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Montana Arts Council  
ARPA Grant Committee  
Helena, MT

April 15, 2022

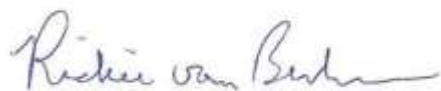
Dear ARPA Grant Committee,

I am writing in enthusiastic support for James Rickley's ARPA grant application. James was a member of the 2021 MAP Cohort that I coached. I have been the coach for seven MAP cohorts since 2014, and James was one of the most engaged and hard-working artists I have worked with. As you know the MAP program is designed for visual artists. As a composer, James joined the program fully prepared to adapt the material for his medium. He was creative and proactive in working the 35 MAP tools in ways that were appropriate for his medium. He rapidly transformed his existing business into a more art-focused model that is rewarding and economically successful.

Our group enjoyed the compositions James shared with us, and we were impressed with the range of original music he created. James is focused and detail-oriented, without losing sight of the broader goals he was working towards. He was disciplined, clearly putting time and effort into working on the tools as they were presented. He was prepared with results at each meeting: this guy got things done.

I feel these qualifications make James an excellent candidate to successfully complete the work that he has proposed. In my discussions with James, it was clear that he was engaged in collaborating with the music community of Great Falls. His proposal reflects this engagement and demonstrates the effort he put into preparing a workable proposal that meets his and the community's goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rickie van Berkum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rickie van Berkum