

Editorial

Michal Lev, Clive Holmwood, Vivien Marcow Speiser,
and Rebecca Zarate

This current issue of the *CAET Journal* distinguishes the unique power of art in a world of imponderable change, uncertainty, pandemic turbulence, and despair. It reifies the value of physical spaces, human connections, visceral qualities, and closeness to self and to others that had once been self-evident and taken for granted and are no longer so. It postulates upon the creative experience that resonates, expands, and guides its practitioners to maintain their vitality and find their strength, supports, and virtues. The articles presented in this issue overlook global changes in mental health, society, and their ties to art, suggesting that despite the different contexts and cultures in Eastern and Western lifestyles, the arts transcend words and bridge gaps within and between cultural circles.

We begin by presenting intersections of arts and health from Eastern and Western perspectives in the article *Art, Medium, and Metaphor*, providing an example of cross-cultural collaboration between researchers from China and Italy. The paper examines the educational value of dance art—a unique medium—in influencing people’s emotions from an intercultural perspective. We then move to the paper *Therapeutic Poems for Advancing Coping, Empathy, and Cultural Well-Being*, in which the author develops and analyzes approaches to using haiku for rehabilitative, therapeutic, and preventive purposes.

Then, *Dance Movement Therapy in the Time of COVID-19* brings an overarching view of using dance and movement as a symbolic way of helping people use creativity, rhythm, and attunement to cope with trauma and loss in China and the United States. This theme concludes with a review of the book *Handbook of Play, Therapeutic Play, and Play Therapy*, which brings chapters from 16 countries presenting a cultural diversity of therapists, counselors, and play-specialists who share common values, ideas, and practice of play in its different forms.

The next theme covers creative therapeutic models, which were explored and put into practice during the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. *The Earworm Technique Applied in Telehealth Music Therapy Program during the COVID-19 Outbreak in China* presents details of a new technique that was put to use through a free, public hotline in China. The model suggests that a one-time intervention with online music therapy is ideal for stimulating subconscious inner contents and promoting well-being. Then, the authors of *Buddhist Psychology Intersects with Dance Movement Therapy* demonstrate how incorporating Buddhist meditations with therapeutic movement experiences can lead to recognition, acknowledgement, and expression of thoughts and feelings. Next, the review of the book *Arts and Health Promotion Tools and Bridges for Practice, Research, and Social Transformation* amplifies the significant role that

various artforms have in holistic health, while also inspiring dynamics among body, mind, and health.

The third theme of this issue displays some of the social implications of the COVID-19 pandemic in different parts of our world. The article *There Are No Silos When We Are All Suffering* draws upon some of the creative work being done in South Africa by artists working across disciplines in education, health, community, and mental health. It describes initiatives and programs developed by artists in the country as well as by the faculty in the Drama for Life program at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Art Therapy program at the University of Johannesburg. Then, the use of intersectional analysis, and its implications for enhancing art therapy practice in relation to gender issues, is analyzed in the article *Intersectionality and Intersectional Analysis in the Arts Therapies: How Does It Enhance Our Thinking about Social Justice?* This theme closes with the article *Digital Art Therapy and Social Withdrawal in Japan*, which presents the use of digital artmaking by its authors to deal with their personal experiences of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic while making a connection to the Japanese mental health crisis, known as hikikomori.

Lastly, we dive deeper into three personal research journeys conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper *Engaging with Doctoral Work during the Pandemic* ties the researcher's ancestral legacy of trauma and the collective trauma experienced during the pandemic. It demonstrates how developing a methodology of "embodied digital story" for her art-based research assisted the author to reclaim a sense of belonging. The issue concludes with the article *Artmaking Resilience* presenting the author's reflections on bereavement and grief. It builds upon findings from an art-based research project conducted during the pandemic that revealed the properties of resilience in face of sickness and death.

We offer this creative synthesis of seminal information in the hope to spark light on creative processes as means to promote sustenance, coping skills, and resilience.