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Fall 2012 Faculty Development Grant Report

I requested a new computer and printer, books, photos, and scripts to collect and develop imagery for my new painting project titled HALLUCINATORY LOGIC IN THE SAHARA DESERT. These paintings will be exhibited at Western Project Gallery upon completion.

This new project started in Jan. 2012 when I was on sabbatical for Spring semester. My paintings require a tremendous amount of research, reading, writing, gathering of images and text from books, photos, the web and Youtube videos. My process in the studio started with Paul Bowles novel THE SHELTERING SKY and Bertolucci's film under the same title and T.E. Lawrence's memoir 7 PILLARS OF WISDOM, A TRIUMPH and David Lean's film LAWRENCE OF ARABIA. This was the base of the project titled HALLUCINATORY LOGIC IN THE SAHARA DESERT where I would expand upon my interest in high culture in collision with popular culture.

These fragmented narratives are built upon collecting and developing imagery which I keep in file folders. Then I move on to working drawings, enlarge working drawings and transfer to canvas panel and paint. But I ran into a problem this time. My green life saver Mac which is at least 10-12 years old no longer had the power to access the images and text I was seeking. Sites on the web would disappear or simply not come up, videos on Youtube would freeze. I was with continual frustration and I could not get my work done in the studio. I had to buy a new Mac to work in the studio. The results were amazing. I could pick up and sustain sites like an Israeli Map site of oil in the Middle East (which are scary but quite beautiful), images of Elvis Presley in his worst movie HARUM SCARUM, images of the original Las Vegas Hotel the Sahara burning up in 1960, Youtube video Marlena Dietrich paired with film of Laurel and Hardy as Foreign Legion men throwing bombs, video of MIA, middle east hip/hop star with cars racing on their sides in the Sahara desert skate-board style with Bataill on the side of one car.

Perfect high and popular culture collision. And then much more! I then needed a stronger printer with high capacity ink which I also bought which gave me more and better images to enlarge and paint from. The upgrade of technology aided my practice in the studio and will continue to inform my work in the future.

I am currently working on the first painting with is 8' x 3' titled The Cartographer: An Unholy Bargain. These paintings will be tall and thin landscapes that also read as film strips and the other paintings will be horizontal long thin landscapes which become cinematic. I plan to do at least 7 paintings and they will be exhibited at Western-Project Gallery. The paintings will also reference Tribal rugs and clothing of the Sahara. Below are photos of work in progress.