

**Grounding Co-design in a Culturally Appropriate Landscape:
Learning from Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing through
conversation**

By

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**A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral
Affairs in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of**

Master of Design

in

Industrial Design

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand how to ground a co-design process in a culturally appropriate landscape. The study outlines the challenges of a National Capital Commission urban design proposal that I submitted in 2014. It also refers to the historical context that informs the contemporary reality of Indigenous culture in Canada, examines current literature on participatory design through a post-colonial lens, discusses the concept of *participation* within Indigenous research methods and outlines potential guidelines.

Methodologically, insights are gathered through conversations with First Nation, Métis and non-Indigenous designers, and interpreted to permeate a cross-cultural co-design process.

The study concludes that Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing form a set of essential cultural teachings, which contribute to a co-design praxis in culturally appropriate contexts and re-affirms Indigenous knowledge as a critical feature to inform spaces of inclusive engagement.

Keywords: Co-design, participatory design, Indigenous research guidelines, Indigenous knowledge and culture.

Acknowledgements

To my daughter Camille

who has welcomed my curiosity with grace and kindness

To my parents Arsène and Lorraine, and my sisters Anik and Gaëlle

who have encouraged me throughout my studies

A warm thank you to my advisors

Dr. Thomas Garvey and Dr. Allan J. Ryan

for encouragement, guidance and trust

To

Jaime Koebel and Elder Simon Brascoupé

who greeted me with open hearts even though I came empty handed

And to all the people who have made this research possible

Douglas Cardinal, Barry Ace, France Trépanier, Rodney Nelson, Trina Cooper-

Bolam, Linda Grussani, David Lemellin, Gilbert Whiteduck, Elder Albert

Dumont, Elder Jim Albert and Elder John Medicine Horse Kelly

With special thanks to Lois Frankel, Bjarki Hallgrimsson, Wonjoon Chung and

Valerie Daley

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Douglas Cardinal

Barry Ace

Jaime Koebel

Rodney Nelson

David Lemellin

Linda Grussani

France Trépanier

Trina Cooper-Bolam

Simon Brascoupé

Preface

With an open heart

First there was ignorance, or was it willful blindness? How could I not know about this, about them, about us? It always seemed like an inconvenience; we had the wisdom and we knew what was best. It turns out we were wrong; we still are. I'm part of that, or I used to be. Now I'm stepping out of one reality and into another, struggling to account for a life spent enjoying my privileges and bearing the guilt.

"Do not carry the guilt, rather carry the answer." - John Medicine Horse Kelly

And so, this reflective study is my way to find that answer and carry it forward. To be mindful of my cultural deficit, and not impose an unfair burden on a diverse community, from which so much has been taken or denied. And finally, it is my hope that in some small measure, this study may help to right some wrongs.

Glossary of terms

Co-design

For the purpose of this study, the term co-design will imply all manifestations and forms of collaborative design, whether cross-cultural and/or inter-disciplinary and including all phases of a design process.

Participatory design

For the purpose of this study, participatory design and human-centered design are considered sub-fields of co-design. The terms will be used interchangeably in the thesis. Participatory design implies that participants play a significant role in knowledge development, idea generation, and concept development. (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). It is also a process that is more often applied in corporate environments and work settings. "Human-centered design is a generative, iterative process, a dynamic approach to understanding needs and figuring out how to satisfy them" (IDEO, 2015). "It is a process used across industries and sectors. It's inspired by people rather than demographics, takes place in natural contexts versus controlled settings, and relies on dynamic conversations rather than scripted interviews" (+Acumen, 2014, p.1).

Indigenous knowledge (IK) ontology

Indigenous knowledge is subject to several interpretations and definitions; it can be unique to specific Indigenous communities and/or be broad in its application.

IK can be applied to agriculture, forestry, human health (traditional medicines and healing), ecological systems, natural resources and sustainability, spirituality, traditional arts and crafts, etc. According to Simon Brascoupé and Howard Mann (Brascoupé & Mann, 2001), Indigenous knowledge is defined as ancient, communal, holistic and spiritual knowledge that encompasses every aspect of human existence. From a broader perspective, it is also defined as local knowledge, knowledge that is unique to a given culture or society. IK contrasts with international knowledge generated by universities, research institutions and private firms. For the purpose of this research the term Indigenous knowledge will be explored as it relates to creative practices.

Post-colonial theory

Post-colonial theorists examine issues through a critical lens. They are not only concerned with the effects of colonization but with the dynamics of power relationships and the resulting consequences that were shaped through colonial rule. Post-colonial theory destabilizes wide assumptions that western knowledge is authoritative, objective and universally applied (Anderson, 2002). While in theory these discourses seem promising, Indigenous scholars have questioned to what end and for who's benefit does post-colonialism apply (Smith, 2012).

Introduction

Creativity doesn't come from knowing the answers but in being willing to not know and to find out. - Douglas Cardinal

Who am I?

I'm a non-Indigenous, middle-aged settler-scholar, born in Ottawa, Canada, and who grew up in Europe before returning back to Ottawa. I decided to enroll at Carleton University because I felt I was missing out on important social design initiatives. I'm also a father to a teenage daughter, I have two sisters and my parents live on the east coast. I have a degree in Visual Arts and another in Interior Design, I've worked in the private sector and for the federal government, and I'm now a design educator. I've had assumptions about Indigenous people and culture most of my life, and like most Canadians, I learned about First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in school through a historical lens. They were never discussed in my post-secondary education until now at Carleton University. I don't recall learning about contemporary Indigenous people or culture until much later in life mostly through various movies, magazines, newspapers and television.

1.1 Contextual background

In 2014, I submitted an urban design proposal entitled *Kabeshinàn*, which is an Algonquin term for a campsite or a gathering along a body of water, usually at the confluence of two rivers (McGregor, Buckshot, & Council, 2004) (see Appendix G) to the National Capital Commission (NCC). My conceptual design proposal was intended as a public installation recalling the historical significance of the Ottawa River lumber trade and its effects on First Nations peoples over 150 years ago. The *Kabeshinàn* proposal situated the project along the Ottawa River shoreline, which has a very rich Indigenous history, and by extension Indigenous meaning and significance to Indigenous communities. Although the proposal was pre-selected among approximately 40 entries, it was not chosen for implementation. This turned out to be good news because during the time the proposal was being evaluated, I discussed the design process and features of the proposal with several Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and quickly realized that it contained weaknesses and failures. More specifically, I didn't use proper cultural protocols when I approached Indigenous people. The title *Kabeshinàn* was chosen without consultation and some of the tangible features of the design, and the resulting design outcome did not fully account for Indigenous culture. The acknowledgment that at the onset the design process was lacking a more complete and appropriate Indigenous approach prompted a

desire and responsibility in me to gain a deeper understanding of Indigenous culture particularly as it relates to design collaborations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

1.2 Purpose of the study

Recognizing the failures of the *Kabeshinàn* proposal, I decided to focus my thesis project on learning how to do it right. This study attempts to reveal that knowledge by examining current practices and/or theories regarding culturally appropriate engagement with Indigenous people and communities within co-design landscapes, and more importantly to discuss this topic with a community of participants who have experience in this area and want to share their insights. The topics of inquiry are examined in reference to the historical context of Indigenous culture in Canada and are described as follows:

- Participatory design (co-design) viewed through a post-colonial lens
- Participation in Indigenous research methods and guidelines

This investigation is necessary and significant for several reasons. In light of the historical experiences of Indigenous people in Canada, designers, or for that matter, any non-Indigenous researcher/practitioner involved in collaborative and cross-cultural work, must be made aware of the nature and sensitive features of Indigenous culture to properly engage with it. Moreover, in the wake of the

recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), there is a momentum and indeed a collective will to find ways to reconcile and bridge our cultures. And finally, this study is important as it reinforces oral histories as credible, reliable and invaluable sources of a distinct form of knowledge transmission.

1.3 Situating myself and the participants

At the intersection of the thesis and before moving on, it's important to acknowledge the fact that I'm writing in the first person to convey my reflections, motivations and assumptions as they relate to my recent interactions and experiences with Indigenous people and culture. The use of first person honours the experiential nature of this study and is congruent with an Indigenous method of inquiry (Kovach, 2009). Conversely, using the term 'researcher' or 'author' tends to suggest that I am removed from a community of participants and that I engaged with them from a peripheral position. While this is true from a certain vantage point, since I do identify as a settler-scholar and am therefore positioned at the boundaries of Indigenous culture, I was granted the privilege of directly engaging with Indigenous culture, and ways of knowing, being and doing through interactions with several Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals. We shared conversations and reflections on contemporary phenomena and life

experiences as they relate to the converging of cultures, albeit from different viewpoints.

From a qualitative research perspective, situating myself within the study informs the readers about the biases, values and experiences that I bring to the study and provides an understanding of the limitations of my knowledge; in qualitative research, this is defined as the concept of 'reflexivity'; its objective is to explicitly 'position' the researcher (Creswell, 2013).

The voices of the participants, Elders, artists, community members, Indigenous and non-Indigenous people I've met throughout my studies are blended throughout the thesis text and are meant to honour oral histories and to ensure that those voices permeate the inquiry and are continually reflected upon (Trepanier & Creighton-Kelly, 2011). Most of those voices are drawn from participant statements that constitute the primary research for this thesis (conversations), while others were excerpted from informal conversations, meetings and ceremonies that took place before the research began.

As a non-Indigenous researcher, I bear a dual responsibility. First, to the community of participants, Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and designers who have generously shared their experiences, and have trusted me with carrying this knowledge forward. Second, to academia at large, which requires

adequate research frameworks and analysis. In this study, these overlapping paradigms will be discussed further in the Methods chapter.

This study, which is framed by an experiential account and is comprised of reflections and conversations, intends to broaden the range of discussions on culturally appropriate collaborative design and acknowledge that design agency, as a broad notion, is more than a manifestation of cultural life or an embellishment of it; it can be adaptive to social and cultural concerns. In many ways this research is transformative, in that it seeks to explore new possibilities of approach through the production of promising cross-cultural narratives. The resulting reflective experience on the *Kabeshinàn* proposal for the NCC can be considered a catalyst to developing a relationship between the kind of knowledge acquired through academia, such as research methodologies, with the kind of competence required and valued in design practice. This study is very much a juxtaposition of those two concerns. It will examine current literature, which discusses these topics (See figure 1), and will draw on the shared knowledge of conversations to propose methods of approach for research and practice in design.

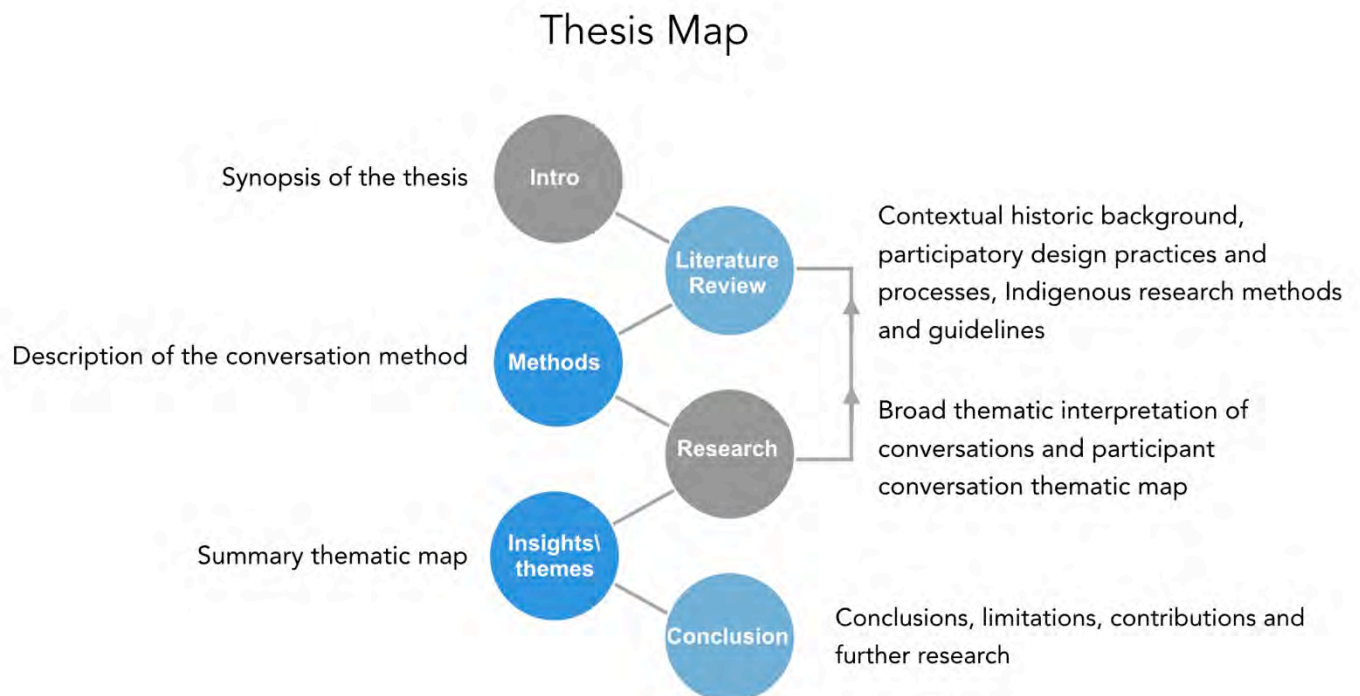


Figure 1 - Thesis Map

1.4 Scope of the study

The research focuses on and engages with Indigenous and non-Indigenous artists and designers who have experience in cross-cultural work. It encompasses their concerns and personal opinions as they relate to a co-design process, and explores how their experiences can provide insights for culturally appropriate collaborations. The literature review examines and discusses the historical/colonial context of Canada, Indigenous research methods and guidelines, and participatory design in post-colonial contexts.

1.5 Research questions

Within the preceding statements, the main thesis question is:

- What are the essential qualities of a culturally appropriate co-design process in relationship to Indigenous people and culture?

Secondary thesis questions:

- What are the implications and challenges of cross-cultural collaborative design?
- To what extent can Indigenous research guidelines be applied to a design process?

Literature review

2.0 Conceptual and thematic overview

Defining design is considerably difficult; a universal definition cannot be adequately applied to all disciplines of design and this study does not attempt to do so. However, in a very broad sense, there is a prevalent understanding about the 'raison d'être' of design, that 'intentional and positive change' is one of its fundamental tenets; this notion has provided insight into understanding what the purpose of design is in a very basic sense. Nelson and Stolterman associate change with design, saying "To change a situation from the way it is to one that is more desirable" (Nelson, Harold, G. Stolterman, 2012, p.105). In the late sixties, Herbert Simon also linked design to change, writing, "Devising courses of action to change existing situations into preferred ones" (Simon, 1969, p.129). Similarly connecting change and improvement, Bryan Lawson writes, "The solver (designer) recognizes a state of affairs that needs improving and a target state of affairs that would represent the improvement" (Lawson, 2004, p.19). These descriptive statements are imbued with a sense of action that views positive transformation/change as an over-arching concept. This broad idea of design as a transformative agency will form the conceptual basis of the literature review for this study, not only from its ideological standpoint, but also for the promise that

it holds for expanding the range of discussions around its own processes and various manifestations of co-design models. From a more structural perspective, the literature review is thematically organized to address the research questions in more depth. The choice of structure and relevant themes is intended to prioritize emerging discussions and possibilities of approach to co-design processes, particularly as they relate to cross-cultural engagement within a post-colonial context of inquiry. It will also affirm that change cannot occur for its own sake, that change must be framed within a set of sensitizing boundaries and recognize that traditional Indigenous knowledge, ways of knowing, being and doing must be preserved, protected and recognized, and at minimum, viewed on equal terms with western knowledge systems.

2.1 Contextual background

To this end and to appreciate the significance and breadth of Indigenous cultural issues and expression in Canada, it is important to first consider the colonial legacies we have all inherited and which we have a responsibility to acknowledge. Co-design processes which involve Indigenous people or communities cannot only be concerned with aesthetic, user-centric or object-centric considerations and contexts; neither can they limit their inquiries into the design, testing and evaluation of tangible design outcomes; they must be

situated within a historical discourse, and expressed through an uneasy narrative of colonial oppression and cultural genocide. Positioning this history as an underlying and fundamental frame of reference is not only ethical, but it can create entry points for the introduction of decolonizing approaches to academic research (Kovach, 2009). Conversely, negating these past and sometimes present-day realities from the design process can invalidate even the most respectful attempts to engage with Indigenous culture and people; and is, some would argue, ethically questionable (Kovach, 2009). Designer practitioners/researchers, or for that matter any non-Indigenous practitioner/researcher involved in Indigenous collaborative inquiry, must be made aware of the past trauma by acknowledging the harm that was inflicted, recognize the underlying issues, and coming to terms with these colonial residues for any meaningful changes to occur (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Trépanier, 2008; Wilson, 2003) whether in practice or in research. This is a much more nuanced understanding of intercultural change.

To facilitate a manageable scale and scope for this study, the following historical overview is only a brief glimpse of the colonial past in Canada as it relates to Indigenous culture and the resulting consequences. It does not, and cannot, adequately and explicitly express the extent and scale of, not only widespread cultural loss, but also loss of identity, land, resources, spirituality, way

of life and life itself, which was brought about by early Canadian colonial policies, some of which continue to function today.

For over a century, the central goals of Canada's Aboriginal policy were to eliminate Aboriginal governments; ignore Aboriginal rights; terminate the Treaties; and, through a process of assimilation, cause Aboriginal peoples to cease to exist as distinct legal, social, cultural, religious, and racial entities in Canada. The establishment and operation of residential schools were a central element of this policy, which can best be described as "cultural genocide." Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015

The Government of Canada in the wake of creating the Indian Act, established the first residential schools in 1876. The last residential school in Canada closed in 1996. During this time, over 150,000 First Nations, Métis and Inuit children, as young as four years old, were forcefully removed from their homes to attend residential schools, in some cases hundreds of miles from their home. The separation of families was intended to remove parental influence, and consequently, to break the link between children and their culture and identity. Resettling the children in a new 'white' context, where all representations of Indigenous culture and identity would be stripped away in favour of an environment where they would "acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men" (Sir John A. Macdonald, Canada, House of Commons Debates, May 9th, 1883, p. 1107-1108) attests to the significance of this cultural genocide. Over 130 residential schools were established and operated in partnership with

Anglican, Catholic, United and Presbyterian churches. The objective was to educate, assimilate, and integrate Indigenous people into Canadian society. As a result of these colonial policies and in terms of cultural loss, the impacts were severe.

Today many Indigenous communities are no longer whole, but are instead comprised of fragments made from pieces and parts of their worldview. They have been sliced and diced, so to speak, due to the external imposition of changes, whether originating from cultural genocide or benevolence. - Ted Jojola, 2013, p.465.

To further amplify these last concerns, Indigenous communities the world over have been subject to research with little or no regard to culturally sensitive models of engagement or ethical responsibility (Roe, Paul; Brereton, Margot; Hong, 2012; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2003). There is an undeniable history of broken promises and a lack or absence of consultation, access and rights to the production of knowledge resulting from research. Linda Tuhiwai Smith notes that the word research "is probably one of the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world's vocabulary...it [research] stirs up silence, it conjures up bad memories, it raises a smile that is knowing and distrustful. It is so powerful that Indigenous people even write poetry about research" (Smith, 2012, p.1). In addition, academia has been slow to recognize traditional Indigenous knowledges on

equal terms with western forms of knowledge production and methodologies for inquiry (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2003).

Much has been lost, but many Indigenous communities have remarkably managed to recover, not all, but some of what was denied or taken from them. In light of this cultural genocide, there is a pressing need to ensure that designers, collaborative projects and processes, are not further perpetuating colonial attitudes and negating culturally appropriate inquiries in favor of western-led approaches. This is a matter of survival, recovery, preservation and emancipation. Design practice and research needs to acknowledge these concerns.

2.2 Collaborative design (co-design) landscape

Design is ubiquitous in today's society, with a widening range of fields of practices and processes such as architecture, interior design, urban design, service design, industrial design and strategic design among others. These fields often draw on a diversity of collaborative design (co-design) processes and tools as a means to better understand the contexts and the users of an eventual designed experience, space or object. Co-design is not a new idea, but there are emerging discussions and theories regarding the methods for these design processes, which involve differing disciplines, contexts of cultural production,

and agency. And from those processes has emerged a progressive rapprochement of the relationship between the designer and 'user', which resulted in an empathic and more human approach. Participatory design is one such model of human-centredness. The term and the method emerged in Scandinavia in the 1970's and focused on addressing power relationships within work environments. It evolved its ideological framework through collaborations between workers, management and unions in the wake of technological advances and computerization of workplaces (Merritt & Stolterman, 2012; Steen, 2011). Today, participatory design has many shapes and forms, and is labeled with a diversity of terms: among them, human-centered design, empathic design, contextual design and activity-centered design. Emerging from each of those subfields is an even broader range of arguments attesting to their respective efficacy in co-design (Steen, 2011). In view of the promising reasoning behind those methods, and as a matter of scope, the overarching 'participatory design' term will be referenced and discussed in this study as the process for which the primary concern is to appropriately engage *with* humans rather than *for* humans (or users) and which have promise in cross-cultural (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) settings.

2.3 Participatory design and the politics of representation

Although participatory design emerged as a response to the computerization of work environments and globalization, and an attempt to address the resulting dynamics of power relationships which form part of the focus for this study, it gave little consideration to the cultural implications influencing those relationships (Merritt & Stolterman, 2012). While the need to do so may not have been critical at the time since participants were from the same culture, it does attest to the ideological and non-cultural origins and purpose of participatory design. Today however, reflections on culture within these contexts is paramount, whether in research or practice. Commenting on this subject as an enduring issue, Linda Tuhiwai Smith makes the following two statements:

The globalization of knowledge and western culture constantly re-affirms the West's view of itself as the center of legitimate knowledge (2012, p.66).

Most of the 'traditional' disciplines are grounded in cultural worldviews which are either, antagonistic to other belief systems or have no methodology for dealing with other knowledge systems (2012, p.68).

This re-positioning and acceptance of an equal worldview can be challenging in light of the designer's natural tendencies towards authoritative direction: "Designers seek to impose their own order and express their own feelings through design" (Lawson, 1980, p.267). On co-design relationships, Lawson adds that "design is often a collective process in which the rapport

between group members can be as significant as their ideas" (Lawson, 1980, p.267). Researchers have also highlighted the need to clarify the benefits to those we design for (Tunstall, 2013) and examine the colonial influences of designers in cross-cultural settings (Mainsah & Morrison, 2014; Merritt & Stolterman, 2012; Steen, 2012; Tunstall, 2013). And further, considering knowledge production is one of the objectives of participatory design, the use of alternative ways of knowing in cross-cultural contexts (which in our case is Indigenous in nature) requires critical reflection as it relates to methodologies (Steen, 2011) and contexts of application. Indeed, while participatory design ideology proposes an empathic approach to designing with 'humans', the approach places Indigenous culture and ways of knowing at risk of being suppressed or neglected in favour of western forms of design approach. Philosopher Rosa Maria Rodriguez suggests that design processes for innovation may inadvertently erode or replace proven Indigenous processes (Rodriguez Magda, 2004), which is an un-intended form of colonialism. Similarly, Elizabeth Tunstall (2013) refers to those concerns, citing Bruce Nussbaum's controversial open question on Fast Company's website in 2010: "Is humanitarian design the new imperialism?" (Nussbaum, 2010). Leong and Clark (2016) bring design thinking into the foreground of imperialistic concerns and describe its process when applied in cross-cultural contexts as ignoring alternative ways of thinking.

There are also more blatant situations where popular designers act as 'designer artists', for whom the process is self centric and based on their own judgements and decisions regarding design outcomes and solutions, as opposed to their client's needs and desires (Nelson, Harold, G. Stolterman, 2012). The term 'starchitect' comes to mind and bears with it a relationship based on prestige and status, where the role of the 'designer artist' can be aptly described as sovereign in making culture, but does little to foster reflective practice, equal say or inclusive engagement.

2.4 Design and culture as a fragile encounter

In design, "Culture is both a resource for, and an outcome of, the designing process" (Balsamo, 2011, p.11). Balsamo further adds that a shared social understanding can emerge through the co-creation of objects, and thus the design process itself. "Through the practices of designing, cultural beliefs are materially reproduced, identities established, and social relations are codified" (Balsamo, 2011, P.11). Here, culture is inter-related and inter-dependent with design practice and creativity; they cannot be disassociated from each other. Design is the cultural production of objects and experiences, stylistic representations in objects and places; thus culture is a central factor in design

processes. Thus, the practice of design manifests itself through the translation and therefore mediation of cultural markers.

The decisions and ideas of designers (as well as participants) carry cultural influence, thus exercised power is exercised cultural imposition - Merritt & Stolterman, 2012.

Indeed, when designers set the agenda for participation, they also fix the framework within which culture is discussed in meaning and in making, but imposition of process and consequently control over representation of culture can also result in commodification of culture as an outcome. Intended or not, Indigenous culture and its various representations can be 'appropriated' for trade and economic concerns (Smith, 2012). Attesting to this consumer agenda, Murphy and Marcus (2013, p.259) view design as being "deeply entrenched in a capitalist system of production, and most designers (excluding perhaps the most famous and elite) concentrate on creating designs that will, in one way or another, sell." While this statement does not encompass broader definitions of design, nor does it attest to viewing design as being in service to others (Nelson, Harold, G. Stolterman, 2012), it does suggest the potential for economic agendas to influence cultural production and outcomes. With Indigenous culture at stake, design practitioners should examine and balance their cultural biases and assumptions within collaborative projects, recognize their locality in participation

and turn a reflective gaze on themselves and their processes to affirm design as a form of social innovation rather than merely an instrument of economic gain.

These are but a few of the concerns that shape the issues of cross-cultural engagement, where uneven relationships and presumptions of power and ownership can cast doubts on the efficacy of design processes or the cultural competencies of the designers applying them.

2.5 Moving towards desirable situations

At the other end of the spectrum, there are also positive and transformative research discussions in play that attest to the value of post-colonial theory in design thinking to contest established paradigms of cross-cultural interactions, essentially undermining colonial hierarchical relationships which often preclude alternative knowledges and ways of knowing. Henry Mainsah and Andrew Morrison (2014) provide reflective insights on the potential for post-colonial theory to re-balance relationships in participatory design and conceive an inclusive engagement as a matter of recognizing colonial histories, local contexts and a re-positioning of analysis of cross-cultural relationships and processes. Samantha Merrit and Erik Stolterman (2012) also view participatory design through a post-colonial lens but as a means to challenge our notions of cultural identity. They discuss the potential to re-frame the concept of

'participation' as cultural hybridity, applied to both the designer and 'user' (or human), thus creating a third space of participation where designer and user adopt dual identities as a way to reconcile their cultural binaries. And to embrace, to a certain degree, cultural elements from each other to facilitate traversing a cultural divide and equalizing an imbalance of relationships (Merritt & Stolterman, 2012). These ideas bring to the fore Willie Ermine's thoughts about recognizing "an ethical space of engagement" which is formed by the confluence of two distinct cultural spaces, and thought about as a framework for developing a capacity to espouse human dialogue (Ermine, 2007).

From an anthropological perspective, Elizabeth Tunstall suggests that 'design anthropology' has significant potential as a model of approach, which "can reframe both anthropology and design innovation as de-colonized practices of cultural engagement" (Tunstall, 2013, p.238). Situated within an examination of value systems, it is dynamic and shifting (or borrowed) to a certain degree between cultures, while at the same time, cognizant of power relationships and how they affect cultural production (Tunstall, 2013). She adds as a principle of design anthropology that:

Researchers and designers ought to create processes than enable respectful dialogue and relational interactions such that everyone is able to contribute their expertise equally to the process of designing and those contributions are properly recognized and remunerated (Tunstall, 2013, p.243).

These reconciliatory approaches attest to the willingness, necessity and potential from both Indigenous and western positions to shape and pursue spaces of engagement on equal and respectful terms, and to recognize a certain level of culture sharing between group members.

The concept of inclusive and respectful engagement as described in participatory methods is not foreign to Indigenous research paradigms, however, it is applied and thought about in different ways, for different purposes, and according to specific guiding principles. Participatory engagement with communities can espouse guiding principles and be integrated within projects as a form of control or to assert an epistemological position to a certain extent rather than a methodology (Stanton, 2014). One such set of culturally appropriate guiding principles is the four R's: respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility. Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) describe the need and the purpose of each of these elements and how they can be applied in higher learning institutions. Although in this scenario, the four R's are discussed to help negotiate and create a more inclusive climate of engagement for Indigenous students within higher education institutions, they are widely discussed as having potential in other cross-cultural contexts. Participatory research is one such context which reflects decolonizing agendas. The use of guiding principles, such as the four R's is helpful in grounding participatory engagement, Stanton (2014)

refers to them in the lessons learned from a community based participatory research project in which she was involved, and also argues for their use as a way for researchers to reflect on their location within collaborative relationships.

Further in this study and emerging from the conversations, a fifth 'R' is mentioned and discussed, it is defined as 'Relationality' which refers to the concepts surrounding relationships.

2.6 Summary

The confluence of human/designer and Indigenous/non-Indigenous relationships can be wrought with social tension and complex issues of cultural understanding, particularly when (settler) designers have little or no cultural competency with respect to Indigenous cultural norms, even more so when colonial residues saturate the settings of collaboration. Under these conditions, settler designers tend to seize an influential position within co-design contexts because it is most often they, who, by way of reference, habit or misguided benevolence, assume an interpretative and sovereign role over cultural meanings through their discipline-specific iterative and ideation processes, or other inquisitive means. They apply and render values and beliefs from within their own worldviews, with incomplete foresight of the consequences on design processes and resulting outcomes. In simple terms, not only can designers influence

cultural production through their biases, which can negate or erode more appropriate means to discuss and produce culture, they also tend to negotiate and express the resulting cultural meanings according to their own cultural judgements. This position of 'perceived' dominance by the designer, whether it is explicit or not, bears with it the cultural weight of the designer.

Indigenous research guidelines, such as the four R's are most often referred to and discussed in participatory research in the context of a 'whole' community project and within a situated physical context. In some instances, the relationship to the 'community' is not clear and can be somewhat ill-defined or difficult to locate in a collaborative setting, nevertheless it can still be helpful in grounding a participatory design project with the necessary framework for engagement.

Moreover, various fields of design and their proponents, whether in practice or research, have raised the right concerns and are having the right discussions around these issues. This demonstrates the adaptive and 'human' features of design processes and particularly how they can espouse interdisciplinary praxis in sensitive contexts.

As discussed earlier, the very cultural differences that divide can also provide the potential for the creation of an emerging space of common familiarity and benefit, but only to the extent that it is genuinely desired and

thought of as a result of reflective effort and commitment to transformative change; or the will to change from 'settler-designer' to 'settler-designer ally.'

3.1 Introduction

Defining a research method and framework is challenging. I'm a non-Indigenous researcher engaging with Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants to gather knowledge of how they view their experiences of cross-cultural collaborative projects. In recent years, Indigenous scholars have written important works about Indigenous research methods (Kovach, 2009; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2007), informing researchers about the theoretical evolution of methodologies, and the challenges and the potential for application by other scholars. I examined several Indigenous research methods, some of which required a high level of cultural competency. As a cultural outsider, I felt hesitant to espouse such methods for fear of using them inappropriately or in a disrespectful manner (such as the medicine wheel for example).

3.2 Theoretical basis for using the conversation method

The conversation method was evaluated and chosen as the preferred option for several reasons. It is congruent with both Indigenous research methods, and qualitative inquiry for the study of phenomena and stories of told and lived experiences (Creswell, 2013; Kovach, 2009). In addition, the

conversation method doesn't exert strict boundaries, which allows for greater freedom for the participants to share their insights with intuitive logic.

An open-structured conversational method shows respect for the participant's story and allows research participants greater control over what they wish to share with respect to the research question. (Kovach, 2009, p.124)

The method also does away with the researcher's tight control and direction of the conversation and sets the discussion on equal terms, rather than having one participant in a hierarchical position. Within design practice, conversations are particularly prominent at the front end of a design process, for example, the early discussions undertaken between designer and project stakeholders to establish client needs. With respect to design practice, "when conversations are well structured and participant roles well understood, the resulting interaction and relationships can be a very powerful creative tool" (Lawson, 2004, p.89). Conversations frame a space of engagement that is culturally relevant and familiar to both Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants.

To a certain extent, the method for this study is based on Margaret Kovach's method of interpretation and presentation of findings resulting from her use of the conversation method (Kovach, 2009). Although I introduce each participant according to his or her Indigenous identity and tribal affiliation, where

I digress from Margaret Kovach's methodology is in my interpretation and presentation of Indigenous teachings as a pan-Indigenous construct, as opposed to one referencing specific tribal knowledges which carry a diversity of cultural nuances. Indeed, the research participants with whom I engaged in conversation come from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, however, it is this diversity and richness of narratives, which enables the emergence of overarching themes and insights, but also precludes interpretations based on specific tribal identities.

The research method for this study attempts to create cultural entry points that allows me to gather experiential knowledge, interpret insights, and draw conclusions. In this study, the experiences, meanings and realities that emerge from the conversations are reflected through a constructionist theoretical model of analysis; in sum, they are relevant if they answer, in some form or another, the research questions in this study.

3.3 Procedure

The procedure for conceiving the shared narrative (conversations) involved selecting seven Indigenous artists/designers and two non-Indigenous artists/designers following discussions with thesis advisors. All of them have experience in a creative practice, whether in visual art, design, architecture or creative performance. Again, the selection of participants was not random.

Contact was made via telephone, face-to-face and email to set up a discussion of the study and to confirm their participation in the study.

The following documentation was provided to each participant:

- Letter of Introduction and Invitation (Appendix B)
- Oral Consent Form (Appendix C)
- Written Consent Form (Appendix D)
- Questionnaire for Indigenous participants (Appendix E)
- Questionnaire for non-Indigenous participants (Appendix F)

As some participants were located outside Ottawa in other parts of Canada, or were unable to meet in person, interviews were conducted either:

- Face to face at a mutually discussed location or,
- Via telephone conference call between researcher and participant

Prior to conducting the face-to-face interviews, as per cultural protocols, I presented an offering of tobacco to Indigenous participants before sharing their knowledge.

Prior to starting the audio recording and the start of the interview, participants either signed the consent form or orally consented to the interview.

3.4 Questionnaires

The research study included two types of questionnaires (refer to Appendix E and F), one questionnaire for Indigenous participants and another

for non-Indigenous participants. The reasoning for creating two questionnaires was the importance of ensuring a balanced sharing of experiences. I also felt it necessary to enrich the Indigenous insights with those of non-Indigenous designers, to validate some of my early reflections on collaborations with Indigenous artists/designers and to connect the practice of design with this research study.

Upon receipt of the participant's signed or oral consent, the audio recording was started and each participant was presented with one of the two questionnaires (Appendix E or F). While the questionnaire was formatted as an open-ended interview, I did use a set of specific questions to establish a context for the topic. All the participants were encouraged to share any insights they felt were related to the topics. As a result, the conversations yielded rich and diverse teachings/insights. Additionally, to link the research study to the initial NCC design proposal, and to provide context and scope for the conversations, the following statement was included on both questionnaires:

Statement of project (to contextualize the topic of conversation):

A team composed of Indigenous and non-Indigenous designers/artists (inter-disciplinary) collaborate on an urban installation (art installation, urban design, or other creative project) related to the Ottawa River. The intent of the final design is to connect river, people and history.

This established a context for an open-ended conversation which relates back to my initial design proposal to the NCC. I also mentioned to each participant that there was no obligation to answer or comment on each question/topic, and that they were invited to answer or comment on the questions/topics with which they felt they could best contribute. As a result, not all questions/topics were answered or commented on. At the end of the interviews, the participants were asked if they would like to review the written transcripts but only one participant asked to do so.

3.5 Methods for interpreting and presenting the insights

The insights are presented in two ways. First, I interpret and present a thematic map of each participant's individual conversation with me in a graphic format, which serves to inform the readers and myself, of the particular aspects of their experiences that were significant to them. It also outlines comments they may have made but not necessarily discussed in the second, more generalized part of the interpretation. The insights are organized according to three themes, which are "knowing, being and doing"; this serves as a general guide for thought and action for designers as it relates to co-design. The presentation of the individual conversations in graphic and point-form format is a strategic

concession in this study; it provides an easier way to contrast the conversations and reference the insights to the thesis in a concise manner.

And second, I interpret the conversations as a whole body of knowledge; this provides an interpretation with more depth and helps to situate, to a larger extent, the insights within a specific context and in relationship to the other insights and themes. In many cases, I only refer to one participant statement to discuss a particular theme, however, most of the themes were referenced in one way or another by all participants. Again, this is a strategic concession which allows for a concise and manageable discussion of each participant.

What counts as a theme?

There are many schools of thought regarding the selection of themes for analysis; certainly, the aspect of prevalence can be used to establish patterns of themes and adds a quantitative element to a study. The higher the prevalence of a theme means the more truthful it is and should be proportionately considered in the overall analysis. In this study however, the prevalence of a theme was not considered a criterion, rather, the assumption that any teachings or insights emerging from the conversations with participants that had the potential to inform a culturally appropriate design approach was considered an indicator of a possible theme. In many cases during the conversations, there was only one

instance of a teaching or insight that could lead towards a theme, perhaps a subset of a theme, but a theme nonetheless.

About stories

Participants shared stories to convey elements of culture and community, issues of communication, gender relations, common ground as spaces for engagement, the impacts of research, historical contexts and instances of cultural appropriation. I was privileged to receive these teachings in this traditional manner and acknowledge them on equal terms with other insights. I also recognize that my interpretation of those stories will evolve over time and as such, may not be fully understood by me to the extent that they were intended by the participants.

Graphic design of the thematic maps

There were many iterations in regards to the look and feel of the maps and diagrams, I was concerned about maintaining a sense of "wholeness" and not breaking up the themes into pieces and then risk losing their relevance in context. I was further concerned about presenting the information (insights/themes) on equal terms, I also included circle motifs to both respect

and represent Indigenous culture, and to illustrate the circular nature of relationality and knowledge.

Participant introduction

Before presenting the research, It's important to clarify that several Indigenous participants did not want to be identified or referred to as spokespersons for their community, and that they were sharing their knowledge on the tacit understanding that their knowledge was based on personal experiences that did not necessarily represent a community view. Each participant is introduced with a short biography (See full biographies in Appendix H).

- 4 -
Research

4.1 Thematic map of individual conversations

4.1.0 Douglas Cardinal

Douglas is Blackfoot and Métis. As a master-builder, Douglas Cardinal's life is dedicated to creating beautiful, thriving, and harmoniously built environments. Born in 1934 in Calgary, Alberta, his architectural studies at the University of British Columbia took him to Austin, Texas, where he receives his architectural degree and found a life experience in human rights initiatives. Douglas became a forerunner of philosophies of sustainability, green buildings and ecologically designed community planning.

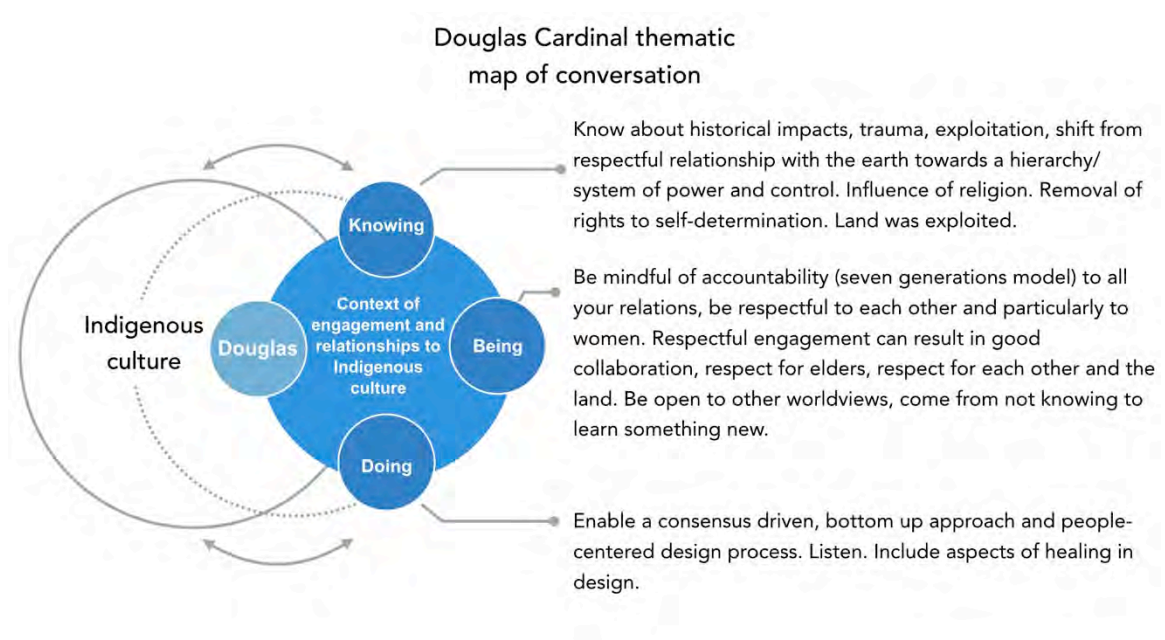


Figure 2 - Douglas Cardinal thematic map of conversation

4.1.1 Barry Ace

Barry Ace is a practicing visual artist and currently lives in Ottawa, Canada. He is a band member of M'Chigeeng First Nation, Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada. His mixed media paintings and assemblage textile works explore various aspects of cultural continuity and the confluence of the historical and contemporary. As a practicing visual artist, his work has been included in numerous group and solo exhibitions.

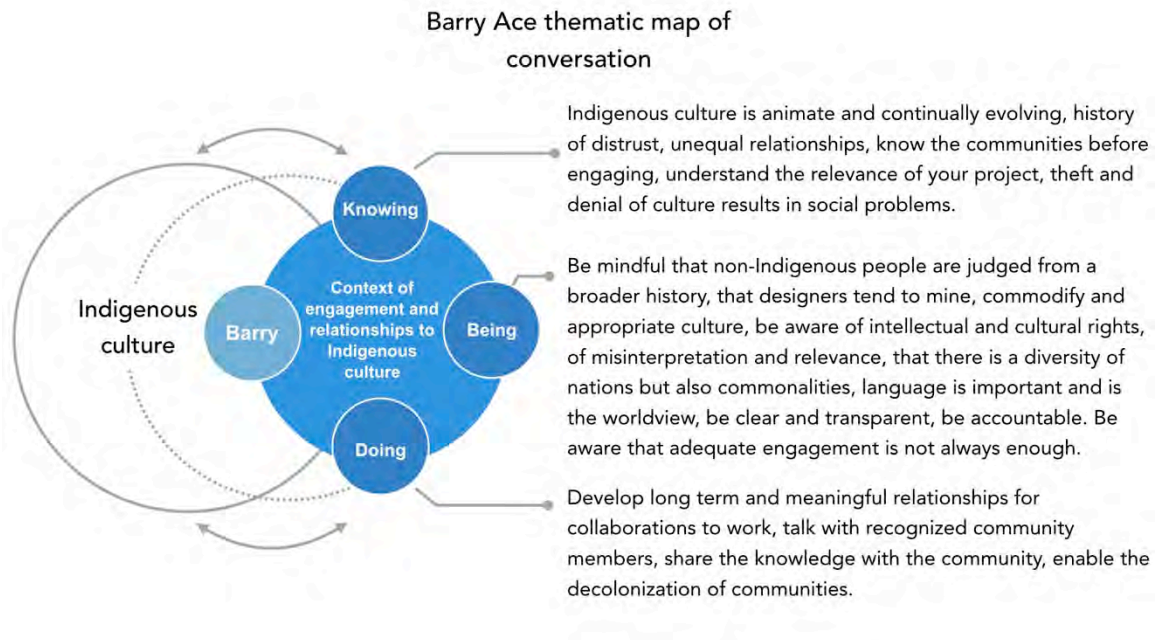


Figure 3 - Barry Ace thematic map of conversation

4.1.2 Jaime Koebel

Jaime is an Apeetagosan/Nehiyaw (Métis/Cree) woman originally from Lac La Biche, Alberta living on unceded Anishinaabe Territory (Ottawa, Ontario) since 2000. Jaime operates Indigenous Walks, which is a walk and talk through downtown Ottawa presenting social, political and cultural issues while exploring landscape, monuments, architecture and art. She was motivated to do the walks for many reasons, however, her confidence to do the walk came from her time as an educator at the National Gallery of Canada during the "Sakahàn - International Indigenous Art" exhibition in 2013 where she gave tours through the lens of the Indigenous experience.

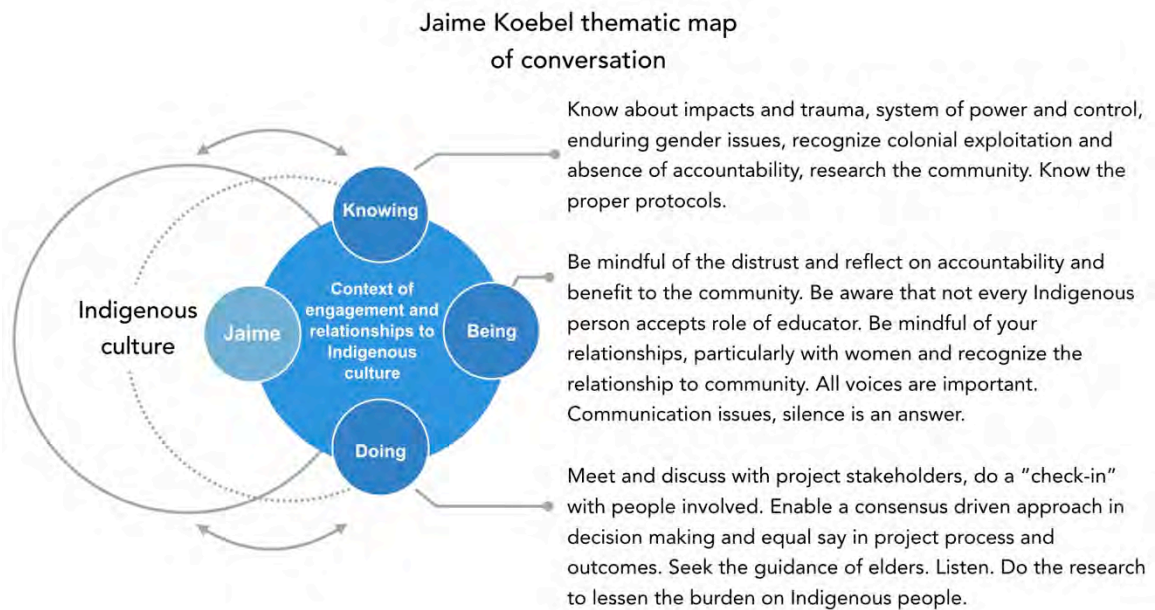


Figure 4 - Jaime Koebel thematic map of conversation

4.1.3 Rodney Nelson

Rodney Nelson, PhD (ABD), C.Dir, PAED, CAPA

Rodney Nelson is the current CEO of the Global Governance group and a professor at Carleton University. He teaches within the Centre for Initiatives in Education within the Faculty of Arts and Social Science where he also coordinates the Aboriginal Enriched Support Program. Rodney also works with the Aboriginal Financial Officers Association (AFOA) Canada teaching ethics, performance measurement and reporting to Aboriginal leaders. He came to Carleton from his position as a former senior manager at the Conference Board of Canada. Considering himself a corporate anthropologist, he has over 20 years experience working with both the public and private sectors, including an appointment as the ethics officer for the Public Service of Canada.

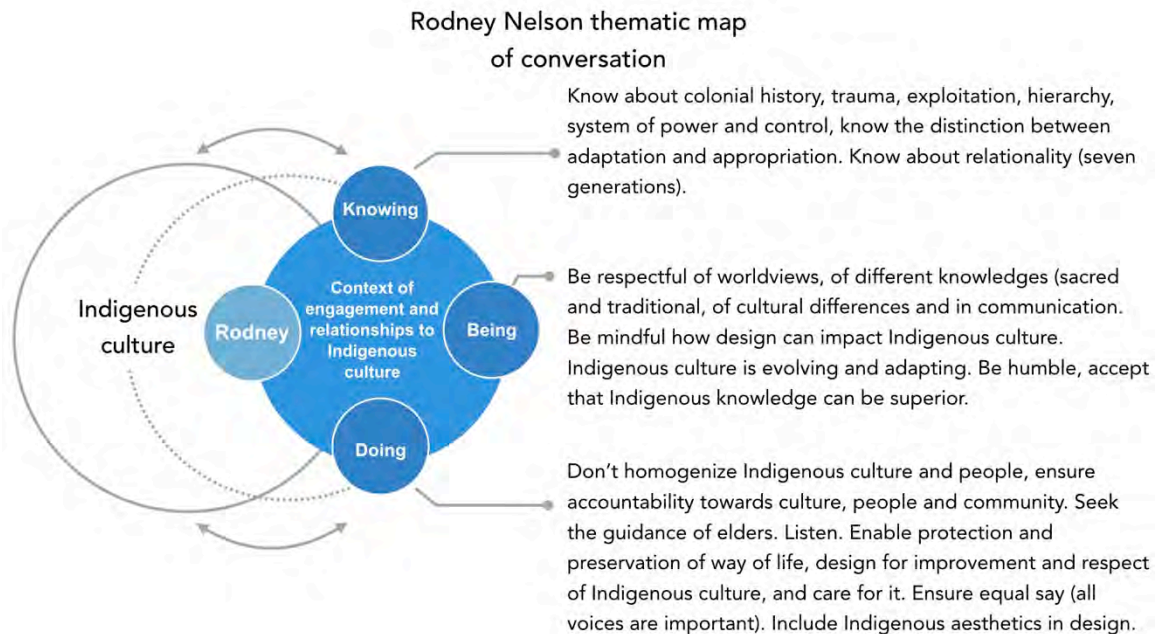


Figure 5 - Rodney Nelson thematic map of conversation

4.1.4 David Lemellin

David Lemellin is non-Indigenous and the founder of Stonefield Studio, a design firm devoted to crafting stories from blank spaces. His work has supported the messaging of diverse companies such as CHEO, Mitel, Air Canada, World Vision, the Aga Kahn Foundation and the Canadian Space Agency. With 25 years of experience in the field of exhibit design, he has developed a notable ability to understand a client’s message and define intuitive tools to help convey it to their target audience. He is known for out of the box thinking and is always striving to incorporate innovative solutions, searching for unusual ways to communicate more effectively.

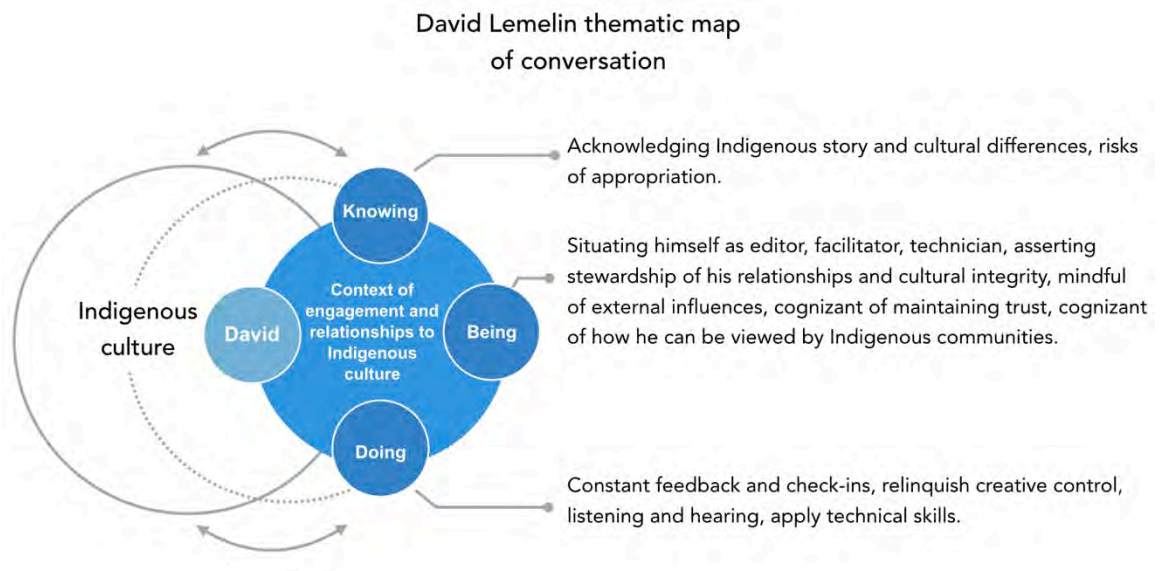


Figure 6- David Lemellin thematic map of conversation

4.1.5 Linda Grussani

Linda Grussani (Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg) is an arts administrator, curator and art historian, currently working on a PhD in Cultural Studies at Queen's University. She holds both a BA and an MA in Art History from Carleton University (Thesis: Constructing the Image of Canada as a Nation: The International Presentation of Aboriginal Art Exhibitions (1969-1990)). Linda is the present Director of the Aboriginal Art Centre at Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

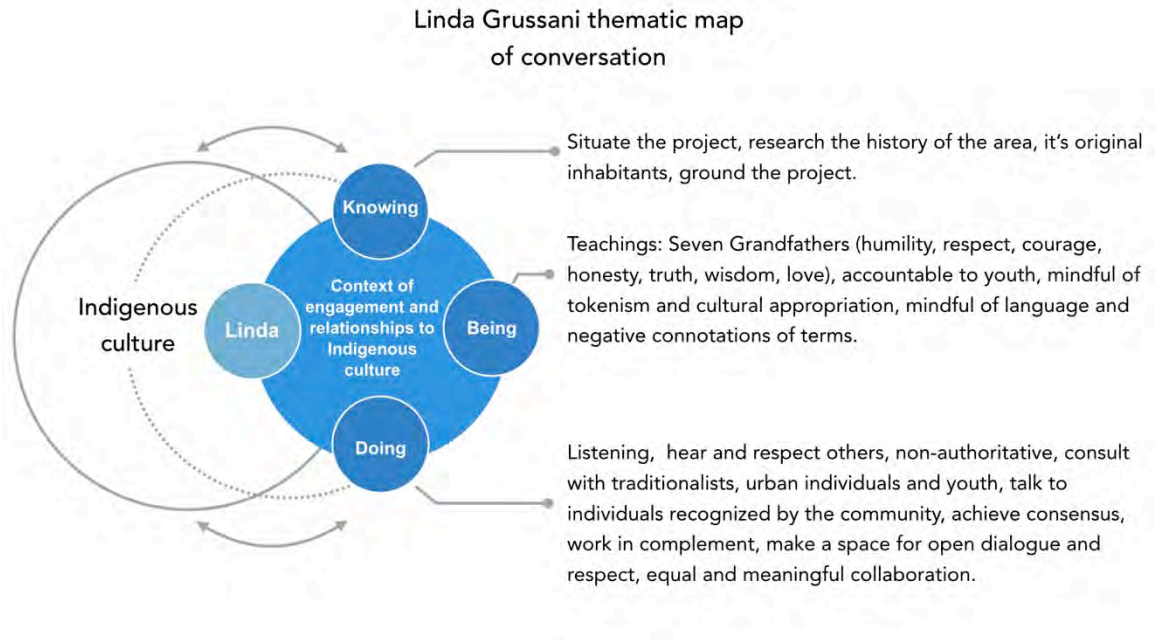


Figure 7 - Linda Grussani thematic map of conversation

4.1.6 France Trépanier

France Trépanier is a visual artist, curator and researcher of Kanien'kéha:ka and French ancestry. Her artistic and curatorial work has been presented in many venues in Canada and in France. Her artworks are included in various public and private collections, including the Museum of Civilization in Quebec City (Province of Quebec), the Aboriginal Art Collection of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Banff Centre Art Collection. She is currently the Aboriginal curator in residence at Open Space Arts Society in Victoria BC.

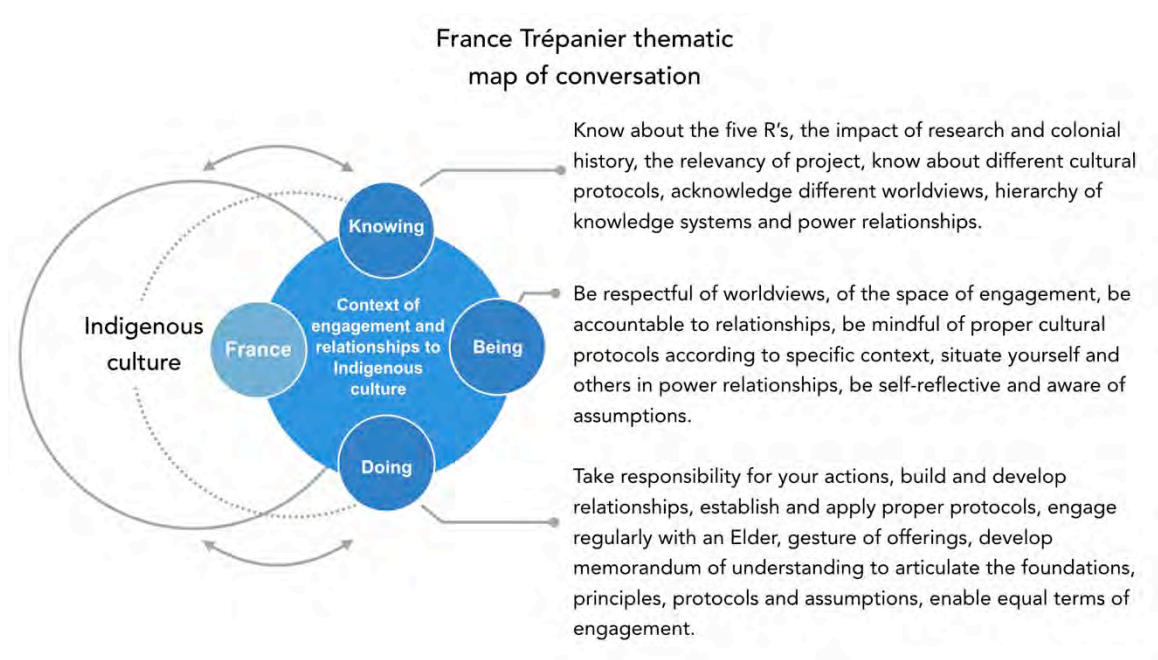


Figure 8 - France Trépanier thematic map of conversation

4.1.7 Trina Cooper-Bolam

Trina is a settler-scholar and doctoral candidate in the Cultural Mediations program at Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Over the last decade, Cooper-Bolam has held senior positions at the Aboriginal Healing and Legacy of Hope Foundations, organizations working to transform the legacy of Indian residential schools. She is also a practicing exhibit designer and is currently engaged in a collaborative curatorial project to reclaim and transform the site of the Shingwauk Indian Residential School.

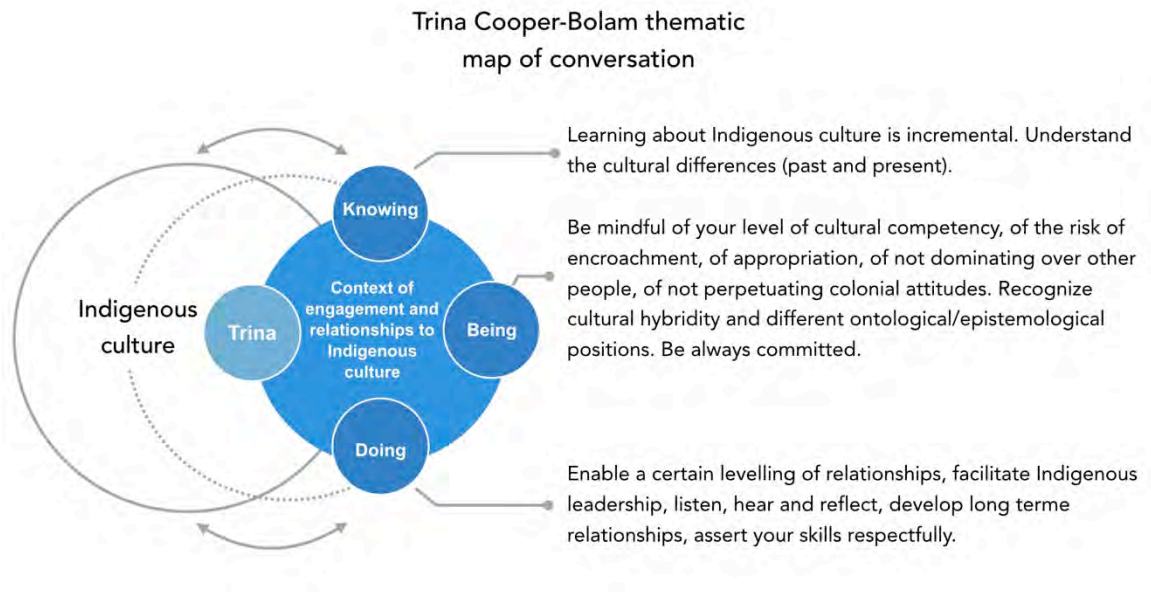


Figure 9 - Trina Cooper-Bolam thematic map of conversation

4.1.8 Simon Brascoupe

Simon Brascoupe Anishinabeg/Haudenausanee – Bear Clan is a member of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, Maniwaki, Quebec. He is an Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University and Trent University. He was recently designated Certified First Nations Health Manager (CFNHM) from the First Nations Health Manager Association. He has a research interest in land-based healing, traditional medicine and traditional knowledge. He conducts research and writes on cultural competency and safety. Simon is also a visual artist; his original prints on canvas and paper are made by traditional native stencil (pochoir) technique. His profound knowledge of Aboriginal symbolism is reflected in his work. Simon's artistic vision is to understand traditional values and teachings through the continuity of imagery and the narrative.

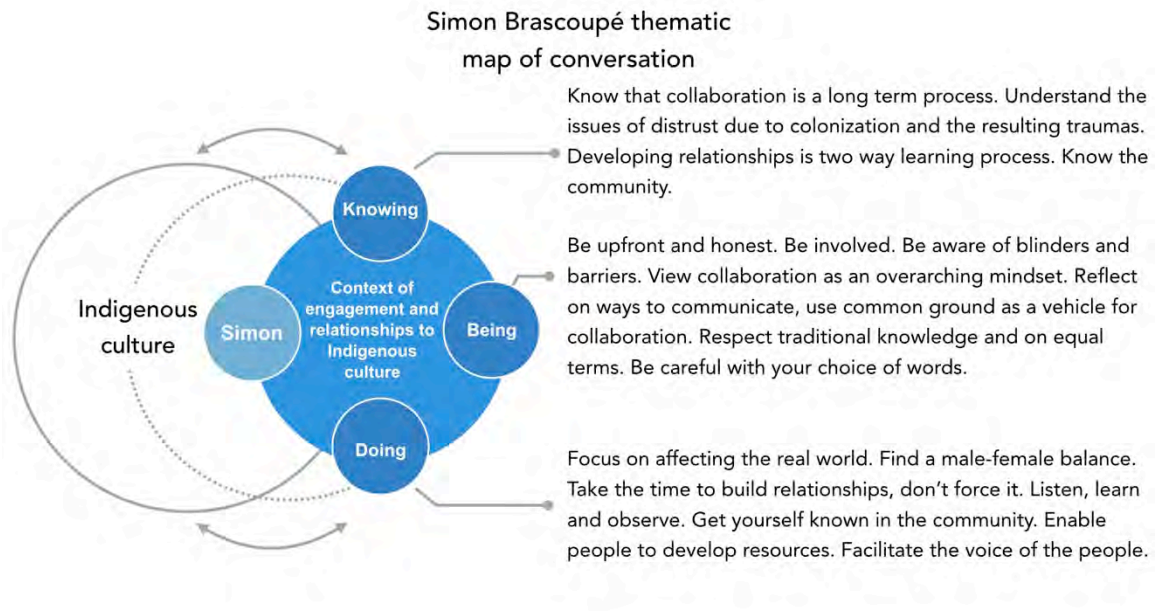


Figure 10 - Simon Brascoupe thematic map of conversation

4.2 Thematic interpretation of the conversations

4.2.0 Know the history, the resulting impacts and trauma

There is a cultural divide in Canada. Since first contact occurred several centuries ago, Indigenous communities and people throughout Canada have been subject to a culture of exploitation and assimilation, which in some cases still pervades in our contemporary society. The influence and control imposed by settler religion and governance, the exploitation of land and resources, the sense of ownership by settlers and the resulting trauma is an undeniable history. To a certain degree, this culture of exploitation continues today, Douglas comments:

It's not what can I give? It's what can I take? How much can I get? How many resources can I take? And so it's a culture of taking, not giving.

Trina describes this culture of taking and leaving, and exposes the potentially fragile state of our interactions. She says the following:

Commitment, relationships and time, that is really what I want to talk about. There is a long history between Indigenous peoples and mostly people from various "scientific" professions, and I put the word scientific in quotations... [It is about] archeologists and ethnologists and historians, people from those types of fields, going into a community and taking something, whether it's artifacts, which is a very troubled term or stories or art and leaving... communities feeling cognizant of having lost something and also ... that the relationship has ended. So it's become very much a relationship of... settler researchers meeting Indigenous people, gaining trust, taking something and leaving, right? It's an undisputed history, and this could very well be the fate of design interactions and design collaborations...? I think that collaborations, I mean... you can look at breadth, or you can look at depth, you know?

As well, most, if not all the participants mentioned that we (meaning non-Indigenous people) need to be reminded (or perhaps be re-acquainted) of the colonial and research history in Canada and particularly the resulting impacts and traumas. This provides a minimal level of understanding. But not everyone agrees, on this Rodney explains:

Yeah, it's so important, it's so difficult when I hear "Get over it!" and that kind of wording or you know "That was then, this is now." You gotta [sic] know your history and at least appreciate it, and appreciate that this is coming from a pretty depressive place.

The insights from the conversations also suggest that our collective history has had profound effects on our relationships between cultures and still plays an important role in influencing them, and by extension our collaborative efforts.

France elaborates:

I mean, we won't erase 500 years of colonization, but one of the big, big misunderstanding of this project here has been the assumption that western civilization was superior and therefore had this idea of universality. They're on top, on top of the pyramid right? And that gave... the colonizers the right to just go and poach whenever and whatever they felt like, or just appropriate whatever they felt like. To enter communities and do just whatever they felt like, and to this day in a way, we're still carrying on a lot of that.

The colonial remnants of that history form many cultural barriers. One such barrier, which most participants agree on, is the lingering distrust of non-Indigenous people. Barry comments on the subject:

Well it's not a level playing field, it's never been a level playing field and there has been a lot of history of broken promises and distrust. So you know, you can't expect people to judge you on your own actions, you're judged on the broader history of people who have come before you to that community, and you have to be mindful of that.

In addition, once engaged in collaborative design, the landscape can be wrought with tensions, which can in turn influence the dynamics of the relationships, the design process and the resulting design outcomes. As discussed earlier, it is clear that our collective colonial history was ripe with exploitation, which also included the exploitation of Indigenous women. Jaime explains:

You're also getting a woman's perspective. Sometimes there could be feelings around privilege, and there's historical stuff, right? And that, I would say, is hard to separate sometimes... Let's say history around the arrival of European men coming to take on wives, say Aboriginal wives. Many of those relationships were more as convenience as opposed to love and things like that; convenience on how to survive on the land and sewing clothes for them and introducing political partnerships, introducing them to medicine so they can survive. So there's this history, and here I am an Aboriginal woman and you're a white man, it's hard to talk about that.

Although I was aware of that particular history, it was a reminder of how those colonial impacts are pervasive even today and far reaching in some circumstances. And we need to be mindful that the feelings of 'being used' by Indigenous people or communities are a contemporary reality; that it takes time to break down those barriers. On this, Simon:

I find that collaboration takes a long time, you know? You can't do it in two months. It takes years to develop good collaboration, I mean real collaborative relationships. And part of it is, if I'm collaborating with other people, there's issues of trust because of colonization and the impact it had on traumatizing communities and individuals. So you gotta [sic] build trust and so with you I just thought "Okay, I'm gonna trust this guy" you know? You were just upfront when we first met.

Breaking down those barriers and allowing for sensitive narratives to take place, or for collaborative efforts to be tried, means reflection and work on both sides. Trina recounts her early interactions with Indigenous culture:

I relate so much to where you're at because it's been the same way for me, right? I've stumbled into a collaboration not even knowing what it was, knowing nothing about the history and hmm... slowly and slowly learning. And through the good graces of the people who've humoured me as an ignorant white person, I finally developed some degree of cultural competency.

And in some circumstances, those impacts and mistakes are being acknowledged and reflected on. Linda explains:

It is the mistakes of the past that are prompting people to take a more sensitive approach, or a more informed approach, or a more inclusive approach to the design.

Adding cultural differences to the foreground, David examines his ways of knowing and doing, which don't always align with Indigenous ways. He's also mindful of his role and authority within a collaborative project. David:

Well, yes, certainly, we come from different cultures, there's a cultural gulf between non-Indigenous and Indigenous people because the way we (non-

Indigenous) are, the way we perceive our world is very didactic. We write things down, we're very linear in our approach, we're very Cartesian in our approach. And what I've found in the work that I've done with First Nations people is that they're very non-linear. It's very 'spoken word'; it's very much experience based, whereas we want to find hard links and hard proofs, and they're much more about feeling things. So there's a bit of a disconnect there. And certainly there's a bit of mistrust from their side. I always approach my work primarily as an editor than as a pure creator, unless someone asks me for my opinion, [so] I can tell them.

Many participants have expressed the need for non-Indigenous people to learn about our collective colonial history as a way of understanding the complex issues of distrust. Some participants have mentioned they are often solicited to provide answers. This can be a burden for them to continually re-explain and educate. Jaime says:

It's really important for people who are non-Aboriginal to do their research ahead of time, that way they're not ...popping up at another person and that person having to start all over. So we sort of touched on that. But I think it's just really important for them to learn about history for instance, some of the basic stuff before going into trying to do a collaborative operation. [They need to be] learning about the community itself before going into it, even taking the time to get to know the person and maybe their impact of their relationship to the community, like how are they viewed within their community? How are they acknowledged? What's their role in the community? I'm always impressed, I have to say, when people have done their research. It's a good start.

4.2.1 Relevancy

The concept of relevancy was brought up several times in the

conversations. This tends to suggest that the issue is still largely problematic, misunderstood or not considered, and requires attention to research, reflection and consultation as to how Indigenous culture is represented, whether in art or design fields, and under what circumstances and contexts. Linda shares the following two reflections:

To find out where this project is intended to go, I would research the area, understand the history of the area; learn what you can about the original inhabitants of that area because it's grounded in something, right?

Well, say if you're creating something... there's symbolism that is restricted and others that are unrestricted... You have to have an understanding of what the symbols represent before you can use them, in case you use them in an incorrect way... You can't be claiming to honour [the culture] if it's being used incorrectly.

Similarly, the sense of ownership and misunderstanding of Indigenous cultural symbols, imagery or representation still pervades the design and academic discourse, and the misuse of them results in incorrect interpretations and incorrect representations, which proper research and consultation could address. Barry says:

Designers will often gravitate to ... the notion of the anthropological construct or the historical past and feel that this becomes the relevance or the meaning for the future, or for the now. And really it may not be. You know a lot of these symbols ...people will pull out from a historical past ...[without] referencing a contemporary context. And sometimes it becomes popularized as a result of academia and then becomes the symbol of that particular community. But it won't have the same meaning in context of the community because it's not

relevant.

Commenting on this in the context of economics, Rodney explains that financial concerns and consumer demands can prompt an unintended change in the design of cultural objects, which then questions the relevance and cultural integrity of the objects. Rodney:

When you think about the Inuk and the dancing bears, everyone wants a dancing bear, and that's not traditional art, but everybody's doing it out there because it sells. It's really interesting because traditional art is bone, small bone carvings that you can take with you, not *giant* ... soap stone carvings. It's hilarious, and they know it and they say it, this is not really our tradition, but it is now because people buy it. And so it changes culture. And this is the danger of design that changes the culture fundamentally because of the external influence just because everyone says: "I don't want bone crap, I don't like it, it's not aesthetically pleasing. But I really like this smooth, beautiful dancing bear". So now ... you're gonna [sic] do the dancing bear, right? So it's actually changed design. More people now are doing soap stone art.

With respect to the integrity of cultural aspects of a design project and how they are communicated, David recalls his experience and shares how he addresses Indigenous stories. David:

The things that I'm dealing with are: "Am I keeping with the spirit of the story I'm expressing? Am I keeping with or am I being respectful to the residential schools? Am I respectful to the gravity of the story?" So as a designer with the technical skills, I have to realize that this is their story, this is their mythology, this is their stuff. So it's really learning the programming from them and bringing that programming into the technical skills that I have. I found that letting people create through my technical skills protects their self-identity with the story. But taking on a project all alone, I would not trust myself to be

sensitive enough.

In some cases, non-Indigenous people evoke a false rationale for using images or other forms of Indigenous cultural representations, whether because of ignorance, financial or social gain, or perhaps to avoid having to deal with things such as consultation, which could lead to a confrontation. Barry shares his experiences:

And sometimes the excuse they use is they say, "Oh, well we're honouring your nation". Are you really honouring that nation? Let's get it down to base level. It's really about money, and growing a company or growing the prestige without any concern of the damage, and in some cases irreparable damage that's being done to Aboriginal people, Aboriginal youth, Aboriginal women, Aboriginal men.

These statements suggest that non-Indigenous people sometimes confuse respect for culture and honouring culture. The use or representation of Indigenous knowledge or symbols is a fragile operation, it is a delicate issue, even more so when non-Indigenous people are involved, but it's use by Indigenous artists can also be criticized within Indigenous circles as well. Rodney explains:

I think that the way I was told by some of the other Elders was that we have two ways of knowing, a traditional knowledge and a sacred knowledge. Sacred knowledge is that which can't be shared or shared only in specific times, places and people and what not, right? Traditional knowledge is that which is universal, so its like "Bimaadiziwin" (Anishinaabeg term), that's a universal teaching: seven generations is universal teaching, seven grandfathers is

universal teaching. These are good for everybody, right? Whereas sacred teachings is only for a specific purpose, should not be allowed to be shared. But then again you look at people like Norval Morrisseau, and Daphne Odjig, and other people who took those ritualistics and tried to paint them, right? And they got in a lot of trouble for doing that.

Indigenous artists are not immune to these tensions and delicate scenarios of Indigenous representation. Simon describes the qualities and profound relationship of certain knowledges with Indigenous people; he shares his own experience with representation. Simon:

Because some of the work that I've done, I've done it from a deeply respectful, spiritual perspective and community members get concerned. They respect the art, but if you put it out there, it'll get misinterpreted and so what I've done is I just stay away from it. So you know let's use the term 'design', there's a design element in our, say Algonquin art history and past, if you wanna [sic] call it that. They are deeply spiritual and come from a spiritual place, even though all things come from the same place. But there are community members that still have a continuous, deep respect and ceremonial relationship with certain images. And so their concern is that those images, when they're out there, can be misinterpreted, misunderstood, you know?

Compounding these tensions are the blatant cases where Indigenous identity is appropriated and commodified. Barry shares a story about an Aboriginal signer, Moana Maniapato from Australia, who was served a 'cease and desist' order in Germany prior to a concert. Apparently a toy company had trademarked her name. He also mentioned awhile back about a company attempting to trademark the term 'Inukshuk'. So here we have appropriation and

commodification of culture and even identity. The extent to which culture and identity can be a commodity is an important concern. Barry mentions designer tendencies to commodify, to appropriate, and to interpret in the wrong contexts, which can damage and further confuse. This issue is about cultural and intellectual rights which are denied or stripped away. For example, in 1884, missionaries and government agents banned Potlatch ceremonies, which were a ceremonial feast to commemorate an important event, and practiced by North West Coast Indigenous communities. The ban was only dropped in 1951 in Canada (New World Encyclopedia, 2016). In light of culture being 'forced' underground to protect and preserve, it's no surprise that Indigenous communities are distrustful. Barry talks about the importance of clarity and transparency, asking the right questions, "Who benefits? How will the knowledge be used?"

Yet, we tend to forget that Indigenous culture is protected; there are models of intellectual and property rights such as The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which outlines a set of cultural and fundamental rights for Indigenous people around the globe (United Nations, 2008). But the sense of ownership that still pervades or the perceived entitlement isn't a new issue. Barry provides insights to mitigate those situations:

So in terms of the question, I think that there should be some kind of a meaningful engagement with the community. And I think ... if you're going to use the design or if you're forward enough, or you get to that point that you get the buy-in by the community then that person should be working throughout the project. It shouldn't just be information taken and then extrapolated. There has to be some kind of meaningful, long term involvement of either a designer or an artist or an Elder, or somebody within the community. And most often it's not. It's basically just someone mining the culture.

Previously, I had a basic understanding of relationships and accountability to a community, in research or in design practice, but my mindset used to be quite different. As long as my concepts were approved and conformed to building code standards, I was only accountable to my client, period! Or so I thought. And so this level of responsibility to relationships extends far beyond working with an Indigenous individual. The collective decisions we make can impact that individual's community, (to which they are accountable) and can also impact the broader Indigenous community in Canada. How can we ensure the relevancy of a design outcome? Certainly consultation would help, as would proper understanding of the cultural features of the imagery in the overall aesthetics, also ensuring adequate research of the context and perhaps in some cases, not going ahead with a particular project if the risks of misinterpretation are too high.

4.2.2 Relationality

Relationships are in many ways the foundations of Indigenous culture. In developing and taking care of those relationships, France underscores the importance of cultural protocols, which are evolving and adapting to the realities of Indigenous people, and although they may differ from nation to nation, they play the same role. They are a way to put into action concepts of relationality (through offering tobacco to an Elder for example) and are key to properly engaging, to developing relationships, to building collaborations and to recognizing the different worldviews at play. Cultural protocols are effective for creating and anchoring ideas for those conversations, and are meant as tools to care for the people, for the spaces, and ideas that inform those inclusive spaces.

France says:

What is also interesting is that protocols are not static ... [They are] not stuck in time and they're evolving, they're in movement; it's all in movement. People are alive, everything is alive and so protocols are alive as well, and they're being performed in a very adaptive way to the reality of Indigenous people today, whether you live on reserve or in downtown Toronto, right?

Some of the conversations provided insights into community-individual relationships, which can inform social interactions and guide Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. Jaime describes her relationship to her community:

So if I'm at home in my community, I'm not going to do this project without the information or the support of my community, and that's pretty universal.

This suggests that the support of the community can be critical and as an artist, in some circumstances, can affect whether or not the individual receives the resources to continue their work. For example, Jaime describes her reliance on her community to provide her with the material she uses for her artwork (fish scales). After she has received them, She says:

That's an acknowledgment that I keep teaching about culture, and so I still have permission to teach about my community, my culture, while I'm here in Ottawa. And the day I go back, go for coffee, go visit them and bring gifts and go without fish scales, I don't question that. If I don't have fish scales, I don't do the work. Yeah, and I need to figure out why they didn't give me fish scales this time. I may have some time to think, ok, well maybe I need to go home...or maybe they heard something that I'm not explaining the meaning in a proper way and that's gotten back and so they just stop. Yeah, so silence is an answer for people, and it can't be taken lightly.

In addition, if we consider building relationships as a matter of respectful intent, the manner in which relationships are developed is as important as the relationship itself and can attest to the genuine nature of the intent and concerns for the community. This also applies to engaging with a single Indigenous individual for the purpose of working in collaborative projects, however, there may be instances where the need for an inclusive collaboration is not as clear, not as respectful as it should be, or not applied in a meaningful way. On seeking Indigenous contributors for a project, Linda describes how a potential scenario ought to be:

The [Indigenous] contributors take an equal read. [They] don't talk down; [they] make the collaboration meaningful and it's not an instance of checking the box. It is to consult more than one person or group and not to approach this as tokenism.

Simon parallels those ideas and explains that developing a relationship is really about commitment and involvement in each other's worlds. He shares tangible examples of how you can build relationships in a genuine manner in the context of initial distrust, and that it's not always perfect:

Well I think there's healing and teachings you know? And I think the approach, like I was talking about trust earlier, trust is big [issue]. How do you get over that barrier, you know? So I think talking is important and maybe doing stuff together, like let's try this or what are you interested in doing? And I find that, working collaboratively, you really do need to talk and you need time. So I think a lot of times we don't spend enough time on developing that relationship... There's the talking part and the next step: if you look at the medicine wheel for example, it's listening and learning, but that listening and learning isn't just verbally, it's observation. And then you're on this journey: so we're gonna [sic] do this project, and the project doesn't always have to be a smooth road. If you're learning, the road gets bumpy you know [laughing], or you're building a road and then the result [is], the project or product is [finished], you know. You try to find some balance, where everybody benefits from it.

In the same line of thought, Jaime provides more details on the reasons for distrust and the feelings of being used:

I do think that in the circles that I run with, there may be a general mistrust and perhaps that's one example of not just women and men [in] relationships but also when you're talking about traditional knowledge or anything like that for instance, researchers will come in and then leave, and they don't come back or they actually use that information to their own personal benefit without

permission or appreciation. There are feelings sometimes, I don't know what other word to use except for 'used'; feeling used. There might be a better academic term (laughing), an ethical term, but yeah.

Establishing relationality between cultures is an important and fragile issue that can serve to build bridges and as such should be approached with genuine care. The insights from the conversations attest to this. But relationality doesn't only concern itself with relationships between people. It is far more profound, and can be difficult for non-Indigenous people to comprehend (if at all). Simon and Rodney describe those relationships as providing knowledge of natural systems and how they might be viewed or thought of by non-Indigenous people.

Simon says:

I just did a piece for Parks Canada and it's called "The land is our teacher" and it's an interesting metaphor because it's real. You know, I think everything humans have learned, everything comes from the land but when we talk about land, we're also talking about the universe. It's broader than just what we see as land. We need oxygen to breath, water to live and that type of thing. And I think at the root of Indigenous art is that sort of understanding of the relationship and the inter-relationship that humans have, not just with the natural world, and each other but with the broader universe. That's often misunderstood cross-culturally because I think different cultures have different barriers and blinders. They just can't see it.

Relationship to land is huge, relationships to animals, relation to Creator, you know how you fit in this; you know a land base is so important. The animals give teachings, right? So, a lot of the teachings are brought about how animals act with each other or act with nature. We watch who eats certain berries, who doesn't, things like that so you can live off the land. With the land, but also the

stewardship of the land ... you have to look at your carbon footprint, which is the term today, but how you are part of this entire system rather than opposed to the system. And right now I think modern society is very opposed to nature and natural systems. It's fighting it, versus you know, living with it in a harmony.

Non-Indigenous designers can have an effect on an individual's relationship and support of the community. And as designers we should not only support and respect the knowledge we receive, but perhaps to a certain extent, re-view our role and mindset within a collaborative project as espousing a stewardship for those decisions in light of the community presence in co-design.

Trina describes her role within co-design and the associated risks:

Sure there's risks, of one colonizing the other, there's risks of one dominating the other and it's very hard to have an evenness. There's also the risk of not hearing each other, right? An artist I collaborate with a great deal is Jeffrey Thomas. Our discussions are very, very long and my greatest fear is that perhaps I'm not always hearing him, I'm not always interpreting what he's saying and my fear is getting it wrong, right? And sometimes, I get it wrong, and I reflect something back on him, and he says: "No, no, no that's not ah..." [laughing] "That's problematic because of this, that and the other". So, I mean there are risks... I think the risks of mishearing is a really big risk, and it's a bigger risk ... because when you haven't listened, you might go off on a tangent and you might end up doing more damage and not realizing it. So, there's a risk of not hearing, not listening. There's always a risk of imbalance, there's a risk of perpetrating colonial structures, risk of appropriation, risk of encroachment, you know. I'm really mindful in my own practice of not encroaching. I don't feel like appropriation, in my own practice, is much of a risk, although it is a risk. I think its encroachment, as the settler in the collaboration; I don't want to encroach onto someone else's territory or domain, or subject of expertise you know?

4.2.3 Respect

Respecting and honouring go beyond creating objects and images.

Rodney explains:

You have to respect that you're not superior in knowledge, that there are different ways,... to look at things; to look at history. There's this superiority it seems of westernized knowledge where it's like "Oh, we'll accommodate a little". Well that means "we'll make a small space for you; we'll tolerate it".

Demonstrating respect can mean being open to recognizing cultural deficits and ignorance. France says:

Each nation, each people, each tribe has it's own cultural protocols and acknowledging that you don't necessarily know what the protocols are is fine. Actually it's a sign of respect to go to people and say I'm wanting to understand what the protocols are for here, because I want to be respectful. And in general, people are very supportive of that attitude... They will share with you what the protocols are.

On respecting (or not) worldviews, Rodney describes a scenario which seems to me very typical of what we may have seen or heard in the news:

examples of the conflict of worldviews in the context of land resource and development projects and Indigenous rights to land and its use:

You have companies that go into communities and say: "Oh this is what you're gonna [sic] do, we're gonna [sic] set up a hydro dam, you're gonna [sic] get this", and quite frankly "We just don't want it! And why? Well it's gonna [sic] affect the community and the way we live and we like the way we live, we don't want to change right now." And the company doesn't understand, "Yes, but

you're gonna [sic] get money! And you're gonna [sic] live a better life." A better life according to whom? Right?

From a design practice perspective, the use of participatory design (and human-centered design) processes can be an indicator of a respectful and empathic intent. Douglas refers to this type of intent here and also provides ideas as to how a project can be reciprocal:

It's all about respecting the people you are serving, like as an architect here, you are serving. Architects have always served societies, have always created structures in which people live in and they are served by these structures, or environments, you're creating ... for people. What kind of environment should you create? Well you should create a healing and beautiful environment that functions for the people you are serving. It should be a proper stage for their lives, you know, because not only are we affecting them in a physical way but we are affecting them in a psychological way. So you have to take the psychological aspects of the space and how people relate to each other in a space; the sociological aspects of how you get people to interact in that space or whatever.

4.2.4 Responsibility

On the subject of relationships, France suggested the need to be reflective and to recognize assumptions in collaborative settings to address questions of authority and power. Who has authority? How is it established and according to what? On this, France says:

Ok, here I am with this group of people doing this, wanting to do this. What are my assumptions? What is it that I may be not even seeing? Where are my blind spots here? That's a very important question, taking the time to do that. In a

way to be able to do that is like trying to be outside of yourself, and saying the things that sound strange because it kind of reveals your own assumptions. And to admit assumptions is a very powerful tool as well. And then [you need to take] responsibility for the opportunities to become better, because you're really recognizing these assumptions.

Reflecting on and recognizing your cultural competency is a demonstration of responsibility. Here Trina discusses her own journey to awareness:

I'm someone who's learning from other people ... My collaborative relationships have been learning journeys, and I'm still on a journey. But certainly I think that many designers who have not worked with Indigenous peoples, even who have worked on Indigenous histories or subjects, or projects but not with Indigenous peoples lack cultural competency. Absolutely, I see it all the time. I lacked cultural competency, and I probably continue to lack cultural competency in certain areas. I mean, as a non-Indigenous person, there's a certain cultural competency that you can achieve and there's a certain cultural competency that you can't achieve and we need to be mindful of that, right?

There is also a cultural competency in understanding how to balance what you know and what you can offer, and to what extent designers can exert some authority in a project. It's not always clear and easy to do. Trina and David discuss this in the following three paragraphs:

Trina:

I think that sometimes in an effort to be so humble and so collaborative and accommodating, sometimes designers can minimize what they contribute, and as a designer you have a particular skill set right? And it's important for the people you're collaborating with to understand that you bring a skill set with you and you bring some expertise. I think it's really difficult in collaborations to... [pause] to make sure that you're always playing to your strengths. Like if

you're a trained designer, that's what you bring, right? And you bring cultural competencies of being able to listen and being able to reflect the things that you heard and render them in something, and to bring particular design understanding to a set of challenges, or objectives or what have you. That's your profession, you're good at that, you're trained to do that, right? So you can't expect the person you're collaborating with, who may not be a designer, to be able to do that, right?

David:

But I approach this as an editor, so about that project that I'm working on with Trina that we just talked about,... for me, I'm there... I see myself as a facilitator as taking my design skills, my illustration skills and applying [them] to their story but I'm letting them tell their story. That's the main crux, I think, the nuance between the designer who wants to create something, who wants to design something and the ability to listen properly, to make the people whose story you're telling really feel that they are engaged in the process.

Well I think for a designer, especially for a designer who's approaching a First Nations project for the first time, is to realize that ... it's not your design, and it's not your story. So that's the first thing to do, is to turn off or sit down with your ego and say, "This is not about me, this is about finding out the story that I need to tell." I have a story ... and I need to learn about that story. That's the first thing. [The] second thing is to listen and document and to approach in a very humble way. I think a lot of First Nation people that I've worked with have had so much experience with being dictated, [to] being told "This is what we're going to do. This is what we need to do" and so to put the control in their hands and to express and say "Look, I don't know your story and I only want to come and help with my technical skills. I want to express your story but I want you to express yourself through me."

The designer's role within collaborative settings can be difficult to negotiate. Designers have a desire to create something. They may influence a project in a certain direction, whether for aesthetic or economic concerns, or by

way of habit they may exert more control. At the other end of the spectrum, a designer's usefulness in a co-design project could be questioned if the designer doesn't assert, at minimum, the skills and abilities that can contribute to the design outcomes. Responsibility within a cross-cultural co-design project can also demand self-reflection, as France says:

It's a very delicate field of work, and that's why I think that maybe the first part of my conversation was related a lot about the state of mind of people entering into this field of work. What is it that you have to take care [of] for doing this properly, right? And one of the ways to overcome this, or at least be aware of it, is to again, when you do have conversations trying to establish a frame of work, or developing a frame of work, to explore what those risks are. [This] is a very powerful thing, involving all parties, involving everyone in identifying the kind of risks that are involved in a particular project that they are undertaking.

4.2.5 Reciprocity

How can a design process include a reciprocal feature? The conversations yielded several possibilities. Designers could 'build into' the project educational features, or perhaps provide resources, or enable Indigenous communities to be included in some form of extension to the project, or even consider healing aspects as integral to the outcomes. It's also a question of long-term benefits and viewing a design process as a decolonizing agent. Properly engaging a community means researching the community, talking to the right people, talking to Elders and ensuring commitment, longevity and responsibility on both sides. The process is fragile and time consuming, it may not work, there might be

confrontation, exploitation or domination, and it also might deter researchers or practitioners in light of these long-term responsibilities and challenges. If you attend to your relationships, take your time to build them in a genuine way. It's the first step, and it might still fail, but you have to bear that reality. It's not always going to go ahead, and that's fine. On this, Barry asks:

So again, how could a design or a relationship foster this Indigenous and settler relationship in this whole contemporary context and process of decolonization?

In collaborative projects, participation of Indigenous people and community should consider many factors of relationality, reciprocity and responsibility. There are promising scenarios that demonstrate these principles of engagement; Simon describes his observations and involvement in a community-based approach with Parks Canada:

I did a study for Parks Canada and they've been trying to repair the relationship with First Nations, Inuit and Métis over the last 20 years and I think they've done a pretty good job of it, you know. In the past, Parks (Canada) would go in and burn down First Nation communities in the park and all that kind of stuff, so I interviewed a lot of the Parks people and what they said was, like what ... [we're] doing now actually, is ... getting to know the community, so you know you're having coffee with people, [and] going to things... And I think that's a good way you know to approach things, rather than going to top person X and saying: "Ok, let's work together" or you know or whatever. I've got this project, so I think knowing the community is important and developing that trust, a trust relationship with them. The other thing that these Parks people... [do is] they call it participatory, you know the participatory approach, but there's also with that this idea of going the other person's road, you know? And they call it

community driven approach, so if we switched the roles and you were Native, I would say: "What are you interested in doing?"

So what I learned from the Parks Canada scientists is that they were in a way facilitating the voice of the people that they were working with. And I talked to some of the scientists and they had a respect for the traditional or the Indigenous knowledge of the people that they worked with and held their knowledge in the same esteem that they had for scientific knowledge [on] equal footing. And as I said, some of them provided resources to enable the Elders to do their thing, using their voice. And I still really haven't thought this through yet but I guess talking about it helps. But what some of the scientists said was ... they're not taking ... [the Elders'] voice, you know, they're enabling their voice.

Trina shares her thoughts on building and nurturing her relationships, which seem far more profound than what one would expect from a typical project designer. She also provides insights into temporal aspects which can affect design projects. Trina:

So on the one hand Indigenous peoples who signed the treaties, they expected that they were doing this for generations, for as long as the rivers flow, etc, etc. But on the other side, the treaties were really I think regarded as a very temporary state. And I think that that mindset still pervades, and I don't think it's a question of the expediency of that relationship or a collaboration... We need to take the longer view, and by 'we', we settlers need to take the longer view, we need to recognize that these are relationships. And they're not relationships for the purposes of commerce or for the purposes of a project or success or what have you. They're deeper, and there's a social consciousness to these relationships I suppose. I think I'm gonna [sic] end there, but ... [this] is really important. Because even if you have a fabulous collaboration; if it's just for the length of one project, you may have damaged the potential for collaboration; long term collaboration,... [regardless of] whatever success you achieved through that one project. You have to make good on your

commitment, whatever you commit to, and be careful that you commit to things that you can do because that commitment will always be there, you know?

4.2.6 Grounding the project in an Indigenous perspective

Several participants described their own use of principles or sources of inspiration that guide them throughout their work and are helpful in grounding collaborative projects in Indigenous culture and worldview.

The five R's

France Trépanier mentioned her use of the five R's (respect, responsibility, relationality, relevance and reciprocity) drawn from Indigenous research methodologies. She added that within landscapes of engagement those principles guide her mindset and provide for questions to be reflected upon:

So I think that, as a researcher, as a scholar to be guided by these principles is an important thing to start with. And I certainly try to use them always in every artistic or curatorial research project that I undertake when Indigenous people are involved ... They're really good guides actually if you take the time to look at each one of them and ask yourself: "Like am I doing this right? Am I being respectful? Could it be that I'm not respectful? And how would that be?"

In light of the research history on Aboriginal people, France adds that guiding principles such as the Five R's, can provide for a decolonized approach to research. Taking responsibility for what you're doing and the people you're

engaging with is being accountable to your relationships, questioning the relevance of what you're doing and how it's relevant to the people.

Seven Grandfathers

In a similar line of thought, Linda described her use of the Seven Grandfathers (humility, respect, courage, honesty, truth, wisdom and love) to ground her work, and that those teachings apply to working in collaboration as well. These are examples, being respectful and listening to what other people have to say, having courage to be open to other ideas, to look at things honestly and be honest with each other, to have wisdom and to love what you do. She is also mindful of the Seven Grandfather teachings in regards to her approach to other individuals, and she looks for those characteristics in other people.

Seven Generations

Rodney shared a story to explain this generational concept. He was visiting a community up north and was offered lodging in the community. It was winter and very cold. However, there wasn't much wood to heat the unit, and so he commented on the situation (which I'll discuss further in the 'communication' paragraph). Eventually, the community took care of the issue, albeit in an interesting and relational way. Rodney explains:

Firewood was brought in by a community member and taken from someone else's woodpile without asking, but "That's relationality, right." It's the seven generations model. What you do now will affect the generations to come, maybe not tomorrow, or next week, but eventually they're going to replace that wood that was taken. And businesses and designers struggle with that concept, because they say: "I will give you this, and you will give me this back now." So that's generational relationality, it might be returned to you from another generation.

That's an interesting comment by Rodney and begs the question: How would a design process deal with generational relationality? Or would it even be possible to do so? If the design process expects an economic return of some kind, it would be problematic to say the least. Douglas also comments on the Seven Generations model, and adds an even more challenging nuance in describing accountability to the past:

So all decisions were made for seven generations, because it would affect seven generations by your acts. So whatever you do, you affect the past, because you're the product of the past. Like you are the grandchild of all your ancestors, so you owe it to your ancestors to be responsible and you are the grandfather of all the generations that come after you. So whatever you do, it affects the past, the present and the future. So you have to be responsible.

Bimaadiziwin

In discussing his relationship to community and his cultural mindset, Rodney described what he calls his "Indigenous backpack". It's about his responsibility to his people and his community. He referred to this as

Bimaadiziwin (Anishinaabeg term), which means the good life, living with a good heart, a good soul, a good mind. Rodney:

Am I doing this right? Is this what the community wants? How am I representing this? Am I hurting someone, or the community? It doesn't mean I won't mess up, but the intent has to be good, and I'll own up to it.

And so, there's accountability to the project and the people you're working with, but it extends beyond that immediate relationship, and so I have to be mindful of that, and the impacts on community. Trina shares her experiences of the challenges and implications of grounding the projects in culturally appropriate settings and discourses. Here she provides insights of project leadership:

I think the subject determines the collaboration, right? So very, very simply put, if the subject is Indigenous, exclusively Indigenous, then one would expect that people working on it or whoever is the lead is an Indigenous person. If the subject is a hybrid subject, or is a subject that hinges on both Indigenous and non-Indigenous histories that is a good opportunity for collaboration.

4.2.7 Communication

Jaime describes how communication is much more nuanced, or not as direct as a non-Indigenous person might expect. When she's in her community, and hasn't received an answer or any material for her artwork, she reflects on the reasons rather than asking for the answer. Jaime:

Yeah. And I need to figure out why they didn't give me fish scales this time, you know and I may have some time to think okay well maybe I need to go home and live there for a little while, maybe I need to offer some workshops next time I go home, maybe they heard something that I'm not explaining the meaning in a proper way and that's gotten back and so they just stop. So a silence is an answer for people and it can't be taken lightly, so if they don't get back to you, unless they, say, ... live in an urban environment it's a bit different, but a silence is an answer. So that's all part of the creative process for me.

Referring again to Rodney's story on his community visit up north, he describes this time the nuances of communicating the fact that there's barely any wood to heat the unit. Rodney:

You know I wouldn't say: "Hey there's no wood, where can I get some wood?" In our way we kinda [sic] look over and instead say: "Oh, that's not a lot of wood there hey? It's gonna [sic] be a cold night tonight!" you know, and that's the sign that you know "Okay, let's get more wood". You comment, but you don't ask, because what you're doing is you're nudging and it means, "Hey, you're a community member, and you're supposed to be taking care of me" and they did, they brought in some wood. In Sandy Lake it was a prime example of how communities come together, so that's relationality right?

4.3 Key findings

1. Although there are cultural commonalities between Indigenous nations in Canada, they also have distinct cultural ways of knowing, being and doing, and distinct values and beliefs. Designers must recognize and acknowledge these distinctions to avoid homogenizing Indigenous culture and include frameworks to address cultural differences when needed.

2. Designers' natural and habitual tendencies can conflict with culturally appropriate co-design by appropriating, commodifying or influencing a design outcome, which in turn has the potential to erode the cultural integrity and intended representation of the design outcome.
3. The impacts of our collective colonial history have far reaching consequences for present day cross-cultural relationships and thus in collaborative settings.
4. Even an inclusive, respectful and culturally appropriate engagement may not result in working in collaboration with Indigenous people or communities. Non-Indigenous designers must bear this in mind and respect that reality. Not all projects will go forward.
5. Recognizing cultural differences while also acknowledging that we share both cultures to a certain extent (cultural hybridity) can provide for a neutral and respectful space of engagement and can enrich the co-design process and outcomes, but only to the extent that both cultures want to take that leap.
6. Non-Indigenous designers should be mindful of the different types of Indigenous knowledge, whether sacred or traditional (universal) or restricted and unrestricted. And how that knowledge (if it is possible to use it at all) is presented in context to ensure relevancy.

7. Long-term relationships and commitments are key to creating a respectful, reciprocal and culturally responsible partnership.
8. A bottom-up design approach is congruent with Indigenous culture; it's about serving the people, not the system.
9. A culturally appropriate design process should consider a consensus driven decision-making protocol (there should be no power relationships or hierarchy within the project team, all voices are important).
10. A design process "with" and "for" Indigenous people and communities is possible, but non-Indigenous designers must be mindful of power relationships. They must situate themselves on equal terms within the dynamics of collaborative relationships and must be mindful not to exert authority over the decisions and creative outcomes of the project. They must also consider facilitation as a primary role for the designer, but assert design skills when appropriate.
11. The co-design members need to collectively define the scope and reach of accountability in the project and ensure that it corresponds to and helps define reciprocity.
12. Designers must consider the nuances of communication within a cross-cultural co-design setting.

13. Designers should consider espousing a cultural stewardship to mitigate the impacts of external influences and protect the cultural integrity of the process and design outcomes.

4.4 Discussion

These preceding conversations have revealed a rich and diverse range of themes and subthemes. Those invaluable insights serve to better understand and articulate the dynamic relationships that form (and inform) the landscape of cross-cultural co-design, particularly in post-colonial settings. Relationality permeates the discussion in a diversity of ways and must be reflected in view of the particular relationships that inform or govern to a certain extent, Indigenous culture, connection to community, land, language and history.

While this study does not claim to present the full extent and nuances of relationality, it does present a certain categorization of themes that emerge from the conversations. These themes should be viewed and reflected on in connection with each other as a whole principle of relationality. A better understanding can inform and positively influence settler-designer mindsets in attempting to achieve a certain level of cultural competency. This must be concerned with issues of respect, transparency, accountability, reciprocity, commitment and cultural protocols.

These issues must be thought about and discussed in relation to our assumptions about history, and with an understanding that everything is evolving and adapting. Douglas says:

Because that's our nature, that's how we all started, that's how we evolved. That's the way I feel. And we have to go back to our roots, as human beings in which we were a heck of a lot happier. And be hunters and gatherers again you know ... hunters and gatherers of knowledge, of wisdom, hunters of new answers and new ideas, and exercise our freedom of choice, which we are starting to do.

The following summary of themes (See figure 12) helps to position the insights within the thoughts and actions of a design practice and process. This should not be viewed as a strict method of approach, but rather as a soft guide of what ought to be considered from a designer's perspective.

4.5 Summary thematic map

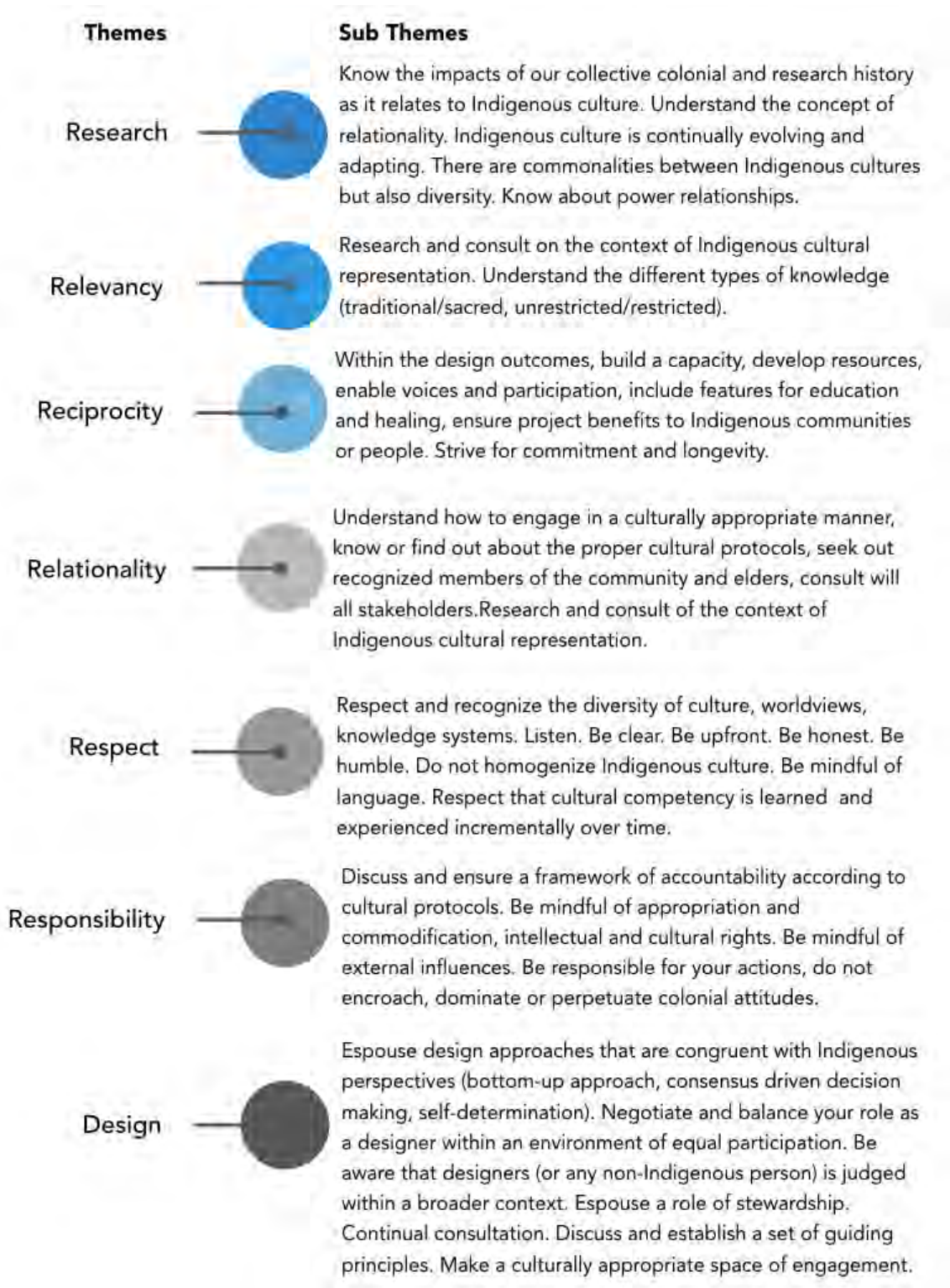


Figure 11 - Summary thematic map

- 5 -
Conclusion

5.1 Limitations of the study

This study draws on the individual conversations and the knowledge shared by the study's Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. Although there are cultural commonalities in their experiences with collaborations, the study does not presume that those voices represent a pan-nation viewpoint, but rather recognizes that personal opinions and experiences are specific to their own communities. In view of this diversity, there is the potential for a disconnected and fragmented view of shared knowledge, which again, suggests that the insights should be considered as a general and evolving understanding.

Moreover, I'm fully conscious that the insights revealed through these conversations are subject to my personal interpretation, and informed by my own life experiences, professional frames for practice, biases and assumptions. Undoubtedly, there is the potential for cultural nuances and essential qualities to be misinterpreted, misheard, or worse, lost through my analysis of the conversations.

In addition, while this study has acknowledged and attempted to apply as much as possible culturally appropriate research methods and protocols (insofar as I understand them), it has not been immune from impeding the very principles

of inclusive engagement that it proclaims should be adopted. Indeed, the pressure of time constraints, as it relates to research deadlines, precluded the potential for a collaborative analysis of the condensed conversations and thematic analysis, and therefore participant consultation and validation of the findings.

5.2 Contributions

The study has the potential to contribute to the current contexts and issues in the following ways:

- To counter-balance the hegemony of western methodologies as 'authoritative knowledges'.
- To demonstrate the value of oral traditions and narratives as credible academic sources of knowledge.
- To extend the range of discussions surrounding co-design methods, particularly as they relate to Indigenous culture, communities and individuals.
- To build common ground between Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge production.
- To acknowledge and facilitate the preservation of traditional ways of knowing, being and doing.
- To contribute guiding principles that foster culturally appropriate engagement.
- To promote a decolonization agenda in design education.

5.3 Conclusions

Culture is central to design, yet design has not always been accorded the kind of attention required to address a process of disparity where design intent, as a cultural operation, is deeply reflected in contexts of social and cultural tension. Moreover, Indigenous decolonized research methods have too often been absent in collaborative endeavours, however, there is a growing number of discussions that attest to this neglect and attempt to articulate models of engagement and participation to redress and reposition these issues as central to inclusive engagement. Designers are often ill equipped to not only engage with Indigenous communities and people, but also to position and balance their outsider knowledge within a design process. In addition, there is an important distinction to be made regarding the context of inquiry for this study and particularly how 'community' is defined or thought about. Throughout this study, I engaged with a diversity of Indigenous individuals, and by extension to a diversity of communities or tribal affiliations; and so beyond learning about the collective knowledge of a unique community through the participants, the focus has also been on the relationships that form a cultural understanding.

Ideally, design is meant to be considered as a service to others, about adapting to emerging issues and espousing relevant knowledge to produce new

processes, and by extension, new design outcomes. It also serves to define and extend the boundaries of design as a culture of inquiry, to balance design and research skills and creative processes within a relational context. Of course, not all design projects require collaboration with Indigenous participants but the sensitizing values emerging here could be used in other contexts of cultural production.

While this learning journey does not yield all the answers, nor does it provide for all the questions, it does conclude that Indigenous research guidelines can be adapted to include the concerns of a design process as a way of thinking, being and doing in design practice and research and has the potential to address the cultural divide. But the intent here is not for a design process to appropriate cultural knowledge and be branded as an Indigenous agency. Neither should a designer commodify this process and claim ownership of yet another Indigenous cultural facet. Rather it should imbue a process and a mindset with the diversity and wisdom of Indigenous values and beliefs that form the landscape of relationality, so that we, as a collective of designers, may step into a new reality in which Indigeneity instinctively permeates our discourses.

5.4 Further research

The results of this study should be further discussed with Indigenous individuals and communities, and attempt to articulate as much as possible a set of practical guidelines according to more specific disciplinary design frameworks and fields of practice, and in reference to Indigenous cultural concerns. It would be beneficial for the findings of this study to be examined with further attention to real world scenarios and in reference to past case studies.

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Appendix A - Ethics clearance form

Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB)

Certificate of Ethics Clearance

Principal Investigator	Department	Study Number
<input type="text" value="Sylvain Despres"/>	<input type="text" value="Industrial Design"/>	<input type="text" value="15-140"/>

Co-Investigators and other researchers:

Researcher	Study Role	Position
Thomas Garvey	Faculty Supervisor	Faculty
Allan Ryan	Faculty Supervisor	Faculty

Study Title: **(Use this version instead) How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate artifacts and experiences?**

Approval Date: Expiry Date: Approval Type:

Submitted Date	Study Component	Approval Date

Validity Term:

Comments:

Certification

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by Carleton University Research Ethics Board and the research procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human participants.

Skelly Brown

Chair, Carleton University Research Ethics Board (CUREB)

This Certificate of Clearance is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the research procedures.

Appendix B - Invitation



CUREB clearance #: 15-140

Invitation

Subject: Invitation to participate in a research project.

Title of the research project: How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate artifacts and experiences?

Dear Sir or Madam,

My name is Sylvain Després, I'm a graduate student at Carleton University's School of Industrial Design (Master of Design) in Ottawa, and my research interests gravitate towards artistic public installations, urban design and creative practices. I was born in Ottawa, have lived overseas and my parents are from New-Brunswick (Cocagne and Dalhousie). I'm also a father, a brother and an uncle.

I am working under the supervision of Dr. Thomas Garvey (Director, School of Industrial Design) and Dr. Allan J. Ryan (Associate Professor, School of Canadian Studies and Department of Art History). Anishinabeg artist Simon Brascoupé is also advising from an Indigenous point of view.

I am writing you today to invite you to participate in a study entitled "**How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate designs and experiences**".

Last year I co-designed an urban design/artistic proposal for the National Capital Commission (NCC). Although the design proposal was well received by the NCC, it did

not fully account for and honour Indigenous perspectives, I have since then cancelled the NCC project. The failures of the NCC proposal are what prompted this research study, thus the intent of the research is to better understand the causes of these failures, and how a design practitioner can adopt cultural competency to better engage with Indigenous collaborators on design projects. Your insight in creative practices and collaborative projects would be valuable to the study.

The interview questions are related to your creative practice as well as your experience in collaborative projects.

Purpose of study: This study aims to better understand Indigenous ways of knowing and interpret those knowledges in terms that are relevant to design.

Task requirement: Your tasks will be to answer/discuss questions as per the interview questionnaire, there is no time limit.

Risk: There are no identifiable risks.

Confidentiality: The interview will be conducted in a private, noise free environment of your choosing.

The study involves a 30 to 60-minute interview that will take place in a mutually convenient, noise-free environment and safe location, or through a telephone interview. With your consent, interviews will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio recording will be destroyed.

As a token of appreciation, I will be providing you with refreshments during the interview along (if the interview is conducted one on one) with a \$10 Tim Horton's gift card. If you are Indigenous, you will also be offered tobacco as per cultural protocols. (The compensation is yours to keep, even if you choose to withdraw.)

All research data, including audio-recordings and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researchers home. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisors.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. (Clearance expires on: insert date here.) Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact the CUREB Chair, Professor Shelley Brown (CUREB-B) at shelley.brown@carleton.ca or at 613-520-2600 ext 1505.

If you would like to participate in this research project, or have any questions, please contact me at 613-261-4858 or sylvain.despres@carleton.ca.

Sincerely,

Sylvain Després, Mdes Student
School of Industrial Design
Carleton University
sylvaindespres@carleton.ca
(613) 261-4858

Appendix C - Oral consent form



CUREB clearance #: 15-140

Oral Consent Form

Hello, my name is Sylvain Després and I am a Master's student in The School of Industrial Design at Carleton University. I am under the supervision of Professors Allan J. Ryan and Thomas Garvey.

I would like you to participate in a research study entitled: " **How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate designs and experiences?**". The interview questions are related to your creative practice as well as you experience in collaborative projects.

Purpose of study: This study aims to better understand Indigenous ways of knowing and interpret those knowledges in terms that are relevant to design.

Task requirement: Your tasks will be to answer/discuss questions as per the interview questionnaire, there is no time limit.

Risk: There are no identifiable risks.

Confidentiality: The interview will be conducted in a private, noise free environment of your choosing. In addition, since your experience and expertise carry considerable weight in the study, you will be identified by name with an accompanying short biography in the research as well as any further publications that arise from the study.

This study involves one 30 to 60-minute interview that will take place in a public location. With your consent, the interview will be audio-recorded. Once transcribed, the audio recording will be destroyed.

You may end your participation and withdraw your responses from the study at any time, up to September 29th, 2015 by letting me or my research supervisor know. If you choose to withdraw, all the information you provided will be destroyed.

As a token of appreciation, I will provide a \$10 Tim Horton's gift card, which is yours to keep, even if you withdraw. If you are an Indigenous participant, you will be offered tobacco as per cultural protocol.

All research data, including audio-recordings and my notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a locked cabinet at the researcher's home. Research data will only be accessible by me and my supervisors.

Once the project is completed, all research data will be kept for five years and I may use it for other research projects on this same topic. At the end of five years, all research data will be destroyed.

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, please let me know. I will then provide you with an electronic copy.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact Shelley Brown (CUREB-B) at shelley.brown@carleton.ca or at 613-520-2600 ext 1505.

You can also reach me at Sylvain.Despres@carleton.ca or 613-261-4858. My

supervisor can be reached at Thomas.Garvey@carleton.ca or (613-520-5672). Do you have any questions or need clarification?

Do I have your permission to begin: Yes No (If no, thank them for their time.)

Do you agree to be audio-recorded: Yes No

Date: _____

Participant's name/Pseudonym/Initials: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____



Consent Form

Title: How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate designs and experiences?

The interview questions are related to your creative practice as well as your experience in collaborative projects.

Purpose of study: This study aims to better understand Indigenous ways of knowing and interpret those knowledges in terms that are relevant to design.

Task requirement: Your tasks will be to answer/discuss questions as per the interview questionnaire, there is no time limit.

Risk: There are no identifiable risks.

Confidentiality: The interview will be conducted in a private, noise free environment of your choosing. In addition, since your experience and expertise carry considerable weight in the study, you will be identified by name with an accompanying short biography in the research as well as any further publications that arise from the study.

Date of ethics clearance: 08/31/2015

Ethics Clearance for the Collection of Data Expires: 08/31/2016

I _____, choose to participate in a study on Indigenous ways of knowing in creative practices. This study aims to better understand Indigenous ways of knowing and interpret those knowledges in terms that are relevant to design. **The researcher for this study is Sylvain Despres in the School of Industrial Design, Master of Design in the Department of Engineering at Carleton University.**

He is working under the supervision of Professor Thomas Garvey (School of Industrial design) and Professor Allan J. Ryan (School of Canadian Studies and Department of Art History) at Carleton University.

This study involves one 30 to 60-minute interview. With your consent, interviews will be audio-recorded. Once the recording has been transcribed, the audio recording will be destroyed.

You, as the participant, will be asked questions in your area of expertise. The interview will not cause any risk to you as the participant. You can decline answering any questions during or to end of the study.

You have the right to end your participation and withdraw your responses from the study at any time, for any reason, up until September 29th, 2015. You can withdraw by phoning or emailing the researcher or the research supervisor. If you withdraw from the study, all information you have provided will be immediately destroyed.

As a token of appreciation, you will receive a \$10 Tim Horton's gift card. This is yours to keep, even if you withdraw from the study. If you are an Indigenous participant, you will be offered tobacco as per cultural protocol.

All research data, including audio-recordings and any notes will be encrypted. Any hard copies of data (including any handwritten notes or USB keys) will be kept in a

locked cabinet at the researcher's home. Research data will only be accessible by the researcher and the research supervisor. Once the project is completed, all research data will be kept for five years and potentially be used for other research projects on this same topic. At the end of five years, all research data will be securely destroyed. (Electronic data will be erased and hard copies will be shredded.).

If you would like a copy of the finished research project, you are invited to contact the researcher to request an electronic copy, which will be provided to you.

The ethics protocol for this project was reviewed by the Carleton University Research Ethics Board, which provided clearance to carry out the research. Should you have questions or concerns related to your involvement in this research, please contact:

CUREB contact information:

Professor Shelley Brown, Chair (CUREB-B)
Professor Andy Adler, Vice-Chair
Carleton University Research Ethics Board
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School of Canadian Studies and
Department of Art History
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Allan.Ryan@carleton.ca

Researcher contact information:

Sylvain Despres (School of
Industrial Design)
Carleton University
Tel: 613-261-4858
Sylvain.Despres@carleton.ca

Supervisor contact information:

Professor Thomas Garvey
School of Industrial Design
Carleton University
Tel: 613-520-5672
Thomas.Garvey@carleton.ca

Do you agree to be audio-recorded: Yes No

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date



Title of the research project:

How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate designs and experiences?

The term 'co-design' used in this discussion refers to collaborative design, meaning that more than one person is working on the same design project.

Interview Questions

In considering the following questions, a context and scale is proposed to situate the parameters of the questions:

Statement of project:

A team composed of Indigenous and non-Indigenous designers/artists (inter-disciplinary) collaborate on an urban installation (art installation, urban design, or other creative project) related to the Ottawa River. The intent of the final design is to connect river, people and history.

1. In preparation for the above-stated design project, what essential practices would you undertake that are specific to your (Indigenous) culture? Please describe.
2. In your opinion, do co-design practices (with non-Indigenous participants) such as collaborative artistic/design projects, lack Indigenous perspectives?
3. In a collaborative creative project/setting with Indigenous and non-Indigenous team members, do you feel that your cultural practices would conflict with non-Indigenous design/artistic practices?
4. In your view, under which circumstances can non-Indigenous designers/artists successfully incorporate an Indigenous perspective in a creative/collaborative project?
5. In your opinion, what are the risks (cultural or otherwise) involved in Indigenous and non-Indigenous creative/collaborative projects?
6. In considering your cultural background, how do your relationships influence your creative practice?
7. In your opinion, what are the top 5 steps that non-Indigenous designers/artists must take into consideration when working within a collaborative/creative project, which has an Indigenous component?
8. Open-ended question: Please feel free to add any relevant themes or issues that you think may be helpful in building and/or understanding cross-cultural collaborative and creative practices.

Thank you.



Title of the research project:

How would articulating Indigenous ways of knowing inform creative practices within the co-design of culturally appropriate designs and experiences?

The term 'co-design' used in this discussion refers to collaborative design, meaning that more than one person is working on the same design project.

Interview Questions

Questions/Responses: approx. 5 minutes per question (or as needed)

In considering the following questions, a context and scale is proposed to situate the parameters of the questions:

Statement of project:

A team composed of Indigenous and non-Indigenous designers/artists (inter-disciplinary) collaborate on an urban installation (art installation, urban design, or other creative project) related to the Ottawa River. The intent of the final design is to connect river, people and history.

1. In your expert opinion, do you feel that non-indigenous designers/artists lack cultural competency when working with Indigenous artist/designers?

2. In your expert opinion, do you feel that your design education lacked Indigenous perspectives?

3. In your view, under which circumstances can non-Indigenous designers/artists successfully incorporate an Indigenous perspective in a creative/collaborative project?

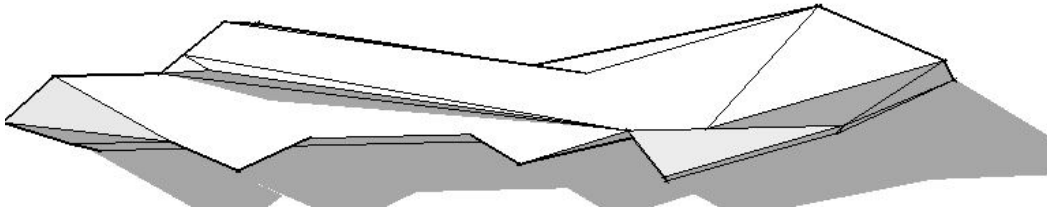
4. In your opinion, what are the risks (cultural or otherwise) involved in Indigenous and non-Indigenous creative/collaborative projects?

5. In your opinion, what are the top 5 steps that non-Indigenous designers/artists must take into consideration when working within a collaborative/creative project, which has an Indigenous component?

6. Open-ended question: Please feel free to add any relevant themes or issues that you think may be helpful in building and/or understanding cross-cultural collaborative and creative practices.

Thank you.

Appendix G - The *Kabeshinàn* proposal submitted to the NCC



The Kabeshinàn Experience

Riverfront Placemaking on the Ottawa River

Proponents:

Sylvain Després: Design and Artistic Lead

Carleton University Mdes student, Designer and Educator

Address: 931 Cookshire Crescent, Orleans, ON K4A 3K4

Tel: (613) 261-4858

Email: sdespr@lacitec.on.ca

Simon Brascoupe: Aboriginal and Artistic Advisor

Carleton University Adjunct Professor, Artist and Curator

Address: 154 Aylmer, Ottawa, ON

Tel: (613) 730-7059

Email: simonbrascoupe@hotmail.com

Project Viability

OPPORTUNITY

The riverfront placemaking call for proposals presents a unique opportunity to create an enthralling interactive experience for visitors. The Ottawa River watershed has strong historical ties to the Algonquin Anishinabeg First Nation as well as the lumber trade. Considering that the Ottawa River is the key attraction, placemaking initiatives should include recognition of the Indigenous community in Ottawa and a reminder of the timber industry that lasted close to 100 years. The Ottawa River shorelines development would gain from having an installation that would animate public spaces by connecting people, river and history. The proposed narrative would encourage visitor participation, play and exploration through shared experiences, responsive technology and historic events; enhancing knowledge and appreciation.

We propose to create an interactive experience entitled *Kabeshinàn*¹ that would engage citizens and visitors through the use of a sensor enabled street sculpture/furniture. The structures (a canoe bench and forest) would be crafted using reclaimed timber from the Ottawa River. The process and use of reclaimed timber as the primary medium to experience Anishinabeg culture is in itself a significant narrative. It is a tangible story that expresses historical events that profoundly altered the Ottawa Valley landscape and

¹ Kabeshinàn: The Algonquin word for a campsite or gathering place along a body of water, usually at the confluence of two rivers.

as a result were sources of deep tension and displacement for the First Nations people.

Replanting a 'forest' is a tribute to the old growth forest that once existed on the shores of the Ottawa River, and ultimately a return to a form of balance, to complete a life cycle.

The 'canoe' inspired public bench is a true Canadian icon and a testament to Aboriginal cultures at large; it embodies times past and present, resilience and ingenuity.

The sculptural installation is divided into two primary interactive areas, and an expanded option: (see Appendix A for conceptual drawings).

1. A canoe inspired contemporary bench (or benches) for up to 5 people, embedded with contact sensors that would trigger soundscapes (First Nations stories, historic recordings or songs). The intent is to equip sitting spaces with proximity sensors that would each trigger a different sound recording. When all of these spaces are activated, the visitors experience a full sound recording. This shared experience promotes group engagement, play and learning (see Appendix B).
2. A forest landscape surrounding the canoe bench, embedded with historical markers such as symbols of Anishinabeg significance and intertwined led lighting. Some of the trees would point towards the winter and summer locations of the North Star, others to the Little Dipper. The real magic would occur at nightfall when visitors stroll into the forest and prompt soft light strands wrapped around the timbers to gradually glow towards the skies and experience wonder and meaningful connection.
3. As an expanded design, the base of the installation could be a scaled landscaped map of the Ottawa River watershed, from its headwaters in north-central Quebec to its outlet near Montreal as the Algonquin heartland has always included the entire length of the Ottawa River.

The underlying theme of the installation promotes empathy and learning about Anishinabeg culture and heritage relating to the Ottawa River while using technology intertwined with vernacular forms and materials; enhancing visitor knowledge and appreciation of the Ottawa River watershed, its Peoples and history. The Kabeshinàn

experience would also raise awareness of past and current struggles and foster meaningful dialogue. From a user experience point of view, as the sensors respond to movements, visitors become co-creators of the aesthetics and acoustics of the installation. There is also an opportunity to list the installation with geo-caching websites in order to foster exchange of goods, relating the social theme of Kabeshinàn.

Partnership opportunities

The installation would also be aligned with the City of Ottawa's *A Renewed Action Plan for Arts, Heritage and Culture (2013-2018)*.

On November 19, 2010, Ottawa City Council approved a motion to support a National Indigenous Centre in the Nation's Capital, and to encourage the Federal Government to work with stakeholders (First Nations, Province of Ontario, etc.) to establish a National Indigenous Centre on Victoria Island.

Page 18 states:

*“Endorse the partnered development of:
A national Indigenous Centre at Victoria Island that gives distinction to the story of the Algonquin Anishinabeg First Nation, focuses on historical and archaeological presentation, and aims to preserve and revitalize Aboriginal languages”*

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Sylvain Després, Designer and Educator

Sylvain obtained a Bachelor in Visual Arts from the University of Ottawa in 1995 and an Interior design degree from La Cité collégiale in 1998. Sylvain has worked in the public and private sectors in the field of office, exhibit and custom millwork for the past 15 years. Since 2002, he has been coordinating and teaching within the Interior design program at La Cité collégiale. His research interests gravitate towards experiential social happenings, grassroots urban renewal and the use of emerging technologies as tools for human understanding, interaction and collaboration. Sylvain is currently enrolled in the Mdes (Master in Design) at Carleton University's School of Industrial Design in Ottawa. Sylvain has won several awards in corporate and exhibit design contexts.

Simon Brascoupé, Algonquin Artist and Curator

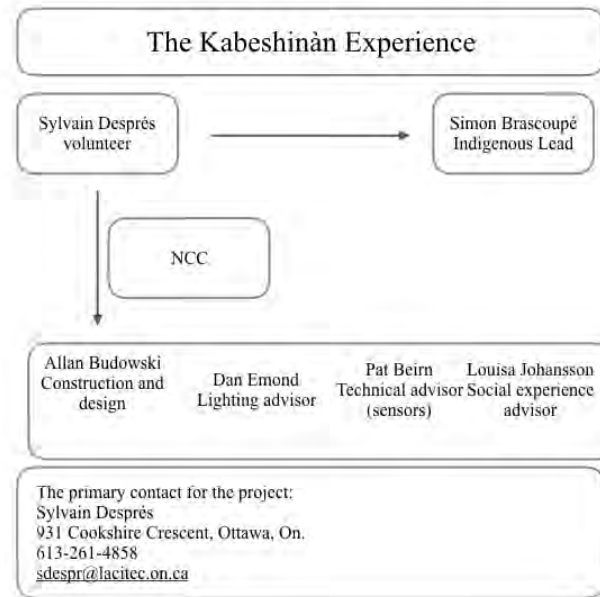
Simon Brascoupé is a leading Algonquin artist in Ottawa committed to revitalizing ancient Anishinabeg art through his art, research and education activities with the Algonquin community, elders, educators and students. His contemporary art is inspired by Algonquin philosophy, rock art, historical art forms and the natural world. He has worked collaboratively on public art projects, art policy and strategy for major art museums and institutions. Simon has worked as a curator, artist, educator and arts organizer for the past thirty years.

Allan Budowski, Construction Specialist

Allan has over 30 years of experience in construction and design. He has worked on an impressive variety of design projects in collaboration with designers and architects; from full residential construction to innovative exhibits and custom millwork.

Operations

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

The installation site would need electrical services in order for the sensors, circuitry, sound system and lighting to function. There is also a size requirement for the installation to be fully experienced and laid out.

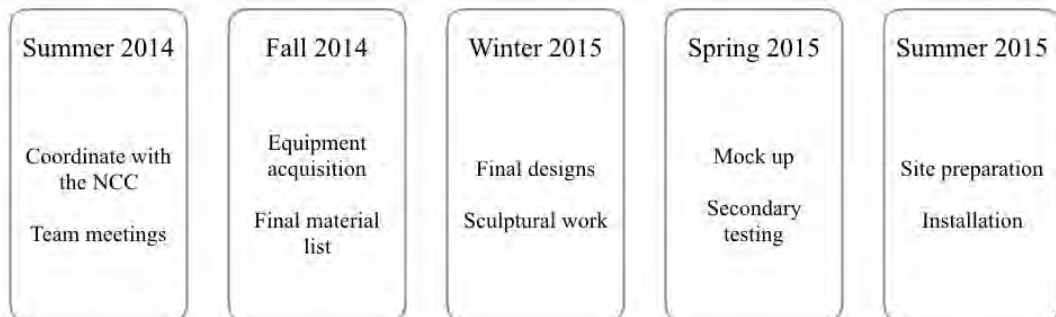
- Minimum ground size would be 15'-0" X 25'-0" (or approx. 400 sq/ft).
- Minimum clearance above the installation: 35'-0"
- Level ground (no slopes)
- Proximity to the river
- Adjacent to cycle or footpath
- There is no foundation work required
- Landscaping may be required in order to harmonize the installation with its natural surroundings.

LOCATION

The Kabeshinàn installation can be experienced in multiple locations due to its flexible configuration. Significant sites such as Victoria Island are proposed as ideal locations. The small island is considered to be traditional territory by Aboriginal Peoples and has been used for centuries as a gathering place for the Algonquin Nation. Other sites that are overlooking the expanse of the Ottawa River could also be well suited.

CORE OPERATIONS

Once the project has been retained the timetable for implementation is proposed as follows:



The Kabeshinàn experience would ideally run from early spring to late fall. This activity timeline is also aligned with Anishinàbeg social gatherings at camping sites. Visitors were always welcome at any kabeshinàn and would participate in festivities, trade and exchange of gifts which symbolizes friendship, trust, continued alliances and cooperation.

VIABILITY OF OPERATIONS

Risk assessment:

Human resources: Proper annual landscaping maintenance would be encouraged to maintain the installation and surrounding landscape.

Weather: Wood structures are susceptible to weather conditions and consequently to degradation. Proper wood preparation and sealing would mitigate this risk and extend structure life span. Discoloration would most likely occur; the rate is dependent on the location of the installation (shaded, etc.).

Hazards: The bench could be used for standing and jumping on; the risk factors are low. The bench and timbers would also be smoothed and polished.

Vandalism: The bench and timbers could be tagged or used for graffiti; however the rough forms of the bench and relatively small surfaces would not be ideal for this activity.

Technology: The installation is equipped with proximity sensors, speakers, wiring, lighting and hardware. All equipment and hardware will be sourced with proper waterproofing qualities. Testing and mock-up of the installation will be required in order to mitigate the risk of equipment failure. Additionally, the installation of the equipment will be configured to limit exposure and facilitate easy access for repairs or replacement.

FUNDING/SPONSORS/GRANTS

Funding capital and sources required for the implementation of the project have been identified and temporarily secured through sponsorships and grants. Comprehensive funding strategy will be discussed and finalized if the project is retained.

Estimated costs for full project implementation:

Raw materials:	\$4, 500.00
Equipment:	\$300.00
Lighting:	\$6,500.00
Labour:	\$15, 500.00
Total:	\$26,800.00

SALES OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Although sales of products and services is not the primary objective of the project, the canoe bench and forest installation will be conducive to natural gatherings and could serve as thematic location for heritage and cultural festivals that propose learning opportunities and sales of related products. The concept of Kabeshinàn resonates with the artistic installation as a meeting place for occasional social gatherings and festivities.

Appendix A: Conceptual drawings of the installation

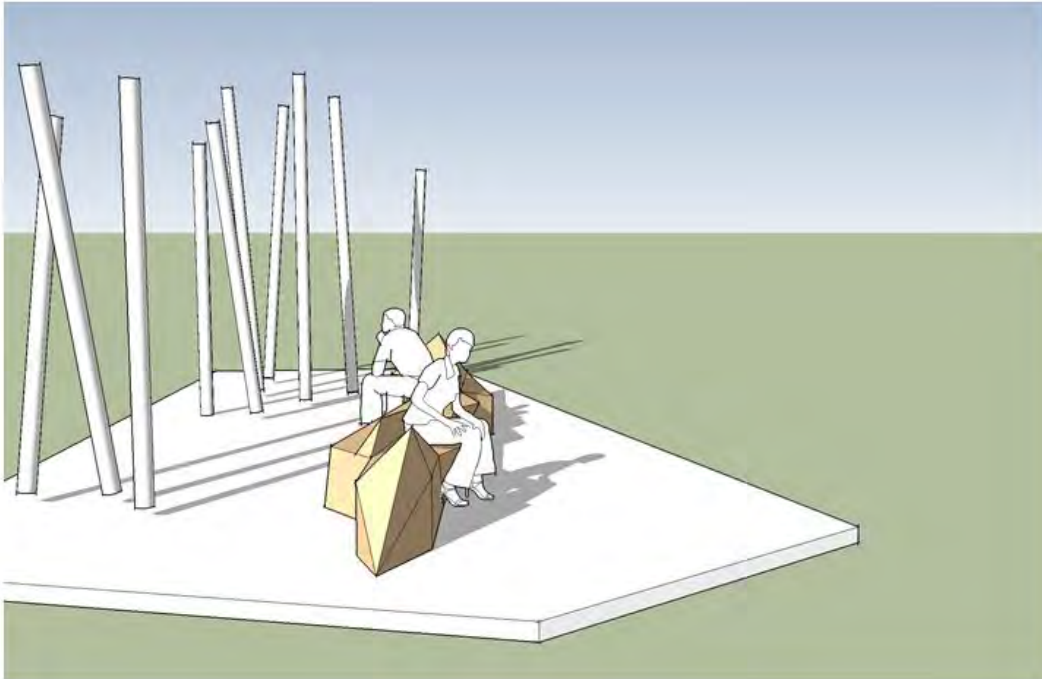


Figure 1

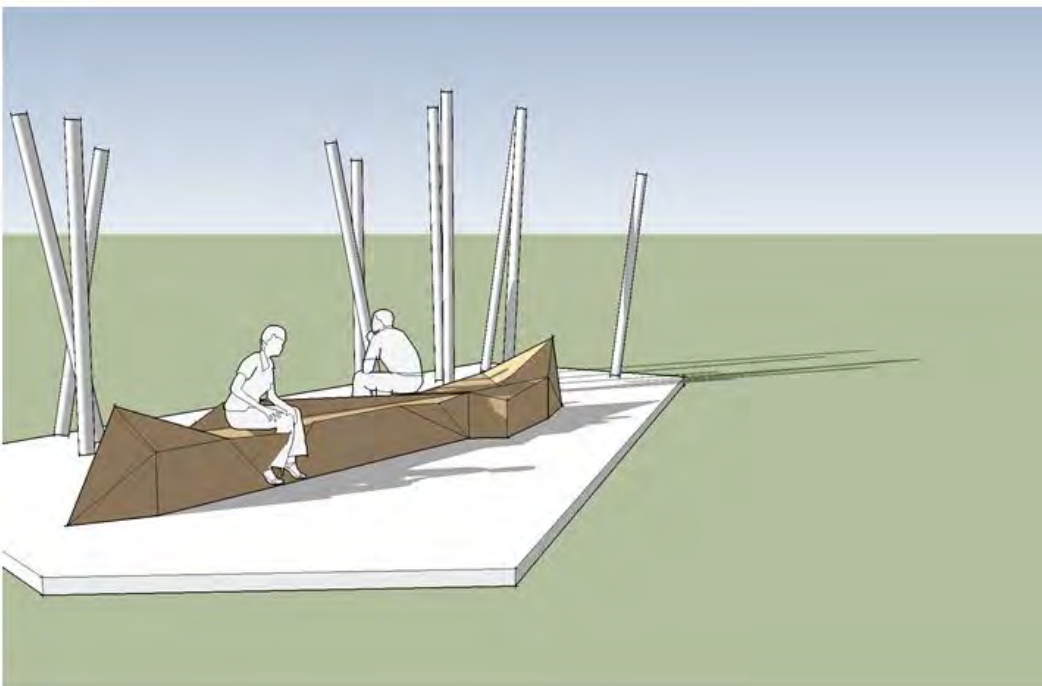


Figure 2

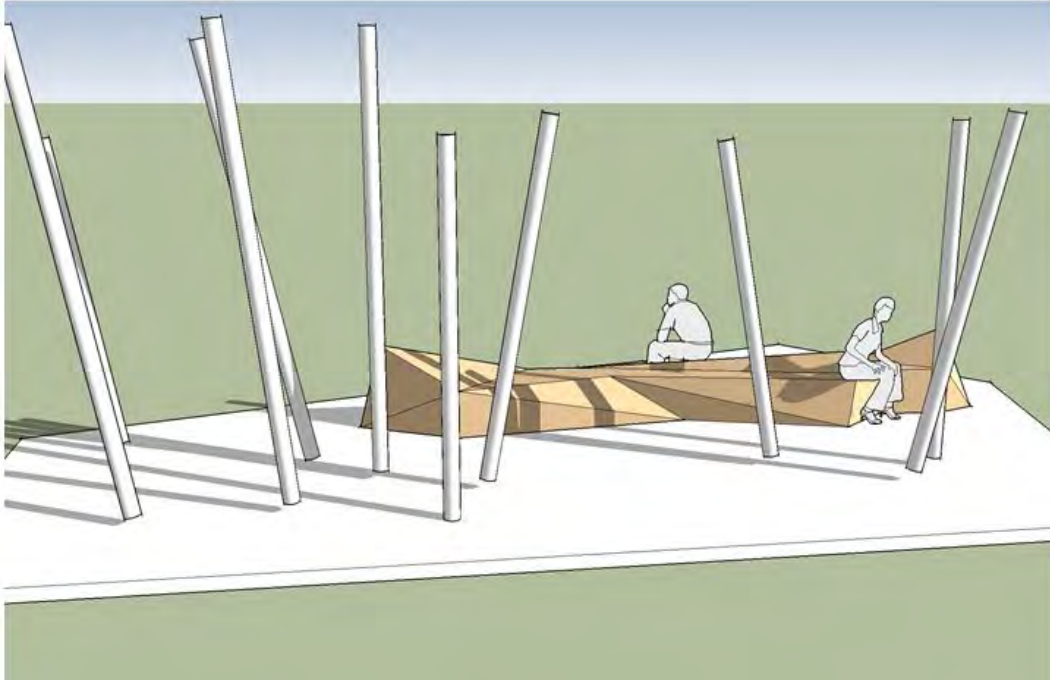


Figure 3

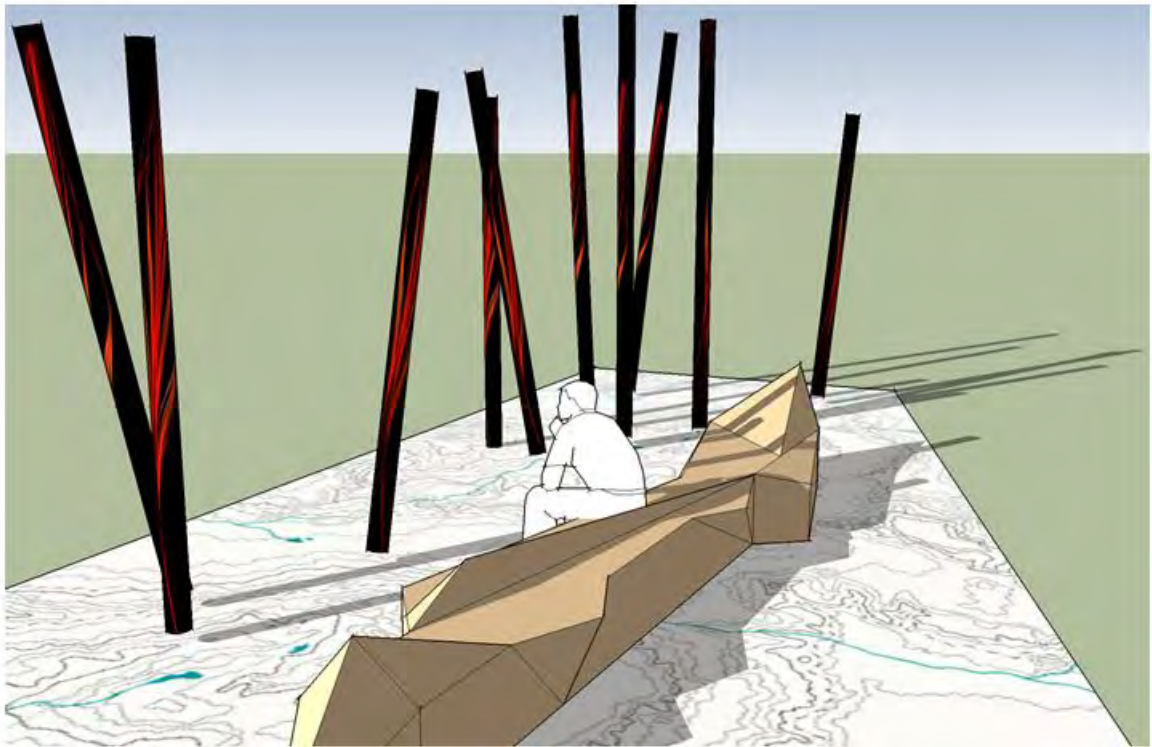


Figure 4: illuminated timber 1

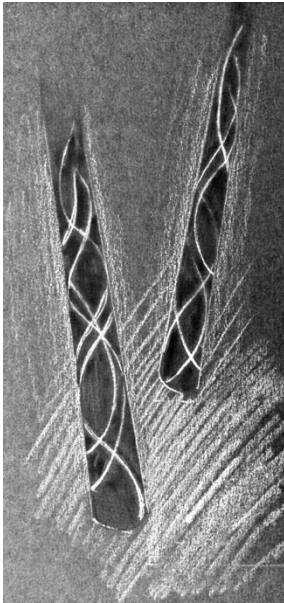
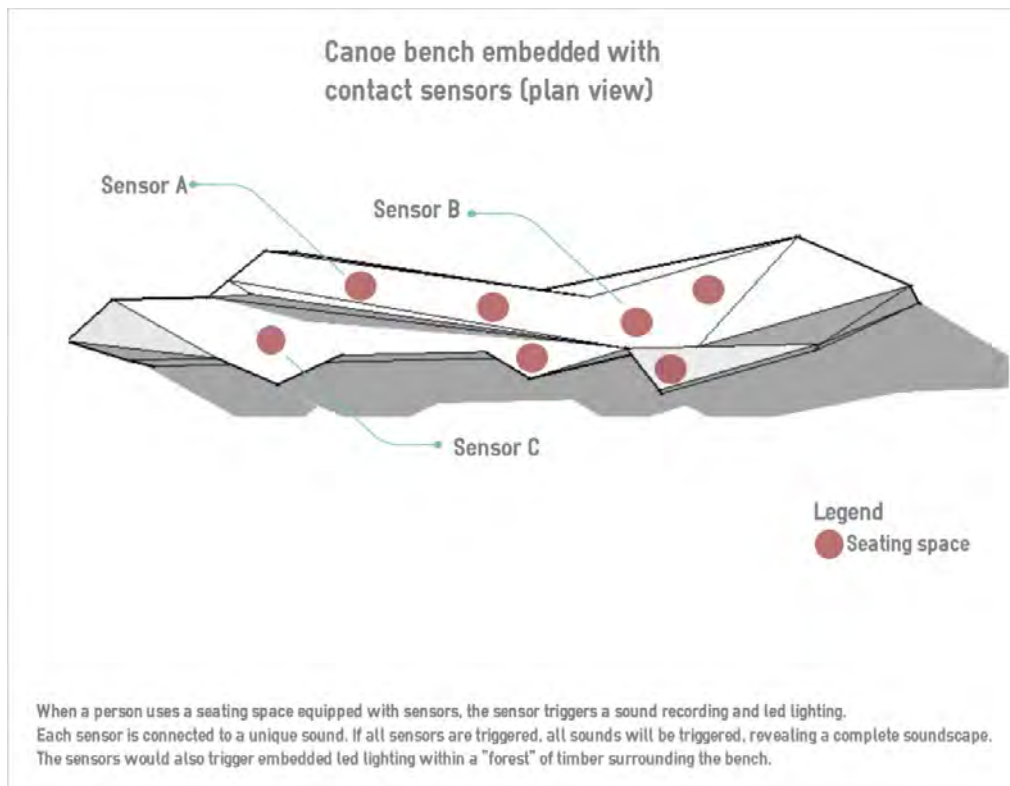


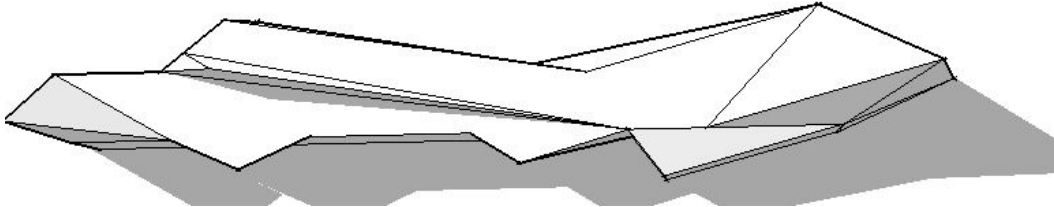
Figure 5: illuminated timber 2 (sketch)

Appendix B: Bench and sensor diagram



Miigwetch,

the Kabeshinàn Experience Team



Appendix H - Participant biographies

(in the order they were interviewed)

Douglas Cardinal Biography

Douglas is Blackfoot and Métis. As a master-builder, Douglas Cardinal's life is dedicated to creating beautiful, thriving, and harmoniously built environments.

Born in 1934 in Calgary, Alberta, his architectural studies at The University of British Columbia took him to Austin, Texas, where he achieved his architectural degree and found a life experience in human rights initiatives. Douglas then became a forerunner of philosophies of sustainability, green buildings and ecologically designed community planning. His architecture springs from his observation of Nature and its understanding that everything works seamlessly together.

In recognition of such work, Douglas Cardinal has received many national and international awards including: 18 Honorary Doctorates, Gold Medals of Architecture in Canada and Russia, and an award from United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural organization (UNESCO) for best sustainable village. He was also made an Officer of the Order of Canada, one of the most prestigious awards given to a Canadian, and he was awarded the declaration of being "World Master of Contemporary Architecture" by the International Association of Architects.

Douglas Cardinal is one of the visionaries of a new world; a world where beauty, balance and harmony thrive, where client, architect, and stakeholder build together with a common vision.

Barry Ace Biography

Barry Ace – Anishinaabe (Odawa), b. 1958

Barry Ace is a practicing visual artist and currently lives in Ottawa, Canada. He is an aband member of M'Chigeeng First Nation, Manitoulin Island, Ontario, Canada. His mixed media paintings and assemblage textile works explore various aspects of cultural continuity and the confluence of the historical and contemporary. As a practicing visual artist, his work has been included in numerous group and solo

exhibitions, including: Emergence from the Shadows – First Peoples Photographic Perspectives, Canadian Museum of Civilization (1996: Ottawa); Urban Myths: Aboriginal Artists in the City. KarshMasson Gallery (2000: Ottawa); The Dress Show, Leonard and Ellen Bina Art Gallery (2003: Montréal); Super Phat Nish, Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba (2006: Brandon); 50 Years of Pow wow, Castle Gallery (2006: New York); Playing Tricks, American Indian Community House Gallery (2006: New York); Home/land and Security, Render Art Gallery (2009: Waterloo); Meditations on Memory – A Metaphysical Dance. Alcove Gallery (2010: Ottawa International Airport); “m̄ntu’c – little spirits, little powers” Nordamerika Native Museum (2010: Zurich); and Changing Hands 3 – Art Without Reservations (2012 2014: Museum of Art and Design: New York). His work can be found in numerous public and private collections in Canada and abroad, including the Regional Municipality of Ottawa Carleton (Ottawa); WoodlandCultural Centre (Brantford); Royal Ontario Museum (Toronto); Ottawa Art Gallery (Ottawa); The Canada Council Art Bank, (Ottawa); and the Nordamerika Native Museum (Zurich, Switerland).

Jaime Koebel Biography

Jaime is an Apeetagosan/Nehiyaw (Métis/Cree) woman originally from Lac La Biche, Alberta living on unceded Anishinaabe Territory (Ottawa, Ontario) since 2000. Jaime operates Indigenous Walks, which is a walk and talk through downtown Ottawa presenting social, political and cultural issues while exploring landscape, monuments, architecture and art. She was motivated to do the walks for many reasons, however, her confidence to do the walk came from her time as an Educator at the National Gallery of Canada during the "Sakahàn - International Indigenous Art" exhibition in 2013 where she gave tours through the lens of the Indigenous experience.

In 2011 Jaime was accepted for a dance residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts and now uses her skills of choreography to design and teach dances to her children in their family dance group "Prairie Fire."

Jaime is a visual artist (ink on drums, fish scale, beadwork, paintings, caribou/moose hair tufting, birch bark biting), a dancer (Métis cultural dance, instructor) and a public speaker. She has exhibited her works and performed

dances throughout Canada and the USA. In 2005, Jaime received the National Aboriginal Health Organization Award in the category of the Arts and Academic Achievement and in 2014, she received the Ontario Arts Council Emerging Aboriginal Arts Award.

Rodney Nelson Biography

Rodney Nelson, PhD (ABD), C.Dir, PAED, CAPA

Rodney Nelson is the current CEO of the Global Governance group and a professor at Carleton University. He teaches within the Center for Initiatives in Education within the Faculty of Social Science where he also co-coordinates the Aboriginal Enriched Support Program. Rodney also works with AFOA Canada teaching ethics, performance measurement and reporting to Aboriginal leaders. He came to Carleton from his position as a former senior manager at the Conference Board of Canada. Considering himself a corporate anthropologist, he has over 20 years experience working with both the public and private sectors including an appointment as the ethics officer for the Public Services of Canada. His work includes; board governance, Aboriginal governance, strategic planning, ethics, economic development, community/corporate partnership development and traditional Indigenous knowledge. Rodney is a board member of AFOA Canada and Chair of FirstPlan Benefits.

Rodney has presented to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on corporate partnership development with Indigenous people and has represented Canada at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) symposium on pandemic planning. He was past chair of the Council on Corporate Aboriginal Relations, past chair of The Pandemic Preparedness Working Group and former Co-Chair of the Public Enterprise Governance Centre.

Rodney has published several papers on economic development, governance and education including; "Incorporating Traditional Knowledge into Board Governance", "Anthropologist as Mediator", "Exploring Indigenous Struggles in Education Delivery", "From Vision to Venture: The Story of Five Successful Aboriginal Businesses" and "The Value of Aboriginal Cultural Industries to Aboriginal Peoples and Canada."

Rodney was recently honoured as a member of the Canadian Board Diversity Council's Diversity 50. A list of the 50 top corporate directors for Canada's fortune 500 organizations.

Rodney's PhD research is in combining Indigenous knowledge and corporate governance. He holds a Master's degree in medical and corporate anthropology and two Bachelor of Arts degrees in psychology and sociology. He is also a certified Chartered Director from the Directors College (McMaster's DeGroote School of Business). Rodney also holds the Professional Aboriginal Economic Development designation and is a Certified Aboriginal Professional Administrator.

Rodney is Anishinabe and resides in Ottawa, Canada with his wife, son and daughter.

David Lemellin Biography

David Lemellin is the founder of Stonefield Studio, a design firm devoted to crafting stories from blank spaces. His work has supported the messaging of diverse range companies such as CHEO, Mitel, Air Canada, World Vision, The Aga Kahn Foundation and the Canadian Space Agency.

With 25 years of experience in the field of exhibit design, he has developed a notable ability to understand a client's message and define intuitive tools to help convey it to their target audience. He is known for out of the box thinking and is always striving to incorporate innovative solutions, searching for unusual ways to communicate so that he can communicate more effectively.

His design work is always created with the experience of the audience in mind, the human scale and the physical limitations of that audience.

"An exhibit is an experiential space, it must to be created from the perspective of the viewer"

His work can be seen at the Canadian Aviation Museum, the Museum of Nature and in numerous National Capital area hospitals and offices.

Linda Grussani Biography

Linda Grussani (Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg) is an arts administrator, curator and art historian, currently working on a PhD in Cultural Studies at Queen's University.

She holds both a BA and an MA in Art History from Carleton University (Thesis: Constructing the Image of Canada as a Nation: The International Presentation of Aboriginal Art Exhibitions (1969-1990)). Linda is the present Director of the Aboriginal Art Centre at Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada. Previously, Linda worked in the Indigenous and Canadian art departments at the National Gallery of Canada and has previous experience as a research assistant and Inuit art curator at the Carleton University Art Gallery and is a graduate of the Canadian Museum of Civilization's Aboriginal Training Programme in Museum Practices (2000-2001). Linda has served on the Board of Directors for the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective (2007-2011) and Gallery 101 (2008-2010), an Ottawa artist-run centre.

France Trépanier Biography

France Trépanier is a visual artist, curator and researcher of Kanien'kéha:ka and French ancestry. Her artistic and curatorial work has been presented in many venues in Canada and in France. Her artworks are included in various public and private collections, including the Museum of Civilization in Quebec, the Aboriginal Art Collection of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada and the Banff Centre Art Collection.

She is currently the Aboriginal curator in residence at Open Space Arts Society in Victoria BC. She was selected by the Canada Council for the Arts to be part of 2015 First Nations Curators Exchange held in Brisbane, Australia. She recently completed Mawita'jig, a three-year collaborative curatorial project involving Indigenous artists and Mig'maq communities at the artist-run centre Vaste et Vague on the Gaspé Peninsula. France was the co-recipient of the 2012 Audain Aboriginal Curatorial Fellowship by the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria. France is also an Indigenous arts educator at Camosun College.

France recently co-authored with Chris Creighton-Kelly Understanding Aboriginal Art in Canada Today: a Knowledge and Literature Review for the Canada Council for the Arts. She is co-chair of the Aboriginal Curatorial Collective and co-chair of the Indigenous Program Council at the Banff Centre. She also is a member of the Aboriginal Education Council at OCADU in Toronto. France worked at the Canada Council for the Arts before becoming a Senior Arts Policy Advisor for the Department of Canadian Heritage. She held a diplomatic

post as First Secretary, Cultural Affairs at the Canadian Embassy in Paris. She directed the Centre for New Media at the Canadian Cultural Centre in Paris. France was also the co-founder and Director of the artist-run center Axe Néo-7 in Gatineau, Quebec.

Trina Cooper-Bolam Biography

Trina Cooper-Bolam is a doctoral candidate in the Cultural Mediations program at Carleton University. In the past decade, Cooper-Bolam held senior positions at the Aboriginal Healing and Legacy of Hope Foundations, organizations working to transform the legacy of Indian residential schools. Her research interests reflect her continued dedication to ethically and inclusively negotiating difficult histories and their ongoing impacts, in particular those of the Indian residential school system, in heritage contexts. Her current research focuses on surveying and analyzing historical representations of Indian residential schools in museums and galleries, and identifying promising practices and pedagogies for reckoning with difficult pasts in these and other museal spaces. These efforts build on earlier research that involved an examination and critique of Canada's federal place-based heritage infrastructure against the needs of Indian residential school Survivors. Arguing for a reorientation of federal heritage programming from conservation-focused efforts to emergent collaborative approaches that recognize heritage as a healing practice, her research and recommendations, directed at the Canada's Historic Sites and Monument Board to stimulate discussion toward reimagining heritage approaches, processes, practices, and sites, informed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report in the areas of commemoration and heritage.

Simon Brascoupé Biography

Simon Brascoupé Anishinabeg/Haudenausanee – Bear Clan is a member of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation, Maniwaki, Quebec. He is an Adjunct Research Professor at Carleton University and Trent University. He was recently designated Certified First Nations Health Manager (CFNHM) from the First Nations Health Manager Association. He has a research interest in land based healing, traditional medicine and traditional knowledge. He conducts research

and writes on cultural competency and safety. He has written and worked in the field of traditional knowledge and intellectual Property Rights. He is the Chair of the CIHR Institute of Aboriginal Peoples Health Advisory Board. Previously Simon Brascoupé was Chief Executive Officer, National Aboriginal Health Organization; Director, Primary Health Care Division, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada; and Director, Aboriginal Affairs Branch, Environment Canada. Simon is also a visual artist, his original prints on canvas and paper are made by traditional native stencil (pochoir) technique. His profound knowledge of Aboriginal symbolism is reflected in his work. Simon's artistic vision is to understand traditional values and teachings through the continuity of imagery and the narrative.