

November 2023

The Beat

2023 - 2024



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SHA NEWS



Keeping Up With the Freshies

Written by: Emily Fasy

One of the main traditions at Sacred Heart Academy is Freshman Day, which happens the day closest to or on Halloween. One of the best things about Freshman Day is how it can include all of the different high school grades in unique ways. The seniors assign the freshmen into different groups to come up with a dance to a mashup from a movie or show, going along with an overarching theme. The theme of this year was animal movies. The freshmen groups included movies like *The Lion King*, *Zootopia*, *Sing*, and *Madagascar*. They dressed up to fit their assigned movies and wore different things such as an inflatable pig head, a lion onesie, and character outfits from *Sing*. In addition to dancing to songs and wearing outfits from movies, the freshmen have another unique tradition. They make capes and crowns for the senior class to wear. Each freshman is assigned to a senior for whom they make a custom cape and crown. The seniors give the freshmen some ideas and parameters for the royal pieces; however, at the end of the day, it is up to the newest high school class to design and create the looks. Seniors don't dress in costumes, so this is a nice way to include them in celebrating the festivities of Freshman Day.

When asked about their thoughts on Freshman day, one of the seniors said, "I thought it was really fun. The whole thing was a good time, having a cape made for me, getting to wear a crown, and watching everything. It was a really good experience since I didn't have a Freshman day since I wasn't here freshman year. It's a very SHA thing." In addition to incorporating the freshmen on the day, the juniors play a significant role in making Freshman Day what it is.

The junior class is responsible for picking out the themes of the costumes for themselves. This year, the junior class council elected the theme of rhyme without a reason. The theme inspired tons of creative, different costumes, which included groups like "DJ and PJ," "Eminem and M&M," "Prom Queen, 80s teen, Halloween," "Sandlot, Astronaut, and Robot," and more. In addition to picking the costume theme, the junior class also puts on a play for the seniors. Every one of the juniors gets assigned a senior or two to play during the skit. The junior class writes the skit and includes inside jokes for the senior class—some of the jokes even come from senior class members. This year, the theme of the skit was "Planning for Prom." It had some iconic lines in it, which were rewarded with nothing but hysterical laughter from the grade above. When prompted to give a quote for this article, one of the members of the junior class council who helped to write the script said, "It was nice being able to remind seniors of some of their memories."

Freshman Day, in my opinion, is one of the best school holidays because of how unique Sacred Heart truly is and how it can spark a sense of community amongst all grades. On her Freshman Day, one of the girls said, "It was really fun, and it was really nice that we stayed after school because it brought us closer together." That is not the only thing that the junior class had to say when asked to look back on when they were freshmen on Freshman day. Other quotes included, "It was pretty lit," and, "I loved making my cape and putting the creativity and flowers into the cape for my girl."

Ring Mass: Sha's Beloved Tradition, but Not So Traditional?

Written by: Yara Memar

Ring Mass has always been a Christmas tradition at Sacred Heart, but what does this date change mean to the Christmas feel of Ring Mass? Previously, Ring Mass has always taken place in December, but this year it is right before Thanksgiving. Juniors are excited as this means they will be receiving their rings earlier, but at what cost?

For those of you new to Sacred Heart, Ring Mass is one of our favorite traditions, one that is typically Christmas-themed. We start the morning off with mass and then proceed with the ceremony. Each junior asks two senior escorts to walk her down to receive her ring, which is handed to them by the Class President. Then, the escorts place the ring on the junior's hand and twist it three times. The three times signify three wishes; a wish for you, a wish for your escorts, and a wish for the school.

This year, however, the Christmas aspect of our Ring Mass tradition has shifted. Ring Mass is right before Thanksgiving, so how have the junior leaders gone about this change? First, they decided that the dance would be themed "Starry Night," which allows for a night, light, and Christmassy feel without incorporating anything directly related to Christmas. The Dining Room will be decorated with different kinds of lights and stars. Second, while still incorporating Christmas trees in the mass celebration, they will only be decorated with lights. Rather than having poinsettias, the mass will be decorated with red and white flowers. Finally, rather than a Christmas tree holding all the gifts, the juniors set up an arch to take away from the Christmas feel.

The juniors have done their best to keep the tradition of ring mass, while also allowing for change! We hope everyone enjoyed the ceremony and dance!

Club Corner: A SHAMazing Introduction to SHA’s Clubs

Here at SHA, there are many different and amazing clubs adhering to a wide variety of interests. If you’re looking for something new or just want an overview of SHA’s clubs, here’s a quick description of some of our clubs ranging from math to science to creative writing.

By: Madeline Wuest

Mathletes

We meet on Day 3 and practice problems for our upcoming monthly meets. We review concepts with Miss Smith and Mrs. Carnicle. On the first Monday of each month, we compete in the meet. There are two timed individual sets, the second harder than the first, that test our knowledge on the month’s topic, and then one team set where 5 of us collaborate on 5 problems. On Pi Day, March 14, we have a celebration where we all bring in circular or spherical food and treats and we all have lunch together.

By: Nora Brannan

Chez Nous/Newspaper

In Chez Nous club, we focus on fostering our creative and editorial writing abilities. We meet on Day 3 and respond to creative writing prompts as well as prepare for our school newspaper, *The Beat*. In February we host our Chez Nous open mic night, inviting all students to showcase their talents in writing, singing, dancing, and more!

By: Madeline Wuest

Girls in Medicine

GIM offers SHA students the opportunity to pursue knowledge in the medical field and empowers them to make a difference. Currently, we are working on our project regarding modern surgery techniques which we plan to present to the school.

By: Katie Schanne

Community Service Corps

CSC gives the opportunity to explore and deepen a passion for service. I hope to help SHA students discover their own passion for service and helping those in need. Some of my favorite service traditions include Day of Service and holiday card making!

By: Katie Schanne

BSU

The BSU provides a welcoming and empowering space, allowing students to feel connected to a smaller community at SHA. We host our own BSU events throughout the year and attend events held by other schools’ BSU groups! We recently hosted a Friendsgiving that we opened up to all SHA juniors and seniors, and BSU members from other schools. We also participate in community-building workshops, such as the Anti-Defamation League Workshop. Members from the BSU and the SHA community are attending the annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC), held in St. Louis, Missouri this year, and are planning the second annual mini-diversity conference for the SHA community later this year. Overall, Sacred Heart’s BSU is a community-building group focused on providing an inclusive and accepting space at SHA for Black students.

By: Issa Lan Taïtt

Club Corner: A SHAMazing Introduction to SHA's Clubs

Songs From Above

If you love singing but aren't quite up to performing in front of a crowd, come join Songs From Above! In Songs From Above we have fun learning special songs for Mass that will spice things up, and make sure that people in the crowd during Mass know the songs. Come join us and bring your friends to sing some fun songs during Day Three club time!

By: Judy Horn

GSA: Gender and Sexuality Alliance

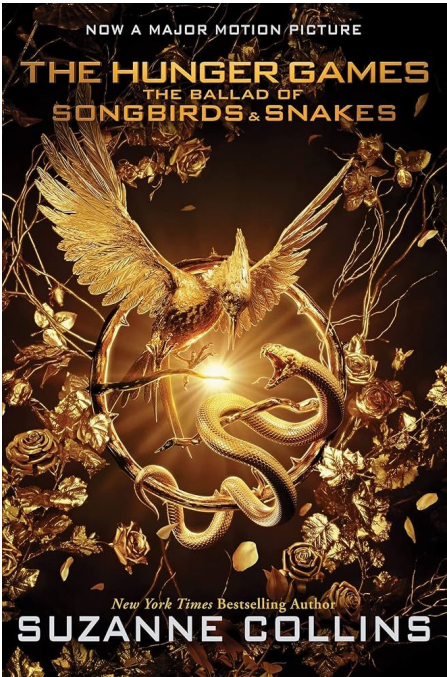
The Gender and Sexuality Alliance is new to SHA's 2023-2024 school year. We meet in the Duchesne room on Day 7 at lunch. The GSA explores identity and acceptance through our various activities, such as learning about a new identifying flag once a cycle. The GSA is meant to be a safe space, and all are welcome regardless of identity.

By: Skylar Dittbrenner

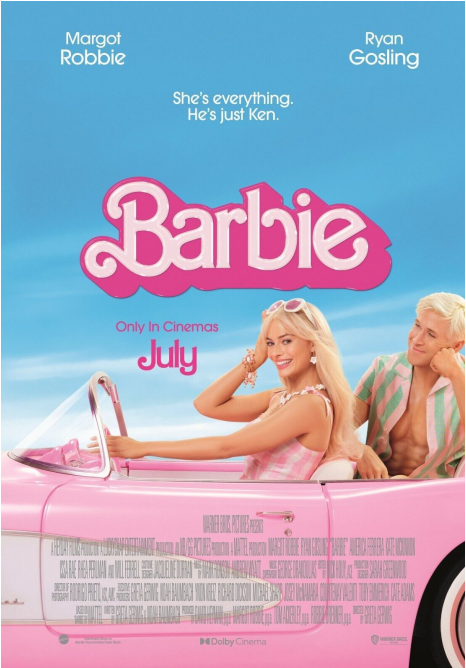
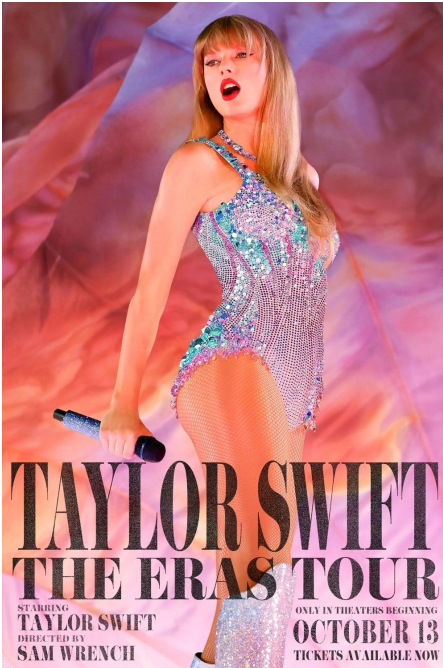
Pop Club

"Once a cycle, students from the Upper School meet to discuss current events. Topics range from global events to pop culture. We watch news clips and read articles from around the world."

By: Paige Redmond, Clare McLaughlin, and Emily Solomon



MEDIA & ENTERTAINMENT



Upcoming Movies and What to Expect

By: Joslyn Ho

Cinematic entertainment has recently presented amazing movies for their audiences! These include movies such as Disney's live-action *Little Mermaid*, Marvel's and Sony's *Spiderman: Across the Spider-Verse*, and Universal's long-awaited *Five Nights at Freddy's*. However, there are many more projects that have been announced, which fans are eager to see. Here are some movies coming out in the next three months:

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes releases on November 17 and is distributed by Lionsgate Films. It is directed by Francis Lawrence and stars Rachel Zegler as Lucy Gray Baird, Tom Blyth as President Snow, and Hunter Schafer as Tigris Snow. A prequel to the Hunger Games trilogy and originally a dystopian novel by Suzanne Collins, "*The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* takes place in Panem during the tenth annual Hunger Games. It follows the story of Coriolanus Snow, who later becomes the tyrannical President Snow depicted in the original series." (Summary taken from "Review of the Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes" written by user Moo N. Meat and uploaded on ScatteredBooks on August 29.) It is predicted that Jennifer Lawrence (Katniss Everdeen) and Josh Hutcherson (Peeta Mellark) will likely not be making an appearance.

Wonka releases on December 15 and is distributed by Warner Bros. Pictures. It is directed by Paul King, and the story is written by Simon Farnaby, Paul King, and Roald Dahl. The cast stars Timothée Chalamet as Willy Wonka, Olivia Colman as Mrs. Scrubbit, and Hugh Grant as Oompa-Loompa. "Based on the extraordinary character at the center of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, "*Wonka*" tells the wondrous story of how the world's greatest inventor, magician and chocolate-maker became the beloved Willy Wonka we know today." (Summary taken from "Wonka (2023)" on IMDb.)

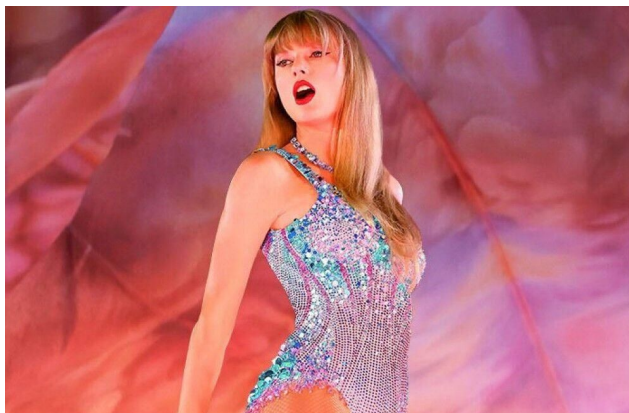
Mean Girls releases on January 12, 2024. It is distributed by Paramount Pictures, directed by Samantha Jayne and Arturo Perez Jr., and written by Tina Fey. Starring Tina Fey as Ms. Norbury, Angourie Rice as Cady Heron, Renée Rapp as Regina George, and Christopher Briney as Aaron Samuels, *Mean Girls* tells of the story of "Cady Heron being a hit with the Plastics, an A-list girl clique at her new school when she makes the mistake of falling for Aaron Samuels, the ex-boyfriend of alpha plastic Regina George." (Summary taken from "Mean Girls (2024)" on IMDb.)

Out of all three movies, I am most excited about *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes*. I have been very interested in The Hunger Games since last year, and have recently been rewatching all the movies. However, I am eagerly awaiting the release of all of these movies, and cannot wait to see them in theaters!

Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour

By: Marley White

Taylor Swift's *The Eras Tour* movie came out on Thursday, October Twelfth, but was originally scheduled to be released on the thirteenth. Over \$100 million worth of tickets were sold in presales, and it is the highest-grossing concert film worldwide! The movie is two hours and forty-eight minutes long, which is a little shorter than the actual show. It was shot over three nights during her shows in Inglewood, California. The movie is going to run for thirteen weeks and will end in mid-January. A few songs were cut out of the movie such as "Wildest Dreams" and "No Body, No Crime." The film is directed by Sam Flinch, who has worked with many other artists before. This isn't just a movie, but an event! Taylor Swift fans, or "swifties," are getting dressed up as the different eras, and theaters are selling collectible cups and popcorn buckets with a picture of the different album covers. Taylor Swift herself even made an appearance during the movie premiere in LA! Fans are making bracelets to trade and are creating connections with other fans because of their love of her music. Unlike other movies, you are free to stand up, move around, and dance to your favorite songs. Many swifties are even forming dance circles and singing together! It's a great opportunity for fans who were unable to get tickets for the actual show to experience the concert or even for fans who already attended it to get to relive it again!



Barbenheimer: A Brilliant Marketing Strategy

By: Judy Horn

If you haven't been living under a rock for the past few months you would have heard about *Oppenheimer*, *Barbie*, or maybe even *Barbenheimer*. What is *Barbenheimer*? *Barbenheimer* is a combination of the two films, referring to the internet trend where people would go to see both movies back to back within the same day due to the movies being released on the same day. The strange thing about this phenomenon is that the movies are complete opposites of each other. *Barbie* is a pink-loving adventure movie while *Oppenheimer* follows the creation of the first atomic bomb and all the destruction that followed in its wake. One might wonder: why are these movies that are so different being combined into the same day and in the same trend? The answer is, it's all part of a clever marketing scheme.

When a movie comes out it usually focuses on a specific group of people and calls those specific people to come out to the theaters or to watch them on streaming services. But when theaters host multiple movies with different audience focuses, it gives theaters more business and recognition. Not to mention, movies are not just films now, they are also merchandise and brand deals/partnerships. *Barbie* inspired everything from the wearing of pink to pink Burger King menu items. Though *Oppenheimer* did not have as large of a cultural effect, it did contribute to the trend. *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer* not only sport opposing storylines but also color schemes. All of July, everything was either black or pink to display one or both of the movies. The movies even started a little competition or argument as to which film people would see first on opening weekend. As one can see, this marketing scheme blasted the movies into popularity, and rightly so, for both movies are good in their own right (for more on the actual details of the film's storylines, see my articles reviewing both movies). Although they do have such great stories, half of their theatrical release fame is due to their amazing marketing strategy, even during a time when actors were not able to promote their films.

In the past, this same strategy has been used many times, but none were as successful as *Barbenheimer*'s. Some examples of this would be *Mamma Mia!* and *The Dark Knight* being released on the same day, *Cats* and *Star Wars Episode IX*, *10 Things I Hate About You* and *The Matrix*, *High School Musical 3* and *Saw V*, and *The Lizzie McGuire Movie* and *X-Men 2*. This strategy has proven to work time and time again, drawing people from all age groups and audience categories together to blow up the box office and create huge income for the movies involved.

Barbenheimer: A Brilliant Marketing Strategy

By: Judy Horn

In conclusion, *Barbenheimer* might have seemed somewhat like a spontaneous and fan-created event when it was a well-crafted marketing scheme that saved cinemas, allowed free publicity for movies during a time when actors were on strike and not promoting their movies, and when theaters were becoming increasingly under-appreciated compared to streaming. These movies turned the theater into an experience worth paying for and dressing up for. So, next time you buy into a popular internet trend, take some time to admire the marketing genius of the popular trends of today and how networks such as TikTok or Instagram can push trends and marketing strategies further than ever before and will continue to for years to come.

Oppenheimer is surprisingly still in theaters and can also be found on Amazon for \$19.99. The run time is 3h. The rating is R.

Barbie can also be found on Amazon for \$19.99 and will soon be streaming on Max. The run time is 1h 54m. The rating is PG-13.



NBC News

Barbie: Paint the Town Pink

By: Judy Horn

The prominently pink two-hour film reintroduces viewers to the well-known and loved “Barbie.” The film follows the iconic Doll, played by Margot Robbie, as she is driven on a quest into the real world outside of the perfected “Barbie Land.” Recently, Barbie has found herself off her usually perfectly pink game, not to mention her once spotless plastic skin has slowly started to develop some unwelcome cellulite. Barbie must enter the real world to understand these new changes to her body, and to find who might be causing them. However, with the new prospect of the real world also comes harsh reality. Barbie, and her not-so-welcome tag-along, Ken (played by Ryan Gosling), experience patriarchy and everyday struggles for the first time. How will this new reality affect the dolls and their perfect Barbie Land? Will Barbie ever find out what or *who* is messing with her perfect life? Or will Barbie be overtaken by the terrifying, ever-growing cellulite?

In case you haven’t noticed, the world is still in recovery from being drenched in pink due to Greta Gerwig’s latest film, *Barbie*. The movie mixes modern feminism with glittery pink outfits and toxic masculinity with underlying tones that suggest the need to improve male mental health. Though some might find this movie to be overly feminist or overly anti-male, the movie is meant to speak to both audiences, though it especially focuses on the female half of its viewers. The movie does overdo the feminism theme at times but that’s not to deny the important topics it brings up about the struggle in everyday life of modern-day women. Barbie is introduced to this patriarchal and unfair world just as a young girl is when she first discovers the reality of the world around her. Similarly, Ken is turned from a cheerful and goofy guy into a masculinity-obsessed Mojo Dojo Casa House owner, somewhat similar to what a little boy might experience when met with the pressures of today’s standards of what makes a man (though come on, who wouldn’t want a Mojo Dojo Casa House). The movie goes much further than the doll you see at Target: it’s about us and how society might have changed us, just as it did Barbie and Ken.

Barbie: Paint the Town Pink

By: Judy Horn

As you might have picked up, the movie isn't going to touch base with every viewer. Though the movie has some fun action scenes, I wouldn't recommend it to the adrenaline junky viewers. However, if you love a good soundtrack, great outfits, or even just a fun adventure story, this movie is for you. This movie would be great for kids or adults of any age, but no matter who you are, you might like this movie more than you think. Just give it a chance and it might just brighten your day, get you thinking about life or get you thanking your Mom for all she's done.

So whether you love or hate the color pink, or are watching the movie solely for the song "I'm Just Ken," get ready for adventure, some childhood toy nostalgia, the sudden urge to buy a pink outfit, a slight existential blip, and most importantly, get ready for *Barbie*.

Barbie can also be found on Amazon for \$19.99 and will soon be streaming on Max. The run time is 1h 54m. The rating is PG-13.



Oppenheimer: Blowin' Up the Box Office

By: Judy Horn

Oppenheimer is a serious, slightly confusing, and beautiful film that introduces us to the Father of the Atomic Bomb, J. Robert Oppenheimer played by the skillful Cillian Murphy. The long three-hour film follows Oppenheimer as he experiences WWII and its emotional, societal, and technological effects. Oppenheimer has always been fascinated by the world around him and how he could pick it apart molecule by molecule, but when the US government wants him to use his fascination to aid their war effort, Oppenheimer refuses the call to arm America with such weapons. Eventually, his thoughts change, not on the brutality, but on the prospects of the experiment and what it might mean for his research. Will Oppenheimer find what he's looking for in this research to make such a powerful weapon? Will he crumble under the pressure of war? Will he survive the creation of his weapon? Or will his research bring ruin to not only his life but his legacy, even if the weapon is successful?

World War II was brought to a close due to many factors but none quite as memorable as the first Atomic Bomb known as the "Little Boy." This small but powerful bomb brought destruction to not one but two large cities, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and all of the civilians inside of them. Oppenheimer, the man who invented the bomb had no interest in killing thousands, he only wanted to understand the minute details of reality. Even when Oppenheimer created the successful bomb, his legacy was ruined, and he was labeled a murderer who had "become death the destroyer of worlds" (a quote from the *Bhagavad Gita* Oppenheimer himself used). He must continue to face the effects of his bomb years later as the very government that called on him to invent the weapon scrutinizes him for its creation.

Oppenheimer: Blowin' Up the Box Office

By: Judy Horn

This film is not only historically eye-opening but it's also cinematically and musically beautiful, one of the best of recent times. Christopher Nolan is known for his cinematic masterpieces and his loathing for visual effects. His trend of solely depending on real visuals continues in this film, though no, the final explosion in the movie is not real, but everything else is. Even the small effects of the vibrating lights were made in real life and not through CGI. Though the movie has some unnecessary nude scenes and a large amount of sexual scenes, the movie overcompensates for this in its consistent beauty. Any movie fan would be blown away (no pun intended) by this movie's attention to visual detail, not to mention the jaw-dropping soundtrack. One doesn't have to like the movie to enjoy the movie's brilliant score. Not only is the movie beautiful but it also gets you thinking, whether you understand any of the physics or not, you start to think about what makes up reality and how history treats those whose discoveries are used in weapons of war, even if they started their research with no malicious intent.

I would recommend this movie for mature young adults and older. If you are sensitive to sexual scenes, depictions of war, loud noises, or explosions/weapons in general, I would not recommend this movie to you. I also wouldn't recommend it to those who have little patience for movies or slowly escalating movies. This movie also might not be the best for those who don't do well with time skips and jumping timelines (though I would say this movie did it quite well). If you love cinematography, beautiful soundtracks, historical stories, outstanding acting, or Cillian Murphy in general, this movie is definitely for you.

So, is anybody up for some beautiful visuals, obsession-worthy music, impressive acting, a lot of complicated physics, or some interesting historical perspectives? *Oppenheimer* has it all and more so don't forget to check out this film of the century.

Oppenheimer is surprisingly still in theaters and can also be found on Amazon for \$19.99. The run time is 3h. The rating is R.



IMDb

The Film Industry and the Rise of AI

By: Madeline Wuest

With the emergence of AI infiltrating almost every corner of our society—from science to schools to art—it comes as no surprise that AI played a large role in the Writers Guild of America (WGA) strike beginning last May. Both the writers (WGA) and actors (SAG-AFTRA) went on strike due to unfair pay and labor conditions. For writers, the strike ended in September, while the strike for the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) ended on November 9. Though both strikes have officially ended, it will take a while for the industry to readjust: anticipated films and shows will still be delayed, and rules regarding AI are still indefinite.

Advancements in Artificial Intelligence have caused much controversy within the film industry. While some view AI as a tool, others are scared AI will surpass human limits and shift the way films and TV shows are created. Despite the belief that AI can potentially be used in post-editing production and script generation, the fear that AI can replace human creativity is prevalent among filmmakers. The limits of AI in filmmaking are unknown, as the technology advances and evolves every day. It can be used to edit, write scripts, make videos based on prompts, add visual effects, and more. While all of these actions are beneficial and time-saving, the question remains of whether making AI do these tasks would replace the workers who are already in these positions.

Critiques and accusations of using AI have already arisen on TikTok surrounding Disney's newest film *Wish*, set to release on November 22. Disney released the villain's song, voiced by Chris Pine, in order to tease the new movie, but users feel that the song "This Is The Thanks I Get?!" sounds like it was generated by ChatGPT. As compared to older Disney villain songs, users feel that the song lacks emotion and depth, which many have assumed could be the result of integrating AI into the writing process. Though the movie has yet to be released, critiques and assumptions of relying too much on AI are already on the rise.

The strikes resulting in a long-term agreement are a huge win for writers and actors alike, but going forward could still prove challenging in terms of AI. Because the technology is new and rapidly evolving, and there are no clear rules regarding where it stands in the industry, AI could either negatively or positively impact Hollywood. For the time being, it is up to filmmakers to decide if they want to utilize AI or leave it out of the process entirely.

WORLD NEWS



Akikiki Birds: Will They Go Extinct?

By: Katie Marshall

The [Akikiki](#) (ah-key-key-key), a small, gray bird that is native to Hawaii, is in danger of going extinct. There are thought to be only five of these birds left living in the wild, and they could go completely extinct within a matter of months. This decline in population is mainly a result of malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Rising temperatures have enabled these mosquitoes to reach the mountains of the island of Kaua'i, which were out of reach for these mosquitoes for many years. This caused the populations of the Akikiki to nosedive over the last fifteen to twenty years. These birds have no resistance to the diseases the mosquitoes carry and fall victim to avian malaria, which is almost always fatal to most of the smaller honeyeater adults. With populations at an all-time low, conservationists along with the Kaua'i Forest Bird Recovery Project and the Department of Land and Natural Resources are increasing efforts to save this species from extinction. They are doing this by building up an insurance population in bird conservation centers and searching for eggs, which is a newer tactic conservationists have taken up.

Conservationists for the Akikiki bird have stopped looking to capture the handful of remaining birds that remain to bring them to safety. Instead they have opted to focus on collecting unhatched eggs. Each season the team goes up to where the nests were previously located. They search the top of 'Ōhi'a trees with a camera mounted to a long pole. When they find a nest, they use a ladder system to reach it, sometimes climbing as high as forty-eight feet to reach the nest. This summer the team rescued ten eggs, placed them in a portable incubator, and brought them safely back to the Keauhou Bird Conservation Center, where they will continue to grow and develop, and hopefully join the other fifty or so Akikiki in human care.

Rescued birds will live in enclosures that are designed to mimic their natural habitat and protect them from mosquitoes, while human interaction is limited so the birds maintain their natural behavior. The goal is to release the birds back into their native habitat as soon as they can eradicate the threat of avian malaria. Until this happens, the conservationists will focus on growing the population and maintaining a stable genetic variety.



OPINION PIECES



Has Concert Etiquette Declined After COVID?

By: Emma Greenwood

Recently, I attended a Boygenius concert with one of my friends. Even though the concert was very fun and organized, some people did not know how to act during the concert. People were screaming during sad and quiet songs, having their phones out when the artist asked them not to, and so much more that just seemed disrespectful not only to others but to the artists themselves. But this isn't the only example of poor etiquette seen at concerts. Truthfully, many people do not know how to behave themselves during concerts. One example of this is Taylor Swift's Eras Tour. As a Swiftie and as someone who has been waitlisted by Ticketmaster more times than I can count, I know how impossible tickets were to attain. Bots and scalpers were seen reselling tickets for more than triple the original price. Along with insane ticket prices, fans are also camping outside of venues for more than ten hours just to have a good spot in the pit. Even when people find a good view, they still feel the need to throw things at the person on stage, which can be incredibly dangerous. Is this bad behavior a product of the pandemic? Poor concert etiquette was seen for years before COVID was even a thought. Still, the pandemic allowed time for more fans to save up money and spend more time listening to their favorite artist who hadn't been on stage in years. So, while poor concert etiquette has always been a thing, the pandemic definitely had a major part in the increase of disrespectful fans.



Say Yes to Nostalgia

By: Rachael Massey

[Nostalgia](#) has come to define the consumer culture of Generation Z. Fashion trends, such as wide-leg pants, have returned to stores, electronic companies are pushing retro devices, and television companies are pushing movies from Gen Z's childhood. These marketing trends are driven by Gen Z's love for nostalgia. Gen Z's appreciation for nostalgia is almost mysterious. Why is a generation that has grown up with most modern technology enthralled by eras gone by? The answer to this is simple: Gen Z craves the simplicity of the past.

For members of Gen Z, the world is especially complex and intense because they are faced with an onslaught of overstimulation from social media and television. Instead of a slow stream of facts and opinions, information is thrown at Gen Z from every direction. Social media has given Gen Z access to thousands of opinions that change rapidly. The flow of information changes so fast that Gen Z cannot form concrete opinions, which makes them feel unstable. As a result of feeling unstable, Gen Z has turned to nostalgia to provide the security that they lack. The trends of the past are something Gen Z can count on because they have endured the dramatic changes of the last twenty years. Low-rise pants, claw clips, and Polaroid cameras may have fluctuated in popularity, but they never disappeared.

1989 and *1989 (Taylor's Version)*: An Opinionated Review By: Magdalen Keller

On October 27, 2014, Taylor Swift released the album *1989*. Less than a month ago, the album was re-released with the name *1989 (Taylor's Version)*. Within one day, Swift became the most streamed artist in a day on Spotify.

1989 is often considered Swift's most pop album. Turning from her country roots, Swift embraces pop fully. Originally collaborating with artists such as Max Martin and Shellback, this album brings a whole new sound to Swift's discography.

In the first single, "Blank Space," Swift takes on the narrative of a confident, "cheeky" girl. She says in an interview with Sirius XM, "[*"Blank Space"*] was actually originally written as a joke." Swift admits to writing it from the perspective of the person that the media was portraying her as at the time: "an over-emotional, completely clingy nightmare." Instead of retaliating to these rumors, Swift took them and turned them into something that was her own. In the first single, Swift was already coming into her own voice, despite what anybody else had to say about it.

"Shake It Off," one of the most upbeat tracks from *1989*, stands to be one of Swift's most well-known songs. However, it is much more than just a party anthem. The song centers around the idea of not letting what others say get to you. With the amount of fame and popularity Swift had - and still does - there were many rumors centering around her music, but also her personal life. Swift tells the world in this song that regardless of rumors and anything else the world had to throw at her, she would continue to shake it off.

1989 was a fantastic album when it first came out, and with its re-release, Swift has only made it better. The album is a testimony not to what the world has to say about Taylor Swift, but what Taylor Swift has to say for herself.



Pacific Rim: Redefining the Bechdel Test

By: MJ Stanley

When people talk about Guillermo del Toro's *Pacific Rim*, they are not talking about Charlie Day's fantastic comedic relief acting, Idris Elba's ability to turn the cheesiest speeches into inspiring monologues worthy of an English class discussion, or Burn Gorman's continuing excellence as a science fiction actor. In fact, they are not talking about a man at all. What people want to talk about when discussing *Pacific Rim* is Mako Mori, the lone female character that redefined women in movies and the science fiction genre forever. As this year is the decade anniversary of *Pacific Rim*, I think it is about time we stop talking about the Bechdel test, and instead talk about the Mako Mori test.

The film industry faces scrutinizing eyes as the writer's strike ends with new open negotiations on livable wages for the backbone of the entertainment industry, and discussions about the ongoing actor's strike remain tense. Issues about representation stand strong alongside these employment issues, as POC and queer actors vie for equal wage representation and representation on-screen: representation that has backstory, depth, and that doesn't die tragically at the end of the movie in the name of another white, straight, or cis male character. But what if I told you that a decade ago, Guillermo Del Toro gifted the big screen with one of these characters in the form of Mako Mori, one of *Pacific Rim*'s main characters?

A movie about giant robots fighting monsters is one of the places you would least expect to find representation, but Mako Mori checks all of the boxes. Portrayed by Rinko Kikuchi, this Japanese woman's backstory is flushed out completely within the movie. Though her story involves male characters, they have supporting or motivational roles within her distinctly independent arc. Her character undergoes development throughout the story as she works through her trauma and takes on more responsibility within the Yaeger (previously mentioned giant robots) Program. She seems perfect already, but the best part is this: Mako Mori does not die at the end of the story, nor is her role reduced to that of a simple main love interest, as her relationship with her male counterpart is left up to the platonic or romantic interpretation of the audience. This may seem like a simple requirement of contemporary media, but a year after Sam Mendes's *007: Skyfall*, in which our two main female characters either are in a relationship with the white, cis male protagonist or die for said protagonist's development, *Pacific Rim* was making vast strides in the name of female representation, especially in the male-dominated action and sci-fi genres.

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Mako Mori's significance not only redefined the role of women in these genres, but she also redefined how female identity was judged in film. From 1985 until now, we have used the Bechdel Test, created by Alison Bechdel, as a criterion for whether or not movies should be considered to contain good female representation. The criteria for this test are surprisingly simple: two female characters must hold a conversation with one another, and this conversation must not be about a man. But are real-life women judged by the conversations they have with one another? On the other hand, the Mako Mori test, created by a Tumblr user, judges female characters by the substance of their roles in movies. The requirement of this test is that a movie or show has at least one main female character whose character development and storyline do not exist to support a male character's story arc.

A woman is defined by her own story, not anyone else's, and it is about time that contemporary media takes notes on *Pacific Rim*. The Mako Mori test depicts the bare minimum of female representation, and some popular movies released within the past few years (*Five Nights at Freddy's*, *007: No Time to Die*, *The Secrets of Dumbledore*) do not even pass it. The movie industry is due for major renovations, and the Mako Mori test is an excellent place to start.



Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce: PR or Written in the Stars?

By: Sophia Schuller

“I’ll be 87. You’ll be 89. I’ll still look at you like the stars that shine,” is a quote from “Mary’s Song” of Taylor Swift’s self-titled album. Swift was born in 1989 and her new boyfriend Travis Kelce is #87 on the Kansas City Chiefs. Many of you have likely heard about the couple due to the buzz in the news. It’s impossible to turn on a Kansas City game without seeing the smiling face of Taylor Swift cheering on her “lover.” How did this happen, and why is it important in the timeline of Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner’s complicated divorce?

Over the summer, Travis Kelce attended an Eras Tour concert in Kansas City. In September in an interview, Kelce confirmed rumors of him asking her out. Later in the month, news of Sophie Turner and Joe Jonas’s divorce hit the media. Then, rumors quickly began swirling about a budding romance between Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce, and she was seen at his game on September 24. Could this just be a coincidence or is there something bigger at play?

Just days before Taylor’s big appearance at Arrowhead Stadium, news broke that her friend, actress Sophie Turner, and singer-songwriter Joe Jonas were filing for divorce. Joe Jonas publicly condemned Sophie Turner for being an unfit mother due to her working schedule. Sophie Turner and Taylor Swift have been friends throughout Turner’s marriage to Jonas. (Swift and Jonas had previously dated circa 2008.)

My theory is that the only reason Taylor Swift entertained the idea of dating Travis Kelce was to take bad publicity off of Sophie Turner. Taylor knows the power she holds in this society and how if she does something, people will talk about it. In the weeks leading up to Swift being spotted at the Chiefs game, she was seen with Turner several times. In most cases, Taylor keeps her dating life quiet. Why didn’t she do the same this time? She sat in a box right next to Donna Kelce, the mother of Travis. She did this to make a statement. Before this big game, Sophie and Joe were constantly in the headlines over the long, messy situation. After that, all anyone could talk about was how the pair could be endgame.

Despite my thoughts on how this relationship started, I don’t feel that this is still the case. I do believe that the two are really dating. Travis Kelce was spotted at the Argentina concert during his bye week from football. I just think that the reason Taylor made this public display of it is because she wanted to help a friend out.

SEASONAL SPECIAL



A Vegetarian Thanksgiving

By: Skylar Dittbrenner

Thanksgiving: a uniquely American holiday characterized by familial bonding, parades, and food. The most commonly recognized Thanksgiving food is, of course, a turkey. Being a vegetarian, I, and many others, cannot indulge in Thanksgiving's poster meal, but that doesn't mean that we cannot enjoy fun autumn foods while still upholding a meatless diet!

First things first, there are so many traditional Thanksgiving foods that already don't include meat, such as mashed potatoes (without gravy), green bean casserole, and pumpkin and apple pie.

One of my personal favorites is lasagna, using lasagna noodles, ricotta/mozzarella, tomato sauce (some marinara sauces have meat in them, so make sure to check the label!), parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Some cheeses have an enzyme called rennet in them, which is found in the lining of an animal's stomach, so make sure your cheese of choice (if not ricotta or mozzarella, which are usually vegetarian in nature) is rennet-free.

NOTE: Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C)

1. Combine ricotta and mozzarella in a bowl along with your parsley, garlic powder, salt, and pepper, and mix
2. Add a layer of tomato sauce to the bottom of your pan, and layer your lasagna noodles ontop of that
3. Add about ⅓ of your mixture made in step 1 ontop your lasagna noodles
4. Repeat steps 2-3 until you run out of your cheese mixture from step 1
5. Add some extra shredded mozzarella cheese on top of the lasagna (optional)
6. Bake for around 45 minutes