

Lydia Newman
Miller Arts Scholar in Drama
Spring 2021
Mini Grant Proposal

Headshots: An Actor's First Impression

I. Project Summary

For an actor, quality headshots are essential. They are usually the first thing a director or an agent sees, so it is imperative that one put forth a professional image. Paying for a professional headshot on a student budget is not always feasible, as high-quality photographers are expensive. I would be grateful for the assistance of Miller Arts as I attempt to take this vital step in the process of working as an actor.

I am currently a second-year Drama major at UVA. I am also currently working on a proposal for a third-year arts award to attend summer musical theatre programs that will supplement my drama degree. At UVA, I have had the privilege of performing in First Year Players' production of *The Music Man* and UVA Drama's production of *Love and Information*, and I am currently working on a production of *Boys the Musical* through UVA Drama's New Works Festival. As a member of the Drama Arts Board, this spring I am working to bring artists in residency to grounds. I took CASS 1010 in Fall 2020, and I am currently enrolled in CASS 1011, where I have enjoyed getting to know my fellow arts scholars. 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 as an actor.

The headshots that I am currently using to apply for acting programs and acting roles are outdated; they were taken in summer 2019, so they are nearly two years old. These photos no longer reflect my image. I do not yet have a professional website, but I plan on creating one within the next year, as it is one of the best ways to market myself as an actor. Updated headshots with a variety of looks would be a crucial addition as I work on creating a professional website.

I plan to schedule a headshot session with professional photographer Jeremy Bustin, who is located in Richmond, VA. I researched various photographers in the Virginia area, and I also reached out to Miller Arts alum Payton Moledor for recommendations. In talking to Payton and in researching actor headshots, I was advised to get my makeup professionally done for headshots, as it helps the actor put forth their best look. Therefore, I am applying for a \$500 grant, and any funds not put towards the headshot session will go towards a makeup artist and hair stylist. I will likely use a makeup artist recommended by Jeremy Bustin; his website states that he has recommended professional MUAs on his roster.

I realize that due to COVID-19, there could be some concerns about this headshot session. On Jeremy's website, he states the safety measures he takes. These measures include limiting the number of clients he is currently accepting, maintaining an eight to ten foot distance when shooting, disinfecting equipment and services, frequently washing hands, using masks anytime when not shooting, shooting mainly outdoors, and requiring makeup artists to be masked at all times. These guidelines adhere to the current university restrictions as sent out by President Ryan on February 26th which call for a gathering limit of 6 people and for activities such as indoor dining to be limited to two people. As the makeup artist will be masked and I will not be (for a very short time while makeup is being applied), I would say that this is an even lower risk than eating in a group of two. This session will be taking place sometime in mid-May, at which point I will no longer be on grounds; this session is not a risk to the university community. Furthermore, it is likely that at this point, more of the population will be vaccinated.

With the help of a Miller Arts Scholars mini grant of \$500, I would be able to obtain high-quality headshots taken by a professional photographer. These headshots are a vital step in improving my professional image and confidence as an actor.

II. Anticipated Timeline

March 5, 2021: Submit the Miller Arts Scholars Mini Grant Application and project proposal.

March 2021: Schedule a headshot session with Jeremy Bustin for May, depending on when he has sessions available

Spring 2021: Have a headshot session with Jeremy Bustin in Richmond after getting makeup professionally done by a recommended makeup artist. After the session is complete and the photos are retouched, I will print physical copies of my headshots and will also update my resumé.

Summer 2021: Use headshots during summer acting program (if admitted) and when applying for acting roles.

III. Budget

Expenses	Amount
Jeremy Bustin Photography Basic Studio and Outdoor Session	\$397
Makeup/Hair Artist*	\$150
TOTAL	\$547*

*I will cover costs that exceed the \$500 grant funds.