



“TAKE BACK THE NIGHT” SPOTLIGHTS SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH

BREANNA TILLIE
Contributing Writer

Going to college is typically an exciting time in life. The freedom that comes with being almost entirely independent of adults for the first time combined with heaps of social and intellectual novelty can create a wealth of memories to look back on for decades to come.

However, this newfound liberty also means that it is especially important to prioritize safety so that the student’s time in college is shaped with positive experiences rather than devastating ones. Many students are passionate about assisting other fellow students in staying safe.

The Peer Health Educators at the University of West Georgia hosted “Take Back the Night” on April 2 in acknowledgement of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

“With it being Sexual Assault Awareness Month, we thought this would be the perfect time to spread awareness to our students and peers,” said lead peer educator, Devin Martin. “Also, this event was to advocate for victims of sexual assault and let them know that they’re not alone with the battle they’re facing. We’re here to support them all the way through.”

While the Peer Health Educators understand the trauma and distress of having an experience with sexual assault, these advocates also support victims in taking steps in the right direction afterwards.

“If they encounter a situation regarding sexual assault, we like to

educate them and bring awareness of some of the resources we have here on campus like Title 9 office, which is a service for students that provides confidential counseling and an opportunity to make reports for disciplinary action,” said Martin. “We know when it comes to things like this, students want to take a more private and discreet approach.”

Confidential counseling after the usual shock, pain, and confusion of experiences with sexual assault is of high consideration to the Peer Health Educators.

“Confidential counseling gives them the chance to have a one-on-one session,” said Martin. “Everything that is mentioned between that person and the counselor stays between them. It doesn’t get reported to anyone unless the victim wants to.”

Parents may have cause for concern with their children going to live on a university campus, especially as stories of sexual assault on college campuses continue to come out. The Peer Health Educators at the University of West Georgia want parents to know that their children are taken care of regarding support and resources.

“Our job as peer educators is to bring awareness and educate students about taking advantage of resources,” said Martin. “We know a lot of underclassmen are unaware about what’s available and we want students to be so knowledgeable about the services provided that parents know about it too.”

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Martin also encourages those who are passionate about the physical, mental and emotional health of students to become involved with the Peer Health Educators.

“We do a lot of table events, presentations and workshops. The majority of these events are in relation to health topics such as safe sex, alcohol awareness, mental wellness, nutrition and more,” said Martin. “Being able to interact with your peers on campus and getting to know how they feel mentally and physically. Not just how they feel about campus, but their overall wellbeing. We have the luxury of being able to give advice and help them to the best of our abilities.”



Photo: Breanna Tillie, *The West Georgian*



UWG THEATRE CLOSES THEIR SEASON WITH A HEROIC EXIT

ABBIE KLEIN
Contributing Writer

Following the success of “Hamlet,” “Animal Farm,” “Fuddy Meers” and “Episodes: A Cabaret” The UWG Theater Department is putting on their fifth and final show of the season, “The Toxic Avenger” running from April 16-21.

The show is a rock musical adaptation of the cult classic 1984 film “The Toxic Avenger.” The story follows Melvin, an aspiring earth scientist who gets thrown into a vat of toxic waste turning him into a mutant superhero. The story takes on themes such as pollution, politics and disability.

“The main theme is actually about pollution,” said Brae Mooney, a UWG theater marketer. “It’s about like toxic waste and how that leads to destruction. It’s about this guy who gets thrown in a toxic vat by bullies and he turns into a superhero, and then has to stop violence and crime in Tromaville. It’s a funny twist on a superhero’s journey, a thrilling and humorous adventure.”

The musical originally written by Joe DiPietro and David Bryan, opened in 2008 in New Jersey following the success of “The Toxic Avenger” franchise that consists of four movies,

a television series and a comic book series. In 2009 the musical won an award for Outstanding New Off-Broadway Musical along with several other nominations. The show played all over the world up until 2018 when a recording of the performance was released on BroadwayHD.

While the musical has been praised for its silliness and humor, the show is not appropriate for younger viewers. Some of the content discussed includes violence and sexual humor as well as foul language.

“It’s not appropriate for all audiences because it has crude comedy and a lot of explicit themes,” said Mooney.

Crude humor and violence is not out of the ordinary for UWG theater. “Fuddy Meers” and “Episodes: A Cabaret” also featured a lot of foul language, violence and sexual innuendos. Because of this the actors are skilled with their comedic timing, even when it deals with heavier topics, to still make the show enjoyable for everyone.

“It’s been a great season so far, everyone has put in a lot of work to make everything happen and I’m excited to see how this last show goes,” said Mooney.



Photo courtesy of UWG Theater Department

One of the biggest challenges for this show has been the costuming. It’s not the easiest task to make an actor look like a toxic mutant superhero, but the UWG costume designers found a way.

“I’m excited to see how audiences react to the music and costuming. The costume designers have put a lot of work into the show,” said Mooney.

“The Toxic Avenger” will open for a community preview on April 16 at 7:30 p.m. and run every night after that until April 20 with one final show at 2:30 p.m. on April 21. For tickets and more information visit Current Season | UWG (westga.edu).

“One of the most important parts of my job is getting people interested in the theater company and getting them to see the show,” said Mooney. “I think this is definitely the type of show people want to see.”

UWG VOGUE ACADEMY SHOWCASES STUDENT TALENT AT COUTURE GALORE FASHION SHOW

KESHAWN ALLEN
Contributing Writer

At the University of West Georgia, there are many ways for students to express themselves. The campus and student organizations guarantee that every student on and off campus can share their loves and interests. One organization that gives students the chance to express themselves artistically is the UWG Vogue Academy, with its first Couture Galore taking place this semester. The Vogue Academy presents a fashion show once a semester with creative and unique themes, and this year’s theme allows students to express their fashion sense and modeling talent.

“From the model’s perspective, it is to push everyone to be their creative self,” said the show’s creative director, Morgan June. “Not just fitting inside that box that society creates but pushing outside of that.”

The theme Couture Galore shines a light on fashion of all sorts, not just a particular clothing style. This show will allow students in the Vogue Academy to display the beauty of the many different fashion styles, whether upscale or streetwear. This is a new approach

that the organization is taking this year to allow the audience members to experience a different type of fashion show compared to the ones they have put on in the past, with a specific theme for just one style of clothing being highlighted.

“This show is very different from what we did last year and it is very different from what you might see on a college campus.” said Vogue Academy president Alexandra Sterwats. “We just want to push the norms and break out of that, be creative, and be a kind of space where everybody in the room can feel like themselves.”

The show’s overall atmosphere will make all who attend feel like they are in New York City and experience the ambiance of many different fashion styles that can be seen in the big city culture. Vogue Academy students will express themselves through the different clothes they walk in on the runway, giving every look and set a personality.

“My confidence level has skyrocketed,” said freshman model Hayden Bunn. “Going into it, I didn’t have too much experience

with modeling. This has definitely taught me how to do so, and not only how to do it but how to do it in a way that makes me comfortable.”

“Before, I didn’t have the confidence to wear what I wanted to wear in the style I wanted to wear it and feel confident that I wasn’t going to get judged,” said sophomore model Emily Lueken. “Now, it’s less about worrying if I am going to be judged and more about even if I am judged, I won’t care. It doesn’t stop me from continuing to dress and feel what makes me feel good.”

If anyone is interested in witnessing the show, Couture Galore will be showing on Saturday, April 6, from 7 p.m. until 10:30 p.m. The show will consist of about 15 sets with five-minute breaks between each set, allowing audience members to take in all they witness with talented models and the amazing outfits they will be wearing.



Photo courtesy Emily Lueken

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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

MGK AND TRIPPIE REDD COLLAB ON LIFELESS ALBUM

“GENRE : SADBOY” **JEFF IGBOKWE**
Contributing Writer

Previous collaborators MGK and Trippie Redd teamed up again to release their first collaboration project last Friday, an album titled “genre : sadboy.” While they attempt to explore the realm of emotion and depression, their apathetic take on the emo rap genre leaves listeners with a pretty bland and uninspired experience.

One of the biggest questions that arose when the album was announced was “why?” The popularity of emo rap had begun to die down towards the later years of the 2010s with the death of some of its major figures such as Juice Wrld and Xxxtentacion. Then why in 2024 did MGK and Trippie Redd feel the need to release such a lazy copy and paste of the sound that has little to no mainstream popularity anymore?

The release of “genre : sadboy” can be seen as a poor attempt to market depression as a brand or aesthetic rather than a real issue many people have battles

with. Trippie Redd has found previous success as an emo rapper, becoming friends with the previously mentioned Xxxtentacion and Juice Wrld. MGK has been accused of mimicking the sounds trap, pop-punk and now emo rap in his music, with “genre : sadboy” being the latest addition to his discography of unoriginal music.

In terms of the music itself, I feel that ‘generic’ is honestly the best word to describe the record. The themes covered in the songs were very bland, the lyricism was surface level at best, the beat selection was boring and the music itself is just a rehash of what has already been done better by other artists from around five years ago. I could be here all day picking out corny lyrics, however an example is from the track “hiding in the hills,” where MGK claims he hates living in his mansion at Hollywood Hills as it feels so lonely stating, “I’m hiding in the hills, but this not where I

belong, I don’t have no friends in this motherf***** room. When does all this end?” Who cares? If he feels that way, he can move somewhere closer to his friends and family members, since he has the money to do so.

This whole album is just a collection of lifeless and generic music. While certain tracks, such as “half dead,” actually have a decent hook, and JID’s verse as a feature on “who do i call” was one of the more memorable moments from the record, “genre : sadboy” ultimately has zero replay value. If you wish to hear an emo rap record, simply put on a Juice Wrld or even Trippie Redd song from 2017-2019, and save yourself from 27 minutes of corny lyrics and bland production from this new project.



Photo courtesy of Interscope Records

ADAM SANDLER LIZARD “LEO” DELIVERS WHAT DISNEY’S 100TH ANNIVERSARY DIDN’T

JANNETTE EMMERICK
Feature Editor

Released on Netflix in November, animated movie “Leo” follows the tale of a geriatric iguana in a school classroom. The film itself still stands as a surprising sleeper when it comes to meaningful and memorable movies.

In the movie review world, “Leo” spiked in popularity mostly because it was released the same month as Disney’s “Wish.” Both being animated movies aimed at younger audiences, they were still different genres, but that didn’t stop the comparisons. Despite “Leo” being a straight to streaming movie, and “Wish” being released in cinemas, “Leo” received endless praises, with many acknowledging the hopelessness and downfall of Disney’s storytelling when an Adam Sandler’s movie is better than a 100th year anniversary film.

The story follows Leo, an 74 year old iguana that believes he is near the end of his life. He dreams to be free in the Florida

Everglades, but instead ends up getting roped into a “take the class pet home” sort of journey where a different student cares for him each week. Along the way, he ends up bonding with the fifth-graders and showing them his years of wisdom— even if it’s not always sage advice.

Largely written and produced by Adam Sandler alongside other writers including Robert Smigel and Paul Sado, “Leo” delivers in the humor department, most noticeably, the piranha-like kindergarteners or the musical numbers. Yes, it is a musical. As if an Adam Sandler lizard was not bizarre enough, the movie features several satirical songs that play on musical theater tropes.

For one song in particular, the students in the class begin to lament about how they’re older now, dropping lines like “when I was three” or “when I was seven,” with the punchline being that they’re all ten-year-olds. Still, the song and the movie

itself highlights the validity of change while growing up no matter age. Showing that even ten year olds can feel a sense of longing for younger years despite being young in the eyes of older folks.

“Leo” hits other themes also about adolescence, change, family, friendship, self esteem, stress and many others. These generational themes are a reason why many preferred the film over “Wish,” because Disney’s film primarily targeted young children in its concepts and themes, as opposed to a family audience.

Moreover, the animation itself delivers a refreshing style to 3-D animation between the textures and character designs. While reminiscent of the CalArts style, there is still a uniqueness to the presentation, especially with the rabid kindergarteners.

However, “Leo” still has its criticisms, mostly being the reliance on the “white-lie” trope. Specifically, Leo tells each individual student that they are the only one he talks to and this leads to them being upset when they find out they aren’t special. Still, this one nitpick can be overlooked, especially by those who are unaccustomed to the trope.

Overall, “Leo” is a highly recommended movie if one is in the mood for animation and humor, or looking for a good family movie. No matter the age of the viewer, there’s something for everyone to learn from and laugh at.