

Enabling the Universe

Project Overview

As someone who experiences life in a wheelchair, I often find myself discovering unusual and surprising relationships between myself and the physical world, as well as devising creative solutions that enable me to interact with my material surroundings. As an artist and film student, I've learned to apply these creative solutions to my work so that I can continue to study filmmaking and visual art.

While my hands aren't able to paint the way I'd like to with a paintbrush, and holding a camera while following an actor through the woods isn't something I can do, I've found that macro filmmaking that is concentrated on organic visual art (creating natural but abstract effects without the use of computer generated imagery) is a way in which I can study and capture movement in the universe with far fewer limitations than I'm met with in the full-scale natural world. Essentially, artistic endeavors of this sort create a downsized and more accessible universe that can be somewhat manipulated, but is still organic, unlike animation or CGI. For example, this type of work often takes place in a petri-dish with a macro lens and a variety of visually interesting materials.

While my focus has thus far been on filmmaking and visual art, time-based visual compositions such as the ones I hope to create in this project are truly brought to life by the accompanying sound. I hope to use this project as an opportunity to learn more about sound design and composition. I plan to collaborate with other artists with a specialty in sound design and music to compose the sound for my films, learning from them along the way.

Outcome & Equipment:

I see the outcome of this project as a collection of short films that explore the organic movement and behavior of materials such as inks, pigments, powders, oils, and soaps – with room for the discovery and use of new materials throughout the process. These are examples of some of the required materials, along with glassware such as plates and petri dishes. The specific equipment I will need includes a macro lens, a tripod, underwater film equipment, and studio lights.

Concerns:

One limitation I anticipate to face is time, which as a student is always scarce. I don't expect this to be a huge concern, however, as I plan to work on this project throughout the summer. Another limitation is the need for help from other people, as managing a camera as well as liquid substances at the same time may at times prove difficult. If I find this to be the case, I have a large peer group of artists and filmmakers who have expressed interest in my project should I find that I need assistance. I will also be relying on collaborators for help in designing sound, but again, I have a large peer group of musicians and sound designers who have expressed interest in collaborating with me on this type of project.

Outcome Report:

I would ultimately like to create and screen at *least* 5 films, perhaps as a projection show in Ruffin Hall or at a local gallery. This may become two separate collections – one with sound,

and one without (projection shows may not be suitable for sound). I plan to document my processes along the way with behind-the-scenes footage and stills that I may present as I articulate my process in my outcome report, along with screening and discussing some or all of the films.

Timeline

Summer 2017

- Purchase materials and equipment
- Research other organic visual artists and study their processes and work
- Experiment with materials, lens, and lighting by shooting preliminary footage
- Meet with mentor Peter Bussigel and sound designers to learn about sound design and discuss collaboration (if unavailable, this will occur in Fall 2017)
- Reach out to potential showing spaces (Ruffin Hall, local galleries, etc.) with the guidance of Kevin Everson

Fall 2017

- Finalize/secure showing space (this may occur at a later date if finished products are desired before securing a space)
- Assemble storyboards – concepts, material combinations (including planning out sound concepts) – consult with mentors regarding my concepts
- Shoot more footage – with the experience gained over the summer in using the equipment and materials
- Design sound – deliver visuals to sound designers in adequate time for us to discuss and create the accompanying sound
- Complete editing rough cuts

Spring 2018

- Complete the final edits
- Curate at least 5 films for the final collection and show
- Complete written outcome report
- Prepare outcome presentation

Proposed Budget

Item Type	Details	Cost (with tax + shipping)
Equipment*	Canon 100mm f/2.8 Macro Lens	\$799.99
	Underwater Camera Housing	\$400 for a 1week rental
	2-Piece LED Lighting Kit	\$79.99
	60-inch Portable Tripod	\$43.99
Tools	5 petri dishes	\$16.39
	Glass tray	\$20.00
	150 pipettes	\$6.99
	12 eye droppers	\$14.22
	100 pack syringes	\$17.95
	6 pack plastic bottles	\$8.95
Color materials	12-piece acrylic paint set	\$14.97
	24-piece India Ink set	\$75.22
	10-piece powder pigments	\$11.89
Mixing materials	1 gallon vegetable oil	\$13.99
	2 bottles rubbing alcohol	\$17.60
	1 bottle soap	\$7.95
Refills	Funds for if I run out of the materials purchased (such as inks, oils, pigments, etc.) or if they change in consistency, considering this project spans a year.	\$50
Total		\$1500.00

*I already own a camera to use with the rest of the equipment.

If I find that there are materials that my budget does not cover, I will turn to everyday substances. Using simple, practical substances (like vegetable oil and dish soap) is a goal of mine anyway, and I will still be able to carry out my project. The most important items on the budget are the lens, underwater housing, LED lights, and the tripod.

Evidence of Participation in the Arts

Participation in the Arts at UVA

Studio Art Minor

Classes taken: ARTS 2370, ARTS 2372, ARTS 3370, ARTS 3372, DRAM 4590, MUSI 4620, ENCW 2530

Extracurricular:

- I am a Digital Media Consultant in the Clemons Digital Media lab. Here, I teach patrons how to use video and audio equipment and software, many times for artistic projects.
- I was a participant in the Adrenaline Film Project in the fall of 2016.
- I am the lead photographer and features editor for UVA's student-run art and culture magazine, V-Mag. In the fall of 2017, I will take on the role of editor-in-chief for the magazine.
- Each fall since enrolling at UVA, I have helped film the Black Monologues production, as well as promotional materials for the show.
- In the fall of 2016, I designed the sound for a Shakespeare on the Lawn production.
- During the summer of 2016, I was a videographer intern for the UVA Career Center, where I learned Adobe AfterEffects through self-teaching and produced promotional materials for the office.

Art Scholars Participation

I have taken the Art Scholars seminar CASS 1010.