Kwey, Emilio Wawatie ni’dijinakaz, and I’m the sound designer for the Youth Committee’s Intergenerational Garden soundscape. The concept of this composition is rooted in my own understanding of intergenerationality, particularly through the transferring of knowledge related to food sovereignty and well-being, bimadiziwin. This is one way I chose to explore the relationships between generations and the knowledge that connects us to the land.

I chose to fuse acoustic blues guitar with an archival voice recording of Anishnabe Elders sharing insights and information regarding the historical relationships Anishnabeg had with food. In the beginning, they say, “They used to eat really good, the Anishnabeg back then.”

The Elders speak of the dependency on the white man's food, like sugar, flour, salt, and lard, and how the reliance on these products was rooted in the starvation of our peoples and the forced dependency on food rations. Yet, they also speak of the land being the grocery store and how everything that was needed was out there to nourish the Anishnabeg all year round, according to each season.

I found what the Elders were saying in this archival interview recording to be of great importance, as it strongly resonated with the concept of the intergenerational garden. The disruption of food knowledge within our communities directly impacted intergenerational health and our connection to the land on a deeper level than just hunting and fishing, but also the knowledge of wild-foraged and domestically grown food varieties that varied from region to region.

For me, this soundscape offers one perspective on intergenerationality, through both the knowledge that has been passed down and the knowledge that has been disrupted across generations. It is a way of reflecting on our relationships with the land, the teachings of those who came before us, and the importance of carrying this knowledge forward.