

Notes from the Field

Hello from PHAME Academy

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Hello from Portland, Oregon—we're PHAME! We're a nonprofit that empowers adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Founded in 1984, we now serve upwards of 120 students per year. In addition to offering ten-week terms of arts-based classes throughout the year, we also have a rigorous performance program that puts our students in front of audiences across the Portland metropolitan area and beyond. Our organization is built on the belief that art is for everyone, and that our community is stronger when everyone has the chance to pursue their own creativity.

The pandemic forced us to close our campus and pivot to online programming, but thanks to the ingenuity of our staff and students, PHAME is thriving. Since moving online, we've held more than 120 classes, free online hangouts, visiting artists, drop-in meditation sessions, and much more. We're now in the early stages of planning a return to in-person class offerings, but one thing we've learned from this year spent online is that for many people with disabilities, online can be the preferable—or only—way to participate. So online classes will be a part of PHAME for the long run.

PHAME's future is looking bright: we're continuing to expand our partnerships with local arts orgs, we're making multimedia video projects this summer, and in 2022 we plan to present an original play written and designed by PHAME artists.

We'd love to hear from you if you're interested in learning more, or have expertise to share in program evaluation or digital arts. Please reach out, or follow our progress as we shift to a hybrid model of in-person and online classes, by visiting www.phamepdx.org.

A work produced by PHAME Students:

Lost in the Woods, duration: 2 minutes 23 seconds

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/MgCD7Vuzuak?t=143>]

About the project: What happens when Hulk the Dog runs into an enchanted wood, leaving his friends to come and find him? The answer includes a haunted fun house, myriad ghosts, and a little romance. This is the premise of [Lost in the Woods](#), an animated original short produced entirely online by PHAME students and staff in the summer of 2020. Part poetic storytelling and part visual revelry, this video illustrates the talent, creativity, and artistry of PHAME students.

In the summer of 2020, PHAME held three separate classes that each met twice a week for 9 weeks to create this video. They were: line drawn animation (8 students), poetic storytelling (5 students), and musical storytelling (10 students). The poetic storytelling class

wrote the story told in the video, and then it was animated by our animation students and scored by our musical storytelling students. In addition, selected voice acting students recorded the voices of the characters. All of this work was guided by our teaching staff, as it was a student project, and the sound mixing was done by a staff member. But the final edit was a collaboration between teaching artists and students, and all of the ideas, poetry, drawings and musical motifs came from our students.

The final editing took place in the three weeks after the class term ended.



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