ARTS AT AMHERST INITIATIVE

FY21 ANNUAL REPORT

www.amherst.edu/arts/aai | arts@amherst.edu
STEERING COMMITTEE

Danielle Amodeo
Mead Art Museum Public Programs & Marketing Specialist

Dwight Carey
Assistant Professor of Art & the History of Art

Darryl Harper
Associate Professor of Music
Director of the Center for Humanistic Inquiry

Ellen Mutter
Arts at Amherst Initiative Coordinator
Mead Art Museum Communications & Public Programs Assistant

Jenna Riegel
Assistant Professor of Theater & Dance

2021-2022 Steering Committee:
Danielle Amodeo
Adam Levine, Assistant Professor of Art & the History of Art and Film and Media Studies
Theo Peierls, Arts Coordinator
Eric Sawyer, Professor of Music
Jenna Riegel
Amelia Worsley, Assistant Professor of English

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The breakfast nook of the Bailey Brown House featuring Chelvanaya Gabriel's duoprints, Mirror Neurons.
The Arts at Amherst Initiative seeks to foster participation in the arts at Amherst College by supporting collaboration across disciplines, facilitating conversations about the arts within the context of the liberal arts mission, and hosting leading artists from around the world.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the Arts at Amherst Initiative had numerous successes this fiscal year. We received first-time funding applications from seven Amherst College faculty and staff members, supported programming with 23 partners across campus both inside and outside the arts, and distributed $10,796.63 in funding support to 11 cross-disciplinary art-centered projects. While the hosting of guests at the Bailey Brown House during the 2020-2021 Academic Year was not possible, the Initiative utilized its resources to invest in enduring home projects: developing and creating a virtual tour of the home, researching and documenting the history of the house and its land, and purchasing and showcasing the works of local artists in the home.
Additionally, the Steering Committee continued to produce an impactful full program of synchronous gatherings that both engaged and met the shifting needs of the Initiative’s arts community. Responding to the college’s new Anti-Racism Plan, the initiative helped instigate dialogues centering race and racism in the arts and produced the event, Confronting Race in Arts Research: A Cross-Disciplinary Conversation with Dwight Carey, Ana Candida Carneiro, and Amy Coddington.

As the Initiative looks to 2021-2022, we hope to continue offering programming that brings the members of our community together to discuss important and relevant topics in art making and expressive practice.

Sincerely,
The Arts at Amherst Initiative Steering Committee

Danielle Amodeo, Mead Art Museum Public Programs and Marketing Specialist
Dwight Carey, Assistant Professor of Art & the History of Art
Darryl Harper, Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Humanistic Inquiry
Ellen Mutter, Arts at Amherst Initiative Coordinator and Mead Art Museum Communications & Public Programs Assistant
Jenna Riegel, Assistant Professor of Theater & Dance
The Arts at Amherst Initiative hosts several events each year providing attendees with the opportunity to participate in informal gatherings with their colleagues and engage in conversation about art-centered work at Amherst College. These informal events, designed to foster a community of collaboration among attendees, were held entirely online during the 2020-2021 academic year.

The gatherings, attended by faculty and staff both within and outside of the arts, served to bring colleagues into conversation about navigating their work during these unprecedented times and provided an opportunity to share ongoing research. This year, the Arts at Amherst Initiative hosted or co-hosted 7 events which reached a live audience of 213.
In partnership with the Center for Humanistic Inquiry, the Arts at Amherst Initiative co-hosted our first program of the semester which brought together four art historians from the Five Colleges to talk about their recently published books. Amherst College Professor of Art & the History of Art and Latinx & Latin American Studies, Niko Vicario, University of Massachusetts Amherst Professor of Modern & Contemporary Art, Karen Kurczynski, former Five College Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow in Islamic Art, Alex Dika Seggerman, and University of Massachusetts Amherst Professor of East Asian Art, Christine I. Ho, spoke about their experiences writing the history of modern art from Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, respectively.

Inspired by the college’s new Anti-Racism Plan, the Arts at Amherst Initiative helped instigate dialogues centering race and racism in the arts. Confronting Race in Arts Research was a cross-disciplinary conversation between Assistant Professor of Art & the History of Art, Dwight Carey, Visiting Artist in Playwriting, Ana Carneiro, and Assistant Professor of Music, Amy Coddington, moderated by Associate Professor of Music and Director of the Center for Humanistic Inquiry, Darryl Harper, that acknowledged and redressed the racism in arts research and pedagogy.
VIRTUAL BONFIRE
November 12, 2020

The Arts at Amherst Initiative closed out the fall semester with a virtual bonfire. The event, which began with a grounding exercise led by Steering Committee member Jenna Riegel, provided time for attendees to share what they have been looking at, listening to, and reading, as well as other ways they have been releasing the anxiety and tension brought on by 2020.

SPRING SOIRÉE FEATURING MILOSŁAVA HRUBA AND KATE PUKINSKIS
February 11, 2021

Between the January term and the start of the spring semester, the Arts at Amherst Initiative invited Joseph E. and Grace W. Valentine Visiting Assistant Professor of Music, Kate Pukinskis, and Mead Art Museum Study Room Manager and European Print Specialist, Miloslava Hruba, to share their recent research. Kate spoke about how her role as a composer informs her scholarly research around the notions of cultural identity, diaspora, traditional folk and choral music, and activism, with particular emphasis on Latvia and 20th-century American art song. Miloslava shared field notes from her recent survey of printmaking practices in the former Czechoslovakia (1948 - 1989) with a focus on gender differences within the ideologically and culturally ostracized group of non-conforming artists.

ARTS COORDINATOR INFORMATION SESSION
April 6, 2021

FY21 Arts Coordinator, Ellen Mutter, hosted the first Arts Coordinator Hiring Information Session in partnership with the Loeb Center for Career Exploration and Planning. The info session, geared at Amherst College seniors and recent alumni, introduced applicants to the work of the Arts at Amherst Initiative Coordinator and resulted in more than double the number of applicants since the last search.
In the final independently hosted Arts at Amherst Initiative event of the year, Arts Coordinator Ellen Mutter ’18 presented her preliminary research into the history of the Arts at Amherst Initiative’s Artist Residence, the Bailey Brown House. In collaboration with Amherst College Archives & Special Collections and the Department of Art & the History of Art, Ellen presented a geologic, architectural, and social history of the home and the land it sits on. In the second half of the event, Ellen unveiled the new virtual tour of the Bailey Brown House which features new works by several local artists. Ellen was joined by Professor of Art and the History of Art, Dwight Carey, who will share connections between Ellen’s research and current research in the field of Architectural Studies.
Professor of Music, Kate Pukinskis, sharing a recording of her 2015 composition, Three Latvian Folk Songs, during the 2021 Arts at Amherst Initiative Spring Soirée.

ALUMNI IN THE ARTS RECEPTION WITH THE MEAD ART MUSEUM

May 14, 2021

During the 2021 virtual reunion program, all Amherst alumni who work in the arts or who are passionate about arts and culture were invited to the Alumni in the Arts Reception. The program was presented in partnership with the Arts at Amherst Initiative, The Common, the Loeb Center for Career Exploration and Planning and the Departments of Architectural Studies, Art & the History of Art, Music, and Theatre & Dance. The event provided attendees the opportunity to connect with faculty, staff and other alumni in program-specific Zoom breakout rooms.
As part of the Initiative’s mission to connect artists with the broader Amherst community, we provide short-term housing for visiting artists at the Bailey Brown House. Located at 19 Hitchcock Road next to the Counseling Center’s Hitchcock House, the Bailey Brown House contains four guest bedrooms, 2.5 baths, and a shared kitchen, dining room, living room, and outdoor patio. The Bailey Brown House is also the home of the Initiative’s Arts Coordinator, who manages the arrival and departure of all visiting artists.

In March 2020, the Bailey Brown House closed to outside artists and remained closed throughout FY21. The Arts Coordinator, Ellen Mutter, continued to reside in the home and manage the care of the building. While closed to outside artists, the Steering Committee used this opportunity to embark on three new Bailey Brown House projects: the installation of new artwork, the creation of a virtual tour, and a cross-disciplinary research project into the history of the home.

As the Steering Committee looks to FY22, it hopes to develop plans to safely reopen the Bailey Brown House for in-person gatherings as well as artist residencies.
INSTALLATION OF NEW LOCAL ART

At the end of FY20 the Steering Committee decided to reallocate funds that would have been used for in-person programming to instead purchase works by local and regional artists for display in the Bailey Brown House. A total of eight works were purchased and during FY21 the works were framed and hung inside the Bailey Brown House. The eight pieces are now part of the enduring virtual tour of the home.

Patrick Eugène’s oil painting, Esmeralda Cheri, is one of the eight works acquired for the home and is on display in the Bailey Brown House living room. In describing this work and its acquisition in Spring 2020, Eugène writes, “We are currently going through trying times but these small interactions provide me with a much needed glimmer of hope! Although there is physical separation, the human spirit will continue to be drawn to the beauty of creation.” While all of the artists were invited to speak about their works during the unveiling of the virtual tour, as we look towards the next fiscal year, the Steering Committee hopes to bring these artists together for an in-person program.

ACQUIRED WORKS

Jourdan Christopher. m., 2019. Digital print.
Anna Hepler. Untitled (March 4, 2010), 2010. Paper and ink on cloth covered and gessoed board.
HISTORY OF THE BAILEY BROWN HOUSE AND GROUNDS

With the support of fellow Steering Committee member, Dwight Carey, Arts Coordinator Ellen Mutter conducted an interdisciplinary research project into the geologic, social, and architectural histories of the Bailey Brown House. Before this project, the Steering Committee’s collective knowledge of the history of the home was limited and knowledge that was gained from year to year was repeatedly lost as a result of transitioning arts coordinators and Steering Committee members.

The research project, which brought together a discussion of the formation of the bedrock of Massachusetts from island chains of Laurentia to Glacial Lake Hitchcock, a history of Federal revival architecture and brickmaking in Western Massachusetts, as well as a history of the families who lived in the home, is now permanently documented on the Arts at Amherst Initiative’s website and youtube page. The cross-disciplinary framework of this initial research project also set the stage for future arts coordinators and steering committee members to pick up this research and redirect the project in ways that complement their own research and interests.

VIRTUAL TOUR

Inspired by the virtual exhibition tours that the Arts at Amherst Initiative helped fund at the Mead Art Museum, the Steering Committee decided to develop an immersive virtual tour of the Bailey Brown House. The virtual tour, now accessible on the Arts at Amherst Initiative’s website, was created using 3D photogrammetry technology executed by local virtual tour company, TOURIT. After entering the virtual tour users are able to navigate a dollhouse version of the home, virtually walk through the home, read about the artwork on the walls, and learn about the history of the house.

The virtual tour was unveiled as part of the Steering Committee’s final event of the semester and will continue to be publicly accessible. In addition, the virtual tour will be integrated into the welcome emails sent to future visiting artists and guests of the Bailey Brown House, allowing all visitors the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the house and its history before, during, and after their visit.
The Arts at Amherst Initiative offers funding for programs that promote cross-disciplinary collaboration and connect artists with the broader Amherst community. Funding applications can come from any department or faculty/staff organization on campus. Funding requests are reviewed twice a year, once at the beginning of the fall semester and once at the beginning of the spring semester. However, funding requests that are submitted outside these deadlines are still considered depending on funding resources.

This year, we supported projects with 23 on-campus program partners, distributing $10,796.63 to a total of 11 different projects.

These programs included synchronous and asynchronous virtual artist talks, hands-on art-making workshops, panels with global authors, collaborative musical composition experiences, virtual and in-person art exhibitions, and more. Some of the events, including the Roundtables on Inclusivity in Choirs, the Creative Resilience Workshops, and the Natural Dye Workshops were expansive multi-day projects that invited Amherst College community members to repeatedly engage with their colleagues and friends around art-centered projects. A complete description of projects funded by the Arts at Amherst Initiative can be found on the following pages.

**PROGRAM PARTNERS**

Amherst College Archives & Special Collections
The Black Student Union
Book and Plow Farm
The Center for Humanistic Inquiry
The Common
The Counseling Center
The Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Facilities
The Multicultural Resource Center
The Queer Resource Center
Sexual Respect Education
Student Activities

The Departments of:
American Studies
Architectural Studies
Art & the History of Art
Asian Languages & Civilizations
Creative Writing
Environmental Studies
History
Music
Sexuality, Women’s & Gender Studies
Theater & Dance
ARTIST TALK WITH HEATHER AGYEPONG

Funding Recipient: Emily Potter-Ndiaye, Mead Art Museum
Program Partners: Sexuality Women’s and Gender Studies

After Heather Agyepong’s spring 2020 artist residency at the Mead was canceled due to COVID-19, the Mead partnered with Amherst College Professor of Sexuality, Women’s & Gender Studies, Aneeka Henderson, to put on a virtual artist talk in October 2020. Heather Agyepong is a visual artist, performer/actor and maker, who lives and works in London. In her work, Agyepong embodies black women from history and presents their lives and experiences anew.

Agyepong’s photography has been on view at the Mead since the spring of 2020 as part of the Mead’s second installation of recently acquired contemporary art. Her photograph series, “Too Many Blackamoors, #1-9” is featured in the exhibition Starting Something New Part Two. The photographs are based on Agyepong’s “personal experiences as a young Black woman, dealing with macro and micro traumas with racism encountered while traveling around European countries.”

The recording of Agyepong’s artist talk and the virtual tour of the exhibition, Starting Something New Part Two, are both available on the Mead Art Museum’s website and will continue to be accessible beyond the end of the in-person exhibition.
ARABIC II COLLAGE PROJECT
Funding Recipient: May George, Asian Languages & Civilizations

For their final project of the semester, the nine students in May George’s second year Arabic course were asked to create a collage that demonstrated the knowledge and vocabulary they gained over the semester. To support the art-centered final project, the Arts at Amherst provided funding for the purchase and mailing of art supplies to all students. The collage project, which asked students to imagine the colors, furniture, and setting of an antiquated apartment, included an oral presentation of the final artwork.

ART WITH IMPACT: CREATING SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE
Funding Recipient: Lauren Kelly, Health Education
Program Partners: Sexual Respect Education, Mental Health Promotion, Amherst Counseling Center

On Wednesday, November 11th, the Department of Health Education and the Counseling Center co-hosted the virtual workshop, Art with Impact. The event focused on exploring the mental health impacts that sexual violence can have on individuals and communities through a series of short films as a tool to build empathy and support survivors. The event connected students with campus and community mental health and sexual violence-oriented resources available to them, empowering them to seek support as individuals and communities to heal from sexual violence.
FOUNDING NARRATIVES EXHIBITION

Funding Recipient: Lisa Crossman, Mead Art Museum
Program Partners: Architectural Studies, Art and the History of Art, European Studies, History, Sexuality, Women’s and Gender Studies, American Studies

The Founding Narratives Exhibition at the Mead Art Museum presents artwork produced in the United States between 1800 and today that offer opportunities to consider the role of art in creating, reinforcing, and challenging stories about national identity. Drawn entirely from the Mead Art Museum’s extensive collection of American art, the exhibition raises questions about representation and the absence of representation in national narratives and in the establishment of a national art, about the significance of “firsts,” and about the interpretative frameworks that museums offer about artists and artworks.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Arts at Amherst Initiative funded the creation of a pre-recorded artist interview with Los Angeles based painter, June Edmonds. Edmonds’s Convictions VI from her Flag series was acquired in 2020 and is featured in the Founding Narratives exhibition on view now at the Mead. Convictions VI is an abstract representation of the US flag that invites reflection on the traditional flat’s varying symbolism within Black America, historically and today. Her painting is composed of colors based on brown skin tones that call for a new, more inclusive reading of Americanness that breaks from the use of the American flag, in Edmonds’s words, as a “tool of violent exclusion” by White supremacists.

The artist video, which includes conversations about Convictions VI and other exhibition works, as well as a Q&A, served as a resource for multiple Amherst College courses including Nicola Courtwright’s Encounters with Nature; Jen Manion’s Race, Gender, and Sexuality in U.S. History; Jennifer A. Hamilton’s Indigenous Feminisms. The artist video will continue to be on view beyond the close of the in-person exhibition in July 2021.
Funded Programming - Fall 2020

Student participants in a session of the Fall Dye Workshop at Book and Plow Farm.

**FALL DYE WORKSHOPS**

**Funding Recipient:** Kaylee Brow, Facilities

**Program Partners:** Book and Plow Farm, Student Activities

In the fall of 2020, Assistant Farm Manager, Kaylee Brow, led students in a two-part workshop on textiles and natural dyes. Brow, who has been “natural dyeing almost as long as she’s been farming”, hosted the hands-on workshops outside on Book and Plow Farm. The workshops provided on-campus students with a much-needed outlet to gather and socialize while participating in a cross-disciplinary art-making event.

In the first workshop, students used farm-grown indigo to dye t-shirts with nothing more than elbow grease and water. In the second workshop, students learned the basics of brewing a dye pot and explored different resist methods to create their own unique t-shirt. Throughout both workshops, Kaylee led students through a conversation about the environmental impact of fast fashion and chemical dyes as well as the history of natural dyes and textile work in general.

While over 50 students registered for the workshops within 24 hours of advertising, only 26 were able to attend due to social-distancing protocol. The success and popularity of the fall workshops led Brow to expand this partnership between Book and Plow Farm, Student Activities, and the Arts at Amherst Initiative, and create a 10-part spring dye workshop series.
4TH ANNUAL BLACK ART MATTERS FESTIVAL

Funding Recipient: Olivia Feal, Mead Art Museum
Program Partners: Black Student Union, Multicultural Resource Center

The Black Art Matters Festival is an affirmation and celebration of Black student artists and creators. The Festival was founded by Zoe Akoto ’21 when, as a freshman, she noticed that the creative work of Black students was rarely seen on campus. She designed the festival to highlight work by those artists.

This year, the Black Art Matters Festival had both virtual and in-person components. The online festival was emceed live from the Rotherwas Room and showcased the work of 14 student artists. The live event was attended by over 110 audience members including current Amherst College faculty, staff, and students as well as alumni, parents, and friends.

In addition to the live show, the Black Art Matters Festival included two exhibitions at the Mead: the Visual Arts Showcase of Student Art, and The Living Room. The Living Room exhibition was the first-ever exhibition of artworks from the Mead’s Permanent Collection created solely by Black artists. The exhibition was curated by Amherst College senior and Advanced Student Museum Educator, DeLyna Hadgu ’21.

This was the Arts at Amherst Initiative’s second year providing funding support for the festival. With support from AAI, the Mead developed a Matterport Virtual exhibition of DeLyna Hadgu’s The Living Room and purchased copies of Kimberly Drew and Jenna Wortham’s artbook, Black Futures, which were distributed to BAM festival artists.
Kimberly Drew and Jenna Wortham spoke at the Smith College Museum of Art just three days before the Amherst College Black Art Matters Festival and the event was attended by many of the BAM festival artists. This collaboration of Black Art programs designed by students across campuses in the time of COVID is a marker of how impactful the BAM festival is to both the Amherst and Five College Communities.

PRAISE FOR THE FESTIVAL: COMMENTS FROM THE LIVE SHOW

“Really inspired to see how students created not just the art, but this whole celebration. Glad to see it even if we’re not on campus!” - Elizabeth Nevins ’92

“Shine shine shine!!! Thank you beautiful ones” - Professor of Art and the History of Art, Sonya Clark
SPRING DYE WORKSHOPS
Funding Recipient: Kaylee Brow, Facilities
Program Partners: Student Activities, Book and Plow Farm

Building off of the success of the fall 2020 dye workshops, the Arts at Amherst Initiative was thrilled to provide funding support for the expanded Spring Dye Workshops at Book and Plow Farm. Fiber artist and campus farmer, Kaylee Brow, expanded the 2-part fall workshop to a 10-part workshop that included the

ROUND TABLES ON INCLUSIVITY IN CHOIRS
Funding Recipient: Jxhn Martin, Queer Resource Center
Program Partners: Amherst College Choral Society, Music Department, Resource Center Teams, Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

In partnership with the Choral Society, ODEI, and the Arts at Amherst Initiative, the QRC presented a series of three roundtable discussion and three workshops that explored how to lead, facilitate, direct, and
participate in vocal ensembles that not only center marginalized folks, but actively create and sustain a more affirming ensemble culture. The events, which took place throughout March and April, gave particular attention to the role of ensemble leadership in setting and maintaining affirming practice and culture, and considerations for repertoire, arrangements, and performance. Roundtable speakers included choral conductor and Amherst College alum, Hannah Goodwillie ’18, returning Kaleidoscope Vocal Ensemble members Dashon Burton and Reggie Mobley as well as new artists such as conductor and composer Erik Peregrine and Sphinx Medal awardee Eugene Rogers. Facilitators from the Resource Centers Team held workshop space correlating to the discussions in each roundtable program for the larger singing community at Amherst (inclusive of the acapella ensembles, and Choral Society members) as well as the Five College choral community.

THE COMMON SPRING LAUNCH PARTY

Funding Recipient: Jennifer Acker, The Common
Program Partners: Creative Writing Center

In partnership with the Creative Writing Center and the Arts at Amherst Initiative, The Common invited writers Aleksander Hemon, Celeste Mohammed, Abdelaziz Errachidi, and translator Nariman Youssef to the participate in the launch of the 21st issue of Amherst College’s award-winning literary magazine, The Common. Issue 21 features art and Arabic fiction in translation from Morocco, as well as short stories, essays, and poetry. The featured writers joined from across the globe for brief readings followed by conversation about place, culture, and translation, hosted by the Common’s editor in chief, Jennifer Acker.
CREATIVE RESILIENCE WORKSHOPS

Funding Recipient: Danielle Amodeo, Mead Art Museum
Program Partners: Queer Resource Center, Resource Center Team, Terra Foundation for American Art

The Mead Art Museum, Resource Center Team, and the Arts at Amherst Initiative partnered to present a Creative Resilience Workshop Series facilitated by local artists Chelvanaya “Naya” Gabriel and Mari “Mars” Champagne. The series was part of the Mead’s larger programmatic mission to interrogate “essential work” and how our understanding of this informs broader ideas about labor. The program series serves as practical research towards a larger and longer-term curatorial exploration of the theme of labor.

The Creative Resilience Workshop Series frames antiracism and self-care as essential work and explores the manner in which this kind of labor shows up differently for folks based on the identities they hold. To create space for multiple lived experiences, Naya and Mars facilitated two workshops. The first workshop, called Essential Work: An Embodied Awareness of White Supremacy was designed for a general audience and the second workshop, called Reclaiming Our Bodies and Minds: Dismantling White Supremacy, was specifically designed for queer and trans people of color in partnership.

Following the workshop series, the Mead’s Curator of American Art and Art of the Americas, Lisa Crossman, conducted research interviews with the artists over Zoom. These interviews, funded by the Terra Foundation for American Art, will be used as research for Crossman’s forthcoming exhibition on the topic of labor so that her thinking and the exhibition will be informed by both the experiences of these local artists and the participants in the workshop series.

Creative Resilience Workshop co-facilitator, Naya Gabriel.
**THE VIRUS**

Funding Recipient: Ana Candida Carneiro, Theater & Dance

The Virus is an ongoing interdisciplinary video project led by Amherst College Visiting Artist in Playwriting, Ana Candida Carneiro. The video performance is about race, perception, and cultural projections that sit below the surface. These racialized perceptions and cultural constructs are bought and cast on the stage, again and again, with each ticket. Playwright and director Ana Carneiro is collaborating on this project with Amherst-based performer Shaneeka Harrell and Western Massachusetts-based video and glitch artist, Sabato Visconti. Together, their work touches on the issue of the Other, which oscillates with perverse ambiguity between demonization and rejection, and capitalistic and erotic exploitation. The project, which began to take shape in the fall of 2020, is planned to be livestreamed in the fall of 2021 and followed by a Q&A with artists.
CLIMATE MUSIC PROJECT
Funding Recipient: Carl Clements, Music
Program Partners: Environmental Studies Department

After their spring 2020 Jazz and the Environment concert was canceled due to COVID-19, musicians and composers Carl Clements and Jason Davis re-imagined their environmental-themed concert for an online format. Their Climate Music Project builds upon the “climate narrative music” which Davis had been developing for the past several years. Davis has recorded people from around the world speaking about their personal responses to the climate crisis, and then created music around the speakers’ words, spoken cadence, and imagery.

The first part of the project was carried out in the spring of 2021 through a partnership between Davis and Clements and Amherst College Professor of Environmental Studies, Rebecca Hewitt. Students in Prof. Hewitt’s Climate Change course participated in a remote workshop in which they were prompted to share and record their personal climate story—students spoke about how they are responding to climate change in their personal lives and in their communities. Davis and Clements then used the recorded stories to co-compose three electroacoustic works which feature elements of the recorded climate stories, electronic music, and wind and string instruments.

In the fall of 2020, Davis and Clements will complete the second part of the project: recording and distributing the performance of the three electroacoustic works through Amherst College and climatestoriesproject.org. They will then lead an online presentation and discussion of the works and ask participants to brainstorm ways to encourage community action to confront the climate crisis.
A page from Carl Clements and Jason Davis’s co-composition, Olivia’s Climate Story, for tenor saxophone, acoustic bass, and voice recording. The composition is based on a climate story by Amherst College student, Olivia Gieger '21.
The Arts at Amherst Initiative’s usual annual budget of $60,000 was cut by 15% in FY21 in accordance with the college-wide financial response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FY21 budget of $51,000 was used to pay the Arts Coordinator’s Salary, support AAI-hosted events, cover the operating expenses of the Bailey Brown House, and to provide funding opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaborations in the Amherst arts community. While there were small reductions to the Arts Coordinator salary and operating expenses of the Bailey Brown House, most of the budget cut was compensated for by reducing the spending in the Arts at Amherst Initiative’s program funding budget.

In previous fiscal years, portions of the program funding budget were used to fund the travel of visiting artists and scholars to Amherst College. With travel expenses eliminated, the program funding budget went entirely to program production costs, project supplies and to artist honoraria. Thus, while our total funding distribution was 50% less than FY20, the number of projects we supported only decreased by 20%.

Over the past three years, the Steering Committee has shifted its focus away from directly producing large-scale events and has instead positioned itself as a key financial supporter of events developed by our program partners across campus. In FY21 we continued this work, using only 15% of the programming budget on AAI-developed programming and 85% to support projects developed by our program partners.
BUDGET

This shift in the allocation of program funding has allowed for the support of more collaborative arts programming overall and resulted in projects that reach a larger range of students. It has also allowed for the approval of funding requests from a larger variety of faculty and staff. FY21 included first-time funding applications from seven Amherst college faculty and staff members: Oliva Feal, Lisa Crossman, Kaylee Brow, Lauren Kelly, Frederika Joyner, May George, and Hahyung Kim. By expanding the variety of faculty and staff projects approved, the Steering Committee has fostered the development of long-term cross-disciplinary partnerships and the production of ongoing collaborative programming.

![Bar chart showing distribution of program funding budget]

Figure 2: Distribution of program funding budget.

Back Cover: Photo of the living room inside the Bailey Brown House.
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!