

ART & JUSTICE

NEWSLETTER | 2023 REVIEW
ISSUE 05



ART & JUSTICE NEWSLETTER

TABLE OF CONTENTS

About ART & Justice • p. 2

Meet the Team • p. 3-5

2023 Updates • p. 6- 11

Featured Art • p.12- 16

Staying in Touch & Sharing your work • p.17

Contact info • p. 18

ABOUT ART JUSTICE

Greetings and warm wishes from the A.R.T. & Justice (Action, Reciprocity, Transformation & Justice) team. It has been a while since our last newsletter, so we would like to begin by (re-) introducing ourselves and share about what A.R.T. & Justice is and what it means to us.

A.R.T. & Justice is a collaborative Participatory Action Research project committed to supporting your holistic health, well-being, and dignity through Indigenous-guided and trauma-informed art and creative writing initiatives. Participatory Action Research is a type of research that believes that research should result in concrete benefits to the communities that university researchers work with, and that experts who are or have been incarcerated bring important wisdom to projects about doing time, making art, and building communities across prison walls. We believe that storytelling and art creation can build community, reduce stigma, and support healing. We see art as a way to build community and dream a better world.

How do we achieve this? Through sharing opportunities to create art inside and outside; by supporting artists with the supplies they need to create art; by featuring the art of participating artists on our website and by showcasing the art of currently and previously incarcerated artists in art shows and, perhaps most importantly, by listening to you and your thoughtful suggestions.

In this edition, we will share updates on the work we have been doing over the past year and some very exciting things that are coming up. We are so grateful that you are here with us and hope that this newsletter brings glimmers of joy and hope for anyone who takes the time to read through and appreciate the art that is shared within these pages.

We are excited to continue developing this project alongside you! We invite you to continue communicating with us, share your reflections, and feedback! To connect with us, please see the last page for our mailing address & toll free phone number.



MEET THE TEAM

Helen Brown

Associate Professor & Academic Lead

Helen is a registered nurse, the academic lead of A.R.T. & Justice and a professor at UBC. She has been working to shift research towards having tangible social justice impact since 2007 using community-led approaches that honour voices that often go unheard. Helen is a mum of 2 adult 'kids' who make her laugh daily and a daughter to an amazingly joyful father who loves art at his ripe age of

94 as a way to connect with others and spark conversation, stories and remembering. A.R.T & Justice brings together everything she loves about doing research in a good way- a mirror for inclusion, community and belonging through creativity.



Helen and 'her kid'



Kelsey in her natural environment

Kelsey Timler, Research Manager

Kelsey is the Research Manager of A.R.T. & Justice who has honoured to work with artists and leaders who are or have been incarcerated since 2015. She believes in the power of community-led research to help build a better world. She spent many years as a professional cook and is a proud art school drop-out who believes that art is for everybody, that every human is creative, and that food has the power to bring people together. She loves hiking up mountains with her dog and making elaborate meals. Cooking is her main artistic endeavour, and she sees art as a practice that can support the simple but radical act of taking care of one another.

MEET THE TEAM

Angelee Porter, Research Assistant

Angelee is an artist with many years of experience. She uses mixed media with mostly found objects. Angelee's artwork has been shown in several galleries throughout the country and she also facilitates community art workshops. Angelee has been a passionate member of the A.R.T. & Justice team since she joined in 2022. She is also a public speaker, advocate, and teacher with a special interest in prison art and artists. Dogs are her true love. She works as a dog trainer and boards dogs at her house. In fact, Angelee's work sometimes contains accidental dog footprints which turn out to be just what the piece needs. The universe provides.



Sam Young, Research Assistant

Sam is a freelance artist, art instructor at the City of Burnaby, Project Coordinator with the UBC Transformative Health & Justice Research Cluster and Research Assistant with A.R.T. & Justice. Sam got her bachelor's in fine arts in Drawing and Painting in Toronto and primarily works with acrylic and watercolor paint. She is a mom to 2 pet hedgehogs named Quilly and Nutmeg. In her free time you can find Sam playing video games and baking new recipes. Sam sees art as a way to speak in a different language, but this language can be understood universally and is not just for a select group. Art allows you to share a different form of expression and understanding, which allows for different forms of engagement and influences in those that view it. Art can be recycled, collaborated upon, temporary, or a piece of history. She likes that you are able to choose what art wants to be for you, there are no rights or wrongs, just creativity.

MEET THE TEAM

Michelle Paquette, Research Assistant

Michelle is a research assistant with A.R.T. & Justice who believes in the power of art and community to make positive and lasting change in the world. Her work as a community-based researcher is informed by her diverse personal lived experiences. She works to create space and make room for others to share their personal lived experiences. Michelle's most important role is that of being a mother to her 5 children and a partner to her husband. She enjoys the creative process of sewing and beading and can often be found wandering in the woods.



2023 UPDATES, CONTINUED

Tablets!!



Stock images of tablets loaded with art creation apps.

Our team has sat with several incarcerated artists who received art kits, and have heard that access to artistic inspiration, mentorship and opportunities for skills building would be helpful to support their artistic journey. We've also heard from people in prison – and from team members with lived experiences of criminalization and incarceration – that barriers to technology while in prison can create challenges upon release, and that the steep learning curve can be anxiety-inducing (especially for those of us who have been incarcerated for an extended period of time). With this in mind, our team has excitedly been working towards creating a digital art creation and sharing platform on Tablets. These will include tips and tricks related to digital technology use, art inspiration, video tutorials of different types of art techniques, apps to experiment with digital art creation, lots of supportive instruction as well as a gallery of art work that has been shared with A.R.T. & Justice by artists like you. We hope that it can be a place for us to connect and support art creation and sharing, not as a replacement for our team visiting in person, but a way to keep in touch and share information more easily. We will have loaded all the initial content in Spring 2024, and then start working with CSC IT and security to get the Tablets inside! To start we will be piloting a few Tablets in Pacific, Mission Medium and Williamhead Institutions. Stay tuned for more updates on this exciting next phase of A.R.T. & Justice!

2023 UPDATES

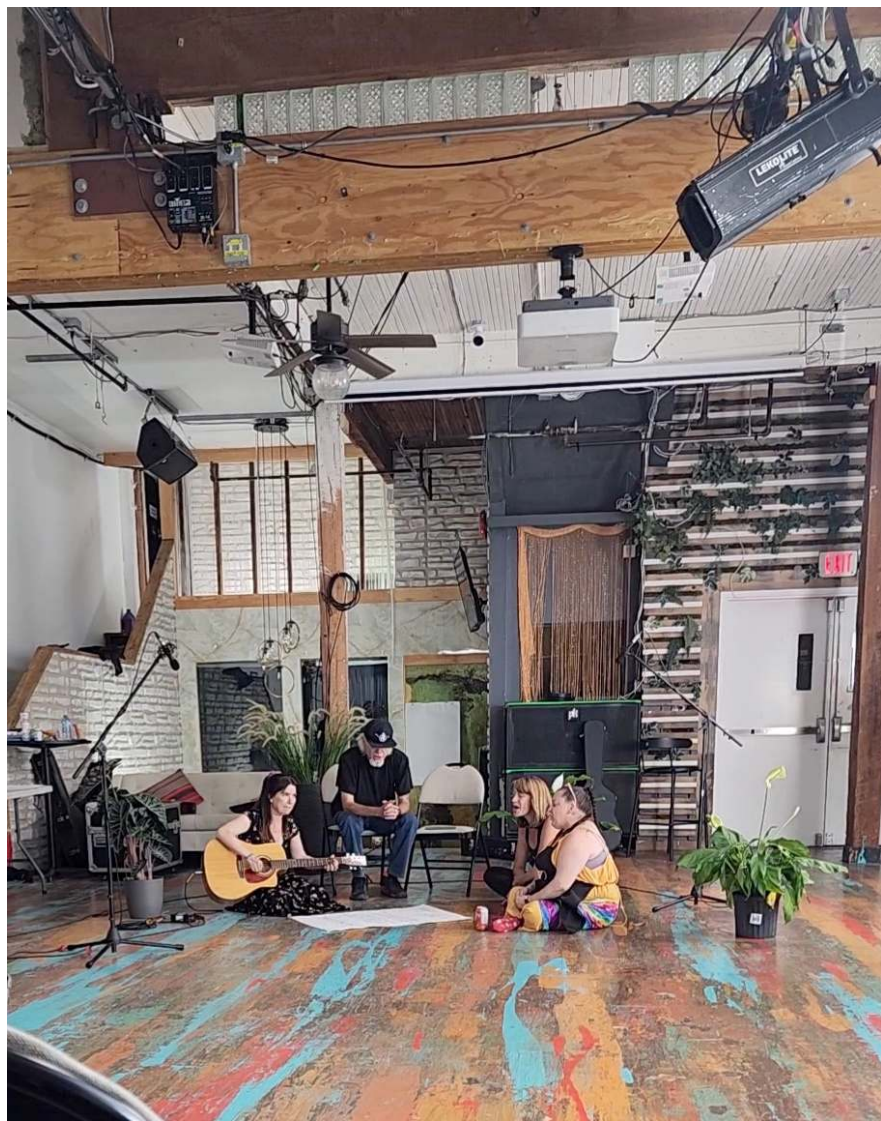
Digital Content Creation Filming Workshop

In July of 2023, the A.R.T. & Justice team along with a group of artists who were on parole came together over 4 days to create a series of short documentaries with each artist sharing their art story with us. These short films will be loaded onto the Tablets along with the content mentioned above!



Some of the art that was created using a print-making technique.

2023 UPDATES, CONTINUED



A shot from inside the space described by Angelee.

A.R.T. & Justice team member, Angelee, shares some of her reflections about the digital content filming workshop:

Our days were filled with bonding experiences, laughter, and tears as some relived experiences that compelled them to create their art and others experienced the emotionality of explaining where, inside themselves, the art originated. My first impression was "the content we create this week is going to help a lot of people."

We met and worked in huge space that looked like a working art studio with places to think, work, and create art. The week offered opportunities to try different kinds of art outside of each artists' chosen media. This included painting, beading, drum making, music, found art sculpture, fashion, filmmaking, stamping, and cooking. The week concluded with each artist being interviewed about their art. Individuals were not only being seen through their art but heard as well. I feel hopeful that this work gives those of us with criminalized aspects in our lives, including those who are still incarcerated, a place to be seen, a place to be admired as our talents are showcased. It feels surreal and beautiful.

2023 UPDATES, CONTINUED

Art Activism



Some of the canvasses on display to the public at a gallery.

Art Activism is high school art class at that explores societal issues through art. Over the course year, the students learn about a particular social justice issue and complete a final art project that reflects their learning.

A.R.T. & Justice has partnered with the *Art Activism* class so that the students and incarcerated citizens can create art in collaboration. For the 2023 class, the focus was on studying the colonial foundations of Canadian society and the ways that Canadian criminal laws, policies and practices have negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples.

Artists from Pacific Institute painted half of the canvas and students finished the paintings. The completed canvasses were first displayed in a public art gallery in June 2023 and then went on to public display at a gallery from June 15 to June 24, 2023. The finished pieces each stood out for their individual beauty and were well received. Members of the A.R.T. & Justice team then brought the completed canvases back into Pacific Institution for an art show in the gym.

For the 2024 *Art Activism* class, the topic is climate justice. The canvasses have been dropped off to artists at Pacific Institute and Mission Medium Institutions and will be given to the students to complete in early April 2024. The canvases will be completed by June for showcasing in a public art gallery, and our team is excited to bring that show back into Pacific and Mission Medium for display in the summer. After listening from both the students and the incarcerated artists last year, our team will be inviting artists to conduct interviews, so that words of support, affirmation and appreciation can be anonymously shared between the students and the artists inside.

2023 UPDATES, CONTINUED

The Outsider Arts Festival



Some of the canvases on display to the public at a gallery.

The Vancouver Outsider Arts Festival showcases the work of visual artists and performers outside of mainstream art institutions. It is a platform for these artists to share their unique perspectives and artistic visions with the community.

This year's exhibit was held in the historic Roundhouse Community Centre in Yaletown, Vancouver. The show debuted October 12, 2023 and was open to the public for a week. A.R.T. & Justice was one of 4 art groups who participated along with 40 individual artists and 15 performing artists. We were able to include 10 pieces created by artists on parole who are participating in A.R.T. & Justice. Participating artists were able to attend the opening night, talk to other artists, and sell original pieces and prints of their art!

2023 UPDATES, CONTINUED

Our current art exhibit, callshift.



The team working to install the art for the show, the show sign and the inside view of the gallery

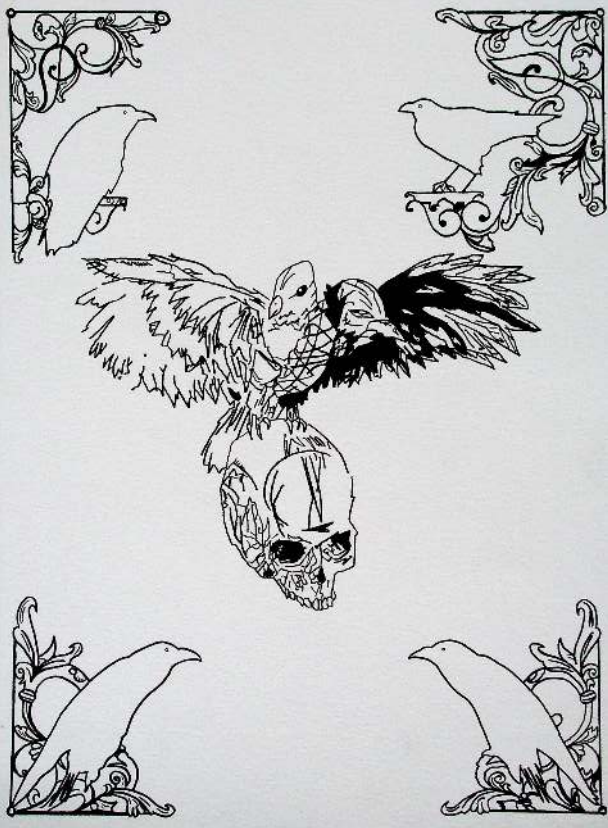
Why the name shift? The word shift was selected by our team and artists on parole who are part of the A.R.T. & Justice community. Shift means to change, to evolve, to transform. It's an invitation for the public to shift their ideas about prisons as they witness the powerful work included in the exhibition.

This exhibit runs from January – April 2024 at the Michael Wright Gallery in Port Coquitlam. It honours the work of 28 artists who have shared their work with A.R.T. & Justice over the past year. We have over 80 individual pieces of art on display!

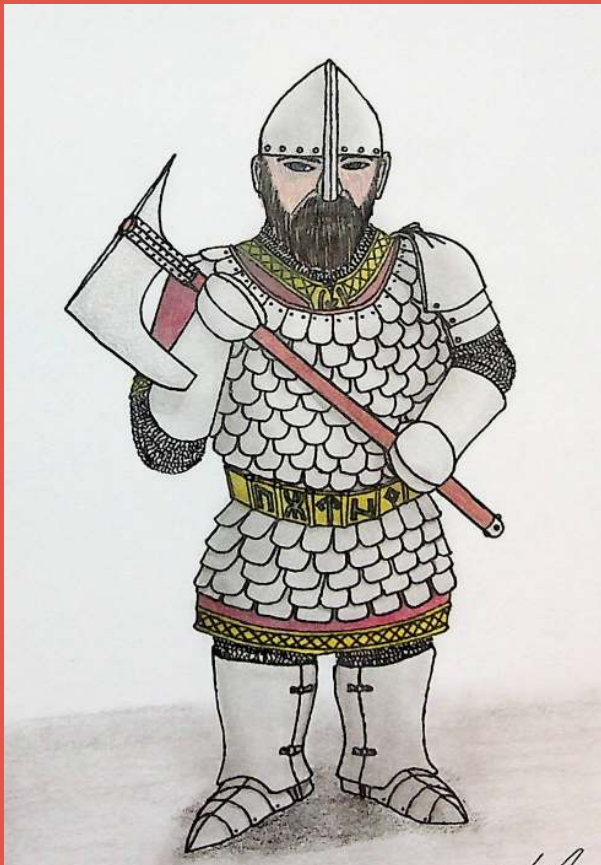
When planning this show, we talked about what our hopes were for impact that this show would have. During this discussion, we came up with the title shift. The show is an invitation for the viewing public to shift their ideas about prison and incarceration. Over the course of the exhibition, we are also hosting 3 workshops for community members- one that is a collaborative and living art piece that is made up of art created by artists at Mission Medium, Pacific Institute and William Head Institute as well as some community members. The smaller pieces will put together into a larger piece that will be on display from April 1st- 22nd at the Michael Wright Gallery and then brought back to Mission Medium, Pacific Institute and William Head Institute to show the artists who contributed art.

FEATURED ART

This section features a small selection of some of the most recent artwork that has been shared with A.R.T. & Justice. Each piece that you share is precious to us and we wish we had room to share everyone's work! Please keep an eye out for different pieces in upcoming editions of our newsletter.



FEATURED ART, CONTINUED



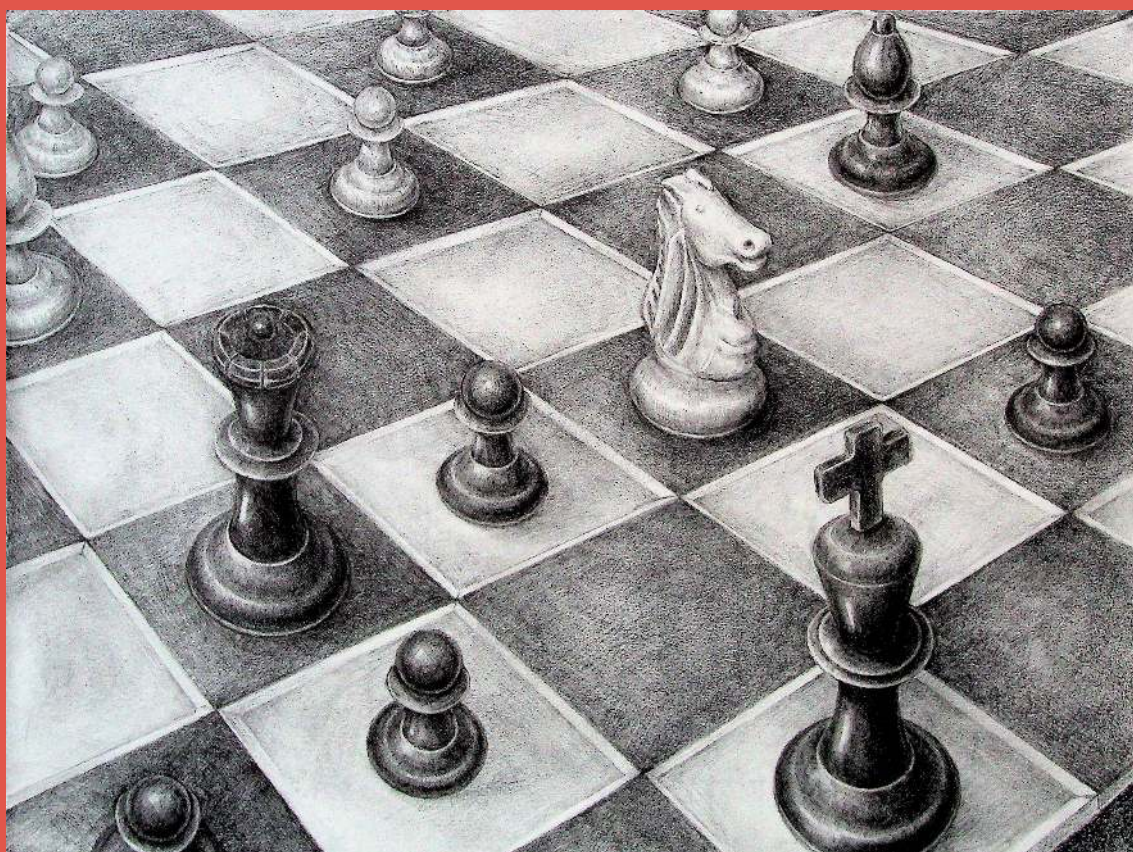
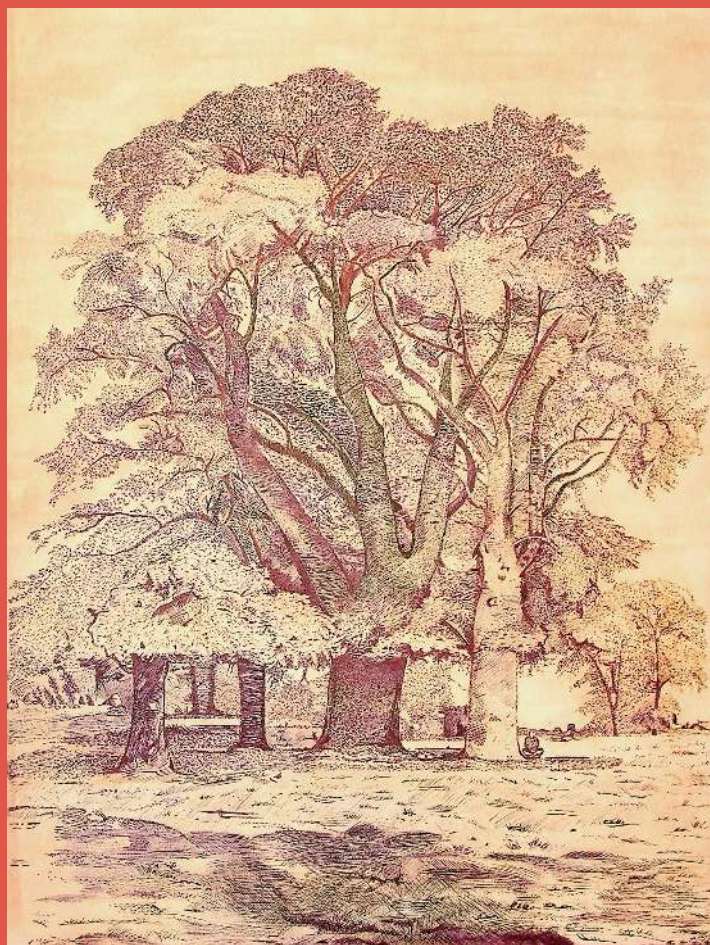
FEATURED ART, CONTINUED



FEATURED ART, CONTINUED



FEATURED ART, CONTINUED



STAYING IN TOUCH & SHARING YOUR WORK

We strive to build community around art in prison and with people being released. We're also keen to find ways to expand the audiences that get to engage with your work! This includes an increased social medial presence and our website.

All of these directions came from your feedback on how we can increase community engagement and recognition for your work. Thank you for your leadership and vision! We invite you to keep sharing your ideas, and look forward to finding new ways to share the power of your art and storytelling!

ARTIST STATEMENT FORMS

When sharing your art, please include an Artist Statement Form to help us keep a more accurate record of whether, how, and with who you want us to share specific works of art.

We also hope that these forms will make it easier to share artist statements with us along with your work. These artist statements are a great way to communicate with your audience about your art process, including specific themes and ideas important to you, what mediums you use and what inspired you to create a piece.

These forms are called "Artist Statement Forms," and you can access them by speaking with the CSC site champion at your institution.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

We have a website and virtual art gallery, as well as an Instagram page! Through these networks, we will feature your art and writing and share updates about the project and our research. We will share the work of those who consented to digitizing and sharing their pieces in the initial tracking form and Artist Statement Forms.

We encourage you to share these links with friends and family!

Instagram: [art.and.justice](#)

Website: artjusticeresearch.org

We hope you enjoyed this issue of the newsletter!

We welcome any and all feedback and comments.

We look forward to sharing more updates and art with you in our next edition of the ART & Justice Newsletter.



Stay in touch!

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