Our Mission: Helping Musicians Make It

**Sustenance**
Provides ongoing support to artists living in chronic poverty and emergency grants to artists in crisis

**Performance**
Supports artistic excellence through professional development, tour booking and management services

**Education**
Makes American musical heritage accessible to current and future generations through public exhibitions, youth engagement, and archival preservation

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Denise Duffy, Managing Director
Aaron Greenhood, Program Manager
Christelle Ndong, Artist Support Specialist
Jed Finley, Program Associate
Karen Mack, Accounting Coordinator
Mollie O’Reilly, Giving Coordinator
Cornelius Lewis, Community Coordinator

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Dickey Betts
Jimmy Herring
Derek Trucks
Susan Tedeschi
Pete Townshend
Elvin Bishop

Dan Auerbach
Taj Mahal
Tift Merritt
Tom Rankin
Sue Foley
Pura Fé

**Founders**
B.B. King (1925–2015)
Levon Helm (1940–2012)
Col. Bruce Hampton (1947–2017)

**Eddie Tigner, 2015 © T. Duffy**

Music keeps you young;
the blues keeps you going.

– Eddie Tigner (1926–2019)
 whose music communicates part of an important story.

We measure the value of this music by its social and artistic significance, rather than its commercial success or current popularity. We call it “the best music you’ve never heard.”

Though often romanticized, the life of a professional musician is rarely glamorous. We focus our efforts on the most vulnerable artists—musicians over 55 years of age who live on less than $25,000 a year—because there is a real danger that their music will be lost to our society and future generations if they are not supported and documented now.

We provide a safety net to an elderly population, and foster a community of partner artists that also support each other as they near the end of their lives. We connect younger generations with their artistic elders, the women and men who blazed trails, so our musical heritage continues to live on through the next generation and beyond.

We have found that when musicians are heard and respected, they are inspired to create more prolifically and aspire to greater artistic excellence. As individual artists thrive, so does the art form itself. We have discovered that as traditional artists gain recognition and respect, there is a positive ripple effect among the communities to which they belong.

We engage audiences with their cultural heritage in meaningful ways. When Americans interact with Music Maker artists by attending a performance or workshop, or engage with our exhibits, recordings, videos, or books, they enrich their understanding of the talented people around them and historic context of the music that surrounds them.

We want the world to appreciate how important and broad the American traditions we shine a light on are: Native American music, gospel, string band music, blues, singer/songwriter traditions, Zydeco, and more.

Our partner artists create Art that is important to our world and is timeless. We invite you to stop, look, and open your ears to the unseen greatness that so many Americans miss every day.

If we do not safeguard our cultural heritage, it will not be here for future generations.

Without the generosity and enthusiasm of supporters like you, we would never have made it this far.

With love,

Timothy & Denise Duffy
Hanging Tree Guitars by Freeman Vines

May 29–October 17, 2020 | Greenville Museum of Art | Greenville, NC

_Hanging Tree Guitars_ introduces the work of African American luthier and visual artist Freeman Vines. Vines' sculptures are imbued with an expressive form and symbolic imagery, shaped by hand from repurposed wood sourced from the natural and built landscapes around his home in an eastern North Carolina farming community.

Freeman Vines' instruments are sculpted from repurposed wood and found materials, which are arranged to illuminate the spirit of each object. Among Vines' most arresting works are a series of guitars carved from sections of a black walnut tree on which an African American man named Oliver Moore was lynched in 1930, an event that marked one of the final documented lynchings in North Carolina. Vines crafts this wood into potent and haunting objects, reclaiming the trophies of past racial violence and transforming it into guitars and a collection of sculptures.

Images by Timothy Duffy offer a lens on Vines' person, environment, and art, framing and refracting the psychological impact of the work within the social and historical context of the American South. Transcribed interviews with Vines immerse viewers in the artist's worldview, exploring themes of memory, racial identity, and spirituality in the rural South.

A companion book, _Hanging Tree Guitars_ by Freeman Vines with Timothy Duffy and Zoe Van Buren will be published and available through Music Maker in spring 2020.

This book and exhibit are the culmination of 6 years of collaboration between Freeman Vines and Music Maker. Timothy Duffy began regular visits to Freeman's home in Farmville, NC in 2013. Freeman invited Duffy and Music Maker staff and interns to document his artistry and work. Music Maker supports Vines artistry through grants and services to help with health, housing, transportation, and supplies.

Music Maker will launch this exhibit near Freemans' home at the Greenville Museum of Art in Greenville, NC with support from the National Endowment for the Arts and will tour the exhibit nationwide.

In February of 2020 Vines' guitars will appear alongside works by Lonnie Holley and Thornton Dial in _We Will Walk - Art of Protest and Resistance in the American South_ curated by Sarah Martin and Hannah Collins at the Turner Contemporary Museum in Margate, Kent, UK.

More Exhibits:

**We Are the Music Makers!**
- Clay Center for the Arts, WV  |  now–11/3/19
- Fort Smith Regional Arts Center, AR | 11/21/19–3/8/20
- Delta Cultural Arts Center, AR | 10/1/19–1/30/19

**Our Living Past: A Platinum Portrait of Music Maker**
- Clay Center for the Arts, WV | now–11/3/19
CELEBRATE: MUSIC MAKER 25

December 4–8, 2019 | The Fruit | Durham, NC

Join Music Maker for the ultimate blowout 25th Anniversary celebration at The Fruit in downtown Durham! This December, we’re collaborating with Duke Performances for a weeklong music series, shining a light on pioneering contributors preserving the rich musical traditions of the South.

PICKERS & STORYTELLERS:

Dom Flemons
Jerron “Blind Boy” Paxton
Jake Xerxes Fussell
Gail Caesar

December 4, 2019
8:00pm

SOUTHERN VOICES:

Lonnie Holley
Alexa Rose

December 5, 2019
8:00pm

ZYDECO:

Major Handy and Buckwheat Zydeco, Jr. with the Ils Sont Partis Band

December 6, 2019
8:00pm

NATIVE AMERICAN:

Pura Fé
Cary Morin
Deer Clan Singers
Lakota John and Kin

December 7, 2019
1:00pm

MUSIC MAKER BLUES REVUE:

feat. Cool John Ferguson, Alabama Slim, Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen, Pura Fé, Cary Morin, Timothy Duffy, Sol Creech, and Ardie Dean

December 7, 2019
8:00pm

GOSPEL:

The Branchettes with special guest Phil Cook
The Glorifying Vines Sisters and the Eastern NC Gospel Revue

December 8, 2019
1:00pm

December 8, 2019
7:00pm

FREE MUSIC MAKER 25 EVENTS:

December 5, 12:30–1:00pm | Power Plant Gallery | Durham, NC
Film screening of THE MAN IS THE MUSIC and I Snuck Off the Slave Ship followed by a Q&A with Lonnie Holley and Matt Arnett.

December 6, 12:00–1:00pm | The Fruit | Durham, NC
Panel discussion with Music Maker partner artists and special guests, and Blue Muse book signing with Timothy Duffy.

Visiting from out of town?

Contact Mollie O'Reilly for assistance planning your trip:
mollie@musicmaker.org or 919-643-2456

Tickets on sale now!

To purchase tickets, visit bit.ly/MusicMaker25 or call 919-684-4444

Individual concert: $25
All-access package (all 7 concerts): $140
Join us for this free series at the Hickory Grove Branch of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library! The series features three Music Maker partner artists: **Alexa Rose** (October 10), **Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen** (November 14), and **Thomas Rhyant** (December 12). Each show will be at 1:00pm and followed by a Q&A with the artists.

**presented in partnership with**

North Carolina Roots Music Series

October 10–December 12, 2019 | Hickory Grove Library | Charlotte, NC

Telluride Blues & Brews Festival

September 13–15, 2019 | Telluride, CO

Renowned as one of the most scenic and intimate music festivals in the country, Telluride Blues & Brews Festival is located in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. The multi-stage celebration of music and craft beer offers an eclectic mix of live blues, funk, indie, rock, jam-band, gospel, and soul performances accompanied by some of the best breweries in the country.

Music Maker artists **Sandra Hall**, **Alabama Slim**, **The Como Mamas**, **Jake Xerxes Fussell**, and **Willie Farmer** will perform at the nation’s premier blues festival this year.

Presented by Telluride Express, the **Music Maker Drink House** at the Blues Stage will give you a glimpse into authentic blues culture. The Drink House features:

- **Listening stations** with original vinyl records. Bring a friend and use the dual headphones to sample classics from the blues genre and discover new and up-and-coming artists.
- **Artist meet-and-greets** from the Music Maker roster. Shake hands, ask questions, and learn more about the artists performing at the festival.
- **Photo booth** to commemorate the experience.

6th Annual Freight Train Blues

May–June, 2020 | Carrboro, NC

This free concert series honors the life and legacy of Piedmont blues legend Elizabeth “Libba” Cotten, born in 1893 in Carrboro, NC. The cultural significance, diversity, and vitality of Cotten’s North Carolina musical community is highlighted by performers from across the spectrum of American roots music that are showcased in this series each year.

**Stay tuned for Freight Train Blues 2020 dates and lineup!**
2018/19 FINANCIAL REPORT

- **Fundraising:** $88,048
- **Management:** $73,408
- **Programs:** $881,047

Total Budget: $1,042,503

WHAT WE’VE ACHIEVED

- **12,425** Musician Grants
- **7,578** Performances
- **2,490** Songs Released
- **440** Partner Artists
- **32** Countries Tour
- **25** Years
- **3** Programs
- **1** Mission

What We’ve Accomplished

- Audited financial statements available upon request.

**Beverly “Guitar” Watkins** suffered a stroke, but has stabilized and is in recovery.

- **Cookie McGee** was homebound during recovery after a routine visit to the doctor resulted in a punctured artery.

- Music Maker helped **Jimmi Mayes** make a few important trips to Chicago from his home in Jackson, MS to visit a specialty doctor.

- In a tragic turn of events, four weeks after he and his band backed up **Ironing Board Sam** on stage at New Orleans Jazzfest, **Lil Buck Sinegal** passed away at his home.

- **Sam Frazier, Jr.** got a new set of harmonicas.

- Music Maker helped **Elnora Spencer** get some essential furnishings for her home, including a couch and dinette set.

- **David McGrew** would like to dispel any myths that he has died; he was joking about his arrhythmia surgery and accidentally started a rumor about his own untimely end—he’s still kicking.

- **Eddie Tigner, Willie Sonny Boy King, Sam “the dot man” McMillan**, and **Harvey Knox** joined the Silent Strings.

- **Lee Allen Zeno** is being treated for lymphoma and is slated to have stem-cell replacement therapy in the new year.

- **Ashley Delhi and Kin** performed at the Kennedy Center and the Library of Congress.

- **Robert Finley** is having a go of it on America’s Got Talent.

- Music Maker helped **Guitar Lightnin’ Lee** purchase a new fridge and stove.

- **The Como Mamas** played the world-famous Ryman Auditorium.

- **Harvey Dalton Arnold** spent 4 days recording his sophomore solo record with New York City’s top session musicians and Music Maker long-time friend Zak Alister.

- **John Dee Holeman** celebrated his 90th year and got favorable reviews for his new record.

- **Alabama Slim** and **Guitar Lightnin’ Lee** were featured on NPR Weekend Edition.

- **Freeman Vines** and **The Glorifying Vines Sisters** were featured in The Bitter Southerner.

**Beverly “Guitar” Watkins, 2007 © T. Duffy**
The Como Mamas made a few trips abroad, performing in Finland, Sweden, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, France, Czech Republic, Guadeloupe, Austria, and Norway.

© Wallace Lester 2019

If you were in New Orleans between May and July, you would have been greeted by the billboard size faces of Music Maker artists Ironing Board Sam, Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen, Guitar Lightnin’ Lee, Boot Hanks, and Little Freddie King all over town.

© Aaron Greenhood 2019

Music Maker gave Freeman Vines a GMC Yukon to cart himself and his art around town. Music Maker also helped move his workshop to a new space in downtown Fountain, NC.

© Timothy Duffy 2019

Mother Lena Mae Perry of the Branchettes performed at the North Carolina Governor’s Mansion to inaugurate NC’s Year of Music. She also completed a recording project with producer and musician Phil Cook set to release in early 2020.

© Jed Finley 2019
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Check out all our releases on bandcamp!

★ SANDRA HALL ★
“The Empress of the Blues”
New Music Maker Partner Artist

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2019 RELEASES

Blue Muse: Timothy Duffy’s Southern Photographs

Blue Muse Book - $55
Published by UNC Press, the book features 60 tintype images captured by Timothy Duffy. These photographs compel us to pay attention, look closer, know the faces, and learn the names. (Hardcover, 12” x 12” 137 pages)

Blue Muse Album - $10
This musical companion to the Blue Muse project features 21 tracks that capture the infinite complexity of Music Maker’s partner artists and traditional American music. Blue Muse artfully places some of the most important, little-known musicians alongside rockstars and longtime Music Maker supporters Taj Mahal, Eric Clapton, and Dom Flemons.

Visit musicmaker.org/shop for more info and to purchase!

Music Maker Deluxe Trucker Hat - $25
Celebrate 25 years of Music Maker with our limited-edition trucker hat! Available in two colors, this deluxe hat features an adjustable snap-back and an embroidered Dr. Burt patch.

MUSIC MAKER MERCH

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There’s a direct line of sight from the money you give to the people you support. It’s incredibly powerful.

- Al B., Music Maker donor and Board Member

"I was raised in a community that helped everybody. This is my community now."

- Rich H., Music Maker donor and Board Member

Investing in the brilliance of the Blues has never been easier—when you set up a monthly gift, you ensure that our artists’ needs are met year-round. Your support can change lives, one month at a time.

Your gift of $30/month or $300/year grants you exclusive access to unreleased tracks, previews of upcoming albums, and interesting musical material from the upcoming Music Maker stacks!

Join the Monthly Giving Program

Visit musicmaker.org to start changing lives!
Music Maker has forged strong relationships with many wonderful organizations. Here are just a few of our partners:

- Malcom Barker
- Lisa Rose Barnes
- CB Barrinet
- Suzanne Barros
- Kim Beeman
- Gary Beers
- Stephanie Benedict
- Steve Benner
- Jane Benson
- Patricia Berg
- Katherine Berkleley
- Leonardo Bertinelli
- Ann Bijon
- William Blunt
- Villy Bohr
- Rex Bohn
- Mark and Jennifer Bolster
- Gerald and Pamela Bozak
- Kate Branca
- Bill Britton
- Jennifer Brookland
- Bill Britton
- Kate Branca
- Boxser
- Rex Bohn
- Villy Bobo
- Leonardo Bertinelli
- Katherine Berkley
- Patricia Berg
- Jane Benson
- Gary Bender
- Kim Beeman
- Malcom Barker
- Chris Mincey
- Rosanne Miller
- Mike Michaels
- Phyllis McNeill and Laura Ann McKinney
- Robert McIntyre
- Peggy McCracken
- John McCormick
- Brenda McCall
- Farrar Martin
- Thomas Schnur
- Philippe Silver
- Patricia Berg
- Jane Benson
- Gary Bender
- Kim Beeman
- Malcom Barker
- Chris Mincey
- Rosanne Miller
- Mike Michaels
- Phyllis McNeill and Laura Ann McKinney
- Robert McIntyre
- Peggy McCracken
- John McCormick
- Brenda McCall
- Farrar Martin
- mężczyzn
- Frederick Goff
- Laura Godel
- Eric Goldstein
- Robert Glaker
- Laura Godel
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