



Documentary
Songwriters



2021 Progress Report

About Us

DocSong is a mission driven nonprofit that seeks to increase empathy by cowriting songs with communities in crisis. We teach the Documentary Songwriting Method: a unique, step-by-step method that demystifies creativity and makes it possible for someone with no musical background to co-write a high-quality song.

Teaching Artists trained in our method create collaborative songs that are authentic, accessible, and artistic. Over the past few years, our Teaching Artists have co-written songs with refugees from the Middle East seeking asylum in Belgium, with Turkish and Greek Cypriots at the UN Buffer Zone on Cyprus, with domestic violence survivors from Maine, and with women from all over the US who have a #MeToo story. Our work has been featured on NPR's *Morning Edition*, Tedx: Bath University, and in dissertations and capstone projects from Prescott College, Oberlin College and Conservatory and the University of Oregon's Robert D. Clark Honors College.



Teaching Artist Raphaël Meulemans in Gotland, Sweden

Director's Letter

Dear Friends,

Thank you so much for your support of DocSong. It has been a year of growth, flexibility and learning for our organization and I write to share some highlights and updates as we look back on the past eight months:

- We successfully launched our Teaching Artist Training Program—an intensive week-long course where musicians from all over the world can study the Documentary Songwriting Method.
- Our “Song of the Month” videos featured a fully produced track, engineered by Caleb Edwards—a longtime DocSong Teaching Artist and current freshman at the Berklee School of Music in Boston.
- We led “Weekend Workshops” with 2020 wildfire survivors from Oregon, with veterans from Maine and Cleveland, with those wanting to share their songs from quarantine, and with domestic violence survivors from Maine.
- We partnered with JetPack Group, a Cleveland-based web-design firm, to design a new website and reimagine DocSong’s branding. This new, interactive web platform allows our audience to sign up for events, listen to our song archive, read about our history, and connect with our community.
- In July, as part of our Teaching Artist Training Program, we partnered with Suzie Assam, a Portland-based vocalist, and Halcyon, a Maine-based string quartet dedicated to environmental stewardship. In this partnership, we shared five documentary songs created over the past few years in conjunction with classical selections. This live program was premiered in Rockport, Maine and was available for streaming world-wide.

The pandemic provided an opportunity for us. While collaborative music is always most inspiring in person, our songwriting method and programming pivoted well to a virtual world. Our community truly spans the globe. DocSong has Teaching Artists in five different countries, songs from more than twenty different countries, and an audience that is even more widespread.

As we continue to navigate this new, pandemic-changed world, we are excited to explore exactly how to sustain our global audience, while learning how to dig deeper within the communities where we reside. Thank you for your continued support of our work. Our programming is possible because of your commitment, feedback, encouragement, and generous contributions.

With appreciation,

Nora Willauer
Executive Director
DocSong

I learned my skills are valuable. I learned there's
a community of people who feel equally
passionate about human connection through
music.

-Clara Schneid, Teaching Artist Training Program Participant



Our Teaching Artists

United Kingdom and Europe

Jonny Westhorp, *Bristol, England*

Raphaël Meulemans, *Gotland, Sweden*

Europe and Middle East

Melodi Var Öngel, *Adana, Turkey*

Western US and British Columbia

Clara Schneid, *Portland, Oregon*

Caroline Rex-Waller, *Portland, Oregon*

Sean Golightly, *Flagstaff, Arizona*

Stephanie Judy, *Kaslo, British Columbia*

Midwest

Cecelia Swanson, *Cleveland, Ohio*

Rebecca Shasberger, *Cleveland, Ohio*

Andre Cardine, *Indianapolis, Indiana*

Mid-Atlantic and Southern US

Khalid Taylor, *Bethlehem, Pennsylvania*

Mimi Bornstein, *Washington DC*

Alex Wilder, *Nashville, Tennessee*

Zach Arfa, *Houston, Texas*

Joaquin Contreras, *Humble, Texas*

Daniella Hope, *New York City, New York*

New England

Chloe Isis, *Brunswick, Maine*

Malcolm Brooks, *Rockport, Maine*

Will Foote, *Portland, Maine*

Caleb Edwards, *Boston, Massachusetts*

Chris Finn, *Camden, Maine*

Hazel Delehey, *Lewiston, Maine*

Matt Smith, *Biddeford, Maine*

Kiyoshi Hayashi, *Boston, Massachusetts*

Alex Adams, *Raymond, Maine*



Our Board Members

Mimi Bornstein

Treasurer

Promote Harmony, LLC

Josie Davis

President

Bay Chamber Concerts and Music School

Halley Elwell

Secretary

Jazz Vocalist and Educator

Dr. Jody Kerchner

Oberlin College and Conservatory

Stanford Thompson

Play on Philly

Lisa Whitfield

Oberlin College and Conservatory

2021 by the Numbers

1 Performance for a Live Audience

2 National Conference Presentations

6 New Strategic Partnerships

12 New Teaching Artists Trained

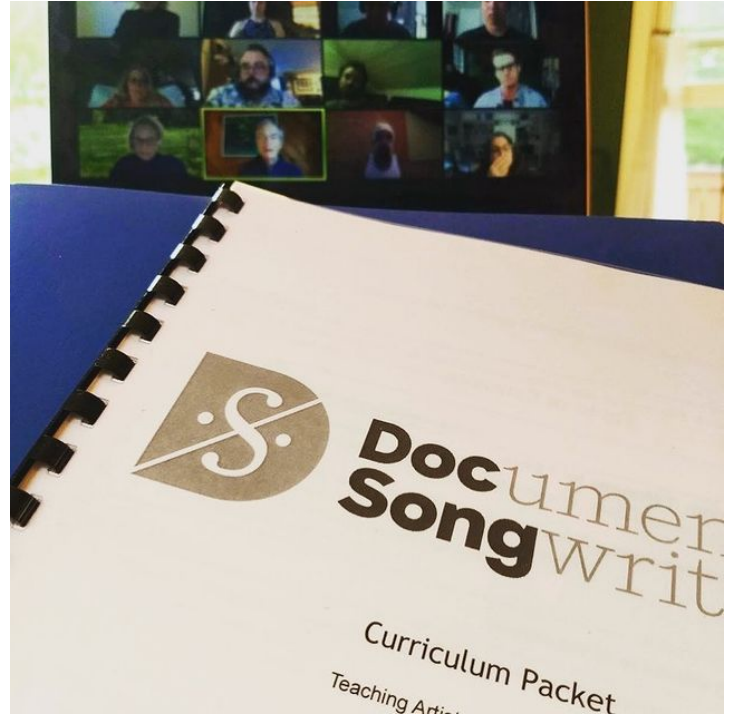
19 New Documentary Songs Completed

84 Participants in Songwriting Programs

TA Training Program

Early in 2021 we worked on codifying the Documentary Songwriting Method, editing the seven teaching modules, creating a handbook, designing T-shirts, and releasing a series of “how-to” videos for each training section.

These projects allowed us to provide unified training to all of our incoming Teaching Artists and create a blueprint for future training programs.



In July, we ran two, week-long programs: the first was a refresher course for the 25 TAs who studied with DocSong previously. The second course brought together 12 musicians from across the globe: we spanned nine time zones, three countries, and countless professions.

Most of our training was devoted to experiential practice with the Documentary Songwriting Method. Faculty members led small workshops on subjects that would help our TAs grow and find success. A highlight was a workshop with Promoting Harmony, LLC, an organization devoted to using musical experiences to bridge cultural gaps and spark courageous conversations. We examined how

society sees and what society might not see, so that as Teaching Artists, we will be better equipped to practice empathy and compassion with our story sources.

At the end of our week of training, DocSong partnered with Finding Our Voices, a Maine-based nonprofit dedicated to breaking the silence of domestic partner abuse. Teaching Artists split into small groups and co-wrote songs with domestic violence survivors. This was an extreme test of their skills after only seven days of training. Everyone rose to the occasion and we are excited to share the four songs with you in the coming months!

“I felt like I experienced a lot more personal and emotional growth than I thought I would. I knew I was going to learn about songwriting, but the emotional intelligence and self awareness I gained from going through the workshop was not something I was expecting! I think that speaks to all of the amazing presenters and organizers throughout the week and also how emotional Documentary Songwriting can be.”

-Kiyoshi Hayashi, Teaching Artist Training Program Participant



**Teaching Artist Melodi Var Öngel with story
source Malika Bakayoko as part of the
DocSong Identities Project**

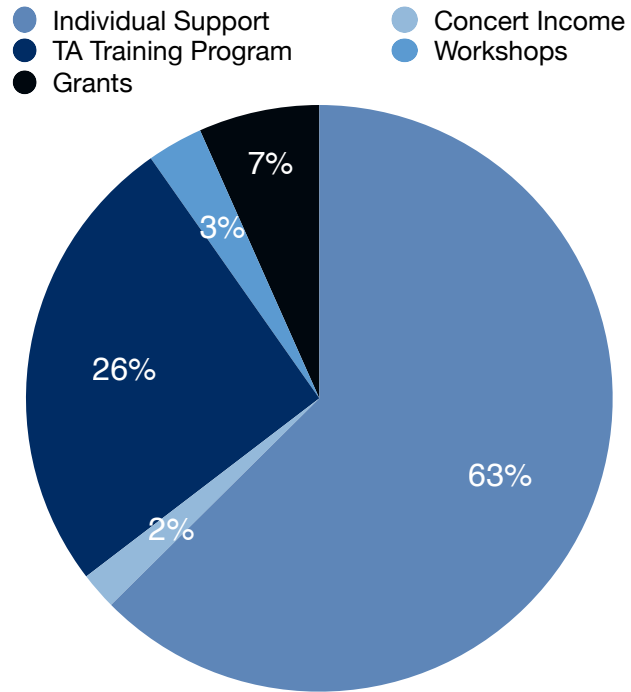
2021 Financials

REVENUE	
Individual Support	\$11,980
Concert Income	\$470.00
Teaching Artist Training Program Tuition	\$18,000.00
<i>Scholarship Awards</i>	<i>-\$13,000</i>
Workshops Fees	\$750
Grants	\$1,250
TOTAL	\$19,450
EXPENSES	
Executive Director Salary	\$9,689
Programming	\$9,109
Website, Software, Branding*	\$7,656
TOTAL	\$26,454

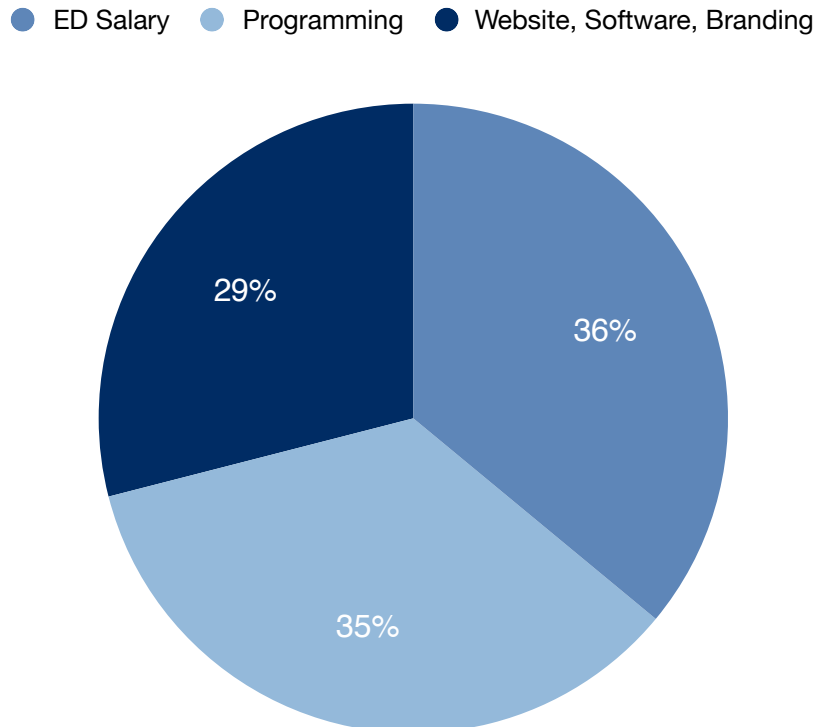
*This investment represents a one-time cost that was made possible (in-part) through 2020 cash reserves.

**Fundraising goal by December 31:
\$15,000**

Revenue=\$19,450



Expenses=\$26,454





Songwriting Workshop with Bay Chamber Concerts and Music School in Rockport, ME

Looking Forward

DocSong is at a pivotal moment in its trajectory. For the past 18 months, we have been working on developing programming and strategic partnerships that will sustain us as we move forward into our next chapter.

Our “Song of the Month” program features up-and-coming artists on our web platforms—allowing us to share new songs with our community. Thus far in 2021 we have run five weekend workshops with new organizations. Each of these organizations is interested in further programming—we look forward to deepening these relationships.

Our Teaching Artist Training Program was a great success. All twelve Teaching Artists would recommend this program to colleagues and friends, and we look forward to hosting a similar venture next summer. After working with our Teaching Artists, it also became clear that continuing education opportunities need to be provided for people to grow comfortable with and practice their new skills. We look forward to developing recurring educational programming in our community.