3ARTS FELLOWSHIP AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO

EVALUATION REPORT FOR 2018

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3Arts Fellowship at University of Illinois at Chicago
Evaluation Report for 2018

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Background

Under the leadership of Esther Grimm in collaboration with Professor Carrie Sandahl, 3Arts inaugurated the 3Arts Fellowship at University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in 2015. Professor Sandahl directs the fellowship as part of Bodies of Work, a program of UIC’s Department of Disability and Human Development. The 3Arts Fellowship at UIC is supported in part by an award to 3Arts from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Fellowship supports two artists with disabilities per year in the creation of new work that increases conversation around disability culture and aesthetics both on and off campus. Fellows are selected by Ms. Grimm and Professor Sandahl. The artists determine their own artistic goals and have opportunities to teach master classes, participate in critiques with students and faculty, attend UIC classes, conduct research, and access UIC’s resources.

Evaluation Methods

In order to provide a more complete understanding of the Fellowship’s strengths and areas for improvement, Professor Sandahl requested that Dr. Lise McKean conduct a qualitative project evaluation for program year 2018.

Dr. McKean reviewed the 2017 evaluation report, project documents for 2018, and additional background information obtained online about the fellowship and the artists. Dr. McKean conducted in-person interviews with Ms. Grimm, Professor Sandahl, and 2018 fellowship recipients Andy Slater and Reveca Torres on November 27 and 29, 2018.

The interview questions are based on those used in the 2017 evaluation and can be found in Appendix 1. The interviews were audio recorded and lasted between 40 and 80 minutes each; the four interviews total 4.24 hours. The transcribed recordings total 80 pages.

Dr. McKean conducted a thematic analysis of the interview data, the findings of which are presented in the following section’s two parts: Strengths of 3Arts Fellowship Program and Suggestions of Stakeholders. Appendix 2 presents each finding with its supporting interview data. The evaluator’s recommendations based on the findings are presented in the report’s final section.

Findings

The focus of the evaluation is project year 2018 and the experiences of Fellowship recipients Andy Slater and Reveca Torres. The Findings section also presents more general themes about the 3Arts Fellowship that emerged from the data analysis in order to provide additional context for understanding the Fellowship. The findings are ordered according to the frequency that supporting data occur in the interviews, starting with the most frequent.
Strengths of 3Arts Fellowship Program

- The Fellowship increases artist’s knowledge of and engagement with the disability community, culture, and aesthetics.
- The Fellowship provides artists with exposure and recognition that increases their confidence and can be leveraged for further career development.
- The Fellowship provides artists with resources to advance or realize work that is foundational for sustained artistic and career development.
- The Fellowship provides artists with opportunities to collaborate with other artists with disabilities and expand their professional network.
- The Fellowship provides artists with access to mentors, expertise, and community within and beyond the 3Arts and UIC networks.
- The Fellowship provides artists with access to university-based resources that are important for artistic and career development.
- The screening and selection process effectively identify artists who are ready to use and benefit from the opportunities the Fellowship provides.
- Fellowship recipients bring their expertise to UIC and other venues.
- The Fellowship’s flexibility meets needs of artists with disabilities and increases access to opportunities.
- The Fellowship’s purpose and goals are clearly articulated.
- The administration of the Fellowship builds awareness and expertise about barriers to artists with disabilities associated with Social Security policies.
- Graduate assistants associated with the Fellowship become knowledgeable about artists and audiences with disabilities.

Suggestions for Improvement and Enhancement

Program administration

- Increase administrative support to improve program operations and outreach and to enable Professor Sandahl to focus on the role of artistic director.
- Establish best practices for disbursement of Fellowship funds that meet the needs of artists with disabilities and the requirements of Social Security programs and UIC administrative procedures.
- Continue to advocate for flexibility in artist’s use of funds.
- Increase the budget for transportation.
- Increase funding for dissemination of program activities.
Program expansion

- Explore the possibility of adding a venue partner.
- Extend the length of the residency and to better align it with the academic calendar and needs of artists with disabilities.
- Increase the number of fellows to two per semester to foster interaction.
- Add a second site for the 3Arts Fellowship to leverage the expertise and connections created by the program.
- Explore the possibility of adding a partner to work with Fellows on documentation of their project.

Mentoring and networking

- Provide more guidance to Fellows around planning in advance and during the Fellowship.
- Cultivate the network of 3Arts Fellowship recipients.

Recommendations

Many of the suggestions of program stakeholders presented above are consistent with recommendations from the 2017 evaluation report (see Appendix 4). These concern administrative matters such as contracting and payment processes that are not readily rectified given the legal and bureaucratic framework of UIC and the Social Security Administration. Others concern matters such as increasing support for outreach and publicity that are dependent on securing additional resources or reallocating existing ones.

Decisions and strategic planning about program expansion need to take these ongoing concerns into account as growth in the number of Fellows, residency sites, or organizational partners is likely to make these issues more resource intensive and more difficult to address.

Key recommendations

- Conduct a cumulative 3Arts Fellowship Program evaluation of impact, accomplishments, and challenges as the foundation for strategic planning by stakeholders and a resource for fund-raising.
- Convene a meeting that includes leadership from 3Arts and UIC, past and current Fellows, and other leaders from the disability arts community to obtain a multiperspectival view of the program, prioritize recommendations, and create a plan for improvement and possible growth.

Additional recommendations

The following recommendations address suggestions presented in Findings that merit particular attention.

- Add part-time support for administrative responsibilities to enable Professor Sandahl to dedicate more time to the role of artistic director.
- Create and continuously update a 3Arts Fellowship guide that includes tools for project planning and documents past projects, administrative requirements and solutions to challenges, and accessibility concerns.
• Leverage the status of UIC’s Disability and Human Development and Art Departments to increase awareness about disability culture and aesthetics by supporting Fellows to participate in professional meetings such as the College Art Association.

• Explore and implement strategies for identifying emerging artists with disabilities in order to develop a pipeline for future Fellows.

CONCLUSION

Evaluation data show that the outcomes of the 3Arts Fellowship Program are closely aligned with the Fellowship’s clearly articulated purpose and goals. Stakeholders express a high level of agreement about the key benefits of the program to the career development of individual artists and to the development of a larger community within and beyond 3Arts and UIC that is informed about and engaged with disability culture and aesthetics. The Fellowship continues on its successful trajectory of identifying artists with disabilities who have a significant and viable artistic project and are ready to make use of the Fellowship’s financial and institutional resources to advance or realize the project.

In addition to the talent and hard work of the Fellows, the 3Arts Fellowship Program’s success is inextricable from the leadership and commitment of 3Arts and UIC that are personified by Ms. Grimm and Professor Sandahl and the untold hours they dedicate to the program. The 3Arts Fellowship Program has moved beyond the proof of concept stage. It has matured to the stage that calls for a cumulative evaluation of impact, accomplishments, and challenges. Such an evaluation in turn will provide a foundation for informed strategic planning by 3Arts Fellowship stakeholders to ensure the program’s continued success.

The 3Arts Fellowship at UIC is so successful because it meets a longstanding critical need for opportunities for career development experienced by artists with disabilities. There is no better way to express how the program met this need in 2018 than the words of the Fellows themselves:

I feel so much gratitude to share with everybody involved. It was the best opportunity I’ve ever had for my art. The work that I did in the assessment and all of the records of what I’ve achieved is one thing. Now I’m part of the 3Arts family with opportunities for residencies and projects (AS).

Having the flexibility to work on whatever project you’re doing is great. It’s a great opportunity for artists in Chicago. I’m excited to see this become a community that supports each other from within but also is doing things outside of its own community that are making an impact and changing the way people think. I’m really honored and grateful that I can be a part of it (RT).
APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE 2018 3ARTS FELLOWSHIP AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO (UIC)

Questions for 3Arts (Esther Grimm) and UIC (Carrie Sandahl) for the Evaluation of the 2018 3Arts Fellowship at UIC

1. What went well with Andy’s residency and what’s been useful?
2. What did the funding for Andy’s residency allow and what areas were restricted by the amount of funding?
3. Did Andy reach the goals he set for his residency?
4. What opportunities have arisen for Andy as a result of his residency?
5. What are some of the impacts of Andy residency on other people and organizations?
6. What went well with Reveca’s residency and what’s been useful?
7. What did the funding for Reveca’s residency allow and what areas were restricted by the amount funding?
8. Did Reveca reach the goals she set for her residency?
9. What opportunities have arisen for Reveca as a result of her residency?
10. What are some of the impacts of Reveca’s residency on other people and organizations?
11. How might 3Arts Fellowship at University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) be improved?
12. What are your suggestions for future directions for the 3Arts Fellowship at UIC?
13. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Questions for Fellows (Andy Slater and Reveca Torres) for the Evaluation of the 2018 3Arts Fellowship at UIC

1. Briefly describe your project for the 3Arts Fellowship at UIC.
2. What went well about the program? What has been useful?
3. What did the funding allow? What areas were restricted by the funding amount?
4. How has having funding to pay for accommodations for yourself, your collaborators, and audiences impacted your work and experience of the residency?
5. How has connecting with 3Arts Fellowship at UIC affected your art making?
6. Did you reach the goals that you set for yourself for the residency?
7. What opportunities have arisen from your residency?
8. What are some of the impacts of your residency on other people and organizations?
9. How might 3Arts Fellowship at UIC be improved?
10. What are your suggestions for future directions for 3Arts Fellowship at UIC?
11. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?
APPENDIX 2

EVALUATION FINDINGS WITH INTERVIEW DATA

The focus of the evaluation is project year 2018 and the experiences of Fellowship recipients Andy Slater and Reveca Torres. The Findings section also presents more general themes about the 3Arts Fellowship that emerged from the data analysis in order to provide additional context for understanding the Fellowship. The findings are ordered according to the frequency that supporting data occur in the interviews, starting with the most frequent.

Strengths of 3Arts Fellowship Program

• The Fellowship increases artist’s knowledge of and engagement with the disability community, culture, and aesthetics.

Both Andy and Reveca have been attending my disability culture class this whole semester as visiting artists. We planned that as part of their residencies, even though it didn't fit into the time slot. And that has been amazing because both these two artists had not had as much exposure to disability culture ideas and weren't as far along in their careers as my previous artists. Both of them really benefited. They did the readings. They came to class. They participated in discussions. They trouble-shot ideas with my students. My students gave them feedback. They gave feedback to my students (CS).

Their embeddedness within a semester really helped with them getting the most out of the critical conversations that helped them develop their ideas more, which is one of the most beneficial things about this project. And also, they're both learning from one another. Andy in particular. We've had these ongoing discussions about audio description and the aesthetics of audio description in my culture class. All of the class watching some of the materials that I give to the students that are audio described. We all watch them audio described. It's created all this generative conversation that's a whole other layer that has come into the class that I wasn't anticipating. And now the students are wanting to experiment with different ways of audio describing. There are the unexpected things that can happen when people spend time together and ideas have time to develop (CS).

Andy’s work really grew with thinking about disability aesthetics and also, some of the representational or aesthetic questions that we delved into. His thinking got so much more complex and his aesthetic really grew with thinking about different disabled audience members. He also was able to reconnect with some collaborators. It expanded out what he had been doing and thinking and the work just got really interesting (CS).

He also was able to collaborate with some of his former connections and brought someone from New York. And that was a really great collaboration to be able to get some mentoring from another blind artist who was more advanced in his career. The funding just allowed for him to be surrounded by disability culture, which was one of our big intentions (CS).

With the mentorship of Carrie, I've identified as a disabled artist for a couple years now. It dawned on me that that is part of my identity. Once I could start creating art about that, once I started doing art about my blindness, I decided to open up to the idea. Since then, I've learned so much about disability and disability art and all those other things. Getting the fellowship helped me fine tune the direction I'm going in and definitely helped me talk about my work. Having the ability for the first time to throw my ideas out to Carrie and Matt, who was assisting the fellowship, “Am I wording this correctly?” in the sense of representing my disability in a way that doesn't marginalize me more. Before this whole experience, it's been hard for me. How do I do this without feeling like I'm exploiting myself or having imposter syndrome? I got a whole lot more confidence (AS).

As a disabled person, you have this different take on stuff. If people are telling me that my work is good and I'm very happy with it, I accept that and invite that. I also realize what really makes my work successful is the way I
do stuff. The wisdom I have as a disabled person. The way that I live my life and how it may or may not relate to other people's experiences. You know what I mean? (AS).

The first real thing that I did during the residency is I presented in a class called Radical Listening taught by former instructor of mine. I asked if I could present one day. It happened to be on the day that artist Christine Sun Kim was presenting. She’s a deaf artist who does a lot of sound work. She's kind of an art star. I got to present after her. Her coming from a deaf experience, she does a lot of tactile sound and a lot of other things. Me coming from a blind experience, it was a great combination (AS).

In Australia artists and disability culture was a lot different. There were some people that didn't like to use disability as a whole. They wanted to define just by what their disability was. It's like a different language there, or a different approach (AS).

It’s been really great to have Reveca come to my class. I've learned a lot from her and I can get more consistent check-ins because she's coming to the class. She's also brought in ideas from her other projects—she runs a film festival and her nonprofit. What we're talking about in class has helped more than just this project. It's helped her think about a lot of the other things that she does. The other thing that has happened in her residency is she has had an opportunity to engage with a lot of the theoretical ideas. My students have really nudged her along and given her ideas and encouragement and feedback. She’s talking in a much more sophisticated way about her work and thinking more about the implications. She's thinking about ways to talk about what's happening in her work that she hadn't recognized were significant (CS).

During the film shoot when she has the photo shoots for her Tres Fridas project, she didn't recognize that the things that the artists were saying were really valuable information that needed to be disseminated outside the project, even if they weren't directly related. She would be talking about things and the students say, "Oh, that's something people really need to know." Sometimes when you're in your small circle, you don't know how much isn't known outside of it (CS).

Reveca does a lot of media advocacy work and she's learned a lot in my class about professional issues. She’s participating in initiatives to get more disabled people in film, television, and theater, and we talk a lot about that in my class. For instance, she didn't know about issues with the unions and how that impacts disabled people. She has been coming to me for more information if someone is looking to cast someone in a play or in a movie (CS).

She didn't know what the statistics meant. You look at some of the statistics of the very few studies that have been done, but without knowing how the statistics came about, what their limitations were. I'm really proud of how much she has been interrogating the efficacy of her advocacy by not having this information. She does a ton of advocacy and she's good at it, but she doesn't have the depth of knowledge that could really add to her efforts. She's amazing and that's one of the reasons I wanted to work with her because I kept seeing people tap her (CS).

Being able to participate in the classes at UIC that Carrie teaches has been really insightful for me because I've been able to learn about different theories of art and culture and disability that I think I experienced and felt, but I didn't really have words for it. Understanding these different either theories or different types of art and movements has helped me think through other projects as well (RT).

The fellowship has been helping me understand the culture of disability too. There is a group and a culture and how people approach it and talk about it and how it can be dismissed as well. Or people don't see it as a culture. It's been interesting to learn that. It's been really great to learn from Andy when he's in the class and just talking with him. And listening to Carrie's experience as well has been awesome (RT).

Having the opportunity to give talks on my project has been really nice because I can share my work and get feedback. I gave a talk during her class and one at Gallery 400 with general. It's just nice to have these conversations about my art. For the most part it's usually something I do privately and keep to myself (RT).
Through the 3Arts and interacting with Andy I've learned a lot about his work and using sound and audio description and stuff. I'm trying to think of ways where an exhibition could be accessible to a variety of different senses (RT).

I've been to the 3Arts awards probably four times, but I wasn't a fellow or I wasn't a grantee. This year I felt that there was a lot of people with disabilities there. We were sitting at a table and all talking and then we'd be mingling with other people but then come back. I feel like it's starting to become a community. Starting to learn what each other's work is and supporting it when it's being presented in other places. And to know that others are out there and working and probably having similar success or barriers (RT).

- **The Fellowship provides artists with exposure and recognition that increases their confidence and can be leveraged for further career development.**

University of Illinois Chicago is one of the great research institutions, and Bodies of Work in the realm of disability culture is very highly thought of as a role model organization. 3Arts, to a certain extent, is a rare grant-making organization that supports individual artists, and Chicago artists. Our whole purpose is to elevate them, to help them become better-known, help them have sustainable careers. When an artist gets three institutions or organizations behind them like that, it helps. Absolutely (EG).

While I realize my language has used the term "resources" over and over, as if it's only about the money, but there's something here about the recognition. Most artists with disabilities go completely unrecognized in mainstream culture, and we're trying, in our very small way, to help some of them locally break through (EG).

The noteworthy elements of both Andy and Reveca's residency, but especially Andy, because she's not quite done yet it's also the recognition. Andy can say, "I got this 3Arts fellowship at UIC, and have it mean something. It's the confidence. And it also is a leveraging element. We see over and over, when an artist gets one award or one bit of recognition, they tend to get another and another. And we hope that's a ripple effect too (EG).

Andy surprised all of us involved in the program in the incredible ... the sheer number of performances, presentations, and the geography of those. Andy ended up presenting at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco, in Australia—10 or 12 public events all related to this same work that he's been creating in this small program. The seed of his ideas snowballed into a lot of additional opportunities that ended up being quite big and that he's still reaping the benefits of it (EG).

The things that Andy is pursuing in the fellowship and the support the fellowship has given him bolstered him in terms of resources, confidence, audiences, and so on, enough that he could apply for other opportunities. The kernel is within this program (EG).

Andy did a presentation for the disability studies conference. It was a grad student conference between UIC and U Chicago. And out of that, he made connections in the Bay Area in disability studies. He was already going out there and so that connected him with that whole hub of disability art and culture (CS).

Andy got this commission from U Chicago for $8,000 to make a new sound piece. He's really taking off right now (CS).

There's been so much that has picked up because of the fellowship. Then parallel with it, all these opportunities that I've never had (AS).

There's this prestige to it too. Through all of the application processes I've gone through. I've always had this perception that you can't get grants unless you've had grants. You can't get residencies unless you've had residencies. Now I also have support if I was applying for something, support and opportunity through 3Arts. Now I don't really have to worry about what I used to stress over. I just have to focus on the proposal and the application (AS).
Doing the lecture inspired me to do what I'm doing now. Trying to translate and interpret my work for a deaf audience. The project still hasn't been booked to exhibit anywhere. I had to push back the production of that for a while because of the other opportunities that were coming up. Translating or interpreting sound work to text is something that I ended doing for an exhibition at Gallery 400. I had a headphone installation. I produced a book that had my interpretation and text of what was going on, since everything was a field recording. A visually impaired artist I was working with named invited me to go to San Francisco to do some recording for an installation that was in Melbourne. While we were there, we also did a performance at the Contemporary Jewish Museum. We did a whole bunch of other stuff. After that whole thing, she's like "Come to Australia and record in this old haunted jail. Move your cane around and compose stuff for this." I went there to record for an exhibition in March out there. I made this piece. I'm still working on it. There's a deaf dancer and performer that's going to have a reaction piece to my sound work. That falls right in line with the point of my fellowship, in the professional development. I went and I worked with two other blind people out there. Then a deaf woman (AS).

As a sound artist, then as a blind person, in the past, especially when I was at SAIC, 2010 to 2013, I always felt like I had to justify what I was doing. I had other friends that were visual artists that were successful and selling work. I create work that isn't really saleable. The students were engaged with what I was doing. It really gave me a boost. That was good validation right there. Another really validating part was I did a performance at the disability studies conference in April that was between UIC and U Chicago with academic disability studies lectures. I did a performance as the visiting artist or the resident artist. It got the attention of the keynote speaker, Karen McNamara. I was in San Francisco a couple months later and she helped me set up a performance at the Contemporary Jewish Museum and a few other things. That's when things started to snowball (AS).

The fellowship has sparked new ideas for projects and given me confidence to talk about the project because it's being supported by this organization, these two organizations that are well known and support professional artists. It gives me this feeling of yes, I'm an artist. When often times you feel like you're a fraud. It's a kind of outside validation by reputable organizations. They're saying, "Yes. We take you seriously" (RT).

To learn how to articulate and learn how to share their work and like I said before, it makes me feel like I'm an artist and you can put this Fellowship on your resume (RT).

The part where I had to have something public was important and more opportunities for that is good. It was important for my development to be out there and talk about my project. It gives you the experience of talking about it and changing the talk for different audiences because it’s different in a classroom than at the gallery. That's very valuable and could be very valuable to other artists (RT).

We've done 16 images already. Not all in this past month. It's just been over time. We have about four more to go. Our hope is to travel to Mexico to visit the Frida's house in the museum and also interact with other women with disabilities from Mexico. And then we would like to exhibit sometime in the next year. And I'm working on a documentary of it which is ... I have a demo for it but I haven't ... Since our project is not complete (RT).

I'm already thinking and developing two new works beyond this that have sparked and have started talking about them with people who want me to be part of an exhibition in September of next year. It's going to be at the Bridgeport Art Center. And it'll be related to health care and policy and how it is affecting many, many people around the country right now. And my take on it with disability and how it's affecting the disability community (RT).

I don't remember if it was Esther or Carrie who sent it or maybe both. I got it multiple times, to apply to Craig Neilsen Foundation. They're doing a commissioned piece that I just submitted to last night (RT).
The Fellowship provides artists with resources to advance or realize work that is foundational for sustained artistic and career development.

I think helping an artist get an idea from here to here, and my hand gesture is a little incremental move, can sometimes be more valuable than going from here to here, and now my hand is high above my head, because there's a learning that happens when you are really carefully, deeply investigating something that you want to do artistically. Over and over, we see that play out in the fellowships, with artists a year after saying, “Okay, now I'm here. Now let me go to the next level.” There's a way in which really careful support can help an artist build deeper roots (EG).

I would have never, ever without the funding been able to build this installation that I've been thinking about for years. The quality of the installation. Being able to do it the way that I want without worrying about the money meant that I could move on to this thing that I've always dreamed about (AS).

This box is to be constructed so that it is strikable and portable. Even though it's big, you can still install it in other galleries. Even if it's popup or if it's a long-term exhibition. After my exhibition and my run with it is done, I want to commission and invite other composers and sound artists to present work that would be played in there and make it its own personal sound gallery or performance space (AS).

I bought all the tech and equipment that I use for this project and a more accessible interface for my home studio. Some of what I used for this project I also use for other things, for synthesizer work, building a sound effects library. I'm doing all this because of the gear I was able to procure. Now I'm rarely working beyond my tech means (AS).

I also had personal funds. I didn't have to stress about working for a month because I had enough money to live on. It meant that I'm not spending all this time reorganizing my life to try to squeeze something out (AS). Reveca is not completely done yet. I feel she's meeting the goals that she set for herself. She's making good progress. Because we're at a different place with her than we are with Andy, I'm not seeing what happens five months out as I'm seeing with him (CS).

After this residency ends officially, I'll still be working with Reveca because we are both doing disability documentaries and I've done work with her in the past in her film festival. I feel like I have a very deep interest in seeing where this goes. And I will continue to stay involved with her (CS).

3Arts offers their artists to do Crowd Funding through them. I’m applying for funding to do the exhibition later next year. I'm in the process of researching different galleries that I would want to exhibit in (RT).

The Fellowship provides artists with opportunities to collaborate with other artists with disabilities and expand their professional network.

I met my collaborator earlier this year through an Internet introduction. She lives in Oakland and is deaf and blind. She’s a UIC grad and SAIC grad. I taught and trained her on how to use the accessible recording tech (AS).

In San Francisco I met a whole bunch of different blind people. Scientists. Researchers. Artists. I have this collection of blind folks now. I have a few friends here who are blind that I collaborate with on stuff. I got them involved in field recording. There's not a whole lot of blind and visually impaired sound artists. I have no idea why. I'm trying to get an idea of why that is. I started the Society of Visually Impaired. I'm trying to get more people involved. “Let's do stuff. Why aren't we working in sound? Why are there blind people feeling that if they need to create art, they need to make it visual for other people to accept them?” (AS).

I'm networking more and more. The woman from Australia. She's visually impaired. She used to be a physicist and worked for the UN. Then a few other people that I've met. Then a few more people that I've introduced to the technology and the ideas I share in my work (AS).
Tres Fridas started with me meeting another artist with a spinal cord injury. We met online and we're just kind of chatting for a while and then it came up that we both really liked Frida Kahlo. So, we decided to recreate one of the Frida Kahlo images called Dos Fridas. And we replaced her, Frida, with ourselves sitting in our wheelchairs holding hands. We enjoyed it so much that we started doing the same thing but with other images of art in history. We added a third person who is also a woman with a disability who is a photographer. We are getting close to recreating 20 images and hoping to exhibit that sometime in the next year. We've replaced most of the subjects with artists with disabilities. It's nice to talk with them and to learn from them and to find this group of like-minded people. There's been this support within each other that is nice (RT).

It's been great to be able to pay my collaborators. They never were expecting it but it's nice to be able to have funding for them. It makes it more real (RT).

- The Fellowship provides artists with access to mentors, expertise, and community within and beyond the 3Arts and UIC networks.

I had opportunities to work with Carrie and talk to other people in Bodies of Work, and artists in that network. Having a friendship with Matt Bodett, who was a fellow last year (AS).

I worked with Brian Bushway, who is the echolocation guy, sharing my work and my ideas. He said they influenced him. Working with this guy who's in the corporate side of blindness. He travels the world presenting for the World Access for the Blind Federation. Sharing my art with him and really blowing him away with what I'm doing was awesome too (AS).

3Arts group of artists is fantastic. In the 3Arts kind of way, there's a lot of women, people of color. Now some disabled folks have been given the opportunity to have the residency. I feel like there's this hub. There's something beyond network. More like a family sort of thing. It's very welcoming. I was invited to be on the 3Arts Artist Council. Reviewing project proposals. Being part of the jury. I didn't think I'd ever have an opportunity on that side of things (AS).

In a lot of the projects that I do now, I felt isolated because there wasn't a whole lot of people in my initial circle that cared or understood what I was trying to do. With 3Arts, it's more diverse. I get to explore all of these artists that are part of the whole 3Arts network. Be influenced. Support them. I've been given an opportunity to work in a new realm (AS).

The fellowship has helped with working with a mentor who does film editing and structuring film. He's helping me with that and also with creating a budget so that I can apply for grants to complete the film. I looked at a sample budget for a documentary and there's a lot of things in here that I have no idea what they mean or what they are. You need someone who can step back and tell you what you need (RT).

- The Fellowship provides artists with access to university-based resources that are important for artistic and career development.

Andy had the opportunity to reconnect with art and art history faculty that was really beneficial to make those connections. EG

UIC offered me use of the wood shop and a studio or a space in the sculpture department to build it. Even install it, if I couldn't find a gallery or something like that to put it in. I'm still going to rely on that. Deborah was one of my instructors in the late 90s at SAIC. She taught me an installation class (AS).

The head of the art department there, Jennifer Reeder, is also a former instructor and friend. Having that connection going into UIC, not necessarily having to explain how I wanted to use the facilities, asking for access to the students and studios and that sort of thing, I didn't have to really propose anything. I just went and asked. I said "Hey. I've got this opportunity. Can I do all this stuff?" It was like "Yes. Absolutely." Because of that I managed to introduce Carrie to Jennifer (AS).
I've been able to give Reveca access to resources like meeting space for her film festival. It's not necessarily related to the Tres Frida's photography project, but it's given her more access to the university resources in general for her other work (CS).

- **The screening and selection process effectively identify artists who are ready to use and benefit from the opportunities the Fellowship provides.**

  One thing that we do think about is who has something that they want to do. Who's ready for this kind of support? The artists have to be ready in order to take full advantage. Each artist who enters this program surprises me with this incredible self-propelled work that they make. These are people who are saying, this is the work I want to make. And then we're helping the artist find venues. In the case of Andy, it just kept going. I'm astonished at what a small amount of money has done and has propelled forward (EG).

  When we approached Andy, he said, "There is this thing I could use this residency to explore, investigate, and materialize. With Reveca, the same thing. She's pursuing a whole series she's really been working on or thinking about in one way or another for a while but hasn't had a lot of dedicated resources to pursue it. So that's very satisfying that we can help with that (EG).

  Reveca has been making this documentary, but she didn't have access to learning how to use the equipment or to having adaptive equipment. And since the documentary is about this project, she's been able to use the resources to get that documentary going, too. And that's related to the film festival work. She really has been finding ways to make this residency enhance the opportunity she already has, but didn't have enough resources to really take advantage of (CS).

  I was nominated for the 3Arts Award and I didn't get it. In the feedback session, it became very apparent to me that I was not focused. I was nominated as a visual artist. This Fellowship was a result of the nomination and talking to Sarah during the feedback session. That whole thing got me into the sound art, blind people (AS).

- **Fellowship recipients bring their expertise to UIC and other venues.**

  The consultancy Reveca did at Gallery 400 for their staff and students around access for people with mobility impairments had a big impact. I know Reveca is already so out there doing work with Backbones. I think that this has supported the great work that she's already doing (CS).

  3Arts Fellows at UIC are tapped for different events. I employ them, invite them to guest lectures, different projects. I've written a grant that does provide money for the past cohorts to come in and work with faculty and students (CS).

  I was able to find a little funding in my department to bring former artists Matt Bodett and Arlene Malinowski to class and participate in discussions. I want to continue to use some funding to bring back previous people and keep them in the conversation (CS).

- **The Fellowship’s flexibility meets needs of artists with disabilities and increases access to opportunities.**

  We typically say that the fellowship will last up to three months, and Andy, of course, went on to six months with it. There are two aspects to that. One is that he just had so much to do in the context of the fellowship that we wanted to continue to support. But the second element is very important, I think, apropos of your work. But for artists who are receiving, for example, disability benefits and support, there is a tipping point at which point you can't make more money-or he will lose those benefits. That would have happened to Andy, but we spread the stipends out (EG).

  One of the things we ended up doing with Andy's funds that we hadn't anticipated in the beginning, which is why it's nice these funds are flexible, was having money to pay for him or partial payment for him to go to
Australia to do the research for his installation. He wouldn't have been able to go and he also wouldn't have been able to accept the opportunities to follow up on further research and collaboration there that ended up being extremely fruitful and connecting him with the whole disability art community out in Australia. The flexibility allowed him to take advantage of that opportunity and then the work that he did there fed into the work he eventually put together here (CS).

I was invited to go to Australia to record sounds in an old jail. UIC paid for the flight. We got to take that money out of the budget. That's what made it happen. That whole experience helped me expand my art as well (AS).

• *The Fellowship’s purpose and goals are clearly articulated.*

It’s a customized fellowship, so we ask each artist, what is it you want to make? We're going to support that. And we always want to have public events and convenings to raise the dialogue for the artist in question, but also around disability culture (EG).

There is a great value, and these artists are proving it, at this scale of support. You have an idea you want to investigate. You're getting the support you need over a period of three months, which is a pretty healthy period to investigate. And then you're getting some support and maybe a little bit more institutional muscle to help you present out to the world, and to meet new audiences (EG).

• *The administration of the Fellowship builds awareness and expertise about barriers to artists with disabilities associated with Social Security policies.*

In terms of capacity building, Andy and Reveca and my previous artists have spent some of their money on hiring other disabled artists, and they're learning about the policy barriers to hiring artists with disabilities, not only from their own circumstance, but other people's circumstances. I've had to work with the artists to negotiate with other artists to figure out how they can get paid. It's building capacity amongst the community on some of the work that I’ve done in the past for the National Endowment for the Arts, saying that we have opportunities to earn money and to grow, but these policies are the hugest barrier. There's been times when we have literally been not able to pay someone at all (CS).

• *Graduate assistants associated with the Fellowship become knowledgeable about artists and audiences with disabilities.*

My graduate assistant’s deep involvement with both projects has really helped his work in museum and exhibition studies. Having the museum and exhibition studies students as my graduate assistants on these projects enhances their professional development. They are future museum professionals and so by working with these artists they're learning in a very deep way about artists with disabilities and also, audiences (CS).

**Suggestions for Improvement and Enhancement**

**Program administration**

• *Increase administrative support to improve program operations and outreach and to enable Professor Sandahl to focus on the role of artistic director.*

We need Carrie's role to become the artistic director, meeting with and talking with the artists about their artistic output and have her focus becoming an artistic mentor. We have the most need in the administrative aspects. Somebody who would be the clearinghouse, keeping everybody informed about what's going on, helping promote the artists’ work on social media, potentially even helping 3Arts create an e-newsletter. We always send an e-blast out about the UIC fellows, but helping us have the content for that. Somebody overseeing the budget. That's not necessarily going to be a full part-time position. But during, maybe immediately before, immediately after the fellowships, that person needs to be really active. Maybe it's an independent contractor.
Getting somebody who might be a person with disability, might want to get involved in this, might be also a pipeline for them professionally to take on administrative (EG).

We don't always know what's coming down the pike with enough time to help promote events as well as we can. We don't have a central clearinghouse, and we're all so busy. The spontaneity is really nice for the artist, but it's not so easy for, let's say, me to do more e-blasts or promotional work. I don't know if it's curable in the way this program is run. It really is a residency program. There's a finite amount of time. We don't always know going in what the venues are going to be (EG).

We need to do better work on promotion. I get so involved in the projects themselves that I'm more of a mentor and dramaturg. The graduate student manages logistics and accommodations and keeping track of statistics and surveys (CS).

We need to improve artists’ access to administrative support (CS).

- **Establish best practices for disbursement of Fellowship funds that meet the needs of artists with disabilities and the requirements of Social Security programs and UIC administrative procedures.**

It took forever for me to get the contract. First off, they gave me a PDF form that was not accessible at all for a screen reader for a blind person. For the first couple months until I got that first payment, I really couldn't do anything because I didn't have the money. I needed to buy equipment. I had to put it on a credit card. Then, they didn't process one of my invoices and didn't tell me. I had to wait a whole month without having the money, which slowed me down. I had to dig into my own finances. They just needed to be clearer with what they wanted from me and Carrie. Better communication about what's acceptable, what's not. And follow up right away rather than just not pay it (AS).

There is a cap on how much I can earn each month since I collect Social Security disability. I can't write the invoice for everything at once. It's considered earned wages, the way that disperse the grant money. That left me to breaking up under $1,900 for each invoice. When they missed the month and I got paid for two invoices at once, I had to go and tell Social Security. It is something that happens with Social Security, but I'm not used to it. That was a learning experience. The fact that they weren't organized and there was no communication over it is why there was that panic—dealing with somebody who doesn't understand (AS).

Since all of the fellows are disabled, there should be initial discussion so the artist understands, if they have Social Security benefits, that they should really look into that first. Like having a consultation with somebody from Access Living or in the Disability Studies Department that might be an expert if it's something that Carrie isn't familiar with. They could sit down with Carrie and somebody from 3Arts and somebody from Bodies of Work and the artist and get a good understanding of the funding or payment restrictions that people like me would have (AS).

A lot of the budget was reimbursement for materials. Then they said, "You have to put an hourly wage on what you're doing." I was invited to go out to San Francisco to do some recording. Then I went out to Melbourne to do this recording. I can't put an hour rate on this. I'm recording wherever I go. Wherever I go, I'm working on the project (AS).

- **Continue to advocate for flexibility in artist’s use of funds.**

Emphasize the importance of flexibility for use of funds because it’s unlike traditional artist’s residencies that provide working space, food, and lodging, but aren’t not so much about infusing support and resources for what artists are doing outside of that space. What’s really unique about this one is the mentoring and community support and helping people see how one opportunity can leverage another one (CS).

- **Increase the budget for transportation.**

I’d like to increase the amount allotted for transportation. We have money set aside for disability accommodations and sometimes transportation is really an accommodation issue. Like for Andy, there were a
lot of times when just taking the train and buses wasn't feasible. They weren’t accessible enough and he ended up taking a lot of Ubers here and there. Transportation also was an issue for Reveca’s collaborators. When you're collaborating with other disabled people, you’ve got to think about their transportation. Maybe we need to think about that budget item a bit more expensively and think about it in relation to disability accommodation (CS).

- **Increase funding for dissemination of program activities.**

  I’d like more funding for dissemination. So maybe some funding to go to Alliance of Artists communities (CS).

**Program expansion**

- **Explore the possibility of adding a venue partner.**

  If we had a third partner at some point, a venue partner. We have the academic institution, and more importantly, Bodies of Work, which is about disability culture. We have 3Arts helping with the fundraising. If we had a venue partner, what would that mean? That would mean there would be a set place where these artists could workshop their ideas or perform or experiment with exhibiting. We’ve had a lot of work take place at Gallery 400. Fellows last year performed at something like 18 different sites, Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens Theater, Poetry Foundation, etc. On the one hand, I see it very efficient to have a venue partner. On the other hand, there might be value in not, because then you can move out all around to these other places. And if we had an administrator to help us secure those spaces, that could be fine. But it's something we have to debate as partners and see where we land. And then, should there be two? Should one be a performance venue and then one for the visual artists? But I like the idea of moving an awful lot, also because every neighborhood in Chicago needs art (EG).

  Formalizing a relationship between 3Arts, Bodies of Work, and UIC with High Concept Lab (HCL), giving the Fellows access to the space for performances. The Mana building has issues with accessibility but HCL doesn't only use the Mana building. They have connections with Steppenwolf and Constellation. Having an exhibition outlet outside of using the UIC student spaces would be really cool. Maybe even asking the Fellow from the get-go, "Is there a gallery or place that's accessible that you'd like to work with that we might be able to incorporate?" Maybe provide funding for them (AS).

  My experience of being part of the exhibition at Gallery 400 was great. Having the opportunity to have my installation there, I have a place now in this history of disabled art and activism in Chicago. That was a really important experience. It would be great if an opportunity like that is offered to each Fellow (AS).

- **Extend the length of the residency and to better align it with the academic calendar and needs of artists with disabilities.**

  Extend the length of the residency. The two-month window is too short. The time period is just too compressed and we end up going over it anyway. It's stressful to me. I would like to think about having these artists for the year. Align it with the academic year. Some challenges due to disability issues. There are restrictions on how we could pay because of Social Security. That presented some challenges with our business office about how to separate out payments, how to get money to him to get equipment and supplies that wouldn't affect his Social Security and wouldn't be counted as income. That's part of the challenge for people with disabilities in general and luckily, were able to accommodate that. That doesn't mean we'd have to do something every month, but the project could go over more time so that I could spread out payments even further. The things that people have chosen to do over the years have ended up needing more time, more flexibility. Sometimes disability issues that come into play, finding resources, connecting with other organizations (CS).

  Both Andy and Reveca have been attending my disability culture class this whole semester as visiting artists. We planned that as part of their residencies, even though it didn't fit into the time slot. My classes aren't taught every semester. This class is only taught every other year. I have a different class that's taught in the other years. My disability classes for grad students that would be available to these artists to visit only are once a year. Even though Andy’s residency ended officially, he's still coming to my class. We still are doing a lot of work
together. We've made his residency stretch. That's good evidence for how extending these out for a calendar year would be really beneficial. (CS).

- **Increase the number of fellows to two per semester to foster interaction.**
  
  Moving from two to four fellows a year could be really great. For example, two fellows at a time, so that there might even be some resonance between them, or at least if not full collaboration, which shouldn't be required, conversation and support and learning from each other, potentially across disciplines (EG).

- **Add a second site for the 3Arts Fellowship to leverage the expertise and connections created by the program.**
  
  Keep it as a UIC-centric program but have a second site that would be facilitated by my Ph.D. student, Sandie Yi. She is an artist with a disability and she's built Bodies of Work with me. She might be able to run a second site at the School of the Art Institute because she's teaching there in the spring. If we expand to accommodate more artists, the key thing is that Sandie has the knowledge of disability culture and all these connections that we've built up (CS).

- **Explore the possibility of adding a partner to work with Fellows on documentation of their project.**
  
  HCL has funding for a team of interns that do documentation for all their artists. We're could put money to pay a partner to do that for the Fellows.

**Mentoring and Networking**

- **Provide more guidance to Fellows around planning in advance and during the Fellowship.**
  
  I wanted a little more structure on my project prior to that so I could prepare better. It's left very open so we can do what we want and what we need to do. But initially I felt a little bit lost like what can I do? Talking to the other artists directly to see what they did and how they used the funds. I only talked to Andy after I started (RT).

  A timeline would be helpful. I had meetings and it was discussed. But it would have been really helpful if I had a visual that I could keep and refer to (RT).

- **Cultivate the network of 3Arts Fellowship recipients.**
  
  Allocate some money to bring in past participants for ongoing conversations with the artists as a group. And then they also continue to work on each other's projects. I know there was participation by former residents in Matt Bodett's performance project that was at High Concept Labs and Andy was at High Concept Labs. And then people doing stuff at Access Living. It's created more performance opportunities or exhibition opportunities or just attending each other's events (CS).
APPENDIX 3

ANDY SLATER
3ARTS FELLOW AT UIC, 2018

2018 Fellow #1 March-December, 2018
Report up to Aug. 3, 2018
Carrie Sandahl

Central Activity

The central activity for Andy Slater’s residency is the creation of a sound installation entitled Space for the Overactive Ear. The spring 2018 has been rich with research and development. The fall of 2018 will include building the installation and additional, related research and professional development. The bulk of Andy’s residency has concluded, and the installation will be exhibited at the end of the year. Details forthcoming.

Link to 3-D models of the booths.
The design to be used is in the Square booth folder.

Funding update

Bodies of Work has been able to leverage considerable in-kind funding and other contributions, and Andy has been able to combine resources with other opportunities to greatly expand the scope of his project. The flexibility of this residency has enabled Andy to take full advantage of opportunities that have come his way and has been successful at using each to develop his central activity and lay the groundwork for future collaborations and projects.

Andy Slater’s Project Description

A Space for the Overactive Ear is a multi-channel sound installation housed in a 6 x 6 x 8 booth. The audio program is composed in the style of Musique Concrete. The entire piece is composed of field recordings with a focus of sonic dynamics and movement of sound throughout the booth. I consider it a listening booth where the listener can get a look into how I personally hear the world around me. Since I am visually impaired/legally blind, I have a unique relationship with sound and a trained ear for detail. It is hard to explain in words what all of that means, so I let the installation describe it for me.

I have come to a conclusion that most sighted people are passive listeners. Normally sighted people allow visual information to distract them from deep listening and focusing on the fine details of a sound. In the booth there will be nothing to look at and the room will be pitch black, forcing the ears to be the gatherer of information. I am concerned about reaching a deaf audience, so I am experimenting with accommodation tactics. The booth is equipped with varying sizes of transducers (bass shakers) that vibrate the floor and walls through low frequencies. I am also developing an ASL and text translation of the piece’s sounds and passages. Since none of the source sounds are processed or manipulated, they remain referential to actual objects, experiences, and landscapes. This allows me to describe in words what the sounds are and their sonic attributes. An interpretative performance and presentation of the piece is in development and I am currently looking to collaborate with a deaf performer.

During exhibition I will host “relaxed” listening sessions. This will include customized volume levels and illumination in the booth for people with sensory concerns. Portions of the audio will be available as a
two-channel stereo mix for playback outside of the booth for people concerned with being in a small dark space.

The structure will also be equipped with a ramp and ADA standard entryway.
The sound sources include recordings that capture nature (a conversation with cows of Northern California, waterfalls, the interior of a cave), industrial (a machine shop, factories, the SETI satellite array), urban landscape (CTA trains, cars, fireworks, my neighborhood), navigating different environments with my white tipped blind cane), and other assorted bits and pieces from my daily life. A multi-channel mix of my recent pieces completed during my 3Arts Residency Fellowship at UIC, “Paralytic Transit” (exhibited by High Concept Labs, Expo Chicago), and “Cosmic Static” (from the group show, Eavesdropping – Ian Potter Museum of Art, Melbourne) will be included in the audio program.

The structure is designed for an easy installation and strike making it portable available for pop-up exhibition. Starting in 2019, I will be curating a program of work from other sound artists to be auditioned in the booth. The installation will then become a gallery within itself.

Specs

* 6 Channel sound installation housed in a 6ft x 6ft x 8ft space (the box). Entry is through an ADA compliant doorway covered by thick dark curtains. The floor is elevated approx. 8 inches of the ground and will require the companion ramp for accessibility.

* The box has been designed for travel and portability.

* The box should be exhibited in a part of the gallery where it’s audio will not disrupt any other work shown simultaneously. The audio playback varies in loudness and is often at low volume with brief passages of silence. Installing the box in a loud room with competing sound sources will greatly affect the composition’s performance.

* A disclaimer of the loud and sudden playback volume must be publicly offered Customizable volume levels should be offered. Customized playback volume for an audience with sensory concerns should be offered upon request and during touch tours.

The box must be kept as dark as possible however a small light is installed on the wall close to the door. Other lighting options should be available upon request and during touch tours.

* Speakers will be installed into the walls on all four corners of the box’s interior with one speaker installed in the ceiling. Bass shaker transducers will be installed under the floor with smaller “touchable” transducers mounted on the walls.

* A Mac CPU with Pro Tools installed will run the audio through a 6 or more output interface. The outputs from the interface will be connected to 2-3 external amplifiers that will send the audio to the various speakers. The placement of the computer and amps will be determined by where the box is installed in the room.

Campus Participation
Andy has studio space through fall semester 2018 provided by UIC’s School of Art and Art History, courtesy of Acting Director Jennifer Reeder. In the spring semester 2018, Andy participated in Prof. Deborah Stratman’s class “Radical Listening,” providing a guest presentation (with sound artist Christine Sun Kim) and critiques of students’ final projects.
In the fall semester 2018, Andy will be a visiting artist in Dr. Carrie Sandahl’s graduate seminar “Disability and Culture,” sharing his working process with students and engaging in discussions about disability aesthetics.

He also presented a keynote, original performance for the spring semester’s annual Chicago Disability Studies Conference, presented jointly by graduate students at University of Illinois at Chicago and University of Chicago: *Crypto Acoustic Auditory Non-hallucination*. The conference’s keynote academic speaker from UC-Berkeley, Dr. Karen Nakamura, noted disability studies scholar found Andy’s performance so engaging that she connected him with opportunities and other artists/scholars during his June trip to the San Francisco Bay area where he was doing field research related to the residency and presented an interactive workshop-performance at The Jewish Museum.

**Public Presentations**

Andy has been doing artist talks, exhibiting his work, speaking on panels, consulting on disability access, and actively engaging the larger community in issues related to this residency. These public presentations have been located in Chicago and the San Francisco bay area, and new collaborations based on activities of this residency have extended internationally to Canada and Melbourne, Australia. In turn, all of the collaborations have fed into the creation of his installation *Space for the Overactive Ear*.

**Documentation**

The residency is supporting documentation of Andy’s work and process. Andy engaged Chicago artist Charlie Simokaitis to take video footage and photographs that will be edited for later use as marketing materials.

**Mentoring**

In July, the residency supported the visit of New York author and musician Jimmy Knipfel, who is also blind. With Jim, Andy recorded an interview with Knipfel about his work, got his feedback on work in progress, and collaborated in a studio session. The mentoring visit concluded with a lively public conversation between the two at Quimby’s bookstore. Each artist also shared work-in-progress and discussed developments in aesthetics and arts access for the blind and low vision. They also discussed the networking of blind sound artist nationally and internationally.

**Summary of Activities (statistics on spreadsheet)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/5/18</td>
<td>Andy presented work from his project <em>Sound as Sight</em> in Prof. Deborah Stratman’s “Radical Listening” undergraduate class in UIC’s Moving Image Department. Andy’s presentation followed one by visiting Deaf sound artist, Christine Sun Kim. In this presentation, Andy explained his process of creating <em>Sound as Sight</em> in which he made field recordings with access technology used by the blind. He recorded sounds of using his cane in various environments to compose a “sonic image” of space.</td>
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<td>3/20/2018</td>
<td>Andy participated on a panel organized by Bodies of Work for the staff of the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago. The panel was called, “Relaxed performance: Welcoming the rich diversity of the 21st century audience.” The panel was organized and facilitated by Carrie Sandahl and included Elesheva Esther, TJ Gordon, and Reveca Torres (also a 3Arts Residency Fellow at UIC).</td>
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<td>4/20/2018</td>
<td>For the Chicago Disability Studies Conference at UIC, Andy performed an original piece entitled “Crypto Acoustic Auditory Non-hallucination.” In this piece Andy presents a performative lecture that simultaneously parodies and seriously explores the notion that the blind can access sounds unavailable to sighted people. Slater used edited field recordings made for the <em>Overactive Ear</em> installation to “prove” the theory that the blind can receive communication from extraterrestrial beings that sighted people cannot hear. Slater also experimented with creative, absurd, and oddly compelling audio description of his sound recordings for the Deaf and hard of hearing that went beyond a dry translation of the sound to imaginative and evocative verbal version of sound. His descriptions added an additional layer of meaning that hearing audiences found compelling and additive to their experience of the sound itself. <a href="http://drc.uic.edu/events/2018-chicago-disability-studies-conference/">http://drc.uic.edu/events/2018-chicago-disability-studies-conference/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/11/2018</td>
<td>Andy showed the <em>Paralytic Transit</em> installation/presentation at High Concept Labs Spring Open House at Links Hall/Constellation. This piece includes his initial field recordings for <em>Overactive Ear</em> and further developed the material he presented to the “Radical Listening” class at UIC. Event was attended by about 100 people. Andy’s description of <em>Paralytic Transit</em> is as follows: <em>Paralytic Transit</em> explores the nuances of Chicago’s most recognizable soundscape, the CTA train system. Many passengers have learned to ignore the grinding of the tracks and rattling cars. Some passengers say the thunderous arrival of the El is a sound of joy that promises a safe passage home. I do not share that sentiment and cannot ignore what I hear. As a blind passenger the sheer loudness of the train can freeze me where I stand. Without hearing or sight, I am left defenseless. Standing under the El tracks as a train passes overhead can certainly be a traumatic experience, however, when the trains aren’t being intimidating, I find that the sounds they make can be beautiful, mysterious, and just plain weird. This piece is composed of the most dynamic sounds from over three hours of recorded travel. These sounds include: The roaring cars bellowing throughout the underground, the din of vents and motors, the breath and thuds of the opening and closing doors, and the grinding exit gate at the California stop. <em>Paralytic Transit</em> is a contribution to the <em>Sound As Sight</em> field-recording project for the blind and part of Slater’s sound installation, <em>A Space For The Overactive Ear</em>. <a href="https://www.dropbox.com/s/mmal2kgze9h833q/Slater_Paralytic%20Transit.wav?dl=0">https://www.dropbox.com/s/mmal2kgze9h833q/Slater_Paralytic%20Transit.wav?dl=0</a></td>
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<td>5/3/2018</td>
<td>Andy was a panelist on the public conversation, “Inside Out: Narrative on Disability &amp; Outsider Art,” co-presented by Bodies of Work, NON:op open opera works, and Intuit: Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art. The panel was organized and facilitated by Carrie Sandahl. Panelists included Christophe Preissing, Matt Bodett (former 3Arts Fellow at UIC), Alison Amick, and Melissa Smith. The panel description is as follows: “... a panel discussion that questions the curatorial practice of framing disabled artists as medically pathological ‘outsiders.’ Depictions of disability have always been central to the arts. Actual disabled people, however, rarely control narratives about this imagery. This discussion is part of an international effort to cultivate a middle ground that centers disabled people both inside and outside the arts world as artists, administrators and audiences.”</td>
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<td>5/7/2018</td>
<td>Andy participated in a critique of students’ final class project in the “Radical Listening” class.</td>
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<td>May 2018</td>
<td>Andy consulted on disability access and the creation of artist-led touch tours for the Museum of Contemporary Art with Jeanine Pollard.</td>
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<td>6/15/18</td>
<td>Andy participated in a performance/artist talk entitled “SoVISA Galatic: Listening through Space” at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco. There were 35 people at this event. ASL interpretation was provided. There were sighted guides and assistive audio listening devices. He also did a presentation with a 3d tactile model of the building for people to explore before the performance. Description of event: “Artists Andy Slater and Fayen d’Evie invite you to join them on a sonar wayfinding journey, from the outer architecture of The Contemporary Jewish Museum (The CJM) to the Museum’s Blue Cube space. The performance will include a sculptural contribution from Bay Area artist Jennifer Justice. Following the performance, the artists will share their ambitions for SoVISA, the Society of Visually Impaired Sound Artists, a group founded by Andy Slater advocating for the inclusion of sound art in art education for the blind, and a greater presence in museums. They will share examples from their solo projects, including Space for the Overactive Ear and The Radical Potential of Blindness and current collaborations that traverse extraterrestrial listening sites and haunted panopticon prisons.”</td>
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| 6/14-6/21  | Andy conducted research for *Overactive Ear*, networked with other disabled artists, and made future contacts for his work as part of his residency. Andy explains:  
“While in San Francisco, I arranged meetings to discuss disability art, accessibility in art, and my own work. These were very beneficial and led to future opportunities for collaborations and return visits to the Bay Area.  
I met with San Francisco Lighthouse for The Blind CEO Bryan Bashin to discuss the goals of the Society of Visually Impaired Sound Artists and my current work as a 3Arts Fellow. Also at this meeting were Sherri Wells-Jensen (Bowling Green University), Josh Miele (Smith Kettlewell Eye Institute), Jennifer Justice (UC Berkley/UIC/SAIC), and Fayen d’Evie (my Eavesdropping collaborator)  
I met with Cecile Puret (Jewish Contemporary Museum) and discussed accessibility, experimental sound and museum experience.  
I also met with Ernst Karel (Harvard) and discussed listening, sound and blindness, and sensory ethnography.”  
During this trip, Andy and his collaborator, Fayen d’Evie, conducted field recording at the SETI Institute whose mission is “to explore, understand and explain the origin and nature of life in the universe and the evolution of intelligence.”  
https://www.seti.org/  
These recordings were composed into a 13-min piece for *Eavesdropping*, in Melbourne, Australia. Andy explained that the SETI site is a unique sonic space due to its being a radio and phone-free area. D’Evie and Andy recorded sounds of a satellite, empty environments, and animals. Some of these sounds will be used in *Overactive Ear*. |
| July 2018  | The residency supported a mentoring collaboration between Andy and New York author and musician, Jim Knipfel. Knipfel gave Andy feedback after reviewing work in progress on *Overactive Ear*. Andy recorded an interview with Knipfel about his relationship to sound and navigation. Andy may edit this interview and post as a podcast. Andy said this interview may serve as the basis of a series of future interviews with other blind artists. Andy and Knipfel had a recording session at Frogg Mountain Studio Chicago, where the two recorded sounds of their canes and other sound related to their relationship to the environment and the experience of blindness. They also conducted more recording sessions and discussed their work at Andy’s home in Berwyn. |
| 7/19/2018 | Artist talk with James Knipfel at Quimby’s Bookstore. Description of event from Quimby’s website:  
Born in Wisconsin, Jim Knipfel was a staff writer at the now-defunct weekly alternative newspaper New York Press for thirteen years, where wrote the long-running and popular “Slackjaw” column, a cynical, misanthropic look at daily life. He is the author of ten books, including *Slackjaw, Quitting the Nairobi Trio, These*

Self-described local blindo, Andy Slater aka Velcro Lewis, will host the event. Slater will be sharing excerpts from his comic How Many Fingers Am I Holding Up, his new stand-up act Permission To Fail, and details of his work with the Society of Visually Impaired Sound Artists.

This event is supported by 3Arts, Bodies Of Work, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

“[Slackjaw] is an extraordinary emotional ride, through the lives and times of reader and writer alike, maniacally aglow with a born storyteller’s gifts of observation, an amiably deranged sense of humor, and a heart too bounced around by his history, and ours, not to have earned Mr. Knipfel, at last, an unsentimental clarity that is generous and deep.”—Thomas Pynchon

“Life hasn’t been easy for Jim Knipfel. He’s blind…He’s got a drinking problem. He’s been in an out of mental hospitals. He’s attempted suicide. But he’s managed to keep his sense of humor.”—Boston Herald

https://www.quimbys.com/blog/readings/writer-jim-knipfel-stops-at-quimbys-on-july-19th/

7/24/2018

Andy consulted with the Chicago Children’s Museum on their spring 2020 exhibit. Andy brainstormed with the museum on the exhibit and will continue to work on its development. Andy explained that this consult is directly connected to current research and work on Overactive Ear.

July – Oct 2018

Eavesdropping – Cosmic Dust at Ian Potter Museum of Art Victoria, AU


Opening was attended by over 1000 people.

Description of Exhibit:

Fayen d’Evie and Jen Bervin with Bryan Phillips and Andy Slater

“Cosmic Static” is the outcome of d’Evie and Bervin’s research at the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence (SETI) artist-in-residence programme. It experiments with the dynamics of “cosmic eavesdropping,” combining a repurposed sculptural radio telescope feed from one of SETI’s arrays with an ultrasonic projection of field recordings and stories of individuals dedicated to listening for extraterrestrial signals.

Central to the work is the story of amateur radio operator Grote Reber, who succeeded in detecting cosmic static in 1938 using a parabolic antenna built in his Chicago backyard. Cosmic Static samples two bodies of field recordings, one from the Tasmanian landscapes where Reber moved in 1954 and constructed antenna farms by stringing wires across sheep grazing lands, and the other from the Grote Reber Museum at the University of Hobart’s Mount Pleasant Radio Observatory. Another narrative collages fragments from the history of extraterrestrial listening, including field recordings at SETI’s Allen Telescope Array in Hat Creek, California, where a small operational staff maintains forty-two small dishes, searching for anomalous stellar and interstellar signals. A third story explores the research of SETI astrophysicist Laurance Doyle,
who studies the language complexity and signal transmissions of non-human species – from plant – insect communications, to monkey whistling and baby dolphin babbling – to develop methods of discerning intelligent extraterrestrial signals amidst the galactic noise.


8/12/2018  Comfort Society: High Concept Labs presents Artist Talk at Comfort Station

Andy will be discussing his work (including Overactive Ear) along with artist Aquil Charlton.
http://www.comfortstationlogansquare.org/events/

9/27 thru 9/29  Expo Chicago-expo sound at Navy Pier. The lineup for this program has not been announced yet so there is no link. This sound piece includes audio recorded for Overactive Ear

Oct 1-16  Andy will also be in Victoria, AU for a residency. See attached letter. This trip will partially be supported by 3Arts Residency Fellowship at UIC as Andy will be working on material for Overactive Ear.

Additional

Exhibitions On the Cusp article - Emily hall Tremaine foundation

Andy will be part of research project on the performing arts and disabilities conducted by Occupational Therapy graduate students at UIC.

Plans emerging for artist talk at Gallery 400.
A note from Andy . . .
When I began my fellowship, I had two main goals. One was my installation and the other was to continue developing myself as a professional artist. Since starting I have been launched into over a dozen opportunities and situations that I have been longing for. This is a direct result of the support I have received from Carrie Sandahl and 3Arts. I have learned to talk more comfortably and directly about my art, my ideas, my practice, and my goals. I’ve been introduced to a group of likeminded and encouraging artists and curators. I presented my work to a sound class at UIC. I performed at a conference of disability academics. I’ve had the chance to consult at major institutions such as the MCA and Chicago Children’s Museum. It is truly vindicating.

When I graduated from SAIC I didn’t feel that identifying as a disabled artist was important or beneficial. After being introduced to people from Bodies of Work and 3Arts, I saw that whether my disability would affect my success as an artist, it would affect my practice positively and lead me to communicate about my blindness more creatively. I have accepted my identity as a disabled artist and have put together a program to encourage other blind people to become sound artists. It has become “what I do.”

I have always been ambitious and prolific, but there have been a number of projects that stayed silent because of funding. With the financial support of this fellowship, I have been able to complete many of these ideas. A Space for the Over-active Ear would have never been built without funding. And it has expanded way beyond my initial proposal. I feel more positive and less anxious. I don’t feel like I need to hustle or do a million things just to gain acceptance or build my resume. I can finally focus on what I want to do and, it has led to comfort and stability in my life. I have really taken off! I’m going to Australia for a residency and lecture run. That’s incredible. My dad told me he was proud of me.

So, with the two goals successfully executed, I have to say that the fellowship has helped me do exactly what I set out to do and that is something I very rarely experienced. Thank you so much for the support and opportunity.
Tres Fridas Project: Reimagining Art through the Disability Lens

“We are getting close to recreating 20 images and hoping to exhibit them in the next year. We’ve replaced the subjects in all these images with artists with a variety of different disabilities. We also interview them and get to know about their experience and their work. We are making a documentary film about the project” (Reveca Torres interviewed by Lise McKeen, November 27, 2018).

Reveca Torres and Mariam Pare, two artists paralyzed by a spinal cord injury, met online and bonded through art, injury and a deep connection to Frida Kahlo. Soon after, they decided to recreate Frida Kahlo’s evocative painting Dos Fridas using photography, making their own costumes and inserting themselves in the image sitting in their wheelchairs. Photographer and disability advocate, Tara Ahern, connected to the project through her own experience as a woman with muscular dystrophy and scoliosis as well as a shared love of Frida.

The women often discussed their experience as people with disabilities and how they could utilize their individual experiences and artistic talents to produce and innovate thought provoking art. This first image was a bold statement to the world; “We are strong, resilient, creative and beautiful!” A spark had been lit and Tres Fridas was born. (Translated: Three Fridas) Reveca, Mariam and Tara began to recreate other iconic images in art, history and pop culture and explore different facets of life and disability. The Tres Fridas collection includes recreations of Dos Fridas, Mona Lisa, Rosie the Riveter, The Last Supper, Whistler’s Mother, Old Guitarist, Christina’s World and more, all with the subjects being people with disabilities.

Tres Fridas documents & records Reveca, Mariam and Tara’s creative process as women artists with disabilities and authenticates the human experience of disability not as one of inspiration, shame, fear, or pity, but as one that is familiar and painted with love, pain, frustration, beauty, happiness and drive. 

Project description Facebook page “About Tres Fridas”
Artist Talk by Reveca Torres
Gallery 400
Tuesday, September 18, 2018
6:00PM to 7:30PM
400 S. Peoria St.

3Arts at UIC fellow Reveca Torres speaks about her multi-faceted arts practice focused on accurate representations of those living with disabilities from her perspective as an art maker, community organizer, and film festival director.

This artist talk is presented in conjunction with the exhibition Chicago Disability Activism, Arts, and Design: 1970s to Today which explores how disabled artists and designers in Chicago were integral to the development of a local and national disability rights movement, creating radical change for more than one fifth of the US population.

Reveca Torres was injured and paralyzed in a car accident at the age of 13. After completing degrees in Fashion Design and Theatre Arts, Reveca worked as a costume designer and simultaneously worked with various organizations doing disability work in the realms of health & fitness, transitioning, recreation, education and peer support. She started a nonprofit called Backbones in 2009 after realizing that years of interaction and friendship with others living with spinal injuries (SCI) had made a significant impact in her self-image, confidence and drive to succeed. Reveca wanted to ensure that others, especially those newly injured, had access to resources, information, and the same type of peer support she had. She has completed two Creative Access residencies at Vermont Studio Center and Santa Fe Art Institute. Reveca is the director of ReelAbilities Film Festival Chicago and has curated touring photography and art exhibitions that showcase the work of people with disabilities and bring awareness to disability rights. Reveca uses painting, illustration, photography, film, movement and other media as a form of expression and a tool for advocacy and social justice. (Tres Fridas)

3Arts Fellow at the University of Illinois at Chicago, 2018
Co-Founder, Backbones
Board member, National Coalition for Latinxs with Disabilities (CNLD)
Director, Reel Abilities Film Festival Chicago 2015, 2017, 2019
APPENDIX 4

KEY PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EVALUATION REPORT FOR THE 3ARTS FELLOWSHIP AT UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO, 2017

Peter McDowell Arts Consulting
February 20, 2018

1. Help the Fellows improve marketing and publicity for themselves and for their residency
   a. If the Fellow doesn’t yet have a website, such as in the case of Lenzo, connect them with someone who will create a simple website with/for them that can be updated by the artists themselves.
   b. Hire a publicist to publicize the Fellowships and the events taking part during them.
      i. Positioning events to be professionally reviewed, when possible, will strengthen the artist’s profile and also lend credibility to the program.
      ii. Making sure that performance information is adequately disseminated to local news and listing sources ensures proper public knowledge of the events and encourages attendance.
   c. Redesign and relaunch the Bodies of Work website.
      i. The site can serve as a place to chronicle the fellowships of Schaefer, Lenzo, Bodett and future Fellows, as well as providing the important historical context of the past two BOW festivals from 2006 and 2013.
   d. Help create slicker materials that come out of the Fellowship:
      i. Examples: replace the introduction of the Lenzo/Fuller video with text instead of them talking - 3:43 is too long of an introduction. Properly identify music composition and players; subtitle video.

2. Respond to suggestions made by the Fellows and Administrators:
   a. Make a certain portion of the grant available to the Fellow immediately, rather than waiting for reimbursements, etc.
   b. Strive to find more funding so that artists’ projects can be more robust.
   c. Provide more funding for accommodations.
   d. Provide funds to create and disseminate research about the work – stipends for administrators or conference travel, for example.
   e. Setting up meetings, perhaps artist salons, of artists who’ve been through the residency program on an ongoing basis.

3. Changes to be made with the objective of administrative financial stability:
   a. Provide more detailed information in advance to entice future funders:
      i. Select artists earlier and gather information about Fellows and their activities further in advance.
      ii. Gather more data such as audience survey results - amounts of audience and feedback from audience
   b. Engage and select a chief administrator for the project.