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The Student Movement Volume 105 Issue 8: Cardinals Remain Undefeated Despite Season Cancellation

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Cardinals Remain Undefeated Despite Season Cancellation



Photo by Rob Getty's

News

NEWS

BSCF Holds Impact Vespers

Terika Williams [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Rayno Victor

On Friday, Feb. 5, the Black Student Christian Forum (BSCF) held Impact vespers at the Howard Performing Arts Center to ring in Black History Month. Theard Pierre (senior, theology), president of BSCF, welcomed the audience and introduced the theme, “Overcome.” He challenged us to think of ourselves—not just civil rights leaders such as Martin Luther King Jr. or Rosa Parks—as overcomers.

Deandra Joseph, graduate student (speech-language pathology, audiology) sang a rendition of the Black national anthem, “Lift Every Voice and Sing.” Lyrics such as, “Out from the gloomy past til now we stand at last...” portrayed the perseverance that overcoming requires. Cellist Jamison Moore’s (junior, music

performance) moving instrumental version of "We Shall Overcome" vibrated hope through the souls of many. Chase Wilder (sophomore, sociology, theology) recited a famous MLK speech, "We Shall Overcome" reminding us that "the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

After the passionate sign language praise dance and the musical selections of the praise team, Claudia Allen, an alumna of Andrews University, delivered a message through a video. The title of her talk was "Rise Up." She encouraged the audience to fight for black women and to remember all the black female activists that fought for black dreams. She also urged the black community to unite in their agenda to seek out justice, adding that black people of color should rise up and say, "for my people" just like Queen Esther did for the Jewish community in Persia. Isabella Koh (sophomore, English) said, "The theme and the speaker really advocated for the idea of uniting with those around us and pushing for positive change. The importance of hearing other people's stories and experiences has helped to show me how important it is to both speak your own truth, as well as listen to other peoples'."

Taznir Smalling (freshman, music) gained insight from the sermon, saying, "As black people we are not united towards the cause of getting freedom. We stick to our nationality, not realizing we are one race!" Isabella Rappette (sophomore, finance) shared, "I have always really appreciated the togetherness of the black community, and after attending Impact, I appreciate it even more. I love how much pride people take in their different cultures and that should be celebrated!"

BSCF's start to Black History Month left an impact on many. To view a recording of the live stream, visit the Andrews University YouTube page.

NEWS

Chapel Service Celebrates Black History Month

Jenae Rogers [02.10.2021](#)

On Thursday, Feb. 4, the chapel service at Pioneer Memorial Church celebrated Black History Month. The theme "Rise" was chosen for this year's Black History Month events. Students pre-registered on the new University Faith app to attend

the service. The sanctuary allowed seating for two hundred students. Additionally, the overflow room in the youth chapel allowed more to watch and listen. Masks and social distancing were required with a limited number of students in each marked pew.

The chapel featured a special performance from the Deliverance Mass Choir. Some clips of Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking were also shown, including part of his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. However, King also spoke about how the dream can turn into a nightmare.

Michael Nixon, vice president for Diversity and Inclusion, moderated the event. A panel consisting of Danielle Pilgrim, the associate chaplain at Andrews University, Steve Yeagley, assistant vice president for Campus and Student Life, and Rayneau Victor (junior, photography, theology) began with a discussion about what King meant by the “nightmare.” Ms. Pilgrim urged us to avoid silence and inaction because it supports the issues which we oppose. Several of the panelists challenged beliefs and ideals the church has shown when dealing with the issue of injustice. Ms. Pilgrim also noted that Christianity means we have a responsibility to further justice and referenced the story of the good Samaritan as an example. Additionally, Mr. Victor called everyone to make a difference in someone’s life. The panel accepted questions texted in from those who were attending in-person.

Elizabeth Dovich (freshman, communications) said, “I really appreciated Mr. Yeagley’s comment during the panel discussion about not being afraid of what others might say, as long as we are doing what is right.” Taznir Smalling (freshman, music) also commented, “What stood out to me the most in chapel this Thursday was the statement made by one of the panelists. He said that we should never underestimate the power and influence we have as college students. We should go out and help in the communities because there are students leaving high school not knowing how to read. So this is something we can do for our outreach—help them because they look up to us.”

Benjamin High (freshman, theology) noted, “What I like about the chapel was that it celebrated a topic that in the 50s and 60s would be unthinkable to talk about. I love how our nation has evolved into a more inclusive society. With that being said, we still have more growing to do. That is what Black History Month is for—to help us grow into who God wants us to be.”

In-person chapels will continue on the theme of “Love in the Grey,” a continuation of the overall theme “Love is Life.” Be sure to register for next Thursday, February 11, to attend. For more information about Black History Month and to see a full schedule of events, please visit the events page.

Game on Hold: Student-Athletes Hope for a New Basketball Season

Amanda Cho [02.10.2021](#)

The basketball court feels oddly serene with the absence of its usual players and the roar of the cheering fans. However, this scene is not unexpected in light of COVID-19. When the news was announced in March of 2020, our lives were changed and different became the new normal. This was no different for the members of the basketball team at Andrews University.

The basketball season generally runs from late October or early November to February. Last fall semester, the basketball team continued to have tryouts and recruit new players to the team, with the hopes of being able to play during this spring semester. Unfortunately, due to regulations on sporting events in Michigan and concerns for the students, all the games for the Spring 2021 season were cancelled. Before the season was cancelled, there were several plans in place for how to keep the students safe. These plans included blocking off the locker room, having portable lockers at a safe distance around the gym, requiring masks before and after practice, and having little to no fans during games. This was in addition to the normal social distancing rules. Matthew Bryson, the sports information director, spoke about plans to put into place more protection for the players. “We even talked about plans for a bubble for our athletes similar to the NBA, in which our athletes would do class over zoom and distance from the rest of the campus,” he said. “However, when the season was cancelled, this plan became obsolete.”

The players are appreciative of the efforts and concerns to keep them safe. While there is concern of the potential of catching and spreading COVID-19, the athletes had confidence in the support of the school and workers. Maxwell Dronen (sophomore, medical laboratory science), said, “At first, I was worried, but our program put a lot of thought into everything we need to do to stay safe. Seeing how thorough they were in planning and enforcing the plan really gave me confidence that everything would be okay.”

While they are disappointed at not being able to play this season, it provides an opportunity to focus on academics and prepare for the new season. They

encourage people who are interested to come and join the team and the community of players. Being part of the team allows you to form new connections and foster teamwork, and it can also help to develop time management skills and organization. Nadira Cousins (senior, social work) said, “I would tell them to be like Nike and just do it. If you want a family of friends, the basketball team is a great place to find that. If you are a hard worker and dedicated, the girls’ basketball team is the place to showcase that.”

If you are interested in joining the basketball team, any other athletic teams here at Andrews, or just want to learn more you can visit [Andrews University Athletics \(aucardinals.com\)](http://aucardinals.com).

Pulse

PULSE

Student Workers: Balancing Life, Work, and Academics

Interviewed by Alec Bofetiado 02.10.2021

What is your academic focus? Also, what job or jobs are you currently working?

Brent Laporre (junior, medical lab sciences): I’m a Medical Lab Science major and work two jobs as both the AUSA yearbook photographer and the Center for Faith Engagement videographer.

Hope Malabrigo (junior, social work): I major in Social Work with a minor in Psychology and work as a service student chaplain for the Center for Faith Engagement.

What do your obligations entail on a daily basis?

BL: Working all of these things together entail long hours for me, and so I often find it difficult to find a student life and work balance, especially since my jobs don’t really have a set schedule but are project based. So I have to be flexible every week.

HM: Having both these academic obligations and work obligations take a lot of time. Especially with my work, I have lots of planning to do, going to meetings, and other initiatives that student chaplains have, all on top of my academic work.

How do you balance your student-life-and work balance?

BL: What's really helped me combine these three was to know my priorities so that I don't take on too much stuff. I always prioritize my academics. Also having that connection with God gives me a peace of mind even though I may feel overloaded with work.

HM: What's helped to keep me afloat with this busy schedule is taking the time at the beginning of the week and prioritizing which work to do. And I always make sure I have time with myself and stay connected with God even though I have these obligations.

PULSE

Study Break Recommendations

Masy Domecillo 02.10.2021

Each student has faced the textbook dilemma. While studying for a class, attempting to become deeply immersed within the reading materials, no matter the initial determination, there will come a point where the words on the page turn illegible. Attempting to cram knowledge into one's brain can be detrimental, as there comes a point where human comprehension stops and autopilot cements. Jolted back into reality, the individual realizes absolutely nothing has been absorbed. Although academic obligations undoubtedly rank highly amongst the Andrews University students, a lack of variance can have negative effects on studying.

The phrase "take a break" has been repeated on numerous occasions, yet to a student that has an avalanche's worth of work, that is the furthest concern on the ever-growing list. Nonetheless, constant, well-timed breaks have been proven to increase the rate of retention. Each student should build in breaks within their study schedules to allow themselves to focus more during the blocks that are purely devoted to studying.

The notion of study breaks does present a query: What should one do within a study break? Since a standard study break may last ten or fifteen minutes, this leaves room for few options. Usually, this is an opportunity to catch up on texts or to scroll through the social media feed, in hopes that some novel, interesting happening has occurred. Unfortunately, these breaks can altogether easily feel like a monotonous loop. Personally, within my breaks, I have found myself scrolling through the same three apps akin to a large cat pacing a very small enclosure. Although students may not necessarily be searching for a cerebrally engaging activity during their study breaks, many simply want something interesting to focalize on for a few minutes.

I prefer activities that will, hopefully, motivate me after my next study block. As browsing through social media becomes repetitive, I usually spend my breaks doing incremental developments of a larger activity. The following are a few activities that I would recommend.

Watching cooking shows. I greatly enjoy watching cooking shows, especially competition-based ones. The plus of starting a season of a cooking competition is that one can pause at any moment. The self-discipline of watching ten minutes of a certain show is much more difficult when watching a plot-driven series, so I find cooking shows to be an entertaining use of my time, yet not as inextricable as watching a series.

Playing turn-based games. Social distancing has fueled a resurgence of online, multiplayer games, and during a break, an individual can reply to moves at their own time. Instead of playing a co-op game, turn-based games allow the player to make their move, then to return at their own leisure. These games include chess, checkers, and even iPhone games such as one that involves sliding penguins around on ice. An app I would highly recommend is Polytopia, which is a strategy game that involves building your own empire and capturing your friends' cities.

Working on a personal project. This can vary from a range of activities, depending on one's own personal interest. I have recently taken up oil painting, which allows me to study in between without fear that the paint will dry down immediately. Other activities can also involve writing, composing, doing calisthenics, playing instruments, and so on. As long as the activity does not necessitate time that exceeds the allotted break, personal projects and endeavors can be a great way to motivate oneself to studying.

In essence, study break ventures can range from a variety of activities. Depending on each individual's interest, one can easily pursue a hobby or a pleasant distraction within the given time. Even so, self-discipline is key to properly enjoying a study break, and remembering that the utmost priority is to study. Although these activities should be enjoyable, they should not be distracting enough that all hopes of knowledge attainment are lost in the late hours of the night.

PULSE

Weekday Holiday: Reflections

Jessica Rim 02.10.2021

Much like New Year's resolutions, plans for how to spend a break tend to be unfulfilled. The new recipes you were meaning to try, the new exercise routine you told yourself you were going to start, and all the creative activities you have been keeping for a block of free time are on the list of things to do before a break. However, by the end, you realize that you have done very little—if any—of these activities. Anticipation at the beginning of the break has evolved into disappointment and a longing for time to turn back.

In order to provide students a mental health break even without the normal week-long spring break, Andrews University has allotted several single days off throughout the semester. Some of the days fall on a Monday, giving us a three-day weekend, but others are on Tuesdays or Wednesdays, providing short island breaks within a sea of work. Whether we can truly make the most out of these short break days depends on our mindset, as some of us will likely use them to get ahead on assignments while others will try to enjoy a day free of academics.

Although there are many advantages to a long spring break, such as being able to go to a far away location or visit family (during a non-COVID era), there are some aspects of a single vacation day that may make it more desirable than a long break. One such characteristic is that a single day becomes so much more precious due to its limited time. Unlike a week of break, there is no second chance to spend a day just as you would want to spend it. This can be a strong motivation to actually attempt the recreational activities that have been pushed off for a better date.

At the same time, if you are not used to knowing how to spend that time in a fulfilling way, the very preciousness that drives one to maximize the day can lead to frustration. Despite all my intentions to be satisfied with the amount of water coloring I have done, how much of a book I have finished reading, or even how much of nothing in particular I was able to do, I am disappointed in how little I was able to do. It is even more devastating if I had nothing in particular planned and was instead wallowing in indecision about what to do.

Then I realized that what determines how well my day was spent is not the amount of things that were done, but the mindset I have. If I do nothing at all and stare out the window, I could still be satisfied with the day if I recognize that it is an important and useful way to help me relax. In fact, it is beneficial to intentionally do nothing, as it slows you down from the constant hustle of daily living. Rather than setting up standards for yourself to meet when no other external force is imposing them on you, it is completely acceptable to have no standards at all—at least for this one free day.

Humans

HUMANS

Black Student Christian Forum: Black History Month Interview

Interviewed by Fitz-Earl McKenzie II [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Rayno Victor

BSCF Executive Team

Theard Pierre (TP)

President

(senior, theology)

Jameeka Williams (JW)

Executive Vice-President

(senior, history, political science)

Ki'ana Hall (KH)
Social Vice-President
(senior, psychology)

What does Black History Month mean to you?

TP: Black History Month means so much to me. Being a Haitian immigrant, I know what it feels like to feel far from home, but coming to Andrews I've found pieces of it through worship & community. And to see others, whether African, Afro-Latino, or Caribbean, feel a part of home is second to none. To be at the forefront of the experience this year is surreal. I look forward to this time every year.

JW: What Black History Month means to me can simply be categorized as the word "success." The reason I use this word is that in Black History Month, you tend to look at all that has happened to us throughout history. First, we usually reflect on how hard the black experience has been, how beautiful our culture is across different diasporic areas, and simply all that we have accomplished personally and historically throughout the years. It doesn't just show the success of where we come from within the past, but success motivates us to further that momentum to make our experience easier and brighter for our future. The month shows our beauty, it shows our strength, it shows our love, it shows our perseverance, and it shows our impact. It's about past, continual, and future success.

KH: Black History Month to me is a month where I get to celebrate who I am as a black woman. It is a month that I get to appreciate my ancestors fully and what they have done for me to do most of the everyday events I do now. It is also a month to reflect how far black people have come and how far we can still go. It is a reminder of just how special, unique and resilient we are.

As President of BSCF, what events are you planning to celebrate Black History Month in light of the pandemic?

TP: Black History Month for BSCF this year, in essence, is the same. We come together in worship, open-mindedness, hopefulness, and appreciation for those who have laid the foundation before us. For almost a year, our school, nation, and the world have been combatting a worldwide pandemic that has forced us to adjust, separate some and be more mindful to all. We plan to educate through our short course series and informational videos on our social media, worship and celebrate the black diaspora through our weekly vespers of Impact, and come

together socially distanced/online, for fun social events, new and old. This includes The Dating Game (February 15th at 8:00pm in Buller), movie nights, a Tiny Desk Concert, and much more.

HUMANS

My Experience in COVID-19

Isolation: Edition Two

Timmy Duado (junior, marketing, communications)

Interviewed by Brandi Seawood [02.10.2021](#)

I am aware that you came down with COVID-19. Could you please give me a recap of what happened?

Well, I was feeling a few symptoms, but I wasn't sure if it was because of COVID or pre-existing health conditions. I think within the first week of my having symptoms I suspected something was up. I have some previous health problems, and I was assuming that what I was going through was a result of that, so I took it upon myself to stay away from people, and stay in my room as much as possible before I got my results back. My first test results didn't come in, but I was cleared to go to class and such. But, just to be safe, I took it upon myself to go and get tested again just to be extra safe! And well, you know the rest.

Either way, thankfully I really only had some headaches and body aches. Nothing too crazy. Although I can't lie, those body aches weren't playing with me. Ibuprofen was my best friend when I felt a little symptomatic.

How was your experience in quarantine?

Well, I'm a pretty extroverted person, so I definitely missed seeing humans for that long of a period. But, all things considered, AU came through and put me in a great room. My daily routine was not as productive as I would've liked it to be though. It was very easy to get lazy, but for the most part, my routine was to wake up, eat whenever food got delivered to me, and go to class/do homework.

How was your mental and emotional health while you were in isolation?

I felt okay. I took it as a time to reflect and think about growth going forward. Plus, I

had friends check on me a lot, so that helped. Around day eight though, I was tired of it. I was ready to get out, and I hated not seeing people. I got into my feelings the first couple of days, but quickly made it back to reality.

How long were you in isolation, and how did it feel the first day you got out?

I was in isolation for about eleven days or so. My first day out was fantastic. I felt like Cleveland when they heard that LeBron was back. Went to Buffalo Wild Wings, saw friends, and just enjoyed seeing people. Literally anyone.

How are you feeling now?

I'm doing pretty good, can't really complain. I'm pretty happy to be out; I love to see humans again. I feel great now, and I don't think I'll have any long term effects from it. I'm just glad I beat it.

How do you feel about social distancing and wearing a mask?

I personally hate social distancing. I know we need to do it for the benefit of the country and each other's well-being, but it dampens things that I wish could happen. I also hate wearing a mask 'cause my glasses fog up a lot, but it's ok. Whatever we have to do to keep each other safe is what we should do. And I think everyone should engage in it. It's something that is required of us in these unprecedented times.

Have you spoken to anyone else who had COVID-19? How was their experience similar or different from yours?

I actually have had quite a few friends who had COVID-19. Some of them had similar experiences to mine, except their headaches were worse and longer-lasting, and some had trouble breathing. Sadly, I lost my aunt to COVID-19, and she was really going through it at the time, so it's definitely hitting and affecting people in many different ways.

What did you learn from this experience?

I learned a lot about myself to be honest. I think my advice to anyone is to use that time to really reflect on life. It gets easy to just want to not do that ever, but it was a great time to really sit back and reflect. Also, try and stay on top of your homework. Get everything done when you can, and stay productive. Bombard your friends with phone calls too. Even if a friend and I weren't talking the whole time on the phone, just having their presence there helped a lot.

HUMANS

Our Lost Season: An Interview with Cardinals Athletic Director Rob Gettys

In the Fall of 2020, the AU Cardinals athletic teams held ongoing practices but were ultimately unable to play a single official game due to COVID-19. Rob Gettys, the Cardinals Athletic Director, describes what it was like to navigate organized sports in the midst of a pandemic.

Terika Williams [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Public Domain

What were the initial plans for the basketball team last season?

Throughout the spring and summer I worked in conjunction with the university administration and the Collegiate Athletic Association to develop policies and protocols for a safe season, to keep the student athletes, coaches, trainers, any

officials and everyone who's involved with the games as safe as possible. The initial plans were to start tryouts as normal. We began tryouts on September 14 and they were well attended. We actually probably had more students try out this year than any normal year. And I think part of that had to do with the fact that there was really no other gym use available, other than if you wanted to try out for the team.

We went forward with the regular plans like a normal year, with the exception of having all of the COVID safety and health guidelines. We took everyone's temperature and had them show their Campus Clear little green checkmark. We had them use hand sanitizer and we kept track of their daily temperatures. We only allowed 18 players in the gym at a time, and we only allowed three players at any one basket at a time. They all had their own basketball so that they didn't have to share. Once the teams were chosen and practices began on September 21, because we had a smaller group and we knew exactly who they were, we were able to relax some of those protocols.

We were able to share some basketballs and have more interaction, but even in that case, the first two weeks we didn't have any contact or scrimmaging. We had all these plans specifically to make sure that we didn't have too many challenges. Long story short, we practiced for three months, from September 21 until the day that they shut down campus, right before Thanksgiving. We had zero cases, zero positives, even though we had 30 people in the gym on a daily basis. The student athletes always wore their masks, as did the coaches, in all the scrimmages and physical exercise.

I want to start at the beginning, so that would be March 2020. How did the pandemic affect you back then?

That's a great question. In March, the women's team got their first ever invitation to the USCAA National Championships, which I am so proud of them for achieving. So we were in Uniontown, Pennsylvania. We returned to campus on Tuesday, and that Thursday was when they shut down campus. So we returned from Uniontown, Pennsylvania from the National Championships on Tuesday night, we had Wednesday on campus, and then I think it was Thursday at Chapel where they pulled us all together and told us that everything was shutting down. So technically it didn't impact our season at all. But it really impacted the closure to the season. We didn't have an opportunity to end the season together and celebrate the accomplishments of the players.

Were there any specific regulations that you had to adhere to?

We had a lot of regulations that the Cardinal Athletic Program had to abide by last semester. We just kept following the best protocols, which were updated on a regular basis by the Collegiate Athletic Associations, and the governing bodies of the state of Michigan. We just had to kind of watch all of those entities and whenever they sent out an update we just had to abide by that. The most consistent protocols that would affect the players were, for example, normally they'd get to come to the gym, go to the locker room and change their clothes. Because of COVID protocols there was no locker room use. So we simply set a chair for each player - 25 players, 13 women and 12 men - and we put a nice little laminated name tag with the Cardinal logo on it and their jersey number. We posted on the wall behind their chair so that one little area became the individual player's locker. We had them 15 feet apart, and we surrounded the outside wall of the recreation center with those. We had the guys on one side and the ladies on the other side.

For those first three months, we would always have the men's practice end, then we would clean and sanitize the gym. We would also take their practice jerseys straight to the laundry. Our team managers and equipment managers did a great job with following all the protocols. The men would leave out of the back of the recreation center and the Lady Cardinals would enter the front of the recreation center. We intentionally separated the two teams when normally they're able to intermingle and practice at the same time. But in case we had any COVID cases, we didn't want to have to quarantine both teams at the same time. We also didn't allow anybody in the recreation center other than the players and coaches, because we screened them every day, and we wanted to make sure that we weren't jeopardizing any of them because during practices social distancing obviously wasn't followed.

You can't play basketball with a six foot social distance, but the players on the team always wore their masks and they had the sweetest spirit. It didn't matter. I would pull them together and give them new protocols and policies. They weren't allowed to eat in the cafeteria with the rest of the students, they had to get their food and take it to go. They never blinked, they just kept a smile and said, "Okay, tell us what we need to do. We want to play this year." They had such a good spirit and they really wanted to play the season. And so, anything that myself or the coaches asked them to do, they just did it with a smile and a great attitude. And even though, you know, it's kind of a lost season because we didn't get to play games, we were blessed with many things. Through the practices, and through the interactions and worships with the teams, we've built relationships and friendships, and it was

really a blessing. We still wanted to play but, you know, you don't always get everything you want. So we made the best of it. The relationships that we developed are very special and I think they'll last for a long, long time.

What was the attitude of the players during all of this?

Their attitude was awesome. Weekly, I would come in and address the men's team and the women's team, and tell them “All right, the policy has changed at the regional level” or “Okay, the policy has now changed again at the university level” or “Okay, the policy has now changed again.” Every week, it seemed like I would have to come in and let them know the new policies and they just never blinked. They just kept saying, “Okay, thank you. Thank you for letting us know. We'll do it, it's no problem.” And part of it I think is once the games began we had a different protocol we were going to follow. The student athletes were going to have to live in either a dorm room by themselves, or in a dorm room with only another student athlete, so that if we ever did have contact with COVID from one of our games it wouldn't be brought back to campus and spread to anyone else. So they would have had to change their living arrangements. We had two Lady Cardinals that were living at home in the community, and they moved into one of the dormitories so that they didn't put their family in jeopardy of catching COVID. The athletes also had to do all of their classes remotely. There were a lot of parameters put in place, and they had the sweetest spirit about it. The coaches and I couldn't be more impressed.

How was the attitude of the coaching staff? How did the coaching team work together to figure out how to make sure that everyone's safe and can still play?

The coaches wanted to do everything they could to make sure the players got a season. On multiple occasions we delayed the beginning of our season. Initially we were supposed to start the last weekend in October, then it got pushed back to the first weekend in November, and then it got pushed back to after Thanksgiving break. And so we were going to play in between Thanksgiving break and Christmas break but then it continuously got changed due to COVID regulations and the university's feelings about having a safe campus and not causing any challenges for other students. The coaches and players during that time just kept being flexible and the goal of the coaches was always to do whatever we needed to do to make sure there was a season for our players.

How was the attitude of the team back in March 2020? Can you tell me about the emotions during that time? How was it for the coaching staff, as well as the team members, to end so abruptly?

That's a great question. It was really challenging, because normally we have a year-end sports banquet. In March 2020, when last year's season ended, we didn't get to end our soccer or basketball season. So we didn't get to give credit to our outgoing soccer seniors or basketball seniors and we weren't able to do many of the things that we would normally do. You probably remember how quickly the year ended, like they just announced it and then all of a sudden the next day, people were packing their stuff and leaving. Since all of our coaches are part time employees or part time coaches, most of our coaches and players didn't get to share a proper goodbye, you know, a face to face goodbye. We tried to communicate with them by text and FaceTime and things like that. It made for a challenging goodbye because some of these student athletes had been part of the team for four years and that builds a lot of depth in the relationships. There were definitely some painful moments because the proper goodbye wasn't able to be shared.

What are the expectations for next year's Fall 2021 sports season?

We have every hope and belief that we will begin our soccer season as normal, with a couple of weeks of preseason training just before school starts. Our first soccer game is scheduled for the first Friday of the school year. We are looking forward to a much more normal year of Andrews University Cardinal athletics.

What is the plan for athletic programs this semester?

Due to the recent changes in the state of Michigan guidelines for contact sports, we're very hopeful that we're going to be able to start intramurals within the next several weeks. And so the best place for students to look for those for that information will be at www.aucardinals.com under the intramural tab. This year, intramural sports are only for Andrews University students. We're not allowing staff, faculty and alumni to play as we have in years past because of safety protocols.

HUMANS

Student Missionary Spotlight

Kyra Collins (senior, speech-language pathology) Student missionary during the 2019-2020 academic year

Interviewed by Alyssa Henriquez [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Kyra Collins

Where did you serve as a missionary, and what made you want to take on this role?

I went to Saipan, which is a commonwealth of the United States, so it's still part of America, just very distant. Both my parents served as student missionaries and I grew up hearing about all of their really cool stories and their experiences and it made me want to do it. I'd been planning it forever.

How did your actual experience as a missionary deviate from your expectations?

Before I went, I talked to, like, literally every student missionary I could find and I asked them one question: "What is the one piece of advice you'd give to somebody who's going to go be a missionary?" A lot of people had the same answer and they just said, "Go with no expectations," and I thought, "Okay, I will do my best." A lot of them also said just "keep God in your life every day, all day long," and I was like,

“Okay, cool.” So I guess I didn't really have a ton of expectations; I just expected a general teaching job. I ended up doing after-school care too and before-school care. I taught a cooking class and a baking class. I did a lot of homework help too—that part was a little unexpected.

What was your living situation like, and what did you do on a typical day?

There were three student missionaries (SM's): one guy and two girls. So me and the other girl ended up living together in an apartment, and then at some point we ended up moving and then we didn't live together. On a typical day, I woke up and got ready for school, which was like three minutes away. I would do before-school care so that the elementary school teachers could go to worship, and then I would literally hang out with my kids until 10:30, and then I was on a break for two hours. And when I came back, they were in nap time and then we had snack time. Then I did after-school care and then came back to my room, and I just hung out with them until they all went home and home around like 5:30.

Was it hard adjusting to becoming a teacher? Were there aspects of it that you prepared for beforehand, or did you just go and adjust as the year progressed? I can't say that I was prepared to be a teacher. I guess maybe one of the aspects that I wasn't really prepared for was just how much time I would spend with my kids. I knew I would bond with them and stuff but we spent all day together, all day every day.

How did it feel being away from your family during the holidays?

It was weird because I've never been that far away during a holiday. Around Thanksgiving break we had our Thanksgiving program, which I almost missed because my kids gave me the flu. I spent like two days in bed, so I was recovering by the time it started, but we had a really big Thanksgiving meal with just a bunch of people from church and the community. So even if it wasn't Thanksgiving with my family, we still had like the Thanksgiving community spirit. It was really nice.

Are there any ways that you think your experience had an impact on your life as a whole afterwards? Do you think you were changed as a person?

Oh absolutely. It sounds weird but I actually think I became more easygoing. I like things a certain way a lot of the time, and I learned that everything is not always going to go your way and you kind of have to pick and choose your battles. With my kids, there were certain things, like, “you know what, if you want to wear goggles for the entire afternoon that's fine. I would rather motivate you to get your work

done versus try and force you to take off the goggles because it's not hurting anybody." And it's kind of cute.

How did you feel about having to go home early because of COVID-19? What was that experience like?

So, before we all went to Saipan all of the student missionaries who were going to the islands hung out in Hawaii for five days, and so we met most of the other island SM's. And so we were in contact with them while we were all gone, and sometimes you ask other people for advice or they ask you and it's fun to just talk to other people because you guys are kind of all in the same boat. And so we had heard some of the other schools, like Southern, were saying "hey, you guys are coming home." Andrews was like "you guys are probably gonna have to come home, but if you sign this paper that's like a waiver, you don't have to." But that was before any of the COVID cases got close, and then they got to Guam, which is about a 20 minute plane ride away. And so, Andrews was like "we are really leaning towards you guys coming home."

Everything kind of happened in a blur. I know some people left their islands literally within a day. The principal of my island actually ended up leaving. He found out, I think it was like Sunday night that he was leaving Monday morning. For us we actually had a couple days, so I called all of the parents that I could get a hold of and asked them to bring their kids to school because I was like, "they're not going to understand what's going on because they're on spring break right now. They're gonna come back from break"—they actually didn't end up coming back—"and not understand why they can't see their friends and why teachers are gone," and so I was like "this will provide at least a little bit of closure for them because they're only four, and for me because I won't see them again for a long time." I gave them all my address so that we could be pen pals. But yeah, I was really angry for a while because, I don't know, being an SM was being right where God wanted me to be, and it didn't make sense that I had to come home.

What were your favorite parts of being a student missionary?

My kids. My kids and getting to know a new culture, because Saipan is a really interesting mix: they were colonized by Spain, but a lot of people from the Philippines moved there, and it's a tourist spot for Korea, and Japan, and Russia, so the culture there is just an interesting blend. Also, we went swimming a lot because the beaches were amazing, and the snorkeling there is so cool. I saw sea turtles, and stingrays, and those really bright colorful fish that are just like in entire schools. It was amazing.

Arts & Entertainment

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

A Brief History Of Black Creativity and Its Importance

Pearl Parker 02.10.2021



Photo by Barbara Jones-Hogu

Black art and creativity at its essence is important because it allows us to share our struggles, triumphs, gifts, and brings the black story in America to life. This representation shows black boys and girls that there is enough room for them to be creative and take up space. The spark of black art and creativity came about during the Harlem Renaissance from the 1920s through the 1930s. This was where African Americans shaped their own identities through music, art, literature, and film, allowing them to control their own narrative. From my impression, European based art has been more visible and acknowledged as the primary form of art in American culture. According to Blavity News, “The erasure of blacks and minority

cultures from art history has been demonstrated through a lack of presence in major auctions, museums, galleries, and art history curricula” (Inniss, 2018). Due to this, European art has overshadowed works from other contributing nationalities. However, Europeans did portray African Americans in their art but frequently depicted counter images of how African Americans actually viewed themselves. An example of this can be seen on the sheet music cover “By The Watermelon Vine Lindy Lou” by Thos S. Allen, an American composer (Allen, 1904). This cover speaks to the racist watermelon trope among African Americans. Watermelon symbolized freedom and prosperity for newly freed slaves, but was turned into ridicule by angry whites.

Thankfully, due to the Harlem Renaissance, the black creative community is widely known. Jacob Lawrence, one of the first nationally recognized black artists, had a tremendous impact on the black community and world with his “The Great Migration Series” (Lawrence, The Migration Series). This series of 60 paintings showcases the migration of six million African Americans from the rural South to the urban North. Lawrence was able to capture the importance of this part of history, allowing us to go back and recount this time, and his work is part of how we have come to understand it presently.

Along with talented visual artists, we have world-renowned singers, such as Billie Holiday and Nina Simone. Simone is known for performing “Strange Fruit,” the classic poem by Abel Meeropol, an American poet and songwriter, turned into song. The performance of this song highlights the atrocities upon African Americans taking place in America. The lyrics of the song convey anguish and suffering, presenting a microcosm of injustice, providing a gateway for discussion among races to come together to attack racist tendencies and call out white supremacy.

These three creatives are just a few out of the many African Americans who have shaped the creative and artistic realm. Black art should be kept alive. To aid its continuation, support local black artists and creatives through sharing or buying their artwork music, books, or films. One of my favorite black artists is Liana Farmer, who is a Boston native. Her beautiful handmade illustrations of African American women can be found @bylianarae on Instagram. Black art is essential because it can educate us all on society's past and provides a roadmap of how we can better shape our future.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Black Novelists You Should Know & Read

Alannah Tjhatra **02.10.2021**



Photo by Public Domain

As Black History Month begins, it is important to remember the many black writers who have helped to shape America as well as the rest of the world. Here are just a few of the incredible black writers who have captured the nuance of the black community as it was, as it is, and as it could be in the future. I took care to try and incorporate authors who each write a unique genre of fiction, but there are so many more I could talk about—not to mention the poets, playwrights, and biographers who have made a huge impact as well.

Each of these writers shaped African-American history and inspired millions to people. They have highlighted African-American contributions to America's history and deepened our understanding of this country's past in a celebration of the African diaspora.

Toni Morrison

Toni Morrison was not afraid to tell it like it is. One of the most celebrated and prolific authors in modern American literature, Morrison's stories have defined and redefined what it means to be a black person in America. In addition to her non-fiction, short fiction, and theatre works, she published eleven (!) novels, which are set in all different time periods and explore the identities of black people in a variety of standings and situations in life. Morrison's writing is at once wonderfully poetic, surprisingly humorous, and hauntingly real. She was able to paint vivid imagery in the reader's mind, weaving her dialogue and description together wonderfully and drawing out deep and complex emotions in her prose. From Morrison's first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, which criticizes the hostility and shame inflicted by white standards of beauty, to *Beloved*, a Pulitzer Prize-winning masterpiece that follows a runaway slave who becomes haunted by the ghost of her dead daughter, Morrison's writing explores black identity in all its complexity—not as defined by Eurocentric ideas, but as defined by the humans who make up the very soul of her writing. If you're looking for a place to start with African-American literature, Toni Morrison is a great choice.

Angie Thomas

Chances are you've read, watched, or at least heard of Angie Thomas's young adult novel *The Hate U Give*.

The author's debut novel, which started as a senior project in college, follows Starr Carter, a high schooler constantly switching between two worlds: the poor, mostly-black neighborhood where she lives, and the wealthy, mostly-white neighborhood where she goes to school. She prefers to keep things separate—but

when she witnesses the shooting of a childhood friend by a police officer, her two worlds are forced to collide.

Filled with poignant emotion, wicked humour, and a narrative that hits reality pretty hard, *The Hate U Give* reaches out to young people especially. It brings to light the harsh reality of racism and discrimination in the present day, demonstrating that although we have come a long way, we also have a long way to go. It shows the strength we can find in family and community, and it displays the hope we have within us—in this case, the hope inspired by a girl who has the courage to find her voice and fight for justice in an unjust world.

Now having published three other books, *On the Come Up*; *Find Your Voice*; and *Concrete Rose*, Angie Thomas says that she looks at books as “being a form of activism. Sometimes they’ll show us a side of the world that we might not have known about.”

Lawrence Hill

A Canadian author whose first passion was actually running, Lawrence Hill is perhaps the most well-known for his 2007 novel *The Book of Negroes* (published as *Someone Knows My Name* in the United States). It narrates the life of Aminata Diallo, who is kidnapped from her village of Bayo, Niger, and is forced into American slavery at the age of eleven. The story follows this incredibly resilient young woman as she makes her way from Africa, across the sea to the United States, to Canada, back to Africa, and finally to England. As Aminata learns the ways of the world, she never stops fighting for her freedom, and, soon enough, for the freedom of others.

Lawrence Hill takes an insightful spin on the history of the slave trade and how it affected the millions of people involved. He is not afraid to show the awful physical and mental stress it had on its victims—but he also displays the community, love, and perseverance found in historical communities and characters.

Octavia E. Butler

Born in Pasadena, California shortly after World War II, Octavia Butler dreamt of stories from an early age. She begged her mother for a typewriter at the age of twelve after enduring a science fiction film called *Devil Girl From Mars*. Butler was unimpressed with the film and knew she could do better. She knew that most science fiction books and films featured white male characters who killed aliens—but Butler wanted to write diverse characters for diverse audiences. She was able to bring a depth and nuance to her characters that wasn’t present in science fiction before.

Butler’s work often takes disturbing issues in the world, such as discrimination,

and blends them into her stories, creating a new context in which they are set and allowing the reader to explore these problems through a different perspective. For instance, her novel *The Parable of the Sower* takes the reader to a near-future California that has been ruined by corporate greed, environmental destruction, and inequality. It follows a protagonist who has hyperempathy, which allows her to feel other people's pain and sometimes their pleasure. The story highlights the importance of adapting in a constantly-changing world. In her sequel, *The Parable of the Talents*, she writes about a presidential candidate who controls America with virtual reality and shock collars. His slogan is, "Make America Great Again." (Take in that this was written in 1998!)

Through her writing, Butler has been able to bring diverse characters to the forefront of science fiction and explore political and social justice issues while she's at it.

These are just a few of the black authors I have researched, read, and enjoyed; each with a unique story to tell. And I could sit here all day, writing paragraphs more about such legends as Maya Angelou, Langston Hues, Alice Walker, James Baldwin, Barack and Michelle Obama, and so many more who have impacted my life as well as the lives of others. But my advice to you is to see for yourself. My word will not be helpful until you go out and pick up a book by one of these talented people. Listen to the truths in these writers' words, and learn from the stories they tell of their past while they pave new ways for the future.

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Creative Spotlight: Autumn Goodman of AGOODIEES

Creative Spotlight: Autumn Goodman of AGOODIEES (senior, photography)

Interviewed by Megan Napod [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Autumn Goodman of AGOODIEES

Could you briefly describe your business?

My small business is called AGOODIEES. I sell apparel & accessories with positive messages rooted in Biblical beliefs and values. "Make Heaven Crowded" is my motto.

What sparked your interest in starting this business?

I was inspired to start AGOODIEES during the height of the pandemic and the Black Lives Matter protests following the murder of George Floyd. I use art as a way to express myself and

I was creating social media posts and illustrations expressing how I was feeling during that time. I wanted a way to allow others to stand in solidarity with the movement, and support it financially, so I created a t-shirt. I personally did not feel comfortable marching and protesting because of COVID-19 but wanted to show my support somehow. I donated 100% of the profits from those t-shirt sales to various organizations supporting BLM. From there I was feeling encouraged to create designs that were focused on bringing others to Christ and encouraging people to do good in their everyday lives.

What are some of your primary goals/objectives for this business?

I set mini monthly goals for my business to stay inspired and create with passion. A major goal I have for the end of this year for AGOODIEES is to reach a substantial amount of people on social media and continue to spread love to others.

In the midst of social and political unrest last year, you began to produce more. What did it mean to you to release your merchandise and products during this period?

I wanted to make an impact, however small, on my community. It was important for me to speak up and speak out against racism and injustice and make my voice heard. I wanted to encourage others to do the same and provide them with an opportunity to do so by purchasing my t-shirt. With the help of others, during the height of the Black Lives Matter movement we were able to raise over \$3,000.

What is a top-selling product or your favorite product you've created? Why?

My favorite product that I have created by far is my "Love Your Neighbor" collection (specifically the t-shirt). I made them in memory of my dear cousin Matthew, who always put others first and was the first to show love to others regardless of the situation.

What message would you say to other creatives who want to use their art to promote change in the world?

Be inspired by the world around you, and don't hesitate to create based on what you believe. You'll love your art more if you actually believe in it.

You can check out Autumn's business AGOODIEES at [agoodiees.com](https://www.agoodiees.com) and on Instagram @agoodiees.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

The Hill We Climb

Hannah Cruse 02.10.2021



Photo by Public Domain

It was just after lunch on January 20th when I remembered I planned on watching the presidential inauguration. I sat on my bed with anticipation and excitement to see a peaceful transition of power despite the protestations from the previous occupant of the White House. But one moment surpassed all, capturing my attention and leaving me in awe.

When I heard the opening words to Amanda Gorman's poem, "The Hill We Climb," I was enraptured by the prose and delivery. It was a retelling of the trials faced in years past, in years present. It was a message of hope, a beacon in a seemingly dark time. It was a call to better our society for those who come after us, for those who have been discriminated against time and time again.

The words that inspired me the most went like this: "And, yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine, but that doesn't mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect. / We are striving to forge our union with purpose. / To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters, and conditions of man. / And so we lift our gaze, not to what stands between us, but what stands before us." To me, this summarizes the heart of this poem, that despite our differences and the violent dealings of our past and present, together we can create a country that respects and uplifts all. This is our calling in the days moving forward, and for the

rest of our lives: “We seek harm to none and harmony for all.”

“If we’re to live up to our own time, then victory won’t lie in the blade, but in all the bridges we’ve made. / That is the promise to glade / the hill we climb, if only we dare.” ‘The hill we climb’ is one we can climb together, hand in hand, racing on to a bright tomorrow.

Ideas

IDEAS

Choose Wisely

Evin N. Musgrove [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Public Domain

Choice: the right or power to make a decision

I was born and raised in The Bahamas, a predominantly black country within the Lucayan Archipelago of the West Indies. In my country, we have a saying: “The only thing I have to do is stay black and die!” In other words, “I have the choice to do whatever I please. That is my right. The only thing I don’t have control over is being black and facing death one day.” I believe that as humans, we have a natural sense of entitlement. We typically hate being told what to do and will rarely allow anyone the satisfaction of feeling like they have any inkling of power over us. For creatures who feel so strongly about possessing such power over our own lives, one would think that we’d do a better job at exercising it more effectively. Far too often do we sacrifice our power to our feelings and circumstances. “I don’t feel qualified, so I won’t even waste my time,” “I have to work with people I don’t really like, so I’ll have a sour attitude,” “I’m offended by what they said, so I’ll use that as an excuse to be rude,” and the list goes on. I dare say that there is value in exercising your power to choose, rather than allowing internal and external factors to make decisions on your behalf.

In his article, “How to Develop the Personal Power Needed to Achieve Your Biggest Goals,” Adam Sicinski discusses the requirements for wielding your personal power, as well as practical steps to aid in its development. The first requirement is having clarity: knowing what you want and setting an objective that will help push past feelings. You must then master the art of adaptation: being mindful, proactive, and flexible to the changing circumstances of life. Furthermore, practice “redirecting disruptive emotions and impulses” (Sicinski, n.d.) This means improving your emotional intelligence so that you are sensitive to self-sabotaging thoughts and behaviors.

Practically speaking, Sicinski suggests taking the time to better understand yourself by asking questions like, “How do I tend to give my personal power away throughout the day and how is it hurting me?” This may look like avoiding social situations due to a fear of criticism, or being really indecisive when decisions have to be made. Sicinski then says to get clear about what you want. Ask yourself, “What do I want specifically in this situation?” or “What perspective do I choose to have right now?” Sicinski urges readers to take responsibility for their lives and circumstances, because once you learn how to use your personal power, you never lose it (Sicinski, n.d.).

As humans, we fail to grasp how much power God has given us over our lives, and specifically for the Christian, I believe that can be attributed to two things: a lack of Scriptural application and the tendency to surrender too easily to

temptation. Believe it or not, most times it's not a matter of understanding Scripture as it is about applying it. It's wise to keep texts like 2 Timothy 1:7 on hand, which explicitly states that God has given His children a spirit of power, love, and self-discipline. However, that holds absolutely no weight if we fail to exercise our powers of love and self-control.

As for giving into temptation, we are so aware of its enticement, that we submit to it before even questioning whether or not we can actually overcome it. This is proven when a piece of gossip is so sweet, that we feed into it without considering the fact that it is possible not to engage, or when we "can't" stop watching a certain show that's centered around some form of immorality, because "I'm already this deep into it."

Whether we care to admit it or not, we surrender our power of choice, daily, to inanimate objects, the media, and worst of all, to things as fickle as our feelings. At some point, we have to take the power back. Any sensible person knows that it's foolish not to make good use of something that cost him a fortune. How much more foolish is it to have something invaluable given to him for free (God's gift of free-will), just to sacrifice it for cheap alternatives?

Dear reader, how are you using your gift? In what area(s) of your life do you need to take back control? What excuses have you been habitually making up to this point, but now vow to be more attentive to? Use your power. Choose wisely.

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IDEAS

Playing the Game of Stocks

Matthew Jarrard 02.10.2021



Photo by Public Domain

Imagine this. One day you go to your local store to buy a bag of your favorite potato chips. Going to the chip aisle, you see that they are only priced at \$3. “That’s a really great price,” you think to yourself. You decide to buy a lot of bags, because these are your favorite kind of potato chips, and go home. A few weeks later you return to the store and see that price has increased, but only to \$5. “Now that’s kind of expensive,” you think to yourself, knowing that a few weeks ago you bought the chips for \$3.

A few more weeks go by, you show up to the store and your favorite potato chips are priced at \$50! You’re amazed at how much the price has fluctuated, and you look around and almost everybody is trying to buy a bag of these amazing chips. You don’t really know why people want to buy these chips for such a high price, and at such a large quantity. The chips are good but they aren’t that good. You think to yourself about how you could open your own store, and sell the chips you still have at a much higher price than you bought them for, because of the high demand. After much thought you decide to sell your potato chips for \$50, and you make a lot of money. Good thing you didn’t eat them a few weeks ago!

This is what has happened to GameStop over the past month.

When the stock market opened in January, GameStop was priced at around \$18 per share. On the verge of bankruptcy, GameStop was a failing business. Buying and selling disc video games and other items in brick-and-mortar stores is quickly becoming a thing of the past. Some of the new video game consoles that came out late last year weren't even designed to take discs. With the ongoing COVID pandemic, going inside stores was no longer an option. But, the stock grew over 1600% with some even buying the stock for over \$480 per share! Mostly credited to r/WallStreetBets, this shows how powerful the internet can be, and how much a group of people can affect the stock market. That group of millennials told other people on r/WallStreetBets to buy GameStop because, for many frequenters of the community, it gave them good memories as a kid. Many of you know that feeling of walking into a GameStop in the early 2010's and looking for that one game. That game your friends have been playing, and you've been wanting to get in on it as well. You've been to other stores, but they just don't have it. So, after convincing your parents to stop at a Gamestop, you search the shelf of games. You look and there it is, all this searching has finally paid off! Gamestop never let us down then, so we can't let them now down. People all over the world decided they wanted to be a part of this trend, because they felt the same way, and they gave their money hoping the stock would rise astronomically or "go to the moon."

While these people made a lot of money with the increase of Gamestop, people lost a lot of money as well.

Perhaps you're thinking to yourself: "Why should I care about what happened to GameStop or stocks in general?" Great question! Let's return to our potato chips analogy. Wouldn't you want to be the person to buy the bag of potato chips at \$3 and then sell them at \$50? And better yet had someone tell you to buy them at \$3? This is basically how the stock market works, buying stocks low, while selling them high. Usually, stocks are determined by people seeing how well a business is doing at a certain time, and investors buying the stock in hopes of other people buying the stock as well, by also seeing how well the stock is doing. So, if you have any extra money, try using that money to invest in a company you think will do well or in a stock that a lot of people are buying. It is important to put money aside to invest now, so you could have that money grow in the future.

But I have always been told the higher the risk, the higher reward on an investment and vice versa. To be honest, a lot of people have lost a lot of money with stocks, including myself. With every person that makes money, there is someone that loses money. The term "volatility" refers to how much a stock fluctuates over time. For how much the stock can go up, it can go just as far down.

It is important to not invest in just one company, but to “expand your investment portfolio” by spreading out your money in multiple stocks you think will do well, and thus reducing the risk of your total investments.

Start thinking about making some longer term investments. Perhaps you’ll even give day trading a try. Who knows? You might get lucky and buy the right bag of potato chips.

The Last Word

THE LAST WORD

Halftime of Horrors: The Weeknd and Hedonism

Daniel Self [02.10.2021](#)



Photo by Public Domain

I've closely followed The Weeknd's meteoric rise for years, growing to understand the enigmatic artist by the name of Abel Tesfaye. I've fallen in love with his sound, he draws comparisons to Michael Jackson but with more synth—it's classic RnB but darker. It helps that he's Canadian, an eccentric Montreal artist who broke onto the scene in the early 2010s with *House of Balloons*, *Thursday*, and *Echoes of Silence*. I never listened to these standalone projects, so I first experienced his work on *Trilogy*, an album uniting his first three original albums under one title. His music presents a brooding man showered in material possessions and sublime experiences and yet bearing an unshakeable nihilism. A 2017 article by Red Bull seems to capture the experience so well, that Tesfaye "lives the life of a Roman emperor — but all he wants you to know is that it makes him really sad." He embodies the paradox of having access to everything material and still not seeming happier for it. He separates our expectations of fame with his reality living under the sort of microscope that comes with being able to make the designation that it was his *first* time selling-out Madison Square Garden. An accomplishment for any artist, Tesfaye does it over and over again.

Seeing Canadian musicians succeeding at the highest levels brings me a rare sense of satisfaction. In one of the few good news headlines from 2020, the NFL announced that Tesfaye would headline this year's Super Bowl Halftime show. It's an honor reserved for only true superstars, musicians at their peak being offered an audience that performers can only dream of. This past Sunday, I took in Abel's performance during Superbowl LV; for many of my friends, casual fans of his work, it seemed eclectic and strange. But that's Tesfaye. He's been becoming a character for almost a year now, since *After Hours* released in March 2020. The glittery red suit jacket, his black tie fading into the black shirt, and his serial killer black leather gloves: for Abel, it's all an allusion, building on itself and on a particular style to draw you into an aesthetic experience. At one point in recent weeks, his makeup crew faked a botched plastic surgery on his face producing protruding cheekbones in homage of Michael Jackson's famous plastic surgery. Preceding the unveiling, Tesfaye wore bandages around his face for nearly a week during all Super Bowl-related publicity. During Sunday's performance, multiple set pieces would see dancers mimicking Tesfaye's bandages and garb. Irregardless of Abel's talent, I wondered how well his style would mesh with such a neutral event like the Super Bowl. Similar to when he was nominated for a Kids Choice Award for "talking 'bout a face numbing off a bag of blow," (a fact which he croons about on his song "Reminder"), Tesfaye's attempt to avoid mainstream media and morality seems in some senses unsuccessful. He creates an aesthetic that feeds into itself –

– it’s a chaotic, unequivocally dark aura that surrounds his latest album—but it sounds amazing.

It’s moments like these that people often revisit the question of separating art from artist, wondering if we can view and experience art without it being inextricably linked to the ideals and motives of the artist. For all the time I’ve spent pondering this question regarding Tesfaye, I’m still not certain. In part, I believe that this is the case because I’m still not sure exactly what he wants to say. Thematically, The Weeknd’s music rarely moves beyond contemplating nihilism, self-gratification, escapism and broken relationships. How do such topics lend themselves to music videos filled with allusions to American Psycho, Joker, Casino, and Chinatown? In an Instagram post by [@viralpopculture](#), they showed scene by scene comparisons throughout Abel’s music videos. It’s clear, he takes painstaking care to perfect his message, but interpreting its meaning upon release remains an entirely different beast. His work speaks to his being a villain or anti-hero, and the darker tones within his music seem to reflect his own self-perceptions. He’s not a killer or psychopath, but he seems to glorify the darker human potentialities all the same.

In some ways, I see a parallel between Tesfaye’s art and the poetry of Charles Bukowski. Both artists are driven towards illuminating the underground lifestyle without necessarily endorsing it. Their dealings with the materialism, temporality, poverty, and the general grunge aura surrounding the underbelly of North American culture. It’s the sheen removed from the American Dream, what Tesfaye and Bukowski examine is that which still remains in its aftermath.

“Ya got cigarettes?” she asks.

“Yes,” I say, “I got cigarettes.”

“Matches?” she asks. “Enough to burn Rome.”

Through excess and hedonism, both Tesfaye and Bukowski’s art comes alive. And yet, I struggle with exactly how to appreciate the undeniably intriguing aesthetic in the context of my own life. As Bukowski speaks of matches, ‘enough to burn Rome,’ it draws me into his web—the allusion to antiquity, the line’s casual cadence imbued with such meaning, and the linguistic simplicity. Yet, as I’ve gone jogging virtually every evening since my early teens, smoking cigarettes could never be a part of my lifestyle. Abel speaks of excess, and I believe him, knowing full well that I’ll likely never experience a tenth of one of Abel’s weekends. In his falsettos lie fire, in Bukowski’s prose a peril.

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