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Art Scholar Fourth-Year Award Outcome Report

### **A Summer Acting at Yale**

This past summer, I attended the Yale Summer Conservatory for Actors in New Haven, Connecticut. This five-week course, taught by actors and professors associated with the Yale School of Drama, was completely life-changing for me. My goals for this summer were to grow and increase my passion for acting – I would consider those goals completely accomplished.

I left for the program in late-June. A typical day at Yale would start at 9 am, with a



warm-up. These morning warm-ups were vital, as

I learned the importance of a warm body to both

your physicality and mentality in class or on

stage. Next, I attended a course in text analysis.

Before arriving at Yale, I needed to read Lynn

Nottage's *Intimate Apparel*, Arthur Miller's *The*

*Crucible*, Jose Rivera's *Cloud Tectonics*, and

Naomi Iizuka's *Aloha, Say the Pretty Girls*. In text class, we learned the hard work of analyzing

and understanding a play, as we completed multiple projects throughout the month (including a

10-page report on a character from *The Crucible*). Next, I attended improvisation/games class,

which focused more on physical improvisation. I tended to be very critical of myself when

performing, and this class helped me DO instead of being both actor and director in my head. I

began to be more comfortable in my body, and more comfortable "at play." After games class, I

went to movement class. We would begin with an intense 20-minute warm-up, followed physical

improvisation and mask work. After lunch, we had group voice class. Voice focused mainly on introducing Alexander technique. We frequently recorded ourselves doing monologues and



taking the time to notice our speech patterns and breath control. Voice was followed by acting. The acting class was the most fruitful experience I had at Yale. We would spend time working on monologues, watching others, building an ensemble, and working on attacking our underlying objectives.

Another extraordinary part about the Yale Summer Conservatory was masterclasses with Evan Yionoulis. Ms. Yionoulis was recently appointed the director of The Juilliard School after being a faculty member at the Yale School of Drama for 20 years. Evan was probably the best acting instructor I have ever worked with. Explaining “how to act” is so challenging; however, Evan was so intentional with her words describing the mental processes for acting, as well as explaining emotion/feeling that it was easy to follow her, and made a tremendous difference for me. Her masterclass about the theatre industry was also extremely valuable.

I left Yale in August very different. I had goals. I was more focused and driven. I felt passion. I found myself daydreaming about characters, and constantly analyzing television and film that I watched. I felt confident. Since August, I have been dedicated to applying to graduate school. The fall semester was spent filling out applications, writing personal statements, getting recommendations, and polishing monologues for the auditions in January. The knowledge I gained at Yale was essential to the way I worked tirelessly on my audition packages. In January and early February, I was gone from UVA every single weekend, traveling to New York City

twice, New Haven, and Knoxville, TN. Throughout all my auditions, I found myself referencing the notes that I took in New Haven over the summer. Without them, I know I would not have found the success I had in my auditions.

I was recently offered and accepted a spot in the University of Houston's MFA Acting program. I will be attending this two-year program starting in August. Without the direction and passion I got at Yale this summer, I would not be going to Houston in a few months. Thank you so much to the Miller Arts Scholars program for their support over the past few years in Minigrant awards and the Fourth-Year Arts Award. I am so thankful for the generosity of this wonderful community, and know that without the support of this Arts Award, I would not be where I am today. Thank you.

**Yale Summer Session** February 4 · 🌐

Basic techniques of the Stanislavsky method in the Yale tradition.

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