F Philosophy, Theory,
Models, Methods
and Practice

Maanjiwe Nendamowinan (The Gathering of Minds): Connecting Indigenous placemakers and caring for place through co-creative research with the Toronto Islands

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Abstract

Connecting Indigenous Placemakers was a week-long practitioners' retreat and public symposium held on Menecing, the Toronto Island (Treaty 13a). The collaborative project was supported by the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), Ngā Aho Māori Designers' Network, and other institutional partners. Based on the success in Aotearoa New Zealand of supporting Indigenous placemaking practitioners and shaping opportunities through a network, the 2019 gathering created a supportive space for Indigenous creatives to be on the land, work on collective and individual projects, build relationship with one another, share knowledge and shape broader

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discourse on Indigenous placemaking in Toronto. As retreat participants integrated the teachings of Menecing, the Treaty Lands and Territory of the MCFN and a gathering place of many nations, the group began referring to the project as Maanjiwe Nendamowinan, the Gathering of Minds. This co-creative experience made clear the primacy of Place. That is, 'we don't make place – Place makes us'. Grounded in Menecing, and in dialogue with many voices, we demonstrate the more-than-ontological significance of Indigenous conceptualizations of and relational practices in (uppercase-*P*) Place, an entity with a specific identity. We conclude with key considerations that keep Place and placekeeping at the heart of research: respect for the sacred, living well with all our relations, relationship with the peoples of Place, and rethinking research.

Keywords

Introduction

> How many times must something be repeated to preserve the words? What are we not talking about enough? What symbols need to be on the ground, in Toronto, to remind us to keep talking these ideas through with others? What metaphors of authority are needed to back up our act? (Loft, 2021)

In the book, *Indigenous Toronto: Stories that Carry this Place*, Loft (2021) invites readers to consider who should be involved in conversations about sharing space and what is needed to generate meaningful and ongoing dialogue about collectivity and connectivity to Indigenous place. Thinking with Loft (2021) and the Talking Treaties Collective (2022), a multi-year art-based research initiative to share and reflect Indigenous presence and knowledge in the place now called Toronto, we suggest that land activations, including artistic, cultural, architectural, design and planning practice, have the potential to deepen our sense of interrelatedness in particular places and our understanding of the responsibilities that these relationships entail.

In 2019, an international gathering of Indigenous placemaking practitioners considered these and related themes during a 1-week programmed residency (retreat) on Menecing, the Toronto Islands (Treaty 13-a). In partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) and Ngā Aho Māori Designers' Network, the *Connecting Indigenous Placemakers* project welcomed 25 placemaking practitioners based in Toronto, Mississauga territory and Aotearoa New Zealand. The project team conceptualized Indigenous 'placemaking' as the grassroots work of Elders, knowledge holders and community members in sharing narratives about place, as well as the work of practitioners such as artists, architects, planners and designers who create physical spaces. While Indigenous peoples have 'made place' for thousands of years, settler-colonialism works to erase visible Indigenous identities and cultural representations, political relationalities and legal traditions from places and urban spaces. Indigenous placemaking has been generating conversation in recent years in urban public policy, governance and academic spheres. For example, the City of Toronto has established an evolving inventory which records a list of Indigenous placemaking interventions within the city, numbering 37 at the time of the gathering (see also COT, 2017, 2020a, 2020b). However, despite growing opportunities, challenges facing Indigenous placemaking persist across both Turtle Island (North America) and Aotearoa New Zealand (Fawcett et al., 2015; Livesey, 2017; Loewen, 2016; Nejad and Walker, 2018; Newhouse, 2004; Porter, 2017).

Experience in Aotearoa illustrates the importance of networks and shared tools to ensure Indigenous practitioners can support each other and engage critically with and shape opportunities in urban design and placemaking. In Aotearoa, Indigenous placemaking interventions have been supported by a group of Māori practitioners under the cloak of the Ngā Aho Māori Designers' Network.[1] Building on this success, *Connecting Indigenous Pacemakers* arose out of new and existing relationships between team members and collaborators. The concept for the 2019 gathering was to support the work of Indigenous placemaking practitioners in their creative practice, and, by forming a network of

Indigenous practitioners, to facilitate dialogue and mobilize existing knowledge around challenges and best practices to re-assert Indigenous placemaking in urban areas.

What emerged from this process is the centrality of Place (an entity with a specific identity) in both Indigenous 'placekeeping' and research practice.[2] Menecing, the Toronto Islands, has always been a site of healing and gathering of many nations. As the group integrated the teachings of Menecing during the gathering, participants increasingly referred to the project not as Connecting Indigenous Placemakers, but Maanjiwe Nendamowinan, the Gathering of Minds. The co-creative experience made clear that 'placemaking' is inadequate as a descriptive term: in a statement that resonated deeply with participants, Lucy Tukua observed, 'As Indigenous peoples, we don't make place – Place makes us' (ELMNT FM, 2019). 'Place Makes Us' hinges on a more-than-ontological distinction between Indigenous understandings of the Earth as a sacred, animate and sentient being, and Western conceptualizations of abstract space, geographical place, surface landscape and material land – a distinction that we signify in English using uppercase-*L* Land and uppercase-*P* Place (Lambert, 2014; Lister et al., 2022; McGregor, 2018; Styres, 2017; Watts, 2013). Even where the affective, particular and storied, experiential, or agentic qualities of lowercase-*l* land and lowercase-*p* place are recognized within Western paradigms, the abundance, spirit, animacy, kinship and intentionality of Land/Place tend not to be (Chung-Tiam-Fook, 2020; Styres, 2017; Watts, 2013).

The centrality or primacy of 'Place' that we discuss below is nothing new to Indigenous peoples, but stands out against the dominant system of research procedures, ethics, operations and norms, a system that is also called to support Indigenous research sovereignty and to 'make room and move over' (Latulippe and Klenk, 2020). It stands out against a relational turn in the humanities and social and sustainability sciences that tends not to give due effect to Indigenous thought leadership and histories (Watts, 2013; West et al., 2020). We also acknowledge that knowledge and spiritual power from an Indigenous view are Place-based, but not place-bound. In addition to place specificity, in this article we speak to movement and circularity, relational practice and protocol, and what Larsen and Johnson (2017) call the vitalities of Indigenous coexistence, or 'being together in place', and Country et al. (2016) call, co-becoming.

Canada and Aotearoa New Zealand are countries with a shared reality of settler colonialism, history of Treaty/Te Tiriti o Waitangi and enduring Indigenous presence. Situated in a Canadian and Toronto context but drawing on insights, lessons and voices arising from connections with Aotearoa New Zealand and other territories, this article weaves together many voices. We begin with a review of approaches to Indigenous knowledge and research sovereignty and discuss the significance of Place-Thought as a physical embodiment of an Indigenous theoretical understanding of the Earth (Watts, 2013). We then journey to Menecing by sharing the background and context of our project, including a bi-cultural framework and network approach to research. On the substantive topic of Indigenous placemaking and supporting practitioners, we draw from the project's many knowledge sharing activities to synthesize three themes: connecting with and caring for Place, nourishment and healing, and gathering strength. Conceived of as a project to support those who 'make place', Place as we describe below emerged as central to both research process and outcomes. From here, we share key considerations for keeping Place central in research and Indigenous research sovereignty: respect for the sacred, living well with all our relations, holding strong relationship and working with the peoples and languages of Place, and rethinking research.

Literature review: 'Place' and Indigenous research sovereignty

Indigenous peoples have been generating and sharing knowledge about the Earth for thousands of years. Relationship and engagement with all aspects of Creation inform infinite ways of knowing and doing Indigenous research methodologies (Simpson and Manitowabi, 2013). In response to the harms to Indigenous peoples, knowledges and territories caused by Western science and academic research practice, Indigenous peoples and organizations are codifying their own research principles, practices

and protocols (Smith, 1999; TRC, 2015; Whyte, 2018). Indigenous research and ethics protocols are designed to protect community knowledge and stories and allow for respectful engagement by non-Indigenous researchers who wish to learn from Indigenous people in a non-extractive way (Maracle, 2017). Numerous models are shared in the public domain (Hayward et al., 2021; Maar et al., 2007; McGregor, 2013; McGregor, 2018b; Morton Ninomiya et al., 2020).

Across the globe, Indigenous peoples have been articulating principles of Indigenous knowledge, research and data sovereignty. Williams et al. (2020) discuss Indigenous research sovereignty, 'Indigenous control of Indigenous research', as a guiding principle for decolonizing research administration in Canada and beyond (2):

> Indigenous research sovereignty – an equitable governance arrangement based on Indigenous principles and intellectual traditions that is accountable to community and responsive to the contemporary needs and aspirations of Indigenous Peoples – is a better model for research with, and by, Indigenous Peoples in pluralist nations or nations aspiring to pluralism. (Williams et al., 2020: 4)

Indigenous research sovereignty requires both fundamentally changing mainstream research funding programmes and forming distinct 'in-community' research models developed by Indigenous people for specific cultural contexts (Williams et al., 2020). This two-pronged strategy mirrors the concept of Indigenous knowledge sovereignty, which similarly involves practices to strengthen *internal* Indigenous knowledge systems and the transmission of knowledge according to Indigenous governance structures, and the removal of *external* barriers (policy, jurisdictional, legal, etc.) to the expression of Indigenous knowledge on ancestral lands (Karuk Tribe in Noorgard, 2014; Whyte, 2018). Likewsie, Sandra Styres writes that Indigenous intellectual sovereignty relates 'directly back' to the principles of the Guswentha (Two-Row Wampum treaty), one of many nation-to-nation agreements (in this case, between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Dutch) that embody an ethic of non-interference and respect for difference, which are essential for successful coexistence between knowledge systems and peoples (Porter and Barry, 2016; Styres, 2017: 138). In Aotearoa New Zealand, the Māori Data Sovereignty Network, Te Mana Raraunga (2018), and Te Kāhui Rauranga (n.d.) have developed policy language and principles to protect Māori data sovereignty, which includes the rights of Indigenous peoples to collect, own and apply data about them, their lifeways, and territories (GIDA 2018; Kukutai and Taylor 2016; Walter et al. 2020). Indigenous self-determination grounds these different articulations of research/knowledge/intellectual/data sovereignty, which promote collective wellbeing through the protection of Indigenous knowledge, knowledge keepers and related values and practices.

Our contribution to Indigenous research sovereignty is to emphasize the centrality of Place (an entity with a specific identity). 'Place makes us' is not an essentialist or environmentally deterministic statement, nor is it limited to an 'ontological' distinction from Western paradigms. Our assertion is premised on the reality that language is key to accessing worldview and consciousness: 'Te Ao Māori values, concepts, and constructs only gain full relevance and meaning within that language. English terms may not necessarily have direct translation to Te Reo Māori [the first human language of Aotearoa], and vice versa' (Lister et al., 2022: 55).[3] For example, in the Te Tangi a te Manu, Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines:

> 4.07 'Landscape' is a Western concept brought to New Zealand. It has evolved as a concept and will continue to evolve in an Aotearoa context.

> 4.08 There is no term for 'landscape' in Te Reo Māori. Whenua is the nearest term, although the words are not directly interchangeable because whenua derives specifically from Te Ao Māori perspectives and tikanga [customary values and practices].

> 4.09 'Whenua' means the land but also contains layers of meaning relating to peoples' relationship with the land. 'Tāngata whenua' indicates people with a deep connection with a territory, with rights and obligations. (p. 72)

In a Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe context, Watts (2013) uses the English term Place-Thought to signify 'the non-distinctive space where place and thought were never separated because they never could or can be separated' (p. 21). Drawing on Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe Creation histories, the land is literally an extension of the bodies of Sky Woman and Turtle, and First Woman (Earth) is literally the place where the thoughts of Gizhe-Mnidoo (Creator) could root and grow. Creation histories describe a theoretical understanding of the world through a physical embodiment, Place-Thought: land is alive and thinking and humans and non-humans derive agency through the extensions of these thoughts (Watts, 2013: 21). Place-Thought is 'non-distinctive space' because ontology (place) is not separate from epistemology (thought). First Woman and her teachings, ontologies and actions are not interpreted as lore, fable, or 'theoretical jump-off' (Watts, 2013: 31). To operationalize the distinction between ontology and epistemology is to undermine Indigenous governance systems and legal principles, as they depend on Indigenous peoples' ability to access, communicate with and care for Place-Thought. Watts' non-distinctive space is signified by Styres (2017) as uppercase-*L* Land. Within this frame, Indigenous ways of 'being-knowing-doing-accounting' (ontology–epistemology–methodology–axiology) form an undifferentiated whole (Cameron, 2015: 19), and research and education are relational practices grounded in the principle of self-in-relationship: many layers of relationships and an expression of Creation itself (Styres, 2017; Wilson, 2008). To recognize the Indigenous philosophical and (more-than) ontological underpinnings of Land/Place is to recognize learning and knowledge as relational, reciprocal and culturally located (Styres, 2017).

Place and Land signified as proper nouns helps to convey Indigenous philosophies, relationalities and practices outside their socio-cultural and political contexts and to counter harmful abstractions. Watts (2013: 28) discusses Haraway, Latour and other progressive Western thinkers who want to avoid 'essentialist notions of the earth as mother' and natural determinations of social relations and material conditions in their consideration of more-than-human agency. However, they end up abstracting Indigenous histories as myth or legend, eroding Indigenous understandings of being and becoming, and they miss the sacred, relational, intentional and intelligent qualities of 'non-human' agency. This abstraction undermines Indigenous agency and governance, which depend on access to and communication with the animals and other beings of the Earth.

Indigenous and Western philosophies and related practices are certainly distinct, but they are not consigned to mutual exclusion or isolation. Bridging Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems may not always be an explicit priority for Indigenous peoples but weaving different knowledge systems is inherent and embedded in the concepts and practices of many Indigenous knowledge holders, practitioners and researchers (Alexander et al., 2021). For example, Styres demonstrates shared pathways for remembering and recognizing Iethi'nihstenha Ohwentsia'kekha (Land) in education across different cultural contexts; namely, Aotearoa New Zealand, Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe territories. Another example is a bi-cultural model for bridging Western and Māori cultural constructs of Landscape and Whenua (Hatton and Paul, 2021; Lister et al., 2022: 72). Indigenous practitioners routinely engage with Western knowledge systems and institutions. Indigenous worldviews have a place for non-Indigenous peoples and their knowledge whereas non-Indigenous peoples have yet to fully understand, respect or apply that lens to Indigenous peoples or knowledge systems (McGregor et al., 2023). Key is that Indigenous peoples determine when Western knowledge is appropriate and engage with professionals and institutions as required (Cajete, 1995; Johnson et al., 2016; Kimmerer, 2012; Whyte et al., 2016). The choice is essential to Indigenous intellectual and research sovereignty.

Finally, Place and the power of Place are not new concepts to Indigenous peoples. In 1973, Deloria (2003) first published his seminal work on spatially determinative Indigenous cosmology and the spiritual power available in places (Colorado, 1988). Outside the academy, knowledge keepers, Elders and Land itself continue to tell very old stories about the Earth, about a world populated by powerful beings, entities and forces (Murdoch, 2020, 2022; Nahwegahbow, 2017). But these

ideas and relational practices are not necessarily taught or taken up in respectful and appropriate ways within non-Indigenous research contexts or acknowledged in theoretical conversations about more-than-human agency. While Western thought increasingly engages relational ontologies, multiple worlds and the agency of non-humans, the Cartesian split does not readily enable the recognition of non-humans as kin relations possessing thought or agency as being tied to spirit (Watts, 2013). Land-based methods are gaining momentum across many fields, including education, environmental studies and geography, but practitioners are not always critical of colonial relations, nor (ethically or meaningfully) engaged in relationship with Indigenous ways of being, knowing and doing (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015).

Indigenous placemaking: Background and context

Indigenous placemaking includes interventions that strengthen the visibility of Indigenous identities in the built environment (such as design, architecture, art and planning) and exercise Indigenous socio-political authority, engage and contest broader decision-making structures and activate Indigenous-Land relations, which includes the fulfilment of obligations to other-than-human kin (Jojola et al., 2013; Kiddle et al., 2018; McGregor, 2015; Recollet, 2015; Stuart and Thompson-Fawcett, 2010). These practices connect people to Place in urban spaces by highlighting practices of relationality and life-making (Dorries, 2022).

In Aotearoa, physical and conceptual interventions in urban spaces have been supported by a group of Indigenous Māori practitioners under the cloak of Ngā Aho Māori Designers Network. Since 2008, this Network has been involved in developing a Māori Cultural Landscapes Strategy, the Te Aranga Māori Design Principles, and has provided a critical forum for connection and collaboration between Indigenous placemaking practitioners including youth and Elders. Ngā Aho has built relationships with key professional institutes in Aotearoa and has generated debate around transforming the planning system. This work is inherently interdisciplinary, with practitioners from a range of professions working together with grassroots knowledge holders towards self-determination.

Indigenous placemaking practitioners and initiatives are active across Canada as well, including in the Toronto region. The City of Toronto has established an evolving inventory which records a growing list of Indigenous placemaking interventions within the city. Major institutions such as the City of Toronto and University of Toronto are actively working to build Indigenous spaces, render Indigenous identities visible in places, enhance Indigenous programming, engagement and representation, and build their capacity to meaningfully contribute to reconciliation (COT, 2017, 2020a, 2020b, 2022, 2022–2023; UoT, 2017). Speaking recently about Indigenous placemaking, former leadership of the MCFN, Bryan Laforme and Carolyn King, discuss the recognition, respect and relationship that come from effective placemaking interventions within Mississauga Treaty and Traditional Territory (Polishing the Chain, 2022).

The literature also identifies significant barriers and challenges to Indigenous placemaking in urban spaces. Colonialism situates Indigenous peoples outside of urban spaces, in 'nature', and erases Indigenous histories and ongoing presence in cities, while Indigenous placemaking interventions tend to be ad hoc and tokenistic as opposed to holistic and Indigenous led (Nejad and Walker, 2018; Nejad et al., 2019, 2020). Within urban planning and design, Indigenous peoples are viewed as stakeholders or cultural communities as opposed to rights-bearing and self-determining peoples, there is a failure to co-produce design and planning policy, and public policy and planning literature tend to focus on socio-economic deficit while further entrenching colonial displacement and dispossession (Akama et al., 2019; Barry and Agyeman, 2020; Dorries, 2022:3; Fawcett et al., 2015; Livesey, 2017; Loewen, 2016; Newhouse, 2004; Porter, 2017).[4]

Similar opportunities and challenges are experienced across countries with shared Indigenous-colonial histories. Practitioners can learn from each other and collaborate across international borders (Jojola et al., 2013). At the same time, vital differences exist between the context for Indigenous

placemaking in Canada and Aotearoa, including the recognition of Indigenous rights, values and interests in regulation and legislation, and the number of Indigenous practitioners working in each country (Kiddle et al., 2018). In both countries, Indigenous placemaking practitioners creating opportunities for Indigenous-led projects and events are often challenged with simultaneously responding to externally led initiatives and requests. In light of these considerations, this project set out to create an immersive space for Indigenous practitioners to explore the similarities and differences in how Indigenous placemaking emerges in various disciplines and geographies. In so doing, it also addresses ongoing conversations about the 'Indigenization' of urban areas and universities as sites and arbiters of knowledge production (Gaudry and Lorenz, 2018).

Research methodology

A network approach

Indigenous placemaking involves multiple disciplines and communities, including but not limited to urban planning and policy, art and design, environmental management, architecture and landscape architecture, newly emerging digital sectors and practices such as augmented reality (Devlin, 2017) and locative media (First Story Toronto, 2018; Sustainable Seas, 2021). With a wide range of Indigenous placemaking practitioners and organizations working in Toronto, experience from Aotearoa illustrates the importance of developing networks and tools to ensure Indigenous practitioners can support each other to engage critically with and shape emerging opportunities (Whaanga-Schollum, 2018). To build support in the Toronto context, our project modelled a network approach.

The project emerged from, and contributes to, increasing interaction between Indigenous and allied practitioners and researchers in Canada, Aotearoa, and around the world (Kiddle et al., 2018; Ngā Aho Māori Design Network, 2018; RAIC, 2017). *Connecting Indigenous Placemakers* was initiated by Desna Whaanga-Schollum, the co-Chair of Ngā Aho Māori Designers Network, after a visit to Toronto and Artscape Gibraltar Point on the Toronto Islands in May 2018. Ngā Aho are growing their international connections and view the project as a chance to share their journey and strengthen their ways of doing and being Indigenous, also as an opportunity to share their successes and acknowledge the challenges faced by Indigenous practitioners. The project was developed with the support of members of Ngā Aho, two of whom (Livesey and Clark) were based in Toronto at the time, and a University of Toronto Scarborough (UTSC) faculty member (Latulippe) through a connection first made at the 2014 International Indigenous Research Conference hosted by Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga in Aotearoa.

Ngā Aho together with the MCFN are the Indigenous project partners. MCFN are the Treaty partners and rights-holders for lands currently occupied by the City of Toronto, including the Toronto Islands, Treaty 13a (MCFN, n.d.).[5] The MCFN has settled several specific land claims with the Crown for past injustices related to treaties; however, outstanding land and treaty claims remain. The MCFN claim unextinguished Aboriginal title to the Rouge River Valley Tract and submitted a claim in 2015 seeking the return of those lands (MCFN, 2022; Talking Treaties Collective, 2022). The Rouge River Valley Tract includes unsurrendered MCFN lands currently occupied by the UTSC campus. The MCFN also assert unextinguished Aboriginal title to all water, beds of water, and floodplains contained in their 3.9 million acres of treaty lands and traditional territory and filed an Aboriginal Title Claim to Waters in 2016 (MCFN, 2017, 2022; Wybenga and Hottinger, n.d.). The MCFN (2022) state,

> As stewards of the lands and waters, we advocate for a healthy environment for the people and wildlife that live within our treaty lands and territory. The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation remains committed, as we have been for generations, to utilizing, protecting and caring for the waters in a holistic way that promotes continued sustainability. We want to maintain and strengthen positive relationships with the people who share our treaty lands and territory.

The lands and waters that form and flow through the City of Toronto, UTSC campus, and surround the Toronto Islands are subject to ongoing obligations and relationship involving the MCFN, making partnership integral to the integrity and success of the project. Toronto-based members of the project team and MCFN developed a relationship over time and eventually the project received formal endorsement and support from MCFN leadership, with accomplished Anishinaabe artist and former elected leader Cathie Jamieson supporting the project as a collaborator. A community-based recruitment process was established to invite members of the MCFN and the Mississauga Nation to participate in the retreat. The project also acknowledges the ongoing cultural importance of the Toronto Islands to other peoples. The Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Anishinaabek and other peoples carry stories about this place, which have been shared lands and an important inter-national gathering site for thousands of years, and efforts were made to include these perspectives and voices (Devine, 2018; Johnson, 2013; Loft, 2021).

Project collaborators also recognized the importance of engaging local partner and affiliate institutions to participate in an Indigenous-led forum. A public symposium held on Day 6 of the retreat saw engagement from all four universities based in Toronto, private design firms, the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, Toronto Island and Mississaugas of the Credit Friendship Group, ENGOs, members of grassroots Indigenous-led urban land-based initiatives and restoration sites in the city, Canada's first national urban park, and arts and cultural groups. A total of 70 participants came together at the symposium to listen to Indigenous creatives, share knowledge, participate in open studios, build networks, and strategize longer-term initiatives.

Knowledge sharing activities

Early in the gathering, Cathie Jamieson of MCFN provided the concept in Anishinaabemowin that would ground our activities in Place: Maanjiwe nendamowinan, the gathering of minds. Cathie explained that Menecing, the Toronto Islands, has always been a place of healing and a gathering place of many nations. The name 'Ngā Aho' refers to a parallel concept in Te Reo Māori, weaving together the strands of many disciplines. The following bi-cultural framework guided our activities:

> Maanjiwe nendamowinan
> *The gathering of minds*
>
> Mā te rongo, ka mōhio;
> Mā te mōhio, ka mārama;
> Mā te mārama, ka mātau;
> Mā te mātau, ka ora
> *Through resonance comes cognisance;*
> *Through cognisance comes understanding;*
> *Through understanding comes knowledge;*
> *Through knowledge comes life and well-being.*

Working with this framework, knowledge was shared through many experiences over the week-long gathering. We began with spirit and an acknowledgement of Place and the ancestors through ceremony. To ground participants in Place, speakers from MCFN as the territorial hosts, Cathie Jamieson and Waawaashkeshii Nini Henry, shared knowledge about the MCFN and their connections to Menecing, including the movement of the people and connections with other groups within the Anishinaabek Nation. Throughout the week, participants were offered opportunities to engage in sessions with knowledge holders, beginning with the speakers from MCFN. Retreat participants were also invited by host David Moses to share thoughts on the programme A Moment of Truth on ELMNT FM (2019), an Indigenous radio station based in Toronto. The recording has been produced

as a podcast and linked to the show's website. Knowledge also circulated and was reinforced by spending time with the Land and waters, through storytelling and listening, personal and group reflections, meal preparation and feasting, singing, visiting, creative practice, sharing circles, panel discussions, presentations, open studios, workshops, audio recordings, blogging, photography, videography and writing.

The public symposium allowed participants to share some of the information gathered with other practitioners, policy makers and community members. It consisted of a series of three panels and the opportunity to visit the studios of practitioners. Equal weight was given to knowledge offered through presentations, and knowledge offered through embodied practice. We also created opportunities for institutions to be involved by inviting Maydianne Andrade (UTSC) and Tanya Chung-Tiam-Fook (Environmental & Innovation Advisor and Educator) to participate as active listeners. The role of these two people was to reflect knowledge shared by synthesizing the presentations and open studios into themes of the day. These syntheses were powerful and offered immediate assurance to the presenters that they had been heard.

Thirteen presenters were grouped into three panels: 'Working in Place', 'Supporting Practitioners', and 'Strategic Conversations'. Panellists shared images of their past work, videos, and also presented work developed through the week as a way to share their thoughts and journey. The panels intentionally moved from local to global, to show the connections between individual, local actions and collective, global movements. The panels each had a mix of retreat participants from different territories and grouped together people with complementary experience. The first panel grounded the symposium in conversations about working locally – in a specific site, in Place. The second panel focussed on the heart of the project – how to support practitioners to work sustainably and respectfully in Indigenous places. The final panel of the day brought together three retreat participants with three respected practitioners from the wider community. These six panellists were tasked with framing the tools, strategies and approaches needed for next steps beyond the symposium.

Finally, six participants offered to open their studios to symposium attendees. Open studios were an important forum for practitioners to share their work in one-on-one or small group conversations, and for attendees to touch, smell and taste work, as well as participate in creating something themselves. As the panels represented the collaborative nature of the week, the open studios showed the work done by practitioners as part of their individual practice. Studios shared work in process, ranging from the intimate and affective, to socio-cultural and systemic.

Wānanga: To work and speak collectively (Findings)

In creating the retreat and symposium space, we drew on earlier work by Whaanga-Schollum et al. (2015) regarding wānanga as a 'container' for aligning purpose, co-evolving new knowledge, and intentionally regenerating mauri (the essential quality and vitality of a being or entity):

> Historically, whare wānanga were schools of learning where highly valued oral traditions, lore and mauri were preserved and passed onto those rangatira [leaders] who were considered to have the aptitude to cope. As with many terms and understandings within Māori society, researchers and practitioners have re-interpreted the term to fit new applications within the contemporary context. The practice of contemporary wānanga is derived from tikanga Māori, the act of interpreting and practising Māori knowledge. Used to describe a space or forum for immersive learning, contemporary wānanga are Māori-led events based on core cultural values, with tāngata whenua worldviews central in the discussion.

In this case, the project created an opportunity for participants to wānanga (wānanga is both a noun and a verb), to work and speak collectively. Here, we share those voices.

To determine what could be shared, the group held internal sessions to weave a collective voice and determine what information could be shared broadly and what should be retained within the group, a

relational process of accountability and consent (Wilson, 2008). The weaving together of many voices has been documented in several publicly available outputs: a radio interview and podcast (ELMNT FM, 2019), compilation video (Connecting Indigenous Placemakers, 2021) and Highlights Report (Latulippe et al., 2022). Other interpretive works have also been developed by retreat participants concerning the gathering itself (see Hatton, 2019) and related to dialogue and relationships formed or strengthened as a result (see Hatton and Paul, 2021; Henry in Latulippe, 2022; Kake and Whaanga Schollum, 2020; Kiddle et al., 2021), demonstrating ongoing connection and conversation.[6]

The following interpretive themes reflect the concept of Maanjiwe nendamowin, which grounded our activities in Place, and continues to find resonance: Connecting with and caring for Place (an entity with a specific identity); Nourishment and healing the Land and people; and Gathering strength.[7] Ultimately, the gathering of minds, fed in and by Place, created a space of nourishment and collective strength. Participants were reminded that it is not about creating Place but connecting to it. Design and other creative practices can strengthen our connection to Place so that we may listen and, ultimately, heal it.

Connecting with and caring for Place

In the radio broadcast (ELMNT FM, 2019), Nicole Latulippe talked of the origins of the gathering – Place (Meneceng) is what brought the group together. Desna Whaanga-Schollum shared her earlier experience of visiting AGP during a visit to Toronto: the space resonated with the kinds of spaces where gatherings are held in Aotearoa New Zealand. Artscape is not an Indigenous space, but it enables gathering, to explore creative practices and a strong connection to the environment. Artscape felt like a place where we could meet to share knowledge with reciprocity. Desna continued,

> There are also beautiful mahinga kai (gardens) to harvest from, with Indigenous foods, and a connection to the waters of Lake Ontario. The task of Indigenous designers is to work towards the healing of Place, and we see humans as part of the environment. We ask, how does our work contribute to this? We bring through the Mother Earth law in our practice. This is an initial meeting so that we can nurture and support practice between Indigenous peoples because we have the same struggles. The more that we can share, the more that we can support each other and heal the environment.

Building on this, Lucy Tukua explained that being present on this Land is always an honour (ELMNT FM, 2019). She continued,

> When we come to Indigenous lands, we acknowledge the Creator, those who have passed on, and the people of this land. We acknowledge our DNA markers – my mountains bow to your mountains, my rivers bow to your rivers, my sites of significance bow to your sites of significance. We are no different – it is just our languages that separate us. Thinking about the waters which connect us globally, we are all one. This work will magnify the way in which we hold our genealogical connections to those DNA markers.

Lucy sees the work she does in Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) as helping Māori to 'see our faces in our places'. When 'we share these deep cultural expressions, it helps non-Māori, non-Indigenous people, to think about who they are, what their DNA markers are, and where their bones come from'. In a statement that resonated deeply with participants all week, Lucy observed: 'As Indigenous peoples, we don't make place – Place makes us'.

Lucy and our Māori colleagues emphasized that to understand what placemaking means, we must start with Land, with Creation and spirit. All of life has a pulse and is grounded in the Earth. Land communicates; it tells us what it needs and can take on. Through our senses and dreams, through signs and symbols, cultural narratives and practices, travel routes and traditional land-uses, ceremony, the ancestors, songs, plant medicines, our relations in the plant, animal, mineral and water worlds, the landscape itself, Place, will tell its stories. Ultimately, it is not about creating Place but connecting to it.

At the symposium, presenters spoke to how an Indigenous sense of being is intricately woven in our sense of belonging to Place/Land: Lisa Myers spoke to how food connects us to Place, how it can anchor people in places and also urge them to migrate; Caitlin Laforme and Lindsay Stephens of the Toronto Island and Mississaugas of the Credit Friendship Group spoke about their bonds to a healing place in Toronto (O'Rourke, 2018); Jacqueline Paul and Josephine Clarke discussed the youth who are taking up their role as land defenders alongside the Elders; Cathie Jamieson talked about the continual cycle of energy and Place.

The first panel, Working in Place, was about instigating change and serving our communities. Cathie Jamieson talked about the Toronto Islands as a place of healing for the physical body and for the body as a spiritual entity, with symbols encoded throughout the island, which she depicted through her painting. Presenters spoke to a range of responsibilities they hold as Indigenous practitioners, community members and leaders, including the responsibility to support protest and occupations, the responsibility to support young people and involve children in the work, and the responsibility to fulfil leadership positions according to the original teachings, not Western roles. Jacqueline Paul shared her experiences supporting the ongoing occupation of ancestral land threatened with destruction/development at Ihumatao in Tāmaki Makaurau. Panellists illustrated a recurring theme of building relationships through sharing food and exchanging knowledge in Place. Both Cathie and Jacqueline emphasized that this gathering is part of a movement, a global resurgence of Indigenous peoples to reclaim their rights, knowledge and ways of life.

These themes were embodied and articulated in the open studios during the public symposium. Waawaashkeshii Nini Henry's studio, Stewards of the land and water, at the public symposium, opened with the question: 'What does it mean to be stewards of the land and water?':

> For the Mississaugas of the Credit, being stewards of the land and water is a sacred charge given to us by the Creator (Gchi Manidoo). It is more than a legal right to the land so much that [it] is our sacred duty to watch and care for the land, water and all that live there. To retell this connection of the Mississaugas of the Credit to Tkaronto and the importance of our duties to the land and water, I've chose a series of hard carved canoe cups and other carvings to recount this history.

In her studio, 'The land tells us what it can take on', Keri Whaitiri drew on comments made by Cathie Jamieson to consider the following:

> Traditional creative practices are deeply embedded in the land. They challenge us to pay close attention to the natural resources that surround us, the dynamics at play within our environment and our relationship to Papatūānuku (Earth Mother) in all her abundance. Engaging in these practices, particularly in an inquisitive way, also leads us towards a better understanding of the collective wisdom of our elders. As a visitor to Toronto Islands, a place of healing and respite within the traditional lands and waters of the Mississauga, Keri has been engaging with this place through creative practice. Her studio project fuses traditional harvesting local natural resources for weaving with jewellery-making. In the process of remaking these into small wearable objects, she seeks to understand the qualities of these resources encouraging viewers to identify natural resources, elaborate on these through story or association, to pick their own resources and to make or take a piece of their choosing.

In these curated spaces, hosts and guests alike considered what it means to relate in respectful and ultimately life-affirming ways with Land (Latulippe, 2022). Participants agreed that design and other creative practices can strengthen our connections to Place so that we may listen and know what Place/Land needs.

Nourishment and healing

The gathering aligned with the traditional uses of the Land on which it was held, a gathering place of many nations and site of healing. Cathie Jamieson explained that the island has always been a place

of rest and respite, purging, healing and regeneration. Participants reflected that sustenance and nourishment were central to the retreat experience: good food together with good company, access to local plant medicines, being with the Land and waters, participation in ceremony, sharing stories and attending to creative practice. These activities enhance connection with Land and contribute to a sense of wellbeing. When designed with communities, Indigenous 'placemaking' practices have the power to connect us to our cultures and systems of regenerating Place.

The second panel was titled, Supporting Practitioners. Desna introduced the relationship which Māori have with their ancestral lands, which drove the formation of Ngā Aho. As a catalyst for developing innovation and resilience in land occupation, Indigenous knowledge and belief systems relating to the environment have great potential to enhance contemporary practices. Ngā Aho proposes that bringing the Indigenous to the fore means designing concepts, products, ways of doing and frameworks – such as the Te Aranga Māori Design Principles (ADM, 2016), which have long-term meaningful outcomes and impacts for our communities. George Woolford shared his experience using the Te Aranga Māori Design Principles as a 'baseline' which identifies cultural values. In his open studio, William Hatton shared another example:

> William has been working with other landscape practitioners to develop and implement a stronger indigenous approach to the way we assess and work with cultural landscapes. In Aotearoa New Zealand, cultural landscapes have been assessed based on their biophysical, perceptual and associative values. Although cultural values are recognized, the approach lacks a deep understanding of Māori, whānau [family], hapū [clan] and iwi [tribe] values and identity of their landscape. An initial Māori approach has been developed exploring whakapapa [geneaology, layered knowledge], hīkoi [walks, site visits] and kōrero tuku iho [oral traditions] as a way to assess and understand cultural landscapes from a traditional and indigenous worldview.

The importance of Elders, youth and other community members spending time together in collective work and storytelling was emphasized. Panellists spoke of their work with people whose voices are often excluded, including people experiencing homelessness and Indigenous youth. Referring to her work with the Nikibii Dawadinna Giigwag: Flooded Valley Healing Garden, Sheila Boudreau stated that Indigenous youth do not see themselves as valued in Toronto and that this results in trauma. Through learning about design, stories and mapping to develop a green infrastructure project, youth found a pathway to feeling connected, speaking up and having their voice heard. Panellists suggested that the role of practitioners is to 'open the door' to Indigenous voices, to form partnerships and work with the people of the Places they are engaging, and to work with communities. Frida Larios concluded by noting that artefacts are transient, but narrative lives forever. In 2004 Frida founded a cultural movement and methodology called New Maya Language; this unique graphic system re-codifies a small part of the Maya mythic narrative giving ancestral oral tradition a new graphic form. The methodology intends to speak from and with today's Indigenous communities, by borrowing directly from the logo-graphic principles of ancestral precolonial scribes.

Elisapeta Hinemoa Heta channelled nourishment, support and healing through narrative praxis in her open studio, Kupu hou – words in process, with Jade Kake:

> As the name suggests, these are new (hou) words (kupu), words/works in process. An indulgent, reflective, and somewhat vulnerable open studio, Elisapeta will invite you in, with tea and the opportunity to sit, and digest works she is currently producing as an expression of self, indigeneity, place, grief, life and love. During her stay at Artscape Gibraltar Point she has also produced small watercolours to accompany some of the words written before and/or during the residency. She asks that you join the workshop with an open mind, ready to listen, and if you have any feedback to write, or voice this feedback during the session.

Everyone is nourished by Mother Earth and to care for her enhances our wellbeing – critical in the context of ongoing settler-colonial violence and trauma. The gifts of ceremonial leaders, youth and

Elders, traditional knowledge keepers, language speakers and medicine people are paramount in this work, and should be adequately supported. While the special relationship and custodial role that Indigenous people have in relation to our territories is nourished through particular processes, activities and values that connect people to Place, significant barriers impinge on the ability to enact obligations, such as pollution and contamination. Tokie Laotan-Brown's talk asserted that access and resources, not 'empowerment', are needed to carry out responsibilities to Land/Place.

Gathering strength

The gathering built upon existing connections within and between Toronto and Aotearoa, across Turtle Island, and internationally. It intentionally fostered connection and an Indigenous space. The practice of connection was embodied in the round of introductions in which participants were invited to introduce themselves through naming the peoples and places to which they belong. The process was the same for each new participant, presenter or guest who joined events (the circle) during the week, enabling people to make connections across age, nation, mountain and river. Water as a connecting element between our peoples was also observed. The symposium space itself was claimed by the Indigenous partners through hanging the MCFN flag behind the lectern, and the Tino Rangatiratanga flag, which represents Māori sovereignty, behind the panellists.

In a session at the end of the week, participants reflected that power was generated from each other, from the collective of Indigenous voices, and from the act of 'placing yourself . . . the authority to place yourself' (Cathie Jamieson). The event was like a council fire of nations coming together, activating Place. As experts and cultural producers, the 'movers and shakers', practitioners reflected on being energized by collective experiences like the gathering. Practitioners bring this energy back to community, part of a 'trigger, then mobilize' process. What is more, inter-tribal gatherings demonstrate sovereignty, nationhood and governance to neighbouring communities, sending a strong message about Indigenous jurisdiction. There is strength in numbers, Waawaashkeshii Nini Henry reflected.

In the third and final panel of the symposium, Strategic Conversations, Tokie Laotan-Brown traced her roots and international journey to 'follow the flow' of the Yoruba language, concluding with the importance of developing long term strategies to connect a global network of custodians, Indigenous people and gatekeepers. Josephine Clarke reflected on her involvement in custodianship and earning the right and responsibility to 'sit in spaces' for local peoples; Selina Young shared stories from her lead role in the first Indigenous Affairs Office at the City of Toronto, including the observation that placemaking is happening but is very reactive without the support of a network that can thoughtfully, mindfully create that space in the city; Elder Wendy Phillips described the cultural and spiritual authority that is held by Elders and often sought in strategic conversations; and James K. Bird spoke of his work to make places and spaces in language, with language being of Land and embodying the connection. Lucy Tukua shared a regenerative framework called 'Te Whakarito' to enable Indigenous peoples to articulate how to give life, vitality, and essence to their cultural narratives in urban spaces. She described how her work as a cultural advisor has allowed Māori to develop their own policies and outcomes. Josephine considered the concept of 'legacy' within Māori worldview and translated it as the pure continuation of energy. In our creation story, she continued, from the nothingness came the potential of being, and the world of awakening. It's the potential in that darkness. Elder Wendy reiterated that deep and cyclical time, 'our ancestors, they have a connection to the space we live in today', while Selina spoke of the need to work for seven generations ahead so that future generations have (safe) space and see themselves as welcomed and celebrated. Legacy has to come from a place of Indigenous knowledge.

Everyone has a role to play in the co-creation required to critically engage with and shape urban design and land-based work that ultimately benefits Indigenous communities, Land, and wider

society. Settlers and guests on Indigenous territories are challenged to know who they are, how they connect to the land, and to whom they are accountable. Questions were posed at the symposium: where are your bones, your stories? Are they being overlaid like ours are with your placemaking? Treaty contains principles to guide appropriate conduct on Land as human beings and as communities of many nations. Indigenous Place-based stories tell us about our relations and how to move forward. Rebecca Kiddle's open studio, The Decolonizer, engaged with these questions and a vision of decolonized urban spaces:

> The Imagining Decolonised Cities (IDC) project led by Rebecca engaged the wider Aotearoa New Zealand public in an urban design competition which asked participants to think about what decolonisation looked, felt, smelt, tasted and sounded like. One of the contributions we received was a board game. This session tests a prototype of the game, seeking feedback from symposium participants.

Maydianne Andrade suggested that the interconnections between our diverse stories of Place and how we knit these stories together can help to build a common base of understanding, values and principles – a base that is needed to produce meaningful action for youth and future generations. The public symposium attracted representation from public, non-Indigenous and Indigenous agencies, organizations and grassroots and government initiatives. Non-Indigenous representatives listened while Indigenous voices led the discussion. The day was both a symbolic and material expression of Indigenous sovereignty and leadership with MCFN as the treaty holder acting as the host nation and Indigenous people, recognized as the landholders, stewards and leaders in urban design and placemaking. Reflections underscored that relationship-building and Indigenous leadership ought to guide institutional change. This work is not easy; Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous organizations often hold deeply opposing values, understandings, and priorities about our relations and what constitutes proper conduct. That said, with a focus on Land and stories of Land, there is something in common to develop.[8] This is a strength.

Finally, Land was also observed to be gathering strength and speaking for itself. This is taking place, James K. Bird observed, 'whether we want to hear it or not'. Rematriating Indigenous knowledge back into our spaces is to give voice to Land and to the people. At the symposium, Desna reiterated that our narratives are there to remind us that we are part of the Earth's wider ecosystems. Stories connect us to where we live and help us determine how to support Place – this is part of strategic dialogue.

Discussion: Placekeeping and research sovereignty

Maydianne Andrade reflected that Indigenous placemaking is about stewardship and custodianship. Tanya Chung-Tiam-Fook emphasized that, as Indigenous people, 'our sense of being is intricately woven in our belonging to the land'. What does it mean, then, to reclaim and reimagine within the current system our sense of Place, belonging, regenerative governance, cultural continuity and land-based practices? Maanjiwe Nendamowin made clear that the task is to strengthen connections to Place through design and other creative practice. This resonates with recent observations from the Ontario Professional Planners Institute (OPPI) (2019: 12):

> Land use – we need to term it differently. It's not there for our use. It should be 'land relationship planning'. Building a relationship with the land around us. Take into consideration what the land is telling us. Everything that is alive is our brothers and sisters.

It also resonates with the concept of Indigenous 'placekeeping', which 'conceives of place (and the land that provides a foundation for place) as having inherent being and agency' (Chung-Tiam-Fook in Engle et al., 2022: 27). Placekeeping is an approach to city building that prioritizes ecological,

historical and cultural relationships in the care of Place; it 'is about how we respect our relations – the wind, the water, the land, the animals – and thinking about how we can build in a way that respects and enhances those (Hickey in Evergreen 2022). It emphasizes both social relations (which are not limited to human beings) and material conditions – that is, the need to support Place 'as the setting and co-creator of our being in the world', as well as those who keep Place (Engle et al., 2022: 51).

Participant feedback and looking ahead

Maanjiwe Nendamowin's success can be attributed at least in part to methodology or research process. As a collaborative project, it drew from a community-based recruitment strategy, the First Nation treaty-holders for the Toronto Islands were engaged from the outset, Land consulted and tikanga (cultural protocol) followed. This process takes time, humārie (humility) as well as resources. Champions within our institutional partners ensured that adequate resources were made available. The COVID-19 pandemic has made subsequent travel and in-person assembly difficult, but the intention remains to stay connected and nurture our practices going forward.

Future opportunities for Indigenous placemaking/keeping events have been identified. A list of priorities for future initiatives can be found in Latulippe et al. (2022). However, ongoing challenges include pragmatic ones – time commitment and logistics – and emotional/spiritual concerns – the emotional labour and trauma that accompanies gatherings of Indigenous people in a 'postcolonial' world. Adequate time and space are needed and more Elders, ceremonial leaders and medicine people should be involved to support participants. It was also noted that Gano:nyok (The Words Before All Else) is a powerful way to begin such gatherings. Haudenosaunee people have a long tenure in the area and relationship with the Land and region. Related, language is welcomed by the Land and language and language speakers should be supported through these events.

'Place' and Indigenous research sovereignty

More broadly, we offer four considerations for keeping Place (an entity with a specific identity) and caring for Place central to research: (1) Respect for the sacred, (2) Living well with all our relations, (3) Relationship with the peoples of Place, and (4) Rethinking research (process, practice, evaluation, etc.). Again, Place and Land signified as proper nouns connote Indigenous conceptualizations of a fundamentally interconnected world where all our relations embody intelligence and will (Watts, 2013). In this manner, 'all our relations' signifies human and non-human kin, 'including all living things and many entities not considered by Western society as living, such as water and Earth itself' (McGregor, 2018: 7).

The *first* consideration is respect for the sacred. Spirit, prayer and ceremony are part of the everyday working lives and multiple responsibilities held by Indigenous placemaking practitioners, and likewise central to Indigenous research paradigms (Wilson, 2008).[9] Non-Indigenous practitioners and institutions,

> have to realize they are working within [an Indigenous] 'system of knowledge' that is totally different from their own. There is an explicit inclusion of spirit and spirituality in Indigenous knowledge system [yet] different conceptions of time for spiritual and value-based traditions are not considered [. . .] or factored into project timelines. Spirituality (e.g. prophecies and ceremony) is not recognized as relevant or as contemporary knowledge that informs approaches to describing environmental change, yet 'spirit' forms the foremost foundational aspect of TEK. (McGregor et al., 2023: 17)

In the context of building just and sustainable cities, Engle et al. (2022) address this gap in their recent collection, *Sacred Civics*. Contributors centre the sacred: the spiritual or divine force in all living beings, that which is 'unique, intrinsically worthy of respect and dignity, relational, life-giving and

sustaining, and defiant of commodification' (p. 3). The authors acknowledge the Faith Keepers, Knowledge Keepers, Elders and community leaders from a myriad spiritual and cultural lineage 'whose ceremonial and cultural leadership and work are central to city building and placekeeping/ placemaking' (p. 6). Their leadership teaches responsibilities and accountabilities to all peoples, future generations and the Earth, and they should be adequately supported.

Elder Wendy Phillips spoke at the *Connecting Indigenous Placemakers* symposium about the cultural authority of Elders:

> we also have spiritual authority. This is a supernatural component that doesn't always get talked about when we talk about place [. . .] When we talk about space, and our ancestors, they have a connection to the space we live in.

Elder Wendy spoke of a universality to spiritual connection, 'no matter where we come from around the world', hinting at opportunity even in spaces that have not been welcoming to ceremony (New College, 2020; TRC, 2015). Indigenous cultural landscape strategies such as the Te Aranga Design Principles support local peoples, ceremonial leaders and practitioners to demonstrate cultural approaches and perspectives on how to manage and build on land. For Māori, this means spiritual connection and sense of belonging is preserved, among other outcomes, as well as benefits for Tauiwi, non-Māori (Paul, 2017).[10] Supporting ceremonial spaces and their keepers is essential to Indigenous research sovereignty.

The *second* consideration that Place and placekeeping bring to research is respect for all our relations. From Desna Whaanga-Schollum's opening remarks at the symposium: 'We are not the most important things on this planet. We are the continuation of our ancestors and the seeds for what is to come'. Moving beyond human-centred planning and design, Indigenous methodology and practitioners reference 'an eco-system of actors' (Whaanga-Schollum, 2020). Several voices talked about the regeneration of Place through the embodiment of treaty principles that are rooted in precolonial relationships between different Indigenous nations and confederacies as well as relationships (bimaadiziwin) with the Land and with animal nations (Simpson, 2008).[11] In a facilitated session during the retreat, Ange Loft and Jamie-Lee Oshkabewisens of Jumblies Theatre led a conversation and art-based response with the group. Participants created symbols and collective sounds to explore and consider the nature of treaty relationships, which are not just between settler and Indigenous peoples but have formed the foundation of relationships between Indigenous groups and with the living world.

McGregor (2018) writes that Mino-Mnaamodzawin, living well or the good life, means that wellness and justice pertain not only to human beings but to all our relations (2018). In a research context, Luby et al. (2021) challenge universities to respect not only the rights of Indigenous peoples to govern research within their territories, but also for non-human actors to figure meaningfully in ethics review processes. These interventions are part of a call to revitalize and reconcile our relationships as human beings with the Earth, an Indigenous law that could be applied more broadly (Elder Augustine in TRC, 2015: 18). To revitalize and strengthen relations through which all life may flourish includes making kin even with those 'polluted' areas and 'invasive' species (Hernández et al., 2021; Reo and Ogden, 2018). To strengthen relationships with Place, Indigenous peoples must have access to their lands. Access and relationship are protected by Article 25 of UNDRIP, the right of Indigenous peoples to maintain and strengthen their spiritual relationships to their lands and waters and uphold their responsibilities to future generations (Craft, 2018). This is something that research institutions have yet to meaningfully grapple with.

Third, is holding strong relationship and working with the rights-holders and stewards of Place, as well as local Indigenous practitioners, networks, language speakers and learners. Practitioners must bring their 'whole selves' to work with Indigenous communities, acknowledging their own identities, ancestors, and histories. 'Many times', Lucy shared at the symposium,

> we've acknowledged the value of being here with the people of this land, to come into this space, be welcomed in a way that our ancestors speak to one another in strategic conversations, acknowledge those sacred sites people have talked about – they belong to all of us, we are all there to protect sacred sites across the globe.

Practitioners must also acknowledge that Indigenous knowledge is not 'transferable' and that their role is to reinvigorate Indigenous voices so that those voices are stronger and clearer.

The project team endeavoured to work in a respectful and appropriate way with the MCFN, the Mississauga Nation, and in acknowledgement of shared territory. On the first day, the welcome from MCFN was responded to by Ngā Aho, who offered acknowledgement and thanks in the form of a whaikōrero (formal speech) and waiata (song). This, and the subsequent exchange of gifts, offering of time from volunteers, visiting, and extending networks, express respect and reciprocity, fundamental values in Indigenous research. Respecting the rights of Indigenous peoples to govern research within their territories takes many forms and relies on relationship and reciprocity. The compilation video is a legacy piece that depicts collaboration and co-creation in the spirit of maanjiwe nendamowinan. It provides a record, reflecting the wishes of our community partner and territorial host nation, and shares the voices, languages, songs and faces in an Indigenous space.

Creating space for participants to exercise agency over how knowledge would be shared was key to the success and realization of research sovereignty at the symposium.[12] Panellists were encouraged to work together during the week to shape the focus of their panel and develop key messages or themes. They shared stories and learned from each other. This series of decisions meant that the symposium was not a collection of strangers talking on related but unconnected topics, but a coherent, cogent force of voices arguing for a single goal. Each speaker knew who they were, in relation to the other speakers. Each speaker knew how their perspective and story fitted with other perspectives and stories. Each speaker chose to introduce themselves in a way that makes sense to them. This experience demonstrated the value of building intentional time and space to relax, focus and connect. Many attendees expressed gratitude for the opportunity to listen and learn from Indigenous leadership that day.

To respect the diversity of Indigenous experiences and strengthen the weave of collective voices, hearts and minds requires well-considered supports to establish culturally grounded and productive spaces. The challenges – emotional, spiritual, physical, relational, that stem from settler-colonial violence and intergenerational trauma are real. Cultural safety and making supports available are key considerations for Indigenous research sovereignty.

Fourth, Place and Indigenous placekeeping demands a reconsideration of what constitutes research. A full discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of the article, but what can be highlighted is that the activities and outcomes shared here are not always legible or of value to mainstream research institutions, which can make it difficult to secure funding and other supports or achieve appropriate recognition for and appraisal of Indigenous research. Indigenous embodied research necessarily challenges dominant conceptualizations of 'research' (Whetung, 2019).

The project demonstrates one research pathway to what Styres (2017) calls (re)centering, (re)membering, (re)cognizing and (re)generating Indigenous philosophies and pedagogies of Land. She emphasizes the prefix *-re* to signify the circularity of coming to know 'again' the primacy of Land and the suffix *-ing* for fluidity, movement and progressive action. The project did not centre academics or prioritize peer-reviewed article outputs, an approach that the university system struggles to see, hear and meaningfully support (Kuokkanen, 2007). Rather, relationship, process, and embodied practice were paramount in our network-based approach to knowledge-sharing. Activities such as feasting, visiting and "gathering" itself are recognized as a culturally-appropriate methods for Indigenous knowledge sharing, and these activities should be adequately supported (Ermine et al. 2005; COO 2015; UOI 2015; Craft 2014, 2017; Heta 2016; Hernández et al. 2021).

Frameworks exist to support Indigenous researchers and research sovereignty (self-determination), such as the First Nations principles of ownership, control, access and possession (OCAP) (First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC), n.d.), Global Indigenous Data Alliance

(GIDA, 2018), and others, but institutions and their representatives have work to do (Latulippe and Klenk, 2020). In the Canadian context, Senator Sinclair reminds us that virtually all aspects of Canadian society will need to be reconsidered to achieve truth and reconciliation (TRC, 2015) – and this certainly applies to research. Seeking truth before reconciliation, and developing institutional 'trustworthiness' before trust (Wilson et al., 2023), means that when challenges inevitably arise (i.e. unwanted and inappropriate developments on Indigenous land), relationships may be strong enough for non-Indigenous people, researchers, and institutions to forge collaborative and effective responses with Indigenous peoples.

Concluding remarks

Maanjiwe Nendamowin embodied a relationship and network-building approach to research that honoured long-standing stewardship and nourished connection with Place. The project prioritized the wellbeing and creative practice of participants and mobilized existing knowledge and expertise through peer-to-peer dialogue and collective, community-oriented outputs. Conceived of as a project to support those who 'make place', Place (re)emerged as primary relationship and first teacher (Styres, 2017) – as central to both research process and outcomes.

In this work, we shared priorities, principles and practices that (re)emerge when Place and place-keeping are central to research. This is not intended to bound Indigeneity or fix identities to certain spaces. Place and learning are interconnected and both are dynamic systems in constant flux (Moreton-Robinson, 2017; Styres, 2017). Knowledge, agency and spiritual power are available in Place, but not bound by it (Deloria, 2003). We emphasize movement and migration, cyclical time and 'legacy', and relational and life-making practices (Dorries, 2022; Whyte et al., 2016). Place (an entity with a specific identity) and placekeeping bring a diversity of human and more-than-human beings together into emergent processes of co-becoming (Larsen and Johnson, 2017; Styres, 2017).

The work ahead to (re)member the primacy of Land/Place is not for Indigenous peoples alone: 'It is crucial that we all consider and take seriously how we want to be in relationship to this world now and in the future' (Styres, 2017: 90, 61). Tuck and McKenzie (2015) argue for engagement with anti-colonial and Indigenous approaches to 'place' across all fields of research. On Menecing, reciprocal, relational and culturally grounded processes of learning and doing promoted connection to Place, care for Place, and support for Indigenous placemaking practitioners. Through a placekeeping lens, we consider the sacred, all our relations, the peoples of Place, and rethinking (re)search as paramount to the weaving of relationship and research practice from Toronto to Tāmaki Makaurau.

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pressing for us all to re-tune into the environment, revise the contemporary planning systems, and remember and revitalise our ancestor's knowledge of Place.

Declaration of conflicting interests

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Notes

1. See https://ngaaho.maori.nz/.
2. See Whaanga-Schollum (2018) for discussion of a Mātauranga Māori 'Sense of Place'.
3. A draft of the Aotearoa New Zealand Landscape Assessment Guidelines was crafted with Te Tau-a-Nuku, a technical group within Ngā Aho, the national collective of Māori design professionals (p. 8) and *Connecting Indigenous Placemakers* partner.
4. Bounded conceptualizations of Indigeneity as a fixed identity category in relation to colonialism and antithetical to urbanity are reflected in urban policies, which 'further entrench colonial displacement and dispossession through processes of gentrification, policing and surveillance, and other forms of structural racism' (Dorries, 2022: 3).
5. The so-called Toronto Purchase of 1805 (Treaty 13) was an attempt to 'confirm' the contested terms of the Toronto Purchase of 1787 (Talking Treaties Collective, 2022; Wybenga, 2017). In 2010, the Government of Canada settled the Toronto Purchase Specific Claim and the Brant Tract Claim, which included compensation for lands unlawfully acquired (including the Toronto Islands) and for the Crown's failure to pay a reasonable price for land obtained in the 1805 agreement (MCFN, n.d.; Wybenga, 2017).
6. Retreat participant contributions to 'Our Voices II' (Kiddle et al., 2021) include Keri Whaitiri, Elisapeta Hinemoa Heta, Kristi Leora Gansworth, Desna Whaanga-Schollum, Jade Kake and Jacqueline Paul, and Josephine Clarke.
7. Direct and indirect quotations derive from public outputs such as the radio show, public symposium and Highlights Report, and from group reflections developed for the purpose of sharing. Other insights reflect ongoing dialogue between and interpretations by the authors, and every effort is made to be specific about attribution. In this section, the authors (who are not all Indigenous or belong to Indigenous collectives) use possessive language (i.e. "our") to reflect Indigenous project leadership, amplify participant voices, and in this context refuse to 'Other' Indigenous concepts, practices, peoples, and places. Where appropriate, we also discuss and differentiate the positionality, roles, and responsibilities of non-Indigenous practitioners and researchers.
8. When people lack an awareness of the fundamental being and agency of Land, recognizing Land can start with living in reflexive relationship to (lower case-*l*) land and requires critical self-location (Styres, 2017):

   respectful acknowledgement of whose traditional lands one is on, a commitment to seeking out and coming to an understanding of the stories and knowledges embedded in those lands, a conscious choosing to live in intimate, sacred, and storied relationships with those lands, not the least of which is an acknowledgement of the ways one is implicated in and informed by the networks and relations of power that compose the tangled colonial history of the lands. (p. 55)

9. An example from broadcasting voices was William's opening with a formal mihi, acknowledging and greeting the Creator, the building, the Earth Mother and the ancestors.
10. Wairuatanga, the immutable spiritual connection between people and their environments, is a core principle that guides the application of the seven Te Aranga Māori Design Principles (ADM, 2016).
11. Indigenous versions of Treaty/Te Tiriti o Waitangi are 'constitutional associations', agreements or relationships codified through Indigenous diplomatic protocol and text, such as wampum belts and written language, which maintain Indigenous sovereignty and establish a foundation for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to live together in place (Mills, 2017: 208; Livesey, 2017: 5; Krasowski, 2019).
12. This decision was inspired, in part, by a wānanga organized by Elisapeta Heta (2016) in 2015. Elisapeta facilitated the 2-day wānanga using the principles of Open Space Technology; she presented the topic, invited people to submit ideas and then asked participants to arrange conversations within the time and space available.

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