# COMPUTING IN THE ARTS



*Chris Benson* »

**CHRIS BENSON TRANSFERRED TO THE COLLEGE** from a much larger university. He'd been studying computer science, but he also had a deep passion for music. While attending a meeting of the Association of Computing Machinery student club here, he learned about computing in the arts. And that's when the lightbulb began to switch on.

"My background is in music, actually. Both my parents are music teachers. And when I met Dr. Manaris – one of the professors who runs the computing in the arts (CITA) program – he suggested that I combine computing and music. That made a lot of sense, and I began to explore it.

Chris took a beginning course titled "Introduction to Computer Music." "We learned to write, play and manipulate music via computer. That reassured me that this major was the way to go.

"I also took a game design class that delves into how games are developed. It was about way more than just programming. It examined how game developers look at target audiences and how they consider the factors that will make a product successful."

Then, Chris dove into his main work in the CITA major – spatiality in music. "I'm working on finding a way to experience music in virtual space. At the moment, we listen to music through left and right headphones or speakers," he says. "What I'm working on is a way to precisely place sounds in space – above, below, behind and in front. It's an attempt to give a 3-D aspect to music."

In the future, he hopes to produce music and music related apps. "One dream of mine is to open my own label and the catch would be to integrate this 3-D approach. Fortunately, this program is really helping me move in that direction. And what's really appealing is having professors who actually sit down one-on-one to talk and help you out. That's an amazing resource." ©



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CITA STUDENTS CREATE, DESIGN AND CODE NEW CREATIVITY TOOLS FOR THE FUTURE. FROM DEVELOPING CONTEMPORARY MUSIC, ART AND THEATRE TO CREATING NEW FORMS OF ANIMATION AND DIGITAL MEDIA, TO INVIGORATING THE VISUAL AND AUDIO SYSTEMS OF TOMORROW'S COMPUTERS, AND INVENTING REVOLUTIONARY WEB AND MOBILE APPLICATIONS, OUR STUDENTS ARE PREPARED FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL AND PRODUCTIVE CAREERS IN THE INFORMATION AND ARTS INDUSTRIES.

THE PROGRAM IS TAUGHT BY FACULTY FROM SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS. IT IS PARTIALLY SUPPORTED BY THE NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION, GOOGLE AND IBM.

» COURSES TAUGHT INCLUDE ANIMATION AND VIRTUAL WORLDS," "GAME PROGRAMMING," "INTRO TO COMPUTER MUSIC"AND "GRAPHIC DESIGN AND DIGITAL MEDIA."