

Liza Wimbish
Rising Third Year Award

Photographing Still Lifes

Photography is a vastly subtractive medium which means that photographic images result from taking vignettes from the world itself. As a contemporary image-maker, I strive to produce images that are reflective of my own experiences but also capable of transcending the self and engaging in a broader dialogue. However, I also perpetually contemplate which narratives I have the authority to tell—especially when considering how easily a photograph can appropriate someone else's experiences. Instead of endeavoring to sheerly document, I want to explore how an artist can engage with the world by creating their own. With this sentiment in mind, I want to construct still lifes, and then, I want to make pictures of them. I am requesting a Rising Third Year Award so that I can explore photographing still life scenes in a studio setting. I want to explore the parameters of creating my own, made photographic composition, as opposed to subtractively taking a composition from real life happenings. I aim to explore the notion of photographic still lifes by creating still lifes and photographing them with a digital camera; the project will result in a series of photographic prints.

The main component that the grant will fund is a digital camera, and specifically, I am interested in purchasing a Sony Alpha a7R III. This camera fits my needs because it is a professional quality, mirrorless camera. Broadly, I want to create digital images so that I have the ability to shoot limitlessly without having to worry about the costs of buying film. My hope is that I can use the camera as more of a sketchbook, and by being able to shoot a lot of images, I intend to challenge my methods of seeing: through more riskily composing images and by configuring and reconfiguring my still lifes. Because I will be photographing still lifes in a studio setting, I will be placing the camera on a tripod—which I already have—and working with longer exposures because I will be shooting under artificial light; this limitation lends the project to needing a mirrorless camera because mirrorless cameras are less prone to visible camera shake which is a frequent problem in long-exposure photography. In alignment with this, mirrorless cameras are lighter and more compact, so it will be easier to move my camera on the tripod

which will give me more malleability in terms of how creatively I can shoot. I intend to use this camera for other creative work long-term, so it is important to me to invest in a piece of equipment that can last, and the Sony Alpha a7R III is a robust camera that can aid me in creating high quality pictures for this project and many projects to come.

The second component that the grant will fund is the costs of creating the still lifes themselves. I allotted \$500 for the production of the still lifes. In the still lifes, I loosely intend to utilize found objects, old Silver Gelatin Prints, and fragments of discarded sculptural works in alliance with new, built forms—the process of making will guide the sculptures' development. I intend to make my still lifes out of the materials I purchase with this portion of the grant in conjunction with everyday objects and scraps that I already have. I did not specifically itemize this portion of the budget because the creation of the still lifes is guided by intuition, and these funds, which are allocated for second-hand materials found at thrift stores and flea markets, cannot be specifically quantified until the day of purchase. However, I will retrospectively detail what I purchased with these funds in my final report. Finally, to create a clearer visual of the direction I want to take these still life photographs, I attached images at the end of the proposal of several of the artists I am looking at for inspiration when creating and photographing my still lifes. Specifically, I mentioned Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Laura Letinsky, Alina Szapocznikow, and Carmen Winant, and with visuals of their work in mind, you can more accurately glean the sorts of photographic practices I aspire to explore in this work.

The Rising Third Year Award would help me to catalyze an investigation of still life photography in a studio setting. The grant would fund the purchase of materials for my still lifes and a digital camera—which is integral for this project, but also vital in propelling the quality of other creative work long term. Ultimately, having access to this camera and having the agency to purchase found objects to create still life scenes will allow me to make digital images without being hindered by inadequate equipment, and by photographing made installations and leaving evidence of physical manipulation, I strive to make still life images that connect to the world compassionately and intimately.

**As mentioned above, here are links to the work of the artists that I am looking to as I plan to execute this project*



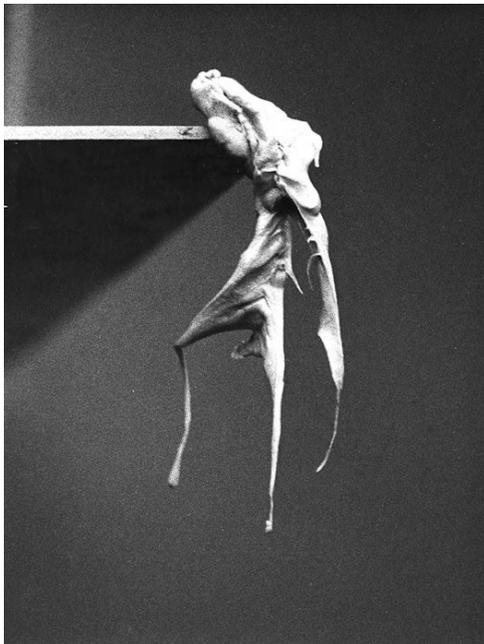
Peter Fischli and David Weiss' Equilibrium Series

https://www.matthewmarks.com/new-york/exhibitions/2007-04-27_peter-fischli-david-weiss/works-in-exhibition/#



Laura Letinsky's Photographs

<https://lauraletinsky.com/photographs/albeit/>



Alina Szapocznikow's Photosculptures

<https://artmuseum.pl/en/archiwum/archiwum-aliny-szapocznikow/515>



Carmen Winant; more so looking at her practice of the detournement of found images
<https://carmenwinant.com/exhibitions/another-echo>

Budget:

Digital Camera (Sony Alpha a7R III)	\$2,498.00
Supplies and Found Objects for Still Lives	\$500
	= \$2,998.00

Timeline:

Summer 2020: During the summer, I intend to make my still life installations and photograph them. I will begin to edit my images in the summer as well.

Fall 2020: I will print my photographs in the fall with photo paper I already have, and I will concurrently continue to make new images.

Spring 2020: In preparation to present my work at the outcome report banquet, I will evaluate the images that I have taken over the preceding months, and I will finalize my selections for the finished body of work. I will present the images as freestanding prints.

Evidence of Participation in the Arts:

In terms of my participation with Miller Arts Scholars, I have completed CASS1010 and am currently enrolled in CASS1011; also, I received a mini-grant for the fall 2019 semester. Furthermore, I have taken many studio art classes, and I have also taken several art history classes to complement my studio practice. Specifically, I have taken *Introduction to Photography I and II* (ARTS2110 and ARTS2112), *Introduction to Sculpture I* (ARTS2810), *Introduction to Studio Art* (ARTS2000), *Art Since 1945* (ARTH2471), *Modern Art* (ARTH2451), *High Renaissance and Mannerist Art* (ARTH2252), *Art and Popular Culture* (ARTH1505), and *Sex, Spirits, and Sorcery* (ARTH2259).