Music summit attracts songwriters

Elaine DeLeon, Staff Writer | Posted: Tuesday, March 1, 2016 7:00 am

The third annual Songwriting Summit was held at Cal Poly Pomona’s Music Recital Hall on Wednesday at which many students gained insight from music industry experts.

Arthur Winer and Kelly Jones, an associate professor and a lecturer at CPP’s Department of Music respectively, hosted the event.

Music industry experts began the summit with an open discussion with students. The experts elaborated on their backgrounds and explained what inspired them to become songwriters.

Student performances followed the discussion. The experts critiqued each performance and offered advice to the songwriters.

“I was looking for more opportunities to showcase what I got and trying to figure what I can improve upon it … and this seem like a perfect fit,” said Ben Burr, a second-year music industry studies student.

After student performances, the experts showcased their talents.

Winer has hosted the summit every year and has worked to make sure students receive proper exposure to the music business.

“Like all the other summits, the most important aspect of it is to help the students and give them access to experts that they wouldn’t otherwise have access to,” said Winer. “And beyond that, it’s just a nice event to have people come out to Cal Poly [Pomona] … and let them see what we can do.”

Before the summit, Winer directed an ensemble called the Songwriter Showcase in spring 2015. To prepare students, he invited one or two experts to what he describes as master classes. During the classes, students performed in front of experts and received advice on how they could improve their playing.

The summit takes the master class structure to another level. More experts are added and students receive the opportunity for personal instruction. Winer also offered advice at the summit and performed.

“I’ve been doing a lot of these master classes with only one or two experts, and I thought it would be fun and interesting to bring in a lot of experts at once and also give students an opportunity to work one-on-one with them,” said Winer.

This year about half of the experts that attended the summit were new to the event.
The Summit is open to the public and invites students of all majors. Music students found the event especially enjoyable, as it gave them a chance to interact with professionals in their field and see fellow music students perform.

“I think this will help encourage them to pick up their songwriting more and prove their songwriting abilities,” said Joanne Serrano, a fourth-year music industry studies student.