity" (p.3). This critical view of non-Indigenous attempts at decolonization highlights an understanding that reconciliation is not a form of decolonization. Moreover, these scholars emphasized the differing relationships between settlers' ways of making their homes and Indigenous peoples' relationships with place. Tuck and Yang (2012) explained,

> In order for the settlers to make a place their home, they must destroy and disappear the Indigenous peoples that live there. Indigenous peoples are those who have creation stories, not colonization stories, about how we/they came to be in a particular place - indeed how we/they came to be a place. Our/their relationships to land comprise our/their epistemologies, ontologies, and cosmologies. For the settlers, Indigenous peoples are in the way and, in the destruction of Indigenous peoples, Indigenous communities, and over time and through law and policy, Indigenous peoples' claims to land under settler regimes, land is recast as property and as a resource. Indigenous peoples must be erased, must be made into ghosts (Tuck and Ree, forthcoming). (p. 6)

These differing relationships with place are highly relevant to this inquiry because it takes place in the settler-colonial[10] context of Canada and engages with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth whose relationships with lands are embedded in the effects of settler colonialism. Differences in relationships

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[9] Tuck and Yang(2012) explain this phrase,

> When metaphor invades decolonization, it kills the very possibility of decolonization; it recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future. Decolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks. The easy absorption, adoption, and transposing of decolonization is yet another form of settler appropriation. When we write about decolonization, we are not offering it as a metaphor; it is not an approximation of other experiences of oppression. Decolonization is not a swappable term for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools. Decolonization doesn't have a synonym. (p.3)

[10] "Settler colonialism is different from other forms of colonialism in that settlers come with the intention of making a new home on the land, a homemaking that insists on settler sovereignty over all things in their new domain" (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 5)

with land are an aspect of settler colonialism that drives *settler anxiety*[11]. Settler anxiety contributes to changing decolonization into a metaphor in order to further settlers' pursuit to reconcile themselves with their own complicity in erasing Indigenous sovereignty over land and ways of being (Tuck and Yang, 2012). This premature approach to reconciliation by settlers was identified by Tuck and Yang (2012) as *moves to innocence*[12] "to provide a framework of excuses, distractions, and diversions from decolonization" (p. 10). These moves "ultimately represent settler fantasies of easier paths to reconciliation" and illustrate some examples of how reconciliation is not a form of decolonization (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 4).

A further critique of reconciliation by Indigenous scholar Coulthard (2014) described a global movement of seeking reconciliation as "an important precondition for resolving the deleterious social impacts of intrastate violence, mass atrocity, and historical injustice" (p. 106). Coulthard's critique of the TRC's terms of reference noted that the terms frame the damages of settler-colonialism as being in the past and prioritize fixing this legacy as the main work of reconciliation. This framing means that the focus of repair lies with Indigenous peoples and not the *colonial relationship*. However, as highlighted by Coulthard (2014), ongoing colonial policies and practices by the federal government has increased since 2007, including changes to federal legislation that undermines Indigenous peoples' treaty rights and removes environmental protections.

Métis scholar McIvor (2020) further critiqued reconciliation in Canada as failing to address systemic racism that denies "Indigenous peoples inherent rights and the willingness of the Canadian

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[11] Indigeneity propels several types of settler anxiety "even if only because the presence of Indigenous peoples - who make a priori claims to land and ways of being - is a constant reminder that the settler colonial project is incomplete (Fanon, 1963; Vine Deloria, 1988; Grande, 2004; Bruyneel, 2007)" (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 9).

[12] *Moves to innocence* are "those strategies or positionings that attempt to relieve the settler of feelings of guilt or responsibility without giving up land or power or privilege, without having to change much at all… We provide this framework so that we can be more impatient with each other, less likely to accept gestures and half-steps, and more willing to press for acts which unsettle innocence" (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p. 10).

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state to use violence to suppress the exercise of Indigenous rights" (para. 2). McIvor highlighted Indigenous rights to land that were "legally" stripped away through the Doctrine of Discovery[13]. This legal principle includes rights for Indigenous peoples to benefit from and determine the use of their land. McIvor (2020) concluded that acceptance of Canada as "a fundamentally racist state… built on the denial of Indigenous peoples' rights and humanity… is a shameful fact that runs through and binds together Canadian law" (para. 10). This acceptance can create opportunities for Canadians to take the first step on a difficult road to reconciliation (McIvor, 2020).

In his essay included in Robinson and Martin's (2016) collection, Garneau (2016), who is a Métis scholar, explained the concept of *conciliation* between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada. Garneau (2016) drew upon *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary 21st Ed. (1981)* to define conciliation and highlighted that "it is an extra-judicial process that is a "conversion of a state of hostility or distrust; the promotion of good will by kind and considerate measures" and peaceable and friendly union" (p. 30). These actions contrast with *reconciliation* that implies a positive relationship disrupted by the tragedy of Indian Residential Schools, and a painful return to a relationship that did not exist[14]. Outlining reconciliation as reconciling Indigenous peoples with this narrative, Garneau (2016) advised "anti- and non-colonial cultural workers" to reconsider this project (p. 31). Garneau (2016) explained,

> Rather than accept the idea that there was a prior period of conciliation, we recognize the fact that the need for conciliation is perpetual. Conciliation is an ongoing process, a seeking rather

[13] McIvor (2020) describes the Doctrine of Discovery as a racist principle that "was developed by the United States Supreme Court in the 1830s. In 1990, as part of its building-block interpretation of section 35 of the constitution, the Supreme Court of Canada welcomed it as a fundamental principle of Canadian law" (para. 5).

[14] Garneau (2016) acknowledges scattered occasions of conciliation between individual trappers and fur traders post contact however they did not occur nation to nation and the relationship changed "when the visitors decided to become settlers, when traders were replaced by ever-increasing waves of colonists, when invading nations decided they would rather own the well than share the water … without consultation with the original inhabitants" (p. 30).

> than the restoration of an imagined agreement. The imaginary produced within Reconciliation emphasizes post-contact narratives: the moment of conciliation settled as if it were a thing rather than a continuous relationship. (p. 31)

Garneau's views on conciliation bridges the domains of Indigenous and aesthetic views on reconciliation which are explored in the following section.

aesthetic viewpoints on the concept of reconciliation

Indigenous Scholar Jonathon Dewar[15] (2017) is a recognized leader in healing and reconciliation. I am drawn to Dewar's (2017) work in his doctoral thesis because, at one point during the early through late stages of the TRC, he was a member of a research team that searched for possible approaches toward ethical and effective research practice with a group of Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and curators. Dewar (2017) observed that *collaboration* was recognized as a key focus of the TRC and Canada Council for the Arts primarily because "the wider Indigenous arts and Survivor communities had told us that collaboration, particularly across cultures was a tool – perhaps *the* tool – for taking reconciliation from theory into practice" (p. 314). In this context, practices are described as "art practice, curatorial practice, institutional/organizational support practice, and the practice of witnessing through art" (Dewar, 2017, p. 314). Dewar's scholarship has helped me to appreciate the potential of collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in facilitating art exploration.

In thinking critically about aesthetic viewpoints on reconciliation, I am also drawn to the work of Robinson and Martin (2016). Robinson is a Stó:lō scholar of Indigenous art and music, and Martin is a

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[15] Dewar (2017) engaged in "professional work in healing and reconciliation-focused education and research roles at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (2007-2012) and the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (2012-2016) about the ways art and artists were invoked and involved in the work of the TRC, alongside it, and/or in response to it" (p. ii).
"Jonathan [Dewar] is of Scottish- and French-Canadian heritage and an off-reserve member of the Huron-Wendat Nation" (First Nations Information Governance Centre, 2024).

settler scholar of Indigenous literatures. Robinson and Martin (2016) gathered essays that focus on the *aesthetic action*[16] of events related to the Canadian TRC (p. 2). Aesthetic action recognizes that embodied experiences impact one's understanding of the world. For example, one aspect of the TRC's aesthetic action is political sensory experience such as seeking empathy using images of mothers and children. Mother and child images "unsettle us, provoke us, and make us reconsider our assumptions" about the subject matter (Robinson & Martin, 2016, p. 3). In the same way, unsettling, provoking, and making viewers reconsider assumptions performs the political function of artistic practice (Robinson & Martin, 2016). Reconsidering assumptions helps viewers to recognize how structures can impact public spaces and national conversations by privileging some bodies and oppressing others. In this way, Robinson and Martin (2016) have increased my awareness that artistic practice in this inquiry has the potential to help participants recognize structures within the process of artmaking that privilege and oppress bodies.

In the previously mentioned essay included in Robinson and Martin's (2016) collection, Garneau (2016) described a vision of post-TRC aesthetic work. I clarify and dissect these ideas by viewing them as *steps*. The first step is described by Garneau as key to and a pre-requisite for post-TRC aesthetic practice, in which Indigenous peoples create artworks that reflect their experiences of colonialism and imaginative visions of the future. Garneau (2016) explained that this work:

> Is an alternative to the confessional and instrumentalist narrative strategies of the historical, sociological, and legal/compensation systems that make up the current system. Our role is to create safe, fluid spaces where novel means of production can occur. In these spaces Indigenous

[16] Robinson and Martin (2016) explained,

> Aesthetic action is here conceived quite broadly to describe how a range of sensory stimuli—image, sound, and movement—have social and political effects through our effective engagements with them. In other words, we are concerned with the ways in which the TRC proceedings and artworks related to the Indian residential school system have impacts that are felt—whether this is through emotion or sensory experience—and to what degree these impacts result in change. (p. 2)

> artists learn from each other, share common experiences and artistic methods, and develop collaborations, but these spaces also support these artists to make whatever they damn well wish as sovereign creative people, not as people always defined by colonialism (p. 38).

Step two of Garneau's (2016) vision described Indigenous and non-Indigenous collaboration in aesthetic practice. Garneau is clear that this kind of collaboration requires a period of exploring "the facts of Indigenous experience and the truths about Canadian colonial history and reaching an agreement on these facts and truths that meets the Indigenous collaborators approval" (p. 38). Garneau reinforced that the work that takes place is *with* Indigenous peoples and not *about* Indigenous peoples. In addition, non-Indigenous collaborators must arrive at collaborations with an awareness of and ability to explain the motivation behind their work with Indigenous collaborators. Step two of Garneau's vision supported the view that collaborating transparently with community and participants in my inquiry can describe the motivation for this student research.

Literature written by Dewar (2017), Robinson and Martin (2016), and Garneau (2016) presented aesthetic viewpoints that critically considered the concept of reconciliation. This work demonstrates exploring root causes of injustice, facilitating the political and social functions of art, and collaborating transparently with community. Having defined what is meant by an aesthetic viewpoint on the concept of reconciliation, I will now move on to discuss differing relationships with Indigenous lands and a definition of critical place inquiry.

differing relationships with Indigenous lands

As previously discussed, this inquiry centres on dance to explore human relationships with land. For Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples, human relationships with land are an aspect of power relations in Canada that is highly contested. These power relations were identified by scholars such as Simpson (2016), Mowatt (2024), and Tuck and Yang (2012) to violently reinforce trauma for Indigenous peoples that include genocide, systemic abuse, and forced assimilation that has led to the loss of

Indigenous languages and theft of land. Differing relationships with Indigenous lands are framed in Simpson's (2016) assertion that "the people of Kahnawa`:ke[17] used every opportunity to remind non-Native people that this is not their land, that there are other political orders and possibilities" (p.326). An example of "other political orders and possibilities" was described by Mowatt (2024):

> According to Gitxsan worldview, law and governance are inherently linked to identity, place and wellness. Therefore, without specific cultural knowledge and protocols, being on the land can contribute to the erasure of Gitxsan laws and protocols that have been in place since time immemorial to keep people healthy and safe on the territories. (p. 53)

Mowatt's description included *place* as interrelated with law and governance. Tuck and Yang (2012) explained that these interrelationships were made "premodern and backward" by settler colonial methods that related to land as property; human relationships to land were narrowed to a relationship between the owner and their property by settler colonialism (p. 5). These settler colonial methods "engaged in horrendous acts of genocide in order to clear the land for settlement, extraction of natural resources and international trade" (Palmater, 2018b, para. 1).

'critical place issue' of settler colonialism

Shea Murphy (2007/2018) described settler colonial methods to acquire land at the end of the 19th century as attempts to control "through institutional discipline and punishment of Indian bodies, indigenous peoples who resisted state authority by continuing to exist" (p. 246-247). Federal governments claimed that this discipline and punishment was intended to *save and civilize* Indigenous peoples by forcing them to become a part of the state. Shea Murphy (2007/2018) explained that erasing differences between Indigenous peoples and European Americans meant that

[17] The Mohawks of Kahnawá:ke (Kahnawákeró:non) are an ancient people with a vibrant culture and rich history. We are one of the eight communities that make up the Mohawk (Kanien:keha'ka) Nation and have historic, political and cultural ties based on Honor, Trust and Respect to the Oneida, Seneca, Onondaga, Cayuga and Tuscarora Nations of the Northeastern part of North America. (Mohawk Council of Kahnawá:ke, 2023).

> No special land rights need be accorded Native Peoples, and Native land could be absorbed into the USA or Canada, and bought, sold, and regulated according to their laws. Thus, one consequence of this corporeal policing and assimilation would be the end of Indian claims to land. One effect of implementing these assimilation tactics on Indian children—removing them from their homelands, forbidding them to speak their autochthonous languages, and then encouraging them to work elsewhere—was the depopulating of Indian land for white settlement—which occurred both in the USA and in Canada. White acquisition of Indian lands was in this way an active, if not always overtly acknowledged, aspect of Indian policy.

Recognizing the ways in which Canadian "Indian policies" punished Indigenous bodies to acquire land for settlement raises questions about the issue of colonialism and this inquiry's research process. I inform this process with *critical place inquiry* defined by Unangan scholar Tuck and environmental scholar McKenzie from Canada (2015) as:

> Research that takes up critical questions and develops corresponding methodological approaches that are informed by the embeddedness of social life in and with places, and that seeks to be a form of action in responding to critical place issues such as those of globalization and neoliberalism, settler colonialism, and environmental degradation" (p. 2).

In this way, my inquiry is informed by critical place inquiry and the acknowledgement of settler colonialism as a *critical place issue*.

The literature highlighted in this section focussed on connections between dance's political role in a post TRC time frame, government policies intended to gain sovereignty over Indigenous lands, and critical place inquiry informing this research process. The following section focusses on Indigenous and non-Indigenous experiences in dance history, practice, and scholarship.

performance studies: a different way of viewing dance

Contrary to common western perspectives on dance performance where humans display physical skills for other humans to watch, this section of the literature review focusses on performance studies - a relatively new discipline that has become an established academic field. I draw on the scholarship of Schechner (2013), Shea Murphy (2022; 2007/2018), Dangeli (2015), and Tuck and McKenzie (2015) to explore the value-laden origins of modern dance and discuss Indigenous peoples' resistance to colonialism through dance practices. This includes danced politics, Indigenous dance in North America, Northwest Coast First Nations dance, and Gitxsan and community-based dance collaboration.

In performance studies, I review Schechner's (2013) scholarship that is rooted in a school that "developed from the intersection of theatre, dance, performance art, and the social sciences, and broadened to encompass gender and queer studies, poststructuralism, postcolonial studies, and critical race theory" (p. 5). Performance studies views items or artifacts of art or culture as actions within a continuum of activities of human life that can be studied as *performance* (Schechner, 2013). This literature is pertinent to this inquiry because viewing dance within a continuum of human activities, or as performance, illuminates ways culture can impact a dance setting.

I consider two aspects of performance studies that view dance as performance. First, Schechner (2013) explained that performance is studied *interculturally* because no groups are completely isolated and the intense diversity amongst and between groups cannot fit into one universal theory of performance. Second, dance when viewed as performance focusses on studying dance as behaviour, as opposed to *reading* the action or questioning what *text* is being enacted (Schechner, 2013). Specific to this inquiry, I recognized potential impacts on the dance setting due to what Schechner described as deep diversity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples as well as diversity within each of these groups. Also, understanding dance as behaviour (Schechner, 2013) emphasized learning what youth did

in relationship with me as a student researcher practitioner. These relationships shaped the dance setting of this inquiry to question what youths' actions were as opposed to an interpretation of the youths' dancing. Viewing dance as performance and embracing a critical approach to the dance setting for this inquiry also required that I attend to the colonial origins of modern dance.

value-laden origins of modern dance

In the 20th century, modern dance developed into contemporary dance and these origins informed the emergence of community-based dance. Shea Murphy (2022) saw modern dance practices "as steeped in a modernity constituted in relation to a coloniality constituted by genocide constituted by patriarchal and white supremacy" (p. 18). In performance studies literature the *spurious* development of modern dance in North America began with colonial expositions and world fairs due to the importation of *authentic rituals* (Schechner, 2013). These beginnings also described "how modern dance "genius" Ruth St. Denis—seen as a "mother" of modern dance—stole from uncredited Hindu dancers" (Priya Srinivasan, cited in Shea Murphy, 2022, p. 20). This viewpoint highlighted how the development of modern dance, like modernity[18], was not developed by *(only)* white people and is also "tied ideologically to these histories of murder and (attempted) genocide, (presumed) expulsion, (attempted) absorption, and general presumptions around one's (white-coded) right to take and take up/steal/extract" (Shea Murphy, 2022, p. 22). This scholar's framing of not *(only)* white development of modern dance was important to critical dance scholarship because, according to Shea Murphy (2022):

> Modern dance was created in relation to European presumptions about the value and centrality of its own ways of thinking, knowing, and seeing beauty, value, and intelligence and of creating

[18] Shea Murphy (2022) states that

> non-European cultures, of course, contribute vitally to European modernity, but in large part via violent white possessive stealing and (attempted) absorption of these contributions into a European culture then constituted as white, and superior, without permission or awareness of any kind of ongoing, reciprocal, relational exchange or return. (p. 22).

> meaning—ways constituted in relation to the creation of Indigenous (including African) humans-made-unhuman. (p. 23)

In other words, critical dance scholarship recognized Eurocentric and oppressive origins of the creation of modern dance. Shea Murphy (2022) also pointed out that, although critical dance scholarship can recognize Indigenous *(and other non-white)* dance artists contributing to the practice of modern dance, this scholarship does not change the makeup and organization of modern dance due to "the white supremacy terrain on which modernity and modern dance have been constituted and are still largely maintained in dance funding structures, academic institutions, festival circulations, and what they see as qualified and disqualified" (p. 23-24). Although dance scholarship has begun to recognize non-white contributions to the development of modern and contemporary dance, the unjust systems that support and recognize these developments remains active (Shea Murphy, 2022).

danced politics

Systems that support and recognize the development of dance in Canada are fundamentally rooted in settler colonial policy making. Government legislation informs culture as a human right and affects the way people access and create dance (Jackson, 2004). A prime example is the abolishment of Indigenous peoples' dance through potlatch bans[19] and how the ongoing reclamation of this practice by Indigenous peoples can address political demands such as territorial rights to land and waterways (Dangeli, 2015). In addition, Indigenous dance scholar Dangeli (2015) made the point that a *nearly nonexistent* body of scholarship on the performances of more than 300 dance groups[20] within the

[19] In the late 1800s, the Canadian government felt First Nations' traditions were keeping Native people from becoming "civilized." The government saw Native culture as a threat and enacted a law to shut down the ceremonial potlatch. The anti-potlatch proclamation was issued in 1883; it became law January 1, 1885. It read: "Every Indian or other person who engages in or assists in celebrating the Indian festival known as the 'potlatch' or in the Indian dance 'Tamananawas' is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be liable to imprisonment..." (U'mista Cultural Society, 2024)

[20] In Dangeli's (2015) study, "the term dance group is used solely to refer to collectives of First Nations dancers, singers, and drummers whose formation is self-determined… [and] uses the term *ensembles* to refer to groups of

Northwest Coast of Canada may be due to stereotyping this dance work as traditional and unchanging. Dangeli (2015) explained that these stereotypes can disregard the ongoing activity of "dance group performances that critically engage with pressing political issues within their communities both nationally and globally" (p. 9). This critical engagement with political issues such as "Delgamuukw—the Gitx̲san-W'etsuwet'en land claims case—and national politics such as the Meech Lake Accord debates"[21] (Dangeli, 2015, p. 43) can be recognized as Indigenous dance artists refusing and reforming the *terms* coloniality has brought to Indigenous dance practices in spite of ongoing exclusion from the development of dominant modern and contemporary dance practices (Shea Murphy, 2022). These examples of unjust systems impacting the development of dance in Canada are rooted in government policies that were designed in the middle of the 19th century.

Jackson (2004) described Canadian dance activity and political policy in the 1940's and 1950's as developing at the same time as broader cultural human rights and concerns[22]. One aspect of governing cultural issues emerged through the Massey[23] Commission that recommended establishing the Canada Council for the Arts to fund cultural institutions in 1957 (Graham, 2012). In dance, the Massey Commission's leadership focussed on promoting ballet as *high art* based on British models. These models contributed to framing folk dance[24] as *low art*, suggesting that the divide between these two

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First Nations people who were brought together in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century by outside parties, such as anthropologists, collectors, museum officials, and others, for the purpose of performing and/or living on display at world's fairs, wild west shows, and other exhibitions" (p. 9).

[21] Dangeli (2015) explained that the practices Indigenous dance groups engaged in was informed by *Gitx̲san* politics related to the ownership of hereditary rights and provincial politics.

[22] Jackson (2004) explained that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was initially drafted in 1946 by Canadian lawyer John P. Humphrey, who was appointed director of the United Nations Human Rights Secretariat (UNESCO); the document included cultural, social, and economic rights alongside civil and political rights.

[23] Lindgren et al. (2021) described Vincent Massey, the chair of the Massey Commission, as a "proponent[s] of national culturalism who looked to Britain to set artistic standards" (p. 15). In addition, Massey "was a vocal critic of the Americanization of Canadian culture who had strong Anglophile leanings" (Lindgren et al., 2021, p. 15). Massey served as Canada's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom for 11 years and six years later became the Governor General of Canada (Lindgren et al., 2021).

[24] Lindgren et al. (2021) explained that Les Feux Follets, founded in 1952, was considered one of Canada's most popular folk art dance companies and was "an ethnographic dance ensemble with the stated mandate to perform

levels were defined ethnically (Lindgren et al., 2021). A divide in funding based on ethnicity emerges from the effects of broad attitudes toward human rights issues that inform the power of dance and its place in Canadian society (Jackson, 2004). Lindgren et al. (2021) explained that Canada's multicultural policies introduced in the 1960's viewed Indigenous peoples *alongside perceived ethnic minorities* and these policies were incapable of recognizing Indigenous rights that were in place before colonization. These policies make "a distinction that can potentially help to evade action on land claims and treaty rights" (Lindgren et al., 2021, p. xix). Attitudes toward human rights are driven by specific legislation regarding human rights and cultural rights, dance, and how dancers, and the professional dance industry respond to these developments (Jackson, 2004). The political structures developing dance arose from positions of power established through settler colonialism and contributed to establishing unjust funding and policy for dance development in Canada.

Indigenous dance in North America

In response to ongoing unjust colonial policy Shea Murphy (2007/2018) highlighted the resilience of Indigenous dance practices and recognized that "Native Peoples in North America have long engaged with dance's capacities to articulate in profound philosophical, spiritual, and political ways" (p. 246). Shea Murphy (2007/2018) described Indigenous dance as

- a threat to the intended assimilation of Indigenous peoples in the 1880's and 1890's that was enforced through dance restrictions in Canada and the US
- being prohibited in order to further colonial government actions to obtain Indigenous lands

traditional dances of Canada's founding peoples "authentically," the company obtained national and international stature through productions like *The Canadian Mozaic*, which it performed at Expo 67" (p. 16).

- a threat to US and Canadian government's imposition of *compulsory Christianity*[25] and authority over territory and ideology due to religious and spiritual practices that were experienced and expressed through the body
- a longtime practice of Indigenous peoples that includes skills associated with maintaining self-determination (p. 246)

This scholar described dance as an identifier of irreconcilable difference between Indigenous and white peoples prompting federal governments to pass *anti-dance* legislation.

The constraints of anti-dance legislation were worked around or largely ignored by Indigenous peoples and federal governments met these acts of resilience with further legislation and harsh punishments. Shea Murphy (2007/2018) noted that "Indigenous dance practices embodied ideologies counter to those the governments were corporeally enforcing" (p. 248) and

> threatened assimilation policies based on classroom education and literacy, as they affirmed the importance of history told not in writing or even in words, but rather bodily. Praying through bodily movement and ritual practice rather than through sitting, reading, and believing threatened colonizers' notions of how spirituality is manifested. Ceremonies that included elaborate feasts and gift-giving threatened ideologies of private property and individual ownership, definitions of what constitutes work and what "productive" activity might include, and the value of "productivity" itself. They were seen as "wasteful" of practitioners' physical

[25] Shea Murphy 2019) explained,

> "compulsory Christianity" formed the explicit base of not only religious education and practices imposed on Native Peoples by missionaries and religious leaders, but in fact on virtually all federal institutional disciplining of late nineteenthcentury Indian bodies in North America. The Indian schools were Christian. Agents and missionaries policed sexuality by imposing Christian marriage ceremonies on sexual partners. Ceremonially based indigenous healing practices were rejected by Christian missionaries, who instead tried to enforce adherence to Western medical practices that they viewed as "rational" and "scientific." In short, the central tool in state construction of "Indianness" and corporeal control of Native Peoples in federally sanctioned disciplinary institutions was Protestant Christianity, and presumptions about Christianity's superiority and eventual triumph over "savagism," structured Canadian and US federal Indian policies as they shifted from warfare to other forms of corporeal control. (p. 250)

> energy and time, and thus as “excessive expenditures” of bodily labor (CIA report 1884, 73). (p. 248)

The threats Indigenous dance posed against Canadian federal governments’ assimilation plans resulted in actions to ban dance practices. In 1872 the first Indian superintendent in Victoria, BC engaged in restrictions on *potlatches*[26]. Government agents and missionaries focussed on prohibiting potlatching[27] and “dances associated with Tamanawas rituals” on Vancouver Island” (Shea Murphy, 2007/2018, p. 252). These practices were banned in 1885 by the federal government and Indigenous peoples were liable to punishment that included two to six months imprisonment (Shea Murphy, 2007/2018).

As Indigenous peoples continued to find “ever-new ways of ignoring, circumventing, and reframing governmental attempts at censure”, anti-dance laws continued to be amended in response to government agents’ and missionaries’ objections (Shea Murphy, 2007/2018, p. 253-254). These objections moved from the West Coast First Nations people to the prairies where aspects of the Sun Dance of the Blackfoot and Thirst Dance of the Cree were regarded as *disconcerting* and fears of rebellion against *European stability* arose (Shea Murphy, 2007/2018). This stability was safeguarded through violent acts that included assaults on Indigenous peoples’ ways of sensing and knowing. Shea Murphy (2007/2018) emphasized that Indigenous peoples’ continual practice of making, using, and sharing dances “evoked spaces in which Native cultural, spiritual, and political agency could continue

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[26] According to the U’mista Cultural Society (2024) “The word "potlatch" means "to give" and comes from a trade jargon, Chinook, formerly used along the Pacific coast of Canada. Guests witnessing the event are given gifts. The more gifts given, the higher the status achieved by the potlatch host… It is a time for pride - a time for showing the masks and dances owned by the Chief or host giving the potlatch. It is a time for joy. “When one's heart is glad, he gives away gifts. Our Creator gave it to us, to be our way of doing things, to be our way of rejoicing, we who are [Kwakwaka'wakw]. Everyone on earth is given something. The potlatch was given to us to be our way of expressing joy." — Elder Agnes Axu Alfred” (*Potlatch*, para. 2-3)

[27] In the late 1800s, the Canadian government felt First Nations’ traditions were keeping Native people from becoming “civilized.” The government saw Native culture as a threat and enacted a law to shut down the ceremonial potlatch. The anti-potlatch proclamation was issued in 1883; it became law January 1, 1885. It read: “Every Indian or other person who engages in or assists in celebrating the Indian festival known as the ‘potlatch’ or in the Indian dance ‘Tamananawas’ is guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be liable to imprisonment...” (U’mista Cultural Society, 2024)

outside of state discipline of Indian bodies" (p. 260). Indigenous peoples' resistance and resilience against colonial governance and attempts at assimilation are integral to Indigenous dance practices in North America.

Northwest Coast First Nations dance

Many Indigenous acts of resistance and resilience developed differently throughout North America against colonial governance that upheld Indigenous exclusion from the development of dance practice as well as policies restricting and harming Indigenous dance artists (Shea Murphy, 2022). Dangeli (2015), who was highlighted earlier in this section, is a Tsimshian First Nations dance group leader, dancer, and choreographer. Dangeli's doctoral dissertation is noted in this section as refuting non-Indigenous peoples' misconceptions that First Nations dancing, drumming, and singing is often perceived as unchanging traditions that are not artistic practices because they come naturally and do not require training to create and perform. This dance artist and scholar focussed on complex relationships between dance and the use of *protocol* by Northwest Coast First Nations[28] dance groups[29]. Although the use of protocol is often viewed as inflexible by other non-Indigenous and Indigenous peoples engaged in dance and the arts, Dangeli (2015) asserted that Northwest Coast First Nations dance artists' use of protocol "is a body of laws deployed and enacted in dynamic ways to address diverse performative, social, and political demands… it is the creative lens through which they, and their dance groups, enact what I refer to as *dancing sovereignty*" (p.4). Dangeli (2015) defined *dancing sovereignty* as

[28] Dangeli (2015) uses "the term Northwest Coast First Nations to refer to the Indigenous people of the coastal regions of what is now known as Southeast Alaska, British Columbia, and Washington State" (p. 1).

[29] Dangeli (2015) distinguishes dance *groups* as,

> collectives of singers, drummers, and dancers who perform songs and dances belonging to their Nations, families, and communities. Regardless of the context of their performance or the makeup of their audience, dance groups and their leaders—who I refer to as dance artists—govern themselves, their performances, and in many case their collaborators, by protocol. (p.3)

> self-determination carried out through the creation of performances (oratory, songs, and dances) that both adhere to and expand upon protocol in ways that affirm hereditary privileges (ancestral histories and associated ownership of songs, dances, crests, masks, headdresses, etc.) and territorial rights to both land and waterways among diverse audiences and collaborators. These assertions of sovereignty are not moored to Western legal definitions; rather, they are articulated through Indigenous nationhood and the protocol and epistemologies thereof. (p. 4)

Dancing sovereignty (Dangeli, 2015) highlighted connections between performance and asserting sovereignty for Northwest Coast First Nations dance artists (Dangeli 2015). These artists have been a part of forming larger numbers of dance groups since the 1960's which Dangeli identified as a social movement of *nation-culture-based resurgence*[30]. The dance practices of Northwest Coast First Nations dance artists can *dance sovereignty* (Dangeli, 2015) which includes expressions of territorial rights to land and waterways, and put artistic and performance-based Indigenous ways of being in power again (Dangeli, 2015).

Gitxsan and non-Indigenous dance collaboration

The following paragraphs consider a Gitxsan and non-Indigenous dance collaboration that highlights relationships between the teachings, dance, and community of the Gitxsan and community-based dance practice in western Canada. The ways these relationships can inform community dance making in a post TRC time frame is also discussed.

As previously noted, Dangeli (2015) looked critically at the work of Northwest Coast First Nations dancers and their use of protocol to dance sovereignty. Dangeli (2015) discussed two *collaborative performances* that took place between "Gitxsan dance and visual artists Hahl Yee (Doreen

[30] Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Simpson (2011) described nation-culture-base resurgence as "re-investing in our own ways of being: regenerating our political and intellectual traditions; articulating and living our legal systems; learning ceremonial and spiritual pursuits; creating and using our artistic and performance-based traditions" (cited in Dangeli, 2015, p. 15).

Jensen), Hagbegwatku (Chief Ken Harris), Muhui Lak (Chief Alice Jeffry) and the Gitxsan dance group", non-Indigenous contemporary choreographer Karen Jamieson[31], and the dancers from Karen Jamieson Dance (p. 43). The ways the Gitxsan dance artists worked in addition to the other collaborators' *response-ability*[32] formed *relationscapes* which Dangeli (2015) explained "create[d] new relationships while reinforcing existing ones. These relationships are made manifest through the movement of bodies in space. These embodied practices, in concert with protocol, can be seen as producing relationscapes" (p. 32). Dangeli noted that these protocol-based relationships with Gitxsan dance artists took years to develop. In addition, Indigenous and non-Indigenous contemporary dance artists in Vancouver avoided the collaborative process of protocol due to its complexity, time commitment, and concern about offending First Nations people. However, Dangeli (2015) emphasized that Hagbegwatku's (Chief Ken Harris) and Muhui Lak's (Chief Alice Jeffry) skills in *dancing sovereignty* (Dangeli, 2015) made this collaboration, and Jamieson's continual growth in this area, possible. The complex work of these Indigenous dance artists "was informed by Gitx̲san politics regarding the ownership of hereditary rights, provincial politics such as Delgamuukw—the Gitx̲san-Wet'suwet'en land claims case—and national politics such as the Meech Lake Accord debates" (Dangeli, 2015, p. 43). Recognizing the complexity of this work is "critical to understanding why protocol is central to the work of Northwest Coast First Nations dance artists and what is at stake and for whom" (Dangeli, 2015, p. 43-44). This example of Gitxsan dance artists *dancing sovereignty* (Dangeli, 2015) helps me to recognize that respectful collaboration with Indigenous uses of protocol may be challenging within the academic time frame and

[31] Karen Jamieson is the "artistic Director of Karen Jamieson Dance—a contemporary dance company based in Vancouver, British Columbia" (Dangeli, 2015, p. 43)

[32] Dangeli (2015) described response-ability as the "ability to respond relationally" (p. 31) and further explained that

> Northwest Coast First Nations dance artists, in their practices of dancing sovereignty, create repertoires that activate politically and relationally charged response-ability from their audiences and collaborators. The ways in which dance artists enact protocol transforms the scenario in which their repertoires are performed into relationscapes that situate collaborators and audiences in relation to their Nations' epistemology, individual and community owned ceremonial privileges to songs and dances, and hereditary rights to land and waterways. (p. 34)

scope of this inquiry. I understand that a part of building respectful relationships with local leaders from Indigenous communities calls for openness to and making time for the collaborative process of protocol. Another important aspect of Dangeli's study of Jamieson's experiences with collaborative processes is its impact on the evolution of community dance in western Canada which was explored by dance journalist Duggan (2017).

Duggan (2017) investigated community dance development in western Canada and began with an interview of Jamieson. Duggan explained that Jamieson is recognized as the founder of community-engaged dance in western Canada. This journalist also noted that, as a respected contemporary dance artist who creates professional artwork, Jamieson reconsidered possibilities for dance creation later in her career, such as who might be included and how dance might look different. Duggan (2017) noted Jamieson's commitment to work in collaboration for seven years with Chief Kenneth Harris and quoted Jamieson describing the experience as "dancing that reflected the stories and history of community… where people dance as children until they're old people. It was utterly different from professional dance as I had known it and practised it" (para. 6). Duggan explained that this thought process led to Jamieson exploring how to extend the dance art form and developing community engaged dance at a time when there was little awareness of it. Within Canadian professional dance communities, community engaged dance was not trusted as it involved amateurs. Duggan (2019) claimed that aesthetically, this form of dance does not try to compare with professional dance although "it might be more relevant as art today than some narrative ballets or even some abstract contemporary dance" and quoted Jamieson as saying that

> An art form that is not current with what's actually going on with society, in this political landscape, can only become irrelevant… Look what's going on at every level of political and social change right now. It's asking for dialogue. It requires dialogue" (para. 23).

The scope of Jamieson's work is significant to my inquiry because the willingness of Indigenous leaders to collaborate with a non-Indigenous contemporary choreographer led to a deeper understanding of the centrality of protocol to Indigenous dance practices, and the ongoing development of community-engaged dance in western Canada (Dangeli, 2015; Duggan, 2017). This understanding emphasizes the practice of relationship-building that can lead to community-engaged dance collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The following subsection considers approaches to dance and art making as forms of research, looking at ABR as both methodology and research method.

arts-based research: dance as critical place inquiry

This section of the literature review highlights the potential of a critical place inquiry approach to community-based dance as an ABR method and features of an ABR methodology that were pertinent to my inquiry. This includes centering place in research methodology, dance and manifesting place, critical approaches to contemporary community-based dancemaking, artmaking processes as research, and dancemaking processes as research. I begin with a review of literature by Tuck and McKenzie (2015) to consider how dance's role as expression of human experience of relationships with land can align with critical place inquiry.

centering place in research methodology

Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explained that difficult relationships between the land and ongoing settler colonial land-based, or property-centred practices are supported by governments as well as "social practices more generally, which establish and reify hierarchies of settler over Indigenous" (p. 4). These scholars suggested that the following research practices do not often centre place: analysis or creation of research methodology, ways of collecting data, and analysis of data. However, Tuck and McKenzie (2015) recognized that centering place commonly occurs, or emerges with ABR methodologies. My inquiry looked to employ ABR methodology to understand youths' explorations of relationships with land at a local level.

According to some of Tuck and McKenzie's (2015) considerations that referred to *relational validity*[33] to recognize research as critical place inquiry, my inquiry:

> (a) understood that the place where this inquiry occurred was fluid, changing "over time and space and through interactions with flows of people, other species, social practices" (p. 19);
>
> (b) accepted that places could influence youths' practice of dance in addition to influencing youths' performance and *(re)shaping* of place;
>
> (c) mentally created place as being interactive and dynamic because of *timespace*[34] qualities;
>
> (d) recognized that dissimilar experiences could determine youths' experiences of place which also determined how place was understood and practiced "(e.g., in relation to culture, geography, gender, race, sexuality, age, or other identifications and experiences)" (p. 19);
>
> (e) paid attention to the ways settler colonialism treated concepts of relationships with land, and used this inquiry to resist deleting or neutralizing this concept;
>
> (f) intended to contribute to *generative and critical politics of places* through dance explorations of relationships with land and through "a relational ethics of accountability to people and place" (p. 19).

Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explained that "settler societies are designed to not consider place— to do so would require consideration of genocide (Grande, 2004), but also ongoing displacement and dispossession" (p. 154). These authors pointed out that most people living in settler societies are unfamiliar with their society being described this way and generally view the settler colonial legacy of

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[33] Tuck and McKenzie (2015) describe relational validity as "grounding and implications for relations to land, to social context, and to future generations" (p. 19).

[34] In discussing a conceptual framework for timespace, Jon and Thrift (2001) explain,

> just as it has been recognised that the nature and experience of social time is multiple and heterogeneous, so it follows that the manner of its construction – the means by which a particular sense of time comes into being and moves forward to frame our understandings and actions – is in turn both multiple and dynamic. In making sense of its construction we need to pay attention to questions of social practice in four inter-related domains, each of which is spatially constituted. (p. 3)

genocide as a part of nation-building that took place and no longer continues in the present. Mowatt (2024) described what this can mean as an Indigenous scholar,

> Ourselves and the coming generations deserve to find ways to access joy, peace, love, and wellness, yet it is not only wrong, but is harmful to assert that we can heal our way out of problems that are being caused by the current settler colonial regime. The "problem" remains within the settler logic of elimination and Canada's need to destroy Indigenous lands and bodies to assert its sovereignty (Manuel & Derrikson, 2015; Simpson, 2019). (p. 17)

Mowatt (2024) pointed out that one aspect of *the problem* of settler logic is fundamentally rooted in settler colonialism's reduction of people being in relationships with land to owning property. Another aspect of the same problem was highlighted by Tuck and McKenzie (2015) who emphasized that settler society ignores consideration of place.

dance and manifesting place

In contrast to ignoring consideration of place, Tuck and McKenzie (2015) described "the liveliness or agency of the land and materiality, and/or the embodied and emplaced aspects of human thoughts, memories, or feelings" and explained that emphasizing these qualities can take place through *different* types of research methods (p. 100). Emphasizing these qualities with ABR helped to focus the frame of this research inquiry on how humans recognize places as well as how "various aspects of places themselves are manifested as well as influenced through human practices" (Tuck & McKenzie, 2015, p. 100). On a broad level, this inquiry centred place and acknowledged that it is revealed and shaped by the human practice of settler colonialism. While this acknowledgement did not return land or make reparations for Indigenous peoples, it played a meaningful role in this inquiry. Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explained that although tracing lines of inquiry to potential impacts on *policy, pedagogy, or action* can be obscured, "inquiry can have a meaningful role in maintaining, resisting, or mobilizing political trajectories with material outcomes" (p. 46).

This inquiry's focus on exploring relationships with land centred human experiences of place within the social activity of community dancemaking. This review of literature foregrounds differing relationships with Indigenous lands and Indigenous perspectives on community dance to be informed by the *critical place issue* of settler colonialism.

critical approaches to contemporary community-based dance

I take a critical approach to western community dance making that involves disrupting typical dance hierarchies, basing creative material on lived experiences, and potentially disrupting colonial power relations. The following subsection reviews literature by non-Indigenous dance artists Halprin (1995) and Lerman (2011) to consider how a critical approach to community dancing may inform employing dance as an ABR method.

Regarding alternative approaches to community dancemaking in North America, Halprin (1995) and Lerman (2011) developed processes that were both open-ended and rigorous. These qualities contributed to highlighting some of the effects of colonial power structures such as hierarchy, on community dance practice. Halprin's (1995) engagement with community practice emerged out of work that challenged conventional dance boundaries and social taboos. For example, Halprin explained that when dancers performed in untraditional spaces such as theatre aisles and ceilings, and dressed unconventionally (or not at all), audiences' unsettled reactions signaled a desire to express their own voices and be included in the artistic process. To begin, Halprin responded to these audiences' desires by leading collaborative workshops and developing a movement system, emphasizing dancing as a whole person - engaging mind, body, and spirit. Next, whole person dancing contributed to exploring dancers' real-life issues. Exploring real-life issues played an important role in transforming the dancer. Transformation, or creating change for the dancer, was the purpose of the movement system and the word *ritual* distinguished this dancemaking from entertainment (Halprin, 1995). Last, large groups of

dancers making rituals learned to use scoring within *RSVP cycles*[35] to confirm what they were doing regarding their own experiences. In Halprin's (1995) words, "the purpose was to empower people to create together and to impact the experience of the power that comes from cooperating through movement as a collective body and find out what are the collective forms and perhaps even the archetypes" (p. 14). Halprin (1995) taught us that groups of people working with individual life stories can use a movement system and find order to express a diverse and collective whole.

Halprin's work strongly informed my facilitation of community-based dance with youth for this inquiry. Her work included seeking a deeper understanding of humans' connection with the earth and Halprin (1999) described an aspect of her seeking in relation to dances of the *Pomo Indian Tribe:*

> The Pomos *live* their experience of nature, not just in thought, but in their daily interactions and in their worship. Their dance expresses their belief in the sanctity of nature, and their dance consecrates the world. I have been attracted to their ways not because I have wanted to imitate their life or their rituals, but rather to understand better something I believe is true for all of us, as human beings in relation to the earth. (p. 214)

Halprin's (1999) clear description of seeking a better understanding of *human beings in relation to the earth* as a non-Indigenous dance artist reinforced my choice to inform this inquiry with critical place inquiry and Halprin's critical community-based dance techniques.

Halprin's critical approach to community dance centred the technique of dance improvisation. Gilbert (2006) developed an improvisational movement system based on brain-compatible dance education. Gilbert's (2006) work emphasized teaching dance concepts which are described in areas of

[35] RSVP stands for: Resources; Scores; Valuaction; Performance; and are creative cycles developed in 1969 by Lawrence Halprin (Halprin's husband) who utilized activities such as architecture, community building, focus groups, and brainstorming to approach group creativity (Halprin, 1995).

space, time, force, and the body. Gilbert's scholarship helped this inquiry to introduce and enter into improvisational play with these concepts.

For dance artist Liz Lerman (2011), expressing a collective whole arose from her life's work described by the metaphor *hiking the horizontal*. The following paragraph considers the meaning of this metaphor and how it translates into the essence of Lerman's alternative approach to community dancemaking. This alternative approach is important to acknowledging the development of telling community stories alongside employing critical dancemaking skills.

As previously noted, Lerman also developed alternative approaches to community dancemaking that were open-ended and rigorous. In 1976 the Dance Exchange was established by Lerman (2011) as a think tank and action lab open to the public to share ideas about dance. Lerman described the underlying philosophy of her work as hiking the horizontal and visualizes living in a non-hierarchical art world. However, this dance artist acknowledged that hierarchy does exist. Lerman (2011) viewed the hierarchy as a vertical line and turned the line on its side to reveal high/low art divisions equally weighted along a spectrum of activity that dancemaking can move within. The following statement suggested that Lerman (2011) was committed to balancing dance work with the qualities of concert dance and the meaning of community dance:

> "Why would I want to live in a world where I would have to choose between concert or community, between nurture or rigor, between abstraction and representation?" I asked. When we wanted to assert why the Dance Exchange was making dances about the defense budget, getting sick kids to dance in their beds at Children's Hospital, and refining its own choreographic tools in master classes for dance majors, we would express this same idea by stating, "The Dance Exchange reintegrates the multiple functions of dance." (p. xvii)

Finding meaning in community dance is based on doing inquiry through a *not knowing* stance (Lerman, 2011). In this creative space Lerman explained that the physical act of doing dance partners with the

rigor of articulating stories. This process responded to the following questions that are foundational to Lerman's approach to community dance: (a) Who gets to dance? (b) What is the dance about? (c) Where is the dancing happening? (d) Why does the dancing matter? These questions develop stories that drive choreographic structure (Lerman, 2011). This structure supports ongoing inquiry, and Lerman concluded that the open-endedness makes space for changes, variations, and completely new directions. Lerman's (2011) ideas suggested that in this inquiry, collaborating with community had a shared focus on telling stories through a critical understanding of dancemaking that could balance creative process with creative expression.

Critical approaches to community dancemaking stem from collaborative and reflective techniques that can disrupt the effects of colonial power relations. The disruption of these effects, or barriers to accessing dance, can have a positive effect on exploring diverse worldviews. The exploration of diverse worldviews through critical community-based dance as an ABR method gives rise to collaborative artmaking in a creative environment where multiple viewpoints can be heard.

artmaking processes as research

In the following subsection, I draw from scholars like McNiff (2012) Barone & Eisner (2012); and Finley (2012) to explore artmaking processes as a function of research. Recognizing the role these processes can play in research deepens understanding of ABR and the potential of dance as a research method.

McNiff (2012) explained that ABR differs from routine research where art can play a significant role. For example, ABR employs artmaking to capture data. However, in ABR, artmaking, or the artistic process and art-making expressions, are also used systematically to carry out research[36]. These art

[36] McNiff (2013) describes the research process as a "systematic enquiry that includes experimentation and seeking out information with the objective of answering questions, solving problems, and generating new understanding" (p.5). In addition, McNiff (2013) explains that expression and imagination are the materials the

processes and expressions can make and convey meaning which bases ABR in *aesthetic knowing*[37] (Leavy, 2018). Barone and Eisner (2012) described the purpose of ABR as opening one to see things that had not been noticed before and question what is already known in the search for deeper understanding of phenomena. This way of noticing and questioning can increase the complexity of viewing the world and move toward further discussion and debate due to art's ability to evoke empathy for peoples' experiences as "a necessary condition for deep forms of meaning in human life" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 3). Finley (2012) affirmed ABR's empathic focus on human experience and highlighted social justice and critical understanding of dominant approaches to knowledge creation and dissemination as central to this methodology. Finley (2012) asserted that ABR researchers "make a rather audacious challenge to the dominant, entrenched academic community and its claims to scientific ways of knowing" (p. 2). Artmaking as a way of knowing can contribute to disrupting the dominant academic community by placing the action of inquiry into community settings as a part of everyday events (Finley, 2012). Rolling (2013) embraced everyday events to describe the significance of art in relation to research: "Art is a reflexive system for thinking and learning improvisationally, yielding the acquisition of knowledge alternately exemplified by formational, informational, and transformational properties—manifested as a heterogenous continuum of experiential learning possibilities" (p. 13). Knowles and Promislow (2008) also pointed out that an artmaking approach to doing research is chosen for the potential to heighten research. This approach demands an energy commitment that calls upon one's ability to work as an artist who combines inspiration with knowledge of artistic process to carry

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ABR researcher experiments with, and that studying "the effects of these experiences with artistic processes and objects is what distinguishes art-based research from other traditions" (p. 6).

[37] In discussing aesthetic knowing Leavy (2018) explained

> With respect to the aesthetics or "beauty" of the research product itself, the beauty elicited by ABR is explicitly linked to how it fosters reflexivity and empathy in the consumer (and researcher) (Dunlop, 2001)… Aesthetics draw on sensory, emotional, perceptual, kinesthetic, embodied, and imaginal ways of knowing (Chilton et al., 2015; Cooper, Lamarque, & Sartwell, 1997; Dewey, 1934; Harris-Williams, 2010; Langer, 1953; Whitfield, 2005). (p. 5)

out research. Knowledge of artistic process can take an unconventional and interdisciplinary approach to research (Prendergast & Belliveau, 2013). These scholars affirmed that using dance as an artmaking process for my inquiry could contribute to deepening critical understanding of aspects of life and engage in research unconventionally through inspiration and knowledge of artistic process (Barone & Eisner, 2012; Finley, 2012; Knowles & Promislow, 2008; Leavy, 2018; McNiff, 2012; Prendergast & Belliveau, 2013; Rolling, 2013).

dancemaking processes as research

In this this subsection I review literature by scholars like Cancienne & Bagley (2002), Snowber (2014; 2018), and Carter (2020) to further consider dancemaking as a method and methodology. I begin with an explanation of academic approaches to dance as research.

Giersdorf and Wong (2019) explained that "the current academic approaches to dance worldwide may be broadly categorized into three interrelated areas: dance as method and site of political agency; dance practice as research; and the ontology of dance" (p. 5). This inquiry drew upon these areas in different ways. The youth used *dance practice as research* to explore their relationships with land without taking political action such as being asked to put their work into the context of a critical understanding of the TRC of Canada. In my analysis and dissemination, I acknowledged this critical understanding and used *dance as method and site of political agency* to potentially reveal entanglement between youths' explorations of relationships with land and ongoing harms of settler colonialism against Indigenous peoples. Methodology for this inquiry used the *ontology of dance* to recognize lived experience as integral to embodied ways of understanding.

In 1998, scholars Cancienne & Bagley (2002) accessed embodied ways of understanding and used inspiration and knowledge of artistic process to present a paper as a live dance performance[38]. These two researchers coined the phrase *dancing the data* as a new way to understand data through deeper reflection of experiences, voices, and meanings as well as in-depth consideration for choices of emphasis, pace, and movement (Cancienne & Bagley, 2002). This systematic dancemaking process used artmaking to understand data and do research (Cancienne & Bagley, 2002; McNiff, 2012).

Cancienne and Snowber (2003) asserted that the artistic process of dancemaking is "sorting, sifting, editing, forming, making, and remaking" (p. 237). These scholars noted that in research, the dancemaking artistic process shifts awareness from the idea "that we have bodies to the reality that we are bodies" (p. 239) and hoped that the knowledge specific to this process could "contribute to the larger paradigm of how research becomes a continued place of discovery, one that includes a physical apprehension and expression of the world" (p. 239). This approach to research was described as *embodied inquiry* by Snowber (2014) who recognized people as being embodied and containing knowledge that is shared in the lived experience of moving body parts. In other words, through lived experience people can open "to the inner life and expression of the sensuous and sacred" (Snowber, 2014, p. 118). Connecting to this inner life and expression as an inner voice is a birthright for all people whether they are trained in dance or not (Snowber, 2014). This scholar's ideas suggested that my inquiry could connect dance to youths' inner voices and potentially hear data in a new way through embodied inquiry.

"The body" has received attention in academic scholarship due to advances in feminist, postmodern, poststructural, and psychoanalytic theories of embodiment (Leavy, 2020). Snowber (2018) pointed to several feminist scholars, including Bordo, Butler, Grosz, and Irigaray who, over decades of

[38] This style of presentation was unusual at the time and went through a process to be accepted by the American Educational Research Association (Cancienne & Bagley, 2002).

critical academic writing about "body – mind distinctions" laid the groundwork for scholarship on how the body has been "colonized, or culturally inscribed" (p. 248). For example, Grosz (1994) critically assessed masculine perspectives of the body and acknowledged Merleau-Ponty's scholarship as "not simply a common theoretical struggle but, more positively, elements that may augment or enrich feminist theory itself" (p. 95). Grosz (1994) explained that Merleau-Ponty's

> emphasis on lived experience and perception, his focus on the body-subject, has resonances with what may arguably be regarded as feminism's major contribution to the production and structure of knowledges—its necessary reliance on lived experience, on experiential acquaintance as a touchstone or criterion of the validity of theoretical postulates. But it is clear that experience cannot be taken as an unproblematic given, a position through which one can judge knowledges, for experience is of course implicated in and produced by various knowledges and social practices. (p. 94)

This nuanced understanding of *lived experience* is connected to embodied ways of understanding or embodiment, through dance (Cancienne & Snowber, 2003). Cancienne and Snowber's (2003) ideas on connections between dance and embodiment were expanded beyond the mind-body split by philosophy and dance scholars Block and Kissell (2001) who explained,

> We are not merely embodied as individuals. Our culture, our language and our art tell us that our way of being-in-the-world means being with others. To be human entails existing in a world of symbolization and meaning that is essentially tied to the material, the physical, the kinetic, the spatial, the temporal. Dance captures all of these ideas." (p.8)

Improvisational dance was at the core of Block and Kissell's (2001) discussion on embodiment and the origins of dance and movement. The philosophies of embodiment and more recent conceptualizations of the body as lived and living process can be understood as describing a body intelligence that is available to dancers and researchers who want to explore the interconnected capabilities of the body's

perception, insight, and understanding (Snowber, 2018). The ability of improvisational dance to harness multiple aspects of being human suggests it was an appropriate approach to embodied inquiry that could explore youths' relationships with land.

The meaning of embodied inquiry, or *embodied ways of knowing*[39] was explored by Barbour (2011), who researched the "epistemological significance of movement" (p. 89). This scholar highlighted the importance of lived experience in building embodied knowledge and described *embodied strategy* as the myriad ways in which people align and connect what may seem to be unrelated ideas and experiences. Barbour's (2011) recognition of embodied ways of knowing that are based in dance as an alternative to dominant ways of knowing, illuminated the role dance as an embodied practice can play in this inquiry. In addition, Barbour pointed out that embodied practice may counter a lack of connection people have to local community experiences caused by our "virtual and globalized world" (p. 100). Barbour asserted that engaging in description, reflection and interpretation of our own and of other's lived experiences can open us as researchers to recognize and appreciate the diversity in human experience" (p. 100). Barbour's view highlighted another role dance could play as an embodied practice to support awareness of diversity among the youth who participated in my inquiry.

Carter (2020 furthered discussion on the role dance can play in a research inquiry through investigation of dance and choreography to analyze and disseminate data. Carter suggested that recognized approaches to dance and choreography can be used as theories that offer lenses to interrogate and build meaning. This kind of questioning and meaning making emphasize embodied knowing, and the researcher's artistic role can impact interpreting and transforming data into dance. In this transformation modern dance "can be used to investigate the internal struggle of embodied

[39] "The potential of embodied ways of knowing as an alternative epistemological strategy corresponds with the recent shift in academia towards accepting alternative ways of knowing, alternative research fields and new qualitative methods" (Butterworth and Wildschut 2009; Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Pakes 2009; Piccini 2002, 2005; cited in Barbour, 2011).

experience and the struggle between individuals and the social world" (Horosko, 2002, cited in Carter, 2020, 4. Analysis). Carter's (2020) ideas helped me to view community-based dance as a theory to gather data and use contemporary dance choreography to analyze and disseminate data.

I drew from Carter (2020) and Green (2015) to recognize note taking as a part of reflexive dance research practice. Carter (2020) described a *dialogue* between dance and data that considered a combination of theory and personal knowledge "to develop insights about the social and contextual aspects of an event" (Collins & Cooper, 2014; Holms, 2010, cited in Carter, 2020, 3.3 Dancing reflexivity?). The *dialogue* Carter described was reflected in my researcher and choreographic notes as it involved this inquiry's emergent creative process. These notes were recognized as data. Green (2015) elaborated on note taking as a part of reflexive research practice and discussed awareness of validity in research that centres the body. Green (2015) explained that reflective body awareness may "enable researchers to develop systems of reflexivity and decenter uncritical assumptions and perceived notions of a found and static reality" (p. 74). Green highlighted "frames of validity" that are fundamental to discussing how this inquiry legitimizes knowledge through a contemporary and post-positive lens (Lather, 1993, as cited in Green, 2015).

I turn now to scholarship written by Kuppers (2019), and Chadwick (2021), that informed the use of ABR in this inquiry, highlighting community performance and ways of conceptualizing voice. Kuppers (2019) explained that defining community performance varied with community groups who embraced it and the art practices they engaged in. I draw upon Kuppers' scholarship to distinguish the dancemaking process for this inquiry. Kuppers' definition of community performance[40] and its principles highlighted that this inquiry was facilitated by me as a communal creation which involved guiding the youth on how to explore the theme of relationships with land through dance as opposed to directing my vision of this

[40] "I understand community performance to be work that facilitates creative expression of a diverse group of people, for aims of self-expression and political change" (Kuppers, 2019, p. 3).

theme. In addition, Kuppers (2019) identified attributes of a reflexive practitioner that could inform my student research to be "grounded in thoughtful and ethical practice, aware of the direction of current debates in community performance issues, and able to be flexible, engaged, and empowering" (p. 2). Another aspect of ethical practice as a student researcher was illuminated by Chadwick (2021) who argued for a different conceptualization of *voice*[41] in qualitative research (p.77). This author did not view voice as coming from individual participants; voice is "a transindividual process that… is fundamentally relational" (p. 77). Chadwick's (2021) scholarship supported me to recognize *voicing* between participants in my inquiry as "a transindividual process that happens between bodies, locations, affective and discursive histories" (p. 91). Chadwick's reconceptualization of voice in research supported me to recognize that the ways youth expressed their embodied knowing through dancemaking could be understood as a relational process.

Receiving data through embodied inquiry informed the Dance Land inquiry about community-based dance in three ways: 1) the dancing itself was data, or content, that contained knowledge 2) dancing was a method to gather content, and 3) dancing was an analytical tool that revealed this inquiry's content. In this way, employing the power of dance to use ABR for this inquiry could support the birthright of all people to access and express their inner voice. Because of this, dance played an important role as *voice* in political contexts for the Dance Land inquiry.

This area reviewed literature that was framed by critical place inquiry to focus on connections between dance's political role in a post TRC time frame, government policies intended to gain sovereignty over Indigenous lands, and Indigenous and non-Indigenous experiences in dance history, practice, and scholarship. This literature review's critical place inquiry perspective linked place and

[41] Chadwick explains, "I argue that 'voice' is not a transparent, individual or singular phenomenon. Instead, it is a slippery and paradoxical border concept – somehow being both (and yet neither) a matter of language and bodies, speech and silence, presence and absence" (2021).

settler colonialism to this inquiry and highlighted a critical approach to the practice of community-based dance within an ABR methodology. In the next area, I present Dance Land as method.

area 3: Dance Land as method

This area of my thesis focusses on Dance Land, a method that reflects my critical approach to community-based dance for a small, exploratory, student research inquiry. In the following sections, I discuss several aspects of relationship building that were fundamental to the Dance Land process, including distinguishing Dance Land's setting, my positionality and reciprocity, and doing validity from a dance-based perspective. The remainder of the methods area focusses on being accountable; implementing Dance Land; participating in Dance Land; doing community-based dance and the emergent nature of Dance Land; analyzing the youths' dancing; recognizing limitations; and mobilizing knowledge.

Inspired by the spirit of the TRC, Dance Land, as a research method, aimed to study how Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth used expressive movement to explore their personal relationships with land. I applied my knowledge of the artistic process to the design of Dance Land as an ABR method. In doing so, I found myself temporarily lost in a haze of scholarly discussions on relationships between knowledge paradigms, ontology, methodology, method, post positivism, and post structuralism in ABR. I arrived at the understanding that my arts-based worldview "accepts a universe of variances and supports knowledge that presents itself as a local interpretation of reality, valid within its own context, yet fully subject to reinterpretation or translation into other contexts" (Rolling, J.H. 2013, p. 5). I wrote the following poem during my heady time of reading about methodology and questioning my connection to this inquiry as a student researcher and member of dominant culture in Canada.

the issue of x

running through fields
tripping through x
where my feet don't belong
  whose paths
  whose traces
  have i obliterated

    question of x widely debated in x field

my dance interrupts
  control x
corrupts
shuts up
and opens
  blue
  men
  felled
  Jones[42]

    scholars such as X and X arguing x

transverse
trans-discipline
transform
  to move
  toward
  to reconcile

    articles have not addressed the issue of x

bodies
embody
  my body
  reaches to
  other
  bodies
  aware
  they are
  there
(where
  my body
  displaces them

42 Donald Blumenfeld-Jones is a dancer and philosopher of education (Blumenfeld-Jones, 1995).

i will examine x and x
show x
i will discuss x and x
juxtapose x against x

reveal
previously
misunderstood
connections

between x and x

i slide
between x
intervene
interlope
to hope
to hear
steer
away
from the masses
whose plans
whose gains
remain

the issue of x
(special attention to x

examine
(closely

xxxxxxxxxxxx

shed
(new light
neglect
(recognize

acknowledge

distinguishing Dance Land's setting

It is important to note that two ongoing, historically significant events occurred at the time of Dance Land that required me to practice a high level of flexibility as a student researcher working face-

to-face with youth and community members. A global health crisis was into its second year in Alberta due to high numbers of the Delta variant of COVID-19 (APTN News, July 6, 2021). The pandemic prompted public officials to place restrictions on public gatherings and impacted my ability to engage with youth and connect with Indigenous communities in the Lac La Biche area. In addition to this serious health crisis another significant event occurred. The media broke news of Indigenous children's unmarked graves at former residential school sites in Canada in the spring (APTN News, May 28, 2021). This devastating news resulted in heightened tension and mistrust within Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations in Canada.

In my communication with the Executive Director (ED) of the Lac La Biche Native Friendship Center[43], I expressed my awareness of these strained relations. The ED explained that due to the COVID-19 pandemic Elders and Indigenous leaders in the area experienced increased demands for community support and guidance at that point in time. These demands taxed the operations of The Friendship Centre (ED, personal communication, Sept. 31-Dec. 1, 2021). Throughout my interactions with the ED, I emphasized the importance of following the Centre's lead to respect the well-being of Elders and the health of local Indigenous communities. In meetings with both community partners, the physical safety of youth, Elders, and the community was acknowledged as a priority within all programming. At the same time, both organizations recognized the need for youth to access as many communal and new experience opportunities as possible. Dance Land's setting presented challenges that demanded a deeper understanding of my student researcher and dance practitioner positionality to inform a flexible approach to implementing and running sessions.

[43] From here on, I describe the Lac La Biche Native Friendship Centre as The Friendship Centre.

expressing positionality and reciprocity

I positioned myself in this inquiry as a dance facilitator, student researcher, and dance practitioner[44] who advocates for moving toward acceptance of the artistic process as a "disregarded intelligence" (McNiff, 2018, p. 27). Due to my dance practitioner experience, I hold knowledge of dance creation that is steeped in deeply understood methods of creative inquiry (Cancienne & Snowber, 2003). These methodological skills increase my ability to gather nuanced details unique to artistic processes (Knowles & Promislow, 2008). In this way, my artistic methodological skills drew on an ABR approach that blended art and research methods to collaborate with youth in Dance Land's repetitive and emergent process (Carter, 2020).

Within this process, I needed to take time to deepen my understanding of my positionality, identity, and how I came to exist on Treaties 6, 8, and 10 territories and Region One of the Métis Nation of AB. These details include narratives about my Ukrainian family and the interconnectedness of Ukrainian-Canadians and Indigenous peoples' histories. Reflecting on these complicated relationships helped me to understand that my narrative implicated me as a white settler in Canada. I am in a continual process of unsettling Ukrainian Canadian legacies to make space for reconsidering my relationship with settler colonialism and Indigenous peoples.

Within this space of reconsideration, I continually reflected on my constantly shifting social location as it responded to power, culture, and location structures (Dewar, 2017). I wanted to lessen perpetuating power inequities or settler-colonial relations between me and the Indigenous youth. I attempted to alter these social power relations by making reciprocity fundamental to Dance Land's artistic process (Robinson & Martin, 2016). For example, reciprocity occurred when the youth were introduced to building confidence and skills in dance making based on real-life experience (Hammond et al., 2018). The youth described personal experiences, such as walking on ice, to guide the physical

[44] I refer to my engagement with all three roles at one time as being a *student researcher practitioner*.

moves they made and evoke supportive mindsets that might confirm making those moves. In other words, my ABR approach reciprocated building confidence and skills through art making because the youth expressed ideas that were meaningful to them, and I carried out student research that was meaningful to me. In this way, I attempted to lessen my power by engaging with the youth in a collaborative creative process design for Dance Land (Robinson & Martin, 2016). Another aspect of grappling with my power required me to recognize my worldview as limited and to facilitate Dance Land from a less hierarchical position (Garneau, 2016; Stimson, 2015). As previously discussed in my literature review, my non-Indigenous worldview of land is rooted in place-based education notions of ownership and property in contrast to Indigenous worldviews rooted in land education of collectivity and shared relations with land (McCoy, Tuck, & McKenzie, 2016). These incomparable worldviews impacted the way I collaborated in Dance Land's creative process, and I focussed my facilitation of Dance Land on building an emergent and reflexive creative space (Carter, 2020).

doing validity from a dance-based perspective

The emergent and reflexive dance space I intentionally developed for this inquiry supported my critical approach to validity. In contrast to traditional ways of reporting on validity I am inspired by the work of dance researcher Green (2015). Three frames of validity, *ironic, rhizomatic,* and *voluptuous* are fundamental to discussing how my student research legitimized knowledge through a contemporary and post-positive lens (Lather, 1993, as cited in Green, 2015). I am also inspired by the work of Rolling (2013) who described validity in ABR as being produced by research action that builds "representations of the realities and ideas that matter to the researcher" (p. 48). Built upon these representations, Rolling's explanation of *making validity* adds another layer to my contemporary approach to validity. In the following paragraphs the perspectives of Green (2015) and Rolling (2013) inform how I report validity for this inquiry.

Validity in dance from a postmodernist point of view can be "problematized and de-centered, yet legitimatized" (Green, 2015, p. 71). This inquiry problematized traditional research reporting by using dance and poetry as other forms to represent "truth" (Green, 2015). Described as *ironic validity*[45], Dance Land's other forms of truth, such as movement and drawing, questioned the parameters of validity[46] and problems with language (Lather, 1993, as cited in Green, 2015). I also de-centred the reporting of validity by exposing multiple views through Dance Land's emergent and reflexive process. For example, movement ideas that were individually created by the youth, myself, and the Youth Support Workers were revisited in subsequent sessions and designed to reflect the outcome of group discussions. Described as *rhizomatic validity*[47], the networking of multiple views resisted restriction that can be brought on by authority and exposed the group to creatively building ways of thinking (Lather, 1993, as cited in Green, 2015). I also built upon creative ways of thinking when I engaged with reflexivity and embodiment[48] to choreograph a dance solo that analyzed the youths' dance making behaviour. Described as *voluptuous validity*[49], my creative approach to analysis included improvising dance movement and writing poetry which "disrupt[ed]s current language and assumptions about the value of female bodies" (Green, 2015, p. 73).

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[45] Green (2015) explained, "*ironic* validity refers to simulacra and an affinity with the ironic. A simulacrum is a copy without originals. "The Baudrillardian argument is that we have shifted from a culture of representation to one of simulacra. Simulacra functions to mask the absence of referential finalities" (677)" (p. 72).

[46] "Lather views validity as a space where research challenges easy conclusions and linear frameworks. … She does not discard the term validity but rather uses it to reflect the uncertainty of knowledge in postmodern times, in nonessentialist ways" (Green, 2015, p. 71).

[47] Green (2015) explained, "*rhizomatic* validity refers to what counts as facts and details. … Thus rhizomatic validity is not based on a linear logic but a network of ideas. Lather added, "As a metaphor, rhizomes work against the constraints of authority, regularity, and commonsense, and open thought up to creative constructions" (680) (p. 73).

[48] Within this frame of validity, embodiment is described as a "type of feminist embodiment as a break from "situating scientific epistemology as shaped by the male imaginary." The idea is to disrupt the male dominant and privileged, western, objective ideal of knowledge with the marginalized subjective and embodied space of knowledge" (Lather, 1993, as cited in Green, 2015).

[49] The term "voluptuous" is not used as an objectification of a sexualized body, as seen through the male gaze, but rather as an ownership of the body through a somatic fullness (Green, 2015).

Green's (2015) work on validity for dance research is meaningful to me because it recognizes the impossibility of creating certainties and finalities that often come through an authoritative position found in academic research. As discussed, Tuck and McKenzie's (2015) views on relational validity add to this understanding and support a critical place inquiry approach in addition to Green's dance-based approach to validity. While Green's (2015) work supports me to break down the use of this authoritative voice, I look to Rolling's (2013) authoritative style of voice to provide another layer of understanding that reinforces my non-traditional approach to reporting validity.

As previously discussed in my literature review, Rolling's (2013) description of the significance of art in relation to research supported me to recognize the youths' and my dance explorations as experiential learning possibilities. Within this recognition, I encompassed Rolling's (2013) explanation of *making validity*[50] to focus on the literature I reviewed and its relationship to facilitating and creating contemporary dance. My critical approach to dance facilitation and creation moved toward making validity within a "flexible and critical-activist ABR architecture" (Rolling, 2013, p. 55). Within this ABR architecture, I employed *thinking through a context* and critiqued specific points of Canada's social structures to reassemble them in a more helpful way (Rolling, 2013). To think through a context, I reviewed literature for this inquiry that looked at the acceptance of questionable dominant understandings of reconciliation and highlighted the importance of exploring one's relationships with land. Then, I facilitated relationships with land explorations with the youth by collaboratively participating in dancing, drawing, and discussions. These collaborative activities supported the youth in

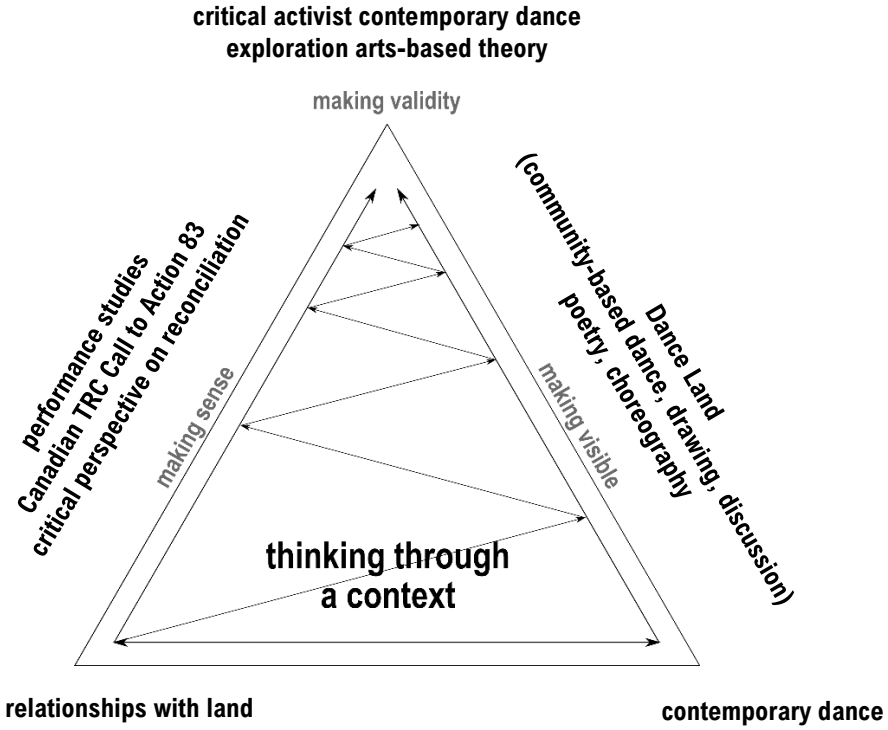
[50] Rolling (2013) explained the process of making validity in the following way,

> During the work of making visible a meaningful interpretation of a chosen focal point, the researcher shapes a methodology. Simultaneously, during the work of making sense of a chosen inquiry focal point through applied mediating instruments, the researcher adds to and extends the prevailing discourse. In the back and forth between making visible and making sense (since not everything visible makes discursive sense, and not everything that makes sense is plainly visible), by the time the researcher or artist arrives at an emergent theory, their work has already established its own rigorously resolved internal validity. (p. 49)

re-constructing and performing their relationships with land as dance. Finally, I analyzed the youths' dance making behaviour by choreographing a contemporary dance solo. My dance solo followed the aesthetics of my student researcher and dance practitioner circumstances (Rolling, 2013). In this way, the youths' ideas about relationships with land were brought side-by-side with dominant understandings of reconciliation that reconsidered this inquiry's ideas, materials, and media (Rolling, 2013). I sifted through these aspects throughout this inquiry by writing reflexively. This process became part of my research and this inquiry's creative process. The dissemination of my research was a part of my oral defence in Victoria, BC and to give back to the community in Lac La Biche, AB. Presented as a contemporary dance performance, the solo may have "rescript[ed]s lived and local contexts, introducing a theater of multiple selves and simultaneous possibilities as the groundwork for newly inaugurated complexities of identity" (Rollings, 2013, p. 56). Performing sections of the solo may have challenged dominant ideologies about reconciliation and the framing of relationships with land while including the perspectives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. Figure 2 draws from Rolling's (2013) flexible and critical-activist ABR architecture to describe my approach to making validity.

Figure 2

Dance Land's approach to make validity



being accountable

All ethical considerations for this inquiry gained approval from the Human Research Ethics Board (HREB) at the University of Victoria. The HREB provided guidelines for culturally safe research practice which informed the structure of my introductory emails and the organizational meeting with community partners that highlighted the importance of community engagement and respect for community governance, customs, and protocols when conducting research with Indigenous peoples or communities. I recognized that the co-design of Dance Land and my positionality as a non-Indigenous student researcher did not guarantee a disruption of power relations between myself and Indigenous

participants (Hammond et. al, 2018). The following ethical considerations specific to this inquiry describe actions that I took to lessen uneven power relations (Hammond et. al, 2018).

consent process

In the initial information session with youth, I informed the group that the age of consent is 16 in AB. I explained that their participation in this study required a consent form that I would provide prior to attending the first session of Dance Land. See Appendix A for a copy of the Dance Land consent form. The consent form was signed by their parent or legal guardian unless the Support Workers who knew the prospective participant considered them to be a mature minor.

I sought verbal consent on an ongoing basis to confirm that youth wanted to share written and drawn materials. This decision was made by the individual authors. Discussions about consenting to share Dance Land content with the partnering community directors, and support workers was ongoing and responded to how the youth felt throughout the proposed collaborative dance inquiry process.

Youth Support Workers role

Youth Support Workers who had pre-existing relationships with the participants were present to support youth throughout Dance Land's five collaborative dance sessions. In addition, the Youth Support Workers were invited to contribute feedback on the community-based dance framework and its level of appropriateness for this youth group.

gifting

Gifts were given to all community members who engaged with Dance Land to respectfully acknowledge the generosity of the youth and the kindness and support that community leaders provided for the youth. In addition, the relationship-building opportunities that were offered by everyone who engaged in Dance Land were acknowledged in writing that accompanied these gifts. I consulted with directors of the partnering organizations to learn what gifts were appropriate to present to the youth, the Elder, The Friendship Centre, Community Services, and Youth Support Workers. Snacks

and drinks were available to the youth and Youth Support Workers at every community-based dance session.

honorariums

A donation was made to The Friendship Centre's Elder's fund. Gift cards for a local business of the youths' choice were given to the youth to acknowledge sharing of personal experiences and co-creating knowledge. Locally made blank cards with images of animals and nature in the Lac La Biche area were sent to the Elder and also accompanied the youths' gift cards to express gratitude for the energy, curiosity, creativity, and knowledge they brought to the Dance Land research inquiry.

data storage and sharing

All digital files were identified through a coded system and protected by computer passwords that only I as the student researcher accessed. Digital data was stored throughout the remainder of the research process. Personal contact information in digital and hardcopy form will be destroyed upon completion of the master's degree relative to this inquiry. Data sharing between the researcher and supervisor or community partner organizations took place through secure physical transport and encrypted digital transfer. Participants were invited to retain their hardcopy artwork at the end of Dance Land.

A written agreement to share Dance Land's video content with the Directors of the partnering organizations will be made upon completion of the master's degree relative to this inquiry. The partnering organizations will not use any of the youths' video imagery or sound files without the written consent of the youth in the chosen files. The partnering organizations will store the digital media in a locked area with little to no access by the public.

implementing Dance Land

The following subsections explain the actions I took to implement Dance Land. As discussed, an important part of my action was reflexive practice. I layer my reflexive learning and my process to highlight several aspects of relationship building.

relationship building in community

I introduce relationship-building with excerpts from my student researcher reflections[51]. These reflections probed the origins of ever-changing social power relations between myself, participants, and my community partners. An initial step in my process to understand power relations arose when I felt inspired by viewing Indigenous artworks at Portage College in Lac La Biche.

October 2nd, 2021
Today I went to the Portage College to see the exhibit of "Aboriginal Peoples Art and Artifacts". There is so much beauty and endurance - artists - I am reflecting on how I see the work differently. I do remember a long time ago when I thought that the simple shapes and designs did not interest or excite me. I am in awe of the individuality that thrives in what I had labelled as simplicity. I was not able to be open to seeing well - just quick judgement. Is this a part of my overwhelming upbringing (from everywhere, not just my parents) to disregard indigenous ways of being? I still had moments of sadness as I listened to artists talking about losing their culture and their way of approaching their art form. I need to go back - to see again, with more eyes, with even more feeling and less seeking of historic understanding. It was a three-hour time frame I spent with the artwork. I continue to think about images.

Reviewing my reflection on the exhibit described above, I recognized respectful relationship building not only as a cornerstone of ethical research, but also as a part of my ongoing learning process. I questioned how looking critically at my white settler narrative informed building relationships in the context of the Canadian TRC and the issue of disregard for land restitution. My reflexive process highlighted connections between my younger experiences of relationships with land and the social context in which I lived. I describe these connections in the following reflection.

October 2nd, 2021

[51] From here on, thoughts that sprang from my student researcher practitioner role will be referred to as student researcher reflections and appear in a Dreaming Outloud Pro font.

I think I am finally breaking through to some understanding of where I am right now – what place I am in – that includes a big part of where I am without me being able to take it in. This is a slow beginning. I think this realization that is happening now informs my understanding of my relationship with land in a way that helps me to recognize the "cut-off" and disconnected experiences I had growing up. I keep thinking about the poem "It" that I wrote in junior high school. There was so much that I felt about the lake – the animals – the sun – the land – that I could not find connection to in my everyday world. There are so many places that this might align – spiritually, connection to my personal ancestry, an awareness of my place of privilege – that I could not access because of what was or was not there for me in these areas. I think these areas give me a very big understanding of my relationship with land. I had the fortune to live a relationship with land and write poetry about it, and then became very confused by the contradictions my privilege posed. It's not that neat and tidy, but it is a big piece of what I am understanding. More later….

The reflection above highlights that relationship building with land or people takes time. In the same way, building relationships for this inquiry began a year earlier when I described my proposed research to the ED and a Youth Support Worker of The Friendship Centre[52]. The ED of The Friendship Centre recommended that I meet with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth within Lac La Biche County Family and Community Support Services[53] programming. A meeting that included the ED of The Friendship Centre and Manager of Community Services confirmed that we would work together as community partners. See appendix B for a letter of agreement from both organizations. Throughout the summer of 2021, I volunteered to support several youth activities as a part of Community Services programming that shared its resources with The Friendship Centre. The youth activities included craft nights, an outdoor paintball experience, and volunteer landscape clean-up for the local animal shelter. The Youth Support Workers invited me to facilitate a community-based dance segment during the

[52] The Friendship Centre works to improve the lives of urban Indigenous peoples in their communities:

> Friendship Centres welcome all community members regardless of place of origin or status to partake in their services and programming – they are status blind and non-political, not representing, but supporting and advocating for all community members who seek their support. This sense of inclusivity has earned Friendship Centres the reputation of caring, culturally driven community organizations who are committed to improving socio-economic situations. Inclusivity is one of the core values of the Friendship Centre Movement (ANFCA, 2022).

[53] From here on, I describe the Lac La Biche County Family Community Support Services as *Community Services*. Community Services "is a partnership between the Province/Municipal Governments and Métis Settlements to provide preventive and very early intervention services in communities. It has been offered in the province for over 50 years" (Lac La Biche County, 2021).

Halloween celebration. Working alongside community partners, meeting with the youth in the programs I volunteered for, and learning about the Youth Support Workers' process to develop programming for youth were an important part of building relationships connected to this inquiry. Within these relationship building activities, I sensed feelings of trust from my community partners when I was encouraged to do specific tasks such as dance facilitation. However, this positive feedback was based on Community Services programming that was shared with youth from The Friendship Centre. The following reflection questions why I did not seek to work more closely with The Friendship Centre's programming.

February 1, 2022
It is very important to me that I explain (perhaps in the Discussion section?) that I understand how engaging respectfully with Indigenous communities means I need to explore who lives in the area I am working in, how do the different communities work with one another, and what does it mean to build relationships. I am struck by a quote in a talk given through Dance Victoria the other day by Troy Twigg who spoke of Frank Whitehead asking, why are you not sitting at the table having coffee with me? I did not do these things. I did not think of doing these things. I wondered why I felt distant from [the Youth Support Workers] and this may be why. I dropped into the Friendship Centre once. I did not contribute to their programming. I contributed to FCSS [Community Services] programming. I was not invited, but I also did not inquire. I am slowly seeing how my privileged ways of thinking that I should be invited get in the way of building relationships. There is so much for me to learn. I am very grateful to have had this opportunity to carry out research because I am learning so many more things about what I do not know. I am learning.

This reflection highlights my experiences navigating building relationships with Indigenous communities. Reviewing my reflection highlights my understanding of reflexive practice and its impact on relationship building. The following subsection continues to discuss relationship-building activities as strengthening community connections, co-designing Dance Land, and inviting youth to Dance Land.

strengthening community connections

My relationship building included following protocol established for local and visiting Indigenous community members. An important part of my relationship building process was following the correct

protocol for interacting respectfully with an Elder and youth from diverse Indigenous communities (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2018). The ED of The Friendship Centre guided me to follow protocol appropriate to this area and explained that families from all over the province who attended the local Portage College often engaged with the Centre. At this point, I did not know who might attend Dance Land and I chose to read online literature about local Indigenous communities that included Beaver Lake Cree Nation and Heart Lake First Nation (Beaver Lake Cree Nation, n.d.; Heart Lake First Nation, n.d.). In addition, I visited the local museum, and explored the Portage College Museum of Aboriginal Art and Artifacts to increase my understanding of the histories and cultures in the area. The following reflection returns to my experience at the Art Museum, and I briefly described how I recognized another way to understand relationships with land.

October 2nd, 2021
One last note – there are many visual artists I will write about. For now, I want to comment on Eddy Cobiness– his images keep coming back to me. I see a rootedness in art-making from the land that is the land – not a reflection upon it. I am experiencing what I feel when I see snow geese flying overhead of me at night here, now, in LLB and they float like beacons of ghost ancestors who travel far over land with instinct and drive and intimacy with the land. Ahhhh, there is so much to describe and express.

This new way to understand relationships with land connected with my experience of night-flying snow geese. Having this experience at that time where I carried out student research, deepened my understanding of how my limited worldview cannot recognize the geese, or the land, as one of my ancestors. This deeper understanding highlighted connections between passing on cultural learning and the importance of the health and well-being of local Elders and Indigenous leadership.

Balancing concerns for health and safety due to the COVID-19 pandemic with newfound opportunities for youth, the ED of the Friendship Center agreed to invite and support an Elder to open and close Dance Land. The ED reached out to four Elders. One of the Elders was very active in the promotion of traditional dance both at the Amisk Community School on Beaver Lake Cree Nation and within her own family (ED, Native Friendship Centre, personal communication, UVic email, 2021-09-16).

Elders were generous in making themselves available in these difficult times, and although the Elder from Beaver Lake Cree Nation was unavailable, a different Elder offered to provide opening and closing prayers for the Dance Land sessions.

The ED of the Friendship Center and a Community Services Youth Support Worker supported me to meet with this Elder. In our meeting I offered the Elder a gift of tobacco wrapped in a cloth from my school that bore the design of the Community Wellness Drum by Salish artist Dylan Thomas. The drum symbolizes the University of Victoria CYC School's "continued commitment to moving towards wellness for children, youth, families, and communities" (University of Victoria, Indigenous Initiatives, n.d.). I also contributed to the Friendship Center's Elder's fund. I asked the Elder to provide the group of youth with guidance on how to think about their relationships with land. I felt grateful to meet the Elder in person and to talk twice on the phone, where we exchanged stories about our family relationships and the various places we lived. Dance Land was rescheduled several times over three months in response to youth availability, illnesses, and the cancellation of school busses due to sub-zero temperatures. Unfortunately, these circumstances prevented the Elder from attending any of the Dance Land sessions. The Director of the Friendship Center approached another Elder to open Dance Land on short notice, but they were unavailable.

In addition to responding to unpredictable weather patterns, I followed rapidly changing COVID-19 safety protocols. In accordance with UVic and Community Services COVID protocol guidelines, Dance Land sessions could not be hosted at The Friendship Centre. The Centre protected their communities from exposure by inviting families to programming in cohorts. This meant that non-Indigenous youth would not be able to attend sessions at The Friendship Centre; however, Indigenous youth could attend Community Services programming at another location. We decided to hold Dance Land sessions immediately after school at the Bold Center, which is adjacent to the local high school.

I strived to find a balance between working with The Friendship Centre Director and other Indigenous youth workers to build relationships with Indigenous youth. A Community Services Youth Support Worker connected me with the First Nation Métis Inuit Graduation Coach at JA Williams High School to invite a larger number of Indigenous youth to Dance Land. The Graduation Coach and I worked together to keep interested Indigenous students informed about Dance Land and up to date on all of the schedule changes. My positive experience of working with the high school Graduation Coach highlights the importance of engaging in appropriate protocols. I recognized that an introduction to the Graduation coach by my community partner was an important part of relationship building. My community partners also played a role in the design of Dance Land.

co-designing Dance Land

In order to further build relationships with my community partners I facilitated a short community-based dance workshop with Youth Support Workers in August 2021. I worked with Youth Support Workers to strengthen my relationships with people who were directly involved with local youth. In this way, the workshop familiarized Support Workers with the community-based dance process and created an opportunity for me to receive important feedback and co-design this art-making experience tailored for local youth. The Youth Support Workers' feedback helped to refine the design of Dance Land sessions in the following ways:

- maintaining spaces for spontaneous talking and laughing during sessions
- inviting participants more often to vocalize any thoughts they might have
- encouraging youths to come with a friend
- anticipating that youth will drop into some sessions and not others
- exploring different reasons to share video footage that is taken during the sessions
- maintaining guided movement for the initial warm-up
- continuing to introduce movement concepts using the action of walking

- making strong efforts to hold some part of the sessions outdoors
- keeping dance sessions to two hours in length, and spreading six sessions over two weeks
- holding the sessions immediately after school to support easier transportation for youth
- requesting that youth keep phones to the side during sessions
- holding the Dance Land information meeting during lunch hour at the high school
- on the poster/flyer, using bullet points, and the words *contemporary dance* and *free*

inviting youth to Dance Land

Youth were invited to take part in Dance Land through advertisements on The Friendship Centre and Community Service's Facebook pages and posters and flyers posted throughout the community (see Appendix C). I held an information meeting at JA Williams High School to describe this inquiry and review the consent form. In late September 2021, I reached outside of my community partners' programming to invite more youth to Dance Land due to low enrollment for the program. Engaging with other youth programs introduced me to a Métis woman who was born in the area and instructed contemporary dance at the local studio. This dance studio instructor was also engaged in post-secondary studies focused on leadership skills cultivated through dance activity, and we developed a relationship discussing dance research in Alberta and British Columbia. Although reaching outside of my community partners' programming did not recruit new participants, I gained a better understanding of movement opportunities for youth in the area. I also familiarized myself with some of the adults who led these programs and their motivations for doing so. My recruiting initiatives also upheld my responsibility to work respectfully and avoid burdening my community partner, the ED of The Friendship Centre, by looking elsewhere to recruit youth.

participating in Dance Land

Dance Land engaged with five youth as well as Youth Support Workers from both community partner organizations. Three of the youth were familiar with both organizations' programming. Two of

the youth, one in middle school and one in high school were familiar with Community Services programming. One of the siblings attended middle school and the rest of the group attended high school. Sessions occurred after school hours with one Youth Support Worker in attendance. The Support Workers took turns attending and were known to the youth.

the youth

I use *Indigenous* and *non-Indigenous* youth as the primary identifier of Dance Land participants. This choice is guided by the Canadian TRC Call to Action 83 that calls for Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists to work together. I acknowledge that the term *Indigenous* does not describe distinctions between First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2018). I asked the youth about their ancestry as an integral part of ethical research practice with Indigenous communities (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2018). I received guidance from staff at the Friendship Center to appropriately ask this question to Indigenous youth. The power imbalance within my role in Dance Land may have added to the complexity for Indigenous youths to describe their personal ancestry. The youth previewed their answers with phrases like, “it’s complicated” and “I don’t know”. In my one-on-one conversations with the youth, I asked the open-ended question, “How do you identify yourself?”. Two youth chose *Indigenous* as descriptions of ancestry that they were most comfortable with, and one youth declined to identify themselves. The two non-Indigenous youth chose to identify as non-Indigenous. I limited exploration of personal ancestry to one conversation with each youth in response to Garneau’s (2016) explanation of racializing people,

> The racializing project assumes that Indigenous persons can be recognized, identified, described, and contained, that they are complete and can therefore report identity facts to an ethnographer because they know themselves. However, in real life, people, including Indigenous persons, experience themselves less as fixed subjects and more as having multiple and flexible identities – that is, when asked to identify only as themselves (p. 27).

In light of Garneau's (2016) explanation of "having multiple and flexible identities" (p. 27), the youths' choice to use *Indigenous* and *non-Indigenous* for self-identification may have been the most relatable to the nature of the Dance Land inquiry at that time.

Identifying the youth as Indigenous and non-Indigenous also creates space where understanding who the youth are may emerge from the content of this inquiry. In other words, what the youth did and the way they expressed themselves as embodied dancers is a stronger reflection of who the youth are than categorizations such as gender, body ability, or age might express. In addition, I use minimally descriptive identity markers such as *Youth 1* in the Findings area. This approach de-emphasizes identifying which individual was drawing, speaking, or writing. Less emphasis on tracking *individual* thoughts and ideas places a stronger focus on the *group* process born out of interactions between the youth. Studying the interactions between the youth, as opposed to highlighting individual leadership, was key to looking into how the youth used expressive movement to explore their relationships with land. It is also important to note that one youth requested the syntax of their discussions be altered to increase protection of their privacy. For this reason, minimally descriptive identity markers support this youth's request for further anonymity in a small group of participants.

The youth took part in five Dance Land sessions over a two-week period. I intended to hold six 2-hour sessions in total however the third session was unattended. Two youth who described their ancestry as non-Indigenous attended four sessions. One youth who described their ancestry as "proudly Indigenous" attended two sessions and another youth who described themselves as Indigenous attended one session. One youth who did not describe their ancestry observed half a session. Three out of five sessions were attended by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. Two sessions were attended by non-Indigenous youth only.

Youth Support Workers

Sharing descriptions of ancestry between the Youth Support Workers and I continued to build our relationships as we learned more about each other's families. One Youth Support Worker identified themselves as Woodland Cree and the other two as non-Indigenous. In the final Dance Land session (which had been rescheduled multiple times due to weather and low attendance) The Friendship Centre Youth Support Worker was engaged in a large event at their centre. In their place, a college practicum student, who the youth were familiar with from The Friendship Centre's programs, attended the session. In community partnership meetings the Youth Support Worker role had been highlighted as support for youth to take part in movement activities with someone familiar to them and to draw upon these relationships to notice any signs of discomfort or hesitation that could be responded to. I intended to have Youth Support Workers dance with the group in the first two sessions and gradually become witnesses within our explorations. However, our groups were very small, and the Support Workers actively participated in all five sessions which brought their perspectives and influence on youth into our creative process. Drawings and ideas from Youth Support Workers were embedded in the creative content. I attempted to approach the participation of the Youth Support Workers as an inter-related part of our explorations to support the development of youths' movement, drawings, and discussions.

doing community-based dance: the emergent nature of Dance Land

Dance Land was an emergent creative process that used the practice of community-based dance with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth and Youth Support Workers to explore relationships with land. The following paragraphs detail the activities that took place during Dance Land.

I view Dance Land under the larger umbrella of community performance as being "*communally created*… the outcome is (relatively) open, maybe within a thematic field opened up by the facilitator, but full of spaces and times for people to create their own expressive material. With this approach, community performances challenge conventional performance aesthetics" (Kuppers, 2019, p. 4). This

community performance umbrella overlapped and reinforced my critical facilitation of community-based dance. My critical approach opposed the hierarchy of traditional dancemaking processes where dancers, or participants, are used to fulfill a choreographer's 'vision' by utilizing my dance skills to explore improvisational dance techniques with the youth (Halprin, 1995). These techniques supported the youth to draw from their personal experiences of relationships with land and express a diverse and collective whole (Halprin, 1995). The expression of a diverse whole was facilitated through a critical understanding of dancemaking that supported the youth to cooperate through movement and discover the collective forms that made sense of their collective dance narrative (Halprin, 1995; Lerman, 2011). In this way, my critical facilitation of community-based dance balanced the youths' creative expression with their creative process to communally create dance work (Lerman, 2011).

Dance Land was communally created by the youth, Youth Support Workers, and me as facilitator. I introduced an artistic exploration of relationships with land and supported the youth to create their own expressive movement. I was engaged in ongoing embodied reflexivity and analysis, or an integrated analytical research process, while the youth were engaged in their ongoing creative analysis. Thus, two ongoing creative analytic processes were entwined and took place simultaneously. Figure 3 visualizes the collaborative and relationship-building nature of Dance Land's emergent creative process.

Figure 3

Dance Land's emergent and collaborative creative process

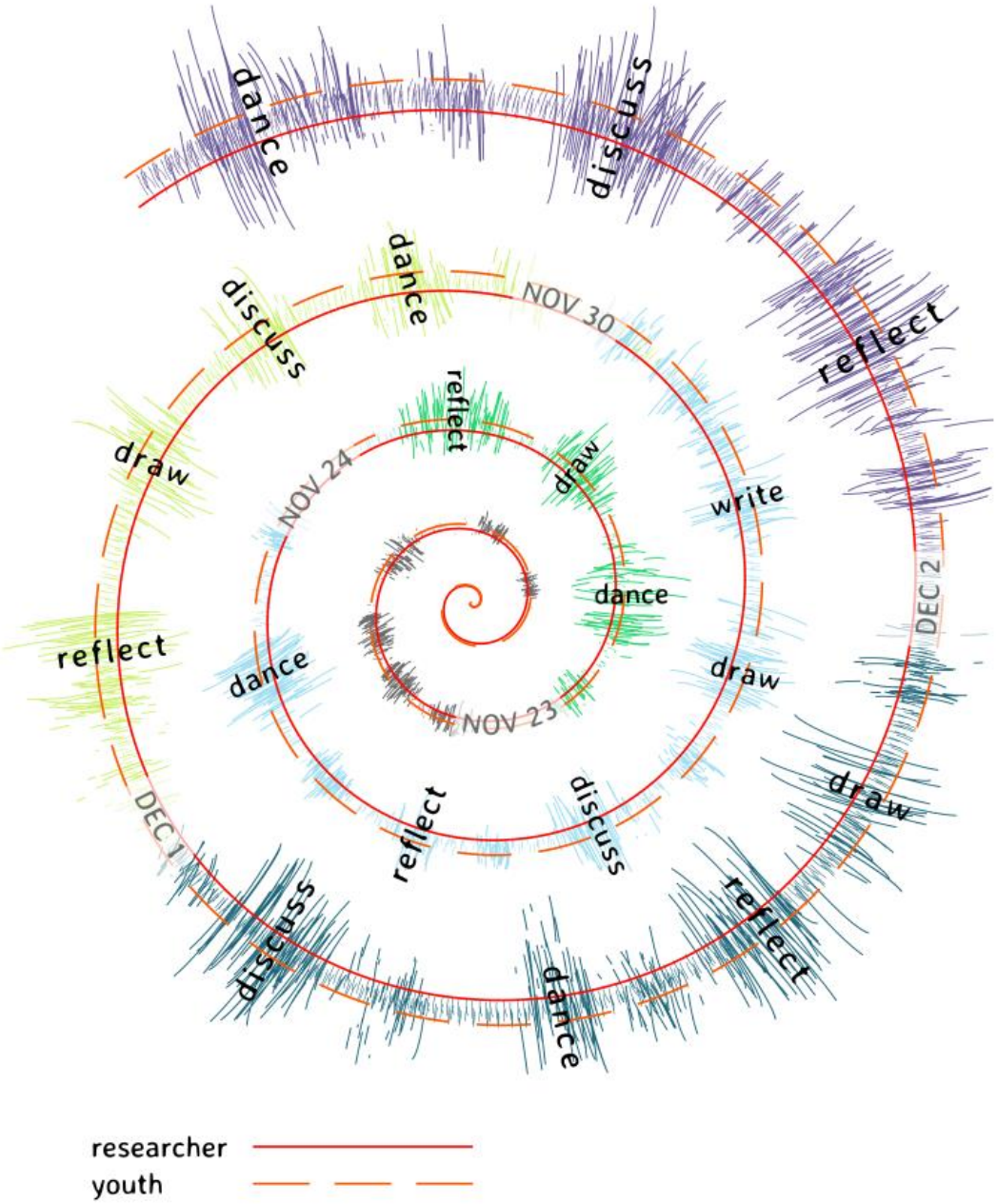


Figure 3 also depicts Dance Land's five sessions occurring along a spiral timeline that grows larger as time passes to describe an emergent process. The youths' ongoing creative analysis took place in each session as well as from one session to the next. My ongoing analysis paralleled the youths' analysis to depict collaboration between the facilitator and youth. Our collaboration contributed to and was influenced by one another's analytical processes. In this way, the youth engaged with one another, and co-created knowledge, and I engaged with the youth and co-created knowledge.

I had planned for an Elder's participation in Dance Land to respectfully support Indigenous youths' relationships with land (Hill & McCall, 2015) and support non-Indigenous youths to recognize that they may think about land in different ways (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015). Unforeseen circumstances meant that an Elder was unavailable for Dance Land sessions, and I recognized that I could not ethically introduce discussions about local Indigenous perspectives on relationships with land (Canadian Institutes of Health Research et al., 2018). Rather, I focussed on the youths' personal experiences and knowledge to inform our discussions and philosophical questions (Kuppers, 2019; Knowles & Promislow, 2008; Barbour, 2011). One aspect of exploring personal experience involved going outside for short periods of time (due to sub-zero temperatures) to respond to and partner with the presence of the outdoor environment (Halprin, 1995). This is one example of the way we explored individuals' relationships with land, and the Elder's perspective on all of our explorations was missed.

Every Dance Land session began with a group discussion where I described community-based dance and improvisation. I explained that we were sharing our experiences through dance exploration focused on our relationships with land (Barone & Eisner, 2012). We discussed dance concepts such as speed and pathway that we would work with for the session (Gilbert, 2006). I reinforced the understanding "there is no wrong" in community-based dance and emphasized that we could bring in dance steps we knew, make up movement, or work with what we saw others doing (Snowber, 2002; Gilbert, 2006). I reminded

youth that Dance Land was a voluntary activity, and they were free to leave at any time without explaining why. In every session I also asked

- youth to protect themselves from injury by choosing movement appropriate for their bodies
- for inclusion of everyone with the example of giving everyone time to finish speaking
- if everyone felt comfortable with going outside at one point during the session
- if anyone brought music to share that could be used in that session
- everyone to write notes or draw at the end of the session with no obligation to share their work with the group
- youth to wear masks throughout the inquiry due to public health measures
- everyone to take the individually wrapped food that was offered outside to eat during a break or at home after the session due to public health measures

These group discussions clarified the structure of the Dance Land inquiry and attempted to reinforce the communal nature of our activities (Finley, 2008; Kuppers, 2019).

We always followed our discussion with a physical warm-up that followed fundamental human movement patterns while we stood in a circle (Gilbert, 2006). The end of the warm-up invited youth to speak a few words that described sensations in their bodies. This practice introduced the youth to developing an awareness of their embodied experience in dance (Barbour, 2011). We stood in a circle at the end of every session and physically cooled down our muscles with repetitive movement that moved from high to low levels and gradually decreased in speed. A ritual-like physical warm-up and cool-down can contribute to building community within a group (Schechner, 2013).

Movement exploration took place for the remainder of the sessions. I used a community-based dance improvisation approach that continually engaged with explorations and discussions on dance concepts rooted in areas of space, time, force, and the body (Halprin, 1995; Gilbert, 2006). I listened to feedback and the interests of the group to choose specific dance concepts for our initial improvisational

movement play in each session. In subsequent sessions I built upon improvisational play by following the group's interests. The group applied movement concepts they learned to exploring individual ideas of relationships with land through more improvisational movement play (Halprin, 1995; Lerman, 2011). We reflected on our movement experiences by drawing with oil pastels and discussing our impressions (Kuppers, 2007). We noted movement phrases we liked and structured them to be repeated by everyone in the group. Throughout this work, the youth drew on personal experiences that informed connections to movement and meaning making (Barbour, 2011). The meaning-making process and its relationship to the youths' experiential knowledge was a key part of co-creating knowledge. This cyclical process was practiced in Dance Land's first four sessions. Each new session expanded on material from previous movement explorations to generate creative content (Halprin, 1995; Lerman, 2011, Leavy, 2020). The progressive growth and expansion of the youths' creative content maintained a focus on communal creation and avoided framing dance presentation as a goal (Kuppers, 2019).

Acknowledging the youths' practice of drawing on personal experience to make meaning highlights the following student researcher reflection. In this reflection, I articulated some personal experiences that contributed to my experiential knowledge. This knowledge informed my experiences of relationships with land that I wrote poetry about as a teenager.

October 3, 2021

I think back to dance articles - one in particle about one dance artist's work in understanding her ancestry and relationship to where she lives. I know rereading it will have a different impact on me now. It is fascinating and exciting and overwhelming that poetry has come back after all of these years. The seeds in my youth - my mom, the farm, the lake, the movement. How do I bring all of this together to succinctly describe my knowledge of relationship with land and what it is that I bring into this inquiry? It is coming together, and I am feeling like there is more of an answer now than before.

The previous reflection illustrates the impact of going deeper into my own personal narrative. I used techniques to support the youth to go deeper into their personal narratives that are described in Table 1 (see Appendix D for Table 1 - *Dance Land sessions exploration of dance concepts*). Table 1 outlines Dance Land's collaborative dance sessions, including the concepts explored, the focus of our movement, and

the use of mediums other than dance. It is important to note that while the table lays out the techniques I used in a given time frame, its linear structure makes the table incapable of reflecting the emergent and collaborative nature of Dance Land. In the final one and a half sessions the youth were guided by me to design a collaborative initial response to the ongoing generation of Dance Land content (Lerman, 2011).

analyzing the youths' dancing

I used my dance artist perspective to analyze Dance Land's content. Viewing this content as the youths' dance making behaviour, I choreographed a contemporary dance solo that sifted through several aspects of the youths' creative activity. The completion of all artmaking is presentation and I performed small sections of this solo publicly in the oral defence of my thesis as well as in Lac La Biche where this inquiry took place. These performances also allowed me to disseminate Dance Land's co-created knowledge. The following subsection focusses on my emergent and collaborative analytical process that involved wondering about the ethics of representing the youths' creative process, thinking about how to analyze the youths' dancing with my dancing, improvising dance rooted in the youth's movement, building a solo structure, integrating words spoken by the youth, choreographing with the youths' drawings, and collaborating with the youth through solo feedback. To view my oral defence that included sections of my analytical solo, see the mp4 file that accompanies this electronic thesis.

wondering about the ethics of representing the youths' creative dancemaking process

I am a white settler student researcher who employed ABR that involved Indigenous youth. Two examples of ethical practice that I used in the creation of my solo performance to reduce power inequities between the youth and myself were in the form of feedback sessions that focussed on representation of the youths' movement and spoken words. I performed sections of my analytical solo for the youth while it was in development and requested their feedback on how it felt to watch some of their movement being represented by my movement as well as hearing some of their spoken words as

recorded text. This approach to choreographing my analytical solo created opportunities for the youth to collaborate on the representation of their dance movement and spoken words in my solo. With the youths' feedback, I moved forward to complete the creation of my analytical solo. In reflecting on this approach, I realize now in writing this section of my thesis that with more time for the research, a stronger ethical approach to creating this analytical solo could have involved a more extensive collaboration with the youth that could have included designing the dance narrative and directing the way I executed their movement.

thinking about how to analyze the youths' dancing with my dancing

Liz Lerman's (2011) description of *subject matter dancing* resonates deeply with my experience of unravelling my approach to creating an analytical contemporary dance solo about Dance Land.

> The fact that I like meaning—that I like to translate movement into meaning and back again, that I find that concrete subjects motivate me to locate movement—does not diminish the power that the movement has for me. Subject matter dancing doesn't feel less than, or like a crutch, or like some simplistic pretend game. It offers, rather, a fantastic dialogue of intellect and impulse, feeling and the matter of the mind, gathered in a weird kinesthetic wrapping paper that makes it all make sense to me and makes the struggle of art-making worth it. (p. 73)

I searched for the essence of my experience of how youth used expressive movement to explore their relationships with land through an art-making process (Barone & Eisner, 2012). In this process, I studied the content generated by the youth through the creative action of choreographing a contemporary dance solo. My solo emerged out of the process of building it. The building process was informed by my subjectivity, and I strived to respond to spontaneity, encourage experimentation, and follow my intuition (Leavy, 2020). I intended to use ekphrastic inquiry[54] to respond to the youths' movement

[54] Ekphrastic inquiry is the practice of writing poetry in response to performance (Prendergast, 2006). Dance, or body experience, connects to poetics through the physical experience of caring; as a dancer attuned to physicality,

during Dance Land and then use the poetry to inform my solo work. However, I participated fully as a dancer in our sessions which challenged me to take a witness role and write poetry. Some of the poetry in this subsection reflects my opportunities to witness youth dancing when we worked in duets or pairs and watched one another's material. Other poems reflect my analytical process in the studio, while creating the solo to analyze Dance Land's content. I also reflected on Dance Land content by playing with movement and images to convey different worldviews in Canada about the concept of relationships with land. At a certain point in my creative process, I reciprocated the youths' willingness to share their creative process with me by sharing my solo as a *work in progress.* During two online feedback sessions, the group of youth watched a video recording of sections of my solo work and gave me feedback on how I reflected the creative work they did during Dance Land.

My analytical dance solo reflected youths' emergent artistic process by focusing on actions of the youth and including my perceptions on the complexities of exploring relationships with land[55] with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. My solo choreography layered the youths' content with my embodied student researcher reflections. I used an embodied analytic process[56] that revealed a relationship between youths' exploration of relationships with land and my embodied student researcher reflections. I discovered that my embodied student researcher reflections informed the youths' development of expressive movement when they explored their relationships with land.

improvising dance rooted in the youths' movement

The day after Dance Land sessions finished, I improvised movement on my own in the dance studio. My writing springs from my body to express the play and timing between gestures and impulses

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I am strongly supported by the practice of writing poetry to express embodied experience (Galvin & Prendergast, 2016).

[55] As discussed, Tuck and McKenzie (2015) explain that critical place inquiry is "an approach to place in research that is explicitly political in its intentions and ethical obligations to land, people, and other species" (p. 150).

[56] Carter (2020) explains that an embodied analytic process acknowledges researchers doing research through their physically embodied selves and using embodied movement to ask critical questions, understand concepts, and discover new insights through sense-making.

that soared and landed many times within me as I merged body intelligence and dance as a place of inquiry (Snowber, 2018). I engaged my perception, insight, and understanding (Snowber, 2018) that my living body offers (Grosz, 2020), and made multiple connections in an ongoing process of discovery. Throughout my first day of improvising, I felt a strong resistance to re-enacting the movement and structure that the youth constructed in Dance Land sessions because I did not want to mimic what had been created. I was seeking the essence of the youths' work.

things connect how

thrust

d r I v e

sway

I see me doing the movement of youth

do (not) do

toes caress

flip and

over in

hips gyrate

does this have context

do not) do

floating bones melt

lift lilt

long reach

I hear their voices

not (do it

pour

hum through clavicle sternum

belly synthesis to hips

two knees

two ankles

giving clear direction

do))

grind

repeat

breathe

s l o w

still

I let go of my hesitancy to reproduce youths' movement and structures. I saw their development of dance movement and a conceptual through-line as a collaborative analysis of some of the material we gathered in our community-based dance process[57]. I improvised movement to work from inside my body and explored the youths' dance work as a personal, physical experience (Blumenfeld-Jones, 2016). My dance process enlivened the experience between my mind and body through the material, physical, kinetic, spatial, and temporal, and was linked to representation and meaning of the youths' dance work (Block & Kissell, 2001). The collaborative analysis with youth was an entry point for me to discover resources (Halprin, 1995) that I could work with in my creative process. The resources included,

structure and movement developed by and with youth

drawings created by and with youth

spoken and written words of youth

the aim and motivation of youth and my student researcher/dance facilitator/artist self[58]

I imagined the above resources as youths' voices expressed in more than one medium. I reflected on how these mediums enveloped one another to inform the youth's dance work. A graduate student colleague framed my understanding as expressing youth's "multivocality" (K. Perrin, personal communication, Feb. 11, 2021[59]). My analytical and representational choice of dance attempted to trace the *voicing* of youth from a new materialist perspective and recognized "a transindividual process

[57] Hereafter the sequence of movement phrases accompanied by youths' musical choices and informed by their conceptual through-line that was developed during Dance Land will be referred to as the youths' dance work.
[58] I play in my writing process and "endeavour to organize the page, to choreograph the text" (Moss, 2011, p. 73).
[59] This exchange occurred through a presentation I made to describe Dance Land to the Centre for Indigenous-led Research and Engagement (CIRCLE) support group at the University of Victoria.

between bodies, locations, affective and discursive histories" (Chadwick, 2021, p. 91). My repeated physical investigations of the youths' dance work were one part of tracing the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) that pushed me to acknowledge multiple ways to see and hear the expressions of their experiences. Multiple perspectives on the youths' experiences led to discovering the essence of a structure for my dance solo (Lerman, 2011).

building a solo structure

I devised a structure for my solo based on building an interactive performance area. This perfomance area emerged out of my need to interact with the resources[60] I identified early in my creative process. I wanted to hear some of the words spoken by the youth while I danced. I also envisioned some of the youths' drawings projected somewhere in the interactive performance area. A few of the drawings featured spirals and I wanted to physically draw a spiral in the performance area. Overall, I imagined the tracing of the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) as interactivity between spoken, physical, and visual expressions in the performance area I built. The discovery of this type of interactive performance area meant that this space, and this space with me in it evoked multiple interpretations of relationships to the interactive content of the space. Table 2 outlines the elements of the interactive content and my interpretation of those elements.

Table 2

Relationships between elements and interpretations in performance area

elements	interpretations
movement as an	investigation of dance movements designed by youth
	exploration of youths' individual movement signatures
	exploration of youths' spoken personal stories

[60] As previously discussed, these resources included: structure and movement developed by and with youth; drawings created by and with youth; spoken and written words of the youth; the aim and motivation of youth and my student researcher/dance facilitator/artist self

	expression of tension and release throughout the Dance Land experience
	investigation of the contextual framework of Dance Land
paper as	an unknown space to search in
	a piece of paper to draw upon
	a place to see youths' drawings
	a metaphor for land
youths' voices as	many ideas spoken at once
	thoughts in the soloist's head as a participant
	explaining concepts
	sharing experiences
	directions to build, design and develop youths' dance work

integrating words spoken by the youth

I strongly believed that the words youth spoke during Dance Land needed to be heard aurally by potential audiences. I followed my intuition (Leavy, 2020) and experimented with dancing to short excerpts of speech from videos of our dance sessions that I spliced with music the youth had chosen to use in those sessions. I recognized that I experienced the youths' words differently when I read, spoke, or heard them. Informed by felt sense[61], I used this insight to move potential audiences beyond simply

[61] Rappaport (2013) explains, "Listening to our inner felt sense is a guide for conducting arts-based research. This inner felt sense calls forth and crystallizes known and unknown dimensions that integrate this holistic knowing … Given that the felt sense is beyond words and our cognitive minds, it needs a medium that allows for capturing all of it at once. The arts are able to do so and provide a vehicle to help externalize this knowing, to carry it forward, and help it to be seen and known" (p. 98).

hearing words spoken by youth and devised a way to have these audiences engage more deeply with words spoken by youth.

I decided to invite potential audience members to engage with the youths' spoken words as an integral part of my solo performance. I transcribed the Dance Land sessions and chose several excerpts to print on slips of paper[62] that could be displayed in random order on a large board.

I envisioned potential audience members entering a gathering area adjacent to the dance space where they learn from helpers that they are reading the ideas, experiences, and concepts youth verbalized during Dance Land. Audience members would be invited to choose as many slips of paper they liked. Helpers in the gathering area would record these audience members reading excerpts aloud. The resulting audio files could be digitally organized and become part of the soundtrack the audience heard during the solo performance. Any excerpts that were not recorded at that time would have backup audio files. I consulted with a computer programmer who tested an interface design that supported audience members to see, hear, and say words spoken by youth[63] during Dance Land.

I understood that recording people to read others' words was a contentious act made more complex by the recorded words coming from Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. After testing the interface design, I discovered that Nadia Myre, an Indigenous and Quebecois artist who works with ideas of identity, resilience, and politics of belonging, created an art performance in 2015 that employed staged readings by diverse communities of written text between 'Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples' (Myre, n.d., *A Casual Reconstruction*). Nadia Myre's work helped me to reflect on my approach to engaging with the youths' words. The Dance Land text excerpts would be described to the audience as some of the words Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth spoke during their creative process of exploring their relationships with land. My choice of text excerpts could focus on contributions to the

[62] The youths' names did not appear on the transcriptions to protect the youths' anonymity.
[63] Once again, the quotes of the youth did not reveal names to protect the youths' anonymity.

youths' creative process and would not identify each line of text as specific to an Indigenous or non-Indigenous youth. In this way, I could create a not-knowing tension between the actual narrating voices and the voice of the narrative content. In addition, my embodiment of being in the constructed solo area would reflect imperfectly the narrative content of the spoken words and could create tension with the actual narrating voices. These tensions could potentially resolve when audience members pushed themselves to find their inner resonances and dissonances and their inner confirmations and contradictions within their worldviews. My choreographic choices could mirror my research attempt to design a creative space with a critical understanding of the context of reconciliation to listen to the youths' experiences without asking the youth to explore that context as a part of their creative process.

The digital organization of Dance Land transcriptions evolved through my movement explorations, the content of the spoken excerpts, and my movement play with youths' drawings. I followed impressions of connection (Leavy, 2020) between specific transcriptions and my creation of various movement phrases that were inspired by youths' drawings. Gradually, the words, movement, and visuals revealed five areas of meaning to me. These areas informed the digital organization of Dance Land transcriptions by gathering audio files into five separate sections. Each section played excerpts in a random or specific order that was designed to coincide with the order of some of my movement phrases and projection of the youths' visuals. This portion of the choreographic design intended to reflect the random, non-linear nature of some of Dance Land's content within my actions as a student researcher practitioner. For example, I experienced an unexpected interest in connection between and through lines of drawing, movement, and thought. I titled one area of meaning *lines.* The five areas of meaning included:

ideas

lines

personal stories

concepts

build, design, and develop movement

choreographing with the youths' drawings

I created an experience of connecting with youths' drawings through a repetitive process. I imagined original drawings projected on the back wall of the performance space one-by-one. I danced in connection with the projected drawings by maintaining awareness of how and when I looked at them, how my movement juxtaposed them, and questioned whether my shadow could appear to be a part of them. I developed movement vocabulary that responded to looking at several images before I focused on a physical exploration of drawing a spiral in the performance space.

I brought a 10' X 10' piece of paper and some chalk into the studio. Two concepts developed by two different youth informed my experimentation. The concept of a *vortex rose* that "starts off with a rose, gets chaotic, and falls apart", led to circular floor movement followed by my body progressively collapsing to the floor. The concept of a *chain reaction effect* that took place when a youth blurred white chalk pastel over lines and saw this as "nicer and calm" instead of "a real mess" led to drawing a spiral with chalk on the large sheet of paper. Lying on my side, I slid my body in a circular pattern while drawing and blurred the chalk lines with the pressure against my clothing. I extended this exploration and played with other simultaneous movement and drawing patterns. The action of drawing and moving resonated with my experiences of Dance Land and the large piece of paper became a part of the interactive performance area. In addition, after significant hours of dance play, I decided not to project the youths' drawings on the back wall, and I chose to project them on this 10' X 10' piece of paper in the centre of the performance space.

collaborating with the youth through solo feedback

Later in my creative process of choreographing my analytical solo I collaborated with the youth to receive feedback on the way my solo engaged with the youths' creative work. This process attempted to ensure that the youth agreed with my artistic treatment of Dance Land's content. Two online sessions took place where I presented video of my analytical solo to youth. Arrangements had been made for both sessions to take place in person; however, they were cancelled due to the weather preventing busses from running and youths' lack of availability. I was concerned that an online format would diminish my sense of connection with youth and hamper reading their body language. I received positive responses from the youth upon viewing the video which described the development of my solo.

The youth offered feedback on the way I planned to engage potential audience members with words spoken by the youth during Dance Land sessions. One youth suggested that the *lines* section use only my recorded voice (as opposed to audience voices) to suggest that the words were my inner thoughts, as though I was remembering what was being said in our Dance Land sessions. The youth also suggested recording my voice with an echo quality and the words eventually overlapping one another to allow the audience to "see what I am thinking". I checked in several times with the youth during the online sessions to confirm that the way I integrated their spoken words into the solo felt comfortable to them. The group expressed agreement with the creation of recordings of myself and audience members speaking their words. The youth also appreciated the anonymity applied to recording audience members' voices to hear those words. One youth requested the syntax of their excerpts be altered to protect their privacy further, and I agreed. I gave the group access to my choices of the spoken word excerpts and confirmed their approval of the representation of their voices.

The final section of my online session with the youth explained my intuitive response to how to end the solo. I was inclined to finish with an image of different worldviews in Canada about the concept of relationships with land. Although this was not present in the youths' Dance Land explorations, my

analysis of their creative process is based in an integrated analytical research process that explored differing relationships with land. I described different ideas about manipulating the large sheet of paper in the performance area to reveal an image of land in Canada that could be created by an Indigenous artist from Lac La Biche. The youth agreed with this aspect to appear in the solo and our collaborative process included discussing the possibility of the youths' drawings informing the final image. The Friendship Center approached local visual artists to work with me; however, none were available. Upon further reflection, I decided that I preferred to return to projections of the youths' drawings to reinforce a depiction of different worldviews of relationships with land in this solo. I placed a layer of sand beneath the large piece of paper in the centre of the stage. The sand imprinted the movement and drawing I did on top of the paper earlier in the dance piece. I ended the piece by removing the large piece of paper, manipulating it, and putting it aside to reveal the imprinted sand. Projections of the youths' images on the sand completed the piece.

recognizing limitations

Due to COVID-19 health protocols, it was more difficult to volunteer to support The Friendship Centre's programming than it was to volunteer for Community Services programming. In September 2021, according to The Friendship Centre's health protocols, two families were allowed into the Centre at a time and on particular days. I chose not to enter the Centre to reduce the potential for exposing the families to the COVID-19 virus. This limitation impacted building relationships with The Friendship Centre community and the number of youth engaged in this inquiry. Also, everyone was required to wear masks during Dance Land sessions. Reviewing video recordings was challenged by the poor sound quality of the youths' and Support Workers' voices. This phenomenon hindered my reflection on the interactivity of *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) between participants.

As previously mentioned, connection between the youth and the Elder was compromised by ill health and the postponement of sessions. Also, presenting my analytical solo to the youth was

challenged due to absenteeism at the original in-person presentation. The subsequent online presentations made the live dance material less accessible in a flat-screen format. Also, the sound system made it challenging for me to hear the youth and for the youth and Youth Support Worker to hear me.

mobilizing knowledge

Small sections of Dance Land's analytical solo will be presented in Victoria, BC, on the traditional lands of the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples, for my thesis defence. This solo will also be presented in Lac La Biche, AB on Treaty 6, 8, and 10 territories and the Homeland of Métis peoples, within 6 months of the thesis defense as a part of giving back to the community. In preparation of both public performances the youth who engaged in this inquiry will be invited to participate in feedback sessions with autonomy to delete or change any of the content of the analytical solo.

This area reviewed Dance Land, a method I designed for a student research ABR inquiry. Dance Land was an integrated analytical research process and important aspects of this method were highlighted, including relationship building, reflexive research practice, and the co-creation of knowledge with youth. In the next area, I present the findings.

area 4: findings

The findings area flowed out of my analysis of the content that arose from Dance Land. However, Dance Land's integrated analytical-research process meant that my analysis and Dance Land's creative process were entangled. My analysis, which was a live performing art, acknowledged the collaborative and relational characteristics of this inquiry's findings in a non-linear way. As written text, this inquiry's findings need to unfold in a way that reflects the non-linear entanglement of my analysis and Dance Land's creative process.

framing findings within collective creativity

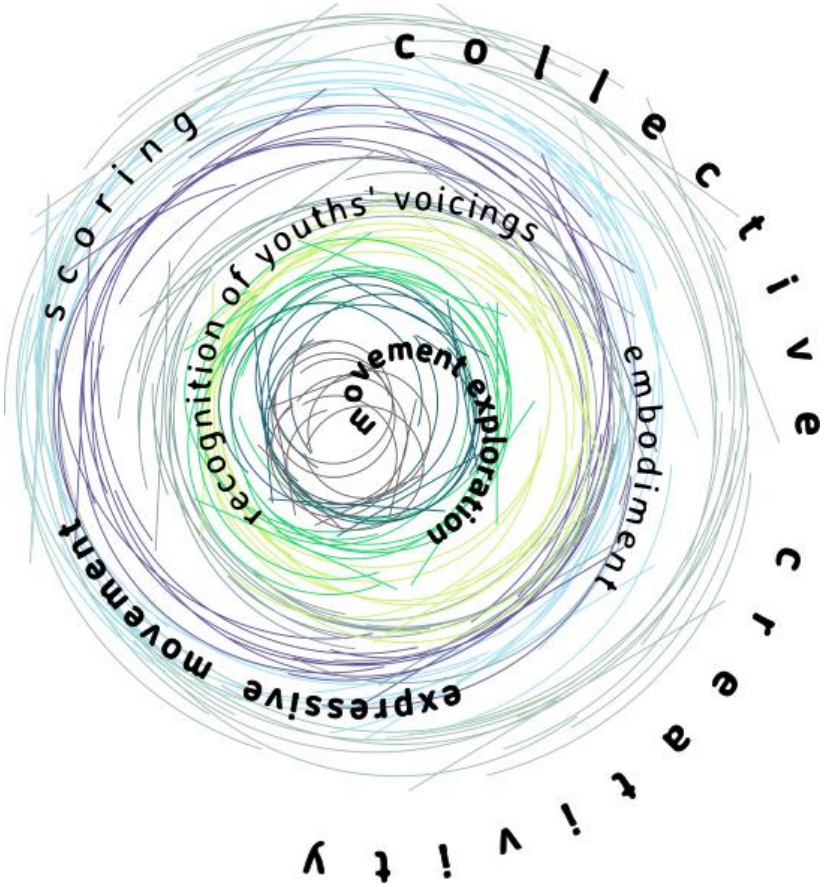
I embrace this entanglement by framing this inquiry's findings within the activity of *collective creativity*[64]*,* which provides a text-based representation of the complexity of this inquiry's collaborations. This representation highlights content that is critical to the question this inquiry aimed to inform: "How can youth use expressive movement to explore their relationships with land?" I illuminate content I discovered in response to this question that includes youths' representations of their work in the collaborative dance making process, such as drawings and spoken words, and my student researcher reflections[65]. These representations and reflections are organized around the tracing of some of the elements of Dance Land's collective creativity: *movement exploration*[66]; youths' *voicing*[67]; *expressive*

[64] Halprin (1995) describes collective creativity as "a way to utilize multiple input of all the diverse responses from participants in a collaboration of performing artists" (p. 48).
[65] As discussed in area 3, thoughts that sprang from my student researcher practitioner role are referred to as student researcher reflections and appear in a Dreaming Outloud Pro font.
[66] Halprin (1995) described movement exploration as a dance creation process that evolved out of movement improvisation.
[67] *Voicing* acknowledges a critical approach to qualitative praxis where "reconfigurings might enable a reconceptualization of voice as a transindividual process that is not located in individual bodies but is fundamentally relational" (Chadwick, 2021, p. 77).

movement[68]; *embodiment*[69]; and *scoring*[70]. Figure 4 visualizes creative space surrounding the tracing of these elements.

Figure 4

Dance Land's elements of collective creativity



The creative space surrounding the elements of collective creativity make room for creating a text-based representation of the youths and my embodied experiences of creative discovery. I am

[68] As discussed in area 1, "… the meaning of an expressive movement in dance derives from, and in its turn contributes to, a whole cultural tradition and the life of a society" (Best, 1974, p. 131).
[69] "Embodiment is a holistic experience, different from 'body' experience (which remains differentiated from the 'mind' and is typically based on a Cartesian dualistic understanding of body and mind)… Embodiment is not a random or arbitrary set of genetic material – it recognizes the material conditions of race, gender, sexuality, ability, history and culture. Embodiment therefore indicates a holistic experiencing individual. Most importantly, embodiment can also be understood through movement, an embodied activity." (Barbour, 2011, p. 88)
[70] "Scoring defines activities. It tells people what activity to do, not how to do it" (Halprin 1995, p. 202).

tempted to highlight these actions in separate categories. However, I co-designed Dance Land's facilitation of community-based dance to be interactive and relational, and separate categories could suggest that the youths and my actions developed in a linear and structured way (Carter, 2020). I use a spiral pattern to describe Dance Land's collective creativity to depict the non-linear and layering nature of Dance Land's emergent artistic processes. My embodied student researcher reflections were integral to these artistic processes. For example, my journey of exploring my personal relationships with land informed the way I facilitated Dance Land. In this way, some of my reflections provided insight on the collaborative and relational characteristics highlighted from this inquiry's content. Before engaging with the element of movement exploration in Dance Land sessions, I wrote the following student researcher reflection after facilitating a community-based dance session with youth support workers who were familiar with the youth participants in this inquiry. This collaborative approach to dance facilitation invited the youth support workers to exchange ideas on what the local youth might respond to.

August 12, 2021
I still feel capable of structuring movement exercises to support a group. I feel less confident in my abilities to speak with youth in a way that encourages them to contribute to a group project. I do not know if there is reading I need to do or simply familiarizing myself with work I have done. When I think of my most recent work, the Prince Rupert project with 20-something year-olds is a good example of creating space to hear ideas and support them to be in some type of structure. I recognize that it would have been better if that structure could have been created by them as well, but I did not feel I had the capacity to do that.
This is interesting – I am recognizing that I build the structures and then fill it with the creative possibilities. I am wondering, what happens if the structure is less rigid? I think that I will be doing that with this project in looking to the youth to decide what we want to share, where we want to share it and with whom we want to share. Who knows? Perhaps some youth may want to get involved in videoing the work as an expression of what we do.

I expanded on my ideas about supporting collaborative process and wrote the following reflection.

August 12, 2021
How can I facilitate in a way that will support youth to go deeper into their explorations? I think there will need to be a balance between the action of play and discovery and the actions of molding, forming, and making a dance. I hope that I can remember to ask them to speak about what they see and help to create positive language around critical observations. Questions like do you see places where you would like to add things or places where you would like to take away things? That is key to getting these discussions going.

Writing about dance collaboration and facilitation of deeper explorations, I saw that I was assessing how to facilitate movement exploration with the youth (Halprin, 1995).

movement exploration: the youth connecting movement and ideas

Dance Land's sessions engaged in movement exploration often. The youth were guided to play with and discover ideas through structured improvised movement. I discovered that the youths' drawings coupled with some of the words youth spoke about their drawings expanded my understanding of how the youth made connections between movement and ideas. The youths' drawings were artistic expressions as *living art,* which refers to the ability of these forms to actively engage viewers[71]. I embrace this understanding to share some of the youths' spoken words and imagery. See Figures 5-8.

[71] Engagement with *living art* builds relationships and arouses continuing interpretation (McNiff, 2018, Prendergast, 2006).

Figure 5

Dance Land youth's drawing - moving

"Moving in different directions and different lines, and different colours."

Figure 6

Dance Land youth's drawing - vortex rose

"I'm trying to draw with my nail. My nail polish can also draw. It rubs off my nail polish. There's actually no nail polish, it's actual pencil lead."

"I tried starting off with the rose, it gets chaotic and then it falls apart."

"It's supposed to be a vortex rose. Well I started off with the rose. And, it gets chaotic. It just falls apart."

Figure 7

Dance Land youth's drawing - nature

"Um, mine is like out in the nature, and the, the sky, how beautiful it is, and yeah. And like, I put the things that I saw out there, with spiky – uh, your thing, that comfortable [bush], the ice, your tree. It's not my best work but I guess it's… "

"I was thinking about, like a piece of ice, you know how you go like this right away, and you go like this, catching yourself before you fall."

"Since I was younger, like kindergarten, people just drew stick men and I drew full body – arms, legs. They said that I used a different part of my body – different part of my brain."

Figure 8

Dance Land youth's drawing - lines

Voice 1: "So the lines I did are all that really matters, not the colours. The way the lines are positioned. How the lines are made are sort of reflecting on feelings. I can't really identify that since I'm not good at identifying my own feelings."

"Feelings, how we, what I felt here the whole time. I meant the lines for different times are different lines. There's a lot of different lines."

Voice 2: "She had mixed emotions."

Experiencing the youths' movement explorations focused my thoughts on the *way* youth moved, expressed themselves, and engaged in decision-making with one another. I turned my reflections toward my practice of *ekphrastic inquiry*[72]. In the following poem, I explored youths' insightful movement in the act of creation that was supported by Dance Land's emergent creative process.

we wonder

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m o t i o n

m o v I n g

a i r

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[72] Ekphrastic inquiry is the practice of writing poetry in response to performance (Prendergast, 2006). Dance, or body experience, connects to poetics through the physical experience of caring; as a dancer attuned to physicality, I am strongly supported by the practice of writing poetry to express embodied experience (Galvin & Prendergast, 2016).

o

o

m

changes

shaking

digs b e n e a t h skin

chest unsettles

s l i p p e r y

catch balance

regain oneself

fingers

soft

bed-like

stretch

inert

d

r

e

a

m

i

n

g

and

c

h

a

o

s

rest on the eyes

push down

bear upward

recline and resist

gentle

body

flowing

play

shift

sway

rhythm

repeat

out ward

in side

all look up

prey on prey

door opens

prosperity

chop trees

takeandtakeandtake

bad guest

The Dance Land sessions used movement exploration to facilitate discussing connections between movement and ideas. Youths' drawings encouraged further discussions that often related to youths' personal stories. Two weeks after the Dance Land sessions finished, I entered the studio to build my analytical solo. My student researcher reflections during this creation period recognized that "I am dancing about HOW youth use dance to communicate their stories with one another". My reflection offers insight into connections made between youths' movement and drawings that occurred during Dance Land movement explorations.

December 17, 2021
So far, I have focussed on the outcome of their process to reflect on how they come to that outcome. My questions run deeper than this: aside from responding to the guidance they were given to explore ideas of relationship with land and dance concepts, what are the multiple layers the

youth used to develop, design, and build movement? I want the solo to be about those choices, not simply about how they responded to what I was presenting. What else did I see? This is the real research. What are the unexpected moments, side curves, and tangents taken?
What immediately comes to mind are some of P's explanations for her movement and drawing. The visualization of her own experience of star-gazing which included the physical action of star-gazing and also included a very personal relationship with the comfort and soothing of rolling your shoulders as well as the larger questioning about your relationship to the world and things - I need to look up this quote.

youths' voicing: interactivity between spoken, physical, and visual expressions

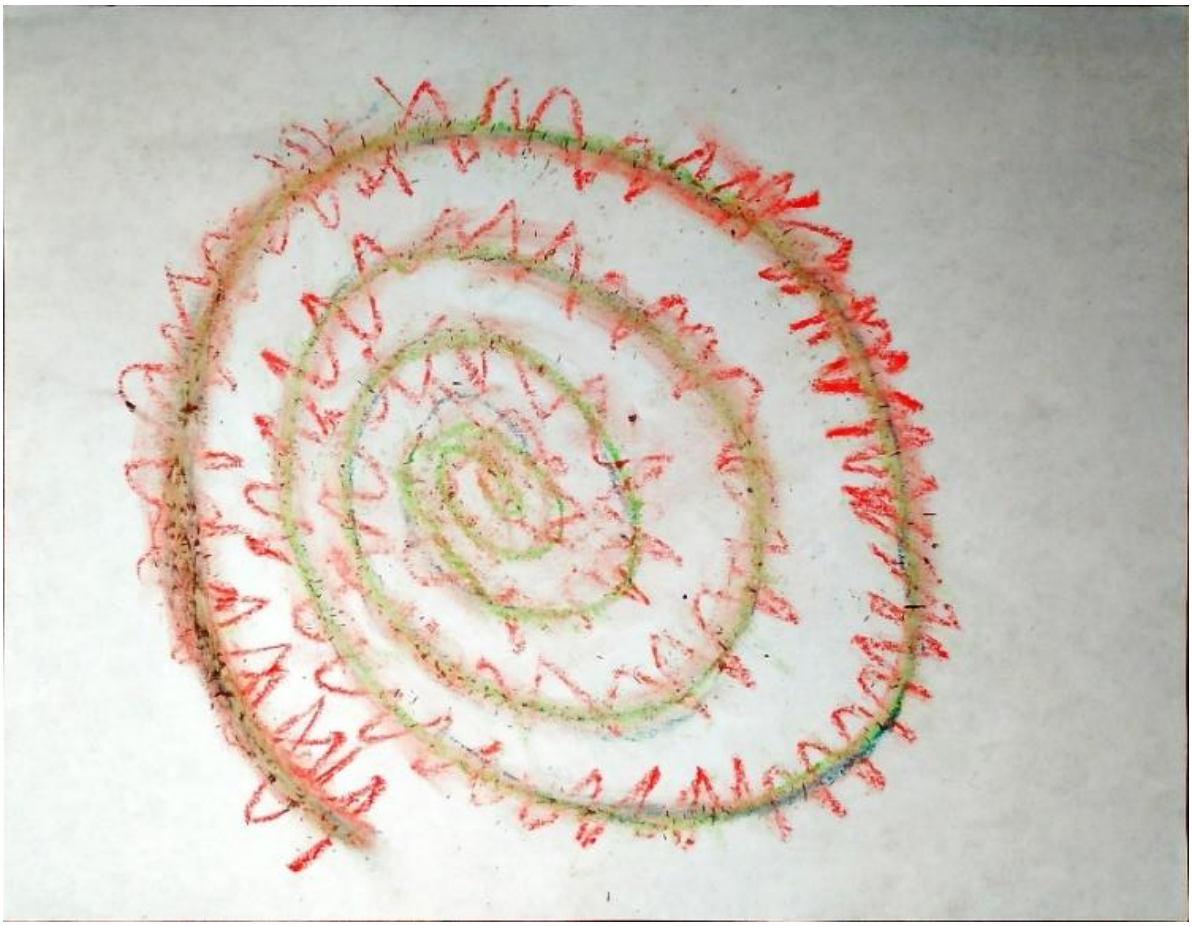
In the above reflection dated December 17, 2021, I questioned what multiple layers the youth who participated in Dance Land used to develop, design, and build movement. I found that one layer the youth used was their *voicing* (Chadwick 2021), which is the next element of collective creativity. As previously discussed, I embraced Chadwick's (2021) reconceptualization of 'voice' in qualitative research to see the youths' interactivity between spoken, physical, and visual expressions as *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) that were mainly relational as opposed to representing individual bodies[73]. My reflection and a youth's drawing (see Figure 9) combines the youths' spoken, physical, and visual expressions to visualize this interactivity as the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick 2021).

November 23, 2021
I asked Y and T if the movement they watched of P and I reminded them of anything. Y thought the vibrating movement looked like she was dying. I asked if it seemed like she was being jolted with electricity. Y said no, it was like she was twitching - the way things twitch before they die. As Y was explaining this, P was sitting cross-legged in front of me and doing the vibrating movement, staring very intently at me. Y continued to explain that the vibrating reminded her of a show they just saw. I asked which one, and she said the zombie one. This was a local high school production I had seen a few weeks ago - before Halloween. I asked if there was any particular part of the show that P's vibrating movement made Y think of. She described the end of the show when everyone came out. As Y continued to speak her body seemed to get smaller and fold into herself. P stretched out her arms stiffly in front of her and moaned a bit. Y said it was just that her eyes were crossed when she was doing it (the vibrating). I asked P how it felt to do the vibrating/twitching movement. She said it felt alive and she vibrated her body more.

[73] "the voices that we make in encounters do not finally and essentially 'belong' to us but are produced in interaction with a complex set of sociomaterial, bodily and discursive relations" (Chadwick, 2021, p. 97).

Figure 9

youth's drawing of "vibrating and all of the movement"



The youths' *voicing* (Chadwick 2021) also raised questions about their individual identities in the Dance Land group who engaged in collective creativity (Halprin, 1995; Kuppers, 2019). I discovered that the youth shared personal experiences in various artistic modes of interactivity with the Dance Land group to connect movement with their ideas and express a sense of their individuality. I found that the youth expressed individual identities relationally, or as *voicing* (Chadwick 2021), within the Dance Land group supported by the artistic interactivity of collective creativity.

As previously discussed, I traced the youths' spoken words when I choreographed a dance solo to analyze Dance Land's content. A few weeks after completing the first draft of my choreography, I

presented an overview of the solo to the youth in a Zoom meeting. In this meeting, one youth gave me feedback on the way I used the youths' spoken words early in my solo. This youth suggested that the words spoken by audience members in the *lines* section contain only my voice (not the audience's) and could be played back with an echo quality to suggest that I was listening to my recollection of Dance Land's interactivity. This youth also agreed with me that line drawings from our sessions should be projected during performance. I discovered that alongside my role as facilitator, the youths' engagement with *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) as an interactivity recognized me as a co-collaborator and highlighted the collaborative and relational nature of Dance Land. The following transcription from our January 20, 2022, meeting represents this finding:

> facilitator: I see. So it's my voice that you would be hearing recorded. Is that what you're saying?
>
> youth: Yes, like you're dancing and then you're like you're doing the lines, and you're doing that and you're like just like, you know - the discussions we had, thinking about like 'oh, the lines' and, as you're dancing, like you'll hear your voice, and then you'll have the screen project.. – you'll have all the pictures projected on the screen yeah, and then they'll be able to think like, 'oh this is what she's thinking' and they'll see like that, and you're like, all your words are going over top, like it's your mind, it's like all scattered together like it also makes sense.
>
> facilitator: That's so cool! So instead of having the audience's voices in this section, it would be my voice and we would make it maybe a little bit kind of echo-ee to make it sound like it's my thoughts?
>
> youth: Yeah
>
> facilitator: And then, just so that I am very clear, so you would be hearing those lines kind of echo-ee like they're my thoughts, and then, do they start to kind of go over top of one another, or do you hear the lines clearly throughout this whole section?

youth: Ah, like they start to go overlapping each other, like that. (Dance Land youth participant, January 20, 2022)

Recognizing the youths' voicing as an interactivity that included me as a co-collaborator leads to an understanding of the youths' experiences of embodiment, the next element of collective creativity.

embodiment: dancemaking expressing embodied knowledge

The following entry in my journal described my understanding of embodiment early in my research process.

September 4, 2019
I came to a place of recognizing my experience in dance as a voice that is in addition to the written word – that can offer multiplicities of meaning (Leavy talks about this). All those grey spaces in between spaces of unknowing, spaces that are often written about in discussions of embodiment, are places that everyone accesses with their own knowledge and histories – their sense of self… My understanding of qualitative methodology is that the participant's voices are an integral part of my learning. I keep coming back to the idea that, if the dance (and text or visuals if they choose to use it) is the representation of their voice that I recognize as valuable, I feel strongly about including that representation in my thesis as well as the written form. I think the doing of this is an important part of the point of my thesis.

My September 4 reflection spoke about accessing embodiment through dance which drew from my knowledge and history that I recognized as a sense of self. I found that Dance Land supported youth to access their sense of self by drawing from personal experiences to express *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) through actions of moving, drawing, and speaking. I discovered that these actions described holistic experiences of embodiment for the youth. Embodiment is the next element of collective creativity within Dance Land's creative process. As previously discussed, I embrace Barbour's (2011) alternate understanding of embodiment to understand how the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) is connected to the youths' embodiment. I interpreted the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) as the youth experiencing themselves as already embodying knowledge. While the youth used their *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) to *express* their embodied knowledge the youth also *created* knowledge during Dance Land. I identified the

youths' actions of expression and creation as embodied strategies[74]. When both strategies occurred, the youth created embodied knowledge (Barbour, 2011). In this way, I discovered that the youths' embodied knowledge connected to holistic experiences of embodiment and their diverse individual experiences.

In the previous December 17 reflection, I saw that the youth's actions of dance-making connected their personal star-gazing experience to accessing their embodied knowledge. The youth's stargazing movement sequence began to emerge during a movement exploration in Dance Land's second to last session. One wall of our meeting space was filled with windows and the temperature was below zero. We chose to use our view of the night sky as our outdoor experience. In my reflection, I observed the youth's need to visualize a real-life experience to inform improvised movement:

December 1, 2021
I am excited about the work we did thinking about our relationships with land. P went into a personal story about sitting with her dog outside at night and looking at the stars. She explained how the stars made her feel – I can't remember her exact words – I think it was comforting to know they [the stars] were out there.
I was especially interested in her process. She had to visualize the stars before she could get into movement. We took more time to do the exploration so that she could fulfill the visualization and then move.

In the same session, the youth commented, "I like sitting outside every so often. It's sort of a way to let my worries melt away" as well as, "I feel at peace under the stars. It's like, natural. It's sort of my home" (Dance Land youth participant, December 1, 2021). I identified that this youth accessed embodied knowledge they already possessed through movement and spoke afterward about a deeper understanding of self and their world when they connected movement to their personal experience.

[74] As discussed in area 2, Barbour (2011) described *embodied strategy* as the myriad ways in which people align and connect what may seem to be unrelated ideas and experiences.

visualizing embodied knowledge

I discovered that, throughout Dance Land, the youth revealed their knowledge of Dance Land's emerging content through embodied knowledge and its envelopment of several types of personal experiences. In the following figures, these personal experiences are divided into three features of the youths' dancemaking: (a) movement; (b) intention; and (c) making meaning[75]. Within each feature, I organize the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) into groups. These groups are based on Barbour's (2011) argument that "embodiment encompasses an individual person's biological (somatic), intellectual, emotional, social, gendered, artistic and spiritual experience, within their cultural, historical and geographical location" (p. 88). The four groupings are: (a) intellectual and artistic; (b) spiritual and gendered; (c) emotional and social, and (d) biological. In this way, I reveal the youths' embodied knowledge by gathering the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) into groupings of experiences that are divided into features of the youths' dancemaking. Figures 10-12 highlight the interactivity of individual experiences of embodiment as youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) within Dance Land's collaborative process.

[75] Each feature (movement, intention, and making meaning) is derived from the following combinations of the areas of meaning I discovered in my analytical solo: movement - build, design and develop movement; intention – lines, ideas, and concepts; making meaning – ideas, concepts and personal stories.

Figure 10

youths' voicing about movement

Figure 11

youths' voicing about their intentions

Figure 12

youths' voicing about making meaning

Figures 10-12 recognized the youths' *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) as embodied knowledge that emerged from creative activities throughout Dance Land. In the introduction to the findings area, my reflections from October 3, 2021, questioned how my connection to embodiment informed me as the student researcher facilitator of Dance Land. I continued my reflection to see that my embodied knowledge connected to my relationships with land as well as my social location.

October 3, 2021
The seeds in my youth – my mom and dad, the farm, the lake, the movement. How do I bring all of this together to succinctly describe my knowledge of relationship with land and what it is that I bring into this inquiry? It is coming together, and I am feeling like there is more of an answer now than before. Embodiment is integral to this understanding. Embodiment is what connects my physical experience of the lake to my physical experience of movement. Physicality is a practice that draws upon the imprints of our physical experience. My movement comes out of all that I have experienced. My movement draws upon all of those experiences to inform the choices I make in moving. …. My learning came from my experiences as a white, privileged, cis-gendered female living in Northern Alberta. I am astonished to understand this – I am so ashamed of all of the harm caused to Indigenous peoples by the arrival of my ancestors that it is difficult to see and hear other perspectives. When I speak with my mother and hear about the cooperation and care that existed between one another, I am forced to see things beyond my academic learning of death and destruction. The picture is bigger now. The picture still looks to better understand how to grapple with the meaning of reconciliation and what actions specific to my time and place look like. I am excited and I am cautious.

I found that these connections informed the choices I made to facilitate Dance Land's creative process and arrive at an understanding of the youths' individual experiences of embodiment as *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021). In the same way, my *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) emerged from my experiences of embodiment, and I discovered how I connected embodiment through dance, relationships with land, who I am, and the actions I take. The youths' practice of embodiment throughout Dance Land included guidance from my embodied knowledge of relationships with land.

I had the honour of listening to a youth's embodied experience of relationship with land when I visited The Friendship Centre before Dance Land sessions began.

October 6, 2021

I had an incredible talk with E this evening. T invited me to the Friendship Centre to speak with any youth who may be there and may be interested in this project. Covid guidelines have had the centre decide to invite two families to the centre per evening, three days a week (6 families in total).

E is beautifully articulate when he speaks about jigging. He described needing his gear in order to dance, this means moccasins, a sash, and fiddle music. He described imagining his legs being water when he jigged.

I responded that I appreciated how that image is tied to relationship with land. E spoke about his legs being water that responds freely to the fiddle music. I explained that his mind is not controlling his movement and what he is describing is similar to what I understand dance improvisation to be.

We walked over to the window and E pulled the blind up higher to see the waves on the lake. He explained that that is what he imagines the water to be like when he dances. He is in that water - he is the water. I took photos and video of the lake later. See them here.

I spoke about how clear he is in saying that who he is is connected to the land. He spoke about his belief that the water, the land, ancestors, everything, has a spirit. It is the creator who gives everything a spirit and it is spirit that he connects with when he dances.

I admired his connection to the land in that way and I acknowledged that I am non Indigenous and I do not have these teachings. E talked about how he gets the impression that people can be jealous of him at times. They do not understand his belief and they are cold to him. They may say hello in a nice way but they do not see him.

I admitted that I have felt jealous at times of Indigenous understanding of relationship with land. Through the work I am doing, I am understanding that I have my own beliefs and part of the reason I am doing this research is to better understand exploring relationship with land through dance. E said he was very excited when he read about this project because he wants to tell his stories through dance.

This youth's embodied experiences emphasized the importance of accessing embodiment through dance. Throughout Dance Land I saw that the youths' embodied knowledge was integral to their development of expressive movement about relationships with land. Expressive movement is the next element of Dance Land's collective creativity.

expressive movement: collectively creating knowledge

As noted in the previous *embodiment* subsection, the youths' embodiment included expressive movement which is a form of *creating* knowledge as well as expressing knowledge. I embraced Halprin's (1995) and Lerman's (2011) writings on community-based dance. I recognized the youths' expressive movement as a part of dance work that moves toward finding a structure that can be described as momentary movement feeling images (Halprin, 1995) as well as sequences of picture, feeling and story (Lerman, 2011). The youths made these images and sequences, or expressive movement, by drawing on their embodied knowledge to collectively create knowledge.

In the previous reflection dated December 1, 2021, I noted that one youth's embodied knowledge was expressed through the youth's movement that connected to their experiences of stargazing. The following day, the group used *embodied ways of knowing*[76] to engage in a period of collectively developing, designing, and building dance. During this collective creation period, I observed that the individual youth's descriptions of their stargazing experience clarified how their embodied experiences of dance contributed to collectively creating knowledge. The following excerpts from the group's creation period illuminated the development of expressive movement and creation of knowledge.

> youth 1: "Maybe we should do that one before, like you go like this, we're slipping and falling and then we're trying to go to the start and we're kind of just starting, we fall back and we're looking for it, oh, and we can just lay down and look up."
>
> facilitator: "Yeah, I think, you tell us what you think P, I was thinking of all of us being under the sky."

[76] "… knowing and understanding yourself and your world through the process of personally integrating and experiencing different knowledge. This way of knowing and understanding does not leave out your individual embodiment, and the sense of wholeness and integration that comes through moving, but instead focuses knowing through moving, or thinking in movement" (Barbour, 2011, p. 91)

youth 1: “It’s like we’re all being under.”

facilitator: “Exactly, Y said we all fall… so now…”

youth 1: “We’re all enjoying it.”

youth 2: “Just try thinking of the real-life contact with looking at the sky. It helps the visual better. And sometimes closing your eyes helps the visual better. And it just helps with descriptive facts. I like thinking of lots of like full moons… tiny bright full moons for a description against the black sky, and it takes a while but after that the picture forms… of the real-life memory.”

facilitator: “And so P, what other movement did you do when you were star gazing? Did you sit up and then, yeah, can you show us?”

youth 2: “I had started like this because this really is the only way I can get sort of the posture of sitting on a step. Because it feels more natural. After a while I shifted to this. While sitting,”

facilitator: “So you dropped your right hip.”

youth 2: “Gone down to where my dog was. I always star gaze with my dog because she, she can always sense when something is wrong. If everything’s ok she’ll, when I ask her to come and sit, she’ll be around that far away from me. Me and her. When something’s not right, she’ll come right into me.”

facilitator: “So would it be ok P, if from laying down here and looking up at the sky, and you can close your eyes if you want and visualize our…”

youth 1: “And we can start our star gazing.”

youth 2: “Yeah, I would do mine softly because it’s sort of a calming movement. If you think about it, because stars blink, so it’s like you’re blinking. If you just – here. I would go like this,”

facilitator: “Oh it’s more in your shoulders…”

youth 2: “Yes. It’s sort of a soothing movement, yeah.” (Dance Land youth participant, December 2, 2021)

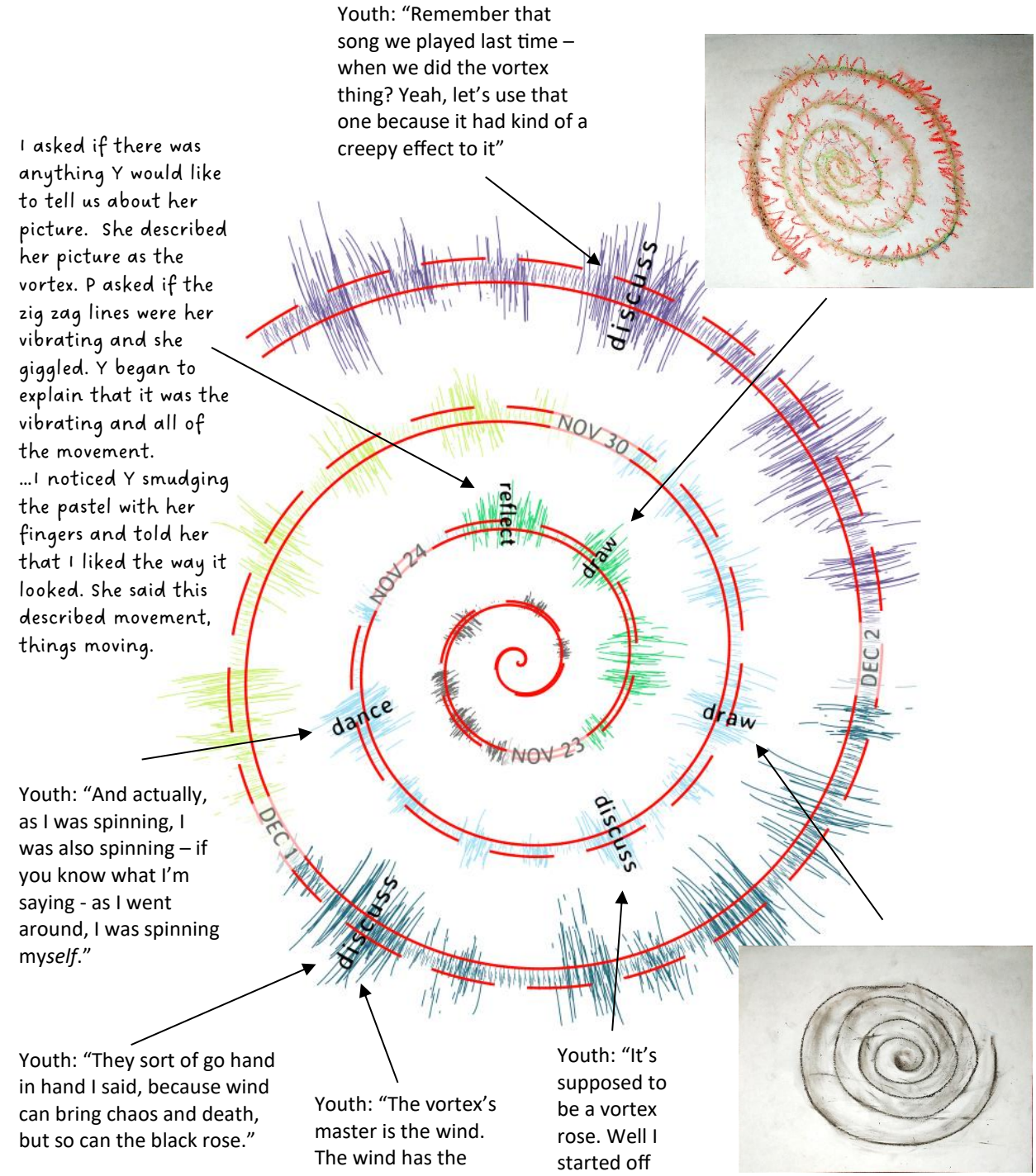
I understood that the youths collectively made meaning of their embodied experiences in dance and this interactivity emerged as expressive movement. The work noted in one of the youth’s discussions dated December 2, 2021 aligned with Halprin (1995) and Lerman’s (2011) descriptions of expressive movement: (a) youth 1 and 2’s collective story of falling, starting over again, and enjoying looking up at the night sky by imagining lots of full moons was a momentary movement feeling image; (b) youth 2’s story about stargazing with the pet dog and feeling calm was a picture, feeling, and story sequence. I observed an ebb and flow of the youths’ ongoing development of expressive movement that revealed several images within Dance Land’s creative process.

I uncovered three images that highlighted the arc of the youths’ ongoing development of expressive movement: (a) the vortex rose; (b) predator and prey; and (c) power of land. The following figures illuminate these images and magnify creative activity related to each image: (a) key words spoken by youth; (b) movement depicted through youths’ drawings; and (c) key embodied student researcher reflections. I recognize that interpreting areas of creative exploration within living art can be an ongoing and endless process. I focus on revealing the holistic nature of the community-based dance process and the integration between embodiment and expressive movement. Figures 13, 15, and 16 highlight how the youth used embodied ways of knowing to create expressive movement. I discovered that the creation of expressive movement in this way made sense of the youths’ human experiences of relationships with land and the relational elements[77] that informed them. Figure 14 supports imagery in Figure 15. See Figures 13-16.

[77] Tuck and McKenzie (2015) recognized the embodiment of experiences of and in place as important to critical place inquiry noting “that it is not just *who* we ‘meet’ in place in terms of social and cultural influences, but also that who we are and how we are is influenced by land and nonhuman” (p. 42).

Figure 13

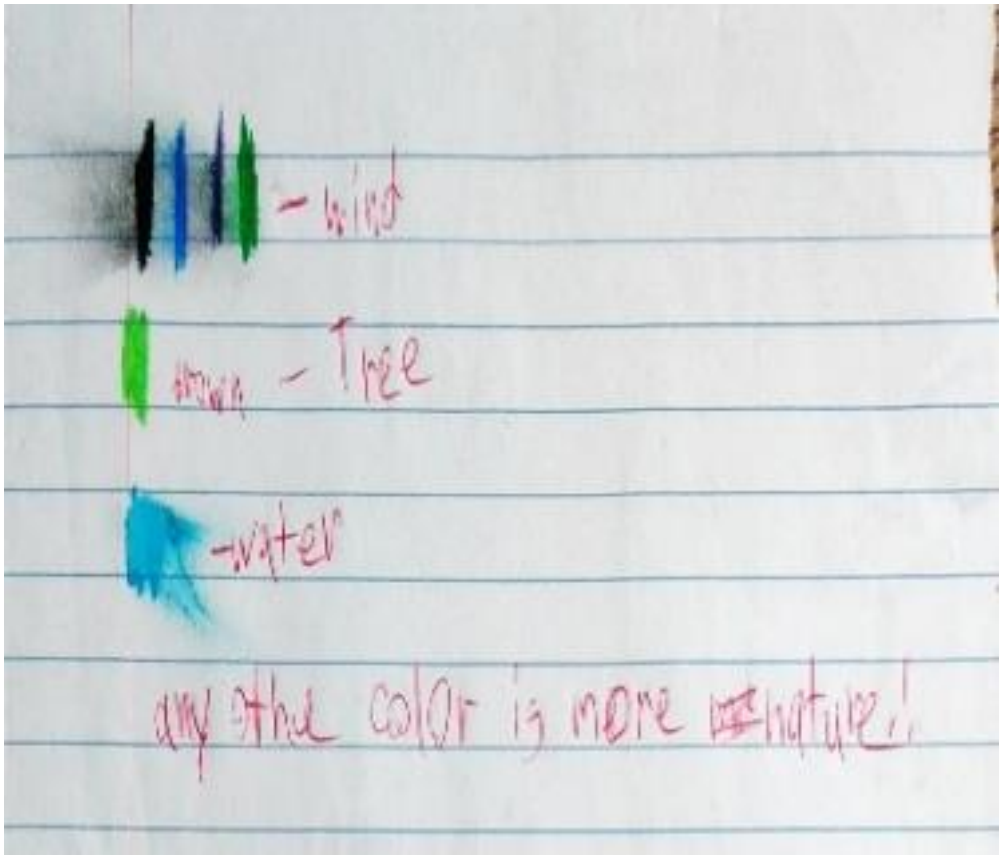
development of expressive movement: the vortex rose



In our December 1st session one youth drew a legend for the drawing that is furthest to the top of the page in Figure 15 that follows the legend. The drawing was created earlier, in our November 23rd session. The legend described the meaning of different colours used in the youth's drawing. The youth's action of assigning meaning to colours in their drawing integrated relationships within some of the images the group collaboratively created. This youth's choice to create a legend for their drawing highlighted the connection between this youth accessing embodiment through dance and creating knowledge in the development of expressive movement. See Figure 14.

Figure 14

youth's legend for Nov. 25th drawing



Note: The hand-written portion of Figure 14 from top to bottom reads: wind; brown - tree; water; any other color is more nature!

Figure 15

development of expressive movement: predator and prey

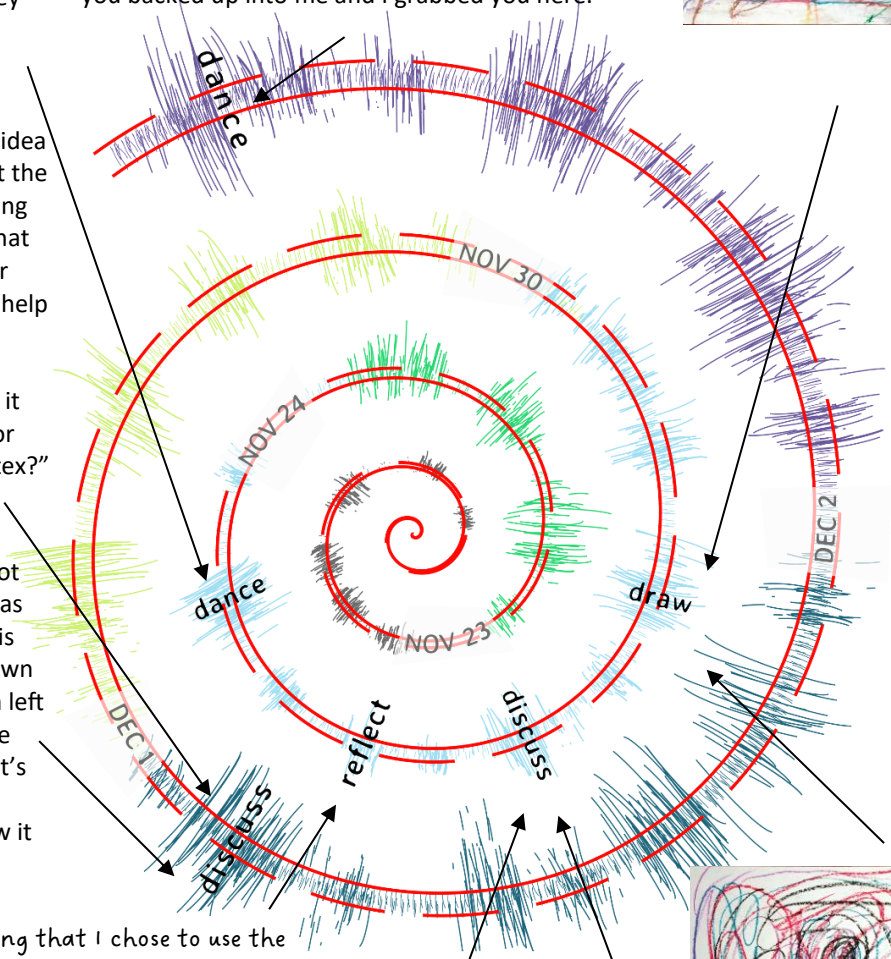
"And at one point I had jumped at you like that! And then she came at me. You had backed away, when I first came at you I had gone behind you, so you backed up into me and I grabbed you here."

"And at one point I had jumped at you like that! And then she came at me. You had backed away, when I first came at you I had gone behind you, so you backed up into me and I grabbed you here."

"Did you notice how we actually track you? Because that actually brings prey and hunter together."

"What about this idea that R drew about the chaos and gathering that happens? What would that idea or image support or help in some of these movement things we've done?... So it goes with predator and prey and vortex?"

"The wind does not have control - it has no master… That is why its up and down and side and then left and right... For the predator or prey it's an advantage, depending on how it blows."



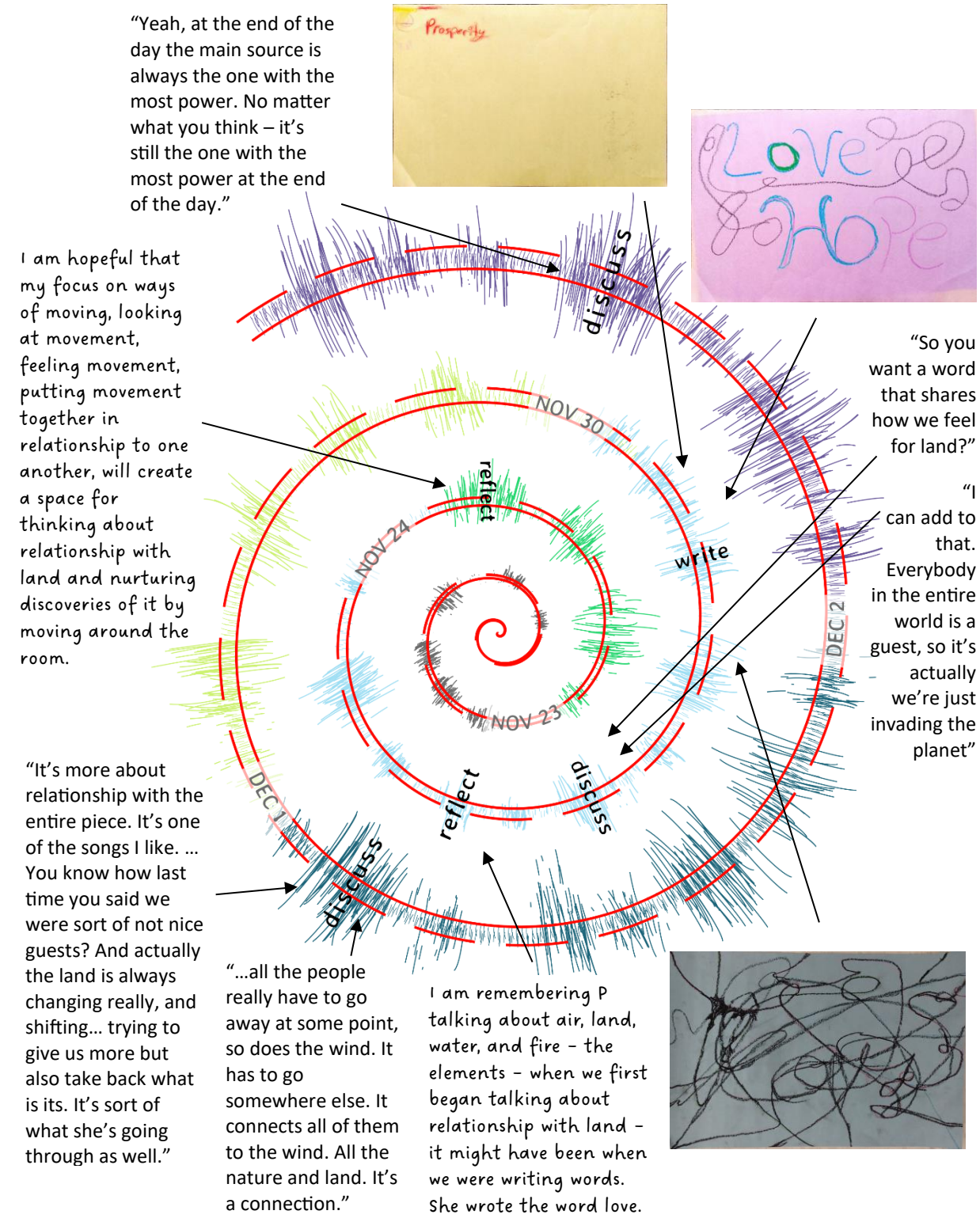
I find it interesting that I chose to use the phrasing "things that are alive outdoors" without discussing what that means - why the word 'alive'? Could we have had a discussion on what it means to be alive? Could this have contributed to the focus on deer, bats, animals and predators? I think R also saw humans as well as animals as predators. Did she have much space to help shape the dance? Not enough - I need to get out of the way instead of feeling like I have to make things happen.

"I have heard a deer. I scared it off by accident when I was just laying in the long grass in our other back yard. And I was like this close to touching it but I kept trying to get Grandma to stop the lawn mower so she could come and see it, and it ran away, and it sounded like a cow!"

"We are both prey and hunter. We kill them, they attack us. It's the same."

Figure 16

development of expressive movement: power of land



Figures 13-16 described how the youth created knowledge through the development of expressive movement based upon experiences of embodiment while exploring relationships with land. In the previous student researcher reflection dating October 3, 2021, I connected my embodiment through dance to relationships with land, who I am, and the actions that I take. The October 3rd reflection continued and described a different way of seeing the lake that deepened my understanding of my relationships with land. My reflection dated October 3, 2021, highlighted how I created knowledge through past experiences of embodied ways of knowing that included the writing of poetry. I found that creating knowledge through remembered experiences of embodied knowing informed the choices I made to facilitate Dance Land's creative process.

October 3, 2021
After the writing yesterday, I feel a gathering or convergence within me of different aspects of things that are slowly revealing themselves to describe my relationship with land. Being here in LLB illuminates the lake. I always saw the lake as being here and something we are very grateful for and appreciative of – its beauty, its smells, its expanse. What hit me like a lightening bolt is that the lake has a presence that encompasses all of us or any group of us. We are not in its shadow but embraced by this presence and even though I learned to believe my presence was equal to, or more than, this lake, I struggled with this idea of dominance as a young person. This is a big part of what my "It" poetry was about. I remember despairing and feeling sad and powerless at the time for the birds, animals, grasses, trees, everything! I did not know why I felt sad. I thought it was because people polluted and did not care about other living things – this came from the perspective that we could "take care" of things. Now I understand that we are not more than or bigger than this lake. The lake is a presence that holds us in its power and mystery. We still do shitty things to the lake but that is not because we have power over it, it is because we are disrespectful to the power it shares. I feel like what I am trying to write about is a subtlety that I am still working through.

This reflection helped me to identify that my personal exploration of relationships with land was integral to facilitating Dance Land and acknowledging the youths' creation of knowledge as expressive movement.

scoring: using embodied knowledge to build a dance

The youths' development of expressive movement was related to scoring which is the final element of collective creativity. Scoring in community-based dance is the action of finding structure to build dances (Halprin, 1995; Lerman, 2011). The youth collaboratively expanded the meaning of their

expressive movement by using embodied knowledge to score a dance. As the final step of Dance Land's creative process, the youths designed an order, or scored, expressive movement. I found that the activity of scoring expressive movement revealed the intention of the youths' explorations of relationships with land (Halprin, 1995).

The intention of the youths' explorations of relationships with land emerged in the second to last Dance Land session during one of the group's longest discussions. In my reflection I described my approach to facilitating the action of scoring and highlighted the work of one youth who requested specific music that aligned with the intention of the youths' explorations of land.

December 1, 2021
I brought out all of the drawings and spoke about the movement sequences and wrote them down. At my prompting, we began to seek a narrative from these pieces. P became very involved in how and why these things fit together. P gave a very thorough explanation of why a Katy Perry song that she likes is "the voice of the land" because the song is about taking back your strength and building yourself up to be able to fight for yourself. In the song she sings about a bad boyfriend who P compares to a bad guest on the land. I told her I would definitely bring the song tomorrow and I would try at the break to play it from my phone… P asked about it at the end and I promised we would have it the next day. I have such mixed emotions – I am astonished by her ability to make these connections, and yet I dread using pop music to accompany the movement that is being created. I am working hard to find curiosity and faith in P's feeling for the music. I recognize I should have taken this opportunity to ask Y if she had any music she wanted us to use – when we first spoke about everyone being able to choose music, she said none of her songs were clean enough and I wrote previously about her comment about depressing music.
P came up with some amazing connections between all of the ideas we had been working on to craft a dance. Tomorrow will be a very busy session. I hope I can structure it in a way that honours all of the thinking done today. This is the first class where we had such a long break from moving. I think that if sessions had not been missed, we could have taken time to play physically with what we were talking about.

In the last two sessions of Dance Land the youth designed their score. In this score I saw an impression of their embodied knowing. Throughout Dance Land's sessions, we asked one another about the development of our expressive movement: what happened; what do we like or not like; what does it

mean to us; where does it go from here?[78] I observed that these questions challenged the youth to develop and score their expressive movement in a way that communicated the essence of Dance Land's focus on relationships with land. I found that the youth united Dance Land's intention and theme (Halprin, 1995) through the action of scoring. I discovered that the youths' Dance Land score expressed the intention to share experiences about its theme relationships with land through a creative process that valued youths' embodied knowledge.

In the previous section titled embodiment, excerpts of the youths' discussions valued their embodied knowledge in relation to one youth's experiences of stargazing. Another youth joined in the stargazing discussion and reflected on the meaning of this movement as an ending to the dance scored by the group. The following transcript took place in Dance Land's final scoring session on December 2, 2021, between me and the two youths. This verbal exchange uncovered how embodied strategies of dance were used to collectively expand the creation of knowledge by scoring expressive movement.

> youth 1: "I think ending calming - like just coming out of something that's like, traumatic, and then ending with something calming…"
>
> youth 2: "That's why I like sitting under the stars. There's so much really going on up there that we might not know about. And yet, they don't let us know because they want us to come there, maybe. It's a whole other world out there maybe. Because it makes me really appreciate how simple it might be down here because the other planets aren't very inhabitable."
>
> facilitator: "Yeah, the ones in our galaxy. And, what it makes me think of is the song that you were thinking about and how in the song nature is taking back its power and so in many ways we are here and we're acknowledging and understanding that nature is all powerful."

[78] Halprin (1995) describes this line of questioning as *valuacting* resources. "Valuaction analyzes the results of action and possible collectivity and decisions" (p. 124). My experiences of learning how to evaluate movement collectively reflects Halprin's description although it was never attributed to Halprin in my dance training.

youth 2: “Yeah, at the end of the day the main source is always the one with the most power. No matter what you think – it’s still the one with the most power at the end of the day.”

I found that, in addition to collectively expanding the creation of knowledge, the youth’s activity of scoring also highlighted tensions between representation of individual and group identities in the dancemaking process.

scoring and expressing character within a group

I saw that the youth expressed individuality in Dance Land’s collaborative working space when, as discussed in the previous *recognition of youths’ voicing* section, the youth drew from embodied knowledge to work relationally. I observed that working relationally and collectively scoring a dance work introduced the youth to the conscious expression of group character. I discovered that the representation of a group character encountered tension between individual choices and designing group character. The following excerpts from the group’s final scoring session dated December 2, 2021, identify some ways that the youth navigated tensions that arose between building movement sequences from the expression of an individual to score the expression of group character in dancemaking. I expose this scoring of group character with the group discussing fine details of movement and referring to one individual’s embodied knowledge to organize the intention and meaning of movement that describes group character.

facilitator: “So E was doing this. Why don’t we think of sharp movements.”

youth 1: “and Y was going” [showing movement]

facilitator: “She was being jaggedy and sharp.”

youth 1: “She was going like this.” [showing movement]

youth 2: “I didn’t do shit.”

youth 1: “In your tree thing. Chopping tree.”

facilitator: “When you and E were doing the chopping tree.”

youth 2: “Yeah, I didn’t do jagged movements.”

facilitator: “Oh! How did you do it then? I am glad you’re here.”

youth 2: “I sank.”

facilitator: “Did you just melt?”

youth 2: “Yes.”

youth 1: “She went first, like this.”

youth 2: “I moved sideways and then started going down.”

facilitator: “So you can do one sharp sideways and then go down. We will be jaggedy. You guys do one sharp one and then start going down.”

youth 3: “So like you hit us and we’re going down slowly. Like you hit us and we’re dying out slowly.”

youth 1: “Like in a sensitive spot.” ….

facilitator: “And, what I just heard is that the tree is slowly falling and then it falls forward uh, depending on how you chopped it.”

youth 3: “Yeah, or should we go sideways so that I am not falling on you? “

facilitator: “That’s true, and you know what I was thinking, this is a great time for us to be in self-space because other than our seeds in the beginning we haven’t stayed in one spot too much. What do you guys think of that?”

youth 3: “Yeah.”

facilitator: “Ok, whoo! this is the big drama – this is like the high point of the dance.”

youth 1: “It’s getting harder just to figure out what’s happening.”

facilitator: “So, you guys have melted down and we keep chopping. We’re ruthless and we keep chopping.”

youth 3: “Mm-hmm.”

youth 2: “She left.” ….

facilitator: “Ok, here we are. Let’s go from the chopping…”

youth Support Worker: “Ok.”

youth 1: “Right here is where we’re no longer anything to chop. Y, what does ‘she left’ mean? Katy Perry – she left?”

youth 2: “When I did it with E – in the beginning of it I was inviting her on to earth, and then, because she was human and humans were taking everything off the earth so she went and chopped down the tree as you guys call it. What she was doing was actually taking everything and then when she was done she was like ‘ok, I got everything’ and then she left.”

facilitator: “Oh she left!”

youth 2: “Yeah, she pretended to walk out the door.”

facilitator: “Well, let’s try that then. We are not necessarily chopping a tree. We are taking everything.”

youth Support Worker: “Ok.”

facilitator: “Once you were down there Y, was that it for you? Did you do any more movement?”

youth 2: “No”

facilitator: “So, we’ll do – I don’t know, do we want to do this?” [rubs hands]

youth 3: “Yeah, and then we’ll be done and walk out?”

I found that dancemaking reveals how the youths’ expressions of individuality were collectively scored into a group character. It is also significant that we ‘discovered’ that a movement exploration described as a human being invited to earth and taking everything evolved into the expressive movement of *chopping tree*. This transformation in meaning and back again uncovers a search for meaning that occurred through scoring (Lerman, 2011).

Scoring was the final element of collective creativity and I saw the youth review several images[79] that were developed through ongoing analysis of their expressive movement. During the last two sessions of Dance Land the group gathered drawings and titles of their images and focused on reviewing meanings and connections that surfaced. I discovered that the youth proposed an order for these images in a *poem-like arrangement* that voiced their meaning-making[80]. This arrangement reveals how expressive movement organized into a score forms the initial steps of dance creation. The progression of building this Dance Land score is captured in two photographs, one from each of Dance Land's final two sessions. See Figures 17 and 18.

[79] refer to Figures 13-16 as some examples of images the youth created during Dance Land

[80] Lerman (2011) describes this approach to making meaning in movement as narrative, or idea-related meaning where images are "layered so that the energy of the dance itself ties together an accumulated sequence of pictures, of feeling, of story" (p. 73).

Figure 17

Dance Land score initial build Dec. 1, 2021

Figure 18

Dance Land score final build Dec. 2, 2021

The Dance Land final score build began with one image followed by seven columns. The score is read from left to right and the columns begin at the bottom and move upward. At times an image informs the column it is in as well as the column that precedes it. In the following, each paragraph describes a new column. In this way, the structure of this score is connected to the meaning of the youths' expressive movement and briefly traces some of the youths' physicality.

The initial image in the Dance Land score was a branch that spreads out and remains a part of the whole, similar to a food chain. The branch signified all components reaching out to extend from the power of the wind.

The first column described a movement sequence titled *vortex rose* (black spiral) followed by a visual that described the feeling of change between chaos and calm, followed by a movement sequence titled *wind*. The movement sequence for the vortex rose reflected beginning as a seed, growing, and dying due to the wind movement sequence that followed. The wind movement sequence reflected one's body being blown around by wind. Feelings of chaos and calm took place throughout the movement sequences.

The second column used three line-drawing visuals to understand various dynamics of the wind movement sequences throughout the score. The more scattered line drawings felt chaotic and spread apart while the *bunched-up* lines felt calmer and unified. This understanding informed how dancers moved in relationship to one another. The lines also described pathways of gathering and spreading apart as well as mixed emotions while moving. The wind acted as master and created the vortex in the following column.

The third column described a movement sequence titled *vortex,* followed by a visual (purple spiral) that described the movement of the vortex, followed by a movement sequence titled *predator and prey*. The movement for the vortex sequence reflected slow tightly circling movement in the centre at the same time large spinning pathways circled around the slow movement. This dynamic shifted into

fast and small vibrating movement in the centre at the same time large sweeping movement circled the centre. The movement for the predator and prey sequence reflected travelling through space while changing levels and passing near other dancers. Three dancers surrounded one dancer and physically connected with one another.

The fourth column described a movement sequence titled *chopping tree* and an image (brown spiral) that described the vibrating power of the vortex and the wind's ability to help predators and prey survive by moving scents around. The movement for the chopping tree sequence expressed the idea of humans as uninvited guests on the planet. In pairs, the first dancer backed away from the second dancer. The first dancer opened their arms at waist height in a welcoming gesture. The second dancer made sharp movements on either side of the first dancer who slowly fell to the floor. The second dancer walked away from the first.

The fifth and sixth columns contained one visual each. In the 5th column an image of trees and a bush reflected two movement sequences (a) a pair of dancers above and below each other, and the lower dancer making soft smoothing motions while the upper dancer makes spiky, shooting out movements (b) moving across an unstable surface and falling and catching oneself to finish with the trauma of falling. In the 6th column an image (green spiral) of the feeling of dancing in snow with shrubs that informed the spiky and smooth movement sequence and the falling and catching movement sequence.

The final column displayed three visuals associated with a night sky: (a) colour beneath darkness punctuated by light; (b) a dance universe containing many different motions; (c) feelings of peace and calm under a dark sky. These three visuals represented an untitled movement sequence based on stargazing that evoked feelings of peace, calm, and wonder.

The actions of scoring required many discussions between the youth. I created the following poem entirely out of words spoken by the youth during their actions of scoring. Through poetry I reveal

a different way of looking at the meaning the youths created when they reviewed and ordered, or scored, images that arose from their expressive movement.

a whole other world out there maybe

onethickbranch

starts in the centre

o p e n s

spreads out
still apart

just lying there
roots in place
little seeds
l
a
y d
o
w
n
scrunched up

slowly g r o w

more thinking

the flower crumple in your hands
hand in hand
wind chaos and death
black rose death and catastrophe

peace and then the storm is that what she said
peace storm
(when she was out (not always the best guests

start the wind
control panel for the world

but the wind has no master.

NNNnnnnnnnn…mmmmmmm…nnnnnnn
(blows hard

knock over
buildingstrees
collapse
killing
(safe outside (more natural

like each other
look
different in ways

darker lines intense there wind movements

darkpurplesdarkbluesandblacks

pinkish red the vortex
browns and greens the tree
in here) the waters (plus these vegetation

smudge lines don't mix other colours
more bunched up more together
nice kids close together
calmer

smudging everywhere
all over away from itself
bad kids cause trouble
chaotic

But the wind has no master.

semi calm
mother nature
storms

go somewhere else
It connects all.

What did you call that one?

It supports the vortex.

vortex death chaos too
vortex tornado simulators
I got up from the vibrating
my sister said I look like a zombie

the spinning part

the whole point
All vortexes spin, don't they?

we also have predator and prey
I went whhht! switching between the levels
hunt in packs
snuck
rushed
startling
I would go like pounce

Do you remember how that works? Because I don't

pushing everything away backing away
ask us we're welcoming

we can both be trees
chop her down sensitive spot
neck bleed out fall
heart dying instantly

She was going like this I didn't do shit
I sank
dying out slowly it's a tree though

it's getting harder just to figure out what's happening
I was inviting her on to earth
humans were taking everything
chopped the tree as you guys call it
got everything
walk out the door

a dance where you catch yourself
walking trying not to flip fall sideways
lay down the sun is pausing look up thank you

tiny bright full moons
the black sky
stars blink

coming out of traumatic
ending with calming

developing expressive movement and facilitating dance exploration

Scoring is the final element of collective creativity and completes this review of Dance Land's findings. The most important findings represented the youths' development of expressive movement as well as my collaborative and relational practice to facilitate dance exploration of relationships with land. First, in regard to the youths' development of expressive movement, Dance Land's collaborative and emergent creative process rooted the youths' decision-making process in embodied strategies. The youth used embodied ways of knowing to choose knowledge that felt intuitively important to them as individuals, modify this knowledge with learned knowledge from others, and create knowledge (Barbour, 2011) to design expressive movement. The structuring, or scoring, of expressive movement challenged the youth to analyze how to express individual experiences of relationships with land together in one group. The youths' experiences of creating knowledge in the process of dancemaking were different than experiences of having knowledge passed down to them, and the youth experienced living creatively by becoming aware of their own embodiment and using it to consciously create knowledge (Barbour, 2011).

Second, in regard to my collaborative and relational practice to facilitate dance exploration, recognition of power dynamics that are fundamentally rooted in settler colonialism and the process of community-based dance contributed to the work of shaping my facilitation (Shea Murphy, 2022). I explored relationships with land to understand my power as a member of the dominant culture in Canada and recognize ways of facilitating community-based dance creation that may enable change and transformation for the dancers who are understanding life situations in a new way. In this process, Garneau's (2016) previously discussed vision of *post-TRC aesthetic work* illuminated two important points in regard to my actions. First, my sparse connection to The Friendship Centre's programming highlighted a lack of coming to an agreed understanding about Canada's facts and truth about Indigenous people and colonial history (Garneau, 2016).

Second, I drew from my embodied experiences through dance and explained my motivation to engage in collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth in a creative space that was informed by critical place inquiry (Garneau, 2016; Tuck & McKenzie, 2015). This reflexive artistic process included organizing youths' embodied knowledge through dance and empowered youth to construct knowledge about their relationships with land. I understood this knowledge to reflect the youth experiencing their relationships with land as a relationship with an entity that has the agency to take back its power from human beings. In their efforts to highlight their connections with land as an entity, the youth wrote *love, hope,* and *prosperity* when responding to a prompt asking them how they felt which could imply moving toward a future of more respectful reciprocal relationships with land as an entity.

The significance of these findings in relation to the literature reviewed is highlighted in the following Discussion area. The discussion explores new understandings and insights that emerged from collaborative creative processes with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth exploring relationships with land and the potential implications for CYC practice.

area 5: discussion

The Dance Land inquiry used an arts-based methodology to take a critical approach to research and dance facilitation with Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth to answer my research question, "How can youth use expressive movement to explore their personal relationships with land?". I reviewed literature on some differing perspectives on the concept of reconciliation and this information was inspiring and relevant to this study. However, I am mindful of the limitations of this inquiry and recognize that it in no way answers the critical question of land claims and restitution for Indigenous peoples on land in Canada.

In this final area, I explore implications for practice in the field of CYC, highlighting this inquiry's key finding of embodiment, or embodied ways of knowing[81]. My intention is to spark new ideas that might support different approaches to sharing views of relationships with land in the field of CYC. I am aware that given the small scope of this inquiry and being a novice researcher, the findings are partial and unfinished. However, I offer the following concluding discussion statements as a way of conveying what is possible. I end this section with suggesting areas for further research and a conclusion.

embodied ways of knowing: new possibilities for exploring relationships with land in CYC praxis

In the following paragraphs, I take up the findings of my inquiry on embodied ways of knowing that are accessed through dance to recognize dance as a way of *knowing through moving*[82]. This way of knowing underlined *how* the youth expressed themselves regardless of *what* the youth expressed, and centered the youths' process, not the product of their creative explorations. Blumenfeld-Jones (2016) reminded us that "our logo-centered Western culture may privilege words and permit that only words

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[81] As discussed in area 4, in the context of dance, Barbour (2011) describes embodied ways of knowing as knowing and understanding yourself and your world through the process of personally integrating and experiencing different knowledge. This way of knowing and understanding does not leave out your individual embodiment, and the sense of wholeness and integration that comes through moving, but instead focuses knowing through moving, or thinking in movement. (p. 91).

[82] From here on, I use the phrase embodied ways of knowing to refer to embodied ways of knowing that are accessed through dance.

count, but this does not rule out those of us who, knowing through movement, actually know something that is not words yet is knowing" (p. 324).

These findings highlight the potential for youth to experience new possibilities in exploring their relationships with land through dance and to consider the implications this may have for the field of CYC. The significance of the youth drawing upon embodied ways of knowing is important to understanding how accessing *knowing through movement* (Barbour, 2011) may contribute to CYC praxis. In the following section, I illuminate embodied ways of knowing in the findings of my inquiry to discuss what dance can do to help youth explore their relationships with land: experience actions that reveal what is valued in relationships with land, create holistic knowledge, listen deeply and more authentically to diverse worldviews, recognize that cultural and historical dynamics can impact relational work, and navigate tensions when shaping the character of a group of dancers. The following section also emphasizes youth engaging with embodied ways of knowing through dance to explore their relationships with land.

experience actions that reveal what is valued in relationships with land

The findings of my research speak to the ways in which youth who accessed embodied ways of knowing explored self-value. For example, youth could experience an environment where space is created to sense, feel, and witness improvisatory movement in addition to more traditional ways of communicating with one another. Snowber (2018) noted that "dance not only welcomes a space for aesthetic experience, connectedness, wholeness, and knowledge to burst open, but also is an entrance to embodied experiences" (p.248). The findings emphasize how dance can access embodied experiences which can facilitate freedom for youth to physically play with ways of moving as well as metaphorically move ideas and associations that arise. Regarding this improvisatory environment, Pollitt et al. (2021), explained that "as a pedagogical practice for the early years, dance improvisation is not about teaching children dance 'steps' or 'moves', but rather aims to use dance as a way of attuning to the world

through bodies" (p. 1143). This free association and collaborative environment introduced the youth to sensing and valuing their experiential knowledge through dance (Barbour, 2011). As highlighted in the findings, this type of dance environment has the potential to support youth to experience how they act creatively toward what they value about their relationships with land. In thinking about the findings in relation to CYC, practitioners with a dance background may be supported to advocate for youth to engage in dance and movement explorations that focus on accessing embodied ways of knowing and to recognize dance approaches that focus on techniques, such as improvisation, so that youth may engage relationally with one another as opposed to skillfulness in executing dance steps.

In addition, the potential of this inquiry to alter the way youth manifested place through deeper and intentionally embodied explorations of their relationships with land may have had a meaningful role in *maintaining, resisting, or mobilizing political trajectories* the youth may encounter beyond this inquiry. For example, youth may enter future discussions in their secondary school studies on some of the political aspects of humans' relationships with land—such as property ownership—and their responses could be informed by embodied dance experiences that occurred during this inquiry.

create holistic knowledge

The findings stress how integrated experiences of body, mind, and spirit, found in *voicing* (Chadwick, 2021) about movement, intention, and making meaning, took place throughout dancemaking. For example, dancemaking revealed youths' experiences and memory specific to a time, place that is danced in, the people youth worked with, and the webs of support that surrounded them. These experiences reflected the youths' embodied ways of knowing and connect to Barbour's (2011) discussion with a dancer on embodiment:

> Maybe this notion of wholeness, of embodiment, is more about being in relationship with ourselves and others and the environment, all at once. It's a total kind of awareness, where all your "antennae" are working in those directions. Maybe you understand something that might

> not even yet have words for you. You understand what integration means, or what that whole idea of mind/body/spirit means. And you can exhibit as a dancer, this fabulous organization in the moment, of intricate movement patterns, emotive expression, spiritual states of being, and qualities of energy. Basically revealing the kind of fantastic brilliance of the human animal at its best. You can articulate that extraordinary intelligence of humans in dancing. (p. 91)

The findings also support how youth who articulate "extraordinary intelligence" through dance by using embodied ways of knowing can experience holistic knowing through their senses and the felt senses of their bodies in addition to cerebral knowing and learning (Snowber, 2012; Blumenfeld Jones, 2016; Carter, 2020).

Regarding experiences of holism and Indigenous research, Ansloos and Wager (2020) noted that "within the context of arts-based research it is critical that holism attend to the intrapersonal, communal, structural, and even onto-epistemological concerns of participants" (p.63). The findings highlight the potential for dance to attend to these concerns when methods to access embodied ways of knowing are used. These findings help researchers in the field of CYC who engage with Indigenous youth to consider using embodied ways of knowing in ABR to disrupt approaches to research from less holistic worldviews.

listen deeply and more authentically to diverse worldviews

The findings give understanding to how youth used embodied ways of knowing in an exploratory movement and creation project and how this could uncover diverse ideas in a collaborative creative space. Such spaces can make room for youth to collectively create knowledge and 'hear' other youths' diverse worldviews related to exploring relationships with land. Lerman (2011) discussed the sharing of these worldviews as unique perspectives, or self-knowledge which "brings out a positive kind of vulnerability in each individual, accompanied by a willingness to listen to others that is deeper and more authentic than that generated by the mere act of taking turns" (p. 22-23). As highlighted in the findings,

this deeper and more authentic way of listening can occur when youth express curiosity about how to execute one another's movement and discuss the intent and meaning behind the movement. The findings provided here illustrate how the youths' sharing of unique perspectives emerged from embodied ways of knowing, which supported the group's willingness to listen deeply with more authenticity to diverse worldviews.

recognize that cultural and historical dynamics can impact relational dance work

The findings also point to how dance can facilitate youth to work relationally. In relational dance work youth can be supported to engage beyond their individual embodied selves and collaboratively create dance that can recognize broader cultural and historical dynamics that emerge from embodied ways of knowing. This way of *knowing how to be with* (White, 2007) one another in dance is an illustration of working relationally. The findings provide insights into how understanding the youths' dance work as relational can make room to see how the dynamics of the youths' cultures and histories in their geographic location can impact the way their *voicing* is formed, received, and valued (Chadwick, 2021; Barbour, 2011).

navigate tensions when shaping the character of a group of dancers

The findings illuminate the potential for youth to navigate tensions in the process of shaping a group's character. Shaping a group's character in dancemaking that accesses embodied ways of knowing has the potential to uncover tensions that arise when participant's individuality is honoured alongside group collaboration to design and make meaning of movement. For example, the youth experimented with movement explorations that they chose to develop and shaped the group's character through the process of scoring a dance piece. In exploring how ways of life and art can unite, Halprin (1995) commented that "the individual, in order to realize his or her potential, needed the reality of a group situation where more life-like experiences and diversity could be confronted and checked out" (p. 112). Thus, the findings deliver sensitivity into how youth can realize their potential in navigating "the reality

of a group situation". This navigation occurs when relational dance work that comes out of movement explorations for two dancers are integrated into the scoring of a dance in which the entire group participates.

implications for CYC

As a novice white settler student researcher using ABR that involved Indigenous youth, I learned from all of the youth that manifesting their relationships with land through dance was an ongoing process that had the potential to lead to more questions, more exploration, and more expressive movement that could build images to collaboratively develop the group's narrative. I learned to follow the youths' lead in navigating this process. I also learned that this ongoing process was unpredictable and facilitating it at the same time as researching it required me to 'sit' in a state of not-knowing. I found that my state of not-knowing sent me into deeper reflections about who I am and how my relationships to land that are informed by my white settler history and culture is pervasive in everything I do. These kinds of reflections often made me question why I would choose to use ABR and contemporary dance in particular, with Indigenous youth. At this point, another cycle of following the youths' lead, sitting in a state of not-knowing, and deeply reflecting would begin again. In the following section I discuss the potential for embodied ways of knowing to contribute to CYC curricula.

embodied ways of knowing: potential contributions to CYC curricula

A significant aspect of discussing what dance can do to support youth in exploring their relationships with land is to look at the potential for embodied ways of knowing to contribute to CYC curricula. White (2007) described a dynamic and embodied expression of CYC praxis as *being with* and *knowing how to be with*. The following section focusses on how ABR, including dance, has the potential to inform the field of CYC in the development of White's (2007) expression of praxis. Also, how a critical understanding of relationships with land can contribute to CYC practitioners building creative spaces for

unsettling relationships with land and settler-colonial power relations. I end this section with a list of proposed implications for the field of CYC.

knowledge of embodied ways of knowing contributing to studies of relational practices

The findings emphasize how familiarity with using embodied ways of knowing to explore relationships with land has the potential to contribute to studies of relational practices[83]. In a study on relational practice in the field of CYC, Steckley (2020) explained that "the relational nature of teaching and learning relational practice was identified, raising important parallels between the relational experiences practitioners have as part of their training, and their relational practice in the field" (p. 112). Recognizing *relational experiences* as integral to embodied ways of knowing can deliver insights into how dance improvisation can contribute to the study of relational practice in CYC. *Relational logics* were described as unique to dance improvisation by education scholars Pollitt et al. (2021) who explained that

> Dance improvisation consists of honing receptivity and expanding perception in response to change. Relationality is central to this practice, as dance improvisation invites and draws human bodies into an open, responsive and receptive relations, such that all bodies (human and non-human) and knowledges are entangled with and part of the wider environment. (p. 1143)

The findings of this inquiry support the importance of how youth engaging in "open, responsive, and receptive relations" can draw from embodied knowledge to work relationally.

[83] Garfat (2008) visualized relational practice as a co-creation between self and other through stages of recognizing the space in-between and explained that this interpersonally co-created place is where CYC relational practice took place. Kouri (2015) reconsidered perceptions of self in CYC and noted that an important change took place in 2007 when White's CYC praxis framework expanded the KSS (knowledge, skills, self) model into knowing, doing, and being. White's (2007) framework is a dynamic and embodied expression of CYC praxis that describes self from the KSS model as 'being with' and 'knowing how to be' which includes the quality of being relational.

critical understanding of relationships with land contributing to development of relational work

The findings also give an understanding of how accessing embodied ways of knowing through ABR, including dance, to explore one's relationships with land can contribute to CYC practitioners' skills to work relationally. CYC scholar White (2007) reminded us that

> many of the relational and personal qualities in CYC work represent the active expression and embodiment of values and virtues as well as ways of being in the world. Often, these values and relational qualities are difficult to teach to new practitioners, in part because these qualities cannot be easily ''pinned down'' with words. (p. 236)

Building on the findings of this inquiry, I propose that exploring relationships with land using embodied ways of knowing can support CYC practitioners to "pin down" relational qualities and gain a deeper awareness of how their social identities and locations within the broader socio-cultural and political context in which they are situated unequally influence relationship-building within their practice. For example, a non-Indigenous CYC practitioner may *pin down* some of the relational qualities of their relationships with land through dance exploration; revealing embodied knowledge that may include valuing land as a commodity or resource to be owned. This recognition of valuing property ownership could lead the practitioner to notice inequities their clients face based upon property ownership. Thinking about this dancemaking process as a way to dialogue between dance and the content or data of one's exploration, I am reminded of dance scholar Carter (2020) who stated that "dialoguing between dance and data, is about thinking critically and integrating theoretical and personal knowledge to develop insights about the social and contextual aspects of an event" (section 3.3). The findings in my inquiry stress how exploring the "event" of relationships with land through dance has the potential to reveal insights about social and contextual aspects of this event. In addition, dance scholar Barbour (2011), explained that "supporting the development of critical understandings through embodied reflection… is particularly productive. However, the development of critical understandings seems to be

more meaningful for these students when undertaken as creative, narrative and embodied explorations" (p.121).

building creative spaces for unsettling relationships with land and settler-colonial power relations

The use of ABR, including dance in this inquiry, shows how this methodology can inform the field of CYC in how non-Indigenous practitioners who identify as white settlers may gain new understandings of how to acknowledge historical and ongoing colonial power relations when coordinating community-based dance making as "post-TRC aesthetic practice" (Garneau, 2016, p. 38). This acknowledgement of colonial power relations was highlighted by White (2015), who is a non-Indigenous scholar in Canada and declared that in the field of CYC "we need an ethos for the times that is grounded in the knowledge of particular places and histories, governed by an awareness of global realities and settler-colonial relations, and which pursues an ongoing commitment to justice" (p.511). Developing an awareness of the settler-colonial relations White refers to was contextualized by critical studies scholars Hargreaves and Jefferess (2015) who questioned, "What would it mean for us—as non-Indigenous people—to think seriously about reconciliation in terms of the project of decolonization, a project that serves to acknowledge and undo the foundational premises of our dominant settler myths?" (p. 201). These scholars went on to explain,

> We have come to experience this process as a humbling one: in one sense, it requires unlearning those stories that have affirmed our belonging and normalized colonial relations of power; in another it requires us to enter into a relation of sorts with those who have done much of this decolonized thinking "for us". In entering into this relation, we recognize a responsibility not only to acknowledge these influences upon our thinking, but also to engage in a collaborative spirit with this creative and critical work. (Hargreaves and Jefferess, 2015, p. 201)

In addition, visual Métis art scholar Garneau (2016) referred to post-TRC aesthetic practice and explained that "such work should not be *about* Indigenous people, but a study *with* Indigenous people.

Allies must understand the historical and embodied facts to the satisfaction of the First Peoples they hope to work with" (p. 38). ABR, including dance, may inform the field of CYC about the potential for practitioners to recognize the need to "understand the historical and embodied facts to the satisfaction of the First Peoples they hope to work with" (Garneau, 2016, p. 38) and to engage in unsettling discussions that can inform the design of dance spaces where decolonizing thinking has the potential to take place (Hargreaves & Jefferess, 2015). The use of ABR in this inquiry also shows potential for the field of CYC to draw from this methodology to access embodied ways of knowing to support practitioners to have unsettling discussions about settler colonialism in Canada. These unsettling discussions, and a need for them, can be regarded as *mapping or resisting* colonization according to non-Indigenous CYC scholar Kouri (2018) who described CYC as "complicit in colonial practices" (p. 21):

> While the denial of ongoing settler colonialism helps to frame many of our engagements with settler and Indigenous peoples as "helping" and "care," a CYC approach with the capacity to accurately map and resist "the tentacles of colonization" (McCaffrey, 2010, p. 343) is desperately required. (p. 22)

Thus, viewing unsettling discussions in CYC as capable of resisting colonization in the context of ABR that accesses embodied knowledge may inform the field of CYC about the design of creative spaces where decolonizing thinking has the potential to take place (Hargreaves & Jefferess, 2015).

In the following section, I draw from the findings of this study and my own learning journey in using ABR to propose the following implications for my field of CYC:

- practitioners who advocate for approaches to dance exploration that access embodied knowledge have the potential to support youth to experience: their physical actions toward what they value; holistic ways of knowing and opportunities to create holistic knowledge; listening deeply to others

- for researchers when engaging with Indigenous youth to consider using embodied ways of knowing through the use of ABR to disrupt approaches to research
- practitioners may recognize the potential for embodied ways of knowing to help youth better understand how cultural and historical locations and settler colonial power dynamics can impact relational work in exploring relationships with land
- knowledge of embodied ways of knowing may contribute to studies of relational practices in CYC curricula; For example, studies in CYC can include a guest facilitator to lead dance improvisation workshops about a theme chosen by students. Consideration of embodied ways of knowing in CYC curricula may offer future practitioners a greater understanding and capacity to advocate for youth to use this way of knowing.
- practitioners who engage with and advocate for creative spaces where decolonizing thinking has the potential to take place may contribute to the ongoing work of changing dominant colonial power relations that may impact Indigenous and non-Indigenous artistic community-based collaborations; these creative spaces may offer the potential for youth to navigate real life tensions that can arise when a dance piece is scored collectively

suggestions for further research

Based on the findings of my inquiry I recommend further research in two areas. First, study of the potential for embodied dance projects to pinpoint relational qualities in CYC practice is needed. This can include researching embodied ways of knowing as a relational approach to engage youth and the CYC practitioners with whom they work. This research has the potential to provide insights into studying relational qualities in CYC praxis.

Second, study of the potential for students of CYC praxis to have embodied experiences that can disrupt theoretical views of developing professional boundaries is necessary. This can include research on how students of CYC praxis who use embodied ways of knowing in dance to explore relational

practice may contribute to bridging what Steckley (2020) describes as “the misfit between the demarcation of professional boundaries as applied by cognate fields and the actual requirements of ameliorative relationships in residential child care” (p. 111). In other words, embodied ways of knowing can be explored for its potential to expose students of CYC praxis to setting professional boundaries informed by embodied experiences. This approach to boundary setting in the field of CYC may contribute to a deeper understanding of relational practice.

Having discussed the implications of the findings from this inquiry and suggesting ideas for further research, I move on to my conclusion that highlights the significance of these implications, my learning, and ideas that inform me as I move forward.

conclusion

This discussion on the implications of Dance Land’s key finding recognizes the significance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth accessing embodied ways of knowing to explore an idea that is central to the contested concept of reconciliation in Canada in a creative space. As such, this inquiry proposes insights into CYC praxis supporting the creation of artistic material that is imbued with the political, social, and cultural struggles and contradictions of the issue of relationships with land in Canada.

Through dance exploration, I learned about an important connection between Dance Land’s critical approach to community-based dance and a critical arts-based understanding of reconciliation. Garneau’s (2016) description of the power of creative process echoes my learning:

> I think we should not be in such a rush to let our words imagine a reconciled, healed future. Our focus should be on creating the conditions that engender the sharing of facts in forms that cannot be as easily appropriated, measured, and contained. I feel that this work will be its own reward, that people will be transformed by the process. Not only will new relationships and knowledge be forged, but new works will also be produced: performances, texts, works of art

> that will all require decoding and resist decoding, and in future such readings will engender further personal transformation. (p. 39)

I have been exposed to the potential that Garneau (2016) describes for dance "to engender the sharing of facts in forms that cannot be as easily appropriated, measured, and contained. Moving forward with these *forms* as dance collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth is a never-ending process in which I will continually learn.

In my learning process, I recognize that Halprin (1999), a non-Indigenous dance artist who, more than 25 years ago, stated that "in the evolution of Western industrialized urban culture, people gradually lost the language of dance even as they lost the consciousness of spiritual and natural participation" (p. 241). My work looks to address western contemporary dance as a *lost language* and to be informed by Halprin's (1999) view that

> The re-discovery of the lost language of dance now offers us the very vehicle which people traditionally used to form their cultures and face their crises… It is probably almost as true to say that the dances created their people as it is to say that the people created their dances. Now, we can use dance to re-create our culture. (p. 241)

I view Halprin's call for dance to *re-create our culture* as recognition that the violence and oppression of the Eurocentric origins of modern dance have the potential to be addressed by ongoing changes to community-based dance practice. My viewpoint is reinforced by Shea Murphy's (2022) "conviction that contemporary dance making's capacity for questioning and shifting are profound enough to perceive, and become unsettled by contemporary dances' grounding in colonizing and settler-colonial limits and presumptions" (p. 6). Shea Murphy (2022) explained that an important part of unsettling this grounding

is accepting *Indigenous refusal,*[84] and I am inspired by this non-Indigenous scholar's reflection on what this acceptance can mean for me as a non-Indigenous dance facilitator and student researcher:

> Learning to listen to refusal as expansive and generative, respectfully, without freaking out, with an openness to how its teachings might actually change things, including us—which might be new to those of us who are white, given how entitled to know everything many of us have been taught to be—is vital and challenging work. How to listen to and hear refusals—including refusals to be included or to be taught—as generative ways of *objecting* to objectifying colonizing structures like the university and of making space for recognition and reciprocity? …Leanne Betasamosake Simpson notes there is no place for whiteness in resurgence, by observing that "when we put our energy into building constellations of co-resistance within grounded normativity that refuse to center whiteness, our real white allies show up in solidarity anyway." (p. 270)

Questioning how to show up as a non-Indigenous person in environments that do not *center whiteness* to explore embodied ways of knowing with people who want to dance deepens my sensitivity to this intangible way of sharing life experiences. I attempted to unlearn dance facilitation structures guided by colonial power relations at the same time that I acknowledged I worked in *colonizing structures like the university*.

My unlearning included new learning from Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars and artists to begin building creative spaces that may contribute to the ongoing work of changing dominant colonial

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[84] Shea Murphy (2022) explained,

> Alongside the offering of guidelines and articulations around the skills settler scholars need to engage appropriately with Indigenous peoples and knowledges, Indigenous scholars have also addressed, and enacted, refusals. Kahnawà:ke Mohawk anthropologist Audra Simpson laid much of the groundwork for this work through her discussions of "ethnographic refusal," registering ways Indigenous peoples … turn away from settler-academic-imposed definitions and anthropological categories "that emerged in moments of colonial contact, many of which still reign supreme" and enacting what she terms "generative refusal" in her own research methods. (p. 267)

power relations in Canada (Hargreaves & Jefferess, 2015). An example of this creative space that helps to put my work into perspective can be found in ongoing contemporary dance performance collaborations between Indigenous dance artist Grenier and non-Indigenous dance artist Jamieson on the west coast of Canada (Dupuis, 2017). Grenier was quoted by Dupuis (2017) on the scope of this dancemaking process,

> "So much of the process is just about coming to a place of understanding and finding the trust necessary to navigate with one another in the space," Grenier adds. "We're not pretending this [sic] it's an easy thing to bridge across this history." (CBC Arts, Posted: March 21, 2017)

As I consider the idea of navigating with humans and non-humans in a place, I see the final expressions of this inquiry as images: a poem from a time of deeply understanding my complicity in the ongoing perpetuation of colonization, and a photograph of the lake embracing my sister and I walking with Sandy the dog in Treaty 6 territory on the ancestral and traditional territories of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, and Nakota Sioux, as well as the ancestral and traditional lands of Métis Peoples.

do not run stay

i feel vibration
sound hum
the earth speaks through my feet
into my bones
i see you
standing gingerly
on a tiny piece of rock

don't fall
i shout

it's too late
you are crawling
up the tiny sharp edges
scratches and bruises
cover you

standing tall
listening to the wind
talking to the trees
your ancestors lift you up

i am bewildered

the earth below
rumbles and shakes

my rattling bones
cannot contain the message
do not run stay

i need to show and say
what staying looks like
and there are rules
big rules

to say what this looks like
to the people
who no longer feel

earth’s messages

I invite them
to take their shoes off
again and again
listen

stay

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appendix A

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

For the Research Inquiry:

'Dance Land: Community-based dance, Youth, and Relationships with land'

Research inquiry leader:
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Research inquiry Supervisor:
Dr. Alison Gerlach, Assistant Professor, School of Child and Youth Care, Faculty of Human & Social Development, University of Victoria, Coast Salish Territories.
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You are invited to participate in a research inquiry. The Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Centre and the Lac La Biche County Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) are community partners who have agreed to host an arts-based inquiry as a dance unit that complements the FCSS *Teen Chill Zone* summer camp program for 13-17 year-olds. Lori is a non-Indigenous person who was born on the traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Métis, Dene and Nakota Sioux, that today is known as Treaty 6 territory, upon where Lac La Biche, Alberta is located. Dr. Alison Gerlach is her academic Supervisor.

Why is this study being done?
The purpose of this inquiry is to explore how collaborative dance among Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth can be used to share stories about relationship with land in your community. The knowledge that is gathered from this dance project will contribute to the way workers in Child and Youth Care do their work.

Why are you being asked to be a part of this inquiry?
You are being asked to take part in this inquiry because you have experience as a youth who is 13-17 years of age living in the Lac La Biche area. The way you think about and describe your relationship with land through dance is valuable and important to understanding how work that supports youth can be done in different ways. Lori Hamar hopes to have up to ten people participate in this inquiry.

What will it be like to participate in this inquiry?
You will be asked to participate in a dance-making summer camp called *Dance Land*. Being a part of this inquiry is completely voluntary. You will decide if you would like to join the two week program, and you will be free to leave the program at any time without explaining why.
In each dance session we will work together outdoors and indoors to create movement that tells our stories about our relationships with the land we live on through dance. Lori Hamar will pay attention to how the group works together to make their creative choices. Lori will write notes to remember what she is thinking about how these creative choices are being made. The group will have the honour to spend time with an Elder at the beginning and end of our sessions. We will explore different ways of

moving together to decide what the dance will look like and what kind of music we would like to move to. We will do some drawing and write down words that we may think of while we create the dance. In each session we will physically warm up our bodies through movement, and experiment with different ways of dancing – like thinking about the speed we are moving, the shapes we make with our bodies, and how dancers might move in the same way or not. Before our last session, the group will decide who they want to invite to see the dance-work that we create.
The dancing will take place in August. We will meet six times during a two-week period. Each session will be two hours in length.

What if you change your mind?
Taking part in *Dance Land* is your choice. You are free to not participate in some of the activities, to stop in the middle of an activity, or to withdraw from all the dance sessions at any time without giving a reason. Because dancing takes place in a group, if you decide to leave, your creative ideas that you have contributed up to the point of you leaving will remain in the content of the dance creation.

What will you and the community gain from being a part of this inquiry? You will have an opportunity to create art together as a group and get to know one another better. You will begin or strengthen a relationship with an Elder in your community. You will exercise your body. You will build a dance that describes ideas about the world you live in and take part in creating youth culture.

Some people in the community will hear and see your ideas about relationships with land. You may be inspired to create more dance to share with your community. You may describe things about one another that encourages the community to learn more about one another. Community youth programs may learn more about hosting dance programs.

Are there risks to being a part of this inquiry?
You will not meet any more risks than you do taking part in other physically-focussed programs (such as baseball or dodgeball). Potential risks may include minor injury associated with physical activity and perhaps discomfort expressing feelings about relationships with land.

What is being done to make participation in this inquiry less risky?
Some of these risks will be addressed by Lori Hamar who is a dance artist familiar with common injuries or pain that comes from practicing dance. Medical aid delivered by healthcare professionals will be provided if necessary. Youth Support Workers from the community partner organizations will contribute to lessening the potential for uncomfortable feelings about relationships with land. The Youth Support Workers will help to make decisions on how the idea of relationships with land is talked about. And they will be present to support youth for all six sessions. Lori Hamar will change the way the dance work is being done to support everyone's needs. If you feel uncomfortable and want to leave at any point in the dance sessions, you will let Lori Hamar or a Youth Support Worker know immediately, and your wishes will be respected. You do not have to give any explanation.

W*ill the dance sessions be recorded?* *Dance Land* requires audio and video recordings of you, and photos of your drawings during the six dance sessions. Lori Hamar will be able to access and watch the recordings and photos and view them with you as a part of the dance creation process. She will also type out words from the audio so that they can be seen as words on a page or screen.
As an arts-based researcher, Lori will create a dance solo to better understand the creative process used in this inquiry. Lori will talk with the group to explore the idea of Lori sharing some of your drawings, text, and videos in her dance solo. Everyone who participates in this inquiry will be able to see the solo

that Lori creates to let her know how they feel about the way she uses the audio and video recordings and photos of their creative work. Lori's dance solo will be a way to let the public know what was learned in this inquiry.

Along with the dance solo, Lori will also write a paper that is called a thesis that will describe this inquiry. When the thesis is accepted by the University of Victoria, it will be available to the public through their online library. Lori will not use the names of youth who participate in this inquiry when she writes her thesis, unless there are youth who would like to have their names connected to their creative work.

Recordings and photos of youth who do not attend all six dance sessions will remain with Lori Hamar. All of the audio and video recordings and photos will not be used for any additional purposes without your additional permission.

How will information about participants be kept private?
The personal and identifying information that is collected for *Dance Land*, such as names, phone numbers, and video and audio files will be kept private. Lori Hamar will have access to this information.

Personal contact information that is stored on computer files or written on paper will be stored safely by using passwords and a filing cabinet that can be locked. All large video, photo, and audio files will be stored on Lori Hamar's password protected computer on an encrypted drive to prevent others from viewing them. All digital files connected to this inquiry will be coded and protected by computer passwords that only Lori Hamar as the researcher can access. Digital data and personal contact information in digital and hardcopy form will be destroyed after five years. All paper files and Lori Hamar's personal notes will be stored in a filing cabinet that can be locked. Participants will be invited to take their original artwork home at the end of this inquiry.

Please note: Participants will be advised if they have or may have come into contact with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19. Contact information for participants will be stored in a separate file from research data in the event that follow up is needed.

The confidentiality of knowing who participates in this inquiry is limited by the group of people who are working together. This means that you, the Youth Support Workers, an Elder, and any invited guests (who are approved by the entire group) will be aware of who is participating in this research. You will be asked to not discuss any information from the creative work we do with people outside of the group. However, Lori Hamar cannot control what people in the group will do with the information discussed. Lori Hamar also has a legal duty to let authorities know if she has any concerns of a child or youth under the age of 19 being abused or neglected.

Will you receive any payment for taking part in this inquiry?

The time and contribution you give to this study is greatly appreciated. There will be a gift card as an honorarium for participating in this inquiry.

Who can you contact if you have any questions about this study?
If you have any questions or concerns about what we are asking of you, please contact Lori at 1 (250) 889-2911.

In addition, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Human Research Ethics Office at the University of Victoria at 1 (250) 472-4545 or ethics@uvic.ca).

CONSENT

Taking part in the *Dance Land* inquiry is entirely up to you. If you agree to take part in this inquiry, please indicate the following:

You agree to be video and audio-recorded and have your drawings photographed:
Yes ____ No: _____

You would like to see the dance solo performed by researcher Lori Hamar that analyzes this inquiry:
Yes ____ No: _____

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records. Your signature indicates that you consent to participate in this inquiry.

_____ _____
Participant Signature Date

_____
Printed Name of the Participant signing above

_____ _____
Parent/Guardian Signature Date

_____
Printed Name of the Parent/Guardian signing above

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

appendix B

letters of agreement

LAC LA BICHE
CANADIAN NATIVE FRIENDSHIP CENTRE

Lori Hamar
Masters Student
School of Child and Youth Care
University of Victoria

February 18, 2021

Dear Lori,

RE: Youth, Dance and the TRC

This letter is written in support and approval of the above noted research project. The Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Centre Association's Indigenous Youth Services Program is looking forward to participating in the Youth, Dance and the TRC alongside Lac La Biche County's Family and Community Support Services Community Outreach Program.

Please be advised the Lac La Biche Canadian Native Friendship Centre Association consents to you carrying out your research and welcomes the opportunity to provide any further assistance as required. Should you require further information and/or clarification, please feel free to contact me.

In friendship,

Donna Webster
Executive Director

Box 2338, 10105 Churchill Drive • Lac La Biche, Alberta T0A 2C0
Phone: 780-623-3249 • Fax: 780-623-1846

Lac La Biche County
welcoming by nature.

February 3, 2021

Research Ethics Committee
University of Victoria
Victoria, BC

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Lori Hamar, Research on *Youth, Dance & the TRC*

We had an opportunity to discuss the research Ms. Hamar is doing regarding youth, the arts and the Truth & Reconciliation work being done in the country at this time.

Lac La Biche County has a significant population of First Nations and Metis people in the municipality and surrounding communities. Lac La Biche County Family and Community Support Services hosts youth programs as part of our service offerings to the community. We feel that this will be a valuable opportunity to engage our youth in the conversation about Truth and Reconciliation and its impact on all Canadians.

If you would like further clarification on the information contained here, please contact me at 780-623-6819 or anita.polturak@laclabichecounty.com

Sincerely,

Anita Polturak, MBA
FCSS Manager

cc: Darrell Lessmeister, Associate CAO
Recreation and Community Services

appendix C


DANCE LAND
create dance together
Are you?
· 12-17 years old
· curious about using movement to tell your story
· interested in your relationship with land
Join Dance Land!
a movement inquiry
We will:
· meet six times in October
· enjoy snacks after school
· explore body movement
No dance experience required
Contact Lori Hamar for a schedule and to register
at 250 889 2911 or lorihamar@uvic.ca
Lac La Biche
Canadian Native Friendship Centre
FCSS
Family and Community Support Services
Lac La Biche County

appendix D

Table 1

Dance Land sessions exploration of dance concepts

Session	dance concepts	focus of dance movement	exploration through discussion and drawing
1	locomotor and non-locomotor use of space	- locomotor walking - seek empty spaces - locomotor walking with everyone at the same speed, and everyone at different speeds - everyone non-locomotor sitting or standing at the same time and at different times	Discussion – how does it feel to have everyone moving and stopping in the room at the same time? – what did you like and not like?
	direction, size, time	- choose one of 5 directions to move for a time that is counted in the music - explore changing the size of body shapes for different times counted in the music - use direction, size, and time in a pattern	Discussion – how can we combine these concepts to interact with one another? - what guidelines can we create to organize our movement? The guideline can be called a score
	combination of locomotion, speed, size, direction	- in pairs, explore a score that uses locomotion, speed, size, direction	Drawing – use oil pastels to draw a shape, combine some colours, or write a word that connects with any part of what you felt, thought, or saw as we danced together Discussion – you are invited to share your drawings/writing with the group. We will take turns to tell you what we think of when we see your drawing or word and you are invited to respond if you would like to.

Session	dance concepts	focus of dance movement	exploration through discussion and drawing
			- do you have thoughts that came from dancing, drawing, and discussing today?
2	direction, speed, level	- hear a beat in the music and think about your choice of locomotor movement, speeds, and directions to continue moving with the group - explore changing your direction to bring you closer or farther away from one another - how do you 'see' each other? In what ways do you acknowledge other's presence? - explore changing speed as you approach someone - all move slowly together, noticing one another, continue to explore locomotor and non-locomotor movement - return to the previous score (speed, direction, acknowledgement) and explore your movement on different levels	
	effort – push and float	- as a group, push with different body parts to move from one side of the room to the other, what actions make us move as one group?	Discussion and drawing - think about the relationships we had moving with each other.

Session	dance concepts	focus of dance movement	exploration through discussion and drawing
		- repeat this exploration and float across the room	- think about the relationships we have with each other in the same way you think about your relationships with land - choose a coloured piece of paper and write a word that describes your relationships with land - take a few minutes to do this, we are putting down our first impressions of thinking about relationships with land in this way - you are invited to tell us something about what you have drawn and written.
	self-awareness	- outside - standing and walking - acknowledge the presence of living things outside - what living things are we in relationship with outside?	
	directions, speed, and level	- inside - in two groups, how can you use direction, speed, and level to explore moving with and around one another and the presence of living things outside?	Drawing - are there images that came to your mind as we were moving in our smaller group? - on a piece of paper draw shapes or colour/s that make you think of your experience of moving in the small group - we will take two minutes to capture one of our first impressions - tell us about your drawing - what does it tell you about your experience? - tell us about something you liked in today's movement and something you did not like

Session	dance concepts	focus of dance movement	exploration through discussion and drawing
		- remember movement phrases from last session - share phrases with others	
3	session unattended		
4 and ½ of 5	locomotor and non-locomotor use of space	- locomotor running and walking to a beat - non-locomotor shifting side to side in self space	Discussion – what did you like and not like? - how did it feel to focus on the physical relationships with one another? - what movement phrases felt like you were telling a story?
	speed, balance	Changing speed to slow movements in self space using different levels and exploring balance on 1, 2, or 3 of our body parts	- what are the stories? - are there movement phrases that come together to contribute to the same story?
	relationship – human to human	noticing our physical relationships between one another	
	relationship – human to non-human (session 4 outdoor, session 5 indoor) pathway, size, speed, level	- outside, choose an area to move in or stay still and notice what we are attracted to - pay attention to living presence in the outdoor space - improvise movement to explore what you are attracted to - play with physical relationship (beside, in front of, behind, above, or below) to	Discussion – outside: - describe what you see outdoors and what you are attracted to - can we create a score to dance as a group in relationship to what we are exploring outdoors and to each other? Discussion, writing, drawing – inside: - how did you feel dancing outside? - what did you notice other dancers doing? - write down or doodle our thoughts in our notebooks for five minutes - choose a piece of white paper and 2-4 colours and draw a shape, lines, or anything you like

Session	dance concepts	focus of dance movement	exploration through discussion and drawing
		what you are attracted to - notice the pathway, size, speed, and level of what you and what you are interested in are making	thinking about your experience outside and your writing or doodling you - what does each person see in the drawings and what would the person who owns it like to tell us about it - do we hear/see stories when we think about our dancing and what we drew and wrote?