

Christina LaFontaine's Artistic Statement
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12/1/2013 for graduate studies application

At the inception of my artistic education I was of the mind that technology was not a necessary aspect of my creative expression. I utilized my undergraduate years to hone and explore my craft in the analog. I developed projects working in sculpture both large and miniature, tackling ideas of the ordinary, and creating creatures that twisted the viewer's idea of what is contained within our normal world. Above all else, my work has been consistently concerned with pushing against mental boundaries we develop against the mysterious or unordinary. This desire to challenge, educate and fascinate the viewer met its ultimate medium when I began exploring installation art. The medium of installation gave me the ability to expose my audience to other worlds by full immersion. No longer would an aspect of my work be left up to my viewer's imagination; I suddenly became able to bring my audience fully into my imagination with me. I explored this newfound ability in my detailed senior thesis, creating a fantastical forest for my audience to experience and explore.

Since receiving my undergraduate degree I have worked as a freelance prop artist and illustrator. The art I have created since finishing school has solidified my confidence in working with hard materials to replicate and imitate the natural world. However, in the past several years I have been made aware of the shortcomings of trying to create a fully immersive experience without the aid of electronics. The atmospheres I desire to create would only be more convincing and effective if expanded into the digital realm. I recently had the opportunity to experience Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Room and it was apparent that without the simple function needed to create the flickering effect of the lights, the sense of infinity would have been far less convincing. This digital manipulation introduced a sense of true natural randomness into the space. In the medium of Installation, digital effects become a stand in for other sensory deprivation.

As a working adult in the art world I have become more aware of the function and importance of collaboration. The atmosphere of a graduate program in which students collaborate by enhancing and analyzing each other's ideas appeals to me and fits in to the way I work. I learn best when through experience, and when multiple artists come together to challenge their ideas both parties benefit. It is this knowledge and preference that convinces me I am best fit for a hands on graduate program environment. This collaborative environment is of particular importance to my craft

because I seek to create an experience in which no detail is overlooked. Perhaps it is Jim Henson I admire most, for his ability to create a world in which detail did not diminish past the vertex of the action. Rather than creating a point of focus for his audience, he allowed them to observe a world in which they had the freedom to look about without losing the care taken in developing the foreground. By working together with other specialists and artists I will be able to rest assured that no detail was overlooked.

As an installation artist I may not be able to literally physically transport my audience, but I will have the ability to come the closest to the incredible power of first hand experience if I bridge sensory gaps with digital manipulation. My travel experience has shown me that it is not possible to fully grasp the experience of standing within the tropical rainforests in Southeast Asia or among the crisp cold colossuses of the Himalayan mountains through description, visual, or sound replication alone. By exploring the medium of installation the power to educate, entertain, and capture our own culture will expand exponentially. By attending Parson's Design and Technology graduate program, my own knowledge in the analog world of fine arts will be elevated to its full potential and my reach will no longer exceed my grasp.