

Lydia Newman

April 2022

Arts Scholars Fourth-Year Award Application

Musical Theatre as Media

Project Overview

As a Drama major, I am appreciative of the education that I have received at the University of Virginia. I have taken Acting 1, Performance And/As Theory, Scenic Technologies, Directing I, Making Theatre Histories, Acting 2, Production Management, and Script Analysis. I believe that these classes have led me to become a well-rounded scholar of drama. Last summer, I was awarded a Third-Year Arts Award from Miller Arts, and I used this arts award to attend the three-week Musical Theatre Acting Intensive at Boston Conservatory at Berklee. This intensive was an incredible experience; I learned a lot about myself as an actor and was able to supplement my Drama education at UVA.

I am also in the Distinguished Majors Program in the Media Studies department at UVA.

Students in this program partake in a rigorous media studies curriculum with the goal of writing a fifty-page thesis by the end of their fourth year. I applied to this program during my third year with the goal of being able to explore the intersection of my interests in both Drama and Media Studies. Currently, I intend for my thesis to examine the portrayal of real-life events in musical theatre to find out how and why musicals change our perspective on these events, so that I can help others understand the significance and effect that live performance (in combination with music and choreography) holds in regard to telling a story or recounting events. I want to understand how and why musical interpretations of historic events/people change the perception of the events from an audience's perspective.

With a Fourth-Year Arts Award, I intend to travel to New York City to view some of these historical musicals in person as a part of my thesis research. I would like to see *Hamilton* and *Come From Away*. While I realize that these musicals may not be running by the time I hope to see them on Broadway, there are different historical musicals that crop up on Broadway, and if *Come From Away* and *Hamilton* are not running, I will attend different historical performances

in New York City, or will use the money to purchase tour tickets of these musicals in a different city.

Also in New York City is the New York Public Library Digital Collections, which is one of the most comprehensive archives for theatre arts. I want to conduct research in the Theatre on Film and Tape (TOFT) Archive, which is home to professionally shot video recordings of Broadway musicals. This would be extremely valuable to my thesis research, as I would be able to see historical Broadway musicals that are not currently being performed and are not available to watch on streaming sites. Some of these musicals include *Bonnie and Clyde*, *Parade*, *Rent*, *Evita*, *Titanic*, and more.

I have discussed this proposal with Tovah Close, and she has agreed to act as my mentor. Tovah is someone who I have gone to for advice in the past, and she also acted as my mentor for my Third-Year Arts Award. I am extremely grateful for her guidance over the past few years. Tovah also has contacts at New York University, and she will be connecting me with some musical theater historians that I plan to meet with and interview.

Participation in the Arts

I am currently a third-year drama major at the University of Virginia. At UVA, I have had the privilege of performing in First Year Players' production of *The Music Man*, UVA Drama's production of *Love and Information*, The New Works Festival's 2021 audio production of *Boys the Musical*, and Virginia Players Lab Series' production of *Peace by Piece*. As a member of the Drama Arts Board, I worked with fellow students on various proposals of artists to bring to grounds. Currently, I am assistant directing First Year Players' production of *Something Rotten* and am the P.R. chair of Virginia Players. I am heavily involved in the arts at UVA, and I intend to bring my passion for drama and the arts into my future career.

I took CASS 1010 in Fall 2020 and CASS 1011 in Spring 2021 where I enjoyed getting to know my fellow arts scholars. In Spring 2021, I was awarded both a Mini Grant and Third Year Arts Award from Miller Arts, for which I am very grateful. In Fall 2021, I was also awarded a Mini

Grant. Being a part of the Miller Arts Scholars community has been one of the most rewarding aspects of my time at UVA.

Projected Timeline

SPRING 2022

- Present my thesis proposal to the Media Studies Department and to my Miller Arts mentor, Tovah Close.

SUMMER 2022

- Continue thesis research.
- Keep in contact with both my thesis advisor and Tovah to update them on my research.

FALL 2022

- Begin writing my thesis and continue research

WINTER 2022/2023

- Travel to New York City to see musicals as research, visit the New York Public Library Theatre on Film and Tape Archive, and meet with Tovah's contacts at NYU.

SPRING 2023

- Finish my Media Studies DMP Thesis.
- Present my findings to Miller Arts.

BUDGET

Travel

Travel Cost for a Plane Ticket to and from New York City	\$292
Travel Cost (approximate) for Uber or Cab within the city	\$160 (\$40/day)

Housing and Meals

Cost for Hotel in New York City for 3 nights	\$858 (\$286/night based on GSA rates)
Cost for Meals in New York City for 4 days and 3 nights	\$266 (\$57 on first and last day, \$76 for both full days based on GSA rates)

Tickets

Tickets for <i>Hamilton</i> mezzanine	\$403
Tickets for <i>Come From Away</i> mezzanine	\$177
Tickets for <i>Six The Musical</i> mezzanine	\$349

Total:**Budget Income, Funding, or Other Awards**

Income Item: MAS Fourth Year Award	\$2,500
Income Item: Personal Contribution	\$5
Total:	\$2505