

# Campus Spotlight



Adam Gross/staff photographer

Daniel Kairoff uses his laptop to produce original electronic music during Don Winsley's performance at the Garage last week.

## UNCA student infuses music with technology and design

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Friends and family know **Daniel Kairoff** as a UNC Asheville multimedia arts and sciences student by day. By night, they know him as one half of the electronic band Don Winsley.

"I first started playing music in middle school. I started messing around with this computer program called Fruity Loops, and I made weird sounds and tried to see what the strangest thing I could possibly do was," Kairoff said. "I gradually simplified that down to making beats and melodies."

Don Winsley consists of Kairoff and his friend **Glenn Yoder**, who plays drums. Kairoff's instrument is a little less conventional.

When on stage, he attaches his keyboard to his computer and produces sounds with the use of a synthesizer.

"Using just my computer as an instru-

ment on stage is very new to me," the 20-year-old junior said. "It's tough to describe exactly what I'm doing when I get up on stage with a Macbook Pro, because for all the audience knows, I could be playing solitaire up there. The way I look at it is the computer becomes my band or my orchestra, and I'm conducting it and telling it when to go and what to do. It's not really a musicianship, per se, but more of a craft."

Kairoff said he started playing bass guitar in high school and has since learned several instruments, including guitar and drums. He writes all of his own music.

"I always grew up with music in the house," he said. "My father is a classical pianist, and so music came really easy to me. I'm just now learning piano, interestingly enough."

Playing in bands is nothing new to Kairoff, who created funk bands in high school with his friends. He said Don Winsley is a newly formed band.

"We've had two or three shows in Ashe-

ville with this project," Kairoff said. "I've played a little bit in Winston-Salem, and somewhat in Greensboro. Before this (Don Winsley), I was in a band called Gold Bricks, and we did a good bit of shows in Asheville."

Although he enjoys performing multiple shows per month, Kairoff said he is wary of playing in the same city too often.

He recently played in Asheville at the Garage with fellow UNCA student **Ian Galdy** and performed at Signal Fest, a musical festival in Chapel Hill, last weekend. Funk and disco are among Kairoff's favorite genres of music, although he said classical composers influence him the most.

"From a compositional standpoint, I'm influenced a lot by Stravinsky," the Winston-Salem native said. "I used to listen to him as I would fall asleep as a little kid. I also love the complexity of Bach. I don't want to compare myself to anything that lofty or incredible, but if I could combine the energy I feel when I listen to Stravin-

sky with the intricacy of Bach, and a lot of Baroque composers, then I think that's what I would hope to do."

Kairoff, who is pursuing a concentration in animation, said he chose to study MMAS in part because the field has many similarities to music.

"Composing music is design, in a basic sense," he said. "I'm designing a space, especially with music production. It's not a visual space, but it's a space nonetheless."

Kairoff's talent in art extends beyond music and graphic design. He said in his spare time he draws. Additionally, during the summer, he taught guitar lessons to children in the south of Haiti for a month.

"I love to do everything with a high level of energy," he said. "That's very important to me. I want to continue with music after college, whether it's promotion or performance related."

Don Winsley's next performance takes place on Halloween night at the MoogFest afterparty.