

# THE LEDGER

University of Washington Tacoma

## Student News, Views and Reviews



PHOTO BY STEPH CARONNA

### This Edition:

- ASUWT panel meeting overview
- ARTIST REVIEW: Aurora
- 2023 highlights from The Ledger

# ASUWT unveils roadmap: Pantry expansion, shuttle services, and more on the horizon

Committee members discuss initiatives to address food insecurity and enhance student safety, and urge students to actively contribute to shaping campus policies.



PHOTOS BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

The spirit of giving at the UWT pantry embraces what community is all about - helping one another.

**By RAGHVI BALONI**  
NEWS REPORTER

In a recent panel discussion hosted by the Associated Students of the University of Washington Tacoma (ASUWT) on November 29, 2023, key topics surrounding

campus initiatives, pantry expansion, and student engagement were discussed, shedding light on crucial developments and ongoing efforts to enhance the student experience at UWT.

One of the highlights of the discussion was the

announcement of plans to relocate the campus pantry to a larger space in the upcoming Winter Quarter. This initiative aims to address concerns about the current pantry's size and stock limitations. Despite the challenges, the commit-

tee is working diligently to ensure that the move provides a more accessible and well-stocked resource for students facing food insecurity.

ASUWT is also actively exploring the introduction of an on-campus shuttle service to enhance

student safety and accessibility. The proposed service is envisioned as a solution for students who feel unsafe walking alone on campus, specifically at night, providing a safer and more convenient mode of transportation. Additionally, discussions

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PHOTO BY CAMERON J. BERRENS

The Pantry is run by the Center for Equity and Inclusion and located on the ground floor of the Dougan building, in room 104.

were held regarding the formation of walking groups for students who park their vehicles far from campus, fostering a sense of community and security during transit.

Evan Campbell, a committee member, said, "The on-campus shuttle is not just about transportation; it's about creating a sense of security for students. We want to ensure everyone feels safe moving around our campus."

During the discussion, there was a strong emphasis on encouraging students to actively participate in the decision-making process. Positions on various panels, such as the Student Safety Group and Budget Advisory Committee, are still open, and students are urged to contribute their perspectives to drive positive change. The committee believes that involving students in these panels is essential

for making ethical financial decisions that impact the student body.

Students were encouraged to provide feedback through surveys and forms to express their concerns and suggestions. The importance of student input in shaping the university's budget, where tuition funds 62% of the budget, was emphasized. The panel also discussed the possibility of reducing credit re-

quirements per quarter for students, recognizing the potential benefits in promoting student well-being and academic success.

"Our goal is to create an environment where every student feels heard and supported," said ASUWT President Holly Wetzel. "Moving the pantry and exploring the shuttle service are crucial steps toward achieving that goal."

The discussion concluded with an open invitation for students to join various committees, emphasizing the importance of student involvement in decision-making processes.

For more information and to get involved, students were directed to reach out to committee members and explore opportunities for engagement.



PHOTO BY STEPH CARONNA

Student government is hoping to get feedback from students on topics such as basic needs insecurities and how safe they feel on campus after dark.

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# Aurora and her magic: How this artist inspires joy for life through her music

Nordic-Folk pop and ethereal pop artist Aurora reflects on the necessary connectedness between humans and nature through her music and teaches us the importance of experiencing life in all of its phases.

BY HEIDI ORTIZ CANDALARIA  
A&E COLUMNIST

In the past two years, the concept and aestheticism of mythical creatures has grown exponentially. From styles such as cottage core to even children's toys, mythology and folklore have never been more popular. But high fantasy and medieval appreciation have taken the spotlight, paving the way for artists of all kinds to join in on the appreciation of these genres. One such artist is Aurora.

Born in Norway, Stavanger, Aurora Aksnes is a singer, producer and songwriter. Her talent and passion for music showed as early as six years old, when she began to write songs and taught herself to dance and sing. These same songs were uploaded online, which later became viral and caused her to become quite well known in Norway. In 2014, Aurora signed a record deal with Glassnote records and debuted her first EP: "Running With the Wolves".

Almost immediately, Aurora became a worldwide sensation in the alternative music fan communities. Her unique songwriting style alongside

her love for nature and magic translated into her music and pioneered a fanbase that also appreciated this new genre: Nordic folk pop. Her song "Runaway" became viral on TikTok, a sleeper hit that reappeared in 2021.

It received over 300 million daily views for over six months, with users within the "Fantasytok", "Booktok", and "Cottagecoretok" communities recording their own creative videos with the song attached. An entire challenge was also created with the song, making it one of TikTok's most popular trends. Later in the year, users began to utilize the song to show their connection to nature and reflect that longing to escape the turmoil's brought forth by modern society. This introduced the conversation of mental health to the app, and Aurora herself responded to the overwhelming support she was receiving for this song. Users considered this a comforting song they could use to unwind and reminisce.

The song focuses on childhood nostalgia and incites a desire to return to that time. As a long-time Aurora fan,



PHOTO BY AURORA VIA INSTAGRAM

Aurora captivates in a scene from the new music video for the song "Your Blood."

listening to this song for the first time made me re-experience memories deeply buried underneath all the stress and anxieties of the times. Many other listeners shared the sentiment, and Aurora became an icon for her positive impact on people who struggle with mental health.

Here is a short excerpt of this beautiful song: "I had a dream I was seven, climbing my way in a tree. I saw a piece of heaven, waiting in patience for me. If I was running far away, would I run off the world someday? Nobody knows. I was dancing in the rain. I felt alive, and I can't complain. But no, take me home. Take me home where I belong."

In 2022, Aurora released her third album "The Gods We Can Touch". Embracing her Nordic roots, Aurora took the opportunity to maximize her use of string instruments, Kulning vocals—which is an ancient Swedish herding call—and modern electronic synth chords. This mix gave birth to a new sound: ethereal, introspective, relaxing, and absolutely magical. This, accompanied by her flawless songwriting, made her perhaps the most influential and well-known ethereal-pop singer. What's even more unique about this album is the way Aurora managed to create a few danceable songs

that still carry that etherealness, such as "Cure for Me".

Recently, Aurora dropped a new single. Titled "Your Blood," the song explores the human experience of suffering and healing. Existentialist yet not overwhelmingly so, the song starts off with Aurora's soft voice describing the pumping heart, rising into the Kulning-style accompanied by several voices that follow her high-pitched vibrato. Aurora truly shows off her talent as the song slowly picks up the pace and transforms into a danceable anthem. The chorus shows this progression of hurt and mend as she sings: "When all inside you burns like a star. It's after you burn that you are reborn again. Reborn again. And maybe if you called out for help then I could help you outrun yourself. Come run again, we'll run again. But I refuse to die."

This song reminds us that we are alive, and to be alive is to feel pain, and love, and to persevere above all. Aurora does a beautiful job at connecting the human to the celestial bodies that surround us, like the forests, the moon, the tides, the sun and the stars. This song also reminds us that we don't have to persevere alone, and asking for help is ok. It doesn't make us weak; it makes us human. And even though "[We] are dust," it just means that we are meant to go

back into the earth and be "reborn again" through the beauty of nature.

This single has fans speculating whether Aurora will be dropping an entire new album centered around this theme after being inactive in her songwriting for over a year. Personally, I have high hopes this will be the case.

Overall, Aurora is a phenomenal artist that can be enjoyed by nearly anyone who just loves music, no matter the genre. Not only is she talented, she is also a kind-hearted, genuine soul who has been openly promoting the ceasefire in Gaza. She is using her large platforms to encourage others to keep the conversation going, supporting the journalists who are currently trapped in the Gaza strip, creating a master list of companies that support Israel in order to boycott them, and sharing filters that donate funds to the Palestinian support efforts.

I highly recommend everyone to listen to her discography, and her newest single, which is currently out on all platforms. There is also a music video for "Your Blood" out on YouTube that is absolutely breathtaking. Aurora will most likely continue to rise to further success, and this author will continue to support her.



PHOTO BY AURORA VIA INSTAGRAM

Aurora is openly advocating for a ceasefire against Gaza on her Instagram account.

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

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