



ENTANGLEMENTS ACROSS TIME-SPACE: AN EKPHRASTIC POETIC RESPONSE TO “CRAFT, RELATIONAL AESTHETICS, AND ETHICS OF CARE” BY BELINDA MACGILL

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Abstract: Following the protocol set out by Fetui Iosefo (2019, this issue), I sought Belinda’s permission to write an ekphrastic poetic response to her art assemblages since, as Iosefo frames it, “if there was no ethical consent and processing ... we would be no different from the colonizers” – just one more shell in my bucket. Like Fetui, I too am responding to more than just the visuals. The essence of Belinda’s work calls me to the past and allows me to come to a different and broader understanding of my childhood experience, while also functioning as a creative trigger – hallmarks of ekphrastic poetry (Faulkner, 2009). It is only after I received Belinda’s enthusiastic response that I submitted this poetic response.

Keywords: craft; ekphrastic poetic response; relational ethics; postcoloniality; entanglements

is also political.

Across entangled time, on another water's shore in another hemisphere,

Sea balls wash up on intertidal shores, crafted by the oceans, compressed entangled masses of relations – feathers, sand, pebbles, sea grass, fishing line, and shells.

Gifts offered by the sea.

But first, she asks, and deeply listens, about which sea balls can be taken.

An invitation to connection ... an attunement to the spaces occupied on the shores.

Spaces occupied by a sovereign People not her own, but connected through responsibility, reciprocity, and relationship.

A call to an ethical engagement with the land

Once accepted, with gratitude, she assembles ... modifies ...

Stitches into relationship (each one itself a complex accumulation) found objects – wood, berries, luminescent yellow leaves with turquoise-headed pins, the colour of the sea.

Each a meditation on and enactment of community ... interconnectivity ... entangled

Each assemblage, a crafting of resistance and disruption against economic purpose and accumulative value.

Sewing herself back into a place of possibilities of postcolonial relationality ... making for beauty, belonging, and healing.

This act

is also political.

Across entangled time, on another water's shore in another hemisphere,

I first meet the ocean when I am 3 years old. I am with my mother in Atlantic City. It is Memorial Day – the official start of seashore days. The beach is crowded – blankets and bodies and buckets tangled together.

I stand entranced by the wet sand and the rhythm of the waves as they touch my toes. But the seashells entangle me in their beauty. Everywhere I look, there are shells. With my yellow bucket, I walk along the ocean's edge gathering them, one by one.

I think that this is the first time I feel greed. I want to collect every single shell on that beach. I am focused. I am seized by a passion to accumulate, devoid of any thought except to take ...

to possess ... to own ... my own childish enactment of coloniality.

Those shells are lost now, forgotten, discarded, except for this story.

I wander away in search of more ... I refuse to answer the questions of the adults who ask, "Where is your mother? Are you lost, little girl?" I shun communal concern. I am focused on thieving the shells.

The family story is that I am gone for 4 hours, finally found by a cousin 1½ miles further up the beach with a bucket heavy with shells.

This act

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