

Emily Hunter
Fall 2022 Mini-Grant
Outcome Report: Stepping Into My Own Sound

Introduction

I applied for this mini grant upon preparation to study music abroad in Vienna, Austria. Miller Arts Scholars helped me work toward my personal goal of experiencing orchestras from all over the world. This grant provided the funds to travel to the concerts and for the concert tickets themselves.

This project expands on my 3rd Year Arts Award, which included a trip to see the New York Philharmonic Orchestra perform and to receive a lesson from a MET Opera Orchestral Flutist on music the NY Philharmonic performed that night. Except this time, I traveled to Europe. I saw the Berlin Philharmonic perform *La Mer* by Claude Debussy and the premiere of *Superorganisms* by Miroslav Srnka, and *Lontano Atmosphères* by György Ligeti on February 11th, 2023. I also saw the Vienna Philharmonic perform *Symphony No. 3* and *Symphony No. 4* by Johannes Brahms on February 24th, 2023.

I based the budget off of studying abroad in Florence, Italy. However, I ended up studying in Austria since it aligned better with my majors. This reduced the transportation costs and I used this extra money to purchase a flight to Berlin rather than a train ticket. I used this opportunity in Europe to expand my knowledge of music in different parts of the world, as well as observing the flute players' techniques and performance practices.

Reflection

I planned my trip to Berlin, Germany off of Emmanuel Pahud's concert schedule. I have been a fan of his since my early flute career. It was incredibly unreal to observe the character he embodies when in performance mode. There is a famous flute excerpt in *La Mer* and I immediately had chills weave in and out of my mind and sweep throughout my body when he articulated the first few notes. I learned more from observing his performance than from any one practice session. I felt incredibly grateful to be in his presence, not only from his astounding musical skills, but for what he represents. To me, Emmanuel Pahud represents my passion for music.

From the first month I have been living abroad, I have already noticed shocking differences in the way music is taught and performed. They really value classical music and seem to praise certain composers over others in my music classes. Outside of the classroom, however, I had a different perspective. From comparing the Berlin and Vienna Philharmonic Orchestras together, I noticed some differences. However, some of these differences could be due to the choice of repertoire played that night, the architecture and/or acoustics of the concert hall itself, and my specific seat in the concert hall. The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra had a timbre more similar to the National Symphony Orchestra. I paid particular attention to the flute section. They were more soft-spoken and fluffier in a sense than the Berlin Philharmonic's flute section.

Regardless of the differences between the orchestra performances, I made a list of learning points.

Emmanuel Pahud’s tone in the excerpt from *La Mer* made my mouth water. It was a river of sound that poured into the concert hall. I really appreciated how resonant and colorful his timbre was and I will aim to do the same by using warmer air, rolling out my flute headjoint, and by using extremely high air pressure – especially in the lower register. These are specific technical ways I can improve my sound, but I think Pahud’s character development as a performer is what makes him the best (in my opinion). I noticed the drama he added to the music. This visual cue somehow bled into my auditory experience of the music. I want to play around with facial expressions and movements to create my own flute “character.” I am not sure if this character will change depending on what I play, but I like the idea of acting when I perform, just as an actor or actress would do. The Vienna Philharmonic also had a famous flute excerpt in their concert from Brahms’ *Symphony No. 4*. One technical idea I will implement is playing around with my vibrato. The principal player often would make their vibrato have an echo effect. It would make my musical interpretations more interesting if I varied my vibrato during one given note. This whole experience not only gave me a European perspective on classical music and invaluable lessons, but it also provided me with inspiration to make my own music.

Budget

Concert	Ticket Prices (estimate because they vary and are converted from Euros)	Transportation Costs (converted from Euros)
Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra 	79 Euro → \$83.36	Round trip flight tickets: \$239.30 Taxi from airport: 60 Euro → \$63.31 Taxi to airport: 60 Euro → \$63.31

Vienna Philharmonic
Orchestra



51 Euro → \$53.81

U-Bahn train pass (already
purchased)

Total Cost prior to study abroad location change: \$498.59

Total Cost with location change: \$503.09