

THE LEDGER

Student News, Views and Reviews

PHOTO BY RAGHVI BALONI

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ASUWT approves funding for membership in student lobbying group

The UWT student government approved a \$5,300 membership fee for WSA, a student lobbying group that represents colleges in Olympia.

BY REESE RAMIREZ
NEWS EDITOR

On Nov 17 student leaders met with Nancy Canales, Executive Director of the Washington Students Association, to discuss the need for UWT's membership in the association. At the end of the meeting, ASUWT members decided to renew their membership.

The WSA organizes representation for all students in Washington state. The association aims to empower students to lobby for the needs of their college campuses. To maintain membership in the association, student governments must pay a membership fee each year of \$5,300. This figure is \$6,700 less than initially budgeted.

Despite the lower-than-expected fee, some members of ASUWT were still concerned with the allocation of money and wanted more information on how the association could impact students before agreeing to renew UWT's membership.

Roland Heyne, Director of University Affairs, questioned how involved ASUWT was with the association and how their involvement might impact students. Canales described how the association opens

doors for student advocates that may be difficult to access otherwise.

"WSA is not an advocate. We are a tool for you to advocate with," said Canales. "The capital is complicated and even experienced lobbyists have many questions. We are a bank of institutional knowledge acquired over years of experience available to you and your student advocates."

Canales went on to describe how difficult it has been for campuses to advocate for themselves when they are not members of the WSA. The association, according to Canales, provides not only knowledge about Olympia, but also a coalition between all Washington campuses to work together towards their goals.

Chrystal Miskanis, Director of Legislative Affairs, reiterated the importance of working with other campuses, specifically UW Seattle and Bothell.

"I think we need to talk to all three campuses," said Miskanis. "Especially if there is an issue that is very important to us, we need all the votes we can get."

Holly Wetzel, ASUWT President, emphasized the need for representation at the state level.



The Association spearheads lobbying efforts during legislative session in Olympia.

PHOTO BY LESLEY MCLAM

"There are so many initiatives that we're working on, for example, related to safety, health, Wellness, etc., where we can only do so much on this level to try and get stuff done," said President Wetzel. "But eventually, we need to lobby for these things.

If we want more security guards on campus, for example, and the University says we have no money, we have to go to the state level, to the legislator and say, hey, our school needs more funding. That's just how it works."

ASUWT decided to renew membership with the

organization. To assist in lobbying efforts and aid in representing UWT at the state level, look out for announcements regarding Huskies on the Hill, the Tri-Campus lobby day in Olympia.

The Ledger

UWT's weekly student publication
November 27, 2023
Vol. 28, Issue 10

 thetacomaledger.com

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Fresh Faces, Fresh Takes: A Snapshot of First-Quarter Experiences at UW Tacoma

As the fall quarter marks the initial steps for students at the University of Washington Tacoma, their diverse backgrounds create a tapestry of experiences.

BY RAGHVI BALONI
NEWS REPORTER

Navigating New Beginnings: Student Perspectives on Tacoma Transition

As the fall quarter unfolds, we caught up with students at the University of Washington Tacoma to share their diverse experiences transitioning to Tacoma, navigating academic resources, and exploring the vibrant city. Their insights provide a glimpse into the dynamic and supportive atmosphere that defines UWT.

Rohan, international graduate student pursuing his degree in Computer Science and Systems, highlighted the challenges of being new to Tacoma.

“Adjusting to extremely cold weather, navigating essential services, and coping with the distance from my family were initially daunting,” said Rohan.

However, he emphasized

the importance of building a supportive social circle that eased his transition.

Conversely, a local undergraduate highlighted the nice chaos of getting used to class schedules while appreciating Tacoma’s quieter and smaller appeal.

“Tacoma is more compact, and I’ve been loving it here,” they said.

Academic Resources as Anchors: Students Utilizing UWT’s Treasures

UWT unfolds as a treasure trove of academic resources for students, with the Career Center taking center stage. The Career Center not only guides students through the nuances of job markets but also refines resumes, ensuring a holistic learning experience.

From the TLC to the Pantry and restaurants that offer students special discounts, students find support in various university services and ameni-



Tacoma embraces UWT students with its welcoming and serene environment.

PHOTO BY RAGHVI BALONI

ties, marking a shift from self-dependence to a collaborative approach.

Tacoma Unveiled: Impressions, Explorations, and the UWT Community Spirit

Tacoma, contrary to bustling expectations, embraces UWT students with its serene environment. The calm streets

against scenic mountain backdrops create a unique living experience. Despite busy schedules, students express eagerness to explore Tacoma’s weekly events and interesting places. The UWT community emerges as vibrant and welcoming, fostering an atmosphere both serene and invigorating.

This early glimpse into the UWT experience showcases a community dynamic that goes beyond academia, embodying a spirit of inclusivity and a commitment to social responsibility that will impact the world.

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Do you want to voice your issues of concern related to news, politics, campus issues and more?

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

Letters submitted to the Ledger may be published.





PHOTO BY ETHANJAEDA07 VIA WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Ashnikko performing "Dying Star (feat. Ethel Cain)" in St. Louis, October 13, 2023.



PHOTO BY @ASHNIKKO VIA INSTAGRAM

Ashnikko holding a vinyl copy of her "Weedkiller" debut album.

ALBUM REVIEW: Ashnikko's 'Weedkiller': A fallen faerie's guide to surviving the wastelands

Ashnikko's certified platinum debut album brings us through a fantastical and brutal journey that encapsulates the queer & femme experience of living in a near-dystopian society.

BY HEIDI ORTIZ CANDELARIA
A&E COLUMNIST

During this school quarter, I've written about several unique and extremely talented artists, while also learning about many others that I hadn't been familiar with. But this week, I will be reviewing an artist that I am extremely familiar with. It is my pleasure to be able to share their talent with the students of UWT, as well as readers from around the world.

Ashley Nicole Casey (She/Her/They/Them) — better known as Ashnikko — is an American rapper, singer and dancer who is most widely known for their 2019 and 2020 hit singles "Stupid" and "Daisy". These songs went viral on TikTok in the early days of the app. They have also become quite an acclaimed LGBTQ+ genderfluid icon through their gender non-conforming makeup and style. They have continuously been very vocal in advocating for the pro-choice movement, ecological conservation of the earth and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Their latest album, "Weedkiller," has been what they have described as a labor of love. For years, Ashnikko had been working on perfecting this 13-song debut album, even during the production of their EP "Demidevil". Going a step further, they chose to polish not only the lyricism and musicality of this album, but also the visuals and aestheticism.

Due to their passion for mythology, horror and nature, Ashnikko designed and recorded visuals even before releasing this album, dropping teaser trail-

ers for months and further intriguing eager fans. In this new album, they took on the form of a mutilated faerie surrounded by a dry, hellish wasteland. Their album cover demonstrates the beginning of this rogue fae's adventures through a dystopian hellscape as they survive and even tame the beasts that come to hunt them down.

Although there is not much more specificity to the plot, it can't be denied that the artistry encapsulating this beautiful behemoth doesn't go unnoticed. This can be seen in "Worms," one of the first songs of this album released as a single. It served as a strong introduction for the rest that was to come. This song in particular was the first to get its own music video and had its own unique CGI and stop-motion animation.

This was specifically used to animate the entire set surrounding Ashnikko: the hellscape, the fae's new demon army, "riding through the desert with a sword on (their) back" in a monster truck, and the enemies they are going into battle with. If you also happen to be an anime fan, you might find these enemies to seem familiar. And though it was never officially confirmed, Ashnikko has admitted to being an anime fan themselves. You can see the similarities of their designs to some popular sci-fi anime's.

These mecha-robot-like enemies look a lot like the monstrous angels from the anime, "Neon Genesis Evangelion," while the demons look like Yokai from Japanese folklore. This mixed in with the post-apocalyptic cloth-

ing, the landscapes and epic battle scenes makes this feel like a fully fleshed out world. These combine seamlessly with lyrics that tie together the emotions of the 21st century femme presenting individual in a near dystopian world, one that is plagued by war, misogyny, and rampant capitalism/consumerism. This is represented when they sing, "The world is burning, I got worms in my brain. I'm gonna bleach my eyebrows, change my name. The world is burning, and I laugh at the blaze."

"Worms" focuses on the spiral of helplessness when the world around you feels like it's on fire. You do the little things to help you stay afloat, and you consider fleeing from society and changing your name to escape from the weight of it all. However, the rest of the album focuses on taking action. This is embodied in the "Weedkiller" single, which can be considered a modern war cry.

Ashnikko embodies a fae whose wings have been ripped from them in this album. Here, she stands up to the enemy (the mecha-robots), which I believe to be a representation of those in power in our world that have taken their wings from them, such as politicians, business conglomerate owners, oil tycoons, high profile celebrities, and those who directly have a hand in taking our own wings (in other words, our freedom of choice).

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PHOTO BY @ASHNIKKO VIA YOUTUBE

Ashnikko in her music video "Weedkiller."

Hence the name Ashnikko gives this character, "Weedkiller": "We always knew that it would come to this. That I would be the one to eliminate you, Weedkiller. Running with scissors. I made knives out of broken ribs. I will be the one to eliminate you. I've been training for murder."

We have songs like "Possession of a Weapon" and "You Make Me Sick!" that speak in the collective voice of femmes' past experiences in romance. While "Possession of a Weapon" acknowledges the power the female body

holds, proclaiming that women are in "possession of the p*ssy weapon", it also touches on how when a woman acknowledges this power within herself, she is ostracized, ridiculed, and even villainized. Ashnikko has embraced inducing fear, specifically adding in body-horror imagery to her lyrics in response to a classic straight man pickup line: "Say you want my body, let me give it to you. Is that what you want, blood and guts? P*ssy teeth to imprison you."

This intimidation and feminine rage are only

further amplified in "You Make Me Sick!" An absolutely sick twist on the classic revenge breakup song. Ashnikko shows off some gritty metalcore vocals with ruthless burns that don't pull any punches. They sucker punch any poor fella in the gut: "Hello waitress! I want his head for dinner, silver plate it. Cut his tongue out first, let's hear him go and try to say sh*t. I'm abrasive? I'm a dragon, animorph and shapeshift. Fire-beathing, break sh*t, brain-eating amoeba coming for you. I'm contagious, ruined

what was sacred. I was living good before your locusts and your plagued it."

Overall, this album might sound brutal on paper, but it is an absolute blast to listen to at full volume. Every single song is catchy, memorable, and powerful, each in their own way, but still fit into the theme Ashnikko took so long to curate. I'd say their effort well paid off, as I've been listening to it on a near daily basis since its release. So, if you happen to be a fan of alternative rap, hip-hop and art pop; I highly recommend

this album as your next listen. "Weedkiller" is out on all music streaming platforms, but I also strongly encourage you to check out the albums four music videos and all its music visualizers on Ashnikko's YouTube channel.

[Ashnikko's YouTube Channel: \(5\) Ashnikko - YouTube](#)

A TWO-WAY

MIRROR:

Double Consciousness in Contemporary Glass by Black Artists



Left to right: (1) Layo Bright (Nigerian, born 1991), *Asikibi' M'*, 2020. Kiln formed glass; 11 1/2 x 11 1/2 x 3 in. Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago, Illinois. (2) Layo Bright (Nigerian, born 1991), *Asikibi' L'*, 2020. Kiln formed glass; 11 1/2 x 12 x 3 in. Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago, Illinois.

On View Now!

MUSEUM OF GLASS

The riveting story behind Scorsese's 'Killers of the Flower Moon'

"Killers of the Flower Moon" tells the story of a Native tribe's dealings with white Americans who are obsessed with obtaining more money and oil by killing numerous Native Americans.



PHOTO BY PARAMOUNT PICTURES AND APPLE ORIGINAL FILMS

JaNae Collins, Lily Gladstone, Cara Jade Myers and Jillian Dion in Martin Scorsese's "Killers of the Flower Moon."

BY RACHEL MEATTE
A&E COLUMNIST

"Killers of the Flower Moon" is the most recent film by world famous director and writer Martin Scorsese. It follows the story of the Osage tribe during the 1920s in Oklahoma as they discover they have been sitting on oil. The tribe inherits this oil since it is on tribal lands and distributes its wealth amongst its own people. This attracts the likes of William Hale, also referred to as "King" by locals who know him, a reserve sheriff and cattle rancher. He, like many other white opportunists, is looking to get his hands on the Osage wealth by whatever means.

In a string of murders, King plots with his co-conspirators to work their way into the tribe's community and earn their trust. They deliberately seek out Native Americans to marry and convince them to sign off their property rights and funding to the white spouses if they die. Once they acquire the rights, they are murdered by a group led by King.

The film is a confrontation of the American myth and reveals the several attempts made by white people to kill off Native Americans and their culture. The

film touches on systemic racism plaguing the general public and how that fueled the relentless push to expand the frontier. When several bodies of the Osage start surfacing, a panic overtakes the tribe.

What's unique about the film is the coverage of Native history and the violent relationship with white settlers. A lot of the panic and fear you feel throughout the film is geared toward white settlers and their attempt to steal from the Osage. They carefully plot ways to collect insurance money and property rights without the tribe's knowledge while gaining trust in the community.

Once in, they are now considered a part of the family and have full access to the Natives' belongings: Houses, cars, money. They have children with them, live with their family and attend regular tribal council meetings. During these meetings you see the white opportunist listening in on everything the tribe is saying. They take notes and alter their plans accordingly. As things begin to unravel, a sense of pessimism grows quickly amongst the Natives and forces them to reconsider their relationship with the settlers.

Those who are married to the murderers and have

kids with them are unwilling to face the possibility that they could be killed next. Other tribe members decided the town is no longer safe and moved away from Oklahoma. As the relationship worsens, the tribes meet more often. They are distraught from the chain of several Native deaths and decide the murderer is someone amongst them.

If Scorsese is good at anything, it's showcasing the deeply rooted evil within a group of severely damaged individuals. The white opportunists who are killing off the Natives don't see the harm in what they are doing. They find it as easy as making a living or paying the bills. When one member of the group is caught, he quickly gives in and says that he wanted the money and didn't care about the Natives' deaths. There was no inclination that the townspeople were concerned about the tribe's wellbeing. In fact, during one scene depicting a mixed-race family, an elderly white couple argue over how "different" and "off-putting" the children look compared to the white ones. They note the difference in skin color and facial features and call them "savages."

As Scorsese put it in an

interview, it's not "who-dunnit," rather, who hasn't dunnit. We are constantly looking for a point of reference that reveals who is a part of the massacre of Natives. Was it just the locals in town? What about out of state? Are any of the tribal members noticing what's happening outside of the meetings? This strong sense of paranoia is felt throughout the first half, until the FBI is called to conduct an investigation. Until this point, we don't feel any sense of justice towards the tribe.

At the time of the film's story, the 1920s lead how American civilians lived their lives. There was crime and corruption as prohibition swept over the country. The U.S. government vilified alcohol and its creation. People were criminalized for possession of alcohol and made to be an example of. Natives are often seen drinking outside of bars and partaking in gambling in the town the film takes place in.

Numerous issues flood the tribe like alcoholism, depression, anxiety and other mental health issues. In one scene, we see an Osage member tell King he feels like killing himself. He is unhappy and feels like he needs help from a doctor to which King says,

"You're fine, you'll be okay. You're a man, you can take care of this." The tribal member was insured by King and needed to live till the end of the year before King could collect any insurance money on him.

As distraught and horrifying as the film is, it does a remarkable job at creating a picture of life for Natives during this time, depicting the influence of alcohol, corruption, religious fundamentalism and the Ku Klux Klan."

Scorsese uses spaghetti westerns and film noir to create a world of turmoil and violence, a closed box that traps Natives in with no way out. They are forced to rely on outsiders like King for guidance. Until they begin to connect the dots and question their oppressor, they continue to suffer.

Right now, the film is available to watch at select movie theatres, including The Grand Cinema in Tacoma. Students can attend for a discounted price if they show a current student ID Card.

Thank you for reading and we'll see you next week.

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