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McClain says students will intersect with design, advertising and branding practitioners, future employers, an “amazing global alumni network” and invited speakers, such as acclaimed designer Stefan Sagmeister of New York-based Sagmeister and Walsh.

All graduating students work with an instructor to develop their final portfolio of 20 or more pieces. After refining their portfolios through expert critique, students participate in a portfolio review session in New York where more than 50 principals, presidents, creative directors and recruiters from design, advertising, consultancies, fashion, retail, e-commerce, branding and other industries are invited to view students’ work and discuss employment.

“This program grooms students for careers and future working environments full of rapid-fire changes — accelerating development, disruptive technologies and societal issues,” said McClain. “Students who have the creativity and agility to respond to these conditions in an entrepreneurial economy will be highly rewarded.” ●



Song as a Time Machine

BY JEFFREY MAKALA

Students in several history and music classes at Furman regularly come to Special Collections and Archives in the James B. Duke Library to learn how the university’s collection of medieval manuscripts were created and used. But this past November, a music history class got a bit more hands-on with one manuscript.

When students in Music History I, team-taught by Associate Professor of Musicology Laura Kennedy and Professor of Music John Beckford, visited Special Collections, they saw a selection of more than 35 medieval manuscripts. The collection is the second largest in South Carolina. Among the 10 or so music manuscripts that were reviewed by the class were leaves from several large-format songbooks, known as graduals or antiphonals. These large works are choir books meant for several singers to view and sing from simultaneously. Furman’s examples come from Spain, France and Italy, and they range in dates from circa 1230 to circa 1550.

The largest leaf in Furman’s collection is pictured here. It is from an Italian gradual and dates from about 1500. Furman acquired it in 2016; however, Cornell University also owns a leaf from it.

Toward the end of the class period, Kennedy suggested that her students try to sing the tones on the staff together. A group of students formed around her, and the impromptu choir worked its way through the beginning of the new hymn on the manuscript’s front side. The large initial “T” begins the hymn “Telluris alme conditor,” or “the maker of the earth,” a piece attributed to Pope Gregory I (circa 540 - 604) and normally sung on Tuesdays in the Roman Catholic breviary. When the singing broke out, the rest of the class in the Special Collections Reading Room stopped what they were doing and listened. Medieval plainsong – or at least a rough approximation of it – filled the air. The music class had brought the 600-year-old manuscript to life. ●

