

PSC-CUNY Research Awards (Traditional A)

Control No: TRADA-51-235 Rank: Assistant Professor Tenured: No College: NEW YORK COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY Panel: Art History, Visual Arts, Communication Arts & Sciences Discipline : Communication Arts & Sciences Co-PI :	Name: larkins, george Address: Telephone: Email: glarkins@citytech.cuny.edu
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Human Subject Use: No

Animal Subject Use: No

Supplementary Materials: No

List of Supplementary Material:

Will Interviews be Conducted?: No

Department: Communica/Editorial & Design

Title of Proposed Project: Anarchy of Will

Brief Abstract

I am requesting funding from the PSC-CUNY Research Award to support the development of a multi-media creative project, Anarchy of Will, based on the work of Aimé Fernand David Césaire. Césaire was a poet, activist, and author from Martinique who co-founded the Négritude socio-political movement in the 1930s as African and Caribbean writers living in Paris began to protest French colonial rule in northern Africa. Artists play extremely important roles as they sculpt and mold our vision of ourselves as individuals and as members of communities, and I am interested in parallels between contemporary work against structural inequality and the resistance efforts from Césaire's time. Anarchy of Will

Anarchy of Will is a research-based multi-media project that contends with the oppression of Black life traced forward from centuries past to today and will include imagery, motion design, and audio combined in installation.

Relevant Publications & Scholarship

2018 - Printmaker's Portfolio, The Old Print, NY, NY

2018 - Open Photography Exhibition, Salmagundi Club, NY, NY

2018 - Faculty Process Show, Grace Gallery, Brooklyn

2018 - Presented an exhibition entitled, A Government of Wolves, (Developed from PSC-CUNY funding) though a curatorial residency from Dysfunctional Collective on Governors Island

2017 - The New York City of Technology College: participant in Third Annual Juried Faculty Commons Art Exhibition

2017 - Participant in the 2017 Summer Programming through the Dysfunctional Collective

2017 - Random Samplings, Black Heritage Gallery -- The Central School Arts and Humanities Center, Lake Charles, LA

Education

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Institution	Degree	Year(s)	Discipline
Pratt Institute	MFA	2005	Photography
Art Center College of Design	BFA	1993	Photography

Other Current & Past Funding (last 5 years)

Period	Role	Title	Amount	Funding Source
7/1/18 - 6/30/19	Director	And the Dogs were Silent	\$3,500.00	PSC-CUNY Research Award Traditional A

Attachments

Description	File Name	File Size	Date Attached
Project Description	Second_draft_PSC-CUNY_Grant_2.docx	23847	12/5/2019 3:40:17 PM

Budgets

Description			Requested Amount
Research Staff	Fringe Benefit Expense MTA Payroll Tax	0.00 0.00	0.00
Clerical Staff	Fringe Benefit Expense MTA Payroll Tax	0.00 0.00	0.00
Summer Salary (Principal Investigator)	Fringe Benefit Expense	0.00 0.00	0.00
General Office Supplies/Xeroxing		0.00 0.00	0.00
Research Supplies		0.00 0.00	0.00
Domestic Travel		0.00 0.00	0.00

Foreign Travel		0.00 0.00	0.00
Independent Contractors		0.00 0.00	0.00
Subject Payments		0.00 0.00	0.00
Laboratory Fees		0.00 0.00	0.00
Equipment		0.00 0.00	0.00
Manuscript Preparation/ Publication Costs The Canon Mark IV and macro lens with stablizer are designed to capture the detail of the small scenes I will be designing for this project. This will allow me to enlarge these elements to full size 4k resolution without losing much image quality.		3500.00 0.00	3500.00
		Total	3,500.00

Introduction

I am requesting funding from the PSC-CUNY Research Award to support development of a multi-media creative project, *Anarchy of Will*, based on the work of Aimé Fernand David Césaire. Césaire was a poet, activist and author from Martinique who co-founded the Négritude socio-political movement in the 1930s as African and Caribbean writers living in Paris began to protest French colonial rule in northern Africa. Artists play extremely important roles as they sculpt and mold our vision of ourselves as individuals and as members of communities, and I am interested in parallels between contemporary work against structural inequality and the resistance efforts from Césaire's time. *Anarchy of Will*

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My work and teaching in the area of art and design has always included a broad spectrum of areas of political and cultural investigation, but I have recently been driven to create work that increases awareness of the contributions of Black creatives. I believe that it is one of my responsibilities as a person of color, an educator, and an artist to continue to address issues of equity and invisibility in my teaching and creative practices. My 2017 film, *The Play*, examined gender and power dynamics, and my 2018 exhibition, *A Government of Wolves* explored historical and contemporary governance and policing of populations of color. My interest in creating *Anarchy of Will* comes out of my continuing professional commitment to uncovering and centering diverse voices and stories.

Background

In 2017, I received a PSC-CUNY Research Award in support of an initial project based on Césaire's poem and play entitled *Et les Chiens se taisaient*. In 2018, I presented the resulting digital work from that research in an exhibition, *A Government of Wolves*, on Governors Island through a curatorial residency granted by the Dysfunctional Collective arts non-profit. My current project, *Anarchy of Will*, further explores the legacy of Césaire's work and the Négritude movement and connects it to current efforts to raise Black consciousness. In 2019, I was selected to participate in CUNY's Faculty Fellowship Publication Program for spring 2020, and I will be using the opportunity to workshop a book to document and accompany the exhibition *Anarchy of Will*. I have been invited again to participate in the Dysfunctional Collective's curatorial program, and I will be using the Collective's space on Governors Island to present *Anarchy of Will* to a public audience. *Anarchy of Will* is geared to engage viewers across platforms with history from a Black experience.

Significance

This project's significance stems in part from its content: Black experience is still underrepresented in the art world today. The first large-scale data science study of artists in major United States museums, published in the 2019 Public Library of Science website, (Topaz, Klingenberg, Turek, Heggeseth, Harris, Blackwood, Chavoya, Nelson and Murphy. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/1812.03899.pdf>) revealed that 85% of the collections are made up of works by white artists. *Anarchy of Will* contributes to an effort to widen the narrative of the American experience. The documentation of words and images about a past, present, and imagined future experience of structural inequality will help speak a truth from a point of view that has long been silenced.

In Julia Halperin and Charlotte Burns' September 20, 2018 article "The Long Road for African American Artists," for Artnet news, senior Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago curator Naomi Beckwith writes that, "Historically, what curators have been asked to do is follow a particular storyline – and then when things fall outside that storyline, they are rendered invisible." Beckwith asserts that works by African American artists, "don't just belong to the bodies that hold the narrative. These stories belong to culture. It is a way of seeing the world." It is my hope that *Anarchy of Will* can also be significant as testimony to a path of courage and perseverance in the face of oppression, and that those who read it will be moved to recognize, reflect, and respond as they encounter injustices anywhere.

In his review of the 2018 exhibition, *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power*, NYTimes art critic Holland Cotter wrote, "Who could have guessed in the 1960s, when civil rights became law, that a new century would bring white supremacy tiki torching out of the closet and turn the idea that black lives matter, so beyond obvious, into a desperate battle cry? Actually, African-Americans could have seen such things coming. No citizens know the national narrative, and its implacable racism, better than they do." Being an African American artist and the son of southern parents that were oppressed and harassed throughout their lives, I have constantly struggled with my identity as a person and as a man in a land that I was born in, but never felt as though I fully belonged to.

Despite legislative and institutional evolution, there is still an underrepresentation and awareness of Black people who have made major contributions to the world of art and design. Through my participation in AIGA and with The Black Alumni of Pratt, I support initiatives addressing issues of representation in the creative fields. As a faculty member at The New York City College of Technology, I have fostered partnership between my home department of Communication Design and the Department of African American Studies by serving as a panelist, speaker and creative collaborator.

Medium

Anarchy of Will is a fictionalized visual memoir of a Black man in search of a way of life who soon becomes involved in revolutionary struggle. Following the poignant words of Césaire, "*Everything disappears, everything falls apart*" the installation will include still and moving images of dystopian landscapes where order has fled. Buildings crumble and skies darken as the outer world reflects the neglect of justice and truth. The audio will include vignettes of spoken narrative and references to themes present in Césaire's work, my own life in the South, and in contemporary culture today.

This work will be created with a 4k digital camera and will be produced using physical sets constructed of foam core and other materials to size. Because of the necessarily reduced size of my sets, the quality of my images and footage will need to be at the highest resolution possible.

Publication and Dissemination

The initial installation of *Anarchy of Will* in the historic home occupied by the Dysfunctional Collective is ideal as a site that evokes military history and is accessible to a diverse public audience. Public programming will include artist talks, family artmaking sessions, a reading of Césaire's poetry, and an ongoing digital word "gathering" of memories and impressions from visitors.

It is my belief that the more we are made cognizant of the diversity of people who have devoted their lives to the betterment of this world, the greater value all people will have for each other. The book project I propose to work on during the FFPP, *Anarchy of Will*, tells a story of resistance, endurance, and sacrifice for Black identity and history, and my hope is it inspires anyone searching to persevere in the face of oppression.

Related Work

Over the past few years I have worked on several projects that relate to equity, history, and creative expression. My goals have been to educate, to commemorate, and to inspire.

<http://dysfunctionaltheatre.org/dysfunctional-collective-2018>

A Government of Wolves considered symbol and force in an exhibition of digital prints and ink drawings. Images sketched from the collection of Paris's Musée de la Préfecture de Police have been translated in sumi ink on vellum and layered, creating an echo of form. Digital manipulations have been inspired by real-world objects, isolated and rendered in c-print. The works grapple with the relationship between the ruling and those ruled.

<http://dysfunctionaltheatre.org/dysfunctional-collective-2017>

The Play – film translation of Samuel Beckett's *The Play* follows the fragmentation of Beckett's dialogue with sound, editing, and motion graphics. Reimagined as a tale of three women, the looping film noir short explores the one-act's themes of convergences and disintegration. The work was screened across the storied surface of the location.

<https://catone.myportfolio.com/a-requiem-for-a-revolution>

A Requiem for a Revolution (2014) – digital treatment of the words and influence of Huey P. Newton and Malcolm X.

<http://www.sva.edu/profiles/alumni/george-larkins>

Insanity Rendered – seven-channel film piece created during a 2013 School of Visual Arts Residency Program in Sculpture and New Media. The work examined mental health, categorization of human experience, and the use of such diagnoses by those in power to oppress those without.

Budget

Equipment: Digital Canon 5D mark IV	\$2500.00
100mm macro lens	\$ 700.00
DSLR Stabilizer	\$ 300.00
Total	\$ 3500.00

References

Césaire, Aimé, (1990). *Lyric and Dramatic Poetry, 1946-82*. CARAF Books.

Als, Hilton, (2013). *Kara Walker: Dust Jackets for the Niggerati*, Gregory R. Miller & Co.

Kendi, Ibram X., (2016). *Stamped From The Beginning*, Nation Books.

Churchill, Ward, (1988). *Agents of Repression*, South End Press.

Aitken, Doug, (2005). *Broken Screen*, Distributed Art Publishers, Inc.