

Project Proposal: Study of Tangible Dialogue

Project Overview

Communicating meaning through an artistic work is difficult for all artists. How can one translate a personal idea that seems innate, obvious, and pure to another? As an artist that relies heavily upon memory for works, I often think about how I can speak clearly and simply in my art despite personal symbolic connections I wish to incorporate in the piece. Exemplifying this idea, I often connect aphasia and artist purpose. Aphasia, a neurological disorder caused by damage to the language center of the brain, prevents affected individuals from finding and saying the accurate words to express a clear idea. I have the intent, however, the idea in its tangible form does not have the right language.

Recently, a close friend of mine, Ceili, passed away. Conveying the death of a loved one through art, among other serious events, has the possibility of being uncomfortable for both the artist and viewer. The artistic work, while cathartic for the artist to create, can become so directed at the personal tragedy that the viewer is unable to connect with the piece. The artist attempts to say words loaded with meaning, however, fails in their language. I am interested in this inability for dialogue between the artist and the viewer. The relationship between the viewer and the artist can be expanded to the communication between two individuals. They can intend to have honest discourse; however, both have different symbolic associations for the intangible ideas they wish to share. Because of flawed discourse, the ideas lose meaning. We can never say exactly what we intend to because the words do not exist.

I propose to examine the discourse between two individuals through an artistic piece, where words and images are overlain to communicate vivid and meaningful emotions, instead of a singular thought or phrase. I will draw inspiration from my communication with Ceili. The work will portray what I wished I had told her when I had the time and regret from not being able to communicate clearly. My relationship with Ceili will be both a parallel to and foundation for the communication between myself, the artist, and the viewer. The relationship between artist and viewer will be both personal and removed.

To convey the difficulty of meaningful communication, I will create a series of prints that employ text, digital images, and illustration. I will produce enough prints to cover a large wall, collage like, when displayed. Prints will draw upon personal memories, symbols, and quotes that I have connected to my discourse with Ceili, overlain with aphasia-like text. I intend on making approximately 15-20 separate prints that I will copy in editions of 7. Various combinations of prints will be arranged and framed together with singular found materials associated with Ceili. This will eventually produce many frames of connected prints and found materials. The nature of printmaking is important to the piece. Printmaking, while a personal and involved process, can make many copies. By repeating my personal images multiple times, they will lose some intimacy that might otherwise be uncomfortable. I will use many printmaking techniques: including intaglio, lithography, and relief printing. The number of printmaking techniques will imitate the large number of images. Together, the large number of prints and the complexity of personal meaning, will overload the viewer with emotional, yet almost undecipherable, symbols covering the difficulty of discourse between Ceili and I. This, in turn,

will translate to the relationship of communication between the artist and the viewer. The viewer can then make connections with their own personal relationships through the piece.

I hope that this work will be, in part, a way for me to synthesize the immensity of my thoughts following Ceili's death and the associated guilt. It is a statement to her, her family, her friends, and all viewers that she was there and mattered despite our inability to say it directly sometimes. Ceili was a student at UVa so it would be, in part, commemoration from her school a year following her death. It would also document my changing perspective on her death over the course of a year. As a developing artist, I struggle to incorporate genuine meaning in my work with clarity. Because most of my works are drawn from memories, this piece will allow me to better understand the language of my artistic style, especially when incorporating difficult ideas such as death. I believe the best way of approaching this inability is to throw everything out there and learn why and how a work confuses its viewers. The large number and variety of prints will also allow me to improve my printmaking technique. While I am proposing to create a large number of prints, I am personally attached to the ideas of this piece and will be motivated to complete the project.

Project Timeline

Because the piece is partially contingent on my changing perspective on Ceili's death, I will begin making prints in the summer instead of having a longer collection process.

- Summer 2016
 - Gather and purchase necessary printmaking materials.
 - Collect found materials that portray communication.
 - Create a selection of digital images for pronto plate lithography. Begin editing the images with Adobe Photoshop.
 - Create approximately 13 woodcut and linoleum prints and edition in sevens. Both printmaking techniques can be done without use of the Ruffin printmaking studio and will allow me to work on my project while I am studying abroad from May – June and at home. This will average 1 print per week.
 - Establish regular contact with Akemi Rollando, my faculty advisor, over email.
 - Stop by the Ruffin Hall printmaking studio when use of their equipment is necessary.
 - Begin sketching for additional prints.
- Fall 2016
 - Create an additional 3-7 prints in editions of 7 utilizing intaglio and lithography techniques. Work will be done at the Ruffin Hall printmaking studio.
 - Continue to learn printmaking techniques in a classroom setting by enrolling in *Intermediate Printmaking I*. This will allow me to receive feedback from my peers, professors, and faculty advisor in person.
 - Purchase framing supplies.
- Spring 2017
 - Arrange my prints and found materials into many, collage like, pieces. Take high quality scans and photos of the completed works.
 - Frame the completed works.
 - Establish weekly contact with Akemi over email and in person to track the progress of my piece.
 - Write an outcome summary by April 1.
 - Prepare my work to be displayed along with a spoken outcome report at the Arts Scholars showcase presentation.

Budget

Supplies will be purchased from local art stores and online websites such as Renaissance Graphic Arts, Hiromi Paper, Frames USA, Utrecht, and Dickblick.

Item	Cost
<i>BFK Rives Paper (70 sheets)</i>	350
<i>Frames and Matting</i>	200
<i>Japanese Papers</i>	200
<i>Mezzotint Rocker (2 1/2in)</i>	120
<i>Copper Etching Plates (8x10)</i>	120
<i>Lithography Inks</i>	100
<i>Birch Wood and Speedball Linoleum blocks</i>	100
<i>Etching Inks</i>	50
<i>Monotype Crayons</i>	50
<i>Adobe Photoshop Subscription (3 months)</i>	30
<i>Newsprint</i>	20
<i>Brushes</i>	20
<i>Paper Towels</i>	15
<i>Pronto Plates</i>	10
<i>Shipping</i>	50
Total: \$1435	