

Exceptional Community Support for St. Joseph Project

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Narcisse, a new play about St. Joseph by Paul Ciufo is gaining momentum in the final weeks of rehearsal as this project continues to engage the community's interest and support. With fifty three cast members, many musicians, and almost daily meetings, the commitment that St. Joseph residents are showing is remarkable. Residents are involved in set, props, costume building or sourcing as well as site preparations. As the site is developed to host an audience in a beautiful outdoor setting, the cast is putting together the scenes they've been rehearsing for weeks – all under the watchful eye of the director, Duncan McGregor.

From the beginning South Huron and Bluewater have supported this project. The Zurich Recreation Centre provided use of its large meeting room for rehearsal sessions. The Friends of Hay Township Hall have provided access to this heritage building for early rehearsals, meetings and as the costume depot as the play's opening nears.

Mike Miller, owner of Lakewood Garden Centre has provided equipment and time to prepare the outdoor site for the production. Hessenland Country Inn offered their unique Coach House meeting space for early public readings and auditions. St. Peter's Catholic Church's Parish Hall has been used for additional indoor rehearsal space. Hensall District Co-op's transport truck has become an outdoor storage unit on the play's site. Media support has increased, with coverage in the area's newspapers and radio stations, highlighting the importance of community involvement to create a successful and significant local cultural experience.

The local theatre community has played their role, showcasing talent from both the professional theatre and the local community theatre. The Blyth Festival has been involved in this project since the beginning and has loaned costumes, props and set pieces. The Blyth Centre for the Arts has provided box office facilities for full ticket sales for this production. The Goderich Little Theatre has also been supportive by providing additional costumes, props and flexible stage units.

The schools in Huron County including South Huron District High School has loaned seating and audience risers. Goderich District Collegiate Institute has provided interlocking audience tiers that give the audience a raised view of the performance area. These resources are essential to the look and effectiveness of the set for the production.

Incredible public support has been received, showing a commitment to Canada, culture, community and volunteerism from the local, provincial and federal government departments and councils. [Canada's New Multiculturalism Grants and Contributions Program](#), Inter-Action, administered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada supported this local project with a grant of \$7500.

The Ontario Arts Council assisted with the development of *Narcisse*. The County of Huron supports preservation and activities of cultural importance through their Huron Heritage Fund (\$3,583) and the Municipality of Bluewater approved an application for support, approving a grant of \$5,000.

Many corporate sponsors and donors as well as individuals have followed suit, affirming their own commitment to support this important local cultural endeavour in their community.

Narcisse is the *don't miss* event of the summer with this resounding and evident local and regional support.

Tickets are available by calling toll free to 1.877.862.5984 (Blyth Festival Box Office). Performances run July 19-24 and 26-31 on the grounds of St. Peter's Catholic Church, Hwy 21, north of St. Joseph. For complete schedule information, visit the website at www.narcisetheplay.com.