

BDF/Gibney Connect 2021 Dance Intensive
Miller Art Scholars Grant Proposal - Spring 2020
Libbie Ryan

Project Overview

Bates Dance Festival/Gibney Connect 2021 is a five-day dance intensive in NYC, aimed to cultivate creative exchange between artists and dancers. The intensive offers classes in technique, improvisation, and composition. While there, I plan to document my experience through photos and video when possible, and record daily journals. An intensive offers more than simply taking dance classes, by providing a structure and community that shape your experience. Spending time on the same objectives each day, with the same group of individuals, allows for deeper discoveries. This intensive provides unique access to learn from artists who are currently active in the dance industry, in an immersive and cohesive environment.

Both BDF and Gibney have long-standing reputations of being innovative contributors to the dance community. Most importantly, as organizations, both BDF and Gibney prioritize intention-driven work. Gibney's Community Action program, established over two decades ago, uses movement to help victims of domestic violence. While Community Action is one of their largest programs, Gibney frequently stands for inclusion and social justice as an establishment. These values influence how they operate, both in and out of the studio. To me, it is extremely important to be surrounded by dancers who consider themselves within a broader context, and use movement to explore how all bodies relate to one another. Without this intention, dancing means less to me. I chose BDF/Gibney not only because it would challenge me physically, but because I value supporting and joining organizations that enact change. I hope that being surrounded by dancers and advocates at Connect will challenge my perspective on how I approach dance as a mechanism of change.

As a dance minor at UVA, much of my dance training and goals thus far align with the Connect intensive. Within the broad genre of modern dance, I have been focusing on my improvisation and composition skills, two focal points of the intensive. Taking Improvisation and Composition this past year make me feel prepared to attend this intensive, and also eager to explore further. While I have danced my whole life, I still feel extremely inexperienced in the realm of creating choreography. Experiencing new teachers and their individual styles helps me push the limitations on my dancing, and inspires new creation. I am guilty of avoiding unfamiliar classes and styles at times, so I hope to use this opportunity to push myself into an explore and be open to new practices.

I plan to apply this new knowledge to my choreography, both in personal and formal settings. Next year I plan to choreograph pieces for the Student Dance Concert,

as well as continue choreographing for CIOs on grounds. I am confident that the BDF/Gibney intensive will impact how I move and create, and I plan to use what I learn in my dance involvements here at UVA. This is a great chance to interrupt my habitual movement, and apply what I discover to my ongoing learning of the choreographic process. When I return, I plan to compile all of my documentation of the intensive for the outcome presentations. This may include videos from class or performing choreography I learned live. Having a record of the intensive through journals, photos, and videos will help provide material to share my experience with other art scholars.

Timeline

I chose a winter intensive due to COVID-19, which caused many summer opportunities to be canceled and generally made summer travel uncertain. BDF cancelled their summer festival, and I expect Gibney to have to cancel many of their planned events as well. This plan is based on BDF/Gibney Connect 2020, so dates and schedules may change slightly, but generally are expected to stay the same.

January 5th: Depart from Charlottesville via train.

January 6th-10th: BDF/Gibney Intensive. The intensive runs from 9 am to 6 pm each day, with a schedule as follows:

9:00 – 10:30 am: Feldenkrais + Improvisation

11:00 am – 12:30 pm: Technique

1:30 – 4:30 pm: Contemporary Making

5:00 – 6:00 pm: Showing/Yoga/Discussion

January 11: Extra day in the city to take advantage of other local dance opportunities. I hope to take classes at Broadway Dance Center, Alvin Ailey Extension, or The Pit. Also, I plan to look into attending any performances in the area.

January 12: Return to Charlottesville via train.

January 13 - End of January: Compile documentation of my experiences during the intensive and trip.

Spring: Create and rehearse presentation of project outcomes by the first week of April.

Budget

Intensive Attendance	\$500
Travel (Train)	\$100
Housing	\$1,200 (\$600 if split with Art Scholar Katie Yared)
Meals	\$245 (\$35/day for 7 days)
Metro Pass	\$30
Extraneous	\$75 (Additional dance classes and shows)
Total	\$2,150

I am planning to travel by train from Charlottesville to NYC. Train ticket prices fluctuate, but it is expected to cost \$80-\$100. I plan to stay in an Airbnb within walking/metro distance of the Gibney dance studio. This is estimated to cost roughly \$1,000 to stay January 5th through 12th. Here are some possible places to stay, all within a reasonable distance of the intensive:

1. https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/7004408?location=New%20York%2C%20NY&adults=2&check_in=2021-01-05&check_out=2021-01-11&source_impression_id=p3_1585710308_69uujO9HVdZoLdrf
 - a. Total Cost: \$1,153
2. https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/9240346?location=New%20York%2C%20NY&adults=2&check_in=2021-01-05&check_out=2021-01-12&previous_page_section_name=1000&federated_search_id=61d1f400-f043-4be2-9379-d6befa6f4a5b
 - a. Total Cost: \$1,098
3. https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/36729458?location=New%20York%2C%20NY&adults=2&check_in=2021-01-05&check_out=2021-01-11&source_impression_id=p3_1585710674_DmqNuujfyJ71Yur9
 - a. Total Cost: \$866

Participation in the Arts at UVA

Since starting at UVA, I have been active in the dance minor, taking classes each semester. To date, I have taken Modern I, Modern II, Improvisation, Composition, and Dance & Culture. I have participated in three Student Dance Concerts. I performed student pieces choreographed by Erin Perry and Alex Murphy. I also partook in three guest artist residencies, with Chien-Ying Wang, Emily Wright, and Faith Levine. I have also been involved in the minor in informal ways, assisting in other students' Dance for Camera projects, and attending guest lectures and workshops. Outside of the Dance Minor, I am also an active member of Virginia Dance Company, an audition-based dance CIO. With them, I have performed in two shows, been a part of 9 pieces, and choreographed one piece of my own. I am also a member of their Executive Board.

Participation in Miller Arts Scholars

I became a member of Miller Arts Scholars last spring, and since have taken CASS 1010. I was unable to take CASS 1011 this spring because it conflicted with PSYC 2005, a requirement to declare my major. However, I plan to enroll in both CASS 1010 and 1011 next year. Outside of the seminar, Art Scholars has helped me connect with other artists, especially those outside of my discipline. Since joining, I have supported other artists at performances such as acapella, opera, and improv shows. All of these are events I was previously oblivious to, despite existing in the same spaces and departments.