

INSTITUTE ON THE
ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to DiscoverSM

MINI GRANT PROJECT SUMMARY

Please complete the project summary and return the completed form to April Snyder, Associate Administrator for the Institute on the Environment at aprilsnyder@umn.edu. Paper copies will not be accepted. Please also attach any photos, publications, brochures, event agendas or other materials that were a result of the mini grant summary.

Date of Report Submission:	05/27/2013
Project PI & Dept/School	MS-0008-13 ; School of Music (CLA) Maja Radovanlija
Project Title:	<i>Improvised Ecosystems: Sounds and Visions of Cedar Creek</i>
Grant Amount \$:	\$2,962

Project Context & Purpose

Please include the original project purpose statement and revise for any changes that occurred in the project after the start date with a short explanation of the changes.

This project gathered an interdisciplinary team of ten faculty, staff, and students, who spent a weekend at Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve, working together on a collaborative creative project, expressing and evoking aesthetic impressions of the sights and sounds of this unique environment. Music participants of this team created pieces directly inspired by and/or incorporating sounds of Cedar Creek reserve (e.g. creating background loops of recorded Environmental sounds, used as a live improvised audio in live performance; compositional source material, performance recorded in the savannah and forest of Cedar Creek Ecosystem, etc.). Visual Arts participants create mixed media works that reflected the vistas of Cedar Creek and expressed perspectives of this specific site.

All of the artistic interventions were inspired by creative discussions and tours guided by Mary Spivey and her colleagues at Cedar Creek reserve. The project presents artistic reflection/reaction to what we have learned and experienced during this creative weekend at Cedar Creek.

Work Completed

Please provide a summary of the work that was completed for the mini grant project.

After very successful creative weekend, spent at Cedar Creek Ecosystem, the process of creating individual reflective works and conversation on how to incorporate all of the works and ideas into one performance, started. We have met several times to discuss and share what we all were working on, both individually and as a part of improvised ensemble. It was an interesting process and experience for all to learn how different media artists work.

The result of a few month of creative process was first performance, presented at IonE Atrium and Commons Gallery on 02/27/2014, starting at 5:30pm. Performance was in an interdisciplinary/installation/concert form, and had incorporated all of the ideas that student composers and members of improvised ensemble (SOM students/faculty) presented, as well as part of work, which visual artist were developing. This performance also succeeded in intention to present our work in interactive way, through setting the audience to be mobile and in a way take part in performance).

Sounds and Visions of Cedar Creek performance was presented again on 05/08 at Regis Art Center. This was a second version of performance, which presented visual aspect of the work in its full potential. The same as the first performance – this was a mobile performance, with interactive elements.

Partnerships & Collaborations

Please provide a summary of the project personnel, partnerships and collaborations that worked directly on the project or were started as a direct result of the mini grant project.

Improvising Ecosystems collaborative team:

Scott Currie (saxophone)

Maja Radovanlija (classical guitar)

Diane Willow (micro cinemas, soundscapes)

Andrew Bergman (double bass, composer)

Sam Krahn (guitar, composer)

Maria Ritzenthaler (viola)

Terez Icovino (visual arts)

Patrick Terry (recorded voice)

Lars Christensen (citer, reading)

Mike Duffy (live audio, tech. support)

In collaboration with:

Cedar Creek Ecosystem Science Reserve scientists, researchers and employees: Mary Spivey (Public Engagement Coordinator, CCESR); Dr. Jeff Corney (CCESR Managing Director); Dr. Ed Cushing (Emeritus Professor, CBS); Dr. Eric Seabloom and Dr. Elizabeth Borer (CBS); Peter Wragg (PhD student, CBS).

Promotional collaborations: IonE employee Molly Boss, SOM public relations manager Lisa Marshall.

Project Outcomes & Impacts

Please provide a summary of the outcomes and /or impacts of the mini grant project including future plans for the project.

Direct outcome of this project was providing creative space for both music and art student/faculty/stuff to work together in order to reflect on ongoing themes, presented at Cedar Creek Ecosystem. It created a model for future collaborations (Improvising Ecosystems ongoing projects through IonE mini-grant and IAS grant for academic 2014/15). We were able to identify number of other potential collaborators at the University and outside of University for our future projects.

Aside from this, two performances, which presented in different performance spaces, succeeded in their intention to present reflection of environment of Cedar Creek in an interdisciplinary way and possibly draw the attention to this specific site.

We are planning to visit Cloquet Forestry in September, spend creative weekend there and open the new creative process, with slightly different team of collaborators (*Improvising Ecosystems: Forest Dance of Survival and Transformation*).

With two mini-grant projects (*Cedar Creek* and *Forest Dance of Survival*), we will have larger team of collaborators and will identify a group of faculty/students/stuff/collaborators who are gathered around this idea of joining our expressive media (music, art, dance) into interdisciplinary processes and conversations with Environmental scientists/researchers and reflecting on ongoing themes and issues.