

## Summary

The musical arts in general and the symphony orchestra in specific embody the consummate act of collective creation. Dozens of musicians on stage contribute according to their own interpretation and artistic vision towards an emergent collective experience that could not be envisioned or foretold by a single participant. For this reason, the orchestral tradition becomes an ideal canvas to explore the story of Frankenstein. The now-mythic story has captured the imagination of composers throughout the last century; they have sought to render vivid the immediate experience of an extraordinary creation. These works that I propose in this multi-media collaboration immerse the audience in the beautiful eros of this art and highlight the intoxication of innovative perspectives on this monstrous creation. This two-hour musical theatre experience pulls the audience into the historical and ongoing reality of Frankenstein and elicits the opportunity for critical reflection over the course of an exquisite and elevating musical experience.

This concert brings an engaging moment of collective experience to the bicentennial celebration by juxtaposing multiple renderings of the story in a large audience setting. The concert opens with the performance of an extraordinary postmodern piece - HK Gruber's *Frankenstein!!* (1976/77) for orchestra and *chansonnier*, first performed in 1979 in Berlin, Germany. The work features a fantastical protagonist who sings, cajoles and screeches and an ensemble that blurs the line between a classical and popular ensemble, with references to jazz and rock and requiring an unusual array of instruments including a toy piano and other children's instruments. ASU Professor David Schildkret, Director of Choral Activities, has a preeminent talent for this type of performance and will be the *chansonnier* vocal soloist.

For the second half, the stage fades to the background as the 1931 film *Frankenstein* plays accompanied by a live orchestral score written by Michael Shapiro (2001). The original *Frankenstein* was released without any form of musical augmentation and Shapiro's score offers the rare opportunity to experience the drama of live orchestral participation. This score re-contextualizes the 1931 film and adds a dramatic layer of expression and meaning to the original film, further enriching the live, collective experience.

The outcome of this project will be two multi-media performances. The first will be a ASU community and student-centered performance at ASU Gammage and the second will expand the outreach potential of the entire bicentennial project by bringing the performance to a regional event stage. The Mesa Arts Center will be the first choice in outside venue. I have been in touch with Cindy Orenstein (Director) and Randy Vogel (Performing Arts Administrator) at MAC about potential future collaboration, and, if the grant is approved, I would propose this project to them for an October 2018 performance.

In keeping with the emergent quality of live performance, this application is open to collaboration with other grant recipients. The ideal collaboration would include artistic or community programs that could contribute to either the physical concert space or

engage the audience through printed material. The audience experience of the ideas surrounding the Frankenstein bicentennial could be enhanced by sharing the research or artistic creations of other grant recipients as part of a commemorative program. I would welcome and embrace this type of cross-disciplinary partnership.

Grant funding is requested to cover music rental, materials, transportation to the outside venue, production costs and marketing.

### **Outputs, Outcomes, and Audience**

As with all public performances, the force of the impact comes from shared experience. Attending a multi-disciplinary/multi-media performance will both draw new audiences into the Frankenstein Bicentennial Project as well as give participants a unique and entertaining opportunity to reflect on the many faceted expressions and meanings of the Frankenstein phenomenon. ASU students in the School of Music will also be pulled into the bicentennial project in a dramatic way as well as have the opportunity to play adventurous works for new audiences. The performance at ASU Gammage will be documented through audio and video, and besides archival importance, will be used in future recruiting efforts.

### **Promotional plan**

Promotion will be through the normal channels of the School of Music, ASU Gammage (including ticketmaster) and ASU Orchestras' print and social media marketing. Promotion will be amplified by spots on NPR and additional social media avenues.