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EDITORIAL

编者按

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Creative Arts in Education and Therapy (CAET) has always occupied a space between disciplines. It is a journal where education meets psychotherapy, where community practice meets clinical inquiry, and where artistic practice meets scholarly research. Yet the articles in this issue suggest that these intersections are no longer merely places where disciplines meet; they are becoming the sites where new forms of knowledge emerge.

Across diverse cultural contexts, populations, methodologies, and artistic modalities, the contributions in this issue share a common concern: the cultivation of human capacity. Whether situated in classrooms, clinical supervision, community settings, digital environments, or intercultural exchanges, the authors collectively ask how artistic engagement develops the capacities that contemporary societies increasingly require—reflection, empathy, relational awareness, ethical responsiveness, creativity, resilience, and the ability to navigate complexity.

This issue is also distinguished by its remarkable geographical and cultural breadth. The contributions span Asia, the Middle East, and North America, bringing together scholars and practitioners whose work is rooted in diverse educational, clinical, and cultural traditions. At a time when many of the regions represented in this issue are experiencing political uncertainty, social division, or conflict, this collection affirms the role of scholarly and artistic dialogue as a form of cultural bridge-building. Without erasing difference or disagreement, the contributions gathered here demonstrate how creative inquiry cultivates the very human capacities—empathy, reflection, curiosity, relational understanding, and cultural humility—that are indispensable for living together in an increasingly interconnected yet fractured world. Together, these contributions suggest that the field advances not through a single dominant paradigm but through a rich ecology of cultural perspectives, artistic traditions, and scholarly voices. It is within this ecology that new understandings of creativity, learning, healing, and human development continue to emerge.

Rather than presenting art as a technique applied to predetermined problems, these articles position artistic practice as an ecology of transformation. Within this ecology, learning is embodied, relationships become methods of inquiry, communities become sites of shared meaning-making, and transformation emerges not merely as an outcome to be measured but as an ongoing relational process. This issue therefore invites us to reconsider the kinds of human beings and societies these articles help cultivate.

EMBODIED KNOWING: ART AS A WAY OF LEARNING

The opening movement of this issue challenges one of the enduring assumptions in much Western education: that knowledge begins with cognition.

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Instead, the articles gathered here demonstrate that artistic experience produces forms of knowing that emerge through movement, sensation, imagination, participation, and aesthetic engagement. Learning is presented as a deeply embodied and relational process through which individuals encounter themselves, others, and the world.

In *Laban-Based Movement Literacy Game for Enhancing Students' Thinking Skills*, Dinny Devi Triana, Riyan Arthur, Yuliawan Kasmahidayat, Khairul Anuar Bin Zainudin, and Fikri Nurcahya demonstrate that movement literacy extends well beyond physical competence. Their work illustrates how bodily engagement with symbolic movement systems cultivates analytical, reflective, and creative thinking, suggesting that cognition itself develops through embodied participation rather than abstract instruction alone.

Similarly, Yaxin Hu and Jack Shu, in *Drama Education as a Pathway to Core Competency Development: Insights from a Chinese Vocational College*, illustrate how drama pedagogy nurtures collaboration, communication, creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness among pre-service teachers. Their findings remind us that professional competence develops not only through acquiring knowledge but also through inhabiting roles, negotiating relationships, and engaging in aesthetic experience. This embodied orientation continues in *Dancing Across Cultures: Exploring Intercultural Pedagogy through Kecak Dance Experience for Malaysian Dance Teachers*, where Rivaldi Indra Hapidzin, Tati Narawati, Trianti Nugraheni, and Uus Karwati explore Kecak dance as an intercultural pedagogical practice. Here, synchronized movement, rhythm, and collective participation serve as vehicles for cultural sensitivity and the formation of professional identity. The body serves not merely as a medium of expression, but as a bridge across cultures.

Likewise, in *The Development of Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC) Based Art Intervention for Malaysians,* Amos En Zhe Lian and colleagues demonstrate how non-verbal artistic engagement can access emotional and cognitive processes that remain difficult to reach through language alone. Their culturally responsive intervention underscores the importance of adapting expressive approaches to local contexts while maintaining fidelity to broader theoretical frameworks.

Although their contexts differ considerably—from schools and universities to clinical practice and intercultural teacher education—these studies all propose that knowledge emerges through movement as much as through reflection; understanding develops through aesthetic participation as much as through conceptual analysis. Across these contributions, the body becomes a vehicle for expression and a site where thinking, feeling, and knowing are continuously formed.

RELATIONSHIP AS METHOD

If embodiment forms one axis of this issue, relationship forms another. Across multiple articles, transformation unfolds within carefully cultivated relational spaces. Artistic processes become methods for fostering dialogue, containment, witnessing, and mutual recognition. The emphasis shifts from what art produces to what relationships make possible.

In *One Canvas, Many Selves: Psychodynamic and Developmental Perspectives on Arts-Based Supervision in the Training of Arts Therapists*, Heli Ravid Horesh presents an elegant adaptation of the One Canvas model for individual arts-based supervision. Through an evolving shared artwork, supervisor and supervisee engage in a visual dialogue that reveals unconscious dynamics, parallel process, and professional identity formation. The canvas becomes less an object than a relational space where reflection unfolds over time. A complementary perspective is offered by Gal Abramovski, Aya Katz, and Maya Gronner Shamai in *Integrating Experiential Learning, Clinical Practice, and Supervision: A First-Year Training Model in Art Therapy Education*. Their description of a first-year art therapy training model demonstrates how clinical education itself can become a layered ecology of relationships in which experiential learning, individual therapy, group process, and live supervision coexist within a single pedagogical framework. Professional identity is cultivated not simply through instruction, but through sustained participation in relationships that simultaneously support and challenge developing therapists.

Relationships also extend beyond formal educational and therapeutic settings. In Gilang Cempaka and colleagues' study of *Maternal Illustration as Art Therapy by an Indonesian Female Illustrator on Instagram*, artistic practice creates spaces where deeply personal experiences of motherhood become shared narratives of recognition, validation, and solidarity. Through illustration and public dialogue, private emotional struggles are transformed into collective experiences, demonstrating how digital artistic communities can foster connection and emotional well-being across geographical distance.

Taken together, these contributions broaden our understanding of relationship itself. Whether emerging through supervision, clinical education, or digital artistic communities, transformation depends less on individual technique than on the quality of the relational spaces within which creativity unfolds.

FROM INDIVIDUAL TRANSFORMATION TO COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

The relational perspective expands further as the issue moves beyond individual therapeutic encounters toward collective, cultural, and societal contexts.

This widening perspective is reflected in the webinar report by Vivien Marcow Speiser and Tony Yu Zhou, *The Arts in Health and the Creative Arts Therapies, Convergences and Intersections.* Bringing together perspectives from two closely related yet historically distinct fields, the dialogue moves beyond questions of disciplinary boundaries toward a shared exploration of how artistic engagement contributes to health, wellbeing, and social care. The discussion suggests that the strength of these two fields lies precisely in their complementary perspectives and their capacity to learn from one another. Such dialogue reflects an increasingly collaborative orientation within the broader landscape of arts, health, and education.

The importance of cross-cultural dialogue is equally evident in Najlaa Salim Al Saadi and colleagues' *Art Therapy and Special Education: A Bibliometric Analysis of Arabic Publications*. At first glance, this contribution differs from the empirical and practice-based studies that precede it. Yet its significance lies precisely in shifting our attention from individual interventions to the infrastructures that make knowledge possible. By mapping publications indexed in Arabic databases during 2010–2025, the authors illuminate the growth of a vibrant research community while also identifying gaps, emerging priorities, and opportunities for future collaboration. In doing so, they remind us that cultivating human capacity also requires cultivating scholarly capacity: building publication networks, supporting regional scholarship, and ensuring that diverse cultural perspectives become visible within international academic conversations.

Questions of continuity, mentorship, and scholarly community take on a deeply personal form in *A Century in the Circle: Art, Relationship, and the Ongoing Work of Transformation*, where Vivien Marcow Speiser and Phillip Speiser reflect on decades of international practice, scholarship, mentorship, and community building. Their narrative reminds us that professional legacies are carried not primarily by theories but by relationships that span generations, cultures, and institutions. In many ways, the essay embodies the ecology described throughout this editorial, in which artistic practice, scholarship, education, and human relationships continually nourish one another.

Collectively, these papers suggest that communities are not simply contexts in which art occurs; they are themselves artistic and relational achievements continually shaped through dialogue, participation, and shared imagination.

TOWARD AN ECOLOGY OF TRANSFORMATION

Viewed together, the articles in this issue suggest an important conceptual shift within creative arts scholarship.

Historically, research in the creative arts therapies often sought to demonstrate efficacy, asking whether artistic interventions "work". Such questions remain essential. Yet the contributions assembled here move beyond questions of effectiveness alone. They ask instead: How do artistic practices cultivate the human capacities that enable individuals, professionals, communities, and societies to flourish?

The answers emerging from this issue are remarkably consistent despite the diversity of contexts and methodologies represented. The authors write from Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Israel, and the United States. They employ art-based inquiry, case studies, educational research, conceptual reflection, and international dialogue. They work across movement, drama, dance, visual arts, supervision, digital media, and expressive therapies. Yet beneath this diversity lies a coherent intellectual vision. These articles remind us that human development cannot be reduced to technical competence, clinical protocols, or measurable outcomes alone. The capacities that sustain individuals and societies, including empathy, creativity, ethical imagination, cultural humility, resilience, and relational presence, are cultivated through participation in aesthetic and relational processes.

Together, these contributions form an ecology of transformation that unfolds across the pages of this issue.

It is an ecology in which bodies become sites of knowing, relationships become methods of inquiry, communities become spaces for shared imagination, and artistic practice becomes a lifelong process of cultivating human capacity.

As CAET continues to evolve as an international and interdisciplinary journal, we hope this collection encourages readers to appreciate the diversity of artistic inquiry represented here and to recognize the common thread that unites it: the conviction that art remains one of humanity's most profound ways of learning, relating, healing, and becoming.