

# Free Times - Ohio's Premier News, Arts, & Entertainment Weekly Arts

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## Scouting

Artists On Reconnaissance Mission For Ingenuity

By Michael Gill

Last week Petia Morozov, Iain Kerr, and David Jensenius took a trip up the Cuyahoga in a boat, stopping along the way to place microphones. Using mics underwater, on or near the banks, and even mounted to surfaces to gather sound like a stethoscope, they recorded the sounds of fish, a seagull rookery, the rise and fall of lift bridges, the progress of boats, and whatever else the waterway has to offer as it traces its path through industry, along the edge of downtown and out to the lake.

The trio is part of a collective called "Spurse," which has projects melding research and art with the idea of place — especially the urban place — around the world. They have a decidedly academic bent. Morozov is an adjunct assistant professor at the graduate school of architecture, planning and preservation at Columbia University in New York. Kerr is associate professor at the Maine College of Art. Jensenius, who is working on his master's degree in musical composition, writes that his main interest is "sound installations using real environments to control the sound, or works for performers using artificial intelligent environments to determine what is played."

They were recording the river to gather material for an installation called Crooked River Songlines, a feature at this year's [Ingenuity Festival](#) (July 25-27), which continues to search for inspiration at the constantly moving intersection of art and technology. Morozov, Kerr and Jensenius will use technology to gather real information about the river that has been central to Cleveland as a place, and then to present it. Their plan is to "transpose the course of the river" onto the site of the festival in a large mapping project, which visitors can follow by listening to the changing sounds along the path of the river through wireless headsets, which they describe as a sonic wayfinding system. At stations along the winding route, they'll be able to see a catalog of photos made available from the Cleveland Memory Project.

IN TOWN for the same purpose was Jenny Marketou, who will do the old song "99 Red Balloons" one better by adding video cameras to some of them. Marketou's project is a site-specific re-incarnation, initially created for the Shift festival in Basel, Switzerland last year. The balloons she'll use are gigantic weather balloons, each five feet in diameter. The organically shaped, 2,500-square-foot red cloud formation will be tethered about 25 feet off the ground and will move with the wind.

On its own it will be a striking image, a fluid kinetic sculpture overhead, like a candy hallucination. But with the use of surveillance cameras it will become a playful subversion of ideas about privacy in public space. The images gathered by the cameras will be broadcast around the site, some projected on billboards, some inside the Idea Center.

"People will be faced with information without knowing where it comes from," Marketou says. She has been experimenting with similar installations since 2003. "The meteorological balloons are like a canopy or a flock or a cloud that takes over part of the city in a visually spectacular way. The installation is not a finished product. It's participatory, accessible to homeless people, truck drivers, bankers, everyone. It gives the public a way to take over the public space."

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