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Animation Project 2012

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Thinkfinity Final Report

Animation Project 2012

Cornerstone II

Linda Herritt, Dyson College/Art Department

December 10, 2012

With the support of a Thinkfinity Award, I was able to complete my proposal, Animation Project 2012, with a number of positive outcomes.

As part of the project, I partnered with the Joan Michell Foundation. The Foundation is a respected non-profit organization established in part to provide artistic training and opportunities to talented but underserved middle and high school students. I worked with a group of fifteen high school students enrolled in their summer program, directed by José Ortiz. The project introduced students to digital media and film animation software by using familiar approaches to drawing and painting that were then expanded into two types of animation, stop action and live animation, with a documentary component involving an introduction and interviews with several of the student participants.

The students worked collaboratively to paint a 40' panorama of City Hall Park, which was then installed in the Peter Fingesten Gallery. The mural was filmed in the gallery, using a video camera on a dolly, and incorporating a number of moving elements conceived by the students. The title was created using a stop animation approach with a still camera. Two Pace student, AliReza Vaziri and Evelyn Shaw, assisted with the camera work and the editing, and conducted interviews with the Joan Mitchell Foundation students.

The experience was successful beyond my expectations. The collaborative mural built a sense of community among the JMF students, and the introduction to the high-end digital cameras, and Photoshop and Final Cut Pro software expanded their technological knowledge and opened students to the artistic possibilities of new media. The close work with the JMF students provided a valuable learning and professional experience for the two Pace students. The Pace students were able to work with the high-end equipment and produce their first animated film.

The project culminated with an exhibition, screening, and reception in the Peter Fingesten Gallery, attended by students in the program, their parents, friends, siblings, etc. The film was undoubtedly the centerpiece of the event, and the mural was the backdrop for photographs taken by enthusiastic parents. The Joan Mitchell Foundation is interested in displaying the mural permanently in their offices.

The equipment purchased through the Thinkfinity Award has now been made available to Pace students in the Art Department, where it will support future

student projects in film and video production, a Concentration in our recently revised BFA in Art.

The film, *Panorama of City Hall Park*, is currently posted on YouTube and will be linked to the Art Department site in January 2013. The Joan Mitchell Foundation plans to use the film for promotional purposes, sending positive images of Pace to the 1500 students in their program annually, greatly increasing the awareness of our programs for prospective students.

The project has helped to cement a relationship between the Art Department at Pace and the Joan Mitchell Foundation, and plans are in the work for future collaborations. The Foundation is very interested in repeating the experience of last summer, should additional funds be awarded to continue the project in 2013.

I also found the project entirely rewarding on both a personal and professional level, and loved working with the high school students and seeing their growth and appreciation. It was as well an opportunity for me to mentor and work closely in an artistic collaboration with two talented and bright Pace students.

A) Goals:

- To collaborate with high school students to produce an animation, using a familiar medium (painting) as a means of introducing the use of HD digital cameras and editing software.
- To involve Pace students in an artistic collaboration using new technology.

B) Progress

- The project has been completed and the finished film is posted on YouTube and in use by the Joan Mitchell Foundation.

C) Completed Activities

- Purchase of two cameras and related materials and equipment for the project
- Summer workshop with Joan Mitchell Foundation students
- Collaboration with Pace art students
- Production of an animated film with both groups above
- Dissemination of the film on YouTube

D) Activities not completed

- The only proposed goal not yet met is the linking of the film to the Art Department website: that will take place when the website is updated in January.

E) Outcomes

- Successful learning experience with new technology for JMF students
- Professional development for Pace students

- A short film incorporating two approaches to animation and a documentary segment
- Building a positive relationship with an established non-profit organization serving underserved middle and high school students
- Personal gratification

F) Class Creation

- I did not create a class, however, my summer class at Pace (Art 138) worked alongside the JMF students, producing their own panorama.

G) Students impacted

- The 15 high school students in the workshop were impacted: this is the maximum number that can fit in the studio.
- The 15 students in Art 138 were impacted.
- The 2 Pace students who assisted with the filming and editing were involved in all aspects of the project.
- The 1500 middle and high school students enrolled annually in Joan Mitchell Foundation programs will see the film and know about Pace and the Art Department.
- All Pace Art students now have access to the equipment purchased for their projects.

H) Impact on other faculty members

- Other faculty members will benefit from having access to the newly purchased equipment, which has been turned over to the Art Department.

I) Unintended outcomes

- The success of the program was not fully anticipated, nor was the support of the Joan Mitchell Foundation for repeating the experience.
- I realized I really needed a few more pieces of equipment than I was able to purchase, and more funds for supporting student assistants.

J) Outcomes reflecting expected change or benefit

- I was pleased with the outcomes: they exceeded my expectations.

K) Furthering Thinkfinity Cornerstone II

- The project was successful in introducing High school students to digital photography and filmmaking, and also to editing software.
- The project led to a productive collaboration with an established non-profit organization.
- The project continues to have a life and reach a broader audience as the film is disseminated by the participating students, the Joan Mitchell Foundation, and Pace.

L) Plans for sustaining the project

- The Joan Mitchell foundation is enthusiastic about continuing the project, should funding become available.
- I have applied for another Thinkfinity Award to support students, resupply the materials we used, and address some of the equipment voids that became apparent the first round (the original equipment purchased will be used again).
- A meeting s planned with José Ortiz of the Joan Mitchell Foundation on January 25, 2013 to discuss future collaborations.