

Kirsten Hemrich
Miller Scholars Arts Award

Ecstatic Art and Travel

Like many artists with wanderlust, I have always admired Kerouac's masterpiece, *On the Road*. There is something deeply ecstatic about the idea of travel: the experience of transience, of journey, of existing in the in-between. Travel is so well suited for artmaking and poetry because it is simply inspiring. It allows the artist to step into a space where she has never been and it challenges preconceived notions about the ways life can be lived. It calls to the traveller to constantly observe and attempt to make sense of the world--which is essentially what each artist does in his or her respective medium: painters organize the world by color, poets by word, musicians by sound.

As an undergraduate student about to undergo my final summer before graduation, I fully intend to devote myself to artmaking and travel. I am proposing a two part project which will take course over four months. The first part will be an intensive month of travel abroad. During this month, I intend to make a book of visual poetry and drawings which will document my experience and also explore the ecstasy that is inherent to travel--ecstasy being derived from word, 'ekstasis,' meaning: "movement of the soul outside the body." I will visually and poetically explore the transient, exciting, almost spiritual experience of ecstasy. The visual poems and drawings will be raw, intense, and gestural. My goal for this initial book and month of travel is to focus on experience and observation. During this month of travel, I intend to visit Madrid, Rome, and Dublin; cities known for producing outstanding art and poetry.

The second part of my project will take place back in Charlottesville when I return from my journey and have access to my paint and studio space. I will take the remainder of summer break and the fall semester to process my experience and focus on turning the book of visual poems into large scale paintings. I also plan to intern at a local gallery or non-profit art center over the summer while I work on these paintings.

As a double major in studio art (painting) and poetry writing, I intend for this summer and these works to be the foundation for my fourth-year capstone projects in both majors. Recently, I have been exploring ways to cohesively merge my two mediums: paint and word. I have been studying the sketchbooks of Ragnar Kjartansson and visual poems of Kenneth Patchen over the course of this process. I am very eager to continue the process of merging visual art and poetry this summer before my fourth-year show. I have also been offered a solo exhibition space in the Charlottesville coffeeshop, Mudhouse for this upcoming November. It is my goal to have a significant portion of the work ready to hang for this show. I plan to have approximately three 60"x60" paintings on canvas and three to four smaller works on paper complete by this November. I imagine that the full body of work will include six or seven large scale paintings on canvas, six or seven works on paper, and the travel book.

As the timeline of this trip is long, and the expenses are high, I applying for two grants: The Miller Scholars Arts Award and the University Award for Project in the Arts. I have detailed my budget below.

Budget:

Transportation:	Flights in and out of Europe, bus fare, flights between cities	1500
Food:	\$30-40 per day; 28 days	1120
Lodging:	\$40 per night; 28 nights	1120
Backpack / travel gear		500
Museum/cultural experience fare:		200
Passport:		135
Art Supplies	paints, stretcher bars, canvas, frames, pens, film, etc.	800
Rent:	studio pace: Charlottesville during summer-- 2 months	500

TOTAL: 5,875