Laton Mini-Grant:

I was awarded a Special Mini-Grant last October 2008 in the amount of $1500 attached to the Public Practices (/graduate-public-practice) project in Laton, California. I am now applying for a development grant of $1000 to total $2500 for financial assistance in completing my film/video project.

The original proposal described the project this way:

"I’m hoping to find support from the Otis Faculty Development funds for a film project I’ve planned having to do with the rural landscape in three locations: Laton, California; Maneadero, Baja Mexico; and Spooner, Wisconsin… The piece will present …broad landscapes that will
eventually be projected, so the level of resolution in the image and subtlety of coloration is critical and can only be accomplished on photographic film. I plan to shoot on 16mm film...

I’ve to date traveled twice to shoot in Laton with the Otis Public Practices group and produced two videos for projection at their event in March, as well as shooting some interviews for them. I’ll also travel to Maneadero, a small agricultural community in Baja Mexico, during the Winter break where I will film the beginning of part II.

"For the third part of the project I’ll be traveling to the small town of Spooner, Wisconsin with my parents in the summer of 2009 in order to pack up and sell their summer home of 40 years. Halfway across the country, Spooner has depressed farm and tourist economy and the people and the land share features with both Laton and Maneadero which I hope to capture with my camera, both in terms of the human subject in broad landscape, as well as the speed, or lack of it, of small town life. The relationship of the rural subject to the ‘vista,’ the experiences of space and of time in these rural landscapes, as well as movement across the in between space from town to town will be the focus of my project through the lens and the projector."

A slight change to the original proposal has been in using the mediums of HD video and super-8 film instead of 16mm film. After taking a brush-up workshop and shooting tests in 16mm I realized that the cumbersome equipment was problematic for travel. Since the quality of High Definition video now rivals that of film it now makes the argument for using film less compelling. I decided that it was much more prudent to spend the same money on a refurbished HD video camera as it would cost to rent all the 16mm equipment. I will be shooting film segments in super-8, as I already own the needed equipment, and have those sections transferred to digital video.

The Laton Project celebration on March 20, 2009 will include one of my videos as a projection on the wall of the Laton Post Office.

--Dana Duff (/faculty/dana-duff)
Fine Arts

Videos available on YouTube:
Walnut Tree Drive-By (http://youtu.be/k2yDlw2M4ss)
Cows Feeding (http://youtu.be/UZYW9RPRZQ)
El Pasajero (http://youtu.be/n2zuS6PiaC)

Images available on Picasa: