

ICE Annual Report FY03

Background

Ideas for Creative Exploration (ICE) began in 1999 and was first funded by the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences and the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. ICE has the mission of promoting innovative, multidisciplinary creative projects and advanced research in the arts. ICE is a catalyst for collaborative studio work and critical discourse that brings together artists, scholars and students in the arts and other disciplines across campus. The ICE structure supports the creative use of technology from both a practical and theoretical perspective and moves the results of those explorations into the world in the form of publications, performances and exhibitions.

ICE Project Grant Program

Three major projects received funding from ICE during the 2002-2003 academic year. Lead applicants were UGA faculty and graduate students who submitted proposals in the fall. A seven-member committee of individuals nominated by the ICE Committee selected the projects and awarded a total of \$14,850 in grant funds. The selected proposals were chosen based on intellectual merit, feasibility, collaborative and interdisciplinary activity, degree of innovation and potential for future funding and development.

A Good Man Is Hard to Find is a fully staged 45-minute chamber opera based on a story by Flannery O'Connor. The opera premiered at the Seney-Stovall Chapel in April. David Volk (DMA candidate, School of Music) conceived the project and composed the score, which combines acoustic and electronic (digital playback) elements. George Contini (Assistant Professor of Drama), who was also the lead applicant for the ICE Project Grant, directed the performance. The cast and crew were made up of UGA students and faculty from Drama and Music, and included faculty from LaGrange College and Gainesville College. The project received additional support from the Mary Flannery O'Connor Foundation and a Piedmont College Faculty Development Grant (David Volk). The opera will be performed again during the International Flannery O'Connor Conference at Georgia College in October.

Eco-log is a collaborative project involving artists and community members that explores local ecology and the issue of urban sprawl. The project was developed through community workshops and culminated in a series of May performances at the Canopy Studio Movement Arts Center in Athens. Catherine Ross (MFA candidate, School of Art) was the lead applicant and project leader. This ambitious and intensely collaborative project synthesized aerial performance (trapeze), dance, spoken word poetry, projected digital video, sound, installation and fiber arts. Sculptural forms and instruments were created from non-recyclable materials during the workshops, which reinforced the non-hierarchical, participatory methodology of the project. In addition to UGA students and volunteers from the Athens community, the performances featured the Gemini Twins, a

professional aerial arts team formerly of the Cirque du Soleil and the reading of an original poem contributed by Scottish author John Wallace. *Eco-log* received additional support from R.E.M., the Canopy Studio Movement Arts Center and the Lyndon House Arts Center.

Somos Pobres Pero No Hay Pobreza Aqui (We Are Poor, But There Is No Poverty Here) is a cross-cultural digital video documentary that explores the educational system in rural Mexico through the lives of three sisters who are school-teachers in Xalapa, Mexico. The documentary will be screened simultaneously in Athens and Veracruz in June. The project strives to create a unique perspective on the issues of migration, language, culture and education in the United States and Mexico. H. James McLaughlin (Associate Professor of Education) was the lead applicant. The project includes UGA students, faculty and recent graduates from Education, Drama and Art. McLaughlin and Jennifer McClung (graduate candidate, Foreign Language Education) are also supported by a Fulbright Fellowship, a Rotary International Teacher Grant and a Teaching and Learning Grant from UGA. The documentary will be distributed via Video CD to sensitize teachers, social workers, university faculty and students to the challenges faced in the educational process on both sides of the border.

ICE Collab_3

The ICE Collab series has emerged as an annual workshop that supports a vital exchange of ideas about creative practice. ICE Collab_3 took place from March 24-26 and was structured as a “temporary media lab”, an experimental workshop model that encourages collaboration and exchange in real-time and has been successfully employed at European new media festivals and conferences. ICE Collab participants attended afternoon presentations and a public lecture entitled “Dreams of an (Un)Certain Future” by Steve Dietz, Director of New Media Initiatives at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. The ICE Collab sessions included a presentation of projects from Gallery 9 at Walker Art Center by Steve Dietz, a debate on usability standards and aesthetics in web design by Tom Cona (Lecturer, New Media Institute) and Mark Callahan (Instructor, School of Art), an overview of the Virtual Vaudeville project by David Saltz (Assistant Professor of Drama), student projects from Digital Media, a presentation of the conceptual, design and code development of the ICE web site by ICE Collab_1 participants and Joe Willey (Web Developer, School of Art) and a screening of the digital video components of *Eco-log* by Catherine Ross and Tom Black (BFA, School of Art).

Honors Program

ICE was formally introduced to the Foundation Fellows Program this spring during Dinner-Seminars entitled “Research in the Arts” by Carmon Colangelo and Mark Callahan and “Art and Technology” by Laleh Mehran. Based on the student interest demonstrated during these sessions, ICE will offer a CURO Seminar called “Introduction to Research in the Arts” in the upcoming fall semester. The seminar will introduce students to advanced research in the arts at UGA, facilitate student-initiated research projects and faculty mentorship.

ICE Internship

The ICE Internship Program was initiated this spring and presents another opportunity for student involvement in ICE. The School of Art supports the three-credit, semester-long internship. The internship provides hands-on experience in project management and documentation, identification of opportunities for artists and knowledge of contemporary research in the arts. Present and upcoming interns are from the Digital Media Program in the School of Art and the Foundation Fellows Program.

Master of Internet Technology (MIT) Project

ICE co-sponsored an MIT Project with the Lamar Dodd School of Art to develop software that will allow various institutions to share data and create a cultural events calendar available on the Internet and wireless devices such as cell phones and handheld computers. The project team was comprised of graduate students in the MIT program. The results of the project help to ensure that the ICE site will remain on the cutting-edge of electronic content delivery and provide a technical foundation for future experiments in net and wireless art.

Mobile Media Project

ICE and the New Media Institute (NMI) supported the collaborative development of four projects for handheld wireless devices in the Wireless Athens Georgia (WAG) zone. Mark Callahan and Zane Wilson created an experimental interface called "Latitude" in a remote collaboration between Athens and Longmont, Colorado. Christian Croft (BFA, School of Art) created a net artwork and performance that parodies the US Department of Homeland Security web site entitled "Afterready". Christopher Hughes (BFA candidate, School of Art) developed a project called "Tagging" that allows participants to draw virtual graffiti on locations within the WAG zone and collects the images in an online image gallery. Tara Rebele (performance artist and ICE Collab_1 participant) created an interactive hypertext-narrative project called "Athens Wireless Escorts" that explores social space and the handheld computer as fetish and companion. The projects were realized with the assistance of NMI students and faculty and premiered during the "Go Mobile or Go Home" wireless technology conference held in April.

ICE Visitors

ICE hosted a series of roundtable discussions with visiting artists Martin Kersels, Ela Lambin and Leah Mann, Jennifer Steinkamp and Gu Xiong. These sessions were made possible through the cooperation of the Department of Dance and the Lamar Dodd School of Art. In March, ICE co-hosted Bryan Rogers, founder of the Studio for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University and current Dean of the School of Art and Design at the University of Michigan. Rogers offered valuable consultation regarding administration and project models for ICE.

ICE Fellowship Awards

ICE has initiated a fellowship program for awards up to \$300 for eligible ICE members who request support for research in the arts. Ben Coolik (MFA candidate, Drama) and Christian Croft (BFA, School of Art) are recipients of ICE Fellowship Awards to support their participation in the Sidney Kahn Summer Institute for New Practices in Performance and Technology offered by The Kitchen and Sarah Lawrence College in New York City, New York.

ICE Project Space

ICE currently occupies the recently renovated lower level of the Tanner Building (Room 101). The space is served by a wireless network and houses a computer, audio speakers, video projector conference tables, chairs and a cabinet for the storage of documents, videos and technical manuals. The ICE Project Space is used for administration, meetings, workshops and seminars.

Web Site

The ICE web site (<http://ice.uga.edu>) underwent significant development with the support of the Lamar Dodd School of Art. Joe Willey created a new site structure that is innovative, efficient and preserves the conceptual and design qualities of the original web site. The improved site is database and code driven, available to users of HTML and Flash-enabled Internet browsers and easily accessible for updates and changes. This new structure has effectively eliminated the need for a Web Manager and will allow the timely creation of new content. Added features include a search function, a forum for national and international exhibition, performance and project opportunities, calls for papers and presentations, events and an online knowledge network indexed by expertise and research interests. An ICE Membership form was launched online in the spring and has 34 respondents at present, complemented by a UGA ICE Listserv that delivers information to 111 people.

ICE Committee

ICE is led by an advisory committee with representatives from Art, Creative Writing, Dance, Drama, Music, the graduate student body and the Athens community. Mark Callahan was hired on a part-time basis to coordinate programmatic aspects of ICE. Callahan is a practicing artist in traditional printmaking and newer media and an Instructor in the Digital Media area in the School of Art.

Partnerships

ICE is a finalist for inclusion in the National Art and Technology Network (NATN), a proposed constellation of US-based cultural and research clusters linked in the creation of dissemination of new technology-driven multidisciplinary works of art. The network and pending grant proposal is administered by The Kitchen and the Ford Foundation. The

proposal is currently on hold due to personnel changes and budgetary concerns at the Ford Foundation. ICE joined Art and Science Collaborations, Inc. (ASCI) a leading organization created to raise public awareness about artists and scientists using science and technology, to explore new forms of creative expression, and to increase communication and collaborations between these fields. In February Carmon Colangelo and Mark Callahan attended the College Art Association Conference in New York City. ICE was represented through promotional literature and personal meetings with leading artists and scholars from around the world.

Future Projects

Planning is underway for ICE Summit 2003: Sound in the Arts and ICE Summit 2005: Art and Science. A new call for proposals for ICE Project Grants will be issued in May. ICE Collab_4 will take place in spring 2004 and follow up on issues presented during the preceding ICE Summit. The Athens-Liverpool sound project is a collaboration of ICE and Colin Fallows of John Moores University in Liverpool, England to produce a limited-edition publication and recorded sound collection. The project joins the images of Athens and Liverpool, two cities known for their distinctive music and art cultures, in an international sampling of experimental sound. The project will be developed over the next year.