

# PERFORMANCES IN THE PARK



*Contact* Venta Rutkauskas  
*Telephone* 250.305.9428  
*Email* [performances@centralcaribooarts.com](mailto:performances@centralcaribooarts.com)  
*Website* <http://www.centralcaribooarts.com/performances-in-the-park/>

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## PERFORMANCES IN THE PARK 2023 TO CATALYZE AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT WITH CONTEMPORARY NEW BRAND AND LINE UP

Williams Lake’s summer concert series is a hidden gem at the heart of downtown through the summer months. Drawing hundreds of people to the outdoor amphitheatre at Gwen Ringwood stage in Boitano Park during 2022, the organizers of the event were reminded of the quality and substance that top-notch arts and culture offers the wider community. Free, family-friendly live entertainment was attracting a crowd, but could they attract even more? They set out to build an outreach strategy that grew from the event’s assets to get the message out.



*Sticks Marketing designer Jasmine Alexander created several branding images for PIP 2023.*

Balancing the unique needs of the local community with the evolving culture of diversity and inclusion, the organizers generated both a new brand image and a line-up roster that matches the natural beauty of the venue and the colourful community connections they witnessed at the summer events.

Presented by the Central Cariboo Arts and Culture Society (CCACS), funded in part by the City of Williams Lake and the Cariboo Regional District, these partners have been working with the Community Arts Council of Williams Lake (CACWL) for the past four years to uplift and emphasize the importance of art and culture in healthy communities. As the 2023 season approached, their ideas prompted a deep dive into the values and goals of the event through a visual design process with Sticks Marketing's Jasmine Alexander.

CACWL Programs and 'Performances' Manager, Venta Rutkauskas describes the journey they took. "Working together with Jasmine from Sticks and CCACS Executive Director Melissa Normandin, our creative imaginings for what Performances in the Park meant to us and the community led to a beautiful set of correlating imagery that we're delighted to share with the community." The process of exploring the current and future impacts of the program led the team to a visual story that they hope will grow with the program over the next decade.

Rutkauskas has also sought to expand the diversity on stage over the years, building relationships to Indigenous performers, and exploring other pathways to equity, including hiring more women, LGBTQ2S+, and other equity-deserving performers. "Arts and culture organizations are being asked to make our stages accessible in every way," adds Rutkauskas. "We've done this through cultural content. We want to represent the community we serve. For example, we know we have an urban-Indigenous community making up almost 25% of the city when considering our line up."

You'll get a taste of it all starting on Thursday July 6<sup>th</sup>. The performers list has got a taste of many musical styles, and acts from near and far, some even touring from Toronto, Ontario and Melbourne, Australia. Highlights include Prince Rupert's **Saltwater Hank** on opening night, Lilwat Nation's **The Spiritual Warriors** in August, **Kym Gouchie** representing L'heidli T'enneh and Secwepemc Nations, **ChuchoTsin and the Land Defenders'** Clayton Charleyboy representing the Tsilhqot'in Nation to the west, and **Half Asian and Amy the CODA** sharing sign language as an accessibility pathway. Acts like **Shannon O'Donovan, Cole Patenaude and the Screech Owls, Carmen Mutschele and Friends** and **Colin Easthope** showcase the local brilliance of our arts and culture scene.

The CCACS and Community Arts Council continue to develop community connections, working to enhance the entertainment experience at the Park each Thursday night. Their outreach to the event sponsors aims to support the local businesses and organizations who devote their funds to the program's success. Sponsors are invited to attend and share their brand with the public, getting involved in multiple ways, like Downtown Williams Lake's **Art Walk** program launch, or the **Chamber of Commerce** cooling us all down during last year's heat with coffers full of freezies for the crowd. This year the organizers' aim is to encourage local food vendors and market stalls to join in the festivities again. **Art in the Park** will also be available for kids looking to get creative!

With the uncertainty of smoke and weather events, the team has also secured a permanent back-up venue with the Cariboo Memorial Complex. Anytime the event is faced with an unsavoury or unsafe climate, the event will shift seamlessly indoors – the show **MUST** go on! "This is a big win for the event and the community, and will lead to fewer event cancelations," says Melissa Normandin at CCACS.

“We’re grateful to the City of Williams Lake and the Cariboo Regional District for providing this venue to ‘Performances in the Park’ in support of arts and culture.”



Amazing local and regional talent in the great outdoors!

<https://www.centralcaribooarts.com/performances-in-the-park/>

Be sure to catch up with Performances in the Park on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and for regular updates, performer biographies and event information.

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