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Class of 2023
Miller Arts Scholars

Enhancing the Viola Sound Outcome Report

I am extremely thankful to the Miller Arts Scholar Program for granting me the funding to purchase a higher-quality bow for my upcoming Distinguished Major Project fourth-year recital this Spring of 2023. With this Arts Award funding, I have been able to further develop my sound on the viola in preparation for the recital while also investing in a long-term bow that will stay with me for the rest of my musical career. I had previously been using a bow that I purchased in middle school, which did not match the college-level caliber and advanced sound of my current viola. However, I will now be using this new bow for my April recital and onwards.

My faculty member for this Arts Award Project was Professor Daniel Sender, an associate professor in the McIntire Department of Music performance faculty and concertmaster of the Charlottesville Symphony. I began studying with Professor Sender during the spring of my third year and he is currently the chamber coach for my current string quartet and octet. He has significantly helped me improve both my technical and musical skills on viola and has pushed me to explore new perspectives in musical performance. His insight and advice have guided me through the process of selecting repertoire for my recital, understanding how to practice more effectively, and he has led me to new ways of approaching music altogether. I was further inspired to purchase this new bow to keep up my playing as a Distinguished Music Major and Performance Concentration student.

With the Miller Arts Scholars Arts Award Funding, I was able to try out various bows over this past summer at different shops, including Potter Violins and The Violin House of Weaver. Ultimately, after multiple trips and test sessions, I ended up choosing a Brazilian Pernambuco wood bow from The Violin House of Weaver in Maryland. The full amount I requested from Miller Arts helped to cover this and I paid the additional difference out of pocket. I went with this bow because it was able to draw the most rich, rounded, and voluminous sound from my viola. It has a more complex tone quality and an ease with executing certain techniques which my previous bow did not have. Additionally, it was easier to control than other bows I had found but not too heavy that it became a weight burden. My other bow option that I was considering was an ivory bow that was able to draw the same volume level, but was very heavy and difficult to control at times. This bow was the closest match for executing my musical ideas when I ran through my recital pieces and overall felt the most suited to my viola.

During the summer, I also played in a chamber group with violinist, Alex Taing, fellow Miller Arts Scholar, Britney Cheung, and former Scholar, Brent Davis, in a string quartet. We played Samuel Barber's String Quartet in B minor, Op. 11 and Bedřich Smetana's String Quartet No. 1. During this bow selection process, I was able to test out this Brazilian Pernambuco bow while playing my part in our pieces. This bow not only gave me the power of volume but also a balanced textural quality that accommodated chamber music dynamics. For example, the Smetana quartet opens with a large viola solo that requires a heavy and lush tone. My bow was able to draw this type of sound out smoothly and did not feel difficult or forced in any way. I was

able to put this musical idea into practice very easily. This indicated that my bow would be excellent for both solo performance and chamber or orchestral music as well. I felt inspired and had more productive practice sessions with this bow. During practice sessions for both chamber music and my recital this April, I could practice and carry out my musical ideas more thoughtfully and intentionally.

I cannot thank the Miller Arts Scholar Program enough for providing me the funding for this high-quality bow and for supporting my musical goals. This bow will help me for the rest of my time at UVA and assist me in my journey to continuously improve and grow as a viola player even after graduation.

Budget Breakdown:

Item	Price	Quantity	Total
Viola Bow	\$3,500	1	
Miller Arts Award Funding			\$3,000.00
Out-of-Pocket Funding			\$500.00
Total			\$3,500.00

Pictures:



YouTube link to recording of summer chamber group:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sPmMAZfLaZw&ab_channel=gwuphd