

Funk jammers Dangerboy emerge victorious at UArts' Battle of the College Bands

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Dangerboy at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

Last Friday, UArts Radio and Laurie Wagman Presents hosted Philly Battle of the Bands at the University of the Arts. The event had five bands from five different schools from in or around Philadelphia compete for a \$200 prize.

This event was created solely by Allie Dicciani, a UArts Music Business Entrepreneurship and Technology major, as her senior thesis project. Growing up in a musical family, it is almost second nature to want to be a part of the industry, but even so, this event was a huge undertaking for a sole person project and she pulled it off almost flawlessly. With the event being exclusively run by students — sound, lights, media, promotion, booking — the fact that the only notable issues that occurred were the mains (speakers) breaking during sound check causing door time to be delayed is fantastic.

Philly rapper The Bul Bey started off the night as the host, pumping up the crowd to get hyped for the bands. The line up for the night went as follows:



Brightbill at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

Drexel University's Brightbill



afloat at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

Rowan University's afloat



Vasey Hall at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

Villanova University's Vasey Hall



Dangerboy at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

University of the Arts's Dangerboy



Rally Point at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

and last but not least Temple University's Rally Point.

The panel of judges included Kristen Nagy, talent buyer for LiveNation; Rashid Williams, drummer for John Legend and drummer / music director for Jill Scott; and Ross Bellenoit, a guitarist, producer, and leader of the band Muscle Tough. Although the criteria for judging was unknown, the space entailed they were looking for stage performance and overall sound.



Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPn

Each band was fantastic, all playing vastly different sets with extremely different vibes. The only thing that was stable is a range of time for the full set length. For example, Ray Jho from Vasey Hall packed an unexpected scream that truly wowed the crowd. Brightbill dramatically waved a guitar in the air after some sound issues like there wasn't even a problem, a true rock star. Set after set, each band highlighted their unique styles in the best way. After a fiercely debated run, the winner (to the audience's cheering delight) was the UArts band Dangerboy.



Max and Ellis from Dangerboy at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPn

The modern rock and hip-hop duo was started in California by Max Murnik and Ellis Rovin (pictured above) in 2015. They mix classical West Coast rap with jazzy live instrumentation and 2010s R&B arrangements creating a harmony of sounds that both fall in the scene of the “Valley” they grew up but also differentiates them from anything currently out there.

When the band moved to Philly, all of its members and management enrolled in UArts. After relocating, the band found new band members to play live sets. For Battle of the Bands, they played a 12 minute three-song medley of “Give Me Your Love,” “Changes,” and “U.S.”



Dangerboy at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPn

Dangerboy now consists of seven members at live performances. They are fronted by their original Max on vocals, and Ellis on keyboards and Abelton, but have since added Landon Herock on guitar, Zach Guise on bass, Craig Hamilton on drums, Stephen Robinson on keys and Jay Cabrera on sax creating a truly full sound of delightful proportions. This rich sound filled the room as much as the bandmates filled the stage.



Frontman Max Murnik, a freshman at University of the Arts, is also fundamental to their success. His charisma on and off stage is one of a true leader. Reminiscent of Tyler Glenn from Neon Trees, and Cole Becker from SWMRS, Max is very energetic through the entirety of the set. He moves in short, shaking motions, intensifying each note with his vibrations. His deep vocals seem like they couldn't possibly come from a man that age, and they make him a stand out lead in the forever growing sea of upcoming artists.



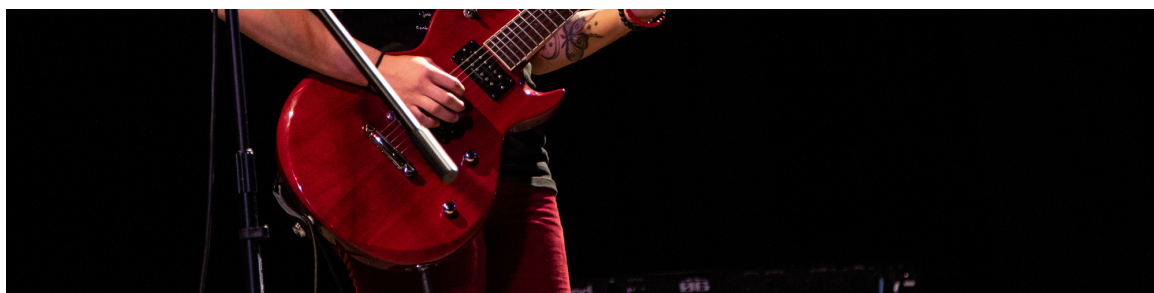
Dangerboy at Philly Battle of the Bands | photo by Gabriela Barbieri for WXPB

They currently have three singles out, with the most recent one being released on the same day as the battle of the bands. This single, "The Essential Skill of Staying Stuck", is a ballad that conveys the experience of a negative romantic relationship in the San Fernando Valley of California, where they grew up.

The Battle of the Bands was a beginning for Dangerboy: they just got booked as the opener for Omar Apollo at the Foundry of The Fillmore Philly on June 1st, so, If you missed them at the Battle of the Bands, or want to see them again, you can see them there. Details at **the XPN Concert Calendar** (<http://xpn.org/events/concert-calendar>). Check out the gallery below for more pictures from the show.



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