

WHAT'S HAPPENING

April 12-14 Moo, Brew, & Que Music Fest

April 12 Battle of the Bands

May 3-5 Lovin Life Music Festival

June 22 Outlaw Music Festival

This year's Battle of the Bands, hosted by WALT and Union Board was thrilling to say the least. As an opportunity for all bands to show their strength, all who attended were able to hear the unique sounds of bands To Be Determined, Kill the Feedback, Sustainability Cooperative, Kenny Outlaw and Associates, Casual Attire, Trophy Husband, The Royal We, and Fool's Errand. Groups performed songs of varied genres while onlookers frolicked in the grass, relaxed under the shade, or passionately sang along to the bands. For some of these bands, it would be their last performance ever as a group, with the seniors graduating within the next month, so it was definitely a special moment. While Fool's Errand won the battle, the audience won the war, getting the chance to enjoy their friends show off their musical talents.

Amira McCormick '26

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album reviews

My gosh, Vampire Weekend's newest LP titled *Only God Was Above Us* may be the best work the band has put out. After a Vampire Weekend-esque five year hiatus, the now trio from New York City released a ten song album, making it the fifth album in their discography. Known for lyrics that confuse the listener until deeper analysis paired with a bevy of sounds from Ska to Afro Style, the band does not shy away from its core qualities in this album. This album seems to call back old guitar sounds from tracks Johnathan Low and piano from their third album *Modern Vampires of the City*. The eccentric filters combined with off putting musical interjections somehow touches gold, creating their best album in my opinion. It's a deep one for sure - the band questions society and culture in many tracks, "Classical", for one standing out with the lyrics "How the cruel, with time, becomes classical." This eccentric, lyrically heavy, possibly based on the historic War and Drive. With four festival appearances planned for this summer, they'll soon be hard to miss.

**Arcy Drive - Beach Plum EP**  
**Henry Royster '27**

If you, like me, have been waiting since high school for a new Backseat Lovers album, then I offer you a solution. If you aren't already acquainted with Arcy Drive, a New York-based four-piece band, then you should be; they are one of the most promising groups on the horizon of indie music. Their newest EP, *Beach Plum*, is the best showcase of their potential to date. It opens with "Superbloomer", my favorite of their songs. It is a classic breakup song in the style of the aforementioned Backseat Lovers—it's slow intro builds rewardingly into a belting, heavy chorus. Arcy Drive continues to display their sonic range and storytelling throughout the rest of the record, most notably in "Time Shrinks" and "Wicked Style." Get familiar with *Beach Plum* and with the name Arcy Drive. With four festival appearances planned for this summer, they'll soon be hard to miss.

upcoming albums

April 12 | Linkin Park, *Paper-cuts* (Singles Collection 2000-2023) | Maggie Rogers, *Don't Forget Me* | girl in red, *I'M DOING IT AGAIN BABY!*  
April 19 | Pearl Jam, *Dark Matter* | Taylor Swift, *The Tortured Poets Department*  
April 26 | St. Vincent, *All Born Screaming*  
May 3 | Dua Lipa, *Radical Optimism* | Sia, *Reasonable Woman*  
May 10 | Brian Kelley, *Tennessee Truth* | Kings of Leon, *Can We Please Have Fun* | Scotty McCreary, *Rise and Fall*  
May 17 | Beth Gibbons, *Lives Outgrown* | Billie Eilish, *Hit Me Hard and Soft* | Don McLean, *American Boys* | New Kids on the Block, *Still Kids* | Twenty One Pilots, *Clancy* | Zayn, *Room Under the Stairs*  
May 24 | Lenny Kravitz, *Blue Electric Light*  
May 31 | Ben Platt, *Honeymind* | Willie Nelson, *The Border*



Pics by Tehinnah Kitcher, Courtney Lassite





r, Sebastian Macaire, and Zach Mordan!





BRIGHT STAR HENRY ROYSTER '27

In March, the Davidson Theatre Department presented Bright Star, its mainstage production for the 2023-2024 season. Directed by Mark Sutch, the Steve Martin-written play follows Alice Murphy, played by Hollis Plexico '24. Alice is a high-profile editor in 1940s Asheville, North Carolina when the arrival of Billy Cane, a perplexing young writer played by Henry Nichols '27, sparks flashbacks to her youth in Zebulon. Ignited by the urge to find her long-lost son, Alice sets forth looking for answers, transforming the lives of her and those around her. The musical was nominated for five Tonys and a Grammy in 2016 and 2017. Bright Star's success continued in its production at Davidson; the 14-student cast and an Appalaichan Ensemble performed in front of a sold-out crowd.

I was in attendance for four of the five shows. For me, the most outstanding part of the show was the music. With Musical Direction by Jacquelyn Culpepper and conducting by Tara Keith, Davidson's cast and musicians delivered an incredible rendition of the score in each of their performances. The set, designed by Anita Tripathi, and the lighting, designed by Anna Kruger-Dull, were also meticulously created to bridge the gap between the actors and the audience. Whether presenting small-town Zebulon in the twenties, bustling Asheville in the forties, or even aboard a train, the scene was well-accommodated by the set and lighting.

Bright Star was a shining testament to the talent of the study body and beyond which amazed the audience that such a cozy college has so much star power. Some particularly worthy of mention, Henry Nichols portrayed the whimsical yet poignant Billy Cane wonderfully. Sahana Athreya '25 played Margo, Billy's love interest, with a lighthearted and witty delivery, particularly shining in her song "Asheville." Mason Escobar '24 terrified us as the antagonist, Mayor Dobbs, with a booming, furious voice that shrank me in my seat.

Jake McGraw '26 showed his versatility in his character development seen onstage from the love-crazy teenaged Jimmy Ray into adulthood. The list of incredible actors in Bright Star goes on; all 14 members of the cast deserve their flowers.

The bright star of the show was undoubtedly Hollis Plexico as Alice Murphy. The senior from St. Petersburg, Florida plays two Alices in two different time periods. As a teenager, she is spirited, adventurous, and bold. As an editor twenty years later, she is no-nonsense and fierce. I personally interviewed Hollis about her experience in Bright Star. First, I asked her to tell me about preparation for the show, which started early this school year. "I spent a lot of time over winter break trying to do scene and character analyses which definitely helped because we jumped right in the first few weeks

of rehearsal. Each character requires something different and you always learn something about yourself in the process." Not only is Alice Murphy a uniquely complex character, she performs eleven songs throughout the musical, each requiring an in-depth understanding of the material. The role demands a lot of preparation and the hours of work that Hollis and the cast put in paid off. She describes, "The growth that we experienced as an ensemble and through each of our characters was honestly one of the most enriching experiences. It was so tangible and inspiring how everyone in the cast grew throughout the entire process." The cast of Bright Star grew as individuals and actors through their experience on stage.

Bright Star is a hopeful story that reminds us that anything is possible with a wonderful cast and crew. It teaches us about redemption, forgiveness, and love through the ensemble's collective excellent performances. Anyone who got to see Davidson's Bright Star, whether they were in the audience or on the stage, were left with an overwhelming sense of propinquity.

"The growth that we experienced as an ensemble and through each of our characters was honestly one of the most enriching experiences...throughout the entire process."

Gag City: The Nicki Minaj Experience

Milo Rothenberg '26

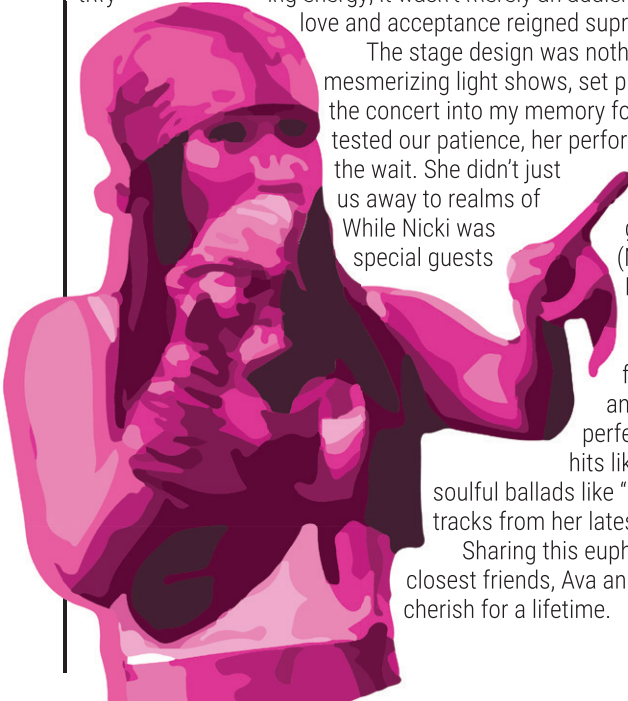
As an avid concert goer, or what some might affectionately dub me, a "concert connoisseur," you can imagine the sheer thrill coursing through me when Nicki Minaj announced her 2024 tour following the release of her critically acclaimed album *Pink Friday 2*.

My love for Nicki Minaj has spanned about seven or eight years, and the idea of sitting floor seats at one of her concerts has always been a dream of mine. Whether belting out the lyrics to "Only" alongside my friend Kristen during high school car rides or delivering a show-stopping rendition of "Barbie Dreams" at a scholarship retreat, Nicki's influence has indelibly shaped the person I've become. Beyond the infectious beats and uplifting vibes, her music fills me with self-assurance, confidence, and the unwavering belief in my own potential.

Given all this, it's not surprising just how close I came to fainting when I discovered my friends and I would be sitting floor 3, row B at Nicki's concert in Charlotte's Spectrum Center. Stepping into Gag City was an unparalleled experience. Seeing the citizens of Gag City, dressed to the nines in pink fur coats, fishnet shapewear, and knee-high boots, felt like traversing through a surreal dreamscape. From the onset, the atmosphere pulsated with electrifying energy; it wasn't merely an audience but rather a community, where love and acceptance reigned supreme.

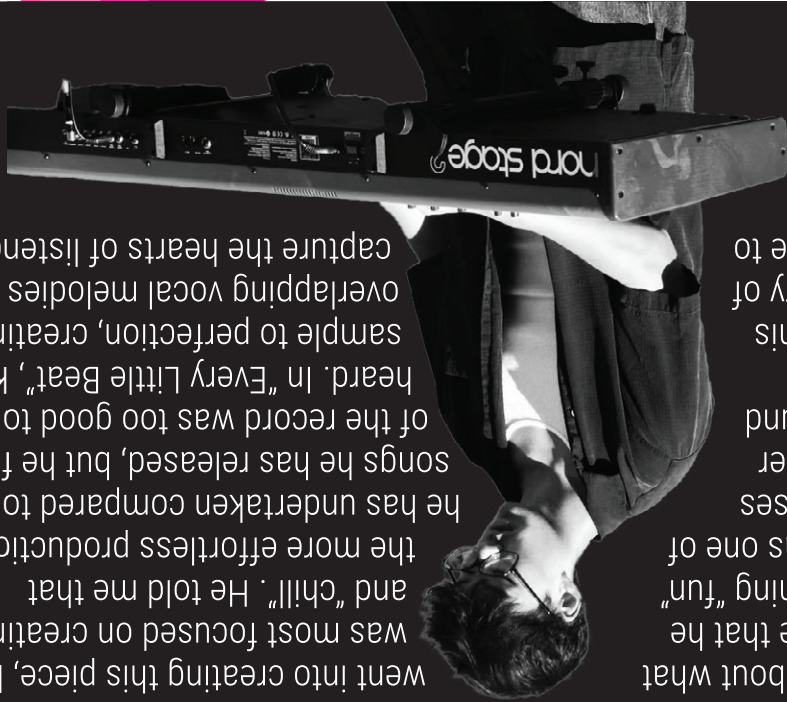
The stage design was nothing short of spectacular, with mesmerizing light shows, set pieces, and pyrotechnics that etched the concert into my memory forever. And though Nicki's tardiness tested our patience, her performance more than compensated for the wait. She didn't just take us to Gag City; she whisked us away to realms of Slay-Nation and Yass-Heaven. While Nicki was special guests great on her own, the inclusion of (Nicki's alter egos) Chun Li, Red Ruby, Harajuku Barbie, and Roman Zolanski were pure magic. My soul ascended when Nicki seamlessly transitioned from "Roman's Revenge" to "Monster," and the setlist was nothing short of perfection. She flawlessly blended iconic hits like "Super Bass" and "Starships" with soulful ballads like "Right Thru Me" and empowering tracks from her latest album, such as "Big Difference."

Sharing this euphoric experience with two of my closest friends, Ava and Riana, cemented it as a moment I'll cherish for a lifetime.



Jacob Kim is back with the fifth single he has released in the last year. In his latest offering, the Davidson sophomore draws on the sounds of soul, sampling a 1978 record by the band Flashlight to create an infectiously optimistic sound that draws the listener in immediately. Kim continues to demonstrate his knack for creating ear grabbing melodies and groovy rhythms, but this time does so in a completely new musical medium. While Kim's previous works have seen him explore vocal layering, catchy bass lines, and glittering synth sounds, "Every Little Beat" allows us to see the artist in his most carefree state. When I talked to the artist about what he has undertaken compared to the more effortless production and "chill". He told me that was most focused on creating something "fun" told me that he artist about what went into creating this piece, he heard. In "Every Little Beat", Kim of the record was too good to be sample to perfection, creating a overlapping vocal melodies that capture the hearts of listeners.

NEW STUDENT RELEASE Jacob Kim - "Every Little Beat" | Eli Haynes '26



frolics playlist

This year's Frolics brings artists Del Water Gap and Briston Maroney. Listen to our own faves to prepare for their arrival!

Briston Maroney Favs Vicky Pete & Maggie Woodward

Body - Ultrasure  
Detonator - Ultrasure  
Sink; Swim - Ultrasure  
Fool's Gold - Indiana  
Caroline - Indiana  
Body - Ultrasure  
June - Big Shot  
Sinkin' - Sunflower



Briston Maroney  
Setlist



Meghan's  
playlist

del water gap is great, actually Meghan Nakant!

Better Than I Know Myself - Del Water Gap  
It's Not Fair! - Del Water Gap  
Perfume - Del Water Gap  
Beach House - I Miss You + I Haven't Left Yet  
Alone Together - Del Water Gap  
Ode to a Conversation Stuck in Your Throat - Del Water Gap  
Coping on Unemployment - Coping on Unemployment  
High Tops - High Tops  
Chastain - Chastain  
NFU - I Miss You + I Haven't Left Yet  
Gemini - I Miss You + I Haven't Left Yet  
Glitter & Honey - I Miss You + I Haven't Left Yet  
Losing You - I Miss You + I Haven't Left Yet