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Public art: 7 new projects planned for street corners, bike paths and the Yahara River

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Reflections from the Banks of the Yahara River is a month-long installation (May 15-June 15) featuring five artists showing work on the Yahara River Parkway. If approved by the Board of Park Commissioners, it would coincide with the Fools Flotilla.

[\(1\) More Photos](#)

As the weather gets warmer, a variety of new temporary art projects are springing up around Madison.

Karin Wolf, the city of Madison's arts program administrator, joked that it's a "very BLINK-y spring," with more than a half-dozen projects on display starting this month and continuing through the summer.

[BLINK! grants](#) are given by the city for temporary public art, like [Little Galleries](#) to [flocks of metal birds perched along Lake Monona](#).

"Focal Points"

April 1-May 3, sundown to 3 a.m., Union Corners, 2323 E. Washington Ave.

Madison filmmaker and teacher [Aaron Granat](#)'s video installation, on view every evening at [Union Corners on East Washington Avenue](#), shows a work of art, like a painting or drawing, next to a picture of the artist who created it.

The goal is to explore audience response, to see what's more interesting, the artwork or the artist. A similar version of the piece, called "Focal Points," was previously on view at the [Mana Contemporary Fine Arts Gallery in Chicago](#).

"I envisioned Focal Points as a kind of archive of the artistic community in Madison, growing as I grow and expand my network," Granat said in [an interview on Lake Front Row](#). "It's served as my own archive but also as a system with a loosely-based set of rules for each artist to follow."

"Asylum"

April 20-May 11, [Yahara Parkway pedestrian underpass](#) at Tenney Park, 1414 East Johnson St.

Think about driving in the rain and going under an overpass, how the sound of the rain stops for a moment and it's briefly quiet. "Asylum," a sound installation by Marina Kelly and Megan Katz, creates a poetic interpretation of that effect by installing a "soundscape" under the pedestrian/bike passageway along the Yahara River near Tenney Park.

According to an email from Katz, "Our piece uses abstracted recordings collected from the space combined with snippets of song and the sounds of pouring rain to create a world where the boundaries between real and imagined are no longer clear."

"Hybrid"

May-October 2014 in [Green Cabs of Madison](#)

Photographer [Thomas Ferrella](#) collaborated with 43 local poets for this project, a combination photo/poetry installation that will be on view in Green Cabs of Madison starting May 3.

Sarah Parrell curated the poems to accompany Ferrella's images, which are often blurred and abstract. There are 41 pieces in all, with recurring themes like the seasons, nature and city life and titles like "10 Below," "October Snow," "[Every green growing]" and, of course, "Hybrid."

"Where are you going?"

May 31-June 30, six local parks

Erika Monroe-Kane and Ellen Carlson designed this friendly installation to look like familiar "Hello, my name is" nametags. Pending approval from the Board of Park Commissioners on Wednesday, this multi-site installation will ask bikers, pedestrians and boaters in local parks, "Where are you going?," then offer them sidewalk chalk to respond.

The medium is "a ground graphic that resembles a stencil," according to the proposal, "essentially an environmentally durable but temporary sticker. ... This project transforms each participant into an artist, as they collectively create an experiential ... art piece."

Potential locations for "Where are you going?" include Yahara Park Place, Warner Park, Olbrich Park, Odana Hills Golf Course, Tenney Park and Brittingham Park.

"Reflections from the Banks of the Yahara River"

May 15-June 15, Yahara River Parkway

[Jessica Becker](#) and Helen Sarakinos organized this [river-centric art installation](#), a month-long piece along the Yahara that will include work by Amy Wencel, John Miller, Chris Murphy, Brenda Gratton, Thomas Ferrella and Becker herself (in the form of [yard signs](#)).

The project, which also is up for approval by the parks committee on Wednesday, is designed to "highlight the history of the Yahara River and Parkway, the geography of the landscape, the ecology of the region, and the culture of the neighborhood." It would also coincide with the [Fools Flotilla](#), a ragtag annual parade of boats set for June 8.

"Persona: Madison"

May 18, 12 p.m. and 4 p.m., Lisa Link Peace Park, 452 State St.

Madison dancers Grace Deane and [Aliza Roth](#), in collaboration with seven other performers, will turn Peace Park on State Street into a performance venue with live music and dance at noon and 4 p.m. on May 18.

"Rain"

May-October 2014, Vilas Beach, 1501 Vilas Park Drive

Sculpture artist Nadia Niggli had originally thought to install her piece, made of vertical strings and a series of very shallow bowls, under the northern bridge at the Vilas Park lagoon, in part "to encourage viewers to think about how overgrown our lakes have become," according to her first proposal.

Newer modifications, set for approval on Wednesday by the parks committee, include moving the sculpture to the rain garden at Vilas Beach and making it free-standing with a curved metal piece designed by [Erika Koivunen](#).

Correction: An earlier version of this story stated that "Asylum," the soundscape near Tenney Park, is motion-activated. It is not.

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