

Tina Hashemi

Rising 3rd Year Arts Award Outcome

## **Networking and Musicianship Development in New York City**

Thanks to the Miller Arts Scholars program, I was able to develop my musicianship and awareness of contemporary jazz by attending performances and taking private lessons in the jazz capital of the world, New York City. I had never before seen such incredible jazz performances, as well as such a variety of types of jazz, in my life, and each performance I attended gave me musical ideas and exposed my ears to new styles. Studying with jazz greats like Darmon Meader and Veronica Swift, whose styles and backgrounds are so different, allowed me to explore vocal jazz from new perspectives. This trip helped me find new direction and focus in developing my own style and sound in vocal jazz in the past year.



*Bebop at 11th street bar*



*Vince Giordano's Nighthawks at the Iguana - 20's style big band music*

The performances I attended ranged over many types of subgenres within jazz: Vince Giordano's Nighthawks and David Ostwald's Louis Armstrong Eternity Band played early 20's

and 30's style jazz, 11th Street Bar presented a night of bebop, The Dirty Dozen Brass Band played funky New Orleans-inspired music, and Veronica Swift sang and reinterpreted a huge variety of songs I had never heard before. I learned things from each of these performances: from Veronica, I was exposed to the craft of taking music from other genres like musical theatre and pop and creatively rearranging them into jazz songs. From the Dirty Dozen Brass Band, I learned the power a motif can have in an arrangement and how it can be expanded and played on to create energy. From all these performances, I also learned non-musical but still important things about stage presence, communication on stage, structuring a setlist, and putting on a real show. Many of these shows were truly breathtaking, and have informed much of my musical development in the past year.



*Sitting in at Cleopatra's Needle*



*Veronica Swift*

In our private lesson, Veronica gave me unique tips, drawing a lot from acting techniques and bringing them to jazz in order to convey emotion well. I have often referred to the list of advice she gave me as I consider how to improve my storytelling in jazz. Darmon Meader's lesson was heavy on jazz theory and helped me develop a way of analyzing chord changes as a

singer. Additionally, I got a chance to sit in and perform two songs at Cleopatra's Needle and a big band chart with the house band at Swing 46. It was helpful to apply what I had learned in private lessons to these performance experiences while still in New York. In the fall semester, I presented a show at WTJU that highlighted the progress I made as a result from all I learned on this trip.

Thank you so very much to the Miller Arts Scholars program for affording me this incredible opportunity to expand my exposure to and knowledge of jazz music. This was a transformative experience and I am so grateful to have been able to explore and learn from it.