

Title: Native Tongues

Proposal: After reviewing my work from this semester, I traced a desire to explore questions related to culture, especially in the form of mouths and tongues. For an example, see the third gif on this site <http://rsx3cd.tumblr.com/>. Currently, I am working on a final stop motion project that explores the symbolism of time and tongues moving in circular patterns. The motions portray a sense of continuity and confusion. I would like to continue and expand on my tongues project this summer, challenging myself to intentionally pursue more cultural, “activist,” works. To continue my work in digital mediums, I will need to purchase Creative Cloud for my laptop because I will not have access to the UVa media labs. I need programs such as Photoshop and Premiere to continue combining videos, images, and hand drawn animation.

My new ideas for the project derive from a survey I recently filled out for my friend’s research in linguistics. The survey asked native English speakers and non-native English speakers to answer a set of language-related questions. I was unable to identify as either because technically, my first languages were Shanghainese and Mandarin—I didn’t know a word of English until I was 3 or 4 years old. However, English is now my primary language—I think and dream in English, and while I speak Mandarin, I’m practically illiterate. My vision for the piece is to ask my relatives from various regions in China and the States to send me voice recordings of certain phrases in their native tongues. I hope to explore idioms, cultural slips of the tongue, direct translations, and the humor and stories that these words will generate. I will start with my tongues stop motion, and allow it to be shaped and transformed by the words my relatives send me.

Schedule: Between now and May 20th, purchase Creative Cloud. For the first 30 days, a.) notify and interview relatives, and b.) do research on idioms in different dialects. For the last 30 days, a.) continue language learning, and b.) work on combining the recordings and creating visuals.

Budget: I will spend \$240 for 1 year (minimum purchase) of Creative Cloud at student prices. I will put the other \$260 towards a getting sharper images with a fixed focal lens (\$125-200) and other miscellaneous expenses for the animation portion, such as a light table (\$50), and paper and scanning (\$10-20).