

Special Issue Call for Papers

Title: Arts-based research and artful approaches as Black homeplace

Expected publication date: Fall 2026.

Guest Editors: Adwoa Onuora, Trent University and Stephanie Fearon, York University, Ontario, Canada.

Black communities have historically leveraged the arts for knowledge production and intergenerational cultural transmission. Artful approaches have served as a way for Black artists, activist, and academics to “situate themselves in a world structured by anti-Blackness” (Raiford, 2024) and to imagine what is possible (hooks, 2008). Increasingly, Black researchers have sought to challenge dominant notions of what constitutes valid research, acknowledging that research aimed at creating meaningful change ought to honor our ways of knowing and being in the world. This commitment is evidenced in the burgeoning body of Canadian scholarship that examines the experiences of Black communities across a wide range of systemic and institutional settings. Fearon (2022, 2024), for example, explores how Black mothers in Canada reimagine learning opportunities for their children. Drawing on storytelling (particularly the African tradition of call and response), she integrates culturally rooted African practices into both the research process and its representation. Hassen (2025) employs photovoice to illuminate the lived experiences of Black residents navigating spatial inequities in Toronto’s urban greenspaces. Likewise, Edwards (2025) positions arts-informed methodology as a means of fostering identity, self-expression, and self-exploration among Black youth in Canada, affirming its value as an approach that decentralizes conventional research standards and processes. Collectively, these works underscore the transformative potential of arts-based research, demonstrating how artful approaches can function as Black homeplaces—sites of healing, renewal, and epistemological equity. In laying this foundation, Black feminist activist and intellectual bell hooks tells us that homeplace is:

... about the construction of a safe place where black people [can] affirm one another and by so doing heal many of the wounds inflicted by racist domination. We could not learn to love or respect ourselves in the culture of white supremacy, on the outside; it was there on the inside, in that “homeplace,” most often created and kept by black women, that we had the opportunity to grow and develop, to nurture our spirits (hooks, 1990 p. 384).

In the struggle to liberate African/Black peoples the world over, homeplaces have been nurturers of anti-racist worldviews and actions. The homeplace has enabled our community members to survive alienating ideologies and societal practices. Homeplace thus forms a central part of African/Black communities and can be a significant source of resistance to oppressive social structures. hooks' conceptual rendering of homeplace opens up possibilities for viewing artful approaches to research as refuge, resistance, and reclamation.

Inspired by Black feminists' conceptions of homeplace (hooks, 2015) and Black artistic research traditions (Crooks et. al 2023), we aim to extend understandings of how African/Black scholars, activists, and artists use inquiry processes to envision humanizing homeplaces for African/Black communities.

For this special issue, "*Arts-based research and artful approaches as Black homeplace*" we welcome submissions that engage Black creativity and knowledge-making through research and the research process. We invite contributions from practitioners, scholars, artists, and activists working at the intersections of Black studies, arts-based methodologies, and social justice.

Submissions may include:

- Scholarly articles (5,000–7,500 words)
- Visual essays and photography that allow meaning making about Black lives and Black futurities
- Multimedia works accompanied by a 1,000-word contextual statement
- Performances or creative representations
- Poetic expressions and reflections on homeplace
- Examples of scholarly works that reimagine homeplace on digital platforms

Key themes for this special issue may include:

- Black homeplace as a site of epistemological equity evidenced in and through art-based and/or arts-informed research methodologies
- Advancing child and youth-centred creative methodologies
- Engaging homeplace through African/Black children's artful ways of knowing and creative inquiries
- Digital reframings and renderings of homeplace
- Reimagining homeplace as acts of refusal
- Remembering the spiritual within artful forms of inquiry
- Black artists, activists, and everyday practitioners disrupting anti-Blackness through artful inquiry and visual arts research

Submissions due by **April 30, 2026**. Inquiries should be directed to Adwoa Onuora at adwoaonuora@trentu.ca and Stephanie Fearon at sfearon1@edu.yorku.ca.

Please review the Art/Research International submission guidelines and download the journal's formatting guide before making your submission. These can be found on the journal website at:

<https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/ari/index.php/ari/about/submissions#authorGuidelines>

Please clearly indicate on your title page that you are directing your submission to this special issue.

References

Crooks, J., Fontaine, D., & Forni, S. (Eds.). (2023). *Making history: Visual arts & Blackness in Canada*. Royal Ontario Museum.

Edwards, F. (2025). Black youth mental health: Reconstructing identity through art-based Research. *Journal of Critical Research Methodologies*. https://cdspress.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/JCRM_Edwards-Akunesiobike_BlackYouth_Proof_FINAL.pdf

Fearon, S. (2022). Freedom dreaming with Black Canadian mothers. *Frontiers in Education*, 7, 1025651. <https://doi.org/10.3389/FEDUC.2022.1025651/BIBTEX>

Fearon, S. (2024). I See You, Mama: Low-Income Black Mother Leaders Reimagining Schools as Homeplace for Their Children. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 58(3),482–502. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jcs-2023-0045>

Hassen, N. (2025). Narratives of exclusion: A photovoice study towards racial equity and justice in public urban greenspaces. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 254, 105233-. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2024.105233>

hooks, b. (1990). Homeplace (a site of resistance). In J. Ritchie & K. Ronald (Eds.), *Available means: An anthology of women's rhetoric(s)* (pp. 382–390). University of Pittsburgh Press.

hooks, b. (1997). Homeplace: A site of resistance. In *Undoing place? A geographical reader* (pp. 33-38). Routledge.

hooks, b. (2000). *Feminist theory: from margin to center* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.

hooks, bell. (2008). *Outlaw culture: resisting representations*. Routledge.

hooks, b. (2015). *Yearning: Race, gender, and cultural politics*. Routledge.

Raiford, L. (2024). Black Habits of Photography. *African American Studies & African Diaspora Studies*, UC Berkley. https://africam.berkeley.edu/news/Black-habits-photography?utm_n