



# 2023 Impact Report



PO Box 345, Guilford, CT • [www.greenstageguilford.org](http://www.greenstageguilford.org)



GreenStage  
GUILFORD  
Live Arts

## Message from the Executive Director



Twenty-twenty-three was an exciting and transitional year for the festival. We adopted a new name, cast a wider-than-ever marketing net, tried new things programmatically, kicked off new collaborations and took meaningful steps toward a future as a professionally staffed organization. In spite of a tropical storm that kept much of our expected audience home on festival weekend this season, we're excited about where we are seven years into this venture now called **GreenStage**.

Artistically, the 2023 festival was a terrific success. We built back to 24 free live events from our Covid-induced low of six in 2021, presenting strong diversity in artistic genre, race, culture, gender and gender identity, age and ability; eight events involved experiential and/or educational elements—a central part of our mission. We expanded the festival to a week, introduced visual art and stand-up comedy, and premiered three new works. There was a booth where people could share and record their stories. An all-abilities dance workshop series was fully enrolled, a lot of fun and deeply moving. We again offered performing arts classes to Guilford public school students; scheduling challenges pushed some of them into 2024.

The beginning of a new year brought new encouragement and validation. We were awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Town of Guilford's American Recovery Plan Act funds. We hired our first office administrator. We elected a new vice chair and two new board members, and signed up several new volunteers. Our new advisory board has its first six members, and we've begun a strategic plan that will give us crucial community input and pay dividends in the festival's future shape, scale and sustainability.

We're thrilled about the possibilities as we leverage this new energy, new talent and new resources. Planning for the next festival and other events is underway as we establish a more visible, ongoing presence in the Shoreline arts and cultural landscape. We're able to do this only because of the tremendous support of this great, arts-loving community—and for that we continue to be immensely grateful.

Peter Hawes, Executive director and chairman



Front cover: Violinist and GreenStage Artists' Award recipient **Ilana Zaks** premiered *The Sounds of New England* based on traditional music from the six New England states. Back cover: A **New England Ballet Theatre** dancer performs en pointe on the festival main stage. Above: **Jonathan Barber**, right, with Peter Hawes. Opposite, **Goodnight Moonshine** performed their unique style of original Americana/folk music. Page 4: **Oompa Possum Puppets** enthralled its young audience. Photos by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.

3 world premieres

24 workshops  
and performances

1,400 attendees

2 million marketing  
impressions





## Entertainment

The 2023 festival presented 14 live performances, eight performance-workshops and two other events. We premiered three new works in music, drama and storytelling. There was folk, brass band, jazz and classical music; opera, cabaret and solo piano; ballet and contemporary dance. There were five women storytellers, two comedians, two staged play readings and a puppet show. Plus music and dance from Puerto Rico, Central Asia, India, the Middle East and Ukraine.

**2023 Artists:**  
**Air Temple Arts, Jonathan Barber & Vision Ahead, Jeff Beal and the Jeff Beal Trio, Beecher, Schuyler Beeman, Carol Birch, Dingonek Street Band, Joe Gerics, Goodnight Moonshine, Danielle Munsell Howard, Kerry Kincy, Marika Kuzma, Jean Le Bec, Nina Lesiga, Wendy Marans, Middle Eastern Dance Academy, The Mohegan Tribe, Movimiento Cultural, Jennifer Munro, Natyamandala, New England Ballet Theatre, Oghlan Bakhshi, Oompa Possum Puppets, Denise Page, Alexa Patrick, Jessica Robinson, Peter Sonenstein, Laura Thoma, Ilana Zaks.**

*Opposite, Natyamandala performed and taught traditional Bharanatyam dance from India. Below, Trumpeter/pianist/composer Jeff Beal fronted a dynamite jazz trio featuring Steve Cardenas on guitar and John Patitucci on bass. Photos by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.*



# Experience

We invested most of our effort this year in public performance-workshops, offering eight educational or jump-in, learn and try-it-yourself dance, music and cultural events. Plus a storytelling booth and a multi-day dance workshop culminating in a performance for people of all physical, cognitive and emotional abilities. We offered programs in jazz, musical scoring, choral singing, spoken word and movement to the Guilford public schools and are working with Guilford Public Schools to most effectively provide in-school programming in the future.

*Below, Kerry Kincy brought people with a wide range of abilities together in a VisABLE Dance residency and performance. Photo by Peter Hawes. Opposite, Middle Eastern Dance Academy performed and taught traditional Egyptian belly dancing. Photo by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.*





Drummer/bandleader **Jonathan Barber**, above, taught arrangement, composition and improvisation to the Guilford High School Jazz Ensemble. Photo by Mark Gahm. Playwright/actress **Julie Fitzpatrick**, below left, performed at several **GreenStage Open Mic Nights at The Marketplace**, while singer/actor **Schuyler Beeman**, center, performed at Guilford's First Congregational Church. Photos by Peter Hawes. **Air Temple Arts**, below right, performed parts of their new show, *Layovers*, and taught circus skills at Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Photo by Judy Sirota Rosenthal. Opposite, *New England Ballet Theatre* by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.





Playwright and GreenStage Artists' Award recipient **Peter Sonenstein** premiered his new work *The End of Empire*, above left, on the festival's main stage. **Jessica Robinson** of Fairfax, Virginia, above right, was one of five female storytellers presented by Artists' Award recipients **Jennifer Munro** and **Denise Page**. **Jonathan Barber** performed at GreenStage Café in the Arthur Murray Dance Studio with his band *Vision Ahead*. Opposite, chorusmaster/conductor **Marika Kuzma** led a *Sing Like a Bird* workshop featuring Ukrainian songs. Photos by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.



## Collaboration

We initiated our collaboration with the Guilford Art Center with a music-and-spoken-word performance in tandem with a Guilford Art League exhibition at GAC; stormy weather canceled a collaborative hands-on artmaking program planned for the Guilford Green. Also canceled, but for one intrepid soul, was a plein air painting program in partnership with the Guilford Art League and Madison Art Society. We're grateful to our gracious 2023 venue partners: Arthur Murray Dance Studio, First Congregational Church, the Guilford Community Center, the Guilford Free Library, The Marketplace at Guilford Food Center, Shoreline Ballet—and especially to the Town of Guilford for use of the historic green.

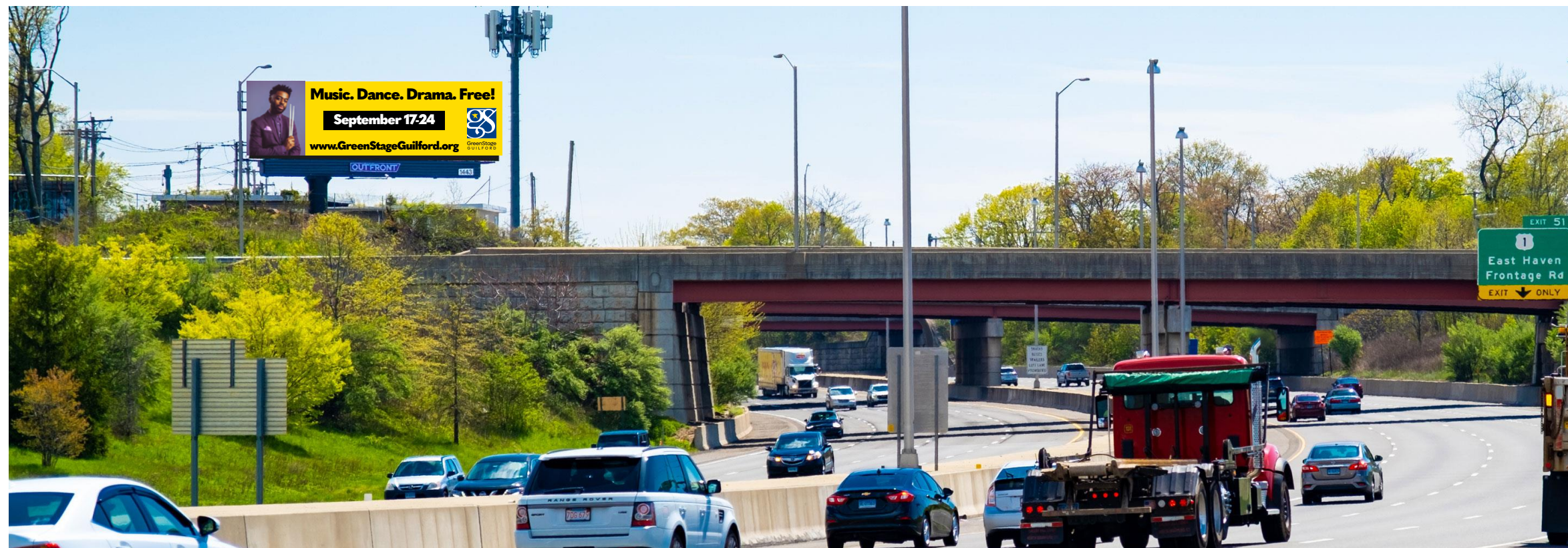
*Ilana Zaks, left, and poet/author Alexa Patrick collaborated on a night of music and spoken word performed in response to works in a Guilford Art League exhibition at the Guilford Art Center. Photo by Kerry Schutz. Opposite, Beecher headlined an evening of comedy at GreenStage Café in the Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Photo by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.*





# Reach

A major donor's generosity enabled us to invest in the largest and most coordinated marketing campaign in our history—with the goals of introducing the festival's new name and brand, creating broad regional awareness and attracting the largest possible audience along with new volunteers, donors, performers and board members. A blend of email marketing; social media; magazine, newspaper and billboard advertising; editorial placement; TV and radio appearances and direct mail generated some 2 million media impressions.

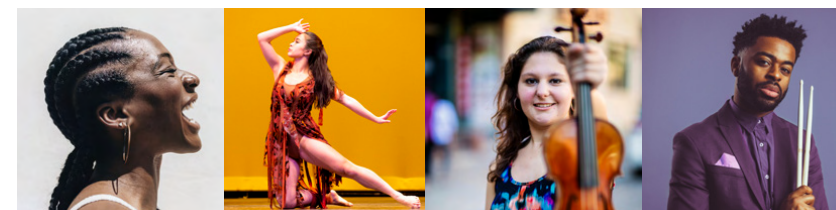


The most comprehensive marketing campaign in GreenStage history featured, clockwise from top left, direct mail, print ads, web advertising and a billboard on Interstate 95.

# Music. Dance. Drama. Wow! September 17-24 Free on the Guilford Green.

For more information and the schedule of events, visit [www.GreenStageGuilford.org](http://www.GreenStageGuilford.org)

*Alexa Patrick by Adedayo Kosoko, New England Ballet Theatre by Jeff Holcombe, Ilana Zaks by Robert Torres, Jonathan Barber by Lauren Desberg*



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GUILFORD  
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# It takes a village

Without the energy, skill, knowledge and experience, imagination, creativity, passion and dedication of these people and organizations, there could not have been a 2023 festival.

### Producing Sponsors

The Residences at 66 High Street

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### Foundation & Government Support

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven  
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The George A. and Grace L. Long Foundation  
The Guilford Foundation  
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Town of Guilford/American Recovery Plan Act

### Partners

American Solutions for Business  
Arthur Murray Dance Studio  
First Congregational Church of Guilford  
Guilford Art Center  
Guilford Art League  
Guilford Free Library



*A plein air painting event was canceled, but one intrepid soul showed up anyway. A team of volunteers, including lighting director Kevin Michael Reed, made sure the show did go on. Photos by Peter Hawes.*

### Partners cont'd.

Guilford Parks & Recreation  
Madison Art Society  
Madison Chamber of Commerce  
The Marketplace at Guilford Food Center  
Shoreline Arts Alliance  
Shoreline Chamber of Commerce  
Shoreline Ballet  
Women Recreating Retirement

### Raffle Partners

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*Opposite, **Movimiento Cultural Afro Continental** performed and taught Bomba music and dance from Puerto Rico. Photo by Judy Sirota Rosenthal.*



**Individual Donors**

Gifts received between 10/1/21 and 1/4/24.

We sincerely apologize if we have omitted anyone!

**Platinum**

Eileen and Andrew Eder  
Susan and Douglas Rollins  
Donita Aruny

**Gold**

Charles and Deborah Austin  
The Conforti Family  
Kristen and Johan Eveland  
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Edward Torres

**Bronze**

Sait and Serap Aksoy  
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Joan Beal  
James Blank  
Michelle Blank  
Zeno Chicarilli  
Barbara Chupp  
Amy Cohen  
Thomas Crosby  
Robert Davidson  
Richard & Judy Davies  
Wendy Dockray  
Carlos and Diana Grilo  
Robert Hartmann  
B. Joan Hickey  
Lynn Hyman  
Kit Ingui

Opposite, **Oghlan Bahkshi**, the stage name for second-generation Turkmens music master Mohammed Geldi Geldi Nejad, awed the audience with a performance of mystical music from Central Asia. He and his wife, Zyyada Jumayeva, sang and accompanied themselves on the two-stringed lute known as the dutar. Photo by Judy Sirota Rosenthal. Below, **Dingonek Street Band** closed out the festival with a set of funky, high-energy party music from the second-line jazz tradition. Photo by Peter Hawes. GreenStage's biennial **Dinner on the Green** benefit was again a sellout. Photo by Kerry Schutz.

**Bronze, cont'd.**

Nellie Kurtzman  
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Gail Tomsich  
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Sandy Connolly  
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Ben Rollins  
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Michael Song  
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 Thomas Crosby  
 Dan Fisher, Treasurer  
 Peter Hawes, Chairman and executive director  
 Stephanie Little Brown, Multicultural programming  
 Susan Rollins, Marketing  
 Sandy Stoddard

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 Mairi Bryan, Sales  
 Tom Conforti, Sales  
 Ty Eveland, Social media  
 MAD Marketing Advertising Design, Web development  
 Pages Inc., Printing & signage  
 Sarah Knox, Sales  
 Super Nine Studios, Web development

## Production & Programming

Peter Hawes, Director of programming

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 Craig Lundell, Associate producer  
 Abbey Tent, Tents & staging  
 CT Metro Protective Services, Security  
 Dave Giordano, Sound  
 Nardella's Music, Sound & lighting  
 Kevin Michael Reed, Lighting design  
 Regional Restrooms, Sanitation  
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 Show Lighting, Lighting equipment  
 Thomas/Ortiz Dance, Marley flooring  
 United Staging & Rigging, Soft goods

## StoryCorps DIY Producer

Richard Davies

## Dinner on the Green Producers

Simone Gell  
 Meg Smith

## Plein Air Painting Coordinators

Eileen Eder  
 Nikki Travaglino

## Catering & Ambience

The Marketplace at Guilford Food Center  
 Wine provided by Eder Bros.

## Artists' Awards Judges

Noah Baerman  
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 Susan Cinoman  
 Angela Clemmons  
 Sandy Connolly  
 Kathryn Contessa  
 Joyce DiLauro  
 Ted Ervin  
 Julie Fitzpatrick  
 Skyler Hagner  
 Keely Baisden Knudsen  
 Ruth Lewis  
 Paul Listro  
 Richard Parent  
 Todd Russell  
 Iddi Saaka  
 Charlie Shafer  
 Sandy Stoddard

## Volunteers

Claire Kerrigan, Volunteer coordinator  
 Suzie Balestracci  
 Nannette Baratta  
 Howard Cohen  
 Sandy Connolly  
 Pamela D'Arc  
 Richard Davies  
 Alicia Dolce  
 Matt Earls  
 Bill Freeman  
 Eleanor Froelich



Opposite, a dance party brought the Dinner on the Green to a joyful close. Photo by Peter Hawes. Above, this was the third festival season in which Simone Gell, left, and Meg Smith produced the Dinner on the Green fundraiser. Below, Dinner patrons shared drinks, a sit-down meal, an auction and raffle, capped by an '80s-style dance party. Photos by Kerry Schutz.

Barbara Johnson  
 Susan Lewis  
 Catherine Maltese  
 Tom McCarthy  
 Pem McNerney  
 Dana Nelson  
 Gary Parrington  
 Elise Powell  
 Doug Rollins  
 Gretchen Rollins  
 Jeffrey Weber

