

Leanne Rubinstein
Profile

4:30 a.m. wake up. Hearty breakfast, then straight to the football field. Rigorous training and practice until 11 a.m. Hit the showers, pull back the long blonde curls, and head across campus for music theory and private voice lessons.

This is what a typical morning looks like for University of Colorado offensive lineman Chance Lytle, a fourth year CU Boulder student who dares to defy stereotypical norms: in addition to playing for the university football team, he is also pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in music with a concentration in vocal performance.

Lytle's love for music stems from his family, inspiring him to become proficient in the violin, cello, piano, and mandolin, and then opera when a football-related shoulder injury prevented him from auditioning for the university orchestra upon entering college.

His experience in football, on the other hand, was more one that he stumbled into. Growing up naturally bigger and taller than his classmates (resting currently at 6'7" and 320 lbs), Lytle was approached for the team in his Texas grade school and proved to have a strong knack for it.

"They are both platforms to perform and be the center of attention. I got into music because I loved it, I got into football because I thought I could make money, and I continue with both because I love attention and always have," he said.

Lytle's present voice teacher, Baritone performer and professor of music Andrew Garland, personally attests that the football player's expertise in sports directly benefits his career as a vocalist, both physically and functionally.

Garland commented, "With every student I try to relate to their experience outside of music to see what they know, what they understand, and what they kinesthetically already have in place. With Chance I ask about how he uses his voice in football practice, what a good stance in formation is and how it compares to singing posture, as well as what the demands are of him during the game."

He acknowledged the application of diligence required in both pursuits, and that as his professor has often had to work with that in mind.

"As a high performing athlete, Chance brings a lot of discipline to his music practice. Practice time is demanding for both aside from class time and film study, which prevents him from auditioning for certain productions due to time constraint. He also ends up having to take a number of classes online."

Lytle hopes to be able to incorporate both into his future.

"The plan is to hopefully go NFL for a few years, invest all the money, then work with the Met (hopefully performing) and teach when I'm older," he said. "Maybe I'll be a high school coach and choir director or orchestra conductor."

Though both possess that performance aspect Lytle shows passion for, it's no shock that these two fields still draw fundamentally contrasting communities.

"I have to go from a hyper masculine, testosterone-filled environment immediately to the 'opposite' in the music school. It's hard to sit down in the music building lounge and not react to other musicians the way I react to football players," he said.

"And in football there are few people I fit in with: I'm a nerdy weird musician around brutish jocks. I'm kind of in a state of social limbo that is exhausting to keep balanced."

According to classmate and fellow vocalist Sam Bruckner, however, Lytle's athlete-minded high energy and sportsmanship only sets him apart from his colleagues in a positive way.

“Chance always has a lot of high energy that’s very uplifting all the time. He doesn’t let anybody get down on themselves ever. He’s a fun guy and can always be heard.” he said. “I don’t think his football self and his music self have to be mutually exclusive. They both make him the Chance we know and love.”

Sources:

Chance Lytle, fourth year BA music student: chly9306@colorado.edu

Andrew Garland, Assistant Professor of Voice: andrew.garland@colorado.edu

Sam Bruckner, second year BM voice student: sabr9297@colorado.edu

Never heard back from contacted football teammates!

<https://www.dailycamera.com/2017/08/10/im-not-just-a-brute-cu-boulder-football-players-heart-rests-in-singing/> (for reference; did not take any information I didn’t already have from interview)