

Fugitive indigeneity: Reclaiming the terrain of decolonial struggle through Indigenous art

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Introduction

Indigenous art is inherently political. As Anishinaabe curator Wanda Nanibush (2014) recently stated, “Our art forms are never separate from our political forms.” Indigenous art thus occupies a unique space within settler colonialism: both as a site for articulating Indigenous resistance and resurgence, and also as a creative praxis that often reinscribes indigeneity within aesthetic and commodity forms that circulate in the capitalist art market. Against colonial erasure, Indigenous art marks the space of a returned and enduring presence. But this presence is complicated by its fraught relationality to the persistence of settler colonialism, which always threatens to reappropriate, assimilate, subsume/consume and repress Indigenous voicings and visuality, their forms and aesthetics, within its hegemonic logic of domination. Indigenous art disrupts colonial hegemony by fracturing the sensible architecture of experience that is constitutive of the

aesthetic regime itself - the normative order, or 'distribution of the sensible' - that frames both political and artistic potentialities, as such.

This issue engages Indigenous art, aesthetics and decolonial struggle as a collective processual undertaking that expresses historical and ongoing Indigenous contestations and escape routes from Euro civility, and its containment of "art" and "cultural" production to the professionalized, individual realm. As Arturo Escobar (2007) has suggested, decolonial aesthetics both breaks from coloniality's reliance on hyper-individualism to maintain this world, and diffuses itself through shared artistic processes to imagine "worlds otherwise." It is a process of creating new radical subjectivities premised on Indigenous survival and re-emergence, similar to processes undertaken by other communities engaged in decolonial struggle. Elaborating on this idea in the context of the Black radical tradition, Joy James and Edmund Gordon (2008) say that, "The unfolding of self within the collective, just as the self develops in its individuality, is likely to be the foundation for radical subjectivity" (p. 368). This means the task of decolonial artists, scholars and activists is not simply to offer amendments or edits to the current world, but to display the mutual sacrifice and relationality needed to sabotage colonial systems of thought and power for the purpose of liberatory alternatives.

Indigenous art reclaims and revitalizes the inherent creative potentiality of art to be activated in political struggle, not as an inseparable aesthetic experience but embedded in the embodied daily life experience of Indigenous Peoples, settlers and others globally. For those artists who take up the challenge of working within this vision, decolonial aesthetics "*seeks to recognize and open options for liberating the senses*" (Transnational Decolonial Institute, 2013 – emphasis added). In this issue, we propose to engage and move beyond a framework for understanding "ongoing artistic projects responding and delinking from the darker side of imperial globalization", to re-center Indigenous land, communities and cultures as the force that energizes decolonization and provides fugitive possibilities for movement and creative expression. In this emerging field, as articulated and set in motion by many of the scholars and others represented by the Transnational Decolonial Institute, decolonization is frequently represented, conceptually, in expressions of "epistemic disobedience" (Mignolo, 2011) and discursive "de-linkings" (Mignolo, 2007) from colonial thought. Decolonization becomes defined and pursued in terms that center liberation of the mind (wa Thiong'o, 1986), over land and body. While we see so-called epistemic disobedience and de-linking as necessary and important aspects of decolonizing art and struggle, we choose to anchor our use of aesthetics within the artistic praxis of artists and communities engaged in *material struggle for decolonization* - those that connect to Fanon's (1963) call to liberate "land and bread" (p. 44). As anticolonial activist-intellectuals like Amilcar Cabral have warned, if all we seek is decolonization of the mind, then we will have already conceded the loss of the most precious and transformative foundation of decolonization: land and place. Theory removed from the land, removed from practice, and detached from the contexts that give it form and content propose a decolonizing strategy that risks metaphorizing its constitutive ground. Land and place must remain at the center of decolonial thought and practice because, "wherever our heads might be,

our feet are planted on the ground, on the land” (Cabral, 1979, p. 44).

With this in mind, and in the spirit of reclaiming the literal, discursive and imaginative terrain of decolonial struggle, this special issue seeks a generative ‘break’ from the dialectics of coloniality and modernity, one that recenters - in both form and experience - Indigenous existences, art, culture, and creative contentions with colonialism founded on place-based relationships to land, people and community. The terrain of the everyday maps our experiences of contemporary colonialism and it is within these localized sites of creative engagement that we trace evolving articulations of Indigenous resurgence that break the vow of silence and invisibility demanded of Indigenous Peoples by settler society, both here (where we write, on unceded Haudenosaunee/Anishinaabe territory & Lenape territory) and around the globe. In considering the role of cultural production in decolonization and the ways in which art can contribute to the revitalization of Indigenous nationhood, we believe that it is necessary both to foreground Indigenous creative practices and to explicate the connections between art, activism, resistance and resurgence. Although rendering creativity instrumental to an explicitly stated politics or political project would be a reductive framing of the liberating potentialities of Indigenous art, it is necessary to consider the ways in which it can disrupt the normative order of the political status quo and, thereby, give voice to new emergences, subjectivities and understandings.

Indigenous resistance, the politics of land and the fugitive aesthetic

This special issue of *Decolonization* highlights the relationship between Indigenous art and struggle - in particular relationship to Indigenous lands, languages and lifeways - in order to explore the creative forms that become possible in fugitive spaces of indigeneity: in the critical ruptures where normative, colonial categories and binaries break down and are broken open. In these breaks we witness resistant voices that refuse to be silenced. As Ngugi (1998) explains, “[decolonial] art arms silence with voices that, even when the bodies that carry them are crushed and ground to powder, will rise again, and multiply, and sing out their presence... art in this sense is silence that screams” (p. 28). Drawing from different artistic methods and practices, each of this issue’s contributors break colonialism’s enforced silence by reasserting the power of Indigenous and decolonial knowledges and voices to contend with colonial power. When read collectively, these articles help clarify and push the boundaries of what “decolonial aesthetics” means to Indigenous life-worlds and struggles today.

These screams fracture the colonial veneer of aesthetics defined in reference to Euro civility but, perhaps more importantly, they suggest a shared movement away from the enclosures of colonial modernity and into resurgent Indigenous visions of decolonial futures. To destabilize the pervasive mythology of colonialism (and its aesthetics) is to re-constitute and re-narrate spaces beyond and elsewhere. Gerald Vizenor (1998) has argued that Indigenous aesthetics of *survivance* assert Indigenous presences against the continued erasures wrought by settler colonialism through ‘fugitive poses’. The fugitive pose is resonant with Joy James’ (2013)

recent articulation of a radical Black ‘maroon philosophy’, in which decolonial aesthetics work to re-imagine, re-map, and re-constitute an elsewhere; an aesthetics that, as James (2013) suggests, is concretized through struggle and resistance. She mobilizes the ‘cell’ and the ‘reservation’ (gesturing to both antiblack racism/slavery and settler colonialism) as spaces of confinement within colonial geographies, spaces constituted on the margins of Western ‘democracy’. Instead of struggling against this marginalization within dominant society - a struggle that leads back to inclusion - she argues that liminal spaces of fugitivity should be re-imagined as part of a decolonizing “trajectory into freedom” (p. 124).

Indigenous art evokes a fugitive aesthetic that, in its decolonial ruptural forms, refuses the struggle for better or more inclusion and recognition (Coulthard, 2007) and, instead, chooses refusal and flight as modes of freedom. Colonial modernity and the colonial state, as Walter Dignolo (in this issue) states, is “a house we are not interested in inhabiting” (p. 205), echoing Métis activist Mederic McDougall who pointedly stated, “We do not want to be integrated into a decaying white society. Why enter a house that is burning down?” (cited in, Adams, 1999, p. 74). The freedom realized through flight and refusal is the freedom to imagine and create an elsewhere in the here; a present future beyond the imaginative and territorial bounds of colonialism. It is a performance of other worlds, an embodied practice of flight. The fugitive aesthetic is not an abdication of contention and struggle; it is a reorientation toward freedom in movement, against the limits of colonial knowing and sensing. It seeks to limn the margins of land, culture and consciousness for potential exits, for creative spaces of departure and renewal. Indigenous art not only confronts and reveals structures of power and the failures of settler colonialism (which is evidenced by the continuing presence of Indigenous peoples), it fights to realize Indigenous alternatives. Jodi Byrd (2011) has suggested, following Vizenor, that mnemonic reading can disrupt the elisions of settler democracy and ‘inclusion’ to understand “indigeneity as radical alterity” (p. xii). This mnemonic reading harmonizes with Moten & Harney’s (2013) call for a ‘wild beyond’ (2013) - a ‘beyond the beyond’ - that finds similar freedom in movement not simply *away from colonialism*, but *away from any standpoint where colonialism makes sense*. To occupy the wild is to occupy flight and reclaim the unconfined, the cacophonous, the dissonant, the noise of anticolonial creativity that sparks, speaks, dreams and gives shape to art that confounds colonial ‘common sense’. Indigenous art resists colonial confinement and containment; it is irrecoverable to colonial logics. Creativity flows, builds and spills over and through colonial enclosures, exceeding them. McDougall (in this issue) explains that *kaona*, as an embedded Indigenous decolonial aesthetic and linguistic praxis, is untranslatable and undecipherable to colonialism. Thus, if democracy has been weaponized by colonialism to contain, erase, marginalize, and domesticate radical alternatives, the fugitive aesthetic of anticolonial Indigenous art not only disrupts this instrumentalizing stasis, which reduces Indigenous art to expressly political or identity-based significations, it also refuses the finality of enclosure (capture/captivity) by remaining in motion: moving, seeking, and building toward the ‘tangible unknown’ of decolonization (Sium, Desai & Ritskes, 2012).

The fugitivity of Indigenous art in struggle is not a flight from battle or a defensive, reactionary posture against the predation and violence of colonialism. As Collins (in this issue) argues, the violence and broken promises of colonialism are what fuel the resurgence of the ‘warrior energy’ of the people, funneling it into creative contention with the limits of colonial modernity. Fugitivity finds its energetic potency in remaining illegible to power, incommensurable with colonialism, and opaque to appropriation, commodification and cultural theft. That which is fugitive proposes an insurgent force of dissident visibility; it is the hidden that reveals itself in motion. The fugitive aesthetic is thus an overflowing of borders and bordered-thinking, a liminal praxis whose generative effects activate art in a transversal re-presenting of indigeneity throughout Indigenous lands, languages and territories. The cultural and aesthetic production that emanates from these positions is a strategic motion of refusal: to evade capture, resist cooptation, and renew Indigenous life-ways through the *creative negation* of reductive colonial demarcations of being and sensing. In this way, Indigenous art contributes to decolonization by disrupting colonialism’s linear ordering of the world and its conditioning of possibility. Art creates experiences of potentiality that inspire and sustain our collective struggles for freedom; Indigenous art reminds, remembers, and calls out to us to account for colonial injustice, and to realize the potential freedom found in our creative transformation of the world.

Jodi Byrd (2011) calls Indigeneity the virus in the global system; a radical alterity that simultaneously reveals and disrupts colonial logics and foundations. How does this disruption occur? How are Indigenous aesthetics both rooted and fugitive, always grounded in place and land, yet highly mobile and adaptive? How does the radical alterity of indigeneity remix spatial and temporal logics? How does indigeneity elude the confines of colonial appropriation, the limits of colonial spectacularization and fetishization? Settler discourses of appropriation and inclusion are disrupted by Indigenous remembrance and re-presenting on the land. As Pedri-Spade demonstrates in this issue, her project, “Nametoo: Evidence that he/she is/was present,” works to re-inscribe “an Anishinabek presence within Anishinabek lands that fall outside the Indian Act that are now occupied predominantly by White settler-Canadians” (p. 88). For her, Indigenous art and photography are embedded in an aesthetic praxis that “involves sensorial acts of being, seeing, listening and hearing *within* our Anishinabek territories” (p. 97).

Decolonial art does not abdicate or abandon the present; it re-inscribes indigeneity on the land, as the radical alterity of an already before, an always elsewhere from colonialism. In refusing colonial territorializations and intentionally *relinking* indigeneity to nationhood, land, knowledges and relationships, Pedri-Spade re-stories the land claimed by settler colonial dispossession and occupation as *Indigenous* land. By recognizing the historical sovereignty and continued presence of her peoples in/on their homelands, she works to unsettle and disrupt the perceptual normativity of the settler state’s occupation. Pedri-Spade re-images decolonial alternatives articulated in an aesthetics and praxis of reconnection, rootedness and mobility.

Navarro explores similar themes in her piece, “Solarize-ing Native Hip-Hop: Feminist Land Ethics and Cultural Resistance,” in which she explicates an evolutionary Native feminist aesthetic tied to land sovereignty, representation, and community power. This aesthetic “is

against the law rather than one that continues to demand recognition from the federal government to *uphold* the law” (p. 108). Navarro envisions being ‘against the law’ through a radical relationality with the earth that simultaneously informs individual cultural positions and proposes points of connection for those seeking solidarity against the colonial state. Here, refusal is framed against the colonial logic of land as property, not only ‘against the law’ as provocation and disruption, but also as a generative reconfiguration of sensibility. In Navarro’s articulation, a Native feminist land ethic re-shapes the settler colonial logic of property through refutation. “The path to the wild beyond is paved with refusal” (Halberstam, 2013, p. 8), and Navarro presents ‘Solarize’ as a path to an elsewhere where the logic of property, of ownership and exploitation of land does not make sense, and where alliances built on a shared land ethic might be generated. A reorientation of settler relationships to land and property are aesthetic reorientations of relationships to sensing and sense experience. As Tiffany King (2013) writes, the settler’s relationship to property is both material (in that land is to be conquered, owned, and commodified), but it is also a concept that cognitively orders the mind of the settler, shaping and allowing the settler to survey land, knowledge, bodies - and art - for potential yield as commodities. King demonstrates how the relationship between settler constructions of property is a powerful one in shaping the effects of cognitive colonialism in knowledge production, aesthetics, and being, both for Indigenous peoples and space, and also, in connection, for Black peoples and spaces. Navarro’s articulation of a Native feminist land ethic deconstructs the modes of being and creating enabled through colonial land occupation, reconfiguring them through a radical relationality with the land. This radical relationality to the land, that is birthed from and in the alterity of indigeneity, is a lived critique of settler modes of knowing and sensing that are cognitively ordered through property and ownership.

Throughout this issue, we see the emergence of decolonial trajectories that both allow Indigenous peoples to remain rooted in a politics of land and place, as well as to embrace a fugitive aesthetic of liminal exploration. Mishuana Goeman (2013) explores this conjunction by examining the ways in which Indigeneity becomes ‘fixed’ by colonial narratives and policies on the land and asks, “Are we free to roam?” (p. 11). Indigenous understandings of land run counter to the cognitive ordering of colonial modes of domination and property ownership. Indigenous aesthetics (re)map being, knowledge and cultural production within modes of thought and creative praxis that must remain both rooted and mobile. Goeman’s use of mapping intentionally gestures to land and its representations, and to how such representations order our way of knowing the land and understanding place. Maps both represent and actively construct the ideational framework of the territory - “The map is the territory” (Turnbull, 2008) - and Indigenous cartographies are both visual and performative (Pearce, 2010; Warhus, 1997), embodying a particular aesthetic in relation to land. In this, a fugitive aesthetic configures space, place and time by, “creating spatialities of belonging that do not bind, contain, or fix [Indigenous] relationship to land and [to] each other in ways that limit [Indigenous] definitions of self and community” (Goeman, 2013, pp. 10-11).

In this issue, both Dion & Salamanca as well as Collins, explore these complex relationships in their examination of urban Indigenous Peoples' cultural production through visual art (Dion & Salamanca), poetry and music (Collins). Collins asserts that poetry helps mobilize a 'warrior spirit' among urban Mapuche (Mapurbe), who are reasserting their physical and cultural presence through creative contention with the state and the rigidity of 'traditionalism', particularly through reconnection with the Earth. She demonstrates how Mapuche are displaced from Mapu (Earth) into urban areas and, subsequently, denied legitimacy through their dispossession from Mapu. Similarly, Navarro (in this issue) sees her work as breaking down the divide between the 'reservation' and urban land (and the confinement of this division that she and Goeman (2013) note), through a focus on radical relationality with the land - one that marks its reclamation as *Indigenous* land. This articulation finds common ground in the recent work of Dene scholar Glen Coulthard (2013), who argues that Indigenous reclamations of urban centers as Indigenous land disrupt what he calls 'urbs nullius': the continued mobilization of Indigenous disappearance by settler states to render Indigenous life and land void in urban contexts for the purpose of settler expansion and gentrification, Indigenous displacement, and the continued confinement of Indigenous bodies to reservations, prisons, and other carceral venues such as museums and history texts. In reasserting Indigenous presence in city spaces, and in reclaiming such spaces *as* Indigenous, decolonial struggle is reorientated against colonial structures occupying the urban. As Collins (in this issue) argues, "The antagonistic manifestation of the Mapurbe demonstrates the presence of the Earth in the city; its existence there is entwined with its resistance" (p. 42).

Dion & Salamanca also work to reclaim space and voice in the city, but within colonial institutions (in this case, the Toronto District School Board). They suggest that the telling of stories and the sharing of photographs can work to re-inscribe Indigenous presence within a historicized trajectory toward freedom. As Vizenor has suggested, "Native American Indians are the storiers of presence" (1998, p. 1). This presence survives despite sustained attempts at its eradication; indigeneity is the presence of resistance and disruption, an existence *in* resistance to settler colonial genocidal replacement; as the authors remind us, representing helps Indigenous peoples "make sense" of the chaos imposed by ongoing settler colonialism, and also to "speak back" to create new ways of knowing/being/doing outside of settler logic. Remapping stories of Indigenous presence into spaces from which they have been erased is a necessary reassertion of Indigenous sovereignty and sense making that, as Dion & Salamanca remind us, is also vulnerable work. It arrives in and through presence, pain, vitality and complexity; which, simultaneously, colonial structures work to re-capture – to consume these narratives through commodification, the disciplining of knowledges, and control (Tuck, 2009). Colonialism works to confine Indigenous stories to multicultural frames and to domesticate, individualize and separate them from their originary communities and lands. The reclamation of urban spaces through Indigenous presence is a necessary site of decolonial struggle, then. In reclaiming the site of the urban *as* Indigenous, the communities and relationships that are necessary to support and sustain individual stories, creations, and articulations can be reimagined and reformed. In our

interviews with Secwepemc artist/curator Tania Willard, Anishinaabe artist Rebecca Belmore, and Diné artist Tom Greyeyes (in this issue), we are reminded that Indigenous artists are held up by their community; their art is borne directly from the artist and individual's relationship to community and to the land. These relationships are integral not only to artistic praxis and decolonial aesthetics, but to life itself.

These are the same relationships that McDougall (this issue) mobilizes in her exploration of Hawaiian decolonial aesthetics in literature. Not only does this aesthetic connect to community, land, and sovereignty - but it is also, for McDougall, intimately connected to a community of ancestors and the Hawaiian language. Her examination of *kaona* as an aesthetic practice is both a re-presencing of Indigenous sovereignty within an unbroken trajectory, despite the (continued) violence of colonial occupation in Hawai'i, and an assertion of the relationships held within Indigenous languages that stretch into the past, engage the present and work towards decolonization. Norman (in this issue) does similar work, by re-reading Inuit photography to "make the past present" (p. 64). He also recognizes the importance of land and community in this re-presencing, demonstrating how Inuit photographs "establish a space in the imaged-history of that homeland where culture does not exist in a vacuum, and where diverse identities coexist, a binding of place to the actual conditions of the people inhabiting it" (p. 60). Both of these pieces challenge the temporal nature of colonialism and reassert a fugitive aesthetic that refuses to abandon contemporary decolonial struggle, by connecting present and future to uninterrupted trajectories that retrace a rooted history of aesthetic practice and literary/visual sovereignty. Similarly, they break down the linearity of colonial temporality, blending and reconfiguring Indigenous presence constituted in multiple times, media, and spaces. Reasserting the fugitive aesthetic within Indigenous art is more than a linear revival of Indigenous cultures in the present; it is a reconstitution of other parameters of sensing, time and space that subtly subvert dominant ways of knowing and being. By restructuring temporality in multiple ways, Indigenous artists plumb the slippages and elisions produced within coloniality in pursuit of escape routes.

This remixing of temporality and reclaiming of visual sovereignty to break the colonial frame is also evident in Davis's (in this issue) exploration of the colonial imaginary in relation to Blackness. In the colonial imaginary, Africa is always "a mixture of the half-created and the incomplete" (Mbembe, 2001, p. 3). It's only ever partially invited into the world of the human, the civilized, or the modern; and has long been constructed in/by colonial visual art as a site of intellectual and moral darkness (Mudimbe, 1988, p. 7). Ultimately, this process is one of containing Blackness within colonial tropes and narratives. Davis (this issue) deconstructs photography as a medium through which African women's bodies become contained by particular meanings, deficiencies and untruths, and seeks, instead, paths of flight that reject trauma as a starting point for comprehension. Instead of centering crisis and trauma within Blackness, which simultaneously removes agency and possibility from individuals, by fixing them in a 'pervasive timelessness' that limits their ability to create new histories and trajectories of resistance and power, Davis argues for a reinvigoration of contexts and narratives outside of the colonial imaginary, not unlike Joy James' (2013) articulation of Afrarealism, that examines

how the space of captivity can become generative and liberating. In this, pain is unmoored from colonialism and reshaped as part of an imaginative trajectory toward freedom that rejects Black pain as spectacle, separated from the spectrum of Black experience and power. Blackness is reinvigorated as a site of possibility and emancipation, as part of a shared - yet, at times, incommensurable - movement beyond colonial configurations of the ways we live and feel (Walcott, 2013). In their shared dreams of freedom, in linked flight from coloniality, and in resistance against the state, Indigenous and Black struggles for decolonization are inextricably interconnected (Kidane & Martineau, 2013).

The struggle demands not only a remixing of time, but also a remediation of the techniques and media available to Indigenous artists, including the destruction of the 'traditional/modern' binary and the imposition of colonial parameters for creative expression. The first words of Norman's article (in this issue) assert, "The camera is an Inuit medium" (p. 49); and he argues that, "Any medium Inuit employ, in any manner, becomes an Inuit medium when it becomes a vessel for Inuit expression and experience; the medium does not come locked into its corresponding European aesthetic paradigms" (p. 49). Similarly, Zepeda (in this issue) works to assert visual storytelling and sovereignty, by examining sculpture and filmmaking as part of Indigenous Peoples' oral traditions. She advocates for the process of creation as ceremony (as processual creation rooted in land and the performativity born of Indigenous knowledges), and asserts that Indigenous artists and creators remain able to mobilize across 'traditional/modern' binaries and to 'roam at will' despite colonialism's best attempts to confine and contain Indigenous creators to the 'traditional'. As Schiwy (2003) states, "Mediation is at the heart of any thinking or representation process and is not a prerogative of western culture or part of a continuum where orality would evolve into literacy alongside the transformation of 'primitive' cultures into 'civilized' ones" (p. 127). She goes on to argue, "Indigenous media suggests that Indigenous cultures have always been audiovisual, that is to say, oral and iconographic" (2009, p. 9). Works such as those examined by writers in this issue - including Zepeda, Navarro, and Norman - deconstruct the temporal continuum of colonial development that always places Indigenous peoples as 'developing' towards modernity and civility (Sardar, 1999), and forcibly displaces indigeneity into spaces of dispossession: where Indigenous Peoples have been, and still are, denied agency and presence by colonial modernity. From within these spaces, however, Indigenous artists and creators are remixing media, aesthetics and modes of expression to refuse the constraints of colonial narratives on creative production, and reorienting art-making to effect resurgent practices and Indigenous ways of being.

Conclusion

As luam kidane (in this issue) reminds us, "in a political and cultural landscape where artistic expressions that follow predetermined patterns without disruption is celebrated, art that compels us to connect creativity to political processes of agitation becomes urgent" (p. 189). Indigenous art is political because Indigenous peoples make it. It is implicitly, and often explicitly,

embedded in political struggle. Indigenous art-making is and has always been integral to Indigenous survival. And as Haunani Kay-Trask has stated, “Surviving as a Native person in any colonial situation is a strange mix of refusal, creation and assertion” (Trask, 1999, p. 89). Indigenous art occupies this fugitive interstice and transforms it. Decolonizing art does not mean prescribing to it, or defining it by, a limited set of ‘decolonial aesthetic’ practices or techniques. The form and content of Indigenous art is dynamic, multivariant and multimodal, perpetually in flux. Our task, therefore, is not to recuperate a politics of Indigenous art, or an Indigenous art of politics, but to expand, open, and defend Indigenous art-making’s ruptural potentiality: its forms of freedom found in flight -- in lines, images, words, movements, performances and sounds that break *from and through* colonial enclosures to (re)discover, in their movement, turning and transformation, open spaces of imagination and creativity. When this is connected to material struggles to liberate Indigenous lands, languages and lifeways, art reveals its power in fugitive motion by disrupting and reconfiguring the normative order of sensible experience. And, “it is in these spaces that we find stories of ancestral spirits unfiltered through the white gaze” (kidane, this issue, p. 189). Indigenous art’s decolonial incitement to seek mobility and the flux of immanent transformation grounds its evocative and affective political potential. It is “terrifyingly beautiful because it violently transcends. It ruptures conventional political protest” (James, 2013, p. 128). Art is the *generative* expression of creativity, not the violence of colonial domination, and it is in Indigenous art’s resistant motion to disavow the repetition of such violence that it recuperates the spirit of ancestral memory and place, and forges new pathways of re-emergence and return. In her reflection on *The Tecusmeh Papers*, Leanne Simpson (this issue) suggests that Tkamse’s art was to gift his life and legacy to the struggle: “You gave each of your weapons away: bravery to Ipperwash, honour to Oka, persistence to the Zhaawanoog, clarity to anyone who was willing to see” (p. 194). In this spirit of giving and remembering, Indigenous art reconnects us to the sacred and continued existence of Indigenous Peoples living and dying in struggle; yet, always resurging and creating art to build and rebuild, to learn and re-learn, to recover and remember. Indigenous art unbinds indigeneity from its colonial limits by weaving past and future Indigenous worlds into new currents of present struggle. Indigenous art and decolonial aesthetics mark collective imagings/imaginings of possible paths forward, through, and beyond, where “whatever is built must be willingly dismantled” (kidane, this issue, p. 192) and where each break, each work, and each act of creative refusal makes a new present possible. Art is the contentious dance of the spirit that, like a spark, “shines across, a burst of light, a tiny explosion in the sky” (Simpson, this issue, p. 194).

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