

Fall 2023 Minigrant Outcome Report

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Funding for a New Viola Bow

I am extremely grateful for the generous funding provided by the Miller Arts Scholar Program that allowed me to purchase a new, high-quality viola bow. With this bow, my technique on the viola and overall tone quality have improved greatly, and I no longer have to worry about producing a scratchy sound while rehearsing/performing with my quintet.

In my search for a new bow, I contacted multiple luthiers/violin shops in an effort to find the best quality for my budget. I ended up scheduling an appointment with Fairfax Fine Violins by recommendation of Professor Ayn Baliya (the viola professor at UVA). I requested bows in the \$300-\$700 price range and was given a large assortment of both carbon fiber and wood bows. After testing and comparing each bow on my instrument, I decided to stick with the \$600 14" Unstamped German Silver Mounted Viola Bow, as it was consistently smooth and much easier to play due to its lighter weight. I used the \$500 provided to me by the minigrant and covered the remaining \$100 (plus tax) with my own money.

This bow has been an extremely valuable purchase for my improvement as a violist. This change has been especially prevalent during my rehearsals with my quintet, as I've found that I can blend more easily with the other instruments. I am also able to apply increased weight and pressure to this bow, producing a clean yet intense sound- a capability that I struggled to consistently achieve with my previous bow. This is particularly important for the piece we will be performing in December (Shostakovich's Piano Quintet in G Minor, Op 57), as there are many moments of large intensity and depth. My new bow also allows me to play delicately and quietly with a sweeter tone (again, without any harshness/scratchiness) which will be an asset for the 4th movement of this piece. It also sits more comfortably in my hand, as it is slimmer and less square (especially around the base of the bow). Overall, my tone is much rounder and more pleasant, which has allowed me to focus more of my energy on other components of the piece, such as dynamics, phrasing, and overall communication with the other members of my group.

I cannot thank the Miller Arts Scholar Program enough for providing me with the funding for this new bow and supporting my musical ventures. This purchase will help me for the rest of my time at UVA and assist me in my journey to continuously improve as a violist. Thank you so much!

Figure 1: My viola, old bow (the black bow on the bottom), and new bow (brown bow on top)



Table 1: Expenses

Item:	Price:
Unstamped German Silver Mounted Viola Bow	\$600