

IMPRINT: PRINTMAKING AND AMERICA'S NATIONAL PARKS

Claire Burke | Miller Arts Scholars Fourth Year Award Outcome Report | March 2019

As a studio art and environmental science double major, I am deeply invested in exploring the interface between the two fields. I am especially interested in America's National Park System, having worked as a seasonal employee at Olympic National Park. I used my grant to interview the creators of the iconic Ranger Doug's Enterprises National Park posters. I believe that the creation of America's public lands is one of our most unique achievements as a nation, but also one that is at high risk of being permanently diminished in coming years.



Still from the opening sequence of the film.

I collaborated with an alumna of UVA Studio Art Cinematography, Sanjana Sekhar, on this project. Sanjana came with me to the Seattle area with me in August, and taught me the ropes of cinematography. We filmed interviews with the employees of Ranger Doug's Enterprises, and then I went on solo to interview rangers in Olympic National



Screen printer Darren Haney pulling an edition.



Screen technician Ian Webb preparing a screen for a Yellowstone National Park.

Park in August 2018. I edited footage throughout the fall and winter, completing the film in late February. Sanjana served as mentor throughout the editing process, and helped to polish the last cut of the film.

The film starts out by explaining the history behind the original serigraphic Works Progress Administration posters, which were created during the Great Depression era by artists employed under the New Deal. It then touches on the history of Ranger Doug's Enterprises, the business founded by Doug Leen which faithfully reproduces the historical WPA posters, and has created new posters in-the-style-of. A concise explanation sequence of the screen-printing process spans the middle of the film, detailing to viewers how the posters are made and introducing the craftspeople involved in the process. Finally, the tension between degradation of our national parks and the increased popularity of the parks is tied in with interviews of park rangers from Olympic National Park and public domain footage of parks. The Ranger Doug posters are a keystone between appreciation of the beauty of parks and stewardship of the environment.



Still from the end sequence of the film, shot in the Hoh Rainforest of Olympic National Park.



Interview footage with Janis Burger, a park ranger at Olympic National Park.

The film has received a modest, but strong amount of press thus far. UVA's Office of Sustainability featured the project on their blog in October 2018, see <https://sustainability.virginia.edu/news/blog/nature-art.html>. Additionally, the final 12-minute film, *Imprint: Printmaking and America's National Parks* premiered on March 1, 2019 in Charlottesville at my environmental art show, *Close to Home*. Sanjana and I are currently seeking opportunities to continue the narrative of *Imprint*. We would like to expand the project into a longer film and submit the existing short film to film festivals.

This experience has been extremely formative in my academic career and my future career plans. I cannot thank the Miller Arts Scholars program enough for making this project possible.

To watch the film:
<https://vimeo.com/325513576>
Password: rangerdoug

Appreciating Nature Through Art

October 11, 2018 · Sabrina Sampson



When awarded a fourth-year grant last spring, Miller Arts Scholar Claire Burke had to decide what she would do with her funding, so she asked herself what was most important to her. As a Studio Art and Environmental Science double major, the answer was easy: she knew she cared about the natural world.

Feature article about the project by UVA's Office of Sustainability.



Attendees gathering in front of the project screen for the premiere of Imprint.



Premiere showing of the film at my environmental art show, Close to Home.