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The Prospector, April 25, 2017

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT ISSUE

MESSY SAYER OF STUDENT OPINION

THE PROSPECTOR

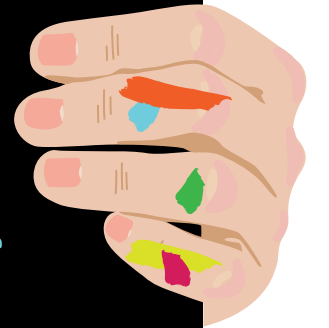
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VOL. 102, NO. 28

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

APRIL 25, 2017

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DESIGN BY ANA RAMOS/ THE PROSPECTOR



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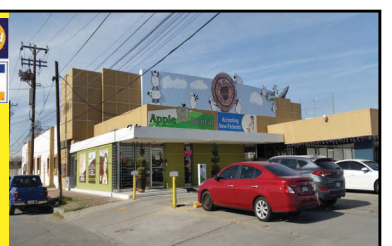
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APRIL 25, 2017

OPINION

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

MICHAELA ROMÁN, 747-7477

No second chances

BY ANA RAMOS
The Prospector



As an art student double majoring in graphic design and painting, I am no stranger to being told “that doesn’t work” after turning in a

project or assignment that took me hours and hours to complete. This can be frustrating, especially when art or good art is extremely hard to define—if not impossible.

There are no rules to follow to guarantee your artwork will be good, and yet we still get told that something is not working, when a piece is completed, by professors, art jurors or even an average person. Why? Because everyone’s taste or preferred style is super different.

Last week in the art department, there was a call for the annual student artwork showcase held at UTEP’s Rubin Gallery. They asked that all the artworks are on display, from paintings to metals to ceramics, etc. Then, only one juror comes from out of town and takes a look at all the art and chooses what will enter and what will be rejected from the showcase.

This has often created problems, because some jurors may pick what they like according to the type of work that they do, whether it is abstract, realistic or something else. This in turn means that a lot of good art that had a lot of thought and hard work put in to it will not be accepted, because one juror alone, with biased opinions, will make that decision. This doesn’t mean that the work chosen is bad, it’s just that good art comes in many different styles and displays many different ways of looking at the world.

Considering all of this, my friend and I were discussing which pieces to submit for the show and found ourselves looking at the juror’s website to see if we could decipher his taste or style, that way we could submit something that he would like instead of something that we were proud of. Ultimately I opted for the latter, because is it really my work if I’m changing it to be someone else’s approach instead of my own?

This sometimes feels true in the classroom as well, because when we are assigned a project, it usually comes with a list of requirements to fulfill. And if you don’t have a good professor, then number one on that list will be to make sure that it looks the way they want it to.

I once had a professor who lowered my grade because my design was symmetrical and expressed to me that while symmetry is appealing to the eye of the human being, he didn’t like things to be symmetrical. This was during my first semester of college and I was completely lost, I couldn’t understand what I had done wrong in my work until I realized that making it symmetrical wasn’t an actual flaw in this particular assignment; he just preferred asymmetry as a personal preference.

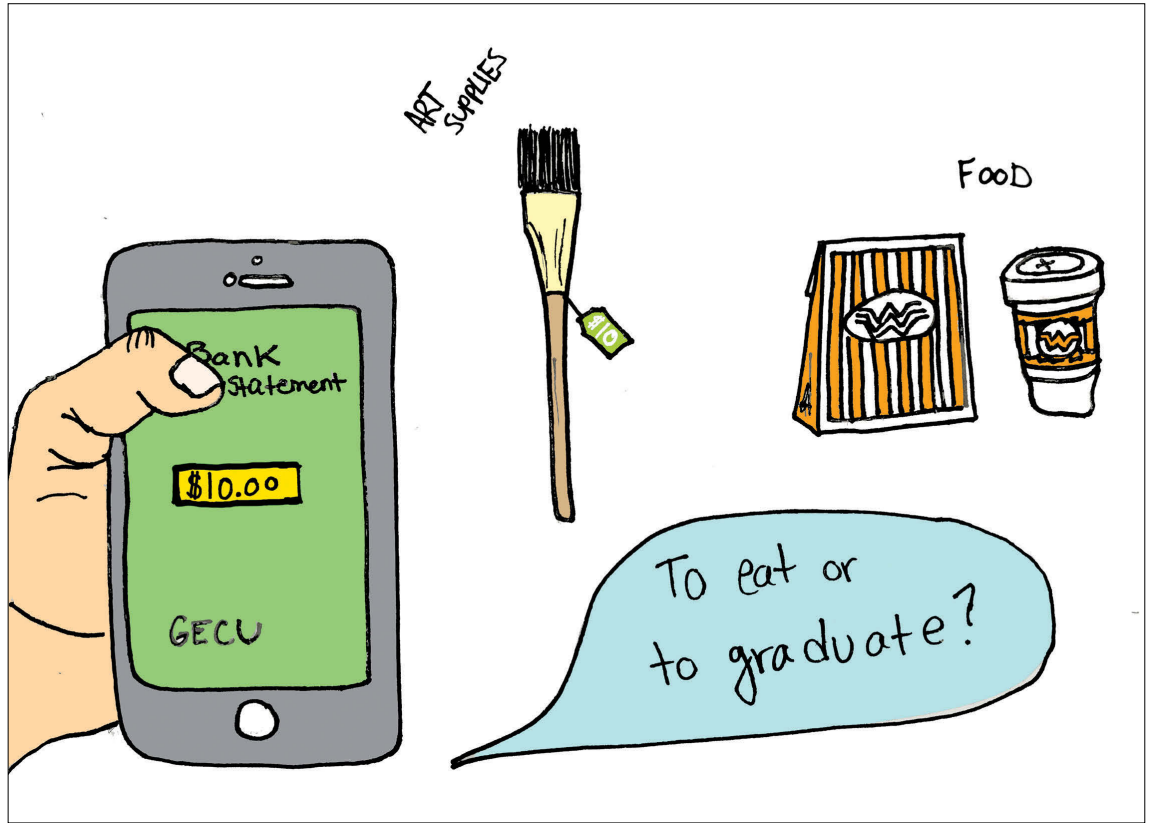
Although this doesn’t always happen, I’ve had many excellent professors as well who taught me the technical parts of art so that I may be able to create art pieces my way, in my style and from my point of view. They have not only taught me this, but have also encouraged me to experiment and to push beyond what I’ve done.

Because, of course, there is bad art in the world and as students, yes we are bound to have failures as we do these experiments and learn new techniques. But the most important thing that professors have taught me is to own my mistakes and find a way to turn them into something greater, a part of what I had meant it to be originally.

Now, regardless of whether the piece is successful or a monumental failure, we as students must take it all as part of the learning process. And yes, sometimes when it comes down to the grading it seems like there are no second chances, what you did is what you get, whether it’s good or bad.

Creating art usually isn’t all about the grades, it’s the end result that matters, and while the grade is final, the lessons learned from mistakes on a piece can always be put to good use in a new one. Looking at it this way means that there actually is an infinite amount of chances to get it right, whatever that means.

✉ Ana Ramos may be reached at loriana.2@gmail.com.



THE PROSPECTOR STAFF

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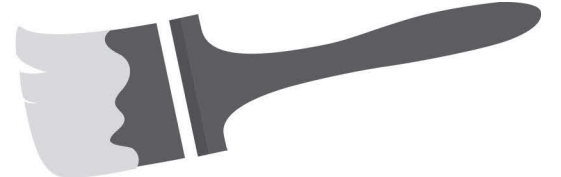
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The fine price of fine art



BY RENE DELGADILLO

The Prospector

As a studio art major, senior Kymea Staten said she constantly bought expensive hardware store tools and art paper until she decided to change majors.

"I changed my major because of how expensive it was," Staten said. "You never really know what you're gonna need because a syllabus in art classes often changes and it can be frustrating. There have been times where I have spent over \$60 on a single assignment."

Staten, now an art history major, said the price of the supplies caused her to feel stressed and embarrassed after not being able to purchase them.

"There were times when I wasn't able to afford some of my supplies and as a result, I would fall behind in my classes. I became extremely stressed and overwhelmed," Staten said. "It's embarrassing to not go to class because you can't work on assignments simply because you can't afford it."

During one semester, Staten spent approximately \$600 in supplies for her art courses affecting more than just her bank account.

"It resulted in eating a very poor diet and making sacrifices that didn't always feel necessary," Staten said.

David Griffin, chair of the Department of Art, said he is aware of what students have to go through as they take courses in the art department.

"It's the same thing when I was a student," Griffin said. "We, as faculty, are aware of this problem and we try to help and suggest solutions and possible substitutions for those materials that students will use. Just because you use lower quality materials that doesn't necessarily mean your art won't be good. If you're creative and you're really good, then you can make those materials work just as good as you would do with high-end art materials."

Griffin said during this upcoming fall semester, course fees for design one and two, drawing one and two and life drawing one will

be raised. He said some of the fees have not been raised in more than 20 years and the money raised from this will allow some professors to help out their students.

"I just raised three or four (course fees) that hadn't been raised for quite a while," Griffin said. "After I buy the materials, I will be able to supply them without having the students go out and buy them on their own. I teach one of those classes and I will know exactly what they need to create what I'm asking for."

Griffin said there is a nationwide problem in funds for liberal arts majors.

"That's the big push between STEAM and STEM, the A for arts is missing," Griffin said. "The designer of every product is important for humanity because they have the ability to connect with people. This is why I would like to see more funding for art students."

Griffin said art students are learning the techniques they need to be good artists and as they progress

they will gain confidence and start to understand what kind of materials are better to work in and in what medium. He said this will then allow students to understand how the right balance between making art and spending money.

"You have to be creative, you have to think and problem solve around these things," Griffin said. "Your assignment is to build a piece of art and critically think about the pieces and the materials you're using, and use them wisely and economically enough so that you don't break your own personal finances."

Griffin said students should take advantage of grants and scholarships as they are offered. Griffin said these are competitive scholarships, where students have to demonstrate a unique technique and sense of art.

"These scholarships are hard to obtain, but if you are going through a difficult economic moment and you still want to want to major in art you should apply," Griffin said.

Griffin said there is a perception that art majors won't be making a living once they graduate, a perception he said can be overcome if art students look for unique ideas and career choices.

"Is the student really clever enough to double major in business or painting and go out and open their own studio?" Griffin said. "That is networking, that's making yourself open to possibilities to the doors that open. I know it's hard to double major, but there are ways in which art students can find the resources to find money after graduation."

Griffin also said students should reconsider if they are majoring in art if they are not willing to make these sacrifices.

"Is making a living in the arts easy? No, it's not," Griffin said. "Art is hard and art is going to cost you money, time, and you have to really devote yourself to it."

Follow Rene Delgadillo on Twitter @rdelgadillonews

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

What are you listening to right now?



CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ, ANDREW RIOS, NINA TITOVETS / THE PROSPECTOR



ADRIAN ABURTO

Sophomore business major
"The artist I'm listening to the most right now is Billy Joel. I'm going to see him in concert soon, so I'm trying to study his songs."



AYVERI DURAND

Senior nursing major
"I've been listening to 'Shining' by DJ Khaled and Beyoncé."



BRIANA WILLIAMSON

Junior pre-nursing major
"Drake's new album 'More Life,' and the song 'Teenage Fever.'"



NATALIA MOLINA

Junior biological sciences major
"I always like listening to country music because it is very peaceful."



GERARDO SAENZ

Junior digital media production major
"I am going full old school listening to Red Hot Chili Peppers."



MARCO CHAVEZ

Freshman marketing major
"Right now it's between Drake and the Weeknd. I would have to say Drake is my favorite though."

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SGA candidates reflect on election week and anticipate results

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS

The Prospector

It's five in the morning and Carlos Chavira's alarm buzzes to start the day. Although he usually wakes up after 9 a.m. each day for school, this particular week the Student Government Association elections demand that he gets to school early and stay as long as he can.

Seven o'clock in the morning rolls around and Chavira, who is running as a senator-at-large, treks out to campus to catch students and explain his platform. For his first time campaigning for a SGA officer position, he chose to run alongside the Marvel party candidates and compete for a spot.

During election week, Chavira traveled from classroom to classroom and spoke in front of the class to pitch why he should be elected.

Now that the campaigning process is over and all votes have been cast, Chavira, along with the 49 other members running for executive or senatorial positions for SGA, will have to play the waiting game to find out who will be elected.

"This past week campaigning was one of the most physically straining experiences I've ever gone through," Chavira said. "At the beginning there's a social barrier that you have to overcome, and it's stressful to go up to a random individual and talk to them about your platforms. After a while, it becomes second nature talking to them."

For the 2017 SGA elections, there are three different groups with their own candidates, Marvel, Boost and Independents. The two parties, Marvel and Boost, put like-minded candidates together for spots in both president and vice-president, and senatorial offices.

Marvel is focusing their movement toward educating students about their rights, specifically for undocumented students, and clearing up any transparency issues for the students by connecting the students with SGA.

On the other hand, the members of Boost are striving for more transportation for students coming across the border, improving budget allocations, solar panels in common areas and making designated rest areas for students.

Then the independent candidates come into play. These individuals chose not to affiliate themselves with a party by running a solo campaign, and each have their own respective motives and platforms.

"The importance of a party system basically only helps you when you run because once you join SGA, there are no political affiliations and you feel like a team," said Celeste Acevedo, a senior communication major, who is currently a senator-at-large. "Execs only put a party together to join like-minded people together so they can hopefully one day work together in SGA. They also want those people under them to campaign on their behalf. If you are in a party, you are more likely to hear one of the 15 senate members than the three exec members. Those votes will go towards them."

Acevedo, who is not running for a position this year, believes that there is a big divide amongst the structure currently in SGA and the organization needs proper ruling and order.

The current SGA president, Sergio Baltazar, has been criticized by some in his current board for how he ran his presidency. Baltazar, who is running again for president under Boost, was publicly criticized during the presidential debate and through social media for his lack of action toward the ideas he promised last year.

"I feel like the discrepancies from President Baltazar and the whole Student Government Association has not really been affecting his campaign," Acevedo said. "He isn't running on the terms that he is having problems."

Acevedo said the one thing that could have affected Baltazar more than it did was negatively attacking the

chair of appropriations, Esber Aboud, during his administration.

"At SGA, he was confronted about this and questioned, 'as a leader, how could you say that we're a team for the entire year, and for the sole benefit of his new campaign discredit an entire committee in your administration?' At first, he didn't know what to say, but he followed it up with how he wants to help the student body and grow in that sense. He said sorry to us, but it ruined the morale of the team."

Last year, Baltazar ran on developmental ideas, such as bringing nap stations to the campus, shade stations and transportations for students crossing the border. Although some of the projects are taking longer to develop than he had planned, he knew the high scale of projects that were at hand and stayed determined to proceed with the ideas.

"I tried explaining to everyone that these projects can't be done in a year," Baltazar said. "I mentioned that when I got elected last year. I told my whole exec board and senators, 'the only one who created the Earth in one day was God.'"

Along with his projects not going into action, the executive board and appropriations committee has negatively evaluated Baltazar's choice of budget.

Each year, the appropriation committee is given \$80,000 to give out to students and organizations that submit a bill to obtain funding. As president, Baltazar is given \$8,000 to utilize wherever he may please. Currently, Baltazar has a negative balance of about \$750.

Baltazar said that he simply wanted to allocate money to organizations that he felt were not given the fair amount of money through appropriations.

"SGA always tells everyone submitting a bill to maximize the most they can ask for, but that's not fair because they only get a percentage of what they ask for," Baltazar said. "I told everyone, God didn't put the guidelines that are there, so we can change them. We can properly

spend the money that the students need. Somehow it's unfair when they pin it on me. It's not like I'm stealing money from SGA. Ever since I started my presidency, I wanted to cut back on the expenses that went towards us, like buying polos or business cards. That was the purpose—to give back to the students."

He ran last year as an independent candidate, but this time around he believes that the party system has helped his platform.

"I'm running again because I care for the students a lot," he said. "Last time, I ran as an independent and going in without a team was definitely a challenge. I liked the way we finished our projects at the end. But running with this party has been great because we have a team of people who are very excited about SGA and making it run with all the ideas and projects we have. I want to continue to work on the platforms that I promised. Even if I don't get it, I will still work on all the projects that I promised."

Chavira and Acevedo both agree that some of the ideas that are being broadcast have been more radical than candidates should be campaigning for.

"People who are in SGA have the knowledge of what we do have control over and what we don't have control over, but some individuals in both parties ran on a platform of implementing more solar panels. I talked to them and tried to explain that El Paso is currently taxing solar energy extra hard," Acevedo said. "They're kind of unaffordable and we don't currently have a budget for that right now. I would say that people who have been through SGA have more knowledge of what we can do."

Chavira also agrees about some of the far-fetched ideas some candidates are trying to implement.

"I would say I'm more of a realist," Chavira said. "My platform is a very simple platform, but also very effective. Some members from different parties are promising students the world. At

the end of the day, truth is, there's a lot of obstacles that need to be overcome. There's big projects that are very far out there. I don't think it's impossible, but it'll be very difficult for a lot of these plans to go into effect."

There has been a lot of tension between the officers in SGA, according to Chavira, and he thinks that this elections term could be a make-or-break situation for SGA.

"Tensions have been pretty high right now—not only between the two parties running against each other, but also in SGA itself between the president and the senate," he said. "They don't see eye-to-eye on a lot of things. It has definitely caused a lot of tension and I can see why there are transparency issues."

However, Cristian Botello, a sophomore communication studies major who is running as an independent candidate for the senator at-large position, does not think that SGA is currently going through transparency issues; rather, he thinks that it has been a growing distance between the students and SGA.

"For me, it's not the lack of transparency, but the lack of student engagement, which actually falls back on us," Botello said. "It's not that SGA is bad right now. There are things that SGA can improve on, but overall most of the senators and exec members have done what they need to do."

Now, the elections committee is tasked to review filed sanctions, which are petitions that could rule out a candidate or votes because they violated rules. After the elections committee is done reviewing these sanctions, SGA will announce the winners. They believe that the winners will be announced later this week.

Follow Adrian Broaddus on Twitter @Adrian_Broaddus

Keeping up with the Texas Legislative Session bills



BY CHRISTIAN VASQUEZ

The Prospector

It's just about a month before the 85th Texas Legislative session comes to an end. During the last session, 6,276 bills were introduced and only 1,322 passed. This year, around 8,000 bills were introduced to both the House and Senate, so the odds are that most won't get another chance until the next session. During the home stretch, bills that seem a sure win could get stuck in committee, and controversial bills might find their way to Governor Abbott's desk and become Texas law. Here's a look at some of those bills.

HB 21

The House passed HB 21, a public school finance reform bill, which provides \$1.6 billion for public education. The bill increased the basic allotment in the budget from \$5,140 to \$5,350 per year, provides more assistance to school districts with students who have dyslexia and related learning disabilities, as well as bilingual students. Rep. Dan Huberty, R-Houston, who authored the bill, said. "This is the first time in over 30 years that we have the opportunity to vote for school finance, to make a holistic change." Provisions were added by rural legislators that would help

districts with fewer than 1,600 students by removing an existing penalty for school districts smaller than 300 miles, according to the Texas Tribune. If passed, the bill would take effect on Sept. 1, 2017. The Legislative Budget Board reports that revenue will be gained for 96 percent of school districts and charter schools, and 98.8 percent of students who attend school daily for 2018 and 2019. The report also estimated that the Foundation School program will save \$35.9 million in 2018 to 2019, and would cost the state around \$900 million each year. The bill is moving to the Senate committee next.

HB 122

House Bill 122 would no longer hold 17-year-olds as adults in criminal prosecutions, and instead raise the age to 18 years old. Rep. Harold Dutton, D-Houston, who filed the bill, said that while we don't allow 17-year-olds to buy cigarettes, get married without parent permission, we do try them as adults. Critics of the bill say that it will cost counties millions of dollars to put the bill into effect, which if passed would be Sept. 1, 2019. In the Legislative Budget Board, El Paso County estimated that in 2020 to 2021, the bill would cost \$15 million, which includes the construction of a

40-bed detention/challenge facility. Advocates say that young people have better outcomes in life when put in juvenile justice systems as opposed to the adult criminal system. They also say that it cost the counties more to keep those younger than 18 separated in adult criminal systems because of the federal prison rape elimination act. The bill has passed through the house and is now waiting to be heard by the Senate Criminal Justice Committee.

HB 1911

Rep. James White, R Hillister, introduced House Bill 1911, which would allow those aged 21 and over to carry a firearm without a permit. The bill only allows "authorized persons" to carry without a license. In order to be considered authorized, an individual must be a legal resident for at least six months and not be a convicted felon or be charged with a class A or B misdemeanor. The bill does not null the right of municipalities to ban unlicensed carry if it does get passed. The Legislative Budget Board estimates that because the applications for a license and a re-

newal to carry would decline by around 90 percent, the state would lose \$37 million. Critics have said that the bill makes it harder for law enforcement officers to do their jobs, while gun rights activists say that the bill does not go far enough and advocates for Rep. Jonathan Sticklands, R-Plano, House Bill 375. The bill passed through the House Committee of Homeland Security and Public Safety and is awaiting a vote by the House.

HB 2899

The house bill would null any policy that has nondiscrimination ordinances that do not meet those of the state and would, in turn, ban local ordinances that protect transgender people. Currently, there are no laws in Texas that protect sexual orientation or gender identity from discrimination in housing, services or employment. The law is seen by many critics as an addition to the controversial Senate Bill 6, that would prohibit transgender individuals from using bathrooms that corresponds to their gender identity in

public buildings such as public schools and buildings. HB 2899 would forbid any schools from creating or continuing nondiscrimination policies. Rep. Ron Simmons, R-Carrollton, who introduced the bill, said during the House State Affairs Committee hearing that nondiscrimination policies should be decided on the state level, not the local. The bill is currently pending in the House Committee of State Affairs.

Follow Christian Vasquez on Twitter @chrismvasq

APRIL 25, 2017

Artspace operates to house artists and revitalize downtown

BY LESLIE SARIÑANA

The Prospector

Artspace is a non-profit organization that has been developing art facilities across the country in an effort to transform the art scene in cities. They have partnered with the El Paso Community Foundation to bring affordable living for artists while cultivating job creation and developing the art community.

Roderick Artspace Lofts, named after Dorrance D. Roderick, who was a pioneer in radio, television and print journalism in El Paso, are located downtown at the corner of Oregon Street and Missouri Avenue. This location was chosen and transformed into the city's arts destination. The Artspace project is meant to rejuvenate the neighborhood and add to El Paso's existing institutions, such as the El Paso's Children's Museum, art museum, history museum, science museum and theater.

The buildings took over seven years to develop and build. The El Paso Community Foundation donated \$10 million out of the \$12.7 million it cost to build the project. The Artspace Lofts opened to tenants in El Paso in 2016. Current resident, Diego Martinez, a UTEP alum with a degree in special education, was one of the first to apply for housing at the lofts.

"As an artist, to live there you definitely have to stay active," Martinez said.

Artspace currently operates 40 projects in the United States. Rent is based on the tenant's income, and only people who qualify for affordable housing can apply to live there. That means that in El Paso, those who wish to live in Artspace must make less than \$22,000 a year.

Non-artists are also welcome to apply, but applicants involved with and dedicated to the arts will be given preference.

The project works to incorporate artists as much as possible in the community. Artspace holds FabLab workshops, Proper Printshop, an art workshop and a gallery space, where they allow the tenants to hold shows.

Some of the current residents include photographers, sculptors, filmmakers, fashion designers, street artists, singers, producers and DJs.

"Everyone is a different kind of artist, so I'm curious to see how the brainstorming comes," Martinez said. "I think right now it's still getting settled. It's a new location, new place."

Applicants are interviewed by a community-based committee, which looks for applicants who are dedicated to their art and will be a positive contributor to the building and community.

"Part of the application process is that you have to meet with a panel of six people. You have to show why you want to be there, what you have to offer to the community, what you plan on doing with your art, and if you're active," Martinez said. "So for me being in a collective and also painting all the time, I was able to show that I was a candidate."

Kathrin Berg, vice president of the El Paso Community Foundation, is one of the community members who interviews applicants.

"The process was not so much on the quality of art, that is something that you judge on your own. But the idea and commitment on being an artist and a resident in an artist community downtown, that was very important," Berg said.

Martinez describes the community as doing more than just helping revitalize the city. It's served as a support for artists and has even helped create different artist collaborations.

"I would definitely recommend it. I feel like I have a purpose there. Being there and being around artists, having the support," Martinez said. "It's gonna be a good center focus for people traveling looking for art. It's been really slick; it's been very nice. El Paso is kind of one of those cities where there's so much talent."

Artspace will be hosting a meeting with all current tenants and anyone who is interested in living there or joining the community at 5:30 p.m. on May 12.

✉ Leslie Sarinana may be reached at theprosectordaily.ent@gmail.com.



Artspace resident Diego Martinez is an active artist in El Paso.

MICHAELA ROMÁN / THE PROSPECTOR

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FloraFEST returns to the Chihuahua Desert Garden



BY CLAUDIA FLORES
The Prospector

FloraFEST is the largest plant sale of its kind in the region, and a fundraising event for the maintenance and operation of the Chihuahua Desert Garden on campus. This is a 23-year-old tradition, where shoppers enjoy a large variety of native and desert-adapted

plants to take home and start their own personalized garden.

Kaye Mullins, education curator at the Centennial Museum, is in charge of coordinating the plant sale and recruiting people to volunteer and make this event a successful one.

“We have a huge variety of plants that are native to the area and

those that have been adapted like shrubs, trees and everyone’s favorites, the flowers,” Mullins said.

From desert marigolds to sages, FloraFEST offers about 3,000 different plant species. Most of the plants at the event are not available at local nurseries or retailers.

“One of our most popular variety of flowers is the chocolate dai-

sy, and, believe it or not, it really smells like cocoa,” Mullins said.

Living in a desert region, it is hard to find plants and flowers that bloom in the dry area and instead of purchasing the typical cactus, FloraFEST gives El Paso the opportunity to learn about the different plant varieties that are well adapted to the region.

According to Mullins, the event draws close to 2,500 people coming through during the two-day plant sale.

“It’s wonderful to see when they open the gates for people to come in and all you can see is the whole place covered in pink, purple, red and so many different colors,” Mullins said.

With almost 3,000 plant varieties at the FloraFEST, local master gardeners will be at the event for people to come by and learn about the plants they are purchasing.

“We have plant-pros all four hours and an information center in the middle of everything, there are people with a name tag that says ‘Provider,’ and those people can tell you what kind of plant works best for you,” Mullins said. “We will also have people from the El Paso Native Plant Society and other expertise at the event, so don’t hesitate to ask questions if you don’t know the plants.”

FloraFEST will take place on April 29 and 30, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the plaza between the Undergraduate Learning Center and the Centennial Museum on campus.

✉ Claudia Flores may be reached at claudiaphr97@gmail.com.

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APRIL 25, 2017

ENTERTAINMENT

EDITOR

LESLIE SARIÑANA, 747-7477

UTEP student featured at El Paso Museum of Art

BY LESLIE SARIÑANA

The Prospector

The El Paso Museum of Art is working with UTEP's Department of Art for the first time to feature one student's artwork at the museum as part of the LabEPMA Program.

LabEPMA features four regional artists throughout the year, and each artist's work is displayed for a three-month period. The artists selected also give a 30-minute discussion on their work. Guillermo Gutierrez was the first UTEP student to be awarded in the program. Gutierrez is an undergraduate set to receive his BFA degree with a double concentration in ceramics and sculpture this coming December.

His piece, "Krag," will be at the museum through May 7. EPMA Curator Christian Gerstheimer, who previously taught art appreciation, exhibition practices and art history at UTEP, played a large part in working with the UTEP Department of Art and selecting a student to feature.

Gerstheimer said students had to be selected by the faculty of the UTEP art department first to be considered for the program, and then those students presented their platform to the EPMA.

"There were four artists that were proposed to be LabEPMA artists. We

told them these proposals were good, but they don't really apply to how their work would be shown (at EPMA)," Gerstheimer said. "They all redid their proposals, and (Gutierrez) was the one we selected because it seemed the most doable, but also the most engaging and exciting for us."

Vincent Burke, an associate professor of art, approached the EPMA about featuring one UTEP art student per year. Featuring Gutierrez has been in the works for more than a year, and he even took time off in the fall semester of 2016, to work on his piece.

Gutierrez had been previously working on site-specific sculptures out in the desert, and decided to weave together a quilt of the materials he found in the desert to feature at the museum.

"That piece started with my exploration of illegal dump sites outside El Paso. I stumbled upon that one by sheer chance actually. That place became my studio," Gutierrez said. "I started to go out there and built site-specific sculptures. I started to go out there and build. I built about seven of these. That quilt is a representation of my explorations of 'Krag.'"

Gerstheimer also said that this selection was a lengthier process than normal. The curatorial department aims to alter the works that are shown



'Krag' will be on display at the El Paso Museum of Art until May 7.

so that they're not always displaying paintings and different medias.

"(Gutierrez) seemed to make the most sense for what we're trying to show," Gerstheimer said. "He really changed his idea to be something that could go here, because he was doing site-specific sculptures. We can't show

something in the desert. He proposed this and it really seems to work."

This is a grand opportunity that most artists don't accomplish until later in their careers, and Gutierrez will receive an honorarium for his exhibit.

When describing why he chose a quilt of materials, Gutierrez said, "The

CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

quilt is basically an accumulation of my wanderings. I was creating a narrative of wanderings. It's up to anyone's interpretations. The narrative can be whatever you want."

✉ Leslie Sarinana may be reached at theprospectordaily.ent@gmail.com.

The Fifth Estate makes his way into El Paso's music scene



MICHAELA ROMÁN / THE PROSPECTOR

The Fifth Estate performing at his first headlining show at the Lowbrow Palace on Friday, April 14.

BY MICHAELA ROMÁN

The Prospector

The Fifth Estate, commonly known as Fifth, is making his way onto El Paso's hip-hop scene. Fifth kicked off his path

to fame by headlining his first show at the Lowbrow Palace on Friday, April 14.

Myke Joyner, 25, grew up as a military brat and came to El Paso four years ago. Joyner has been making music for most of his life, playing trumpet and guitar

when he was younger. It wasn't until high school that one of his best friends introduced him to the rap scene.

"I used to play around with (rap), but it wasn't until I turned 18 that I started to take it more seriously," Joyner said.

Joyner found the name Fifth Estate as a suitable name, when thinking about the structure of social classes.

Before the French Revolution, France separated society into three estates. Clergy was the first estate. The second estate was nobility and the third estate was common people. The fourth estate is the media. This structure continues in modern U.S. society.

"The fifth estate is also like the news, but it's the raw truth and less opinionated," Fifth said. "When I say the fifth and the third it means I'm the voice of reason."

Around five months prior to his Lowbrow debut, Fifth began to view his hip-hop career with a new perspective.

"I realized I had always had passion for music and I was finding ways to eat, sleep and travel off of it," Fifth said. "If I get superstardom off of it that's tight, but I just want to be able to provide for myself and experience things. The things I've experienced through music and meeting people are unlike anything I've ever done."

Fifth played at The Lowbrow with local artists such as the Swell Kids and singer songwriter Elia Esparza. Fifth walked on stage to the beats of El Paso DJ One Man Jazz, who Fifth said he felt honored to work with.

When Fifth first moved to El Paso four years ago, he was hungry to get out and see what music scenes existed here.

"It was really kind of hard to find a hip-hop scene because there are a lot of variations of it," Fifth explained. "You have your guys who are definitively '90s boom bap. You have your guys like the Rare Individuals, who are more modern. There's a whole mixture out there."

Fifth says the music scene in El Paso is not talked about by the average El Pasoan, but they should recognize what's going on in their hometown.

"I really do believe there's world-class talent here, from some of the hardcore bands here to some of the hip-hop acts to some of the singers. The scene has done a lot of growing in the last year, I mean that in all accounts," Fifth said. "Even the local venues here like Prickly Elder and Dream Chasers Club. I've seen a lot of more progressive, forward-thinking efforts come out lately and I think it's going to benefit all of us."

Fifth says 19-year-old El Paso artists Evander Griim and Khalid have inspired him by taking their newfound fame out of El Paso and bringing it home when they can. He says now is the time for artists to capitalize on the attention they're bringing to El Paso.

see FIFTH on page 9

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Nico & The Silent Films strive for innovation in first year



BY LESLIE SARIÑANA

The Prospector

Among all the local talent, one of the newest bands stands out above them all—Nico & The Silent Films. They are this year's winner for the Lowbrow Palace's Battle of the Bands and they've only been together for a little over a year.

The band is comprised of Andrew "AJ" Hernandez (lead vocals and guitar), Derek Lopez (drums), Steven Maldonado (bass) and Fernando Corona (guitar).

Just because they don't all sing on stage doesn't mean they can't. Earlier in the development of the band, Lopez and Maldonado were the lead singers, but the roles have changed over time.

The four all met during high school before deciding to form the band. Earlier names for the band were Nico Wednesday and Silent Films. Their current name is based on the Velvet Underground and Nico and Andy Warhol's films.

"We kind of combined two of the band names we previously went by. First, we called ourselves Nico Wednesday, then we started calling ourselves Silent Films, so we didn't really like either of them. So we just mixed them up," Lopez said. "We like the whole image that the name gives."

Corona, who wrote their newest song "Honey," is the latest addition to the band, having joined seven months ago. Lopez and Hernandez were in a different band before.

"We still have a couple songs that are still in the works. We're trying to get them perfect for shows," Lopez said.

They've had a successful year, winning Battle of the Bands, opening for The Drums, landing a spot at the Neon Desert Music Festival and going on their first tour. They're barely catching on to the attention they're creating locally, but they hope to remove themselves from the "local band" label.

"We're trying to get past the local thing. We're trying to push ourselves further than that. Just getting out there, different cities," Lopez said. "I think if anything, the only thing that's really put us apart is trying not to sound like anything else. We just play and hopefully it sounds good."

They credit their success to having fun and keeping it as natural as possible on stage.

"Yeah we're pretty new, we've been in previous bands and stuff, but this has been the one that's worked out the most," Hernandez said.

Although their sound is mostly surf-psych rock, the band explores with different elements of music. Some of their songs include hints of jazz elements, punk, blues and psychedelic.

They all have very different individual interests and when creating music they all get to contribute different sounds. They cite The Beatles, the Beach Boys and the Flaming Lips as some of their influences.

They never intended on finding a specific sound as a group. They try to avoid sounding repetitive and mixing it up style wise.

"It's kind of hard to point it down to one thing because we're always kind of changing it. We're all influenced by a lot of different things," Lopez said. "Some things are just like heavy crazy, and some things are just like slower, mellow. Whatever we're feeling."

Hernandez comes up with most of the songs and the lyrics.

The band will be embarking on their first tour this coming summer. They hope to record and release new material after their tour.

"We probably won't do it (record) until we come back from tour this summer. We'll probably just focus on the tour and then do it," Hernandez said.

As the winner's of Battle of the Bands, they won studio time at Sonic Ranch. They plan to take advantage of that after touring. They're unsure about whether they'll create an album or a couple EPs, but one thing is for sure, there will be new music from them.

"Expect, once we come back from tour, expect some new recordings," Lopez said.

Nico & The Silent Films will be at Neon Desert on May 27, to close off the local stage that night.

Leslie Sarinana may be reached at theprospector.em@gmail.com.

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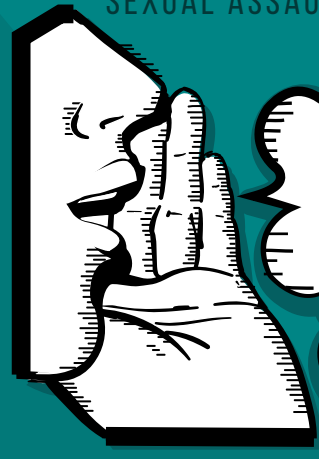
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'Anything Goes' slows down in the second act



CLAUDIA HERNANDEZ / THE PROSPECTOR

'Anything Goes' will be playing at the UTEP Dinner Theatre until May 7.

BY EDDIE VELAZQUEZ

The Prospector

The latest UTEP Dinner Theatre production of "Anything Goes" is a bright and charming musical about dreams aboard an ocean liner. However, a rushed second act that seems to disregard storytelling at times can leave the audience feeling lost at sea.

Originally written in 1934, with music and lyrics by composer Cole Porter, "Anything Goes" takes place during the Great Depression. The musical tells the story of Billy Crocker, a young Wall

Street stockbroker played by freshman theater major Jorge Blakely, who is in love with Hope Harcourt—played by sophomore theater major Nichole Hardgrove. Crocker follows Harcourt to a New York-London cruise, just to find out she is getting married to British millionaire Lord Evelyn Oakleigh—played by sophomore theater major Jared Berry.

The ship is also host to second-rate criminal Moonface Martin, played by freshman theater major Alvaro Callejas. Martin brings mischief aboard

while disguised as a minister, and ultimately becomes Crocker's main aid in his quest to impede Harcourt's wedding and win her and her mother over.

However, evangelist turned nightclub singer Reno Sweeney—played by doctoral student of teaching, learning and culture, Josey Mitchell—is the star of the show.

For starters, in the opening musical number, "I Get a Kick Out of You," Sweeney reveals her feelings for Crocker, showcasing great vocal talent.

Mitchell's stage presence is unmatched during this production, and the chemistry she brings to stage helps other characters flourish. For example, during "You're the Top," Mitchell's years of theater experience were telling as she commanded the segment and seemed perfectly comfortable guiding Blakely along while displaying great chemistry.

The musical also makes use of great side characters in Eli Whitney, played by Norman Lewis, and Erma, played by senior English major Lauren Peña.

Lewis portrays a perpetually drunk character that ironically seems the most sober of all once it is all said and done, while Peña's character has an interesting arch regarding her sexuality, even if it ultimately doesn't fully develop.

Technically, the production is sound. The backdrop resembles the deck of the ship while also shifting to the inside of the suites and the bar. It manages to keep a minimalistic style and never detracts from the action on stage.

In terms of sound, the lines were always loud and clear. However, during "I Get a Kick Out of You," the music overshadows Mitchell's voice.

When it comes to lighting, the production team kept a simple approach with little variation to the acting segments. However, during "It's De-Lovely," the projecting of Crocker and Harcourt's shadows on the backdrop served as nice symbolism foreshadowing the fate of the two characters.

Despite some interesting musical numbers, the second act feels like a disjointed series of vignettes. The script seemingly tries to wrap up all of the character subplots and does so in a way that feels rushed, and to an extent, awkward. This is evidenced by the ending, which plays on Chinese stereotypes and feels tacky even in dialogue.

The ending makes use of Luke and John—two characters whose only purpose throughout was to serve as comedic relief—as crucial to the play's ending by lending their outfits to Martin and Crocker. They fake a Chinese accent to break off Harcourt's wedding and the musical then abruptly ends.

Director Justin Lucero and the cast made the decision to follow through with this creative element.

"After considering many alternatives, the cast and I decided to embrace the intent and message when necessary, offering this touchy aspect of the show as a moment for audience discussion and reflection," Lucero said as part of his director's notes.

While the energy and commitment to the characters shows serious effort, a product-of-its-time script and a rushed second act holds "Anything Goes" back from being a memorable performance.

Follow Eddie Velazquez on Twitter @ezvelazquez

Keeping grillz alive in EP



MICHAELA ROMÁN / THE PROSPECTOR

3-5-Six Grillz is located at 5929 Dyer St. in Northeast El Paso.

BY MICHAELA ROMÁN

The Prospector

On the Northeast side of El Paso, you'll find blocks and blocks of local restaurants, body shops and other small businesses running down Dyer Street.

Something you might not expect to find is a store that specializes in the late '90s, early 2000s mouth jewelry craze—grillz.

The 3-5-Six Custom Gold Grillz is a barbershop, mixtape store and studio all in one, located at 5929 Dyer St.

Samuel Griffin, owner of 3-5-Six, started the shop in 2001 and came up with the name from the Bible, Proverbs 3:5,6, which talks about trusting the Lord with all your heart and him providing in return.

The grillz are custom made to fit the customer's mouth from a mold of their mouth. They run from six to 22 karat gold. They can be made in sterling silver and gold. By using ceramic, the white gold can be painted to any color, even hot pink or bright yellow. The teeth can be diamond cut

or have a stone finish. They also offer to provide cosmetic teeth for those who cannot afford to get it replaced at the dentist.

One silver tooth starts off at \$35, and cheapest gold starts at \$65. The shop asks for a 50 percent deposit and then the customer has 90 days to pick them up.

When Tyler Batson, UTEP football wide receiver and senior multidisciplinary studies major, came to El Paso he had just lost his grill. One of his teammates told him about 3-5-Six.

Batson has had a grill since his junior year in high school in Houston. He paid around \$250-\$300 for this most recent piece.

"Everyone says, 'why would you wear a grill?' I say, why would you wear gold earrings? I just want gold in my mouth," Batson said. "I like to be different in that aspect."

Although there was a time in the early 2000s, when Griffin was selling 26 grillz each week, he says he still sees a variety of customers. Soldiers from Ft. Bliss, UTEP and NMSU stu-

dents, high schoolers, parents and everyone in between.

Griffin's support for UTEP football made Batson feel comfortable when getting his teeth molded for his grill.

"I thought it was my kind of thing I could bring from Houston to El Paso. A few of my teammates have them, but they're also from the Houston area or Dallas area," Batson said. "In high school it was all a competition about who had the better one. Being on the team we do a lot of formal things, but I don't wear it to anything like that. You know just going out on the weekends or just hanging out with friends."

Batson says as much as he enjoys wearing grillz, it's probably not something he'll do much longer.

"I actually have had three or four and after losing my most recent one, I realize as you get older there are more priorities to spend money on," Batson said.

Michaela Román may be reached at michaelairoman@gmail.com.

FIFTH from page 7

"Personally speaking, I think there's a lot to be said for your age. I don't think it's everything, but it is commendable. In this day and age, everybody is on Instagram and Twitter putting stuff out there. They're not just doing one thing, they're making waves," Fifth said. "For Khalid to be on a global level and do the things he's doing, you can't help but be inspired by that."

Fifth considers himself a hip-hop artist at the core, but likes that he has room to move around.

"I'm still growing my name here so it's exciting to pull out any card from my deck to show people," Fifth said. "Nineties hip-hop molded me, but I think it's all about balance. I'd say I'm somewhere in between what's going on today and the sounds of yesterday."

Fifth says he's always been inspired by Andre 3000 of hip-hop duo Outkast and anyone who is a true lyricist and storyteller such as Slug from Atmosphere or Idea. Fifth enjoys being able to write stories and show transparency through his songs about life experiences he's had.

One of his songs, "Melancholy Rose," is the story about a breakup he went through.

"The song is saying, 'yeah stuff happens, love can suck, but it's also really tight,' so there's that duality in the song. It starts in a sad place but goes into how it's going to be cool," Fifth said.

Although starting off as a hip-hop purest, only focusing on lyrics and bars with straightforward head-bopping beats, Fifth has started to incorporate more instruments into his songs. He tries to find a balance between having an impactful message and sound.

"There's a time and place for everything; for rappers like Future and Lil Yachty and Young Thug and there's a place for your super conscious heads," Fifth explained. "I deliberately try to find myself somewhere in the middle."

During live performances I want people to hear what I'm saying and also feel something physically that they move with it."

Fifth says once you achieve those three things as an artist is when you start gaining traction and heading in the right direction.

"I can spit the dopest rhymes of all time, but it doesn't do anything if people don't want to actually vibe to it on a deeper level," Fifth said.

Fifth says everybody likes to be attached to something greater than themselves and on a more basic level, attached to someone that's famous.

"I feel like local artists definitely have support. People who aren't average showgoers, say 'oh it's just some sound cloud rapper, some guy that thinks he's Kendrick Lamar,'" Fifth said. "Everyone is opinionated, but when you have artists come out of here, hopefully people wake up and realize we're more than a few talented people."

Fifth says he tries to learn as much as possible from artists at his own level and higher up to incorporate into his own work.

"My self motto is, 'the limits that you have are the limits you place upon yourself,' so you're only going to go as far as you push yourself," Fifth said. "So I'm like, I can improve on anything. I'm not the tightest or amongst the top five on anybody's list, so I need to keep going and search for that number one spot and whether I get there or not, it's always a pursuit."

All Fifth wants is for people to connect with his music. He says he tries to add a personal touch to everything he does.

"If you don't resonate with it now, it might be 10 years from now, but you're going to get it," he said.

The Fifth Estate's music may be found on Soundcloud and Spotify.

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BY JASON GREEN

The Prospector

The new restaurant at 3501 Sun Bowl Drive, behind the empty Krispy Kreme building, is more than just an outstanding place to get Mediterranean food at a great price; it is the culmination of one man's life's work, his drive to succeed and if need be, the pouring out of his love on anyone who needs it.

Café Istanbul opened just weeks ago after Habib Gumus and his crew worked for months to convert the old barbershop around the bend

from Helen of Troy field, just blocks from campus.

They added a patio for outdoor dining, with plans to add some hookahs further down the line along with an open kitchen. It's the first of it's kind for a Mediterranean restaurant in El Paso and Gumus' top priority.

"These days, in the restaurant industry, once the kitchens are closed you don't know what's going on in there," said Gumus over a Turkish tea. "I'm in the food business almost 15 years and it's become a major issue for people. It's like this - if you don't show love to the food, that food's not going to taste good."

Taste is not a problem at Café Istanbul. On a recent Friday night, our table of four dove into Iskander (Doner Kebab meat with an excellent tomato-based sauce over the top), Lamb Doner Kebab, Chicken Doner Kebab and the Beef Saute. All of the plates come with a choice of two sides: fries (amazingly seasoned), salad or rice.

While debating amongst the table about what sauce we would prefer, from Tzatziki, garlic or chili, our phenomenal waiter Okun told us that they were all on the house, so why not have them all. Midway through the meal, Okun was back to ask for our votes on the favorite—the staff was in competi-

tion apparently. Tzatziki, the Mediterranean classic, was the winner.

All of the meats were amazing, moist and flavorful. Upon talking to Gumus later, I found out that the meat is never frozen and seasoned completely in house. According to Gumus, in the case of the Doner Kebab (often referred to as Gyro), this is a great departure from other restaurants.

"If you ask me a question, I can tell you what's in it," Gumus said. "That's why the kitchen is open, you don't see anything frozen."

Café Istanbul did not come to the west side without experience. Gumus has served food all over the world, since getting his start in Iraq.

After working as a translator for the military in Iraq, Gumus realized that the soldiers needed some time to relax and eat a good meal. He began to serve Turkish food to the troops to great success. He continued to work as a translator, while serving food, for multiple tours in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Following his time with the military, Gumus was able to parlay his cooking into a food truck gig with the Army and Air Force Exchange Service, traveling around the United States serving food—eventually landing at Fort Bliss.

Gumus worked tirelessly at Ft. Bliss, often with a 30 or more minute wait for the kebabs that soldiers with experience overseas had learned to love. Now, he has parlayed that experience and income into a permanent home near the UTEP campus.

This new home is where Gumus is already working to build a relationship with the UTEP community—

with the \$7.50 UTEP student kebab specials and 50 percent off for police in uniform.

"Say it's a school break, you don't have too much to do, you don't have too much money," said Gumus. "You don't have to have food. You can come here have a chai, have a coffee, whatever."

Gumus said that students do not need to feel pressured to order food and are free to use the soon to be installed free Wi-Fi for their studies.

"We are human beings, we face difficulties sometimes," said Gumus. "We cannot force the people that either you eat or you take off. No, my friend, you come drink water if you need."

It is this personality that rubs off on the employees under Gumus' command and builds the family atmosphere at Café Istanbul. The restaurant is inviting and clean.

More offerings are on the way from the upstart restaurant like more live Turkish music on the weekends and an in-house oven for baking fresh pita bread.

The food is indescribably fresh and clearly homemade when compared to other offerings around town.

You owe it to yourself to try the food at Café Istanbul and maybe also come out a better person for having eaten there.

Café Istanbul is open daily from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Follow Jason Green on Twitter @greenevansj

APRIL 25, 2017

SPORTS

EDITOR

JASON GREEN, 747-7477

Football player has wealth of talent beyond the field

BY AUGIE TOURIS

The Prospector

For student athlete Jean-André Moore, his talents extend far beyond the football field.

The senior wide receiver is heavily involved in the arts, beginning his musical career at age 3, when he started to learn to play piano.

“When I was 9, I began to sing during Catholic masses, and also would play piano,” Moore said.

Moore is also a member of Lambda Chi Alpha and has had many roles in his fraternity. He has held the role of social chair and has helped organize and run events for up to 300 people, as well as balancing the budget, which is in the thousands.

Moore also incorporates his love of the arts into the fraternity, and he produces, mixes and choreographs all of their respective dance and strokes competitions.

The 25-year-old has been dee-jaying for the last seven years, beginning with a nightclub he owned in Portland, Oregon.

“I really enjoy performing and creativity, and this extends to writing and poetry as well,” Moore said.

Moore also produces music and composes covers of popular songs.

As a senior on the football team, Moore keeps a line between athletics and pleasure. The wide receiver looks to contribute to the Miners as they break in their second-year offense under offensive coordinator Brent Pease.

Tall and lanky, Moore looks like the prototypical wide receiver and could very easily help out projected starting quarterback Ryan Metz.

“It’s my last season, and that’s a lot to think about,” Moore said. “Football has been a part of my life for a majority of it, and I’m not sure how I’ll react to its absence.”

Moore knows that the easiest way to fill that void is to adopt hobbies or interests, and he’s eyeing an acting path.

“

I really enjoy performing and creativity, and this extends to writing and poetry as well.

”

- Jean-André Moore,
senior wide receiver

He joined an acting troupe in the summer of 2016, and enjoyed the experience thoroughly. He was cast as the lead in a subsequent production of “The Sorcerer,” and he’s planning on joining the UTEP Dinner Theatre in 2018.

Moore has lived on his own for the last seven years, with this comes self-reliance. He also has dabbled in cooking, and he said that he’s taught himself pretty well. Moore said he enjoys the



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

Jean-André Moore performed at the homecoming pageant before being named homecoming king 2016.

process of preparing the food as much as eating it.

“My Almond Rocca cream pie is easily my best dish,” said a smiling Moore. “It was tricky to learn and took lots of practice, but it’s what I’m most proud of.”

Moore’s repertoire of varied and unique skills is ever expanding and he is even learning about the world of hypnosis.

Moore is an avid listener of podcasts. He says it’s helped him broaden his horizons, and that he loves learning about

unfamiliar ideas and topics. Perhaps not shockingly, Moore is an excellent juggler. His hand-eye coordination is exceptional and he can rotate four objects at once on his own. With a partner, this number goes up to five.

“I think undoubtedly sports have helped my hand-eye (coordination),” Moore said. “The JUGS machine, for example, really helps us on the field, but also with juggling for me.”

The JUGS machine throws footballs to athletes, eliminating the need for a

quarterback and also lessening the physical toll on quarterbacks as well.

Despite his activities in the world of entertainment off of the gridiron, Moore says that his main focus is on his last year of college is football.

“The way I see it is that football is winding down, but I have the rest of my life for my creativity,” Moore said. “So, I have a heavy focus on playing this season as hard as I can, and giving it my all.”

Follow Augie Touris on Twitter @atouris85.

Jones and others prepare for the spotlight of 2017 NFL draft

BY ADRIAN BROADDUS

The Prospector

The week that every NFL hopeful anxiously awaits, NFL draft week is finally here. This year, there are multiple ex-Miners, who will be hoping to get a call from an organization and get a chance to play at a higher level.

For these NFL hopefuls, it takes months of preparation, training and getting in communication with professional scouts to gauge where they are desired.

Since announcing that he would forgo his senior season for the NFL, former standout running back Aaron Jones has been busy getting his name known on the draft leaderboards. He has competed on the grandest stage at the NFL Combine, which raised the eyebrows of many scouts.

“It feels good to finally get some recognition for my play knowing that I’m not at a bigger school and they’re taking notice,” said Jones, who has already met with eight different teams. “I think the combine really helped with that and now I’m just taking advantage of it.”

Jones has been under a demanding, rigorous schedule in the weeks leading up to the draft. While most football players his age are finishing up their spring season, Jones is on a strict workout routine.

Each day, Jones wakes up, gets treatment from trainers, works out with the UTEP football team, gets more treatment, works out again with his younger cousins’ Burges High School basketball team, rests in the evening and repeats it the next day.



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

Running back Aaron Jones is one of several former UTEP football players hoping to hear his name called during the NFL Draft Apr. 27-29.

“I still feel like the same player,” Jones said. “I’m still working hard and doing everything I had been doing.”

Joining Jones on the draft list representing UTEP are tight ends Hayden Plinke and Kent Taylor, linebacker Nick Usher and fullback Darin Laufasa.

All have been training, working out in their own respective ways and anxiously awaiting any call at a chance at the NFL draft.

“It’s been my dream ever since I was a little kid,” Jones said. “I felt like

I was ready for this new obstacle in my life and I felt like I did everything I wanted to do here at UTEP, except winning a conference championship. I just decided it was time for me.”

Unlike other UTEP athletes, Jones was given the opportunity to train at the EXOS football training camp this off-season. At the facility, Jones trained alongside some of college football’s greats such as Texas Tech’s Patrick Mahomes, Michigan’s Jabril Peppers and Stanford’s Noor Davis.

“I saw all the athletes and realized that it was time to put in some work,” Jones said. “We were out there competing each day and I was feeding off them and learning new workout strategies.”

Although they did not go to the EXOS training camp, Usher and Plinke were able to showcase their talents at the College Football NFLPA Bowl. Usher finished the game with six tackles and even forced a fumble.

According to nflscout.com, Usher is ranked 57 of 189 linebackers, Plinke

at 33 of 105 tight ends, Taylor at 57 of 105 tight ends and Laufasa at 17 of 74 fullbacks.

“I love training, but I’m ready to get back to football,” said Plinke, who is currently training at a Seattle facility.

Jones has also been very driven to continue his training because of what’s to come after the draft.

“Rookie minicamp is coming up, so I have to get ready for that,” Jones said.

Jones, who has talked with teams such as Green Bay, San Francisco, Philadelphia and New England, is very open-minded when talking about what teams he wants to sign with.

Although he hopes to get drafted in the third through sixth rounds, he does not care what team he gets drafted to as long as he gets picked up.

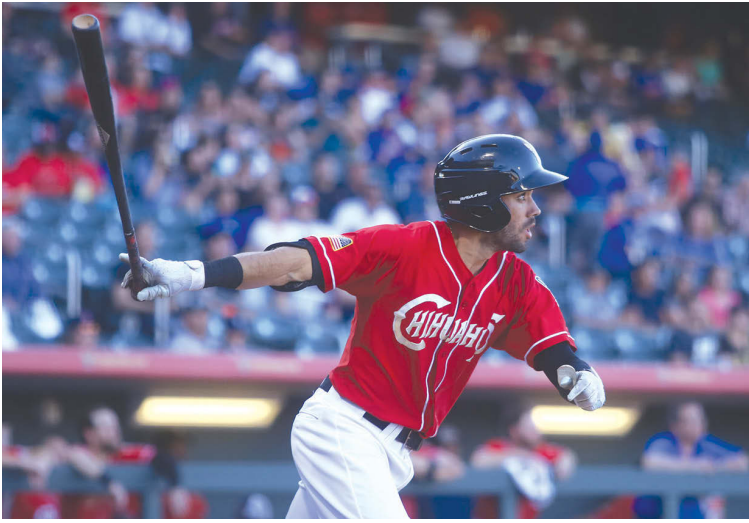
Jones does not have any guarantee from a team, rather he has been hearing from new teams each day.

“It changes every day (for teams that are interested),” Jones said. “Now I’m hearing from teams, who I hadn’t heard from throughout this whole process. They always say you’re going to end up with a team you never talk to.”

The NFL draft will span from Thursday, April 27, beginning with the first round up until the later rounds on Friday and Saturday.

Follow Adrian Broaddus on Twitter @Adrian_Broaddus.

Chihuahuas relying on pitching to find their early season rhythm



FILE PHOTO/ THE PROSPECTOR

The El Paso Chihuahuas returned home from a 2-5 road trip with revenge on their mind. So far, the team is 3-3, with two games left to play at Southwest University Park.

BY MIKE FLORES
The Prospector

After a rough set of away games for the El Paso Chihuahuas—where they went 2-5 from April 11 to April 17—the team has bounced back during their recent homestand.

The Chihuahuas responded with a 3-3 record in their home park, from April 18 to April 23, but still have two more games remaining until they have to pack their bags for a trip to Utah. Now at 8-10 overall, El Paso is 6-5 at home and three games under .500 on the road.

El Paso split the first series, 2-2, with a Tacoma team that just beat them earlier in the week in Washington, 3-1.

Against the Rainiers, El Paso really found their stride throughout the pitching rotation, as Carter Capps and Keith Hessler received their first wins of the young season while facing Tacoma.

But even in the 6-5 loss to the Rainiers, Chihuahuas' pitcher Dinelson Lamet was a force to be reckoned with on the mound, as he struck out a season and team-high 13 batters. Despite Lamet's performance through 5.1 innings pitched, the Chihuahuas could not hold onto the lead he built. Tacoma took advantage of the El Paso relief corps and overcame the home team in extra innings (10).

In total, the Chihuahuas retired 33 Tacoma batters on strikeouts alone during the four-game series.

"Coming off a rough and cold road trip, it was nice coming home and getting El Paso weather," said Rod Barajas, Chihuahuas' manager. "We had a couple of rough games pitching before, but I still think pitching is going to be the backbone to our season."

Hitting wise, El Paso continued to earn huge support from their starting first baseman Jamie Romak, who hit four

home runs, including two in one game against the Rainiers, and lifted his home run total to eight on the season.

On Monday, Romak was named the Pacific Coast League Player of the Week for batting .478 from April 17-23. His five home runs also tied him for the most in all of professional baseball during that seven-day span.

Romak's first home run of the series in the opening game stood out the most, as it came in the seventh inning with the game tied 3-3. Romak drilled Rainiers' pitcher Sam Gaviglio's pitch over the left field wall and it turned out to be the game-winning moment, giving El Paso the victory, 4-3.

El Paso's third baseman Cory Spangenberg got at least one hit in every single game against the visiting Tacoma team. Spangenberg totaled nine hits, five RBIs and lifted his batting average to .382 (team-high) after the four-game series.

Earlier in April, Reno had embarrassed the Chihuahuas back in Nevada, winning the series 2-1 with a combined score of 29-18, the Chihuahuas got revenge on Reno—beating them 3-1 in the Sun City during the four-game set of contests.

The Chihuahuas upended the Aces 7-1 in game one due to three home runs—one coming from Romak once again, shortstop Dusty Coleman and right fielder Jabari Blash—which started the whole barrage during the second inning of the game.

After Romak knocked in his fifth homer of the homestand, he now leads the Pacific Coast League in that category with nine souvenir balls on the year. Romak is also first on the roster with 17 RBIs.

In game two of the Reno series, the Chihuahuas could not overcome an early deficit and they fell 4-3 to the Aces.

The pitching staff for Reno struck out 15 batters of the Chihuahuas and the four

first-inning runs were just enough to edge El Paso at home. El Paso's leadoff hitter Franchy Cordero went 0-for-4, with four strikeouts to his name.

In that opening inning, Chihuahuas' starting pitcher Matt Magill pitched the perfect ball to get a double-play on the first two batters of the game, but second baseman Diego Goris had a costly error that did not get anyone out after all.

"It just goes to show you how important every play is," Barajas said. "The second ball was put in play and it turned the game around. We were not able to overcome the error, and they put up four runs after, but to bounce back and pitch six shutout innings on top of that was very, very impressive. It's good to see guys who won't fold, we look for guys like that."

Instead, Reno capitalized on the mistake and went through all nine

batters in the first inning to get out to a 4-0 lead.

El Paso tried to comeback with a two-run home run from right fielder Jabari Blash to make it a one-score game, but the damage was already done and Reno tied up the four-game series.

El Paso will now be on the road again—following the final two games versus Reno in El Paso—when they travel to Salt Lake City to face the Bee's at Smith's Ballpark. It will be the first meeting of the year between the two PCL Southern Division teams.

The Chihuahuas sit in fourth place in the division with their 8-10 record, while Salt Lake leads the division with their 11-6 overall record due to their nine game-winning streak.

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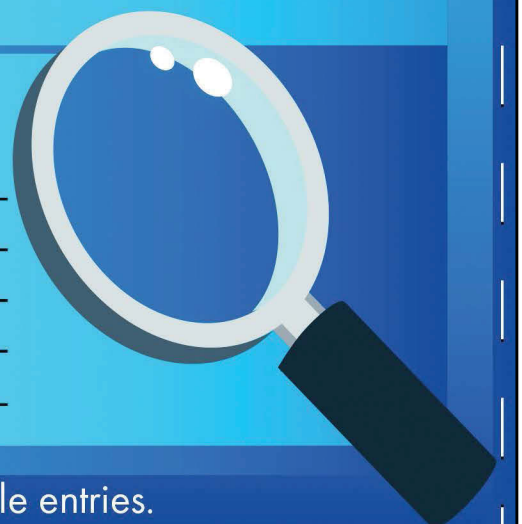
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