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Call for Artists - Creative Bridges

The Shadowlight Artists are an independent group of six artists with learning disabilities based in Oxfordshire, working in a variety of media but with a shared interest in digital forms. Their work is personal, moving and at times challenging. The group are being supported by Film Oxford, who have worked with the group since 2008 through the Flash Frame and Digital Lives projects, and aim to continue this support through the Creative Bridges project. Creative Bridges will allow each of the Shadowlight Artists to recruit and work with a professional artist or artists in order to extend their creative potential and produce new work for exhibition during 2016.

Shadowlight artist Mark Hemsworth will make a film about the effect seasonal affective disorder has on his life. He would like to receive expressions of interest from the artists/filmmakers who would like to work with him, offering creative exchange along with technical support for his project.

Project Description

Mark wants to create a film about his life and the influence of seasonal affective disorder on its tempo. During the summer months, Mark enjoys spending time outdoors, which includes a great deal of walking in rural Oxfordshire and also visiting the various festivals in the region, including music festivals, air shows and car shows. During the summer period, both of these activities bring Mark pleasure and the freedom to enjoy the natural environment. As autumn close in and into winter, Mark's world gradually shrinks back into the retreat of his bedroom. The collections housed in his room become significant at this time, becoming his main interest to sustain him through the enclosed winter period.

Mark's film will explore this cycle and the contracting effect the onset of winter has on Mark's life. Motifs to be used are the Landscape and the change in light through the seasons which also draws on Mark's interest in nature and landscape photography. This could be used as central device in the film, with a series of film images of the bright sunlight and sunsets in summer through finally to a view of street light at dusk through Mark's bedroom window in winter. Other parallels could be between music festivals in the summer, with the excitement of the crowd and the communal party atmosphere through to images of cassette collections listen to inside and alone during winter.

In contrast to Mark's previous films, this film will be far more personal in nature, offering an insight into his world and a condition that reflects the cycle of the natural world.

Method

Mark will be interviewed once per month during the project to record his response to the current season and its effect on his outlook. These interviews will take place mainly at his home, but could also take place outdoors during the summer. These recordings will be used to provide the narrative for the work, which will feature Mark's own voice.

Mark will record material to document his outdoor activities through the summer, including his various visits to festivals and events. Also he will create landscape photographs and footage that shows the change



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of the season, with particular focus on the quality of light through the seasons.

Artist to work with Mark

Mark will need an artist film maker with a background that spans documentary film making and also experimental film making. The artist will need to work with Mark both to shoot material featuring Mark, and also to make selections from materials Mark has recorded himself, in readiness for the edit. The edit may be taken on by the artist, or compiled rushes handed to Film Oxford for completion. The artist will have extensive experience of video production from shoot through to edit, and experience with Premiere Pro would be an advantage.

Artists wishing to collaborate with Mark should be able to travel within Oxfordshire, and would benefit from having their own transport. No budget additional budget is available for travel expenses, so this opportunity is best suited to artists within Oxfordshire or surrounding region. A fee of £500 is available to cover 2 days working with Mark, which can be broken down into shorter sessions as required. An additional fee will be available to artists wishing to take on the edit process with Mark.

About Mark

Mark Hemsworth was born in 1968 in Reading and grew up in Cholsey, Oxfordshire with his family.

My favourite artists are Van Gogh, Picasso and Leonardo da Vinci and I like painting and colour. For example how colour makes the picture come alive. I am also interested in perspective, shadow and shading. The shapes and the detail are also something I am interested in.

With video I plan out what the video is going to be about and then plan and draw a storyboard. Then I record what I need and then come back and edit on the computer.

I like going out and filming and doing the editing, I like the effects that are possible. My first film was shown at a film festival in 2008 which was called the Three Billy Goat's Gruff.

My ideas come from a feeling I've had in the past and have enjoyed. Film is a good way to express them and I get pleasure from painting.

Mark's painting and photography work has been exhibited through the region and beyond.

Expressions of interest

Artists interested in working with Mark should email links to up to 3 examples of video or film work to Chris Oakley (Creative Bridges Lead Artist) at contact@chrisoakley.com. These examples should be selected to demonstrate compatibility with Mark's project, and accompanied with a CV and a short statement explaining how and why you would like to work with Mark. Optionally, this statement could be in the form of a video recording compressed to a size suitable for email (under 10MB) and sent to contact@chrisoakley.com, or posted on a video sharing site or accessible facebook page. This would assist in the accessibility of your response for Mark. This doesn't need to be a polished production- a short recording on a smartphone or from a webcam would be ideal. Closing date is the 10th July 2015.



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