

# The bands play on and trees come to life

BY DAVE WEDEKINDT

Interim President of Artpark



Dave Wedekindt

One of the many things I really enjoy about Artpark is that we offer such a diverse selection of events to equally diverse audiences. Just last week, Two Door Cinema Club played to thousands of young people in their teens and 20s, bouncing up and down to the band's high-energy post-punk and danceable music. The very next day, guitar icon Slash made his first appearance on our stage, to entertain a crowd composed of many who came of age in the '80s-'90s with Guns 'N Roses and big arena rock. Dancing was replaced with fists (and a few beers, too) raised and pumping in the air in approval. Quite the contrast!

Turning the calendar to August is a bit bittersweet. Not only does it remind us that we're closer to the end of summer than the beginning, but that the sun is beginning to set on the Artpark season as well.

But don't shed a tear. There's still much more ahead this month, and August is filled with music. We'll have plenty of guitar heroes – Kenny Wayne Shepherd; Eric Johnson; and Duane Betts, who is the son of the late, great Dickey Betts of the Allman Brothers Band. They'll perform as part of the Backroads Blues Festival this Saturday, Aug. 10.

This Sunday brings an evening of '90s pop hits with Gin Blossoms ("Hey Jealousy," "Found Out About You," "Til I Hear It From You," "Follow You Down"), Toad The Wet Sprocket ("All I Want," "Fall Down") and Vertical Horizon ("Everything You Want").

Making their first area appearance since 1983, The Stray Cats, with the original lineup of Brian Setzer, Lee Rocker and Slim Jim Phantom, will "Rock This Town" on Tuesday, Aug. 13, in one of the most anticipated shows of the summer.

Another popular and enduring band that formed in the '80s, Blues Traveler ("Hook," "But Anyway," "Run-Around") returns to Artpark on Aug. 16, this time bringing with them a band that rarely comes to town – Big Head Todd and the Monsters. Both of these groups really thrive in the live setting, so be sure to put this one on your calendar. Fun fact: Big Head Todd's drummer, Brian Nevin, is a Buffalo native.

Rounding out the week will be Bush with Jerry Cantrell and more on Saturday, Aug. 17. Tickets for this show are going fast for this evening of great rock music. Then on Sunday, we'll switch gears to a relaxing jazz concert by the Buffalo Jazz Composers Workshop on the Emerald Grove Stage (lower park). Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy the late-afternoon sun outside along the Gorge. I think this stage is one of Artpark's best kept secrets!

The mighty Tedeschi Trucks Band (TTB) will make their Mainstage Theater premiere on Tuesday, Aug. 20. A number of people have wondered why the TTB won't be appearing in their usual spot at the Amphitheater this time. Well, the answer is simple. With their 12-piece band,

equipment and increased production, they're simply too large to fit on the Amphitheater stage!

Perennial Artpark favorites O.A.R. return on Aug. 27. Then, the next day, get ready for another dose of '80s rock with Tesla. Audiences have also been asking for more country, so we're pleased to offer Cole Swindell on Aug. 29. This show will likely sell out in advance, so don't delay! Finally, Cage The Elephant and Young The Giant light up the Mainstage on Sept. 7. Only a handful of tickets remain.

In a quiet portion of the trail off of the South Fourth Street entrance, visitors have listened in wonder to the music of plants in our sound installation "Ultra-Sound: The Secret Symphony of Plants." These sounds have inspired new music compositions, which will have a world premiere in concert at Artpark on Aug. 25. Hope you can join us for this very unique performance.

Music is always a big part of our programming and draws the crowds, but Artpark is also about community. We'll be part of this weekend's Art Festival with art and Indigenous activities and a performance. We're also pleased to welcome the "Better Off Read" festival to our grounds for the first time on Aug. 31.

It has also been wonderful to celebrate Artpark's 50th anniversary this year. The artists, programs and events that have been here may be what you remember the most, but it's our people behind the scenes who make the magic happen. We will celebrate Artpark's unsung heroes in a very special, large-scale temporary media installation titled Craig Walsh's "Monuments" opening tonight, Aug. 9, and continuing evenings through the 18th. Several trees in the Amphitheater area will come alive with huge moving digitally mapped projections of the faces of living people who have and continue to make Artpark a special place. They are also part of the community.

I won't give away too much more of the magic of "Monuments," but suffice to say many people around town will be talking about it next week and for some time to come.

Visit [www.artpark.net](http://www.artpark.net) for more information on "Monuments" and the many other programs ahead. Hope to see you soon!

# Artpark50

## 2024 Events

**"Monuments"**  
AT ARTPARK

**AUGUST 9**  
**AUGUST 12**  
**AUGUST 14**  
**AUGUST 15**  
**AUGUST 18**  
FREE | 9-11PM  
ARTPARK AMPHITHEATER

SCHEDULE AND MORE INFO: [ARTPARK.NET](http://ARTPARK.NET)

M&T Bank | NEW YORK STATE Council on the Arts | NIAGARA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

**KWS This Saturday!**

**BACKROADS**  
BLUES FESTIVAL

**Backroads Blues Festival**  
Featuring Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Eric Johnson, Duane Betts & Palmetto Motel  
With Special Guest Bobby Rush  
Aug 10 | 6:30PM Amphitheater

**This Sunday!**

**Gin Blossoms + Toad the Wet Sprocket**  
With Special Guest Vertical Horizon  
Aug 11 | 6:00PM Amphitheater

**This Tuesday!**

**Stray Cats**  
With Special Guests The Midnight Cowgirls  
Aug 13 | 7:00PM Amphitheater  
Starting at \$25 advance

**Blues Traveler + Big Head Todd & The Monsters**  
Aug 16 | 7:00PM Amphitheater  
Starting at \$20 advance

**Bush**  
With Special Guests Jerry Cantrell, Candlebox & Bones UK  
Aug 17 | 6:00PM Amphitheater

**Buffalo Jazz Composers Workshop**  
Aug 18 | 4:00PM Emerald Grove Stage  
Tickets \$12

**Tedeschi Trucks Band: Deuces Wild 2024 Tour**  
With Special Guest Margo Price  
Aug 20 | 7:00PM Mainstage Theater

**Ultrasound: The Secret Symphony of Plants**  
Aug 25 | 4:00PM Mainstage Theater  
Tickets \$12

**O.A.R. Summer Tour 24**  
With Special Guests Ripe and DJ Logic  
Aug 27 | 6:00PM Amphitheater

**Tesla: Keepin' it Real Tour**  
With Special Guest Kurt Delmer  
Aug 28 | 7:00PM Mainstage Theater

**Cole Swindell**  
With Special Guest Tigrilly Gold  
Aug 29 | 6:30PM Amphitheater

**3rd Annual Better off Read Festival**  
Aug 31 | 10-4:00PM

Tickets: [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com) | 716-754-4375

Artpark Box Office  
Tuesday-Friday 10AM-4PM & Saturdays 10AM-2PM

More info: [artpark.net](http://artpark.net)