MOTHERFATHER

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WHY WE NEEDED TO MAKE THIS/ARTIST STATEMENT

There are multiple reasons why we needed to make this, mostly Mike has had the idea for the physical cabinet part of this project kicking around in his head in various states of finish for the last 5 years, he just never had a worthwile reason to justify making it until now… Personal and artistic justification to make this project finally came to him as he continued to develop the cabinet in his free time, at some point turning it into an outlet for the anxiety and fear we've all been feeling over the current sociopolitical climate. As artists and designers we innately understand the value, power, and introspective nature art creates within our culture in times of political unrest. After the last US Presidential Election we found we had a genuine desire and wish to see something like the College of the Creatives out in the real world "protecting the past, and inspiring the future" through art and culture. Given our professions, and the new Presidential Administration's announced plans to defund national public arts programs (ie: the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting), we think it's important that influential creatives band together and advocate:

1. That other creatives become actively aware of the health of local creative communities in and around them that are outside of their creative craft

2. Vigilance of threats to our shared cultural heritage

3. The championing of a creative's right to free speech

4. The protection of existing art and culture using their clout

5. The use of creative work to proactively inspire and empower others to do the same!

More than anything else, this past election has personally challenged our collective to try to do more. We want to help create an America we'd all proudly call home, and think thoughtful story-driven art and design projects at the intersection of culture and technology are our best chance at helping create the kind of civic engagement and dialogue necessary to make that America a reality. We're determined and committed to using our craft and practice to try to make our society work in more equitable and just ways for everyone. Through this project specifically, we want to civically engage and mobilize influential creatives whose work speaks to us (personally) in the hopes of accelerating the changes we want to see within the communities we self-identify with and belong to (specifically the nerdy and creative communities).

We also want to try to use our work to cut through filter bubbles, newspeak, tyranny, cults of personality, hateful groupthink, and toxic culture we've all experienced in

contemporary "public squares". We believe the best way to do that is to subvert and re-appropriate negatively associated cultural tropes like the irrational fear of the establishment and powerful intelligent women, wrap them up in a history lesson, and present it as a counterpoint to the insidious transgressiveness that's taken root in America since the Gamergate imbroglio and spread through our society like wildfire since the last Presidential election. Also, if we're being perfectly honest, we're not fans of solutionism. Instead, we subscribe to the premise that art and design's greatest values come from exposing the unseen and starting new public dialogues. With all of this in mind, we want to use our work to uncover new positive discussion topics that create opportunities for new thoughtful voices, socially-minded and diverse perspectives to bubble up.

Further driving this project is the personal inspiration and excitement we draw from open, inexpensive/free, easily accessible/low entry point and "available for everyone to use" technology. As tinkerers, artists, human-centered designers, and storytellers we see tremendous creative and storytelling value in new technology platforms (like the Raspberry Pi and NTC's C.H.I.P.) and existing technological infrastructures (like Twitter, Facebook, and Youtube):

- As tinkerers and artists we're fascinated by relatively new technology platforms like the RPi and C.H.I.P., and want to explore the growing artistic applications the proliferation of inexpensive and embeddable single-board computers will create in contemporary artwork moving forward. We're also intensely interested in the broader implications their uses create related to the expectations, interactions and value the general public puts on art when it starts to resemble commonly accessible and often disposable off-the-shelf consumer electronics and collectables vs what is traditionally considered to be art as made with classically accepted and recognized mediums, which tend to be hung on walls and viewed at an arm's length distance.

- As human-centered designers and storytellers we feel existing technology infrastructure like Twitter is severely underused as a community building medium and tool for empathy, thanks in large part to its rigidly accepted uses and the toxic narratives everyone has come to associate it with. We further feel our cultural obsession with innovation is now constantly pushing us to reinvent and ignore the fact that existing technology infrastructures (like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube) can be used in different innovative ways. These technological infrastructures also represent HUGE mountains of rich data that anyone with good data framing parameters can access to find previously unseen insights that could be thoughtfully used to drive new kinds of public dialogue and engagement.

Mostly, as artists and designers we want to use new technology platforms and existing technology infrastructures to reach and move our audiences in new ways with our work. We believe the value of our work is in the creation of new engaging stories that are easily, happily and widely shared via existing technological infrastructure like Twitter, Facebook and YouTube - creating public dialogue

along the way. We also want to use technology to tell dense, interactive and engaging stories that help disrupt the cultural backlash this new transgressive social movement has created. We see nothing but opportunities in new technology platforms we've only just started scratching the surface of, and tons of unfulfilled potential in existing internet infrastructure thoughtful and intrepid creatives can use to create outsized positive sentiment and engagement with.

Finally, we'd be lying if we didn't admit that we want to have the opportunity to collaborate with and bring the people we're personally fans of together to amplify this project's call-to-action. By designing a secret and authentic art experience with timely social-action underpinnings+subverted negative cultural tropes that is thoughtfully targeted at its intended recipients, we think we've created something special that authentically speaks to who the intended recipients are as people. It's our sincere hope that this project unexpectedly delights the cabinet's recipients, while producing a genuine connection to them that then inspires and mobilizes them to start a dialogue with the general public about the important role art and culture has played in their lives and careers.

We want to dedicate ourselves to the design and making of artifacts at the intersection of culture and technology infused with the human touch that tell thoughtful, empathetic and communally engaging stories to help make the world a better place. Essentially, we want to make pieces of art and culture that: create thought, start dialogues, and civically engage our audiences. The College of the Creatives Cabinet is our bid to bring together influential creatives in the hopes of starting a public dialogue on the importance of art and culture in America during this time of political unrest. If nothing else, we sincerely hope this project helps make America feel a little more like a place people like us would like to call home, and/or inspires the public to make their own "College of the Creative Cabinet" project they can use to contribute to a more egalitarian and peaceful world. Or, as one of Mike's childhood heroes would say, "EXCELSIOR!"