



# Soulshine Festival

Closing Report 2023

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2023 Post Festival Photo  
Photo Credit: Andy Lee

### From the Festival Director Anas Attia

"If you're gonna start a revolution, I'd advise that you start with a mirror. You stand before that mirror and like what you see. You stare at the mirror and say, you and I, we're going to change the world. We're going to start right now". - John Henrik Clarke

We live in times defined by the inquiry and the embodiment of what it means to be free and live in a good society. For awakened individuals or collectives, like Soulshine, we are on an interactive and integrated venture, where little is left to the theoretical and nuanced work is celebrated. Operating out of this space requires responsibility taking, careful discernment, and finding humility at all levels of work and play. To some, this is too big of an ask; for others, it's a dream come true.

It is undoubtedly a dream come true for me. Soulshine keeps me bright-eyed and at the edge of my evolution, presenting me with a microcosm of challenges that demand my full awareness and integrity. Identifying an ideal and working towards it is my favorite way of generating something useful and free. I am grateful for the resonance of those standing beside me, who have generously taken to heart the sacred responsibility of serving this community. As I look further ahead, it is clear that we have only just begun unlocking our potential.

I'm excited that engagement and post-festival collaborative energy are at an all-time high. Many of us are interconnected and integrating our experiences, but not everyone is well resourced in this arena. The Soulshine container has the potential to catalyze significant changes in one's perspective, and we must, as a community, become more careful around this transformational energy. It is a priority for our community that we collectively address overall activation intensity and ensure the availability of appropriate integration support both during and after the festival.

The festival was extraordinary, and as always, we are excited to improve on many of the aspects that make it an amazing and satisfying project. With the intention of education, transparency, and sharing responsibility, we're excited to share this first edition of the Soulshine Festival closing report.

### **From the Festival & Volunteer Coordinator, Sarah Jean Butler**

Once again this year, Soulshine expanded in both scope and participation. The Crew to Passholder ratio came in at almost exactly 50/50 for the third year in a row. We created six additional Teams, formalized some of the hooligan folks into Crew members and created new Team Lead positions. The final estimate of all volunteers, leads, workshop facilitators, musicians, food vendors, residents and guests is 358 blue wristbands. While the goal is to streamline for efficiency and create a more balanced investment from everyone in attendance, this number will likely stay stable even as the number of Passholders must increase to create sustainability.

One great challenge is securing reliable volunteers early enough for proper orientation and integration. Conducting one on one video calls with over 150 potential volunteers was a positive influence on crew dynamics and simultaneously matured my own ability to speak of Soulshine and hone an elevator speech on what we are actually doing and what it might require of a person. The Team Leads who created relationships with their volunteers through communication and connection in the weeks leading up to the festival had the most cohesive and high functioning crews.

With the Director in tow, we toured the province in the spring months to meet with new and returning Team Leads. These in person connections, along with more experience in general, resulted in a more coordinated and enjoyable process from beginning to end. Developing resonant and responsible Team Leads is a priority for 2024. The ultimate vibe is a community of Team Leads organizing and managing the festival.

The beauty and vibrancy of Soulshine permeated my awareness for the first time this year. I found moments to sink into various environments and receive the flavor of them, however briefly. Mostly, I worked. And mostly, it was glorious fun and a deep, rich relationship with the high powered frequency of the container.

I stand in humble reverence to the intensity and intentionality of the collective energies. I remain ever grateful for this unparalleled opportunity to live in service to the values of sovereignty, humility, responsibility & care and also to my steadfast belief that the purpose of life is to embody the sensations of life-force flowing through our experience and allow them to guide us through the chaos.

### **From the Vibe Keeper Angee Pell**

The Vibe Keeper Team was newly created in 2023, envisioned and proposed by the late Tim Neilson. It truly was an honour to take on the Lead role for this Team and bring his beautiful vision to fruition. The Vibe Keepers were quick to jump in to assist festival goers at any opportunity, and we were all kept quite busy. We assisted in supporting roles in Kitchen, Gate, Family Village, Art Village, Earth Keepers, Transport and some workshop spaces. We showed up, ready to serve in any capacity that was asked of us, and did so with beautiful smiles, vibrant energy and JOY! We stayed present and grounded while enjoying our own festival experience, in order to step in and serve community members at any moment.

The majority of my festival experience was enjoyed from within the luggage tent. What a gift this place within the container was! I was able to meet and mingle with almost every festival goer as they arrived, and departed from the festival grounds. This was truly beautiful as it gave me a unique opportunity to engage with everyone, to identify the needs of groups or individuals as they arrived, offering any support needed with efficiency, and it allowed me to ask for valuable feedback and reflection as everyone left.

I was asked to think about what I feel Soulshine is asking of me. When I think about the collective community, I feel the calling very strongly. As a Traditional Medicine carrier, my medicines, Drum, Flute and Nature guide me. To the Anishinaabek, a Grandmother is a Holder of Sacred Space. She is the Heart Holder, the container in which you can ask and receive the things we need to hear. The one everyone can come to and feel seen and heard. She is also the stern voice of wisdom when someone needs redirection. As Soulshine shepherds me, I feel this is being asked - To hold space for others - To listen and guide - To empower, inspire and motivate. I am excited to discover what that will look like for Soulshine 2024!

The Vibe Keepers humbly thank the Soulshine community for embracing us and allowing us to serve. We truly hope that our love, presence and service was felt by all.

## 2023 Festival Credits

**ADMINISTRATION** Penka Pol • Angel Shepherd • Michelle Waithe **ART VILLAGE** Christina Abbott • Nancy Ceneviva • Heather Clearwind • Matt Crookshank • Stephanie Hofman • Colleen Kettle • Monique Ra Brent • Miriam Rodriguez **AV WORKSHOPS** Niranjana Gundu • Ashvin Sharma • Evan Wylie **AXE THROWING** Rudy Brown • Kalen Bussey • Connor Frain • Hunter Gouin **CHAI TIME** Deepthi De • Vee Ghandi • Nadya Hordichuk • Vijayendra Jadhav • Illya Kylau • Lauren McCammond • Stefany Wayne **COORDINATOR** Sarah Jean Butler **DIRECTOR** Anas Attia **DRIVERS** Marcus Kingo • Mike Odber • David Phillips • Petro Vesna **EARTHKEEPERS** Anja Bushmina • Elijah Crosby • Philip Crosby • Wendy Fischer • Steve Jovanoic • Jia-Huey Liu-Crosby • Pavel Sirotkin • Stefan Sirotkin **ELIXIR BAR** Andy Brunning • Anthony Cousin • Laura Dorigiola • Adam Maxwell **FAMILY** Lianna Bahry • Janelle Bentley • Liam Bentley • Oliver Bentley • Laura Brookes • Elianna Bull • Phoenix Bull • Samantha Denuzzo • Stephanie Denuzzo • Krista Dussault • Aliya Ladha • Anna Mattucci • Melissa Mattucci • Hannah McNamara • Dianne Ray • Nadine Registe • Lisa Rego • Jessica Rego • Rylyn Simmers • Leland Watson **FIRE KEEPERS** Matthew Sniderman • Jody Summers **FIRST AID** Jake Baer • Alisha D'Aversa • Rebecca Eadie • Rebecca Jean-Paul • Thundra Kerr • Anita Kim • Katie Marie • Brian McLellan-Tuck • Isaac Rovira • Danielle Richardson • Randoll Sosa Rocafort • Jorge Rocafort • Eva Skiba • Jeremy Trollope **FORAGING** Keith Degasperis • Brett Sanger • Cat Sobotta **FRINGE STAGE** Krishna Deva **GATEKEEPERS** Brad Baker • Kelly Baker • Jose Burgos • Lisa Hamilton • Darlene Hintzen • Ali Muhammad • Corinne Sunshine • Susan Wells • Susanna Wacker • Karen Wilson **GLOW STAGE** Victor Nguyen • Stephen Reiss **HEALING FOREST** Clarity Barton • Sharon Bromberg • Victoria Chapman • Barbara Dametto • Sonja Den Elzen • Jennifer Guevara • Laura Hamilton • April Kowaleski • Liz Lei • Kelly Maslen • Heidi McLarty • Jennifer Merifield • Ioana Nistor • Jacqueline Noble • Genn Norman • Nicolas Oullette • Sitara Rahi • Laura Repo • Tara-Lee Spatz • Sacha Thoman • Jodi Trahey • Jessica Triumbari • Andjela Uze • Jeannie Vuksinic • Lisa Williams-Harris • Madeline Wood **INFO TENT / MERCH** Lou Bye • Valerie Clement • Carolina D'Andrea • Misha Lee • Liz Stewart **KITCHEN** Su Alexanian • Ahmad Alkhabbani • Lina Maria Aristizabal • Jiwan Kaur Aujla • Beki Bobrovski • Lucie Borque • Marie-Anne Brosseau • Roy Philip Buyu • Pam Casedei • Anastasiya Cheryomina • Victoria Conde • Myriam Cottard • Richy Craig • Steven Dalgarno • Lorraine D'Andrea • Natalina Giovinazzo • Charan Gill • Zen Gundu • Sean Hollingsworth • Amal Kanafani • Melanie Klein • Sue Korol • Jenny Krause • Ingrid Kulbach • Emma Kuzmaski • Darrelle Leeming • Michaela Moritz • Sylvia Parker • Susan Proctor • Joshua Psavka • Emmanuelle Salvador • Stephanie Senecal • Tanya Spasic • Larisa Storisteanu • Sarah Tacoma • Dan Van Der Putten • Hayleigh Wright **LODGE MANAGER** Bev Bettens • Amanda Laister **LOGISTICS** Denis Karda **LONG CREW SITE** Richard Hofman • Jim Kerr • Alexei Marshall • Alexander Nikoulin • Graham Walker **LONG CREW KITCHEN** Pete Douros • Kara Groen • Connie Tunney • Phoenix Walker **LUCIA LIGHT** Dan Andronescu • Ashley Brydges • Jamison Rambharose **MEDIA** Ella D'Andrea • Ashley Hardman • Jeffrey Hirschfield • Nick Kus • Andy Lee • Daniel Saliji • Seth Vane **MEN'S TIPI** Robin Corolux • Andrew McDonald • Geoff "Rawa" Larden **MUSIC** Lucia Almeida **PARKING** Taylor Brockelbank • Akshay Changulani • Tyson Finn • Jacob Finn • Paul Haynes • David Ng • Isit Kiri **POWERKEEPER** Fred Colbourne **PURPLE HILL** Paula Lishman • Geordie Lishman **RED TENT** Behnaz Ameli • Sarah Jane Mariposa • Jenna Schultz • Nicole Tupechka **SACRED FIRE** Peter Arcari • Anthony Barr • Joshua Bendah • Sidney Johnson **SAUNA** Trish Lavigne • Jen Richardson • Dwayne Todd • Nicole Villeneuve • Yvonne Villeneuve **SECURITY** Mark Baille • Andre Beauchamp • Len Benoit • Will Jones • Mitch Karda • Scott Pope • Syed Raghieb **SITE CONSTRUCTION** Bex Brock • Vishal Sharma • Remik Zablocki **SHINE STAGE** Bryant Didier • Jeremy Legault • James Madio • Max Nilsson **SOULS PATH** Nancy Aitken **SWING** Matthew Fagan • Toby Neal **TRANSPORT** Ivar Gorr • Phil Karda • Tyler Kerr • Alannah Langille • Dave Langille • Riley Langille • Tim McColm **VIBE KEEPERS** Vanessa Morrell Crittenden • Kallie Edmonson • Steven Kent • Gabriel Kent • Monica Leilani • Laura McMinn • Tala Muhtadi • Natasha Nesrine • Zoe Paul • Angee Pell • Sara Ross Schlatter **VIBE PATROL** James Cave • Sofiya Chorniy • Andrei Muresan **VILLAGE STAGE** Boris Buhot • Tino Desideri **WATERKEEPER** Tim Martin **WORKSHOPS** Ariel Benavidez • Amy Rewilding • Gabby Sharpe • Larry Ward

## Stats

Total attendees: 735  
Percent children: 11%  
Percent of projected attendance: 105%  
Percent of projected pass sales : 90%

Total volunteers: 350  
Crew Leads: 50  
Crew: 214  
Additional Workshop Facilitators: 34  
Additional Musicians/Dj's: 52

Total worked-hours: 19,000

Total non-volunteer participants: 385  
Total Passes sold, including all age groups and Pass categories: 336

Total Organized Activities: 130+  
Soulshine Workshops: 52  
Community Workshops: 35  
Musical Performances/Jams: 30  
Family Camp: 15+  
Drop In Art Village Activities: 5

Meals served from the Soulshine Kitchen: 5600  
Festival: 5200  
Long Crew: 400

Food Loss by weight: <1%

Food vendors: 4

Waste management breakdown:  
37 % Organics  
34 % Waste  
17 % Containers  
9 % Paper  
3 % Film plastic

# '23 Festival Challenges

## Initiation

- Develop organizational structure and role responsibility
- Simplify and focus on core values (sober up to our limitations and opportunities)
- Organize opportunities for the community to gather more frequently by introducing the Soulshine Socials
- Begin addressing the limited communication systems established for the size of the operation
- Actively onboard and integrate a significant number of Team Leads while simultaneously creating the processes necessary to accomplish this
- Catalyze and support agency in leadership

## Planning

- Introduce several new spaces with a 15% increase in net programming
- Carefully manage resources and finances, working towards financial feasibility
- Frequent meetings, both in-person and online
- Develop a more comprehensive kitchen management team (agency)
- More management-level crew
- Creation of logo, design themes, visual communication strategy
- Lack of suitable candidates for critical roles, including kitchen volunteer manager, inventory manager, lighting manager and external transport manager.
- Insufficient support for marketing, social media, outreach
- Incorporate the highest possible number of activated community members
- Integrate residents into crew positions where possible

## Execution

- Long crew's short duration creates significant challenges
- Unexpected physical obstacles on site requiring time and resources to resolve
- Late arrival or unavailability of key crew and equipment
- A substantial number of unexpected Thursday early arrivals
- Some lack of responsibility and accountability as volunteers missed shifts or left early
- Underestimated need for support in parking/luggage on Saturday & Sunday
- ~25 (\$7800+) participants attending without payment or prior arrangement
- Unauthorized use of official spaces with unofficial programming confuses

participants and creates safety concerns

- Unauthorized and/or irresponsible use of motorized vehicles on festival grounds
- Not enough skilled sound and lighting support crew
- Lack of Monday planning

## Self - Management

- Crew overindulgence in work or play resulting in failure to meet core responsibilities
- Not enough focus on participant integration for the level of activation at the gathering
- Overstepping agreed parameters on programming, schedules and protocol
- Personal drama compromising safety and well being for other participants

## Closing

- Exodus of some crews before closing tasks are complete
- Developing basic closing procedure
- Build of long-term storage
- Post festival inventory
- Decompression event for Leads
- Continued lack of administrative and event management support

## Proposed Change Log ('23-'24):

This part of the document is our first attempt at communicating a change log as we expand our reporting and close-out protocols. The intention is to update the community with festival planning and outline potential avenues for participation.

### **Project Management (Operations)**

- Further develop HR infrastructure by completing crew job descriptions, ready for the 2024 season
- Further explore parity of work exchange with musicians and workshop facilitators
- Extend long crew duration and/or adjust site build-out scope and design
- Investigate new online tools for project management

### **Communication**

- Update languaging of the value system for 2024
- Empower and decentralize communication and coordination systems
- Prioritise and plan for more post-integration support for crew, volunteers and other participants
- Enhanced communication of the variety and scope of avenues available for festival interface
- Explicit policy on who drives moving vehicles and under what circumstances

### **Programming**

- Maintain volume of official programming and enjoy the high density of activities on offer again in 2024. Soulshine is already big!
- Encourage crew to also lead workshops, perform on stage or share their other gifts as appropriate
- Establish a central psychological support and integration tent with free counseling sessions
- Differentiate clearly between official and unofficial programming
- Designate an area in Moonshine Camp for community-created programming
- Glow Stage to open early in the evening and end at 2 am
- Focus on intentional/journey dance music at Glow stage
- Introduce more opportunities to dance during the day

### **Gate / Security**

- Actively manage festival gate earlier in the Long Crew week
- Establish regulated Early Entry pass for Thursday Load in
- Increase security roaming throughout the site at night
- Trades/residents to receive wristbands, eliminating names at the gate

### **Site**

- Build bicycle paths on the primary thoroughfares.
- Establish policy and a communication strategy for safe and appropriate usage of bicycles
- Reliably illuminate both paths between The Village and Glow Stage
- Build upgraded outdoor showers at Moonshine Camp
- Explore option to offer tent/camping rentals at the festival
- Develop the Soulshine General Store, empowering community creators of goods
- Encourage art installations

### **Volunteer Coordination**

- Prioritize volunteers who have attended the festival as a participant or volunteer
- Further develop volunteer intake procedure including Team Lead guidelines
- Add Long Crew policy which establishes culture of participating in festival cleanup
- Pair the volunteer food pass purchase with volunteer confirmation for smoother integration
- Adding short shifts for Passholders to engage in more community service in appropriate areas (kitchen, luggage tent, parking, tear down)

### **Kitchen**

- Continue to build the kitchen crew and add a serving manager, volunteer manager and a dedicated cleaning manager
- Improve the dishwashing station
- Incorporate expanded low-cost refrigeration
- Explore options for building an additional outdoor kitchen

### **Vendors**

- Empower (great) food vending options at lunch
- Ensure a balanced offering at all times, including vegan options
- Set requirements for local, organic ingredients
- Work with food vendors to create environmentally friendly packaging and cutlery solutions
- New strategy for how to accept and integrate vendors for 2024

# Fiscal Report

The great news is that our volunteer-led, community-powered Festival can be financially stable. We see the signs that we are on the right path of creating a gathering that can cover its own expenses and offer a stable platform for further improvement. We managed to generate and cover 95% of the total expenditure by the crew in all forms. The leftover 5% was taken off our shoulders due to the giving nature of the crew, who did not ask for every expense. Beyond covering the expenses we are happy to report that the Festival generated its first bit of income and we are enacting the newly updated and first rendition of the Fair Share Model to manage the funds.

The model is a distinct effort to create a transparent and meritocratic method to distribute an honorarium payment to the crew and when possible, add to the support for all of the facilitators and musicians. 80% of income is shared among crew (up to 30k) and 20% goes back to the Soulshine fund. Funds are shared based on a meritocratic set of measures meant to help the community share in the common awareness.

**Note:** Please read the updated Fair Share overview document, found on the website update page, for more detail.

## Overview

### Income sources:

Admission Passes: 104,500  
Volunteer and Performer  
Food Passes: 10,690  
Elixir Bar: 1,700  
Merchandise: 1,300  
Camper Van Passes: 1,250  
Pay It Forward (donation): 420

Total Income: 119,860

### Biggest cost centers:

Food and Beverage (25%)  
Land Use (11%)  
Rentals (8%)  
Inventory (8%)  
Security and First Aid (5%)  
Construction/Structures (5%)  
Artist Honorarium (4%)  
Merch (Tshirts) (4%)  
Transportation costs (4%)  
Supplies (4%)  
Waste Management (2%)

Total expenses: 117,600

Fair Share (80%) 1,808  
Soulshine Fund (20%) 452

\* Updated with new expenses, including a missed \$3000 farm produce payment.

