Music inspires students

Sean Goodwin, Staff Writer | Posted: Monday, February 19, 2018 3:14 pm

The Songwriting Summit brought a variety of professional songwriters to help music students improve personal compositions.

Songwriters who attended included Bleu McAuley, professor Eleni Mandell, Kyle Neal, Sarah Lentz, Sonja Midtune, Keaton Simons, professor Kelly Jones and professor Arthur.

“As soon as you step on stage, every noise you make becomes your responsibility,” Kyle Neal said.

Neal replaced Mara Connor who was originally set to attend the event, but couldn’t due to a family emergency.

The Songwriting Summit was held Feb. 15 in the Music Recital Hall.

Preselected students were called onstage during the event to play a song, while experts provided constructive criticism.

Experts were honest when it came down to critics, but they still gave plenty of praise.

Every songwriter presented their own perspective on how to write music, which caused an interesting clash of opinions.

“Everybody has an opinion and point of view,” Keaton Simons said.

This event was a unique opportunity for students to take suggestions from professionals to enhance their work.

The summit encouraged students to be open to receive advice from anyone that heard their music.

“Every song can become a successful song if you have the right tools,” Bleu McAuley said. “Build your toolbox.”

Experts emphasized that even bad songs have the potential to be something great.

“You can finish a song, hate it and then come back to take what you liked,” Neal said.

Students were very curious to learn how professionals find inspiration.
Multiple students asked experts how to get into the mindset of creating a good song during the question and answer portion at the beginning of the event,

“The best ideas always come in the bathroom, but you can’t always be in the bathroom,” McAuley said. Peterson stated, “Take your happy space with you.”

Although every expert had a different writing style, each encouraged that a good idea can come from anywhere.

“The discipline of writing all the time is the ability to capture the moments when they come,” McAuley said.

The event was a success, and although it lasted three hours, experts and students remained interacting long after the event ended.

If you missed out on this year’s event, the Songwriting Summit takes place annually for anyone interested in learning more about composing songs.