## D.J.C. RECORDS



# ANNUAL REPORT 2020

PROVIDING FORMERLY AND CURRENTLY INCARCERATED MUSICIANS A HIGH-QUALITY PLATFORM FOR THEIR VOICES TO BE HEARD.

# OUR MISSION

is to break down institutional barriers to recording music in prisons and provide incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people a high-quality platform for their voices to be heard. We provide our collaborators the tools to carry out top tier albums from start to completion, allowing them to strengthen their sense of identity and professionalism in an environment that often prohibits intellectual and creative growth. Our musicians lift up the unheard stories of some of the most marginalized people in our communities, changing the narrative on prison in America.

# THROUGH OUR WORK

we aim to build cultural power for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people, and increase public awareness of systemic racism, mass incarceration, and inequity in policing and the judicial system, centering the voices of those directly impacted.

## Dear Friend of DJC,

You might be thinking, whether you're reading this in 2021 or in 2121, we could not have picked a stranger time to launch as a record label: 2020. A global pandemic the likes of which the world had not seen for a century. A summer of protests with an energy of the 1960s and 70s. Masses of people stuck at home, seperated from their loved ones, at risk of catching a deadly virus. And yet for all the calamities 2020 held, with grit, passion, and a ton of volunteer hours, Die Jim Crow Records had a remarkable first year officially as a record label.

It started out as a more normal year would, with us recording in two South Carolina prisons for upcoming projects B. Alexis and The Masses. Following those sessions, I travelled to Nashville to lay down a bunch of instrumentation for the Territorial project with some seasoned Americana players. Meanwhile, BL Shirelle's debut album (and our label's first full length LP!) was in the mixing process, and things were off to an exciting start.

As the world began to shut down in March, we became very concerned about the musicians we work with in prison and knew we had to do something. After a couple long conversations with BL, who is also our Deputy Director, we decided to push the release of her album and launch a PPE Into Prisons campaign in an attempt to help serve our community; some of the country's most vulnerable.

And that we did. From April 13 to October 28, our PPE campaign raised over \$25,000 and helped us send 30,285 masks to 26 prisons and jails in 16 states. Engaging our fans stuck at home, we held 20 virtual concerts featuring 138 performers from all over world, 18 of whom were formerly or currently incarcerated. While this was a shift in direction, it was well worth it. Initiatives like our PPE Into Prisons campaign show the public that, while high-quality music and art is what drives us, we are an organization of activists as well; and the two are of equal importance.



"Confronted with an excess of talent, the team has expanded significantly..." **OPitchfork** 

On Juneteenth 2020, BL Shirelle's *Assata Troi* released to wide media attention in the LA Times, BBC, NPR, and Pitchfork. A sonic exploration of hip hop, rock, and R&B, the album is about owning one's past pain and turning it into power. As an LGBTQ Black artist/activist who served ten years in prison, BL's message came at a crucial time for the culture, and I believe the reaches of this album have not even scratched the surface yet.

In September, we teased the Territorial album with the release of "America The Merciful," the album's first single, which premiered on Grammys.com along with an in-depth article on the project. Our last release of the year, "The Meaning of Christmas," also gave a taste of what is to come with Territorial, as bandmember Michael Tenneson is the track's singer and author, and it was mixed by Matthew Cullen (Lady Gaga, My Morning Jacket, Lana Del Rey). This song's catchiness and depth you'll find more of with the long-awaited *Tlaxihuiqui* (Summer 2021), Territorial's first LP offering.

Though the year held many unexpected turns, it was ultimately a time of growth and settling in at a reasonable pace. All of the time spent indoors helped us strengthen our team and our administrative capacity. We learned to coordinate better, to schedule more realistically, and to be adaptable in times of unexpected duress.

We also grappled with the challenges that come with being a new and growing non-profit. Our team, including myself, is still largely volunteer, and we're able to continue our work by having other jobs that support us or by subletting our apartments and living with parents (hint hint at my sitch).

And yet we've never been in a better place. We saw a growth of 31% in revenue last year, and are shooting for a 50% growth this year\*. We have *Tlaxihuiqui* dropping in August and B. Alexis in the Fall. The Masses to follow in 2022. And much more. So, I'm hopeful and excited. Also grateful... that you're here for the journey!

Yours

Fury Young Executive Director & founder

<sup>\*</sup> Bear in mind our 2019 activities were much smaller and 2020 was our first year as a functioning label. Photo by Fury Young. L-R: BL Shirelle, B. Alexis, and FY at Camille Griffin Graham CI (Columbia SC). February 2020.

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS 2020

NEW RECORDINGS



In February, DJC recorded two upcoming projects out of South Carolina: The Masses, an LP recorded with a 10-member hip-hop collective at Allendale Correctional Facility, and B. Alexis, whose project will be the first solo album ever recorded by a woman in prison.

The Masses, whose project will also be a debut, put forward nuanced explorations of racial profiling and the trauma inflicted by prisons along-side powerful lyrics that speak to the group's collective power: "The Masses / Movement / Voice of the voiceless / Soldiers of fortune / The poor and unfortunate..."

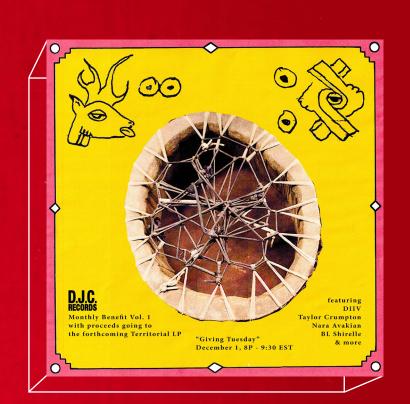
B. Alexis, who is serving a 30 year sentence, takes us on an introspective journey of a streetsmart-meets-booksmart rapper who channels the firmness of Scarface and the mystique of Lauryn Hill.

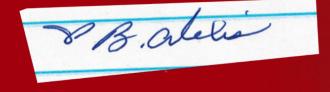
Closing out the trip in early March, we spent two days in Nashville recording dazzling instrumentation with veteran Americana session players for the upcoming Territorial project.



In celebration of the Assata Troi album release, BL Shirelle hosted an album launch in which she honored ten formerly incarcerated women for their contributions as activists and entrepenuers in their communities. Each woman spoke on their experiences reintegrating successfully into society. Assata Troi, which means "she who struggles is a warrior," could not have been a more fitting album to honor in this fashion.

"Prior to DJC I'd been struggling with what to do with my music. I figured with a thirty year sentence I'd be too old to come out trying to establish myself as a 'renowned rapper.' So I had all these brainstorms that really didn't sit well with me; sell my lyrics, turn them into poetry, use them in a memoir, or just trash them. I thought those were my only options. It never dawned on me that while in prison I'd see my dream coming true, but DJC has given me a platform to express; to show my music on a professional level I didn't think possible. In the process I've met some awesome and authentic people and I feel honored to call DJC's 'motley crew of misfits' my friends."





V I R T U A LV O L U M E SK I C K O F F

Following the success of our PPE Into Prisons concerts, on #GivingTuesday we launched Virtual Volumes, a monthly benefit concert series that features musicians on our roster alongside other musicians who are invested in our mission, including several popular artists such as DIIV, Shamir, The Nude Party and KeiyaA. Volume one had over 70 RSVPs and raised over \$1.5K for the Territorial LP's mixing and mastering costs.







### RELEASES

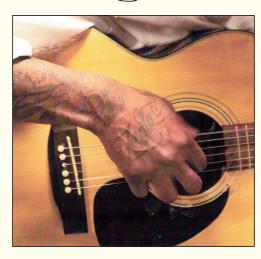
In 2020 we released our first full length album, BL Shirelle's critically acclaimed *Assata Troi*, which was called "passionate and poetic" by The Philadelphia Inquirer.

In addition to a single and music video from BL's album, we released our first single from the Territorial project, "America The Merciful," which premiered on Grammys.com.

In total we released 1 LP and 3 Singles featuring three incarcerated artists and three formerly incarcerated artists.







AMERICA THE MERCIFUL FEAT. UNO

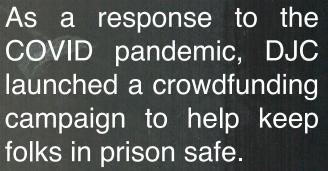
## PPE INTO PRISONS











- . 30,285 masks delivered
- . Over two dozen prisons, jails, and ICE detention centers reached
- . 19 states
- . Over \$25,000 raised
- . 20 benefit shows featuring 138 performers, 18 of whom are formerly or currently incarcerated.





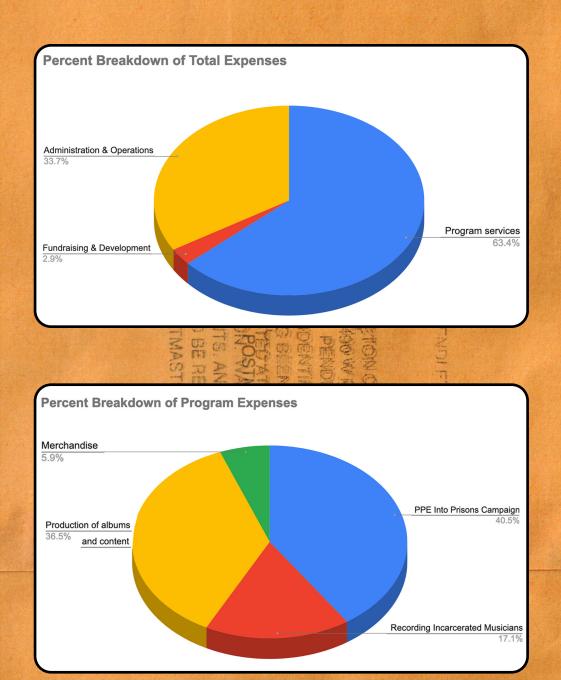






### FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS 2020

Statement of Activities		
For the year ending December 31,	2020	2019
Revenue		
Contributions, grants, and other income	\$88,607	\$67,605
Government grants	0	0
Gifts in-kind and contributed services	0	0
Total Revenue	\$88,607	\$67,605
Expenses		
Program services*	\$63,026	\$15,917
Fundraising & Development	\$2,857	\$1,699
Administration & Operations	\$33,453	\$14,570
Total Expenses	\$99,336	\$32,186
Excess/(shortfall) of revenue over expense	(\$10,729)	\$35,419
Restricted funds balance excess/(shortfall) for programs and capital projects.	0	\$35,419
Change in Net Assets	(\$10,729)	\$35,419
Net assets at beginning of year	\$36,769	\$1,350
Net Assets at End of year	\$26,040	\$36,769
*This includes \$24.4K of PPE Into Prisons expenses.		
Balance Sheet		
For the year ending December 31,	2020	2019
Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$43,103	\$36,769
Grants and contributions receivable	0	0
Fixed assets	0	0
Total Assets	\$43,103	\$36,769
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Accounts payable and accrued expenses and line of credit	\$17,063	\$0
Deferred revenue	0	0
Total Libailities	\$17,063	0
Net assets		
Unrestricted	\$11,040	\$0
Temporarily restricted	\$15,000	\$36,769
Total Net Assets	\$26,040	\$36,769
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$43,103	\$36,769



#### Of Note:

- A revenue growth of 31% from 2019.
- \$30K in donor support, not including PPE Into Prisons campaign.
- \$19K in new grant support thanks to The Wyomissing Foundation and Resist.

# MOVEMENT

Thank you to our partners — the individual donors and institutions — whose passion for the mission and vision of Die Jim Crow Records makes our work possible.

You are all valued members of our community, and we are humbled by your solidarity. Foundations Resist. **The Wyomissing Foundation** The Ford Foundation The Yip Harburg Foundation The Robert & Maurine Rothschild Fund

#### Our Team

Fury Young - Executive Director/founder BL Shirelle - Deputy Director James Joseph Gallagher - Label Manager Maxwell Melvins - Senior Advisor Lauren Vanzandt-Escobar - Grant Writer Royal Young - Publicist Ted Jamison - Volunteer Coordinator Justis Malker - Marketing Strategist Nara Avakian - Social Media Volunteer Batya Roth - General Counsel

Our Board of Directors

Dr. Leila Adu-Gilmore Eric Borsuk Maxwell Melvins BL Shirelle Mark Springer Fury Young

#### Donors

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Jessica Ng

Jessica Johnson

JN KW

joey t

julian g

Kayla E

Kellv

Kerry

Maggie Norby-Adams

Jessica Witt Mallie Froehlich Jill Schneider Mamajoe Vramajoe Margi Conklin Jodie Gordon Marie Gadda Jody Nagel Marion Hinton Mark Atkinson Mary Hamrick Johanny Valdez Jon Simon Mary Kenney Mary MacMillan Jonathan Siebels Jorge Rossy Costa Mary Parker Jose Guerrero Matt Allan Judith Simon Matt Dole Julia Alsop Matthew Allan Julia Bistriceanu Matthew Bussa Julia Lazareck Matthew Daddona Julia Wolfe matthew harrison Matthew Kafoury Julie Stipe Matthew Politoski Justin Jones Max Ornstein Justin Schafer Maxana Goettl Kah Yangni MC Moran Karen Romo Kariemah Shah Meghan Goode Karl Berger Mekenzve S Kat Tedesco Meredith Spencer Kate Ginna michael berman Kate Miles Michael Etten Kate Strauss Katharine DeWitt Michael Preiss Katherine A Tilford Michael Schnapp Katherine Rusch Michelle Phelps Kathrvn Nowinski Mikavla R Foote Katie Shimko Mikey Zee Katie Walter Ming Lin Misty Castaneda Katy Rea Morgan Mullings Kayla Fisher Mykel Mogg Keir Harris Natalye St. Lucia Keith Brooks Nav Singh Neill Raper Kelsey Ragsdale Niall Cunningham Kenneth Goldman Nicholas StOnge Kenzie Rowlett Nick Walther Nicole Fleetwood Kevin Goldberg Nicole Kulick Kevin Hays Nikki Smirl Kimber Nelson Nikolas Fournier Krissv Bressan Noah Barker LAKEYLA WHITAKER Noah Johns Laura Asher Nora Demere Laura Shea Nora McKinnon Lauren Katzman Oliver Spencer Lauren Mooney Olivia Durif Lauren Renaud Pablo Ripolles Lauren Segal Pamela Romero Laurie Abel Layli Wilson Pascal Stevenson Lea Zalinskis Patricia Kogos LeAnne Payne Pavel Samsonov Lee Wengraf Phyllis LH Quashana Ponder Leila Adu-Gilmore Leo Bowen RAleora fuller Rachel Levenson Leslie Korein Rachel McBride Lila Babb Rachel Statham lily randall Raquel Almazan Lily Randall Rayaan Anil Khatau Linda Polk Lisa Borsuk Rebecca Codas Liz Thompson Rebecca Vitarelle Lorena Linero Lopez Rebekah Mayle Lucia Hinojosa Gaxiola Red Hart-Smith Lukas Adgate Reginald Gowland Lynne Elizabeth Riley McShane Madison Noel

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robert newman

Rosalie Finkelstein Roya Haroun Royal Young Ruby Singh Ryan Eykholt s hart Sam Ashman Sam Barber Sam Kogos Sam Margevicius Sam Orner Samantha Kohl Samuel Bordenave Sara Bennett Sara Weiss Sarah Bowen Sarah Erwin Sasha Ali Sequoia Snyder Seth Frazier Shannon Lee Simon Lejeune Sophia DeVito Sophie Salem Soraya Perry Soren Roi Stanford Chisholm stefan nelson Stephanie Babirak Stephen Levine Steve McLinden Steven Swiller Sundeep Sood Tara Hanish Tatiana Maslany Ted Jamison Tefft The Kellie Duggan Foundation Thea Glassman Tiana Gaudioso Tiffany Curren Timothy Myer Tina Dina Tonya Walton travis martin Trevorlyn Trude Chandler Ursula Sommer Valerie Fitzgerald Veronica Leach Victoria Ruiz Willem Boning William Silva Zane West Zina Noel Zoe Dale zora tucker

## HERE'S TO '21



#### **LOOK OUT**

TERRITORIAL TLAXIHUIQUI - August 2021
B. ALEXIS - Fall 2021
THE MASSES - Q1-2 2022

Releases dates are subject to change.