

Open Mic Night

Bandemonium's loss, along with the loss of both Bus Stop and Rockefeller Room (which disappeared around the same time), left a huge vacuum in Hinman College with regards to social events and programming. However, filling this void would be a much smaller and low-scale, but no less popular musical/creative event: Open Mic Night. The concept of Open Mic Night was simple: on Sunday nights set up a microphone and speakers in the Hinman Commons (if the weather was bad) or outside on the Hinman Patio and allow singers/songwriters or performers of any kind the opportunity to perform in front of an audience. In many ways Open Mic Night was getting back to the roots of the original Bus Stop. Instead of the sometimes wild and "anything goes" type of entertaining of later Bus Stops, Open Mic Night performances were generally low-key, relaxed affairs in a coffee-house type atmosphere with a more folksy genre of music being performed in the vein of performers like John Mayer, who was popular at the time. Far from the huge, arena rock-style performances of Bandemonium, Open Mic Night was a simple, informal affair playing to a relatively small audience in a casual setting and atmosphere. At the height of its popularity, groups from all over campus and even off campus (like the group "One Who Stayed") came to Hinman to perform in front of an audience. Sadly, even Open Mic Night would not last long. Around 2004-2005 Open Mic Night would disappear from the Hinman radar screen. This was in large part because the people who were really instrumental in setting it up graduated and there was no new generation of music enthusiasts who were willing to take it up. A few Open Mic Nights are still held each year, but they are a shadow of what they once were. Still, the legacy of Open Mic Night continues to this day whenever there is an event where performers can pick up their instruments and play to a crowd, all for the love of music.