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To mask or not to mask? ... pg 3

The financial adversity first generation college students face ... pg 2

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVIE ESTEBAN



To mask or not to mask?

Studies show masking up benefits you as well as the people around you. Do you still do it? Or is it too inconvenient?

By RUTH OGDEN
OPINION COLUMNIST

Wearing a mask to protect others from a potentially deadly virus should have never become a political issue. In 2020, who wore a mask and who did not was roughly divided down political party lines. Now, in 2022, wearing a mask is just part of life. Knowing when and where it's polite to mask up is important in order to avoid certain social faux pas.

Covid-19 is now considered to be endemic, similar to influenza or the common cold. This

means that it is unlikely to disappear from the general population. There will always be minor outbreaks and a need for updated vaccines. There will always be a minor risk that you or a loved one could be exposed to Covid-19. On September 20th, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) reported 47,037 new cases of Covid-19 infection, with a 7 day average of 55,332 new cases per day (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). Covid-19 has become normalized but is still highly

**Now, in 2022,
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just part of life.
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important...**

contagious. Like any other virus, large groups of people are hot spots for Covid-19. This includes classes, spiritual and religious services, and concerts. Wearing a mask when in a large group is one way to reduce the risk of you or someone you know getting sick.

Scientific consensus agrees that wearing a mask prevents the spread of viruses. If you speak or cough while wearing a mask, water droplets (that contain the virus) are trapped in the mask rather than floating around in-

fecting the general public.

There are plenty of non-political reasons a person doesn't mask: claustrophobia, health issues, a disability or sensory issues are all examples of logical justifications for not wearing a mask. When I see people in public not wearing masks, I assume they're taking a personally calculated risk that is none of my business. There is no reason to confront strangers about their personal choices.

For more information
see PAGE 3 ▶

Financial knowledge to aid new and returning college students

One organization estimates college students can overlook millions in unclaimed scholarship money

By **LESLIE GONZALEZ CRUZ**
NEWS REPORTER

As college students make their way into their first year of secondary education, they can overlook access to information regarding financial aid that can end up reducing or heightening their student loans.

Past student, Rocio Aurea, a first-generation student in her family, even struggled with the application process itself.

“Even just starting with the FAFSA my parents and I lacked the knowledge to correctly fill it out since they had not even graduated from high school, they had no idea what FAFSA was,” said Aurea.

Lack of financial knowledge and access places further economic divide on the student and makes it challenging for those who struggle financially.



PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE

The Student Financial Aid Office located in the Mattress Factory (MAT) building room 251 offers students help online, in person and through phone

...of the 7 percent of applicants that are likely to receive scholarships only 1.5 percent actually receive the full scholarship amount, averaging at \$7,400.

“Being a first-generation college student from a low economic background, I was able to receive grants, which immensely helped my financial situation, however, it didn’t fully cover my tuition, so I started relying on scholarships and any financially-rewarding opportunity I could find,” Aurea said.

As reported by The National Scholarship Providers Association (NSPA), an estimated \$100 million in financial aid goes unawarded each year due to lack of applicants. When applying for scholarships, it is not only the lack of applicants

that play a role in unrewarded money but also the number of applicants that actually receive the scholarship they apply for.

Reported by Scholarship Statistics in 2022, of the 7 percent of applicants that are likely to receive scholarships only 1.5 percent actually receive the full scholarship amount, averaging at \$7,400.

For new and continuing students at the University of Washington Tacoma, assistance with FAFSA and WAFSA is available at the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships through online chat, in-person

or phone. Services begin Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For live chat help visit: <https://apps.tacoma.uw.edu/uwt-chat-system/application-core/protected/student-financial-aid-chat.php>

For in-person help visit the Mattress Factory (MAT) building room 251.

To contact the office through phone: (253) 692-4374

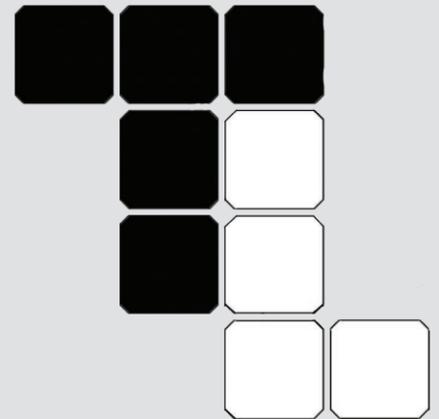
To access UW Tacoma scholarships visit: <https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/finaid/scholarships>

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To mask or not to mask?

Studies show masking up benefits you as well as the people around you. Do you still do it? Or is it too inconvenient?



VILLUSTRATION BY STEVIE ESTEBAN

UW Tacoma recommends masks indoors, but they are not required

By **RUTH OGDEN**
OPINION COLUMNIST

Continued from **COVER**

However, the majority of anti-masking rhetoric is linked to conservative ideology. A study published in 2021 in the peer-reviewed academic journal *Frontiers in Psychology* titled “Mask Wearing as Cultural Behavior: An Investigation Across 45 U.S. States During the COVID-19 Pandemic” found that the perceived symbolism, value, and utility of wearing a mask is strongly related to whether a person held an individualist or a collectivist mindset: “conservative respondents perceived mask wearing to be less useful, and in the interest of themselves and others than was the case for liberal respondents” (Kimmelmeier & Jani, 2021).

People who perceived mask wearing as a symbol of submission and valued independence were less likely to wear a mask, and people who perceived mask wearing as a symbol of protecting one’s community and valued interdependence were more likely to wear a mask.

Conservative anti-mask rhetoric is strongly linked to ex-President Trump’s statements on Covid-19 being yet more ‘fake news’ designed to make him look bad. A publication in *The British Medical Journal* (BMJ), a leading peer-reviewed med-

ical journal, pointed out that authoritarian populist leaders like Trump, Modi, and Bolsonaro all interfered in press releases as a means of downplaying the severity of Covid-19 (Gonsalvez & Yamey, 2020).

The Biden administration is also accused of mishandling the pandemic. Reports and press releases on the pandemic are frequently in conflict with official health organization suggestions. On the September 19th 60 Minutes broadcast, President Biden said “The pandemic is over,” and “if you notice, no one’s wearing masks.” (Sullivan & Stein, 2022). That same day, the Center for Disease Control reported an average of 364 American deaths per day due to Covid-19 (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2022). Data miscommunication and delays in government action are partially to blame for the current status of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Regardless of what went down in 2020, we are here now. As we move into the Fall 2022 quarter, we should be mindful of potential Covid-19 exposure and take whatever precautions we are comfortable with. It is no longer mandatory to wear masks indoors at UWT (although it is recommended). However, in my opinion, masking up indoors and in public spaces is now part of general etiquette. In a crowd of people, you don’t know who lives with their

grandparents, who is undergoing chemotherapy, or who has a new infant at home. They also shouldn’t have to share this information with you in order to avoid unnecessary exposure to viruses.

Covid-19 aside, masks are excellent for maintaining general health. “College crud” is infamous for rapidly spreading during the first few weeks of every quarter, and wearing

a mask could reduce your risk of getting the sniffles. Masks are also a useful preventative measure as we head into the fall flu season.

I’ll be honest - I like masks. My personal cost-benefit analysis has calculated that wearing a mask is a net gain. I like saving money on makeup and I like being able to hide my facial expressions when heated class discussions go

completely off the rails. I also don’t like getting sick and I don’t want to unknowingly make others ill. If you see me on campus in classes or large groups, I will be most likely sporting a KN95.

So, do you mask up? When and where? Why or why not?

For Further Reading:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). *Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory [interactive graph]*. Retrieved September 22, 2022 from https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends-dailydeaths_select_00.

Gonsalves, G. & Yamey, G. (2020). *Political interference in public health science during covid-19*. *BMJ*, 2020, 371. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.m3878>

Kimmelmeier, M. & Jami, W. (21 July 2021). *Mask Wearing as Cultural Behavior: An Investigation Across 45 U.S. States During the Covid-19 Pandemic*. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12 (648692). doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.648692

Perra, N. (23 May 2021). *Non-pharmaceutical interventions during the COVID-19 pandemic: A review*. *Physics Reports*, 913, 1-52. doi: 10.1016/j.physrep.2021.02.001

Sullivan, B., & Stein, R. (2022, Sept 22). *How Biden’s declaring the pandemic ‘over’ complicates efforts to fight COVID*. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/healthshots/2022/09/20/1123883468/biden-pandemic-over-complicates-fight>

UW Tacoma’s Covid-19 Policy

UW Tacoma’s Covid-19 policy page was last updated on 9/15/2022 as of this publication. Campus is open, classes are meeting in-person, and masks are recommended indoors but are not required. If you are experiencing any potential symptoms of Covid-19, you must stay home and get tested, even if you are fully vaccinated.

In addition to this, the University of Washington requires all students, staff, and faculty to provide

evidence of vaccination against Covid-19, except in cases of sincerely held religious beliefs or documented medical conditions with a letter from your healthcare provider.

The University of Washington has a FAQ page for any additional questions students may have about Covid-19. Check out <https://www.washington.edu/coronavirus/student-faq/> for more information.

The return to “normal” life

What lingering effects of online classes are still impacting students today?

By CELIA WILLIAMS
OPINION EDITOR

These past few years have been nothing short of overwhelming. From the many obstacles that come with life to the pandemic radically changing the world from what we once knew, everyone has had a rough few years. But how has this impacted us today? How has it changed the way we approach school and social situations?

After two years of being secluded in our homes with a small group of close friends and family, many have been experiencing a bit of shock returning to semi-normal life. With the return to in-person, many students are feeling the effects online

classes have had on their learning and social skills. In an article written for BMC Psychology, it was reported that nearly 83.3% of students had increased levels of depression, anxiety, and/or feelings of loneliness.

It's no secret that mental health has a huge impact on other aspects of your life, including your academic and social life and physical health. Through BMC Psychology's survey, it was found that 73.6% of students' future plans had been affected by the pandemic, with many experiencing job loss or had to take time off of school as a result. The increase in mental health issues had also directly impacted many students' academic performance with a staggering 61% of students reporting that it had

been more difficult to complete their semester.

I spoke to UWT student Ashley Leon Guerrero, a junior studying psychology, about their experience with school during the pandemic and how it has changed their education today. Ashley said she felt like she'd missed out on so much having classes be online for her first two years of college as well.

When asked how the shift back to in-person classes this last year has impacted her, she said the change had been something “bittersweet”. While she had enjoyed the comforts of working from home and having a more flexible schedule, Ashley said she was happy to be able to walk on campus, go to the library and study, and just

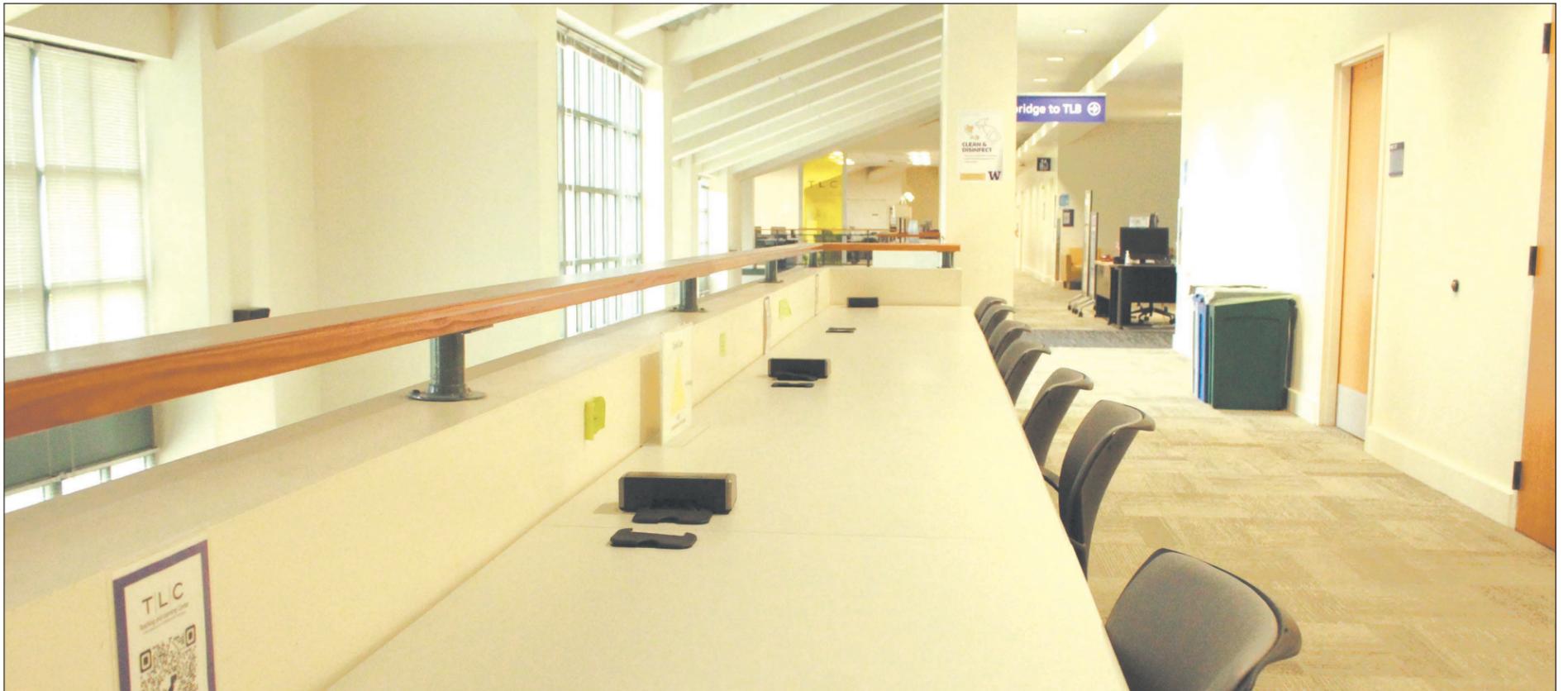
be in a classroom with others.

With things changing radically, feelings of anxiety have been high for everyone. Whether it's worrying about your personal health or someone else's or adjusting to the way the education system has changed since the pandemic, everyone has had their share of struggles. Ashley shared that the transition to online classes and back to in-person classes had significantly affected her mental health. She said her drive and motivation for school plummeted and that she felt she'd had to “self teach” a lot of the material she was learning, which was stressful.

It's been a wild couple of years, especially for those going to school. With limited human contact and teaching strategies changing with the pandemic

closing schools, there has been a lot to adjust to. As we make our way back to returning to semi-normal life many are trying to readjust to the life they once knew. Social norms have changed with mask mandates and the use of masks becoming something of the past for many.

Lee, J., Solomon, M., Stead, T., Kwon, B., & Ganti, L. (2021, June 8). Impact of covid-19 on the mental health of US college students - BMC psychology. SpringerLink. Retrieved September 18, 2022, from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s40359-021-00598-3#citeas>



Student study space in UWT's Snoqualmie building.

PHOTO BY ALEXA CHRISTIE

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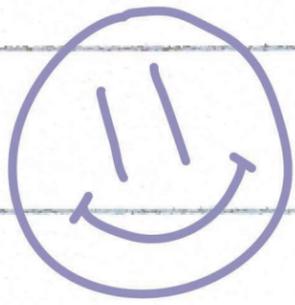
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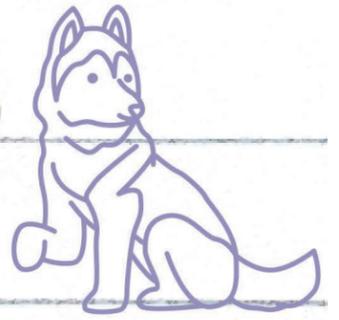
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Then we invite you to write a Letter to the Editor.

Letters submitted to the Ledger may be published through both TheTacomaLedger.com and our print edition.





Welcome Days



Welcome Days offers students a variety of ways to meet new people, learn about UW Tacoma, and get immersed into UW Tacoma and Husky culture. To new Huskies, welcome to UW Tacoma! To returning Huskies, welcome back!

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Ari Lennox asserts her power in “age/sex/location”

Newly released soul for your soul

By **KIARRA BLAKELY-RUSSELL**
A&E EDITOR

Ari Lennox puts out her sophomore album “age/sex/location,” which is an album that represents the ups and downs of love and the bittersweetness of it. The transitional period, and finding her way into an “Eat Pray Love” space in her life. With strong influences in soul and R&B reflected throughout. Ari has also stated being heavily inspired by singers such as: Minnie Riperton, Anita Baker, Missy Elliott, and Teacher Moses. Which can be heard through her melodies, and writing styles.

In an interview with Zane Lowe, she touches on the background of the title: “ASL,” an icebreaker used in online chatrooms that she went on when she was younger. “Becoming someone else and fantasizing about whoever is behind that username even though I feel like we were all lying,” said Ari.

This album was able to show important lessons that she’s learned while entering her thirties.

By having songs that exude the importance of what a relationship means to her and what she is willing to put up with. By

the end we see Ari regaining her power by giving the love she has not been able to receive from others, and giving it to herself. Through sexy, sensual, and liberating songs in this body of work.

We slide into a slow groove for “POF”. Which could be a reference to the dating site Plenty of Fish, and a play on words about pretending to be something you aren’t; as she has said about herself in the past, and later in “A/S/L (Interlude)”: “I am the original catfish.”

But, in this case, this song allows her to take control of the narrative and question the men she has dated. With an isolated vocal Ari sings “The audacity to question me about your Christianity /then turn around and f**k with me/ like it was gon’ be easy (no),” as harmonies featuring J. Cole’s vocals accompany. The chorus drops, “Lord knows I don’t need no one/ But sure would be sweet,” she sings.

These lyrics prove that she indeed does want to be with someone and knows she has the power to obtain better.

A nice and slow transition falls right into “Hoodie”’s sexier, glimmering, and liberating awak-

ening; with a deep soulful bass a softer, yet curious side of her comes to play.

She converses with a new lover about what he could give to her if she were to continue.

This also comes through many forms of sexual innuendos. She asks if he’s too afraid to be honest and show her all his intimate parts. “I need someone fearless/ tell me, are you that guy?” she sings.

With the melody of old ‘90s slow jams and trickling cymbals falling in, she enters the pre-chorus: “You know how these things go/ ready if you say so/ spread it like some queso,” with built-up anticipation for the listener along with multiple layered vocals, as the bases slowly muffles into the background.

A similar theme arises in “Waste my time,” a song that can relate to today’s “hook-up culture”, with an R&B and pop twist, heavily influenced by Missy Elliot. She is willingly accepting a relationship that will only provide her with temporary satisfaction, so long as she gets what she wants, as she sings “Waste my time/ Get on my line/ ‘Cause I got the time to waste.”

As the first single on the album, “Pressure,” doesn’t fall short. Accompanied with a jump in energy, she sings about her lover only realizing his desires for her at the height of her fame. Now that she realizes the power she holds over him, she craves a people pleaser singing, “Keep your eyes on me, eyes on me, apply that (pressure)/ Get it, don’t be scared when you in it, apply that (pressure).”

“Mean Mug” and “Boy Bye feat. (Lucky Daye)” both focus on asserting her power, making boundaries and realization that a casual relationship isn’t what she wants, and that she desires loyalty beyond sex. She wants the love she’s given out so frivolously back.

In “Mean Mug” she sings, “That Mean Mug sh*t when I forward your calls/ I don’t play that sh*t, I’d rather not get involved/ Cause I ain’t sharin’ you.” While “Boy Bye” introduces a new suit-or trying to impress her, but ultimately being unsuccessful. With both singers harmonizing with each other, Lennox uses a modern update of the interlude by Erykah Badu’s “Next Lifetime.”

While “Stop By” can shy more in the background and grab your attention by using a common move, a raw recording before the

drop begins. This song will show the listener that no matter how much progress you make, there is a chance your desire may take over your consciousness again.

However, this doesn’t last in “Outside,” a song with themes of female empowerment. She is freeing herself from care. She does what she wants as she sings, “Givin’ the girls Diana Ross/ Walkin’ around like I’m a boss.”

With the newfound confidence, she has gotten through the storm of bitterness and found sweetness. While nearing the end of the journey with, “Leak It” also sung with Chlöe, “Blocking You” and “Queen Space” sung with Summer Walker. All showing commitment to embracing and sticking up for oneself; along with the expectations she holds for any partner that wants to enter her sacred energy and space.

So, if you’re looking to take a trip into another dimension and pretend for a moment, try taking a listen to this lustful, female-empowering, soul and R&B record.

YOU CAN FIND IT ON PLATFORMS SUCH AS: APPLE MUSIC, SPOTIFY, YOUTUBE, AND SOUNDCLOUD.



PHOTO COURTESY OF DREAMVILLE/INTERSCOPE RECORDS

“See How They Run” is a fun take on Agatha Christie murder mysteries

What better way to usher in the autumn season than with a good old-fashioned whodunit?

By **EMILIA BELL**
FILM CRITIC

4/5 STARS

In early 1950s London, an inspector and a constable must investigate a murder that occurred amongst the cast and crew of a popular play performed on the West End: “The Mousetrap,” written by Agatha Christie. Directed by Tom George, this film has all the necessary ingredients for a satisfying mystery with a meta twist that verges on parody, assisted by the setting of the real play. Many murder mysteries are meta nowadays, but this film fully commits—providing ample amounts of humor. The opening scenes draw you in right away with Adrien Brody’s amusing narration that breaks the fourth wall. The film utilizes clichés to put a spin on a well-known genre—in common murder mystery fashion, it was predictably unpredictable.

Saoirse Ronan and Harris Dickinson are enjoyable to watch, and Sam Rockwell fills the role of a beaten-down detective well. Adrien Brody, despite his questionable choices in real life such as starring in a film directed by Roman Polanski, who was charged with rape (and 5 other related charges), and a racist Saturday Night Live joke, turns in a fantastic comedic performance. Ronan and Rockwell play off each other well. Ronan portrays the young

and eager constable opposite Rockwell’s worn-out and gruff inspector. Ronan is delightful as the co-lead, bringing a sense of innocence, drive and humor. Rockwell’s character, while funny in his own right, seems to be a pointed combination of detective tropes. Though it is a clever parody, this choice for Rockwell unfortunately creates a rather underwhelming and forgettable character.

Additionally, the film utilized real-life historical figures such as actor Richard Attenborough (played by Harris Dickinson). This added to the self-referential feel of the movie; grounding it in real events, as well as providing some historical context. It also causes the audience to question what events really happened, which makes it all the more engaging.

The set design from production designer Amanda McArthur and set decorators Celia De La Hey and Sophia Mililar was vibrant and cluttered, which created a sense of realism along with being aesthetically pleasing and cozy. The costumes by Odile Dicks-Mireaux were beautiful and contributed to the plot, cleverly suggesting clues. Bright colors were utilized in much of the overall design of the film which gave it a light-hearted feel.

The crafty script, written by Mark Chappell, is full of references and you can be sure that no line is unimportant. The mov-

ie frequently referenced the mystery genre and specifically hinted at Agatha Christie’s writing. Editing was used cleverly and the framing was often creative and fun, adding a layer of charm and making the film more memorable. The music by Daniel Pemberton added to the momentum of the plot and added another layer of enchantment. The jazz-like score combined with the colorful sets was reminiscent of a Wes Anderson film without being an outright copycat.

While there are outrageous moments that are certainly amusing, the comedy that is found in the quieter moments of the film is truly what makes it shine. Ronan never acts over the top, but her small quips and subtle expressions give the audience all they need to understand her character and appreciate the satire. The supporting cast brilliantly adds understated comical moments of their own quite often, rounding out the movie in an endearing way.

This film hits the spot for a satisfying whodunit film perfect for the fall season. The acting is top-notch, and combined with the overall design of the movie and the music it manages to set itself apart from other similar films. Though it is not groundbreaking, it feels fresh and was enjoyable to watch.

THOSE INTERESTED IN THIS GENRE SHOULD SEE THIS FILM IN THE THEATER IF THEY CAN.



See How They Run theatrical release poster

PHOTO COURTESY FROM SEARCHLIGHT PICTURES

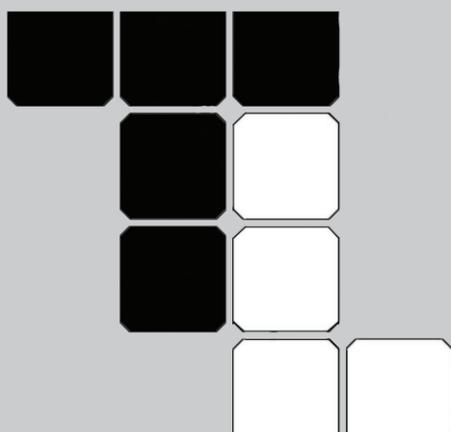
The Ledger is **HIRING!**

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Which fall seasonal anime should you watch?

With many new shows, sequels, and even movies coming out in the fall season; there are only so many that can take the spotlight.

By ANGELO ALEGRE
A&E COLUMNIST

Fall seasonal anime is just around the corner and it is jam-packed with shows that have the chance to become the anime of the year, but which of them are worth checking out?

“Blue Lock”:

“Blue Lock” is a new sports anime that doesn’t follow the normal trope of being a school sports club. Instead, it takes young players from all across Japan and puts them in a jail-like environment where they compete against each other to become a striker on the Japanese national team. The Blue Lock institution was built in order to house and train promising soccer players in hopes that Japan will perform better in the national league. Ego, the coordinator of the Blue Lock facility will stop at nothing to make Japan the leading country in the world of soccer. If these types of sports shows interest you, “Blue Lock” is set to be released on October 9 and will be available to stream on Crunchyroll.



“Blue Lock” series cover art

“Chainsaw Man”:

As one of the most anticipated anime since being teased back in June of 2021, “Chainsaw Man” is one show to add to your watchlist. The story follows the main character, Denji, and his devil pet named Pochita. In this story, Denji wants a normal life like every other person his age but because of the crippling debt he inherited from his late father, that dream of his seems impossible. If you are interested in seeing how this story unfolds, “Chainsaw Man” is set to be released on October 11 and will be available to stream on Crunchyroll.

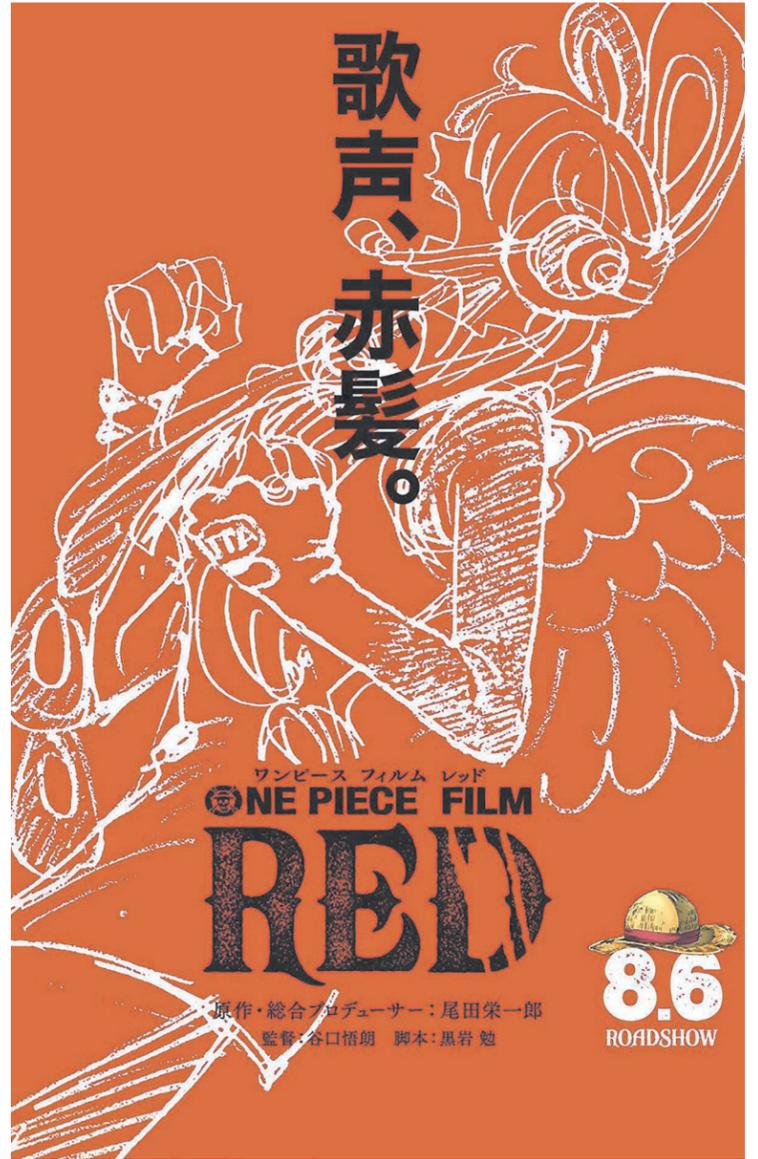
“One Piece Film: RED”:

The newest movie added to the collection for “One Piece” is one fans of the series should not miss out on. Shanks, a character that does not get much screen time but everyone loves, makes his appearance in the movie as one of the main focuses. “One Piece Film: RED” will follow the Strawhat Pirates as they meet with the popular singer, Uta who happens to be Shanks’ daughter, and Luffy’s childhood friend. This movie was released in Japan on August 6, but is now going international; The United States and Canada being the last to get hold

of it. If you are interested in seeing the latest movie, “One Piece Film: RED” is set to release on November 4, and will be available to stream on Crunchyroll.

“SPY x FAMILY Part 2”:

The first season of “SPY x FAMILY” aired back in April of this year and has gained so much traction in the anime community that the second part of the show is now being released just six months later. The main plot of the story follows this family as they try to attain their different goals while trying to keep their secret hidden, all while appearing to be a



“One Piece Film: RED” promotional film poster

normal family to everyone else. The family we follow don’t know of each other’s secrets, except for the daughter Anya Forger. With the power of telepathy, she is able to read the minds of people around her, so she learned the hidden identities of her adoptive parents. Her father is a spy and her mother is an assassin. If you are interested in watching the sequel, “SPY x FAMILY Part 2” is set to be released on October 1 and will be

available to stream on Crunchyroll.

Overall, the fall season has much to offer for anime fans with big names like “One Piece,” as well as new seasons of beloved shows like “SPY x FAMILY.” Although it is a great season for people who are already invested in anime, it also has some new shows that can be welcoming to people who are new to the genre.



Screenshot from the show “Chainsaw Man”



Promotional poster for “SPY x FAMILY”

PHOTO COURTESY BY WIT STUDIO AND CLOVERWORKS