STUDENT SETS NATIONAL RECORD, YET ANOTHER REMINDER FOR REST OF US TO DO SOMETHING WITH OUR LIVES

by Juan Hernandez and Ted Shull
Editor / Assistant Editor

UHD's powerlifting team has consistently won national championships in the last several years, now the team's co-captain has brought the team to a new level of success. Kenny Nguyen, 19, set new national bench press division records during competition in both the Teen 18-19 and Open Divisions, in the 145 lbs. weight class at the U.S.A. Powerlifting Championship Bench Press Nationals in San Antonio.

Nguyen broke the Teen American Record by lifting 468 pounds, surpassing the World Teen Record by 80 pounds. Nguyen's new records mark the first time a teenager has won in any middleweight class of the Open Division. He defeated fellow power lifters twice his age who're considered to be at the peak of their powerlifting careers. At 19, Nguyen is only in his fifth year of powerlifting with a Texas State Championship win during high school under his belt.

Team coach John Hudson said Kenny's performance "was so impressive it approaches the historic. He established himself as one of the best bench pressers in the sport today."

Currently, Nguyen is a sophomore bio-technology major on a full academic scholarship; he can now add the Texas Collegiate Regional Champion to his list of achievements. Nguyen not only showcases success in the gym, but in the classroom as well; along with being a member of the prestigious scholars academy.

This victory gave Nguyen the opportunity to represent Team USA in the North American Regional Bench Press Championship in Mexico this November. He'll also represent Team USA in the International Powerlifting Federation's World Bench Press Championship in Sweden in May 2015.

Hudson says he "feels humbled to be Kenny's coach. I'm proud UHD was his destination of choice and even prouder his decision was based in part on the quality of our powerlifting program. I have nothing but pride in his work ethic, his academic performance, his conduct and character, his leadership on the team and, of course, his competitive accomplishments." Hudson, a 700-pound bench presser himself, added "At the World Championships next year, Kenny has the opportunity to become the greatest overall teen / junior bencher in the world, regardless of weight class."
Deliver submissions to room S-260, email them to date-line.editor@yahoo.com or fax them to (713) 223 7466. Letters to the editor may be edited for space. They will be edited for spelling, grammar and malicious or libelous statements. Submissions must be the work of the writer and must be signed. All submissions become property of Dateline Downtown and will not be returned.

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SUBMISSION POLICY
IMMIGRATION REFORM DELAY ALIENATING HISPANIC VOTERS

by Ted Shull
Editor-in-Chief

President Obama has decided to post-pone implementing promised changes on immigration reform after the November U.S. Congressional elections. Thus a major promise of his 2012 re-election campaign has become a political football, punted in order to help Democrats maintain control of the U.S. Senate, leaving Hispanic and pro-immigration voters feeling as their concerns don't matter.

A Homeland Security analysis show the U.S. government currently projected to deport the lowest number of immigrants this year since President Obama took office. While Obama ran on a pro-immigration platform, he has earned the dubious nickname of “deporter-in-chief,” deporting higher numbers of unauthorized immigrants during his six years in office than either of his two predecessors.

Remaining relatively obscure as to what actions the president will announce after the elections, his administration did begin to prioritize deportation cases involving criminal immigrants. Obama announced in early September the country will be stronger if unauthorized immigrants – specifically those who have remained in this country for 10 years or longer and have American children – are given a “way to get legal.” This entails having them file federal and state income taxes, paying a potential fine and learning to speak English.

However, many immigrant advocacy groups are upset by the recent announcement from the administration that it will delay action on immigration reform. While this move may yield some political benefits, it could cost the president political capital as well. It has disenfranchised some Latino voters, according to political commentators, and others have said they lost all confidence that he will act on his prolonged promise to reform our immigration system. During Obama's initial presidential run in 2008, he assured voters that his top priority would be immigration reform if elected, however once in office this was quickly eclipsed by his push for healthcare reform.

Obama again promised action in 2010, and with a majority Democratic Congress, real change seemed palpable, yet stayed elusive. Hispanic voters helped Obama turn the tide against Romney during the 2012 election in key battleground states, but the president continued to postpone his reforms. Now facing a deep partisan divide in Congress, he announced to go forward without congressional approval, a move which drew the ire of many Republicans in Congress.

Even if the president finally decides to act on immigration reform, there are limits to what he can accomplish without congressional approval. He still wouldn't have authority to give large groups of immigrants’ permission to remain in the U.S. indefinitely, nor can he grant them blanket citizenship. Permitted powers include delaying deportations, issue official work permits, file tax returns and obtain driver’s licenses.

Latino voters hoped Obama would clear a path through the immigration morass; as Politico magazine’s Carmen Velasquez writes “maybe Latinos, in states with closely contested Senate or governor’s races, should sit this election out. Maybe only by paying a price at the polls will Democrats finally stop throwing us under the bus.”

TIME FOR INTERVENTION

by GeRoyal Jackson
Staff Reporter

“This health crisis we're facing is unparalleled in modern times, we don't know where the numbers are going on this,” World Health Organization Assistant Director General Bruce Aylward said Tuesday, according to reports.

President Obama recently announced he’s sending 3,000 American troops to West Africa for containing the spread of the deadly Ebola virus currently crippling the region.

Presently more than 2,300 dead, 120 of them health workers, and nearly 5,000 suspected cases in Liberia, Senegal, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea, the Ebola outbreak is officially considered an epidemic. With fatalities mounting and overwhelmed local health care systems, some charity groups have questioned the silence of the international community on the crisis. The U.S. has been criticized for its evacuation of American health workers who were infected with the virus. The treatment of those Americans with an experimental drug (called ZMapp) has led to speculation that the U.S. government currently projected to deport the lowest number of immigrants this year since President Obama took office. While Obama ran on a pro-immigration platform, he has earned the dubious nickname of “deporter-in-chief,” deporting higher numbers of unauthorized immigrants during his six years in office than either of his two predecessors.

Remain...
OGG FIGHTS TO DECRIMINALIZE SMALL CRIMES

by Joshua Burgman
Staff Reporter

The race for Harris County District Attorney is in full swing as Republican incumbent Devon Anderson, a thirteen year Harris County DA veteran, defends her seat against Democrat Kim Ogg.

Appointed DA in Sept. 2013 by Texas Gov. Rick Perry, Anderson’s challenged by Ogg, a former Executive Director of Crime Stoppers and former member of the DA’s office. A major issue facing both Anderson and Ogg this election cycle is Harris County’s record number of criminals in jail for non-violent offenses.

Ogg made this issue a major priority for her campaign, taking DA Anderson to task regarding the large sums of the DA’s budget allocated to prosecuting low level offenders of non-violent crimes as opposed to those committing violent crimes. Ogg argues the current DA waste tax payers dollars and time by prosecuting criminals of low level non-violent crimes; currently promoting a Clean and Green program she began in 2007 with former Port of Houston Commissioner Elyse Lanier.

Clean and Green utilizes a “cite and release” system; allowing law enforcement officers to ticket and release low level non-violent offenders. After being ticketed and released, the offender would have to appear later before a judge on an assigned court date. Upon appearing in court, defendants would have the option to volunteer for the Clean and Green program. If the defendant meets specified qualifications, they opt for a two day community service commitment by cleaning the bayous and ports of the city of Houston.

Houston political insider Tarah Taylor commends Ogg for leading the fight against risking costs in Harris County jail system while tackling the city’s environmental needs.

“I think it’s a great idea,” Taylor states. “We have to do these things anyway. It might as well be done by criminals who commit low level non-violent crimes, instead of having them arrested and housed at the taxpayers’ expense.”

Taylor supports the program because it allows offenders of these low level crimes to eventually have their records expunged, stating “This program allows these types of low level offenders to continue as productive members of our society, while making sure they are held responsible for their offenses; especially juveniles who still have an opportunity to contribute good things to their communities.”

The program suggests creating a special court for non-violent offenses like small drug crimes, in order to clear up room on the dockets of the already overburden criminal courts. Ogg’s plan yields cost effective ways to mitigate the effects of arrest caused by criminals who commit low level crimes while creating a productive way for non-violent criminals to repay their debts to society. It shines a light on the disparities in the current DA’s budget of money allocated to non-violent criminals and violent criminals.

IROUUPER EXPERT DAVID CRIST: JACK OF ALL TRADES

by Ted Shull, Mohammed Zain and Joshua Burgman

Author and middle-east historian. Dr. David Crist visited the University of Houston-Downtown campus and granted Dateline Downtown an exclusive interview. This accomplished author and scholar brings an intriguing perspective on the U.S. involvement in the middle-east, and especially its tenuous relationship with Iran. His credentials and experience make him a virtual Swiss Army Knife adviser to the U.S. military and government officials.

He is a current Department of Defense employee and Colonel in the US Marine Corps reserves. He is also an expert on Middle-East history, holding both Ph.D. in Middle-East history from Florida State University.

Crist gives a compelling narrative in his book The Twilight War: The Secret History of America’s Thirty-Year Conflict with Iran, and poignantly recognizes the knowledge “gap” that exists for Americans on their relationship with Iran. His goal in writing this book, and in speaking to students at UHD, was to educate readers on the de-facto state of war that has existed between the two nations. While deployed during the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Crist became one of the few American military officers to face armed Revolutionary Guard forces at gunpoint, and the conflict almost escalated into an actual shooting war. He was incredibly candid on current affairs and discussed the current crisis in Iraq and Syria in an unbiased and apolitical fashion

“Quite frankly I feel sorry for President Obama,” said Crist. “He doesn’t have very many good options when it comes to dealing with ISIS.”

In our world of social media, political pundits and hardcore party ideologies, it was refreshing to hear an assessment from a government official who didn’t try to force his opinions on the audience. Crist spoke eloquently sharing his insights as a historian, his impartiality a distant cry from the divisive government we see on CNN and Fox News.
SGA MAKING HEALTHY FOOD MORE PRACTICAL ON CAMPUS

by Ted Shull
Editor-in-Chief

UHD’s Student Government Association has many committees striving to enhance the university experience, yet the food options committee has been particularly active recently. President John Locke has made a healthy eating initiative a priority for his administration.

“There are two major complaints about existing food options on campus: the food options available aren’t representative of our diverse student community” said Locke. “The healthier options available are often more expensive, which doesn’t enable most students to choose these alternatives.”

Led by Vasooda Kumar, the food options committee is tasked with finding existing options on campus, making them known by marking them with a “Gator Smart” logo. This has been a diverse effort for students, faculty, school administration and Aramark Food Services.

The committee actively looks for new, viable alternatives to be added on food services for making healthy eating more practical. Committee co-chair Naiyolis Palomo said healthier options in the Main Building food court have already been labeled. Students will see new options by the spring semester, leading to all campus buildings with healthier food choices.

Palomo said since UHD is a minority-serving institution “our student community is at a higher risk for obesity and other illnesses that affect minority populations disproportionately. Our main goal is to educate students to make healthier choices so they can, in turn, avoid the consequences of these illnesses.”

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT DAY: AN EVENT YOU PROBABLY WEREN’T INVOLVED IN

by Chelsea Conaway
Staff Reporter

On Sept. 9, Student Activities hosted their annual Student Involvement Day, during which students were able to meet student organizations representatives to discovers ways of student life involvement. The A-300 event room buzzed with music and excitement as students mingled with peers from various organizations. While the event proved engaging for students looking to get involved as well as student organization leaders, it serves beyond just a social function.

“It’s important to provide an involvement opportunity for students so they actually know their options. We want to do that early enough so they can actually join a group,” said Dr. Patrick Edwards, Director of Student Activities. “Research shows when students participate in organizations, they’re retained and adjusted to campus better. So, we want them adjusted here as soon as possible as it increases their chance of being retained.”

UHD has the reputation for being just a ‘commuter school’, thus many students don’t regard the campus for an active or exciting student life. There are a multitude of organizations ranging from academic honors societies, professional organizations, special interest organizations, even Greek organizations, which offer students opportunities to get involved on campus and in the community.

“Student Involvement Day is greatly beneficial to all student organizations,” said Marco Hernandez, a sophomore psychology major and co-president of UHD’s Psychology Club. “It’s beneficial because it’s an amazing opportunity to recruit members and to showcase a little about the organization.”

As some student organization leaders know, the more members an organization has, the more it thrives at creating opportunities for students. Despite Student Involvement Day being over, there are ways to get involved.

Students have access to OrgSync through which they can browse organizations and see upcoming meetings and events. Additionally, the UHD website’s Student Life section has been recently updated to better showcase the various student organizations and give students the information they need to contact organization’s advisors and officers. So if you missed Student Involvement Day, don’t fret, there are year-round opportunities to become part of a team.

BOLLYWOOD MUSICAL PARODY IN WORKS

by Jason Rivas
Staff Reporter

For the last five years, UHD’s Umair Qureshi learned a variety of dance styles, but his natural footwork in Bollywood met their match two years ago when he met Tina Bose-Kumar and Kiron Kumar, co-founders/directors of the Infused Performing Arts Bollywood Dance School.

The trio is behind the upcoming musical: The Making of a Bollywood Movie. According to Kiron, Bollywood was one of the premier showcases of the film industry because of the film making process and musical compositions. Lately though, Bollywood has shifted away from its roots towards a more Western film style. Kiron and his wife, Tina, have created an original production that pay homage and showcases the aforementioned elements of Bollywood, along with extensive choreography, costumes, action, romance, comedy and magic.

Kiron expands the play is a way “we stay connected with our tradition and our heritage and at the same time, showcase that to the culture outside.”

Tina elaborates on Hollywood and Bollywood borrowing from one another over the years and through this bridge, "a lot of people are knowing what Bollywood is and about Indian culture." For Umair, the son of a Muslim family, "it’s more of a personal thing, I want to show people what I can do"

On Oct. 4, join Umair, Tina, Kiron along with 200 performers at the Stafford Center as they illustrate the power of Bollywood and Indian culture with The Making of a Bollywood Movie. Tickets (free) and information are on Facebook at Infused 2014 “Making of a Bollywood Hit.”
On Sep. 10, President Obama addressed the nation and outlined his strategy for combating the bellicose terror organization ISIS. As I listened, I couldn’t help feeling a sense of déjà vu. Once again, this great nation is being thrown into the precipice of war. I sat stunned as the president tacitly declared war on ISIS, proclaiming the ultimate goal is to “degrade and destroy.” My question for the president is, after that, then what?

For decades, this country has been the chief prosecutor of the world’s most dangerous terror organizations. Hamas, Hezbollah of the Arabian Peninsula, the Mujahedeen, the Taliban, Boko Haram and Al Qaeda, just to name a few, are all terror organizations the US has tried and are trying to defeat; even with some of the same tactics Obama presented in his speech. The only difference between the aforementioned terror organizations and ISIS is the rapacious nature of ISIS and their viral effect in the Middle-East.

Obama emphasized during his speech how ISIS “is not a state,” but everything they’ve done thus far points to the contrary. The terror group is extremely organized with recruitment skills like no other; especially among Sunni Muslim youth. They’ve set up food distribution centers and schools, but their most notable achievement comes in the hundreds of millions of dollars ISIS makes in oil sale revenue; which is sold to the same countries who’ve openly excoriated ISIS for recent behavior. It seems the president’s plan is reaching a little far. Although Obama didn’t specifically use the term ‘war,’ his plan of a protracted military engagement is clear.

After having fought two wars, one needlessly, the people are more concerned about boosting our economy and updating antiquated infrastructure. Obama outlined a number of ways he’ll achieve his goal of degradation and destruction. His plan sounds very similar to his predecessor, George W. Bush, in 2003 before the U.S. invaded Iraq. The two presidents’ plans are nearly identical but everything they’ve done thus far points to the contrary. The only difference is Obama emphasized during his speech how ISIS “is not a state,” but everything they’ve done thus far points to the contrary. The terror group is extremely organized with recruitment skills like no other; especially among Sunni Muslim youth. They’ve set up food distribution centers and schools, but their most notable achievement comes in the hundreds of millions of dollars ISIS makes in oil sale revenue; which is sold to the same countries who’ve openly excoriated ISIS for recent behavior. It seems the president’s plan is reaching a little far. Although Obama didn’t specifically use the term ‘war,’ his plan of a protracted military engagement is clear.

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NASA PLAYS KETCHUP IN SPACE RACE

by Ted Shull
Editor-in-Chief

NASA recently announced the U.S. will return to the business of manned-space flight, albeit with distinct differences from past missions. The Space Agency will now rely on private industries to transport astronauts from the International Space Station, allowing it to focus all resources on deep space exploration. Officials said our nation will launch spacecraft destined for asteroids and, ultimately, bring humans to Mars by the next decade.

This came as a huge relief to NASA proponents following the lull in manned space flight produced by retiring the Space Shuttle fleet. However, the U.S. may have found itself in a new “space race” as the Chinese rack up accomplishments in their own ambitious space exploration program.

According to New York Times columnists Edward Wong and Kenneth Chang, China’s current progress puts it “where the U.S. and the Soviet Union were in the mid 1960’s”. But China has much larger aspirations, planning to launch its own manned space station and to land a man on the moon. This is clearly to display its prowess as a global powerhouse, to possibly even surpass the U.S. in its scientific muscle.

While the U.S. faces differences of opinion in both ideology and specific mission goals, the Chinese have a unified civilian and military space program. Different Presidential administrations in the U.S. cause goals and ambitions to shift every four to eight years, while China’s authoritarian regime allows it to meet rigid timelines for space exploration.

The U.S. hasn’t kept pace with scientific advancement over the past decade and funding cuts hinder the forward track of scientific progress, forcing a generation of young scientists to find other fields of study or to other nations.

President John F. Kennedy led our nation once to dominate the first space age by declaring we’d send a man to the moon by the next decade. Will a new Kennedy step forward to inspire us as we go beyond the moon and into deep space? And who will they be?

LIKE THAT ONE B**CH FROM HIGH SCHOOL, APPLE CURRENTLY COASTS ON PAST SUCCESSES

by Mohammed Zain

I’m not going to ruin the party and tell you to stop buying Apple products.

Fundamentally, the tech purist in me will remain dilettante to expect boundary-pushing innovations from ultra-high resourceful companies who shouldn’t be delivering a dime shorter of revelatory greatness. But the realist in me will always know: people are people. Apple has a body of work any mom and pop shop would be proud to milk their legacy for another decade. They have a good thing going: a brand, a business model impene-trable of risk, a bigger app community.

And there’s still that line out of every Apple store in suburban malls and trendy cities. The oh-so-elusive state of the iPhone will be annually discussed in tech magazines and dinner parties with no fail. But what is it with Americans and the black hole of personal insecurity they carry around? Apple isn’t making anything new anymore. That’s not a revelatory observation, I’m sure you picked up on it. America is unapologetically a victim to pseudo-elixitist, ‘keeping up with the joneses’ nagging addiction to brand-ing to blame, sure.

But why does everybody constantly settle for less?

It’s either you’re stuck in a relationship you don’t deserve, you praise a popular Marvel film (Guardians of the Galaxy) or prominent pop artist (Iggy Azalea) solely due to their popularity, you eat sub-par fast food, you’re buying iPhones despite any game-changing features. Never for a minute do the masses, as a whole, consider they deserve a certain standard.

The recession may have hit our banks, but why did we let it seep into our egos?

I worry for Apple. They’ve left the tech throne up for grabs to the next forward-thinking tech company and I’m not sure if they’re even aware of it. The angel on Apple’s proverbial shoulder has his (her?) feet up on a recliner lulled on pills recreationally constantly stating “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” in a voice so relaxed, “The Dude” Lebowski would probably feel anxious. While the nagging devil on the other side cackling in his (definitely his) own hellfire urging Apple “It’s been ten years. Time to blow up this business model and start over.”

And guess what? The devil always knows before you’re dead.
Known for his landmark ambitions in modern literature, England writer David Mitchell promoted his latest critically successful novel The Bone Clocks on Sep. 21 at the Wortham Center.

As the first of a continuing series of prominent literary figures, Mitchell performed a section from his work followed by an interview conducted by a UH creative writing faculty member: Inprint's traditional structure. Profoundly concise and appropriately timed, Mitchell delivered a potent reading from a nightmarish section of The Bone Clocks told from the eyes of a father who just lost their daughter in an unknown setting. Never letting a minute to waste, Mitchell filled a mere ten minutes with modern tension, hard-won pathos and smartly allocated humor. The hour procedural interview shared sizable laughs with the audience, regarding a general banter of US/UK cultural differences. Mitchell discussed the newfound depth his work achieves by cracking a new structure in novels: blending novellas into a grander, consistent universe; allowing him to explore humanistic themes while writing shorter character arcs that, as Mitchell says, “never have the chance of getting dull!” Arguably his biggest hit comes as the audaciously complex Cloud Atlas: a novel (turned film) consisting of six novellas ranging deeply in style, first told chronologically then backwards in the latter half all the while each story being told from the vantage point of a character in the next story.

Despite any degree of fandom, Mitchell amicably presented himself accessible to newcomers and veterans of his boundary-pushing style. Happily signing away books to a line of hundreds, Inprint's reading series worked in tandem to compliment Mitchell's modest charm and celebrate the definitive capacity of Houston's literary community.

- Sean Syed (Dateline Downtown): How do you feel about Houston's rap scene and its evolution?

- Fat Tony: It's more awesome than before ever in my lifetime. I'm seeing lots of new acts coming out, new venues coming out, more fans coming out. There's a new energy here right now. I've been performing here in Houston since 2004. 10 years. I've seen ups and downs. I got into music as Houston's mainstream appeal was at its peak. From 2002 to 2006, Houston was at the top of the mainstream rap world. Even the underground scene were popping, always open mics and underground rap artists coming from all regions. Then Houston kind of hit a decline in mainstream appeal. I still had my scene but it was dwindling, I kind of dropped from curious fans to a core group of people who cared about the music. I think it's getting back, not the mainstream level, but that energy coming out again. Folks are now hungry the same way we about the music. I still had my scene but it was dwindling, I kind of dropped from curious fans to a core group of people who cared about the music. I think it's getting back, not the mainstream level, but that energy coming out again. Folks are now hungry the same way we about the music.

- DD: That's how I felt about Soulja Boy when he came up.

- FT: Totally, and as his style has progressed, he's gotten weirder and weirder. He does this auto-tune singing thing the whole time and it's interesting. I've always heard reports he might have Asperger's or a form of autism. It's really interesting to me, my brother has Autism and I used to be a Psychology student, so I know about those kinds of disorders. I would go as far as saying this guy might be a savant, he might be just a guy not in a mental norm. He says things I've never heard before, the way that he phrases things; a lot of his music has a sad tone. Gangsta rap focuses on boasting while Chief Keef sing songs about not wanting to go to jail and see people die from an introspective view. But he has all these songs and lines having money, guns, and stuff so when people hear that, there are turned off and don't want to dig deeper.

- DD: What've you been listening to lately?

- FT: I have my favorites but I don't check for every new thing pushed or hyped because I have a natural bias against material I think is being overhyped. It pushes me away. I like things being hyped in a controlled way, not over-the-top where it seems like an unseen force has pushed it all the way. That said, one of my favorite artists in recent years I've enjoyed is Chief Keef. I don't have any hatred or bias against trap or gangsta rap, but I see a bunch of lames always hating on it. I didn't think Chief Keef was interesting off that first song, "I Don't Like". When his "Finally Rich" album, I thought it was f**king awesome. The things he was saying was mad funny. It really hyped him up to be violent, but I didn't feel like the album was ever overly hateful. It was fun the same way Soulja Boy is.

- DD: Don't settle for the trends. Don't settle for the easy way out. Take a chance to be yourself. Do things in your own way. Upcoming artists will see a big hit and think you have to follow that. It works sometimes, but it's a lazy way out and it doesn't make for a lasting classic. You'll see a big Migos song and be like "If I rap like Migos, folks will like it", maybe folks will pay attention to it because it's familiar but they won't really like it. You can tell how good an artist is by looking at how timeless their work is. You can tell how good an artist is by looking at how timeless their work is.
Everybody’s chasing their past.
We, as a species, chase happiness. More often than not, we find it in memories. The merciless universe grinds your spirit to a pulp, leaving you chasing simpler times. A moment in your childhood when you received a new game console and relished the emotional high of anticipation, perhaps?

Maybe it’s this stigma gamers constantly try to keep awake. You’ll never find the obsessive daydreaming, speculation and expectations in another modern art medium. Films and records come and go our attention within weeks or months. Games enter the playroom of our heads for years at a time even before its release. Destiny did that to millions.

The first week of Bungie Studios’ latest monumental release confounded modern audiences. Dramatic online rejection of Destiny’s game mechanics and intentions threw non-players relying on feedback for a loop. Video game journalists patiently sat with Destiny for review, yet still came up short on fully realizing the complete product. Those who slipped through the cracks, the players who blindly bought the title were ultimately the ones who reaped full benefits: getting in early on a polished triple-A while the masses awkwardly pieced together the game’s abilities.

Marinating in Destiny’s universe and game mechanics for the past weeks brought a modest satisfaction. I’m playing a decoupage of Borderlands 2 and Halo over the slickest MMO-RPG gameplay put to console. What Destiny lacks in depth and abundant content, almost intentionally so, it makes up for in simplicity and replay value, a rarity in the current triple-A game market. There’s almost a mathematical satisfaction to the blend of mild-mannered strategy and snappy combat.

The main concern is in rethinking how an audience approached Destiny; buying into a superficial hype which ultimately led to a mass lukewarm reception. Gamers awaited years for Destiny, salivating over glimpses of concept art and over-stretched game developer descriptions. In a post-modern age, we’re constantly taking advertisement with a grain of salt. When was the last time you saw a set of movie trailers and didn’t cringe or roll your eyes at least once? Let’s not indoctrinate cynics, but a more moderated rationale. Destiny is now a rather besmirched title due to a fuzzy mishandling of excessive hype.

We expected the next coming of Jesus; instead we got Jesús, who’s still an exceptional carpenter for the job.

Courtesy of Bungie Studios
On Oct. 23, the Student Government Administration host the Walk 2 Vote campaign: the semester’s largest event with the goal to make voting more attractive to young adults. Many students have never voted and view it as something akin to going to the dentist. SGA hopes to change this perception by making it an all day pep rally with live music, contests, local artists and activities. This year will feature keynote speakers from the Houston community and activists assisting individuals to register and vote - ALL in hopes of creating a platform to raise awareness, and boost voter participation within our University.

In 2012, UHD started an initiative to empower students by registering them to vote and take action. In that first year, SGA registered 2,500 students to vote. During early voting that year, SGA hosted their first Walk 2 Vote event; which was attended by over 700 students, Mayor Annise Parker and other notable Houston guests. Following a brief rally, the entire group marched to the polls.

The results of the 2012 Walk 2 Vote were truly unprecedented, as over 55% of the UHD community in 2012 registered and voted, compared to other University counterparts at 5-15% according to the Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University.

“We have had tremendous success in our short history of this grassroots movement,” said SGA President John Locke. “I would sincerely appreciate your presence. We’re certain your attendance will prove beneficial to the success of our event and strengthen youth voter participation rates in our community. This year, we are planning to grow this initiative even bigger, and we need your help. We’re aiming to have over 500 attendees, and march together to vote again with even more participation.” Pending guest appearances and performances by local Houston artists will be announced by the time of the event.

FOR MORE INFO: VISIT THE SGA OFFICE IN N210
**PERFUME GENIUS**

**TOO BRIGHT**

by Mohammed Zain
Managing Editor

Seattle songwriter Mike Hadreas returns with a new world of emotionally fractured textures on his anticipated 3rd LP: *Too Bright*.

Hadreas reaches for wider stylistic accomplishments now; offering nothing but carefully measured artistic growth. Unlike the emotionally devastating 2012 record *Put Your Back N 2 It*, Hadreas isn’t here to offer a beefed-up sadness to sequel past works. Perfume Genius has renewed their creative notebook and stationary set, painting piano ballads with crisper production, sacrificing melody for atmosphere to gives his lyrics and hypnotic vocals room to breathe.

*Too Bright*, however, showcases Hadreas’ ability to scrap his niche style in favor for artful alternatives. Prepared with a duo of dynamic singles, “Queen” and “Grid” feature stark layers of electric instrumentation, seeping into Hadreas’ energy to yield fierce pay-offs. Occasionally citing R&B and art pop, *Too Bright* remains fresh and occasionally frightening. "My Body" teeters on a Portishead or Suicide influence with fuzzy, sinister bass drops and a paranoid rhythm. "Grid" sounds like a fan of St. Vincent and Kanye West’s production preferences, with tense samples of echoed screams and eerie vocals to boot. "Long-pig" throws in its hat in the 80s electro-pop ring, spotting a bouncy synth riff dripping with mid-tempo nostalgia over hand claps and backing vocals glazed with reverb.

Perfume Genius again graces us with one of the year’s more memorable records. *Too Bright* may keep morose thoughts, but its introverted state refuses to wallow this time. Vindictiveness is Hadreas new pet and he’s out to take names this year.

**ALT-J**

**THIS IS ALL YOURS**

by Mohammed Zain
Managing Editor

My white friends are going to force themselves to like this record, I can feel it already. England quartet Alt-J debuted two years ago with the much-celebrated *An Awesome Wave*, an unapologetically quirky pop record graced with oft-kilter catchiness and cutesy movie references. It’s not hard to imagine millions of white teenagers making cheap impressions of front-man Joe Newman’s gawky delivery. *An Awesome Wave* benefited from a polite atmosphere and alluring pop-rock production, a far-cry from the otherwise boring *This Is All Yours*.

Meandering through a longer track list, *This Is All Yours* exudes confidence and comes up nil on every mark. The ‘sophomore slump’ label begs to be given, but artists’ on their poorest records often have the most to learn from. Searching through a pile of incompetent lyrics about lukewarm nothingness, each sonic twist Alt-J offers up substitutes substance with poor style; lacking any bite whatsoever. In the absence of any pop hooks or experimental song ideas, Alt-J arrives with an album entirely made of filler tracks and a nagging attitude to still be taken as seriously as before.

It’s like trying to talk to a significant other during cuddling. During the honeymoon phase (first few months,) whispering dorky sweet nothings retains a charm and purpose. Somebody almost always oversaturates cuddling sessions with saying cute sh*t to the point where the feel devolves from cute to embarrassing in record time. Depending on your tolerance, Alt-J may still make you swoon, but *This Is All Yours* has me preparing for the break-up.

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**HOUSTON FALL CONCERT GUIDE**

by Mohammed Zain
Managing Editor

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