

Alex Burijon (he/they)
Miller Arts Scholar, Music
Fall 2023
Arts Scholars Artist Minigrants

A Tenor's Texture

Voice Lesson Proposal

OVERVIEW

Since arriving at UVA, I've embraced choirs, a cappella, and theater as spaces to grow my overall artistry and vocal performance, facets of my life that have been compelling me for as long as I can remember. At the same time, I began to come to terms with my gender identity. I was able to explicitly label the nagging discomfort triggered by my high voice as gender dysphoria. Because of many hard-fought battles during my second year, I am now celebrating one year on testosterone Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) to the exact date – I started on September 28th, 2022! HRT has thickened my vocal cords this past year, just like many people experience during puberty, and now I am finally at a place with my voice where it makes sense to get to work. **Thus, I humbly request \$425 from the Miller Arts Scholars in order to fund vocal lessons this semester.**

Lessons at this juncture will be critical in order to ensure that I maintain healthy habits as my physical instrument changes. Self-teaching has served as an adequate foundation in the past, but I had a span of 19 years across which to practice on and off. Now, it is necessary to accomplish 19 years of growth in an eighth of the time so that I can be equipped to enter the professional realm and grow as a vocalist from there. In just the few voice lessons I've had so far, I've already come to understand that I could not decode my new instrument without Professor William Ferguson's assistance. The techniques required to sing soprano dramatically differ from those required for tenor, and the same physical sensation often bears completely different sounds than to what I am accustomed. Further, as I, in music leadership positions, collaborate with artists around Grounds, I want to continue to learn and grow so that I can promote sustainable habits and a culture of cooperation, education, and meaningful impact. I am committed to promoting the present and future of UVA arts, and I wish to use what I gather from my voice lessons to invite more artists into the community.

In terms of timeline, I have already enrolled with Professor Ferguson with the intent of paying through Miller Arts Scholars. This minigrant, however, would not serve as reimbursement because payment has not yet been completed. I enrolled in weekly half-hour lessons; we have decided to meet every other week for one hour to use this time more effectively. There will be a studio class on December 5th, and I will present to a jury on December 6th. If I perform well, I will apply for scholarships within the performance program, hopefully allowing me to wean off of Miller Arts' funding and afford one-credit lessons. If I continue to improve, I will keep performing for juries and becoming familiar with performers and mentors here, which would be an excellent resource for the start of my musical career.

Miller Arts Scholars' funding for vocal lessons at this crucial time would redirect me to the performance path I've been unable to enter as of yet. As I consider the time I have left, I am promising to myself that I will pursue as many purposeful artistic ventures as I can while under UVA's stewardship. I would be endlessly grateful to have the support of the Miller Arts Scholars as I intentionally embark on this quest. Thank you so much for your consideration, and I hope that you enjoy a restful Fall Break!

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SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Objective</i>
Fall 2023, biweekly	Continue vocal lessons with Professor Ferguson. Prepare repertoire for juries.
December 5 th , 2023	Participate in Studio Class.
December 6 th , 2023	Present at a jury.
Spring 2024	If I adequately perform at juries, I will apply for scholarships to increase to weekly hour long lessons.
Spring 2024	Continue lessons, prepare to present to more juries, connect with more vocal performers. Grow involvement in performance to directly inform present and future careers.

BUDGET

<i>Cost</i>	<i>Item</i>
\$425	½ credit (2000 level) private voice lessons.