

# 2015 FESTIVAL REPORT

Each autumn, downtown Bloomington comes alive with a global array of sounds and sights at the Lotus World Music & Arts Festival. The flagship event of the Lotus Education and Arts Foundation, the 22nd annual Festival offered audiences another extraordinary experience in 2015, rooted in Lotus's core mission: to create opportunities to experience, celebrate, and explore the diversity of the world's cultures through music and the arts.

## The 2015 Festival: A Snapshot by the Numbers

- 146 visiting artists from 20+ countries
- 27 world-renowned musical ensembles
- 4 days of non-stop arts action
- 8 venues with 57 exhilarating performances
- 50+ hours of completely free activities
- 36 community partners
- Nearly 12,000 attendees celebrating different people, places, & cultures
- Over 600 volunteer applications filling 530+ positions
- Audience members from at least 28 states
- 2,500+ all-ages visitors at Lotus in the Park



## Local sponsors and donors continue to be the backbone of Lotus's ability to transform downtown Bloomington.

Local business support for the Festival is always vital to its success. This year saw 100+ dedicated corporate sponsors providing over \$70,000 of underwriting, led by presenting sponsors Bloomingfoods, Blueline Media, and Indiana University. Individual patrons and donors also continued to provide invaluable support through personal contributions and various interest-based "giving groups" such as Women of Lotus, Volunteers of Lotus, and Friends of Old Time and Celtic Music. A full list of 2015 Sponsors can be found [here](#).

**Your support can still make a difference! To date, Lotus has raised 80% of the budget goal needed to keep bringing the world to Bloomington. Can you make a [Friends of Lotus](#) gift and help us reach full funding by the end of the year?**



**21 bands made their Lotus debut this year, and we were thrilled to add Chile, Estonia, Philippines, and Republic of Georgia to our artist map.** The full Festival roster can be seen [here](#). Other Lotus firsts in 2015 included a new Food Truck Village, and Saturday's Lotus in the Park played host to one of the state's first Bicentennial events: the exhibit "Indiana Folk Art: 200 Years of Tradition and Innovation," in partnership with Traditional Arts Indiana.

In what has become a Lotus tradition, ~160 high school students from Signature School in Evansville attended a special Festival Student Orientation on Festival Friday, learning a Swedish Hambo dance and tips for making the most of their one-day trip to Bloomington. An additional 300+ students from Indiana University attended the Festival in group programs coordinated by IU faculty, residence halls, and Union Board, and Lotus once again welcomed ~60 student attendees all the way from the University of Illinois.

**Festival Outreach Initiatives provide FREE opportunities for community members of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. A full year in the making, the 2015 slate of Lotus outreach offerings was among our most impactful yet.**

**Lotus in the Park** is the keystone of our free programming and our largest Festival venue, at Buskirk, Hill and Waldron Park (Third St. Park). An estimated 2,500+ Lotus lovers of all ages, who might otherwise not be able to attend ticketed Festival events, came out to enjoy the sunshine and participate in an afternoon of performances, educational workshops, and hands-on arts activities. The Global Education Pavilion and the Open Air Education Pavillion allowed even more people to have deep engagement opportunities with traveling artists.





Those wanting a deeper Lotus dive had other events to choose from as well. Before the festival, the new **Lotus Lineup Lowdown** event provided a free, in-depth review of the 2015 Festival artists' homelands and cultures, led by an IU ethnomusicologist and hosted at the Monroe Co. Public Library. During Festival weekend, special community workshops and meet-and-greets saw Lotus artists interacting directly with young people from Prism Youth Community, the Indiana Two-Spirit Society, and Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana. Lotus artists also gave talks and demonstrations on the IU campus, deepening student engagement at the IU Art Museum, School of Global and International Studies, Polish Studies Center, and Wells-Hutton Honors College.



**Lotus Visual Arts Programming** has been a key component of the Festival since its earliest days. In 2015, we counted 36 different community partners, social-service agencies, and local organizations collaborating on 17 different Lotus arts outreach projects that culminated in a large-scale collaborative community art installation at **Festival Arts Village**. The summer-long "**Celebrating the Harvest**" initiative focused on the harvest tradition of Pahiya's Festa Houses in the Philippines – this workshop series offered 419 children and participants of all ages the opportunity to explore a unique cultural tradition and cumulatively create 674 individual pieces of art for Arts Village display. All told, the Arts Village hosted 8+ hours of free, interactive art experiences, including the Pahiya's installation, hands-on art-making stations, and a performance by the Mabuhay! Philippine Cultural Community demonstrating a series of traditional dances associated with the Pahiya's festival and dating back to the 16th century.

On August 28th, Lotus also launched the special Festival exhibition, "**Seeing Red: World Textiles**" at the Ivy Tech John Waldron Arts Center. The month-long exhibit – and a related series of gallery talks – drew 1,050+ guests in total and featured rare, dramatic examples of handmade ethnic cloth featuring dyed shades of red as the dominant color.

Out on the streets, Lotus artist Fanfaraï led the free **Lotus Parade** down Kirkwood Avenue on Saturday evening. With more than 600 participants marching along (many of whom had decorated their bicycles with a Lotus-inspired theme), this popular event was a feast of banners, masks, colors, and sound as the Algerian brass band led the crowd from the B-Line to the BCT.

**Thank you for your help in making the  
22nd annual Lotus World Music & Arts Festival a success!**

**Don't forget to mark your calendar for next year's Festival dates:  
September 15-18, 2016**

