

Connor Noble, *cpn8ftn*  
College of Arts and Sciences, Class of 2023  
Miller Arts Scholars Arts Award Proposal, Spring 2022

### Project Overview Narrative

#### **PROJECT TITLE**

The Last Left Behind

#### **FACULTY MENTOR**

Matthew Burtner  
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#### **PROPOSAL**

Ever since I was little, the ocean has been a close companion in my life. Having moved frequently around the world growing up, I have been fortunate to be able to experience the beauty of the ocean from western Pacific Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea. At the age of 12, I earned my scuba diving certification whilst in the Philippines, and ever since have had a different perspective on the environment. Since coming to UVA, I've been challenged to think about music more critically than I ever have before. As a result, I have been able to explore larger human concepts multiple times through electroacoustic composition over the past 5 semesters within the university's music department. This semester, I've been learning under the tutelage of Matthew Burtner as to ecoacoustic compositional techniques and the many ways in which music can be used as a tool for political and social change. This class has been an incredible boost of motivation for this proposal. Now, as an Arts Scholar, I want to undertake the largest musical compositional effort I have ever done thus far, and build upon all of my learning to sonically investigate both the beauty of the ocean and the destruction of aquatic ecosystems in creative ways through a surround sound musical work. This fits perfectly with my upcoming summer plans to move to New York for an internship, where I hope to be able to source many of my field recordings of an industrial context.

#### **DESCRIPTION**

Contemporary music production, specifically the type of work that my project entails, is not possible without the use of a digital audio workstation (DAW). A mobile DAW that can handle the tasks necessary to complete this project is absolutely essential. For this reason, I am applying for funding for a powerful laptop with both the mobility and improved computational power to make this project feasible, and a high-fidelity field recorder to perform the field recordings. To source my audio, I will be conducting field recordings using the H5 Recorder (see below) in various locations across the East Coast, including New York City and various locations in Virginia, Washington D.C., Maryland and South Carolina. The goal of this project is to create an incredibly immersive and powerful musical experience that explores the beauty of the ocean and the destructive interaction between human life and aquatic ecosystems as a result of persistent industrialisation. I aim to complete this piece in Spring 2023, and to submit it for performance in the Digitalis concert in Spring 2023.

## LIMITATIONS

I have attempted to create smaller-scale surround sound installations in the past, but the main obstacle has been computational ability, both on my own system and in the VCCM machines in the music department. My current computer workstation struggles greatly with the power and simultaneous processing that is an essential part of the multi-track recording and surround sound composition work that makes up my creative workflow, frequently crashing and leaving me unable to save my work as I progress. Although the newest machines in the VCCM have more power to accommodate, they fail to support a key part of my project needs: portability. I will largely be working on this piece this upcoming summer where I will be in New York City and unable to access the VCCM to work on this piece. Furthermore, I currently use a UVA department-owned rental field recorder for the field recordings in my current works, but having my own will allow me to explore in more of my own free time outside of university operating hours.

## OBJECTIVES

- Improve with field recording techniques
  - Experiment with underwater recording methods and tools
- Freely compose without the restriction of a fixed workstation location
- Develop myself as a composer altogether, especially in the surround sound space
- Curate an immersive listening experience to motivate positive social change

## TIMELINE

**Apr 1, 2022**

Arts Award proposal submitted

**May 1, 2022** (*approx*)

Funding received, items purchased

**May 9, 2022** (*approx*)

Field recording begins

**Jul 1, 2022** (*approx*)

Composition begins with current field recordings, further field recording continues

**Apr 1, 2023** (*approx*)

Project outcome report completed

**May 1, 2023** (*approx*)

Digitalis performance of the piece

**BUDGET BREAKDOWN**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Apple Macbook Pro</b> 16-inch computer, with M1 Max chip with 10-core CPU, 32-core GPU, and 16-core Neural Engine	\$3899.00	64GB unified memory 1TB SSD storage 16-inch Liquid Retina XDR display Three Thunderbolt 4 ports, HDMI port, SDXC card slot, MagSafe 3 port 140W USB-C Power Adapter Backlit Magic Keyboard with Touch ID - US English
Zoom H5 Field Recorder	279.99 (\$20 discount)	Multi-track high fidelity field recorder to be used to source high quality field recordings
<b>Total (tax not included):</b>	<b>\$4178.99</b>	

*\* sales tax and product cost surplus (\$1178.00) is to be covered by me separately*