

**Project Title:** Theatre of the Oppressed Performance for Distinguished Majors Thesis**Introduction:**

As a fourth year student in the interdisciplinary arts administration program I am required to complete a forty-page distinguished major thesis at the culmination of my undergraduate career. Many students in the program choose to embark on arts based research projects. I have long been interested in how the creative arts interact with social justice. Thanks to previous funding from the Miller Arts Scholars, I got to explore this interaction through training in the methodology of Theatre of the Oppressed. Since that time, I have conducted workshops with middle, high school, college, and adult populations introducing them to the methodology. Now, I want to take things a step further. For my thesis project I will synthesize my theatre, administration, and education skills to work with high school students in Charlottesville to create a Forum Theatre performance utilizing the methodology of Theatre of the Oppressed.

**Project Purpose:**

The purpose of this project is to introduce local high school students to the methodology of Theatre of the Oppressed with the hopes that they can use it as a tool for promoting social justice in their successive theatre work. It is important to me that the issues that the students explore through their theatre work are entirely student initiated, in order to cultivate agency and encourage identity exploration. Additionally, by inviting students from three different schools together to create a theatre piece, I hope to provide a context in which new relationships can form and community can be built around working towards social justice.

**Work Plan:**

My project will contain three main parts. First, I will conduct Theatre of the Oppressed workshops in three different high schools in Charlottesville introducing students to Theatre of the Oppressed. Following these workshops, I will audition students to form a troupe of twelve actors who will participate in a daylong intensive, culminating in a Forum theatre piece to be presented to the public. Finally, I will document the process of creating the piece and the outcomes it presents in a forty-page final thesis paper. For more detailed information, see attached Timeline for Completion.

**Nature of Research and Need for Support:**

The research I am conducting will be multidisciplinary drawing on skills from performance studies, ethnography, administration, and theatre arts. I will serve in the role of producer, stage manager, and director for the theatre piece that the students create. Additionally, I will work as a teacher to pass on my knowledge of Theatre of the Oppressed to the students. The beauty of Theatre of the Oppressed is that it is devised theatre, so there is no need to purchase rights to a show. Additionally, sets, costumes, lights and sound can be fairly minimal. Therefore, my biggest administrative concern is securing a space. After some thought I have decided to utilize the black box at the Piedmont Virginia Community College. I came to this conclusion because I want to host the performance in a relatively intimate space. Additionally, I

do not want to privilege one high school's performance space over the others. I am seeking funding from the Miller Arts Scholars to help partially cover the cost of renting this space. The remaining costs, as well as other costs associated with the production of this piece, will be covered through a grant that the Arts Administration program has secured to support its students in their thesis process (see attached budget for more details).

**Evaluation and Expected Outcomes:**

I will evaluate the impact of my project through surveying both the audience and the student participants. Surveys will measure self-reported inclinations towards social justice activities before and after participating in the Theatre of the Oppressed project. Although the scope of this project does not allow for longitudinal study, it is my expectation that students and audience members will come away from the project with a renewed sense of community and a better understanding of what social justice means to them. Additionally, a forty-page written account of the project will be produced which will enable future theatre practitioners to see what was and was not effective about employing Theatre of the Oppressed with Charlottesville high school youth.

Miller Arts Scholars Mini Grant  
Grant Application Budget

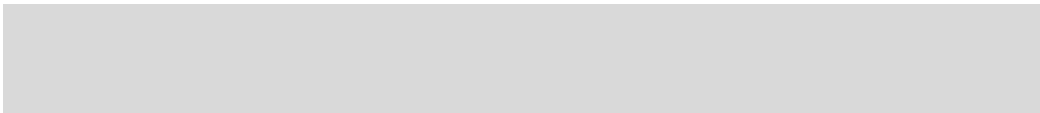
**Project Name: Theatre of the Oppressed Performance (Distinguished Majors Thesis)**

**Contact's Name: Emily Schmid**

**Contact's email address: ees4fc@virginia.edu**

**Total amount requested from Miller Arts Scholars : \$500**

<b>Item Description:</b>	<b>Anticipated Cost:</b>	<b>Amount Funded By Another Source:</b>	<b>Type of other Funding Source (e.g., Student Activities Fees, etc.):</b>
Refreshments for Workshops	\$60.00	\$60.00	Arts Admin
Black Box Space Rental for Final Performance at PVCC	\$700.00	\$200	Arts Admin
Publicity for Final Performance	\$70.00	\$70	Arts Admin
Costumes	\$50.00	\$50	Arts Admin
Props	\$50.00	\$50	Arts Admin
Thesis Printing and Binding	\$40.00	\$40	Arts Admin
Poster Presentation Materials	\$30.00	\$30	Arts Admin
<b>TOTAL Cost</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>		
<b>Total amount funded by other sources</b>		<b>\$500.00</b>	
<b>Total amount requested from Miller Arts Scholars</b>		<b>\$500.00</b>	



**Timeline for Completion:**

October 2018

- Collect sources and begin research on previous uses of Theatre of the Oppressed
- Complete a draft of the thesis proposal
- Start an annotated bibliography
- Reach out to high school teachers at Monticello, Albemarle, and Charlottesville high schools about conducting a workshop at their schools
- Begin conducting ethnographic research by interviewing teachers and students about social justice issues present in their schools

November 2018

- Conduct Theatre of the Oppressed workshops in the three selected high schools
- Create audition save the date cards to give to students at the end of the workshops
- Draft a literature review
- Finalize the annotated bibliography
- Secure the Piedmont Virginia Community College blackbox for the final daylong performance intensive in February

December 2018

- Write reflections from each of the workshops to serve as data for the thesis paper
- Audition students from each high school and select a group of twelve individuals to serve as the troupe for the daylong performance intensive

January 2019

- Create a marketing plan and begin advertising for the Theatre of the Oppressed performance in February
- Finalize the draft of the literature review
- Complete an outline for the final thesis paper

February 2019

- Send out personalized invitations to the families of the students participating in the daylong performance intensive
- Facilitate the creation of a performance in the style of Theatre of the Oppressed

March 2019

- Work with my three thesis advisors to write, edit, and revise the thesis paper

April 2019

- Turn in written copy of the Distinguished Majors Program thesis paper to each of the three advisors

May 2019

- Present outcome report at the Miller Arts Scholars grant presentations
- Present oral report of the thesis work at the end of year Arts Administration gathering