Mayor Jake Wilson and Somerville Arts & Culture present:

ArtBeat Festival

Sat., July 18, 12-9pm

Rain date: 7/19, same times

Davis Square, Somerville

Suggested Donation: $3
Get a cool dog tag!

One of the largest cultural festivals in the region, ArtBeat includes 70 crafts vendors, two stages of music, a dance showcase, roaming performers, food vendors, a parade, activities for children, and community vendors. This year's theme is REVolution: a creative take on the spirit of transformation and challenging the status quo. REVolution is not just a commemoration of the past, but a spirit that propels us forward.

Bring your own water bottle! Fill up your bottles at the Quench Buggy in the center of the festival.

This year's artwork by Pete Moulthrop/Bearded Tales of Woe.

somerville arts council

How can we help? Let us know.

ArtBeat Schedule

July 18 (Rain date: 7/19; same times):

12:00 PM Festival begins

Seven Hills Stage (Seven Hills Park, behind Somerville Theatre)

12:30 PM Ruby Grove
1:30 PM Mean Black Spider
2:30 PM Cheyenne Mize & the REVolving Sound
3:30 PM Kotoko Brass
4:30 PM Dr. Beaver
5:30 PM Revolutionary Snake Ensemble
6:30 PM Salsa Dance Lesson with Johnny Giraldo
6:40 PM Salsa Dance Party with Johnny Giraldo & La Diáspora Combo
7:00 PM La Diaspora Combo
8:00 PM Intac

Elm Street Stage (corner of Elm St. and Chester St.)

12:00 PM Literary Readings
1:00 PM Baker Thomas Band
2:00 PM Los Mambiseros
3:00 PM Kingfisher Contra Dance Party
4:00 PM Mal Devisa
5:00 PM **Community Parade — All Are Welcome!**

Dance Showcase (Crystal Ballroom)

12:00 PM & 2:00 PM Jenna Gross
12:00 PM & 2:00 PM Miranda Lawson
12:00 PM & 2:00 PM Rebecca McGowan
1:00 PM & 3:00 PM Duets for a Lifetime
1:00 PM & 3:00 PM Julianne Cerreta
1:00 PM & 3:00 PM Emily Jerant-Hendrickson

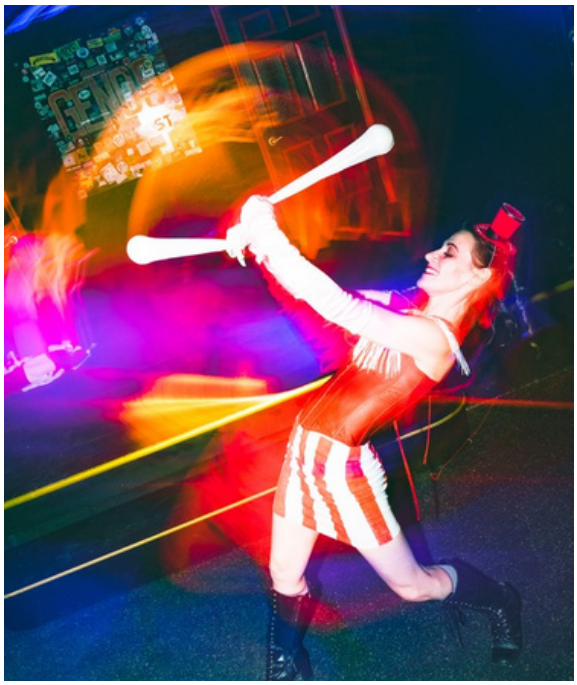
Parade

5:00 PM Leaves Elm Street Stage and winds down to Seven Hills Park Stage

All day/throughout the festival:

12:00–7:00pm Craft vendors, food vendors, interactive activities, community groups, roamers

Streets open at 7pm; bands continue until 9pm in Statue Park



Top to bottom: Julianne Cerreta will perform at Somerville Theatre (photo by Taylor Nicole Craft); roving performer Katelyn Beaudoin (photo by Sean Molloy); the band Kingfisher will provide the music for a Contra Dance Party by the Elm Street stage (photo by Mira Whiting).

Revolution-themed Art, Activities & Happenings

All day unless otherwise noted
Davis Square traffic intersection

Flower Power Art Making (Statue Park)
The Growing Center and the Somerville Garden Club have teamed up to offer hands-on paper flower making in three distinct varieties. Join us in Statue Park to make your own "Power of Flower" garlands, paper flower crowns, and Flower Power Magic Wands. Show off your flower creations as part of the ArtBeat Community Parade, 5pm, begins at Elm Street Stage. Fun fact: "Flower Power" was coined in 1965 by American beat poet Allen Ginsberg during anti-Vietnam War protests in Berkeley, California.

Somerville Museum
Step into the spirit of REVolution with a series of interactive historical experiences presented by the Somerville Museum. Transform statues into historical characters, pick up a vintage telephone and hear contemporary recorded messages about the theme of Revolution, and encounter costumed interpreters delivering spirited soapbox speeches throughout the festival. Together, these activities invite visitors to reflect on the power of ideas, public expression, and community action across generations.

Town Crier (Througout the festival)
In the historical tradition of the Town Crier, Josh Telepman announces happenings of the day and other news tidbits, while providing a unique experience and kinetic energy to any event. This year, in observance of the country's semiquincentennial anniversary, the Town Crier brings a personal touch celebrating the spirit of REVolution, as precursor to social media, keeping the public up to date through his bell and vocal proclamations.

The Prospect Hill Memorial Tower of Power (Seven Hills Park)
Designed and constructed by artists Robert "Smitty" Smith, Nick Wyneken, and local contributors, this dynamic interpretation of the Prospect Hill Monument will be near the Elm Street stage before rolling itself into the Community Parade at 5pm.

Parade (5pm, leaves from Elm Street Stage)
Kilted Colin will round up parade participants via his bagpipe. Then we'll turn things over to Mayor Jake Wilson and the Revolutionary Snake Ensemble to lead us through the festival. Highlights will include the Prospect Hill Tower float, the Flower Power brigade, historical figures, and more. All are welcome to join this ragtag REVolutionary Parade! To participate, stop by Statue Park during the day to make a flower crown or garland and then join the Flower Power brigade.

Top to bottom: Somerville Garden Club members want to help you make flower-themed parade swag!;artists Robert "Smitty" Smith, Nick Wyneken have created this fabulous float of Prospect Hill Tower; ArtBeat's first ever town crier!; and left: Kilted Colin.

Music on the Seven Hills Stage

Seven Hills Park

12:30 PM Ruby Grove

NEMA-nominated Porchfest faves Ruby Grove is a six-piece indie rock and psychedelic soul outfit that crafts conscious, mystical musical atmospheres. Fronted by Melissa Nilles, the band blends genres to help listeners heal from the traumas, burnout, and exhaustion of modern life. During their set, they offer a soul-filled, funky performance charming audiences of all ages, including indie rock and soul fans alike. Their immersive live shows combine deep, mindful lyricism with a fresh, dynamic groove that resonates deeply.

1:30 PM Mean Black Spider

Mean Black Spider is a Boston-based quartet that strips raw, unfiltered 1950s Chicago Blues down to a primal, minimalist essence. The group features Mark Earley (vocals/harmonica), Jeremy Lyons (vocals/guitar), Dennis Poitras (washtub bass), and Scott Kistenberger (snare drum). Devoted to masters like Howlin' Wolf and Papa Lightfoot, the ensemble delivers hard shuffles, dirty blues, and a hypnotic swamp boogie. This hardcore minimalist approach echoes the intensity and spirit of mid-century recordings with a unpretentious attitude and a raw, primal resonance.

2:30 PM Cheyenne Mize & the REVolving Sound

Featuring the collective talents of Cheyenne Mize, Joey Thieman, Colby Sherwin, and Nick Isherwood, they'll play a mix of originals and powerfully relevant covers, the band pulls from the unique personal styles brought by each member. Their core instrumentation of voice, guitar, piano, bass, and drums occasionally expands to feature dynamic layers of fiddle and trumpet along the way. Known for groove-driven melodies and lyrical depth, they deliver passionate performances that resonate deeply with audiences.

3:30 PM Kotoko Brass

Kotoko Brass brings their West African dance grooves to the Seven Hills Stage. The ensemble seamlessly merges syncopated African percussion polyrhythms with hard-hitting dance grooves, driven by the propulsive heart and soul of the drumset. Rich New Orleans horn traditionalism blends beautifully with West African highlife lines to forge an infectious party atmosphere. Their passionate, groove-driven live show spreads an irresistible energy that unifies and uplifts audiences everywhere.

4:30 PM Dr. Beaver

Somerville-based seven-member Chinese band Dr. Beaver blends original songs with Mandarin covers to create a vibrant cross-cultural experience. Their original music features a fresh, indie-folk style with light, nature-inspired tones, while their covers bring the dynamic energy of Mandarin rock. One of the band's original compositions earned prestigious recognition at the NCCU Golden Melody awards. Known for their immersive live performances, they seamlessly connect diverse musical traditions to inspire and captivate fans everywhere.

Top to bottom: Ruby Grove by Melissa Nilles; Mean Black Spider by Zach Lanoue; Cheyenne Mize & the REVolving Sound by Evan Haas; Kotoko Brass by Jenna Joyce; and Dr. Beaver.

ArtBeat at Night!
Music on the Seven Hills Stage
Seven Hills Park

5:30 PM Revolutionary Snake Ensemble
The Revolutionary Snake Ensemble will power the Community Parade with their live music, before jumping onto the main stage for a rousing, high-energy performance. As a six-piece instrumental group with a knack for shaking things up, they are the perfect explosive match for this year's theme of "REvolution." The ensemble blends traditional New Orleans brass band sounds, original compositions, and unusual covers. Their fifth album, *Serpentine*, was released to great critical acclaim, showcasing their groove-driven, foot-stomping rhythms. Combining rich jazz roots with a dynamic live presence, they continue to captivate longtime fans and new audiences alike.

6:30 PM Salsa Dance Lesson & Dance Party
Kick off the evening by stepping onto the dance floor! Join Johnny Giraldo from Salsa y Control Dance Studio for a FREE 10-minute salsa lesson, perfect for beginners and experienced dancers alike. Then keep dancing during an interactive salsa dance party led by Johnny alongside La Diáspora Combo, helping everyone put their new moves into practice before the band continues their full live performance. No experience needed—just bring your enthusiasm and get ready to dance!

7:00 PM La Diaspora Combo
Led by Angel Camino, La Diaspora Combo presents Rhythms of Resistance, an immersive performance exploring Afro-Latin folklore as a living expression of cultural resilience. The high-energy set features salsa, merengue, and bachata, genres that emerged from communities navigating colonization, migration, and social change. Through vibrant music, choreography, and direct audience engagement, the ensemble celebrates diasporic identity as a revolutionary force. They bring a joyful, positive energy that turns the concert space into a collective celebration of transformation.

8:00 PM Intac
Intac is a Somerville-based collective of musicians and friends who blend sharp songwriting, community spirit, and playful satire into an unforgettable live experience. Framed as a fictional "music industry corporation," Intac uses humor, creativity, and a tongue-in-cheek corporate aesthetic to explore the realities facing artists and communities today. Their performances challenge the status quo while celebrating connection, joy, and the power of collective action—making them a perfect fit for this year's REVolution theme.

Crystal Ballroom, Davis Square

7:00 PM "Speaking It Aloud"
Meanwhile, at the Crystal Ballroom, "Speaking It Aloud" will feature two women prominent in the Boston music scene. Artists Shira Laucharoen and Felicity Paige are on a mission—to inspire revolution in a rising generation of young people by amplifying underheard voices and perspectives. In their music, they discuss themes of ego, power, love, and fighting back against deeply rooted systemic issues. Hear their stories, and find a spark to create change! Tickets $15.

Top to bottom: Revolutionary Snake Ensemble by Jean Hangarter; Johnny Giraldo; La Diaspora Combo by John Wilcox, Intac by Harry Gustafson; and Shira Laucharoen & Felicity Paige.

Literary Readings & Music on the Elm Street Stage
(Corner of Elm St & Chester St)

12:00 PM Literary Readings
This year's ArtBeat Festival will kick off with a series of literary readings on the Revolutionary theme, featuring local writers in the Somerville community! The lineup is curated by SAC Board member Sarah Beckmann, and will be emceed by local writer Fin Leary.

1:00 PM Baker Thomas Band
A band that isn't afraid to wear their feelings on their sleeves on and off the stage, the Baker Thomas Band released *The Great American Melting Pot* in the spring of 2025. A 5-song EP singing songs of protest, commentary on our moral standing, our religious freedom to our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Whether it's the infectious grooves, hooks, horns, heartbreakers or anthemic rock finale's, Baker Thomas Band covers a spectrum of emotion and feeds the soul like a night out with good friends.

2:00 PM Los Mambiseros
Traditional Cuban music and fusion project Los Mambiseros dedicates its mission to sharing and celebrating Cuba's folkloric culture, music, and dance. The flexible ensemble focuses on traditional Cuban styles including Son, Salsa, Afro-Cuban drumming, and Boleros. Their immersive performances celebrate rich cultural traditions while spreading a joyful, positive energy that resonates across generations.

3:00 PM Kingfisher Contra Dance Party
Few art forms embody REVolution quite like a contra dance, where every dancer becomes part of a living, turning machine. Dosido, circle, and swing, revolving in joyful motion. Kingfisher brings that spirit to ArtBeat with a sound as inventive as it is rooted. Jeff Kaufman anchors the duo on piano and mandolin, weaving traditional and modern contra music together with a collection of instruments he built himself, while Cecilia Vacanti delivers intense, masterful fiddling that propels the crowd forward. And you don't just watch: with Harris Lapiroff leading the dancing—no experience required—we'll show how a dance tradition that flows back to the Revolutionary era still has the power to transform a group of strangers into one spinning, celebratory whole.

4:00pm Mal Devisa
Rounding out the Elm Street Stage will be Mal Devisa, the striking songwriting, liberation, and poetry project of the multifarious Amherst-based artist Deja Carr. Carr began her musical journey at age 12 with the group *Who'da Funk It?* before teaching herself bass and compiling scraps of her forgotten songs. Born out of slanted basement walls, this solo project delivers a genre-defying sound that blends deep soul with poignant storytelling. Known for passionate performances and authentic songwriting, Mal Devisa continues to push creative boundaries and captivate listeners everywhere.

5:00 PM Parade stages and kicks off!

Top to bottom: Town Crier; Baker Thomas Band by Neale Eckstein; Los Mambiseros; Jeff Kaufman by Dave Pokorney; and Mal Devisa.

ArtBeat Dance Showcase

(Crystal Ballroom)
Six dance troupes will each offer two performances

Arrive a few minutes before the start of the hour whether 12 PM or 2 PM to catch the whole dance set.
Limited seating (approx. 60).

12:00PM & 2:00PM **Jenna Gross** - "Apply Pressure"
Apply Pressure comments on the use of comedy as a coping mechanism when dealing with inner turmoil and not wanting to burden others with being "negative". Through high energy contemporary dance with elements of jazz technique, we explore tropes in performative dance cliches, clowning vocabulary, and childlike aggression. Centered around calculated movements and dysfunctional teamwork, the performance comes to a head with eventual burnout from overperformance. Hard hitting movements juxtaposed by fluidity and soft articulation highlight the exertion and effort it takes to maintain a public facing mask.

12:00PM & 2:00PM **Miranda Lawson** - "Should've Been a Cowboy"
Miranda Lawson presents a contemporary work that celebrates and reclaims Black contributions to country music. Inspired in part by Beyoncé's Cowboy Carter, the piece honors this musical lineage while questioning how cultural spaces center whiteness despite being built on Black innovation. Performed by an all-Black cast, the choreography blends contemporary and house dance with theatrical play and humor to balance celebration with critique. Ultimately, the work foregrounds Black presence, joy, and complexity, inviting audiences to reflect on ownership and belonging within the genre.

12:00PM & 2:00PM **Rebecca McGowan** - "TBA"
This piece is rooted in traditional soft shoe Irish dancing, with a playful lightness. Uptempo, quick footwork, travel in space, and dancers in playful relationship to one another. Using traditional movement vocabulary and expanding that outwards as well, we are exploring a looser movement quality, groundedness, and our relationship to the floor, to express the musicality of the piece (Drilling, Outside Track).

Top to bottom: Jenna Gross by @runawaycamera; Miranda Lawson by Derek Fowles; and Rebecca McGowan by Jason Jong.

ArtBeat Dance Showcase

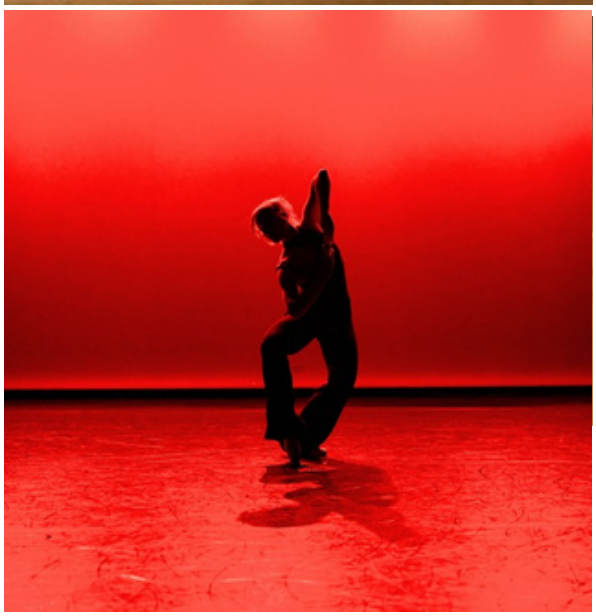
(Crystal Ballroom)
Six dance troupes will each offer two performances

Arrive a few minutes before the start of the hour whether 1 PM or 3 PM to catch the whole dance set.
Limited seating (approx. 60).

1:00PM & 3:00PM **Duets for a Lifetime** – "Swim or Sync"
This dance is a fun loving, take on synchronized swimming. We hope its lighthearted mood will elicit much laughter. For the "in the pool" section, the performers will dance inside a large elastic band, allowing them to stretch almost horizontally and give the impression of swimming underwater.

1:00PM & 3:00PM **Julianne Cerreta** – "This is Power" – /Excerpt from This is Ballet/
This piece critically examines the imbalanced power structures of classical ballet. The piece directly references Balanchine's Serenade, turning its iconic choreography against the very systems that created it to embody grief, rage, and ultimate liberation. Created by dancers, for dancers, the work challenges the uniformity and obedience traditionally demanded by the art form. It asks: What happens when we speak up and force leadership to see us as human beings instead of pawns? Ultimately, "This is Power" is a fierce reminder to dancers everywhere: you have a voice, and it's time to use it.

1:00PM & 3:00PM **Emily Jerant-Hendrickson** – "Caged"
"Caged" is an 9 minute long contemporary dance theater solo that follows the wide range of reactive states that humans pass through while existing as captives of their own mind. Like caged animals, we stagger through an internal minefield, oscillating between blissful unawareness, panicked awareness that results in feeling frozen or reacting explosively, and the urge to return to captivity even when given the tools to escape because our coping mechanisms prove to feel safer than the sensation of freedom.



Top to bottom: Duets for a Lifetime by Olivia Moon; Julianne Cerreta by Zoe Knowles; and Emily Jerant-Hendrickson by Becca Marcela Oviatt.

Throughout the festival

Craft Vendors
We'll have over 70+ artists, craftsters and crafty companies, including: Henna by Heather, Indecision Studio, Zooguu, Sparkletown Studios, Amar & Riley, Momo Glassworks, Lunch City Studio, Fishcakes, Sassafrass Creations, Razalas Art, Chikako Designs, Joie de Vivre, POWPAPER, SepiaLepus Illustration, Lexi's Tree Fort, Phenomenalia, and more! From pottery and jewelry to photographs and fine art, we have you covered. So, buy local and support our talented artists and maker communities!

Community Organizations
There will be a bevy of organizations sharing material and offering activities, including: Somerville Public Library, Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs, Arts Collaborative Medford, Somerville Museum, Benjamin G. Brown School, Outside the Lines Studios, Acropolis Boston, SAC's Intercambio, Somerville Garden Club, Somerville Homeless Coalition, ArtsBoston, Somerville Office of Sustainability and Environment, Department of Racial and Social Justice, Somerville Community Land Trust, Somerville Media Center, the Growing Center, and more.

Main Traffic Island, Davis Square

Food Vendors including Mr. Crepe, Thai Hut, Mela & more!

Nibble Global Food Island: Come hungry!

Vendors: The Arts Council's Nibble program will once again bring diverse flavors to Davis Square, featuring returning favorites Dos Manos Kitchen, Matki Artisanal Kulfi Creamery, and Sinta Filipino Cuisine, alongside newcomer Manaos Colombian. Be sure to stop by the Nibble Program tent to learn how this unique initiative supports cultural exchange and small business growth in Somerville.

Cooking Classes: Nibble Kitchen's Micro Cooking Classes will offer an exciting lineup of instructors representing cultures from Haiti to Laos and beyond. These free, 15-minute classes invite up to 8 participants at a time to learn how to prepare a traditional dish while exploring the stories and cultural traditions behind the cuisine.

Inside Out Gallery (CVS Window, Davis Square)

Printing the REVolution is an exhibit curated by New Impressions Print Studio. Printmaking has a long history of playing an important role in the spread of information and ideas. New Impression Print Studio and the participants from their Community Carving sessions bring the ArtBeat theme to life! It's a collective celebration designed to challenge the status quo. This will debut at ArtBeat and be on display all summer long.

Top to bottom: Shine and Raise by Nelson Salazar; Community members playing Lotería at Intercambio, our Language & Culture Exchange Program; Matki Artisanal Kulfi, a Nibble graduate business, featuring its popular signature artisanal ice cream; and 2026 REVolution by Daniel Glaser.

Other Activities

Statue Park

Paste it Slant: A Collage & Poetry Workshop
Inspired by Emily Dickinson's invitation to "tell all the truth but tell it slant," this generative workshop pairs collage with poetry. Led by artist/poet Leticia Priebe Rocha, festival goers can experiment and craft unique, hands-on pieces. Explore found poetry techniques and walk away with the creative seeds of a new poem.

Spark Wall: Voices of REVolution
Rooted in Somerville's history of activism and creative culture, Spark Wall: Voices of REVolution is an evolving, community-built installation capturing our collective momentum. Drop by to write or draw your own "sparks" of inspiration or resistance.

Davis Square Plaza (by the old Starbucks)

12:30-1:00 PM **Puppet Playhouse**
Discover Somerville's history with a vibrant, 20-minute puppetry performance that brings the city's public art landscape to life. Designed for all ages, this interactive show features larger-than-life puppets celebrating iconic local creators Kenji Nakayama (signage artist), James Tyler (public sculpture artist), and Christine Vaillancourt (abstract artist).

12:30-4:30 PM **Knucklebones**
Entertaining the younger set for years, Knucklebones has been a staple at the ArtBeat festival by using play as a catalyst. The Knucklebones team has the pulse on FUN, encouraging all ages to enhance their lives...for the love of play!

1:00-4:45 PM **Magic Circle**
Step into the Magic Circle: an interactive, all-ages space where everyday reality pauses for connection and play. Drop in and out for a community-led lineup including Levantine circle dance workshop with the Nahda project, a singing circle with Violet Folk Sings, collective meditation, and improv games.

Festival Wide

Festival Roamers
Sarah Morrison will don a participatory color-it-yourself ballgown. The Flutterby Faeries will share their mystical powers with all who dare to interact. Meanwhile, Qatherine, Kate Beaudoin, and Jane of Arc will all hoop and hop around the square in the spirit of REVolution

Top to bottom: Collage & Poetry Workshop by Leticia Priebe Rocha; Peanuts Playhouse; Jane of Arc, and The Flutterby Faeries by Leah Cirker-Stark.

Accesibility Information

Persons with disabilities who need auxiliary aids and services for ef ective communication (i.e., CART, ASL), written materials in alternative formats, or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures in order to access the programs, activities, and meetings of the City of Somerville should please contact Adrienne Pomeroy at 617-625-6600 x 2059 or apomeroy@somervillema.gov.

Interpretation into any language is available upon advance request (at least seven days in advance) by contacting the SomerViva Office of Immigrant Afairs at somervillema.gov/Contact SomerViva or calling 311 at 617-666-3311.

MBTA Red Line Closure and Bus Information

MBTA Buses Routes: 87, 88, 89, 90, 94, 96 will be rerouted from 8 am to 8 pm on due to the red line closures at Davis Sq train station. Shuttle stops will be relocated to Mass Ave. Please see www.mbta.com for full detour information.

Stay Cool and Comfortable!

ArtBeat is an outdoor festival held during the height of summer, so we encourage everyone to come prepared. Bring a refillable water bottle (Water Buggy will be on-site!), wear sunscreen, consider a hat or umbrella - or look for one of our shade tents. Let's beat the heat together and have a great ArtBeat!

Plan Your ArtBeat Adventure!

With music, dance, art, food, community activities, and more happening throughout Davis Square, use the festival map to explore all that ArtBeat 2026 has to offer and make the most of your REVolutionary day.

How can we help? Let us know.

ONE CALL to CITY HALL 311 SOMERVILLE

Top to bottom: Sarah Morrison in her ballgown made from coloring book pages; and volunteers and their families staffing the Arts & Culture info table.

Artwork by Pete Moulthrop