Faculty Research Grants for Academic Year ’17 Funding

Faculty Research Grants are designed to support larger-scale initiatives than those currently supported via the Brenner and Lucas funds, both of which are capped at $2000 per request per competition. Instead, requests for Faculty Research Grants may run up to $5000 and hence represent an opportunity to support a larger-scale initiative. In that spirit, the grants are designed to support significant expenses or the granting of significant time in the form of a course release (beginning in AY17). Appropriate initiatives may include artistic and scholarly projects (or part thereof), research travel and stay (for academic or creative work), and bodies of work with significant material expenses. The motivation for developing this new category of funding for faculty work is that certain types of projects require more support, either monetarily or temporally, than the existing funds can provide. Faculty Research Grants are decided in conjunction with Faculty Grants Committee and the Provost.

Monica Amor  
Art History, Theory & Criticism & Critical Studies, MA  
Monica Amor’s book project concerns the work of Gego (1912-1994) who arrived in Caracas in 1939 and became a prominent local artist in the sixties. In recent years, Gego’s work has transcended this local context and she has emerged as a key contributor to the art of the period. Her radical recasting of the modern sculptural project, as it was received in her adopted country, via a productive engagement with architecture, crafts and artistic pedagogy, throws new light on the dissolution of boundaries that traditional mediums such as painting and sculpture underwent during this active period of experimentation. This study intends to develop a monographic approach to Gego’s work while exploring the unique texture of avant-garde culture in a developing urban metropolis such as Caracas. The latter produced distinctive cultural models shaped by the transnational dialogue between Europe and the Americas that Gego exemplifies. This project was supported by a Course Release.

Mina Cheon  
Art History, Theory & Criticism; Foundation; Interactive Arts  
Mina Cheon’s project “Happy Land Starving Canvas: The Performance of North Korea” includes research, travels to South Korea to work with Ewha Womans University’s Institute of Unification Studies and the Department of North Korean Studies, as well as producing artwork in the studio in Baltimore. The series of new works will culminate in the next solo exhibition, which will be her tenth solo show. After over a decade of working on a series of art that demonstrates the complex makings of North Korea’s fantastical myths, she will focus her research on the many layers of contradiction and irony between the “performance” or presentation of the nation state versus the reality of the people and conditions of the country, hence the title, of a prosperous and happy state versus the poverty and starvation of its people in physical to cultural forms. Mina’s artwork known as “Polipop,” short for political pop art, takes geopolitical or sociopolitical issues and spins them around in provocative ways through pop art. The inspiration of such work comes from highlighting things often unsaid about people, lives, and places in global media culture, giving voice to those things skewed by media, such as the common media portrayal that dehumanizes North Koreans. This project was awarded $5,000.
Jennie Hirsh  
*Art History, Theory & Criticism & Critical Studies, MA*

Jennie Hirsh’s project addresses strategies employed for representing Italian fascist architecture and territorial expansion at home, in Italy, and beyond, in the colonies and occupied territories between the years 1922 and 1945. Jennie’s work aims to build on existing studies of the diverse architectural vocabulary for governmental, civic, and residential building commissions executed under the fascist regime for major urban centers and throughout the periphery as part of *bonifica* (the fascist program for land reclamation). In short, *Transmissions of Fascism* will be an interdisciplinary book on fascist architecture and urbanism as represented in fascist-era Italian publications connected to other (mass) media, such as popular newspapers and more specialized periodicals and posters related to radio and cinema. Focused on intersections between the built environment and the infrastructure of institutions of *communication*, this project surveys the ways in which radio, cinema, post offices, train stations, public schools, military academies, museums, exhibition venues, and other social spaces *within Italy* emerge as a new category for a unique type of propagandistic programs and events orchestrated under Italian fascism. This project was awarded $5,000.

Nate Larson  
*Photography*

Nate Larson will be traveling to five sites calculated as the mean center of population by the United States Census. He plans to represent the nearby towns through large-scale color photographs, critical historical research, and collaboration with local communities. The project will use this notion of “the center” of our country to explore shifting understandings of national identity. This project was awarded $5,000.

Christine Manganaro  
*Humanistic Studies*

Christine will spend time writing and revising her book manuscript, *Assimilation Nation: Science and U.S. Colonialism in Hawai‘i*. As a historian of science and the U.S., Christine’s work focuses on scientific expertise in American cultural and intellectual history, particularly the function of racial ideology in American settler colonialism. Her book examines how the creation of archives of social scientific information about race and assimilation advanced the U.S. colonial project in Hawai‘i. These archives’ contents supported the production and teaching of an authoritative history authored by academics, whose liberal multicultural narrative—which persists in Hawai‘i and elsewhere—naturalized American control of the islands as a form of integration rather than colonization. This project was supported by a Course Release.