

IGNITING Research through THE ARTS

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“Integrating the arts in research methodology affords scholars new lenses for viewing, analyzing, representing, and disseminating research. The term Arts Integrated Studies is used to refer to research projects which use the arts as a generative mechanism in the research process.”

For millions of years, our ancestors believed that the sun revolved around the Earth. That is until Nicolaus Copernicus, in a flash of creative brilliance, realized that we had it all backwards. It’s a classic example of transformative research, an instant in time that changes everything we believed to be true and opens our view to new paths—that’s how Arts Integrated Studies ignites transformative research.

The problem is, how do you bottle that lightning? Dr. Pauline Sameshima, Canada Research Chair in Arts Integrated Studies, is researching how artistic activities incorporated into research activities can actually spark this creative brilliance. Dr. Sameshima developed the Parallaxic Praxis Model, a collaborative research method which is based on the parallax principle: an object will look different – bigger, smaller, have a different context – depending on where you are viewing it from. In interdisciplinary teams, researchers from different fields will analyze the same data in different ways. Data can also be translated into artefacts including stories, poems, or visual arts as a way to examine and share the data from new angles and perspectives and with broad groups of people.

Through the Arts Integrated Research (AIR) Lab at Lakehead University, with national and international interdisciplinary teams, Dr. Sameshima is collaborating with researchers to develop the methodology. This work will advance AIR as a significant research practice to support innovative interdisciplinary research as well as creativity development in Canada, the new driver of the knowledge economy.

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