



Aron Zingman
SP.757 Final Photo Project

The concept behind this image was an evolution of several ideas stemming from my initial desire to incorporate the unique windows of Simmons Hall, where I have lived for three and a half years. Additional inspiration came from Prof. Ferreira's suggestion to blur the lines of what is inside and what is outside and from my frustration with course work at the end of the term. The image itself is a composite of five images, four digital and one black and film. One image is of me sitting in a Simmons lounge in which the background has been removed. The windows are in the Simmons lobby. The sky is a sunset I saw a couple weeks ago here in Massachusetts and the water is a separate shot of the beach I took in Denmark a couple years ago. The background image is an MIT scene.

The idea I have tried to convey is one of reaching towards the outside world. As the end of the term approached, I was swamped with work and with one term left, I have this overwhelming desire to get out. The background image is a black and white print of mine near the green building. My body is black and white, as is the MIT world it occupies. In the image, I am stuck behind a wall of Simmons windows which act as bars. I am reaching out into the colorful natural scene and my hands and feet are in color having entered the world outside of MIT. The twist is that the photo of the Simmons windows and floor that have been replaced by the sunset is an interior shot of the building. Where I would be if the image were real is actually the outside. The MIT background scene is also one of my favorite photos from the semester, just like MIT is one of my favorite places (when it's not trying to pound me into the ground). I see graduating as a stressful and conflicted process, but one I am striving for nonetheless.

While the composite is made of only five images, there are almost twenty layers to the Photoshop file that it was made in. This is largely because of the need to overlay several images in order to get the image of me to appear both in front and behind different part of the scenery. One of the more challenging items for me to figure out was how to make my arms and legs fade from black and white to color as they reached out. Execution once I thought of how to do it was not difficult but getting the idea for the technique was. To accomplish the fade, I made a duplicate layer of the picture of me and converted it to black and white

with the same density as the original. Placing it over the color layer, I used a layer mask with a gradient of opacity, fading to transparent on each limb, to get a soft transition moving outwards. The shadow was made by flipping the image about the horizontal, decreasing contrast, and decreasing opacity. For all layers it was necessary to use the selection tools to delete unwanted parts of the images to let other layers come through the transparent areas. I also had to use the clone stamp to add more windows including the small window cranks.