



We present live performing arts in parks around New York City, bringing world-class artists to local communities, turning parks into accessible performance spaces, because we believe the arts should be accessible to all. We reach more than **257,000** people of all ages annually through our programming, the majority of which is free of charge for everyone.

SUMMERSTAGE

Capital One City Parks Foundation SummerStage Festival is one of New York's most beloved, broadly accessible, outdoor performing arts festivals presenting free and benefit performances in Central Park and 10-15 neighborhood parks in all five boroughs. With performances in genres that reflect the cultural fabric of New York City, SummerStage brings a widely diverse roster of renowned artists and rising stars from around the world to local neighborhood parks, presenting distinctly New York genres — salsa, jazz, and hip-hop — alongside indie, reggae, global, soul, dance performances, and everything in between. SummerStage turns local parks into dynamic and accessible performance spaces.

SummerStage Turns 40

In June of 1986, the avant-garde Afrofuturist Sun Ra Arkestra touched down at the Naumburg Bandshell in Central Park for the very first SummerStage concert. Both the park and our city's cultural landscape have been forever changed. In the 40 years since, SummerStage has presented thousands of global artists to more than seven million people, bringing hundreds of free live performances to neighborhood parks across the city.

CHARLIE PARKER JAZZ FESTIVAL

The Charlie Parker Jazz Festival, a unique element of SummerStage and New York City's annual salute to the eponymous late saxophonist, is a three-day celebration of live jazz in the neighborhoods near where Parker worked and lived, including Harlem's historic Marcus Garvey Park and Tompkins Square Park in the East Village. Each year, some of the finest jazz musicians in the world are assembled who reflect "the Bird's" musical individuality and genius, to promote appreciation for this highly influential and world-renowned artist. This vibrant — and free — celebration of jazz in New York celebrated its 33rd anniversary this year of bringing together storied, veteran players and the next generation of jazz artists.



SWEDISH COTTAGE MARIONETTE THEATRE AND ITS TRAVELING PUPPETMOBILE

For more than five decades, thousands of children and families have delighted in Central Park’s historic Swedish Cottage Marionette Theatre and its contemporary and innovative marionette productions based on children’s classics. Beginning in 2026, the Swedish Cottage, which dates back to 1876, will undergo a full renovation.

The CityParks PuppetMobile, the oldest continually operating company of its kind in the country, pre-dates the theater at the Swedish Cottage, and presents free performances and puppet-making workshops in neighborhood parks and recreation centers between May and October.

All marionette puppets are built by hand, by the Cottage’s skilled puppeteer-artisans. Select performances may be presented in Spanish and Mandarin. Tickets are required for performances at the Swedish Cottage, while all PuppetMobile performances are free and open to the public; no reservations required.

The Swedish Cottage and its traveling PuppetMobile are a collaboration between City Parks Foundation, NYC Parks, and the Historic House Trust.

ABOUT CITY PARKS FOUNDATION

At City Parks Foundation, we are dedicated to invigorating and transforming parks into dynamic, vibrant centers of urban life through sports, arts, community building and education programs for all New Yorkers. Our programs -- located in 330 parks, recreation centers and public schools across New York City -- reach nearly 300,000 people each year. Our ethos is simple: thriving parks mean thriving communities.

We also offer many opportunities for youth to be out in neighborhood parks, from sports activities to a wide variety of free environmental education programs after school and during the summer months.

To find out about these programs and more, please visit CityParksFoundation.org



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