



THE WAKE

fortnightly student magazine

volume 23 - issue 1



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Art by Alex Kozak



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The Wake was founded by Chrin Ruen & James DeLong.

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GUTS, everything is alive, "Bottoms" top, The other Black Girl, Theater camp and The Land is so Inhospitable and So Are We images from original sources

Like to do art, poetry or anything creative ?

Send it to us!

We are looking for more creative submissions! Art, poetry, DIY coloring pages, photography or anything else you want to submit. Email art@wakemag.org for any of your fun and/or freaky submissions :)

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wink! one page magazine

#GRWM

Obscure outfit edition



For when you go to your favorite cafe, get your \$8 latte and then do absolutely no work

For when you have to go pick something up from your ex's house and you want to talk just to "clear the air"



For when you are running late to that class presentaion you forgot about and stayed up too late at your local bars karaoke night



For when your car breaks down and you have to bike to your great aunts funeral



For any day in Minnesota in the fall, when it is 40 degrees in the morning then 85 when you leave class

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UPCOMING EVENTS

9/27

The Glorious Sons

Doors at 7pm and tickets are \$20. The Glorious Sons are a canadian rock 'n' roll band touring with their new album Glory which features heartfelt and vulnerable lyrics that are both personal and universal at the same time.

First Avenue

9/28

Black History of Jazz

Conversation on the African roots of Jazz and its evolution as an outlet of expression for Black identity, culture, struggle, and joy. Presenters include Ayodele Casel, a critically-acclaimed tap dancer and choreographer, Michael Gallope, a musician and scholar of critical theory, philosophy, and sound, and Elliott Powell, a scholar of U.S. popular music, race, sexuality, and politics.

Best Buy Theater in Northrop

Doors at 2:30pm; free event but registration required.

9/30

"Going Out, Coming In"

Walking Tour is from 10-11:30am and tickets are \$14. A guided tour of LGBTQIA+ spaces in downtown Minneapolis that highlight stories of queer love and resistance.

Mill City Museum

9/29, 30 and 10/1

Arsenic and Old Lace

Starts at 7:30pm on Friday and Saturday and 2pm on Sunday; Tickets are \$18-25. Don't miss the last week of this dark, witty, and twisted play that follows Mortimer Brewster who discovers his sweet aunt's penchant for poisoning lonely old men and his endeavour to keep this new-found knowledge from the police and his fiancéé.

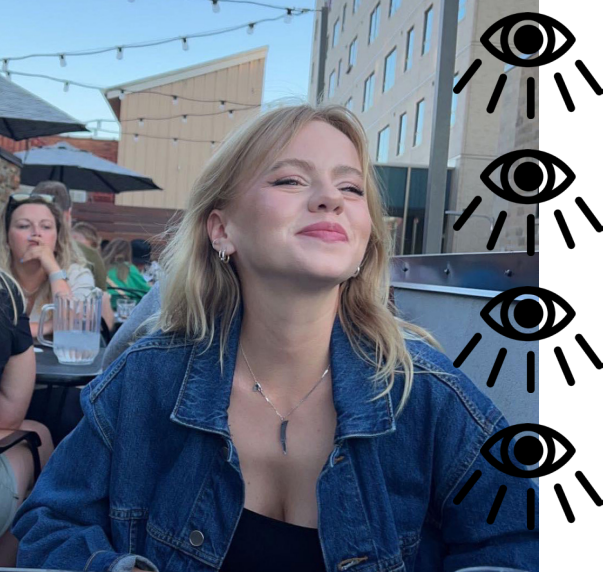
Theater in Round

10/1

Chappell Roan

Doors at 5:30pm and tickets are \$31. Chappell Roan is a fantastical storyteller who explores queer love and its ups and downs in her new album The Rise & Fall of a Midwest Princess.

First Avenue



Letter from the Editor in Chief

Dear Reader,

Sunday, April 1st (I believe some time around 4 p.m.PM), was the day I received the email. I had gotten the job, selected to be The Wake Magazine's next Editor-in-Chief for the 2023-2024 school year here at the University of Minnesota. I immediately texted my good friend Morgan, one of The Wake's original EICs in the early 2000s during its first days. "CONGRATULATIONS! You are the head of an alternative press for a city-sized campus. Your work is real-world work." Her message, upon first read, first inspired elation, which was then quickly followed by feelings of abject terror. Of course, there is nothing like the visceral grip of imposter syndrome to kickstart your tenure as the Editor -in -Chief of a commentary magazine with a legacy of over twenty years.

During this last summer, I grappled with these feelings of not being good enough. Was this the "right" decision? What if I was unable to handle the responsibility? Specifically, the B- I earned in high school public speaking came to mind when considering the fact that I would have to get up in front of thirty some people to deliver pitches and talk about the magazine. I was not nearly extroverted enough, interesting enough, organized enough, etc. (trust me, the list could go on forever).

I considered my options. Option A: back out, confess to my alleged lack of competency. Go to bed comforted in this newfound absence of responsibility, and perhaps lie awake wondering what could have been. Or, Option B: say "I do" (in sickness and in health), and start viewing my new position less as an insurmountable undertaking, and more as an incredible privilege to do something amazing.

Hi, my name is Sophia, I chose Option B (hence, why you are reading this letter now), and I solemnly swear that I am now only slightly terrified to be The Wake's new EIC (just kidding!). The worry that once occupied my thoughts about the future of the magazine has now been replaced by what I can only describe as pride. This year, I am so so proud to not only be a part of, but head this organization comprised of some of the most creative, intelligent, and talented writers and artists I have ever met. I am honored to have been chosen for the opportunity to continue The Wake's incredible legacy, and I am excited to see where I can take it.

Thank you for choosing me, it is going to be an amazing year.

Yours,

Sophia
Editor in Chief



Art by Zoë Meyer

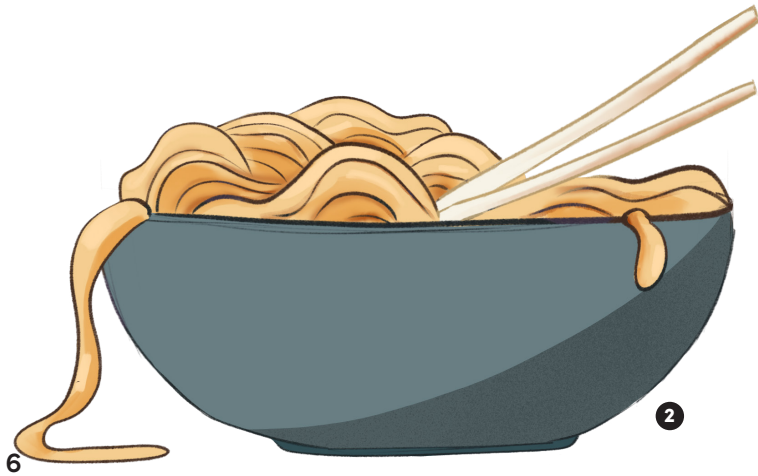
Exploring Minnesota: Thai Food Edition

By Abigail Vela

Many different events throughout the Twin Cities often go overlooked. For example, every year, there is a Thai food festival called MinneThai, which showcases food, clothing, crafts, and cultural dances. I had never heard of this festival before, but this year, I decided to check it out. MinneThai was a two-day event that took place from September 16-17.

Right away, I noticed how many people were in attendance; families of all different backgrounds gathered to appreciate the food and culture showcased at the festival. People kept moving from vendor to vendor, looking at the food, sweets, jewelry, toys, and flowers. The food was delicious and plentiful. The first thing I got was some vegetarian spring rolls and a tea lemonade, which were so good an Bianca Llerena d came in big portions. There was simply so much food that there was no way to try everything in a day. The food was exquisite and so were the deserts (mochi donuts are always a hit for me) and it was evident that everyone agreed: I witnessed many people go back for seconds or thirds.

Outside of selling food, there were also a lot of different vendors. Although I did not buy anything, I looked at a couple of really beautiful pieces at the jewelry stands (fortunately they only took cash or I would've spent a lot of money). The handcrafted pieces were beautiful and such a hit with all festivalgoers. They also had gorgeous handcrafted toys and knick-knacks that caught my attention, as did the fresh flower arrangements they were selling. There was even a stage where they had competitions, dances, and even a drag show. They also advertised a fashion show which I was not able to see. Overall, it was an awesome experience that broadened my knowledge about a culture that I was not very familiar with before. Not to mention, the food was worth the trip! 👁



The B.O.N.K. Show

The B.O.N.K. Show: A lesson in mid-night debauchery

By Quinn McClurg

How many times have you heard the tired phrase “nothing good happens after midnight”? Well, if you’d like to prove it wrong once, then right for several weeks afterwards, I hope you didn’t miss the B.O.N.K. Show; all other post-midnight activities will pale in comparison.

What does B.O.N.K. stand for? It’s Better Off Not Knowing, literally—and that’s all you need to know before attending! I attended the first show knowing nothing at all. It was midnight in mid June, and I was pulled by a group of rave-fluent friends to many dark, abandoned buildings to find... a truck? A stage? Some hot jazz and dirty blues from the top of said stage-truck? A topless puppeteer? Whatever it was, it wasn’t a rave, but I knew I had to stick around to find out more. Before I knew it, I ended up going to all three shows this summer.

The B.O.N.K. Show is an eclectic display, a midnight cabaret of acts ranging from puppetry to acrobats, and burlesque to body horror. Even the stage, the Fox & Beggar Theater’s “Gonzago,” fits the B.O.N.K. Show’s ideals of experimentation: the side of this 18’ box truck flips outward to create a stage and the top railings extend upward to create a bandstand. Even sound and light systems are included too.

These are no no-name acts either. Previous performers have included the New-York-based performance artist Enormous Face, Sadye Osterloh and Matt McCorkle of the Flotsam River Circus, Kansas-City-based Molly Balloons, and soul and swing-styled jazz from Miss Myra’s Moonshiners.

The B.O.N.K. Show is also a fantastic showcase of local painters, costume creators, and other visual artists. Stage dressings are sufficiently lavish and whimsical, while costumes are kitschy; clownish enough to stick in both your memory and your heart. Although the summer season of this midnight debauchery has finished, this inexplicable whimsy is sure to continue next summer. If you feel up to the task, consider applying to act in the show yourself. If not, you may just run into me, and dozens of other happily confused folk, soaking up the magic of the stage. 👁

One Month After Nudieland

By Quinn McClurg

The long shadow of Nudieland has fallen thick and absolute; I know it will continue to stretch far, far into the future, equally ignored or understated by most media. One month later, most of the articles about Nudieland include mentions to the queer and transgender elements of the community affected. However, despite several articles being written immediately afterwards, the first article to mention the LGBTQ+ community or the nature of the shooting as a hate crime was published four days later.

Both in grief and the newscycle, four days may as well be a lifetime. When the folks affected were dealing with the hardest and most immediate processes of grief, the few running headlines read: “1 dead, 6 injured after mass shooting at Minneapolis punk show.”

If folks didn’t read beyond the headline (or haven’t had experience inside the punk community), they would assume the shooter was a punk, some sort of violent person spreading their violent subculture. If folks did read the story in question, they would have seen no mention of the LGBTQ+ community present, the mutual-aid communities present, or the fact that the shooting was queerphobic in nature. Like always, the people affected were reduced to a number, a handful of pixels on a screen.

I felt especially bitter about this article, as I was one of the first folks interviewed. I spent upwards of 15 minutes talking to the reporter about how beautiful and immediately supportive the scene is, how Nudieland is a haven, and how queer and trans folks were targeted. The editorial team only used my brief description of the shooting itself, something I strongly discouraged.

I understand the dynamics of the inverted pyramid and the nothing-but-facts, breaking-news formula, but the fact that integral LGBTQ+ elements were so easily overlooked is nothing short of erasure; Nudieland wouldn’t have been attacked if it wasn’t motivated by anti-LGBTQ+ hate. The day after the shooting, I attended a friends-and-family event for August Golden, the well-loved musician killed at Nudieland. Enraged with the article, I talked to some other punks there, mentioning how, as a journalist, I thought I could be careful enough. Someone responded with something along the lines of, “huh... explains why

you were holding out hope for the media.”

Maybe it goes without saying why punks don’t trust the media; maybe it goes without saying why punks have only ever had each other for support. And support did come flooding in. Several GoFundMe pages were made for Tonio (a critically injured victim), six other injured victims, Caitlin (August’s partner), and the residents of Nudieland, each one receiving tens of thousands of dollars. Journalism didn’t spread the word of the mutual aid or fundraising pages though, only social media posts and word of mouth. Benefit concerts, free meals, and free counseling all popped up to support survivors, proving invaluable in reinforcing the community’s cohesion.

In almost every way, Nudieland was a reality check; the realities of grief, death, injury, gun violence, toxic masculinity, misogyny, queerphobia, and media coverage set in. But so too did the realities of love, support, catharsis, cohesion, and community. I’ve come a long way after the shooting. However, at the time of writing, I can’t help but feel immense rage that such an act of violence

occurred, especially in the punk community, one built on infinite amounts of radical love and acceptance. Just one action based on senseless hatred disrupted so many lives forever, lives of folks who were already downtrodden, disadvantaged, marginalized, and stigmatized. I, alongside many other queer and trans individuals, have been afraid to leave my house presenting; we’ve been battling trauma and mental illness; we’ve been flinching at every door slammed or horn honked; we’ve been missing sleep, missing meals, and missing each other, especially since work or school can’t be put off forever. And this grief, this rage, this hurt—it isn’t just for the folks who were immediately impacted; all of it is meant to be shared. We all should know the realities of these emotions so we can better contextualize the depths of the human experience alongside the texture of the sociopolitical world we are living in. I have to do something with this rage, and I have to live through the rest of my life carrying it. Maybe, like many others impacted, I’ll use it for art, maybe for organizing, maybe for mutual aid. But right now, ever since my first interview, I am going to use it to be a better journalist, objectivity and inverted pyramid be damned; lord knows those immediately impacted need it the most 👁



“Breaking the Balls of History”: Quasi at 7th Street Entry

A two-member psycho-pop band from Portland, Oregon, Quasi made their way over to 7th Street Entry. Minneapolis should be so lucky.

By Bianca Llerena

Phonetically pronounced “kwa-zee,” this real-deal indie rock band roped in their dynamic fanbase at 7th Street Entry on a Tuesday night this September 12th. With their iconic “QUASI” poster hung up on stage and both members of the band selling their merchandise at the counter, opener Ava Mendonza played her heavy rock/improvised jazz music. Thankfully for the late-comers, tickets were still available at the door for just \$20. Then, Quasi came to the stage.

Right away, they opened up with “Last Long Laugh,” a classic song from their newest album “Breaking the Balls of History.” Sam Coomes and Janet Weiss, both on vocals, seemed at home on the small stage and with the loving crowd; they completely let loose and rocked their setlist. Their idiosyncratic rock sound paired with their balmy energy created a heated energy that permeated the atmosphere. The concertgoers beamed with excitement.

Their loud techno rocksichord and drums pounded through the little venue and people started to dance. The crowd was somewhat sparse with green “Quasi” t-shirts appearing now and again. As they played, watching Sam Coomes on the keyboard was invigorating: he sang with gusto and passion, closing his eyes from time to time, melting with the music. Janet Weiss on the drums was equally powerful as she carried the tempo throughout the show with her percussion. A few times throughout the set, Sam would use one of his hands, sometimes lifting his foot, to hover over the electronic color-changing theremin sitting on his keyboard, which gave off an eerie and somewhat vocal sound. At one point, he was playing the keyboard completely with his knees. Their stage presence brought a whole new cinematic experience to their already expressive music; an almost interactive vision to watch.

This psycho-pop sound carried on throughout the entire concert, and in between songs, Sam and Janet commented how their setlist was largely

improvised on the spot. They played a few songs back to back, only pausing for a few seconds in between each to get set up and to talk to the crowd. Songs from “Breaking the Balls of History” was intertwined with their other classics, the most well-known coming from “Featuring “Birds”” and “When The Going Gets Dark.” These three main albums were greatly appreciated by the overall fans, as every song was followed by applause and cheering. Quasi had fulfilled their promise.

Quasi’s live sound tended to slightly deviate from their studio versions, with Sam and Janet yelling louder at certain lyrics or improvising fun closings to some songs. Their voices, however, were carbon copies of their recorded songs. Unfortunately, because of 7th Street Entry’s size, sound tends to be muffled, and at times, their voices would be harder to interpret and separate from their instruments. This didn’t completely ruin the experience, but definitely impacted the ease with which one sings along with the artist. Throughout the entire performance, you could see both Sam and Janet watching each other,

communicating through their eyes, as they planned when to end a song and at times, blending it seamlessly into the next. On stage and on the floor, the venue was filled with admiration for Quasi. Nearing the end of their performance, Sam and Janet asked the audience which songs they wanted to hear instead of going backstage and waiting to be called back for an encore. Even their last song to play, “Peace and Love,” was sung to completion just as devotedly as their first.

After a completely rocking show, Sam and Janet returned to the merchandise booth selling stickers, CDs, t-shirts, and vinyl. Price-wise, bumper stickers reading “I want to be breaking the balls of history with Quasi” went for \$5, “Mole City” CDs for \$14, t-shirts for \$25, and vinyl for \$23. The prices for merchandise that qualified for signing were far from unreasonable. Following this concert, Quasi is completing their tour in Wisconsin, Missouri, and Chicago. Overall, the show was chock-full of energy, passion, and Quasi’s beloved psychedelic noise as they outperformed their iconic studio sound and totally rocked the 7th Street Entry stage. 🌀



One Among 4.98%

Diving head first into the a Lesson in Midnight Debauchery Dominately White Institution.

ANONYMOUS

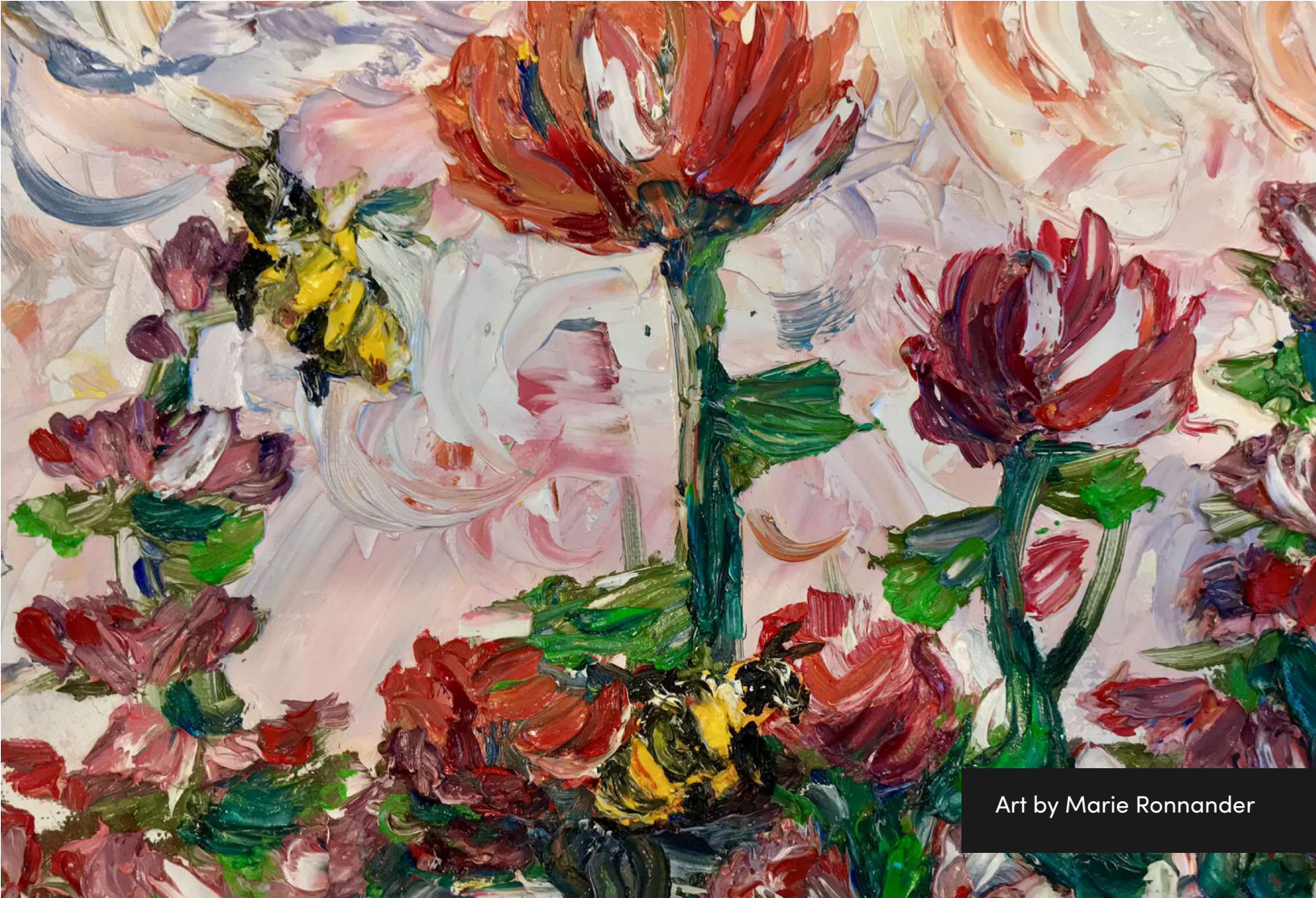
How do I claw and tear my way into a spot that I have rightfully earned, yet still feel completely unqualified and alone? How do my (white) friends take space in a way I’ve never felt I could? In 5/5 of my classes, I am the only self-identifying Latina. I sit in class and look at the three3 other POC and panic at the thought of having to represent the 4.98% of Latinx students that make up the UMN. Is my passion enough? Is my excitement for my future career what got me here, or am I only the token student to be brought out when someone needs a Sspanish translation?

My classmates make obscure references to academic papers I’ve never heard of. A

professor giggles at my pronunciation of a word I had only ever read and never spoken. I over-prepare, starting assignments and studying terms weeks in advance, only to be made fun of by classmates for trying too hard. They can’t seem to understand what it feels like to be the first in your family to reach this level of academic success. They hold so little understanding of the social norms expected of POC in white scholarly institutions. I can’t help but see the message wherever I turn : “You don’t belong.”.

To assimilate requires erasing your ethnicity; you have to perform in a way that puts white people at ease, to the point where you earn an honorary whiteness: “You’re not like the others.” Students, like myself, who choose not to erase their ethnicity, or who cannot downplay their differences, are othered and quietly outcast.

So, I look for places to call my own. I smile at every person of color on my way to class. I seek to be inclusive where I have been neglected. I see the way my fellow Latinx band together to create communities on this campus. I try to become a champion where I had none. But, the insecurities and doubts remain. Sometimes, they’re a full orchestra in my brain; other, other times, a mere hum. But I push through and, even though it sucks, so should you. 🌀



Art by Marie Ronnander

Girlfriends (fight sometimes)
by Scout Albrecht



Presidential Power and Student Trust: Rebuilding What Gabel Lost

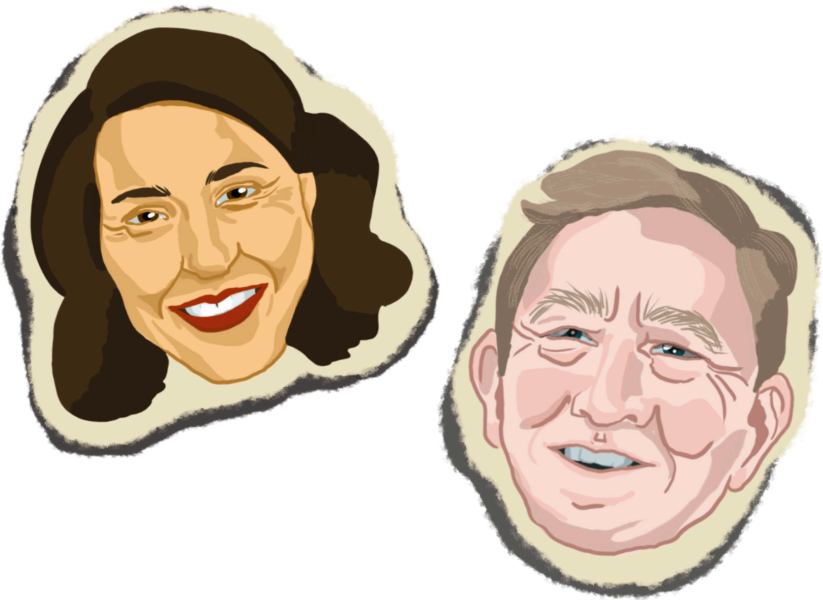
In the wake of Gabel leaving and Ettinger taking over, student trust in the campus presidency seems to be lacking.

By: Joshua Kloss

Every September, us gophers start a new school year that both brims with excitement and is filled with new experiences. New living situations with potentially new people, new classes with new class crushes, new professors and schedules. But this year, we get to start the new school year under entirely new leadership.

We said goodbye to Joan Gabel last spring when she announced that she would be leaving her position as president for a chancellor position at the University of Pittsburgh. Her successor, Jeff Ettinger, was named the interim president of the University of Minnesota on June 10, 2023, meaning we have been steered under his leadership for a couple of months now. It’s hard to feel the effects of a new presidency during the summer months, though, as so many of us students are either not here on campus or not actively living the lives of students like we do during the fall and spring semesters. So given how newly appointed Ettinger is to his presidency, his future actions will be the most telling of his capabilities as president. At this point in time, most students, about 73% of our poll-takers, have indicated that they don't have any strong opinions towards Ettinger at this time.

Without much academic policy to go off of quite yet, maybe looking towards Ettinger’s previous experience can tell us what to expect of him.



Ettinger was formerly the chair of the Hormel Foundation board of directors, which he is taking a leave of absence from while fulfilling the interim presidency, according to the Office of the President website. Some have noted that Ettinger’s willingness to leave prior commitments such as his chair position at The Hormel Foundation indicate his dedication to the U, a point that was made aware to me via an article written by the Pioneer Press.

Ettinger also served as CEO of the Hormel Foods Corporation from 2005 to 2016. It’s interesting that his most prominent experience in positions of power and leadership come from working with a corporation. At the same time, though, this might not be a surprise, as most institutions of higher education in the United States tend to run themselves like a corporation, maximizing their profits through research initiatives and minimizing their operating costs where possible.

Ettinger also has what some may call “legacy” with the University of Minnesota, evidenced by his past

close ties with our university. He was an executive fellow at the Carlson School of Management, where he co-taught a course for the fall semester of 2017 and 2018. He also guest-lectured in the fall semester of 2020 and 2021 for a pricing class in the Carlson School. Ettinger’s success in business seems to triumph his track record and overall reputation as opposed to success in educational institutions. Ettinger has served on the board for several other companies: some public such as Ecolab and Toro, and others private such as the Sacred Heart Care Center. Additionally, he’s received several awards for his accomplishments as a CEO, such as an acknowledgement in Barron’s “World’s Best CEOs” from 2016.

So it’s no doubt that Ettinger has experience in leadership and positions of power. But I’m curious as to what it means for us, as students, when the regents appoint somebody to lead us whose experience is most based in the world of business rather than education. After all, do we, as students, feel seen by this new president? Did we even feel seen by the last one, former President Gabel?

To gauge how students feel about Ettinger’s interim presidency so far, and campus presidency as a whole, The Wake ran a student survey. Of the participants who answered, it seems that there is a general trend of either distrust towards or estrangement from the position of president. One student said, “I honestly have no idea what they [the presidents] do.” Another student said that “we’d be better off without a president.” And while these criticisms may sound harsh, I think it’s fair to be critical of the people running our universities, especially given the fact that a high volume of the students polled viewed former President Gabel unfavorably.

A majority of students, about 81% of poll-takers, said that they were not sad to see Gabel go, and the remaining 19% of respondents said that they did not care / felt neutral towards the fact that she left. This means that there was not a single respondent polled that indicated feelings of sadness towards Gabel leaving. Furthermore, most of the students polled rated Gabel either a one (54%) or two (27%) on her performance as president; a score of one corresponded to being extremely unsatisfied with Gabel’s accomplishment as president, whereas a score of two corresponded to being very unsatisfied. The remaining percentage of respondents claimed they were neutral, and had no strong opinions about her accomplishments (a score of three). In line with the trend of no respondents indicating sadness toward Gabel’s departure, not a single respondent rated Gabel higher than a three. That means not a single respondent felt very satisfied or extremely satisfied with Gabel’s accomplishments as president, which corresponded to a score of four or five, respectively, on our scale.

When asked about policies or initiatives overseen by or led under Gabel’s presidency that they found to be poor decisions, many

participants indicated dissatisfaction with Gabel overseeing increased police presence. Some students elaborated on that point, hoping for public safety initiatives that don’t center around increasing the presence of police in our campus communities. Another popular answer to this question was concern over Gabel’s willingness to accept raises to her salary at a time when student and campus workers, such as M Food Company, had to strike to receive wages and benefits that “they should’ve already been receiving.” Not to mention that this pay raise was simultaneous with tuition increases, wherein, as one respondent writes, “students didn’t see any major notable improvements, and in fact, some departments lost funding as a result.” The budget cuts, which were announced last spring, took from many liberal arts departments, such as American Indian Studies and Gender, Women, and Sexuality studies.

Obviously, there is some discontent over what was (or, rather, what was not) accomplished under Gabel’s presidency. And there is a general distrust of the presidents in general, as many of the students polled were unsure of what the president even does. Unsurprisingly, many students are untrusting of the campus presidency because it is such a highly valued position, the efficacy of which students seem to not feel much of at all. It’s fair for students to be untrusting when in the past, presidents like Gabel have seen higher salaries when campus workers have to strike for fairer wages, or students have to protest for the departments they study within. After all, why should we be paying such handsome wages for a position that most students either don’t like or don’t know much about?

Going forward, it is fair to assume that Ettinger has big shoes to fill. Judging by how displeased our poll respondents were with Gabel’s performance, many students may be looking to Ettinger with hope for a better future for gophers. After all, he has the opportunity to listen to what students

want, what they need, and what they hope for. He has an obligation to restore the trust that his predecessor lost before him, which is a daunting task indeed, but one that the president must be equipped to handle.



The Grief Is Never Ending but so Is the Love

Make sure to tell your people that you love them

BY KELTY DUVAL

If you haven't experienced a lot of loss in your life, grief might be a foreign concept to you, and that's okay. I wish I hadn't become so well versed in it. In case you haven't heard already, September is Suicide Prevention and Awareness Month. I will be honest, I didn't know that myself until I became affected by suicide. Last winter, I lost my brother and a friend to suicide, and with their deaths, I became acutely aware of how suicide is affecting our society today. Thus, I was formally introduced to the emotion called grief.

Some people have already experienced a lot of grief in their lives, while others have made it to this point with minimal exposure. I had been incredibly lucky; up until the beginning of 2023, I had only minimal bumps and scrapes with grief. Sure, my great grandparents had passed throughout my childhood, and I had lost too many pets to count, but I soon learned that there are more sides to grief than I had previously experienced. It was as if I had always been in the shallow end of the pool and could always pull myself out fairly quickly. When I actually met grief in its truest form, it felt as if I had been thrown into the deep end of the pool with my legs tied together.

The problem with grief is that it comes in waves. As a creature of habit and optimism, I wanted so badly to ignore all of the things I was feeling. I wanted to swim against the current and hope that I could wake up from this awful nightmare and everything could be like before. And when that didn't work, I wanted to swim a few years ahead, wade in the waves where the wound had finally scarred over.

As is common with many survivors of suicide loss, part of me felt angry at them. But I didn't want to be angry with them because I loved them. I tried to hide that part of my pain away, telling myself that I had no right to be angry. But I was, and I did have a right to be angry. They had left me, and they no longer had to feel all of the terrifying feelings I was having to navigate.

I adamantly refused to ride the waves of grief and feel what I was feeling. I fought, I flailed, but I finally gave in. Some days, everything seemed like it weighed a million pounds, like darkness was creeping in on all sides. Other days, I felt completely desensitized to the world around me.

When my best friends and I were informed of our friend's passing, someone described the feeling as, "My heart immediately dropped out of my butt." It felt as if someone had decided to cut a them-shaped-space in my heart that could never be filled, like the piece of my heart that I had given them had been taken with them when they left.

On my grieving journey, I learned that that grief is just another form of love. I loved my brother so much that I felt so much pain when he left. Grief is just the left over love that we never got to give.

I don't know if love could have saved my brother or my friend, but I think that if they could have felt how loved they were, there could still be a chance that they'd still be around. In the past year I have learned how incredibly important it is to tell your people that you love them. Ever since, I have made sure to tell my friends and family that I love them every single time I walk out of the door or hang up the phone. Constantly saying "I love you" doesn't take away any meaning of the words by saying it twenty times a day, it just means that my people know what they mean to me. I never want to see someone in my life ever feel like they are not loved.

Going forward, I challenge you to make the people in your life aware of how much they mean to you and how valued they are in this world. Tell your people you love them so often that it gets annoying. The grief is never ending, but so is the love and as long as the love is never ending, the grief will become easier to carry. 🧡



The Grief that Comes with Changing Seasons

Shaking off your old leaves to make room for the new

BY MARIE RONNANDER

In my senior English class, I learned that our favorite books use the movement from one season to another as a backdrop for the protagonist's growth. In summer, there is peace and contentment. Fall brings about adjustment, while winter signals hardship, or even death. Spring is a chance to be resurrected. To me, this all makes poetic sense. Narnia only thaws when evil is destroyed.

Recently, I've begun to see myself as a mirror of the season that I'm in. I notice this reflection in the people I love, too: the change of hair color before entering a new school year, or a new tattoo to celebrate a birthday; our experiences are carved into our bodies. We'd like to think we're separate from the earth around us, but in reality, we change just like the colors of leaves in autumn. And as our past falls away to the wind, it's the looking back that causes us to catch our breath. After all, the colors were beautiful.

When we're young, we see the future as a bright, shining sun. We stare into it without sunglasses and let the possibilities of life burn ambition into our retinas and our hearts. As time passes, each breath we exhale is not only energy churned towards these dreams, but also energy left to the past.

This idea falls under the law of conservation: energy is neither created nor destroyed, but rather passed on into different forms. We put our passions, creativity, and love into growing our own leaves, and those leaves are lovely. But when autumn comes, and winds of change sway our branches, some energy must be left behind in order to grow anew.



The idea of moving into a new season, letting all that we experienced fall behind us, is terrifying. Making room in our minds for all that is to come is terrifying. Each fall, I find myself fighting this great fear inside me that the new school year won't be as sweet as the last. Photos from the previous years cause nostalgia to seep into my bones and settle into my heart. I ache for all that has passed me by. I miss the beautiful colors that are blowing in the wind.

Perhaps these feelings rise because each year, each new season, we are older (perhaps even wiser). There's so much more life to look back on and cherish. Looking forward is so difficult, especially when what we already have is comfortable (perhaps even content). Our beautiful memories are carefully conserved in golden light, sometimes eclipsing the idea of the future. In these times, fight to remember that the future is what we're on the earth to create. We are alive to keep living and to keep growing.

I'll admit that, yes, saying my goodbyes to this summer came with nervous breakdowns and maybe, just maybe, a couple of tears. I fell in love with the rhythm of life I had been following, and to leave that behind clouded my optimism towards the future. However in these same weeks of change, I've been able to say some hellos. I moved into a new home with roommates that

make my heart feel full. And while my classes are getting exponentially harder, I'm becoming the scientist that my sunblind younger-self always told herself she would be. I'm growing, and no matter how strangely uncomfortable it is, I am determined to keep doing so.

Every year, the earth goes through four seasons. Every year, the cycle starts over. While climate change makes the atmosphere a little hotter and our future a lot more uncertain, the cycle *still starts over*.

We, ourselves, are not impervious to these changes, and they will always make us feel unsure, and perhaps a little shaky. In these moments, don't be afraid to cling to your roots; forgetting the past only leads to repetition. But in these moments, please, don't lose sight of where you want to go. Let yourself feel all that you're feeling, but don't overlook that little light at the end of the tunnel. That's your future, and you deserve to bask in it.

You'll grow new leaves, and they have the potential to be even more vibrant than the last. 🧡

Maybe We’re Forgetting the “True” in True Crime

Why do we feel entitled to dissect other people’s tragedies?

BY LILA SWEDZINSKI

Raise your hand if you have ever watched a true crime documentary, or listened to a true crime podcast. Ok, you don’t actually have to raise your hand, but I am assuming that most of us have engaged with true crime content in some form or another. In fact, the Pew Research Center finds that 24% of the top-ranked podcasts from Apple and Spotify are related to true crime. But why is that?

I want to preface this by saying that I’m not immune to the allure of true crime, because so much about it draws you in. Whether it is just for plain interest, entertainment, or the sheer incredulousness of it all, crime is a point of interest for many, especially due to our innate desire to understand why people commit such heinous acts of violence. However, I do think we — as individuals and as a society — need to reexamine our own reasons for engaging with true crime media.

I have noticed that something which used to be an exercise in empathy is now just another instantly gratifying form of entertainment that people aren’t able to resist. We used to approach true crime with an intense curiosity and sense of purpose. That still remains true for some documentaries and podcasts, but the line gets extremely blurry when streaming platforms start making movies and limited series about these tragedies.

Netflix’s Dahmer Series is a prime example. “Dahmer — Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story” is a show about a cannibalistic serial killer, Jeffrey Dahmer, who is already decisively well-known. And in unnecessarily dramatizing this story and making it resonate with audiences like some variant of the fictional television series “Criminal

Minds or Law and Order: SVU,” Netflix and show creator Ryan Murphy have exploited gruesome, real-life tragedies and further traumatized the families of Jeffery Dahmer’s victims. In an article from The Hollywood Reporter, Rita Isbell was quoted on the show’s portrayal of the trauma she experienced after Dahmer murdered her brother.

“When I saw some of the show, it bothered me,” she said. “It’s sad that they’re just making money off of this tragedy. That’s just greed.”

According to Netflix’s 2022 letter to shareholders, the Dahmer Series garnered 824 million hours of viewership and became the second biggest English series during their third financial quarter. Netflix acknowledged that they had been losing money in the first two quarters, but expressed hope that they would continue to generate growth.

“The key is pleasing members. It’s why we’ve always focused on winning the competition for viewing every day,” the letter stated. “When our series and movies excite our members, they tell their friends, and then more people watch, join and stay with us.”

On this information alone, it is fair to say that the Dahmer Series was a huge reason for Netflix regaining popularity in the second half of their financial year. It is important to acknowledge this

context when discussing the problem of victim exploitation in true crime series because of how important the payoff was for Netflix. The casting for these projects is another component of the problem. Attractive and beloved actors like Evan Peters and Zach Efron being cast as serial killers only exacerbates the intrigue in true crime movies and TV, especially for young girls.

The medium of these stories makes a difference as well. My quarrel with the effects of true crime media does not stem from watching informational documentaries or podcasts, because those can be a way to raise awareness for victims that have been otherwise disregarded. The problem emerges when writers and producers feel entitled to making a TV show out of murder victims’ stories without getting permission from their families beforehand. It is possible to tell the untold stories of victims of violent crime without over-dramatizing them for a cash grab, but it needs to be done respectfully, delicately and consensually. 🙏



Late Night Thoughts with Magdalena

A one sided conversation about growing up with my subconscious Magdalena

BY VISHALLI ALAGAPPAN

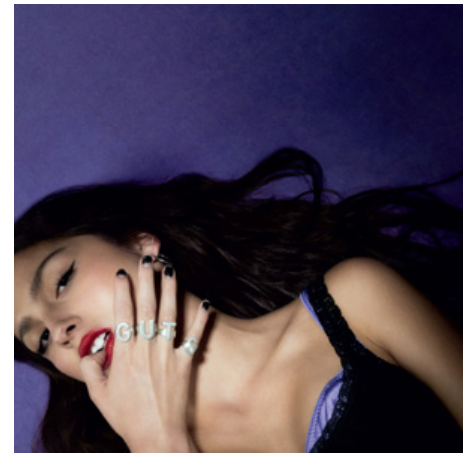
I don’t yearn for the years I missed during the peak of the pandemic anymore. I used to grieve the loss of my late adolescence and wonder how I would have turned out had I been able to live in the dorms freshman year and stay up with my best friend from orientation and break up with an incompatible partner. As the world returned to normalcy, I felt more juvenile and insecure than I had back in middle school. I had to learn how to order coffee without stumbling over my words again. I had to learn how to carry a conversation again. I had to find myself again. I’m not saying that I’d do it all over, nor that I’m a better person for having experienced that, but I don’t consider it a misfortune anymore.

I don’t know, Magda. Maybe that time period wasn’t just an outlier in a dataset that I can exclude to make my graph prettier. My graph is wonky and weird but it tells a story. I don’t want to erase a part of my life story just like I don’t want to commit academic fraud. Just like in research, every failure and misstep is a learning experience. You build upon what you already have. I get that it’s just a cliché that people say, but it’s so true. Part of growing up has been accepting all of me, all that I’ve done, and all that has happened to me.

The pandemic really exacerbated my mental health issues and I wasted away into nothingness for two years and I’m still recovering from that major depressive episode. But this year is the first year I feel like an actual college student. I still love my bed, but it is not my only safe space anymore. I still love snacks, but I don’t have to eat my emotions anymore. I still cry, but I can wipe the tears away and assure myself that I’m okay. Maybe this progress is what has helped me leave the shame and bitterness behind. I can see that I’m on the other side and when I look back at the Vishalli from a couple years ago, I don’t want to forget her. She did the best she could and she deserves to be remembered too.

People around me often remark that I seem more mature since my rock bottom. Yet, I still feel like a little kid. It’s like that song, the one that goes, “the more things seem to change, the more they stay the same.” I feel so grown up. I have a credit card, stainless steel cutlery, and I compare goals to find a time a month out to hang out with friends. Yet I still call my mom before buying cough syrup to remind me which flavor I like and sleep with a stuffed polar bear every night. You know how people always say, “I’m a kid still at heart?” Maybe this is what that





GUTS

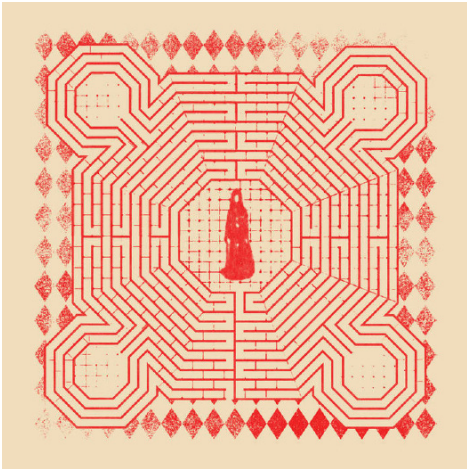
Olivia Rodrigo

BY SOPHIA GOETZ

Olivia Rodrigo’s sophomore album, “Guts”, is just as powerful as her platinum-selling debut, “Sour”. Although certain songs on this 90s-inspired album may seem diametrically opposed to one another, they are all connected by the artist’s disillusionment with adulthood.

To highlight a couple of my favorite tracks off of the album: “All-American B*tch” kicks off the record. Rodrigo, who is only 20, opens the song with a gentle melody and pleasant voice, but by the chorus, she is screaming her frustration: “I don’t get angry when I’m pissed/I’m the eternal optimist/I scream inside to deal with it.” The dramatic shift in tone highlights the vast gulf between the idealized portrayal of women in popular culture and Rodrigo’s seething frustration with it. Frustration with society’s unrealistic beauty standards is another theme explored in “Pretty Isn’t Pretty” by Rodrigo. The singer expresses her worries about her physical appearance and the false definition of “pretty” determined by everything around us: “I could change up my body and change my face/I could try every lipstick in every shade/But I’d always feel the same/’Cause pretty isn’t pretty enough.”

Rodrigo’s second album successfully weaves together a wide range of emotions, leaving listeners with a satisfying whole. She shows a different aspect of her musical personality when she mixes classic instrumentals with contemporary sounds. Meanwhile, her skill as a songwriter and her willingness to bare her soul continue to win her fans. “Guts” is a stunning album that demonstrates her development and potential. 🎧



everything is alive

Slowdive

BY BIANCA LLERENA

Heavily electronically instrumental “everything is alive” is Slowdive’s first studio album to come out in six years. Ominous and just as equally creative, this album transitions from its previously love-related lyrics in their last album to more introspective ones: their third song “alife” saying, “We look, but we don’t understand/We try, but we don’t look around.” Filled with hints of metallic techno, the style of “shoegaze rock” that Slowdive is known for is the core of the album, deliberately meshing voices and instruments.

“everything is alive” was released on September 1st with eight songs, averaging out at almost five minutes per song. “shanty” opens up the album at 5 minutes and 42 seconds, setting the scene for obscure lyrics and long instrumentals. Following, “prayer remembered” and “the slab” are completely instrumental, both a calm and euphoric contemplative sound. Very gloomy, too.

Their songs contain a lot of overlap with one another which gives the album the feel of an emotional soundtrack. “everything is alive” is definitely an ideal album to play on a late-night drive. “andalucia plays,” the fourth song of the album, quiets the instruments down, letting Neil Halstead and Rachel Goswells’s voices be heard more clearly. This song contains the most lyrics than any other song within the album, with lyrics like “Andalucia/Plays on the stereo/I dream like a butterfly/Perfect and temporary.” Overall, the melting of sound and voice keeps your ears guessing as Slowdive plays with the sonic art of shoegaze. 🎧



“Bottoms” top

Bottoms, a queer icon

BY CAROLINE RAY

A few weeks ago during a late night doom scroll, I happened across the trailer for “Bottoms.” It opens with, “Warning! Three out of four people who have watched this film have turned gay.” That night I had a maze-like dream that I went to the theater to see it with my mom. Basically I was doomed to love this movie from the start.

“Bottoms,” starring Rachel Sennott and Ayo Edebiri, is a high-school comedy so perfect that it may have killed the genre. The film feels like the final manifesto, where the high-school drama was always going to end: with a violent, ridiculous, all-female fight club murdering an entire football team. The whole movie is unexpected, and yet it just feels right. It never takes itself too seriously or loses its over-the-top charm. Sennott and Edebiri shine together, landing every line with heart and wit. The supporting characters are tenderly developed, and there are too many one-liners to pick a favorite.

However, most importantly to me, this movie is queer. Not just in the sense that the two main characters are lesbians, but in that the whole movie is extravagant and twisted to surprise. These are not two characters who could have been straight but were written queer for the sake of representation. Their personalities and the strange and violent world they navigate is infused with and defined by their queerness. They are awkward, naive, and sometimes intolerable; and yet I have never had such a euphoric experience watching two characters on screen. This movie was an un-toppable joy. 🎥



The Other Black Girl

A quintessential black horror TV show set in the corporate world

BY VISHALLI ALAGAPPAN

I’ve heard the term black horror thrown about, but “The Other Black Girl” on Hulu was my first foray into the genre. Black horror captures the Black American experience with horror, when their mere proximity produces terror in others. The distinction between black horror and conventional horror is the type of monsters: a demon mutilating a girl from within vs. being followed/ haunted by the Klansmen. It centers the all-too-real fears of being Black in America.

“The Other Black Girl” follows Nella Rogers, a nerdy black girl with dreams of becoming an editor, at the publishing company Wagner Books. Wagner Books has only ever had one black editor, Kendra Rae Phillips, who edited the book Burning Heart, the book that made Nella want to tell black stories to make the next generation of black kids feel less alone. Burning Heart was written by Diana Gordon, Kendra’s childhood friend. Kendra is believed to be “off grid.” In the beginning, the show explores Nella’s own experience in corporate America. Nella forms a relationship with Hazel May McCall, the new black addition to Wagner. Hazel acts really weird, backstabbing Nella and going out of her way to reconcile the relationship. All the while, Nella experiences hallucinations and ringing in her ears, foreshadowing something sinister at play. I want to say more, but I’m afraid I’ll say too much. The entire show examines the different schools of thought in regards to black success: Do you sell your compromise and accommodate to the white world or stick to your ideals and let your pain inform your story? Grab a blanket and a couple friends, binge the show, and find out. 🎥



Theater Camp

A homage to the weird kids

BY SHANNA SIVAKUMAR

2023 seems to be the year the film industry has revived itself, and the same-day release of “Barbie” and “Oppenheimer” was the CPR that cinema needed to have people flood the theaters after a three-year, pandemic-induced lull. It appears that cinema has returned with a fresh new wave of whimsical and comedic films—one being “Theater Camp,” directed by Molly Gordon and Nick Lieberman.

“Theater Camp” is a rare gem, made of a simple premise and humorous enough that you forget that the main characters are products of nepotism. The film is shot as a mockumentary and is about a theater camp whose owner is stuck in a coma and unable to direct the summer camp, leaving it in the hands of her vlogging son (Jimmy Tatro) and two eccentric theater lovers (Molly Gordon, Ben Platt).

The cinematography of “Theater Camp” is mostly done through a single camera to pay respect to its mockumentary style of filming. The color palette reflects the deep tones of summer and nature— dark greens, deep blues, and the rich red of stage curtains.

The film is surprisingly hilarious and pokes fun at the “theater-kid” archetype. It is light-hearted and has a large cast of children who keep the movie entertaining and endearing. This film captures the nostalgia of summer camp—of meeting new people and getting to pursue an art form that isn’t often tended to in a school setting. “Theater Camp” is an homage to the hilarity and sentimentality of theater. 🎥



The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We

Mitski

BY ABBY VELA

The long-awaited 7th album from artist Mitski immerses listeners in a world of nostalgia, pain, and loneliness. “The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We” is an album that makes you stop and think: How do we coexist with our minds and the world, and what will it remember of us after we’re gone?

“The Land” is an amalgamation of sounds that Mitski, though experimented prior, has now conquered. Her past albums, “Retired from Sad” and “Lush”, show her dabbling in orchestral arrangements to their fullest force. Similarly, we see in “Laurel Hell” and “Be The Cowboy” the development of her electronic and synth-driven sound.

“The Land” takes these sounds, strips them, combines them, and cultivates them into a cohesive and sophisticated album. The lyrics are smart and include some of Mitski’s most visceral imagery to date. The release’s lead single, “Bug Like an Angel”, leaves me consistently stunned by and in awe of the desperation in each verse. “When Memories Snow” compares pushing memories away to shoveling during winter—a terribly bleak and curt image that never fails to give me shivers.

Country influences dominate this album, giving it a feeling of loss and nostalgia. With the album having been recorded in Nashville, TN, the influence is tangible. Complete with steel guitars and choral features, songs like “Heaven,” “Frost,” and “I’m Your Man” feel like a Southern Gothic—unsettling and hauntingly beautiful.

“The Land Is Inhospitable and So Are We” is apocalyptic — a startling commentary on what happens when you’re left alone with your mind for a little too long, and I could not recommend it enough. 🎧



Sumana

BY SHANNA SIVAKUMAR

Sumana is a singer-songwriter based in Minneapolis. Her debut album, Splendid Isolation, was released September 1st, and I was lucky enough to sit down with her to talk about her album and artistry. She is also a senior here at the University of Minnesota. You can find her on Instagram @sumiseeth, and her music on Spotify @Sumana.

👁️: What got you into music in the first place?

Sumana: I’ve had a love for music for a long time. I think it started because my mom and her dad (my grandfather), they’re like a lineage of singers— not as professionals— but they love music. My mom is a singer and she loves singing around the house. Growing up, she and I were a part of Chinmaya Mission (a Hinduism school in the Twin Cities) and would sing bhajans during assembly. When I was maybe eight and my sister was ten, my mom put us in Sangeetham (Carnatic singing lessons) and I did that until I graduated high school, so I’ve always had music in my life in some capacity. And when I was younger I played the piano and violin but I never really stuck with instruments, I always preferred singing— I was always la-di-da-di-ing around the house or singing random songs here and there.

👁️: How would you describe your musical style?

Sumana: I’m not really sure, because it’s like, an ongoing thing. I want music to be like an onion for me. Like this is the first layer and every time [I make music] I just want to be able to dig deeper into something that interests me, whether it’s

cultural influences from carnatic music, even Bollywood music too. A lot of the music I listen to is R&B, jazz, soul, pop, sometimes Latin and French music, and of course, a lot of Indian music. So I feel like I’m a combination of lots of different kinds of influences. I don’t necessarily know if there’s a particular genre of what it is that I’m doing. But a lot of people that have listened to my music have said that it’s soulful and genuine. It’s really just the shit that I’m making. I always try to remind myself to not try and mimic stuff. Inspiration is fine but it has to come from me, and you can never force yourself to sound or write like somebody else.

👁️: What’s the meaning behind the album title, “Splendid Isolation”?

Sumana: This album has been on my mind for a minute, I think, ever since I came to college. I had an itch to make something or write and express myself musically. I kind of struggled with constructively sitting myself down over and over again to bring something into reality. ‘Cause I think that’s the nature of anything— that you have to be consistent and you have to be disciplined about creating something, especially an album.

It all kind of came about this summer. I had a lot of alone time and that’s why the album is called “Splendid Isolation—” it was made as a product of my alone time. The process of making the album itself was beautiful. I loved making it and anytime I wasn’t feeling it, I was like, “alright, let’s go hang out with my parents, or friends, or go on a walk.” I was never trying to force myself to make music. And I think that’s what made it a fun process. If I was feeling it, and I wanted to do it, then I did it.

👁️: How was the recording process for this album?

Sumana: Ooo, I love this question, because I didn’t go to a studio. I went to a lot of local shows this summer and I saw an artist named Ricki (Ricki Monique) perform and followed her on Instagram. In one of her posts, she had posted the credits of everyone that was involved in her album. At the time, I was looking for someone who would help mix and master my music. Through Ricki’s post, I eventually contacted Alec (Alec Ness), who is a music engineer that has worked with some big artists. I reached out to him on a whim and told him I’m in college and trying to make music for the cheapest amount of money possible. What should I do? He gave me a list of mics and different kinds of interfaces that I could use to vocal-produce my music the way I wanted. I bought a mic, good headphones, and converters that would help me record straight into my laptop. And after that, I just did everything on Garageband. Like literally from the safety of my own house. The final mixing

and mastering was then done by one of Alec’s apprentices, Jake (Jake Rupert).

👁️: Who did the saxophone on your last track, “24K”?

Sumana: That’s actually a sample from a Jazz track that was then sampled by Amy Winehouse and I really liked the saxophone on it, so I just stripped that and then put it in my track.

👁️: And the guitar in your acoustic track, “on my own”?

Sumana: That was my older sister, Sanji. We were just sitting at our dinner table one night and figured it out. She’s very musically inclined, too. She’s the kind of person who can listen to a song and five minutes later, she can play it. I love making music with her because it feels so natural and there’s safety there, a space where you can make mistakes and sound bad and it’s not a problem, ever. I think we’ll always make music together.

👁️: What can we look forward to, regarding your music in the future?

Sumana: I want to sing live. I think that’s like, another skill to develop and it’s different from making music. Making music is one thing, because you’re in your own little bubble, but then, sharing it with other people— I mean, online interaction is one thing— but then sharing it in person is like a completely different experience because you’re in this living, breathing, moving interaction with people. But yeah, I’d love to eventually do a live performance of the whole album at some point. It’s just a pain to manage during the school year. I also have a lot of Virgo placements, so I’m a big “details, details, details” kind of person, so I would want it to be a performance, with choreography, costumes, and a vision. I have a lot of visual ideas as well, and I don’t want the visual ideas to be subpar to my sonic ideas, because I feel like the music I make is very detail-oriented. I want it to feel like that experience is brought to life. I know it’s going to take so much time to learn, but I’d love to do it someday.

I’m performing with a band very soon, and I don’t know how nervous I’ll be. I’m also working on another album right now. A lot of serendipitous things have been happening lately— I’m excited for the future.



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