FLORENCE, ITALY

MARGARET HUSKIN

Program: UW Music in Italy, Summer

Margaret’s Majors: Music and English

Academic Life: This program really encourages you to challenge yourself to become a more independent musician with a wide variety of skills and tastes. Every day tests your ability to sight-read new music from the composers, which you are then asked to talk about in interesting and constructive ways. Though each student was at a different level in terms of their performance and/or music theory background, everybody was able to contribute to the discussion. With so much support, everybody showed a real growth from the beginning of the program to the final day of recording. We also saw a wide variety concerts, heard many different speakers and got a look into the music scene in Florence and saw how it differs from Madison. Overall, I really feel that this program contributed to my growth as a musician as well as helped me broaden my horizons.

Most Memorable Moment: One day a Florentine singer came to talk to us about modern vocal technique, which was interesting to me since I am a singer. After class, I got the opportunity to talk to her one-on-one about singing. Though her English wasn’t perfect, and my Italian even less so, we were able to keep up a good conversation through a positive attitude, gestures, and Google Translate. It was a really fun and interesting afternoon.

What Margaret Learned About Herself: I’ve learned that one important value of mine is “To be a participant.” Being a participant is different from being a follower or a total individual. Being a participant means that you use your individual skills and unique talents to contribute to what’s going on around you. Being a participant is singing with an ensemble and adding your unique voice to the group’s sound. Being a participant is going to famous museums in order to get a greater understanding of the history and culture of a place. No matter what’s going on in front of you, it’s important to ignore the “what should have happened...” or the “it would be better if...” and instead just participate.

“I have a newfound appreciation for learning through experience.”

Margaret exploring the gardens of Florence.

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