

SUMMER 2020 URCO GRANT PROPOSAL

Rachel Hancey, Student

Printmaking
Department of Art + Design
Caine College of the Arts

Kathy Puzey, Mentor

Associate Professor of Printmaking
Department Head
Department of Art + Design
Caine College of the Arts

LIGHT AND SPACE: THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE

Throughout my undergraduate education here at Utah State University, I have developed a passion for transforming existing opportunities into ones of research and inquiry. Due to the creative nature of my work as an artist, much of this research is rooted in observation, experience, and thoughtful reflection on phenomenology, philosophy, and the humanities. I am committed to ensuring the work I make is relevant and purposeful to myself and others. Research is how I develop the knowledge base from which I draw inspiration and purpose. As such, this proposal will establish how I will elevate an existing opportunity to participate in the Contemporary Art and Printmaking Study Abroad Program in Venice, Italy this summer into a deeply meaningful and intensive research project resulting in a comparative look at how artists and architects utilize light and space in their designs.

First, in order to establish the relevancy of this proposed research to my current work as an artist, I should note that I have always found interest in the subtle elements of experiences. I am most interested in moments when existence feels delicate; when we become astutely aware of the transitory, fleeting, and impermanent. I seek to illuminate these quiet instances in order to inspire a greater sense of awareness and presence within the individual. Amidst my current research, I have found myself focusing most intensely on light phenomena; specifically, changing light that seems to transcend reality, eliciting a sudden, nearly shocking awareness of one's humanity. This awful yet awesome awareness of our human existence is the sublime. As important as light is, I have, however, become increasingly more aware of the importance of spatial phenomena acting in conjunction *with* light as the most effective way to speak about the sublime.

This work has entailed studying the Light and Space artists of the 1960's-present, and how their work has influenced modern aesthetics, particularly in relation to the sublime. Artists such as James Turrell, Robert Irwin, Dan Flavin, Mary Corse, and David Simpson have proven to be quite influential in developing and expanding my visual literacy and vernacular. These artists operate at the cutting edge in their field and have transformed their art into all-encompassing experiences through light-based installations, ganzfeld rooms, skyspaces, and reflective paintings. In recognizing the importance of these artists to my own research as well as understanding the perceptual and experiential nature of their work, I have become aware that in order to fully understand the depth of these artworks, witnessing them in person is imperative. While reading about their work has provided some insight, these works are in many ways too large for photographs and mere descriptions.

Fortunately, this summer I will be in proximity to a plethora of work created by some of the biggest names in the Light and Space movement. Within a couple hours' drive from Venice, the Villa Panza in Varese, Italy has the largest concentration of Dan Favlin's light installations, work by Robert Irwin, and one of James Turrell's disorienting Ganzfeld rooms, *Sight Unseen* (2013). A few hours from Varese, Zuoz, Switzerland has one of James Turrell's famous skyspaces *Piz Uter* (2005). Slightly further but still within a day's drive, Munich, Germany's Lenbachhaus Museum has work by James Turrell, Dan Flavin, and other European-based Light and Space artists on permanent display. Unfortunately, I will be unable to visit these locations during the study abroad program in Venice; however, additional funding would allow me to lengthen my stay in Europe for a week and enable me to visit and study these renowned Light and Space installations.

Simple observation of these works, however, is not the sole focus of my research. Rather, I will be comparing the phenomenological use of light and space in these art works to that of the architectural works I will study while in Venice. The Venice Study abroad program website states "Venice is the perfect laboratory for artistic research and exploration...We will use the exhibitions of the 2020 Venice Architecture Biennale, Punta Della Dogana, Palazzo Grassi, and Peggy Guggenheim Collection as a starting point for in-depth discussions of contemporary art and design." The Architecture Biennale is further described as "a massive multinational exhibition" of architectural design and I intend on taking full advantage of the opportunity to attend while in Venice. This comparative research between artistic and architectural use of light and space will follow phenomenological research methodologies.

On phenomenological research, Thomas Groenewald explains, “the operative word in phenomenological research is ‘describe’. The aim of the researcher is to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts” (44). He continues,

[Phenomena] have something to say to us - this is common knowledge among poets and painters. Therefore, poets and painters are born phenomenologists. Or rather, we are all born phenomenologists; the poets and painters among us, however, understand very well their task of sharing, by means of word and image, their insights with others - an artfulness that is also laboriously practiced by the professional phenomenologist. (44)

Here, Groenewald clearly establishes my role as artist and subsequent phenomenologist as one of describing and sharing my insights with others through word and image. For the intents of this research proposal, my chosen mode of sharing will take written form. I will discuss later how I also intend to share via image.

For my written research, I will meticulously record phenomenological observations and descriptions of my experiences with both the Architectural Biennale and the Light and Space art works in order to examine how each defines, emphasizes, manipulates, confines, expands, condenses, or multiples different light and space phenomena. From these observations, I will select common, reoccurring uses and share these conclusions as a working record of the intersection of art and architecture through the phenomenology of light and space.

The research proposed here is the first part to a larger, two-part research project. If provided the opportunity, receiving this research grant would ultimately deepen and enrich the philosophical, observational, and contextual knowledge in which I ground my creative work. The second part to this research endeavor is image-based and will coincide with my pending application for the Caine Summer Research Fellows. Upon returning from Italy, I will synthesize my written research and phenomenological observations in order to create a body of artwork that expresses my newly discovered insights through image. If funded, I intend on submitting my research results to the Utah State University’s Undergraduate Research Journal, *Curiosity*. I will also share both written and image-based components of my research at the 2020 Summer Student Research Symposium with a poster presentation and pop-up art display. I also intend on bringing the results of this research to the community at large by submitting my artwork to local

and regional galleries, open-calls, exhibition proposals, and for exhibition at regional and national professional printmaking conferences.

In the end, the opportunity to study architecture and the works of Light and Space artists while abroad will help lay the foundation of my current and future work as an artist. I am certain that seeing art and architecture of the internationally renowned will transform my life as a creative individual. As an artist phenomenologist, it is my aim to share how the beauty found in quiet, sublime moments can help inspire greater awareness within ourselves and others of our shared human experiences.

Reference:

Groenewald, Thomas. "A Phenomenological Research Design Illustrated." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Mar. 2004, pp. 42–55, doi:10.1177/160940690400300104.

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**LIGHT AND SPACE: THE INTERSECTION OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION PLAN**

- Come to a deeper understanding of the perceptual phenomenon of the works created within the Light and Space Movement. Rather than reading *about* these works, I will experience firsthand, *how* these works push and pull with our perception of light and space.
- Develop a deeper understanding in architectural theory, design, and philosophy. Architectural design is a completely new field of study for me, so developing an understanding of these underlying concepts as well as *how* architectural design defines the spaces around us is critical to my research.
- Practice and strengthen observational abilities by formally conducting phenomenological research with specific methodology. As an artist I have learned the importance of observation, however I now recognize the importance of observing *intentionally* “to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon, refraining from any pre-given framework, but remaining true to the facts.” I have never formally conducted such research and will undoubtedly widen my skillset as I journal and record my findings upon observation.
- Synthesize and draw connections from preliminary research in order to create the end product of a body of artwork. This research project will help me learn how to better transform the data of my observations into both a well-constructed phenomenological study and a cohesive body of work.

PROPOSED URCO BUDGET & COMMITMENT

Student Name: Rachel Hancey	Department: Art + Design
Student A#: [REDACTED]	Faculty Supervisor: Kathy Puzey
Student Email: [REDACTED]	
Project Title: Light and Space: The Intersection of Art and Architecture	

Group submissions should use the Group Budget & Commitment form.

Expenses (Optional)

Each proposal may include an optional expenses budget of up to \$1,000 provided there is a 1:1 match (up to \$500/\$500).

EQUIPMENT/SUPPLIES/RESEARCH TRAVEL BUDGET

TRAVEL

Description of Items	Budgeted Amount
Airbnb/Hotel Stays (\$80/night) x5 stays (June 23-28)	\$400
Rental Car (June 23-28) includes car insurance	\$300
Travel Insurance (Entire Study Abroad + Additional URCO Travel)	\$200
Entrance Fees to Biennale, Museums, Ganzfeld Room, Skyspace	\$ 100.00
Total Travel Budget	\$ 1,000.00

SUPPLIES/EQUIPMENT

Description of Items	Budgeted Amount
Total Supplies/Equipment Budget	\$ -

By signing below, the mentor certifies that they have reviewed this proposed budget and find it to be reasonable for the project proposed. If funded, this budget is subject to review by the Office of Research & Graduate Studies to comply with URCO regulations.

Mentor Signature _____

EXPENSES MATCHING FUNDS COMMITMENT

As part of the URCO program, a 1:1 match is required for this optional additional funding.

The faculty mentor, department, college, or program that will commit to match the budget portion of this URCO scholarship is: _____ Department of Art + Design

The matching support may come from any source, but RGS requires an **F&A or E&G fund** index number to transfer our matching funds to you. _____

*If this URCO application is approved, I authorize the Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) office to transfer 50% of this proposed budget to this index to match the 50% of available funding from this source. If this URCO application is approved these matching funds will be made available for this URCO project's expenses. **The faculty mentor's department will be responsible for overseeing the expenditures for this URCO project.** RGS's funds will be transferred to the department.*

Signature of Person with Direct Budget Authority _____

Scholarship (Required)

SCHOLARSHIP MATCHING FUNDS COMMITMENT

As part of the URCO program, a scholarship match is required.

The faculty mentor, department, college, or program that will commit to match the scholarship portion of this URCO scholarship is:

Caine College of Art

The matching support must be in the form of **F&A** or **E&G funds**. The index that these funds will come from is:

If this URCO application is approved, I authorize the Research and Graduate Studies (RGS) office to transfer \$250 in funds from this index to match the \$750 in funds from the RGS office to award the student a \$1,000 scholarship.

Signature of Person with Direct Budget Authority _____

Total Budget

Overall Scholarship Summary

Scholarships are mandatory and require a scholarship match.

Total RGS Support	\$	750.00
Total Matching Support	\$	250.00
Total Scholarship	\$	1,000.00

Overall Equipment/Supplies/Travel Summary

Each proposal may include an optional expenses budget of up to \$1,000 provided there is a 1:1 match.

Total Travel	\$	1,000.00
Total Equipment/Supplies	\$	-
Total Equipment/Supplies/Travel Budget	\$	1,000.00

Total

Total RGS Support	\$	1,250.00
Total Matching Support	\$	750.00
Total Student Award	\$	2,000.00

URCO PROJECT TIMELINE

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January
Attend URCO Orientation													
Receive Scholarship & Budget													
<i>Purchase Biennale Architettura 2020 Tickets</i>													
<i>Make Reservations for Stays</i>													
<i>Make Reservations for Rental Car</i>													
<i>Attend Biennale Weekly to Journal and Photograph</i>													
<i>Visit Munich, Germany (June 23-25)</i>													
<i>Visit Zuoz, Switzerland (June 25-26)</i>													
<i>Visit Varese, Italy (June 26-28)</i>													
<i>Document Experiences + Reflections</i>													
<i>Write Research Paper</i>													
<i>Design Poster</i>													
<i>Print Poster</i>													
Submit project for presentation													
Present project (SUMMER SRS)													
Submit final & financial URCO reports												12/7/2020	