

Fourth Year Recital: Patience and Persistence
Benjamin Trombetta, Miller Arts Scholar (Music)

Project Outcome

In the evening of March 24th, 2022, I had my dress rehearsal for my fourth-year voice recital; I remember returning to the Old Cabell Hall stage after everyone had already left, eager to soak in every detail of the storied building, from the way the light hit my face on stage to the shadows in the back of the auditorium. This stage holds powerful memories; it was here that I realized I should follow my heart and major in music, shortly after my callback for the University Singers in Fall 2018, a group that I have come to adore as my “family away from home.” The next day, I walked onto the stage for my recital performance, just after 8pm on Friday, March 25th. I immediately saw my mom and dad, sitting right up front; this was their first visit to Charlottesville since 2019, a timely reminder of how challenging the past two years have been, not only for live performance avenues, but simple acts of regularly visiting family. As I began to sing my first piece, “Would you Gain the Tender Creature” from Handel’s *Acis and Galatea*, I was overcome by sentimentality; my recital represented the culmination of four years of vocal study with Mrs. Pamela Beasley, and was, in many senses, a community effort.

To prepare for the recital, Prof. Beasley and I began our weekly voice lessons in September 2021, still taught via Zoom due to mask regulations and other health concerns. The fall semester entailed a great deal of research – scouring the music library for musical librettos and writing repertoire study sheets for various pieces, to name a few efforts – in addition to preparing two of my most challenging pieces, Rossini’s *La Danza*, a fast-paced *tarantella napoletana*, and Schumann’s *Mein Schöner Stern*, ripe with German diction. I also reached out to Prof. John Mayhood, my music major advisor, to ask if he could accompany me throughout the recital process, which he graciously agreed to. I could not have pulled the recital off without the dedicated efforts from both Prof. Mayhood and Prof. Beasley; their support propelled me through all the ups and downs of the recital process, from fielding my frequent questions about having the required stamina to deliver a twelve-song recital, to helping with research about song styles and performance techniques.

As we shifted into the spring semester, recital preparations went into full swing; I continued my weekly lessons with Prof. Beasley, sometimes pursuing additional coaching as needed, confirmed my reservation with Old Cabell Hall, and completed a recital photoshoot with

local photographer [Jannatul Pramanik](#), who took an array of professional photos and helped me gain the confidence to feel my best heading into the recital. Jannatul's photos went a long way, as many of the photos were featured in my self-designed recital publicity posters, Facebook events, and the like. Rehearsals with Prof. Mayhood became much more frequent as we added piano to my entire setlist, a range of pieces in the classical and musical theatre tradition that included Italian, German, and English selections; three songs even featured close friends! For Toselli's *Serenata*, third-year violinist Katherine Cadzow accompanied me; second-year arts scholar Talia Pirron and fellow fourth-year recitalist Josh Eiger also joined for Porter's "It's De-Lovely" from *Anything Goes* and Sondheim's "Agony" from *Into the Woods*, respectively.

On top of the bountiful lessons in performance readiness, from proper breathing technique to exercises in crisp diction, performing a fourth-year voice recital was a large tutorial in arts administration; I learned how to advocate for myself through planning a solo artistic event, and quickly became my own concert manager, publicity chair, and performer. More than anything, I realized that performances like this, while technically solo, take a village. As best stated in my recital program:

First and foremost, I would like to thank John Mayhood for his encouragement, support, and dedication in collaborating for this recital; I am so grateful for all your help and guidance.

Likewise, thank you to Katherine Cadzow, Talia Pirron, and Joshua Eiger for partnering with me for various pieces on the recital. Making music is fun by yourself, but it is even better in the company of good friends.

Thank you to my friends, professors, and mentors, both in Charlottesville and back home, for your constant kindness, encouragement, and lasting faith in me through all the ups and downs of the past four years.

Thank you to the Miller Arts Scholars program for your artistic and financial support; this recital was made possible by your generosity. Many thanks, also, to the McIntire Department of Music faculty and staff for your support in all of my musical endeavors.

Thank you to Pamela Beasley for being so much more than just a voice teacher these past four years, but also a guiding light and my "mom away from home." Your wisdom, patience, and inspirational teaching will

remain with me for years to come.

Last, thank you to my family, especially Mom, Dad, and Francesca, for always encouraging me to follow my heart and continue pursuing the arts. Thank you, also, to my late grandmothers Barbara Rohrbach and Norma Trombetta, to whom I dedicate this performance tonight.

Budget:

Expense	Amount
Additional Voice Lessons with Professor Pamela Beasley*	\$400 (5 lessons at \$80/hour)
Appcompanionist Subscription	\$150 (10 months at \$15/month)
Recital Photoshoot	\$105.30
Recital Filming	\$100
Old Cabell Hall – Space Rental, House Manager Fee, Piano Use Fee	\$750
Miscellaneous Costs (includes accompanist fees, additional recital photography, etc.)	\$500
Total Spent (as of April 2022)	\$2,005.30
Total Remaining**	\$494.70

*Two additional lessons were completed before the recital; the remaining three will be pursued in the coming months (post-graduation).

**Some estimated costs from my original proposal were higher than necessary; for example, I was able to print my recital programs and posters for free, leaving about \$500 leftover. I plan to use the remaining funds for future musical enrichment, like purchasing tickets to various opera, musical theatre, chorus, orchestra, and dance performances.