

With this project, I set out to compose an original, neo-classical oboe and piano sonata with the intention of performing it for my Distinguished Major Program (DMP) recital in the spring of my fourth year. From the start, a few constraints existed: length, style, and my experience as a composer. First, regarding length, the composition had to strike the right balance in my DMP program. Programs generally last around an hour, give or take 15-minutes. So, ideally my composition will be between five and seven minutes. Next, I needed to research the nuances of composing in the neo-classical style. And finally, I have limited experience as a composer since the only composition classes I have taken were music theory classes required to complete my major. I hoped use this grant as a learning opportunity and a challenge, both for my composition skills and my performance skills.

So far, I have about 25 measures of my composition complete. I feel very satisfied with the melodies and harmonies in these 25 measures and expect them to stay the same as I continue composing. This is about one third of what I expect will be the total length. I have generally retained the A-B-A' structure I outlined in my proposal, with the A section being a lyrical, modal section and the B section a technical and virtuosic section. I have done ample research on the neo-classical style, so this no longer poses such a threat to completion as it did at the outset of the project. Currently, I am realizing that theoretical knowledge of composition does not always produce melodies that sound complete and fulfilling. I find that whenever I compose without a piano, my melodies and harmonies sound more like an exercise from a workbook than an actual, viable piece of music.

My mentor for this project is Professor Aaron Hill in the Department of Music. I chose him because he has been my private oboe lesson instructor since I began taking lessons my first year. I also think he is easy to work with, incredibly intelligent, and knowledgeable about composition and musical eras. He has been able to provide advice about how to simplify my compositional technique, what kinds of musical motives are appealing to audiences, and how to take advantage of the oboe range to create a virtuosic sonata.

With Prof Hill's help, I have been able to adjust my compositional technique and I expect to be able to make faster headway with my composition. I am excited to finish this piece! I aim to have a complete first draft by Thanksgiving with support from a fourth year Arts Award Grant. At this point, I will be able to ask for much feedback until my composition is complete. And using the fund from my second grant, I will be able to record myself with a piano accompanist and hone the composition until it is exactly to my liking.

I am so grateful to my mentor, Aaron Hill, for being patient, helpful and encouraging. I am also grateful to him for spending excess amount of his personal time to advise me on compositional styles and techniques, as well as reed-making techniques, which will be very important when I perform the piece. Reed-making is a large component of this project because I intend to perform my composition and it is necessary to master reed-making techniques if I expect to execute the piece the way I envision it on my DMP program. Since I already had the compositional software when I was awarded this grant, I have used most of the money to buy reed-

making materials in preparation to use my new techniques to perform my composition for my DMP recital.

I cannot express my gratitude enough to all the donors to the Art Scholars program and to all the Art Scholars who inspire me to be creative. I am very excited to share the finished piece and my honed reed-making skills.

<https://soundcloud.com/lolly-rose-1/grant-composition-5>