



Iguana Music Fund Showcase Night

April 11th, 2022 at 7pm
celebrating the 2021 recipients

About the Iguana Music Fund

The Iguana Music Fund is an annual grant program funded by generous anonymous donors, plus the help of Passim and community donations. Each year the Iguana Music Fund gives approximately \$40,000 in grants to individual artists in amounts from \$500 to \$2,000 each. Grants are used for projects and expenses to aid in artists' career growth and community programs.

The Fund was established in 2008 after donors approached Passim with the intention of helping artists pursue their musical goals. Artists often have the talent and ideas to create incredible music, but they do not always have the financial capacity to do so. To help musicians overcome financial limitations and allow their creative projects to come to fruition, the Iguana Music Fund awards annual grants to artists with a residential or tour-based affiliation to New England. Now in its fourteenth year, the Fund has given \$513,000 in grants, funding more than 300 projects.

Being a musician in the last couple years has led to more uncertainty than ever before. What remains clear is that art helps us understand ourselves, connects us, and makes life worth living, which is why the Iguana Music Fund remains an important part of Passim's mission.

Notable recipients from 14 years of the Iguana Music Fund

Alastair Moock
Antje Duvekot
Aoife O'Donovan
Barnstar!
Caitlin Canty
David Wax
Della Mae
Hanneke Cassel
Jennifer Kimball
Lake Street Dive
Lula Wiles
Margaret Glaspy
Mark Erelli
Matt & Shannon Heaton
Oompa
Peter Mulvey
Rose Cousins
Rose Polenzani
Sam Kassirer
Session Americana

Help Feed the Iguana

Ways you can get involved and keep the Iguana Fund healthy and growing:

Apply for an Iguana Grant

We are always looking for new applicants with fresh perspectives and exciting new project ideas. Are you an artist or do you work with musicians? The Iguana Fund is open to musicians from all genres and all backgrounds that are based in New England or have strong New England ties. Get creative and share your idea with us!

Applications are open every fall from September through mid-October with the recipients chosen in December. Go to passim.org/iguana or email iguanamusicfund@passim.org for details.

Donate to the Iguana Fund

With more donations, we are able to fund more projects! Every dollar counts, and it's another dollar given directly to the New England music community. To give to Passim, visit passim.org/support. To give directly to the Iguana Music Fund, please include a note that your donation should be directed to the Fund.

Tonight's Featured Projects:

Chris Walton

Green Tara Project

The Know Better Do Better Project
represented by Tom Smith & Kim Moberg

Hilltop House Songwriting Retreat
represented by Lisa Bastoni, Corey Laitman, & Naomi Sommers

The 2021 Iguana Music Fund Recipients

In December, the Fund distributed 23 grants to New England artists totaling \$40,000. These grants were given to a great variety of projects, including album recording, home studio equipment, new instruments and gear, songwriting retreats, and reaching out to marginalized communities. We can't wait to see what these artists will achieve, and we encourage you to follow these projects as they come to life. The following pages briefly describe all the 2021 grant recipients and how they are using their funds.

Alida McKeon

Alida McKeon is a songwriter, vocalist, multi instrumentalist, and educator hailing from the central valley of California and now based in Providence, RI. Alida is recording "Seasonal Affection"- an EP of lyrically-driven ADHD sad girl songs served on a fresh bed of jazzy harmony with lush arrangements. "Seasonal Affection" is a lyrical diary of her coming of age as an artist with ADHD and depression. The songs meld classic jazz form and soaring melodies with modern folky narrative lyrics, addressing mental health and navigating relationships in the modern world.

Since graduating with a degree in Songwriting from Berklee in 2019, Alida has collected these songs and arrangements for her first official release.

alidamckeonmusic.com

C.J. Red Mouth

In March of 2021, during a songwriting course taught by Buck Meek over Zoom, C.J. Red Mouth penned three cathartic songs. The first, "Bark Thickening," was inspired by a collage of phrases cut from a loved one's driving permit information sheet, a stray New Yorker magazine, a take-out menu, and more. After ten drafts, this collage became a meditation on the silences between family members. Another song was created by reversing the lyrics of "Bark Thickening," turning each word backwards. Lyrics were spun from this jumble of letters – first purely phonetic, then drawing words from the sounds, and finally writing poetry from those words. The end result is meant as a reversal to the silence in "Bark Thickening": the chaos of finally speaking out

These songs grew into C.J.'s first EP over the following year. Thanks to the work of several friends and collaborators, the tracks expanded well beyond just her voice and guitar. Together, the songs explore what we sacrifice in silencing ourselves, navigating family and self-love, and what it takes to finally use your voice. With Club Passim's Iguana Music Fund, C.J. gained the ability to finish recording this EP: the grant went toward home recording equipment and mixing, mastering, and distribution costs. Thanks to the Iguana Music Fund, C.J. will be releasing her EP by the end of April 2022 – and with her new equipment, C.J. has the agency to make music independently for years to come.

cjredmouth.bandcamp.com

Camerata Nova Anglia

Camerata Nova Anglia (CNA) celebrates the diversity of song traditions that have weaved the lives of their artists! This spring, they presented a high quality digital recital, "Spring Blossoms", celebrating what the Lunar New Year means to them through Colombian, Korean, and Mandarin language songs. With the generous support of the Iguana Music Fund, they brought these songs to their communities around Cambridge and Boston, especially in Central Square through St. Peter's Episcopal Church (Cambridge) which had graciously opened their sanctuary for this project.

Feedback from artists involved in "Spring Blossoms" highlighted exactly why CNA's mission is crucial. Wei En Chan, founder of CNA, brought up his experience that no other classical art song society in the region actively presents POC singers beyond short-term appearances, and none are actively invested in the long-term, to sincerely telling the stories that the POC song repertoire is invested in telling.

CNA looks forward to continuing their exploration of the under-represented art song repertoire through the next installment of their recital series, "An Evening Hymn", tentatively scheduled for August 2022.

cameratanovaanglia.weebly.com

Chris Walton

Chris Walton is a singer/songwriter/producer. His music is a blend of classic Soul, Jazz, and Funk with a modern aesthetic. Chris is equally comfortable writing intimate introspective love songs or upbeat retro pop tracks.

He received an Iguana grant to release one single each month for a year and recording all the singles together for a full-length album recorded at BearSnake Studios.

chriswaltonmusic.com

Coral Moons

Quickly making a name for themselves in the Boston scene, three time Boston Music Awards nominee Coral Moons, brings their signature blend of retro-rock and surf-pop to the indie stage, drawing influences from Maggie Rogers, Lake Street Dive, and the Eagles.

Their debut single *Fall In Love*, featuring in-your-face harmonies, catchy electric guitar riffs, and the raw vocals of lead singer/songwriter Carly Kraft, released in July 2019. The song rapidly caught fire to the indie scene, acquiring 50K+ streams on Spotify, regular airplay on Boston's WERS 88.9FM, and a feature on WGBH (Boston's NPR) alongside icons Allen Stone and Brittany Howard.

In August of 2021 the band released their highly anticipated debut album *Fieldcrest*: a full-length LP produced by Sam Kassirer of Great North Sound Society (ME), best known for his work with Lake Street Dive, Josh Ritter & Lula Wiles.

Fieldcrest is a departure from the band's early work but maintains the identity that makes them unique. Coral Moons' debut record was born in the studio which allowed them to explore the depths of their sonic palette through dense synth pads, exploratory drums tones, and nostalgic songwriting. *Fieldcrest* is an album that focuses on the human experience while exploring many familiar topics such as childhood memories and daydreaming.

coralmoons.com

FLUKES

Aloha! The FLUKES (Fun Loving Ukulele Society) has created four one-hour themed performances that will be recorded in a local Portland studio: "Meet The FLUKES", "Love Songs", "Hit The Road With The FLUKES", "Songs That Make Us Smile". These videos will be made available, free of charge, to all memory care and rehab centers, nursing homes and assisted-living facilities throughout the state of Maine. Our goal is to reach audiences in all corners of the state, especially in rural counties, to connect this underserved population with our ukulele music and song.

facebook.com/FunlovingFLUKES

Green Tara Project

Green Tara is a collaborative project bringing together Celtic fiddler Amy Beshara with Nepali sarangi player Shyam Nepali. When Amy first went to Nepal to study the fiddle music there, she was astounded how similar it was to the Celtic music she had been immersed in back home. A Nepali friend hearing a Scottish tune said "that sounds familiar." An Irish fiddler hearing a Nepali tune on the fiddle had no idea the tune was from Nepal. This project weaves these tunes together, in well-crafted arrangements and quality recording to present these traditions as a patchwork of human expression from across the globe.

shyamnepali.com
facebook.com/amybesharamusic

Ira Klein & Convivencia

Boston-based guitarist and composer Ira Klein will use his Iguana Grant to record two “live in the studio” music videos with his ensemble Ira Klein & Convivencia. For this project, Klein re-arranged ancient Jewish-Sephardi Ladino songs. By creating modern versions of these traditional songs, Klein aspires to revive an almost extinct rich musical tradition, and to engage a wide range of audiences.

Ladino culture flourished in Spain over a few centuries prior to the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. Since then, it was carried on in Jewish communities around the world who continued to speak the Ladino language, a unique mix of Spanish and Hebrew. The sound of Ladino music sits at the intersection of East and West, reflecting its roots in an environment of multi-faith co-existence. When Klein was putting together Convivencia’s ensemble, he was looking to underscore the cross-cultural roots of Ladino Culture. By collaborating with outstanding musicians from across the Middle-East and the U.S., Klein hopes to share a present-day vision of tolerance and dialogue through his music.

Ira Klein & Convivencia:

Ira Klein - Guitar, Musical Director (Israel)
Neil Leonard - Clarinet (U.S.)
Bahar Badieitabar - Oud (Iran)
Eleni Moniodi - Voice (Greece)
George Lernis - Percussion (Cyprus)
Noam Tanzer - Bass (Israel)

irakleinmusic.com

Honeysuckle

Comprised of Holly McGarry and Chris Bloniarz, Honeysuckle is a Folk/Americana duo based out of the Northeast. Thanks to the Iguana Music Fund, Honeysuckle is working on their 6th studio release and has secured recording dates in August of 2022. They will be working with esteemed producer and engineer Benny Grotto at MadOak Studios in Allston, MA. The inspiration for the material on this latest release is ruminations on grief, isolation and self discovery, all of which was felt and experienced during the pandemic. Their song "Shadow Dance," which will appear on the new release, is a story of how death is a constant companion, not one to be feared but a partner of sorts.

Honeysuckle is currently on tour testing their new songs live and preparing for their upcoming recording dates. They will be performing at Club Passim May 20th.

honeysuckleband.com

Jake Blount & the Vox Hunters

The folk music community is in the midst of intense dialogue about the role Black people have played in the creation and evolution of the styles we love. Maritime music has been largely left out of this discussion, even though Black people have a deep history in the genre. This oversight stems at least partially from a dearth of recorded examples. To date, few recordings have been made which focus on Black sea music. Jake Blount & the Vox Hunters aim to be part of that solution.

With a list of songs gathered from collections both written and recorded, Jake, Armand, & Ben aim to arrange the tunes in a way that simultaneously references this original context and makes the tunes more accessible to a modern listener. Percussion and vocal harmony will be foremost tools in pursuit of that goal. This project represents a growth opportunity for both artists; it would be the Vox Hunters' first collaborative record with another artist, and Blount's first foray into the sea music scene.

Jake Blount is an award-winning musician and scholar based in Providence, RI. A specialist in the early folk music of Black Americans, Blount is a skilled performer of spirituals, blues and string band repertoire.

Hailing from the great state of Rhode Island, the Vox Hunters (Armand Aromin and Benedict Gagliardi) are seekers and singers of old songs, cultivators of local music, and chronic multi-instrumentalists. They are touted as strong tradition-bearers in their generation, and their genuine affinity for the music is evident in the emotion they draw from it.

jakeblount.com
thevoxhunters.com

Kate Callahan

Vocal Empowerment at York Correctional Institution

The voice is an innate expressive tool with the potential for a broad emotional range. When we connect with the emotional power in our voices, our communication skills become more authentic and meaningful. Incarcerated women often have a complex relationship with their voice, not knowing whether to blame or embrace their power. Over the course of 21 weeks, singer-songwriter Kate Callahan offers three 7-week programs at York Correctional Institution (Niantic, CT) serving 12-15 different women in each program. In 2022, Kate works with a new population of women in the Women Overcoming Recidivism Through Hard Work (WORTH) Unit, which serves 18-25-year-olds.

Kate's vocal empowerment program gives these young women the opportunity to make connections between significant life moments and the power to speak and sing about them. Kate began this work in 2017 during her tenure as Connecticut's 16th State Troubadour. She is grateful to the Iguana Fund and Club Passim for making this program possible.

kate-callahan.com

The Know Better Do Better Project

The Know Better Do Better Project seeks to encourage conversation and awareness of songs that have played a role in sustaining systemic racism, and the writing of new alternative songs. By facing our music history, creating new songs, and making informed decisions about the songs we choose to sing, we amplify the positive power of music to shape a more just and inclusive world. The project name was inspired by the Maya Angelou quote: "Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better."

Kimaya Diggs

Kimaya Diggs is using her Iguana Fund grant to complete her sophomore album. While some of the album was recorded in outside studios, Kimaya has found that the final stages of the recording process tend to be more productive at home. As such, she's building out her home studio with the essentials so that she can self-record backing vocals, cello, violin, and viola parts, as well as hand percussion.

kimayadiggs.com

Amid growing awareness of systemic racism in the United States, the Black Lives Matter movement, and protests responding to the deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Elijah McClain and many other African Americans at the hands of police; musicians Olivia Brownlee, Sarah Fard, Tom Smith, Chris Walton and George Woods met several times in the summer and autumn of 2020 to discuss the racism embedded in folk and popular songs, especially those commonly sung for and with children. A simple assignment to research some of these songs has grown to a popular web site containing relevant articles, anti-racism resources, and videos of sixteen featured artists describing the racist histories of commonly sung folk songs and performances of completely new alternatives inspired by those songs.

This project has also been presented for staff development at several music education organizations. The project's volunteer, grass-roots effort has benefitted from a generous grant from Nine Athens Music for artists of color to participate as featured songwriters. This evening we especially celebrate a Passim Iguana Music Fund grant which is earmarked to pay web site and server fees for the next three years.

knowbetterdobetterproject.com

Lady Dust

Lady Dust (the accidental side project of Kaitlin Crull, Lindsey Cook, and Emily Cunningham - the more lady-like half of six piece folk group Noble Dust) is planning their first cross-country tour! Lady Dust blends classical trumpet and cello arrangements with folk sensibility and storytelling. Though the project was born of a desire to tour more nimbly and sustainably, they are excited by the new arrangements and by how their songwriting has come alive in this new format.

Through this tour supported by the Iguana Fund, Lady Dust is looking forward to forming new relationships with artists, listening rooms, festivals, and DJs in new geographies to bring their music to new ears, and to expanding their team to include a booking agent.

nobledustmusic.com

Lisa Bastoni

Hilltop House Songwriting Retreat

Lisa Bastoni, along with Naomi Sommers and Corey Laitman will be hosting a 3-day songwriting retreat this summer in Worthington, MA.

The idea for this retreat arose through conversations Lisa had with other songwriting mom friends, while trying to manage pandemic life as a single parent of two young kids. "Wouldn't it be great," she thought, late one night while washing dishes after a full day of survival-mode freelance-working-from-home and homeschooling, "if we could get a bunch of songwriting moms together, away from the kids, after all this is 'over' and just write a bunch of songs, and cook meals together for a couple of days?"

This year, we have invited twelve songwriters to join us, for a few days in August, at Thayer Hill, a residence and performance space set on 20 acres of wooded meadows in western Massachusetts. The days will be loosely organized around time to write, collaborate, and share, with optional times for meditation, movement and visual art practice. All of our invitees are women/non-binary; many are parents and/or caregivers (not a requirement); and all are songwriters and creators who would enjoy and benefit from a few days away from usual responsibilities to focus on creativity and community.

Thanks to the Iguana Fund Grant, there is no fee to participate, and all meals and lodging will be provided. We are gratefully looking forward to spending a few days together in an inspiring setting, with access to nature, time, and space to write.

lisabastoni.com

Lyracle

Lyracle is an ensemble dedicated to music for voice and viol-family instruments and the largely forgotten practice of accompanying a solo voice with a single viol. While Lyracle has worked with several presenters in the past, the Iguana Grant will help us establish our own concert series in the Boston area and bring early music concerts to parts of Greater Boston where there are currently few, if any. The first program in our 2022-23 concert series will subvert the traditional mode of curating concerts around a specific composer or masterwork. Instead, it will focus on the experiences of individual viol players, particularly those who traditionally have not been the focus of concert programs, such as women, people of color, and amateur musicians.

We strive to present a more inclusive narrative of historic music-making on the viol by weaving together musical selections and dramatic readings from primary source documents, which will be delivered by an actor. Our second program will feature music for voice and lyra viol, a unique type of viol with sympathetic strings. There are only a few lyra viols in the world, making our concert a rare opportunity for audiences. Presenting these programs on our inaugural season will help us communicate our ensemble's values, cultivate new audiences, and produce impactful concerts in our community for years to come.

lyraclemusic.com

Medford Community Chorale & Youth Chorus

The Iguana Fund is supporting the Chorale's first post-pandemic concert and in turn supporting Medford's CITY-WIDE HUNGER FREE initiative. The Medford Community Chorale was founded in November '19. Shortly thereafter, they gave their first public performance at Medford's inaugural celebration on January 5, '20, with 59 singers on stage. In March '20, rehearsals were well underway in preparation for subsequent community concerts when everything came to a screeching halt due to the pandemic.

Concerts are once again bringing everyone together again, from kids, young adults, adults, and the wider community! In addition, a portion of the proceeds from their concerts will be donated to the Medford Food Security Taskforce, so the work they are doing is bringing both social and material support to the community.

Miles of Music Camp

Miles of Music Camp was founded to foster an exchange of skills, repertoire and ideas in the roots music community. The flagship event is an annual week-long music retreat for all ages on a private island in Lake Winnepesaukee, NH. The Island Camp has grown from 56 participants in 2011 to over 100 participants in 2013 to selling out at 120 participants from 2015-2021. Past Iguana grants have been used for need/merit-based scholarships for campers as well as instructor salaries. One goal for the upcoming Miles of Music Camp season is to encourage diversity in the instructor and camper base. This will require hiring instructors who are relatively unknown to our usual student base but who have the expertise to transmit new skills and traditional styles. This year's Iguana grant will subsidize the salary of two of these new instructors as well as contribute to four need-based scholarships to first-time campers.

milesofmusiccamp.com

Opera on Tap Boston

In 2021 Opera on Tap: Boston teamed up with local Brookline businesses to present Flowers and Opera: a free outdoor monthly concert series featuring local opera singers and a pianist, presented in an alleyway in Coolidge Corner. Each concert patrons were invited to bring items to donate to the Brookline Food Pantry and encouraged at the end of the evening to take home flowers, which were donated by local businesses to decorate the alley. With the support of the Iguana fund, OoT Boston will have the ability to hire additional singers to perform at each concert and invest in new marketing materials to better connect with and expand their community.

operaontapboston.com

Owen Kennedy

Owen Kennedy is a sixteen-year-old fiddler from Maine whose love of traditional music and enthusiasm for performing has captivated audiences from San Diego to the Shetland Islands and all over New England. Even with the challenges of covid, 2021 was a big year for Owen - he won the Junior US National Scottish Championship and the "Glenn Jenks Future in Music" prize; opened for Còig and Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas; and finally got to play live again at some terrific venues.

People were asking: "Owen, oh when will you have a cd we can buy?" With his debut album "Oh When: Now" due out later this year, he can answer: soon! Owen is working with a team of terrific musicians and mentors: Owen Marshall is playing guitar, bouzouki, and harmonium; Noah Fishman will do the recording and mixing and add bass & mando; and his teacher Seán Heely is also joining for a track.

As an emerging musician rooted in the Maine Maritime music tradition and taking a deep dive into the music of Scotland, this album features the tunes Owen has loved for years as well as newer favorites from Shetland and Scotland. It's a musical snapshot of the places he's visited and the musicians he's played with and learned from. You may recognize a Maine Fiddle Camp favorite or a tune from the jam sessions at Boston States Fiddle Camp; there's a Seán Heely original; a gorgeous slow air; one in very alternate tuning; and lots of awesome pipe tunes.

fiddlerokennedy.com

Owen Marshall

After 15 years of touring full time as an accompanist, Owen Marshall is making his own solo record. In the traditional Irish music scene, accompanists rarely take center stage. Having spent nearly the entire pandemic without anyone to accompany, Owen has begun taking the lead and arranging his own favorite tunes from the Celtic and old time traditions learned over a career of performing.

This album's supporting cast include Allison DeGroot, bringing her old time groove on banjo; Emily Troll, her accordion magic weaving in and around every single note; Isa Burke, bringing tasteful electric guitar grunge and attitude; and in addition to keeping everything on the rails as the project's co-producer, Jenna Moynihan, providing fiddling and musicality that will elevate everyone involved. After working on over 30 albums for other people's projects, Owen is ready to put the music that's been in his head out into the world.

owenmarshallmusic.com

Pamela Means

Pamela Means is a Easthampton MA-based Out(spoken), Biracial, independent artist whose “kamikaze guitar style” and punchy provocative songs have worn a hole in two of her acoustic guitars. Armed with the razor wit of a stand-up comic, engaging presence, elegant poetry, and irresistible charm, Pamela Means’s “stark, defiant songs” (New York Times) set the status quo and the stage afire.

Then covid changed everything! Pamela reached out to the Iguana fund for help shifting to a new reality for a gigging musician. If she had her own full sound system, top shelf yet still manageable, and portable, she could field and accept any gig offer for any of my music projects, without an added rental expense, whether solo or a full band. If the pandemic showed us anything, it's that artists, freelancers, are resourceful. Purchasing a sound system of her own has allowed her to accept more livestream and outdoor event opportunities while still presenting a lovely, lush, professional sounding show. In any setting.

pamelameans.com

Sub Rosa Songwriting Retreat

The Sub Rosa Collective is an ever expanding community of musicians and songwriters who gather sporadically and typically on short notice to celebrate a theme through song. With all the odd grace of a trained bear riding a unicycle, thoughtful performances are hastily prepared and delivered from the high wire. Spirited successful crossings are met with cheers. Those that pull themselves from the net below share a laugh with the crowd and are applauded for their nerve. All in all, everyone in the room is happy to share in the magic of not quite knowing what's going to happen next.

Drawing on the spirit of collaboration in these shows, the Sub Rosa songwriting retreat was a natural next step. Originally conceived by Dinty Child and Rose Polenzani, the vision was to make available the primitive cabins, scratchy wool blankets, kerosene lamps, and relatively unspoiled surroundings of Three Mile Island in Lake Winnepesaukee, NH, to musicians who could benefit from time; time to rest from tours and travel, time to recharge creative batteries, time to sit for a third cup of coffee around the wood stove with an old friend, and, of course, time to write.

Over 5 days in late spring songs take shape on porches, on the dock, by open fires at the waters edge, in canoes lazily circling the island. They're written on nylon string guitars in the isolation of North Point and on the battered spinet piano in the main lodge. Gathering at the fireplace each night, the group will share and breathe the first breaths of life into these new songs.

If the island is where these songs draw their first breaths, the stage at Club Passim is the ground where they take their first steps. Each winter the retreat participants gather at the club to showcase the fruits of their labor and send their work out into the world. The members of the Sub Rosa Three Mile Island Songwriting Retreat would like to thank all involved with the Iguana Fund for allowing us this opportunity and for helping foster the writing of, literally, hundreds of songs. We're already looking forward to next year.

A heartfelt thanks to our donors, our members, the Iguana Fund judges, and the New England music community for your continuing support.

passim.org/iguana

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The Iguana Music Fund

