



SKELETON  
PARK  
ARTS  
FESTIVAL

# SKELETON PARK ARTS FESTIVAL

ANNUAL REPORT  
2023





Photo Credit: Al Bergeron

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## VISION STATEMENT

Contributing to healthy, vibrant communities in Katarokwi / Kingston through celebration of arts and culture with social, racial, and environmental justice as our guide.

## MISSION STATEMENT

SPAF is a grassroots community organization that engages in collective care by fostering diverse cultural activities that are free, collaborative and accessible to all. We create opportunities for making art and being creative together. SPAF supports a sense of enjoyment and civic belonging for diverse communities in Katarokwi / Kingston, with a particular focus on the Skeleton Park neighbourhood.

## VALUES STATEMENTS

**Collective Care:** SPAF values the power of the arts to contribute to the health, well-being and expression of our community members. We strive toward empowerment and compassionate respect in our interactions with others. We prioritize group collaboration in decision-making and art making.

**Accessibility:** SPAF is committed to free musical and cultural programming that is accessible to all regardless of income and other barriers.

**Creativity and Joy:** We believe in the power of making art and being creative together, solely for fun and enjoyment.

**Environmentalism:** We are each care-takers of Skeleton Park, our neighbourhood, Katarokwi/Kingston and the planet. SPAF is committed to practices of waste-free and leave-no-trace.

**Anti-oppression and Equity:** SPAF is committed to an ongoing process of naming, challenging and transforming unequal power relations. This includes paying artists appropriately for their work.

**Anti-racism:** SPAF acknowledges racism and white supremacy have dire impacts on people in our community. We are committed to challenging racism and white supremacy in the organization and beyond.

**Indigenization:** We are committed to meaningful transformation of our practices that return power to Indigenous peoples and prioritize Indigenous ways of knowing and being. SPAF is committed to reconciliation and challenging cultural appropriation.

**Accountability:** We are committed to open, accessible communication between community members, artists, and the organization. We recognize the importance of feedback, evaluation, transparency, and relationship building as key components of accountability.

Agreed upon by consensus by the SPAF Board of Directors and the Artistic Director on June 24 and 28, 2021.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Marney McDiamird - President**

Marney McDiamird is a ceramic artist and longtime resident of the Skeleton Park neighbourhood with an ongoing interest in community engaged art.



**Jill Glatt - Secretary and Volunteer Coordinator**

Jill (she/her) is a teacher, printmaker, and arts educator.



**Kristin Moriah - Treasurer**

Kristin (she/her) is an Assistant Professor of English at Queen's University. Her research interests include sound studies and Black feminist performance, particularly the circulation of African American performance and its influence on the formation of national identity.



**Greg Tilson - Artistic Director**

Greg is a community organizer specializing in arts programming.



**Sol Castañeda - Community Outreach Coordinator**

Welcome Sol Castañeda, who is starting a temporary contract as SPAF's new Community Outreach Coordinator. Sol holds a bachelor's degree in Communication and a Master's degree in Cultural Management. She has created cultural initiatives for radio, cultural journalism, curatorial projects and international film festivals. *Photo credit: Marcela Mendez*

# PARTNERS, SPONSORS, AND FUNDERS

CFRC RADIO  
THE ELM CAFÉ  
THE NEXT CHURCH  
MOVEMENT MARKET DANCE COLLECTIVE  
KINGSTON CANADIAN FILM FESTIVAL  
KINGSTON WRITERSFEST  
MURAL ROUTES  
CENTRE CULTUREL FRONTENAC  
DIA DE LOS MUERTOS KINGSTON  
KEYS JOB CENTRE  
THE SCREENING ROOM  
CENTRAL PUBLIC SCHOOL  
RIDEAU PUBLIC SCHOOL  
KINGSTON ARTS COUNCIL  
CANADA COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS  
CANADIAN HERITAGE  
ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL  
KINGSTON INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES NEST (KILN)  
REELOUT QUEER FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL  
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH  
MCBURNEY PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION  
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR KINGSTON & AREA  
CITY OF KINGSTON DEPARTMENT OF ARTS & CULTURAL SERVICES



## MAYOR'S ARTS AWARD

SPAF'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PARTICIPATED ON THE 2023 MAYOR'S ARTS AWARD JURY ON BEHALF OF THE FESTIVAL, WHO RECEIVED THE 2022 ARTS CHAMPION AWARD.



## NORTH KING'S TOWN PROJECT

SPAF'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PARTICIPATES ON THE ONGOING NKT WORKING GROUP, ON BEHALF OF THE FESTIVAL.

## KING'S TOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKING GROUP

SPAF'S ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PARTICIPATES ON THE ONGOING KTAHWG, ON BEHALF OF THE FESTIVAL.



## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

Skeleton Park Arts Festival is primarily an arts programming-focused organization that achieves its mandate through diverse, seasonal presentations of free, multi-generational and accessible arts activities such as concerts, dances, films, exhibits, parades, readings and workshops. In partnership with a variety of local arts and service organizations, schools and community groups, SPAF brings together diverse groups of community residents and visitors to engage with multi-arts programming.





1.



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## 2023 FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS

1. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (Photo Credit: Nadya Kwandibens)
2. Alex Cuba (Photo Credit: Martine Bresson)
3. Yessica Rivera Belsham (Photo Credit: Al Bergeron)
4. Movement Market (Photo Credit: Jamstone Productions)
5. Ombigizi (Photo Credit: Ombigizi)
6. Porch Jazz Parade (Photo Credit: Meghan Balogh)



# THE CROSSWALK MURAL PROJECT



The Crosswalk Mural Pilot Project is a new SPAF initiative that engaged local artists to work with residents to design and paint a series of crosswalk murals, transforming parts of the roadway into works of art. This project is in partnership with the City of Kingston Department of Arts & Cultural Services, The Community Foundation for Kingston & Area, and Mural Routes. The 2023 Crosswalk Murals Project designs were informed by ideas from the community, and brought to life by artists Jaylene Cardinal and Dakota Ward (Pictured Right), Floriana Ehninger Cuervo, Marney McDiarmid and Vince Perez.

Crosswalk murals can:

- transform parts of the roadway into works of art
- improve pedestrian safety
- incorporate public art into everyday life
- support community-based placemaking



Mural Photos Credit: Al Bergeron

# THE ELM CAFÉ EXHIBITS



Savannah Shea installing her exhibit at The Elm



Make-A-Mural Project Exhibit featuring works made at this years festival

The gallery space at The Elm Cafe is curated by the Skeleton Park Arts Festival. Exhibits run seasonally. If you would like to apply visit [skeletonparkartsfest.ca/elm-cafe-gallery](https://skeletonparkartsfest.ca/elm-cafe-gallery)





## HALLOWEEN PARADE IN THE PARK

Lead by the Urban Science Brass Band *Photo Credit: Martine Breeson*

## SPAF is a Kingston leader in event waste diversion!



Photo by Jay Middaugh

SPAF's strategies for a successful waste plan include:

Remove the element of choice for where waste can be deposited by featuring a centralized volunteer sorting station

Use volunteers to collect, sort, rinse, and place all waste into the correct bins of a mobile waste diversion unit called OSKAR

Communicate with food and drink vendors ahead of time, asking them to eliminate or reduce the amount of packaging used to serve their products

Post good signage to let festival participants know what is going on

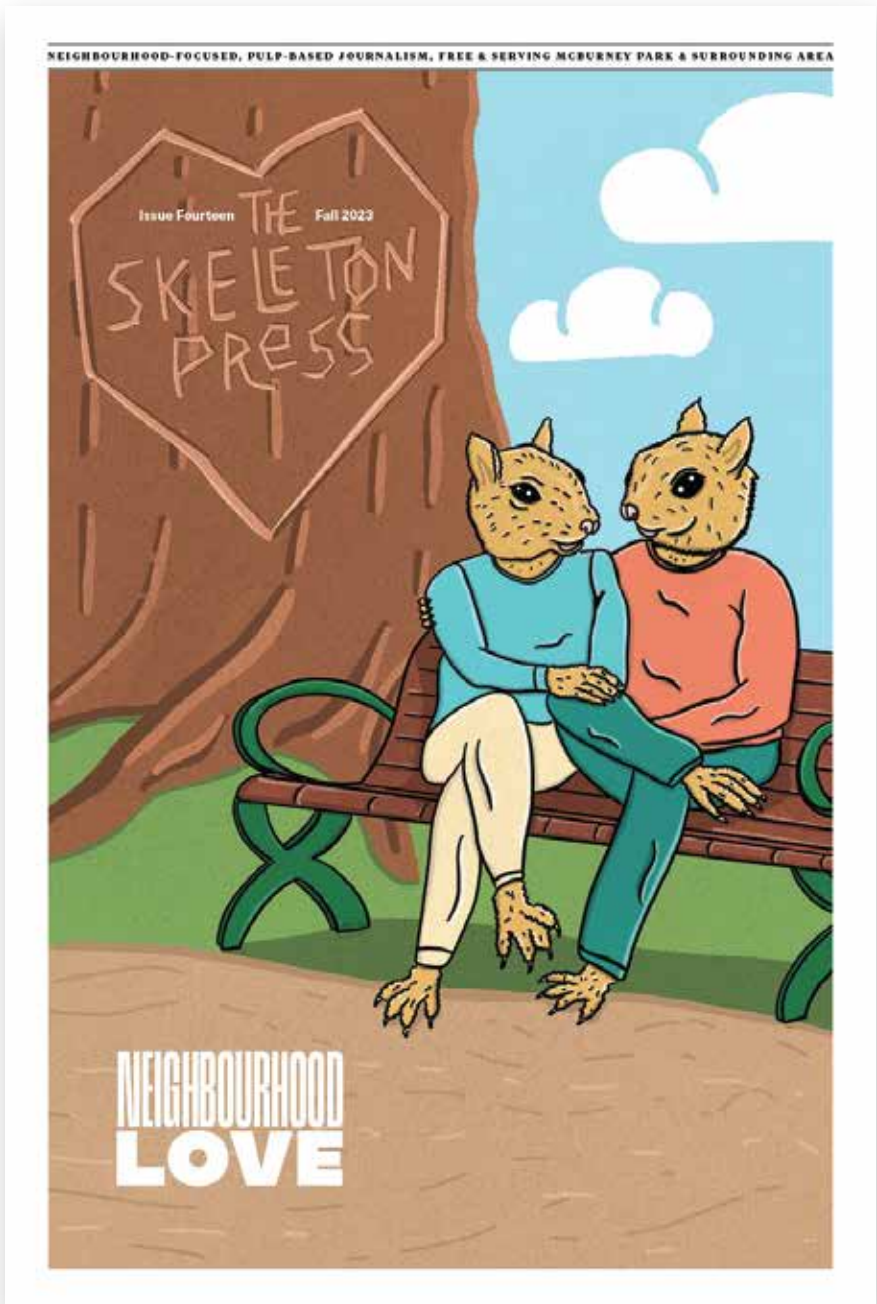
Have a City representative at a booth next to OSKAR who can answer questions about waste diversion



# THE SKELETON PRESS

The Skeleton Press is your free community newspaper serving the Skeleton Park neighbourhood. Published four times a year, we aim to capture Skeleton Park’s vibrancy and diversity in “old-school” print – as we believe the physical act of distributing a newspaper builds community. We want to see tattered, marked up copies of The Skeleton Press passed from hand-to-hand, sparking conversation with neighbours over the fence or at the corner store, and strengthening our sense of place and each other. If you share our vision, please donate to keep The Skeleton Press alive. Your money will go to paying local creatives, staff, printing, and distribution. Becoming a ‘Friend of The Skeleton Press’ is a commitment of \$150 a month. To show our appreciation of your support, have your name printed on page two and be our VIP at various Skeleton Park Art Festival events throughout the year.

Visit [www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/skeleton-park-arts-festival/](http://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/skeleton-park-arts-festival/) to donate.



# THREE THINGS CONSULTING

By Pytor Hodgson, CEO Three Things Consulting ([www.3things.ca](http://www.3things.ca))

Early in December 2022, myself and Saimaniq Temela, a senior consultant at Three Things Consulting, (Three Things), were humbled to be invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of the Skelton Park Arts Festival, (SPAF). We had the opportunity to share with members and the Board of Directors about a newly formed agreement, anchored in Ceremony and our four shared values: respect, transparency, humility, and honour. It identified how we would provide support to SPAF in preparations for the 2023 Festival, with a particular focus on further developing the ongoing relationship building and meaningful engagement of Indigenous Peoples in the work of SPAF. We understood the profound responsibility building on the critical work undertaken by Kamryn Marsh, and their important role addressing anti-oppression and equity work for and within SPAF, including the Summary Report: Consultation with Indigenous Community Members and the organizational learnings generated at the Intentional Social Gathering and Dinner between SPAF and Indigenous Community Members in 2022. We honoured the work done to date as we looked forward with SPAF.



Grandmother Kate Brant and Miss Tyffanie Morgan  
*(Photo Credit: Pytor Hodgson)*

We have long believed the arts, and music in particular, are good medicine for us all. Whether creating or experiencing, it helps us heal hurts, builds resilience, and brings peoples together in shared and safer spaces. For our minds, the arts challenge what we think or believe we know, (and don't), and pushes us to look at ideas or experiences differently. For our hearts, the arts can give us permission to feel, often, deeply. Art motivates, and we see that in how we walk in this world and interact with others. Lastly, it provides a point to point connection to something bigger than us. Art, deep with spirit can help build attachment in the journey of our lives with an understanding others have shared experiences, ideas, concepts, or worldviews. Art helps many not feel alone.

This is why it was a privilege to be of service to and support the ongoing efforts of SPAF as they planned and executed the 2023 Festival. Hopefully this short storytelling provides context and understanding of what was offered and completed in 2023.

It is important we share, publicly, our experience and view of SPAF. We hope those involved in SPAF feel a sense of pride knowing that you are demonstrating how arts organizations can be creating safer spaces for Indigenous Peoples, and other racialized and marginalized communities. The commitment to listen, learning, and acting is ensuring Indigenous Peoples know that they, and their stories matter, they are important and belong within the SPAF community.

The strength we have seen in the organization, which is the people, is the intention of their work rooted in an inherent thoughtfulness, respect, and desire to have reciprocal relationships with Indigenous artists, contributors, and attendees. We saw an organization who listened and learned while walking in the best way possible forward with the Indigenous community.



There were key deliverables in our shared agreement:

- Sharing space in three two-hour Colonization and its Effects on Indigenous Peoples: The Past, Present and Future Circles, with additional tools for participants to utilize upon its completion; these Circles had a focus on building knowledge, understanding, and confidence of SPAF staff, Board members and other volunteers as they furthered building relationships with Indigenous artists, collaborators, vendors, and attendees. The Circles concluded with a session exploring decolonization in the future in the arts festival space.
- Three Things supported the recruitment of Indigenous people for the SPAF Board by provided a list of potential Board Members from Kingston and surrounding Nations and area.
- Our team provided insights and advice in support of SPAF’s engagement of the unhoused in the 2023 Festival activities. Three Things provided several potential Indigenous artists and collaborators, locally and from within other Territories, demonstrated most directly in our provision of support for the SPAF National Indigenous Peoples Day Event, An Evening with Leanne Betasamosake Simpson on Wednesday, 21 June 2023 at The Screening Room, Kingston. Three Things provided two draft policies for SPAF’s review, Engaging Authentic Indigenous Voices Policy, and Indigenous Artisans and Vendors Policy.
- Lastly, when requested, we provided ongoing guidance and advice to SPAF staff and volunteers. The Indigenous artists, including vendors, those involved in the mural creations and on stage each brought that good medicine for all attendees. Seeing Grandmother Kathy Brant meet and greet artists, visit with attendees and provide ongoing support to staff and volunteers was a reminder that the knowledge, wisdom, world view and approach held by many Indigenous Grandmothers and Elders has benefit for all.

The commitments and actions taken in the past and in 2023 by SPAF have helped the arts community take a step further towards demonstrating what reconciliation can look like in the sector.

## COMMUNICATIONS/AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT (Year Over Year)

	NOV 2022		NOV 2023
FACEBOOK	5004	▲ 4.7%	5241
INSTAGRAM	2586	▲ 21.9%	3154
TWITTER	912	▼ 0.5%	907
NEWSLETTER	1308	▼ 11.9%	1153

## 2023 Financial Highlights

### Sample Highlight Expenses

**\$69,016** Artist Fees

**\$36,986** Skeleton Press

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**\$193,548** Total Expenses

### Sample Highlight Revenues

**\$41,503** Canadian Heritage

**\$55,000** Canada Council

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**\$192,878** Total Revenues

# SKELETON PARK ARTS FESTIVAL



# SKELE PARK FESTI



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