



Editorial

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From September 24 to 29, 2024, Métis scholars and thinkers gathered at the University of Manitoba for knowledge sharing, community building, and joyful expressions of culture. As one of the hosts of Mawachihitotaak 2024, and the editor of this special issue, I feel immense gratitude to the Métis visionaries, artists, educators, leaders, and learners who chose to spend those days with us, and those whose words and images I am lucky to share with you here.

Mawachihitotaak emerged as a response to the lack of Métis-specific presentations made at other Indigenous Studies conferences and conferences that were not focused on Indigenous Studies (Forsythe & Delgado, 2025). Where there were Métis contributions, they were often booked during the same time slots, if they were accepted at all. From these conversations, and the labour of Métis thinkers across the country, Mawachihitotaak emerged – a biennial community-centred research conference that creates space for both established and emerging Métis academics as well as Métis people working with and for their communities outside of academic spaces, including artists, youth, Elders, and community members.

This year, organized by a team of Métis thinkers and scholars from across the country, we hosted almost 300 attendees for those days, and this special issue reflects some of the beauty and genius that was shared, as well as the perspectives of those who attended and listened to the theorizing that took place.

This issue of *Pawaatamihk* looks a little different than issues thus far. Volume Two Issue One includes an additional section, “Notes from the Floor”, which highlights reflections from those who attended the conference. In this section, Toorenburgh reflects on the expansive understanding of what constitutes knowledge and scholarship at the conference and reminds us of the historical and contemporary brilliance in our communities that is not always reflected in academic spaces. McGillis recalls the words of Sherry Farrell Racette in her presentation where Farrell Racette spoke to being “seeded and re-seeded in community,” and McGillis shares an image that was drawn while reverberating on this phrase. McCracken speaks to the common thread of love that transcended throughout the conference, and the reinvigoration of coming back to the homeland to be in community with other Métis people. Finally, Smith, Lefebvre, and Leggett recount parts of their conference presentation on their experiences as Métis people living outside the homeland in Quebec, and the considerations that diasporic Métis must hold.

The art feature of this issue is from Marissa Magneson who had attended the conference and created beadwork in reflection of her time in that space. We have also included a reflection on Marissa’s beadwork from Lefebvre, to mark the generative and evocative way that Lefebvre, like many Métis scholars who review regularly for *Pawaatamihk*, invoke in their review process. Finally, the issue concludes with two scholarly papers, both of which were presented at Mawachihitotaak 2025. Himer and Exner-Cortens examine the experiences of Métis young adults in Alberta who are (re)connecting to their communities and culture, and some of the

implications these experiences have for Métis young peoples' well-being. Beauchemin interrogates *L'espace de Louis Goulet*, a text that was first told as an oral story and then translated into written text, and speaks to truth, storytelling, and the aesthetics of the demise of the buffalo through the eyes of the Métis.

I am indebted to these brilliant Métis minds for sharing their words and dreaming with us. Their contributions to the field of Métis studies through their own research or through the engagement in and support of Métis-specific work. The next gathering of Métis thinkers at Mawachihitotaak 2026 will be hosted in Calgary, and I can't wait to see what comes next.



References

Forsythe, L. & Delgado, L. (2025).

The impact of Métis-specific spaces on our spirit. In L. Forsythe & J. Markides (Eds.), *Métis Coming Together: Sharing Our Stories and Knowledges*, pp. 7–18. Peter Lang.