



## MUSIC AS SOCIAL CHANGE IN INCARCERATED COMMUNITIES

### A HISTORY OF PARTNERSHIP

Musicambia has worked independently and in partnership with the following institutions around the world

#### SING SING CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Ossining, New York

#### RIKERS ISLAND CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

Queens, New York

#### INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ORIENTACION FEMENINA

Los Teques, Venezuela

#### INTERNADO JUDICIAL BARINAS

Barinas, Venezuela

#### CENTRO PENITENCIARIO DE CARABOBO

Tocuyito, Venezuela

#### HM PRISON BARLINNIE

Glasgow, Scotland

#### HM PRISON SHOTTS

Shotts, Scotland

#### POLMONT YOUNG OFFENDERS INSTITUTION

Polmont, Scotland



### STRIKING CHORDS WITH A COMMUNITY IN NEED

Musicambia is a New York based arts organization working to establish a network of creative music conservatories within the prisons and jails of the United States. The community need for this program was first recognized back in 2011 when Founding Director, Nathan Schram joined a group of colleagues for a live performance at Rikers Island Correctional Facility as part of Carnegie Hall's ACJW Fellowship program. As he started to play, it was impossible to ignore the powerful impact that live music had on the inmates in attendance. The atmosphere of the room warmed up almost immediately as inmates allowed themselves to relax and enjoy the experience. Mr. Schram was later informed that in a prison environment, those reactions are almost unheard of.

After witnessing the overwhelmingly positive response to his concert, the follow-up question was obvious: What effects could we have on inmates if a program existed that made meaningful musical experiences part of their everyday lives? Over the next three years, Mr. Schram traveled the globe to countries that were already incorporating music performance initiatives into their prison reform programs and used this research to design a syllabus he felt confident would be successful for inmates in America.



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## Musicambia Testimonials

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**“There are three other people on my gallery that are participants- none of which I had ever imagined that I would speak to, much less positively urge them to keep up the good work. Now we all consistently find each other at the others gates listening to them play and promoting their hard work. But it doesn’t stop there. When I see others of ‘The Family’ I go out of my way to inquire about how they’re doing and vice-versa. We share ideas, help each other with our own pieces and loose patience waiting for Saturdays (Musicambia day) to come around.”**

**“Men who have spent most of their lives in prison have very little hope, very little to aspire to. Learning to make music provides a lifeline and reaches the men in ways nothing else can. And people who learn to speak in the language of music learn the language of humanity, love and connectiveness.”**

## A NEW CHAPTER

In the Fall of 2014, Sing Sing Prison enthusiastically agreed to partner with Musicambia for the launch of a pilot residency program. Prison staff carefully selected a group of 26 male inmates to participate in nine months of intensive musical training with the internationally recognized musicians who make up the Musicambia faculty. The program is currently in session, and will last through the Spring of 2015 with Musicambia faculty visiting inmates 2-3 times each month.

## A WEEKEND AT MUSICAMBIA

The syllabus for each visit focuses on three main areas of study: First, inmates work with a music skills teacher on music theory, ear training and vocal skills; next the 26 inmates are broken up into smaller groups based on their instrument and given small group instruction; finally, all participants regroup at the end of the day to reenforce their newly learned skills in a small ensemble performance class. Like any conservatory model, inmates are expected to practice their instruments on a daily basis and participants have been granted special permission to bring their instruments back to their cells to ensure that they have opportunities to prepare for the next Musicambia session.

## PROMOTING SOCIAL CHANGE

The first few months of the pilot program have already shown amazing results. In addition to the energetic and joyful attitude that the participants consistently show during Musicambia sessions, inmates and staff have also reported that the program encourages community building within the prison, even after the Musicambia faculty has left for the week. Because the inmates must all participate in a group performance class, everyone gains from encouraging each participant to perform at the highest level possible. As a result, inmates with higher skill levels voluntarily choose to help the less advanced players between sessions. This creates a sense of camaraderie and teamwork that is not often found in an environment like Sing Sing.

## MEET OUR FACULTY



**NATHAN SCHRAM**

FOUNDING DIRECTOR/STRINGS

CARNEGIE HALL ACJW FELLOW



**LEILA ADU**

VOICE

DOCTORAL FELLOW  
PRINCETON UNIVERSITY



**JOHN CHIN**

PIANO

WORLD RENOWNED JAZZ  
PIANIST



**THOMAS BERGERON**

BRASS/WINDS

ATLANTIC BRASS QUINTET

CARNEGIE HALL ACJW FELLOW



**ELLIOT COLE**

MUSIC THEORY/VOICE

DOCTORAL FELLOW  
PRINCETON

## HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE

To ensure that we can continue this program for years to come, we are seeking financial support to help fund:

- The purchase and maintenance of musical instruments; and,
- Musicambia faculty compensation.

Additionally, we are now in talks with Rikers Island to *expand the program in 2016 to include a special initiative targeted at incarcerated minors* and are working hard to build support for this exciting new opportunity.

If you are interested in supporting our organization, we would be delighted to discuss our work in greater detail with you or submit a formal grant proposal.

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