

The Empathy Project

A Paul Rucker Project

February 21 - March 16, 2014

Paul Rucker, the Robert W. Deutsch Foundation Research Fellow and Artist in Residence, invites MICA students, faculty, staff, and neighbors to participate in *The Empathy Project*, an interactive exhibition, and a series of conversations and performances from February 21 - March 16, 2014, in the Sheila & Richard Riggs and Leidy galleries in MICA's Graduate Studio Center (131 W. North Ave.). We intend for these events to continue intercultural conversations in the community about diversity, difference, and global perspectives.

Paul Rucker explains some of his thinking related to this project: "It's vital for artists to step outside their comfort zones. Not just with new mediums, but also with new approaches and ways of thinking. One of the many challenges in life is to try and make sense or understand the 'why?' of everyday observations. We no doubt spend most of our time looking at things from our own perspective—things not only in the news, but also in the classroom, as well as walking home... Even when we see that someone else has a problem, we think about how we would solve the problem, often without taking into account possible disparities in resources or options. This project is not about solving another's problem, or feeling sorry for someone. It's about understanding, walking in their shoes, without judgment, or the expectation of a clean resolution."

Paul invites you to contribute your writing or artwork to *The Empathy Project*. You can submit anonymously. Stories and artwork will be shared. Full schedule of programming including moderated and community discussions—coming soon.

Special instructions:

WRITING:

Everyone: Write 500 words or less about your earliest experiences with empathy.

ARTWORK:

Artists: Write 500 words or less about your earliest experiences with empathy and create something using only discarded or failed art pieces that have been set aside. No one is allowed to buy any new art material, but they can and are encouraged to exchange failed or incomplete art pieces with classmates or neighbors. Any medium, any format—including digital, photos, movies, drawings, sculpture, etc.

See MICA's policy on performance, installation, and sound art in public spaces.

http://www.mica.edu/About_MICA/Policies_and_Handbooks/Institutional_Policies/Policy_on_Performance_Installation_and_Sound_Art_in_Public_Spaces.html

This exhibition will evolve over time. You can submit text and artwork in advance or bring work to the exhibition during the exhibition. Everyone who contributes artwork should also write about their earliest experiences with empathy and include this writing with their submission.

What is *empathy*?

Watch "The Power of Empathy"

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evvngu369Jw>)

Read The Merriam-Webster dictionary definition of *empathy* for English Language Learners

(<http://www.learnersdictionary.com/definition/empathy>)

Please send text and images to empathyproject@mica.edu. Or, submit artwork in person to Marcus Civin in Curatorial Practice, Room 110, Graduate Studio Center. Artwork will be available for pick-up at the end of the exhibition.

Faculty interested in incorporating *The Empathy Project* into their classes, please contact empathyproject@mica.edu.

If you are interested leading your own conversation about empathy during the exhibition, please contact empathyproject@mica.edu.

Read more on Paul Rucker:

<http://www.paulrucker.com>

<http://rwdfblog.com/2013/12/12/an-afternoon-with-paul-rucker-artist-in-residence-at-mica/>

The Empathy Project is supported by Center for Race and Culture, the site of the residency, MFA in Curatorial Practice, MFA in Community Arts, offices of Diversity, Graduate Studies, and International Affairs.