



## NEWS | FACULTY | STUDENT STORIES

### Sherri Frye, ASC

It is hard to believe it is almost spring and that I have been an ASC for Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts for a year! Thank you to everyone who has been so great to work with; I enjoy our conversations and connections.

Based on your feedback and research around student success, please stay tuned for a couple of things this spring. The first is an opportunity for us to gather, get to know each other, and talk about ILAR-BA 2 and 3 options. For some students it has been easy and others more challenging to narrow in on possible options to fulfill these requirements. I will put something together and announce on the Canvas page.

Speaking of the Canvas page, my hope is to utilize this more in ways that will enhance your experience and be a source of information. Please have this on your radar to use this resource accordingly in the semester to follow.

Enough work stuff! Happy (almost) winter break to all of you! I



will be spending time with my family and spoiling my dogs, Otis (fourteen year-old golden retriever), Boomer (our mixed breed rescue who we think is eight years old), and my baby (don't tell my sons!), Wally (an eighteen month-old golden retriever).

Finish strong this semester, you have worked hard to get to this point. If you need anything, please reach

out to me via email ([sherri.frye@colostate.edu](mailto:sherri.frye@colostate.edu)) or call me at (970) 491-3117.

### How is Interdisciplinarity Different?

Although it is an academic subject—with an ever-increasing existing body of scholarship and research behind it—interdisciplinarity is unlike other subjects in that it is not so much the end of our study or the completed acquisition of one subject's knowledge, but rather the means by which we put our study to some other use. Spread the word!



2023 SUPPORTING MEMBER

### A Message From Program Director, Kevin Foskin

Again, when the topic of the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts Major came up in conversation this past summer, as I was waiting for a commuter train at the Tara Street DART station in Dublin, Ireland—and the fact that it is indeed a major one could pursue for a Bachelor of the Arts degree—the reaction upon hearing this took a familiar turn. First, there was a look of incredulity. Then, surprise. Then they became curious, and wanting to hear more, before finally their imaginations take over.



Why is the initial response often incredulous? Two reasons, mostly. First, when they hear that students taking our major have the greatest degree of choice in terms of the courses they choose to take and that every liberal arts class can potentially count toward the major, it sounds too good to be true. Second, interdisciplinary-based programs such as ours—although increasing in number—are still relatively unknown. Unlike “traditional” majors—say, history, computer science, literature, or engineering—very few students entering the university know of us. Furthermore, the more traditional majors are organized around academic subjects that are already familiar and recognizable. And many students have already studied these subjects in high school. So, the larger challenge for programs such as ours is always one of visibility. We are the best kept secret that wants to be known! And here is the where surprise kicks in—when hearing that programs such as ours actually exist.

Of course, their surprise quickly turns to curiosity once I explain that (a) interdisciplinarity—as a major—is premised on a belief that one can learn and master a set of diverse intellectual foundations, analytical practices, and practical skills that are ideally situated for the 21st Century career world that awaits after graduation and (2) that it is designed to address the fact that our human problems are increasingly becoming more expansive and globally interrelated than they were a hundred years ago. Thus, the answers we now seek usually require more than one disciplinary approach. I further argue that one's academic credentials should reflect this new reality by being more unique and individualized, which is exactly what programs such as ours offer. So, yes, you may not become an interdisciplinarian—like how an anthropology major becomes an anthropologist—but you will be prepared (and trained) to become hundreds of other possibilities.

And here is where their imaginations take over, when they try and re-imagine themselves as undergraduates and how they might fit into our major and how they could have invented a degree experience and competency unique to themselves, their interests, and their goals for the future.

I am sure all of you—when explaining this major to others—have often experienced something of this same response. But, really, it's only natural given the relative obscurity of our degree program. Too often, we may feel as if we are always having to defend our major when in fact we are simply sharing it with others in the hope that they too will come to see the importance of our major in the way that we do.



ILAR FACULTY

Emily Lee — Assistant to Program and SAU Directors

Hello, My name is Emily and I am the new administrative assistant for the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts program. I have been a part of the College of Liberal Arts for a little over a year, but at CSU for two and a half. I have really enjoyed getting to know the students, staff and faculty, and supporting them through their academic careers. CLA has a strong dedication to cultivating an inclusive learning environment that sparks curiosity and creativity, which I hope to strengthen and help foster during my time within ILA. Enjoy the newsletter, and help spread the word!



Dr. Cindy Murillo, ILA Faculty

I went to Santa Fe recently for a conference. I drove the full seven hours for the sheer enjoyment of the landscape and was not disappointed. I hail from Albuquerque so New Mexico is somewhat home to me, but it had been far too long since my last visit. As I drove the distance, I was still mesmerized by New Mexico’s beauty and indigenous history. I took a side trip to the Jemez Mountain Trail National Scenic Byway and found myself dwarfed by the high volcanic cliffs that echoed the rushing waters of the Jemez River. It was so quiet. I took in the sights, breathed in the serenity of the red rock scenery, the widening canyons and the breathtaking views while looping through the Santa Fe National Forest. I almost forgot about my conference!

As one of the oldest capital cities in North America, Santa Fe is an iconic image of Southwestern culture, amassed after centuries of trade and governance. Evolving from an amalgamation of Native American, Hispanic, Mexican, and Anglo influences, Santa Fe’s diversity and conflation of old-world tenets with traditional beliefs truly make this city a unique and dynamic multicultural space. You can certainly see this in the San Miguel Chapel, which was constructed in the early 17th Century by Spanish-allied Indigenous Tlascalans from Mexico under the direction of Franciscan Friars in an area called Barrio de Nalco (Nahuatl for other side of the river). This site currently hosts a variety of events ranging from memorials to concerts, masses and vow renewals.



I hope to visit this magical region again soon, but this time attend a Feast Day when tribal members come together to honor their ancient heritage and traditions. Each begins with a Catholic Mass and includes traditional dances and ceremonies that relate to seasonal cycles. I can already taste the various stews, unique dishes, breads, and desserts that are sure to be shared and enjoyed by all in attendance. First things first, though: find another conference to go to in Santa Fe!

**Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts - Legal Studies Minor**

**Gina Robinson - ILA Faculty - Prelaw Club - Advisor**

If you are interested in going to Law School, this is the club for you! We meet every other Thursday from 5:30-6:30 pm in Eddy Hall. For each meeting we have a guest speaker, usually a local attorney or a current law student. The attorney discusses their path to law school, their experiences and current practicing of law. We close with a Q&A session. Law students also attend the meeting via Zoom and talk to the members about their law school experiences. We also have LSAT study sessions to talk about what to expect from and how to prepare for the LSAT exam. Once a semester the club participates in a community service project. This year we participated in a fall clean-up. We also take trips to the local law school and have already visited CU and Wyoming. If you are interested, please get on RamWeb and find the Prelaw Club and sign up. Or, contact Gina Robinson, JD at [gina.robinson@colostate.edu](mailto:gina.robinson@colostate.edu).



**ILA COURSES | LB 360: MOCK TRIAL**

Mock Trial is a great class to take if you are interested in becoming a trial lawyer. You will receive a case problem on the first day of class - this year it is a murder case. You will then be placed on a team, and you will work with your team for the entire semester to prepare for trial. I will teach you how to present opening statements, closing arguments, and direct and cross-examinations. You will learn how to enter exhibits and how to make and respond to objections. We have local attorneys offer their time and expertise to judge and offer excellent feedback. This is a must for anyone interested in Law School and trial work. Feel free to contact me with any questions at [gina.robinson@colostate.edu](mailto:gina.robinson@colostate.edu).

**2024 ACT HUMAN RIGHTS FILM FESTIVAL**

Just a shout out and a reminder for next spring. Be on the look out for the 9th annual ACT Human Rights Film Festival (April 3 - 7, 2024), always one of the most vibrant and interesting events taking place on campus and in Fort Collins each spring. It is a week plus event that showcases powerful documentary films from all around the world, addressing a wide range of human rights issues facing our world today.

The good news for us here is that Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts has been a sponsor of the festival and we think it's an excellent opportunity for ILA majors and Interdisciplinary Legal Studies minors to learn about contemporary human rights issues and the tremendous courage demonstrated by those facing suffering from human rights abuses today. And best of all, ILA majors/Legal Studies Minors have access to a number of free tickets.



**ALPHA IOTA SIGMA**

Alpha Iota Sigma is the International Interdisciplinary Honors Society established to recognize outstanding academic achievement by graduate and undergraduate students in the field of Interdisciplinary Studies. This Honorary Society enhances academic credentials through public recognition and community outreach. Honors students will have the opportunity to present at annual conferences, secure awards and scholarships, connect with other honor students and professionals in the field, and forge a network from across the country.



Annual dues are \$30, which includes Honors Certificate and Regalia (honors cord and pin).

**Qualifications:**

1. Must be enrolled in an ILA program or degree.
2. Must have a minimum 3.3 GPA.
3. Must have one academic reference.

For more information, contact faculty advisor Dr. Cindy Murillo at [cmurillo@colostate.edu](mailto:cmurillo@colostate.edu)

HEARING FROM STUDENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

Karla King

I chose ILA as a major because I wanted to be able to have more control over what I am able to study. I liked that there were only three mandatory classes for this major. Other than those three classes, I get to study whatever I want. I also like the fact that I am able to minor in business. Originally, I was a business major but found myself struggling, so I decided to minor in it and pursue other academic interests. I'm not exactly sure what I want to do beyond college. I do know that minoring in business does give me opportunities in that field. With a degree in ILA, I can give back through teaching or doing research, so I do have plenty of opportunities there.

The main reason I am getting this degree is to prove to myself that I can finish college. I had to take a break from school due to struggles arising from my Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, so I want to be able to prove to myself that I can do this. I originally wanted to drop out of school completely because I was struggling so much but my parents told me to give it another try and just study something that I enjoy. This major represented the best option for doing just that. The resources that CSU provides have also been of tremendous help. I got therapy, help from a psychiatrist and the medication I needed courtesy of the CSU Health Center.

I heard about this major freshman year and I am so glad I did, otherwise I would not have known about its availability and benefits and would have dropped out by now. I feel like this degree will help me achieve my goals in life. Even if I don't use this degree professionally, it will help me personally just for the fact that I enjoy all my classes and the insights the professors share. This degree forces me to look at other perspectives and reduce my own personal biases, making me a more well-rounded individual. This degree challenges my mind to make me a better person every day. It challenges me to think about things that I wouldn't have before. I am thankful for this degree and all of the ways it is helping me and will help me in the world to come.



Wyatt Carlson

Hello, my name is Wyatt Carlson and I am a Junior at Colorado State University. I have loved my time here at CSU, where I participate in my fraternity, Phi Delta Theta, and sit on the board as chaplain. I am also an active member of the student ministry, SALT. I knew CSU was right for me early on, as my parents and older brother are all Colorado State alums. Getting involved on campus is just one of the many ways I show my love for the Green and Gold.

Outside of school, I am trying to obtain my private pilot's license and my real estate license. Part of the reason I chose Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts was because it allowed me the opportunity to pursue my interests in flying and real estate while obtaining my degree. Flying has always been a big passion of mine from a very young age. I started flight lessons but had to put them on hold because of the pandemic. It is something I have always wanted to do, and I am very grateful for the opportunity to pursue such a fun and exhilarating hobby. After obtaining my degree, I would love to continue my passion for real estate and flying while working with my dad developing land.

This summer, I interned with a local real estate brokerage, Kenna Real Estate, where I got to work alongside some industry professionals. The internship solidified my choice of career and major. I hope to continue working for Kenna Real Estate throughout the rest of the school year and gain more hands-on experience.

HEARING FROM STUDENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

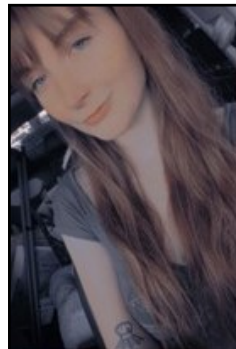


Charis Heintz

My name is Charis Heintz and I am an Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts major with a double minor in English and Philosophy. I like to hang out with my cat Hazel and I love collecting and refurbishing antiques and reading books about philosophy and world religions. I am an artist in my free time, focusing mostly on traditional oil painting, but I also work with other mediums such as acrylics, watercolors, gouache, and charcoal (pretty much anything that'll make a mark on canvas).

In 2022 I became a published illustrator for a children's book called, *Suzy and Jake: The Sunflower Twins*, written by Lavinia Hopfe. This is something I hope to continue in the future, as the experience was so rewarding.

Coming to CSU I wasn't exactly sure of the direction I wanted to take for my education. My academic interests have always been broad and rarely limited to just one specific disciplinary focus. I enjoy art, art history, philosophy, English, religious studies, history, anthropology and plenty more. While my journey into higher education began with me pursuing a degree in Philosophy with a minor in Religious Studies, I was unsure where that would take me and if it even was the right direction for me. So I switched majors to English, which had always been one of my favorite subjects, but even that didn't feel right.



I consider myself an eclectic person so committing to just one major was proving to be difficult for me; until I discovered Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts. ILA gave me the ability to learn about multiple disciplines and explore all of their different perspectives. I fell even more in love with the major as I realized how applicable interdisciplinary perspectives are for life outside of academia. Life is full of complex problems and nothing is ever as simple as it seems. ILA enables us to synthesize a range of important disciplinary insights which proves to be a significant skill to have when facing the ever-changing complexities of the world.

I'm not exactly sure what the future holds for me, but with the knowledge gained from my ILA degree I'll be able to follow where life takes me with confidence. I hope to pursue illustration, maybe become a high school art teacher, and never cease being a lifelong learner. ILA continues to teach me the skill of being able to synthesize vast amounts of knowledge in an effective and integrative way. Such a skill is priceless and one that I'd love to carry with me as I venture out of higher education and into the life the future has planned for me.

Sam Cook

My name is Sam Cook and I am a fifth-year student from Minnesota who just recently transferred into the Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts program. I started college thinking I was going to do something related to finance or business, which led me to economics, before I ultimately found myself at the steps of Interdisciplinary Studies. This major suits me perfectly as I have always been proficient at many disciplines and have an interest in all of them but never wanted to feel tied down to one singular way of thinking.

I am entrepreneurial at heart and am always thinking about new ideas or innovative methodologies. I believe it is very important to constantly challenge current ways of thinking and always be open-minded towards learning something new or seeing a situation through a different perspective.

The outdoors call to me and I enjoy skiing, camping, fishing, snowmobiling, and doing water-sports and I think one thing that all these activities have taught me is that there is never only one right way to do something. People each have their own styles and personalities that will seep into their passions. This also applies to life and a career.

Humans are inherently unique and that is our superpower. We

are different from each other and can see the world or a situation or a problem through unique lenses without feelings of being better or worse, just different and adjacent. That is what attracts me so to the ILA major; it teaches us to curb our own biases without letting previous understandings get in the way of new learning. This is how we become our best selves and to be authentically uninhibited with our thoughts and ideas.



ILA COURSES  
LB 455 NARRATIVE FILM AS A LIBERAL ART

Fiction (Narrative) Film is a powerful medium for identifying, examining, and exploring the many dimensions of the human experience. Yes, motions pictures entertain. Yes, movies tell stories. But, fundamentally, movies are always about recognizable human situations. Contemporary film is a powerful sociopolitical, cultural, and aesthetic construction that allows us greater insight and understanding of key issues and conflicts of our time. Yes, good films move us, excite us, entertain us, but they also can serve us as perfect interdisciplinary platform for utilizing and broadening our own liberal arts perspectives.

HEARING FROM STUDENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

**Adrian Silletto**

Hello everyone! I am Adrian Silletto, currently in my fourth year at CSU. I am majoring in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts and double minoring in Real Estate and Business. When not in school, I love to spend time with close friends and my Maltese Shih-Tzu, Cherry.

I'm a first-gen student and I grew up in North Denver without a lot of money. I say this because I initially majored in business. Progressively, I realized that business was not for me; I wanted to do something where I can use the life skills I learned as I was growing up. Enter Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts.

You see, ILA forces people to solve problems and look through multiple perspectives. It also involves critical thinking and personal reflection. As I looked at all these aspects, I believed I had a lot of experience in life that prepared me to tackle some of these challenging tasks. So, as I chose this major, I did so with curiosity, wondering what else I might learn and what it might teach me. These are some of the most important skills one can have and teach others, so I jumped into this degree believing there is more for me to learn.

My plan after graduation is to dabble in real estate. I am currently trying to buy a house or a couple of units of rental properties. My plan is to finance the house through an FHA Loan. This loan is special because if one gets approved, then you can buy one to four housing units. I would like to get approved for the loan, rent out three of the four units, and live in the last one. It will give me time to build income and work all at once. Afterwards, I want to try and use my degree to get a job that will benefit people in the inner city who didn't have the same opportunity of college as I did and help them develop some interdisciplinary skills.



**Ethen Erickson**

The reason for selecting Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts as my major is my strong enthusiasm for harnessing the potential of language to establish meaningful connections with others and bring about positive global change. I firmly hold the belief that language serves as a potent instrument, capable of imparting knowledge, instigating inspiration, and fostering a more just and equitable society.

What captivated me about ILA was its multifaceted approach. This program affords me the opportunity to explore the diverse aspects of language - spanning linguistics, literature, and rhetoric. This web-like exposure has deepened my comprehension of the mechanics of language and its versatile applications in various real life scenarios.

Following graduation, my aspirations encompass engaging in either language education or advocating for social justice. Perhaps a merging of the two is in the works. My specific focus lies in collaborating with underprivileged communities to assist them in harnessing the power of language for self-empowerment.

I firmly uphold the notion that every individual should have the opportunity for quality education and the ability to raise their voice against injustice. The anticipation of what lies ahead as a graduate of the ILA program fuels my enthusiasm. I am resolute in my belief that the competencies and insights I have acquired during my time in this program will equip me to affect meaningful change in the world. My academic interests within Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts, such as language groups, literary genres, rhetorical theories, and my personal perspectives and experiences; these are what shape my hopes and dreams for the future.

HEARING FROM STUDENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

Lilian Nwaneto

I have always been drawn to the vibrant hues of African history, the rhythmic cadences of dance, and the melodious symphony of music. These passions, coupled with my ambition to explore diverse opportunities, led me to choose Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts as my major. As I venture toward the post-college chapter of my life, I am excited to see my dream of working with people with disabilities become a reality.

African history has held me in thrall since I can remember. The rich, branch-like narratives of this vast continent, from its ancient civilizations to its contemporary challenges, have always fascinated and enthralled me. Within the academic realm, ILA provides me with the ideal canvas upon which I may explore African history from various angles. It allows me to dig deep into historical, cultural and sociopolitical aspects, thereby comprehending the complexity of Africa’s past and present.

Dance is a profound means of self-expression. It transcends language, serving as a channel for emotions and thoughts through the power of visual storytelling. I find solace in various dance forms, from traditional African dances that connect me to my heritage, to contemporary expressions that enable me to seek and tell new narratives. I become one with the music while I dance, creating a harmonious dialogue with my surroundings. Music is the universal language that resonates within my soul. My fingers find their rhythm strumming and plucking the strings of a guitar, and I explore melodies with an open heart.

Choosing Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts as my major was a pivotal decision in my academic journey. It is a major that celebrates the complex and interactive intricacies of knowledge. It allows me to pursue diverse interests, explore various disciplines, and merge academic study with personal passions. ILA offers me a comprehensive education that transcends traditional boundaries, aligning perfectly with my numerous interests.

Looking beyond college to my future, my heart is dedicated to a purpose-driven career. I look forward to working with people with disabilities, assisting them in navigating the challenges of life. I believe in the inherent potential, growth, and contributions of every individual, regardless of the scope of their abilities. My goal is to contribute to creating a more inclusive society where everyone has an opportunity to thrive.



Jae Raintree

Howdy, my name is Jae (pronouns they/them). I’m a third year student majoring in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts and minoring in Global Environmental Sustainability. I consider myself a non-traditional student as my academic journey to this degree has been a long and winding road. I began in 2009 majoring in “Undeclared” and then spent the next decade and a half slowly finding my way to where I am now. I hadn’t heard the term Interdisciplinary until this year (2023). The first day I had a class with Professor Cindy Murillo I felt on a soul level that I finally found the path worth pursuing. Thank you, Cindy, for your inspiration and guidance!

I chose ILA because its approach aligns with how I view and interact with the world. I’ve had many experiences that have forced me to see aspects of my life from distinctly different perspectives. From gender identity to late-in-life diagnoses; from trauma to addiction recovery, each has helped with the expansion of my perspective of what I am capable of. In studying sustainability I’ve learned there is rarely one way forward but rather a combination of many factors that lead to integrating sustainable solutions. This kind of problem-solving gets me hyped up! These issues challenge me to use all of my brain and I think that helps me stay engaged with learning too.

Outside of school, I enjoy spending lots of time playing with my dog, Swayze (shown in picture to the right). Long boarding and horseback riding are where I find my happy place. To stay active I love to camp, hike, and kayak. I’m an introvert at heart but my close friends truly fill my cup. I haven’t done a ton of traveling in my life, but my new hyper-fixation is all things “van life.” My post college plans are to find a remote job at the intersection of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI); ecological sustainability, and fair and equal access to clean drinking water for all. I will also be taking baby steps toward buying and/or building a van that contains everything I need to survive and travel, thereby minimizing my carbon footprint while leaving lasting positive impressions.

HEARING FROM STUDENTS OF INTERDISCIPLINARY LIBERAL ARTS

Lex Harrison

Hello! My name is Lex Harrison, I'm a fourth-year student majoring in Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts with a minor in Apparel and Merchandising. Last year I transferred to CSU from a school in Los Angeles and decided to major in ILA this fall so I would be able to take Journalism and Media



Studies classes in addition to my fashion courses. I have always been predominately right-brained and when I was deciding on a major, I knew I wanted to focus on something creatively stimulating. Majoring in ILA has been a wonderful experience for me; having the freedom to explore my artistic passions in several disciplines instead of being confined to only one is extremely fulfilling and helps me truly enjoy my education experience in college. The past few years I have been extremely blessed in a career sense. I was able to intern for an

Australian swimwear company my sophomore year under the wing of my mentor. This gave me my first taste of the fashion industry which I hope to have an active and immediate part in upon graduation. This past summer I worked in Los Angeles for a non-profit raising money for Multiple Sclerosis. I played key roles in the organization of a celebrity-endorsed gala fundraiser; and it was here that I was able to shine in the orchestration of my first fashion show. This experience gave me even more clarity on what I hope to do once I graduate.

I want to give back to my community through art instead of simply being confined to working for one single clothing company for the rest of my life. Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts helped me realize that being able to apply my other interests - like music and film - with fashion was possible. Journalism classes give me the opportunity to write about it all. In my free time I study the history of musicians, movies, artists, and designers that I appreciate and write reviews about them and their work on an Instagram account for my friends to read.

I grew up all around the country, moving states and cities every year or two, so I crave and welcome the perpetual cycle of change. ILA allows me to do this in an academic setting and outside of class I make sure to get out and try new things, exploring new places as often as possible. I also recently started vending at the Fort Collins vintage market selling unique clothing pieces I have collected over the years. This has been a great way for me to meet people with similar interests while doing something I love.



Christopher Self | ILA Newsletter Editor

Tell me again, about the nameless terrain. Getting there, it's tricky. We begin in a room, sterile, windowless, blank walls and a table. Across from me sits the reader. The mental journey to get to that place, that "there ness" we cannot claim any ownership or control, is one of escaping the confines of one's own mind. But at which point consent is given to the newly in-control party, I cannot say. Is this a test? Is this training? Am I losing my mind?

I think I have been using that term improperly. Which term? Teleological. According to - no, shut the hell up. I don't care about Webster. Tell me about your use of this word. The end of something's transformation or evolution. What would the final form be of a thing that exists when it stops evolving or changing or adapting? What is the final penultimate state of a thing, what is it driving toward - perhaps without realizing it; is it death? Something, something else. I am wrong.

Back in the room. Instead of images flashing across a screen, a projector and wall, or photos laid before you to see, scan and identify, it is in your mind that these pictures are flashing by, with not even a nanosecond of space between one and the next. Consider the person sitting opposite you as the ultra-sensory perceiver who is meant to identify the images that you are thinking of in continuous succession based on your ability to properly project them along their frequency. Start with, say, various fruits, but do not allow yourself to mentally say the name of the fruit.

Remove the need to identify, name or state. Just flash the images in quick succession, allowing the thing to be a thing without stating what that thing is. You control the tempo and pace by how many and how often they are to flash across your mind. It won't take long for a certain landscape to take over your head-space projections. At least, that is what happened to me. Repeatedly.

At a certain point, it seems that I am no longer in control of the visuals in my own head. Instead, I am transported to a night-scape, a threshold of sorts. A holding place not entirely unreal, but not yet all the way there. Standing on a shore overlooking a still lake and an island with a mountain at its center. Silence. Not even the sound of waves lapping and crashing, no birds, no breeze. This lake, this waterless wetness. With each step forward the surrounding black glass shoots out as if magnetically propelled away from my presence. Another step forward and a sheet of this gelatinous ooze curves up, out, and away from me. Dark, reflective, tar-stained chrome. Don't you dare look into it. I don't know why. The need, the urge, the - I gotta do this! - push is to approach that mountain at the center of this alien-like environ. My Obsidian Lake.

That's where it ends. That's where the flashing image exercise takes me. Standing on the silent shores, anxious, alone, thinking I know what I must do. How can I claim ownership of my intentions if what led me to this spot was beyond my own will? I just don't know. It almost crosses the lines distinguishing the boundaries between a groggy waking state, lucid dream, and pure fantasy. This thing, this looking glass realm; it is not memory, nor is it experience. But I know I was there. Breathing was just a formality.

