

A Musical Journey: Nationally & Internationally

With the generous grant that I received from the Miller Arts Scholar in summer 2017, I was able to pursue several goals that all lead to helping me emerge from UVA not only as a graduate, but as an artist, and a Miller Arts Scholar, ready to present myself to the world. My objectives for the summer were (1) to study the art of Bel Canto singing and return with a more concrete and applied understanding of the form, (2) to prepare myself for my Fourth Year Recital through the private lessons and voice coaching sessions, and (3) to form connections with teachers, coaches, and other artists that will not only be helpful in my pursuit of performance, but wholesome and meaningful bonds.

The beginning of my summer was dedicated to learning assigned music and preparing myself for 3 weeks of intensive singing. For my section of the program (Young Artists), we were expected to learn the ensemble choral part of an excerpt from *La Traviata* and two bel canto art songs by Donaudy, in addition to coming with our own prepared arias and art songs to work on in the various coachings we partook in. Learning my music for Bel Canto included my own rigorous rehearsals and meeting with my old voice teacher back in my home town.

The later and largest undertaking of my musical endeavors took place overseas, in Greve in Chianti, Italy. Initially going into the summer, I had planned on partaking in two separate programs, but, due to overlap of the program dates and logistic issues, I ended up accepting a Young Artist position with Bel Canto in Tuscany and spending my summer with this program. Given that the program focused on the art of Bel Canto' singing (literally meaning “beautiful singing,” and often used as a definition for both the style of long, extended, and smooth singing),

¹ <https://www.operasense.com/what-is-bel-canto/>

the songs we were assigned focused on alignment of the voice and extension through the lyric and vocal line. I was so happy to also have my friend and fellow Arts Scholar, Wesley Diener, present at the program with me.



(Wesley and I shortly before our final performance)

Working on this technique proved to be immeasurably important not only in order to successfully perform in the final recital that closed out the program, but also for my Fourth Year DMP recital. Composer Gioachino Rossini is a staple composer of Bel Canto art songs and operas. My recital set happened to include an aria by Rossini, from his opera Guillaume Tell. The work I did over the summer no doubt influenced my ability to sustain my breath and line throughout the difficult aria. My studies over the summer played a key role in my confident

In addition to befriending artists and vocalists who are similar to me in age and studies, I was able to find not only great mentors who are aspiring musicians, but a bit older than I, but also connecting with coaches who I still study with to this day. The director of the program, Giovanni Reggioli, meets with me several times a month at his private studio and our work together continues. These connections will last a lifetime.

return to the McIntire Department of Music at UVA as I studied for my Fourth Year Distinguished Majors Program (DMP) recital. Taking place on March 24, my Fourth Year DMP took months of rehearsing, tweaking technique, and attempting to perfect performance. The skills I gained at Bel Canto, with help from Arts Scholars, propelled me forward not only in my ability to sing healthily and well, but also my pure passion for performance.

Josephine Miller
Soprano
DISTINGUISHED MAJOR VOICE RECITAL
Featuring Karen Dalton, piano

SATURDAY, MARCH 24
3:30PM | Old Cabell Hall | Free

434.924.3052
music.virginia.edu

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(My official DMP poster)

Moving towards the end of my final semester at UVA, I am able to reflect on the opportunities that I was provided with that ensured I was able to pursue what I love. I am so thankful to be an Art Scholar and to have the opportunity to receive funding that allows me to

complete projects and competitions that I otherwise might not be able to. I give my endless thanks to all of the supports of the Miller Arts Scholars Program and a special thanks to Evie and Stephen Colbert as well as Sandy and Vinie Miller.



(Myself, Wesley, and three of our good friends also in the Young Artist division).