Symposium for Performing Arts in Rural Communities

April 24 - 27, 2014
Haliburton Highlands, Ontario
Symposium for Performing Arts in Rural Communities

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Welcome SPARC Delegates

Walt Disney said “We keep moving forward, opening new doors, and doing new things, because we’re curious and curiosity keeps leading us down new paths.”

When the Highlands Performing Arts group decided to organize a symposium to explore the challenges and benefits of making performing art in rural communities, we had no idea that what we were doing was ‘opening new doors’ or ‘doing new things’.

We did, however, have a vision. We saw a rich and diverse network of performing arts creators, producers and presenters reaching across the province and beyond. A network which would allow everyone involved in the business of performing arts in rural Canada access to resources, knowledge and experience that may not exist in their own small community. A network which means no one involved in this crazy business needs to work in isolation.

Our hope is that in attending this symposium you have embraced that vision and together we will create a map that will lead us down those new paths and make connections that will satisfy our curiosity but continue to lead us on.

Welcome fellow visionaries!

Lesley English,
SPARC ORGANIZING COMMITTEE CHAIR,
GENERAL MANAGER, FOREST FESTIVAL

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Overview

In putting together the program for SPARC we recognized that knowledge about creating, producing or presenting the performing arts in rural areas is held by different people and organizations or groups, and that all forms of knowledge are needed to move forward. Sharing that knowledge in innovative ways that encourage dialogue was at the top of our priority list.

As a result, we are thrilled that more than 30 speakers from across Canada – and internationally – will be participating, providing 34 workshops and 3 thought-provoking informative plenaries, and a broad range of regional performances and entertainment – all taking place within a rural context.

Whether your goals are professional development, learning strategies to attract new audiences, innovative approaches to sustainability, opportunities for information exchange or developing creative methods for engaging in cultural tourism, it is our hope and belief that this program will facilitate them.

Perhaps even more importantly, we want you to leave feeling that you have learned something useful, have valuable new tools in your arsenal and, most of all, the beginnings of a rural performing arts community network of like-minded individuals with experience, knowledge and expertise to share.

Mandate

The purpose of the symposium is to provide a forum for rural performing arts creators, producers, presenters, community animators and administrators to spark inspiration, exchange knowledge, learn new skills, network and develop partnerships.

The objectives of the symposium are to advance discussions about how to create and nurture supportive networks, increase the profile of rural performing arts, and to:

- Present creative approaches to implement cultural tourism.
- Articulate the connection between rural performing arts and the health and vitality of rural communities.
- Explore best strategies for using the shared knowledge – to inform public perception, policy and economic development.
- Create the foundation for an ongoing network of performing arts creators, producers and presenters in rural Ontario.

The goal of the symposium is to recognize the unique opportunities and challenges faced by those who create, produce or present the performing arts in rural settings.

Hosting Partners

SPARC has been organized by a collaborative of Haliburton Highlands performance arts groups: the Arts Council–Haliburton Highlands, Conjurors of County Town, Highlands Summer Festival, Dusk Dances Haliburton, Forest Festival, Haliburton County Folk Society, Sticks and Stones Productions and Those Other Movies – and our host facility – Haliburton School of the Arts-Fleming College Campus.

The SPARC organizing committee is comprised of representatives from these performing arts groups:

- Lesley English, Organizing Committee Chair & General Manager, Forest Festival
- Chris Lynd, Chair, Arts Council–Haliburton Highlands
- Fay Martin & Michael Fay, Conjurors of County Town
- Jack Brezina, President, Highlands Summer Festival
- Jim Blake, Chair, Dusk Dances Haliburton
- Sean Pennymegion, Forest Festival & Haliburton County Folk Society
- Barrie Martin, President, Haliburton County Folk Society
- Tammy Rea, Principal, Sticks and Stones Productions and Those Other Movies
- Kendra Wishlow, Youth Intern, Haliburton County Folk Society & Sticks and Stones Productions

Project Support:

- Elisha Barlow, SPARC Youth Caucus Co-Facilitator, Minden, Ontario
- Rachel Gillooly, Project Coordinator, Rachel Gillooly & Associates, Minden, Ontario
Youth Caucus of SPARC

When we started planning the Symposium for the Performing Arts in Rural Communities over a year ago we identified that the younger generation living in rural communities play an important role in making rural communities vibrant and resilient places where performing arts are alive. We felt that it was important for youth to have a significant role in this event. One of our goals for the Symposium is to serve as a springboard for the creation of a provincial network focused on the Performing Arts in Rural Communities.

A recent funding announcement by the Ontario Trillium Foundation’s Province-Wide Program has made it possible for us to cover the costs for sixteen youth (ages 16-29) to attend the symposium. We are delighted that 25% of our symposium delegates will be youth from across the province who are engaged in the performing arts as creators, presenters, producers and community organizers.

In addition to having youth involved in all aspects of the symposium we have also planned four events focused on the challenges and successes of youth involved in the performing arts in rural communities.

The purpose of these events is to give youth an opportunity to network, to “take a pulse” of rural communities in which they are involved in the performing arts and to collectively explore their experiences and articulate their particular interests and assets. The intent is to have a clear youth voice reflected in the Symposium Wrap-up and a report that will ensure the ongoing inclusion of youth in the province-wide network, as it develops.

A four-part youth-focused program has been designed (subject to change). We anticipate that there will also be lots of opportunity for informal gatherings and networking for youth delegates throughout the Symposium.

We also encourage everyone in the use of smart phone technology to add texture and depth to the SPARC experience and to share it via social media with other symposium participants, with your home communities, and indeed, with the larger world.

#SPARC2014 and #SPARCYouth

Youth Program

Thursday, 5:30 - 7:00 pm

Meet & Greet: Dinner, A Social Exchange:
This will be an initial opportunity for young performing artists from across the province and country to connect and network with fellow SPARC youth participants. Participants will meet over dinner, and then attend the Symposium’s evening Welcome Reception and Open Stage performances.

Friday, 12:30 - 2:00 pm

Open Forum & Lunch: This portion of the youth program will provide an open forum for young performing artists to express and exchange ideas and concerns. This is when we will ‘take a pulse’ of the challenges and advantages faced by rural youth involved in the performing arts. Participants will be encouraged to seek resolutions and creative problem solving inspirations during their attendance of the rest of SPARC’s programming.

Saturday, 11:15 am - 1:30 pm

Wintergreen – Mobile Workshop, Debrief & Inspirations: Youth have the option of travelling to the Wintergreen location to meet young performing arts professional Ryan Dawson. Ryan will explain his experiences as a youth in a rural community and share the history behind Wintergreen as a performing arts location. Participants will enjoy a catered lunch, and then continue their discussion to reach some consensus on how best to present the youth perspective to the full symposium.

Sunday, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

After four days of learning, sharing, discussions, presentations and performances all SPARC participants will spend the last 90-minutes bringing it all together and laying the groundwork for a network of creators, presenters, producers, and community animators involved in the performing arts in rural communities.

The Youth Caucus will present their perspectives to the assembly, using all resources and skills available, with a view to building a foundation for ongoing youth engagement in the province-wide network, as it develops.
"Be Our Ally" is a collaborative project facilitated by Joan Chandler, David Sereda, and Anna Gaby-Trotz. It combines new interactive theatre, photography, soundscape and music to give new words and voices to youth who have often been branded and labeled as outlaws in their communities, and to energize others to be allies. It is shameful that we live in a society where people who are seen to love "differently" are targets of hate crimes and discrimination.

We believe that we must begin to reshape the words and values that create victims of hate crimes in the LGBTQ* community. These photographs are meant to shed light on participants of this project. These are collaborative pieces facilitated by photographer Anna Gaby-Trotz. During the photo shoots, Anna works with participants, asking them to talk with each other about why they feel it’s important to participate in this project. The discussions range from hope for a society that embraces perceived difference, to sadness for friends they have lost due to suicide as a result of homophobic bullying. The images are not meant to label people, but rather to offer images of strength, hope and fragility. We all must be allies. It is the hope that we will add more and more images of people who want to share in a project that aims to change and reshape the way we see and live.

The "Be Our Ally" photo exhibition sheds light on the strength, fragility and resiliency of rural LGBTQ* youth and their allies in our community.

It is part of a multi-arts project that partners the arts (theatre, music and photography) and education in an engaging violence prevention program to teach youth about homophobia, inclusion, LGBTQ* reality and friendship.

At the root of all, community facilitation, peer connections, collaboration, honour and kindness are key to creative expression, audience engagement and social change. "Be Our Ally" also consists of a 60 minute forum theatre play and songs that explore the reality and struggle of LGBTQ* youth and the impact of homophobia. In audience-interactive performances, students try actions to stop the painful, hateful and traumatic experiences that youth regularly face.

Presentations to grades 6-12 across Grey-Bruce are being delivered this spring, with exhibitions also at galleries including the Tom Thomson Memorial Art Gallery and the Art Space (Huntsville). The project is funded by the The Canada Council Artists and Community Collaboration Fund, Justice Canada, The Ontario Arts Council and local partners The Bluewater Board of Education, ETFO Bluewater Local, The Community Foundation Grey-Bruce, The AIDS Committee of Guelph Wellington, and CMHA Grey Bruce.
Thursday April 24, 2014

11:00 am – 2:00 pm Registration
2:00 – 4:30 pm SPARCing Exchange Café
4:30 – 8:00 pm Registration continued
5:30 – 7:00 pm Dinner on Own
5:30 – 7:00 pm Youth Caucus: Dinner – A Social Opportunity
7:30 – 8:30 pm Welcome Reception
Special Guests: MPP Laurie Scott, Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock; Murray Fearrey, Reeve, Dysart et al
8:30 – 10:00 pm Open Stage Performances

2:00 – 4:00 pm SPARCing Exchange Café
To open the Symposium we will be transforming the Great Hall and Commons of the Haliburton School of The Arts into a neighbourhood café – the type of place where the air is buzzing with ideas and folks are hopping from table to table to greet old friends and meet new people; where the walls are covered with pictures, bulletins, helpful information, and notes about what people are seeking and what people are offering.

A key goal of SPARC is to create an environment where people are exchanging ideas, finding opportunities for collaboration and discussing solutions to tricky problems. Everyone has a part to play in the SPARCing Exchange Café. You will have an opportunity to meet people engaged in the performing arts from rural communities throughout the province and across the country.

Get ready to share information about:
- who you are and what you do,
- your hopes and dreams,
- what you’re seeking, and
- what you have to offer.

All of this information will be posted—creating a Living and Thinking Wall that will grow and evolve throughout the 4 days of the symposium and contribute to the creation of a network.

5:30 – 7:00 pm Dinner on Own
5:30 – 7:00 pm Youth Caucus: Dinner – A Social Opportunity
Co-Facilitators: Elisha Barlow and Kendra Wishlow, SPARC Youth Caucus Co-Facilitators
To provide the initial opportunity for rural youth from across the province and country to connect and network, participants will meet for dinner. Following dinner, Youth Caucus members will attend the Symposium’s Welcome Reception and Open Stage.

7:30 – 8:30 pm Welcome Reception: Cash Bar & Local Snacks
8:30 – 10:00 pm Welcome & Opening Remarks: MPP Laurie Scott, Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock; Murray Fearrey, Reeve, Dysart et al
Open Stage Performances
Open Stage Performances will feature a variety of performances delivered by at least five SPARC delegates!
OPENING PLENARY
9:00 – 10:30 am
Greetings & Welcome:
MP Barry Devolin,
Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock;
Sandra Dupret, Dean/Principal,
Haliburton School of the Arts

Sponsored by:

Keynote Speaker:
Inga Petri, President,
Strategic Moves, Ottawa, Ontario

Community, Partnership and Performing Arts: Co-creating a Culture of Place in Rural Communities
“The Value of Presenting: A Study of Performing Arts Presentation in Canada” has been deepening the conversation about the role of the presenter within the performing arts ecosystem, in communities and in society at large.

Through this landmark study – spearheaded by the Canadian Arts Presenting Association (CAPACOA) and presenting networks across Canada – we have learned that performing arts organizations are expert at forging diverse partnerships that serve common goals and create social connection, reinforce a sense of place and enhance quality of life in communities.

What does it mean…?
• that 1 in 6 presenters in communities under 5,000 people reported an annual audience larger than its own population, according to a study of 288 presenters in 2012
• that rural Canadians believe the community as a whole benefits more than individuals attending events from having performing arts in their communities
• that for every paid staff, presenters on average have 17 volunteers contributing to all aspects of a performing arts organization

Inga will weave together highlights from this and other recent studies in a powerful narrative focused on evolving vibrant rural communities fueled by the performing arts and community-engaged partnerships. She will share compelling stories of community-engaged performing arts partnerships from Northern British Columbia to Nunavut to PEI. In so doing, she will address key concerns about audiences, audience engagement and
sustainable organizations. This dynamic keynote will set the stage for the Symposium by exploring what co-creating a culture of place means in Canada today.

“The Value of Presenting is obviously some of the most important and impactful work related to our industry in Canada.” Workshop participant, CAPACOA Annual Conference, January 2013.

This 90-minute session includes 45 minutes for questions, comments and reflections by participants.

10:30 – 11:00 am  Refreshment Break
11:00 am – 12:30 pm  Concurrent Sessions

F1
Dusk Dances: It Takes a Village to Raise a Rural Dance Arts Event

Presenters: Sylvie Bouchard, Artistic Director, Dusk Dances Inc; Jim Blake, Committee Chair, Dusk Dances Haliburton; Daniela Pagliaro, Committee Member, Dusk Dances Haliburton; Jordyn Archer, Local Choreographer & Dance Instructor, Haliburton Highlands, Ontario

Dusk Dances is an outdoor dance festival that brings high quality contemporary and traditional dance to public parks. In 2006 Dusk Dances was brought to Haliburton County, Manitoulin Island, and Deep River with the intention of building capacity so these communities would consider continuing the event afterwards. Of the 3 original communities, Haliburton is the only rural community that continues to successfully present Dusk Dances. The Dusk Dances Inc. mandate is to bring dance to the community by making it accessible physically, financially, and artistically. Dusk Dances also gives choreographers a unique opportunity to showcase their work in a non-traditional dance venue and in front of a large and mostly new audience.

In this seminar, the presenters will guide the audience through the Dusk Dances history and share their experience with moving from a co-presentation model to an event licensing model, describe how to work with a volunteer committee, how to build capacity for local choreographers, and how to engage youth in a rural community.

F2
The Cultural Roundtable: Empowering & Engaging the Rural Community

Presenters: Nichola McEwen, Community Representative, Minto Cultural Roundtable; Mayor George Bridge, Town of Minto; Gordon Duff, Treasurer/Deputy CAO, Town of Minto, Ontario

Community involvement is a key component to the development and sustainability of performing arts in rural communities, but can often be difficult to achieve. The Town of Minto, through the creation of a Cultural Plan, has developed a Cultural Roundtable with a distinctive goal, guiding principles, clear mandate and a membership that includes a variety of specific community members, each of whom brings a particular talent, perspective, and ability to the group.

The Cultural Roundtable becomes a strong network of engaged community members who share inspiration and skills in a powerful and productive way.

Attendees will gain insight and experience through visual aids, participation in the role-play group activity that will highlight the power of a Cultural Roundtable, and leave with concrete and practical instructions as to how to bring this powerful asset to their own rural community.

F3
The Cult of Collaboration

Presenters: Aly Botlman, Theatre Manager, The Roxy Theatre, Owen Sound, Ontario; Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer, Grey County, Ontario

It started with sex, as good things often do. In an effort to save a historically and culturally significant early 20th century brothel, Aly Boltman envisioned an erotic art show to be set in an abandoned house facing imminent demolition for a strip mall. Months later Aly approached the local Tom Thomson Art Gallery and created a highly successful erotic art exhibition and burlesque show at The Roxy on Valentine’s Day. This unusual cultural partnership became the first of many for The Roxy Theatre, growing and transforming the audiences, building capacity, strengthening the relationships between arts and culture organizations and sharing resources to aid in sustainability for rural partners. Working with models similar to those of charitable venture organizations, The Roxy has partnered with Mudtown Records to support the Mudtown Music and Arts Festival and the Lupercalia Winter Multi-Arts Festival.
In this seminar, attendees will gain insight into strategies that will attract new audiences and increase sustainability through innovative approaches, maximize opportunities for resource sharing, and outline creative approaches for implementing cultural tourism and enhancing rural economies.

F4
Creating & Staging a Musical Drama in Rural Ontario

Presenter: Allan Kirby, Musician in Residence, Lang Pioneer Village Museum, Peterborough County, Ontario

Allan Kirby, PhD will explain how he co-wrote and produced a musical-drama in a rural venue with meagre financial support. The drama, Fowke Tales, is the story of song-collector/scholar Edith Fowke’s travels through rural eastern Ontario to record and document folk songs and stories. Fowke’s journey began in the autumn of 1956 at the P.G. Towns General Store, located in the Peterborough County hamlet of Douro, where she recorded the singing of storekeeper Mary Towns. Fowke quickly realized she had discovered an Ontario folk song tradition that nobody knew existed. It was a wealth of orally transmitted songs that blended Ontario stories with those from the 19th century British folk tradition. For the next nine years, Fowke travelled rural roads with her tape recorder, recording 2,229 folk songs from 135 singers. Her work resulted in 27 books, 100 magazine articles, and nine commercial recordings. Although she was Canadian born and educated, her initial research funding came from the United States. It took time for Canadian academic institutions to recognize that Fowke's work provided a unique perspective of rural Ontario’s cultural history.

In this seminar, Dr. Kirby will explain how he combined his knowledge of folk music history with fifty-five years of performing experience and an understanding of rural culture to successfully create and present Fowke Tales. He will detail how he selected the musician/actors and a sound technician needed to produce an entertaining show for a rural audience. Kirby will discuss how flexible business and financial plans can be used to stage an arts project. Advertising and publicity strategies will be discussed. Fowke Tales’ press releases, programs, posters, CDs, and newspaper reviews will be available for seminar participants to peruse. A final discussion will focus on the ability of the rural arts to function and grow without depending on grant money.

F5
Celebrating Local Stories with Shadow Puppetry

Presenter: Krista Dalby, Co-Artistic Director, Small Pond Arts, Picton, Ontario

This workshop will explore how to connect with local stories in rural communities, and why it is so vital that our communities tell these stories. Shadow puppetry will be used as an example, although these principles can easily be applied to other forms of theatre, music and dance.

Shadow puppetry is an ancient art form, yet one that many are unfamiliar with. In a world of high-tech gadgetry, shadow puppetry is refreshingly low-tech, and has a sensuality that can only be achieved by raw human effort. Shadow puppetry is an incredibly accessible medium: even the most inexperienced artist can create a shadow puppet, and even the most nervous performer can rise to the occasion and become a puppeteer. In turn, audiences are surprised and delighted by the magic that can be created out of such simple materials as paper, fabric, light and shadow.

Even more important than the medium are the stories themselves. Stories have the power to bring communities together in profoundly meaningful ways. What happens when we tell each other our own stories is that we stop looking outwards and we start looking at each other; we become invested in what is happening in the place that we live, which is every bit as interesting and important as what happens in larger centres. When we tell one of our folk tales or relate a piece of local history, we are building on the voices of every storyteller who has come before us, reinforcing our connection to the place we live. We are both witnesses to our time and place, as well as active participants. Telling our own stories swells our pride of place, and strengthens our sense of community.

Participants will explore and learn strategies in finding and selecting stories, as well as best practices when working with culturally-specific groups using specific examples including historical research-based stories, folk/traditional tales, and the creation of new, fictional tales with a focus on real local places and people. Participants will work individually to brainstorm a story from their own community, real or fictional. Working in small groups, they will briefly share their stories, and identify an important character or symbol from each story.

Workshop participants will also get a crash course in shadow puppetry, and have the opportunity to try making their own shadow puppet.
Fun with Funders: Rural Capacity Building

Panelists: Loree Lawrence, Community & Multidisciplinary Arts Officer, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Office; Valerie Hopper, Manager, Cultural Development, Arts & Heritage, Canadian Heritage; Claude Schryer, Coordinator, Inter-Arts Office, Canada Council for the Arts; Sheila Simpson, Program Manager, Ontario Trillium Foundation; Lou O’Hara, Regional Advisor, Culture Development Fund, Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport

Get up close and personal with representatives of provincial and federal arts funders who will offer tips and insights into how to align your project ideas and funding requests with the aims of your organization and with their funding goals. Learn more about various types of funding opportunities and the importance of proper project development.

Panel members will talk about the kinds of projects their agencies support, how and when to approach them for support, what they require from potential grantees and what they are able to provide in return. The panel presentation will be followed by networking opportunities with the funders during the 90 minute lunch-time immediately following the presentation.

12:30 – 2:00 pm Lunch & Networking With Funders and Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO)

Participate in self-organized networking conversations with funders from Ontario and Canada, and Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO).

2:00 – 3:30 pm CONCURRENT SESSIONS

SOCAN I0I: Performing Rights in Canada & SOCAN’s Role

Presenter: Craig Brockie, Industry Relations Executive, Toronto, Ontario

This seminar will be very informative whether you are an event organizer, singer songwriter, publisher or simply just looking to learn about copyright and what SOCAN’s role is within that framework. This session will cover three main areas, copyright with specifics to performing rights, the requirements for event organizers when hosting events with music, and finally how a songwriter and their publisher get paid from SOCAN.

With these topics being the focus of the seminar, host Craig Brockie welcomes questions with any respect to copyright as a whole. SOCAN plays one of the largest roles in the Canadian music industry so join us for this engaging seminar to find out more.

Onsite: A Crash Course in Site-Specific Theatre Making in Rural Surrounds

Presenter: Kendra Fanconi, Artistic Director, The Only Animal Theatre Society, Roberts Creek, British Columbia

The Only Animal Theatre Society creates theatre projects with a deep concentration on ‘place’, and is inspired particularly by sites with an elemental identity. They have made award-winning plays in swimming pools (The One that Got Away), on beaches (Sea of Sand) on docks, and in active waterways (Other Freds), and in theatres of snow and ice (NiX). The session will begin with a retrospective review of the past 15 years of their work. While the The Only Animal recognizes a multiplicity of site-specific aesthetics, they firmly believe in embracing the ‘Identity of Site’ in all approaches. This session will introduce participants to the list of questions that can tease out the identity of a given site, with a focus on work that is environmentally sustainable. Participants will take away useful tools for investigating the sites in one’s own backyard, and have insight into the particular challenges in the creation of ambitious site-centred work.
A Mile in Their Shoes: At the Intersection of Rural Cemeteries & the Performing Arts

**Presenters:** Lyn Royce, Principal, Royce Public Images, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario; Maja Bannerman, Parasol Lane Productions, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario; Colleen Laverdiere, Grimsby Museum Assistant Curator, Grimsby; Pam Mundy, Amateur Performer, ‘A Walk Through History’, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

At Drummond Hill Cemetery in Niagara Falls, each year tourists and locals attend guided walks. They experience a return to life of those long buried through performances by local animators. In 2012 Niagara Region was designated a Cultural Capital of Canada. As part of that designation, the development of cemetery walks was mentored in five more communities of varying sizes across Niagara as ‘A Walk Through History’.

These oral histories showcased Niagara’s culturally diverse history and the historic roles community members played – with the Underground Railroad; in the War of 1812; as early female entrepreneurs, alongside other characters and accomplishments of note.

With over 70 cemeteries in the Niagara Region, there is yet room for further expansion! This presentation will:

- Provide an overview and context and, using an interview format, a project lead and creative support person from ‘A Walk Through History’ will discuss the challenges and rewards of starting this project from scratch within their community and script and acting skills development for volunteers.
- Interviewees will become interviewers to cover larger scale concerns such as joint marketing and sponsorship possibilities.
- Conversations will be interspersed with ‘in character’ presentation(s) – selected dramatizations from scripts based on local history research in one or more of the 2012 participating communities.

This session will also cover:

- Researching local figures based on ‘cemetery residence’
- Scripting characters for interest and fact
- Designing and producing props and costumes
- Engaging community volunteers
- Individual and joint marketing
- Issues of outdoor sites
- Delivery management
- Accessibility considerations
  (Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act)
- Budgeting, funding and revenue generation
- Where do you go after the first one’s done

Community, Connection, Cooperation: Key Elements for Successful Partnerships

**Presenters:** Kevin Korchinski, Executive Director, Organization of Saskatchewan Arts Councils, Regina, Saskatchewan; Laurie Gillis, Executive Director, Atlantic Presenters Association, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Ann Barker, Director of Business Development, Ticketpro, Barrie, Ontario

Partnerships for any size presenter are important, but for rural presenters they are vital to ensure the health of an organization with a limited audience, volunteer and sponsorship base. This session will feature executive directors from two presenter networks that are predominately rural-based and the director of business development for Ticketpro, a company that assists presenters, festivals and networks, many with a rural or small city emphasis.

Dealing with presenters and festivals based outside of the larger cities requires not only empathy, but an innate understanding of the issues faced in these communities. In addition, many of these are run by a group of volunteers with various levels of experience and industry expertise, and the challenges soon become evident.

This session will offer attendees the opportunity to hear lessons learned over the years and how these organizations have assisted presenters within their respective areas. OSAC and APA have spent a number of decades acting as liaisons between those volunteers and small presenters and professional artists from across Canada and beyond. Ticketpro has partnered with many rural and small city organizations. That combined with years of marketing experience in those markets, places them in a somewhat unique position within their field within Canada.

Partnerships today mean more than working with a local restaurant (although those are important too). Arts organizations must create working relationships with funders, networks, other presenters, agents, artists, local businesses and most importantly, the ticket buying public. Examples of partnerships and topics that will be discussed are: Block Booking - how a group of rurally-based presenters can join forces to present an artist that would not otherwise be within their reach; Networks or What the Heck is a Contact Event! – How the collective knowledge of a network can assist rural presenters with professional development, workshops, funding opportunities and marketing ideas.
Gros Morne Rocks: Promoting Arts & Performance in a National Park & World Heritage Site

**Presenters:** Katherine Lockhart, Cultural Coordinator, Creative Gros Morne, Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland & Labrador; David Maggs, Founder & Director, Gros Morne Summer Music, Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland & Labrador; Candice Pike, Manager, Gros Morne Summer Music, Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland & Labrador

This presentation will examine regional partnerships and collaboration for marketing and promotion in Gros Morne National Park using online tools and social media.

People in Gros Morne National Park share a strong sense of identity and a rich culture including music, performance and storytelling. An increasing number of tourists are visiting not only for the geology and outstanding natural beauty that has set Gros Morne apart on the world stage, but to take part in the unique culture through festivals, events and direct experience.

The Gros Morne Cultural Blueprint (GMCB) was developed in consultation with regional stakeholders to strengthen and develop cultural initiatives within Gros Morne National Park. It is a collaborative regional framework that includes provisions for product development, strengthening human resources and building regional profile as a cultural destination. The first phase of implementation of the GMCB is led by the Gros Morne Co-operating Association in collaboration with local artists, festival organizers and business owners and with the support of Parks Canada, Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, Canadian Heritage, and the provincial departments of Innovation, Business and Rural Development and Tourism, Culture and Recreation.

Participants will learn about engaging artists, event organizers and businesses in regional partnerships to promote the arts, how to develop strategies for shared use of online and social media and about working with a regional strategy to promote the arts in a rural area.

Finding the World in Your Neighbourhood..... Bringing Film to Light

**Presenters:** Laura Good, Programming Coordinator, TIFF, Toronto; Ming-Jenn Lim, Senior Coordinator, Film Circuit, TIFF, Toronto

It is sometimes difficult to introduce world cinema into a community. This session will explore the many successful, and not so successful ways rural communities have tried to engage their community. Through connections to the content, the crew, the location, the situation or creative venues for screenings, there are many ways to create a connection to your audience.

Founded in 1989, Film Circuit is TIFF’s successful film outreach programme, bringing the best of Canadian and international films and artists to communities across the country. Through an alternate model of grassroots distribution, marketing and exhibition, Film Circuit encompasses over 180 groups in over 160 communities across Canada, and helps TIFF lead the world in building markets and audiences for Canadian cinema.

This session will focus on Canadian ‘Heritage’ as an inspirational point for promoting a community’s narrative identity, and show participants how to utilize their cultural heritage as a method of developing cultural tourism. TWTC will also explore their sustainable business model that has helped them develop cost effective high quality products without relying on grants. This innovative approach will re-engage audiences and re-invigorate space.
F14  
The Rainforest Circus: Exploring the Value of Collaborative Interdisciplinary Creation in Rural Canada

**Presenters:** Chad Hershler, Artistic Director, Deer Crossing the Art Farm, Gibsons, British Columbia; Sandy Buck, Director of Education and Community Outreach, Deer Crossing the Art Farm, Gibsons, British Columbia

The Art Farm began as a social experiment following a simple equation: art + nature = change. Founded on five acres of traditional Squamish territory just north of Gibsons BC, the Art Farm brings arts and nature-based innovators together. Projects are broad-ranging – from festivals to interdisciplinary art installations to educational programming to performance art to capacity-building for social and creative entrepreneurs – and they all share these common traits: they are collaborative, they build community, are cutting edge and are place-based.

Of all of these projects, the most successful to date is an ongoing one: the Rainforest Circus. The Rainforest Circus is a unique inter-disciplinary creation devised and mounted each year in (and about) the rainforest surrounding Gibsons BC. This workshop will explore the creative process behind the project. Beginning with a short multi-media collage depicting the history of the Rainforest Circus, the presentation will showcase the genesis of the project, its evolution through four years of production, how and in what way the local community has supported, nurtured and claimed it as their own and the vision for its future.

Workshop participants will participate in a micro-version of the Rainforest Circus’s interdisciplinary creative process in small group exercises. Outcomes of group discussions will be presented through an eclectic combination of performance and artistic disciplines, and findings discussed about the collaborative creative process of the Rainforest Circus.

F15  
Producing Quality Theatre in a Rural Setting – Presented by Theatre Ontario

**Moderator:** Julianne Snepsts, General Manager, Festival Players of Prince Edward County, Ontario

**Panelists:** Jack Brezina, President, Highlands Summer Festival, Haliburton Highlands, Ontario; Deb Sholdice, General Manager, Blyth Festival, Blyth, Ontario; Harold Arbuckle, Board Member and Treasurer, Embro Thistle Theatre, Embro, Ontario

This panel and discussion forum includes equal representation of professional theatres and community theatres from rural areas of Ontario, and is presented by Theatre Ontario. The panelists represent the wide geographical spectrum of Ontario from the rugged north to the agricultural south and hold expertise ranging from establishing some of the most successful professional regional theatres in the province, to growing and sustaining community theatres that have become the cultural heart of their regions.

All have overcome a wide range of challenges, from loss of venues, to tackling financial woes, to developing and maintaining an audience and surviving unpredictable weather. All have experienced great triumphs and overcome huge challenges and their stories will encourage and inspire others as they pursue the goal of producing quality theatre in their own communities.

The session will include an opportunity for the audience to ask questions of the panelists and share their own successes and challenges with the group.

F16  
Increasing Capacity Through Collaboration

**Presenter:** Marie Zimmerman, Executive Director, Hillside Community Festival of Guelph, Ontario

This session will describe an innovative approach to community development and arts presentation that saw five festivals in Guelph and Wellington County partnering together to:
- showcase and co-present one or more of the arts from other festivals;
- expose each individual festival audience to the work of another festival;
- develop intellectual capacity by sharing presenter knowledge and the work of planning co-presentations;
- increase audience capacity and diversity for each festival.
This work was grant-funded and surprising in its results:

- Increased attendance:
  - Eden Mills Writers’ Festival: 74%
  - Guelph Contemporary Dance Festival: 69%
  - Festival of Moving Media: 32%
  - Guelph Jazz Festival: 21%

Two of the participating festivals—the Eden Mills Writers’ Festival and the Hillside Summer Festival—take place in rural areas. And they both draw on rural and urban populations. Both are also environmentally conscientious and have constructed dishwashing and waste management systems to reflect their concern about their impact on the rural land. These have become signature features of the festivals in question.

This session will address the strength of the collaborative model for creating urban-rural partnerships as well as for increasing the interest and retention of audiences. The collective power of five festivals has arresting benefits for the recruitment of volunteers as well as for the sharing and procurement of resources from cities and townships.

Participants will learn why one should collaborate with a competitor, how to increase audiences through strategic co-presentations, and how to reach across the urban-rural divide in ways that both play to stereotypical differences and dissolve them.

**F17 Research Soundbytes**

(1) Case Studies from the Canada Council for the Arts’ Artists & Community Collaboration Program in Rural Regions

**Presenter:** Claude Schryer, Coordinator, Inter-Arts Office, Canada Council for the Arts, Ottawa, Ontario

The Canada Council created the Artists and Community Collaboration Fund (ACCF) in 2001 to increase the Council’s commitment to the diverse artistic activities that bring together professional artists and the broader community and to provide the arts a stronger presence in everyday life. This pilot program became a permanent program of the Council, the Artists and Community Collaboration Program (ACCP) in 2006 after an external review of the program, Imagine, by Laurie McGauley in 2006. The Canada Council undertook a further internal evaluation in 2011 and will announce improvements to the program in 2014. Artists and community collaboration is defined as an arts process that actively involves the work of professional artists and non-arts community members in creative and collaborative relationships. The ACCP places the ‘creation of art’ led by a qualified professional artist at the centre of the community collaboration process and has funded a number of innovative art projects in all regions of Canada.

This presentation will present a snapshot of case studies of recently funded ACCP projects in the performing arts in rural regions. The presentation will explore the artistic process between artists and communities and the impact of the work on the professional artists, community participants and the community as a whole. The case studies will also present an overview of some of the tools that have been developed during the evaluation of the ACCP such as self-evaluation tools and community reporting systems.

(2) Ontario Arts Council: Snapshots of Funded Projects in Rural Ontario

**Presenter:** Aengus Finnan, Touring and Audience Development Officer, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Office

In its last 5-year strategic plan, developed through extensive consultation with the public and cultural sector, the Ontario Arts Council identified “regional” (any artist, organization or community outside the GTA) as one of its five strategic priorities. Coupled to the plan the OAC articulated a vision of Ontario where, among other aspects, priorities and values, people in all regions actively engage and participate in the arts, and where regional artists and arts organizations are recognized for the value they provide to all of Ontario’s people, cultures and creative sectors. Based on the OAC’s Performance Measures document, this session will discuss some of the internal OAC processes of ensuring consideration, participation, and engagement of regional representatives and artists, and a review of the latest indicators related to regional service, activity, and granting results. A review of the regional outreach initiatives and activity to date, as well as regional staffing will be addressed, and a brief review of regional program opportunities will be highlighted. And there’s guaranteed to be a few surprising statistical misconceptions debunked.

(3) A Fresh Start Supporting Rural Performing Arts Presentation: Snapshots of Funded Projects in Rural Canada

**Presenter:** David Barnard, Cultural Consultant, Canada Arts Presentation Fund, Department of Canadian Heritage, Toronto Office

Fresh Start is a program initiated in 2002-2003 by the Canada Arts Presentation Fund program (CAPF) through the Department of Canadian Heritage. Administered by the Ontario
Campus and Community Impresarios Presenting Network (CCI), the program’s purpose is to provide developmental, financial and technical assistance to performing arts presenters from three prioritized communities: Aboriginal, culturally diverse and rural/remote. In the ten plus years since its creation, Fresh Start has led to a diversification of the presenting organizations supported by CAPF in Ontario.

In 2012-2013, Fresh Start was realigned as a development project for small northern presenters. The project includes two main elements: increased access to contemporary dance in four northern Ontario communities and increased exposure to Canadian children’s artists for six young audience presenters operating in the northern Ontario. The goal of this project is to enhance the range of presentations offered in remote areas of Ontario, through development of the presenters responsible for bringing performing arts to these communities.

The presentation will examine the evolution of the Fresh Start program, how and why it has changed, evaluating the impact it has had on the organizations and communities it has served and exploring the continuing priorities of those presenters.

F18 Calabogie Center for Performing Arts: A Study in Creating Community & Destination Development Through Culture

Presenter: Byron Hermann, President, Calabogie & Area Business Association, Independent Music Producer, Calabogie, Ontario

This seminar will present the challenges encountered and the insights gathered in the planning and development process for the creation of the proposed new “Calabogie Centre for the Performing Arts.” The proposed Calabogie Performing Arts Centre (PAC) will be a midsize, 470-seat theatre-style venue with full stage house and a complete array of professional amenities, including ample lobby, and supportive production spaces. The seating would be in a fixed-tier format and would not allow for multiple configurations. The facility would include a fly space, for lifting scenery above the stage.

Challenge 1: Understanding Partnerships

Initial challenges were related to the development of working partnerships. Potential project partners were identified and approached. These included the National Arts Centre in Ottawa, The University of Ottawa Faculty of Music, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Algonquin College, Ottawa Valley Festival Arts, the Township of Greater Madawaska, CABA (Calabogie Area Business Association) and a substantial group of patrons, contributors and foundations. Insights included the importance of securing the support of a wide community to support a rural performing arts economy.

Challenge 2: Understanding the Cultural Landscape

Initial challenges were related to understanding the current cultural landscape and what is the potential of community and economic development through cultural destination development. This required improved communication between communities to determine common needs, understand factors in cultural destination development, and provide insights into the relationship between performing arts and healthy communities and healthy living. Performing arts are not just an experience or activity to “add-on” to other primary tourist activities, attractions or lifestyles. Performing arts ARE primary experiences in a cultural destination. Performing arts ARE primary experiences in a healthy community.

Challenge 3: Understanding the Rural Performing Arts Economy

Initial challenges were related to understanding the concept that the development of a rural performing arts economy and rural cultural infrastructure project feasibility is dependent on a number of interrelated factors. These factors included understanding arts and culture tourism volume, the nature and value of arts and culture, overnight tourists and their economic impact in the area, understanding that the concept of sustaining a rural performing arts economy required that PAC have a year-round calendar of events ranging from local community and county shows to midsize professional theatrical productions as well as a full array of concerts, and that other community cultural assets offer meaningful programs and experiences. Insights were gained into the nature of performing arts experiences cultural tourists and residents were seeking and nature of the rural performing arts economy.

Finally, this PAC enterprise is intended to be the centerpiece of a new cultural destination development plan to serve the community and county, introduce culture, create a tourist attraction, and to provide an amenity for rural life in and around Calabogie, the Township of Greater Madawaska, Ottawa Valley and Ottawa.

Participants will develop an understanding of the factors in cultural destination development, how to attract support and resources by developing enhanced partnerships, and how to improve communication between communities to determine common needs; how to create, support and sustain a rural performing arts economy.
6:00 – 11:00 pm  **Dine-Around Town(s): Light Up Your “Friday” Night!**

On Friday night, SPARC participants will be provided with a $20 dinner voucher (redeemable at participating restaurants), and free entrance (where a cover charge is involved) to enjoy their choice of the Haliburton Highlands' finest eating and entertainment establishments. Don’t forget your SPARC name tag – it’s your ticket in!

**In Haliburton Village:**

- **Baked and Battered**, 128 Highland Street (“We take our fish & chips VERY seriously”)… Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and then catch the show at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion (see below)!
- **McKeeks Tap & Grill**, 207 Highland St., Founded by hockey great Walt McKechnie, renovated with careful attention to historic detail, features the culinary stylings of Chef Aaron Walker. Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and enjoy the night’s entertainment featuring Carl Dixon (April Wine, The Guess Who) celebrating the recent release of his album “Lucky Dog”. Guests attending tonight will also be “lucky dogs”!
  
  Show starts at 8:00 pm.
- **Dublin Gate Irish Pub**, 212 Highland St, offers pub grub and great Indian curries. Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and enjoy tonight’s feature artist Phil McMahon and Paddy’s Lament. Entertainment: 6:30 – 9:30 pm.

**In Carnarvon Village:**

- **Rhubarb Restaurant**, at the north east side of Hwy 35 on Hwy 118. Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and enjoy the much-loved and recently re-located ingenuity of Chef Christof Carl, along with music that embraces the senses provided by Custom Blend at 8:00 pm.

**NB:** if you selected this dining option at the time you registered online for SPARC – a place has been reserved for you. If you did not – you must call for a reservation to see if there is space available.

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**In Minden Village:**

- **Dominion Hotel Pub**, 113 Bobcaygeon Rd, one of the oldest operating hotels in Ontario, is a favoured performance site for local and visiting musicians. Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and then enjoy WANTED Dead AND Alive! The Dead (and Live) Poets Society, an evening of poetic entertainment featuring readings from live poets and their dead inspirations! An interactive and entertaining evening of spoken word that takes itself lightly. Entertainment 7:00 pm.
  
  - **The Minden United Church**, 21 Newcastle St, is a frequent performance venue with wonderful acoustics. Redeem your $20 SPARC dinner dollars and enjoy a locally catered meal followed by an evening of familiar toe-tapping tunes provided by Highlands Brass and Highlands Concert Band and guest vocalist Hannah Klose accompanied by the strings of Simply BeFiddled.
  
  Dinner 6:30 pm.
  Show 7:45 pm
### Saturday, April 26th

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<td>7:30 am – 5:00 pm</td>
<td>Registration</td>
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<td>8:30 – 9:00 am</td>
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<td>Welcome: Barb Reid, Reeve, Minden Hills &amp; Vice Chair,</td>
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<td>Haliburton County Tourism Committee</td>
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<td>Introduction and MC: Carol Moffatt, Reeve, Algonquin Highlands &amp; Chair,</td>
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<td>Haliburton County Tourism Committee</td>
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<td>Refreshment Break &amp; Embark on Buses</td>
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<td>10:45 am – 1:30 pm</td>
<td>Mobile Workshops &amp; Catered Lunch</td>
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<td>2:30 – 4:00 pm</td>
<td>Concurrent Sessions</td>
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<td>5:15 pm</td>
<td>Pinestone Resort: Shuttle buses depart for Bark Lake</td>
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<td>6:00 pm</td>
<td>Reception (Cash Bar), Dinner &amp; Feature Performances</td>
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<td>Welcome: Carol Moffatt, Reeve, Algonquin Highlands</td>
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<td>Bark Lake Leadership Centre</td>
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<td>10:00 pm</td>
<td>Bark Lake: Shuttle buses return to Pinestone Resort</td>
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### Full Day Schedule

**9:00 – 10:30 am**  
**PLENARY**

*Welcome:* Barb Reid, Reeve, Minden Hills & Vice Chair, Haliburton County Tourism Committee  
*Introduction and MC:* Carol Moffatt, Reeve, Algonquin Highlands & Chair, Haliburton County Tourism Committee  
*Sponsored by:*  
*Keynote Speaker:* Steven Thorne, Principal, Place-Based Cultural Tourism Planning, Waterloo, Ontario  

**Place-Based Cultural Tourism:**  
**Realizing Your Community’s Potential**  
Steven Thorne is a specialist in “place-based cultural tourism” – a phrase that Steven coined.

He helps cities, towns, and regions to realize their potential for cultural tourism by using his company’s holistic, place-based planning approach. The approach weaves together heritage, arts, culinary, agritourism, and natural history experiences to form a tapestry that reveals a destination’s unique cultural terroir and sense of place. By using Steven's approach, any destination can enhance its appeal to cultural travelers and compete more successfully in the cultural tourism marketplace.

In Steven's words, “For cultural travelers, the visitor experience is about much more than a destination’s cultural ‘attractions’. It's about encountering a destination’s history and heritage, its narratives and stories, its landscape, its townscape, its people. It’s about discovering what makes a city, town, or region distinctive, authentic, and memorable. It’s about the experience of ‘place’. Simply put, the place is the product.”
10:30 – 10:45 am  Refreshment Break & Embark on Buses
10:45 am – 1:30 pm  Mobile Workshops (& Catered Lunches)

A-1
Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve: The Forest Festival of Concerts

Hosts: Sean Pennylegion, SPARC Working Group Member & Retired General Manager, The Forest Festival; Peter Schleifenbaum, Owner, Haliburton Forest & Wild Life Reserve, Haliburton Highlands

This annual festival of concerts that links nature and music, takes place over six days each August in Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve (The Forest) and features nine unique musical performances. The Forest’s 80,000 acres provide a home to many activities, including the world’s longest forest Canopy Walk and the renowned Wolf Centre. The Forest is Canada’s first Forest Stewardship Council certified forest and the ownership and employees are committed to sustainable and integrated resource management.

Peter Schleifenbaum will discuss how and why “The Forest” became involved in presenting a self-sustaining (no public funds) arts festival that reflects the ideals of Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve. Initially, in conjunction with Patria Theatre/Music Productions, the “soundscape” outdoor theatre productions of R. Murray Schafer were presented using the Bone Lake amphitheatre. This collaboration evolved into the Forest Festival, now beginning its seventh season.

Sean Pennylegion will focus on the mechanics, challenges and successes of staging concerts in these two non-traditional spaces. There will be ample time for participant questions and answers during the presentation.

B-2
Wintergreen Maple Syrup & Pancake Barn: Youth Caucus

Hosts: Elisha Barlow and Kendra Wishlow, Youth Caucus Co-Facilitators, Minden, Ontario; Ryan Dawson, Youth, Spoken Word Performer & Musician, Minden, Ontario

Wintergreen Maple Products, a timber-framed barn on a country road near the village of Minden, is owned by Tom and Diane Dawson. After many years of teaching, they were inspired by their surroundings and bounty, and turned this passion into a full-service business including a Maple Syrup operation, restaurant, store and performance venue. What was the fountain of this inspiration? A book entitled “Re-imagine: Successful Business in a Disruptive Age”, where writer Tom Peters rants about how modern businesses of all sizes are misreading their customers, the market and the huge market influences globalization is making. Two provocative ideas in this book particularly stood out: “If you don’t like change, you’ll like irrelevance even less”, and “Diversify or die”.

People are always wondering what the next product or event will be – Barbados night, Blues Concert, Dinner Theatre, or Pig Roast. With the help of wife Diane, son Ryan, daughter Catherine, and many friends and volunteers, they have created a lively and thriving venue.

Ryan Dawson will explain his experiences as a youth and performing artist in a rural community, and share the history behind Wintergreen as a performing arts location. Participants will enjoy a catered lunch, and then continue their discussion to reach some consensus on how best to present the youth perspective to the full symposium.

C-3
Hollywood Dreams in the Middle of a Forest – Digital Projection in Unique Spaces

Hosts: Tammy Rea, Sticks and Stones Productions & SPARC Working Group Member, Minden, Ontario; Keith Strata, Owner, Highlands Cinemas, Kinmount, Ontario

On the border of the Kawarthas and the Haliburton Highlands, Kinmount, a village of 300, boasts an unusual demographic: more movie theatre seats than people. Highlands Cinemas, a 550-seat complex with five theatres showing first-run movies, has drawn customers from the surrounding area for more than two decades. This season — from May to Thanksgiving — 50,000 moviegoers are expected to enter Keith Stata’s home to enjoy the movie experience in the middle of cottage country.

Unlike your average chain theater, the Highlands Cinema comes complete with bears eating popcorn, a collection of movie projectors numbering in the thousands – the largest collection in North America – and a room full of mannequins dressed in period costumes.

Keith faced a major decision last year when he decided to “go digital” – probably the biggest threat to independent theatres in Canada. Tour this unique venue, hear about the challenges of digital projection and maybe even see a short or two.
D-4
Haliburton Highlands Museum: Mining Local History for the Performing Arts

Hosts: Fay Martin, Co-Founder Conjurors of County Town & SPARC Working Group Member, Minden, Ontario; Michael Fay, Professional Writer & Playwright & SPARC Working Group Member, Minden, Ontario; Kate Butler, Curator, Haliburton Highlands Museum, Haliburton, Ontario

Nestled in Glebe Park, an easy tromp from Fleming School of the Arts, the Haliburton Highlands Museum is the site of a renovation done by Sustainable Building students, developing its capacity to be a performing arts venue. Kate Butler will lead a tour of the facilities and recount its colorful history, as well as current and planned performance activities.

Fay Martin and Michael Fay were founders of the Conjurors of County Town, a cooperative community theatre that over several years produced five original plays rooted in local history, performed in an outdoor theatre created on the Minden Hills Cultural Centre grounds, as well as various other projects e.g. Ghost Walks, Fringe Theatre. Michael will talk about why and how he turns local history into theatre. Fay will discuss the challenges of producing performing arts in a rural community, including the structural impediments to including youth.

E-5
Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion: From Kids Play to Stage Plays

Hosts: Curtis Eastmure, Founding Member, Highlands Little Theatre, Singer, Actor & Producer, Haliburton, Ontario; Heather Smith, Manager, Public Use, Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion, Haliburton, Ontario; Jack Brezina, President, Highlands Summer Festival & SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton Highlands, Ontario

When the school board announced plans to build a new triple gymnasium at the high school, several members of the community saw an opportunity to create a theatre in the soon to be abandoned gym. With support from the school board, the provincial government and the community, the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion emerged, like a butterfly from the cocoon on the former facility. The fact that the space had been used in the past for theatrical productions provided an ironic twist to the story as the basketball nets came down and a raked 226 seat theatre appeared. A combination of community support, buy-in from the high school and support from the province made the facility a reality.

Curtis Eastmure, one of the driving forces behind the transition will talk about the effort needed to convince the powers of the day that the space could be successfully repurposed as a theatre space that serves both the community and the high school.

Current theatre manager, Heather Smith, will be on hand to show delegates around. We will also be inviting those with similar experiences or considering converting an existing building to a performance space to talk about their experiences.

F-6
The Little County That Could – A Community of Music

Hosts: Barrie Martin, President, Haliburton County Folk Society & SPARC Working Group Member, West Guilford, Ontario; Roxanne Casey, Manager, CANOE FM, Haliburton, Ontario

‘Without music, life would be a mistake’ (Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche).

The Haliburton Highlands are alive with the sound of music. Music is part of our cultural mosaic and contributes immensely to the vibrancy of our community. There are many opportunities to listen to or perform live music. The offerings are diverse – folk, jazz, blues, country, bluegrass, rock, classical, and opera. We have musical guests of the highest calibre and a wonderfully talented community of local artists. And music happens in theatres, restaurants, resorts, homes, community centres, camps, on the street, and in the great outdoors on forest floor and lakeshore.

The influences are everywhere. The high school’s outstanding music program, music courses offered through the Haliburton School of the Arts, private music instruction by talented teachers, speciality music camps, theatre productions, open stages, community choirs and bands, recording studios, community radio, festivals, and many concerts have fostered a passion for music in young and old alike.

This workshop explores the opportunities and challenges of building a community of music. Come prepared to share your stories and explore a variety of topics including presenting, audience development, partnerships, venues, music tourism and the role of community radio. You will enjoy a mix of discussion, presentation, performance, problem solving and some tasty treats. A portion of this workshop will be broadcast live on 100.9 Canoe FM.
2:00 – 2:30 pm  Buses return from Mobile Workshops  Refreshment Break & Disembark from Buses

2:30 – 4:00 pm  CONCURRENT SESSIONS

S7  Research Soundbytes

(1) Rural Artists’ Contributions to Resilience & the Emergence of a Local Culture-based Economy

**Presenter:** Jude Ortiz, Research Coordinator, NORDIK Institute, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario

In traditional economic frameworks, the arts are typically seen in terms of tangible outputs of cultural products with limited viability in generating wealth. More recently they have been hailed as economic drivers in the creative economy and many (primarily) urban centres are attempting to harness the arts in this regard. Less understood, however, is how engaging in the arts strengthens community identity and fosters the emergence of a local culture-based economy, generally, and the critical role artists in rural communities play in achieving such, specifically.

The presentation will discuss a new overarching framework for understanding the arts contribution to individual and community resilience, defined as ‘the capacity to adapt, transition and prosper when faced with significant change while retaining core values’ (Colussi, 1999; Torjman, 2007). It will highlight the value chain in social and creative capital development that supports cultural preservation and innovation in the creation of unique products and experiences, leading to more sustainable livelihoods.

(2) Tourism and the Performing Arts: Expanding the Experience Classic Theatre Festival Case Study

**Presenter:** Laurel Smith, Artistic Producer, Classic Theatre Festival, Chair of the Board, Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization

The performing arts have long been considered a tourism draw due to the sector’s innate ability to provide memorable experiences that tap into the senses. In fact, while other businesses that cater to visitors work towards adding an experiential layer to their offer, the performing arts by nature ARE experiences. Today’s visitors are shifting away from “look and see” tourism opportunities and moving towards hands-on, close-up journeys into communities where visitors can meet the people and artisans who create and engage in rich storytelling and interactive moments. Using the Ottawa Valley’s only professional theatre company, the Classic Theatre Festival, as a case study, attendees will learn how embracing a visitor-centric approach can reveal practical ways to expand and position their offer to increase demand and meet the needs of the visitor.

S8  Research Soundbytes

(1) Community Building Through Performance Arts

**Presenter:** Shelley King, Chief Executive Puppeteer, Puppeteria, Wilberforce, Ontario

Using the magic of clowning, puppetry, and expressive arts, Shelley King will share her experiences in coordinating inter-generational community based performance art projects. This presentation will include a discussion on finding community support, partners, volunteers, financial assistance, and appropriate venues for a variety of creative performances in rural communities. Shelley will discuss the history behind eight different programs she developed for her community. These successful programs include Creative Expression Through Drama, Point in Time Puppet Players, Generation to Generation, and When We Were Young. All of Shelley’s projects have been inter-generational, have required creative problem-solving when facing obstacles, most have included youth and adults with intellectual disabilities, and all have contributed to a greater sense of community.

(2) Improvised Storytelling for Community Health and Wellbeing

**Presenter:** Fay Wilkinson, Registered Expressive Arts Consultant/Educator, Faculty, Fleming College, Principal – The Creative Cocoon Studio, Eagle Lake, Ontario

‘A tale however slight illuminates truth’. (Rumi)

How can stories – both literal and metaphorical – contribute to the resilience of a rural community? Fay will outline how she is using improvised storytelling and spoken word art for health, wellbeing and community building with a broad cross section of populations in Haliburton County, including seniors and school children. She will discuss her model, Visible Voices, for engaging the community and the benefits of the Playback Theatre troupe she founded who have performed at numerous venues in Haliburton County including Hospice Volunteers, Caregivers, and the Fringe Festival building our community one story at a time. Future ideas, for example integrating digital storytelling with other forms of art making, will also be presented in the hopes of sparking discussion.

The session will articulate the connection between rural performing arts and the health and vitality of rural communities. Best strategies will be explored for using the shared knowledge to inform public perception, policy and economic development.
S9
Meaford Hall: A Community Success Story
Presenter: Susan Lake, Manager Arts & Cultural Services, Meaford Hall Arts & Cultural Centre, Meaford, Ontario

Meaford Hall Arts & Cultural Centre, located in historic downtown Meaford, is a beautifully restored and renovated century-old landmark. As a four seasons venue, Meaford Hall plays host to a variety of events including live theatre, music, film, dance and entertainment as well as community, corporate and social events. Meaford Hall measures its success on three pillars: Financial Success, by achieving its financial goals; Community Success, as a celebrated community icon, and Regional Success as the Premier Arts and Cultural Centre in South Georgian Bay. This presentation will feature some of the ways Meaford Hall has engaged its community and audience to achieve financial, community and regional success since reopening as a renovated icon in 2006.

This presentation will answer the question about how the economic and social role of the performing arts in rural communities can be seen as both an answer to those seeking world class performances, as well as community based productions and low cost entertainment all within a small operating budget.

S10
Down Along The Shore: How Music, Story and the Arts are Generating Pride and Economic Renewal in Rural Newfoundland
Presenter: Dan Rubin, Second Stage Creative Arts, Pouch Cove, Newfoundland & Labrador

This session will focus on the role of performing arts in cultural renewal in rural Newfoundland and specifically the ways in which music, story, theatre and local celebrations have contributed to rebirth of pride and economic activity in the town of Pouch Cove, a traditional outport community on the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland, close to St. John’s. Activities and events that have helped develop pride and our local economy include two recent fund-raising concerts, the work of a community development committee, the rebuilding of the community’s fishing launch, the work of the heritage committee which Dan helped found, recent house and shed concerts and a community garden project. A few examples from other outport communities will also be referenced in this presentation.

This session will demonstrate specific approaches and programs that have connected the arts with local community, to simultaneously restore community identity and spirit and generate new options for generating economic opportunity.

Participants will emerge with a deepened view of community development in which the arts become an engine for renewed identity and creativity; specific ways to apply these lessons in their own communities; and an understanding of the more subtle ways in which the arts offer a mirror for rural communities to allow them to grow and prosper organically by understanding and celebrating their past.

S11
The Shadowland Exploratory
Presenters: Anne Barber and Brad Harley, Co-Artistic Directors, Shadowland Theatre, Toronto, Ontario

This workshop will explore Shadowland’s style of outdoor, visual theatre using puppetry, mask, installations, spectacle art and music, and its application to rural youth, artists and the land. We will map out our partnership in rural Norfolk County that created community-engaged, outdoor performances. Join our theatrical journey – developing the themes and ideas; the initial forays to the community; gathering financial and material resources; engaging participants and local artists as fellow travellers; exploring the best techniques and approaches; and embarking on the full journey of the performance where communities celebrate their own stories and localities. How do local and visiting artists share and disseminate their skills and adapt their own practices? What is the potential of urban and rural collaborative relationships in finding the resources needed? How can be done to sustain projects more than once? How do we develop the relationship between art and nature? The workshop will feature selected visual examples and provide opportunities for discussion and interaction.

S12
Dancing in the Third Act
Presenter: Randy Glynn, Choreographer and Dance Professional, Toronto, Ontario

Last summer Randy formed a senior’s dance company in Annapolis Royal, NS, and choreographed a dance for them that flew far beyond everyone’s expectations – in short it was astonishing. Dancing in the Third Act has been booked to open a major dance festival in Montreal and has attracted the attention of agents in Canada and the US. Six hundred people attended the 3-night run in Annapolis Royal – population 450.
A documentary film is in the works and Toronto’s Luminato is interested. The dance is not a senior’s variety show in any way but a true, powerful, moving and funny work of art that deals, literally, with the ups and downs of aging: think of it as 12 dancers – 800 years of experience.

Currently, with partners the Orillia District Arts Council and the Mariposa Arts Theatre Foundation, rehearsals are underway for the next cast of Dancing in the Third Act which will open its 3-day run at the Orillia Opera House on May 1st. This workshop will explain the process of making the dance – and how it garnered attention. All – or part of the Orillia production cast – may well perform all or part of the dance for workshop participants!

5:15 pm  Pinestone Resort: Shuttle buses depart for Bark Lake

6:00 – 10:00 pm  Reception (Cash Bar), Dinner & Feature Performances
Bark Lake Leadership Centre
Welcome: Carol Moffat, Reeve, Algonquin Highlands

On Saturday night at the beautiful Bark Lake Leadership Centre guests will be treated to a spectacular evening of entertainment. As you enjoy a pre-dinner drink, you will be surrounded by film images of local events created by Sticks and Stones Productions.

Following dinner from the kitchen of Chef David Guieweler, Julie Barban of Heritage Ballet will thrill you with her adaptation of The Spirits of the Great White Pine, a children’s chorus extracted from a play based on lost local history written in 2007 by local playwright Michael Fay, choreographed to original music composed and performed by strings player Bethany Houghton and colleagues.

You will be thrilled by Lauren Margison, (accompanied by Melissa Stephens) a member of the Highlands Opera Studio, a unique Canadian summer program that began six years ago in the Haliburton Highlands. Program participants are professional opera singers trying to break into the industry’s top ranks. They receive coaching and training culminating in performances of two operas at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion.

And to complete the evening, local band Ragged Company will take the stage to set your toes to tapping, perhaps even dancing the light fantastic.

10:00 pm  Bark Lake: Shuttle buses return to Pinestone Resort
Sunday, April 27th

**FULL DAY SCHEDULE**

7:30 am – 2:00 pm  
Registration

8:00 – 8:45 am  
Light Breakfast Refreshments

8:30 – 9:00 am  
Showcase Performances

9:00 – 10:30 am  
Plenary

10:30 – 11:00 am  
Refreshment Break

11:00 am – 12:30 pm  
Bringing it All Together & Closing

12:30 pm  
Lunch & Departures

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**9:00 – 10:30 am  PLENARY**

**Facilitator:** Michael Fay, Professional Writer & Playwright  
& SPARC Working Group Member, Minden, Ontario

**Keynote Speaker:** Scott Walters, Founder, Center for Rural Arts Development and Leadership Education (CRADLE), Bakersville, North Carolina

(Re)creating a Vibrant Arts Ecosystem in Small & Rural Communities: Building a Network

Scott Walters will discuss several of the challenges that must be overcome in order to (re)create a vibrant arts ecosystem in small and rural communities.

The first involves innovative business models. An arts organization in a small community is not simply a smaller version of an arts organization in a metropolitan area. It's organization, financing, and relation to the community should be very different.

Another challenge is to encourage people to tell their own stories. An arts organization, like a local restaurant, should reflect local flavors. And a serious challenge is communication. By its very nature, rural areas are isolated. It is important for people who are leading arts organizations in rural areas to have a source of information, seed funding, and a place to share successes and failures.

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10:30 – 11:00 am  
Refreshment Break

11:00 am – 12:30 pm  
Bringing it All Together & Closing

After four days of learning, sharing, discussions, presentations and performances participants will spend the last 90 minutes bringing it all together and laying the groundwork for a network of creators, presenters, producers, and community animators involved in the performing arts in rural communities.

- Throughout the symposium a team of videographers, artists, observers, and social media watchers will have captured the flow and the flavour of the many parts of SPARC. This team will deliver a short multi-media presentation reflecting the experience.
- The Youth Summit will report on their findings and recommendations for the future.
- We will have a look at what the Living and Thinking Wall has to report to us on how symposium participants have come together to share, collaborate and create dreams for the future.
- We will present the next steps in the creation of a network.

12:30 pm  
Lunch & Departures
Keynote & Speaker Biographies

Inga Petri – Keynote Speaker
9:00 – 10:30 am, Friday, April 25th
Community, Partnership and Performing Arts: Co-creating a Culture of Place in Rural Communities

Inga Petri, CMRP, is the President of Strategic Moves. Her work thrives on the crossroads of research, strategy and marketing/audience development.

With more than 20 years experience in diverse sectors – from the performing arts, museums and arts services organization to international trade promotion organizations, national membership associations and technology companies – clients benefit from an uncommon breadth of experience and expertise.

Applying creative, collaborative approaches, she consistently rallies teams around common objectives and inspires action, leveraging her experience on both the client and agency sides of marketing practice.

After sixteen years in sales and marketing, and as an account executive at a major Ottawa advertising agency, Inga founded Strategic Moves, a research-based consultancy focused on designing strategic solutions that effectively connect clients with their audiences. In addition to hundreds of corporate sector and federal government projects, Inga has a profound record of achievement in the arts and cultural sector spanning from her work in Canadian book publishing during the 1990s to a series of significant primary and secondary research, analysis and strategy projects undertaken for the National Arts Centre, Governor General’s Performing Arts Awards, Storytellers of Canada – Conteurs du Canada, Canada Dance Festival, Canadian War Museum and others during the last decade.

Most recently, she has been leading the Value of Presenting: A Study of Performing Arts Presentation in Canada, conducting extensive research into the value, benefits and impact of performing arts presentation. During this study - commissioned by CAPACOA on behalf of the presenting field - she has led more than 30 workshops and presentations across Canada with over 1,500 participants from the presenting and performing arts field providing a unique perspective on the opportunities for and challenges faced by the performing arts sector.

She presents at national and regional conferences in the performing arts, research and marketing communities and regularly gives talks on evolving marketing practice and actionable research to a variety of professional meetings and in post-secondary institutions.

Steven Thorne – Keynote Speaker
9:00 – 10:30 am, Saturday, April 26th
Place-Based Cultural Tourism: Realizing Your Community’s Potential

Steven Thorne specializes in “place-based cultural tourism” - a phrase that Steven coined.

Steven’s clients have included Tourism BC, Parks Canada, Ontario’s Ministry of Culture, Tourism PEI, and cities, towns and institutions from British Columbia to Newfoundland and Labrador. In the wake of the 2010 Winter Olympics, North America’s preeminent ski destination - Whistler - invited Steven to help the resort capitalize on cultural tourism. The result was, “A Tapestry of Place: Whistler’s Cultural Tourism Development Strategy” – a strategic blueprint for place-based cultural tourism. Currently, Steven is developing cultural tourism strategies for Huntsville/Lake of Bays, Ontario, and for BC’s Columbia Valley.

With an extensive background in culture - he managed the Arts Development Office for Greater Victoria, BC, and for the City of Kelowna, BC - Steven Thorne brings principles of cultural planning and placemaking to destination planning for cultural tourism. He hopes that, over time, his place-based approach to cultural tourism will replace attractions-based cultural tourism - the predominant approach (and in Steven’s view; both antiquated and obsolete) that is found in the global tourism marketplace.

Steven Thorne holds a graduate degree in Leisure Studies from the University of Waterloo, specializing in cultural development, and an undergraduate degree in theatre from York University, specializing in performance. In step with his passion for cultural tourism, Steven is an advocate for the preservation of the built environment, and for the preservation of community heritage. He is the author of Policies for Preservation: The Heritage Canada Foundation, 1973 – 1993.

Committed to cultural tourism education as well as its practice, Steven teaches the course, “Cultural Tourism: Realizing the Opportunity”, offered through the University of Victoria’s Cultural Resource Management Program. He also lectures in the Graduate Program in Tourism Policy and Planning at the University of Waterloo.

Scott Walters – Keynote Speaker
9:00 – 10:30 am, Sunday, April 27th
Building a Network

Scott Walters is the founder of the Center for Rural Arts Development and Leadership Education (CRADLE -- http://www.cradlearts.org), an organization devoted to exploring new ways of creating sustainable, participatory arts programs in small and rural communities.

He is also a Professor of Drama at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. He writes for American Theatre Magazine, the Huffington Post and the Clyde Fitch Report, as well as for his blogs Theatre Ideas and Creative Insubordination. He is the co-author with Cal Pritner of Introduction to Play Analysis. Scott lives in Bakersville, NC (pop 462) with his wife, as well as assorted sheep, alpacas, chickens, rabbits, dogs, and cats.
Harold Arbuckle, Board Member & Treasurer, Embro Thistle Theatre, Embro, Ontario
Harold is a Founding member and current board member and treasurer of Embro Thistle Theatre. He has acted on stage and also held the jobs of stage manager, set design and construction, lighting design and directing for local community theatres. His two favorite shows to direct were “Queen Millie of Galt” for Ingersoll Theatre of Performing Arts (ITOPA) and “Trying” for Embro Thistle Theatre. He was a member of the cast and financial manager for Thistle Theatre’s production of “Fiddler on the Roof” that was entered in the festival and represented the Western Ontario Drama League (WODL) at the Theatre Ontario festival in Sault Ste. Marie in 2004. That undertaking took a cast and crew of 86 people to the Sault. Harold is a retired livestock veterinarian. His past endeavors include Chairman of the Embro Townhall Restoration committee, Chairman of the Embro West Zorra Millenium Celebration committee and a board member of Oxford Creative Connections. He was the recipient of an Agriculture Service Diploma presented by Embro Zorra Agricultural Society and an Ontario Volunteer 40 Year Service Award.

Jordyn Archer, Choreographer & Dance Instructor, Haliburton County, Ontario
Jordyn has been studying dance for 17 years and has performed in three previous Dusk Dances seasons. She has also performed in Patria’s Princess of the Stars at the Haliburton Forest in 2007, in Guelph with Royal City School of Ballet and more recently choreographed a piece in Heritage Ballet’s 2012 Nutcracker (Haliburton, Ontario). Jordyn is currently working towards her Certificate of Ballet Teaching Studies with the Royal Academy of Dance and teaching at Heritage Ballet Studio in Haliburton.

Maja Bannerman, Parasol Productions, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
Maja is a published author, singer, storyteller and performer. She is acclaimed from the Yukon to Newfoundland for delighting audiences through original storytelling, theatrical performance and music, creating portrayals of characters, original and historical, in theatres, libraries, museums, galleries, historic sites, at festivals, and in educational institutions. Involved since the Niagara Falls Museum’s 2000 inception of the Drummond Hill Cemetery Tour, writing and directing four years of sell-outs, Maja has been an Arts Educator with The Royal Conservatory of Music’s Learning Through The Arts program, working extensively in schools teaching through drama and music. She also founded the Niagara-on-the-Lake Story Telling Festival.

Anne Barber & Brad Harley, Co-Artistic Directors, Shadowland Theatre, Toronto, Ontario
Anne was born and trained in theatre in the UK where she toured with their only horse-drawn theatre, Horse & Bamboo. She came to Canada via Bread and Puppet and joined Shadowland in 1992. Anne directs Shadowland’s productions and founded the company’s youth program. She teaches mask and puppetry and uses theatre arts to celebrate seasonal cycles. Brad trained as a visual artist and was a founding member of Shadowland in 1983. He has worked as a theatre designer with companies including VideoCabaret, Callaloo Productions (Trinidad), Horse & Bamboo (UK) and Bread and Puppet Theatre (US). Brad defines Shadowland’s highly visual aesthetic of mask, puppetry, costume, stilts and spectacle arts. Shadowland creates original theatre that entertains, engages, empowers and inspires people to interact positively with each other and their environments. Most recently the company has collaborated with communities in rural Norfolk County to create travelling, outdoor shows based on local histories and nature.

Elisha Barlow, SPARC Youth Caucus Co-Facilitator & Arts Council–Haliburton Highlands Board Member, Minden, Ontario
Elisha is an artist and arts educator. She also works at Haliburton School of The Arts–Fleming College as the librarian, student service assistant, student event coordinator and part-time faculty. She is a board member for the Arts Council–Haliburton Highlands and was the founder of their Makers & Mentors program. Elisha is a very active member of the community in the Haliburton Highlands. She performed in the 2013 Dusk Dances ‘Dance of the Derbygirls’ in addition to being co-chair and co-captain of the Highland Roller Girls. She holds a degree in Visual Arts from the University of Western Ontario (London), a certificate in Fibre Arts from Fleming College and has trained in artist-educator fundamentals with the Royal Conservatory. She has previously brought her skills in administration and social media to The Forest Festival, Haliburton Highlands Land Trust, Minden Cultural Centre and Yours Outdoors.

David Barnard, Cultural Consultant, Canada Arts Presentation Fund, Department of Canadian Heritage, Toronto, Ontario
David’s early childhood was spent in the Township of Whitchurch and later in the Township of Medonte in Central Ontario. He attended Ryerson University and has been a Toronto resident for most of his life (there was a four-year experiment with Vancouver). David has worked on many community based projects. He’s been a radio producer/host; event programmer, planner, and production coordinator; journalist; facilitator; publicist and marketer; waiter and delivery driver… Add to that being a spouse and the father of two young boys. When he has time, David loves gardening, bicycling, camping, playing baseball, reading and listening to music.

Jim Blake, Committee Chair, Dusk Dances Haliburton, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Jim is also a storyteller, community animator, curator of the Haliburton Sculpture Forest, consultant for the Haliburton County Development Corporation and part-time faculty member at the Haliburton School of The Arts where he teaches courses on business for artists. He is a very active member of the arts community in the Haliburton Highlands, wearing many hats and contributing greatly to the vitality of the community. Jim serves
as the president of the Haliburton County Community Co-operative which provides support for a wide range of community initiatives in the areas of the arts, heritage, active living and community based research. In 1999 he co-founded the U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research and continues to serve on its management committee. Under the auspices of the Co-op, Jim also co-founded Dusk Dances Haliburton and the Communities in Action Committee.

Aly Boltman, Theatre Manager, The Roxy Theatre, Owen Sound, Ontario
Aly is a graduate of Concordia University's Drama in Education program. She's a seasoned arts administrator, writer and researcher, as well as a former singer, auctioneer and appraiser. Often called a Jill of All Trades, she's happiest problem solving in the most creative ways possible to feed her inner artist, while appeasing her inner neurotic. Born and bred in the city, Aly sold her 16ft wide downtown Toronto home a decade ago to buy a remote 50-acre farm. She's never looked back.

Sylvie Bouchard, Curator & Festival Director, Dusk Dances Inc., Toronto, Ontario
Sylvie began her training in Montreal before moving to Toronto in 1983, to study at the School of The Toronto Dance Theatre. She subsequently joined The Toronto Dance Theatre in 1985, performing nationally and internationally with them for 5 years. Sylvie has also performed with Kaeja d’Dance, Winnipeg Contemporary Dancers and Dancemakers and continues to work for many independent choreographers. She was nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore award for best performance for her solo Cassiopeia, which premiered at the DuMaurier Theatre in 1999. In 1997, Sylvie Bouchard co-founded the company CORPUS with artistic partner David Danzon, and until 2008 she co-created and performed 8 works, touring internationally. She also co-choreographed and starred in the popular children's TV Series Four-Square on Treehouse TV. In 1993, Bouchard created Dusk Dances, a festival that presents dance in public parks. Sylvie is the recipient of the 2009 KM Hunter Award for dance, and is Artistic Director of BoucharDanse, a company that serves as an umbrella for her artistic endeavors.

Jack Brezina, President, Highlands Summer Festival, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Jack is the President and one of the founding members of the Highlands Summer Festival. In addition to his executive responsibilities over the years he has appeared on stage during the Festival. He also manages the company’s marketing and promotion. He has directed two plays for the local Little Theatre Company and directed “You Can’t Take it With You” this spring. Jack is a retired newspaper publisher. In addition to Highlands Summer Festival, he is currently active with Canoe FM Radio, Sticks and Stones Productions, the Conjurors of County Town in Minden, the Arts Council–Haliburton Highlands, Minden Hills Festival of Banners and other arts-related organizations.

George Bridge, Mayor of the Town of Minto, Mount Forest, Ontario
Born and raised in Minto, George attended Ryerson Polytechnic Institute and worked for TD Canada Trust for 30 years, managing various branches throughout Ontario. His ties to the Minto community are varied and strong. Mayor Bridge’s support of a business approach to local government, a responsive Council, as well as the strong and fair voice he provides at the County has gained him a justified reputation as an open, honest and approachable member of local government. Dedicated to Minto, its culture and economic development, he is a practical and effectual member of the Cultural Roundtable.

Craig Brockie, Industry Relations Executive, SOCAN
Craig has worked at SOCAN for seven years. Craig is responsible for helping to build awareness of SOCAN, specifically by organizations like those attending SPARC so they understand the obligation when authorizing musical performances at their event or venue. Craig prides himself on working hard for the betterment of the music industry, music users and of course SOCAN’s 100,000 members. He enjoys discussing any concerns or questions people may have with respect to SOCAN and how SOCAN operates.

Sandy Buck, Director of Education & Community Outreach, Deer Crossing The Art Farm, Gibsons, British Columbia
Sandy is a multi-disciplinary fabric and installation artist with over 10 years’ experience as a costume designer in the theatre and film industry. She received a Genie nomination for her design work on the 2005 film “Eve and the Firehorse”. Six years ago, she discovered the world of puppetry and began creating her own puppets and original shows. In 2006, she formed her own puppet theatre company Rababoo Puppet Theatre. Since that time, she has performed her one-woman show “The Dragon’s Desire” at festivals and theatres along the coast and lower mainland and has performed her puppet show “The Tales of Maggie Rose” across Canada. In 2007, she was the recipient of the Gillian Lowndes Award for her ongoing work as a puppet-maker and puppeteer. Sandy has extensive experience as event designer for arts and event-based organizations including the Vancouver Jazz Festival, Vancouver Film Festival and Whistler/Blackcomb. She has organized gala events for over 1000 guests, including creating the artistic decor, organizing the production and coordinating the event. Sandy also has extensive experience working with youth and children. She has created programs for youth in many settings and performed/interacted with children in a variety of settings from small classrooms to large outdoor events.

Kate Butler, Curator, Haliburton Highlands Museum, Haliburton County, Ontario
Originally from Toronto, her work in the fields of Celtic Studies, heritage and folklore have taken her to places as far afield as Ireland and Jamaica, but memories of summer visits to Haliburton County brought her back to the Highlands in 2013. She feels it’s important for museums to function as community spaces and to work collaboratively with a variety of other groups.
Roxanne Casey, Manager, CANOE FM, Haliburton County, Ontario
Roxanne is in her sixth year of Managing this not-for-profit local Community Radio Station. The position requires having close relationships with community stations across the country and the CRTC and countless local community organizations. Roxanne sits on the National Campus and Community Radio Association, the Dysart et al Cultural Planning Committee and is a member of the 2015 Ontario Senior Games Committee. Previously Roxanne was the volunteer manager and the Resource Development Coordinator for the local Community Care organization and she partnered with her husband of many years as the owner, operator/manager of a local resort.

Krista Dalby, Co-Artistic Director, Small Pond Arts, Prince Edward County, Ontario
Krista is a playwright, a puppeteer, a producer of theatre and community festivals, and an arts educator. Small Pond Arts is an ‘art farm’ in rural Prince Edward County, Ontario – an artist residency centre, art gallery and art centre that hosts concerts, plays, festivals, workshops, and other joyous creative events. Krista is a volunteer with ArtsCan Circle, travelling to remote First Nations communities to lead school workshops in puppetry, and is the Project Director for Puppets Without Borders, bringing puppetry and art supplies to kids in Ghana. She also teaches closer to home through the Ontario Arts Council’s Artist in Education program.

Ryan Dawson, Youth, Spoken Word Performer & Musician, Haliburton County, Ontario
Ryan caught the bug for public speaking in elementary school during a grade six speech contest and has been spouting words in one form or another ever since. He uses music, poetry and analogy in an attempt to communicate the unadulterated joy of being. Ryan draws inspiration from the inexhaustible bounty of nature and mines the depths of his own restless soul for material. Born under the sign of Leo (surprise, surprise), Ryan is attracted to fluorescent colors, likes peanut butter and enjoys leisurely strolls along the beach.

Sadie Dixon-Spain, Founder, Artistic Director, Act, In-house Playwright for The Walking Theatre Company (TWTC), Argyll, Scotland
Sadie has enjoyed a long and creative acting career, with National Repertory theatre, TV and broadcast credits to her name. After a life-changing move to rural Argyll (Scotland), Sadie thought her acting days were through, however the extraordinary wild, beautiful, isolated landscape became home, and started a creative journey of discovery. TWTC was born as a direct creative response to the rural environment, to open up community access to theatre, and deliver work that audiences really want to experience. A true theatre without walls: with a unique brand and methodology, producing award-winning interactive work, pioneering new writing, engagement and project collaboration.

Gordon Duff, Treasurer & Deputy CAO, Town of Minto, Harriston, Ontario
Gordon was born in Waterloo and obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration from Wilfred Laurier University. He has 20 years of municipal auditing experience and is currently Treasurer/Deputy CAO for the Town of Minto. He is actively involved in economic and cultural development with Minto Council and has volunteered as Treasurer of the Minto Arts Council for 15 years. Gordon attended the first Municipal Cultural Planning Forums in 2004 and is keenly interested in this topic. He presented the experiences of cultural planning in small towns to a Russian delegation assisted by the Ontario Ministry of Culture in 2012.

Curtis Eastmure, Founding Member, Highlands Little Theatre, Haliburton County, Ontario
Curtis is a singer, actor and producer. He, along with key members of the arts community, spearheaded the effort to transform the gymnasium at Haliburton’s local high school, into a theatre – the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion – and then helped raise $450,000 in donations needed to support the work.

Kendra Fanconi, Artistic Director, The Only Animal Theatre Society, Roberts Creek, British Columbia,
A theatre creator of original, often site-specific work, Kendra has created plays in swimming pools, treetops, on False Creek, and in a theatre built of snow and ice. Playwriting/Directing credits include: NIX, at the 2010 Cultural Olympiad and Enbridge Festival, Alberta Theatre Projects 2009, (Nominated Betty Mitchell Award: Best New Play, Best Production, and Vancouver’s Critic’s Choice Award for Innovation); dog eat dog produced by The Only Animal, PuSH festival, 2007, (Nominated Jessie: Best New Play), Other Freuds produced by The Only Animal, 2005, (Winner Jessie Award: Significant Artistic Achievement). Other playwriting credits include: Bonehouse, one-act for Solo Collective, 2003, adapted for CBC radio; The One that Got Away, 2002 remounted at Magnetic North Festival, 2007, (Nominated for 10 Jessies including Best Script, Best Emerging Playwright. Winner of four Jessies including Outstanding Production); you and the moon, a short play for HIV/E2, Magnetic North, 2008, remounted at Cultch 2010 (Winner: Jessie Award Significant Artistic Achievement for HIV/E2). Other directing credits include: Sugar for Hive 3 and Last Five Years for Roaring Lion. Collectively Written: Transit Lounge, 2005; The Last Stand, 2002, (Nominated: Critic’s Choice Award for Innovation); Box2, 2000, (Winner: Jessie for Significant Artistic Achievement); All Flesh is Grass, co-written and produced with Radix, 1998. Over the last few years she has mentored 50 companies in creating original site specific premieres for the Fringe Festival. Kendra is the Artistic Director of The Only Animal, a company that is uniquely dedicated to theatre that springs from place.
Michael Fay, Professional Writer, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario

Michael turned to playwriting when he moved to Haliburton County 17 years ago, using his plays to animate the community to a deeper and different understanding of itself. He tends to see small worlds in large contexts, in art and in life. He was twice president of the Periodical Writers of Canada, and in that capacity a primary negotiator for Canadian copyright agreements, which have brought millions of dollars into writers’ pockets since inception.

Aengus Finnan, Touring and Audience Development Officer, Ontario Arts Council Toronto, Ontario

Aengus is a visual arts graduate of Pearson College, studied theatre at Concordia University, and specialized in Aboriginal and Northern education at Nipissing University. As a singer-songwriter he released three albums and toured internationally for eight years. He taught in Moosonee, Ontario, and Inuvik, Northwest Territories; and worked as a Program Manager for Community Futures prior to the OAC. He is past President of the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals, co-founder of the Northumberland Arts Council, and founder of the Shelter Valley Folk Festival.

Randy Glynn, Choreographer and Dance Professional, Toronto, Ontario

Randy Glynn’s 37 year history as a dance professional began in Halifax in 1977 as dancer/manager of the freshly minted Halifax Dance Co-op Dance Company. A year later he was on stage in NYC with Toronto’s Danny Grossman Dance Company with whom he danced and toured all over the world. In 2008 he was invited to Berlin to direct a Circus Cabaret Show called MyLife. The successful show, which ran at the Chamaeleon Theatre in the heart of Berlin for a year, was seen by over 100,000 people. In the summer of 2013 Randy created a full evening piece called Dancing in the Third Act with 12 untrained seniors in Annapolis Royal, NS. The success of this remarkably moving dance grows daily as it garners both national and international attention.

Laura Good, Programming Coordinator, TIFF, Toronto;
Ming-Jenn Lim, Senior Coordinator, Film Circuit, TIFF, Toronto, Ontario

Laura books films for Atlantic Canada, Quebec, DVD locations and all short programming and Ming-Jenn oversees guest bookings, new group inquiries, group development. TIFF is a charitable cultural organization with a mission to transform the way people see the world through film. Founded in 1989, Film Circuit is TIFF’s successful film outreach programme, bringing the best of Canadian and international films and artists to communities across the country. Through an alternate model of grassroots distribution, marketing and exhibition, Film Circuit encompasses over 180 groups in over 160 communities across Canada, and helps TIFF lead the world in building markets and audience for Canadian cinema.

Byron Hermann, President, Calabogie & Area Business Association, and CEO, Genesis Music Productions Canada, Calabogie, Ontario

Byron was born, raised and educated in Southwestern Ontario. Upon graduation from University of Western Ontario he moved to the Montreal area completing a Masters Degree in Music at McGill University followed by further graduate work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Byron has pursued an active career in music education, conducting and composing, and church music ministry. After working overseas in Taiwan for ten years Byron and his wife Cathy moved to Calabogie to operate “The Fans of Calabogie B&B”. He is currently music minister for the United Church of Canada, CEO of Genesis Music Productions Canada – an independent music producer – and is a champion for all aspects of the creative economy and tourism at the local, county, provincial and federal levels of government. He serves as president of the Calabogie and Area Business Association and is on the board for the Ottawa Valley Visitor Association.

Chad Hershler, Artistic & Executive Director, Deer Crossing The Art Farm, Gibsons, British Columbia

Since the Art Farm Society was officially formed in 2008, Chad has helped develop and oversee its unique art-plus-nature education programming for children and adults. He has produced five years of high quality arts-in-nature programming, catalyzed the launch of FUSE Community Work Hub, (a shared work space for creative and social entrepreneurs), and developed an outdoor festival that draws more than 2000 people over two days to the Gibsons, BC region every August. Currently, Chad is working on the Art Farm’s largest initiative yet: The Smart Farm Project. Chad has also worked as a professional actor and writer for the past 15 years. He has been a company member and collaborator in theatre companies across Canada and self-produced numerous theatrical productions throughout his career. As a writer, Chad is an award-winning freelance journalist – as well as a writer of short stories, novels, plays and narrative non-fiction. In 2001, Chad took a break from the arts to take a small-business course at the British Columbia Institute of Technology to learn the basic skills of business planning, management and operations. Since then, he has applied these skills to his work as a self-employed artist and collaborator and with his work on The Art Farm. Chad is a Bachelor of Fine Arts graduate, specializing in Theatre Performance, from Concordia University in Montreal.

Valerie Hopper, Manager, Cultural Development, Arts & Heritage, Canadian Heritage, Ottawa, Ontario

Valerie has been involved with arts presenting as a volunteer since her pre-teen years, when she lived in Sault Ste. Marie. She is a graduate of the University of Toronto and lived in Toronto for 7 years. She could not resist the call of the north, and returned to the Sault to raise her 4 children. Her first paying gig in the arts was the Arts Council of Sault Ste. Marie, where she was an events co-ordinator and editor of the Council’s publication, ARTiculations. While working there, she started a presenting
after fundraising over $100,000 CAD, the dream became a reality! A project with her Drama Students in Manitoba came to life, and TWTC’s transatlantic adventure began. Nancy’s vision to create a TWTC performance, and blown away by the performance, was swept into a TWTC performance, and blown away by the performance. While her visit was arranged to attend a fiddle workshop, Nancy was encouraged a visit in 2010, where she travelled to the stunning Isle of Lismore in Argyll – a rural island in the Western Highlands. Nancy is the Manitoba Project Coordinator – the Canadian contact for the Grimsby Museum ‘A Walk Through History, Niagara 2012 - Cultural Capital of Canada’. New to the world of performing arts, Colleen served as the Director and Site Coordinator for the Grimsby Museum ‘A Walk Through History’ Cemetery tour. The Cemetery Tour, offered at Queens Lawn Cemetery in Grimsby was a huge success due to the help of Museum staff and a great group of volunteer actors. This tour, with new scripts, was offered in 2013 and is part of the Grimsby Museum’s annual event schedule.

Shelley King, Owner/Chief Executive Puppeteer, Puppeteria, Wilberforce, Ontario

Shelley uses the magic of puppets as a workshop facilitator, entertainer, educator, social change agent, and shift disturber. Over the past two decades, Shelley has used her playful and interactive approach to teach and entertain thousands of people of all ages and abilities. She brings together her training in social work, clowning, puppetry and expressive arts to create a unique blend of workshop experiences custom-designed for each group. Her creative presentations have been enjoyed at conferences, children’s camps, women’s retreats, elementary and secondary schools, colleges, not-for-profit organizations, hospices, seniors residences, and festivals.

Allan Kirby, Musician in Residence, Lang Pioneer Village Museum, Peterborough County, Ontario

Allan is Musician in Residence at Peterborough County’s Lang Pioneer Village Museum where he facilitates traditional music workshops and provides music for special events. He has a BA from Queen’s University, Kingston, a MAEd from St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and a PhD in Canadian Studies from Carleton University in Ottawa. Allan’s primary interest is in rural Ontario traditional music. He has lectured at Queen’s and Carleton Universities; and written for scholarly publications. Allan co-wrote and produced Fowke Tales, a musical-drama about scholar Edith Fowke’s search for rural Ontario folk songs. In 2006, he received the Peterborough County Award for Arts Leadership. His performance experience includes many studio recording credits and years of playing pedal-steel guitar with country/rock bands Matchbox and Bandanna, and banjo with bluegrass bands McCormick and Solina Road. Allan currently plays banjo with the bluegrass band SweetGrass and instrumental folk music group Nassau Mills.

Nancy Kovachik, Drama Teacher, Powerview High School, Pine Falls, Manitoba

Nancy is the Manitoba Project Coordinator – the Canadian contact – for The Walking Theatre Company (TWTC), her love of Scotland encouraged a visit in 2010, where she travelled to the stunning Isle of Lismore in Argyll – a rural island in the Western Highlands. While her visit was arranged to attend a fiddle workshop, Nancy was swept into a TWTC performance, and blown away by the concept. She met with Sadie after the performance, and the TWTC’s transatlantic adventure began. Nancy’s vision to create a project with her Drama Students in Manitoba came to life, and after fundraising over $100,000 CAD, the dream became a reality!

Susan Lake, Manager, Arts & Cultural Services, Municipality of Meaford, Meaford, Ontario

In 2007 Susan was hired as Manager of Meaford Hall Arts & Cultural Centre following its extensive renovation and reopening. In 2013, she was promoted to Manager of Arts & Cultural Services which includes both Meaford Hall and the Meaford Museum in her portfolio. Susan has an undergraduate degree from the University of Western Ontario and is the former Manager of the Meaford Chamber of Commerce.

Colleen Laverdiere, Grimsby Museum Assistant Curator, Grimsby, Ontario

Colleen has worked for the Town of Grimsby for 19 years as the Assistant Curator of the Grimsby Museum, developing programmes and special events for the Grimsby community. The Grimsby Museum was part of ‘A Walk Through History, Niagara 2012 - Cultural Capital of Canada’. New to the world of performing arts, Colleen served as the Director and Site Coordinator for the Grimsby Museum ‘A Walk Through History’ Cemetery tour. The Cemetery Tour, offered at Queens Lawn Cemetery in Grimsby was a huge success due to the help of Museum staff and a great group of volunteer actors. This tour, with new scripts, was offered in 2013 and is part of the Grimsby Museum’s annual event schedule.

Loree Lawrence, Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Officer, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto, Ontario

Prior to joining the OAC in 2009, Loree developed collaborative theatre performances, film and video projects, art installations and arts-based research projects with communities in Toronto and Vancouver for 20 years. During this time she was the Theatre Director at Kensington Youth Theatre and Employment Skills (KYTES) in Toronto and the Creative Director at Projections, a film and video mentorship project for street-involved youth in the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver. Loree has also worked extensively with several performing arts companies including Jumblyes Theatre, Public Dreams Society and Leaky Heaven Circus and is the founding member of Red Wagon Collective, a community-engaged arts initiative that is active in the Junction neighbourhood of Toronto.

Colin Little, Actor, The Walking Theatre Company, Argyll, Scotland

Colin’s first role with The Walking Theatre Company (TWTC) was that of Macbeth, playing alongside Sadie’s Lady Macbeth with fine aplomb. An established, diverse, creative member of our core company, Colin has taken to the challenge of such roles as Long John Silver and Robert Burns, often going to great lengths to “get his character just right”. He has led a 100-strong Battalion of ‘High School’ Roman Legionnaires, through The Inch Public Park (Perth), and collected ‘Fish Gutters’ on the Shores of Loch Fyne. Further credits include Film and TV work, performances with No Limit People Theatre, Baldy Bane Theatre, Hopscotch Theatre, and regular Edinburgh Fringe appearances.
Katherine Lockhart, Cultural Coordinator, Creative Gros Morne, Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland & Labrador
Katherine is an experienced administrator with a background in event and project planning with a strong passion for the arts and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. Katherine is the coordinator for the implementation of the Gros Morne Cultural Blueprint.

Nichola McEwan, Educator/Artist, Community Representative, Minto Cultural Roundtable, Harriston, Ontario
After receiving an Honours BA in languages, Nichola studied Furniture Design at Sheridan College before obtaining her teaching qualifications. She currently teaches high school English, French and Art, maintains a small rural studio and runs a blog which spotlights local businesses and events. Her decision to move to a rural community grew from a desire to enjoy a higher quality of living and a stronger sense of community. As an artist she has experienced the unique challenges of living in a rural community and as an educator she understands the importance of knowledge and the power of people.

David Maggs, Founder & Director, Gros Morne Summer Music, Rocky Harbour, Newfoundland & Labrador
David has spent the past decade building a wide variety of arts activities and has learned how to engage with the larger economic context in doing so. David is an accomplished pianist, having performed throughout Canada, the US and in Europe, and has been fortunate to collaborate with some of the most exciting players of his generation. He is also completing a PhD in Environmental Studies at the Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia.

Philly Markowitz, Economic Development Officer for Local Food, Grey County, Owen Sound, Ontario
Philly has urban interests and rural sensibilities. Drawn to Grey County for a “one-year experiment” in 1991, she and her family put down deep roots in the area and have founded or facilitated several cultural and community events over the past 20+ years. A graduate of Ryerson University, Philly was a programmer and director at Toronto’s community radio station CLKN before working as a freelance host and programmer for CBC Radio for 17 years. She currently works for Grey County as the Economic Development Officer for Local Food, where partnerships drive the vast majority of her projects. She is also on the Mudtown Festival’s steering committee.

Barrie Martin, President of Haliburton County Folk Society, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Barrie has been active helping to shape the music scene in the Haliburton Highlands for many years. The Folk Society presents a concert series in venues throughout the Haliburton Highlands, house concerts, monthly open stages and a Winter Folk Camp. The Society works closely with other community partners to present, produce and promote all genres of music and nurture the growth of local performers. The Society supports local musicians by providing them with opportunities to perform, selling their music, offering recording subsidies, scholarships for youth, producing a compilation CD, and maintaining a database of local artists. Barrie also owns and operates Yours Outdoors, a company that specializes in experiential tourism to create unique adventures in art, culture and nature that often include the performing arts. He also provides consulting services in environmental and ecological education, tourism and community development.

Fay Martin, Co-Founder, Conjurors of County Town, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Fay came to Haliburton County to create a broad-spectrum children’s mental health agency, and persistently worked to integrate art into the roster of interventions, which included consistently making room for children and youth in Conjurors’ activities. As Coordinating Producer of Conjurors, she ensured that it was fiscally viable as well as socially inclusive.

Pam Mundy, Amateur Performer, ‘A Walk Through History’, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
Pam has been designing, creating and making historical costumes since she was 10 years old which was aeons ago and during that time she has costumed over 30 major period productions winning four awards at Theatre Ontario. Her skills were honed at Niagara College’s Theatre Arts program. She currently spends her time making reproduction clothing for individuals, museums, short films and theatrical productions. She also gives talks on Costume and Historical Food and is an amateur performer in ‘A Walk Through History’ in Niagara-on-the-Lake. Those who know Pam would say that historical costume is her number one passion, however her life has also been coloured by time as a Police Officer, Restaurateur, Chef Instructor and Caterer. Taking life’s opportunities whenever they present themselves is her creed.

Lou O’Hara, Regional Advisor, Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport, Peterborough, Ontario
Lou serves as the local connection to the Province’s programs and resources (including grants) that support the culture, sport and recreation sectors. His coverage area includes the Counties of Haliburton, Peterborough and north Hastings. Within the ministry’s Regional Services Branch, there is a network of Regional Advisors across the Province that provide ongoing information and advisory support to municipalities, First Nations communities and not-for-profit organizations at the local and regional level.
Jude Ortiz, Research Coordinator, NORDIK Institute, Algoma University, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
Jude has been conducting culture research across Northern Ontario for the NORDIK Institute, Algoma University’s community-based research institute, since 2004. Her research foci include resilience; holistic (cross-sectorial) community economic and social development within and between cultures; and, education and training. She maintains a studio goldsmithing business and brings her knowledge and understanding of the realities and context of rural artists to her research. Jude is a PhD candidate (ABD) and her presentation is based on her doctoral research.

Daniela Pagliaro, Committee Member, Dusk Dances Haliburton, Haliburton County, Ontario
Daniela has worked as a choreographer and community animator in Haliburton County since 2001. She has taught contemporary dance and has offered many Artist in Education Projects in rural communities in Ontario. She trained at the Canadian Children’s Dance Theatre (now Canadian Contemporary Dance Theatre), Toronto Dance Theatre and the York University Dance Program. Throughout her career she has combined community development and dance including working with youth in Bella Bella, B.C, on Manitoulin Island, and Haliburton County. Daniela created the piece “The Hat” with eight local youth for the first Dusk Dances festival in Haliburton in 2006, which was remounted for Dusk Dances in Toronto in 2007. In 2011 she coordinated a local commission with Toronto choreographers Meredith Thomson and Kate Franklin who mounted a new work for Dusk Dances Haliburton that involved six professional dancers and thirty-two community members. In 2013, Daniela teamed up with members of the Highland Roller (Derby) Girls and Kate Franklin to create a community piece for Dusk Dances Haliburton.

Sean Pennylegion, Producer & Musician, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Sean arrived at “The Forest” with a checkered past. His most recent academic pursuit was the study of Ecotourism Management at Fleming College in Haliburton. After graduation in 2000, he was offered an annual, seasonal position at Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Reserve that included guiding the “Walk in the Clouds” canopy tour and piloting a fresh water tour submarine. Sean has been involved in the music “business” for a long time both as a musician and producer. He was the General Manager of the Forest Festival for the past 5 years and the Artistic Director of the Haliburton County Folk Society for longer than that!

Tammy Rea, Principal, Sticks and Stones Productions, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Tammy has spent the last 20 years in the computer world – and then the last 10 of those working with digital video. She runs the Haliburton 48 Create Video competition for ages 7 to 70. Tammy has taught video creation at all school levels and also produces corporate and creative videos. Sticks & Stones Productions, a Haliburton based media arts company, works with some of the best video production personnel in the business and is able to provide field producers, PAs, grips/utility, lighting directors, teleprompter operators or any additional positions your project may require. “Sticks & Stones brings stories to life – around the world – with vibrant, high-quality imagery and professional video production. From every corner of the world, we capture the images that tell your story- beautifully and effectively.”

Lyn Royce, Principal, Royce Public Images, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario
Lyn has worked with Toronto’s Mixed Company Theatre, Waterloo’s Creative Enterprise Initiative and more recently with “A Walk Through History, Niagara 2012 – Cultural Capital Of Canada”. She has passion and experience with one-on-one mentorships and multi-project management of tourism product development (Norfolk County); cross-pollinating programming (Heritage Toronto), funding submissions (Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund; Ministry Of Tourism, Culture, and Sport); personal missions championing accessibility to the arts; 360° audience stewardship; and breaking down silos that separate arts disciplines. Her colleagues branded her as “best plug and play person”. She has also served as Audience Services Director for seven seasons with the Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake.

Dan Rubin, Principal, Second Stage Creative Arts, Pouch Cove, Newfoundland & Labrador
Dan is a retired educator (teacher, school principal and curriculum developer) who has worked in community development in three provinces. Since moving to Newfoundland in 2002 he has primarily been an arts manager, supporting performing artists, writers and visual artists through his company Second Stage Creative Arts. Living in the small outport community of Pouch Cove, about 17 km north of the capital (St. John’s), he has been increasingly involved in programs that honour the history and heritage of the town, while using the arts to celebrate and extend local history and culture. Over the past ten years he has organized concerts, performed with local musicians, worked with the town’s community development committee to develop a park in the middle of the town, he has founded a community heritage committee and has helped organize a series of celebrations and local commemorative events. Most recently he is coordinating efforts to establish a community garden, as an educational and seed saving site that honours traditional agricultural practices. Dan is also active as an author, editor and performing musician.

Peter Schleifenbaum, Manager, Haliburton Forest & Wildlife Preserve, Haliburton County, Ontario
Peter was born, raised and educated in Germany. Peter and his wife Elke came to Haliburton in 1988 to take on the management of their family’s company, The Haliburton Forest and Wild Life Preserve, the following year. With a PhD in forest history and forest economics, Peter’s focus was the vast timber resources of the company, which had been neglected for decades. But the task and operation at hand was almost purely tourism related, which was a new experience for him. His lack of previous exposure to common tourism operations allowed him
to think outside the box and venture into some of the innovative tourism products Haliburton Forest is known for today. In addition, he and Elke love good music!

Claude Schryer, Coordinator, Inter-Arts Office, Canada Council for the Arts, Ottawa, Ontario

Claude studied composition at Wilfrid Laurier University (BAMus), interdisciplinary arts and new music at The Banff Centre for the Arts and composition at McGill University (Master Mus). His professional artistic activities are principally in the fields of electroacoustics, interdisciplinary art, acoustic ecology and the media arts. Since 1999, he has been a member of the management team at the Canada Council for the Arts as Coordinator of the Inter-Arts Office, whose mandate is to foster and support creative diversity, vitality, recognition and continued excellence of integrated arts, contemporary circus arts and artist and community collaborative practices that are related to these arts. It achieves its mandate through the delivery of funding programs for professional artists, collectives or groups, and organizations. These programs work in complement with the other funding programs of the Canada Council for the Arts. In addition to its programs, the Inter-Arts Office seeks to share and generate knowledge and information about current and emerging artistic practices within its scope, both within the Canada Council and with artistic communities.

Deb Sholdice, General Manager, Blyth Festival, Blyth, Ontario

Deb spent “many happy years in my youth” as a volunteer usher at the Blyth Festival. In 2000, she went with her son to a volunteer orientation session and they’ve become fixtures ever since, first as a member of the community company for all three productions of The Outdoor Donnellys and then as a member of the Board of Directors. In 2007, the organization was searching for a General Manager and Deb was ultimately selected for the position. Since that time, she has worked closely with many organizations and businesses to promote arts and culture in their rural region.

Sheila Simpson, Program Manager, Ontario Trillium Foundation, London, Ontario

Sheila has worked with the Ontario Trillium Foundation for 15 years. She is also the Strategy Lead on Capacity Building for the Foundation and brings to that work a strongly rural view. Sheila grew up on a family farm in Middlesex County and although she currently lives in the city of London, she has never lost her view of issues through a rural lens. She volunteers for a number of organizations within her community.

Heather Smith, Theatre Manager/Booking Manager for the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion, Haliburton, Ontario

Heather has been involved in theatre productions for the past 15 years, working mostly behind the scenes as stage manager and ASM. She has been manager of the public use of the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion for the past five years.

Laurel Smith, Artistic Producer, Classic Theatre Festival (Perth), Chair of the Board, Ontario’s Highlands Tourism Organization (OHTO), Pembroke, Ontario

Laurel is a theatre producer, director and performer with an MBA in Arts and Media Administration from York University, Toronto, and theatre training at both the Banff School of Fine Arts and the Drama Studio in London, England. In 2010, Laurel launched the Classic Theatre Festival, the Ottawa Valley’s only professional theatre company, in Heritage Perth, Ontario. Over the first four years of operation, the Festival has grown exponentially, attracting thousands of visitors to Perth, and encouraging visitation to the surrounding area through partnerships and strategic alliances. She has enjoyed a 30-year career as a theatre artist and professional arts manager, and for the past four years has served as a Board Director of OHTO, two years as Governance Committee Chair, and this past two terms as Chair of the Board. Laurel has been instrumental in creating an accountable and transparent governance process for the OHTO, with a focus on policy development, the setting of strategic priorities and operational performance evaluation.

Julianne Sneysts, General Manager, Festival Players of Prince Edward County, Prince Edward County, Ontario

Julianne is the General Manager of Festival Players of Prince Edward County, a professional summer theatre company producing contemporary Canadian plays in beautiful Prince Edward County. With more than a dozen years’ experience as a theatre producer, manager, programmer and promoter, Julianne has worked in a variety of theatre contexts – rural, urban, non-profit, commercial, theatre for young audiences, live comedy and the avant garde. For five years, Julianne was part of the producing team at The Second City in Toronto where she managed tours that played across Canada. She served on the Board of Theatre Ontario for eight years, and is the Founding Co-Artistic Producer of the Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival.

Keith Strata, Owner, Highlands Cinema, Kinmount, Ontario

Keith Stata is a small town construction worker who had big ideas for a cinema in his hometown of Kinmount, Ontario – population 300. He built and operates a five screen, first-run movie complex called the Highlands Cinema. Unlike your average chain theater, the Highlands comes complete with bears eating popcorn, a collection of projectors numbering in the thousands and a room full of mannequins dressed in period costumes.

Fay Wilkinson, Registered Expressive Arts Consultant/Educator, Haliburton County, Ontario

Fay is a registered, independent Expressive Arts Consultant/Educator, storyteller, and artist working out of her Creative Cocoon studio in Eagle Lake, Ontario. She is a member of IEATA (International Expressive Arts Therapy Association) and the Global Alliance for Arts & Health. She is a graduate of and now teaches in the Expressive Arts Post Graduate Program at Fleming College. Fay designs and delivers expressive arts experiences for both individuals and groups of all ages, and continues to research the impact of this work on health and
wellbeing. Her Visible Voices programming engages both seniors and the community at large to make the invisible, visible. Founder of the Haliburton Highlands Community Playback Theatre troupe in 2006 she has led Playback training and performances. Her storytelling credits include performing in festivals in Toronto, Ottawa, Bringelly, Australia and Edinburgh, Scotland. Awarded the Fellowship of Applied Education from Fleming College, her current focus is using the creative process to contribute to the mental health of seniors and expanding the storytelling facet of her services in new and innovative ways.

Kendra Wishlow, Youth Social Entrepreneurship & Marketing Intern – Haliburton County Folk Society & Sticks and Stones Productions, SPARC Working Group Member, Haliburton County, Ontario
Kendra recently completed her studies at the University of Waterloo, earning a degree in Fine Art and Psychology focused on Digital and Performance Arts. She spent her youth in the small town of Bancroft, Ontario where she worked with theatre companies to gain experience in all facets of the dramatic arts. Kendra also actively contributes to Passion8 magazine, a publication created by youth, for youth. She is thrilled to be involved with SPARC as a working group member, a co-performance producer, and youth caucus co-facilitator.

Marie Zimmerman, Executive Director, Hillside Community Festival, Guelph, Ontario
Marie did her PhD work in literature and cultural studies, which she taught at the University of Western Ontario for many years. For the past 12 years, she has worked for several different festivals in the capacity of Artistic Director, planner, publicist, MC, grant-writer and risk-management consultant for both urban and rural events. She recently created emergency preparedness plans for two festivals and events and took on the role of treasurer for the Guelph Dance Festival. She is one of the founding members of the Guelph Fab 5, a collective of local arts festivals.
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