The Voyage Through the Multiverse

By

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MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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I. Artist Statement and Introduction

My work lies at the intersection between traditional painting and new media. I'm fascinated by digital art and art that lives in the digital space, such as GIFs, and how that digital art can be manipulated and transposed onto printed media. The 80's as a decade has captured my imagination because it was the first decade I consciously experienced. I use the computer imagery of the 80's, in particular the eight-bit imagery used in the classic video games that I played as a child, as a lens to explore that intersection of new and old media. My color palette is derived from colors that you would see in the digital media of this formative decade; bright neons, soft gradients, and processed colors that live within the screen. Through the imaginative use of color and form, I'm interested in how space can be recontextualized and manipulated to make new forms and new models for our views of the universe. Above all, I want all my art to be graphically appealing to the eye and to connect with a viewer's playful side.

In graduate school I have developed techniques for constructing images that express my ideas in ways that I never thought possible. I came into graduate school as a painter; I now consider myself an image-maker that uses the grid, theories of new media, and 8-bit imagery to construct what I call digital renditions of paintings. Let me start off with a brief introduction to these core aspects of my work.

The grid is a part of life and so much that we see stems from the grid. Think of a city and the way it's laid out. Here New York City is laid out in a network of gridded formations. Doing so allowed easy flow throughout the city during that time (Figure 1). This type of city planning dates back to the Indus Valley Civilization around 2600 B.C. ¹

My images are interwoven with the grid. My interest in using grids in my work started with plotting data in a mathematics course at VCU. The plotted points showed a network of different angles or points that formed isometric views in the picture plane. Isometric data provides us with constant dimensions of geometric forms, which helps engineers, surveyors, and architects to build infrastructure throughout the world. The grid acts as a platform in design. It can also act as a “multiverse” when it forms cells within a network of a larger grid. I am interested in modeling the multiverse when I use cells within the grid as the foundation for images.

“New media” is a 21st century term used to define all that is related to the Internet and the interplay between technology, images, and sound. By its nature, new media is continuously evolving and morphing. So far, my work in new media takes the form of GIFs, “printed paintings”, the digital glitch, and “net art” applications.

The 8-bit graphic image has been a part of my life since I was 8 years old, sneaking into my brother’s room to play Nintendo. I associate 8-bit graphics with nostalgia and being drawn into a new virtual world (Figure 2).³

![Figure 2. Mario in Super Mario Bros. Nintendo, 1987](image)

The limited musical palette of 8-bit video games, whose distinct sound is known as Chiptune, has a big influence on how I construct images. When I sit in front of the computer and listen to this kind of music, my mind starts to travel and become one with the beat. The tempo of the beat helps me place my marks within an image (Figure 3).

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Now that I have provided a general overview of the topics that inspire and form my work I would like to explain each in greater detail.

II. The Grid

**The grid as a design matrix**

When we think of grids conceptually, they are flat. The grid does not only reside on the paper in my work; the grid is present in a field of view, a planar space (Figure 4), and in theory. Within computers and video games, circuits and data are built using a grid, a framework that constantly transmits information to the viewer through the video monitor. In video games this framework goes beyond providing data; it creates a platform on which the designers build pixels that make a digital image on liquid screens.

The grid can be an area where we organize information, such as the screen, or circuit board, but it is also a place where we create. Walking into a building or driving down the street, odds are we’re moving through a space designed on a grid.
Maps are created by plotting locations of features on a grid representing an area of land.

In my work, the grid provides a structure on which my images are built. The images that lay on top of this structure appear from this gridded starting point. The final result might not show any appearance of a literal grid, but the structure and theory behind creating art in this fashion is apparent within the final image (Figure 5).
The grid can also become a standalone entity that becomes interwoven with the rest of the image. In this role the grid itself becomes the protagonist. The grid playfully darts in and out of the image, which deepens pictorial space. By naming the grid a protagonist, the image develops and projects more of a narrative and a history emerges in the image (Figure 6).
The grid as the multiverse

The grids in my work are not just limited to design matrices, they are also used as a model for a much grander idea: the multiverse. This usage of the field or (grid) as a multiverse model stems from Jorge Luis Borges’s quote from *The library of*
Babel "The universe (which others call the library)⁴ is composed of an indefinite, perhaps infinite number of hexagonal galleries." To me, the Internet can be seen as a multiverse. Much like the hexagonal gallery of Borges’s Babel, the Internet is comprised as a never-ending grid of individual screens. (Figure 7) (Figure 7.5)

Figure 7. Picture of multiple computer screens

Figure 7.5. Picture of multiple Internet windows representing a grid like structure

The notion of the multiverse doesn’t end within the conventional computer; think of smart phones as examples of personal galleries. These galleries then connect you to a larger mainframe or network. But this idea of the multiverse doesn’t have to simply live within a digital realm; doorways and windows also convey this theory. Each threshold has an opportunity to lead to a multiverse. When you approach my work, you experience a fluid transition into multiple planes sitting upon a digitalized version of a universe. Through projection and tactile printing the digital world becomes expanded and presented to the viewer. These multiple copies of images I create can exist and be viewed simultaneously in the digital and real world, becoming a multi-fragment microcosm selection of the multiverse.

The grid and nerd culture

“A digital frontier. I tried to picture clusters of information as they moved through the computer. What did they look like? Ship? Motorcycles? Were the circuits like freeways? I kept dreaming of a world I thought I’d never see”.\(^5\)

The grid as a signifier of nerd-culture is present in everything from computers to science fiction to gaming. Role-playing games, such as Dungeons and Dragons (that appeared in 1974), allowed people to interact with and experience a fantasy adventure world. Also, a major aspect of the aesthetics of D&D was the grid based layout system of “dungeons” or other environments characters moved through. The rise of personal computing in the 80’s provided people another platform to play video games that the grid-as-map in a similar way. Both Dungeons and Dragons and PC games made it possible for most people to escape reality for a short period of time through the abstract concept of the grid (Figures 8 and 9).

The work that I create has a strong tie to nerd-culture and technology. By using references and images from early computer models, the work becomes grounded within this culture. Even the colors in my images resemble the same color configurations of early computer graphics. The work generates a sort of neon glow that recalls that time by using a high key palette and actual neon. Growing up I was attracted to games that involved the grid like Monopoly and Hero Quest. In these board games you moved pieces around on a grid-like surface (Figure 10). The qualities of these memories inform not only the aesthetic of my work but also how I approach it with a sense of play.
III. New Media

Net Art

While I was born in the 80’s, I grew up in the 90’s and early 2000’s. My first experience with the Internet came when I was in elementary school around 1997. It was a new and crazy place that would connect you to someone across the world. My parents bought a computer around ‘98 and from that point I was hooked on the web. While first perusing the Internet I always noticed these short animations called GIFs and websites that were bright and colorful and felt more like art then actual webpages. But it wasn’t until I entered art school that the term “net art” was introduced to me.

Internet art or net art, in simple terms, is art that lives on the web. Pages like jodi.org, and readme.html stood at the forefront of net art, and today provide the canon for what net art was and has become. Today net art takes on more of an expanded practice since nearly everyone has a smart phone. Artists in particular used these devices as platforms for new media. Applications for smart phones such
as Fragment and Glitché opened the door for these artists to make their work more accessible, which in turn provides a new interaction for both the artist and the modern day consumer.

These artists are establishing a link between the physical and online space, which brings up the question: for net art to be called “net art”, must it live within a browser? One such artist that deals with these concepts is Rafael Rozendaal. Rozendaal makes web pages as his primary way to construct an image, inviting viewers to fully immerse themselves by clicking and scrolling through each page. Some examples are www.yesnoif.com, www.slickquick.com, and www.futureisuncertain.com.

I feel that net art doesn’t have to live within a browser to be called net art. If you accept that definition you are closing off all the other possible definitions of what net art can become. In my work I approach the concept of net art though GIFs and projected imagery using a digital projector. With the use of GIFs I transform sections of my work into moving images. These images repeat themselves over and over again in a never-ending loop that evokes a sense of play and wonder (Figure 11) (Figure 12). With projection, I blur the boundary between physical space and digital space, by allowing an image flow through both fields.

Figure 11. Image still of Wave Rider Rainbow
GIFS

GIF (or graphics interchange format) files have been around since the birth of the World Wide Web. Commonly used in Photoshop, the GIF supports an 8-bit pixel range, with its own scale of colors. There are 256 colors within the RGB color scale available in the GIF format. The end result is an image that ends up being a small file size, which makes it perfect for loading on the internet.

The downside of the GIF image is that since you can only produce 256 colors, most of the imagery tends to be grainy and pixelated. The most popular association of a GIF is animation. The GIF file format allows images to be stacked on top of one another each with its own 256-color palette, to produce a looping short that never
ends. The resulting animations provided unique opportunities for collage and humor.

The GIf has become a contemporary art form. Today anyone can make a GIF and post it through social media; there are websites and apps that have been specially created just for the purpose of making and posting a GIF. To me, GIFs bring a sense of play, and enable my images to connect through multiple varieties of space. The GIFs that I make are sourced from a larger parent digital image. Each GIF is a “bit” of the larger image, which through its selection provides a sense of wonder or intrigue.

**Glitch**

Glitch is a short-lived fault in a system. Often used to describe a transient fault that corrects itself, and is therefore difficult to troubleshoot. This error mainly occurs in the digital realm, with an image, sound, or film. The glitch is visual evidence of an event when the software and hardware becomes corrupted and therefore fails the user.

While the glitch usually falls into the category of a problem, the glitch can also become a beautiful occurrence as a visual image or a sound. The glitch is visually appealing, and while the glitch can happen by chance, artists have figured out two ways to purposefully “glitch” a piece of media. First, program code can selectively be altered, with the end result of something that looks or sounds “off”. Another way to create a glitch is to physically alter a piece of electronic equipment, which is called circuit bending. This is accomplished by altering the circuit board to change the original function of the device. I have used circuit bending to help me produce visual images by modifying a Nintendo Entertainment System (Figure 13). When bending electronics you get a sense of how the machine behaves. This is really noticeable though a process called live glitching, where one alters the device while it is powered on, providing real time information to the artist (Figure 14).
A traditional painter might employ the effect of a transparent color over an opaque color, creating a serendipitous result. In my work, I use the glitch in a similar way to complement the high key colors and imagery that I use. I break down my images and select the “code” to produce a rhythmic pattern that makes the eye travel. As I “glitch”, new shapes are generated that become part of a larger image. The glitches that I produce are comprised of the same 8-bit imagery as GIFs and early video game graphics.

**IV. 8-bit imagery**

**Place in pop culture history**

Just like video games, 8-bit imagery’s place in pop culture history started in the late 70’s. Their iconic images started to appear on toys, arcade machines, cereal boxes, plush toys, etc. (Figures 15 and 16).
In the mid 80's when the Nintendo Entertainment System released its most iconic 8-bit character, Mario, he became a touchstone in pop culture history. Today there has been resurgence in the 8-bit image; children who grew up in the 80's and 90's want to relive their childhood. Artists like Eboy use the 8-bit art style to "retrofit" corporate logos and images. This style glorifies the past and embraces nostalgia. The main resurgence of 8-bit imagery lies within video games.

**Video games**

Video games from 1979-1994 were designed using a pixel "sprite"-based program that outputted worlds and characters in 8-bit form. The end result made the image look blocky and ridged. The games during that time, while simple, were fun. Today playing far more complicated games on a CD is the industry standard.

Recently, with the rise of the indie game designer, that 8-bit style has made a comeback. It really bloomed with games like Minecraft (Figure 17). These games designers don’t care about graphics and cool features, they care about content and story. It is almost more beneficial and profitable to make an 8-bit game today since
more and more people are craving it.

In my work, the 8-bit video game art style not only becomes apart of the images I use, but also takes a nostalgic stance. They live in the past, part of my youth and using these images helps me rekindle a feeling of the past.

**Chiptune**

Chiptune music is the audio version of an 8-bit image. An 8-bit image has a maximum color palette of 256 colors, so when you translate that color palette into sound you end up with a variety of rhythmic beeps and buzzes that in a way mirrors that 8-bit image. Chiptune has been around since the early days of video games. In every video game you played in the 80's and early 90's the music that you heard was called chiptune but no one really classified it as a genre, it was just the musical score to video games. The earliest known example of chiptune was from the game Gun Fight from 1975. In the 80's, chiptune style music thrived; artists started sampling video game sounds from arcade machines, and home consoles. Most of the early pioneers of chiptune hailed from Japan. These composers sampled tracks from games like Super Locomotive and Space Harrier.
As the decade progressed, chiptune paved the way for house and techno music. Today chiptune music comes from gaming devices that have been circuit-bent to produce sounds. These sounds are filtered through a controller and a synthesizer to produce music that gives off a digital feel. The most popular devices that make this style of music are the Nintendo Gameboy and the Nintendo Entertainment System. There is also a program called Little Sound that is designed to turn the Gameboy into a music device.

Chiptune has reached the point that it is now used in mainstream applications from film to commercials to videogames. As recently as 2012, the Smithsonian American Art Museum had a piece of chiptune music stored in their collection. Artists like DJ Cutman sample sounds from videos games that I played when I was a child. Artist such as Slime Girls and Anmanaguchi use newer chiptune technology to generate their own sounds that resemble classic video games.

Artists such as these inspire me to place my work as a part of this cultural and visual history. My work is influenced by the upbeat tempo of this style of music. I look for these types of rhythmic notations in my work. The high key colors mashed with glitch and 8-bit imagery produce a chiptune symphony that vibrates throughout the whole image. When making my images I listen to chiptune to help me channel my direction.

V. Neon

Neon lighting and colors have been around since the early 1900's. In 1902, engineer Georges Claude developed the first neon lamp. In 1923, neon first comes to America and it gains wild popularity. This led to the outward aesthetic of Las Vegas, Nevada. Neon signs littered the streets of Las Vegas and illuminated the

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skyline (Figure 18). During the 60’s neon started to branch out from sign usage. Neon was starting to become an attractive medium for artists to use and manipulate. Through the 80’s, neon entered the nightclub scene as a design element and became an iconic image of the decade. Today neon is used in a variety of ways, from signage, to art, to accent lighting.  

![Image](image.png)

Figure 18. Picture shows the glow of neon illuminating the sky and city of Las Vegas

For myself, I find neon to be aesthetically pleasing and I’ve started using it to illuminate printed imagery and define the edges of the artwork. I can recapture the style of the 80’s, the video games, digital graphics, and computer interfaces in my work.

Mary Weatherford, and Bruce Nauman are two examples of artists that use neon in their work.

In Mary Weatherford’s paintings the neon lays directly on top of the canvas, reacting with the colors to provide a sense of bounce and glow. The wires connecting the neon act as gestures to create a sense of movement throughout her work (Figures 19 and 20). Like Weatherford, I use the wires as gestures to create a

sense of movement within my work. Additionally, and also like Weatherford, the neon light glows and bounces off the surface saturating the colors.

Figure 19. Picture of Mary Weatherford’s painting showing how the neon just sits on top of her paintings. The wire acts as a brush stroke giving a sense of movement throughout the work. “Wonder Wheel, 2012 flashes and neon on linen 103 x 83 inches”

Figure 20. Picture of a mock up installation showing the neon that sits above the print, while the wires try to mimic the image.

Bruce Nauman works with mediums such as sculpture, video, film, printmaking, performance, and installation. What draws me to Nauman are his neon pieces. I love the way in which the neon commutes to the viewer through text and
bright glow. The neon draws the viewer in and demands them to take a closer look, hear the sound, and feel the glow and temperature of neon, which for Nauman signifies commercialism and the clash between high and low art. Bruce Nauman's neon pieces are all about the viewer experience. (Figure 21).  

Figure 21. One Hundred Live and Die," 1984. Neon tubing mounted on four metal monoliths, 118 x 132 1/4 x 21 inches. Collection Fukake Publishing Co., Ltd., Naoshima ... Shows how Bruce Nauman invites the viewer close with the text and neon glow.

Like Nauman, I want to invite the viewer closer with the neon. I want the viewer to see how it reacts to the image it's lying on top of. I want to viewer to come away experiencing something, a feeling, a sensation from the phenomena of neon (Figure 22).

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VI. Thesis Work

My work builds from my love of the geometric image. I’ve never been one to render from life but there is something about the geometric shape that I’m drawn to. The structure and built-in set of rules that lay within a geometric form tie it back to the grid. The geometric shape is a large part of how I view the world, and it relates to nerd culture, computers, and video games. The grid is the field from which these shapes spring.
"Laser-Scape" is an example of the grid acting like the protagonist within the piece. The grid darts between the foreground and background smoothly, providing a sense of play with the push-pull interaction. The grid in "Laser-Scape" also acts as a porthole into multiple dimensions. In the center the grid seems to act on different planes, each plane providing an entry point into another world. The transparent color also provides viewpoints and reveals pathways to another world. The two larger rectangle forms act as mirrors of themselves. That dissolve within the print, but make subtle but noticeable appearances. They also act as a shelf; another plane upon which the grid rests. These rectangle forms are both fluid and solid in their appearance. They act as focal points and seem to react to the grid that lies under them. Both of the rectangular forms have a drop shadow that acts not unlike a real shadow but its own entity within the piece. This second form becomes the empty shell of its neighbor.
The neon's softer color pushes the mood of the piece into vibrancy, drawing the viewer into the heavily saturated colors that mimic a computer screen. The colors in this piece are processed, producing a richly intense color that invites the viewer to come closer. This color portrays a sense of warmth throughout the whole piece. The viewer should feel energy and motion when looking at "Laser-Scape". The neon colors help raise the saturation of the print, and the print as a whole becomes denser.

While the overall image is complex, the building blocks are not. When you break it down, it's just simple lines and shapes. The blocky nature of these forms helps the piece conceptually feel like it belongs in the 8-bit realm. The stair step form that lies in the first layer of the print resembles both the video game "Qbert" (Figure 24) and a painting from 2013 (Figure 25).

![Figure 24. shows a picture of the game Qbert. 1982 Gottlieb I based my colors and imagery on this game.](image)

![Figure 25. A picture of a painting from my second year in grad school. This painting was the launching point for Laser-Scape.](image)

This print is part of a larger installation at the Atlanta Decorative Arts Center where it will be integrated with eleven other prints on a wall that has neon tubes
surrounding the prints. The neon tube breaks the second dimension, and provides a
interplay of different mediums to heighten the viewer's experience of the work.

Figure 26. "Data Field Wave Rider", Digital print on Somerset Velvet 44"x60" 2015

With "Data Field Wave Rider" the grid both provides the structure upon which
the image builds and also acts as the protagonist with the central image. Each layer
is integrated so that it is hard to distinguish which layer came first. Each cell on the
grid is an entry point to the previous layer that conceptually is another dimension. These cells also show the history of the layer before it, and give clues on how the print was constructed.

"Data Field Wave Rider" is bathed in a field of digitized color. The soft color separations of the geometric shapes that lay on the second layer of this print help break up the mood of the piece. Blue is the prominent color. I wanted to depict the feeling of water and waves, like a rush of color when you walk into a nightclub, the blue neon raining down rolling over you like a wave. "Wave Rider" has repetition of color within the second layer as well. The colors tend to gravitate towards the cooler side of the color wheel; greens, pinks, and blues.

The second layer portrays a feeling of design and wallpaper that could stand on its own, if necessary. The top layer of "Wave Rider" depicts a central form floating in space, which draws you closer. A gradient is used to signify that these rectangular shapes appear to float on the surface. The colors chosen for the gradient are meant to produce a calming sensation and give the eye a spot to rest within the print.

"Wave Rider" is built with simple shapes such as rectangles, triangles and parallelograms. All of these shapes have sharp angles and edges, providing movement and mimicking the shapes of early computer graphics, when engineers pushed the limits of their machines to produce simple forms.

"Wave Rider" was constructed using the idea of the glitch. This is most noticeable within the bands of geometric shapes. I wanted to construct them in a way that it doesn’t feel like I had a hand in their making. I designed a pattern within Photoshop and used that pattern with filters over selected sections of the pattern to create the glitch effect.

When you look close at "Data Field Wave Rider" you will notice little blocks of different shades of blues and greys. When you stand back these blocks or shapes
appear to form a larger image. The image that you see is a glitched rendition of a wave based off the video game Town & Country Surf Designs: Wood & Water Rage (Figure 27). This wave appears in many of the recent prints, the wave for me signifies the constant flow of energy that my prints generate.

![Image of Town & Country Surf Designs: Wood & Water Rage](image)

**Figure 27. Picture of the wave image that is used in parts of my work, along with the box art of the game. Town & Country Surf Designs: Wood & Water Rage**

Using imagery from video games refers to my connection with them. Since I grew up playing games like these, I feel that I should homage to their influence. At the bottom of the print lies a free flowing squiggle mark. This is my digitized brush reflecting the motion of a wave, using a pattern stamp tool and a mouse. I want to have some sort of signature that mimics an actual brush mark. The mark wants to be expressive and fun.

"Data Field Wave Rider" is five feet by four feet because I want the viewer to be immersed within the image. When you stand about one to two feet away from the print, it occupies your entire field of vision.
“Pattern Wave Surfing” uses the same themes as “Wave Rider” but recontextualizes them to suit the mood of this image.

![Image of Pattern Wave Surfing](image)

Figure 28. “Pattern Wave Surfing”, Digital print on Somerset Velvet 30”x22” 2015

Here the neon color is active and aggressive. “Pattern Wave Surfing” produces an electric glow that reflects on the viewer. The softer geometric shapes provide you with a sense of depth making it feel like it’s entering a different planar space.

“Pattern Wave Surfing” gives off two moods; one is calm and cool, reflective of the softer tones and what the image represents, the second is the bits of high-key colors that become energetic and give off a sense of movement. Slicing the original image into multiple layers and changing the filter of each one to produce the stacked image offsets the print.

In “Pattern Wave Surfing”, the grid doesn’t have a visual presence, but instead has a conceptual one. The geometric shapes that lie within the waveform show the subtle the presence of a grid. The digitalized brush mark is a glitched section of “Pattern Wave Surfing”. This was done to heighten a feeling of movement, and to bring a random element into the grid.
Figure 29. "Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth"
Digital print on Somerset Velvet 88" x 120" 20
"Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" is comprised of two large prints that hang next to each other. One of the striking things about this piece is the scale of the image that measures seven feet across and ten feet high, immersing the viewer.

For the sake of describing this piece I’m going to refer to the image on the left as part A and the image on the right as part B. With part A, the colors are on the bright and softer side of the palette. I wanted part A to feel like it was floating in the sky above us, that’s why you see softer tones and neon colors. These softer blue and pink tones project a calming sensation to the viewer. With part B, I wanted to depict a change in temperature as you move your eye from bottom to top. The color palette leans towards the warmer side, with greens and vibrant pinks that project a sense of energy and movement.

Both part A and part B have a translucent quality within the print. It’s hard to find an opaque passage of color in the work, which leads to a sense of tranquility in this piece. Both images glow with a richness that is achieved through the quality of how the paper receives the ink. As with all of my prints the Somerset paper provides great color saturation that makes the image seem to have a sense of weight.

Both parts of "Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" share the same bank of imagery, essentially becoming a mirror of each other. The print is constructed with imagery from based off video games, and 8-bit geometric shapes, along with references to other prints in this recent body of work. The wave (Figure 27) recurs again within both parts. This is done to depict continuity within both prints. Part A’s depiction of the wave is soft and flowing, easy on the eyes, and depicts a calming sensation though out part A. These waves don’t act as waves anymore, but as bits of data flowing through space.
In part B, the wave takes on more of an aggressive role. The coloration of the wave image is an indicator of this aggressiveness. Here the wave appears to be dematerializing into bursts of saturated color. This also keys up the 8-bit graphical style within the print. The wave is not to appear happy and calm, but pure energy.

You also notice an 8-bit cloud image from Super Mario All-Stars and Super Mario Bros 3 (Figure 31) that was been apparent in the older work (Figure 30).

![Figure 30. Image of an 8-bit cloud from the series of cloud prints](image)

The reason I’ve appropriated this image of a cloud was that I wanted more of a cartoony, lighthearted feeling suggested by its rounded corners and shapes. In both parts, the treatment of the cloud is the same. I layered the cloud through multiple filters to produce a light turquoise coloration. The cloud itself is a depiction of the sky and space, within the labyrinth of the universe.
Both parts have rectangles that direct the viewer to look into the stars. These rectangles act as windows and cells that provide a sense of depth, and conjure up negative space within the print. The star imagery within these rectangles comes from my love of the mystery of the cosmos.

"Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" was constructed with the use of layers, pattern, and repetition of imagery each acting as its own cell or floor of the labyrinth (as in reference to "Garden of Forking Paths, by Jorge Luis Borges). The layers are not easily identifiable as individuals because I wanted to give the piece a sense of structure while at the same time projecting wonder and mystery.

Parts A and B have a circular form floating inside the image space. When hung on the wall, these circular forms lay diagonal from each other to capture eye movement. The circle form in part A is a depiction of a clean and crisp 8-bit wave. Being untouched my hand, this circular form becomes a portal to the "real" word, and it also becomes a focal point that connects the whole image. In part B, the circle form depicts the negative image that was depicted in part A. It still acts as a portal but this form almost blends with the subsequent layers that it lays upon. The drop shadow in both forms identifies their own layers, and creates a floating presence. These also act as little planets, floating through the picture in separate universes.

The large zigzag digital brush mark sits right in the middle of both parts of the work. These join the top and bottom half of the print and acts as a directional signifier of an up and down motion. The colors of the brush mark lean on the warmer side, and stand out in their vibrancy. When the piece is installed this mark sits around eye level for the viewer, which helps the eye distinguish between the top and bottom of the image.

"Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" is hung along with a six-foot tube of neon, shaped in a zigzag form. This shape is the final layer of the piece,
with the bright seductive glow of the neon tube interacting with the saturation of 
the colors within the print.

“Wave Rainbow” is an eight second image loop that is sped up into a GIF 
animation. This GIF animation is comprised of parts of my other prints. The 
background wave is taken from the video game “Town & Country’s Surf Designs: 
Wood & Water Rage”, while the image in the foreground is a digital brush mark with 
a pattern overlay.

Figure 32 Wave Rainbow, Video (GIF) 2015 Dimensions variable (Still from Gif loop)

The looping image blurs and becomes fuzzy; the digital brush mark is active 
and repetitively brushing itself over and over again. This brush mark attempts to 
bridge the gap between the physical and nonphysical—the physical being my hand 
making the mark, the nonphysical being that it has no conceived weight. It lives in 
the screen and its pixels make up a false perception of weight. This brush mark
creates a visual distortion of colors that seem to blur together as the image loops over itself.

"Wave Rainbow" depicts the digital glow of neon. The gradient overlay suggests the feeling of nightclub rhythms. The viewer gets lost in the loop and starts to feel a sensation of either warmth or uneasiness.

A looping GIF lasts forever when placed on an internet browser, but "Wave Rainbow" is displayed on an old JVC TV hooked up through a DVD player. I've done this because I wanted to take the GIF out of its context, which is the internet browser, and see how it would react when displayed through older media.

The JVC TV is displayed in a two-tone color scheme. When you approach the looping image the TV appears to be black, but when you walk around the TV you notice a high gloss blue color. The black color that you first notice is the original color of this TV; this black color shows the age and wear of the TV. I kept the front of the TV like this because I wanted it to connect to my childhood, when I would spend many hours playing video games on a TV like this.

The high gloss blue that you see connects the TV with the image on the screen and gives the TV some presence in the museum space. The blue along with the digital brush mark helps connects it to "Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth." While both pieces can live on their own, they complement each other.

VII. Installation

The installation of "Level up side step" (figure 33) at the Atlanta Decorative Arts Center fills up the space completely. The neon tubes are the signal to come closer while each print provides an entry point into each layer of a different universe. The tape on each side counteracts the position of the neon and signifies rhythm across the piece.
The same can be said with "Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" (figure 34) in which the neon invites you into the space. Here, both sections of this print absorb the neon color. The neon tube acts as a connection between both prints, by moving your eye from one porthole to the other. Placing it around the middle of the print helps break up the space, since it is sitting a little above eye level. When you walk up close to the piece the blast of neon color enters
your pupils and distorts your vision. The wires act like directional lines that mimic a brush stroke, leading you to the transformer, which rests in the middle of the piece. I've chosen to place the transformer here because I wanted a resting spot for the eye of the viewer.

![Image of art installation]

**Figure 34.** "Through it all we make peace within the labyrinth" digital print, neon installed at the Georgia Museum of Art

I wanted to install “Wave Rainbow” so that it would compliment “Through it all we make peace with the labyrinth”. I also wanted to give it enough room for it to breathe and not be distracting; putting it off to the side was a decision to keep everything separate but close enough to provide some sort of connection. The unexpected beautiful moment in “Wave Rainbow” is having it displayed through an
older TV. When watching the looping GIF you notice that the TV itself is "glitching" the video and providing something that was never expected to happen. This is why I enjoy working with technology; you get to experience serendipity in the work.
VIII. Summary

This recent work has allowed me to expand my love of the geometric shape through multiple types of media. The work has connected me to my childhood, and to a decade that I find fascinating. Technology, most importantly the computer, has really opened my eyes in the way I construct images. I feel that making imagery through media this way was inevitable. The concept of multiverse within the context of my work is ever expanding; it’s a journey into never-ending layers that surely will open new avenues for me to explore. I want to think of myself as someone who is looking to push forward with technology, always searching for newer ideas in the future of art.

The internet and digital culture is vast and ever expanding, resembling The Library of Babel in theory. It is my duty as an artist to travel into those cells and recontextualize that theory into tactile forms of media that live within the physical realm.
Works Cited


"MATRIXSYNTH." *Circuit Bent Yamaha RX7 and Nintendo NES.* Web. 25 Mar. 2015.  


