

ICE Annual Report FY05

Mission

Ideas for Creative Exploration (ICE) promotes 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.

Background

ICE began in 1999 as a series of discussions among faculty and students throughout the university and local community to address the need for a program that would support collaborative projects and advanced research across disciplines in the arts.

In the spring of 2001 a series of meetings and events called the ICE Summit was held at UGA, developed through the coordinated efforts of the departments of Art, Dance, Drama, English, and Music. Although the ICE Summit mainly addressed art and technology, the resulting conversations revolved around the potential of an interdisciplinary unit at UGA that could generate projects and partner with other institutions to bring these efforts to the attention of local, national and international audiences.

During the past six years ICE has supported the development of original projects, hosted visiting artists and scholars, held workshops, developed a website and online forum, and established a project space in the historic Tanner Building. The ICE network has expanded to include faculty and students in the Honors Program, Faculty of Engineering, an increasing number of people in the sciences, UGA alumni, community members, and national and international organizations. ICE revolves around a healthy Project Grant program, a weekly electronic mailing list serving over two hundred members, three research groups, and an academic/social/mentoring network.

Funding

ICE is supported by the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Franklin College of Arts and Sciences. ICE has received in-kind support from the departments of Art, Dance, Drama, English, and Music, the Honors Program, and the New Media Institute.

Research Groups

ICE supported new and continuing projects through the creation of three distinct research groups: the Interactivity Task Force, Emerging Media Research Group (EMRG), and ICE Productions.

The Interactivity Task Force supports project-driven exploration of performance, sound, and installation technology such as Max/MSP/Jitter, Open Sound Control, sensors, and

motion capture. The task force builds on the expertise of past collaborative productions in the departments of Dance and Theatre and Film Studies, and the schools of Art and Music. These projects have featured faculty and students working in Dramatic Media, the Interactive Performance Lab, CORE Concert Dance Company, the Center for New Music, and Digital Media. Perhaps the most visible ongoing project is *Virtual Vaudeville*, a prototype for a Live Performance Simulation System utilizing motion capture technology and 3D computer animation, led by Dr. David Saltz and supported by the National Science Foundation.

The use of sensors and interactivity software is integral to ICE projects such as *E.L.I.: Nomad*, *Sporangium*, *All Day and All Night*, and *Paradise Hotel*. *Sporangium*, a sound and sculpture installation developed by composer Dr. Eric Marty, premiered at the Atlanta Contemporary Art Center. Another installation project by Marty, *Ochre With*, was shown at the Mimara Museum in Zagreb, Croatia.

Marty, recent winner of the ALEA III International Composition Prize, teaches in the Digital Media area of the Lamar Dodd School of Art. He formed a Networked Interactivity research group to bring together technologists, performers, and composers in the community. The group is interested primarily in Open Sound Control (OSC), an open source protocol for high-level, expressive control of multimedia applications. It is designed to facilitate real-time networked interactivity, and has been implemented in all the major multimedia environments, including Max/MSP, Director and Flash. It is also replacing MIDI and other protocols in hardware interfaces and devices.

One of the most exciting collaborative projects this year was *The Ticket*, developed by the Interactive Performance Lab and the Chicago Theatre Company Studio Z. Written by Daniel Zellner of Studio Z, this commedia del arte style production includes actors, designers, computer programmers and media specialists. The performance features actors within improvised scenes interacting with film and 3D animation. *The Ticket* was also featured at The Second City in Chicago.

The Emerging Media Research Group (EMRG) supports projects and prototype development addressing new cultural forms in communication technology, such as wireless devices, the Internet, and human-machine hybridity. EMRG operates in an environment rich with possibilities for creative research, represented by UGA initiatives such as the New Media Institute, the Faculty of Engineering, Nanoscale Science and Engineering Center, and research in biotechnology and artificial intelligence. Just ninety miles from Athens, fellow Research One institutions Emory University and Georgia Institute of Technology help shape the future through a broad range of research activities.

EMRG advances the goals set forth by previous ICE projects such as early experimental versions of the ICE Web site, and the Mobile Media Project for wireless handheld devices in the Athens wireless Cloud network produced in collaboration with the New Media Institute. *Tagging*, a virtual graffiti project, began as a prototype supported by ICE and was developed further with the support of a Center for Undergraduate Opportunities (CURO) Summer Fellowship for its creator, B.F.A. candidate Kit Hughes. Another ICE

project by Hughes, *All Day and All Night*, along with *E.L.I.:Nomad*, was accepted to the Rhizome.org ArtBase, an international archive of new media art.

E.L.I., or Electro-Linguistic Imaginator, is a mobile computer module that moves about unlikely environments speaking randomly generated poetry in exchange for new vocabulary words for his database. Developed at the Kitchen in New York by artists Christian Croft (B.F.A., Digital Media), Ben Coolik (M.F.A. candidate, Drama), and Todd Shalom, a graduate student at the California College of Arts and Crafts in San Francisco, the project has grown from a prototype to a touring phenomenon called *E.L.I.:Nomad*.

E.L.I. has navigated crowds and made impromptu public appearances throughout the Southeast and Midwest, with notable encounters at sites of mass public protest such as the FTAA meeting in Miami, School of the Americas at Fort Benning, and Stop the Occupation in Iraq rally in Washington D.C. In addition to being tear-gassed, surveilled, and removed from the Mall of America, E.L.I. has been featured at the Kitchen Street Festival in New York and the International Digital Media and Arts Association IDEAS exhibition and conference.

EMRG is currently supporting E.L.I. with one of the most challenging and crucial aspects of any new media project: documentation. Croft, Coolik and ICE intern Micki Davis are editing hours of video footage from E.L.I.'s travels to produce a DVD that will document and educate as new venues are sought. E.L.I.'s poetry was also featured in the windows of the ICE Studio in the historic Tanner Building.

EMRG is also supporting the development of a prototype for robotic pinscreen, blending the research of an early twentieth century animators with new software development.

John Foreman and Lydia Greer are both 3rd year undergraduates at UGA, where they are Mathematics and Film Studies majors, respectively. They've been friends since high school and are now married. Last year Lydia took a film studies course that dealt with the history of experimental animation, such as the work of Len Lye and Norman McLaren with their direct manipulation of film stock to create animations. Especially fascinating to Lydia, was the work of Alexander Alexeieff, an engraver turned animator who sought to develop a technique to animate engravings.

The technique Alexeieff developed was called pinscreen animation. A pinscreen frame is created by shining a light across hundreds of pins pushed through a white board to create a black and white, completely chiaroscuro image out of the pin shadows. An animation is developed simply by filming frame after frame on the pinscreen, shifting the pins as necessary to create motion between frames.

John and Lydia both became very interested in this animation technique, however moving the pins by hand on a pinscreen is extremely labor intensive (it can take years to make one short film), and neither of the two students had the time to devote to such a project. Pinscreen modeling software had already been written, however computer

animations often look too crisp, the nails look nothing like nails, and the shadows are too perfect.

Thus, the students decided on a computer-aided compromise. Beginning this past fall with the aid of CURO, ICE, and the National Science Foundation, Lydia and John built a physical pinscreen whose pins can be pushed via a robotic printer that communicates via infrared with a computer. The computer tells the robot where to push the pins by taking in live action digital photography and converting the digital frames into pin lengths to be transferred to the board.

ICE Productions will support the creation and distribution of limited-edition books, CDs, and DVDs produced in collaboration by UGA students, faculty, and independent artists. Previous editions include a Video CD containing the cross-cultural digital video documentary, *Somos Pobres Pero No Hay Pobreza Aqui (We Are Poor, But There Is No Poverty Here)*, that explores the educational system in rural Mexico through the lives of three sisters who are school teachers in Xalapa, Mexico. Last year ICE supported the production of a multimedia CD, *Scenes from the X-Ray Cafe, Vol. 1* and accompanying Web site. *Scenes from the X-Ray Cafe, Vol. 1* is currently distributed by CD Baby.

ICE will publish AUX, an audio CD in hand-printed packaging produced in collaboration with the acclaimed Printmaking/Book Arts program at UGA. AUX will contain experimental music from the famed Athens independent music scene, curated in part by Joe Silva, of WUGA's Just Off the Radar program, and Heather McIntosh, a graduate of the UGA School of Music and prolific composer and instrumentalist, with the assistance of Steven Trimmer. MFA candidate Stephanie Dotson, leads the AUX design team with Amanda Burk, Danielle Benson, Audrey Molinare, and Elisa Dallas. BFA candidate John Crowe, received a 2005 Center for Undergraduate Opportunities (CURO) Summer Research Fellowship to address online models of cultural production and distribution, culminating in the design and launch of a website in conjunction with AUX.

Honors Program

ICE continued its participation with the Honors Program by offering a CURO Seminar called "Introduction to Research in the Arts" during the fall semester.

The seminar provides an overview of arts research, presents methodological models for sustaining research-based creative practice and acts as a workshop for project development. The seminar examines conventional and emerging forms of arts research, ranging from historical and critical studies to project-based works that address newer media and interdisciplinary approaches.

Students visit various areas of campus to become familiar with performance and exhibition resources at UGA and meet leading faculty and professionals who are conducting research in the Departments of Art, Dance, Drama, English and Music, the Georgia Museum of Art and ICE. Students are exposed to a range of models for creative practice based on visits with faculty, outside reading and discussion. The seminar

addresses ways that arts research is produced in the form of exhibitions, performances and publications, and how institutional networks, grants, commissions and entrepreneurial approaches support research-based cultural production. Throughout the semester students develop individual and collaborative project proposals based on actual opportunities and hypothetical situations. Project development occurs in a workshop format through brainstorming sessions, critique, feasibility studies, written proposals, production and documentation planning and organization of supporting materials.

The seminar was led by Mark Callahan and included Dr. David Saltz (Drama), Dr. Jed Rasula (English), Dr. Pam Kleiber (Honors Program), Curator Ashley Callahan (Georgia Museum of Art), Rebecca Enghauser (Dance), Dr. Susan Thomas (Music), Laleh Mehran (Art), Dr. Marcus Fecheimer (Cellular Biology).

Several ICE members participate in the Honors Faculty Mentor Program and the CURO Apprenticeship Program.

ICE Fellowship Awards

ICE maintains a fellowship program for UGA students who request support for research in the arts. Jeffrey Young (BFA candidate, Art) and Jon Michael Boling (BFA candidate, Art) are recipients of ICE Fellowship Awards to support their participation in the Sidney Kahn Summer Institute offered by The Kitchen and Sarah Lawrence College in New York City, New York.

ICE Internship

The ICE Internship Program continued with the support of the Lamar Dodd School of Art, offering a three-credit, semester-long internship to UGA undergraduates. The 2005 intern was Digital Media major Mariquita Davis.

Events

ICE hosted a number of events promoted locally through the ICE Web site and electronic mailing list.

STREAM Performance and Demonstration

Founded by composer Eric Marty, STREAM (The Studio for Research in Art and Music) is dedicated to innovation in art and music. STREAM brings innovative arts to the public through performances, exhibitions and workshops. To inaugurate its first season, STREAM presented a free public performance and demonstration of interactive audio technology at ICE.

ICE Open House: Paradise Hotel

The *Paradise Hotel* project team spent the summer in residence at the ICE Studio, where they developed and built interactive stage elements utilizing Max/MSP software. Many of the hand-crafted props will be on display. The project uses Richard Foreman's play, *Paradise Hotel*, as a framework for collaboration to bring together readers, actors, and

artists in a series of performances running from September 9 to 11 at the Little Kings Club in downtown Athens.

Xerces Society Public Discussion

Professor Laleh Mehran and the Xerces crew discussed their recent installation, *The Xerces Society, Installment VI: Sir Samuel Cropias Public Laboratory*.

This exhibition is a collaborative project led by Laleh Mehran, a professor in the Digital Media department of the Lamar Dodd School of Art, University of Georgia. Mehran is working with students and faculty from the Lamar Dodd School of Art, ICE, the Georgia Museum of Natural History, and the Department of Entomology in transforming the Letitia and Rowland Radford Study Collection Gallery into a laboratory of art and science.

The Xerces Society, Installment VI: Sir Samuel Cropias Public Laboratory, a contemporary work of performance and installation art, will address the blurring of the intersections between art, science, and politics. This installment of *The Xerces Society* displays the typical workplace of a lepidopterist, Sir Samuel Cropia, who harbors a fanatical devotion to his butterflies and beliefs. Sir Cropia is a fictitious, world-renowned lepidopterist known for an extreme dedication to the preservation and proliferation of butterflies. Regular performances by various laboratory players and the presentation of key artifacts will help reveal the malevolent nature of Sir Cropia's research and methodologies. In the laboratory, Sir Cropia's private goals subtly manifest themselves through painstaking manipulation of laboratory personnel and the exploitation of scientific authority. The intention of *The Xerces Society*, whose title makes reference to the North American butterfly conservation society and the ancient king of Persia, intends, as it enters its sixth year, to investigate the complexities of fanaticism and ideology under the auspices of art and science.

ICE Open House: Experimental Animation Evening

An evening of informal presentations featuring Dr. Richard Neupert, John Foreman and Lydia Greer, and Martijn van Wagtenonk. Dr. Richard Neupert, Head of UGA Film Studies, selects and screens historical examples of experimental animation. John Foreman and Lydia Greer demonstrate their Robotic Pinscreen Animation prototype - in development since the fall and supported in part by ICE. Lamar Dodd School of Art Professor Martijn van Wagtenonk presents his work and discusses his upcoming stop-motion Maymester course.

Living with Technology Symposium

ATHICA: Athens Institute for Contemporary Art hosted the Living With Technology Symposium. The public was invited to interact with E.L.I., or the Electro-Linguistic Imaginator on the ATHICA. Ken Rufo, recent Ph.d from UGA's Speech Communication Dept. discussed feedback loops and the impact of media technologies on our thinking. Mr Rufo's work focuses on the interconnections between new media and intellectual movements as well as pop-culture. Mr. Rufo's presentation was followed by a panel

discussion led by Mark Callahan, the Assistant Director of Ideas for Creative Exploration (ICE) who was joined by artists in the *Embedded* exhibition.

College Art Association Conference

The College Art Association conference in Atlanta featured ICE during two events: BFA candidate Kit Hughes (recipient of a 2004 ICE project grant) took part in a Leonardo art/science/technology Mentorship Roundtable, and ICE hosted a session called *Agents of Change: Alternative Networks and New Visions for Research in the Arts*. The session included Mark Callahan, ICE, Dr. Michael Mateas, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Laleh Mehran, The University of Georgia.

Partnerships

ICE is affiliated with three major organizations, ASCI, Rhizome, and MARCEL.

Art and Science Collaborations, Inc. (ASCI) (<http://asci.org/>) was established primarily as a network for artists who either use or are inspired by science and technology. ASCI has become a magnet for some of the best examples of this type of contemporary art and for technologists wishing to collaborate. ASCI programs and services provide members with opportunities for professional growth, increased public visibility, and a supportive community.

Rhizome.org (<http://rhizome.org>) is a nonprofit organization that was founded in 1996 to provide an online platform for the global new media art community. Their programs and services support the creation, presentation, discussion and preservation of contemporary art that uses new technologies in significant ways. Rhizome's core activities include commissions, email discussions and publications, web site, and events.

The Multimedia Art Research Centres and Electronic Laboratories (MARCEL) is a network dedicated to artistic, educational and cultural experimentation, exchange between art and science, and collaboration between art and industry. MARCEL is comprised of members from around the world, including many top practitioners and arts research programs. Working groups are addressing topics such as interactive music, online performing arts, online installation art, new media documentation and preservation, and virtual critiques.

During a meeting in Souillac, France in July 1997 a group of international experts from art and industry agreed on the importance of fundamental artistic research, over applied arts, in the development of telecommunication networks. The need for collaboration between artists, artistic establishments and the public and private sectors in building a permanent high band-width network for artistic experimentation was stressed.

The goals of MARCEL are as follows:

- to promote artistic experimentation and collaboration in all forms of interactive art
- to promote philosophical exchange between art and science
- to develop the potential of the network as an educational tool
- to study the network as a pedagogical subject

- to develop co-operation between art and industry
- to participate in the development of cultural expression on the network

Administration

ICE is advised by a committee with representatives from Art, Creative Writing, Dance, Drama, Music, the graduate student body and the Athens community. Carmon Colangelo is the Director of ICE and Mark Callahan is the Assistant Director.

Appendix

ICE Budget

Office of the Provost	+20,000
Franklin College of Arts and Sciences	+10,000
CURO	+ 1,500
total	+31,500

Payroll **16,500**

Research Groups **11,000**

Fellowships **800**

Office **3,050**

Travel **150**