

Fall 2022 Minigrant Proposal

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Recording for Experience, Expression, and Evolution

The past couple of years, I have become increasingly attracted to the idea of being able to record and produce my own music. I have a great deal of experience singing under my belt, and being in a-cappella for the last 5 years has given me additional experience in arranging for and recording voice. The most recent example of this experience is my leadership position in the New Dominions, a student-led a cappella group at UVA. We are releasing an album later this fall, and as Music Director, I have been in frequent contact with our producer, James Gammon, and I've spent many hours in the recording studio directing my co-members as well as learning techniques and skills to make such an album.

I have also been learning and experimenting with producing myself, ever since I enrolled in Composing Mixtapes, where I composed and co-produced 2 songs in our album, "I Like It" and "ANSWER THE PHONE!" The links to each are included below. For the latter, I decided to try and record my own voice, and while I am not the most experienced lyricist, I greatly enjoyed recording myself singing intricate lines that I composed myself. This semester, I am continuing in my journey of composition, as I am currently enrolled in Intro to Computer Music and Technosonics, where I am learning more about the role of electronics in composition as well as production techniques to improve the sound of my songs. While I have a lot of fun recording my voice and random objects through my phone, the quality of an iPhone microphone leaves much to be desired. For this and many other reasons, I am requesting a minigrant from the Miller Arts Scholars in order to purchase a quality microphone and audio interface.

One of the main reasons I am requesting this grant is to further my experience in sound mixing and production. One of my dream career paths is to become a producer or professional arranger, and in order to do that, I need experience mixing voices. As of now, I have very little experience in this area, and most of my knowledge comes from listening to other people's production techniques or from watching YouTube. Acquiring a microphone and audio interface would allow me to get hands-on experience in vocal production, therefore the project that I am proposing is called "Recording for Experience, Expression, and Evolution."

I plan on fully recording and producing my own song, using the equipment I already have (my Computer, a MIDI controller, and Ableton Intro) but in order to truly get vocal production experience I would need a quality microphone to sing into, and an audio interface to record it to my computer. I plan on finishing this project before the school year ends, and hopefully I will have most of my recording done well before spring break, and I will spend the next months honing my mixing and mastering skills on the vocal tracks that I have recorded. While this one project may not seem like much, the experience I gain from it will be vital not only for this project but for projects in the future and many other subjects.

Sound equipment is notoriously expensive, however it can be incredibly useful once purchased. I would be able to use my microphone not only to record myself singing for compositions, but also for my voice lessons, as I am currently working with Pamela Beasley

through Zoom. We have discussed the possibility of me getting a microphone setup so that Professor Beasley can better hear the details of my voice to offer advice and critiques that she normally would be unable to discern. I would also be able to use this microphone to record a cappella arrangements myself, allowing me to hear how my arrangements will sound even before I present them to my group. This would let me further edit and improve my arrangements – which would give me experience in another potential exciting career path for me.

Budget:

- Audio Technica AT4040 microphone: \$250
- Focusrite Scarlett 2i2 audio interface: \$180
- Total: \$430

Links:

- https://soundcloud.com/raplabuva/i-like-it?in=raplabuva/sets/1-800-mixtape&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing
- https://soundcloud.com/raplabuva/answer-the-phone-interlude?in=raplabuva/sets/1-800-mixtape&utm_source=clipboard&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=social_sharing