

# Artpark's Strawberry Moon Festival includes Indigenous musicians, smoke dance competition, Native American artisan market & DJ Shub

Press Release

The Strawberry Moon Festival is a truly immersive experience for everyone to celebrate the diverse indigenous cultures of North America through storytelling, teachings, music, dance and the Native American artisan market. Guests will participate in an inclusive and engaging Native American community gathering where they can make, craft and participate with various Indigenous activities. They will also be entertained by an eclectic lineup of artists performing on multiple stages.

Artpark's Strawberry Moon Festival will return Saturday, June 17. Admission to the afternoon activities in the lower park (1-5:45 p.m.) is free. Tickets for the featured evening performances beginning at 6 p.m., outside in Artpark's "Niagara 1979" "Painted Parking Lot" and stage, are \$20. Chairs and blankets will be allowed for the concert and performances.

This year's Strawberry Moon Festival celebrates the heartbeat of Mother Earth and the heartbeat of our life by introducing a new performance called "The Circle: Indigenous Singer-Songwriters and Musicians Showcase."

Artpark Indigenous Arts Producer Michele-Elise Burnett (Métis/Algonquin, Bear Clan) conceived and curates the Strawberry Moon Festival. She said participants use "their voice and their instruments as their tools to construct stories for the rest of the world to feel and hear. The stories range from powerful, sad, to humorous and playful. No matter the story or song, their concert always creates a unique sense of community, sharing and healing, which will leave you uplifted and amazed by the magic of the lyrics and storytelling by these artists."

The Strawberry Moon Festival welcomes:

- √ Traditional drums
- √ Haudenosaunee country singer-songwriter musician Jim Jacobs
- √ Internationally recognized violinist from the Huron-Wendat Nation, Genevieve Gros-Louis Salamone, and Stephanie Big Eagle (Lakota and Dakota) will honor the youth smoke dancer winners with a special show
- √ Local award-winning musician and Tuscarora singer-songwriter Tonemah and his band will rock the stage with original music to close out the afternoon.



Artpark Strawberry Moon Festival file photos.



### Event Schedule

• 1 p.m. **festival and marketplace** at Artpark's lower park (South Fourth Street entrance): This year's festival will open with Team Tuscarora's Marching Band leading attendees from the Native American Peace Garden to the Emerald Grove Stage, where a youth group will perform the opening thanksgiving address.

Then, a wide variety of free interactive programs will be offered at the Emerald Grove Stage, Artpark's Native American Peace Garden, and everywhere in between.

These programs celebrate diverse and expressive Native American cultures through the arts; food sampling; storytelling; workshops; music presentations; the interactive make, play and take-home Indigenous Ways of Knowing Discovery Zone; wampum beading workshops – one of the U.S.' largest wampum belts collection will be on display; beading workshops; face painting; a unity bracelet workshop; and lacrosse.

The ever-popular **smoke dance competition** continues this year with both youth and adult division.

Visitors can also discover unique gifts from our Native American artisans and food market.

Admission to the afternoon activities is free.

• 6 p.m. **concert** at Artpark's "Niagara 1979" "Painted Parking Lot" and stage: This area will come alive with a special opening with Genevieve Gros-Louis Salamone and Stephanie Big Eagle, who blend traditional dance, hand drum and classical violin to take the audience through a musical and dance storytelling performance.

They encourage adults and youth alike to connect to the stories of the Turtle Island and indigenous peoples of the Americas.

• Closing the Strawberry Moon Festival is a concert headlined by **DJ Shub**, the "Godfather of PowWowStep," a DMC World DJ champion, three-time Juno Award winner, Much Music and Canadian Screen Award Winner, and a founding member of Tribe Called Red. He will take to the stage at 7 p.m. with his unique show that blends traditional drum with modern-day electronic beats and hip-hop.

The Consulate General of Canada in New York, and Roswell Park Cancer Institute are supporting sponsors of the Strawberry Moon Festival.

### Notes on Traffic & Parking

Center Street will be closed on June 17 to accommodate the Lewiston GardenFest. To access Artpark's lower entrance for afternoon activities, guests can access South Fourth Street either via Cayuga Street or Seneca Street.

### History of Artpark's Strawberry Moon Festival

The first Strawberry Moon Festival, in 2019, brought back Native American programming to Artpark after a 40-year-plus hiatus. More than 3,000 guests participated in and experienced Indigenous traditions in song, dance, crafts and more, forging cross-cultural connections and cross-community relationships

that continue to this day.

In 2020, the festival took a COVID-19 pause, but the Native American Peace Garden came to fruition at Artpark State Park.

More than just a place to reflect and take in the beautiful setting along the Niagara River, the garden is an outdoor classroom led by Native Elders and knowledge keepers.

In 2021, the festival-themed "Rekindling our Roots" returned with performances by Martha Redbone, Lakota John, Charly Lowry and Tonemah, plus a smoke dance competition.

In year four, Artpark celebrated the many contributions Native people made in the shaping of this area, and the global stage. The idea was built on the Two Row

Wampum teachings that promote all Nations walk together in parallel, with respect, compassion and understanding, to cultivate an inclusive community for our shared future.

Artpark & Company has made a commitment to Indigenous arts programming and awareness with a full season of Indigenous programs built for and by the local Indigenous community. Its programming, conceived and curated by Burnett, serves residents from the Indigenous community in Lewiston, Youngstown and beyond, as well as non-Native persons who are interested in learning more about the culture and traditions.

Visit [artpark.net](http://artpark.net) for a current calendar of events.




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