

Phuc Le
Artist Statement for Digital Media Art BFA application

When I told my parents I want to build my career in the art field, they were less than enthusiastic. First thing first, my family did not come from money, and everything we have today happened because my parents worked hard; the case is especially true for my dad, who gave up his dream of being an architect to become a businessman so that our family can eat. Secondly, at the time--and even today--to talk about a dream of making a career out of art will often get you an awkward look in Vietnam. However, I did my due diligence and found that the world is getting more connected, and that building a career in art doesn't mean one would be a starving artist (in fact, bar a selective few, many careers don't give people a surplus of income). I decided to build a career in art because of the endless creations a person can build with technical skills and designs.

My main interests lie in 3D and visual effects; but 3D can be done in spatial art and visual effects can be done by chemists, so...why did I decide to study digital art? The answer lies in the potential I see in the nature of digital art. I will always remember the time I saw the intro of Warcraft III: Frozen Throne, the combination of 3D effects in shading and lightning, in combination with the attention to details in character's animation had made these digital creature so real--the seventh grade me almost wanted to believe these creatures could be out there in the world. At that moment, I was made aware of the power of digital art: the efficient work flow in creating art; the environment friendly medium; the access to the digital world that is only limited by technical skills and imagination; but the most important factor is the accessibility like no other form of art--the seventh grader from across the globe in Vietnam had stumble on a Warcraft trailer made by company in the U.S. while he had never fully experience the Louvre in person even though he had read about the work many times in school. The exposure of digital work is simply amazing. I consider digital media artists to be an unorthodox engineer who puts more emphasis on aesthetics.

When I make an artwork, I focus on getting the attention of viewers, theater of the mind and call to action.

I used to believe that immersing the audience in my work is the most important factor in bringing the viewers to my art. That is until last year when I read a line from a book about game development, the line reads "It is attention, not immersion that keeps the audiences engages in your work"; the article that line came from was discussing that many game developers try to keep the player by increasing immersion, but they should focus on grabbing the players' attention, then maintain them with the game instead. This is where digital art shines: audience interaction. Because of the interactive nature of digital art, I can grab the attention of viewers through means such as interactive or video, then maintain their attention with narrative and drama; in addition, I can put to work the audience's theater of the mind using foreshadow, or include a mark of history in character's design or character's clothing. Those are the techniques I have known so far, and I'm eager to learn more.

Another thing I tend to include in my art is a call to action: Most of my works tend to revolve around otherworldly theme, but in works that is political, I believe simply bringing to mind

the issue isn't sufficient, so I often go extra mile to research about potential fix to the problem to include in my work, hoping to provide my audiences with a direction to start getting involved; of course, I'm only one person so the call-to-action might be biased, thus I tend to update them frequently.

Overall, I see great potential in Digital Media Art--the media is environment friendly, has great work flow, has wide reach, and is pretty accessible to audiences worldwide. As an art student, I have noticed my works often carry otherworldly theme, mainly post-apocalyptic one--these works often utilize theater of the mind to grab the audiences' attention and maintain them through the whole interaction; however, I'm very aware that I'm a person who picked a career as an art-maker, and thus I stay in touch with reality with works that often has a call to action, hoping that people who saw my art would get involved in helping our world become better and kinder. My focus at the Digital Media Art department would be 3D, VR and 3D printing, seeing how these technologies are environment friendly and efficient.