

Brooke Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to your grandmother?

I would never need to describe my area of study to my grandmother. My grandmother and I have always been very close and I cannot remember a single time that she has missed one of my many performances. She has seen every dance recital, choir concert, opera performance and solo vocal recital that I have ever done. I am so glad that I am able to have her constant love and support, even though she may not be able to understand when I sing in foreign languages!

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I wanted to be able to have the chance to learn everything I could about music and the voice, which is why I chose to continue with Graduate study. I feel as though any extra knowledge will be immensely helpful when applying to Young Artist programs and searching for teaching jobs upon completion of my Master's Degree.

Do you think there is any value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields?

Yes, there is value in social networking with students in non-related fields. Being a professional musician means that you must know the ins and outs of the music business. Someone studying for a degree in Business Management or Public Relations would be extremely beneficial in guiding a musician to make the right choices concerning their professional careers. Also, as a vocalist, it is important to know as much as you can about your vocal health and your vocal mechanism in general. Someone majoring in a health related field may know more about this subject and be able to guide a vocalist in specific concerns about their vocal health.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

My favorite stress-reduction technique is, oddly enough, singing. Whenever I feel stressed about classes or worried about life in general, I can always find comfort in singing. When I practice singing, I can focus solely on that and all of the other complexities of being a Graduate Student seem to leave my mind, if only for a little while. I always feel more relaxed after I spend an hour or two practicing my music. Also, after a practice session, I usually leave the practice rooms feeling more accomplished, which tends to give me an overall sense of peace as well.

What is the last book you read strictly for pleasure and how long ago was it?

The last book I read for pleasure was entitled Great Singers on Great Singing by Jerome Hines (with highlighter in hand). The book contained interviews conducted by singer, Jerome Hines, with some of the greatest singers who have ever lived. It was highly informational and also inspirational as I also embark on a professional career in Voice. Also, another author that tends to be my “go-to” for guilty pleasure books is Nicholas Sparks. I have read every single one of his books, always sobbing through the last few chapters. That guy really knows how to tug at your heartstrings!

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

My most meaningful academic relationship will most likely always be the one I have with my voice teacher. Anytime you take private vocal instruction, you are entrusting that teacher with your most prized possession: your voice. They must act as your mentor, guide, inspirational speaker, and coach to help you achieve the goals you have set for yourself as a professional musician. I am lucky to have found all of those qualities in my vocal instructor here at Radford; Ms. Clarity James.

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

What surprised me the most about Graduate School is really how welcoming and encouraging all the teachers are. They have helped me to stay motivated and learn as much as I can in each one of my classes. Even though graduate level learning leans much more toward independent study, each of my teachers have been so reassuring throughout every step of the graduate process.

If travel to Mars happens in your lifetime, would you want to be one of the scientists on board? If yes, what would you contribute to the mission?

I would never want to travel into space on a mission to Mars! Ironically, space seems to me, to be a very claustrophobic place, even though it is the most vast, open place there is.

What is your favorite comfort food and why? How often do you consume it?

My favorite comfort food is chocolate. I consume it (in small amounts) nearly every day! I always keep a piece of chocolate on hand for emergency situations, like a tough day at school. Chocolate never ceases to make me feel better in any situation and...it's so tasty!

If you hadn't been admitted to graduate school, what do you think you would be doing right now?

If I hadn't been admitted to Graduate School, I have no idea what I would be doing! I never imagined doing anything after I received my undergraduate degree except taking it to the next level.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

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