



season 8 annual report
july 1, 2021 – june 30, 2022



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about palaver



Palaver Strings is a musician-led strings ensemble and nonprofit organization based in Portland, ME. Founded in 2014, Palaver has established itself as a forward-thinking ensemble whose mission is rooted in community and creative programming. Palaver has toured widely throughout the United States, performing at the Kennedy Center and a celebration of the Lullaby Project at Carnegie Hall. The ensemble recently released its third album, *Ready or Not*, in partnership with Azica Records.

Palaver has enjoyed residencies at Rockport Music, Boston Center for the Arts, Bay Chamber Concerts, and Longy School of Music, where ensemble members teach a graduate course on music and community engagement. Since 2019, Palaver's musicians have been proud to call Portland home, presenting dozens of concerts each year throughout the northeast and offering quality music education through the Palaver Music Center.





dear friends of palaver,

Season 8 brought a return to in-person performances reaching close to 9,000 audience members through four full-group programs and a chamber series, each featuring different collaborators and partner organizations. Programs included **Welcome Here**, a program that celebrated heritage and community in Maine through the lens of the Wabanaki, Puerto Rican and Congolese communities; and **Affirmation**, a collaboration with Warp Trio that reflected on the struggle for racial justice and representation that takes place both in the concert hall and in the world at large.

In April 2022 we released our third, full-length album, recorded through Azica Records. **Ready or Not** features works by female composers from the Renaissance through today, and is both representative of the performance work that Palaver produces and equally relevant to the importance of honoring the talent and artistic output of historically marginalized voices.

In June 2022, Palaver culminated year three of the **Palaver Music Center**, welcoming 50 students in our pre-k through 2nd-grade After School Strings Program, teaching 90 young people early childhood music through Zoom, and completing our 7th Lifesongs and Lullaby projects with six participants in Portland.

Perhaps one of our biggest season landmarks was surpassing an annual budget of \$500,000 for the first time.

We are grateful to each of you and your continued investment in our growth as a diverse performance and education community organization. Here's to many more seasons of music, dialogue, understanding, and love in the years to come!

With gratitude,
Palaver Strings



Signed by all Palaver Strings Season 8 Co-Artistic Directors

As Co-Artistic Directors of Palaver Strings, we affirm that Black lives matter and acknowledge that systemic racism continues to affect our community. Our mission is to strengthen and inspire community through music, and we believe that true community is not possible without sustained work to dismantle the oppressive structures that can separate us and impair the development of the community we seek. As performers, educators, and collaborators, we strive to create a culture of equity, inclusion, and accountability. One necessary part of this work is examining classical music's legacy of exclusion and white supremacy, and the ways in which this legacy shapes our playing, decision-making, and ways of being together. We will coordinate this effort with a continued awareness of the effects that such exclusion and white supremacy have on our day-to-day lives. Our work cannot end there; it must continue with concrete action to disrupt these systems and practices.

the palaver team

co-artistic directors & staff

Josie Davis	Violinist, Co-Artistic Director & Evaluations Coordinator
Brianna Fischler	Violist, Co-Artistic Director, Education/Social Media Coordinator & PMC Faculty
Maya French	Violinist, Co-Artistic Director, Managing Director & PMC Faculty
Kiyoshi Hayashi	Violinist & Co-Artistic Director
Lysander Jaffe	Violist, Co-Artistic Director, Communications & Evaluations Coordinator
Jesse MacDonald	Violinist & Co-Artistic Director
Nate Martin	Bassist & Co-Artistic Director
Elizabeth Moore	Violist, Co-Artistic Director, Programming Director & PMC Faculty
Ryan Shannon	Violinist & Co-Artistic Director
Kamyron Williams	Cellist & Co-Artistic Director & PMC Faculty
Matthew Smith	Cellist, Co-Artistic Director, Managing Director of Education & PMC Faculty
Nathaniel Taylor	Cellist & Co-Artistic Director
Roland Robitaille	Operations Director & Performance Manager
Haley Maiden	Marketing Director
Sylvia Schwartz	PMC Faculty
Fiona Hilton	Graphic Designer
Yoon S. Byun	Photographer & Videographer

board of directors

Ari Solotoff	Board President / Founder of Solotoff Law Group PLLC
Lauren Eidson	Board Treasurer / Internal Auditor at St. Judes Children's Research Hospital
Josue Gonzalez	Board Secretary / Executive Director at Project STEP
Ekhlas Ahmed	Board Member / Program Officer at Gateway Community Services
William Black	Board Member / Deputy Public Advocate (Retired) at ME Public Advocate Office
Katherine Knox	Board Member / Attorney at Bernstein Shur
Rob Krauser	Board Member / Owner of REK Room Media
David Lakari	Board Member / President of Renewal Housing Associates, LLC
Molly McCarthy	Board Member / Director of Development at Massachusetts General Hospital
Max Monks	Board Member / Director of Consulting and Subscription Services at Tarifica
Aaron Pratt	Board Member / Shareholder and Attorney at Drummond Woodsum

advisory council

Manuel Bogorro	Advisory Council / Carnegie Hall & Bay Chamber Concerts
Sarah Darling	Advisory Council / Musician at A Far Cry String Orchestra
Moisés Fernández Via	Advisory Council / Boston Medical Campus Arts/Lab
Monica Kelly	Advisory Council / Bay Chamber Concerts
Bayla Keyes	Advisory Council / Boston University
Heath Marlow	Advisory Council / Emmanuel Music
Brian O'Donovan	Advisory Council / WGBH
Shay Stewart Bouley	Advisory Council / Community Change Inc.

the numbers

39

of in-person concerts performed throughout New England and New York

17

of collaborating musicians, visual artists, and speakers

2

of new commissions by up-and-coming composers

4

of performance residencies and education partnerships

90

of students in our Portland Early Childhood Music program

50

of students in our After-School Strings Program

5

of participants in our Lullaby and Lifesongs Projects



highlights

A woman with dark hair, wearing a dark jacket, is performing on stage. She is holding a microphone close to her mouth and looking upwards. The background is dark with several bright blue spotlights creating a bokeh effect.

season 8 performances

Palaver kicked off Season 8 with **Portraits**, a program that explored the relationship between music and visual art, featuring music by Stravinsky, Reena Esmail, and Charles Mingus and paired with the motion graphics of **Indigo Arts Alliance** visual artist Pam Chevez. In November 2021, we hit the road again for the first time since the pandemic, with the incredible Warp Trio for our **Affirmation** program with in-person performances in Portland, ME, Boston, MA, and Brooklyn, NY. The program reflected on the struggle for racial justice and representation that takes place both in the concert hall and in the world at large.

Over the winter we performed our three **chamber series** programs in Brattleboro, VT, Cambridge, MA, and Portland, ME. March featured a vibrant and connective set of live performances in Cambridge, MA, and Portland, ME. The program, **Kaleidoscope**, was centered around Max Richter's recomposition of the Four Seasons, featuring Palaver violinist Ryan Shannon as soloist, as well as works by Jessie Montgomery and Elizabeth Moore.

In May, Palaver presented **Welcome Here**, a Maine state-wide tour that featured the stories and wisdom of three beautiful grandmothers of Wabanaki, Congolese, and Puerto Rican descent here in Maine. Interspersed between music from their communities, performed by six incredible guest musicians, they talked about all that they had learned from their grandmothers, including generational trauma and frustration but also the beauty of all of the traditions, language, and stories that had been passed on to them. And to culminate the season we celebrated the release of our **Ready or Not** album with a New England tour featuring the incredible, mezzo-soprano Sophie Michaux.



highlights



the palaver music center

The Palaver Music Center (PMC) seeks to generate a love of music, foster creativity, and hold space for shared dialogue with people from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. 60% of students received scholarships to ensure access.

PMC successfully completed our third year with a return to a hybrid teaching model in which our 50 Pre-K through 2nd grade After-School-Strings students attended private in-person lessons and our Early Childhood Music faculty sang and danced with 90 young people from 0-4 years old through weekly Zoom classes at Opportunity Alliance Head Start Centers and at Youth and Family Outreach. We feel lucky to have continued collaboration with the Opportunity Alliance's Maine Families program and MaineTransNet for recruitment and support for both our Lifesongs and Lullaby Projects.

"When I was young I didn't have a chance to learn music but when the opportunity came for Uriel I wanted him to do it. Sometimes when he is practicing I tell him, 'No, do it like this'. I'll take the viola and show him how to do it and he'll tell me, 'No, mommy, you did it wrong, that's not how you do it - you do it like this.' Eventually we just end up laughing and having fun. Music is good - I like classical music and viola is part of that. One day, my cousin came to visit us with his two daughters and Uriel opened up his viola case and began to play for them. The two girls started dancing to his music and the room filled with joy." - Bebe Kabedi



a special thank you to our season 8 partners



and our season 8 sponsors



MAINE BEER COMPANY



fy2022 budget



Total Revenue	FY2022
Individual Sponsors	\$211,053
Grants & Corporate Sponsors	\$225,246
Performance Revenue	\$45,327
Palaver Music Center Revenue	\$34,615
Other Revenue	\$5,773
FY2021 Employee Retention Tax Credit	\$48,000

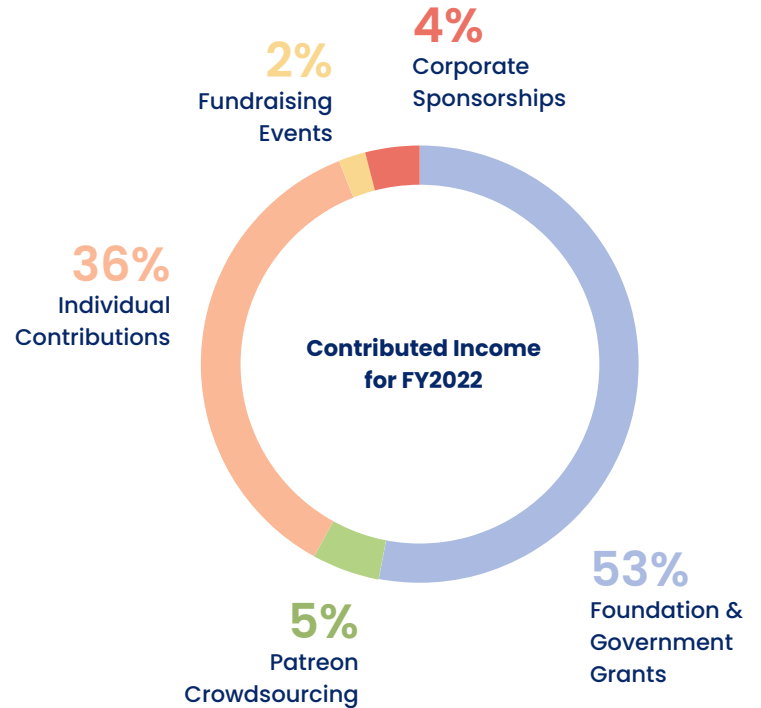
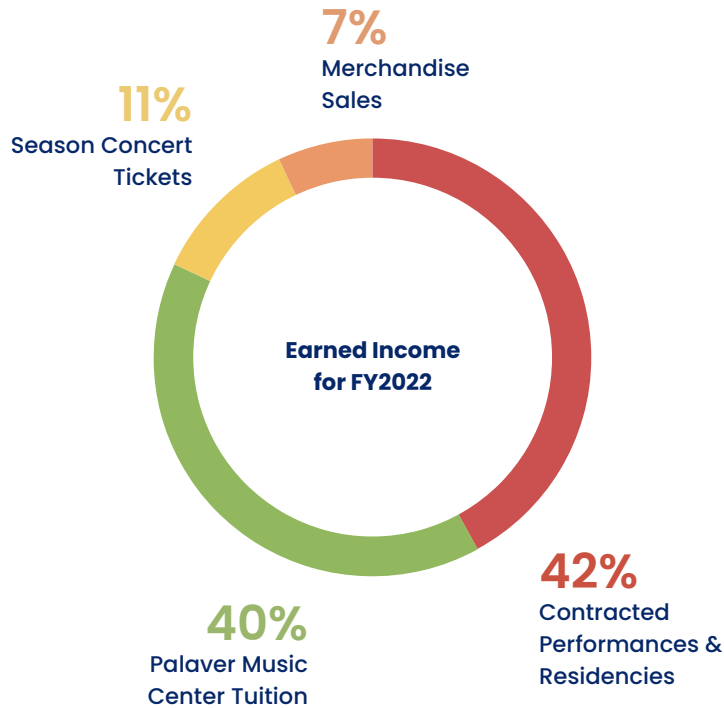
Total Revenue **\$570,015**

Total Expenses	FY2022
Performance Salaries & Wages	\$203,007
Education Salaries & Wages	\$95,068
Administration Salaries & Wages	\$89,764
Program Expenses	\$95,126
General Expenses	\$36,306

Total Expenses **\$519,272**

Net Revenue (includes FY2021 tax credit)

income breakdown



We are so proud to have surpassed a \$500,000 budget this season. Thank you to all who made it possible!

looking forward



After eight years of teaching and music-making in a variety of spaces and performance halls, we are thrilled to begin our next chapter in our own space that provides ample teaching, rehearsal and administrative space.

On any given week during Season 9 our new Cumberland Avenue space will bustle with the following activities:

- 40 one-on-one lessons taught by our 6 devoted string faculty
- Collaborative team meetings to plan tours, book concerts, promote our work, and apply for grants
- Discussions about our strategies with board members, volunteers and friends to bring dreams to life
- 12 group classes offering hands-on musical exploration with songwriting, art and world music
- Shared meals, conversations, and practice in our community room with families and students as they navigate homework, music learning, and rest during after-school and work hours
- Intensive rehearsals for each exciting performance presented and performed by Palaver
- Co-Artistic Director meetings focused on advancing diversity, equity, inclusion and justice in music education and culture

In August, we begin our 9th season, again performing close to 40 concerts around the country, sharing live performances across the city and region, while at the same time, teaching hands-on strings and music education to more than 200 Portland area children, ages 6 months to 10 years. Additionally, we launch year-long residencies through performances and teaching a Music & Civic Engagement Course at Longy School of Music at Bard College and workshops at the Children's Museum and Theatre of Maine.

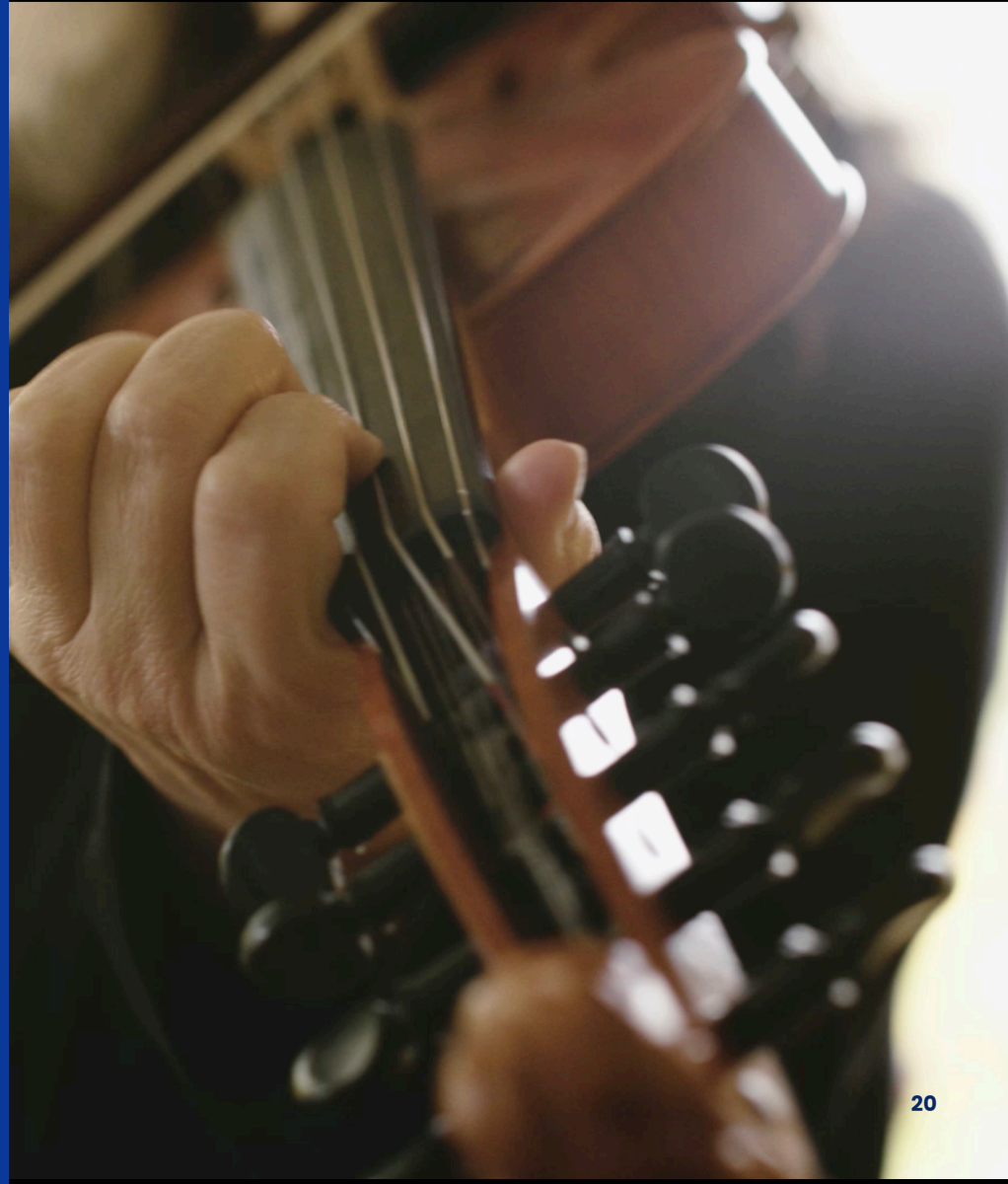


palaver thanks

*We'd like to thank the following people
and organizations who have helped
Palaver Strings so much this season...*



Aaron & Kelley Pratt
Adele Ngoy & David Currier
Alan Fischler
Alisa Amador
Allan Keddy
Allan Rodgers
Amy Gottlieb
Andrew Mark
Ann Casady & Peter Pitegoff
Anne Cogger
Anne Goodale
Anne Moore-Hutton
Annette & Robert Elowitch
Annette Naegel & Douglas Smith
Annie Reiner & Jonathan Asen
Anthony Antolini
Ari & Natalie Solotoff
Ariel Friedman
Arline Rauch
Arthur Robins
Arthur Robins
Ashley Terison
Barbara Jean O'Brien
Barbara Lamont
Bath Savings Institution
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Bennett Konesni
Bernard & Phyllis Givertz
Bernstein Shur
Bonnie & Dutch Kuykendall
Bonnie Porta & Robert C. Monks
Bonnie Rukin
Brian & Lindsay O'Donovan
Britton Goodale
Carl Lakari
Carol Maher





Carole Brand
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Catherine Besteman
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Elizabeth Mayberry
Elizabeth Pope
Elizabeth Rauch
Elizabeth Staton
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Emily Nelson
Eric & Elizabeth Handley
Eric Buch
Evan Dorsky
Ezra Weller
Faith Sacey
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Gail Mishara
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Karen Smith
Kate & Jess Knox
Katherine Everett
Katherine Ledwith
Kathleen Guilday
Kathryn Green

thank you

Kim Victoria Kettler
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Tommy Barth
United Way of Southern Maine
Victoria Green
Walt Dunlap & Cynthia Barnett
William & Lynn Ragen
William Black & Jackie Potter
William Matthews
Wyatt & Rachel Garfield
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Palaver Strings, Inc. 501(c)(3)

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