



Grant Application

COMPONENT : Explore and Create - Research and Creation

APPLICATION NAME :

APPLICATION ID :

FILE NUMBER :

PROFILE : Music and Sound - Composer or Sound Creator

APPLICATION STATUS : Successful

DEADLINE : Apply Any Time

DATE SUBMITTED :

1. Grant Description

1.1 Name of Application (approximately 10 words, 65 characters)

The name you provide is for your reference and will identify this grant application in your dashboard

[REDACTED]

1.2 If this application is for restarting or continuing a project that was interrupted because of COVID-19, and the project was supported by a previous Canada Council grant, please provide the following information: (approximately 100 words, 650 characters)

- The file number of the previous grant. You will find the application in the Application History section of your portal. The file number has this format: #####-##-#####.
- If you cannot find the file number, indicate the approximate date you submitted the application.
- Briefly describe what costs (if any) were paid using the previous grant. Do not include these costs in this application and do not include the previously awarded grant amount.

1.3 For groups and organizations, provide the name of the contact person responsible for this application.

1.4 Project start date

This date must be after the date you submit your application.

: 06/01/2021

1.5 Project end date

: 01/31/2022

[REDACTED]

1.6 What art form(s), style(s), genre(s) and/or expression(s) are most relevant to this application? (approximately 25 words, 150 characters)

Some examples include: hip hop, experimental music, theatre for young audiences, poetry, graphic novel, throat singing, documentary film, fine craft, new media, circus aerial acrobatics, transdisciplinary arts, Deaf theatre.

This information helps the Canada Council collect examples of art forms and practices in Canada and will not be used for assessing your application.

New opera, LGBTQ+ stories, female composer, female librettist

1.7 Describe your project. Explain the inspiration for your project or why you wish to undertake it at this time. (approximately 750 words, 5000 characters)

Include information on the key artists you will be working with, if applicable.

Saskatoon librettist ██████████ and I have begun working towards our third operatic collaboration, “██████████ ██████████” (known herein as ██████). Thanks to the ██████ Independent Artists Grant, ██████ will be writing this new libretto from November 2020 – May 2021. I would like to apply for a grant to begin writing the music for ██████ starting June 2021.

Nox will follow the story of Orpheus and Eurydice fairly closely to Ovid’s telling in “The Metamorphosis” but with some key differences – the protagonists Orpheus and Eurydice will be queer women, the action will take place in a modern gay bar called The Naiad, and the bar will be attacked by a homophobic gunman, Hades.

██████████ is a librettist and writer based out of ██████████. Her move into libretti writing came after working for ten years as a super-titleist, and her former career as a double bassist. She has created original super-titles for Saskatoon Opera, Opera Kelowna, and Musique 3 Femmes. Her musical practice and experience working deeply with opera texts are part of what make her such a phenomenal librettist. ██████████ holds a Bachelor of Arts in Women’s and Gender Studies from ██████████ ██████████

As female opera creators, both ██████████ and I are aware of how the genre of opera is full of women written by men in generations past, and thus does not always correctly or fairly represent the lives and experiences of contemporary women. ██████████ as a queer artist, also wants to give a voice to queer women, who are rarely properly represented. ██████████ writes “‘Kill your gays’ is a common historical and present trope; but if we are to die tragically while being portrayed, let it be us who portray us and hasten our deaths. The goal is to portray a modern couple on the same love-and-death timeline as most operas do, but within the scope of modern characters and queer spaces.” ██████████ is an exciting storyteller and truth-teller, and I am thrilled to be working with her on this project.

For this project, I will be writing music for a fully realized libretto. In our past collaborations, I’ve had story ideas that ██████████ has written libretti for and thus the writing process has been very piece-meal. With ██████████ however, the story is entirely her idea and she will be fully fleshing out the libretto before I start writing music for it.

As it stands, the opera score will be written for piano only; as for the singer types, I won’t be able to determine that until I get to know the characters. I find that different vocal ranges suit certain characters more than others, and the different timbres available inside those ranges can be more indicative of particular emotions. However, ██████████ does want to keep to the cast mostly female, minus of course, Hades.

██████████ ██████████

Earlier this year I worked on a '██████████' project with the ██████████ Symphony Orchestra (SSO) and Toronto-based ensemble ██████████. The character I was writing for was a queer woman. My hope was to infuse some queer culture into my reimagined aria, so I did a little research into contemporary queer music – in fact, ██████████ gave me a playlist of songs that she loved! Unfortunately, I was not able to get the infusion into the music that I was looking for. What I did find, however, was this sense of strength from solidarity, and that confidence found its way into my portrayal of this character. For ██████████ I would like to continue this research into queer artists – particularly composers and singer-songwriters. With the operatic action taking place in a queer bar, I would truly like to marry my classical tendencies with the spirit of queer music in order to add to that feeling of safety and solidarity in queer spaces.

In June 2020, Executive Director of ██████████ ██████████ approached me about teaching an online class about female composers that would run September – October 2020. The course, ██████████ has been reaching audiences globally. There are presently about 1200 people signed up for the course, and there are participants from 20 different countries! The research into the lives and music of these women has been so enriching, and I feel a much deeper connection to these women. Their tenacity and bravery in a world designed against them is remarkable. As a result of this class, I feel more empowered to continue representing marginalized voices. Progressing into work on ██████████ in June 2021 feels like the most natural course to me.

Nox is about bringing queer stories front and centre. Violence against the queer community is still very real; love stories between queer women are often looked on with disdain. These stories deserve to be told and treated with respect, and I think opera is a perfect genre to do it in.

1.8 Briefly outline your project plan, including timeline. (approximately 250 words, 1700 characters) Identify key steps and the dates for their completion.

For the first month of the project, I will take time to study ██████████'s libretto, research queer music, and study the music of "Les Perapluies de Cherbourg" (music by Michel Legrand, with Stéphane Grappelli), which in our meetings ██████████ has referenced as a source of inspiration. During the study of the libretto, I will be able to identify the vocal ranges for each character, and start getting ideas for the flow of the opera – such as key arias, and story arc pieces.

Then in July 2021, I will begin writing the music. Throughout this process, I will have meetings with ██████████ to ask questions and receive feedback. I will also spend some time in the Fall of 2021 taking virtual composition lessons with Iranian-American composer ██████████ and getting her feedback on the work. ██████████'s vocal music beautifully conveys the feelings and experiences of her characters. Her music seeks to express the influence of events on individuals as opposed to expressing her own feelings about an event. Her knowledge and experience will help me to develop in these areas as a composer.

In October 2021, I will organize a small reading session of any completed arias or portions of the opera. This will give me a concrete deadline to work towards. This will also give ██████████ and me a sense of how the opera is working or not working and will be a key component in developing the opera. The artists we involve will be paid according to music union rates.

My goal will be to have a completed first draft of the opera by January 2022.

1.9 How will this project: (approximately 500 words, 3500 characters)

- contribute to your, or your group's, artistic development?

██████████ ██████████ ██████████

- advance artistic practice?

Consider the following questions, as applicable: What types of artistic risks will you be taking? Are you exploring a traditional artistic practice in a new way? Will you be using technology or a venue in an innovative way? Does the project involve other areas of artistic exploration or innovation?

Nox will be my third collaboration with [REDACTED]. Our first collaboration, "[REDACTED]" for the [REDACTED] Festival of New Music, was a great introduction to each other's working processes. We got to know each other's creative voices and then see how their combination translated on stage from a fully-staged production by Little Opera on the Prairie in June 2017. From this point on, we knew that we wanted to continue collaborating with one another.

Our second collaboration, "[REDACTED]", was a winner of the inaugural Prix 3 Femmes (English language) from [REDACTED] [REDACTED] in 2018. It demonstrated a massive leap forward career-wise for [REDACTED] and me. We attended the "Opera Changing Worlds" conference by opera.ca at McGill University in September 2018, where a portion of our developing work was performed by soprani [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and collaborative pianist and coach [REDACTED]. This workshop began changing the way we thought about and wrote opera, and we started to see a stronger collaborative relationship form. After completing the full draft, we went for a week of rehearsals and workshopping with [REDACTED] soprano [REDACTED] mezzo-soprano [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], Juno-nominated composer [REDACTED] and two-time Governor General award-winning playwright [REDACTED] in March 2019. The Toronto phase culminated in a performance of the complete work at [REDACTED] Opera, directed by [REDACTED] to a sold-out house at [REDACTED]. "[REDACTED]" has since been performed in [REDACTED] ON, and [REDACTED] QC.

One of the biggest changes for us is that [REDACTED] will be our first serious opera. Both "[REDACTED]" and "[REDACTED]" were comic operas. With comedy, the musical writing can be more sarcastic and over-the-top, which I find very natural. However, serious operas require authentic emotions, which I feel require a more subtle and nuanced musical touch. That will be a challenge for me. In order to help guide me in this writing, I will be working with [REDACTED] who I will be taking lessons with.

This project will also challenge me with writing longer forms. Our first two operas were short in length – approximately 20 minutes in duration. At this point in time, [REDACTED] hopes that [REDACTED] will be a one hour production. In order for the hour-long opera to be cohesive, I will need to work with integrating themes and motives throughout the whole opera, which I have certainly struggled with in the past. I will need to be much more cognizant of pacing and dramaturgy. I will also be writing for a larger vocal ensemble, which means I will have more characters to develop musically and uniquely. What is also exciting is that I will finally get to write for a male voice. All vocal works I have written thus far have been for a woman's voice. One challenge I will have with writing for a male voice is that I have no personal reference for how a man's voice sits physically in the body and how the different breaks in the vocal range feel and transition (whereas with a woman's voice, I naturally have that experience and reference). Nox will further and greatly improve my opera composing skills to heights I will never have imagined.

1.10 If you are hiring artists, explain how you determine the fees to be paid. (approximately 250 words, 1700 characters)

If you are hiring artists, you must pay professional artist fees. This may be governed by industry standards or union rates.

For the lessons with [REDACTED] I will be paying \$60 USD per lesson as discussed with the composer.

For the workshop in October 2021, artists will be paid according to union rates in the [REDACTED] Music Union at \$130 per session per person.

[REDACTED]

1.11 If applicable, how will you ensure safe working conditions for those involved in this project? (approximately 100 words, 650 characters)

1.12 If your proposed activity touches upon Indigenous traditional knowledge, linguistic or cultural intellectual property, please describe your relationship to this content and how appropriate protocols are/will be observed or addressed. (approximately 100 words, 650 characters)

1.13 If you were selected to participate in a residency, describe how the residency will contribute to the successful completion of your project. Also describe the registration process, the selection process and whether or not you have been officially accepted. (approximately 250 words, 1700 characters)

1.14 If there is anything that has not been asked that is essential to understanding your application, provide it here. (approximately 250 words, 1700 characters)

You may wish to explain specific requirements related to your artistic practice or the regional context in which you work, for example.

Do not use this space to provide additional information related to earlier questions.

Throughout the libretto-writing process, [REDACTED] will be having consultations with author and former Writer in Residence to the [REDACTED] Public Library, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is an accomplished opera singer with a wide knowledge of the mechanics and schematics of repertory opera, as well as an excellent writer and developer of worlds.

The end goal for [REDACTED] is to be offered as a standalone, full-length work, or as a companion piece to '[REDACTED]', our first opera collaboration. '[REDACTED]' is a comic short opera about two singers on the rehearsal stage of a classical production of Orpheus and Eurydice; it is about professional ego versus experience in the opera world and hoisting oneself on one's own petard... to death. One clear goal of [REDACTED] is to contextualize and provide contrast between how the audience is ready to receive and accept Eurydice's death in '[REDACTED]' versus her death in '[REDACTED]'.

We have always aimed our work at younger singers and younger audiences, and we intend to keep aiming for companies and artists who appreciate fresh, new flavours from the opera world. We also aim at accessibility to audiences via cultural idiom and identifiable story arcs, because our primary goals are to offer quality, hearty entertainment and provocative plot choices.

1.15 Provide a one-sentence summary of your project. If possible, use the format ACTIVITY, EVENT (if relevant) and DATES. (approximately 25 words, 150 characters)

For example, "To research the history of Black communities in Cape Breton and write the first draft of a play from month/year to month/year".

This summary will be used in the Canada Council's official reporting.

To compose music for a new opera "[REDACTED]" (libretto by [REDACTED]) from June 2021-January 2022

1.16 If you have applied to a different component for overlapping activities or expenses, please indicate the component and submission date. (approximately 10 words, 65 characters)

1.17 If your project includes travel, a group activity, an in-person event and/or other gathering, describe what precautions you are taking to meet Government of Canada recommendations and public health guidelines. How could you modify your plans if

[REDACTED]

the project is impacted by COVID-19? (approximately 100 words, 650 characters)

2. Budget

Documents Uploaded: [HarderBudgetCCA2020.xlsx](#)

2.1 Grant amount requested

Up to \$25 000 per year, to a maximum of \$50 000 over 2 years (see below). Most grants are no more than \$25 000. Higher amounts are exceptionally awarded to projects that extend beyond 12 months. This amount must match the requested amount in your completed budget. Do not include expenses that are not eligible in this component. If successful, you might not be awarded the full amount requested.

: 12890

3. Required Documents

3.1 For residencies, attach a screenshot of a website page or a copy of a letter/email that indicates what the host or partner is providing to support your project.

3.2 If your project involves artistic collaborators, provide their biographies and an agreement or a letter/email that indicates confirmation of their participation. If your project involves community partners, provide a letter/email that indicates confirmation of their involvement.

Description	File
Letter of Intent from librettist [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Short biography of [REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

4. Support Material

4.1 You must submit at least 1 item of support material.

Year	Brief description	Password	Instructions for viewing	Upload file
2019	Opening aria from "[REDACTED]" second opera collaboration with [REDACTED] winner of [REDACTED] (English)			[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

2017	From ' [REDACTED] ' first operatic collaboration with [REDACTED] commissioned by [REDACTED]			[REDACTED]
2019	Music score for [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] recording is listed above.			[REDACTED]
2017	Music score for [REDACTED] from [REDACTED] recording is listed above			[REDACTED]

5. Submit Application

I confirm that:- I agree with the statements above- the statements in my application are complete and accurate, to the best of my knowledge.

Yes

5.1 Approximately how long did it take you to complete this application form?

more than 90 minutes