

Percussionist marches to the beat of his musical talent

Helena Yu
News Editor

As a percussionist, senior Colin Fleming lives life in rhythm. He sees the beat in everything from Brahms to Dave Matthews, and this love for drumming has translated into numerous honors for this student.

"The first thing that ever got me interested in drumming was when I was at a Fremd football game when I was about eight," Colin said. "I saw the drumline playing, and I loved watching them, so I tugged on my mom's jacket and said, 'Mom, I want to do that.'"

Band director Matt Moore discovered Colin's talent early in his high school career.

"I think it was October of his freshman year that I looked at Mr. [David] Lang and said, 'We have a future All-Stater with Colin,'" Moore said.

His love of percussion started after picking up the snare drum in fifth grade. Since then, he has expanded his range of instruments and now plays timpani, marimba and xylophone, counting the timpani as one of his favorites.

Colin's repertoire also has expanded to include classic pieces. He is currently working on "Marimba Spiritual" by Minoru Miki.

Throughout high school, Colin has racked up a list of accomplishments, including being chosen for first chair by the Illinois Music Educators Association out of 500 percussionists and winning numerous "superior" ratings at District 211 solo and ensemble contests.

Since his junior year, Colin has been a member of the Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra (CYSO), the youth orchestra



Logue photo by Nathan Gerowitz

MARIMBA MUSIC. Chicago Youth Symphony Orchestra percussionist Colin Fleming practices the marimba.

equivalent to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra (CSO).

Colin adds that being in the presence of many gifted musicians before his audition for CYSO was a humbling but motivating experience.

"It was just surprising to have one communal warm-up room...being around all these great musicians," Colin explained. "It was just like, I don't know if I'm that caliber. I had doubts about my playing at first."

But Colin's dedication and hours of practice paid off when he was accepted into the orchestra, with which he per-

forms biannually.

After making it into the CYSO, Colin went on a European tour with the group. The orchestra performed in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic during the summer of 2007.

"[Making CYSO] showed me that I could play percussion seriously and that it was a possible career path," Colin said.

At Fremd, Moore notes that Colin has inspired the music program.

"He has influenced many of our percussionists, and they are much more serious about music this past year than ever before," Moore said. "Simply put, I think he

might be the top percussionist ever at the school. This is also probably true with the district."

As co-captain of marching band, Colin plays the tenor drums in the drumline. He also has performed as a District 211 Honors Orchestra and Band percussionist and as the principal percussionist in wind symphony and symphony orchestra.

From playing in all of these groups, Colin has learned how to control his nerves.

"Over the years, so many performances have just conditioned me to not get so nervous anymore because [the audience members] are just people, and they just want to hear music," Colin says while absently clicking his pen to the imaginary tempo in his head.

To keep improving his skills, Colin takes monthly private lessons with Michael Kozakis, a former CSO percussionist, whom Colin deems one of his greatest influences, along with Moore.

With his full schedule, this student still makes time to attend concerts and listen to music, ranging from classical to rock to country.

His favorite band is the Dave Matthews Band, and he especially admires drummer Carter Beauford. Some of his recent musical interests include artists Trevor Hall and Xavier Rudd.

After high school, Colin will be majoring in percussion performance at Boston University. He hopes to eventually achieve his goal of performing with the CSO after college.

"The pinnacle thing that I probably really have to work at is playing with the CSO," Colin said. "That would be perfect. I don't know if I can do that, but we'll see."

Stephanie Choe lays foundations for architecture career through artistic talent

Helena Yu and Jennifer Lee
News Editor and Staff Writer

To some people, art consists of stick figures and coloring books, but for senior Stephanie Choe, art spans many mediums and conveys profound messages.

Stephanie began at a young age after taking classes at an art academy and encouragement from her sister and parents.

"I first got interested in art watching Disney videos," Stephanie said. "Those videos were in foreign languages because my dad bought them when he visited other countries, so my understanding was based solely on the visual representation."

Although childhood hobbies often come and go, Stephanie has stuck with art. Her tenacity caught the eye of Art Department Chairman Curtis Pinley, who has taught Stephanie for three years.

"I think her art is very thought-provoking," Pinley said. "This year, her art is much more personal."

Stephanie won first place in the 2-D section of the Harper College Art Show among Fremd entries and was recognized at the Life is Simply Art Show as well. But she also finds motivation outside of competitions.

"The biggest rewards would be my parents' compliments or my teachers'," Stephanie said.

Throughout high school, she has developed her artistic prowess through extensive practice with various techniques, mediums and subjects.

"During freshman and sophomore years, I only completed about 15 pieces, focusing only on technique. My sophomore year I tried painting for the first time, and I fell in love with acrylics," Stephanie explained. "Then last year, I began to work on thematic subjects and use of metaphors to express my statements."

For the past year in particular, Stephanie's personal



Logue photo by Amy Liu

BRUSH STROKES. Stephanie Choe creates "Ostracized" in acrylic, a painting in an series exploring the theme of isolation.

life has influenced the themes she implements in her artwork.

"Last year, my grandfather passed away, and I think I had a brief series about the inevitability of death and consumption by time," Stephanie said. "I also worked on pieces about social isolation and ostracism."

Her Korean heritage has led her to fuse Asian art with American art to create her own hybrid style.

"The American style is bolder than that of Asia. Asian art emphasizes subtle forms and harmony," Stephanie explained. "So to keep a balance, I keep my details, but I have bold brush strokes."

And her style has served her well—she created more art this year than her freshman and sophomore years combined.

"This year, I finished 24 pieces. It was a crazy experience. For me, it was like doing 10 term papers," Stephanie said.

When not creating art, Stephanie also balances six Advanced Placement courses. Despite her busy schedule, she finds balance between her passion and school.

In the fall, Stephanie will enter Cornell University's prestigious five-year architectural program.

"I have a cousin who's an architecture graduate student at Harvard right now. I'll probably open a family business or something," she said.

Originally planning to pursue a career in science, her change of heart came earlier this year when she realized she wanted her artistic flair to be an integral part of her future.

"I realized that I wanted to become an architect in late October of senior year when I began sending in college applications. Before that, I thought I was going to become a dentist or a doctor," Stephanie said. "I knew I couldn't give up art entirely. I mean, what would be better than doing something you enjoy for your career?"