

For Immediate Release

MIXEDPRECIPITATION

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**Mixed Precipitation announces**

***Dr. Falstaff and the Working Wives of Lake County: A Picnic Operetta***



*Celebrating its 10th season, the company brings an edible opera adventure to parks, farms and gardens throughout MN in August and September*

(Minneapolis) March 28, 2018 — Mixed Precipitation announces ***Dr. Falstaff and the Working Wives of Lake County: A Picnic Operetta***, a new adaptation of Otto Nicolai's German opera, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with a bit of Minnesota history and the music of Bruce Springsteen. Created by **Producing Artistic Director Scotty Reynolds, Director Kym Longhi, Music Director Gary Ruschman**, and the Mixed Precipitation team, this late summer harvest celebration offers local flavors with picnic bites for the audience. It's fun for everyone!

An edible opera adventure for the whole family, *A Picnic Operetta* marks its 10-year tradition of celebrating the harvest with a unique blend of music, horticulture, food, and storytelling. *A Picnic Operetta* will tour the Twin Cities metro and several locations around the state, including first-time performances in Finland, Cook, and Red Wing. The tour will also include performances in Babbitt, Hastings, Wykoff, Winona, and Oronoco. See the full schedule below.

Critics have honored the Picnic Operetta our summer traditional with bountiful praise:

“Opera. Pop music. Delicious food. The beautiful Minnesota summer. What could be better than Mixed Precipitation's annual summer picnic operetta that combines all of these things?! Not much.” - *Cherry and Spoon*

“Believe me when I tell you it is like nothing else, and it is great fun.” - *Talkin’ Broadway*

“... a company sprouting skyward, its offbeat artistic vision blossoming beautifully.” - *Pioneer Press*

***Dr. Falstaff and the Working Wives of Lake County: A Picnic Operetta*** takes place on the shores of Lake Superior where a small town is in trouble. The taconite plant has gone bust and jobs are leaving town fast. Meanwhile, the sleazy Doctor Falstaff has washed up on shore. He's looking to sell a boat, eat some herring, and seduce some married women. Luckily, a trio of tough working gals has teamed up to chase the rat out of town. These working wives (a nurse, a park ranger, and a librarian) show the men in town who's *the Boss*.

Scotty Reynolds, a native of Silver Bay, Minnesota, adapted this story following his research on Minnesota's ecological and economic history and the landmark legal battle, **United States vs. Reserve Mining**.

“Our show places the silly characters of Shakespeare's comedy alongside contemporary questions about industry, job creation, and the environmental impact of capitalism,” Reynolds says. “Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* takes place in a hunting village outside of London. Our version takes place on the North Shore of Lake Superior in a historic fishing community and mining town. Contaminated drinking water and a depleted fish population led to a decade of legal battles with fisherman, environmentalists and the mining industry. Bruce Springsteen's classic anthems of working life and songs of love are perfect for the struggles of the time. We'll look at the conflict of environmentalism and job creation with humor and dignity. ”

**This one-of-a-kind show is directed by Kym Longhi, written by Scotty Reynolds, with music director Gary Ruschman.**

## Artistic Team

**Producing Artistic Director Scotty Reynolds** has helmed the Picnic Operetta since inception. His active career in performing arts includes directing, performing and facilitating an ensemble of artists with disabilities at the Interact Center for Visual and Performing Arts. His 2008 production with Interact, *Broken Brain Summit*, won an Ivey Award for its innovative concept. He's toured as a performer and stage manager with Tiger Lion Arts and their outdoor production, *Nature: A Walking Play*, performing in arboretums in Minnesota, Illinois and Ohio. In 2017, we was awarded an Artist Initiative Grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board to develop a new music theatre piece about the history of taconite mining on the North Shore and Iron Range.

**Stage Director Kym Longhi** has cultivated her artistic vision as an actor, mime, writer, director, teacher and artist in residence for nearly 3 decades. She directed Mixed Precipitation's hit 2016 production, *Donald Giovanni in Cornlandia*. Her performing and directing experience encompasses classical theater, opera, experimental theater, mime and dance. Her mime

# MIXEDPRECIPITATION

training includes intensive study with Marcel Marceau. She is an associate artist with the internationally-recognized Margolis-Brown ADAPTORS. As a core member of the performing ensemble since 1993, she collaborated in the creation of many of their original works including: *Vanishing Point*, *Vidpires!*, *Starry Messenger* at Children's Theatre Company, *Sleepwalkers* as part of the O'Shaughnessy's "Women of Substance" series, *American Safari* and *The Human Show*. Other performance training and experience encompasses classical speaking theater, dance, and mime. She has toured nationally and internationally as a performer and teacher, including Spain, Singapore, Japan and two extended tours in Australia. Kym has also worked as a performer/collaborator with Off Leash Area, Skewed Visions and Flaneur Productions. She is the first certified Margolis Method instructor in the United States.

**Music Director Gary Ruschman** has been hailed by the San Francisco Chronicle as "funny and fresh-voiced." A native of Kentucky, Gary Ruschman is a veteran performer, educator, visual artist, and prize-winning composer/arranger. Along with thirty stage roles and hundreds of concert appearances, the tenor has toured the globe as a member of Cantus. He has appeared with major orchestras and opera companies, played in rock bands, and presented new works and music for dance in Cincinnati, New York, California, and the Twin Cities. He maintains an active singing and conducting schedule, spending much of his offstage time composing and arranging for voices. His children's opera, *Nice Mice and Friendly Frogs* was produced by Minnesota Opera in 2015.

## Cast

Baritone **Nick Miller** sings the leading role of Dr. Falstaff, having previously sung the role of Leporello in our production of *Donald Giovanni in Cornlandia* in 2016. Picnic Operetta alumni **Naomi Karstad** (Mrs. Ford) **Anna Hashizume** (Mrs. Page) play the "working wives" pursued by Dr. Falstaff. Baritone **Alex Adams-Leytes** plays the jealous Mr. Ford, following previous appearances with companies in Germany, Austria, and Italy. In the United States he's performed with St. Petersburg Opera Company, Gulfshore Opera, and the Pacific Opera Project.

Ensemble members this year include **Joni Griffith, Leif Hove, Maya Alvira, Alia Jeraj, Jacob Miller, Akiko Ostlund, Nora Ricky, and Jesse Pollack-Foote**. Musicians include **Gary Ruschman, Drew Kellum, Avery Wong and Luke Hunter**.

## Food

Mixed Precipitation blends sweet and savory bites into the storytelling to celebrate the harvest. Chefs **Natalie Vandenburg** of the Good Acre and **Kyual Cribben**, of Hai, Hai will craft a tasting menu adapted to the story, inviting the audience to taste the edible beauty of the Minnesota harvest.

# MIXEDPRECIPITATION

## Tour Dates

August 16, 7pm (Preview)

Fair Oaks Park, presented by the Hennepin History Museum  
200 East 24th St, Minneapolis, MN 55404

August 17, 7pm (Opening)

Fair Oaks Park, presented by the Hennepin History Museum  
200 East 24th St, Minneapolis, MN 55404

August 19, 2pm

Finland Historical Society  
5653 Little Marais Rd, Finland, MN 55603

August 23, 7pm

Dodge Nature Center  
1701 Charlton Avenue, West St. Paul MN 55118

August 25, 2pm

Northern Delicious presented by the Northern Lakes Arts Association  
3298 Lenont Road, Babbitt MN, 55706

August 26, 2pm

Cook's Country Connection  
1953 Vermilion Drive, Cook, Minnesota, 55723

September 1, 2pm

Alexis Bailly Vineyard  
18200 Kirby Ave. Hastings, MN 55033

September 2, 2pm

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18200 Kirby Ave. Hastings, MN 55033

September 8, 2pm

Bronx Park Community Garden  
2500 Georgia Ave. South (Nelson Park Building), St. Louis Park, 55426

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September 9, 2pm  
JD Rivers' Children's Garden  
2900 Glenwood Ave N, Minneapolis, MN 55405

September 15, 2pm  
Memorial Park, Presented by the Sheldon Theater  
315 W 4th St, Red Wing, MN 55066  
*Skyline Drive entrance off 600 Block of E. 7th Street*

September 16, 2pm  
Unity Park, Presented by the Page Series at St. Mary's University of Minnesota  
860 Parks Avenue, Winona, MN 55987

September 22, 3pm  
Dream Acres Farm  
17289 County Road 8, Wykoff, MN, 55990

September 23, 2:30pm  
Squash Blossom Farm  
7499 60th Avenue NE, Oronoco, MN 55960

September 29, 3pm  
Swede Hollow Park  
657 East Beaumont St, St. Paul, MN

September 30, 3pm  
Loring Park Garden of the Seasons  
1382 Willow Street, Minneapolis, MN 55408

October 7, 2pm (no RSVP)  
Carleton Arboretum  
501 Three Oaks Drive, Northfield, MN 55057

## Reservations

Please call 1-800-838-3006 or visit [mixedprecipitation.org](http://mixedprecipitation.org) for reservations. **Reservations will be available on June 1 at [mixedprecipitation.org](http://mixedprecipitation.org).** Seating is limited and reservations are strongly encouraged. The suggested donation is \$10 - 20 per person. Donations are a critical source of funding for *The Picnic Operetta* and can be made with your reservation or collected at the performance. **No one will be turned away for lack of funds.** We provide blankets, bug

spray and sunscreen for our audience, but patrons are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs and water.

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### Access

We are prepared to provide reasonable accommodation to patrons with physical disabilities and those using access services. Our performance is designed for an outdoor garden venue. A sighted guide is suggested for visually impaired patrons. Accessible services will be listed on our web-site beginning May 1st.

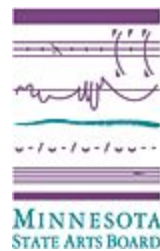
**Please call Audience Services Lead Alia Jeraj (651-485-2283) for parking suggestions and access accommodations for each unique venue.**

### About Mixed Precipitation and A Picnic Operetta

Mixed Precipitation's mission is to create unexpected theatrical experiences through unique partnerships and festive events that inspire social engagement.

Each summer we present our signature event, *A Picnic Operetta*, a lively theater experience touring community gardens, urban farms, parks, orchards and vineyards throughout the Twin Cities Metro and Greater Minnesota. A five-course tasting menu of locally grown, performance-inspired delicacies is served during the show. We bring together classical music, horticulture, food, and storytelling into a celebration of harvest and our local food system.

This activity is made possible in part by a grant provided by the Minnesota State Arts Board and the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council, through an appropriation by the Minnesota State Legislature from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund.



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