

## Classical Voice Performance Study in Vienna\*

### Rising Third Year Arts Award Proposal

Elise Ebert

Faculty Mentor: John Mayhood

My first love was classical voice. At age 3, my parents put me in choir, in an ill-fated attempt to get me to stop singing around the house constantly. Instead, I went from singing *The Little Mermaid* to screeching “Der Hölle Rache” (more commonly known as the Queen of the Night aria from Mozart’s *The Magic Flute*). For my 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, my parents gave me a picture book of “The Magic Flute”, and to this day it is still one of the most magical possessions I have ever owned. With every flip of the page, I fell in love with the stories and characters as much as I already loved the tunes floating around in my head. After this, I turned my attention to librettos. My favorite childhood activity was sitting with my dad in the car, listening to my latest opera selection while I read along with the libretto. Pairing the music in my ear with the stories on the page made me know that I had to learn how to do that: sing in a language I didn’t even understand, yet still convey the most magical stories I had ever encountered.

When I was old enough to enroll in voice lessons, some of my first arias were Mozart soubrettes: I sang Despina and Zerlina, becoming those characters that I loved so much. 10 years later, I was accepted to the UVA Performance Concentration, singing “Ach, ich fuhls”, Pamina’s heart-wrenching aria from the opera that began it all for me. Because of my love for opera, I always thought I would attend a conservatory. However, as I progressed in the college application process, a variety of factors, including COVID and financial barriers, helped me realize that this would not be possible. Although at first disappointed that I would not be studying music at a conservatory, I have come to love the arts community I have found at UVA. My musical life is rich and diverse, and I learned to love and appreciate music beyond opera, including theater, choir, and even a cappella. However, I still want that chance to foster my original dream: to intensely study and sing opera. Where better to do that than Vienna? Home of not only Mozart, my original idol, but also Mahler, Haydn, and Schubert; I will be so inundated with classical music, I couldn’t get away from it if I tried. **Through my rising-third year Miller Arts Grant, I am requesting \$3,000 to study abroad with the IES: Austria: Vienna: Music program during Fall 2022.**

In Vienna, I will be taking 16 credits, including both Music and German courses. I am very excited for my schedule, which includes a Music Performance Workshop, where I will participate in weekly chamber, solo, and opera theatre performances, join an ensemble of instrumentalists and vocalists, have an in-house collaborative pianist, and learn from guest lecturers and renowned professionals from Vienna. I will also take private lessons and end the semester with my own vocal recital. This recital will help prepare me for my UVA third-year recital, which I will present only 4 months later in the Spring. I will also take two non-performance music classes: Music and Politics, where we will investigate historical musical works in tangent with social movements, international conflict, and criticized political events. This course also will be centered in Vienna itself, examining the French Revolution, Napoleonic

\*application submitted with UVA Education Abroad Office

Wars, and WWII through the context of Vienna composers, their opinions on these events, how these opinions were reflected in their own work, and how these works influenced the public. I am also particularly excited to take “Gustav Mahler and Turn-of-the-Century Vienna”, a course exploring Mahler within the setting of Vienna from 1875-1911. This class includes excursions to significant musical historical sites in Vienna to complement course material. Finally, I will take an elementary German course to introduce me to the language.

Because this is an IES program, rather than a direct exchange, I will not be confined to a university setting. Through the study abroad program, I will have countless opportunities, both curricular and extracurricular, to explore the musical scene of Vienna. With IES, I will take trips to concert halls, classical music concerts and operas, as well as museums and historical homes of composers, including Mozart, Beethoven, and Wagner.

I believe that this program will provide me a taste of the conservatory education that I always dreamed of. Although I could not imagine going to any school other than UVA, I am really excited to have the opportunity to spend 4 months completely immersed in classical music and performance. On my own, I will actively engage with the other musicians, both exchange and those at the Universität Wien, professors, and other performers that I meet to curate an international network of musicians that I can maintain, even after returning to the States. Learning under professors beyond the University of Virginia will also provide me with perspectives on my voice that I haven't gotten from Professor Beasley and my other UVA teachers. I hope the conglomeration of these experiences will enrich my musical education and provide me with new perspectives that I can carry with me throughout my completion of the music major and performance concentration at UVA and my entire musical career.

One of the only limitations of this program is the cost itself. With the combination of tuition, housing, airfare, and dining, I am unable to cover the cost without the assistance of grants like this one. Throughout my experience in Vienna, I will document my experience through journaling, notes in classes, and videos to present in my outcome presentation. I will also film my final recital to share with Miller Arts as evidence of my progress during the semester.

## Project Timeline

### **Spring 2022**

April 1	Submit Study Abroad Application to UVA
April 15	Submit Homeschool authorization and application to IES

### **Summer 2022**

June-July	Prepare audition materials for voice lessons and Performance Workshop
	Take lessons with Professor Beasley and my high school voice teacher, Mrs. Sondra Harnes
August	Fly to Vienna and move into my apartment
August 29th	Program begins

### **Fall 2022**

First week of September	Audition for the Music Performance Workshop
September-December	Continue to take classes, lessons, and explore Vienna
December	Present and film a final recital

### **Spring 2023**

January-March	Return to UVA and prepare my Outcome Presentation
April	Outcome Presentation at the Center for Undergraduate Excellence (including presentation of recital videos and other documentation of the Study Abroad experience)

## Proposed Budget

<b>Expense:</b>	<b>Amount:</b>	<b>Details:</b>
Tuition and Fees	\$17,035	
Books and Supplies	\$225	
Housing/Room	\$4,002	Apartment with 3-6 other exchange students from August-December

Dining/Board	\$1,500	Grocery money; estimate of \$100 a week for 15 weeks
Airline Tickets	\$800	Based on an average of the price of round trip flights found online from D.C. to Vienna
Local Transportation	\$100	Budgeting for public transportation fare in Vienna
Personal Expenses	\$400	Budgeting for hygiene products, cleaning supplies, and other basic daily life necessities
Application Fees	\$90	
Visa Fees	\$180	
Health Insurance	\$230	
<b>Total Estimated Cost:</b>	<b>\$24,562</b>	

<b>Income:</b>	<b>Amount:</b>
Miller Arts Rising 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year Grant	\$3,000
Miller Arts Minigrant (contributing to airfare)	\$500
UVA Study Abroad Office Scholarship	\$1,000
Personal Contribution	\$20,062

### Evidence of Participation in the Arts

I have been heavily involved in the arts at UVA, since my first semester during COVID. I take voice lessons with Professor Beasley and participate in University Singers and Chamber Singers. I was also recently accepted into the Performance Concentration of the Music Major. Extracurricularly, I am the assistant music director for the New Dominions, UVA's premiere all-gender a cappella group. First year, I participated in the cast of both *Working: The Musical* and *Singin' in the Rain* with First Year Players, and last semester, I vocal directed their fall musical, *Curtains*. I've also volunteered for Madison House Practice Partners, working with a Charlottesville high schooler on practicing her bass during COVID. This semester, I have also begun taking piano lessons with Professor Moore with the help of the Miller Arts minigrant. I also am currently enrolled in CASS 1011 and took CASS 1010 last semester. I have taken a total of 5 curricular classes through the music department, not including performance classes such as voice lessons and USingers. These courses have included theory, musicianship, history, and composition.