

# The Ancestral Waves Project™ (AWP)

The Restorative Modality: A Material Genealogy™ of Lineage Gaps and Intergenerational Continuity

An Arts-based Research Project (ABR)

Presentation by Multidisciplinary Artist, AWP Researcher, and Project Lead Director Shā'-nay Paris

# Abstract

This independent arts-based research project introduces Material Genealogy™, an original, practice-led methodology integrating Macramé (a contemporary adaptation of hand-knots and finger weaving) and Fiber as a Primary Source, land-based engagement, and lineage-informed ways of knowing. Developed and led by the artist-researcher, the framework utilizes Material Remembrance™ to operate through embodied and emergent practice rather than extractive or prescriptive research models.

Positioned within diasporic and land-based epistemologies, the work explores intergenerational knowledge transmission and cultural continuity while maintaining ethical containment of cultural-specific processes. By framing fiber art as a sensory archive, the research seeks to recover land-based ways of knowing that have been underrepresented from conventional historical records. To protect the integrity of the work, specific findings related to the current foundational gateway remain proprietary to the researcher at this time.

Keywords: Material Genealogy™, Material Remembrance™, arts-based research (ABR), practice-led methodology, textile art, land-based inquiry, lineage-informed knowledge, ambiguous Loss, restorative continuity, tactile cosmology, non-verbal and tactile storytelling, visual narrative, finger weaving, and hand-knots.

# Scope

This project scope outlines a proprietary, independent research framework that integrates several methodologies:

- **Arts-based and practice-led research:** Utilizing original material production as a primary mode of inquiry and analysis.
- **Material Genealogy™:** Employing Hand-knots and Fiber as a Primary Source for historical and archival investigation.
- **Land-based inquiry:** Positioning the land as an active knowledge generator, not merely a backdrop or context.
- **Intergenerational and lineage-informed inquiry:** Focusing on the transmission and recovery of knowledge across generations and the mending of lineage gaps.
- **Applications across multiple sectors:** Scalable applications across art, wellness, community development, and academic contexts.
- **Independent, scalable framework:** A proprietary model led by the artist-researcher, designed for replication and expansion while maintaining the integrity of the original methodology.

# Methodological Framework

This research employs the proprietary framework of Material Genealogy™—a method where original material production and embodied experience drive the inquiry. The approach is defined by the following core principles:

- Practice-led Research: Knowledge emerges through sustained making, material engagement, and the active process of creation.
- Hand-Knots and Finger-Weaves as Primary Sources: Utilizing both technologies to identify common structural patterns that survived displacement.
- Tactile Cosmologies: Viewing both the "knot" and the "weave" as visual and physical maps of ancestral order and connection
- Embodied Inquiry: The reliance on somatic awareness and material interactions as primary sources of insight and data generation.
- Land-Based Epistemology: Acknowledging the place and environment as essential co-participants and knowledge sources in the research process.
- Lineage-Informed Orientation: Engagement with inherited, non-written knowledge systems, honoring ancestral guidance and intergenerational memory.
- Emergent Design: An iterative, adaptive, and responsive methodology that prioritizes discovery over predefined outcomes.
- Ethical Containment: Core processes and specific findings related to the foundational gateway are intentionally not fully disclosed to protect authorship, cultural specificity, and integrity of the work.

# Positioning

- **Grounded in diasporic and land-based epistemologies:** The framework is built on a "two-eyed seeing" approach that values diverse ways of knowing.
- **Refuses reductive identity categorization:** The work acknowledges racialized histories and lineage gaps while also expanding the lens to acknowledge and explore the full spectrum of multi-national ancestry.
- **Positions the artist as both knowledge-holder and methodological designer:** The researcher maintains intellectual sovereignty over the Material Genealogy™ framework.
- **Operates alongside, not subordinate to, Western academic paradigms:** This is a key declaration that your work is a peer-level methodology, not a secondary or "lesser" form of research.
- **Prioritizes continuity, authorship, and intergenerational responsibility over extractive knowledge production:**
  - This directly addresses ethical containment and your commitment to the community you are seeking to connect with.

## Context:

This research explores sensory wellness and creative expansion through arts and land-based inquiry. It engages experiences shaped by displacement and migration, supporting reclamation, restorative knowledge systems, and integrative ways of knowing.

The work prioritizes embodied presence, cultural awareness, creative agency, and intergenerational continuity. To protect the integrity and proprietary nature of this research, specific historical linkages and findings related to the foundational gateway are held in private archives.

# Research Context & Ethical Orientation

The work explores embodied knowledge transmission, cultural continuity, and intergenerational relevance through sustained creative practice and the application of Material Remembrance™.

Developed outside formal academic institutions, the project operates as a sovereign inquiry that aligns with contemporary arts-based and decolonial research paradigms. A core tenet of this framework is the maintenance of ethical containment regarding culturally specific processes and findings. This intentional "strategic silence" ensures that the methodology remains resistant to extractive research models and protects the integrity of the lineages involved.

Specific research questions, objectives, and outcomes are articulated within individual project instances developed using the Material Genealogy™ framework. To protect the proprietary nature of these inquiries, detailed findings related to the current foundational gateway remain the exclusive intellectual property of the researcher.

This framework is designed to address both historical displacements and the contemporary 'ambiguous losses' associated with complex family beginnings and personal lineage gaps.

# Original Statement

To the creator's knowledge, this project represents an under-documented, distinct, and newly articulated methodology that integrates macramé textile practice (as a contemporary adaptation of ancient hand-knots and finger-weaving), land-based inquiry, and lineage-informed ways of knowing within an independent, arts-based research framework. This work focuses on different forms of migration and displacement and its impact on lineage gaps, memory, and creative expansion particularly as it relates to ethno-cultural hand-made creations and related traditions.

Originality is located in the methodological design of Material Genealogy™, scope, and epistemic positioning, rather than claims of exclusivity or universality. This modality utilizes macramé as a contemporary adaptation of the ancient technologies of finger weaving and hand-knotting as a primary epistemic medium. By translating ancestral stories and cosmologies into textured form, the work provides an accessible and sensory-friendly pathway for deepening cultural continuity, remembrance, and mending lineage gaps while providing tangible, textured, artifacts as archives for future generations.

Not all aspects of the process are made public, as transparency is balanced with responsibility to cultural specificity and authorship.

The project intentionally avoids extractive or spectacular modes of knowledge production, prioritizing ethical containment and lineage accountability.