



Animating the Delaware River's Environmental History

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Application Date: February 23rd, 2024

Funding Request for Summer 2024

Funding For Artist Residency (travel + residency fee): 1600

Salary Supplement for Summer Work: 3500

Description of Project

I am working on a long term animation project exploring the environmental history and future of the Delaware River. This animation has been funded by the Mellon grant and generated numerous other artistic projects and avenues for exhibition, including a cyanotype series, documentary photo project related to the river, and pennant flags. I view all of these projects as intertwined generative practices that influence and inform each other as they all investigate different aspects of the Delaware's environmental history. I will describe each project individually, but they all bleed together in my working process, with completion and exhibition of the animation a main goal at this point.

I am asking for funding to provide concentrated time to make progress on the animation (and related projects) in two main ways:

1. Attending the Hambidge Artist Residency in Georgia, including the residency fee and travel expenses. I applied to attend the residency for two weeks this summer. This time would allow for editing footage, collaging photographs, and creating 3D models (CGI) necessary for the animation. I selected the residency based on recommendations from colleagues and for its remoteness, allowing for uninterrupted time to work away from any distractions. (I have applied, I have not yet received notification of acceptance or rejection).
2. Funding time this summer to gather any missing material for the animation. This may require traveling to anywhere within the watershed to gather audio or visual assets (photo, video, sound, etc.), including reshoots or new material. In rare cases I may need to travel to research a specific object, person, or history that I will include in the animation (most of this research has already been completed). On these trips I will also gather new material for the other projects, especially the cyanotype and photography projects.

The Animation

The animation about the Delaware River Watershed is designed to make pollution and global climate change visible and their effects tangible. I am equally concerned with processing the past as I am speculating about the future of the watershed through biological, technological, and political lenses focused on reconceptualizing humanity's relationship to nature.

The animation will collage together video, photographs, 3D modeled objects, and audio that speculates about the ecological histories and futures of the river especially in relation to pollution and global climate change. Animation's inherent ability to defy physics, including time, and create new or unexpected connections makes it an ideal medium for exploring the potential future ramifications of the ecological histories of the river. You can view a previous animation I created in a similar style and sample footage from my current project in the appendices.

Cyanotype Project: Downstream (working title)

The cyanotype process is one of the original photographic processes and its poetic power lies in the fact that something must come directly in contact with the paper to make an image and that water "fixes" the image. I am making cyanotypes in two ways on the river:

1. I fold up cyanotype coated paper in the shape of boats and float them down the river directly. This process traces the journey each boat takes down river. As the boat floats, the river water "fixes" the image, while the sun "develops" the image, when the paper "sinks" its journey down river is over. The resulting image is abstract and contemplative with the embedded "history" of the image more imagined than didactically represented. Sample images in appendices.

Documentary Photography Project

The documentary photography project collects photographs I took throughout the Delaware Watershed to explore and connect the history of place to the current landscape and inhabitants. Sample images in appendices.

Measurable goals and objectives for the project

The ultimate goal for all these related projects is multiple exhibitions in institutional galleries and museums. Particularly for the animation, I would like to show the animation in the Independence Seaport Museum (Phila), Icebox Project Space, various environmental film festivals, and art museums. Similarly for the printed work, I want to exhibit them in institutional galleries and museums.

More immediate objectives for the funding period are below:

By the end of the residency period (if awarded), finish developing the narrative text for the animation (there will be a voiceover or text telling a story) and solve two animation problems: 1) how to visualize or imply New York City's connection to the Delaware via drinking water supplies and old canals/trade routes, and 2) how to visualize different levels of climate change.

By the end of the summer, I need to have at least a 5 minute animation completed for exhibition, even if it is not the final animation, which will be approximately 15 minutes long. For the other projects (cyanotypes, photographs), I would like to submit the work for exhibition to at least 10 university galleries/museums, though these series need not ever be "finished," just complete enough to exhibit.

Project Timeframe

The project has been ongoing for 2-3 years, and I have much of the visual footage I will need, though some re-shooting is needed. I have had exhibition opportunities arise from this work (see outcomes sections).

May: review text and visual sources that influence narration (histories, theories, and recorded footage), create cyanotypes, take documentary photographs

June: first half: residency (hopefully), write narration, problem solve animation

July: finalize animation, revisit sites for filming or audio

August: finish 5 minute animation, begin applying and sharing it for exhibition

How the project will enhance teaching and research at Lincoln

The project will further my teaching at Lincoln by informing my moving image pedagogy (especially how to combine historical research, speculative fiction, and the moving image). This research also informs potential collaborative classes between art and biology or environmental science. I also hope that the exhibition locations for the animation and the related projects will be displayed at more prominent venues, thereby increasing the visibility of research and creative output from Lincoln.

Outcome Measurement

Outcomes can be measured in two ways: the physical production and completion of work, and the quality and quantity of exhibiting venues. The main measure of success for the grant period will be the completion of a 5 minute animation and creation of numerous cyanotypes and photographs. Ultimate success can be measured in exhibition venues—I hope to exhibit the piece at Philly area museums such as the Franklin Institute, Independence Seaport Museum, or the Philadelphia Museum of Art. If these venues do not decide to exhibit the work, a lesser tier of success would be displaying the animation and related work in other institutional venues and galleries. I have successfully exhibited photographs from the project at the Woodmere Art Museum (Philadelphia) and Payne Gallery (Moravian University) and this coming summer I will have a pennant flag artwork on display at the Philadelphia waterfront. See appendices for visuals.

How, when, where, with whom will the project's outcomes be shared.

I have outlined in "outcome measurement" where I hope to exhibit the work, and it makes sense to start with an audience based where the Delaware River is, Philadelphia, however I hope it travels to film festivals and other cities as it explores global issues. My hope would be for continued exhibition and publishing opportunities for the next 2-5 years for the animation and related photography projects.

Budget Page

\$1600 request for Hambidge Residency (if accepted):

Information about Hambidge: <https://www.hambidge.org/guidelines-apply>

\$500 Residency Fee (\$250/week, 2 weeks total)

\$938 travel (approximately 1400 miles at \$.67 mile)

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/K3i4YM4oBDJZK34K7>

\$162 incidentals and tolls (including possible hotel stay en route since trip each way is over 11 hours of driving).

\$3500 request for salaried time to work on animation projects.

This could support some travel along the Delaware River, however it mostly designed to allow me the time to work on my animation for 8 hours a day, 5 days a week over the course of a month after the residency period.

\$5100 Total Request

Visual Appendices

Sample Animation Style: <https://vimeo.com/372277882>

Footage and Assets for current project (including still images from documentary project):
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rMsv5QsRDmq4yiuPBYNEOpUDiGfB9tkg/view?usp=sharing>

Image of Pennant Flag (on display summer 2024, Philadelphia)



Woodmere Exhibition Inclusion: <https://woodmereartmuseum.org/experience/exhibitions/the-woodmere-annual-81st-juried-exhibition>

Floating Downstream Sample Cyanotype:

