

A show so good we should charge admission

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The first monthly Tulane Talent Showcase @ Hillel took place on Oct. 1, and to my complete and utter relief and excitement, it was a smashing success. The event at the Mintz Center featured 11 acts of up to three Tulane students at a time, who had the option of playing one to three songs or controlling the floor for five to six minutes.



Aaron Cohen, a first-year student, performs one of his original songs, entitled "Good Morning, New Orleans," at the first Tulane Talent Showcase @ Hillel on Oct. 1. (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

Most of the performers played original acoustic singer-songwriter tunes with beautiful vocal harmonies, as well as covers of crowd-pleaser, sing-along pop songs. The event's performance options are flexible, however. We had a slam poet drop some fierce yet eloquent knowledge, an accordion-organist croon a highly suggestive Miguel number, a freestyle rapper invent some witty rhymes on the spot, and a poet paint a picture of a summer day long past.

Besides being organizer of the event, I banged out a howling grunge-folk original on guitar and then laid down a dangerously goofy rap track over a funky beat.

Our gracious host, [Tulane Hillel](#), provided yummy cookies, pita bread, hummus and tea for the evening.

From performing several times in an “open mic” event last year, to taking on the role of producer this year (I emcee the event, book the talent, secure the equipment, set up the room and communicate with Hillel to make sure everyone is on the same page), the Talent Showcase has been an extremely enriching part of my Tulane experience. I highly recommend participating if you are interested in practicing your performance chops in a low-pressure, nothing-but-supportive environment.

Even if you aren't a performer, you'd enjoy the show; believe me when I say it's so good we should charge admission.

The next Talent Showcase @ Hillel will take place on Nov. 5 at 8 p.m.

Benton Oliver is a senior at Tulane University majoring in communication and music.