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Warrior International Day

ASB organized International Day as a way for Warrior culture clubs to share their traditional cuisines with the student body.

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Exploring culture through cuisine, Warrior ASB hosted International Day in the school quad Nov. 8.

International Day is a festival for Warrior culture clubs to share food from their culture, with the aim to expose students to food from around the world.

Initially, International Day was a fundraising event where culture clubs brought in traditional foods and ASB assigned non-culture clubs a designated cuisine to bring food from. Around nine years ago, International Day became Warrior Food Fest, and clubs were no longer required to bring culture-specific foods.

This year, ASB is re-establishing International Day in hopes of sharing traditions and educating Troy students about specific cultures. ASB Interclub Commissioner Junior Eshani Deshpande invited culture clubs to participate in the event and ASB sold event tickets for \$1 each Nov. 4 through Nov. 8. Warrior culture clubs L'Chaim, Latinos Unidos, Pilipinos Sharing Smiles Together, South Asian Student Association, Japanese Culture Club,



Middle Eastern Culture Club, Troy High Chinese Cultural Appreciation Club and Vietnamese Student Association participated in the festival by selling food.

The event planning team consisted of primary organizer Eshani Deshpande, Assistant Principal of Student Activities Jeff Padgett and ASB Adviser Abigail Contreras. Deshpande began planning International Day at the beginning of October and spent two weeks contacting clubs, sending out reminders to club presidents and securing tables for them to use as concession stands.

According to Deshpande, the event helped students engage with their own cultures as well as new ones. Participating in the event also allowed students to gain awareness of all the various

culture clubs that exist on the Warrior campus, Deshpande said.

"The main purpose of culture clubs, [which] is stated in their club constitutions, is to spread their culture to anyone who is willing to learn about it," Deshpande said. "I think the outcome of this event lets students do that and gives them an event to try foods from different cultures."

According to Middle Eastern Culture Club Co-President Mohammad Tanatra, preparing for International Day was a three-week process. Planning for the event consisted of deciding which Middle Eastern foods to sell and collaborating with board members to buy food for the fundraiser, Tanatra said.

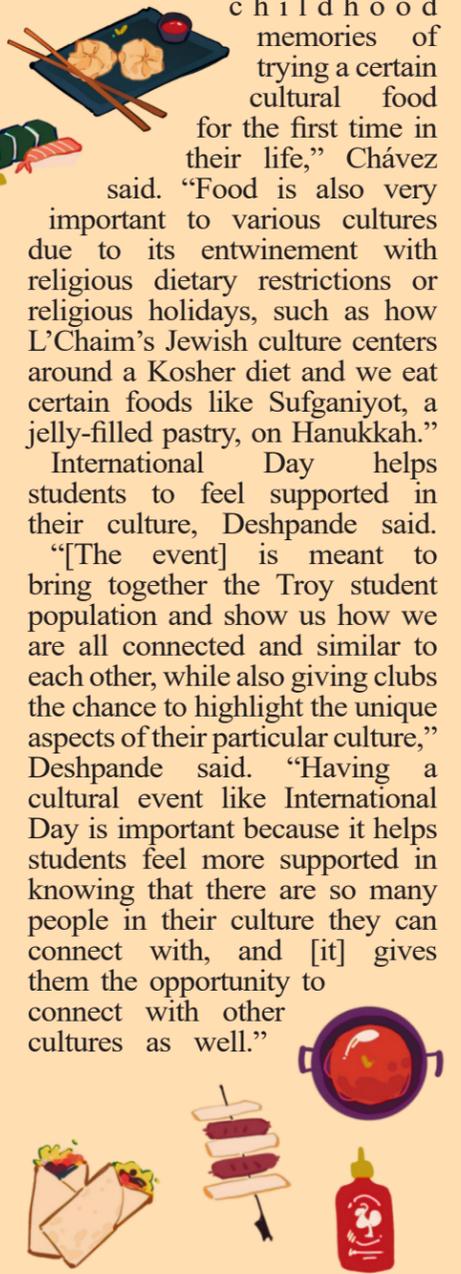
"Our entire set of board members have been in close contact with parents who are willing to help support our club in order to receive food to bring to the International Day event," Tanatra said. "We wanted to have a diverse set of foods to sell that are representative of all Middle Eastern culture, which is why my board and I decided to bring Shai, a traditional Arabic tea, as well as Pita bread and Iranian yogurt dip." According to L'Chaim

Club President Salvador Chávez, hosting events like International Day is crucial for students due to the prevalence of food in every culture and religion. Selling from various cuisines helps educate students on the history of traditional customs in order to destigmatize cultures, Chávez said.

"I think that the event helped people remember their childhood memories of trying a certain cultural food for the first time in their life," Chávez said. "Food is also very important to various cultures due to its entwinement with religious dietary restrictions or religious holidays, such as how L'Chaim's Jewish culture centers around a Kosher diet and we eat certain foods like Sufganiyot, a jelly-filled pastry, on Hanukkah."

International Day helps students to feel supported in their culture, Deshpande said.

"[The event] is meant to bring together the Troy student population and show us how we are all connected and similar to each other, while also giving clubs the chance to highlight the unique aspects of their particular culture," Deshpande said. "Having a cultural event like International Day is important because it helps students feel more supported in knowing that there are so many people in their culture they can connect with, and [it] gives them the opportunity to connect with other cultures as well."



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Senior Nicholas Dang releases first EP “it’s just you, my dear”

Dang’s music is inspired by the R&B genre and focuses on blending lofi beats with smooth vocals and lyrics.

By Kylie Tien
STAFF WRITER

Senior Nicholas Dang debuted his first extended play release “it’s just you, my dear” Sept. 27 and played songs from the EP at his listening party Oct. 17.

Dang began producing music when he was 13 and started releasing music

under the name asumuh in 2022, having since amassed a following of over 430,000 monthly listeners on Spotify.

Dang’s passion for music led him to build connections with other figures in the R&B community, such as Rocco George and Grent Perez, who served as early sources of inspiration. According to Dang, his first experiences in the music industry involved both highs and lows.

“Something that I learned [was] how to lose,” Dang said. “Learning to lose is a thing no one really expects.”

Since the release of “it’s just you, my dear,” the EP, featuring five songs: “it’s

just you, my dear,” “moviestar,” “with you,” “play pretend” and “number one,” has garnered over 400,000 streams on Spotify. After its release, a listening party for Dang’s EP was hosted at the Yellow Goose Cafe in Irvine Oct. 17, with several of Dang’s friends and fans in attendance.

Dang began working on the EP in 2023 and spent a year on songwriting and production. The songs in “it’s just you, my dear” aim to portray relationships through a storytelling method, Dang said.

“I was writing [the songs] throughout the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF NICHOLAS DANG

TERRIFIC TUNES: Nicholas Dang performing during the listening party for his new EP, “it’s just you, my dear,” at the Yellow Goose Cafe.

year,” Dang said. “I [wanted] to show falling in love and looking at relationships from a different point of view.”

Each song in the EP tells a tale about the different aspects of love. According to Dang, the EP’s chronology created difficulties at times.

“I have never had an EP before this,” Dang said. “It was challenging trying to make [the] songs connect with each other.”

Since the release of “it’s just you, my dear,” Dang has been gathering ideas for his next works and projects. According to Dang, working on music on a smaller scale helps him balance his passion with schoolwork.

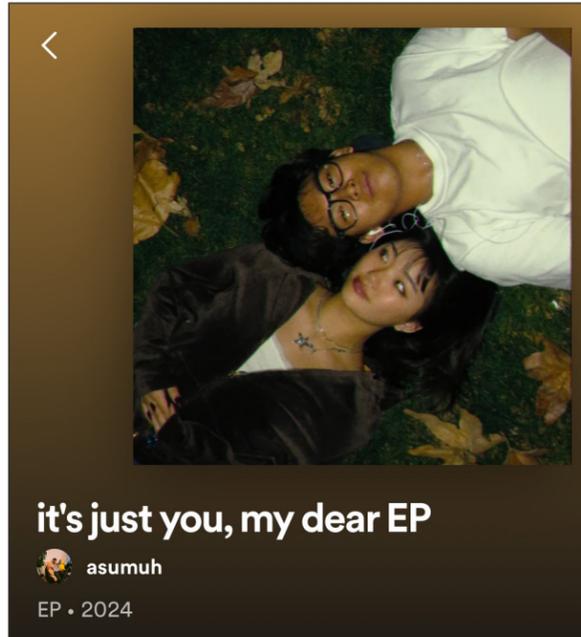
“I have many really small projects

here and there,” Dang said. “I have ideas for different songs, like a Valentine’s Day [and] Christmas double singles.”

Dang released an official music video for “it’s just you, my dear” on his YouTube channel on Sept. 27, and has planned upcoming projects, including a new single “met a pretty girl” scheduled for release on Nov. 15.

According to Dang, when it comes to music, it is important to believe in yourself and have an open mind.

“[My] advice [is to] be yourself, [and] do your best to ignore everybody else,” Dang said. “At the same time, have an open mind, and work [with] a different point of view.”



it's just you, my dear EP

asumuh

EP • 2024

Warrior Badminton Club hosts first Winter Tournament

The Winter Tournament took place over the course of one week, and winners received donuts as the prize.

By Anastasia Efremova
STAFF WRITER

Warrior Badminton Club hosted its first Winter Tournament during lunch in the South Gym Nov. 4 to Nov. 8.

Founded this school year by President Yoyo Zhang, Troy Badminton Club hosts practices every other Friday during lunch in the South Gym. Members participate in practices ranging

from freeplay to competitive games.

Club Vice President Aiden Lim proposed the idea for a club tournament in September and board members began discussing logistics. Publicist Kate Chen and Secretary Dina Zhang decorated posters advertising the tournament while Y. Zhang and Treasurer Audrey Donn made registration forms. Lim oversaw the tournament organization and made brackets for the order of teams. Signups opened for members on Oct. 21.

During the organization process of the tournament, the board faced scheduling issues. The original plan was to host the games from Oct. 28 to Oct. 31, but the club members had scheduling conflicts, so

Badminton Club board members moved the tournament to the following week.

The tournament consisted of six teams in pairs playing matches against one another each day, with the winning team advancing to the next game. If a team did not arrive fifteen minutes before the lunch period ended, they automatically forfeited. The team with the most points won a match if it was not completed by the end of lunch. At the end of the week, the team who won the most games won the tournament.

Teams played the first two rounds up to 15 points, and every day after that increased by 5 points. In preparation, board members had to thoroughly plan rules and regulations for the tournament, D. Zhang said.

“For the past couple of weeks, we have been making teams,” D. Zhang said. “[Then], we made a bracket, so people know who they are playing against, [along] with a schedule [for each team].”

The winners of the 2024 Badminton Winter Tournament were Tiger Chen and Bonmin Gu, who played the final game on Nov. 8 against Sissi Feng and Junting Li, winning the thirty-point match and coming first in the tournament.

The board faced challenges on the first day with some players not being present for their games. Board dealt with the problem by disqualifying those people and creating new brackets with the players present. Going forward, the club plans to send out confirmation

emails to the participating teams before the tournament starts. In the future, Badminton Club hopes to get more teams to participate, Lim said.

“I would love to continue [the tournament] in the future,” Lim said. “Some changes I am making are making the brackets easier to understand, [as] it was a little confusing [this time].”

Badminton Club aims to host at least two tournaments per school year, as well as collaborate with other schools’ Badminton clubs and teams to provide students with a more engaging experience.

The club will be hosting a fundraiser to finance more tournaments in the future. The Winter Tournament itself is free of charge to all members, as the club tried to make it as accessible as possible. The Winter Tournament was created to promote badminton as a sport, Y. Zhang said.

“The goal of the tournament is to keep our members motivated through competition,” Y. Zhang said. “[And] to encourage people to join and play [in our club].”

According to D. Zhang, joining the club can expose people to the fun of badminton and lead them to find enjoyment and discover a new interest in the sport.

“I never really got into badminton before this, but now I have discovered a new hobby,” D. Zhang said. “Originally I joined [the] club to support my friend, the president, but now I think badminton is a very fun sport, and I want more people to join in on the fun.”



PHOTO BY ANASTASIA EFREMOVA

FORMIDABLE FINALISTS: Sissi Feng, Junting Li, Tiger Chen and Bonmin Gu face off in the last game of the tournament.

LINK Crew holds Halloween themed scavenger hunt for freshmen

The scavenger hunt aimed to be a fun way for freshmen to familiarize themselves with the Warrior campus.

By Paulina Lee
STAFF WRITER

Aiming to help freshmen adjust to high school, LINK Crew hosted a Halloween-themed scavenger



COOL IN COSTUME: Freshman Vinicius Maiztegui, who won a raffle prize, posing with his reward.

hunt, “Trek or Treat,” Oct. 31.

The Troy teachers and administrators created the LINK Crew program in the summer of 2018 with the goal to support and aid freshmen as they navigate through the challenges of high school. LINK Crew aims to foster a sense of belonging and community by pairing incoming students with upperclassmen who can offer guidance and friendship.

During the Halloween scavenger hunt, designated LINK group leaders passed out “passports” to their freshmen. These passports had specific dates, ranging from Oct. 28 to Oct.31, with the location of LINK Crew coordinates around the school campus. Upon meeting the coordinators, students were given stamps on their passports to later receive candy and fun gifts. According to LINK crew coordinator Alexandria Williamson Gillespie, the motivation behind this event was to increase engagement and involvement with freshmen.

“We met and decided that Halloween week would be a fun way to introduce the idea that LINK [Crew] is going to be having these kinds of events throughout the year,” Williamson Gillespie said. “We just hope to build up momentum so that freshmen know future events will be fun for them.”

In hopes of creating an enjoyable experience for freshmen as they transition into high school, the LINK Crew program hosted accessible and easy-to-achieve events, such as trick-or-treating. LINK Crew coordinators plan to hold more events throughout the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ALEXANDRIA WILLIAMSON GILLESPIE

PLEASANT PRIZES: Freshmen collect their candies and stickers on the second day of the event.

school year, like the upcoming winter event, to encourage interaction between upperclassmen and underclassmen, Williamson Gillespie said.

“I hope Troy culture can reflect that we can be incredibly brilliant and hard-working while being silly and curious,” Williamson Gillespie said. “If we can get freshmen to associate school with some really fun core memories, then we will see greater success in attendance, performance and overall school spirit.”

LINK Crew leaders helped organize

and provide information for the event as part of their responsibility to connect with freshmen. Leaders contributed to the planning process by donating candy and distributing the passports to participants. Junior LINK Crew Leader Kayla Nguyen noted that it is a leader’s role to assist freshmen and ensure they understand the event.

“LINK Crew leaders help lead this event by first meeting up with groups of freshmen and giving their passports and small instructions before they are off to find their stamp posts,” Nguyen said. “We help guide students to the location if they need assistance, for example, like [finding] the outdoor classroom.”

In preparation for the event, LINK Crew coordinators purchased around 400 Halloween party favors and approximately 700 pieces of candy. During event days, coordinators set up tables in the quad at lunch to distribute treats to freshmen who presented a passport. At the end of the event, LINK Crew held a raffle for all participating students, providing gift cards as prizes. According to Williamson Gillespie, the program put in dedication and effort to ensure that every student felt welcome and engaged throughout the event.

“High school can be a difficult place with completely new stressors and expectations,” Williamson Gillespie said. “Essentially, we want to make sure that no matter what, every freshman who walks on campus knows [that] they have at least one Warrior in their corner rooting them on.”

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FBLA's participation opportunities from policy takes away many students

By Jayden Beaumont
STAFF WRITER



Clubs should not exclude students based on the classes they're taking.

Future Business Leaders of America is the largest student organization in the world with the goal of preparing high school students for business-related careers. Since its founding in 1937, FBLA has connected with more than five million teenagers, helping them funnel their aspirations and explore their passion related to careers and entrepreneurship. Members compete at regional, state and national levels, showcasing their knowledge in finance, economics and problem solving. However, FBLA is limited to those in business programs at their schools, meaning that only students who are taking specific courses are eligible to be part of the organization. FBLA should open its doors to all students to ensure equal opportunities regardless of circumstance and encourage the multiple interests of their members.

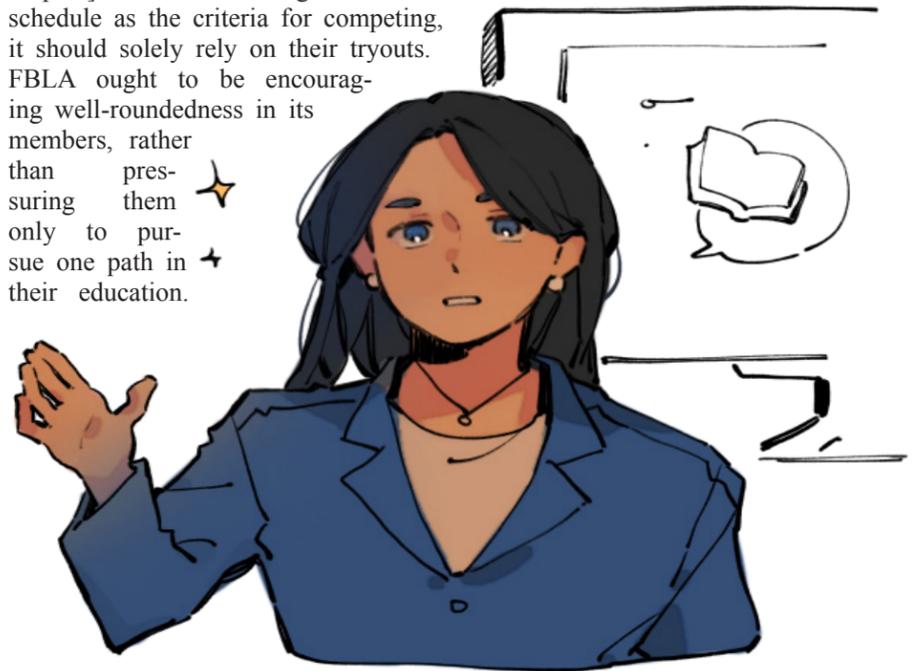
FBLA should allow students who aren't in business programs to join to help as many students as possible. Not all schools have business programs, which means a large group of kids, through no fault of their own, have no access to the club. Some high schools do not have the funding to create business classes for their students, but that doesn't mean that

these students are not interested in future business careers. Were FBLA to allow all to join and not only those already participating in business programs, it would give students a chance to explore their business ambitions that otherwise would not have been able to. Additionally, FBLA offers experiences that all people can benefit from. FBLA board member Reva Sobti said, "Even if you're not going into business, business is part of everything we do." Everyone can learn from FBLA and everyone should have the opportunity to do so. Ultimately, FBLA's motto, "Service, Education, and Progress," can only be fully achieved by ensuring that all American teenagers have the opportunity to participate.

High schoolers should be able to pursue all of their interests without feeling pressure to commit to just one. By only including students in business programs, FBLA forces students to choose between their interests. For example, at Troy, only kids who have taken Troy Tech's business classes can compete in FBLA. However, many students don't have room in their schedule to take these courses, especially if they are in other tech pathways. But just because someone can't take a business class does not mean they would not be able to contribute to the organization. The policy of only accepting students in business courses greatly narrows FBLA's outreach and fundamentally undermines its goal of preparing student leaders. It

would serve competitors well to develop various skills outside of business such as in media, design or technology. Furthermore, before competing, students must try out to prove they are both knowledgeable and dedicated. If someone is able to pass these trials, it should not matter if they have taken a business class. Sobti stated that she thinks that "as long as [one has] passed the trials and proven they're capable and willing to work hard on it, anyone should be allowed [to participate]." Instead of using one's class schedule as the criteria for competing, it should solely rely on their tryouts. FBLA ought to be encouraging well-roundedness in its members, rather than pressuring them only to pursue one path in their education.

FBLA has made a positive difference in many students' lives, teaching them valuable lessons in leadership, public speaking and problem-solving. But this club could foster a greater impact if it allowed all students to join, regardless of their schedule. According to the National Center for Education, 20% of undergraduates are business majors. For FBLA to truly service America's future business leaders and America's youth as a whole, it must allow every student to join and compete.



CARTOON BY HANH DINH

School lunches are not good enough—students deserve better options

By Ethan Ferrer
STAFF WRITER



Troy students need more than what school lunches offer them.

The Troy High School cafeteria has failed to meet the standards of all of its students, and this must change. Although the free meals allow all students access to food, the quality of lunches isn't based on calories alone. Student meals can go beyond simple preheated products, and instead focus on providing students with freshly-made meals. Although the fruits and vegetables offered do contribute to student diets, many students decline them in favor of hastily prepared fast foods, such as pizza and burgers. The lack

of options at Troy needs to change, and the school cafeteria must offer students more options to cater to their unique dietary needs.

Healthier and tastier alternatives should be made available to the entire Troy population. In a survey described on Education Week that surveyed students from across the United States, only 64% of students believed their school meals tasted good. Moreover, only 55% of students rated their meals as good quality. Although this implies that most students are comfortable with school meals, this is not necessarily the case. The data shows that half of students eating school-based meals are dissatisfied with the food—something they shouldn't need to worry about at all. Moreover, the milk provided by Troy's cafeteria may not even be suitable for consumption by all students.

According to Boston Children's Hospital, 90% of Asian Americans are lactose intolerant; given that Troy's 2024–2025 School Profile states that 44% of students are Asian, some students will inevitably be lactose intolerant. But despite this, the cafeteria only offers dairy-based milk. The United States Department

of Agriculture's Special Milk Program provides a healthy surplus of milk to schools—why can't non-dairy milk be an option? Moreover, for students who may not have access to lunches that are prepared outside of school, school-based meals must have enough nutrients to supplement students through the school year. According to research done in 2023 by the School Nutrition Association, over 95,000 United States schools and institutions serve meals to about 28.6 million students per day—a statistic that is likely reflected throughout FJUHS's schools. The great demand for school-based meals means that such meals cannot be subpar. If school food isn't up to a healthy standard, part of Troy's population may miss out on essential nutrition.

In particular, teenagers—all of whom make up Troy's population—need better meal choices to support their growth. For instance, Stanford Medicine mentions how many teens have increased appetites as a result of different occurrences such as

growth spurts and increased metabolism. Due to this, such increased appetites cannot be satiated by only unsatisfactory fast foods. Additionally, with many students actively

partaking in Troy athletics, diet is critical to many student activities. Statistics from Utah State University suggest that a high school athlete's diet should consist of 50% carbohydrates and about 1.2–1.8

grams of protein per kilogram of body weight. This standard needs to be done by providing students with foods of decent quality—not preheated packages that do not provide any supplement to student health. Ultimately, Troy students, given their age range, need significantly better nutrition than what the current school lunches can offer them.

Decent food is something that every student should have access to. While the Troy cafeteria does offer students free meals, such meals are often seen as suboptimal by many and require changes. For instance, junior Ethan Yan notes that the meals are simply "not enough," while sophomore Samuel Abraham believes "there's a lot of room for improvement." Many students agree that the food at Troy falls below the standard, with common dietary restrictions such as lactose intolerance not taken into consideration. Change must be made to be more accommodating to student needs and restrictions. School meals can be better than this, and Troy's food is no exception.



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES TIMES

The implementation of AI simulations could change the world for the better

By Chelsea Engelhardt
STAFF WRITER



Artificial intelligence testing rather than animal testing is a step in the right direction.

Science and technology are constantly evolving to become more efficient and accurate, and artificial intelligence is no different. Regardless of the controversy involving the uses of AI, it is irrefutable that it is an efficient tool, especially in medicine. In the case of animal testing, AI could replace the practice through elaborate databases and scientific input. Correct implementations of AI could better society and make the product development cycle more humane.

Animal testing has been a cruel issue for way too long. Throughout history, this practice has taken place for medical research, but it is no longer necessary. According to the Regulatory Review, over 110 million animals die painful deaths in the U.S. due to

animal testing, which needs to end now. Too many animals die every year in labs in the name of helping humankind. Although many alternatives, such as stem cell research and cell cultures, have been tested as replacements for animal testing, none have proven successful. However, this could now end as according to the BBC, AI simulation tests have more widespread uses and use universal algorithms in science. Controversy aside, AI has the potential to end a long-spread history of cruelty towards animals.

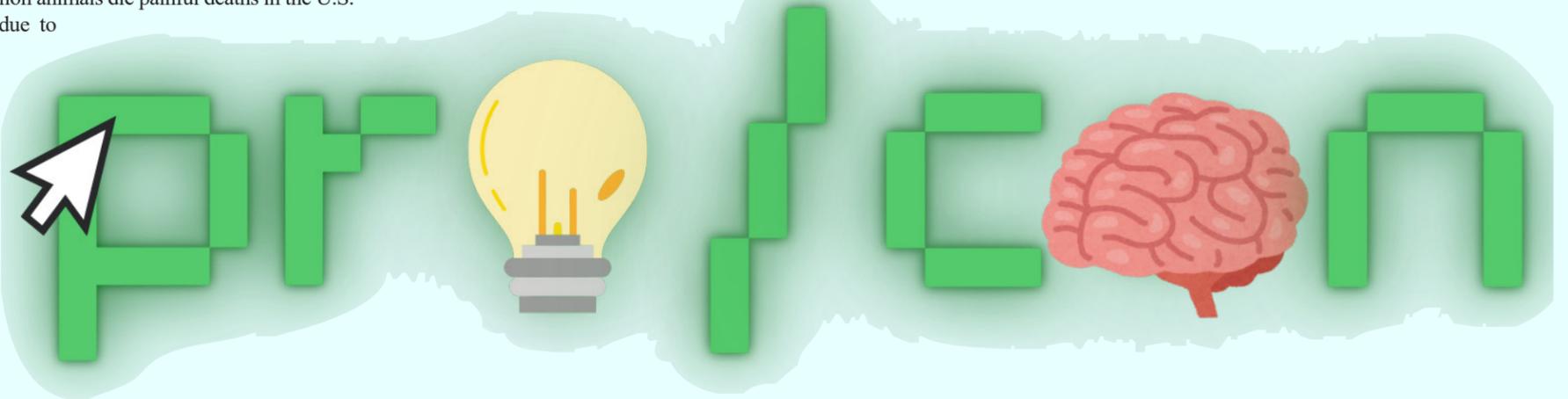
On top of AI testing proving to be easier and more versatile, the practice has also shown more accurate results. Professor Hartung of Johns Hopkins University started the Center for Alternatives to Animal Testing, where AI is used to replace other outdated practices. Prof. Harthung claimed that in several different cases, AI technology was already proving itself to be more accurate than animal testing. So not only can AI end this cruelty, but it can also be more accurate and useful in research. Additionally, AnimalGAN,



PHOTO COURTESY OF PETA

funded by the Federal Drug Administration, is dedicated to the creation of virtual animal models to stimulate animal studies without risks and morality concerns. AnimalGAN has also found that their online testing allows for a more versatile testing system. The synthetic data from AnimalGAN has the potential to be used in toxicology developments and assessments. Programs like these are a step in the right direction.

Although AI uses have caused rifts, the overall value AI can bring makes it worth it. Not only can AI be used to help ensure that drugs and other substances are safe for eventual human use, but it could also replace animal testing. The implementation of virtual animals and AI toxicology databases are vigorously working towards a more just and humane society that needs to be instituted.



GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA WON

AI is the wrong answer to the right question when it comes to medical testing

By Scarlett Clark
STAFF WRITER



The dangers of AI in medical research cannot be ignored.

For decades, animals have been used unethically for research purposes. Organizations such as People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals have attempted to solve this issue by advocating for animal rights. A proposed solution that has arisen recently is the use of AI to simulate

responses to different medical tests. However, applying AI to research, as well as society as a whole, is a severely risky endeavor, particularly when it comes to data bias and overgeneralization. The use of AI is not worth the myriad of complications it presents—and the harm it could invoke should be strongly considered.

AI is a mechanism that has the power to put the medical field at risk, a severe peril that we cannot take a chance on. The negative influence of AI is even worse for healthcare and research, fields critical enough to form the basis of function for a population. The question of whether to implement AI across the board,

especially in healthcare and research, must be considered with great caution. Artificial Intelligence is too rocky a mechanism to put our faith in when it comes to the lives and well-being of an entire population. A great number of concerns come into play when it comes to AI testing, including biased programming, which is detrimental to the research arena. Stanford University reported that automation in medicine may “amplify existing biases,” which can “degrade a system’s accuracy.” This is clearly a critical issue in the field of healthcare, which millions of people rely on. To put research and medicine in jeopardy based on the faultiness of AI is to put the population at risk. Biases impair the viability of data, particularly when it comes to the samples of information artificial intelligence is equipped with and bias in the systematic function of AI. Not to mention the fact that these biases can invoke problems for vulnerable communities, as well as put individuals in danger based on inaccurate or skewed data. Additionally, AI is too immature a system to rely on at this point, and to depend upon it for research could have dire consequences. In a field as important as medical testing, it is profoundly dangerous to involve artificial intelligence, which contains dangers evident by its effects and hazards since its invention.

It is absolutely true that animal testing is a problem that cannot continue to go on, but AI does not have to be the solution. There are a significant number of alternatives to animal

testing that do not involve artificial intelligence. For instance, in vitro methods of testing have begun to rise as developments in science give way to new opportunities for solutions to the animal testing problem. This testing involves the use of human cells and tissues allowing researchers to simulate human responses to substances and diseases. This innovation, which continues to adapt and improve, is one alternative to the suffering of animals in research. This sort of testing has the potential to become the future of medical testing. Innovations in In Vitro testing continue as new models and devices are created. Other substitutes proposed by scientists include partial replacement, which uses organisms that are incapable of experiencing pain or suffering, as well as human volunteering, which is the most accurate form of simulating human responses. Animal testing does not have to be the only method of testing, but neither does AI. There are alternatives that lack the moral consequences of animal testing and the risks of AI.

Artificial intelligence is too unreliable and dangerous to be involved in high-stakes branches of science. We must consider whether using AI is worth the risks it presents, whether that be for our jobs, the integrity of creativity, the government, and the next generation. Simply because AI exists does not mean we should take advantage of its abilities.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF TECHTICS.AI

WARRIORS AT HEART

A-TEN-TION! Prepare to salute our Warrior alumni and their service in protecting our country. Read more about the stories of Rishi Shah, Stephanie Gower, Nicole Uchida and Timothy Tran!

Compiled by Eileen Um, **FEATURE EDITOR**, articles by Kathleen Hong and Emma Gong, **STAFF WRITERS**, photos courtesy of Stephanie Gower, Rishi Shah, Timothy Tran and Nicole Uchida

STEPHANIE GOWER, US ARMY

Stephanie Gower, a graduate of Troy's class of 2010, is a US Army captain. Through her leadership roles and growing passion for her community, Gower discovered an intimate camaraderie with those around her, helping her find purpose in her service.

Gower's military journey began at Troy, where she was recruited for the United States Military Academy, more commonly known as West Point, at one of her varsity soccer tournaments. Gower knew little of what to expect, transitioning from soccer games to boot camp. But she quickly integrated into the West Point culture of serving a greater purpose: protecting America. After receiving her Bachelor's in Science and Engineering Management, Gower was first stationed at Fort Campbell in 2014 as a military police officer. Despite being a platoon leader of 50 soldiers, many being her seniors, Gower adapted to her responsibilities, learning to maintain a humble and confident mindset.

"[I had] a difficult transition, but I had a good team around me to help," Gower said. "And by the end of my year and a half, we were [a] really close knit unit."

Gower faced a new task when she was deployed to Afghanistan. Despite little outside communication (to protect sensitive information) and long work hours,

Gower felt a great sense of purpose as she saw how she was helping to keep US soldiers safe. Alongside contributing nationally, Gower finds fulfillment in contributing locally. Alongside her military duties, Gower has volunteered as a soccer coach at every post she was stationed at, and in 2019, Gower was awarded the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal to recognize her community service. Currently, Gower is a captain, and next summer she will be promoted to major. Although she started her career with little military knowledge, Gower has become a soldier passionate about protecting her country and community.

"I am very passionate about what I do in the military," Gower said. "For me, it's doing something greater than myself and focusing on helping [other] people."

Gower's military journey helped her become a fervent leader for her community. Simultaneously, Gower remembers to enjoy the little moments, especially with friends and family, and she encourages the Troy population to do the same.

"Spend time with your friends and family and enjoy [it]," Gower said. "Because those are the people that you're going to lean on as you move forward in your careers...as you move forward in life."



TIMOTHY TRAN, US NAVY

Timothy Tran, a member of the Troy Class of 2007, is a surface warfare officer working in the Joint Staff in the United States Pentagon. He carries a vital role in foreign policy and resource distribution for various branches of the military, combining his respect for his duties with a tenacious love for different cultures and global relations.

Tran's journey began with a childhood dream of being a naval officer. He participated in both Troy's NJROTC program and the University of Southern California's Reserve Officer Training Corps where he avidly studied international relations. Once deployed as a surface warfare officer in Japan, Tran became responsible for leading the sailors of his fleet, managing the ship during watch rotations, and more. Through this experience, he learned the art of sacrifice and prioritization, as well as the importance of first listening to everyone's perspectives before taking any abrupt action. "It's challenging, and it's not easy," Tran said. "[But] it prepared me really well for my next step [as an officer]."

Today, Tran serves onshore in the Pentagon as a member of the Joint Staff, acting as the medium between different branches of the military and

geographical representatives of different conflicts around the world, Tran works very closely with America's allies in Europe and NATO. His interactions with these allies help him to advise the director of plans for strategy in Europe, NATO, and Russia, who then goes on to brief the National Security Council or the Secretary of Defense to pass on their military's advice.

"I've studied a lot of history and a lot of international relations," Tran said. "One of my favorite things about the military is the chance to leave academia and [not] just studying about international relations [but] getting to be on the forefront of it."

Tran's lifelong motivation for his passions in global relations and American security is fueled by his upbringing and family history. His parents were refugees who came to America in hopes of living out the American dream, and with great gratitude for his own education and opportunities, Tran strives to continue protecting the country and the hope it represents.

"I serve to make America a stronger place in the world, a safe place in the world," Tran said. "A place where we can continue offering the opportunity of the American dream to every American."



RISHI SHAH, US NAVY

Rishi Shah, a Troy graduate from the class of 2007, is a Blue and Gold Officer and Marines Corps veteran. Through his dynamic academic journey and military service, Shah discovered his innate drive to serve his country and community, finding the true meaning of giving back to those around him.

Shah, similar to many Troy students, took AP and IB courses and was a member of NJROTC. But after learning about star basketball player David Robinson, an United States Naval Academy alum, Shah attended the USNA Summer Seminar camp. Fascinated by the USNA's opportunities, he decided to apply, joining the next class of midshipmen. He majored in aerospace engineering and, soon afterwards, joined the US Marines Corps as an intelligence officer. Shah reflects upon his gratitude for being able to use his military service to pay back what America has provided for him. Born to immigrant parents, Shah recognizes the strength of the American Dream and was grateful to be part of protecting that opportunity for all Americans.

"We're free to chase our dreams and for me that's very personal," Shah said. "[It] means a lot to me, giving back to the country that's given me so much."

Shah acquired many valuable lessons while serving in the Marines Corps. Shah looks fondly of the strong

bonds he built with experienced peers and fellow officers, realizing that the military is truly about the people he met. After serving his nation for five years, he obtained his master's in business administration at Northwestern University and is currently a business team manager for a manufacturing company. Despite retiring from military life, Shah continues to give back to the USNA community. In 2020, Shah became a Blue and Gold Officer, meaning he interviews Troy High USNA candidates as one of the steps in the USNA admissions process. Shah finds great purpose in making the committee aware of the extraordinary qualities Troy students possess and the school's rigorous environment.

"It's always interesting to learn [each candidate's] life story," Shah said. "And for me, that's what makes my job as a Blue and Gold Officer interesting, fun, and something I take seriously."

Despite his academic and career journey's twists and turns, Shah believes in trying your best every time despite the failures, and he urges the Troy population to do the same.

"Never be afraid to fail," Shah said. "Put yourself out there, and the worst that happens is you learn and grow from it."



NICOLE UCHIDA, US NAVY

Nicole Uchida, a Troy graduate from the Class of 2008, is the director of speechwriting for the Secretary of the Navy. Responsible for conducting Secretary Del Toro's speeches, Uchida has combined her passion for writing with her naval background to better inform and connect with the citizens of America.

Uchida's journey was sparked by her older brother who went on to study at the United States Naval Academy. Uchida found herself following in their footsteps, involving herself in Troy's NJROTC unit and entering USNA to earn a Bachelor of Science in English. Once deployed overseas in the Middle East as a surface warfare officer, Uchida was required to adapt to her new lifestyle aboard a guided missile destroyer. Uchida expresses a deep appreciation for the connections she made within the Navy and the foreigners she met overseas. Despite being on opposite sides of the globe, she was able to find well-intentioned and supportive communities everywhere she went.

"You're really capable of a lot more than you think you are," Uchida said. "When you're like, oh this is really hard, you can just keep on going."

After five years working in various positions on guided missile destroyers and naval cruises, Uchida shifted her means of serving the nation; from a military officer to a civil servant for the SECNAV as a speechwriter. Working backstage, Uchida's speeches are heard in various commencement ceremonies, ship commissionings and other important military events. Uchida's rule balances principal voice and tone, as well as respecting the importance and influence the speeches have on the military and all citizens across America.

"You can serve the United States in any capacity," Uchida said. "Not just in the military." Uchida combines her powerful writing voice with her appreciation of people to weave compelling speeches that connect with the citizens of America. She recognizes the effort the people have put into making America a better place and strives to give back the same effort and dedication through her speeches.

The United States is full of a lot of really dedicated, hard-working American people," said Uchida, "Being able to just give back in this way is incredibly meaningful to me."

SHI-SHIFTING GEARS

Watch out for the amazing Warriors like Charlie Shi as he thrives through his mountain biking adventures while competing and succeeding in national-level tournaments.

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, article by Tejas Konka, **STAFF WRITER**, photos courtesy of Charlie Shi

The crunch of the gravel beneath the rough and ragged bike tires; racing neck and neck on an unruly trail. Each and every person is pushing the pedals as hard as they possibly can.

The sport of mountain biking is an extreme sport that tests a person's endurance, strength, and persistence. Sophomore Charlie Shi competes around the world in a series of trails and tracks.

In a typical mountain biking race a series of riders race around the track, each of them going as fast as they can, trying to score a spot on the rankings. Out of over 100 riders, only a few end up with a ranking on the charts.

Shi first became interested in the sport of mountain biking after watching his friend. Seeing his friend do cool tricks made Shi fall in love with the sport. From there, he has been

practicing more and more to participate in competitions. Shi's main goal is to go around the world and win as many of these events as he can.

Before actually competing, Shi likes to race down the track so he can get a feel for it prior to the real race, so when the time comes, he is not met with any surprises and can have a smooth running round. Shi describes this pre competition practice as essential to the smooth running of the round.

Once Shi figures out the track he can then focus on pushing as hard as he can.

Shi also constantly rides around with his friends, having fun while

improving himself at the sport.

Shi said, "It's fun with friends, but when it comes to races, you have to depend on yourself". Though one can practice for the sport with others, the sport of mountain biking is not team-based.

Shi has competed twice in China's national mountain biking league, racing around in two tracks, receiving 11th place and 7th place, respectively.

Although Shi has faced several setbacks in his time riding, and has gotten severely injured, he has gotten up over and over again.

Shi said, "You overcome each and every setback and then don't give up and then keep going".

Shi describes that he loves to

bike because of how it makes him feel.

He said, "Mountain biking gives me freedom and makes me feel happy".

When you are biking, each person is in complete control of themselves—every decision is made by that person. Shi loves that independence within mountain biking.

Mentally, the sport provides great relief, even though physically, the sport can take a great toll on the rider.

"Ride, wisely don't get yourself killed. [Mountain] biking can have dangers but at the end of day it is really fun".



Swimming with Spirit

Catch up on the Warrior swim team's pre-season activities as they get ready to tread harsh waters and have a groundbreaking season to keep their strong position in league.

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, article by Seungwoo Lee, **STAFF WRITER**

With the ending of fall sports, everyday is a day closer to the swim season in spring. Swimmers are now more than ever focusing on their club practices and their swim meets. Troy swimmers go to local clubs like Fullerton Aquatics Sports Team, Brea Aquatics and Novaquatics.

Most off-season practices are Monday through Saturday, almost never missing a day in a week of practice. Adding upon the two hour swim sessions are morning weight rooms sessions to gain strength and build the endurance necessary to push through the water. Swimming also has many variations in the way they compete because of the many different events. With the main four strokes being freestyle, breaststroke, butterfly and backstroke and a combination of all the strokes being called the Individual Medley events during meets.

Swim meets occur around two or three times a month during off-season, where swimmers come to swim faster than one another in a competition. Junior Varsity swimmer sophomore Kevin Bian elaborates on some of the

pre-season skills that swimmers work on.

"It's more like your technique, and your tempo, rather than your actual size," Bian said. "But once you get faster, to a certain level, you need that strength and explosiveness."

Afterwards, swimmers can work on their strengths in the weightroom to help their propulsions. Certain training during pre-season can always help swimmers better their tempo and style.

"Warming up with the snorkel helps

you to breathe without lifting your head. So, the main point of that is to keep your body in line and keep your feet and legs straight and consistent, because once you breathe, a lot of swimmers just lift their heads way too high and their legs just stop moving when they breathe." Bian said.

This upcoming season, the Warrior's swim team's main goal is to get as many qualified CIF swimmers as possible. Competing in Division 1 last year it is going to be difficult and demanding for the team to achieve qualifying times and score strong.

Swimming is a sport that demands all year round practices and consistent effort, requiring a dedicated mindset of pushing yourself even when you are tired. Being mentally tough on every single set and practice is necessary for a swimmer to thrive.

"Most people, although they show up to practice, they do not try the hardest on every single set, so that essentially makes the practice kind of worthless. But it is the people who try the most that try the hardest that push themselves the most and get the fastest."



PHOTO COURTESY OF TROY SWIM & DIVE

What Pumpkin-Flavored Fall Treat are You?

'Tis the season to be... a pumpkin lover? Oracle knows fall is the perfect time for all our favorite pumpkin treats. Take our quiz to find out which one you are!

Compiled by Edyn Mai and Kaitlyn Zhang, EDITOR IN CHIEFS, graphics courtesy of Canva

Are you one for the classics or trying new things?

Classics

New things

Do you prefer a fall scarf or a pair of mittens?

Do you prefer a fall boot or a sneaker?

Boots

Scarf

Mittens

Sneakers

Would you rather go out and enjoy the weather or stay in?

Would you bring a main dish or a dessert to Friendsgiving?

Are you an old soul or more hip?

Dessert

Main dish

Go out

Stay in

Old soul

Hip

Pumpkin Cream Chai

Pumpkin Loaf

Pumpkin Spice Latte

Pumpkin Pie



Funky and fresh, you're the slight chill that tickles our noses as fall creeps around the corner. Pumpkin cream chai perfectly embodies your soul, a new interesting mix for the holiday season that warms us just the same as any classic. While you have your quirks and love to try the unconventional, your witty remarks make you everyone's favorite character in the holiday special.

When someone says "I can't wait to snuggle in with a good book," they're thinking of you in your natural habitat. You're an old soul, in fact almost an elderly soul, who knows the perfect recipe to cozying up for the autumn season. You always know what wisdom to impart at the right time, making you the best friend to rely on in times of need. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone this holiday season!

At the end of the day, when all of Autumn's colorful leaves have finally fallen, there's still only one conclusion-you're basic. Despite being a sucker for all the new trends, one thing's stayed the same, you love a good PSL. You are definitely the "mom-friend" who slightly radiates millennial vibes. It's okay to stick to the same drink every year, you're loyal to your favorites, but that's what makes you so endearing.

What's a better way to enjoy the season of giving than with a delightful slice of pumpkin pie? Just like you, it's something you can always depend on to be a classic treat! Your warm energy is bright enough to make anyone feel like they've known you since forever. The sweetest of the four, anyone is bound to love making memories with you this holiday season.

Host Your Own Friendsgiving

There is no better time than Thanksgiving to get all your friends together for gratitude and good food. Read more about Oracle's guide to a perfect Friendsgiving feast.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo and Kailey Reichman, STAFF WRITERS, photos courtesy of Canva and Pinterest

As Thanksgiving break approaches with its promise of family fun and delicious food, make sure to give gratitude for friendships. A Friendsgiving feast is the perfect opportunity to spice up your holiday season with a potluck-style hang-out to appreciate a time for not only family, but also friends.

Setting up a Friendsgiving feast can begin by devising a plan for the most important part—the food. A great way to coordinate the evening's courses is by creating a shared spreadsheet where attendees can sign up for specific dishes. That way, each friend can contribute a unique dish to the menu and everyone can avoid bringing the same food. Of course, Thanksgiving staples must have a place on the table: it is not a proper feast without roast turkey, mashed potatoes and pumpkin pie. But do not be afraid to venture off the traditional menu, as a funky Friendsgiving is a great opportunity to bring a new spark to the table. If there is

a group chef, they can cook up a delicious new cucumber salad recipe as a refreshing appetizer. For dessert, in

addition to the classic pumpkin pie, one friend could be in charge of bringing a box of some iconic Crumbl cookies. Merging both traditional and trendy foods will surely fill the stomachs and hearts of all your friends.

Once you have your food planned, organizing your dishes can help make an aesthetic and efficient Friendsgiving table. It can get messy to reach across the table to try to cut a slice of turkey, so you can have everyone bring their potluck foods in pre-cut portions: casseroles, cornbread and other large dishes could be sliced beforehand for easy serving. Weaving your entire table together in a way that flows effectively also plays into the careful planning of a Friendsgiving gathering. For example, arranging the meals along the table from appetizers to main courses to desserts will create a buffet-style layout that smoothly guides your friends through their meal.

Beyond digging into a warm, delicious meal, you can take

your evening to the next level by a d o r n - i n g your house with delightful decorations. Placing calligraphy name cards along your table will help your event stay cute and coordinated. Designing these cards, whether by hand or digitally, is also a fun craft that can make an adorable keepsake for each friend.

As for the extra plates and cutlery you will need, do not worry if you do not have fine china to bring out: instead, invite your friends to bring their own cutlery and plates, compiling a homey variety of tableware. As a host, you can contribute to this cozy, mix-and-match aesthetic by setting candles and plants across the table. Another way to make your event aesthetics more memorable is to coordinate cute outfits with your friend group: wearing knits, scarves and jewelry can be a comfy way to show off your fall theme, especially for the nostalgic polaroids you might take throughout the night.

The Thanksgiving season is all about appreciating the things in life that bring the most warmth and joy, and there is no better way to do that than gathering with your closest people at a Friendsgiving. As the long-awaited Thanksgiving break approaches, do not waste a second in bringig together your closest friends to plan your very own

Friendsgiving.



Fashion Feature

Check out the Oracle's inside look at the stylish students representing this season's campus chic!

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Kailey Reichman, STAFF WRITER, photo by Lauren Song, PHOTO



The brisk autumn air and changing leaves never lose their cozy charm—the same is true for junior Charlton Tran's fashion. Tran describes his style as a blend of modern streetwear and preppy, which shows through his styling of trendy Adidas Sambas with classic knits. "I take a lot of my inspiration from the time I visited France...I think that people should go to other countries and see their styles to take inspiration from their cultures," Tran said. In order to achieve his aesthetic, he favors heavy sweaters and dark jackets or coats. Tran prefers shopping for his pieces online rather than in person as a way to avoid giving into the temptation of overbuying. He strives to be more mindful about the pieces he selects to break away from the wasteful tendencies of fast fashion. Tran accessories with finishing touches of bracelets, headphones and classic Birkenstock Boston Clogs, which are amazing investment pieces for anyone looking for a pair of comfy shoes to tie together a cozy look. Rocking both fashion and function, Tran is surely embracing the ideal autumn aesthetic.



The Cure Songs of a Lost World

There is clearly no “cure” to the disappointment The Cure’s comeback album has caused fans worldwide. Come check out Oracle’s take on “Songs of a Lost World.”

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Celeste Hollingsworth, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of Billboard

What was supposed to be the cure for a shortage of catchy tunes, “Songs Of A Lost World” has turned out to be the disappointment of the century. While music lovers can appreciate the dramatic comeback, no one expected this dramatic letdown. The Cure, a post-punk and alternative British band formed in 1976, rocked the world with singles like “Friday I’m In Love,” “Boys Don’t Cry,” and “Just Like Heaven.” On top of this, The Cure was never just a one-hit wonder, but had a long-lasting era of popularity and influence. Much of this success can be attributed to lead guitarist and vocalist Robert Smith, who took a central role in the development of The Cure’s latest album. However, he did not manage to bring this success into “Songs Of A Lost World,” where the flawed musical elements make this comeback feel like a missed opportunity rather than a successful return.

“Songs Of A Lost World” is a desperate attempt to recreate 80s music, and it lacks the innovative twists that individualized previous albums. Regardless of their venture into a new gothic rock genre, the album tries and fails to convey a darker vibe. In what seems to be an effort to dramatize the album, every song has an introduction that lasts for what feels like an eternity. These sections are composed of an exorbitant

amount of synthesizers, orchestral sounds, and ascensions and descensions in volume, repeating over and over throughout the introduction. In the second track, “And Nothing is Forever,” the dramatic introduction lasts longer than forever, droning on for three minutes. Unfortunately, The Cure does not manage to execute this solemn sound genuinely, as the whole album comes off as a mockery of 80s production.

The Cure misses the mark by causing their listeners to become lost in the music, and not in a good way. The loud piano, deafening drums, and numerous other instrumentals make it impossible to distinguish one impressive feature or melody. The fourth track, “Warsong,” lives up to its name, literally, as it sounds like the battle of the electric guitar, each one in a desperate attempt to overshadow the other. Instead of a dramatic and emotive listening experience, the overuse of the keyboard and synthesizers causes a sense of disorientation. Unlike “Songs Of A Lost World,” The Cure’s old songs had a rhythmic drum line, catchy bass line, and melodic electric guitar that shone cohesively. Despite The Cure’s

attempt to recapture their

classic sound, they fail to recreate the past successes that contributed to their original appeal.

Even though “Songs Of A Lost World” fails to shine in many ways, the lyrical elements light up the album in their complexity. In an interview with The Los Angeles Times, Robert Smith shared his experience with grief during the writing process, which lends a hand to the genuinity and depth of the lyrics. In the opening track, “Alone,” Smith sings “to all the love, Falling out of our lives.” Although some lyrics are disconnected and hard to follow, this only extends his vulnerability, given that being alone can be a confusing feeling. Through their exploration of deep and profound themes, The Cure demonstrates growth in at least one area.

Unfortunately, “Songs Of A Lost World” would have been better if it stayed lost. The album lacks any modern touches to connect with newer audiences and lacks the instrumental basis that would have engaged longtime fans. Given The Cure’s popularity, comparisons to their past songs are inevitable, and this album is a stark contrast to how remarkable they used to be. Even though the band set their heart on making this album one of their best, these songs truly deserve to be “Songs Of A Lost World.”





CHROMAKOPIA

Come take a look at international rap sensation Tyler, the Creator's latest hit, Chromakopia!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Riddhi Arora, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of Vulture and Pixelframe

Tyler, the Creator's latest album, "Chromakopia," colors outside the lines of music norms to create an astonishing listen with an unorthodox feel. Tyler, a popular American rapper, began creating music at the young age of 14, allowing him to create unique music due to his abundance of experience in the music industry. As a generational pop sensation, his songs depict a soft and tranquil feel unlike other rap music produced during the 2000s, making Tyler stand out from conventional artists. By straying away from rap stereotypes, Tyler has bolstered his rise to fame, creating a fanbase like no other and an intense anticipation for "Chromakopia." With "chroma" signifying color and "kopia" meaning abundance, "Chromakopia" lives up to its name through its distinct hues of personality within each song. From new lyrics and storylines to rhythm creativity, Tyler incorporates them all to produce an exceptional, "chromatic" experience.

Although Tyler's album is relatively well received by fans, the song "Sticky" is certainly a "sticky" subject within the fanbase. When factoring in Tyler's background whistle in "Sticky," the constant repetition of phrases in the song becomes tiresome, a common theme seen throughout the album through other songs such as "Thought I Was Dead." However, "Sticky" does incorporate an enticing addition of a marching band, giving the song a final boom with its menacingly sporadic trumpet sounds. Although the songs within the album do incorporate creative instrumentals and musical choices, the abundance of repeated phrases makes the album seem bland and a bore compared to the other gripping songs within "Chromakopia."

Tyler makes it a point not to add emphasis to the features on "Chromakopia," even with household names in the world of rap and R&B. By not mentioning popular artists like Daniel Caesar and Childish Gambino, Tyler adds to the unpredictability of the album, making the experience engaging throughout all 14 songs. While Tyler does not explicitly

mention their names, the features' prominent presence in the album makes "Chromakopia" an especially compelling experience. In particular, Childish Gambino in "Judge Judy," who is not labeled as a feature, brings attention to the background of the song, incorporating his heavenly vocals behind Tyler's spirited lyrics. Adding a serene feel to the song, Childish Gambino makes "Judge Judy" a consoling experience while Tyler explores the harsh realities of suicide and death. Tyler's unique approach to introducing his features makes "Chromakopia" an unpredictable journey as the album progresses from one song to the next.

Far from void, "Noid," Tyler's single, fills up expectations for the album with its engaging lyricism and musical execution. The song opens with the dramatized paranoia Tyler faces resulting from his fame, demonstrating how his fans make him anxious and uneasy. Shown through, "No cameras out please, I wanna eat in peace," Tyler expresses real-life concerns many

public figures face as they rise in popularity. By describing the dark impacts his fame has on him, Tyler opens up more to the fans, showing them how much he is being affected. In doing so, he addresses his feelings in an artistic but direct way, coinciding with the darker themes seen in "Chromakopia," from various song meanings to the album cover. "Noid" also highlights the experimental South African rock band, "Ngozi Family," by switching the song from English rap to their native Nyanja language. By bringing more obscurity to "Noid," the switch in language properly illustrates how diverse the actual album is. Tyler, with his attention-grabbing single, set a tone for the release of "Chromakopia" and properly demonstrated how exhilarating the album would be.

By opening the music industry to new concepts, Tyler's "Chromakopia" transcends the generic constraints of rap music through unique additions of features and artistic choices. Not only does "Chromakopia" live up to Tyler, the Creator's reputation as an eccentric rap artist, but the album also lives up to his stage name, as Tyler was the Creator of a colorful album fans will never forget.

