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Miller Arts Scholars Mini Grant Application Spring 2023

### **Commissioning a Recital Work**

As I approach my fourth and final year at UVA, I have begun to consider the recital I will perform as the final showcase of my participation in the Performance Concentration. As this recital will be the culmination of four years of work, I want to make it my own and have the pieces I play reflect my values as a musician, artist, and person. Throughout my experience as a classical flute player, I have repeatedly faced the problem of diversity in our repertoire. Many of the works I have been assigned were composed by people who are largely white, male, and dead. I often felt this discounted many of the living, diverse composers that exist today. I sometimes feel an emotional disconnect when playing these older pieces, because while I appreciate their importance and historical context, I prefer works that represent the zeitgeist in which I am living. When a composer is still living, a performer can work collaboratively with them, ask them questions about their work, and make the performance as representative of the composer's vision as possible. I encountered several diverse composers (both their person and their works) full of energy while at the National Flute Association Convention in August 2022, and it inspired me to take advantage of the many beautiful contemporary works written for flute. The convention reminded me how much creativity there still is in flute playing, and how it can still relate emotionally to people of my generation. I wish more people knew that. Thus, I would like my fourth-year recital to, as much as possible, represent living composers with a wide variety of identities.

One way I would like to carry out this plan is by commissioning a work by a living composer whose work I have enjoyed. This would be a two- to three-minute work for solo flute that I would perform at my senior recital in April 2024. The composer I have selected is Judy Nishimura, whose work I greatly enjoyed when I played her *Mood Swings* from the *21st Century Masterworks: Eleven Pieces for Flute Alone* book. I have communicated with her by email, and she agreed to compose a piece with me within the parameters I provided. If I were to receive the grant, I would move forward with Nishimura to plan the piece she would compose for me. We have agreed on the price of \$500. However, for this plan to move forward, I need the assistance of the Miller Arts Scholars program to fund the commission.

I think this commission would be a fantastic opportunity for many reasons. Firstly, I would be financially supporting a living, female, Asian composer and promoting her work. I think it is an extremely worthwhile pursuit to support people who compose for flute in the modern day because it allows for continued innovation and progress within the musical

community. Secondly, it would be a great educational experience for me to work on this project. While Judy Nishimura would be doing the composing, I would determine the parameters of the composition. This means everything from theme to tempo, style, and much more. This is very exciting for me as it allows me to apply the thematic ideas I have learned from classes like Songwriting and Introduction to Music and Computers to the context of the flute. I would then get to actually learn the piece, and through my practice evaluate how my vision lined up with the finished product. I would work with my faculty mentor, Kelly Sulick, to make the piece as representative of the composer's intentions as possible. The process would culminate with my performance of the piece at my senior recital.

The timeline for this project is not set in stone as much of it is up to the composer. However, within the 60-day period before my outcome report is due, I would establish the parameters of the piece and work with Judy to make my vision come to life. While the final product will take place after this period, I feel a mini grant at this time is the best way to present this project due to the budget and the lead time required for the composer to finish the piece the time of my recital.

I believe that getting this grant would support many goals, including supporting female composers, developing my collaborative skills, and developing my performance abilities. I thank the Miller Arts Scholars Program for their consideration of my proposal.

Budget

|                                |       |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Commission with Judy Nishimura | \$500 |
| Total:                         | \$500 |