

## **Review of the Floyd Fest Stage by StreamLine TimberWorks**

Howdy, fellow music festival lovers....

I've been thinking about festival stages lately. This has been prompted by my last festival trip that included the Greyfox and Floydfest festivals; and whose stages differ greatly but both fit the respective festival's scene perfectly.

I was told that the main stage at Greyfox is the original stage, which means it was built 31 years ago on the Rothvoss farm in the Berkshire Mountain area of New York. "Quaint" is the perfect word to describe this stage! And that term of course works for most of the surrounding New York area.....'tis a beautiful part of the state. This stage has soooo many memories for the attendees, whether it be the customers or the staff or the volunteers or the musicians themselves. I myself was immediately taken by the stage and found myself helping to give it a new coat of paint that very first year I saw it. (1998) Just this year I sat watching a set with a longtime volunteer who reverently told me of his love and affection for the stage and all of the super musicians who graced it....Bill Monroe, John Hartford, Earl Scruggs, Del McCoury and Vassar Clements were the musicians he mentioned.

On the other side of the spectrum, the Floydfest is only 6 years old and is in the process of attendees building their own musical memories. This process hopefully will include memories of the stages....and the two new stages are nothing short of spectacular. The first (and Main) stage was built by Dreamworks, a timber framing business in Floyd and is massive and beautiful. The second stage is smaller and to my mind is even prettier....this stage is brand new, being "unveiled" this past festival, and is called the Streamline Hill Hollar Stage. The first set that I saw on this stage was by the Waybacks, and included three encores! A fitting premiere, in my view....and it proved to me that the stage was fire-proof as well. Both stages were designed by Steve Arthur, who formed the Streamline Timberworks in Floyd and who donated the new stage to the festival. Both stages are built with an ancient construction utilizing large timbers and fastened together with wood joinery such as mortise and tennon held together with wooden pegs. They are strikingly beautiful.....and the Hill Hollar Stage was raised by a collaboration between 3 different timber frame companies, similar to the Amish barn raisings. There will be musical memories built around these stages!

Other festival stages that stick out in my mind include the Watson Stage, at Merlefest; and a wonderful fitting tribute to Doc and Merle. Another festival stage tribute is the Fred Shellman stage at Telluride....Fred was one of the founding members of the group that started the Telluride Bluegrass Festival. Also, another stage in the Planet Bluegrass organization is the stage at Rockygrass and the Folks Festival in Lyons, Colorado. I don't remember if this stage has a formal name, but I considered this stage to be the most beautiful that I had ever seen. I love the fact that the background is trees!

The Amphitheater Stage for the Suwannee Springfest and Magnoliafest is also very beautiful and perhaps the most attendee-favorable stage that I've seen. It's located in a natural bowl that is tiered for easy seating and the area is located amongst big live oak trees that have spanish moss hanging.....and this moss and the crookedness of the tree branches themselves can lead to some eerie sights at night! >g< Because it is located in these trees there is always shade if you'd prefer, or during the day there are plenty of areas where one can sit in the sun if that's the choice.

The choice of shade in a hot sun situation is a real plus! I'd love to hear and read about other cool festival stages....

Peace, David

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