

# WRRC music festival rocks out

By Madeleine Johnson  
Staff Writer

From the mastermind behind the infamous "Ballad of Dean Mayo" came the first of two WRRC-sponsored music festivals. The April 14 show featured mostly acts from the Rider-based Lunchbox/KDT Records. Performers treated the packed Bart Luedeke Center pub to original songs and familiar covers while trading witty barbs with audience members.

Junior Brian Spitz is in charge of both the festival and the record label. Spitz said he is proud of his two-month-old "very independent" label and has high hopes for the future.

"I'm taking the necessary steps for this to become an official company," Spitz said. "There are plans for a larger tour outside of Rider and I also want us to start producing our own CDs."

With an ever-growing network of performers, Lunchbox/KDT Records has signed Rider students and musicians from both New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Featured artists at Wednesday night's show included Luck Out with Spitz, sophomore Bill Lambusta and Liz Gayder from Bayville, N.J., the Deans with Spitz and junior Drew Novelli and junior Kevin Titze played under the name of Spencer Rodgers. Matt Pischl and Nick Donis from Worcester, P.A., former Rider student Ian Paul and the south Jersey band Walter's Alter Ego



Photo by Madeleine Johnson

Singer and guitarist junior Drew Novelli sings one of his original songs at the WRRC sponsored music festival in the Bart Luedeke Center pub.

also performed.

Kristy Lynn Baldwin, Jason "Jay" Portizo and Ellen "Eek" Kasiske make up Walter's Alter Ego, with Brian Cromer on loan from The Opposites for Wednesday's show. Recently profiled in *The Aquarian*, a New Jersey indie rock magazine, the group of "good-natured and serious" musicians have created a sound that transcends established musical genres.

"We take what exists in rock n' roll and combine it with what was perfected in classical music," said guitarist and backup vocalist Portizo. "Our violinist [Kasiske] and cellist

help to create that sound."

Lead singer Baldwin said the band was not only missing a few key members that night but also was taking on new musicians.

"This whole acoustic thing is kind of new," she said. "This whole violinist thing is new, too."

While most of the songs were originals, each act offered at least one cover of a familiar tune played in its own style. The varied group of musicians pleased many of the audience members, including sophomore Rebecca Knab.

"It was diverse," Knab said.

"They're all playing different kinds of music, but it's also not male-oriented."

Knab, along with other audience members, frequently watches various Lunchbox/KDT musicians perform at Brownwater, Rider's open mike night held every Tuesdays in the BLC pub. She was one of the many who drew comparisons between the informal improv sessions and Wednesday's event.

"It really is like Brownwater, but in a bigger and more organized role," she said.

Other audience members enjoyed the comfortable and

carefree ambience of the show.

"The whole atmosphere of the night is so laid back that everyone is having a great time," junior Jess Lelli said. "My only problem is that there wasn't much publicity in my dorm. The only flyers I saw were in the academic buildings."

Despite the unbalanced advertising, the music festival drew almost fifty people to the BLC pub. Many credited both the turnout and the night's overall success to Spitz.

"Brian [Spitz] did a great job organizing this event," sophomore Ken Levin said. "Without him, this whole thing would have never happened."

Spitz was quick to pass the credit back to Levin, "the unnamed help."

"The show wouldn't have gone so well without people like Ken," he said. "We had a lot of technical difficulties throughout the night and Ken was always right on top of things."

Already looking ahead, Spitz is working on plans for the radio station, WRRC and Lunchbox/KDT Records.

"As far as I know, the station has never sponsored an event like this," he said. "It hasn't been promoting itself very well lately, so the station and the label are using each other as resources. There's too much talent in the label and station to let them sit around and do nothing."

# America's Hung on Idol's favorite reject

By Bill Greenwood  
Opinion Editor

Review

Why? After listening to William Hung's debut CD, *Inspiration*, this was the only question that immediately sprung to mind. The world knows that Hung can't sing to save his life, having witnessed his atrocious "skills" during the auditions for *American Idol 3*. So why is it that *Inspiration* has debuted at number 34 on the Billboard Albums Chart?

Well, Hung is a genuine person for one thing. He has a real passion for singing and that's something you don't see much of these days. After getting ripped by Simon Cowell on *American Idol*, Hung simply stated that he had given it his best shot and had no regrets about his performance. This is a far cry from many of the other wannabes who fought with Cowell, screaming at the top of their lungs about their superior talent in vain hopes that their abysmal performances would be drowned out in a sea of complaints.

So Hung is passionate about singing. That can't be denied. Unfortunately for him, however, his complete and utter lack of talent is just as evident. This man cannot sing, period. He never comes close to being anywhere near on-key throughout the duration of this album. Furthermore, his rendition of R. Kelly's "I Believe I Can Fly" is downright unlistenable. The track brings to mind what it would sound like if a man was beaten viciously while forced to sing at the same

time. Now if that's your cup of tea then go pick up this record right away.

This CD is not good. There's no denying it. However, it is something that everyone has to hear at least once. The album is just hilarious from beginning to end. From Hung's spoken word inspirational messages to his frenzied covers of the Eagles' "Hotel California," Enrique Iglesias' "Bailamos" and, most famously, Ricky Martin's "She Bangs," every track screams comedy. Furthermore, those who choose to waste 15 of their hard earned dollars will be treated to a bonus DVD featuring footage of Hung recording the album and performing live.

Even with the free DVD, there is no way that this album can justify the loss of \$15. To be extremely blunt, this is one of the worst records to ever be made by anyone ever. Hung has absolutely no place on the Billboard Charts, much less at number 34, and the sales of his record show just how eager the American public is to latch onto the *American Idol* bandwagon, leaving scores of more deserving musicians undiscovered by the wayside.

However, for those who just want to laugh and laugh heartily, make sure that you download, copy or otherwise listen to this album. It very well might make your ears bleed, but it will also put a smile on your face. After all, it could be worse. It could be the Macho Man Randy Savage.

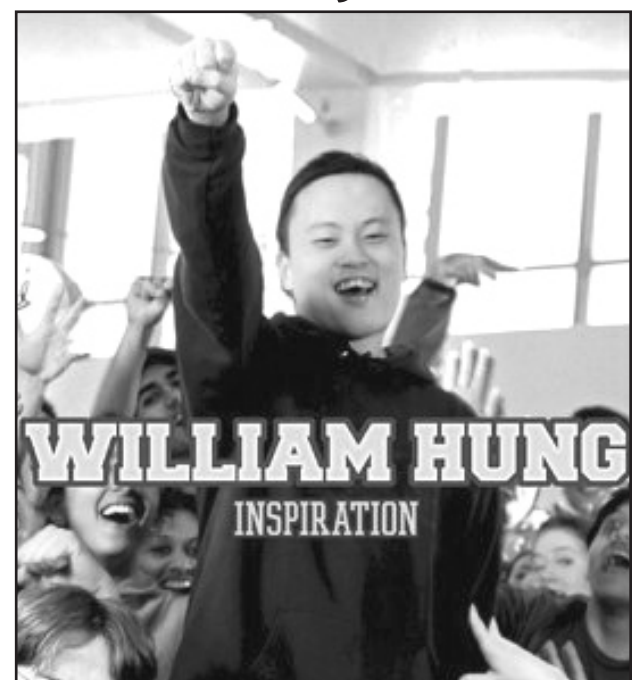


Photo copyright Koch Records

After his unsuccessful attempt to become America's next pop superstar on the hit reality show *American Idol*, William Hung has found fame with his joke of an album entitled *Inspiration*.