Arts & Life

Music till midnight: Take 800 breaks through Quinnipiac

By KELSEY SWEET
Staff Writer

Music drifted across campus as Take 800 took the stage, drawing a small crowd of students outside their residence halls for an evening of live music. For the newly formed college band, it was a chance to introduce its talent to the campus community.

Take 800 is currently made up of four band members: Manon Shannon, who is currently attending Manchester Community College (MCC), Connor O'Shauchnessy, who attends Ellington High School, Quinnipiac sophomore civil engineering major Elias Slocum and Quinnipiac sophomore chemistry major Connor Hildebrand.

On Sept. 3, Take 800 brought new music to campus, and this performance was more than an evening of music. As a new band on campus, the group is working to find its sound, build an audience and create a place for live music within the community.

Take 800 was originally started around four months ago by lead singer Hildebrand and some close friends from Ellington High School, where each of the performers attended school and broke into their career.

"We all went to high school together and we kind of picked up playing instruments like a year ago," Hilderbrand said. "We did some playing, but we didn't do anything serious."

The band's performances have grown from casual practices with friends into regular shows all around Connecticut.

"We normally perform at a lot of bars and clubs around Connecticut and some in Massachusetts," Hildebrand said.

Their performance in front of Ledges and Troupe residence halls was another opportunity for the band to practice together and have an audience hear them live. For students watching from nearby residence halls, the performance offered an easy way to stop, listen and enjoy live music without having to leave campus.

"This summer we dedicated ourselves to actually form a band and get everyone (involved)," Hilderbrand said. "So Mannon and I, the drummer, got to be friends together."

The group's journey from casually playing together to performing for crowds has been gradual, beginning with practice sessions and eventually turning into paid performances.

"We did some practice, we learned lots of music and then we started out by just going to some open mics around Connecticut," Hilderbrand said. "After that, we eventually worked our way up to playing actual shows that would book us and (we would) get paid."

While Take 800 is still new, the band has already created memories from its performances that helped shape its experiences as a group. One of those memories came from their first-ever gig.

"The first gig was memorable because we were really nervous," Hilderbrand said. "It was at our high school that we used to go to, and they let us play for an event."

Since then, the nerves have become part of the excitement. For Take 800, each show is another opportunity to grow more comfortable together while sharing music they enjoy playing.

"As a band, I think we just want to kind of keep playing with each other," Hilderbrand said. "We're not really sure where it'll go. I know I want to, hopefully, do music as a full time thing."

Take 800 is starting to expand their music and ways people can listen.

A friend of Hildebrand and fellow band member, Shannon, found a strong connection with people involved in music back home.

"Me and Connor are founding members; I just always loved the idea of a band," Shannon said. "I love listening to music."

That passion for music has also pushed Shannon to look beyond playing covers.

"I didn't always intend to be a cover band, which is why we got a couple originals working," Shannon said. "That is something I wanna pursue, more original songs."

For Shannon, the appeal of being in a band goes far beyond the performance. It's about creating something of their own and continuing to develop their sound together. Many artists like to keep their favorite performances and memories in the back of their brain. Shannon does exactly that.

"(My favorite performance was) our Luther's Co-op gig, just because it was a really nice venture," Shannon said. "There were a bunch of guitars on the walls, and the sound person wasn't the kindest, but you know that happens."

Regardless of the challenges that come with performing, Shannon said the experience is what makes playing with Take 800 worthwhile. The same energy came through during the group's performance on campus, where I enjoyed being able to hear live music while watching the band interact and perform together.

"I love the whole band thing," Shannon said. "It's about doing it with your buddies, you know, making each other better."

You can watch them perform as the opener to Kids That Fly at Fall Fest Oct. 11.



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Is it almost time to 'Dance No More?'

The daunting nature of Harry Styles' future

By CLAIRE FRANKLAND
Editor-in-Chief

Wednesday, Sept. 9, my mom and I received an email filled with a mix of euphoria and confusion. And before you ask, no, it wasn't from a relative, friend or colleague and no one's life was in danger. Rather, this email was from no other than singer-songwriter Harry Styles.

Styles, who is currently en route to doubling his 15-night Love On Tour residency at Madison Square Garden with his 30-night residency of Together, Together, flooded every loyal fans inbox just hours before taking the stage with news that left many fans wondering what lies ahead.

In the email, Styles set the record straight that the following day he would be announcing a second leg of his Together, Together tour, expanding it into 11 more cities.

"Tomorrow's announcement will be the final cities of Together, Together. After that, I don't know what comes next for me, but I know that I'm excited to find out," Styles wrote.

Naturally, this announcement left fans in a bit of a predicament.

On one hand, the announcement meant expanding his existing Together, Together tour into 2027 and offering various locations for fans.

His second leg of the tour will visit Phoenix, Dallas, Los Angeles, Toronto, Atlanta, Chicago, Berlin, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Dublin and London. Currently, the Together, Together tour is only scheduled to have played in Amsterdam, London, Sao Paulo, Mexico City and New York City, and will make its way to Melbourne and Sydney later in the year.

Yet, the scariest part of the email for many fans is the unknown nature of what Styles mentions in the email, leaving many to speculate that the end of the road might be near.

Any fan of Styles would know that he is no stranger to going on a hiatus. After ending Love on Tour July 22, 2023, Styles would practically vanish off the face of the Earth.

Aside from random sightings walking around Vatican City or running in countries around the world, for nearly three years Styles' presence in the music industry was nonexistent, with the only trace of him appearing sporadically across people's "for you" pages.

Even on social media, Styles became inactive, only posting twice during the course of his hiatus: to promote his lifestyle and beauty brand "Pleasing" and to honor his former bandmate Liam Payne, after his passing in October 2024.

In January 2026, when Styles, at random, went live on YouTube, showing his 10-minute-long instrumental piano piece that closed out Love on Tour, fans lost it, torn over what the message meant.

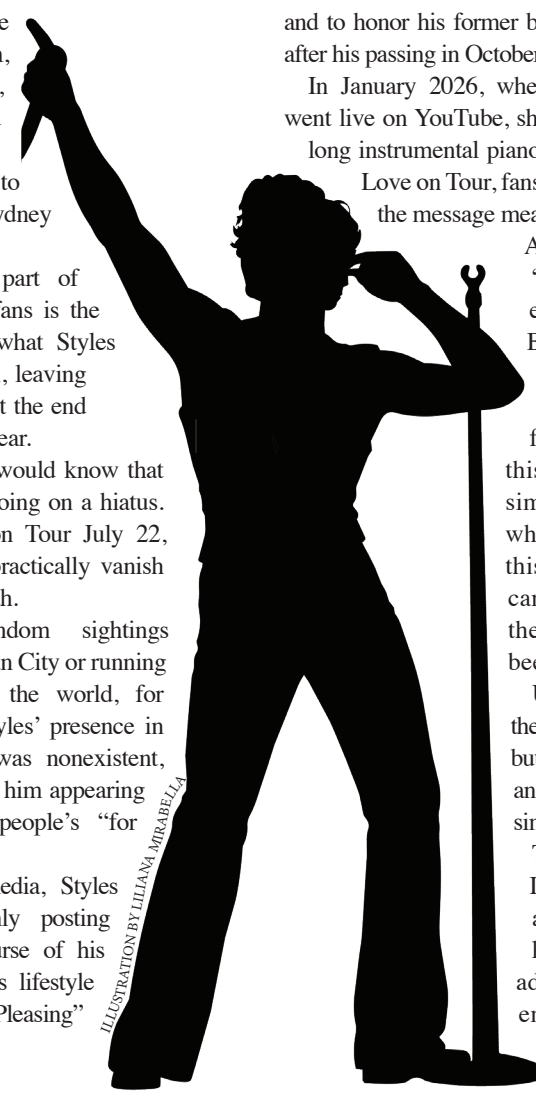

ILLUSTRATION BY LILIANA MIRABELLA

A video titled "Forever, Forever," ending with "We Belong Together" written across the screen as the video faded to black, with this cryptic message, simply no one knew what to think. Was this the end of his career? Or was this the comeback fans had been waiting for?

Ultimately, we know the latter would be true, but fast-forward to today, and fans are feeling similar mixed reactions.

Thankfully, though, I, for one, can take a sigh of relief knowing Styles addressed his cryptic email three days later during night nine of his MSG residency. And while Styles didn't completely confirm nor deny retirement in the near future, he expressed his wanting to be open and honest with his fanbase.

"I didn't wanna get to the end of the tour as we have previously and sort of say 'until next time.' I just wanted to be a little honest with you about that," Styles said.

He added, reflecting on his time in the music industry, which he consistently notes started during his teenage years when he was 16 years old.

"I'm working on learning to be content with what is enough, and I don't ever want these moments to ever feel less special because once they're done they're sort of on to the next thing," Styles said. "I wanted to be open with you and share it with you because I think, maybe, all together we can acknowledge how nice it is to be in these rooms and have these moments. It's been a privilege and an honour. Thank you so much."

So while fans were spiraling, thinking the end was near, it turns out it might not be as close as some think. Of course between releasing his fourth solo studio album, celebrating his 32nd birthday in February and his unconfirmed relationship with actress Zoe Kravitz, no one can know for sure what is going on Styles' mind, but only time can tell because "come on Harry" we want to keep dancing with all our friends.