

Taxidermy of Biologically Possible Alien Organisms

Proposal:

For the last year, I have been working on a series of sculptures that feature realistic fictional lifeforms that come from an alien world. The goal of this project is to create multiple pieces at various scales to be displayed as if they are part of a natural history museum, presented as if they aren't fictional at all.

Previously, with the help from funding from the Miller Arts program, I was able to create numerous small-scale alien embryos that are less than a centimeter tall, and a sliced piece of a tentacle of a massive organism about 4ft tall. I am currently working to incorporate real bones dissected from various animals to add another level of realism and a breath of life to my creatures. While these creatures are fantastical, as they are grotesque, pink, and packed with glitter and rhinestones, they feature universal concepts that exist past this world: scenes of birth, life and death. I believe the next step is to study real life, and the animals that already exist in this world, and incorporate not only the anatomy, but the parts of a real organism.

Taxidermy is an artform that preserves life, and displays a scene that is either fictional or natural. This summer, I wish to attend various workshops, classes, and private lessons in order to learn the basic skills of taxidermy, and master it enough to be able to incorporate parts of it into my alien sculptures.

This proposal will span two parts: summer when I will learn taxidermy, and the fall and spring when I will work to incorporate the taxidermy into my art.

First, in early June, I will take weekly classes at University of Arts at Philadelphia. The course is called *Taxidermy: Charivari-Wearable Trophies*. The course involves small scale taxidermy, and will introduce me to the basics, as it will involve use of preserved specimens, teeth, locks of hair, claws or whiskers shed from pets or objects found in nature.

During this month, I will also travel to New York to attend workshops at Brooklyn Taxidermy, where they provide classes on taxidermy of various rodents. After a few classes, I will take a private lesson to learn taxidermy of a large animal, for example a racoon. Finally, I will attend Oddities & Curiosities Expo, where I will be able to be exposed to various taxidermy that is created specifically to be fantastical, as well as take a taxidermy class on creating a fictional animal, a jackalope, to learn how to apply my new skills in taxidermy to create original, alien creatures.

I will stay in Philadelphia for most of the summer, as being in a city opens up more opportunities to attend various classes and taxidermy-related events. I will attend 6 total workshops, few involving travel to New York from Philadelphia. Staying in Philadelphia will enable me to stay near both the University of the Arts and the New York classes, and I will be able to do so rent-free as I will be staying with fellow Miller Arts Scholar Tina Hashemi. However, I will be paying for my own food and miscellaneous living expenses.

My biggest obstacle will be COVID-19, and how it will affect the schedule of the workshops. If the workshops are canceled, I will convert them into one-on-one private lessons. My outcomes report will include a portfolio of the sculptures created, along with in-process photos and summary of what I was able to learn over the summer.

Timeline

Summer 2020: Taxidermy workshops

June 3- July 1: Taxidermy as Wearable Art

June 6: Mouse/Small Rat Taxidermy Class

June 20: Chipmunk Taxidermy Class

June 27: Squirrel Taxidermy Class

June 30: Full body large mammal taxidermy private lesson

August 15 : Jackalope Workshop at the Oddities & Curiosities Expo

Fall 2020

Take advanced sculpture class

Creation of various sculptures involving taxidermy

Spring 2021

Take advanced sculpture classe

Continue creation of various sculptures involving

taxidermy Submit outcomes report before April 1st 4th year exhibition

Taxidermy as Wearable Art Workshop	\$325
Mouse/Small Rat Taxidermy Class	\$180
Chipmunk Taxidermy Class	\$220
Squirrel Taxidermy Class	\$250
Full body large mammal taxidermy private lesson	\$750
Jackalope Taxidermy Workshop At Expo	\$180
Food budget for the month of June-August	\$400
Transportation to Philadelphia, and to and from Philadelphia to New York (bus)	\$445

Art materials, supplies, and specimen budget	\$250
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TOTAL: \$3000

Participation in the Arts

Art Classes Taken: ARTS 2610, ARTS 2620, ARTS 2220, ARTS 2810, ARTS 2810, ARTS 3810, and ARTS 3812

I have taken CASS 1010 in the fall, and am currently taking CASS 1011. Last summer, I participated in ArtLab at Mountain Lake Biological Station. I have also contributed to various CIOs by creating digital art for flyers, posters, and stickers: College Science Scholars, Kinetic Sounds, growing for change, 1515 Arts Committee, etc.. I have also displayed work in cafes, including Shenandoah Joe.