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ARTS

Continued from Page 16

music departments. Because they require so much more than simply studying textbooks, it makes certain students eager to study only their art.

Ryan Adams, a sophomore in the dance department, has had a lot of trouble integrating academics with his love for dance. On the one side, he wants to concentrate entirely on dance and fully understand the movements of his body. On the other side, he has to concentrate on completing papers and getting good grades. It frustrates him because he believes he can't reach his dance potential if he must focus so much on academics.

Ponto says the same can be said of music majors, who routinely have to emphasize practicing over conventional studying.

Complicating matters, Ponto says, is that it's hard to explain to non-artists what musicians are reaching for. Ponto cites the quote that talking about music is like dancing about architecture. "What musicians are after is intangible," Ponto says. "The job part is tangible, sure. But what we create as artists, you can't spend it or drive it."

When a musician plays a passage, there's no perfect way to play it, he says. One can play the same notes as someone else, but while one person can play it delicately, giving it a more intimate feel, someone else can play it louder, more bombastically, and make it sound impassioned. They may both be interesting and challenging, Ponto says, but is either better than the other? The core of a musician is not to play it perfectly, he says, but to expand your ability to interpret a piece in many ways.



ANTHONY FORNEY/Emerald

Erik Norwood, a sophomore clarinet major, takes his final test.

Ponto likens it to Michelangelo's vision for his sculptures. Instead of carving stone into a human shape, Michelangelo liked to think he was releasing a human that existed within the stone. Ponto would like to think the music school is releasing people from constraints.

It requires practice. Lots of it. Ponto says it's kind of like sand sifting through an hourglass. A student must become focused and improve to a certain point, but when he or she reaches that point, a whole world of possibilities will open.

"Sleep is for wimps," says Jeff Stolet, director of the electronic music program. To him, discipline is the key. "If you're not practicing five hours a day, someone else is," he says. While working on his master's degree, Stolet says he routinely practiced 14 hours a day.

"If I missed half a day, I'd feel it," he says. Nobody else could tell, he says, but he could feel a subtle lack of control in his playing. People who work the

hardest, who put in those hours of practice, will get the opportunities and the fulfillment, he says.

Hyeja Chong, a piano performance major, hopes to be one of the fulfilled.

"I'm majoring in music because I don't think I could do anything else," she says. Although true to Ponto's word, she wishes she didn't have to study other disciplines. She, too, says you have to practice five to six hours a day, in addition to your 18 credits and the studying that goes along with regular classes.

Chong says she's not worried about the lack of money. The desire to play supersedes any concern. There's an old joke about musicians, Ponto says, that describes the love that belies financial rewards: A musician wins \$10 million in the lottery. Someone asks him what he'll do with the money. "I'll keep gigging until the money runs out," he says.

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