



Press Contacts

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For Immediate Release

Drop-in Auditions and Call for Volunteers for an Original, Site-Specific, Musical Theater Production to be Performed on the Grounds of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in June 2015

Event Details (at a glance):

Drop-In Auditions and Volunteer Sign Up for an original, site-specific, musical theater production that will take place on the grounds of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge:

We are looking for 50-100 performers, musicians, artists, volunteers, puppeteers, dancers, and Bloomington enthusiasts to be a part of the production; **No experience or preparation necessary**; all ages and abilities encouraged to attend; families, siblings, and friends can audition together.

Drop-In Auditions & Volunteer Sign-Up

Friday, April 17th – 4:00-8:00pm

Saturday, April 18th – 10:00am-2:00pm

Sunday, April 19th – 1:00-5:00pm

**Bloomington Education and Visitor Center at the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge
3815 American Boulevard East, Bloomington, MN 55425**

Drop-in during the times listed above or sign-up for a 10-minute window with the Directors at:
www.bloomingtonaudition.eventbrite.com

Bloomington, MN – March 24, 2015: PlaceBase Productions is looking for **50-100** local performers, musicians, artists, puppeteers, volunteers, designers, and Bloomington enthusiasts to assist with an original, site-specific, walking theater production that will take place on the grounds of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge this summer. Auditions and Volunteer Sign-Up will be held on Friday, April 17th from 4:00-8:00pm, Saturday, April 18th from 10:00am-2:00pm, and Sunday, April 19th from 1:00-5:00pm at the Refuge's Bloomington Education and Visitor Center located at 3815 American Boulevard East, Bloomington, MN.

Auditions and Volunteer Sign-Up are open to all ages and abilities; no previous experience or preparation necessary; families, siblings, and friends can audition together. Drop-in during the times listed above or sign-up for a 10-minute window with the Directors at: www.bloomingtonaudition.eventbrite.com

This **one-of-a-kind production** will be staged on the grounds and walking-trails of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The audience will move together from scene to scene in a style of mobile theater PlaceBase Productions has coined "Walking Theater." The original production will be performed during the Twin Cities Urban Bird Festival, June 5-7th to celebrate the rich history, culture, and local talent of the area and to support the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge's mission.

Ashley Hanson & Andrew Gaylord of PlaceBase Productions, have spent the last four months researching the history of the Refuge and it's relationship to Bloomington's South Loop and the Minnesota River Valley under the project title *Cross-Pollination*. By collecting historical documentation, holding Story Swap Workshops, and conducting interviews with groups and individuals who have a connection to the area, they explored the resources and initiatives of the Refuge that make it a rich common ground where the entire South Loop can pursue community engagement and connect to the surrounding Minnesota River Valley. The stories and information collected have informed the script and music for the original, site-specific theater production.

PlaceBase Productions has successfully produced similar large-scale theater projects in the communities of Granite Falls, Fergus Falls, and Saint Paul. Their productions have ranged from exploring the Minnesota River Valley through Walking and Paddling Theater on the Minnesota River, to exploring the history of mental health care through Bicycle Theater. In each production, more than 50 community members participated in the show and audiences in the hundreds came from across the state to celebrate the stories of these treasured Minnesota places. Find out more about their past projects at: www.placebaseproductions.com

PlaceBase is producing *Cross-Pollination* in partnership with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, The City of Bloomington, and Bloomington Theatre and Art Center as a demonstration project for *Creative Placemaking in the South Loop*. This initiative is funded in part by an Our Town Grant awarded to Bloomington Theatre and Art Center by the National Endowment for the Arts.

Please direct Audition, Volunteer, or Theater Production questions to Ashley Hanson: ashley@placebaseproductions.com, 952.486.0533 • For Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge inquiries, please contact Mara Koenig: mara_koenig@fws.gov, 952-858-0710 • For Bloomington Theatre and Art Center inquiries, please contact Andrea Specht: aspect@btacmn.org, 952-563-8745.

About PlaceBase Productions – www.placebaseproductions.com

We are a production company that explores community stories through site-specific performance and the arts. Our work cultivates stewards of community identity by connecting people to their common places, stories and relationships. Our goals are to foster creativity, play and, above all, a sense of place.

About Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge - www.fws.gov/refuge/minnesota_valley/

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1976 to provide habitat for a large number of migratory waterfowl, fish, and other wildlife species threatened by commercial and industrial development, and to provide environmental education, wildlife recreational opportunities, and interpretive programming for Twin Cities residents.

About Bloomington Theatre and Art Center – www.btacmn.org

BTAC is an independent 501(c)(3) arts nonprofit serving audiences and artists throughout the region. BTAC exists to enrich the cultural fabric of the communities it serves by producing high quality performing arts, visual arts, and arts education programs, and by welcoming and nurturing talent.

About *Creative Placemaking in the South Loop* - www.btacmn.org/placemaking/

Cross Pollination is one of five *Creative Placemaking in the South Loop* Demonstration Projects taking place through August 2015. *Creative Placemaking in the South Loop* is an initiative of BTAC and the City of Bloomington. The first 18 months of the initiative are funded by an “Our Town” matching grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Grant outcomes include the development of a long-term creative placemaking plan for the South Loop and the five demonstration projects: a creative placemaking charrette held in June 2014, a mural, an earth art installation, a community-based theater production, and an architect-designed mobile sauna. BTAC and the City are grateful to project partners Mall of America, McGough Companies, Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau, and others. The project is managed by a team of artists and planners with Creative Community Builders.

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