

Jack Gereski

Miller Art Scholar Minigrant Proposal

The Last Five Years

We, Wesley Diener, Jack Gereski, and Maelisa Singer, are applying for Art Scholar Minigrants to fund our participation in the Lab Series production of *The Last Five Years*.

The Department of Drama's Lab Series will present Jason Robert Brown's *The Last Five Years* on November 18 and 19. Wesley will direct the musical, Maelisa will design the costumes, and Jack will portray Jamie Wellerstein. This production provides unparalleled opportunities for undergraduate drama students to take on larger responsibility within a professional theatrical environment. Our active participation in classes and departmental productions has equipped us with the necessary skills to stand on our own as artists.

I have a unique opportunity to portray one of my favorite characters from a musical, Jamie Wellerstein, in *The Last Five Years*. Anyone familiar with *The Last Five Years* knows that it is distinctive for its detailed and personal emotional representation of a five year relationship between Jamie and Cathy from start to finish. Since time does not work linearly in *The Last Five Years*, and because there are only two characters in the musical, Jamie will be one of the most demanding acting performances I have gotten to play. Additionally, with music by Jason Robert Brown, *The Last Five Years* is a musically and vocally demanding production, requiring both endurance and range. The character of Jamie will all me to implement both vocal and acting techniques I've learned in my studies as a drama major at UVA, while permitting me to refine and explore my ever-changing goals as an artist and as an Arts Scholar.

Since my enrollment to the University, I have been eagerly awaiting a chance to fuse my own voice and vision into a dynamic musical character, and I believe *The Last Five Years* is my chance. My primary aspiration as an Arts Scholar and drama major is to perform in musicals and plays that have meaning to myself and elicit emotion to the audience or cause some sort of introspection. I can think of no better way for me to achieve my goals, explore new work, and test/challenge myself to become a more experienced and complete artist than by portraying Jamie Wellerstein.

We are requesting funding to cover the rights, royalties, and material rentals for this departmental production of an iconic musical. We feel very fortunate to present such a compelling work of theatre in departmental space, but the popular nature of this musical results in significant financial burdens. With the assistance of these minigrants, we hope to be able to represent this musical, our individual skillsets, and, most importantly, the collaborative, multidisciplinary nature of the Miller Art Scholars in the best possible way.

Timeline

Summer 2017: Finalize logistics, secure cast and technical designers
October 7-November 17: Rehearsals
November 18 and 19: Performances

Budget

Rights and Royalties ----- \$900
Material Rental ----- \$400
Technical Elements ----- \$200
Total ----- \$1,500

To cover the budget, we are requesting the full \$1,500 that is allowed across the three minigrants. While we are grateful for support from the Drama Department for access to the Helms Theatre, the costume shop, and the prop shop, its financial support is minimal and we require this funding for rights, royalties, and rental materials.

Thank you so much to the Art Scholars for your consideration and continued support.