CHECKLIST AND INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Confirmation of eligibility (must meet all four criteria):

___ 3.5 or higher cumulative GPA
___ Sophomore or higher standing
___ No previous funding from Honors College (Global Scholars, Scholars-in-Service, and Honors Fellows who have received funding for projects are not eligible)
___ Award, if given, for this fellowship will be spent before June 30 of the NEXT calendar year

Project is suitable for named endowed fellowship (one of the following):

___ African Studies (project requires travel to Africa in approved academic program)
___ Catholic Intellectual Tradition (research on an issue or major thinker in CIT)
___ Community-Engaged Learning (experiential project in a community)
___ Creative Arts (project in creative writing, music, or visual arts)
___ Liberal Arts (research in humanities and/or social sciences - all majors welcome)
___ Phenomenology (research based in phenomenology)
___ Women’s and Gender Studies (research with WGS as central component)

Project Narrative

Budget (your request must be from $1000 - $5000)

Endorsement letter from Faculty Mentor (emailed separately)

Instructions:

1. Please type all information into the document.
2. Save as a Microsoft Word file only, with this filename format: “Your last name-Endowed Fellows Grant Competition”. (example: Smith-Endowed Fellows Grant Competition)
3. Email your file to honorscollege@duq.edu with the subject line in caps: ENDOWED FELLOWS COMPETITION
4. Your emailed file must be received by 11:59 pm on February 15. Late forms will not be considered.
GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME: Mariangela Gominho

CAMPUS ADDRESS:

HOME ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

YEAR OF GRADUATION: 2017

SCHOOL AND MAJOR: Vocal Performance Major at Mary Pappert School of Music

THIS IS AN APPLICATION FOR ENDOWED FELLOWSHIP IN (CHECK PRIMARY AREA):

___ AFRICAN STUDIES

___ CATHOLIC INTELLECTUAL TRADITION

___ COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING

☐ CREATIVE ARTS

___ LIBERAL ARTS

___ PHENOMENOLOGY

___ WOMEN’S AND GENDER STUDIES
It is with great enthusiasm that I write to apply for a 2016 Endowed Fellows Grant in the Creative Arts. I am proposing to go to Reykjavík and Siglufjörður, Iceland over a two-week period to collect, transcribe, and arrange Icelandic epic song poems (rimur) that will inform my own original compositions for performance. As a junior vocal performance major, this project will be great musical accomplishment and provide me with the proper training to learn Icelandic diction and the epic song genre. With the support from my faculty mentor Dr. Meghan Hynson, Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology, I will be able to accurately research the history and meanings behind rimur and suitably set the poems to music.

Working in the creative arts requires taking the knowledge and experiences one has gathered in life and applying them in the creation of a new piece of art. In today’s global world, original works are often an amalgamation of different cultural influences. Folk music, in particular, preserves a country’s history through song and can convey their beliefs and values. Music can therefore be used to promote and explore cross-cultural understanding and give people insight into another culture. With this in mind, I would like to travel to Iceland and learn about its musical aesthetics and stories to then create musical pieces that will teach my audience about Iceland’s rich cultural history.

I plan to do this by studying rimur, one such form of folk music. This music is very unique because Iceland is an island that has been isolated from other European countries. Its folk music tells of vikings and sailors through rhymed alliterate stanzas of two to four lines. Similar to Gregorian chant, the voices are a simple fifth apart and move along the melodic line without instrumental accompaniment. This lack of accompaniment leaves room for experimentation and creates the possibility to adapt these songs for piano and voice. With the support of an Endowed Fellows Grant, I am proposing to travel to Iceland to learn and transcribe four rimur songs and set them to piano music in a four-movement work.

Upon arriving in Iceland, I will first travel to the University of Iceland in Reykjavík where I will study the language and diction of íslenska (Icelandic). I have already made contact with Sigridur Kristinsdottir, a teacher at the University of Iceland, who has agreed to give me private lessons. While in Reykjavík, I also plan to visit the numerous museums on the history and folklore of the Icelandic people (for example, the Reykjavík city museum, which showcases the maritime history of Iceland and their coastal cultures). Following my language study and visits to these museums, I will then travel to Siglufjörður, in Northern Iceland, to attend The Folk Music Festival from July 6-10. My daily activities will include: participating in classes on Icelandic and Scandinavian folk music, attending concerts to observe Icelandic performance practice, interviewing performing artists, and learning four rimur song poems with an expert. I plan to learn rimur by taking private lessons with a rimur specialist and by attending one of the undergraduate courses at the Folk Music Academy, which runs in conjunction with the festival. The last two days in Iceland will be spent finalizing transcriptions and translations and taking notes on Icelandic aesthetics and musical conventions. After returning to America, I will begin composing based on the rimur song poems that I have chosen.

Upon completion of this project, I plan to present a synopsis of my work at the Duquesne University Undergraduate Research Symposium and perform my compositions in the Fall 2016 semester as a lecture-recital at the PNC Recital Hall of the Mary Pappert School of Music. This lecture-recital will be open to the public and will be comprised of a general overview of Iceland, photo and video documentation of my trip, a historical background and context of the music, and a performance of my four-movement work.
As a vocal performance major at Duquesne University, this project will benefit my career and artistic portfolio in many ways. To date, I have only been exposed to diction training in Italian, French, German, and English. Having the ability to learn Icelandic diction would be a great benefit to my musical career because the language is unlike any I have been exposed to; it is complex, containing many unfamiliar characters and accents. In vocal performance, one is often hired to sing in an unfamiliar language, and must be able to sing in that language with an informed knowledge of pronunciation and stress. This project will give me more practice learning unfamiliar diction while also creating the opportunity to use my composition skills to merge song forms and create an original work. It will also provide an opportunity to learn about the epic song genre and the traditions of its performance. I expect this to be a unique addition to my skills and résumé as I undertake a career in singing and music.

I believe that this is a great project to do through the Duquesne University Honors College, as one of its main goals is to support innovative thinking and creativity. This project bridges creative and liberal arts, combining musical composition with native folklore, stories, and indigenous music. The research on Icelandic history garners global perspectives and the literature behind rimur can be connected to the humanities. This project will also give me the opportunity to compose a musical work that draws on original material and presents new possibilities for what I can achieve and convey through music. This proposed process of setting rimur to music mirrors what 19th century composers did, and although setting chants to music is not new, my idea to incorporate rimur is a unique derivation of this. With the support of the 2016 Endowed Fellows Grant, I will have the opportunity to share this project with others, promote multicultural understanding through music, and create a beautiful piece of music in honor of a wonderful country.