



*Co-creation* - tangible examples  
from around the world

Tanja Beer

*Peoples Weather Report,*  
Arts House, Melbourne (2014)

# The Living Stage

Transforming urban spaces into accessible, equitable and thriving ecological and social gathering places.





Castlemaine 2013





Castlemaine 2013



At the end of its performance life, the living stage is consumed by its community. Physical structures become garden beds and community spaces; plants become food; and waste becomes compost.





The Trans-Plantable Living Room, Cardiff UK (2013)

Prague Quadrennial Special Jury Award (British Exhibit) & exhibited at the V&A Museum (London)



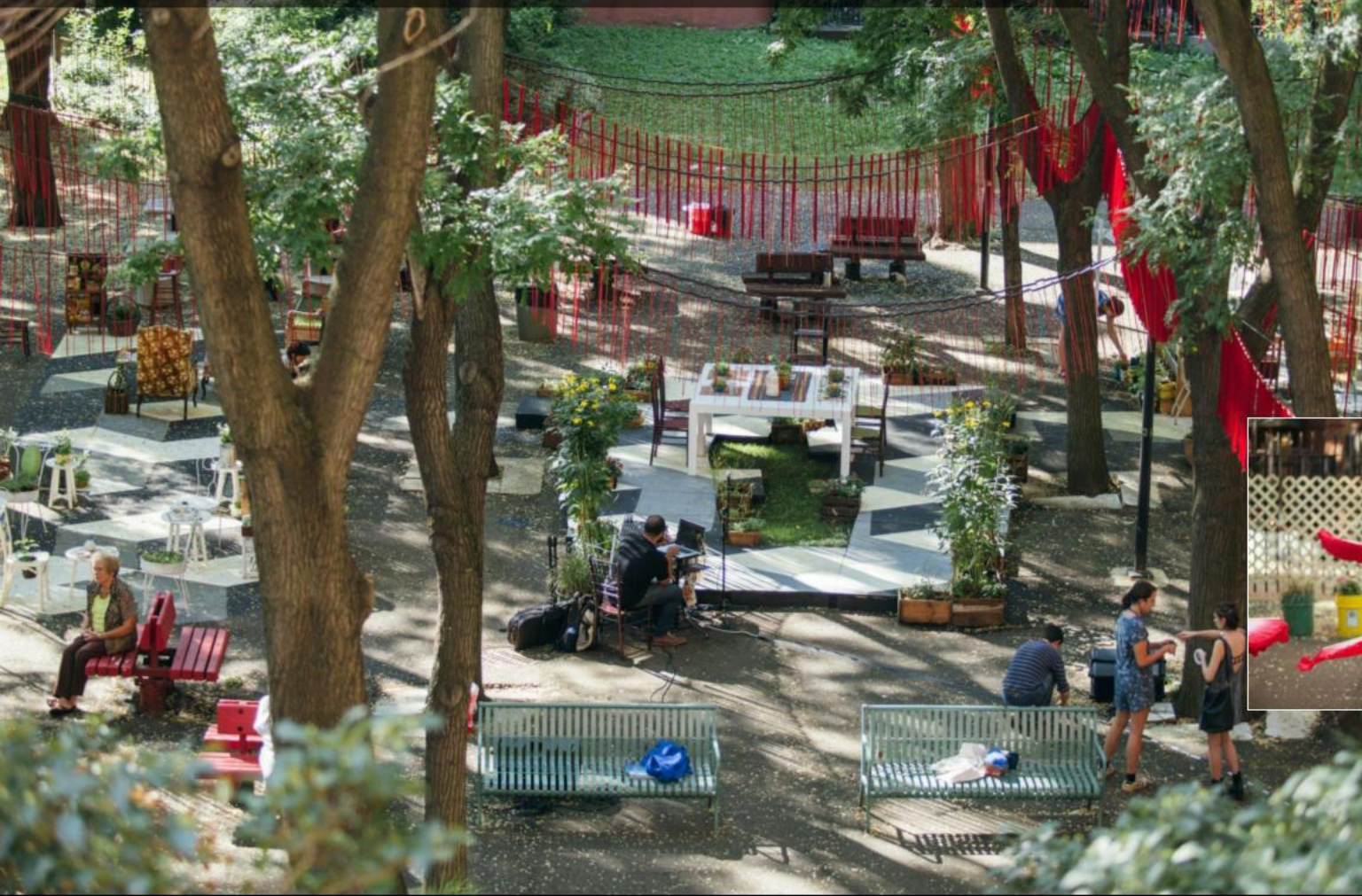
Winner of the Glasgow City Council Environmental Initiative 2016  
(Evening Times Streets Ahead Awards) for creating healthy cities for children

*Uprooted*, Glasgow UK, The  
Living Stage & Out to Play  
(2015)



Lorne Sculpture Biennale 2018

# Building social-ecological connection on the Lower East Side



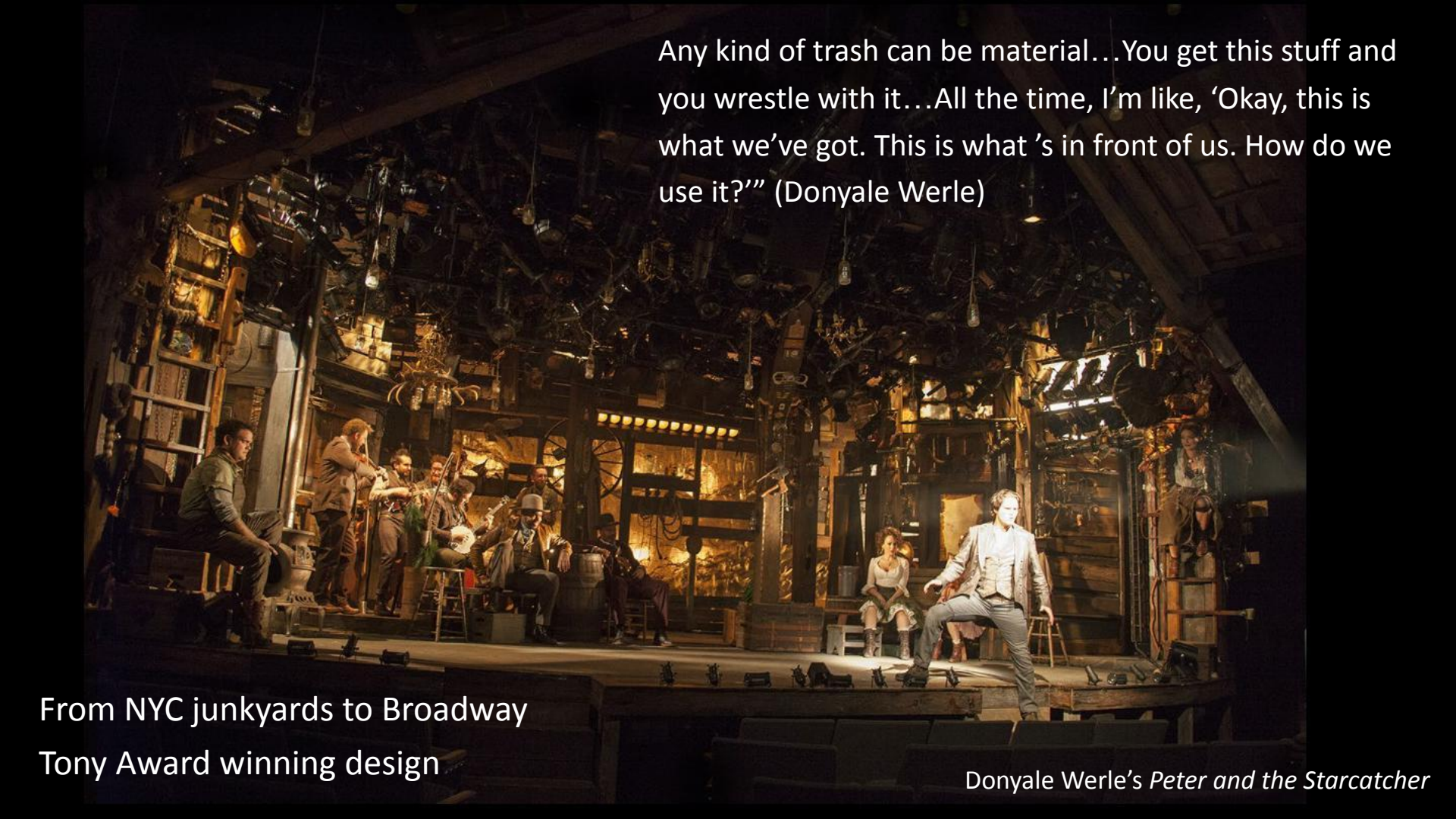
The Living Stage NYC  
New York  
2017

A transdisciplinary research project & 'living lab' connecting Indigenous knowledge, ecological science and sustainable design through participatory arts practice



*The Living Pavilion*  
University of  
Melbourne (2019)

Victorian & National Landscape Architecture Award for Community Contribution 2020



Any kind of trash can be material... You get this stuff and you wrestle with it... All the time, I'm like, 'Okay, this is what we've got. This is what's in front of us. How do we use it?'" (Donyale Werle)

From NYC junkyards to Broadway  
Tony Award winning design

Donyale Werle's *Peter and the Starcatcher*

Co-creating with material & place: designing  
from abandoned festival tents & sleeping bags



Andrea Carr (London, UK)

## Silje Kise (Norway)



Dress of plastic garbage bags, from Sustain (by Bodil Rørtveit, Jørn Lavoll, Vibeke Havre, Silje Kise.) Costume design: Silje S. Kise.  
In picture: Bodil Rørtveit. Photo: Jørn Lavoll. Bergen International Festival 2017.

## Mawukplorm Harriet Abla Adjahoe (Ghana)



“The foremost concept underpinning the material building was to intercept the flow of waste into the land and into our water bodies right from the source of production...Contact was made with restaurant managers, beach resorts managers and pub owners to discuss...the collection of the waste materials before they are pulled to the dumpsites. **It was very crucial to stress segregation of the waste materials as it is not a common practice in this part of the world.** Almost all the managers grudgingly accepted this challenge but asked that a token of appreciation be made available to the workers who ‘painstakingly’ segregated the waste for the designer” (Adjahoe, 2021)



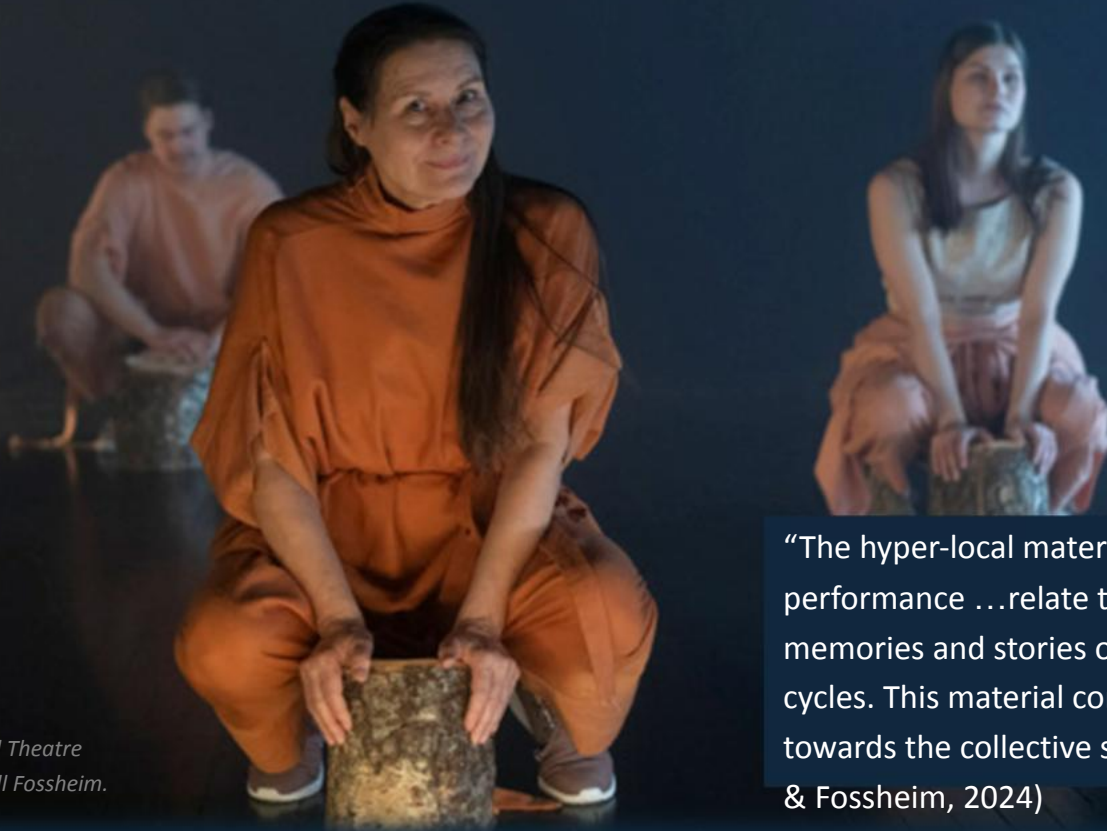
The production team constructing the set for *Marriage of Anansewa* (Ofori, 2021).

As part of Opera North's drive to be carbon neutral by 2030, Leslie Travers' **entire set was recycled from past shows or from found materials.**



Falstaff's home (a worn-out little 1970s caravan) was **found unwanted in the grounds of a pub on the north side of Leeds** by resourceful operatic bargain hunters.

Ingvill Fossheim (Finland)



“The hyper-local materials that I chose for the performance ... relate to my own experiences, memories and stories of the land and its seasonal cycles. This material connection to place contributed towards the collective storytelling of the work” (Beer & Fossheim, 2024)

*Muohtadivggažat, Sami Nationl Theatre  
Beaivváš, 2021. Design by Ingvill Fossheim.  
Photo: Ingun Alette Mæhlum.*

**Glyndebourne** launched a dedicated Dye Garden in 2019 to grow plants specifically for naturally dyeing opera costumes—intended to reduce synthetic dye use.

UK, Sussex  
Dye Garden



First applied in Glyndebourne's 2022 production of *The Wreckers*, where part of the costumes were dyed exclusively using garden-grown pigments.



The Dye Garden supplies plant-based colourants—woad and Japanese indigo for blue, madder root for deep red, and weld, marigolds, dahlias, tansy, iris for yellow to orange hues.

# Co-creating with Communities

*Portage* engaged audiences in a series of bamboo workshops the co-built rafts were then used to create an immersive performance piece.



*Portage*, Jen Rae & Giant Grass as part of 'Refuge' (Arts House, Australia 2019)

Aris Pretelin-Estéves' (Mexico)



Aris Pretelin-Estéves' work *Tejidos* consists of participatory workshops in which a collectively woven artistic piece made with recycled material is created into extraordinary costumes and performed.



*Refugium* (Federation Square, 2016, Australia)



*Pickle Party (Theatre Practice, 2025, Singapore)*

## Co-creating with more-than-human communities: Dutch National Opera & Ballet's 50 home-made bird boxes

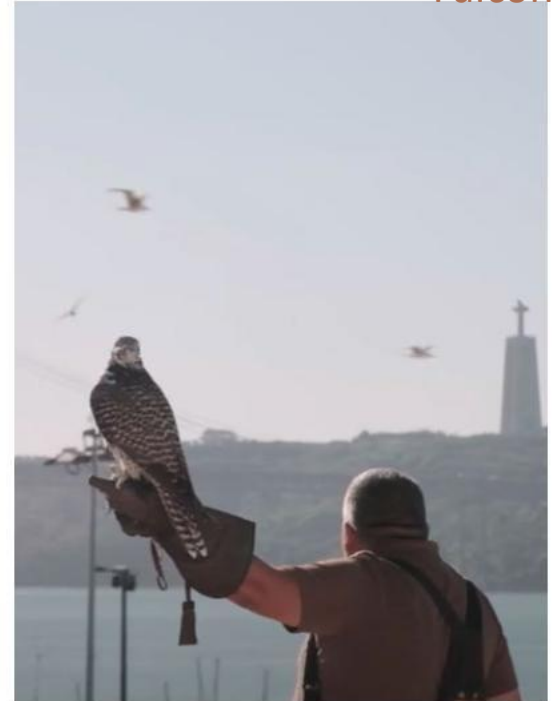
'Sustainability should be a source of joy. When our building was being BREEAM-certified, we found out that we were doing rather poorly ecology-wise. We weren't promoting biodiversity in the area around the building at all.'

(Rolf Hauser, Head of the Production Workshop)



**Co-creating with more-than-human communities:** In 2020, **The Centro Cultural de Belém (Portugal)** installed solar panels valued at approximately €1.4 million. But as the site is located near the coast, seagulls kept pooping on the panels. To solve this, they hired falcons and falcon handlers to patrol the skies and keep the seagulls away from the panels.

Centro Cultural  
Belém  
Lisbon, Portugal  
Falconry



An aerial photograph of a large music festival. In the foreground, a large, curved wall is covered in a dense arrangement of yellow and green flowers. Below the flower wall, a massive crowd of people fills the festival grounds. The crowd is diverse in age and appearance, and many people are holding up phones or cameras. In the background, there are several large tents, including one with blue and white vertical stripes. The festival is set in a lush, green area with trees and a clear sky. The overall atmosphere is vibrant and festive.

## Hillside Music Festival (Canada)

**Hillside Music Festival**, one of Canada's most environmentally progressive events, has long been celebrated for its commitment to sustainability and community-driven activism. This not-for-profit festival has become a **beacon of environmental leadership, demonstrating how music, art, and eco-consciousness can seamlessly intertwine.**

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Waste-free

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100% Renewable technology

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Living Roof on the Main Stage for biodiversity benefit

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Trash Turnaround stations (compost, recycling)

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Dish Washing Wizards

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Eco-friendly transportation

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Shuttle bus system

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2019 certified carbon neutral

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2023 Changemaker Award

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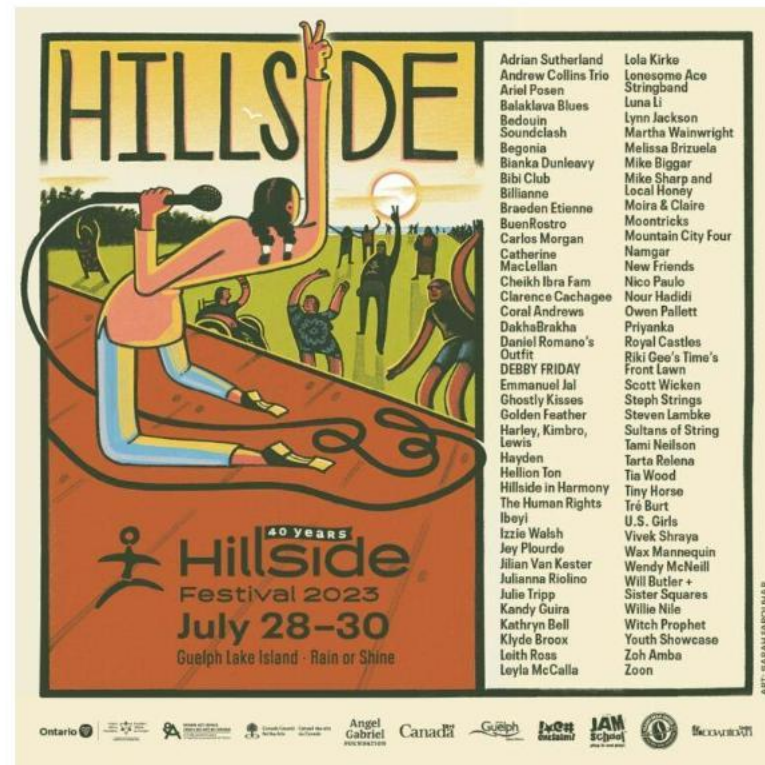
**Mission: To build a future for celebration of culture but also a powerful platform for environmental advocacy and innovation**



# Incentivising the shuttle bus system

Hillside's biggest environmental footprint was single passenger car travel from Toronto

**Solution:** program the shuttle buses as venues with live artists to incentivise skipping the car. This led to the festival becoming carbon neutral in 2019.



**HILLSIDE**

40 years  
**Hillside**  
Festival 2023  
July 28-30  
Guelph Lake Island · Rain or Shine

Adrian Sutherland  
Andrew Collins Trio  
Ariel Posen  
Balaklava Blues  
Bedouin  
Soundclash  
Begonia  
Bianka Dunleavy  
Bibi Club  
Billianno  
Braeden Etienne  
BuenRostro  
Carlos Morgan  
Catherine MacLellan  
Cheikh Ibra Fam  
Clarence Cachagee  
Coral Andrews  
DakhaBrakha  
Daniel Romano's Outfit  
DEBBY FRIDAY  
Emmanuel Jal  
Ghostly Kisses  
Golden Feather  
Harley, Kimbro, Lewis  
Hayden  
Hellion Ton  
Hillside in Harmony  
The Human Rights  
Ibeyi  
Izzie Walsh  
Jey Plourde  
Jilian Van Kester  
Julianne Riolino  
Julie Tripp  
Kandy Guira  
Kathryn Bell  
Klyde Brook  
Leith Ross  
Leyla McCalla

Lola Kirke  
Lonesome Ace Stringband  
Luna Li  
Lynn Jackson  
Martha Wainwright  
Melissa Brizuela  
Mike Bigger  
Mike Sharp and Local Honey  
Maira & Claire  
Moontricks  
Mountain City Four  
Namgar  
New Friends  
Nico Paulo  
Nour Hadidi  
Owen Pallett  
Priyanka  
Royal Castles  
Riki Gee's Time's Front Lawn  
Scott Wicken  
Steph Strings  
Steven Lammike  
Sultans of String  
Tami Neilson  
Tarta Relena  
Tia Wood  
Tiny Horse  
Tré Burt  
U.S. Girls  
Vivek Shraya  
Wax Mannequin  
Wendy McNeill  
Will Butler + Sister Squares  
Willie Nile  
Witch Prophet  
Youth Showcase  
Zoh Amba  
Zoon

ART: BALAKVA/BLUES

Ontario  
Guelph  
Angel Gabriel  
Canada  
Guelph  
JAM School  
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