



UMS ANNOUNCES THE 2019-20 COHORT OF 21ST CENTURY ARTIST INTERNS

**Students Develop Industry Contacts, Hands-On Work Experience, and
Deep Connections with Internationally Recognized Performing Artists**

**U-M interns will work with the Joyce Theater, American Ballet Theatre, Stew &
The Negro Problem, Milka Djordjevich, Javaad Alipoor, and the Chamber Music
Society of Lincoln Center**

Ann Arbor, MI (June 19, 2019) — The **University Musical Society (UMS)** and the University of Michigan's **School of Music, Theatre & Dance (SMTD) EXCEL Lab** are proud to announce the 2019-20 cohort of 21st Century Artist Interns. These five students, all SMTD undergraduates, will spend the summer working with a professional dance, theater, or music ensemble that UMS will present during the 2019-20 season. When they return to campus, the interns continue their work via a one-credit independent study, serving as a campus ambassador, educator, and marketer to support the ensemble during its visit. Each intern earns a competitive stipend of \$5,000 to cover the cost of lodging, travel, and living expenses during the internship. The \$5,000 stipend is on par with similar internship programs in the sciences and is a rarity in the arts, where internships are often unpaid, volunteer opportunities.

The 2019-20 cohort includes:

Victoria Briones, Class of 2020

Major: Dance

Placement: Briones will intern in artistic programming at the Joyce Theater, one of the nation's premier venues for dance presentation. She will also participate in the intern professional development program at American Ballet Theatre and serve as an occasional intern for education. American Ballet Theatre will perform *Swan Lake* April 16-19 at the Detroit Opera House as part of UMS's Dance Series.

Summer Location: New York

Zion Jackson, Class of 2020**Major:** Voice Performance**Minor:** Performing Arts Management & Entrepreneurship**Placement:** Jackson will serve as the personal assistant to performer, composer, and writer Stew. Stew is the creator of the Tony Award-winning musical *Passing Strange* and front man of his eponymous band Stew & The Negro Problem. Stew & The Negro Problem will perform his latest work, *Notes of a Native Song* (inspired by James Baldwin's *Notes of a Native Son*), at Lydia Mendelssohn Theatre on November 22 and 23 as part of UMS's biennial Song Remix.**Summer Location:** New York**Shannon Nulf, Class of 2021****Major:** Dance**Minors:** Movement Science and Performing Arts Management**Placement:** Nulf will assist choreographer Milka Djordjevich in the development of her new dance work *CORPS* during a residency at the prestigious Maggie Allesee National Center for Choreography at Florida State University (Tallahassee). Following the residency, Nulf will support the presentation of Djordjevich's *ANTHEM* in Philadelphia and administrative activities in Los Angeles through LA Performance Practice. Djordjevich's *ANTHEM* will be performed March 18-21 at Jam Handy in Detroit as part of UMS's Dance Series.**Summer Location:** Tallahassee, Philadelphia, and Los Angeles**Isabel Olson, Class of 2020****Majors:** Theatre Arts/Directing and History**Placement:** Olson will assist theater artist Javaad Alipoor on the presentation of his two original plays, *Rich Kids* and *The Believers Are But Brothers*, at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe. Alipoor's *The Believers Are But Brothers* will be performed January 22-25 as part of UMS's No Safety Net Renegade theater festival.**Summer Location:** Edinburgh, Scotland**Karalyn Schubring, Class of 2020****Major:** Composition**Placement:** Schubring will intern in artistic programming and fundraising at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center will perform in Rackham Auditorium on October 11 as part of UMS's Chamber Arts Series.**Summer Location:** New York

The 21st Century Artist Internship program, which was launched six years ago and is now funded in part by the Jay Ptashek and Karen Elizaga Family, was developed to help prepare students for the new demands that working artists face in the contemporary marketplace. In addition to generating outstanding creative work, today's artists are also tasked with reaching potential audiences in innovative ways. They must be able to speak dynamically about their work and creative processes, provide interactive experiences for novice audience members, and transmit themselves and their artistry across rapidly changing media platforms. The 21st Century Artist Internship program provides

real-world work experience and professional connections to young artists-in-training at U-M and a chance to practice these skills within the context of UMS's programming. Past 21st Century Artist Interns have gone on to interesting careers in the arts, whether as performers or administrators.

"The skillset that this generation of artists needs in order to have a healthy career includes much more than mastering an art form," said UMS director of Education & Community Engagement Jim Leija.

"That's why we're thrilled to partner with the School of Music, Theatre & Dance to provide an opportunity for these incredibly gifted students to learn from the established touring artists that UMS presents. It's our hope that their experience and the connections they make provide a foundation for a lasting and fulfilling career in the arts. We can't wait to see where they go from here."

"As a new dean at Michigan, I was delighted to learn about the 21st Century Artist Intern program, which is truly unlike any other internship program in the country," said David Gier, Dean of the University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance. "I'm thrilled that we are able to collaborate with UMS to place SMTD students in terrific summer opportunities where they are learning directly from professional artists. And that they also get to come back to campus and work with one of the country's leading performing arts presenters provides them with a unique competitive advantage whether they choose to pursue a performance or arts management career. This type of innovative collaboration is one more example of the Michigan Difference."

"The 21st Century Artist intern program means so much to our family," Jay Ptashek explained. "We have seen and felt the difference the performing arts, and young performers in particular, can make in the world and in the fulfillment of a performer's life. There is no greater gift than to be able to express oneself, and this program allows these amazing students to do that. In doing so, they also give back to the world through the beauty of their work."

Learn more about the 2019 cohort of 21st Century Artists Interns, including bios, at ums.org/2019interns.

ABOUT UMS

A recipient of the 2014 National Medal of Arts, UMS (also known as the University Musical Society) contributes to a vibrant cultural community by connecting audiences with performing artists from

around the world in uncommon and engaging experiences. One of the oldest performing arts presenters in the country, UMS is an independent non-profit organization affiliated with the University of Michigan, presenting over 70 music, theater, and dance performances by professional touring artists each season, along with over 100 free educational activities. UMS is committed to bold artistic leadership, engaged learning through the arts, and access and inclusiveness. Since 1990, the organization has co-commissioned and supported the production of nearly 80 new or reimagined works. Matthew VanBesien became the organization's seventh president in July 2017.

ABOUT EXCEL LAB

The University of Michigan School of Music, Theatre & Dance's EXCEL Lab provides entrepreneurship training and career services for all U-M students engaged in the performing arts, with a goal of enabling students to forge viable careers in the arts by exploring, developing, and leveraging their talents, training, skills, and ambitions. Each year, EXCEL offers co-curricular workshops, mentoring, and student project and venture funding.

MEDIA CONTACT

Mallory Shea

UMS Marketing & Media Relations Manager

734.647.4020 / mschirr@umich.edu