

Maxwell Mitchell
Miller Arts Scholar, Music
March 20th, 2025
Arts Scholar Fourth-Year Award Application

Los Angeles Music Production Studio Internship

Summary:

I will go to Los Angeles for two months this summer to complete an internship with the production studio The Monsters & Strangerz. Through this internship, I would gain hands-on experience in a professional music studio environment. This would be an incredible opportunity for me to make industry connections and watch from professional producers to bolster my own production skills. Importantly, this experience would be integral in equipping me with adequate skills to complete my proposed DMP project, for which I am planning on spending the next school year writing and producing a full-length album. Since the position is unpaid, I am requesting the full \$3000 to assist in covering groceries, housing, gasoline, and any other general living costs.

Background:

I started playing guitar when I was 8 years old, and almost immediately began using it to write my own songs. I had a zeal for songwriting and music in general, and continued playing and writing throughout middle and high school. It wasn't until 2020 that I began wanting to record and polish my sound, and started learning more about music production. I quickly fell in love with the combination of technical knowledge and artistry involved with production, and since then, that has taken over as my primary musical focus. In January, I recently released my fourth album, all entirely self-written and produced.

Since coming to UVA, I have taken every opportunity available to grow my skills as a music producer. I have taken "Intro to Music and Computers," and am currently enrolled in "Sound Studio," in which I am learning about the nitty-gritty side of audio engineering and production, and have fully enjoyed both classes.

On top of this, this past winter break, I was able to receive funding from the Cavalier Fund to accompany Professor JoVia Armstrong to Detroit, where I sat in on three studio sessions with her band as they recorded their new album. This experience was vital to my development as a producer, mainly in showing me that there is so much within the world of professional music production that I still do not know that is difficult to teach in a classroom setting.

I am extremely passionate about producing, and believe strongly that with the right experience and connections, I could make a full time career out of music production.

Opportunity Overview:

Recently, I was introduced through a friend to an assistant studio manager at The Monsters and Strangerz studio in Sherman Oaks, CA. The Monsters and Strangerz are a production and songwriting team who have written and produced for pop artists like Justin Bieber, Maroon 5, Dua Lipa, Katy Perry, and many more. He offered me the chance to spend 2 days a week for two months this summer with him at the studio as an intern. My primary role would be providing general studio assistance as needed, whether that be setting up microphones and equipment for recording sessions, helping with A&R research and accounting, or maintaining a tidy and organized studio environment for all sessions. I was ecstatic to be offered this, since this is exactly the type of opportunity that I believe would allow me to more deeply understand the techniques used by producers of commercial music and why they work. It also gives me the chance to network with many people in the industry and make important connections within a business that is dominated by networking.

I plan on doing weekly check-ins with my mentor, Ted Coffey, to describe what I did and learned that week at the studio. Professor Coffey works particularly well as my mentor for this project, since he is also my proposed advisor for my DMP, and would be able to offer my constructive advice on how to apply the things that I will be learning this summer towards that endeavor next fall. As for the final outcome of the project, I will complete a written summary of my experience with the skills I learned and the people I met. Additionally, I believe that my growth as an artist and producer will be evident in my subsequent DMP album that I plan on starting directly after this internship.

The main downside is that the position is unpaid. If I were to receive funding from Miller Arts, I would be able to use it to cover housing costs, groceries, and gasoline, as well as any other general living costs that I incur while there. I truly believe this has the potential to be a one of a kind experience, and I don't want money to be the only thing that stops me from developing as an artist and musician. I would be incredibly grateful to Miller Arts for providing me with the funding to pursue this passion and take the next step towards the dream that I have been working on since I first picked up a guitar 13 years ago.

Project Timeline:

May 2025 - June 2025

- Spend 2 months in LA working at The Monsters and Strangerz studio
- Gain hands-on studio and production experience
- Use the professional studio to practice techniques and work on some original music

August 2025 - May 2025

- Use the skills and techniques learned over the summer to complete DMP album

Budget:

Item	Cost
<p>AirBnb Housing https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/1340166642897362675?location=Sherman%20Oaks%2C%20CA&search_mode=regular_search&adults=1&check_in=2025-05-20&check_out=2025-07-20&children=0&infants=0&pets=0&source_impression_id=p3_1742478170_P32RiN5WiMUT4ADc&previous_page_section_name=1001&federated_search_id=762d2655-4f12-46d0-a3aa-1dafaefdc3a2</p>	\$832/mo for 2 months = \$1,664
<p>Groceries</p> <p>On average, a single person in Los Angeles can expect to spend between \$300 and \$400 per month on groceries. </p> <p>https://housinganywhere.com/Los-Angeles--United-States/cost-of-living-in-los-angeles</p>	\$300/mo for 2 months = \$600
<p>Gasoline</p> <p>In Los Angeles, the cost of gasoline for one person for a month can vary significantly depending on driving habits and car type, but expect to spend roughly \$200 to \$300 or more. </p> <p>https://housinganywhere.com/Los-Angeles--United-States/cost-of-living-in-los-angeles</p>	\$200/mo for 2 months = \$400
<p>Entertainment, eating out</p> <p>https://housinganywhere.com/Los-Angeles--United-States/cost-of-living-in-los-angeles</p>	\$300/mo for 2 months = \$600
<p>Total</p>	\$3264 (\$3000 from Miller Arts, \$264 paid for by me)

Participation in the Arts at UVA

- Music Major
- [Spotify Artist Profile](#)
- [Rock Band \(Krispies\) Instagram Account](#)
- Arts and Entertainment Staff Writer for the Cavalier Daily

Portfolio Examples:

- [Sedimentary Man](#)
- [A Millennium](#)