

Jack Gereski
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Art Scholar Fourth-Year Award Application

A Summer Acting in NYC

This coming summer (2018), I am hoping to achieve acting training to better position myself for an acting career after graduation. I want to apply to two training programs (attending only one) this summer: The Michael Howard Studio and The Circle in the Square Summer Musical Workshop. Both programs are very different, with each focusing on a different aspect of performance. The Michael Howard Studios Professional Acting Studio for Theater, Film, and Television Summer Conservatory program is a six-week acting intensive in June and July in New York City. The program will allow me to grow my passion for performing in a fully immersive setting. The courses are essentially a full time job, (Monday-Friday, 9-5pm), and “include scene study, movement, voice, camera, Shakespeare, acting techniques, clown, improvisation, and the business of acting.” The Circle in the Square Summer Musical Theatre Workshop is a seven-week program that includes: Scene study, acting technique, classical text analysis, speech, voice lessons, physical acting, dance, singing interpretation, singing technique, and tap dance. The “total clock hours per week” for this workshop will be 29 hours. The curriculum would be vital to my performance capabilities, especially with Musical Theatre dance courses.

I am a double major at UVA (Drama and Government), and sadly, I do not have the availability in my schedule to take extra drama courses that are not required for the major. To me, I feel I’m losing valuable experience in skills from courses (Acting II, dancing and movement training) and have never had the opportunity for full drama immersion and connection. I love my liberal arts education, and I know it will make me a stronger actor, but at times, I feel like I’m losing opportunities to grow my craft because of my other academic commitments. The Michael Howard Studio or the Summer Musical Theatre Workshop would change that. After a summer taking classes, I will be more focused, more impassioned, more practiced, more experienced, and better connected. I will be able to compete with other actors from traditional theater colleges after graduation, too. Most importantly, I will bring the lessons I learned over the summer back to Charlottesville in the fall, and make the arts community at UVA stronger.

My goal for this summer is passion and personal growth, and I am certain that my attendance at one of these two amazing programs would be the boost I need to take my skills to the next level. If I am fortunate enough to get into both programs, I would need to decide which one is my preference. Both have their different benefits, but since the total cost of both are basically the same, this is a decision I can make if I find myself in that amazing position. I am dedicated to the idea of spending this summer in New York City, and know this summer will give me the training

and resources that will lead to a life in the performing arts. I am so grateful to be apart of an organization like Arts Scholars that encourages artists to pursue their passions full-on. My goals and dreams of being a professional actor are big and pretty nerve-wracking, but this summer in New York will provide me with clarity, passion, knowledge, and experience that I will take with me the rest of my life.

TIMELINE

- Spring
 - Send in applications for Circle in the Square and The Michael Howard Studio
 - Apply for external grants, informing the Arts Scholars committee of any grants I've received
 - Admissions are released on a rolling basis (inform Arts Scholars committee if I'm denied admission)
- Summer
 - Attend Circle in the Square/Michael Howard Studio Program
- Fall
 - Implement knowledge from summer experience into classes and Drama Department shows
- April 2019
 - Present my summer experience in front of all Miller Arts Scholars

BUDGET**Michael Howard Studios**

http://www.michaelhowardstudios.com/Michael_Howard_Studios/Summer_Conservatory.html

- Tuition - \$3960
- Housing - \$2800
- Meals - \$500
- Miscellaneous - \$300

Total: \$7560

Circle in the Square Summer Musical Theatre Workshop

http://www.circlesquare.org/tuition_aid.htm

- Tuition - \$4150
- Housing - \$2800
- Meals - \$500
- Miscellaneous - \$300

Total: \$7750

I know that these program costs are clearly greater than the amount available for the 4th-Year Art Scholars awards. Housing in New York City is incredibly expensive, and I am continuing to search for cheaper alternatives if I'm accepted into the Circle in the Square program. I am requesting \$5,400 to cover the cost of tuition and half of the housing, but any amount given by Arts Scholars would help me in the pursuit of my dream. I am also applying for Small Research and Travel Grants, and other external grants to help me pay for the rest of the housing, and other miscellaneous items, and will alert the committee if I were to receive any money from elsewhere.

ARTS INVOLVEMENT

Since my arrival at UVA, I have been very involved in the arts community. Immediately upon my arrival, I joined First Year Players, and performed two leading roles in that organization in *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Cabaret*. I've continued my involvement with student-run theatre portraying Mr. Collins in Spectrum Theatre's Production, *Pride and Prejudice* in Garden VIII, directed by Arts Scholar, Mimi Robinson.

Last semester, with the help of Miller Arts Minigrants, I portrayed Jamie Wellerstein in Virginia Player's production, *The Last Five Years*. I was selected as a recipient of a Minigrant with Wesley Diener and Maelisa Singer to put on a completely sung-through show written by Jason Robert Brown. We performed *The Last Five Years* in November 2017, and the performance was a huge success.

This semester, I am playing Bobby Strong in the Drama Department's production of *Urinetown*. This is my first Department show, and I can't wait to perform in more.

In January 2016, I was selected as a member of The Virginia Gentlemen a cappella group. As a musician and singer, this accomplishment was life-changing for me, and led to a popular YouTube video of my solo, "When We Were Young," by Adele. We average two to three gigs per week around Grounds, in the Charlottesville/Albemarle County community, and around the commonwealth of Virginia. In December 2017, the VGs were flown to Asbury Park, New Jersey, where we performed our rendition of Dion's "Runaround Sue" for a PBS Special "Doo Wop Generations." I performed the solo, and the song will be airing on March 3, 2018 on PBS.

I joined Arts Scholars last May, and have been an active member. I have taken both the fall and spring seminars (CASS 1010, 1011), and have always been engaged and energetic in class. I plan to continue to take the seminar if my schedule permits.

TALENT PORTFOLIO

"The Schmuel Song" from *The Last Five Years* by Jason Robert Brown:

<https://youtu.be/EjwnMGzZgnI>