

# Arts + Wellness 2019 Verge Conference

**Thursday, September 26**

**8:45-9:15am** Registration

**9:15-9:30am** Welcome + Opening Remarks

**9:30-10:50am** Session 1

TELL ME A STORY – Rm 210/Instrumental Hall

- Lorraine Brown // **What Is It That Writing Wants?**
- Caroline Sanders & Danielle Lindemann // **Wellness and Chronic Health Complexities: Living Life to the Full – Using the Arts to Share Narratives of Women with Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia**

**10:50-11:10am** Break

**11:10am-12:15pm** Keynote Address – Rm 210/Instrumental Hall

- **Healing Through the Expressive Arts: Finding Wellness within Suffering**  
Kendra Rieger // Assistant Professor, College of Nursing, University of Manitoba

**12:15-1:00pm** Lunch

**1:00-2:45pm** Session 2

IS IT “WELL WITH MY SOUL”? – Rm 210/Instrumental Hall

- Joshua Hale + Kelly Arbeau // **It Is Out of Who I Am That I Create**
- Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Kelly Schutt, Tiara Driedger, and Pushvinderjot Kaur // **How Arts-Based Contemplative Practices Enhance Student Nurses’ Learning about Spirituality**
- Joan DeVries // **When It is *Not* Well with My Soul: Acknowledging Brokenness in Christian Worship**

A WORLD FOR HEALING – Rm 201

- Zuzana Vasko // **Psycho-Spiritual Healing in the Face of Ecological Degradation: The Role of Aesthetic Practice**
- Erica Grimm // **Paying Attention to Wellness in the Anthropocene**
- Alysha Creighton // **Wellness in the Anthropocene**



**2:45-3:00pm** Break

**3:00-4:45pm** Session 3

ARTS FOR A CHANGE – Rm 210

- Kathy O’Flynn-Magee + Patricia Rodney // **Lights, Camera, Action: Using Live Theatre to Address Bullying in Nursing Education**
- Katrina Plamondon, Sana Shahram, Colleen Davison, Sherri Dutton // **Weaving Arts and Dialogue for Resilience: Two Examples of Using Collage in Community-Based Health Research**
- Lauren Airth // **Exploring Rural Older Adults’ Mental Health Experiences through Photography**

**7:00-9:00pm** Artist Talk + Exhibition Opening (SAMC Gallery, Alloway Library)

- Erica Grimm, Tracie Stewart, Sheinagh Anderson // **Water Samples and Skin Boats**

***Friday, September 27***

**9:30-10:50am** Session 4

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE – Rm 210

- Nathan Stein // **Looking Seriously at Improvisational Comedians: An Existential-Phenomenological Analysis**
- Sandra Graham // **Lessons from the Red Nose: Therapeutic Clowns and the Art of Relationship**

DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? – Rm 201

- Kaia Magnusen // **The Art of Health: Images of Illness and Wellness in Art and their Relevance to Contemporary Social Health Issues**
- Hannah Kirkham & Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham // **Two Vantage Points on the Aesthetics of Healing Spaces in Hospitals**

**10:50-11:10am** Break

**11:10am-12:15pm** Keynote Address - Rm 210

- **Musical Portrayals of Wellness in Mountain Biking**  
Jeff R. Warren // Professor of Music and Humanities, Quest University Canada

**12:15-1:00pm** Lunch

**1:00-2:45pm** Session 5

BREATH + SONG – Rm 210

- Leah Cameron // **The Breath of Life and Being “Well With Our Souls”**
- Joel Tranquilla // **Preaching *About* the Choir: The Health Benefits of Singing Together**

MIND + BODY – Rm 201

- John Wang // **A Whole Body, Kinaesthetic Digital Drawing Tool for Art Therapy**
- Lillian Hung + Colleen Butcher // **Using Gamification in Dementia Education: A Knowledge Translation Project**
- Shelley Canning // **Exploring the Link Between the Arts and Well-Being: How Arts-Based Interventions Support the Well-Being of Persons Living with Dementia**

## SESSION 1 / Thursday, Sept 26 9:30-10:50am

### TELL ME A STORY (RM 210)

#### **What Is It That Writing Wants?**

*Loranne Brown*

In a recent article, Amy Williams (2014) mines a promising theoretical vein she calls “composition experience scholarship.” There, she seeks to understand “the affective experience of writing — what writing wants from and does with a writer.” The end of writing, she suggests, “may be the creation of a writer who enjoys the process of entelechy” – that is, by its very definition, a particular type of motivation, the need for self-determination, and “inner strength directing life and growth to become all one is capable of being.”

If one of the things writing wants from a writer is wellness, how might we go about seeking the conditions under which writers – both student and professional – might achieve it?

BIO

**Loranne Brown’s** first novel, *The Handless Maiden* (Doubleday Canada), was a finalist for several national awards. She currently teaches nonfiction and journalism in the Department of Media + Communication at Trinity Western University where she was awarded the 2015 Provost’s Award for Innovative Teaching.

#### **Wellness and Chronic Health Complexities: Living Life to the Full – Using the Arts to Share Narratives of Women with Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia**

*Caroline Sanders & Danielle Lindemann*

**Background:** Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) is a rare condition encompassing a range of autosomal recessive inherited enzyme deficiencies that impact cortisol biosynthesis pathways. We wanted to explore wellness within the scope of ‘living well’ in relation of menstruation and heart health. We were interested in exploring how information from the medical domain mixed with social narratives for these women, how they accessed information, and where were the gaps in knowledge translation products.

**Methods:** An integrative literature review of three areas determined from clinical practice; menstruation, fertility and cardiovascular health helped the team determine ten semi-structured interview questions. Two workshops were held in an urban setting with women and providers to examine the data drawn from the review and narratives.

**Results:** Six participants shared narratives about life with CAH. While they talked about the issues we had understood as important, many other arose. We developed an infographic – using a design company. Version 1 was deconstructed by the workshop participants, version 2 was a combined effort and has subsequently been shared with partners in BC and around the world.

**Building on using Art:** We also discovered the need to have a web platform to hold our information and an animation. With the help of a young artist and a media connection, we developed characters and a story board. The journey into this new space has been, exciting, liberating and a little anxiety provoking. Moving forward we (a researcher, patient partner and graduate student) are keen to look at music and melody, slam poetry, or cartoons; exploring how using these mediums we can build community, promote wellness and share our outputs in a highly digitised world.

BIOS

**Danielle Lindemann** is a patient partner and developing advocate for women with rare conditions. She is an avid music follower and active social media user. She is keen to explore how we begin to use alternative mediums to share narratives about wellness and health information in ways that help shape future research and knowledge translation products.

**Caroline Sanders** is an Associate Professor at the University of British Columbia. A background in paediatric nursing, originally from the UK now in rural Canada, she has used music, poetry, movement, design, photovoice and arts-based work in working with children in the past and is keen to look at ways we can use such approaches across all generations.

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS // Thursday, Sept 26 11:10-12:15pm (RM 210)**

### **Healing Through the Expressive Arts: Finding Wellness within Suffering**

*Kendra Rieger*

When a person receives a cancer diagnosis, their lives change in an instant. In addition to facing the challenges of treatment and troubling symptoms, over one-third of patients experience emotional distress. How does a person survive, adjust, and find wellness within the context of suffering? Indigenous people with cancer are further faced with startling health inequities as they navigate their illness. Western approaches to Indigenous research have had limited effectiveness on patient outcomes. At first glance, the intersection of the arts and health might be an unlikely space in which to address these complex problems. However, the arts have enhanced people's lives for all of human history and can provide alternative, potent ways of healing and knowing in healthcare. In this presentation, I share insights from three arts-based studies which demonstrate why healthcare needs the arts. In the first, we engaged with First Nations women to assess the feasibility and meaningfulness of using digital storytelling, an arts-based method, to explore their breast cancer experiences. Their stories illuminated the strengths that they drew upon to find healing and also the challenges they experienced within the healthcare system. We are now embarking on a study in which the workshop participants have become full research team members. In another study, we explored how patients with cancer experienced, utilized, and drew meaning from a mindfulness-based expressive arts group. Our grounded theory provides insight into how participants experienced a transformative process of restoration through the integration of mindfulness and the expressive arts. Lastly, we are planning an exhibit of the participants' artwork to share our study findings. The challenges and benefits of creating this arts-based knowledge translation initiative will be discussed. Through this presentation, it will become apparent that the arts have unique characteristics which foster meaningful ways of healing, knowing, and expressing, even within suffering.

BIO

**Kendra Rieger**, RN, PhD, is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing at the University of Manitoba. Her research program focuses on arts and health initiatives for psychosocial care, arts-based research, arts-based pedagogy, arts-based knowledge translation, and systematic reviews. She is especially passionate about employing arts-based research methods to understand the health and illness experiences of diverse groups of people to promote health equity. Dr. Rieger is focused on research with individuals living with cancer and uses qualitative and mixed-methods research approaches. She teaches an undergraduate evidence-informed practice course and a philosophy of nursing science graduate course.

## **SESSION 2 // Thursday, Sept 26 1:00-2:45pm**

### **IS IT “WELL WITH MY SOUL”? (RM 210)**

#### **It Is Out of Who I Am That I Create**

*Joshua Hale & Kelly Arbeau*

Being a creative person of faith is a qualitatively different experience from being a creative or being a person of faith. Part I of our interdisciplinary, multimethod project used interviews with creative individuals who practice a religion or faith ( $n = 10$ ) to articulate the meaning of the experience of being a creative person of faith. In Part II, we used art, poetry, and other forms of creative expression to continue to explore the study themes identified in Part I. In the present study (Part III), we looked at the knowledge gained in Parts I and II through the lens of the creative person of faith. Four themes emerged that describe the distinct components associated with their social identity: (1) A sense of *creating with* rather than creating alone, (2) *creating for* positive benefit, (3) *created seeing* the world and themselves as artfully made objects, and (4) the *created* being now *creating*. Spiritual wellbeing and a positive sense of identity emerges from coherence among each of these four components that are uniquely associated with being a creative person of faith.

BIOS

**Joshua Hale**, MFA, is a visual artist and creative professional from Texas. His combination of professional and educational experience in both the design and studio art realms have provided him with an interdisciplinary perspective. He is an assistant professor and chair of Art + Design in the School of the Arts, Media, and Culture (SAMC) at Trinity Western University. He is strongly motivated by an interest in enriching the interdisciplinary discourse between the arts and other areas of research.

**Kelly Arbeau**, BA (New Brunswick), PhD (Alberta) is an assistant professor with the Department of Psychology at Trinity Western University. Dr. Arbeau's interests include integrating quantitative (esp. multilevel modeling) and qualitative methods in interdisciplinary research and the phenomenology of involuntary separation.

## How Arts-Based Contemplative Practices Enhance Student Nurses' Learning about Spirituality

Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham, Kelly Schutt, Tiara Driedger, and Pushvinderjot Kaur

*"We are in the midst of an evolving integration between contemporary understandings about the conditions needed to support the human mind-body system to flourish and to skillfully work with distress, with that of ancient contemplative practices which offer a methodology for looking into the human mind and practically engaging with the processes therein" (Crane, 2017, p. 592).*

Contemplative practices, including arts-based practices, are making their way back into higher education as a way to engage and enrich learning and to foster self-awareness within students. In the long run, the hope is that contemplative awareness can help to create a more just, compassionate, and reflective society (Barbezat & Bush, 2013). In the healthcare field, these types of practices are being taken up to offset the emotional labour and burnout rates that characterize today's workforce. In a newly developed retreat-style course, *Spirituality and the Helping Professions*, one of the assignments has each student lead classmates in a contemplative practice, with the aim of exposing students to a range of possible contemplative practices that might support their wellbeing as students and in their future nursing practice. In this presentation, by the professors who co-designed and co-taught the course and two students, an overview of the emerging field of contemplative pedagogies will be provided, and students will reflect on their experiences engaging with arts-based contemplative practices, including dance, painting and colouring, and music. Particular attention will be given to how contemplative practices opened faculty and students up to learn more deeply about spirituality in the context of healthcare, as a route to supporting well-being.

### BIOS

**Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham**, PhD, is Professor of Nursing at Trinity Western University, [Acting Dean (2018 - present) and Director of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program (2009 – 2018)]. She teaches spirituality and the helping professions; health policy; qualitative research; knowledge translation; and health leadership. Her research is in the area of plurality, equity and human rights in healthcare, focusing on the intersections of spirituality, race, class, and gender.

**Kelly Schutt**, BSN, is a Lecturer in the School of Nursing at Trinity Western University. She is a palliative care nurse, with interests in theology and suffering. Currently she is completing her master's thesis on the experience of a loved one receiving Medical Assistance in Dying.

**Tiara Driedger** is an undergraduate nursing student at Trinity Western University. She is passionate about travelling and learning different art forms used across the world.

**Pushvinderjot (Jyoti) Kaur** is an undergraduate nursing student at Trinity Western University.

## **When It is Not Well with My Soul: Acknowledging Brokenness in Christian Worship**

*Joan DeVries*

If one participates in contemporary Christian worship, or simply scans the lyrics of many of its songs, it is evident that the content is heavily focused on positive expressions of praise for the good things that God has done. This is, of course, a legitimate part of Christian worship as Christians see themselves as heirs and proclaimers of *evangelia* or good news. Sometimes it can seem, however, that Christians are taught to be life-deniers, blind to problems in themselves, their communities, or the world, because they must always vehemently declare the goodness of God instead. Whatever their lot they must passionately proclaim that it is “well with my soul.” But what if it is not well with your soul? What if you have been wrecked by profound loss? What if you are gutted by your own failure, or by the brokenness of the world itself? In other words, what if the language of contemporary Christian worship does not speak to or mirror your condition?

This paper will argue that the fault lies not in the person and their experience of brokenness, but rests instead on some inadequate and malformed notions of the goal, purpose, shape and witness of Christian congregational worship. Going back to sources of ancient text as well as historical practice, this paper will first elucidate ways in which such contemporary Christian worship is incomplete, and then, secondly, suggest various means by which congregational worship practices can become a more robust reflection of the whole of the biblical witness to the human condition and life in a broken world.

BIO

**Rev. Dr. Joan DeVries** serves as Assistant Professor of Worship Arts at TWU. She has previously worked as a school teacher; then, after completing an MDiv and being ordained, she has served as lead or transitional pastor in 4 congregations. More recently she worked at Tyndale University College and Seminary in Toronto. Joan completed her PhD at McMaster Divinity College in the area of Practical Theology. She has a keen interest in how a community’s practices (in pedagogy or worship) are formative in the lives of its people.

## **A WORLD FOR HEALING (RM 201)**

### **Psycho-Spiritual Healing in the Face of Ecological Degradation: The Role of Aesthetic Practice**

*Zuzana Vasko*

The pervasive and weighty awareness of ecological degradation gives rise to a need for expressive avenues through which to channel – and give voice to – what Joanna Macy has called “an anguish beyond naming,” as well as to invite new paradigms through which to move forward. While it may seem particularly tempting to close oneself off from the sense of overwhelm, finding means to open our senses and spirits to that which desperately needs healing seems essential. In contexts of education and personal practice, art-making calls upon the senses, involves of the spirit, and allows for processing on a personal level of how we are all affected by ecological concerns. Perhaps most meaningfully, art engagement provides a means – an avenue for expressive dialogue – through which to re-authenticate our connection with the life-giving earth.

The state of mind that is inhabited when we engage in art is particularly conducive to inquiry that pertains to the natural world: Gregory Bateson has said that when we finding meaning in art, our thinking is most in sync with nature. Coming into earth-aligned ways of thinking and being may offer a

dual kind of healing: James Hillman proposes that the wellness of the psyche cannot but include the wellness of our surroundings and natural ecologies, while Heesoon Bai proposes that healing of our inner selves may be a prerequisite to understanding how better to care for the earth. This presentation explores how creative and aesthetic practices help us move closer toward a place of awareness and of agency with regard to the environmental crisis.

BIO

**Zuzana Vasko** teaches with the Faculty of Education at Simon Fraser University, and the Dept. of Interdisciplinary Expressive Arts at Kwantlen Polytechnic University. Her research is primarily in arts-based environmental learning, and her artwork explores human-nature connections. She enjoys spending time in the forests near her home in Maple Ridge.

### **Paying Attention to Wellness in the Anthropocene**

*Erica Grimm*

Contemplating wellness and the arts might seem like a distraction given the findings of recent intergovernmental scientific assessments of climate change and biodiversity, the IPBES and IPCC Reports. With one million species at risk of extinction, how is focussing on the arts justifiable? When averting a climate catastrophe depends on massive global structural change, how is personal wellness even important?

Understandably, denial, along with existential angst, psychological uncertainty and paralysis are common, almost inevitable responses to this unprecedented situation. For others urgent activism and engagement provide a path out of climate despair. After all, the global societal reorientation, what I call a kenotic turn, required by the planetary systems change we are undergoing, has never before been experienced.

Is another response to climate change possible? Can artmaking serve the enormous reorientation required? Can we be *stopped* out of our complacency to see our complicity? Can we embrace *being stopped* to theorize a way forward?

Drawing on new models of subjectivity and materiality, I ask whether the arts can help re-conceptualize our situation. Can we find, in new ways of being in the world not only solace but, hope? Perceiving the agency of vibrant matter and responding to the quivering life force of the more than human world, can ordinary aesthetic acts remind of the miracle oxygen is; that all is gift?

As vital as it is to measure the health of the planet with science, it is equally vital to re-imagine and visualize our relations with it using art. Perhaps it is also important to experience active practices of making and other contemplative practices to replenish energy. Perhaps the arts are not a distraction, but can serve personal and planetary wellness.

BIO

**Dr. Erica Grimm** is a Canadian artist and Professor in SAMC at TWU. Canada Council and SSHRC Grant holder, her practice is fueled by environmental urgency. Her sculptural installations—“*material semiotic entanglements*”—layer materials with scientific texts, maps, video and sound, drawing in space with anything at hand, exploring the entanglements between aesthetics, ecology, science and art. Her work is

found in public collections such as the Canada Council Art Bank + the Richmond Art Gallery. Her written practice considers the epistemological implications of the process of making. *The Aesthetics of Attentiveness* is forthcoming from Wilfred Laurier University Press.

## **Wellness in the Anthropocene**

*Alysha Creighton*

In this lecture-performance I reimagine wellness from a post-human vantage. Unfolding understandings of the human biome reveal that we are not the bounded, self-contained subjects that the modern dream promises. The non-human cells in our bodies—bacteria, fungi, viruses—outnumber the human. The other inhabits us.

Without, the non-human world supports and sustains us and all life by an infinitely complex web of relationship. The honeybee, the sea ice, the coral reefs and the phytoplankton are as vital to our thriving as anything we take into our bodies.

From this post-human vantage the mainstream discourse on wellness as self-optimization seems hollow. This concept of wellness is predicated on an idea of the human subject that no longer fits. Its individualism rests on a hubris that imagines that human life can thrive without concern or need for the non-human world. I seek to envision a wellness that does not stop at the limits of the human subject.

Through this performative lecture I offer some of the metaphors that have surfaced through my artistic practice as I have sought a way forward in the often bleak discussions around the Anthropocene. A great companion here has been Donna Haraway and her insistence on imagination and story in finding a way to “stay with the trouble.”

Increasingly these metaphors take the form of costumes in my practice. These costumes are often performed and imagine human subjects that might be able to bear the burden of this coming century. These costumes envision a human subject that pursues an expansive vision of wellness which encompasses all of our non-human kin with whom we share this world.

## **BIO**

**Alysha Creighton** is a visual artist based in Vancouver, BC. She holds a BA in Art from Trinity Western University and an MFA from the University of Alberta. She is a Sessional Assistant Professor of Art + Design at Trinity Western University. Her performance-based practice is deeply informed by her background in dance and movement and encompasses video, installation, photography, sculpture and drawing practices. Her work has been exhibited across North America and Europe. Highlights include solo exhibitions at the Art Gallery of St. Albert, The Bleeding Heart Art Space and inclusion in *The News From Here: The 2013 Alberta Biennial of Contemporary Art*.

## **SESSION 3 // Thursday, Sept 26 3:00-4:45pm**

### **ARTS FOR A CHANGE (RM 210)**

#### **Lights, Camera, Action: Using Live Theatre to Address Bullying in Nursing Education**

*Kathy O'Flynn-Magee & Patricia Rodney*

The "CRAB" (Cognitive Rehearsal to Address Bullying) project emerged in response to student/faculty-shared concerns about the prevalence of bullying experienced by nursing students. Cognitive rehearsal has been used for a number of years to prepare nursing students and nurses to address bullying if or when they encounter it, by providing phrases and scripts for students to consider when faced with bullying. Griffin (2004) describes this as a strategy where individuals refrain from responding reactively to a situation, instead allowing themselves time to consciously process their response. (Griffin, 2004, Griffin & Clark, 2014).

The CRAB project moved beyond cognitive rehearsal, which uses a deductive approach, to Forum Theatre (Diamond, 2007) which invites students to inductively create responses to bullying and to try them out on stage. In this session, using a student/faculty-designed situation of bullying, we will share our use of forum theatre as a form of pedagogy and describe our process from script to stage.

#### **BIO**

**Kathy O'Flynn-Magee** is a Senior Instructor at the UBC School of Nursing. Over the years, she has become increasingly interested in the use of arts as a way to invite nursing students to appreciate the person or family for whom they are caring. In so doing, she has used movies, narratives, poetry, music, meditation and interactive art. Recently, she joined UBC's 'Arts in Health Community of Practice', collaborated with a colleague from the Theatre and Film department to create forum theatre, and was invited to Nepal to share the 'addressing bullying' work she is involved in using forum theatre.

#### **Weaving Arts and Dialogue for Resilience: Two Examples of Using Collage in Community-Based Health Research**

*Katrina Plamondon, Sana Shahram, Colleen Davison, Sherri Dutton*

Dialogue methods can guide research and knowledge translation through the use of transformative pedagogies. Deliberative dialogue, for example, purposefully invites people into a facilitated meeting to deliberate about what is known (evidence) about something important to them and what they believe should be done about it. It invites collaborative interpretation of evidence in context, where the implications of research evidence are considered in context of diverse knowledges. This future-oriented methodology can foster relationships and trust that lead to collective action.

Weaving arts into dialogue creates space for people to deeply understand others' complex ideas, emotions, and values. Expressive and artful strategies for engagement evoke insights that might otherwise be impossible to express. Data generated from arts-infused dialogue re-present collective interpretations as contributors critically reflect in evidence-informed dialogue as a means to access, understand, and transform futures.

In this presentation, we will share insights from two distinct studies that infused dialogue methods with collage-making. One took place in the Central Okanagan and focused on youth and emerging adults' perceptions of what fosters resiliency for youth suicide prevention. In the other, emerging community leaders and wellness facilitators participated in collage-making and dialogue as part of an auto-biographical process. In both studies, we invited contributors to create collages as a way of expressing their experiences of resiliency and wellness in their communities. People participating in the dialogues were energized, forged new relationships, and contributed to setting priorities and decision making for issues that mattered to their communities. Further, images of their collages created a set of artful representations that are now inviting broader community dialogue about issues of resiliency and leadership for community wellness. Blending purposefully designed facilitation with arts and creative expression opens beautiful possibilities for collective meaning-making and understanding.

BIOS

**Katrina Plamondon** an Adjunct Professor (UBC Okanagan, School of Nursing) and Practice Leader for Research and Knowledge Translation at Interior Health. Building on a clinical background critical care and street outreach, she has a Master of Science in Community Health & Epidemiology (University of Saskatchewan) and an Interdisciplinary PhD (University of British Columbia, Banting & Best Canada Graduate Scholar). Her doctoral work extended a decade of research and practice in knowledge translation for health equity. As co-chair of the University Advisory Council for the Canadian Coalition for Global Health Research, Katrina promotes equity-informed practices in research and knowledge translation.

**Sana Shahram** is a Michael Smith Foundations for Health Research Postdoctoral Fellow with the Equity Lens in Public Health (ELPH) research project at the Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research (CISUR). Sana is also an embedded health equity scholar in Interior Health's Population and Public Health department, an adjunct professor with the School of Public Health and Social Policy, and a sessional instructor at UBC Okanagan. Her research interests include reorienting health systems towards health equity, decolonized approaches to health equity research, the social determinants of substance use during pregnancy, and knowledge mobilization that disrupts the systemic roots of inequitable health outcomes.

**Colleen Davison** is an Associate Professor in the Departments of Public Health Sciences and Global Development Studies at Queen's University. She completed her PhD in Population Health and Social Epidemiology at the University of Calgary in 2007. Her dissertation was undertaken with Tlicho youth in Behchoko, NWT. She conducted a critical ethnography of their changing social determinants of health and young people created self-published-magazines as part of this study. As an active artist and mixed methods researcher, Colleen has also used collage, photography, video creation, and cartoon as part of wellness promotion and wellness research with adolescents globally.

**Sherri Dutton** obtained a Masters of Public Health from Queen's University in 2018 and holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Winnipeg. She has worked in a clinical setting as a registered diagnostic medical sonographer for the past decade. During her MPH degree, Sherri incorporated collage into community-engaged research and capacity development with Inuit "initiators" in Nunavut. Sherri will be starting her PhD in Public Health with Queen's University in the fall of 2019 with a focus on health equity and community involvement with Indigenous and marginalized populations using qualitative and arts-based research methods.

## Exploring Rural Older Adults' Mental Health Experiences through Photography

Lauren Airth

**Background:** In Canada, 20% of people live with a mental illness. This includes the growing population of older adults. As the population of those age 50 and over grows, they will have more mental health concerns than any other age group. Older adults are relocating to rural areas, yet, there is little literature exploring their experiences.

**Research Design:** This thesis addressed: What are the experiences of adults aged 50 and over with a mental health concern in a rural community in British Columbia? Data collection occurred in a rural town in the southern interior of BC. The thesis used critical social theory, interpretive description, and photovoice to understand experiences in a creative, holistic, and participant-oriented manner. 5-7 Cameras were provided to eight participants aged 50 and over who had experienced a mental health concern in this rural community. They photographed parts of their lives affected by their mental health concern and shared photos in individual interviews.

**Findings:** There were five key themes. *Mental wellbeing* was explained through photos that represented: personal qualities, hope, spirituality and gratitude, nature, routine and productivity, medication, substance use, family, and isolation. The second theme, *Losses*, was unveiled through photos of lost lifestyles, people, and thoughts regarding death. The third theme, *stigma*, was shown through photos that examined the internal and external effects of stigma. The fourth theme, *services and supports*, highlighted barriers, negative and positive experiences, and informal supports (e.g. photos of pets). Finally, many participants' photos focused on the influence of their *environment*.

**Discussion:** Participants described caring for their wellbeing, but their coping strategies were difficult to enact due to stigma. Stigma was a facet of many of the photographs shared, including topics such as isolation, poverty, and access to services. Participants' personal histories, which often included stigma, also influenced their ability to reflect on and maintain their mental wellbeing. Using photovoice provided another layer of understanding, and a unique way of conducting knowledge translation.

BIO

**Lauren Airth** is a Registered Nurse living in Kelowna, B.C. and recently finished her Master of Science in Nursing. During her studies, she received a Canadian Nurses Foundation scholarship. Her MSN work focused on the experiences of older adults with mental health concerns in rural areas. Lauren has been working as an RN in acute mental health care since 2014. She has also been working as a clinical instructor in mental health in the BSN program at UBCO since 2016. In 2017, she was named one of 150 nurses for Canada by the Canadian Nurses Association. Recently, she began working for the Voice research project at UBCO as well.

**ARTIST TALK + EXHIBITION OPENING // Thursday, Sept 26 7:00-9:00pm**  
**SAMC Gallery, Norma Marion Alloway Library**

**Water Samples and Skin Boats**

*Erica Grimm, Tracie Stewart, Sheinagh Anderson*

Whether coursing through the atmosphere, ocean, river estuary or our veins, water sustains all life on the planet and is the theme of this exhibition. Using embodiment metaphors to call attention to human-caused ocean change, the work is informed by Alanna Mitchell's award-winning *Seasick: Ocean Change and the Extinction of Life on Earth*. Based loosely on coracles—ancient water-going skin boats—these “material-semiotic entanglements” are woven with willow, walnut and dogwood branches, and skinned with airplane dacron, beeswax, bathymetric ocean maps, scientific formula and ocean poems. Sheinagh Anderson's ambient soundscape is composed as a living, breathing, sounding entity that emanates from within the illuminated boat-like-body-like forms suspended from the ceiling. Together, sound and form weave an immersive aqueous experience for the viewer. Of the *Salt Water Skin Boats* series, curator Laura Schneider writes: “The fleshy boat-like objects float overhead, submerging us in an imagined aqueous environment: a briny sea, a deep ocean channel, or perhaps something more elemental, like a womb.”

At once flesh and ocean surface, the boat hulls remind of surface cracks in ice, rivulets of light, or is it melting glacial water? Each vascular hull is layered with mathematical formulae that condense the science of climate change into succinct, numerical models. These cryptic scientific codes are juxtaposed with poems—prayers for the ocean and provocations written in the voice of the ocean—contributed by an impressive list of Canadian poets, who responded to a call out for ocean poems.

A collection of 571 water samples exhibited in tincture bottles wrap around the gallery. Water makes up 75% of newborn bodies and is essential for life, yet despite Canada's abundant fresh water, potable water is not available in many Canadian indigenous communities. Surprisingly, the chemistry of blood plasma, tears, amniotic fluid and the global ocean share similar salinity and pH levels. Just like human life, ocean life is very sensitive to chemical changes, and thrives within narrow ranges. For example, atmospheric carbon dioxide, absorbed by the ocean, converts to carbonic acid. An unintended but very real consequence of burning fossil fuels is the acidification of the ocean. Rising acidity levels are inhospitable to organisms like plankton. Without oxygen-producing plankton our atmosphere would resemble the atmosphere at the top of Mount Everest. Paying attention to water, its chemistry, cycles, and connection with planetary ecosystems is critical—or, just like the plankton, life for future generations will be uncertain.

**BIOS**

**Erica Grimm** is Professor in the School of the Arts, Media + Culture at Trinity Western University. A Canada Council and SSHRC grant holder, Erica's practice is rooted in embodiment and she is curious about liminal, saturated (inexplicable but ordinary) phenomenological experiences. Fueled by environmental urgency, she creates material semiotic entanglements, sculptural installations that layer materials within scientific maps, medical imagery, drawings, projected video and soundscapes. She was the University of Regina 2002 Distinguished Nash Lecturer, the recipient of the Imago National Juried Art Prize, and named University of Regina Distinguished Alumnae. Widely exhibited, her work is included in private and public collections such as the Vatican, Canada Council Art Bank, and the Richmond Art Gallery.

**Tracie Stewart** is an international, award-winning interdisciplinary artist working across media in collaborative installation and public engagement. She is a problem-solver, an artist, a master gardener, and an arborist. Originally from Terrace, BC, Tracie resides in the Fraser Valley with her family. Tracie's training as an artist and arborist has informed her work and she is fueled by questions of integrated pest management, pollinator collapse, food security, and Ocean/Climate change. She has created work for the Surrey Art Gallery "View of the Southbank" project, engaged the public to tell the stories of Richmond's Britannia Shipyards, and created a sculpture for Coquitlam's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary with Artists Rendering Tales Collective Inc. She has also led engagement for "Faces of the Fraser" at the Fraser Discovery Centre, and collaborated on "Salt Water Skin Boats" at multiple venues. Tracie has facilitated many educational programs with Dare Arts, Art Starts, and Artists Rendering Tales Collective Inc.

**Sheinagh Anderson** is a transdisciplinary artist specializing in sound art—intrigued by voice, and the transformation of space and place through sound design, soundscape production, and voice. Her sound art compositions are atmospheric, inductive, ambient, intent on affecting and shaping aural space into transformative listening places. Her background is theatre, Cirque du Soleil, performing arts, performance installation, ritual, voice, and contemplative arts. She is currently a PhD candidate at Simon Fraser University researching "Listening and Sounding as Awareness Practices of Yogic Sadhana."

## **SESSION 4 // Friday, Sept 27 9:30-10:50am**

### **LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE (RM 210)**

#### **Looking Seriously at Improvisational Comedians: An Existential-Phenomenological Analysis**

*Nathan Stein*

For all their ability to make us laugh, many comedians report severe struggles with mental health. Even so, this reality does not deter a growing number of improvisational (improv) comedians from endorsing applications of their craft in wellbeing-oriented workshops for the public, which claim to leverage the beneficial side effects of learning improv comedy to help with a growing list of psychological ailments like social anxiety and autism. This existential-phenomenological study explored the complex dynamics of wellbeing among eight professional improvisers (five men and three women) to illuminate the psychological vulnerabilities and resiliencies of this unique subset of the comedy community. Qualitative analysis yielded six common themes that conveyed the beneficial personal "side effects" of doing improv, which included the opportunity for adults to play, the joy of collaborative relationships, increased comfort with risk, improved confidence, a focus on positivity, and a revitalizing effect on emotional health, self-image, and sense of purpose. Stressors unique to the business aspect of improv, but not improv itself, were also revealed. Results provide valuable insights both for improvisers and those interested in improv's mental health applications.

BIO

**Nathan Stein** is a researcher and creative from Langley, BC. He received his BA Honours in Psychology from TWU in 2018, where his honours research on improv comedy endeavoured to weigh in on the rapidly growing industry of "improv therapies" and expand the sparse literature on the subject through exploratory, qualitative analysis of the comedians themselves. He is an experienced improviser himself, having performed, coordinated, and taught improv with TWU's 11:07 Improv Comedy from 2013-2018,

appeared alongside Vancouver-based improv troupes The Fictionals, Superprov, and Blind Tiger, and since 2018 been a recurring member of Panic Squad.

### **Lessons From the Red Nose: Therapeutic Clowns and the Art of Relationship**

*Sandra Graham*

Laughter and humour in medicine have existed throughout the ages. However, the use of clowns in health care settings has only recently been established - a result of the documentation of humour's positive impact on health. Humour has a place in every patient setting and relational interactions, while fleeting, may have lasting effects. Clowns have the ability to establish relationships quickly and bring calmness to situations involving pain, suffering and anxiety. Further, clowns have been shown to have a positive impact on the health care team.

In this qualitative study, participants from two therapeutic clown troupes were interviewed about their experiences to discover how clowning techniques can inform nursing practice, specifically in the art of relationship. Through often profound narratives, clowning emerged as a complex art, combining the visual effects of the costume, make-up and props with ubiquitous humour, laced with sensitivity and compassion. Participants described having a vocation for clowning, with intrinsic motivation and passion. They articulated how their costume and personas provided emotional shielding and they used judicious humour, intuiting when, where and how best to use humour in myriad patient situations.

Insights from clowning can help nurses or other health care providers expand their relational art. Therapeutic clowns have mainly been evident and studied in paediatric care, but as demonstrated in this study, there is a burgeoning movement towards clowns in elder care. They have the ability to vary their techniques depending on the environment and situation - jokes and schticks are replaced with sensitivity, a quiet presence and a hug when needed. While the focus of the study was on relational perspectives, insights into therapeutic clowning as well as humour were gained.

BIO

**Sandra Graham** is a registered nurse and clown aficionado. Her nursing career has been varied - public health nurse, midwife, genetic counsellor, quality management, researcher and more, with a current interest in dementia care. She received a Master's of Science in Nursing from Trinity Western University in 2015. Her thesis topic on therapeutic clowns included taking clowning workshops and investing in red noses, which tend to be dispersed throughout her home! Humour has always been a part of her nursing practice and she is excited to continue to weave humour into her work, possibly as a therapeutic elder clown once she gets her character nailed down!

## **DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE? (RM 201)**

### **The Art of Health: Images of Illness and Wellness in Art and their Relevance to Contemporary Social Health Issues**

*Kaia L. Magnusen*

Throughout the nineteenth century, cholera epidemics prompted artists to capture the fear of this disease in works such as Emile Loubon's painting *The Flight of the People during the Cholera Epidemic in Marseille* (1850) and an anonymous image of a monstrous cholera microbe titled *Le microbe du cholera* (1884) from the journal, *Le Grelot*. These works visualize the widespread panic caused by cholera that is

similar to present day anxiety over outbreaks, such as ebola in Africa, that threaten wider epidemics. Attendant to the depiction of disease is the representation of disease prevention. In his *Detroit Industry* fresco cycle (1923-1933), Mexican muralist Diego Rivera extols the positive aspects of modern medicine by including a scene of an infant being vaccinated that resembles a nativity scene. Rivera's affirmative depiction of vaccination does not reflect the feelings of some contemporary participants in the anti-vaccination movement, the so-called "anti-vaxxers." Due to the 2019 measles outbreaks, heated debates have occurred about vaccinations and the role anti-vaxxers have played in the spread of diseases. The aforementioned examples demonstrate that a unique visual dialogue exists between the arts and the sciences that is relevant to contemporary discussions about wellness. By examining these visual images pertaining to health and illness, one can gain a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the challenges attendant to preventing illness, eradicating disease and promoting wellness.

BIO

**Kaia L. Magnusen**, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Texas – Tyler. She received her doctorate in art history from Rutgers University, her master's degree in art history from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University and her bachelor's degree in art history and foreign languages from Wheaton College. She has published and presented on Otto Dix, Caspar David Friedrich, and Jeff Koons. Her research interests include images of women, constructions of "deviant" femininity, representations of dance, visualizations of death, and depictions of physical and mental of illness in art and visual culture.

### **Two Vantage Points on the Aesthetics of Healing Spaces in Hospitals**

*Hannah Kirkham & Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham*

Hospitals are institutions of healing, but it is not unusual for them to be stark and clinical in their aesthetic, offering little in the way of a healing atmosphere or life-giving art-based activities. In this co-presented paper, a health researcher studying sacred spaces in hospitals, and a photographer who captured these spaces for a project in London and Vancouver hospitals offer a visual analysis of how art can contribute to healing, sacred spaces. In publicly funded hospitals, the priority is often given to funding biomedical technologies, procedures, and highly trained staff and administrators (all of which are important), but a modest investment in creating aesthetic beauty can do much to lift spirits and bring perspective. In this presentation, we will reflect on a recent research project on prayer in hospitals in Vancouver and London, offering two vantage points on the aesthetics of healing spaces. The first author (photographer) will share her insights on photographing hospital spaces, with a focus on the art in this space. The second author (researcher) will describe current research on the value of the arts in healthcare settings, including examples drawn from London and Vancouver.

BIOS

**Hannah Kirkham** is a 2<sup>nd</sup> year Fine Arts Major at Trinity Western University.

**Sheryl Reimer-Kirkham**, PhD, is Professor of Nursing at Trinity Western University, [Acting Dean (2018 -) and Director of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program (2009 – 2018)]. She teaches spirituality and the helping professions; health policy; qualitative research; knowledge translation; and health leadership. Her research is in the area of plurality, equity and human rights in healthcare, focusing on the intersections of spirituality, race, class, and gender.

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS // Friday, Sept 27 11:10-12:15pm (RM 210)**

### **Music Portrayals of Wellness in Mountain Biking**

*Jeff R. Warren*

We are surrounded by portrayals of wellness, from 'Instagram influencers' to diets to travel to activities aimed to fulfill human potential. In the context of wellness, the things we do expand into lifestyles and identities. The growth of outdoor recreation provides one example. In this presentation I focus on mountain biking, and in particular the ways that mountain biking is presented through musical multimedia. I argue that mountain biking films are co-constitutive of mountain biking experience. In other words, these films both reflect and inform the experiences of viewers. Here I examine the sonic elements of three film segments: *Lifecycles* (2010), *Mother Earth* (2018), and *Return to Earth* (2019). These films are indebted to Romantic ideals of nature and authenticity, yet these films and their music also portray athletic mastery at odds with such ideals. The sonic landscape of the films contributes to these tensions, yet music is often used to cover over tensions with the idealization of an escape from the everyday. Throughout the presentation, I argue that the analysis of mountain biking musical multimedia provides ways to reflect upon the tensions within contemporary concepts of wellness.

BIO

**Jeff R. Warren**, PhD is Professor of Music and Humanities at Quest University in Squamish, British Columbia. His book *Music and Ethical Responsibility* (Cambridge University Press) examines the ethical implications of everyday musical experiences. Current research projects include: musical multimedia and mountain biking culture, Christian congregational music, and the relationship between music, politics, and phenomenology using post-1968 Paris as a case study. His creative work includes sound recording, sound installations, and performance on double bass. Before moving to Quest in 2013, Jeff spent nine years teaching at Trinity Western University, where he retains the title of Adjunct Professor of Music and Interdisciplinary Arts. More at [jeffrwarren.github.io](http://jeffrwarren.github.io)

## **SESSION 5 // Friday, Sept 27 1:00-2:45pm**

### **BREATH AND SONG (RM 210)**

#### **The Breath of Life and Being "Well With Our Souls"**

*Leah Cameron*

Breath is not only essential for life; the study and practice of breathing is an integral indicator of human wellbeing, not only physiologically, but also psychologically and spiritually. The phenomena of breath afford uniquely interdisciplinary—indeed, even transdisciplinary and interreligious—sites from which to further explore being and existence itself. By engaging and encountering the role of the breath in the human experiences of making music with the voice and the practice of yoga, two of my own areas of expertise, I intend to examine and propose the potential for the wellness of the body and soul as it proceeds from these as yet little-integrated but fundamentally spiritual practices, Christian and Eastern.

In Scripture, God's breath is recorded as integral to the Judeo-Christian understanding of the source and sustenance of life as it relates to the first person of the Trinity (Genesis 2:7), as well as its sacred, eternal power as it relates to the second (Luke 23:46) and third persons of the Trinity (John 20:29-23). In

Eastern religious understanding, for thousands of years, the ancient wisdom of yoga has demonstrated that mindfulness in breathing can result in extraordinary human strength and integration in life experience—one of the aspects of wholeness to which Christians also inspire in this fraught world. While there is much to study and practice regarding the relationship of the breath to the wellness of both body and soul, my research and experience hearkens me to explore the mysteries of breath and their contemplation in the believed hope that in them lies the wellness that both supports and transcends body, mind and spirit into which God has breathed the human soul.

BIO

**Leah Cameron** is a part-time instructor in English and Foundations at Trinity Western University. Her M.A. in Interdisciplinary Humanities was supported by a Canada Graduate Scholarship (SSHRC). She has published and presented on subjects such as theopoetics, poetry and music and theological aesthetics. Leah is a classically trained lyric soprano who has sung with artist programs such as the Cornish American Song Institute in Oxford and Falmouth, UK, the Vancouver International Song Institute and Early Music Vancouver. Ensemble work has included Pacifica Singers and UBC's *Collegium Musicum*. Leah teaches voice to students of all ages from her studio in Langley.

### **Preaching *About* the Choir: The Health Benefits of Singing Together**

*Joel Tranquilla*

For some time now, medical professionals and research scientists have been confirming what choral singers already knew to be true: that singing in a choir has remarkable health benefits. Group singing is a powerful tool for improving mood, respiratory function, and core strength. It has also been linked to lowering blood pressure and preventing Alzheimer's. Beyond the physical components of singing, the emotional and psychological benefits are immeasurable. Unlike many other pastimes, choral singing can take place at all ages and stages of life and is a relatively inexpensive activity. It can draw together a diverse group of people who would otherwise not seem to share very much in common; it can also strengthen a community of individuals already bound by creed or cause.

This interactive session will explore the health benefits of singing in a choir, borrowing from medical research as well as personal accounts. The Trinity Western University Chamber Choir will demonstrate/facilitate vocal exercises and perform a few selections.

BIO

**Dr. Joel Tranquilla** is a conductor and music educator noted for his versatile musicianship and creative programming. As the Director of Choral Activities at Trinity Western University, Joel oversees a program of six choirs and teaches various other courses within SAMC. He is also the Artistic Director of the Valley Festival Singers in Abbotsford and the Associate Conductor of the Canadian Chamber Choir. In high demand as an adjudicator and clinician, Joel has worked with singers of all ages from coast to coast. He lives in Fort Langley with his wife, Meghan and their two children, Everett and Penelope.

## MIND + BODY (RM 201)

### **A Whole Body, Kinaesthetic Digital Drawing Tool for Art Therapy**

*John Wang*

Drawing and painting serve as media to channel emotions or deliver messages during the art therapy session. Drawing is not only able to translate the state of mind into visual images, but also drawing itself is a trajectory of body movement.

Today, digital media and their applications are ubiquitous. Using digital media has become inseparable from our work and life. Nevertheless, this is still not the case in art therapy. Most digital Motion-Sensing drawing tools, they are designed primarily for art and design purposes such as 3D paintings, 3D sculpture, and performance. To compensate for the neglected physical movement in drawing and the fact that body movement can help reveal or articulate one's inner feelings, this research suggests that both the product of drawing (the accomplished piece of artwork) and the process (the act of drawing) are essential to art therapists' interpretation of their clients' physical, mental and psychological state.

This study is to explore the likelihood of a kinaesthetic user interface and algorithmically generated drawing tool to serve as an effective tool in art therapy. The author has assumed increasing the range of physical movement to full body can allow patients to reveal information about their mental and psychological state, which is to help achieve therapeutic goals. Based on this premise and the improvement upon current digital devices, a motion-sensing drawing tool has been created based on research findings to validate the impact of drawing and whole body movement on art therapy. With corroboration from research findings and artefacts, validated data were collected from art therapy practitioners and further analysed. The results indicate this tool can aid therapists' achieving therapeutic goals by facilitating clients to express creatively. The clients who can benefit from this tool include people prone to impaired verbal communication and people with physical disabilities or emotional problems.

#### BIO

**John Wang** is an assistant professor of Art and Design at Trinity Western University. His work focuses specifically on the potential application of an innovative whole body drawing tool for enhancing the therapeutic effect of art therapy. As an artist with sustained passion, he has devoted himself to drawing in multidisciplinary fields through his education and career. Such as fashion design, graphic design, illustration, animation, and interactive art. He had substantial lead experience in teaching post-secondary students from diverse backgrounds with passion and commitment to providing students with the opportunity to reach their fullest potential through creative expression, production experiences, and community arts engagement.

### **Using Gamification in Dementia Education: A Knowledge Translation Project**

*Lillian Hung & Colleen Butcher*

The topic of what motivates staff to accept new research knowledge and apply in practice is an important one to explore. The traditional academic publication offers limited effectiveness as practitioners often find the content boring and difficult to retain. This project involves using gamification (game thinking and mechanics) to support rapid knowledge uptake. This project aims to increase

engagement, accessibility, knowledge, and effectiveness of research knowledge uptake in dementia care among hospital staff in British Columbia. An animated digital art approach was taken to engage staff to play online games for learning dementia care approaches. The games begin with creating an avatar to clock in for a hospital shift. Each game challenges the player/learner to use person-centred care approaches in clinical care. The project was evaluated by a knowledge test and a survey of staff experience. Initially, a total of 70 staff members (nurses, physicians, occupational therapist, physiotherapist) in the medical and mental health programs of VGH were involved in testing the game by using multiple action cycles. The project has been introduced to all health authorities in BC to spread education. Over 1000 users played the game to learn about dementia care. This presentation will illustrate what we have learned about the impact of applying gamification in knowledge translation. Also, we will discuss the process of how we engage stakeholders to work together on this project - what worked and how. We will share practical tips to encourage future work in dementia education.

BIOS

**Dr. Lillian Hung** is clinical nurse specialist at the Vancouver General Hospital and clinician scientist at Vancouver Coastal Health. Lillian's research mainly focuses on examining how technology and environment impact the care experiences of persons with dementia. Her research is practice-based and patient-oriented. She uses participatory approaches to engage clinicians, patient and family partners, as well as organizational leaders to co-produce solutions for change. Her current projects include the iPad study, social robot, gamification, GPA & silent disco, etc.

**Mrs. Colleen Butcher** is a Registered Nurse who has supported older adults for over 18 years of her 37 years' experience in health care. She completed her nursing education at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, holds a BScN from the University of Victoria and received a Master of Business Administration from Simon Fraser University. Additionally, she is a Certified Health Executive with the Canadian College of Health Leaders. Colleen has experience as a staff nurse and in supervisory roles in various acute care departments including surgery, medicine, ICU and emergency as well as supervisory roles in community and tertiary care settings for seniors. She is currently a Clinical Nurse Specialist - Seniors for Island Health and her areas of interest are dementia friendly hospitals and elder friendly environment.

## **Exploring the Link Between the Arts and Well-Being: How Arts-Based Interventions Support the Well-Being of Persons Living with Dementia**

*Shelley Canning*

The arts have long been understood as being integral to humanity. The arts create bridges and links across social structures with both social and economic benefits associated with civic inclusion, participation and development. In particular, the social benefits related to the arts are understood to support health and quality of life through personal enrichment, creativity, and subjective well-being.

Quality of life and well-being for people living with dementia has been associated with participation in meaningful activities and social relationships. Increasingly the arts have been explored with the goal of providing opportunities for meaningful engagement for these individuals. Thus, dementia programming has embraced a wide range of arts-based interventions, typically drawing on programming involving music, dance, visual arts, and drama. Engaging in arts-based interventions provides important opportunities for social inclusion, creativity, and communication thus supporting health and well-being for people living with dementia.

My presentation will draw on two recent research studies in exploring the role of the arts in supporting the well-being of people living with dementia. Visual art was observed to provide opportunities for residents in a local long-term care home to both critique and appreciate an art installation. These paintings provided a unique point of connection prompting communication and promoting interaction between staff and residents. A second study highlighted the benefits of an innovative inter-generational dance programme that brought school-aged children together with residents living with dementia in long-term care in weekly ballet classes. Again, the benefits of this programme were largely socially oriented, focusing on communication, interaction, reminiscence, and engagement. While measuring outcomes related to well-being and quality of life is challenging the positive outcomes of this arts-based intervention were captured in film footage of the dance classes; an excerpt from our documentary film *They Aren't Scary* will be shared to conclude this presentation.

BIO

**Shelley Canning** is an Associate Professor in nursing and Lead for the Centre for Education and Research on Ageing at the University of the Fraser Valley. She is also a doctoral candidate in nursing at the University of British Columbia where her dissertation research explores engagement, meaning, and quality of life for older adults including those with advanced dementia. She is interested in the development and benefits of inter-generational relationships, and the role that arts-based interventions play in determining quality of life for people with dementia. Her research methods emphasize visual data to hear the voices of people living with dementia.