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**Lewis Center for the Arts awards over $152,000**

**for summer projects in the arts to 57 Princeton students**

PRINCETON, NJ – The Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton University announces more than $152,000 in awards to support the summer projects and research of 57 Princeton undergraduates. While all first, second, and third-year students are eligible to apply for the awards, for many recipients the funding provides vital resources to conduct research, undertake training, and pursue other opportunities critical to achieving their senior creative thesis project goals in the arts. The grants range from $160 to $7,500.

Rising seniors Kaelani Burja, Cassandra James, and Kakuyon Mataeh have been selected for the Alex Adam ’07 Award. Established in memory of Alexander Jay Adam ’07 and made possible through a generous gift from his family, the award provides each student with $7,500 to spend the summer pursuing a project that will result in the creation of new artistic work. While a student at Princeton, Alex Adam pursued artistic interests in creative writing and theater. Joyce Carol Oates, his creative writing professor, praised Adam’s work as “sharp-edged, unexpectedly corrosive, and very funny.” Additionally, Adam was an actor and performed with the Princeton Shakespeare Company, Theatre Intime, and the Program in Theater.

“We are extremely grateful to those who make it possible for Princeton students to pursue ‘passion projects’ in the arts over the summer months, many of which lay the groundwork for their creative theses,” said Michael Cadden, interim chair of the Lewis Center. “The family of Alex Adam '07, along with so many others, allow our young artists to do 24/7 deep dives into projects in a way that no academic semester can allow because of their multiple curricular and extracurricular commitments. More often than not, they return to campus with a deepened understanding of their arts and of themselves.”

**Kaelani Burja** is an anthropology major pursuing certificates from the Programs in Theater and Music Theater at the Lewis Center, as well as a certificate in Latino Studies and Latin American Studies who is passionate about expanding the classical theatrical canon and challenging traditional forms of theater-making. During her time at Princeton, Burja gained experience as an actor, stage manager, and theater scholar, but this summer she will explore other theatrical career paths such as directing, dramaturgy, and writing. With the help of the Alex Adam Award funding, Burja will spend the summer researching, observing, and participating in the production and development processes of various new plays in the tri-state area. She hopes to observe the rehearsal process of new Latiné works and works that center on previously excluded peoples. Burja will use this summer research to develop rehearsal strategies she can use as a director of an original senior thesis production at the Lewis Center in the 2022-23 academic year.

**Cassandra James**, majoring English and pursuing a certificate from the Program in Creative Writing from the Lewis Center, as well as certificates in theater and music theater, will use the Alex Adam Award funding to research and write a historically inspired, magical realistic novel centering on the stories of Hispanic women in the 19th century American southwest. James will spend a week conducting academic research on the history of the American southwest before setting off on a two-week road trip of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona, immersing herself in the landscape of “the Frontier.” She will spend the remainder of her summer drafting her novel, which will be her culminating senior thesis project for her certificate in creative writing. Through her novel, James is “determined to preserve Latina stories and share them with readers, honoring the generations of women that have gone before me while encouraging those that will come after, confirming that their stories are worthy of being told.”

**Kakuyon Mataeh**, a computer science major pursuing certificates in jazz with Princeton’s Department of Music and in African American Studies, will use the Alex Adam Award funding to create a jazz and hip-hop EP commemorating the relationship between a Black father and his son. The EP is an artistic continuation of his computer science independent work in which he is using machine learning technology to map a three-dimensional model of the expansion of Black American music into subgenres. Mataeh explains in his proposal that he is seeking to “create an original piece of artwork that can resonate with other Black men with trauma and mental health issues.” Mataeh hopes “that this album can help other Black men struggling with depression, honoring the idea that we must teach one another methods of coping with trauma, the same way my father taught me how to cope with mine.”

Rising seniors Eliyana Abraham, Chaya Holch, and Camryn Stafford have been selected for funding through the Mallach Senior Thesis Fund. This award, established by Douglas J. Mallach ’91, supports the realization of proposed senior thesis projects that incorporate historical research and create an alternative path to learning history.

**Eliyana Abraham**, a neuroscience major pursuing certificates in theater and music theater from the Lewis Center, will use the Mallach Award funding to conduct summer research on queer women’s experiences in the modern day and in 1852 in preparation to direct *Affecting Expression*next academic year for her thesis project. *Affecting Expression*was written by Princeton alumna Eliana Cohen-Orth '21 and tells the story of three queer women artists—Charlotte Cushman, Matilda Hays, and Hatty Hosmer—and their relationships with artmaking and each other. Abraham’s summer will include historical and academic research. In her funding proposal, Abraham describes her motivation for selecting *Affecting Expression*as her thesis play as being her “personal and artistic need to tell a story that myself and other queer women artists can look to and see our experiences, emotions, relationships, and artistry reflected in an honest way.”

**Chaya Holch** hopes to pursue a certificate in creative writing from the Lewis Center and will use the Mallach Award funding to work on two discrete, yet overlapping, original works of puppetry and prose engaging with the work of Bruno Schulz, a Jewish Polish artist killed by a Nazi officer in his hometown of Drohobych, Poland (now in Ukraine), in 1942. Holch first encountered Schulz’s writings in Princeton Professor Mark Pettus’s class “Eastern European Literature and Politics,” and she fell in love with what she describes as Schulz’s ‘sensitivity to and rendering of the world.” Holch is building on a precedent of turning Scholz’s stories into puppetry, however she wants to build large-scale puppets to reimagine Schulz’s story, “The Night of the Great Season,” in particular. Additionally, throughout this process, Holch will write a cycle of genre-less prose meditations on Schulz’s life, art, and death, as well as the themes of Jewish anti-Zionism and diasporism, and secrecy in Schulz’s work. She also received funding for her project from the Judaic Studies Program

**Camryn Stafford**, an African American studies major pursuing a certificate in dance from the Lewis Center and a certificate in entrepreneurship from the Keller Center, will use the Mallach Award funding to complete rigorous dance training and to attend dance performances throughout the summer. For her senior thesis, Stafford is planning to create a dance performance thesis that infuses seemingly different styles of American dance performance to demonstrate how Black and Africanist styles have influenced many American styles. Stafford will train in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Italy and view performances of gaga, contemporary, ballet, hip-hop, jazz, and tap in preparation for choreographing her thesis. Stafford explains that “studying a variety of dance styles at various locations both nationally and internationally will give me the most comprehensive view of dance and will allow me to reach my hypothesis that Africanist aesthetics [in dance] are prevalent everywhere, not just in one style or in one location.”

Additional summer funding award-winners include:

Rising senior **Allen Delgado** has been awarded a grant from the Mary Quaintance ’84 Fund for the Creative Arts established in her memory to foster talents similar to those Quaintance developed in writing, film studies, and literature in the creative arts programs at Princeton.

Rising senior **Rachel Qing Pang** and rising juniors **Erin Macanze** and **Emma Mohrmann** received grants from the E. Ennalls Berl 1912 and Charles Waggaman Berl 1917 Senior Thesis Award in Visual Arts, which was established in 1999 by Marie Broadhead to provide support for research, travel or other expenses of current juniors undertaking senior thesis work in the Program in Visual Arts.

Rising seniors **Wendi Yan**, **Corinna Brueckner**, **Naomi Benenson**, **Leah Emanuel;** rising juniors **Collin Riggins**, **Petr Karpov**, **Michael Garcia**, **Tecla Mafa**;and rising sophomore **John Juarez Venegas Jr.** received funding through the Sam Hutton Fund for the Arts instituted by Thomas C. Hutton ’72 to support undergraduate summer study, travel and thesis research in the Lewis Center.

Rising seniors **Annabel Dupont** and **Titi Sodimu** are recipients of the Lucas Summer Fellowship, which is presented annually to one or more visual arts concentrators for summer thesis work in any media.

Rising seniors **Elliot Lee**, **Alexis Maze**, and **Oyin Sangoyomi** received support from the Mellor Fund for Undergraduate Research, which underwrites course, travel, and/or research costs related to studies in the creative and performing arts.

Rising junior **Briony Zhao** is a beneficiary of the Lawrence P. Wolfen ’87 Senior Thesis Award established for travel or research costs, materials, equipment or other expenses of current juniors for thesis work in the creative arts, especially the visual arts or graphic arts.

Rising seniors **Jamie Feder**, **Noa Greenspan**, **Magdalena Poost**, **Meera Sastry**, **Ngan Chiem**; rising juniors **Seppe De Pauw**, **Sal Kang**, **Kate Lee**; and rising sophomores **Azariah Jones**, and **Belinda Wu** received funding through a special one-time grant to the Lewis Center from the Rita Allen Foundation.

Rising seniors **Julia Elman**, **Jack Shigeta**, **Gaea Lawton**, **Priyanka Aiyer**; rising juniors **Zi Liu**, **Olivia Buckhorn**, **Rachel Chen**; and rising sophomores **Magnus von Ziegesar**, and **Su Fey Ng** received support from the Maria and Philip Yang P’19 Arts Fund, which supports undergraduates in summer study, travel, and/or independent research costs related to their studies in the Lewis Center for the Arts.

The Hartman Feldman Fund for the Arts supports undergraduate study or research in the Department of Music or the Lewis Center’s Program in Dance. Rising senior **Naomi Benenson** and rising junior **Michael Garcia** are recipients of this award.

Rising senior **Jared Wilson**, rising juniors **Juliette Carbonnier** and **Sabrina Kim**, and rising sophomore **Wasif Sami** received support through the Peter B. Lewis Summer Fund, which supports current Lewis Center for the Arts first-year students, sophomores or juniors.

In addition to funding, some students are the recipients of support for internships. The Bernstein Fund for the Arts Fellowship supports student summer fellowships at prominent New York arts institutions. Recipients this year are rising junior **Tanéyah Jolly** for an internship with the Public Theater and rising junior **Sabina Jafri** to support an internship with One Nation/One Project: A National Arts and Wellness Initiative. Rising junior **Tanaka Ngwara Dunbar** is the recipient of support from the Tiger Baron Fund, created to support student theatrical summer experiences including internships, fellowships, and training opportunities. The Sandberg Fund was created by playwright and longtime lecturer Robert N. Sandberg to support summer internships for students in the Programs in Theater and Music Theater with support with this year going to rising seniors **Anna Allport, Jenni Lawson** and **Kate Short**.

To learn more about the Lewis Center for the Arts, the funding available to Princeton students, and the more than 100 other performances, exhibitions, readings, screenings, concerts, and lectures presented by the Lewis Center, most of them free, visit [arts.princeton.edu](https://arts.princeton.edu/).

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