and hundreds of years later, we're still telling the same stories (as the bathroom walls at the Jimmy Jazz will no doubt attest). We're declaring our existence in the world, trying to make ourselves immortal by adding our own voices to this song of humanity. Even as we discover new techniques and acquire new knowledge in science, art, design, and technology, we are re-samplers of culture, building hybrid identities by telling old, old stories in new configurations. And it is in each new telling that they acquire power. So there are many different ways to tell this story about stories, but this telling is mine.

I've always told myself stories. Most of us have done it at some point. It starts almost before we start remembering—we hear the trees talking, make cities from stones, drag invisible friends out of the shadows of abandoned lots. I was eight, or somewhen around that anyway, and I had some chores to dosorting laundry into piles in my parents' musty basement. We lived on a residential street that used to be a swamp, and the concrete walls were always cold. Toads would occasionally congregate, croaking hesitantly, outside the downstairs windows. I was sitting there in the murky half-light, sorting: red t-shirt in the warm colours pile, a bra and a rank pair of running socks in the whites, the weighty thump of a pair of black jeans crumpling resolutely into the darks. Yearning to be more than just a tiny girl chucking her family's clothes around, I made up this spirited proletariat story: Hard labour! Not enough pay! I even wrote a little song, timed to the satisfying thud of each piece of laundry. "Work,

work, that's all I do..." And it would be easy to write this off as a game, as a conjured wool scarf (into the delicates for hand-washing, naturally) able to ward off the chill of ennui. But it seemed more important than that to my fierce small self then, and it still feels important now. It was in this narrative revisioning that the mundane became more livable and drudgery became golden in this new imagined narrative light.

They are powerful things, these narratives we tell ourselves, whether we are small or more grown up and beginning to coalesce into groups of people. Sometimes a story works within the dynamic of a community and makes a proposition that stretches the bounds of what we believe is possible. I work for a Guelph-based international organization called Musagetes that makes the arts more central and meaningful to people's lives and in our communities. The stories we spark through participatory and socially-engaged artistic projects often take on lives of their own within these communities. They become something new to each new person that interprets, hears about, or talks about an event, as people make sense of what they've experienced.

Between a Rock and a Hard Place was a one-day concert tour created by Dutch artists Bik Van der Pol that Musagetes produced in Sudbury last summer just as the nights were starting to get chilly. It was a series of punk, folk, rock, classical, and electronic concerts by local bands. Eleven bands reclaimed eleven pieces of exposed Canadian Shield blackened by many decades of mining by using