



BLOOMINGTON THEATRE AND ART CENTER

We exist to enrich the cultural fabric of the communities we serve by providing high quality performing arts, visual arts, and arts education programs, and welcoming and nurturing talent.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 17, 2013

Contact: Andrea Specht, Executive Director
952-563-8745 | aspect@btacmn.org

***Bloomington Theatre and Art Center Receives \$100,000 from the NEA
Grant to Assist City of Bloomington in Transformation of South Loop***

Bloomington, MN -- Bloomington Theatre and Art Center (BTAC) has received \$100,000 from the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) through the agency's "Our Town" grant program. Along with the grant, BTAC will secure \$100,000 in matching funds to work with the City of Bloomington to develop a "creative placemaking" plan for the South Loop and to commission four to six public art projects that demonstrate the role that art and artists can play in transforming the area's character.

According to BTAC Executive Director Andrea Specht, the Our Town project is "a once-in-a-generation opportunity to engage artists as key partners in transforming a mundane but highly visible suburban district into something extraordinary: a vibrant, distinctive urban place for the 4,800 residents, 44,800 employees, and 60,000 daily visitors projected for South Loop by 2030."

The South Loop is a 2,300-acre district adjacent to Minneapolis, Saint Paul, the MSP International Airport, and the Minnesota River. It contains a unique mix of features and amenities: the Mall of America, the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, HealthPartners' corporate headquarters, 13 hotels, four light rail transit stations, a 1950s-era residential neighborhood, and 890 developable acres.

Through Our Town, the NEA supports projects that help transform communities into lively, beautiful, and sustainable places with the arts at their core. All Our Town grant awards were made to partnerships that consisted of at least one nonprofit organization and a local government entity. Partners for the South Loop project include BTAC, the City of Bloomington, the Mall of America, Bloomington Convention and Visitors Bureau, and McGough Development, among others.

BTAC and its partners will work together to achieve this transformation using the foundation provided by the City's South Loop District Plan. The NEA funding will help the partners engage the Twin Cities' nationally recognized community of artists and arts organizations in co-creating a new reality in the South Loop—making it a dynamic place that "piques curiosity, fosters delight, and leaves a lasting impression," said Larry Lee, Community Development Director for the City of Bloomington.

About Bloomington Theatre and Art Center: BTAC is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to enriching the cultural fabric of the communities we serve by providing high quality performing arts, visual arts, and arts education programming, and welcoming and nurturing talent. BTAC serves audiences from across the Twin Cities region and artists from a five-state area.

###