



## LANTERN FESTIVAL HIGHLIGHTS ASIAN CULTURE ON CAMPUS

MARIA JESUS MARTINEZ  
*Contributing Writer*

The Center for Student Involvement and Inclusion hosted the Lantern Festival on April 5 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The event took place at Love Valley, located on the University of West Georgia campus, and was decorated with Chinese lanterns and featured a hot air balloon.

“The Lantern Festival is typically celebrated for the Chinese New Year and is mostly celebrated for forgiveness,” said Dejora Curry, a UWG graduate student, who is doing her practicum in the department of Student Affairs. “On that day, the families decorate the lanterns, walk around with the lanterns, and release them.”

Also called the Yuan Xiao Festival, this day has two possible origins. The first version is that the celebration began in the Han dynasty, the second Chinese dynasty (206 BC-220 AD), when monks started to light lanterns to worship Buddha, and later this tradition expanded to China and Asia.

In the second version, a legend narrates that the Lanterns Festival started when an Emperor blamed a village for killing his goose and as a payback, the emperor decided to burn the village. However, the villagers were warned on time by a spirit and decided to light lanterns to disguise the entire town as it was already on fire to trick the emperor. From that moment on, the townspeople started to light lanterns every year as a way of gratitude towards the spirit.

This event was slightly different from the rest of the Lanterns Festivals celebrated worldwide as the lanterns were not released into the air. The floating lanterns were replaced by the hot air balloon, which departed with

students so they could experience a symbolic experience. The festival was also unlike as it was the first time UWG included a hot air balloon.

“The hot balloon actually represents the actual lanterns going up since we couldn’t release the actual lanterns on campus,” said Curry. “We can’t guarantee that they are biodegradable like at normal lantern festivals.

“It gives a little significance to the event for people not to think that it is just for decorating lanterns,” continued Curry. “Even when you are in the balloon, the person who is very knowledgeable talks to you about how it works.”

Instead, the 260 lanterns came with a little light so the students could use it as a lamp. There were also three different sizes of lanterns, small, medium and large, so the students could have more than one lantern if they wanted.

The event offered lucky bamboos for students as well, an asian plant which consists of a bamboo stick which is put in a glass cup with gravel and water. As the name suggests, the plant is supposed to provide good luck and prosperity.

The food at the event was served by Dine West and included Asian cuisine such as chicken lo mein, vegetable egg rolls with sweet chili sauce, vegetable potstickers, Asian teriyaki meatballs, along with mango and peach lemonade. In addition, there was a cotton candy station which covered a stick with colorful lights. The event also offered some games such as human-sized dominoes, Connect Four, corn hole and spike ball.

While the department did not

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organize anything for the Chinese New Year, they still wanted to highlight Asian culture with this festival.

“The Chinese New Year is around February, and since we are in April it is a little non-traditional but we still wanted to highlight the culture,” said Curry.

## HOUSING AND RESIDENCE LIFE PROMISES HVAC SOLUTION

RACHAEL BROWN  
*Contributing Writer*

Issues with the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) that began in the fall are still ongoing in The Oaks, Center Pointe and Bowdon Hall, but Housing and Residence Life staff say that they are working towards a solution.

“Thanks to the work with our third-party contractor, Daikin, we have identified the issues,” said Cassidy Nelson, director of Housing and Residence Life. “The challenges we continue to face with these systems are having multiple failures at varying points of time, coupled with long lead times on parts to fix the issue. These systems are very sophisticated and require highly skilled technicians to repair them and parts are not readily available to make repairs.”

The HVAC systems were not quite at the end of their lifespan and not expected to malfunction so soon.

“Systems in Bowdon, Oaks and Center Pointe were installed in 2012 and 2013,” Nelson said. “These systems on average last up to 15 years, but a number of factors can affect the longevity of these systems. This makes it difficult to project how long these systems will work effectively. We have been working on a long-term solution to replace these systems over the last two years.”

In addition to the unexpected nature of the outages, the systems are extremely difficult and expensive to replace.

“It takes a significant amount of time to repair these issues because of repair costs and the administrative work related to paying for the repairs and acquiring the parts,” Nelson said. “These systems are very difficult to replace because of the cost to replace them. It can cost more than \$60,000 to replace one system, and there are 11 systems for

Bowdon, and more than 15 for Center Pointe and the Oaks, respectively.”

Housing announced that they have purchased window units and are scheduled to install them in May in hopes of providing some relief for students, but after a year of experiencing issues, many residents see this measure as too little too late. This has left some students considering off-campus housing instead. Housing and Residence Life staff claim to be just as frustrated with the situation as they are.

“We understand your frustration,” Nelson said. “Your health, safety and comfort are of utmost importance. Housing and Residence Life is committed to your experience at UWG, and we want to ensure that you are able to be comfortable in your home away from home. We work tirelessly to provide the best service possible.

“We take all of these concerns seriously and have been working to address all the concerns in a timely manner,” Nelson continued. “We share the same frustration that these issues have not yet been resolved. We will work until all of these issues are addressed.”



# LIVING WEST

## PREVENTION AND ADVOCACY CENTER SPREAD AWARENESS IN APRIL AND OFFER AID YEAR ROUND FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS

SAMIRA BARNETT  
News Editor



April represents Sexual Assault Awareness month and all of the resources available to survivors. The Prevention and Advocacy Center (PARC) is a sexual assault prevention and advocacy center that primarily serves both teens and adults in Haralson, Carroll and Heard counties. This program is intended to treat both primary clients (victims who have been directly impacted) and secondary clients (loved ones). PARC’s mission for this organization is to amplify the voices of all survivors. Advocates are available after an assault through their program and remain present throughout the entire legal process. “Our advocates can go to criminal justice interviews,” said Rob Dial, Executive Director of PARC. “If they decide to have the perpetrator be interviewed by the police to make a charge, they can go with them to the police department and support them through that process.” PARC also provides prevention programs to educate young people about the causes of intrapersonal violence and sexual assault. They visit local schools throughout the community from September to the middle of April, educating over 5000 students. “We do programming with students as young as kindergarten and all the way through ninth grade in high school,” said Dial. PARC will also participate in community programming with partners such as the local domestic violence shelter and the child advocacy program throughout the year. “It’s important that people understand

there are a lot of wrap around services available in the community, the kind that can meet different needs of different people,” said Dial. To provide the best possible care to victims, this organization strives to provide specialized experts with experience in various areas of abuse, such as domestic, child and even child sexual abuse. PARC works hard to educate and serve the community. There are two annual awareness events hosted including the teen violence awareness event in February and a community conversation in honor of sexual assault awareness month in April. “[The community conversation] will be focused on teens and relationships and how parents can kind of support young people through their transitions of adolescence and young adulthood,” said Dial. The next community-based awareness event will be held at City Station on Maple St. on Tuesday, April 18 at 7 p.m. This event is completely free and open to the public. Individuals interested in volunteering with the PARC can take advantage of internships and training courses. To be approved and have contact with clients, you must complete a minimum of 20 hours of training and pass a federal background check. Individuals interested in volunteering should contact [info@wgaparc.org](mailto:info@wgaparc.org). “It’s an eight-module training and covers everything from basic communication skills and confidentiality all the way through victim centered response,

trauma informed care and basic advocacy models,” said Dial. “It’s actually based upon a federal training called victims assistance from the Department of Justice in Washington, DC.” Numerous resources are provided for those affected by sexual assault, with the goal of making the client feel safe and comfortable. “We have found over the last several years most clients prefer to seek counseling because they want that one-on-one time, but we can absolutely help clients find support groups if that’s something they want to do,” said Dial. PARC is a state-certified counseling center that offers free and confidential counseling with qualified, licensed professional counselors for victims of sexual assault as well as counseling for loved ones. The first step is to inquire about services with a PARC advocate. The office phone number is 770-834-8905. Furthermore, for those in need of immediate assistance, PARC provides a 24-hour crisis line at 770-834-7273. “You have rights as a victim of assault and it’s important for you to know that you should expect confidentiality and support,” said Dial. The website also provides a variety of information and frequently asked questions about the next steps to take if you or a loved one has been assaulted, as well as reassuring the victim that they are not alone. More information is available at [www.wgaparc.org](http://www.wgaparc.org). “It is really a difficult time for people, and we want to make sure PARC is a program where all are welcome, feel respected and heard.”



Image: SHVETS production, [pexels.com](https://www.pexels.com)



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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

SAX, BASS AND DOLLAR BILLS: MASEGO GRACES ATLANTA WITH SUPERB PERFORMANCE

ALANNA KING  
Editor-in-Chief

Few musicians have graced me with a performance as exciting as Masego’s April 12 visit to the Tabernacle. The musician’s “You Never Visit Me” tour offered a variety of experiences for the audience that surpassed music alone. His fun and talented interactive style set a new standard for my show-going ventures.

Masego integrated several unique elements to his performance that created a well-versed experience for his audience. He featured a live drum, bass guitar and keyboard player along with his own saxophone and vocal performances.

The singer also produced his own beats while on stage with a combination of keyboard and electronic elements. He switched between his instruments and voice nearly simultaneously throughout the show, keeping me surprised at each twist and turn. The result was music ranging from rock to hip hop to r&b to jazz. Each musician brought their own established style and talents while cohesively jamming, grooving and creating.

Beyond having the pleasure of witnessing the swirl of creativity amongst the band, another one of my favorite aspects of this concert was seeing the audience participation.

Masego interacted with the audience often which gave the show a curated,

one-of-a-kind feel that was deeply appreciated. He threw roses, money and merchandise into the pit, causing the crowd to move about and interact with each other. He chose a woman from the crowd to bring onto the stage and serenaded her with his voice and a pleasant, yet stunning saxophone solo. Masego often gave lines to the audience to sing as back-up vocals or choir-like chants.

While the tour promoted Masego’s newest self-titled album, the singer included a variety of songs for audiences to groove to. He started the night off strong with “Queen Tings” and went on to perform crowd-pleasers like “Mystery Lady” and “Navajo” while also incorporating OG favorites such as “Flight 99” and “Good & Plenty.” He even sang a cover of Outkast’s “Ms. Jackson” which was a fantastic choice for this Atlanta crowd. Masego ended the night with the beloved “Tadow” which, after a double encore, left the crowd seething for more.

While Masego’s performance was stunning, it can hardly be expected that the artist, who prides himself on genre-bending, would settle for anything less. Masego houses much inspiration within his musical repertoire according to Shore Fire Media, from his Jamaican birth and a nomadic childhood, to his upbringing in the church that introduced



him to music, to his college days spent breaking through as a music artist, falling in love with women and the music he missed out on during his sheltered up-bringing.

While Masego’s persona represents a sexy and powerful musician, his authentic self as a genuinely passionate, deeply sensitive music nerd still shines through. I believe this is what allows audiences to continue to connect so strongly with him, even though his growth has surpassed the natural point of fan-artist intimacy.

I must also give credit to the crowd, who gave the concert a comfortable, homey vibe that made the whole audience feel like a family. Everyone appeared to be relaxed and vibing out to the music while getting hyped up to sing along the lyrics when necessary. People were able to shed their inhibitions and go along with the playful interactions that Masego provided. Overall, the crowd was respectful and welcoming.

The Tabernacle has hosted thousands of acts since its inception and each one proves to transform the music house into its own magical world. I would like to give thanks to this long-standing Atlanta gem that allows for artists of all genres to shine within its walls. On to the next one!

MURDER MYSTERY 2: NECESSARY? NO. BUT CHAOTICALLY FUNNY? YES!

JANNETTE EMMERICK  
Copy Editor

Netflix released the sequel to the whodunit “Murder Mystery” starring Adam Sandler and Jennifer Aniston on March 31. While the film brings nothing new or revolutionary to the table in terms of genre, cinematography or plot twists, the movie wholly retains much entertainment value through slapstick humor and absurdist comedy.

The first movie released in 2019 and followed married couple Nick and Audrey Spitz whose marriage was on the rocks and in desperate need of new excitement. However, through a sleuth of both misfortunate decision making and fortunate acquaintanceships, the pair found themselves in Europe trying to solve a billionaire’s murder all while being accused of committing said murder. Typical of the sub-genre of romance, their marriage is repaired and they were able to solve the mystery and apprehend the bad guy in the end.

The second movie branches from the first, but is enjoyable and watchable without the need to see its predecessor outside of cameos. From the get go, the audience learns that the Spitzes were running on the high of their detective adventure leading to Nick quitting his job with the police department and Audrey quitting her job as a hairdresser. Instead, they’ve decided to become private investigators and have

haphazardly done a subpar job as such. Despite multiple failures, they decide to take the official licensing exam.

The plot picks up when Vikram “the Maharajah” Govindan (Adeel Ahktar), an incredibly wealthy character from the first film, invites the couple to his wedding on his private island. Before his grand entrance into the wedding hall, however, he is kidnapped and the Spitzes are once again under accusation of committing the crime. Frantic to have their names cleared and to rescue their friend, the Spitzes work alongside professional, world renown hostage negotiator Connor Miller (Mark Strong) and other characters from the Maharajah’s inner circle, including Colonel Ulenga (John Kani), another returning character.

The Spitzes, and others, pursue the kidnappers to France, where many bodies start hitting the floor and the suspect pool is narrowed every few minutes as there’s constant action and shock humor to instigate more laughter from the viewer. It’s definitely not family friendly for all ages considering the sometimes morbidly funny death scenes and the many sexual innuendos, but that’s a given considering Sandler’s reputation.

While the film has received mixed reviews and maintains a near 50% review rating on most rating sites, most agree the film was better than the first one even if it’s an



unnecessary sequel. I agree that the sequel is much better, and more absurd than the first. Even if unnecessary, I enjoyed it immensely.

While I am not a fan of Adam Sandler and Jennifer Aniston, this film is very much reminiscent of their other romantic comedy “Just Go With It,” except with an added few genres of mystery and action. “Just Go With It” also has mediocre ratings, which seems to show that Sandler and Aniston tag-team movies seem to be hit or miss depending on the viewer.

Throughout the movie, I found myself laughing aloud often and grinning like a fool. The nonsense jokes, ridiculous explosions and wacky characters keep the story riveting. This film isn’t something to think too much about, it’s all fun and milks random humor to its fullest potential. For me, this film is a definite rewatch in the future.



# “SUPER MARIO” WILL UNITE CHILDREN AND MARIO FANS ALIKE

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Contributing Writer



“The Super Mario Bros. Movie” is a film for all ages to watch and thoroughly enjoy whether you’re trying to catch a fun family film or you’re a Mario super-fan. The film set a record opening weekend at the box office making \$377 million globally, according to Variety Magazine.

This film is a redemption of the first 1993 live action film “Super Mario Bros.” that many fans hate to talk about. The 90s live action designs of Mario, Luigi, Bowser and many more characters were just very underwhelming compared to the animated “The Super Mario Bros. Movie” which was able to do these beloved characters justice in this amazing film.

The film’s overall plot involves Bowser, King of the Koopas, stealing the Super Star and using its power to take over the Mushroom Kingdom. It’s up to an Italian plumber named Mario, along with help from Princess Peach and Toad, to stop him. He must also save his brother Luigi from the clutches of Bowser as well.

Even though the film’s target audience is children, older fans will definitely enjoy watching due to the many references from the franchise, pulling from Mario Kart, Super Mario 3D Land,

Super Mario 3D World, Super Mario 64 and others. The use of certain power-ups, Mario’s perfected moves and even icon themes from the games were all included. The movie did not miss a single aspect when it came to attention to detail.

My favorite scene from the movie had to be Bowser making a whole song about loving Princess Peach and wanting to be with her no matter what. The song was so catchy and entertaining that even after watching the movie I still find myself singing the song randomly throughout the day.

As for the casting, I think the creator picked the perfect line-up. Chris Pratt, who voiced Mario, did even better than expected. I was worried when they announced him as Mario because of the voice of such an iconic character. It didn’t feel too flat or forced. It felt natural to the ear. Anya Taylor-Joy, who voiced Princess Peach was stellar. Her portrayal of Peach just felt empowering. Instead of sounding like a damsel in distress, she sounded like a fearless warrior willing to protect her kingdom no matter what. Jack Black voiced Bowser which was a spectacular choice. Although he was the villain, his humor made him the star of the show in

my opinion. Charlie Day voiced Luigi and he sounded a lot like the iconic character. He played the part amazingly. Seth Rogen voiced Donkey Kong. He suited him well with his traditional role as comedic relief.

One problem with the film is that the pacing is too fast. The movie was supposed to be 1 hour and 32 minutes but the pacing makes it feel like it’s just 1 hour. Certain scenes in the movie felt rushed just so it can go into the next set up quickly. The pacing could’ve been reduced a little to help actual feel certain scenes more but overall, it’s a movie that doesn’t need to be overly complicated.

# REVIEW OF MILEY CYRUS ENDLESS SUMMER VACATION (BACKYARD SESSIONS)

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Contributing Writer

“Miley Cyrus Endless Summer Vacation (Backyard Sessions)” is one of the newest documentaries on Disney+ centered on Miley Cyrus’s new album “Endless Summer Vacation”. As the name suggests, most of the documentary takes place in Miley Cyrus’s backyard, with some scenes taking place inside her home. However, instead of songwriting sessions in Miley’s backyard, with perhaps rougher and unedited versions of the songs on the album, the documentary mainly features performances of the final versions of the songs, with the one exception being the hit song “Flowers”.

While Miley does take the opportunity to explain some of the meaning behind her songs along with snapshots of the songwriting process, she largely allows the music to speak for itself, which I

think is to the documentary’s detriment. The film wasted the opportunity for a behind-the-scenes look at her album, using the runtime for song performances instead. With a mere 43 minute length, there was not nearly enough time spent on Miley’s creative process.

That being said, the performances were well done and attention grabbing. For the one particularly emotional song, “Wonder Woman,” the set was moved inside with a singular piano opposite of a flashy performance to emphasize the weight within the music. Miley and the makers of the documentary made sure that the visuals and the physical aspects of the performance were appropriate for the song choice and they did a wonderful job.

The performances that caught my attention the most were the demo

version of “Flowers.” Before Miley performed this version of “Flowers,” she explained how she wanted to convey a progression from convincing herself to actually believing what she was saying. Ultimately, she was much more successful in this documentary version of the song than the original music video, and it seemed more relatable to her audience. Many people need convincing that they can love themselves, and this version comes across more as a pep talk after a breakup rather than a confident statement.

Miley’s revisit of “The Climb” also caught my attention because it sounds more authentic compared to when it was first released. Miley explained that before her performance she had experienced a sort of tunnel vision while she was trying to reach her goals, but she ultimately remembered her journey much more vividly than her destination. Whereas before, the song suspiciously felt like someone older and wiser wrote it for her to sing. This performance shows how much Miley has grown to see the truth of the lyrics.

