

Name: Saul Villegas

Student ID: 7142385

College: Porter

Grade Level: Junior

Funds Requested: \$550.86

Website: <https://www.modernobysaulvillegas.com/>

Proposal: Marine Fog

Hello my name is Saul Villegas, an undergraduate transfer student majoring in Art. I am interested in exploring photography in the style of a photo-essay to depict a current climate issue. Recently an article published on UCSC's Newscenter website stated, "Coastal fog linked to high levels of mercury found in mountain lions". In reading the article I became interested in exploring the idea of portraying an imagined toxicity level of mercury for the viewer to have an immediate encounter with the topic. Because mercury is invisible, the discovery of toxic levels in fog became traceable due to the declining reproduction of mountain lions closely researched by the *Puma Project*. My interpretation of the link to declining health and the correlation of toxic fog contamination to other animals in the food chain will be examined through landscape photography.

The body of work I will create for *Marine Fog* are conceptual landscape photographs which will allow the viewer to see imagined areas of mercury tainted fog on the image. Through digital imaging processes, the photograph will be altered to show an image map, similar to a heat map, rendered in different color tones. Because the toxicity of mercury is invisible, by changing the atmosphere's natural color and highlighting the toxin, the viewer will become engaged with the substance as it is spread throughout the landscape.



Liquid poison
Digital Photograph
2019

By creating awareness of the invisible toxin through the use of photography, I will make visible a problem that requires a solution. The goal is to visually capture the audience into thinking what is mercury and why is it so toxic and how can we create a solution to detoxify this metal?

I intend to continue researching this topic and photograph important areas that cross contaminate on landscape such as the coastal area whereas fog is created, slowly spreading over the terrain infecting the plant and animal life. The images will be printed to create a photo-essay book that will document articles of current climate issues researched at UCSC and reimagined photographs depicting areas of contamination.

In receiving the proposed grant for the Arts + Environmental Futures I will purchase materials needed to complete my exploration and studio practice of research and manual methods of design. By allowing me the freedom to explore my studio practice and have funds to purchase materials, I am preparing my portfolio at a high caliber while looking ahead to building my skills for graduate school.

Timeline:

Winter Quarter

January 2020 preliminary designs and photographs complete

Week of January 5, 2020 print large scale | photo-essay photographs at DARC

Itemized Budget Plan:

[Dick Blick Arts Supply Wish List](#) \$550.86

I would like to thank you for reviewing my submission and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saul Villegas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Saul Villegas