

Folk and Traditional Arts Program

Annual Report 2022

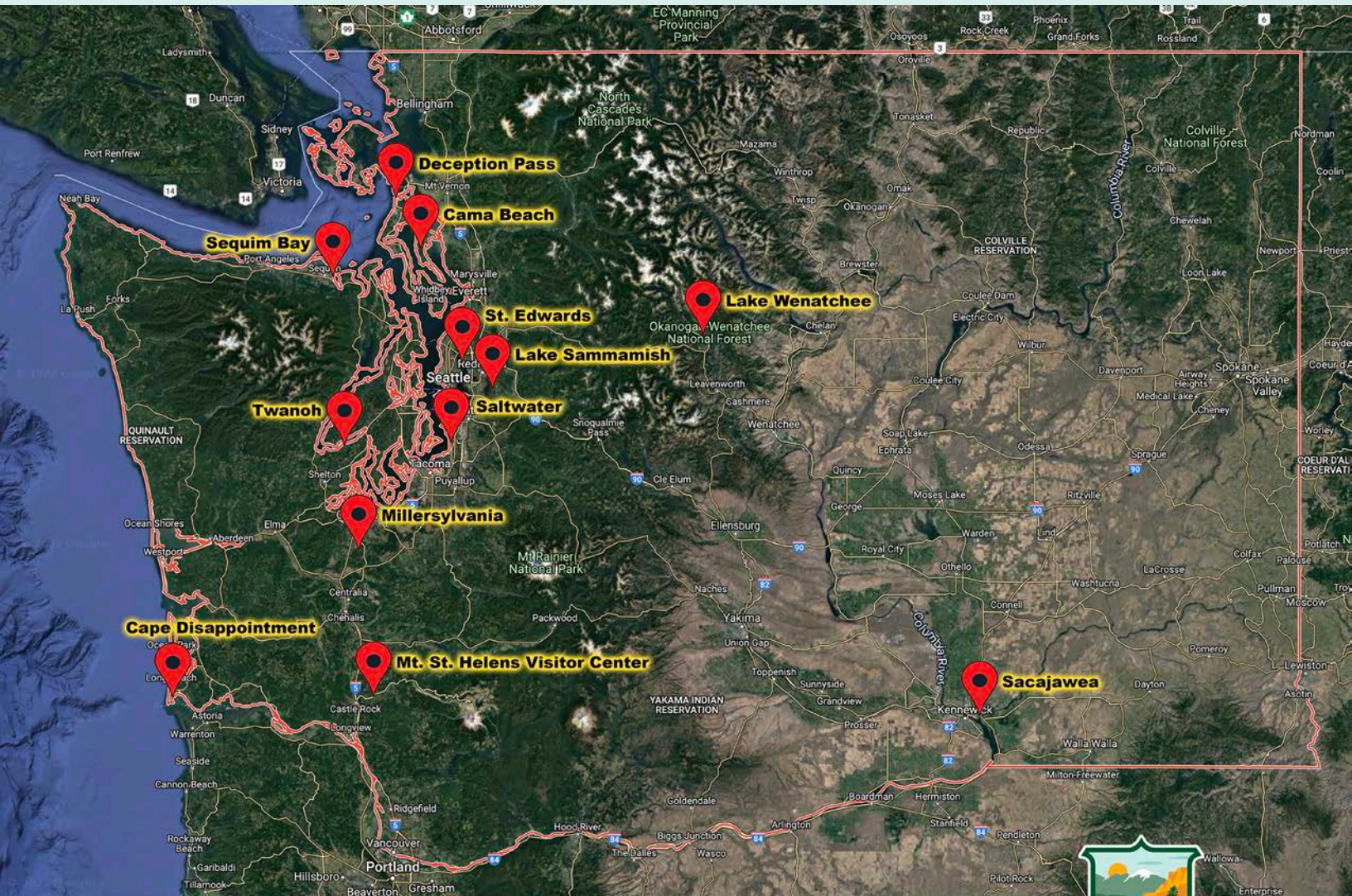


Foreword

As we venture into a new season with hope and grand ambitions, we look back at 2022 and acknowledge the people and places that made the work of the Folk and Traditional Arts Program possible. We are deeply grateful for the community partners, artists, culture keepers, volunteers, funders, park rangers, interpreters, and administrative staff, who make public, community heritage programs at parks possible. Thank you!

The Folk and Traditional Arts Program weaves these threads together to create programs meant to spark curiosity, cultivate community, and encourage creativity in connecting to one another and our places. We hope to shine a light on our shared humanity even by highlighting the traditions that make our identities unique.

Cover: Participants on a guided mushroom walk at Millersylvania State Park. Photo: Kuen Kuen Spichiger (KKS).



2022 Folk and Traditional Arts Program Park Locations





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Connections

The Folk & Traditional Arts Program opens up spaces where people and nature can interact with curiosity, compassion, and joy. Since 2004, the Folk & Traditional Arts Program has added to memorable experiences with programs in parks by musicians, dancers, artists and culture bearers who represent a wide variety of old and new traditions. From Yiddish folk dance to old-time square dance, from fisher poetry to Mexican son jarocho music, from Hmong cultural cuisine to Tribal first foods, the program brings people together—some to celebrate a common heritage and some to learn about the traditions of others.

LEFT: Sundaes Outside at Ramblewood Retreat Center.

Photo: Michael Maine/Menrva Labs. MIDDLE:

Participants wearing paper mache mushroom art created at workshop. Another participant wearing a mushroom head

piece created by the art instructor, Emily McHugh, on the right. Photo: KKS. RIGHT:

Cambodian traditional costumes. Photo: KKS.

Photo: KKS.



“Being on the water with multiple melanated paddlers is always a dream. This particular opportunity at Sequim Bay State Park was courtesy of Golden Bricks Events and Washington State Parks.”

– Participant, Sundaes Outside Camp Out

“The connection between art & science is so important. We also appreciate family-centered programming. I hope we can attend another program like this in the coming year.”

– Participant, Mushroom Walk & Art Workshop





Sustainability

“I really enjoyed the lecture & learning about the process of harvesting bark & different basket styles. It was really nice to do the class in the outdoors with a view of the cedar trees. Melissa & Kylee were wonderful teachers & helped each student finish a beautiful basket.”



– Workshop participant, Makah Cedar Bark Baskets Workshop

We support and foster the continuity of folk & traditional arts by providing funding and resources to artists, cultural groups, and community organizers to gather together in nature. Parks are public resources where we balance the complex needs of humans with a responsibility to steward our natural ecosystems. We work with partners to encourage sustainable event practices and learn how issues of environmental justice affect their communities.

TOP left: Eclectic Cloggers, Lake Wenatchee State Park. Photo courtesy of the artists. TOP right: A young Cambodian martial artist practicing Bokator with her coach at Saltwater State Park. Photo: KKS. MIDDLE: A participant weaving a basket with cedar bark at Millersylvania State Park. Photo: KKS. BOTTOM: United Communities of Laos Festival participants pose for a photo at Lake Sammamish State Park. Photo: KKS.





“The biggest accomplishment was that the youth learned Tuwaduq beyond the classroom, it’s in nature and in the community they belonged to. For example, they learned the word salmonberry ‘yatawad’ in Tuwaduq on the guided hike while they were seeing and touching them.”

– Christie Charmbless, First Generation Skokomish Descendant, Skokomish Language Department

Advocacy

Our history is rooted in systems that do not serve all communities equally. We believe that empathy, creativity, and relationship building are key to meeting communities where they are and cultivating inclusion. Whether we are co-creating a cultural festival, funding creative residencies, offering trainings in multimedia storytelling, or enhancing accessibility to our programs, we are proud to share our programs and services for free.



TOP: Sundaes Outside at Sequim Bay State Park Ramblewood Retreat Center. Photo: Michael Maine/ Menrva Labs. MIDDLE 1: Salmon in Tuwaduq. Photo: Christie Charmbless. MIDDLE 2: Salmonberry. Photo: Sven-Erik Spichiger. MIDDLE 3: Artist in Residence - Nina Vichayapai’s artwork. Photo courtesy of the artist. BOTTOM: Portait of Nina Vichayapai.

Creativity

Whether visitors join us for an hour-long concert or a weekend of workshops and guided activities, our programs center engagement with creative expression. Research suggests that engaging with creativity can relieve stress, increase brain plasticity, and enhance empathy and tolerance, among many other benefits. Paired with time in the outdoors, we believe our public programs can create powerful and memorable experiences.

TOP: Melissa Peterson (1st row right), her granddaughter Kylee (1st row middle) and students at the baskets workshop at Millersylvania State Park. Photo: Hillary Tully/Arbutus Folk School. RIGHT: A young participant holding a mushroom ring that she created at the mushroom art workshop at Millersylvania State Park. Photo: KKS. LEFT: Mount Vernon Mariachi & Folklórico at Deception Pass State Park. Photo courtesy of the artists. BOTTOM: Musicians, Miho & Diego, share their Musical Trip Around the World program at Cape Disappointment State Park. Photo: KKS.



“I love the class & the opportunity to observe & learn from such a master. It gives a new appreciation of this art form.”

– Participant, Makah Cedar Bark Baskets Workshop



“Diego & I would like to thank you both for trusting us, having such great visions in music/arts/education and creativity, and most importantly thinking about the next generation! This summer has been beyond what we expected (we actually didn’t know what to expect during/post pandemic) and we met incredible people/campers from all over via all the performances.”

– Dr. Miho Takekawa, musician at the Musical Trip Around the World program



\$61,400 Amount of funding that flowed to artists/culture bearers for public programs

Season Highlights

Cultural Festivals

- Skandia Midsommarfest
- United Communities of Laos Festival
- Cambodian Cultural Festival
- Latino Leadership Network Hispanic Heritage Month Kickoff ----->
- Sundaes Outside Camp Out



Photo: Commissioner Mark Brown.

Concert Series

- Lake Wenatchee Mountain Melodies ----->
- Cape Disappointment Waikiki Beach
- Deception Pass American Roots
- Cama Beach Family Dance



Photo: Ranger Paul Thomas.

Youth Programs

- Salmon and Arts in the Park - Skokomish Youth Program
- Winlock Migrant Summer Youth Program

Workshops

- Makah Tribal Cedar Basket Weaving - Melissa Peterson
- Chinese Miao Batik - Kuen Kuen Spichiger ----->
- Mushroom Foraging and Art - South Sound Mushroom Club, String & Shadow Puppet Theater, Tursi Art
- Musical Trip Around the World - Miho & Diego



Photo: Michael Maine/Menrva Labs.

Creative Residencies

- Nina Vichayapai - mixed media, fabric arts
- Michael Torkildsen - photography

Multimedia Storytelling

- Cowlitz Tribal Foodways & Food Sovereignty Documentary Series ----->
- Public Lands Unearthed



Photo: Makaela Kroin.

Behind the Scenes

*What does it take to make
a program happen?*



The Folk & Traditional Arts Program became a team of two for the first time in 2022, Makaela Kroin, program coordinator, and Kuen Kuen Spichiger, program specialist. The additional capacity made it possible to support all the behind the scenes work required to co-create programs with community partners.

Program Life Cycle:

1-2 years before a program: Relationship building, federal grant writing, site visits to assess infrastructure and accessibility.

1 year to 6 months before a program: Reserve park facilities, schedule programs with partners, book performers, state and regional grant writing, site visits with partners.

3-6 months before a program: Secure event infrastructure, coordinate with sound technicians, design graphics for outreach materials, complete permits with park staff and partners.

1-2 months before program: Develop contracts for artists and organizers, distribute publicity and promotion, produce event evaluation materials.

1 week before program: Transport event equipment, print signage.

Day of program: Arrive early to help set up, brief volunteers, solve problems, document program with photo and video, build relationships, tear down equipment.

Post-program: Pay artists and organizers, process and share photos and videos, debrief and gather feedback, federal and local grant reporting.



TOP: Event coordinators, emcees, artists, sound technicians, volunteers, etc. setting up the venue for the Cambodian Festival at Saltwater State Park. Photo: KKS. BOTTOM: Getting materials and equipment from our trailer located in Millersylvania State Park. Photo: KKS.

Thanks to our Funders:

Deception Pass Park Foundation,
Friends of the Columbia River Gateway,
National Endowment for the Arts,
Washington State Parks Foundation,
and Washington State Parks
Specialty License Plate Fund.



Thanks to our Partners: Arbutus Folk School, Cambodian Classical & Folk Dance Northwest, Center for Washington Cultural Traditions, Friends of Sacajawea State Park, Golden Bricks Events, Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group, Migrant Education Program: Winlock School District, Northwest Folklife, Skokomish Youth Program, Skokomish Language Department, Skandia Folkdance Society, South Sound Mushroom Club, United Communities of Laos, Washington State Latino Leadership Network, and Washington State Parks Boating Program.

