

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:	10/01/2015
Project PI & Dept/School	MF-0026-13, School of Music
Project Title:	<i>Improvising Ecosystems: Forest Dance of Survival and Transformation</i>
Grant Amount \$:	\$ 3000

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 represents the continuation of the IonE-inspired arts research initiative Improvising Ecosystems, which brings artists together with environmental scientists in interdisciplinary, collaborative, and creative teams. This team will be composed of faculty, staff, and students representing following of disciplines: music, visual arts, dance and scientists/researchers of Cloquet Forestry Center. The purpose of this project is the further development of an ongoing creative research program between disciplines and departments in a way that will further raise awareness of some issues and topics specific to Cloquet Forestry Center.

This project will gather an interdisciplinary team of 10-12 faculty, staff members and students, who will spend a weekend at Cloquet Forestry Center. Team members will be working together on a collaborative project (ideally interacting with Native American singers/dancers) focused on aesthetic reflection upon research narratives on the “hot” topics of the Forestry Center (for example-climate change), as presented by staff members of the Center. All artistic interventions will arise from creative discussion and tours guided by Carry Pike and the team of researchers at Cloquet Forestry Center, evoking aesthetic impressions of the sights and sounds of this unique environment. The final presentation of this will be interdisciplinary performances at the Cloquet Forestry and, later in semester, on the Twin Cities West Bank campus (e.g. Ferguson Hall, Regis or Rarig Center) and the IonE Commons. The continuation of this innovative collaboration and artistic contemplation on environmental issues will open a wider interdisciplinary conversation between artists, community artists and environmental researchers.

Work Completed

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

Our team of three-faculty members (Diane Willow, Scott Currie, and Maja Radovanlija), spent creative weekend at Cloquet Forestry. We had a guest workshop by Lyz Jakoola, Native Indian musician and singer and a tour through the Forestry with scientist, who work there. Most of the time twelve students (Art Department and SOM) spent sharing their experience of spending two days in his interesting environment, and talking about possible project development, as well as performing together (music, and movement, with some visual representations of the place). Later in semester, we had a dance student join the team, and we presented some work in progress at the Nash Gallery (October 2014).

Later presentation of more developed performance/installation was on April 30th at the Conference Room, Northrop, with guest performers Michelle Kinney (cello), and Phil Fried (double bass). This was interdisciplinary performance, in which students presented their videos, and visual reflections of Cloquet Forest, dance student improvised with several installations (“sounded pine needles”, “live leave graphics”), and music, which was performed a live. Whole event lasted for about 45 min.

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.

Scott Currie (ethnomusicology faculty), School of Music, Creative Studies and Media division, Twin Cities Campus; • Maja Radovanlija (classical guitar faculty) School of Music, Creative Studies and Media division, Twin Cities campus; • Diane Willow, Department of Art, Twin Cities Campus; • Michelle Kinney (cellist, musician in residence), Department of Theater Arts and Dance, Twin Cities Campus; • Carry Pike, Interim Director of Operations/ Research Fellow MN Tree Improvement Cooperative; • Students of the School of Music, composition/improvisation/performance, Twin Cities campus; and • Students of the Department of Art and the Department of Theater Arts and Dance.

Lyz Jakoola, Fond Du Lac Tribal College; Douglas Ewart, local artist, educator, improviser.

Project Outcomes & Impacts

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

During this project we successfully connected with Native American artist, and more local musicians, and also learned a lot at this interesting location (Cloquet Forestry). Our project was also successful in its goal to incorporate variety of artistic reflections, and processes. We hope to continue this work, and keep looking for more connections, both in learning about Environment, and Community artists, whose work is strongly connected to their heritage.