Nick Norris, Painting

Project Description

As a painter, place has a great impact on my work and travel is a core component of my studio practice. In order to improve my professional development after graduation at MECA, it is important for me to travel while keeping my studio practice at the forefront of my life. I will spend a year in Europe starting in Auvillar, France where for the second year in a row I will be working as an assistant for Professor Robert Reed at the Yale Summer Sessions at the Institute for Studio Studies in painting and drawing. This will take place from May 27th to July 14th. This provides me an opportunity to work closely with other artists in a studio setting. I will spend the following two and a half months in Paris, France with a close friend where I will have a shared studio. Paris will offer me a rich environment to settle making paintings and drawings. Next, I will be attending residencies across Europe because they offer me a place to continue to grow the body of work I will apply to graduate school with. They also allow me to meet people and make connections in diverse areas.

Recently, I was accepted into a two and a half month residency in Ålvik, Norway called Kunstnarhuset Messen. Here, they will provide me with a studio space and a place to live. I believe this to be a new addition to the energetic subject matter in my paintings. I propose that I will break down the elements of the surrounding Norwegian town and translate them into new paintings. Finding moments within the unique cultural heritage of Ålvik such as the effects of industrialization in the early 1900’s will constructively allow me to explore new subject matter within the language of my current paintings. I am greatly involved in studying small towns because they offer an intimate and personal setting which differs from the life I grew up in. I envision my paintings becoming a commentary on the surroundings of Ålvik combined with my heritage from the United States.
What is most important in developing my path as an emerging artist is that I have the opportunity to keep making my work. Having the assistance from the Professional Development Grant for travel and materials will allow me to further my practice as a painter greatly. I am asking for assistance with travel from Paris, France to Ålvik, Norway and for the cost of materials when I get to Kunstnarhuset Messen.

Budget

According to Vueling Airlines a flight from Paris, France to Bergen, Norway in October 2014 is $180. Once in Bergen the bus to Ålvik will be $20. Last, I am asking for $300 which will be used to buy canvas, stretcher bars, and necessary paint. I am asking for the full award amount of $500.

Forest Gagne, Woodworking

I am currently a senior in the Woodworking and Furniture Design program at Maine College of Art. I am seeking consideration of the "Artists at Work" Program in granting me Five Hundred Dollars ($500) to develop further my website and online presence as an artist. With these granted funds, I will be able to expand and promote myself as both an accomplished artist and maker. For the past seven months, I have been working with the Scarborough, Maine graphic design company, Southern Maine Media, to create a website that displays my work professionally and artistically. The website is seamlessly designed to integrate my work with a streamlined approach. The ease of accessibility allows website viewers aesthetically to understand my work and my message. I believe in order to further integrate an online presence with my studio work, an application of a Brand/Logo must be implemented. If an artist is serious about becoming a professional, he or she must accept art, in part, as a business. And while, as artists, we may balk at this seemingly harsh reality, there are a few things we can do to advance our business in dramatic, yet simple ways. One of the best things we can do, as artists and business people, is to create a personal website. Currently, I am working with Jonathan Novak, a Junior in the MECA Graphic Design Department. Our intention is to co-create a logo that can be paired with my website and coupled with a physical image to be branded into my work. With the “Artists at Work” grant funds, I would like to have the remainder of my BFA thesis work professionally photographed to develop a more extensive portfolio. The photographs would be taken by Jonathan Theodorou, a Maine College of Art Senior Photography major. I strongly believe that by
employing these two Maine College of Art students, the grant funds will not only benefit my own development, but will also allow these other artists to gain professional experience in their given fields and to be compensated for their efforts. Artists are one another’s greatest allies. Through this type of collaboration, each of us has an opportunity to grow exponentially. Through compiling the many aspects of my online presence, I hope to allow myself to become more credible as well as marketable. After I graduate in May, my focus will be on taking a year to explore graduate programs across the country. The grant of $500 will enable me to present myself to graduate schools, future clients and employers as a professional artist. I hope to expose myself to the world, where people can discover me through my website, thus leading me to countless opportunities.

I appreciate the opportunity for consideration of the Professional Development and Entrepreneurship Grant.

Budget

Photography & Branding/Logo

$5 per image x 3 Pieces (5 images per piece) $75
Brand/Logo Consulting $25/hr x 1hr
Logo design with website integration $100

Sub-total: $200

Website Design
Southern Maine Media Scarborough, ME

Consulting $25/hr
Editing $25/hr
Image Uploading $25/hr
Designing $25/hr
Estimated Hours: 12 x 25/hr

Sub-total: $300
Liz Long, Illustration

Project Description

What the conference means to me and my work:

ICON8 (Illustration Conference) is a biannual conference in Portland, Oregon that brings illustrators and designers from all over the nation together to talk about important issues facing the profession. It is here that the top illustrators and industry leaders will come to talk about the profession and lend insight into the discussion of the present and future of illustration. I have a voracious passion for illustration that has me wanting to move forward as quickly and as proactively as possible. I have a strong desire to attend this conference right after graduating with my BFA in illustration because I see it as an essential tool to staying focused and in the know-how of where to begin my career.

I want to be a part of this event because it is vital toward successfully using the skills I have developed at the Maine College of Art. I hope to gain knowledge I could not get elsewhere from the top illustrators, publishers and representatives who will be speaking at the conference. It is the only national biannual conference just for illustrators and persons in the graphic arts community and addresses specific topics like, children’s books, promotion and contracts, and product development. There are over forty illustrators and designers across the globe speaking at the conference that fall under the category I want to pursue. For instance, Carson Ellis, a keynote speaker at ICON8, has created album art and stage sets for The Decemberists and various covers for best-selling books like The Composer is Dead by Lemony Snicket and Wildwood by Colin Meloy. I see myself modeling aspects of my career after Ellis’ and as she lives on the West coast, this is a rare opportunity to be able to hear her speak and potentially meet her.

Goals:

There are two goals I have in mind when I attend the conference. The first being, to be present at main stage events run by speakers consisting of illustrators, art directors,
reps and publishers currently working in the field. I will attain vital information on many different facets of being an illustrator and gain insight into what it is like to be a working illustrator that operates as my own business. There is also the possible opportunity to meet face to face with various artists I am inspired by.

The second goal is to have a table showcasing my illustrations at the Roadshow event, which coincides with the main stage event. This is a pop-up marketplace that showcases the work of over sixty illustrators and artists. It is a great practical component to the overall event, allowing me the chance to market my skills and establish a strong business practice.

What is most compelling about my art:

My work has been described as conceptual as well as narrative and dreamy. The most compelling aspect of my work is the process involved in my practice. From the beginning stages of deep research and thorough sketching to layering different materials like frosted vellum over acrylic painted wood panels or watercolor paper, my process is meticulous and in the end seamless.

What, in the broadest sense, would a donor be supporting in the project:

This grant will be used for my entry fee into the illustration conference. The timing of ICON8 is happening in July, just a few months after graduating, and could be the best launching experience of my career. If given the opportunity I will make the most out of the experience.

Budget

Entry fee: $585

Roadshow vendor table: $250 half table / $450 full table (which will be used to sell and promote my work)