

Seattle University

ScholarWorks @ SeattleU

The Spectator Online

Newspapers

5-14-2021

What Time is it? Time for Battle of the Bands

Anna Popp

Seattle University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online>

Recommended Citation

Popp, Anna, "What Time is it? Time for Battle of the Bands" (2021). *The Spectator Online*. 325.
<https://scholarworks.seattleu.edu/spectator-online/325>

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Newspapers at ScholarWorks @ SeattleU. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Spectator Online by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks @ SeattleU.



What Time is it? Time for Battle of the Bands

Anna Popp, News Editor

Deciding not to stick with the status quo this year, Seattle University's Student Events and Activities Council (SEAC) hosted Battle of the Bands in the middle of spring quarter. Traditionally SEAC hosts one major event per quarter, but with the pandemic uprooting the social aspect of student activities, SEAC pivoted to include Battle of the Bands and Quadstock in the same quarter.

The event took place May 7 over Zoom, due to COVID-19 regulations making it difficult for large groups to gather, but the event still went smoothly. Battle of the Bands featured four solo artists. Corbin Bleu, who portrayed Chad in the famous "High School Musical" trilogy, hosted the event.

Shannon Chistensen, the executive director of SEAC, explained that attendance has been relatively low this year at student events such as Fall Ball. However, she has seen a significant increase in interest for Battle of the Bands this year.

"Especially with the difference of having an in-person Fall Ball to a virtual Fall Ball, it's understandable that we had a lower attendance, rather than having this big night where we're all getting dressed up and going out, it's moving to that more in home personal feel," Christensen said.

Christensen added that SEAC put in a great deal of effort into pivoting Battle of the Bands this year.

"With Battle of the Bands, we've seen a tremendous increase in interest due to both the amount of outreach that we've done and because we're having such a huge person coming and being a part of that," Christensen said.

Jasper Rose, the university programs chair at SEAC, was in charge of planning Fall Ball and Battle of the Bands this year. He wanted the theme of Battle of the Bands to be "nostalgia" and thought it would be fun to have another host of the event, since D1, the Seattle U Improv Club successfully hosted Fall Ball.

With some budget left over from not hosting in-person events, Rose started researching different celebrities who fit the nostalgic theme. SEAC got in touch with the company How to Concerts that pairs events looking to partner with celebrities.

"I had made a list of a bunch of different people that I was thinking could fit the cool nostalgic theme. And I way overshot; I put Miley Cyrus and Selena Gomez...it just so happened Corbin was in that. And we went for it," Rose said. "We got in contact with Jolene, the person from How to Concerts, she got in contact with Corbin's team. And they accepted the offer."

Jolene Chevalier, the owner and talent buyer of How to Concerts, has pivoted her business during the pandemic to virtual events hosted by celebrities. She noted that hybrid events with celebrities may become popular when the pandemic ends.



Adeline Ong

Corbin Bleu opens Battle of the Bands 2021

“Bringing a celebrity host on a big screen, and having a moderator sitting at the computer so that they can enter questions into the chat that people are saying out loud in the room...it’s a nice way to do a hybrid event where you’re engaging the people that don’t want to leave their rooms or don’t feel comfortable leaving their room, as well as the folks that want to come to a room and connect with other students in-person,” Chevalier said.

The pandemic has provided Chevalier and How to Concerts with a silver lining in terms of accessibility.

“We’ve had access to artists and celebrities that maybe can’t take two days out of their filming schedule to do an in-person event, but they can certainly take an hour and a half out of their schedule to do a virtual event. So it’s actually opened up some doors for us in terms of celebrity relationships with actors, actresses and different different types of film creators,” Chevalier said.

Chevalier, who recently worked with Bleu on another event, added how much she enjoys working with him for events.

“I worked with him before. So I know his personality is just so wonderful and it shines through in everything he does,” Chevalier said. “He’s filming something in Hawaii, so had it been in person, he would have had to do the filming opportunity, we wouldn’t have been able to do it. So it’s just such a cool opportunity.”

With Battle of the Bands hosted by Bleu, there was ample excitement and buzz surrounding the event. During the event, held via Zoom webinar, the chat was filled with dozens of comments from student and faculty members filling the section with positive remarks.

Mia Lee, a first-year computer science major, was the first performer of the night. She began playing the ukulele in middle school after discovering musician Jake Shimabukuro. She used to perform in high school, but this was her time on stage at Seattle U.

“When I applied to Seattle U, I heard there was a Battle of the Bands. I haven’t really gotten much of a chance to perform in front of people since the pandemic and missed it, so I wanted to try something new online,” Lee said.

Lee performed two songs on the ukulele, including one she arranged herself. Although it was her first performance online, Lee hopes to get more involved with music both on and off the Seattle U campus when the pandemic eases.

“Because it was online, I tried to take advantage of some of the things that you can do online or through video or not live, I think it was definitely a different experience,” Lee said. “I hope to be able to connect more once we get to be in-person and then do more collaborative music stuff too.”

Similarly, Third-year Mechanical Engineering student Seth Tecsí began performing in middle school but this was his first time performing at Seattle U. He was looking forward to sharing his music and seeing the other performances as well.

“I wanted to do this because I wanted to start releasing music soon. I figured out how to get over stage fright and not that this is in person, but just getting started would be good,” Tecsí said.

Tecsí shared that he did not mind the format of the event, where he could send his recorded performance in before the event aired.

“With Zoom, I could give my best take or what I think my best take was...I think that’s the pros and cons, I guess, because live is a little bit more fun and entertaining just because it’s right there, but I think the zoom was still pretty cool because you can get the best performances,” Tecsí said.

Tecsí is hoping to release singles soon and will continue to pursue music projects down the line.

It was the start of something new for several of the student performers, who had not performed at Seattle U. For Third-year Psychology major Kekoa Vierra, Battle of the Bands was her singing debut.

Singing had always been a private hobby of Vierra’s, she would sing in the shower or in the car alone. When she submitted an audition, she had no idea she would be picked as a finalist for Battle of the Bands.

"I auditioned at the last second because I thought it'd be something fun to do and I want to get more involved in Seattle U events," Vierra said. "I've always been confused about singing and whether I'm good enough. There's a lot of pressure singing in front of a lot of people, but I thought I would give it a shot. I'm excited to be a finalist."

Vierra explained that her parents were excited for her to perform and step out of her comfort zone. She noted how they are always pushing her to be her best self and that she feels lucky to have a strong relationship with them.

"My mom and my dad have always been my number one supporters when it comes to singing and just really wanting me to get my voice out in the world," Vierra said.

Vierra expressed that she used Battle of the Bands as an opportunity to expand her music and overcome her fears.

"With music, I've always held myself back. By doing this, I feel like it's just giving me that extra push that I needed to be like, 'alright, I can do this,'" Vierra said. "And regardless of the outcome of Battle of the Bands, I think I'm just lucky enough to be able to have this opportunity to build my confidence and use music more often in my life."

After the performances ended, audience members participated in a poll to determine the winner. Although Vierra did not expect to even be a finalist of Battle of the Bands, at the end of the event, Bleu announced that Vierra had received the most votes and would be the opening artist at the next SEAC event, Quadstock.

During Battle of the Bands, it was announced that the headliners for Quadstock would be Seattle-based artist, Umi, and 2000s indie pop band, AJR. Vierra will be the opener for this event that will be held May 22.

Although the pandemic has shifted the way events can be held, SEAC proved that we're all in this together and there are creative ways to host successful events. In the words of Ms. Darbus, "that's showbiz."