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For Immediate Release:

Artist Invites Public to “Measure” Lake Wingra

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In “Measures of the Lake,” a Madison artist wants recreational users of Lake Wingra to think of themselves as collecting valuable knowledge about a unique body of water. On Sunday, September 14, from 4:30-7:00pm, artist Michael Peterson and crew will welcome lake appreciators to the Vilas Park shelter and trade treats, information, and souvenir water bottles for stories, anecdotes, and observations about Lake Wingra.

Peterson says that ordinary people “measure” the lake in everyday physical activities such as running, fishing, cycling, swimming, and boating, and he wants to value that knowledge alongside scientific research and environmental activism.

The Vilas Park Shelter by Lake Wingra will be the center of the event; the idea is to make it feel like the finish line of a small-scale road race, with a banner, refreshments, and activities, as well as a souvenir gift water bottle for the first 300 “finishers” who share a story, an experience, or an observation about the lake. The gathering will feature brief remarks by special guests who measure the lake more technically, such as lake experts and community stakeholders

Measures of the Lake is the first artwork in a two-part project. Following the public event, some of the material gathered will be incorporated into the second project, *Running Commentary: Lake Wingra*, a set of 6 audio tracks featuring original local music, expert interviews, citizen story-telling, and field recordings. The audio files and accompanying map will allow runners (and others) to circle the lake with a soundtrack keyed to each mile.

Measures of the Lake is a BLINK temporary public art project funded by the Madison Arts Commission.

About Michael Peterson

Michael Peterson , PhD, is a Madison-based artist and Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. A scholar as well as an artist, he writes critically on performance art and popular culture. As a performance artist, he has staged events and performances around the world. His *Running Commentary* pieces began with a project as part of a “Forrest Art” exhibition outside of Darmstadt, Germany. In the northwoods Wisconsin version of Forrest Art, Peterson served trail users dumplings made from the invasive plant garlic mustard, which he had gathered in cooperation with local efforts to control the plant. Since 2008, Peterson has been the cofounder of the collaborative Spatula&Barcode, which has staged social performance events around the world and was recently featured in the Wisconsin Triennial with a project that organized one-to-one performances in more than a dozen local coffee shops.

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