

Faculty statement on mentorship of research/creative activity

My mentorship of Sculpture graduate student Asha Cabaca for her research/creative activity *The Wheel: A Cast Iron Sculptural Performance* included the following aspects of support.

First, I shared my extensive knowledge of modern and contemporary art with Asha based on her stated research interests/objectives in creating *The Wheel*. I placed particular emphasis on artists who worked with themes of repetition, sculptors who drew on themes of insurmountable or Sisyphean tasks, and creators of kinetic/mechanical modes of expression. This provided conceptual underpinning for Asha's creative approach, so that she could see her individual artwork in the context of significant trends and ideas at play in the larger art world. This aspect of mentorship helped Asha significantly with regard to writing a compelling narrative for her performance proposal, which helped it get accepted for the National Conference on Contemporary Cast Iron Art and Practices at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark.

Second, I provided material support for Asha to physically weld and fabricate *The Wheel*, utilizing generous departmental resources provided by the Myers and Mesaros endowments to order mild steel, hardware, and other materials needed for the construction of this project. Additionally, I utilized these departmental funds to set up all aspects of our joint research trip to Birmingham, Alabama, for the National Conference on Contemporary Cast Iron Art and Practices at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark, paying for conference registration, hotel accommodations, and other expenses related to this endeavor.

Third, I provided first-hand documentation of Asha's cast iron sculptural performance on the final evening of the National Conference on Contemporary Cast Iron Art and Practices at Sloss Furnaces National Historic Landmark. Since I was not part of the team who helped Asha execute this project, this afforded me the opportunity to create high-resolution photography and video documentation of her piece in action, which helped for this temporary artwork to live on in perpetuity as a valuable aspect of Asha's research agenda while enrolled in graduate studies in the WVU School of Art and Design.



/ Dylan Collins (he/him/his)
Associate Professor
Sculpture Program Coordinator
Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising
School of Art and Design / College of Creative Arts
West Virginia University
304.322.0739
<http://dylancollinsart.com/>