



INGRAM LIBRARY REOPENS AND SPOTLIGHTS STUDENTS' ARTWORK

ABBIE KLEIN
Contributing Writer



At the beginning of this year on Jan. 18, the third floor of the Ingram Library reopened after a long period of undergoing a remodel. With the reopening of the third floor the UWG Art Gallery was once again open to the school. At the beginning of February, multiple art students at UWG had the privilege of displaying their art in the gallery for the Annual Student Exhibition.

UWG Art Student, Hailey Jackson, was one of the many artists who had work displayed in the gallery. Jackson's pieces were all centered around things she has struggled with as a student, specifically in her high school career.

"I focused on topics like how it's important to know you're beautiful on the inside, the outside doesn't show your worth," said Jackson. "As well as the stress I felt my senior year regarding SAT and college applications, and the addiction to technology people face nowadays."

Her paintings on display are both self portraits. One shows her standing in front of a wall of flowers and pulling the skin of her abdomen apart like a curtain to show the muscle

Photo: Abbie Klein, *The West Georgian*

underneath, showcasing her belief of self-worth and beauty coming from the inside.

Another painting shows Jackson in her room clutching her head in stress while staring at a laptop screen. The rest of the room is cluttered with study tools and other objects important to her such as an SAT textbook, a sketchbook, snacks and headphones. Her idea of the overwhelming stress students feel during testing periods is displayed here with the elements she used in her work.

"I really love painting topics like these because it allows me to vent some of my thoughts and feelings," said Jackson.

The art department at UWG uses opportunities like the student exhibition to share students' work and jumpstart their career while still in college.

"UWG has helped my art career so far by bringing to light some new opportunities I didn't know existed like exhibitions within the school and events with the Carrollton Center of the Arts," said Jackson.

The UWG art department consists

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of not only passionate students but passionate teachers as well. The main goal for art professors at UWG is to grow their student's skill sets while continuing to inspire and nurture their passion.

"What I love most about being an art student here is the faculty," said Jackson. "Pretty much all the professors here want nothing but the best for you and it shows. Whether they give you critiques on how to improve or just push you to try new things. It really helped me broaden as an artist so far."

To see Jackson's paintings and other UWG art students' work, visit the third floor of the Ingram library from now till the end of February. Student art is also displayed at the Vault Gallery in the Wadsworth Auditorium at the Newnan campus.

FILM RACE SPRINGS INTO ACTION, SPARKING CREATIVITY AND COMPETITION AIMED AT THE BIG SCREEN

KESHAWN ALLEN
News Editor



Photo: Chloe Wallwork, *The West Georgian*

Students both in and out of the film department will get the opportunity on February 22nd to showcase their own movies this semester to other film students and professors. Later this month, the students can present their movies, documentaries and short films at the UWG Film Race. The film race is an event in which students can express their art. Students gather equipment and make movies for them to get recognition for their underrated talents.

While a relatively new event since its first inception last year, it has already achieved a remarkable feat due to the number of participants it takes to make it run perfectly. Currently, the Film Race is run by UWG's School of Communication, Film and Media Department (SCFM). The SCFM utilizes the race to allow students with majors and minors in this department to get hands-on experience

and expand their abilities in making a film. It allows them to win awards for certain aspects of the movie they made. Many students gather some experience regarding hands-on expertise as they do their assignments.

"This is my third film race that I've been part of," said film student and filmmaker Ricky Selph. "It helps better my craft and helps me become a filmmaker."

Not only will this be a positive for the many students in the SCFM, but it will also benefit students in the drama and art department. When it comes to filmmaking, it takes much more than just a camera to complete the entire project. There will need to be actors in those films. Since the university has a full and talented drama department, many theater students can better perfect their craft by acting in films made by other students. Even students in other

parts of the fine arts department can benefit from the race if they choose to use certain pieces of artwork they want professionally made.

Overall, this event brings a lot of positivity to the students in many different majors. The ones who benefit primarily from it are the students who are going to be working behind the scenes, shooting, setting up and editing the films.

As art is seen as being subjective, there are no limitations to who can and cannot produce art and tell a story with documentaries and movies. Many genres, such as comedy and drama, will be shown at the screening on the night of the Film Race, which is open for all students and faculty.

If anyone wants to participate in watching the race this semester, it will occur on February 22nd at 5 p.m. in Miller Hall

WIT EMBRACES WOMEN ENTERING THE TECH FIELD

BREANNA TILLIE
Contributing Writer

When someone is entering an environment as an underrepresented minority, it can prove to be stressful and intimidating. The fear of facing biases and stereotypes can take a toll on one's confidence in whatever they are doing, potentially leading to poor performance or giving up altogether. However, there is great power in someone knowing that they are not alone. Although being an underrepresented minority in any field or environment presents challenges, when someone has a support system of other minorities who can relate to the challenges, it can make facing them a little easier.

The University of West Georgia's Women in Technology, also known as WIT, offers a bonding and relationship-building opportunity for women entering the tech field as the organization is hosting a game night in March since March is Women's History Month.

"In my own experience, there have been tech jobs that I've wanted to pursue, and meeting other girls who are also pursuing them helped," said Abrianna Warner, President of WIT. "Also, you don't just want to network up with people who are above you, but you want to network across. I think if you network with people who are on your level, you can build each other up together."

WIT is a large organization in Atlanta that is composed of several different companies that support Georgia colleges and universities and connect them with industry professionals as well as offering internships and scholarships.

"Our mission as WIT campus is to plug

in the girls in STEM-related fields: science, technology, engineering, art and math," said Warner. "We plug them into different programs that WIT offers."

Women are underrepresented in the tech field, and the leaders of WIT and similar organizations are passionate about plugging women into the field.

"A lot of women don't go into tech because they don't think that there is a place for them," said Warner. "When I was younger, I didn't see a lot of girls pursuing tech at the high school level especially. But now there are a lot of professionals taking the time to teach girls as young as middle school and elementary school about tech, with clubs like 'Girls Who Code.'"

WIT is not limited to any one branch of tech, because most industries require some sort of a tech professional.

"Everything is pretty much tech because we all work with processes and programs. I was actually in the military and I got exposed

to many different tech roles," said Warner. "I was originally a business management major but I found that it was really broad. So when I got back from the military, I joined WIT and learned about so many different careers that I had no idea about.

"It was enough for me to switch to management information systems because it helped me narrow down a specific pool of jobs related to tech," Warner continued. "I even had some girls last year who were in cybersecurity so we went to cybersecurity headquarters in Augusta. I think that women are going into roles that are going to challenge them. With the world of tech constantly changing and expanding, it's only natural that more women are going to gravitate towards more tech roles."

Warner is optimistic about the strides that the tech industry is making to be more inclusive to women and break down that stereotype of women not being able to succeed in this male-dominated field.

"I would tell any young girl who is interested in tech to go for it," said Warner. "A lot of companies are looking to specifically hire women to help with the underrepresentation. If you put in the work and take action, you can do it."



Photo: Breanna Tillie, *The West Georgian*

FEATURE

UWG NEWNAN'S NEXT-DOOR NEIGHBOR: THE MCRITCHIE-HOLLIS MUSEUM

JANNETTE EMMERICK
Feature Editor

Located on 74 Jackson Street in Downtown Newnan, right next to UWG's satellite campus is the McRitchie-Hollis Museum, a 1937 Neoclassical home that now serves as a bastion of Newnan's local history.

Dubbed the "Peniston-Arnall-Thomasson Home," the property was initially built in the late 1930s by Ellis Peniston and his wife Mildred Arnall Peniston, their daughter then inherited it at one point with her husband Dr. James Thomasson. In the 1980s, the family sold the home to the Newnan Hospital, and then the City of Newnan acquired the property when the hospital relocated.

"There was a man who grew up in Newnan named Edgar Hollis, and when he passed in the 2000s, he left

his estate—or at least part of it—to the Historical Society for the purpose of starting a furnishings museum," said Larisa Scott, Executive Director of the Newnan Coweta Historical Society, soon to be known as the Newnan Coweta Historical Center (NCHC). "And his grandmother, who lived in Newnan as well, her last name was McRitchie, and she had been someone of influence for him that he and the people of the Historical Society wanted to honor."

Hollis' grandmother was even buried in Newnan's Oak Hill Cemetery, which sits right across the street from UWG Newnan and the McRitchie-Hollis Museum.

"We conduct the annual cemetery tour," said Scott. "We've been doing it

for about eight years and it's been very, very popular and I think the most we ever had was in 2021, when people had been in lock-down and were ready to get out and do things. I think we had over 500 people that year."

The Peniston-Arnall-Thomasson Home was originally a furnishings museum, featuring furniture with no particular historical significance or purpose in regards to serving the community.

"People would go through and see the pretty house," said Scott. "So after a while, the [NCHC] board said, 'what we really need is a place to have our museum.' And just be able to display, or rotate on display, the things from the collections building."

The property is now transitioning into an exhibits museum with the purpose of teaching local history.

"Our new exhibits coming up will be focused on Newnan as a Civil War hospital town and the history of Newnan Hospital, which is where

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(Continued)

[UWG] is now,” said Scott. “Also it will focus on Dr. Jordan, who was the first African American doctor in the county. And in another room, we’ll have the R.D. Coal Manufacturing Company exhibit and the ‘Newnan as a mill town’ exhibit. After that, we’ll be doing exhibits on Native Americans and Chief McIntosh.”

The Museum also hosts events, including “Newnan Burns Weekend” which annually honors Robert Burns, also known as the Bard of Scotland. Part of Newnan’s appreciation for Scotland also comes from their sister city in Scotland, Ayr.

“Burns Weekend” features different activities for the night, with the most recent one on Feb. 3rd including a whiskey tasting, and with every Scottish celebration, they also served a hearty amount of haggis.

NCHC, through the McRitchie-Hollis Museum and their other endeavors, hope to build a greater relationship



Photo courtesy of Newnan Coweta Historical Society

with UWG. Thanks to the Newnan shuttle that travels to and from Carrollton, students living at the main campus have easy access to seeing the Museum. Moreover, Downtown Newnan offers other historical and recreational activities to explore.

“We also own and operate the Historic Train Depot, which is at 60 east broad street near downtown,” said Scott.

“We use that as a learning center and as a rental space where people can get married and things like that.”

Whether it be a wedding in a train depot, or a day at the museum, it’s nice to appreciate the remnants of history.

For more information, visit the NCHC website: <https://newnancowetahistoricalsociety.com/>

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

ATHENS’ DREAM POP: DIVING INTO AVERY DRAUT’S NIGHT PALACE

EMMA SWALES
Editor-in-Chief

Entering the music industry is unconventional and risky, but also a leap of faith. Many people often struggle with turning their passion for music into a career, especially when the path proves to be uncertain and ever-changing. This was the case for Avery Draut, a University of Georgia alumni who decided to take that chance.

Soon after graduating from UGA in 2016, Draut finally found the time to sit down and let her musical creativity flow. This led to the creation of Night Palace, a whimsical and psychedelic indie band guided by Draut’s angelic and captivating vocals.

During her time in college, Draut changed her major several times in hopes of finding something that fits her best. She stated that it was hard to choose a degree that aligned with her creative energy and passion for singing, rather than a major that supported a more stable career path.

“I started as a visual arts major, I switched to journalism and tried theater,” said Draut. “I was just all over the place since I have so many interests that either compete or collide in a nice way. It took a minute to figure out that I actually wanted to pursue a music degree.”

She began her musical journey and stayed busy in school with opera performances and singing recitals. Once she graduated college, her schedule cleared, and Draut was left with all of the time to focus on herself and to finally make her own music.

“I found that I started hearing melodies and jotting down lyrics,” said Draut. “I had to get over thinking that I couldn’t write songs. I had so many friends who had been writing songs for so long and so many friends who were poets and writers. I thought to myself, ‘those people do that, I don’t do that’ and I had to kind of get over that hurdle.”

After getting comfortable with the idea of creating music, Draut quickly found a love for songwriting, and it soon became an outlet for her creative energy. In 2022, she began to form Night Palace’s debut album, *Diving Rings*.

The album features 11 songs that are filled with dreamy synths and magical melodies that create a soft and hazy atmosphere. Draut explains that the album features heavy orchestral qualities that help create the perfect dream-pop listening experience.

“When this project started it was a little

punkier, trimmed down and a little bit less lush,” said Draut. “We started playing shows and as I grew as a person, I wanted the songs to grow too so they became a little softer and formed what Night Palace is now.”

Diving Rings proved to be a successful debut for Night Palace and set a solid foundation for the indie-pop band.

The band continues to grow and Draut expressed hopes of new material being released in the near future.

“We have this album that’s done and so I’m hoping a label will want to put it out,” said Draut. “That will hopefully be in the next few months. In the meantime, we have released a live video for our song ‘Nightshade,’ which we played at Terminal West in Atlanta. I think it kind of pushes out the edges of Night Palace. It goes a little darker and more atmospheric and we are starting to feel more ourselves.”

Night Palace is moving forward and will continue to play shows around Athens and Atlanta. After looking back at her progress, Draut is happy to see the growth of her music and where her songwriting journey has taken her.

“These songs on *Diving Rings* were the first songs I had ever written, and I think I had my whole life to bubble up and kind of congeal these ideas,” said Draut. “I started having these melodies and lyrics come to me and I just started writing. I came later to it than a lot of people but from there, it just grew. I have become more a part of the songwriting and music scene in Athens, Georgia which is so magical.”



Photo: Emma Swales, *The West Georgian*