

Project Title

Boggy Creek

Project Summary

My new video and sculpture installation, Boggy Creek, is based on popular culture and mythology surrounding bigfoot monster sightings along the Texas-Arkansas border where I grew up. I am interested in conflating “the real” as it is manifested in folklore, social constructions, and digital manipulations within the video’s images and props. This installation will be a traveling, guerilla-style show in and between Houston and Texarkana. These are also the locations where the video will be shot. Projected images, powered by my car, will be accompanied by a boat-sculpture strapped on the roof of my car. Similar to how bigfoot creatures move along creeks, my exhibitions will appear near small waterways.

Longer Project Description

Boggy Creek: a traveling video and sculpture installation in Houston and Texarkana

I am seeking funding to create a new video and sculpture installation, Boggy Creek, based on popular culture and mythology surrounding bigfoot monster sightings along the Texas-Arkansas border where I grew up. I am interested in conflating “the real” as it is manifested in folklore, social constructions, and digital distortions within the video’s images and props. This installation will be a traveling, guerilla-style show in and between Houston and Texarkana. These are also the locations where the video will be shot. Projected images, powered by my car, will be accompanied by a boat-sculpture strapped on the roof of my car. Similar to how bigfoot creatures move along creeks, my exhibitions will appear near small waterways.

To prepare for this project, I have attended the Texas Bigfoot Conference, gone on bigfoot searches, and conducted interviews with eyewitnesses. Bigfoot has been theorized as a symbol for a longing to belong. It is also specific to rural, forested areas. The title, Boggy Creek, is both a local creek on the Texas-Arkansas border where there have been many monster sightings and a name used in a handful of horror film titles about bigfoot. Since returning to Texas a little under two years ago, I have been making frequent trips back home and confronting the culture where I, and many generations of my family have lived. Texarkana is a trucker-stop town rooted in an all-American working class mentality, a community where I led sermons at my public high school’s flagpole on Friday afternoons, a region where second wave feminism never permeated, and my home for which I have deep empathy. This project is important for me due to its personal nature, but importantly, I feel there is a need to queer the oversimplified popular imaginary of my culture.

In my video, I will strap a crystal boat on top of my car in Houston and head home to Boggy Creek. Affixed to my boat will be an angry mermaid figurehead. At home, I will pump gas at Monster Mart, a convenience store featuring a fifty foot sculpture of the Fouke Monster. The monster and mermaid, both imagined as male-explorer fantasies, will meet. As the video

progresses, I will travel waterways in my boat, navigating through small oil rigs and cypress trees searching for the creatures, seeking solidarity with their in their incarnated forms.

To see this project to its fullest potential, I am seeking sources of funding to pay for the material and fabrication costs of props, transportation, an additional camera operator, and rentals of equipment for the traveling exhibition. I have already taken classes and met with fabricators to learn how to make the props. I have secured a camera operator and locations for shooting. I am extremely excited about this project, and it will be my most ambitious project. Due to the costs associated with producing and showing it, I rely on funding to see it through.

What is the goal of this project?

By focusing on my hometown almost as a case study, my goal for my video installation is to queer the oversimplified popular imaginary of rural culture in Texas. Additionally, my goal is to show the work in both cities in which I work and live, Houston and Texarkana.

How does this project relate to visual art?

My video draws from the history of cinema, specifically docu-horror films from the 1970s. The digital distortions that will be in the video's images and props also reference anamorphic images, often used throughout art history to camouflage erotic images and dangerous political statements.