

Savannah Maive Edwards
Miller Arts Scholars Mini Grant Proposal
26 February 2019

Directorial Growth

At the end of this semester, I will have added both “Theatre Director” and “Film Director” to the hodgepodge that is my resume. To this point in my artistic experience, directing for film and stage is something that I deeply enjoy and feel inspired to continue pursuing. However, directing for film and stage tend to be work-heavy, time-intensive experiences, and I am seeking opportunities to supplement my knowledge in ways that are smaller and more separate from the experience I gain from actually directing films and plays. Therefore, I am proposing a minigrant project to help me gain more experience as a theatre and film director through a combination of observation, instruction, and practice.

For both film and theatre, much of the learning is to be done through observation – watching and analyzing plays and films that other people have directed in order to study their techniques. This is easy to do for film, as most people (myself included) have a Netflix subscription and access to the library’s digital files. On the other hand, theatre tends to be more inaccessible in terms of the cost, time, and location. Despite spending an entire summer working at a mid-sized theatre in D.C., I was only able to attend two plays – both of which I had complimentary tickets for. My hopes to see more theatre were demolished by the ever-decreasing numbers in my bank account, in addition to the fact that most of the theatre within my price range was being performed in a not-so-safe location; therefore deeming it inaccessible by my cost-effective travel combination of foot and metro. For this reason, I am applying for a minigrant to offset the costs of attending theatre in whatever city I end up working in this summer. I am currently applying for theatre-related summer internships in Manhattan, Chicago, D.C., Boston, Seattle, San Diego, and San Francisco. I am not interested in seeing commercial theatre, so most of the tickets for shows that I would see fall into the \$35-75 price range. I am currently creating and maintaining a website that encompasses my work as a theatre artist, including play reviews and analyses. I intend to write short analyses of each show I attend over the summer to add to my portfolio (<https://savs.myportfolio.com>).

Additionally, in order to further my techniques and theoretical understanding as a film director, I intend on using some of the funds to purchase a year-long subscription to the online Masterclass series. This online series offers over twelve classes related to film and eight related to writing, which is helpful to me as I wish to continue my film experience as a writer-director. This will supplement my current experience as I continue working on my short film, *Community of Trust*, and move on to begin developing other projects.

I anticipate my next film-related project to be the adaptation of a short screenplay that I wrote called *Brotherhood* into a web-series composed of five-minute shorts. I envision the web series to be a snapshot into the lives of students who are members of a fictional co-ed fraternity, with each short being filmed in one primary location and only featuring one to three characters per episode. Each short should only take one day to film, with the help of 1-2 crew members. This is the ideal structure for me, so that I can create a larger story out of many smaller pieces. By doing this, I will avoid having to worry about the logistics of filming in various locations with many crew members and actors on different days.

While this project seems to be split between the two mediums of film and theatre, this kind of disjunction is how I normally operate as an artist. My artistry is a patchwork that I am

proud of, and any experience I have in theatre is often able to transfer into my work as a filmmaker (and vice versa). At the completion of this project, I will hopefully have many things to add to my director's toolkit. There is something unique about learning from observation, instruction, and practice, and all three concepts must be combined to facilitate my ideal artistic learning experience.

Timeline

March 2019

- Purchase Masterclass subscription
- Begin watching class lessons
 - o Apply to the filming of *Community of Trust*

April 2019

- Finish editing *Community of Trust*
- Begin re-write and adaptation of *Brotherhood* into a web series
- Finish writing pilot of *Brotherhood*

May 2019

- Film pilot of *Brotherhood* during a reading day
- Finish editing pilot and upload to YouTube after exams end

June – August 2019

- Write six more episodes of *Brotherhood*
- Attend at least five plays at regional and professional theatres in whatever city I end up in
 - o Write analyses and add to my portfolio <https://savs.myportfolio.com>

Fall 2019

- Film entire season of *Brotherhood*
- Apply directorial concepts gained from attending plays to projects I work on as a(n) director/assistant director

Budget

Expenses	Description	Total
Masterclass Subscription	A one-year, all-access subscription to courses on Masterclass.com	\$180
Theatre ticket*	Professional/Regional Theatre Ticket	\$50-75
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Theatre ticket*	Professional/Regional Theatre Ticket	\$50-75
Theatre ticket*	Professional/Regional Theatre Ticket	\$50-75
Total Cost		\$430-505

*To be determined by which city I end up working in this summer.