

Application for Ocean Space Fellowship

June - October

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A series of 15 horizontal wavy lines, resembling a stylized ocean surface, filling the lower half of the page. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.

Letters of Motivation

I want to be an Ocean Space Fellow.

I want to be a curator.

I want to be an artist.

I want to be a photographer.

I want to publish a photography book.

I want to go scuba diving.

I want to see nudibranchs.

I want to explore the tegrue.

I want to start the Amateur Oceanographic Artists Club.

I want to hike on a glacier.

I want to see the aurora borealis and aurora australis.

I want to hear a whale.

I want to get tossed by a wave.

I want to burn my feet on hot sand.

I want to find urchins in tide pools.

I want to ride a Vespa that doubles as a space ship.

I want to play electric guitar.

I want to get better at playing my synth.

I want to write a song and perform it in front of an audience that dances.

I want to make an album.

I want to make a film and write the score.

I want to see the launch of Landsat 9.

I want to go to space.

I want to be the first curator for the International Space Station.

I want to curate an exhibition on the moon.

I want to go to Italy.

I want to get better at speaking Italian and Japanese.

I want to remember how to speak Hebrew and French.

I want to see the rings of Uranus.

I want to be able to see with microscopic vision.

I want to go to the Sogetsu School of Ikebana.

I want to go back in time and talk to my grandma.

I want to go back in time and give myself a hug.

I want to meet Carlo Rovelli and ask him to explain time to me.

I want to fall in love.

I want someone to love me back.

I want to feel heartbroken.

I want to hold hands in a movie theatre.

I want to sneak beers into the theatre.

I want to ride my bike down the biggest hill—no hands.

I want to feel scared.

I want to feel safe.

I want to cook cast iron chicken thighs with my friend.

I want to get tipsy and eat a warm meal—family style.

I want to fall asleep in the grass under the shadow of a tree on a sunny day.

I want to dance.

I want to get lost in a book.

I want to write a good poem.

I want to go backpacking in Colorado, Texas, and the Northwest.

I want to go backpacking in the Alps.

I want to go back to Mexico City.

I want to learn Spanish.

I want to support my friends.

I want my friends to support me.

I want to champion artists that I like.

I want them to be treated fairly and to be able to share their work.

I want to go to the hot spring from the movie *Old Joy*.

I want to go to Kurashiki—our sister city.

I want to start a sister city artist fellowship called *An Exchange*.

I want to have more intercultural experiences.

I want to go fishing.

I want to hold my cat—Duchess Cream Puff.

I want to go back to the Noguchi Museum and maybe even work there.

I want to work for Art 21.

I want to live outside of the United States.

I want to be able to identify flowers, trees, and bugs.

I want to go mothing—where you light up a sheet at night and take pictures of the moths that visit.

I want to tour more libraries.

I want to be a curator at a library with a beautiful building.

I want to steal some peanuts from the grocery store.

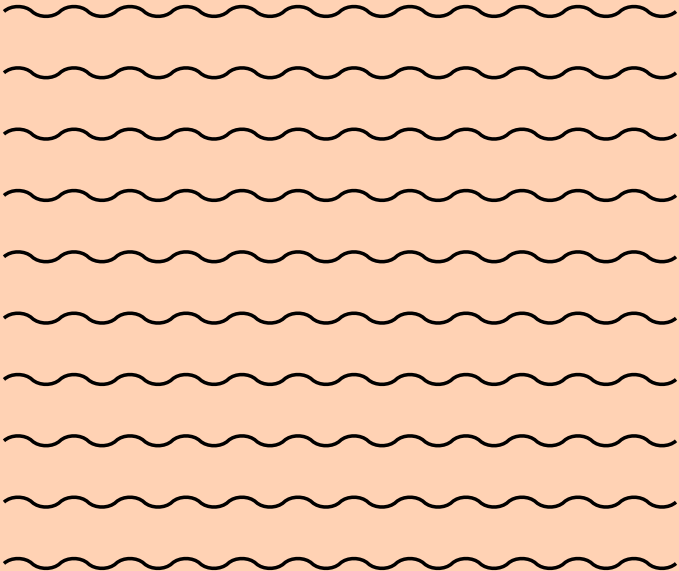
I want to smash peanut shells underneath my feet at a baseball game.

I want to feel like a cloud.

I want my curating to be a cloud.

I want it to be the cloudiest cloud.

I want to be an Ocean Space fellow.



Research Proposal

AMATEUR

OCEANOGRAPHIC

ARTISTS

CLUB

Humans have indisputably altered the global habitat. We have detonated thousands of nuclear bombs¹, chemically bored holes through the ozone, reduced the planet's biodiversity through colonization, and thrown off several global cycles including—the nitrogen cycle, ocean acidity, and greenhouse gasses². We are looking at a period of potential extinction—not just for humans, but also for countless other animals and plants. What are we doing, and what will we do moving forward?

So far, we have yet to implement any kind of cohesive global response. Large scale shifts including climate change and the exhaustion of resources seems inevitable³. We are already experiencing large scale refugee crises⁴ and an increase in hurricane intensity⁵—among other dramatic planetary changes. It seems that awareness does not necessarily lead to a synchronized cultural reaction—especially on a global scale—so, what now?

I propose intimate poetic connections—with ourselves, fellow humans, fellow organisms, and matter/energy. These connections will be like tendrils entangling or worms in the compost. Donna Haraway—Professor Emerita in the History of Consciousness Department at the University of California, Santa Cruz—refers to this connection building as “making kin”—inter and intra collaborations in order to create refuges on a planet that will be increasingly less hospitable to humans and a myriad of other critters⁶. These new connections will not be easy or fit neatly into preconceived notions or relationships. As Haraway writes, making kin will “demand our best emotional, intellectual, artistic, and political creativity, individually and collectively, across ideological and regional differences, among other differences.” These connections will not prevent global warming or resource depletion, but they will provide a method of adaptation to our new environment, a supported process of mourning for our losses, and the reclamation of collaborative refuges. The question then is—how will we generate these new connections?

One way is through metaphorical composting. My hometown—Kansas City, Missouri—is already in a state of decomposition and composting. After decades of racism and car-centric development, the city lies in a state of perpetual decay. The urban sprawl is full of vacant buildings and crumbling infrastructure. Artists work with and within this rotting, nutrient rich habitat—creating cyclical and collaborative relationships. In her essay *Making-do as Compost*, Annie Woodfill writes, “But we find unofficial places to stage impulsive experiments, explore possibilities for equitable public space, build new means of cultural preservation, collaborate with nature, and so on.”⁷ I want to bring this process of composting-as-connecting to Ocean Space. I want to be a bioturbator—mixing with and reworking the humus of Venice within a collaborative and symbiotic cycle.

My initial plan is to create the Amateur Oceanographic Artists Club—a sub-club of Reality Club—my curatorial platform⁸. The Amateur Oceanographic Artists Club will connect artists to oceanography through intimate programming and collaborations. Like Reality Club, we will work with/within/around existing critters and institutions. We will tour oceanographic books in libraries, learn about research at the Instituto di Scienze Marine, and document the rivers surrounding Ocean Space. We will screen films, cook food for each other, and take group photos. Like “the octopus in love”⁹ the Amateur Oceanographic Artists Club will be a tendril of Ocean Space—independently thinking and sensing. These shared experiences will strengthen our connection with ourselves, each other, and the ocean.

1. "There Have Been 2,624 Nuclear Explosions in History. This Map Shows All of Them." 2016. The Independent. March 5, 2016. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/map-shows-every-nuclear-explosion-history-a6914056.html>.

2. Lewis, Simon L., and Mark A. Maslin. 2015. "Defining the Anthropocene." *Nature* 519 (7542): 171–80. <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature14258>.

3. Scranton, Roy. 2015. *Learning to Die in the Anthropocene : Reflections on the End of a Civilization*. San Francisco, Ca: City Lights Books.

4. "UN Refugee Chief Laments Nearly 80 Million People Forcibly Displaced." 2020. UN News. June 18, 2020. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/06/1066492>.

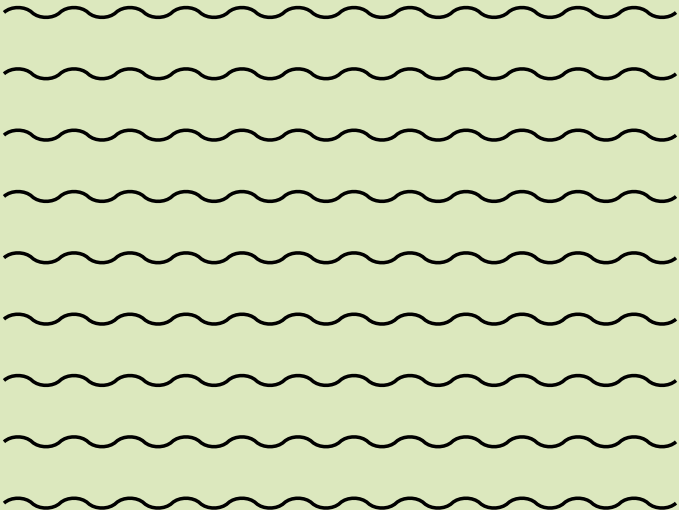
5. US EPA, OA. 2016. "Climate Change Indicators: Tropical Cyclone Activity | US EPA." US EPA. June 27, 2016. <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/climate-change-indicators-tropical-cyclone-activity>.

6. Haraway, Donna. 2015. "Anthropocene, Capitalocene, Plantationocene, Chthulucene: Making Kin." *Environmental Humanities* 6 (1): 159–65. <https://doi.org/10.1215/22011919-3615934>.

7. Woodfill, Annie. "Making-do as Compost" 2020. Accessed January 7, 2021. <https://anniewoodfill.com/kansas-city>.

8. "Reality Club." n.d. Reality Club. Accessed January 8, 2021. <https://www.realityclub.art/>.

9. Martínez, Chus. "The Octopus in Love". 2014. <https://www.e-flux.com/journal/55/60304/the-octopus-in-love/>.



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ARTS, CURATORIAL:

2021

- *Slideshow Festival*

2020

- *Wintertime Adventure Club* (ongoing)
- *Reality Club Listens*, alpert.online/realityclublistens
- *Remote Collaboration*, Reality Club Library
- *to you*, Kansas City
- *Take Home*, publication
- *Collaboration, Conversation and Play: Body of Inquiry Panel Discussion*, moderator, UMKC Gallery of Art

2019

- *Reality Club Film Series*, Stray Cat Film Center, Kansas City, MO (ongoing)
- *Crystal Growing Party*, Apartment, Kansas City, MO
- *Expedition No. 1*, Round Grove Creek, Kansas City, MO
- *Rare Book Tours*, Greater Kansas City Area (ongoing)
- *Pissarro IV*, Theis Park, Kansas City
- *Reality Club Reads*, Kansas City, MO (ongoing)

2018

- *Interactive Arts Party*, Apartment, Kansas City, MO
- *Spacetime Variety Show*, Open House, Kansas City, MO
- *do you know how much i love you? this much*, thismuch.org, (ongoing)

RESIDENCIES/FELLOWSHIPS:

2020

- Fellow, Elsewhere Museum, Greensboro, NC (postponed to 2021 due to pandemic)

ARTS, STUDIO:

2020

- *What Is Your Reality in the Pandemic Era?*, Orange Art Foundation, Brooklyn, NY

2019

- *Origin Story*, Open House, Kansas City, MO

2018

- *Passing Notes*, Art in the Loop, Kansas City, MO
- *Notes for Artists*, Box Gallery, Kansas City, MO

PROFESSIONAL:

- *2021-Present*
Maryland Institute College of Art
Graduate Program Assistant, Curatorial Practice MFA

- *2020-Present*
Stray Cat Film Center, Kansas City, MO
Board Member

- *2016-Present*
Arts Council of Johnson County (ACJC)
Governing Board Member, 2016-Present

- *2011-2020*
Botwin Family Partners, LP, Kansas City, MO
Property Manager, 2011-2013
Office Administrator, 2013-2017
Project Manager/Partner, 2017-2020

- *2016-2018*
Public Arts Commission, Johnson County, KS
Commissioner

EDUCATION:

- *2020-2022*
Maryland Institute College of Art
MFA Curatorial Practice

- *2018-2020*
Mid America Arts Alliance
Engage (education program for non-profits)

- *2008-2011*
Occidental College
B.A. Economics

LANGUAGES:

- English, fluent
- Italian, beginner
- Japanese, beginner
- Hebrew, used to speak well but would need to refresh
- French, used to speak well but would need to refresh

RELEVANT COURSES:

- Intercultural Discourse
- Design Theory and Practice
- Art Worlds
- Curatorial Practice Thesis
- Curatorial Practice Seminar

WRITING:

2020

- “KCAI End of Semester Show Highlights”. Informality Blog. <http://informalityblog.com/kcai-end-of-semester-show-highlights/>
- “Diminishing Returns, Capital Theory, and a #slurpee”. Kiosk Gallery. https://kioskgallerykc.files.wordpress.com/2020/07/diminishing-returns-capital-theory-and-a-slurpee_v2.pdf

2019

- “Short Review of Still in Motion”. Informality Blog. <http://informalityblog.com/short-review-of-still-in-motion/>

PRESS/MEDIA:

2020

- “New Platforms for Art in the Current Environment”, Informality Blog. <http://informalityblog.com/new-platforms-for-art-in-the-current-environment/>
- “What is Your Reality”. Episode 126. Real Photo Show. Podcast. <https://www.realphotoshow.com/2020/12/16/david-alpert-what-is-your-reality-ep-126/>

REFERENCES:

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