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Miller Arts Scholars  
Rising Fourth Year Arts Award Proposal  
March 29 2024

**Project Title:** Framing Lost Familial Locations with Large Format Film

**Executive Summary:** I will be requesting \$2,998 in order to travel to Southern Germany and buy large format film, darkroom paper, film sleeves, and darkroom filters. This semester I have been working on a photo series about my relationship with my dad, and want to extend this train of thought and practice on a broader scale in order to make work about my relationship with my foreign identity and relatives.

**Proposed Project:**

**Background and Questions:**

In 2017, I had the opportunity to visit Southern Germany where much of my extended family on my grandfather's paternal side lives. It was a life changing experience, especially as a 16 year old, to be able to travel abroad for the very first time in such an authentic way. I stayed with family the entire stay, where I ate homemade German food, conversed with a mixture of broken German and English, discussed cultural differences, and began to see my life at home in the states in a whole new way. Since 2017, and the further I have studied film photography, I have become explicitly interested in familial ties and the links that are drawn across oceans which have created a deep network of trust and respect for the extended family that I barely know. My images this semester focus on the relationship between myself and my dad, and how we have used our respective creative projects as a communication tool. I would love to have the opportunity to utilize my photography as a means of bridging gaps, in order for me to have a better understanding of my ancestral history, and to forge closer relationships to the family I scarcely know because of physical distance.

Throughout this project, I am mainly interested in photographing the significant places in my family history. I am wondering how the completion of this project will impact my familial relationships to those living relatives that I will be contacting? Will I feel more connected to those family members that have passed away by examining the places that were significant to them with a photographic eye? What will I find out about my extended family that is not clear without being in the places that are significant to them? How will I view the relationships with my extended family and my close family members after the completion of this project? Will shooting film on a 4x5 camera impact how I view the places I am photographing?

**Methods:**

I will complete this study by contacting my extended family members who live in Germany to create a list of places I will need to visit. I will be conducting interviews with my family in order to understand the familial significance of each location and to gain context as to how these sites functioned in the past and in the present. I anticipate photographing family homes, towns, gravesites, and other locations discussed and suggested. After traveling to Germany and spending some time interviewing family members and understanding the importance of the places I will be photographing, I will then take my camera equipment on site and begin shooting the film. I intend to shoot all of my photographs on 4x5 film, as that is my primary medium. I want to explore what it is like traveling with the 4x5 equipment and the logistics of being an on site photographer. I will travel between locations mostly by train, uber, or ride from a family member. After shooting the film, I will then ship it back to the states where I will send the color film to a lab, and develop the black and white film in the UVA darkroom.

**Needed Equipment and Faculty Mentor:**

I will need to borrow a 4x5 film camera, dark cloth, cable release, tripod, and negative carriers from the UVA darkroom. I will also need to use darkroom chemistry (developer, stop bath, fixer, fixer remover) and facilities (film processing station, enlarger, easel, large sink, trays, hurricane washer, drying racks) provided by the UVA darkroom upon my arrival back in Charlottesville. All of this equipment I will have free access to as a photography student at UVA. I will also be working with my faculty mentor James Scheuren, and Bill Wylie, who are both photography professors at UVA.

**Anticipated Outcome(s) and Potential Limitations:**

After the completion of the study, I anticipate having a much deeper understanding of my family history as well as the places that were significant to it. I hope to forge closer relationships with my extended family and make it clear that our family is extremely important to me, and the best way for me to comprehend it is by taking, processing, and printing the images. I intend to create a body of work with at least a minimum of 30 photographs that I am proud of that will either be compiled into a photo book or show.

Potential limitations of the study might include a lack of information from my extended family about locations or their willingness to want to be involved. I don't intend on taking photographs of any of them; however, they might not be interested in being involved or providing the contextual information I need. We do have written family records, so I would be able to find towns and gravesites through that, but would rather receive accounts via conversation and interviews. Also, in shooting film there is always room for error, especially in taking it through airport security. Hopefully, I would be able to develop a couple negatives while still in Germany to make sure there were no shooting errors, and then be confident in shipping the rest home.

**Significance of the Work:**

This work is extremely important to me as it will be creating a record for myself and my extended family of the places that are historically significant to us. This is also an opportunity for me to be able to practice my photography internationally, which is something I have always dreamed of doing. By creating this body of work, I will be able to examine the technical aspects of photography like correct exposures, framing, and printing practices, while also forging and maintaining relationships with my extended family. After returning home and developing all the film, I will then print the black and white film myself, and compile the photographs into a show or digital book. By working so intimately with the prints after they have been shot, I will be able to perfect my darkroom and Photoshop practice as well as be able to contemplate the nuances of the locations I shot and the family members I consulted.

**Presentation of Project:**

I intend on having a ~20 11x14 black and white silver gelatin photographic prints from my time in Germany on display in Ruffin Hall in late fall of 2024. I also plan on creating a process presentation as well as displaying prints at the 2025 Miller Arts Scholars culminating showcase.

**Timeline:**

Mid July 2024: fly to Munich and photograph for ~2 weeks

Early - Mid Fall 2024: process and print film in the UVA darkroom

Mid - Late Fall 2024: curate show

Late Fall 2024: Present show in Ruffin Hall or other UVA building

Spring 2025: Present results of project in Miller Arts Scholar culminating showcase

**Itemized budget:**

- Roundtrip flight from DC to Munich: ~\$1,700
- Food and in country travel: ~\$220
- [Kodak Professional Tri-X 320 Black and White Negative Film \(4 x 5", 50 Sheets\)](#) x2: \$380
- [Ilford Multigrade FB Classic Paper \(Glossy, 11 x 14", 50 Sheets\)](#) x3: \$487
- [Print File Archival Storage Page for Negatives, 4x5", Holds 4 Negatives or Transparencies \(Binder Only\) - 25 Pack](#) x2: \$14
- [Ilford Multigrade Filter Set with Holder](#) - 3x3": \$147
- Shipping from B&H Photo: ~\$50
  
- TOTAL: \$2,998