Abstract:

I am requesting funds to purchase a 3D printer for a "Do It Yourself" artwork to be exhibited at the international arts event, SIGGRAPH. In this interactive artwork, participants are invited to create DIY projects of everyday necessities and objects of absurdity that are envisioned to educate and delight. Combining electronic technologies with analogue mechanisms in a willfully tinker-centric approach, the work is driven by the philosophy that making rather than consuming leads to self-reliance, an engaged worldview, enhanced personal relationships, robust local economies, and ultimately to a sustainable future. Scalable, this work can travel to future exhibitions beyond SIGGRAPH.

Proposal:

I have been invited to present The Tampa to Anaheim Hackshack at SIGGRAPH 2013 by Patricia Clark[1], Studio Chair at SIGGRAPH. The Hackshack provides the means and expertise to implement a large host of Ad-Hoc solutions to issues of everyday life for dogged tinkerers. Projects to be built by participants are envisioned to educate and delight with the ease and ethic of producing everyday necessities and absurdities, including 3D printed prototypes, scale models and objects of whimsy; CNC routed paper machines; DIY electronics projects such making amplifiers, solenoid drums, (Anaheim) citrus batteries, passive water heaters and swamp coolers. In addition to instructions for on-site and take-home projects, the workshop provides instruction in basic 3D design, printing, and cutting, programming microcontrollers, basic electronics, strategies for mechanization, and armchair engineering. Additionally, I will seek the expertise of the audience, and encourage impromptu demonstrations from outside my skillset. Tools required for the project include a 3D printer, DIY desktop CNC routers, and a sundry of hand tools. All display items and tools will be built in Tampa prior to the event in July, with accompanying detailed step-by-step project schematics.

In this project, I examine the relationship between art and everyday life by combining electronic technologies with analogue mechanisms in a willfully tinker-centric approach. The ongoing surge of open source thinking, hacktivism, 3d printers, and garage based manufactories, has gifted the novice with a level of accessibility to technology previously available only to the technical elite. Within an art setting, technology and interactive experiences provide new tools to an old outlet for commentary on contemporary culture, but also for exuberant expressions of sheer techno-joy. In a time when digital communication systems are radically shifting the configuration of contemporary social structures, and the speed of information technologies has resulted in a growing alienation from "self" and "community," this project / artwork pursues a utopian social remediation prioritizing industriousness and togetherness.

My endeavor is driven by the philosophy that “making” rather than “consuming” leads to self-reliance, an engaged worldview, enhanced personal relationships, robust local economies, and ultimately to a sustainable future. Careful research into historical and contemporary DIY movements reveals that there is a growing resistance to corporate cultural mediation through technology by a congregation of tinkerers who choose to use that very technology as a means to draw closer to one another. This work reveals how humankind can leverage technology to create a free and healthy world, made by our own hands. Implicit in this approach is a drive to develop poetic systems that function as tools as well as constructive critiques on a world running low on long-term critical thinking. By creating work that overlaps old and new technologies to query the human experience, I aim to create new spaces for reframing a world that has grown complex beyond our understanding. An interactive workshop offers a space for an audience to become responsible participants in the work of making the world.

[1] Associate Professor, Media Arts, Interdisciplinary Arts and Performance, Arizona State University