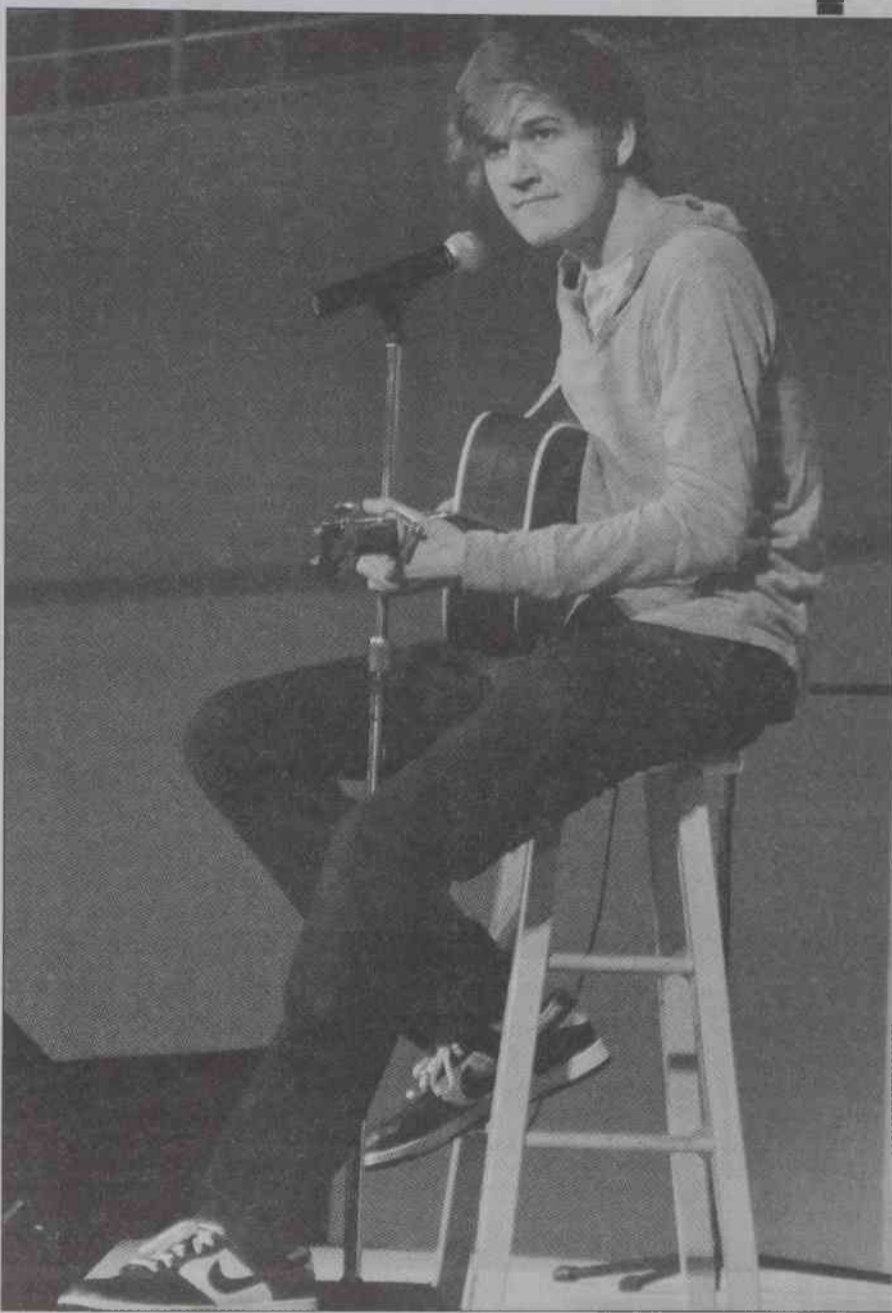


# burns 'em up

## Bo Burnham



Comedian Bo Burnham entertained in Alumni Gym for several hours Sept. 20. Burnham faced technical difficulties, but continued on with the show.

LINDSAY FENDT | Photo Editor

Kit Arbuckle  
Reporter

A lot of things were working against Bo Burnham and his show Tuesday, Sept. 21. There were conflicting messages sent out regarding the time of the event, causing some students to arrive more than an hour early. Audience members were let in late, causing the show itself to start behind schedule. Finally, even though the show took place in the newly renovated Alumni Gym, technical problems plagued the show at every turn.

Burnham rose above it all, though, and gave Elon University students a night of intellectual and profane comedy they'll not soon forget.

Burnham's brand of comedy is witty and pubescent, honest and outrageous, and above all, snarky. He addressed race, sex, Catholic school and a myriad of other controversial topics with a straight face as his audience roared with laughter.

And, while he matched many older comedians in political incorrectness, the truly unique aspect of his show was the music. Burnham sang frankly and unabashedly at his electric keyboard and with his guitar, performing both new and previously well-received material.

The nature of Burnham's show is to shock his audience into laughter by way of tactlessness and sincerity. Offensive it may be, but the up-and-coming artist said that his stage personality is different from his normal behavior.

Burnham attempted a particular skit involving several pre-recorded voices slowly being cut together to form a song, but a technical goof ended it short just as things were escalating toward a finale. He claimed the night of the show

was the first time he attempted the skit, so there is hope that the bugs will be fixed in the future.

At one point, Burnham even went so far as to recite Hamlet's famous "to be or not to be" soliloquy and then stepped back to ask, "What does that (even) mean?"

Burnham is a native of Hamilton, Mass., where he was born in 1990. His age makes him both appealing and relatable for college-age people — if he were still in school, he would be a junior in college. His songs tend to focus on such serious topics as real-world angst, relationships and self-doubt, but all, of course, with a humorous twist.

He began posting videos of his songs on YouTube in 2006, while still in high school.

In the fall of 2007, talent agent Douglas Edley of The Gersh Agency contacted him — the same agent who represents Drew Carey and Dave Chappelle.

Burnham performed on Comedy Central shortly after he turned 18. Since then, Comedy Central Records has released his six-song EP, "Bo Fo Sho," in 2008 and his self-titled full album in 2009. He's been on two tours, won awards at the 2010 Edinburgh Festival Fringe, and reportedly has been contacted about several movie and television opportunities.

The turnout was better than anyone had expected, said SUB Stage Executive Meaghan Britain. According to Britain, the final attendance count exceeded 700 students.

Twenty-year-old Burnham has managed to capture the persona of a post-millennia adolescence. One certainly has to admire a performer who can sing so quickly, while still retaining excellent articulation and clever lyrics.

# K.O. Kid knocks out the competition

Ashley Watkins  
Reporter

It's about 1 a.m. and The Fat Frogg bar in Elon is jumping with music and dancing. Inside, a 20-year-old stands on the stage trying to freestyle a rap based off the word supercalifragilisticexpialidocious. He succeeds — the crowd screams and people wave their hands in the air. This is a typical performance night for up-and-coming area rapper K.O. Kid.

"A lot of people think my name stands for knockout, but my real name is Kobla. Full name Kobla Hargett," said K.O. Kid before the sound check of his Thursday night performance at The Fat Frogg.

Kid's nickname was given to him the way all good nicknames are: by just hanging out with friends.

"We had already been calling him K.O. for a long time, so it just kind of stuck," said Paul Barker, Kid's producer, better known in the music business as Ladro.

Kid is a senior biology pre-med major at East Carolina University. "My schedule is pretty hectic," he said, "It's pretty much a continuous grind."

He began rapping a little more than a year ago.

"I used to freestyle with my friends all the time at parties, just kicking it and having fun with people," he said.

He travels around the North Carolina area, particularly around Chapel Hill where he is from, trying to create a buzz. Though he has only been doing shows for one year, Kid writes all of his own music along with his producer, Ladro.

"He (Ladro) makes the beats, I



Rapper K.O. Kid performs at Fat Frogg on Thursday, Sept. 23rd. K.O. is a pre-med and biology student at East Carolina University, but performs around the state.

BRIAN ALLENBY | Staff Photographer

write the music," Kid said.

Kid and Ladro live in different towns, so they use video chat, e-mails and text messages to get the music and the beats combined to create a final product.

Kid takes influences from a lot

of the new rappers in the industry, especially those who have fresh ideas to influence music that is already out there.

"I'm influenced by the guys who are really almost not what hip hop has always been." Kid said. "A lot of

people would consider hip-hop to be the gangster area, that kind of thing. And right now, it's just a whole slew of these guys who are just coming out, cross genre rappers."

Kid said he draws a lot of inspiration from his family.

"The (new album) is called 'Doctor's Orders' and my dad is actually an ER physician," he said. "In high school and college he played in a band, so my father has a huge influence on everything I do, as does the rest of my family."

Though it has not always been his goal to become a rapper, rapping is something K.O. Kid would like to pursue in the future.

After working this past summer on HIV research in New York, the doctor he worked for has been trying to secure Kid a job. He said he hopes to continue to do music on the side of his professional job after college.

"I won't stop making music till I have to," he said of his future plans.

Along with being more seasoned in the industry, K.O. has found that music is more fun for him now. He said he loves the adrenaline that comes with rapping.

"The split second when you drop a word when you're freestyling. Everything can go wrong or you make it all go right. It's my favorite feeling. I live for it."

K.O.'s said his ultimate goal is to be at the top of whatever he's doing and to make music that people enjoy.

"I hope to share a whole bunch of perspective and just good times," she said. "I want to make music that people love and as far as what I look to gain for myself, whatever I can get. Wherever it goes, that's where I'm going."