

Contact: Amber Garcia, agarcia@ckcommgroup.com, 857.961.7840



Passim Announces 2024 Iguana Music Fund and Gecko Fund Recipients

*Grants Support New England-Based Musicians
and Community Programs*

(Cambridge, MA - December 23, 2024) Passim has awarded \$40,500 to 23 artists through their Iguana Music Fund. Established in 2008 the Iguana Fund provides New England musicians funding for hundreds of career building projects. In addition, Passim granted \$5,000 through its Gecko Fund, which supports an artist in the New England music community with musical work that is linked through a narrative arc.

The Iguana Music Fund grants support artists' career growth and range from recording projects and purchasing specialized equipment to community programs. Passim has awarded more than \$634,000 in grants for the past 17 years. This year, Passim received more than 230 applications from across New England for the Iguana Music Fund.

Through the Iguana Fund grants, Passim will help musicians **Adam Hende**y, **Boston Mongolian Artsong Ensemble**, **Good Judgement**, **High Tea**, **Himalayan Highway**, **Katie Castagno**, **Kenya Hall**, **Lydia Harell**, **Najee Janey**, **Hooly J Chan & the Wicked Queer Puppet Theater**, and **Pearl Scott** record new music. Artists **Jean-Baptiste Cardineau** and **Simon Lace** will use the grant to purchase new equipment.

Mercedes Escobar will use the grant to finalize their new full-length album, which was recorded with x3 Grammy Award-winning artist and producer Gaby Moreno. The album represents the artist's Latin American roots of cumbias, boleros, rancheras, norteñas, and tumba with their original love of blues and country. The album will also feature many collaborations.

This year's round of grants will also support several live performances. The artist **Flight Or Visibility** will hold a concert with a full-length singing string quartet concert featuring original classical punk music about liberation. As a solo performer, Flight Or Visibility features punk music with simultaneous violin and vocal textures. The **Arlington Jazz Festival** will use the grant to present several free performances in April featuring up and coming jazz musicians.

Several of the grant recipients will use the money to better the community. **Center for Peace Through Culture** will offer stipends to artists who bring their lived experiences to the space. **Gender Equity Audio Workshop** is hoping to improve and expand their workshops which educate women and gender-expansive people working professionally in the music industry. **The Know Better Do Better Project** will use the grant to continue its mission of bringing awareness of songs that have played a role in sustaining systemic racism, and then writing new alternatives. The **After School Arts Program** will showcase student's work at a showcase as a component to their 3rd Annual Youth Creator Festival.

Zaira Meneses will use her grant to promote her career by producing high-quality promotional videos, tracks and professional pictures for her website. **Kotoko Brass** will use the grant to help record high quality videos for multiple musicians. The artist **Indë** will use the grant to showcase their new album at a gallery.

“For 17 years, the Iguana Music Fund has been a fundamental part of Passim’s dedication to supporting local talent and assisting musicians in advancing their careers,” said Abby Altman, the Club Manager at Passim. “The projects we funded spanned a variety of genres, including folk, bluegrass, Celtic, soul, jazz, and pop. We also noticed a strong emphasis on live events and collaborations across genres. This year we saw an increase of applicants under the age of 30. It's great that Passim is able to impact many young musicians, fuel their passions, and grow into their careers.”

The Gecko Fund was established in 2023 in honor of Caroline Chao who passed from cancer in 2019. The fund supports creative narrative works in the New England music community, granting \$5,000 to one artist annually. The winner of the Gecko Fund grant, **Heartwood** will use the grant to support their musical, “The Well Tree.” Illustrated by a ‘crankie’ - an illuminated, papercut, hand-cranked scroll, the three members of Heartwood are the actors, musicians, and the crew that runs the crankie, and audiences help sing pieces of the story.

Club Passim will host their annual Iguana Music Fund Showcase on May 12th, providing an opportunity for several of the grant recipients to perform. Tickets are \$15 with proceeds going to the Fund.

About Passim

The mission of Passim is to provide truly exceptional and interactive live musical experiences for both performers and audiences, to nurture artists at all stages of their career, and to build a vibrant music community. We do so through our legendary listening venue, music school, artist grants and outreach programs. As a nonprofit since 1994, Passim carries on the heritage of our predecessors—the historic Club 47 (1958—1968) and for-profit Passim (1969—1994). We cultivate a diverse mix of musical traditions, where the emphasis is on the relationship between performers and audience and teachers and students. Located in Harvard Square, Passim serves Cambridge and the broader region by featuring local, national and international artists. Our ultimate goal is to help the performance arts flourish and thereby enrich the lives of members of our community.