On Campus

Shake, Battle, and Roll

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Photo illustration by Columbia Magazine. (Anna Strbka / Columbia Spectator, Colette Gentile, Monette Scipio, Nyah Lee)

Here’s a campus clash we can get behind: Bacchanal’s annual Battle of the Bands, a high-decibel contest fought with guitars, drumsticks, and vocal cords. Bacchanal, the student-run music-events club that produces Columbia’s spring concert, also called Bacchanal, hosted the annual melodic melee, held in Wang Pavilion in Lerner Hall. Some 150 undergrads grooved to a mix of blues rock, R&B, indie, and folk rock from six student acts: Jennifer Surjadi, Benny and the Jets, Miss Demeanor, Federico Stock, Rosie Peppé, and Nudey. Battles don’t get more wholesome: No amps were smashed, no humans moshed, and the hardest substance on hand was Red Bull.

The winner, by crowd vote, was Columbia College senior Rosie Peppé, a soul-driven singer-songwriter from London. As her prize, Peppé would get to perform for thousands on Low Plaza at Bacchanal 2026, opening for the headliner, Fakemink, a London-based rapper and producer. Far from a battle, the concert promised to be a friendly British invasion. But on the eve of the concert, Fakemink pulled out, and Bacchanal's organizers dialed up American rapper Waka Flocka Flame to top the bill. Waka isn't British, but he is a king of the rap genre called "trap" (according to his 2018 song "King of the Trap"), and he was born in Queens. Call it a battle royal?

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