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College of Arts and Sciences, Class of 2023

Miller Arts Scholars Minigrant Application Fall 2021

### ***Memoirs of a Foreign Face***

Six years ago I began my upper school years living in Athens, Greece, when I decided that I wanted to make music for the rest of my life. Having moved many times, the one constant that kept me motivated through many challenging and testing times was the support I found in the music by my favourite artists. I absolutely loved electronic music at the time, and with a budding lifelong interest in computers I found my path into exploring electronic music from the perspective of the one who makes it; as a music producer. It was then that I took any and every step to learn everything I could about music, how it was made and how I could replicate my musical idols at the time, including Avicii, Kygo, Flume, Illenium, to name a few. This learning often took the form of innumerable YouTube videos I would analyse in place of doing my homework. With the autodidactic skills I curated, I built a foundation for myself that allowed me to excel when I continued my exploration here at the University of Virginia.

I came to UVA eager to take my understanding of music to a new level. I immediately took MUSI 3390 (*Introduction to Music and Computers*) with Leah Reid, and subsequently MUSI 4582 (*Composition II*), I became fascinated with sound design and generative synthesis. Yet no matter how much I tinkered and experimented with virtual synthesisers (in my DAW, VCVRack, etc.), I never felt satisfied as a creator. The interactivity of a physical connection to the sound is what I lacked. I am a DJ and classically trained cellist, and that interactivity is as vital in either of those fields as it is for me as a producer. Unfortunately I am stunted by financial barriers. Ever since moving to the USA, I've spent much of my free time going to music stores like Guitar Center to be able to explore the depth of creative ability in hardware synthesisers, and I now very much desire to use one to realise my ultimate lifelong creative dream: produce an album, entitled *Memoirs of a Foreign Face*. Through this album of music I will be able to finally express the lifetime's worth of emotions that I never had the words to do so in the past.

I want to be able to express myself through music and allow my work to help others through hard times in the same way that my favourite music has done for me all my life. This is the motivating force behind all of my creative work. For this reason, I am applying for the Miller Arts Scholar Minigrant for the funding to purchase the following 2 items, both of which amount to the allotted \$500 minigrant:

1. 'MicroFreak' Experimental Hybrid Synthesiser by Arturia
2. Portal Granular Synthesis plugin by Output

I intend to create my entire album by the end of 2022 (one year from now), and am very confident that with this equipment I will certainly be able to do so. With the MicroFreak I will be able to exponentially expand the boundaries of what is possible for me as a producer given the synthesis capabilities of the machine. With the virtual granular effect Portal plugin I will be able to create new effects for my sounds and curate a unique sound of my own through novel production techniques that Portal would enable me. This is particularly important for me, as Logic (my current DAW of choice) does not have a good granular synthesis plugin.

### Budget breakdown

Item	Price (\$)	Link
'MicroFreak' Experimental Hybrid Synthesiser by Arturia	349	<a href="https://www.arturia.com/products/hardware-synths/microfreak/overview">https://www.arturia.com/products/hardware-synths/microfreak/overview</a>
Portal granular synthesis plugin by Output	149	<a href="https://output.com/products/portal?campaignid=13387937471&amp;adgroupid=126088336747&amp;adid=525831536605&amp;utm_medium=cpc&amp;utm_source=google&amp;utm_campaign=13387937471&amp;keyword=output%20portal&amp;gclid=CjwKCAjw2P-KBhByEiwADBYWCsGEqOeNhHdjE540Aa-fRUpjMUq6pLk82s6TxuTe_LcrX-IBAcXgxoCMNoQAvD_BwE">https://output.com/products/portal?campaignid=13387937471&amp;adgroupid=126088336747&amp;adid=525831536605&amp;utm_medium=cpc&amp;utm_source=google&amp;utm_campaign=13387937471&amp;keyword=output%20portal&amp;gclid=CjwKCAjw2P-KBhByEiwADBYWCsGEqOeNhHdjE540Aa-fRUpjMUq6pLk82s6TxuTe_LcrX-IBAcXgxoCMNoQAvD_BwE</a>