



Zach Litchfield »

MUSIC

ZACH LITCHFIELD HAS BEEN PLAYING THE cello since he was in the second grade. Like a lot of students who are serious about studying music, he knew that this would be his major even before coming to the College. What he didn't know was the great breadth of musical background that he'd be getting here.

Despite playing the cello for most of his life, Zach's original passion was for composing, not performance. "I came to the College thinking that music composition would be my focus, but I was so impressed by Natalia Khoma, the professor who teaches cello, that I've added that to my academic program and I'm now basically doing a double major in performance and composition."

Zach allows that this major can be demanding. "Students in this department are serious about their music. We're encouraged to practice about four to five hours a day whether you're a vocalist or an instrumentalist, and those who are focusing on composition should be doing that at least two hours a day."

Though he prefers classical music, Zach joined the College's Contemporary Ensemble and says that experience accelerated his musicianship. "This really pushes you. The music is often not conventional and can require different techniques, and you have to learn it in two weeks. My lessons are mostly solo sessions, so the ensemble performances help me to improve greatly."

But it's not all about performance for Zach. In a music history course, he and his classmates were introduced to opera. "I've never liked that genre, but we were assigned to listen to works such as Verdi's *La Traviata* and write about the music. I learned to appreciate opera, and it taught me to look at music in a different way."

Zach values the broad experience he's had in this department, including performing chamber music in Charleston's Spoleto Festival USA and working for CofC Concerts. "I know I'll draw on all of these experiences for the rest of my musical career." 🎻



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