

# DCFE *TRIBUNE*

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Dunboyne College of Further Education

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## Welcome!



You are welcome to the eighteenth edition of our college newsletter, the DCFE Tribune, which brings you some highlights of the college year 2024-2025, which was our 22nd year of bringing

quality education and training to this region. Primarily, I want to thank our graduating class of 2025 for their great contribution to the college academically, culturally socially and in terms of sports and extracurricular.

**I particularly want to mention the Student Union, the Green Campus committee and all the students who helped with or took part in extracurricular activity and community outreach activities this year.**

I also want to thank our students for their contribution to so many companies and concerns through our work experience programmes.

For helping so many students achieve their dreams and ambitions I am particularly grateful to the very dedicated and professional teaching staff here in the college.

We continue to work towards our new college campus which will be a FET College of the Future design and will be the first of its kind in the country. We are hopeful that finally this development can give us state of the art, purpose-built facilities for PLC courses, traineeships, apprenticeships, skills

to advance programs, community outreach courses and night classes. This investment is a testament to our staff, students, and the schools and communities we serve, who have put their trust in us for so many years to help us grow to over 1,300 students. We thank LMETB staff, in particular Martin O'Brien Chief Director of Further Education and Training, Sadie Ward McDermott, and Land and Buildings Officer Sinead Murphy for their constant support on this journey as we progress as a centre of excellence for teaching and learning in this region.

Dunboyne College is a college with a family atmosphere which gives students a wealth of learning, enabling, communicating, collaborating, and inspiring experiences each day. DCFE is a comfortable and supportive place to learn. We provide over 70 accredited courses at QQI levels 5 and 6 as well as new HND and apprenticeship offerings.

**Whether you want to be a nurse, teacher, scientist, sports coach, web designer, accountant, engineer, filmmaker, teacher, beautician, artist etc. we have a course that will start you on your way.**

We offer practical training, giving you up to date adaptable and transferable skills.

We also offer numerous Skills to Advance programmes for on-the-job employees.

We are proud of our staff, our students and their achievements. Dunboyne College, since 2003, has seen 12,000 thousand students pass through, gaining qualifications in a diverse range of areas, and progressing either to further studies at higher level, or going directly into the world of work.

**For the fourth year running our student population has numbered well over 1,300 and so many of last June's graduates received offers to third level or are in places of secure employment.**

This past year has seen record numbers progressing from our college to third level courses and directly to industry. Four hundred and ninety-nine (499) students received honours degree, Level 8 offers and three hundred and one (301) received a Level 7, ordinary degree offer. Many of these degrees were on courses requiring over 500 Leaving Cert points or in hard to access courses like Nursing, Science and Teaching. These figures do not include the many mature students who received early offers and those who took up offers in the UK for Nursing, Law or Sports degrees. In addition to these students, most of the students who studied on the vocational skills courses obtained employment, this is particularly relevant in the service and leisure courses.

**Well over 90% of the students who finish with us each June are either in a third level course or employment the following September.**

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter and share in the many activities and events of recent months. Please keep an eye on our website, [www.dunboynecollege.ie](http://www.dunboynecollege.ie), and our [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) pages, which will keep you informed of events as they happen. We will be taking applications right through the year until next September, and we hope many students will continue to join in the experience of Dunboyne College, some of which you will find recorded here.

If you are thinking of coming to us next year, feel free to call in at any stage for more information on our courses and activities. You can always phone us on, 01-8026577 or email; [dunboynecollege@lmetb.ie](mailto:dunboynecollege@lmetb.ie) or look up our website on [www.dunboynecollege.ie](http://www.dunboynecollege.ie)

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Denis Leonard  
Principal

#BeginHereGoAnywhere



## College News and Events

### Denis Leonard — Retirement

Staff describe Denis as



Warm hearted  
Great sense of humour  
Dedicated  
Passionate  
Hard working  
Caring  
Loyal  
Enthusiastic  
Positive  
Creative

**Emer Cloak**  
Deputy Principal

It's hard to believe that Denis is actually retiring. What will his office be like without the sound of his booming laugh and — of course — the talking! Whether it was Monday morning at 9 am or Friday at 4 pm Denis could talk with such passion and stamina that you'd forget what the original topic was. His energy has always been contagious—like a double shot of espresso, fully caffeinated!

Denis's office has always been interesting.... A chaotic mix of paper stacks, mystery folders, and long-lost stationary supplies. While it looks like nothing is filed (it isn't) everything is actually stored—with surprising accuracy—in that razor-sharp mind of his. The office is just a front - the real archive is in his head, and somehow, he can always find exactly what he needs.

I will miss the leadership, the infectious laugh, and the sense that, somehow, everything was going to be okay—because Denis was steering the ship (talking of course and telling a story while doing it).

**Congratulations on your retirement Denis - you've earned some peace and quiet... though with energy like yours, I suspect it won't last long....**

**Hilda Coughlan**  
Deputy Principal

I have been looking after Events and staff gifts for Special occasions for some time in DCFE. This is one occasion that I am not ready for. Your retirement has come all too soon Denis.

**We will miss you so much.**

From my early days in Dunboyne when you were out around the schools in the four corners of Meath and surrounding areas, building up our student numbers we always knew when you arrived back.

Your laughter reverberated around the building. Your leadership has been inspirational. When you took up the role of Principal the college grew and became the best place to work in Meath. I have always been very proud to be part of your team. The student experience always at the heart of everything you did.

Each request I made, for a space for teachers to work, students to eat, nursing room, library this list was

endless, but always met with a positive response, usually along the lines of come up with a plan and get back to me. As you embark on this next stage of your life, spare a thought for Mrs Jones, she left it too late to enjoy the finer things in life.

**Enjoy your well-earned Retirement Denis, no doubt it will be busy.**

**Catherine Fox**  
Deputy Principal

Student welfare has always been at the forefront of all decisions made by Denis Leonard throughout his career. Tales of his early teaching career in Finglas centre around students and ensuring that they had every opportunity available to them, even if it meant Denis taking the keys of the school minibus and traveling the roads of Ireland for sporting, social and environmental events.

As Guidance Counsellor in St Peter's College Denis saw how difficult it was for students to access post leaving certificate courses so he lobbied for a post leaving certificate college in Dunboyne simply because it was in the best interest of students. There are students whose lives have been changed as a result of his vision and commitment to ensuring access to educational opportunities.

I have had the privilege of working with Denis over the past 5 years as he presented a case for a permanent site for the college. He never passed up an opportunity to make the case for a new college and no Minister or official escaped his attention.

He was always forward thinking and constructive in planning for the development of the college, identifying opportunities to introduce new courses and secure additional premises, while dealing with the daunting task of running a 1300 strong college in the middle of a busy business park. No other FE Principal in the history of further education in Ireland faced so many challenges. Only Denis would have made it the success that it is today.

I knew of his commitment to students well before I came to Dunboyne College and over the past 5 years, I have witnessed his gentle, collegiate managerial style. His approach is one that has resonated with staff and management alike.

I have enjoyed many conversations with him on so many topics from a shared interest in Westmeath to history and politics. He has always been supportive and kind and for that I, like many others before me will say Denis Leonard made an impact on my life.

At all times Denis has focused on what is best for the college, its students and staff and the community it serves. We in Dunboyne College are sad to see Denis retire but know that he will always have an interest in the college and its success, he has spent the past 22 years building a strong college, one where both staff and students work together for the better of their communities. It is a legacy that we will work to honour and protect.

**To Denis, Mary and his family I extend my best wishes for an enjoyable retirement, with good health, full of success for his beloved Mayo football team.**





## Supporting businesses growth through upskilling at Dunboyne College

In a significant showcase of collaboration between local businesses in County Meath and Dunboyne College of Further Education, staff from Kilsaran and the Cusack Hotel Group recently received nationally accredited certificates following their participation in a series of employer-based training programmes.

Mary Lyons, Director, Enterprise, Employees and Skills with SOLAS presented employees from both companies with their QQI certificates at recent graduation ceremonies. They were joined by staff members from LMETB who also completed accredited courses. Ms Lyons was joined by Thomas Byrne TD, Minister of State for European Affairs and Defence.

Employees from both companies completed courses at Level 5 and 6 in Train the Trainer, Managing People, Personal Effectiveness, Customer Services and Culinary Techniques. The classes were delivered by staff from Dunboyne College on-site in the employer's premises.

In his address to the graduates, Cllr Nick Killian, Chairperson of the Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB), praised them for their dedication to both their personal and professional growth and highlighted the significant role employers like Kilsaran and the

Cusack Hotel Group play in fostering a culture of continuous development.

The graduation events marked the successful completion of training funded under the SOLAS Skills to Advance initiative, which supports employees in upgrading their skills to meet the demands of today's ever-evolving job market. The SOLAS initiative provides funding for training opportunities aimed at employees already in the workforce, equipping them with industry-recognised qualifications that enhance their career prospects. Courses offered under Skills to Advance are designed to help individuals strengthen their skills and stay competitive in a fast-paced and changing employment landscape.

Sadie Ward McDermott, Director of Further Education and Training at LMETB, also spoke at the graduation events, emphasising the importance of further education and training in unlocking the full potential of individuals.

David McKeown, CEO, Kilsaran, detailed Kilsaran's relationship with Dunboyne College. "This is our 2nd Managing People programme delivered through Skills to Advance and Dunboyne College of Further Education. Our 3rd programme is currently underway with another 16 of our people completing the programme.

In 2024, we had 194 Learners access and complete training and development programmes throughout the year, excluding statutory/mandatory industry training. This marked a 59% increase in participants compared to 2023. Our experience with Dunboyne College and Skills to Advance has been extremely positive. They understand our challenges, industry dynamics, and culture to ensure that learnings can be applied to our day-to-day operations."

Shirley Brady, Group General Manager, Cusack Hotel Group described working with Dunboyne College's Skills to Advance as truly transformative. "Our chefs, senior managers, and staff at all levels have experienced significant growth through courses in personal effectiveness, managing people, culinary skills, and much more. These initiatives have enhanced both technical expertise and leadership capabilities across the board. We've seen remarkable improvements in all departments, demonstrating that investing in staff now is so important for future success. By empowering our team, we're not just improving today—we're building a foundation for long-term excellence and growth."

Denis Leonard, Principal of Dunboyne College, congratulated the employees for their hard work and perseverance, noting that the partnership between the college and local employers is crucial in cultivating a skilled, adaptable workforce.

## Personal counselling is a vital service of the Guidance Department supporting students with needs from anxiety and stress to referring students for outside services.

Meabh and Derek have been crucial in supporting these students throughout the year both in getting back on track academically and in personal matters.



## Green Week 2025

Green Week 2025 included a wide range of activities from guest speaker Daniel Fieldes visiting campus to share his experiences as a marine biologist and wildlife photographer to a cookery demo on using up leftovers. Staff and students from various class groups took part in a litter pick and Animal Care and Science students visited Wild Acres Nature Reserve to observe rewilding and biodiversity restoration in action. This year with Easy Treesie we will be distributing 4,500 trees for planting! Huge thanks to our hard-working committee, Anneliese, Claire, Jacqueline, Anna and Gillian!

## Career Guidance

A major part of the Career Guidance service is the application process for progression to other universities and colleges both in Ireland and abroad. CAO time is extremely busy this year at DCFE with students seeking assistance on all aspects of the application process.

The QQI qualification gained at further education is a new route to progression for students providing huge opportunities alongside any other qualifications that they might have, such as a Leaving Certificate. The Higher Education Links Scheme is a system where

students with a QQI qualification can apply through the CAO for a place from a quota of places set aside for the further education route.

Connecting with the schools in our catchment area has continued strongly throughout the year to date with many schools inviting us back in on campus.

Meabh and Derek have also hosted information stands at the many career expos in the region.

## Campus Events

### Wellness Week

Everything from nail filing to hair blow dries, circuit classes and a cookery demonstration, Wellness Week in DCFE had everything covered! Health checks, meditations & a mature student coffee morning finished out a fantastic week!

## Daffodil Week 2025

Activities during this action-packed week included international cuisine tasting in the mature room where students and staff could taste the variety of dishes from various countries. The highlight of the week Dunk the Teacher! Tensions ran high as staff and students came to try their luck at hitting the target to dunk the teacher!! Quiz time in room 33 helped raise valuable funds. The week was rounded off by buying your pin to show support for cancer research!



## Learning in Action

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## Guest speaker with Pre-Paramedic Fire and Ambulance students

Jack Lynch a former Pre-Paramedic Fire and Ambulance student called into the college today after finishing his first Observation Shift in his new role as a Student Paramedic with HSE National Ambulance Service.

Jack outlined his progression from DCFE student to his current role He spoke to both Pre Paramedic Fire and Ambulance groups and answered many questions the students put to him around his role and the recruitment process. Thank you again Jack for giving up your time.



## Lámh Training

This semester the Speech and Language Therapy Assistant (SLTA) class completed their Module One Lámh Training with Speech Therapist (SLT) Margaret Farrell. We are always delighted to welcome Margaret Farrell to the college. She is one the 220 trained Lámh tutors working in Ireland.

The Module One Lámh Course is for those working with children and adults who use Lámh to enhance their communication. It is used by families, teachers, SNAs, social care workers, PAs and staff and others who work in mainstream and special schools, preschools, adult support services and other settings where our SLTA class will be working and studying. The purpose is to support our students to be flexible and inclusive in their communication with many of the service-users they will work with in the future.



The positive feedback from students is that the training of Module One is delivered in such a practical way that all involved walked away feeling confident that they could communicate complete sentences using the 100 signs practiced throughout the day. This training complements the teaching, field trips and workshops that this class group participate in and delivered by the Speech and Language Therapists who work with us throughout the year.

## PHECC Emergency First Responder Certificate at EFAST Training

Both Pre-Paramedic classes completed a very intense 5 days of training for their PHECC Emergency First Responder (EFR) certificate at EFAST Training. The students were put through their paces, but all students were successful and are now fully qualified Emergency First Responders.

This training started with a presentation on the Evolution of SCBA, a description of the SCBA Set, and then demonstrations and Search Procedures. After their break, a run-through of the General Checks required by firefighters on their equipment was demonstrated and practiced by the students. The students learnt how to "Donn and Doff" this equipment properly and practice using the equipment whilst crawling and walking in very tight dark spaces."



This was a great experience for our students, where they were closely monitored by highly trained instructors in the safe use of this vital firefighter equipment. Thank you to Kevin in EFAST for providing this excellent training and ensuring our students were trained to the highest standards.

## Guest speaker Peter Flynn

Dunboyne College were delighted to welcome back to the college former student Peter Flynn as a Guest Speaker. Peter was a Pre-Paramedic Fire and Ambulance student from 2023-24. Since Peter has left DCFE he has continued his journey in Pre-Hospital and the Reserve Defence Forces. He has qualified as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and is now working as an EMT with EFAST. He is one of the onsite medics in Emerald Park in Meath, amongst other roles. Peter also joined the Reserve Defence Forces and recently celebrated Passing Out after completing his army resolve training.

Peter had the students from our 2 Pre-Paramedic groups enthused as he presented his journey from Salesian's College to where he is now. He brought along a collection of his Uniforms that he has worn since then, with the DCFE Uniform sitting proudly amongst the EFAST, Defence Forces, and Civil Defence uniforms. In 2 years, Peter has achieved so much. His next step on his journey is with the HSE National Ambulance Service (NAS) as a Student Paramedic. He was successful in his application to NAS and is waiting on a call up to NAS College to commence the next step in his pre-Hospital career.

Peter emphasised to the students that if they want to achieve their goal that DCFE is the ideal place to start their journey. Peter is one of 5 students from his class in DCFE who have being successful in their application to HSE NAS with another student working as an Emergency Medical Controller — Call Taker with NAS. Peter brought along an Emergency Ambulance with him and demonstrated the different equipment and the contained in a typical Emergency Ambulance. He demonstrated the use of the ramp and the 999, "Blue Lights and Siren," system."

Thank you again to Peter for this very well received presentation!



## Art Exhibition 2025

An exhibition recently showcased the wonderful work created by our students from Art Portfolio, Graphic Design, Architecture and Animation. This event celebrated our students' creativity, dedication, and progress throughout the year. The exhibition featured a diverse collection of pieces, including painting, drawing, architectural drawing, sculpture, mixed media and animation.



## Ulreeka's Wagathon!

Incredible support and enthusiasm of staff and students made the annual wagathon event a fantastic success!

Thanks to everyone, we've made significant strides in supporting the Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind, enriching lives one step at a time. This event could not have been what it was without your generous contributions and spirited participation.



## Class Trips

### Nuala McKeever's 'In the Window' at Summerhill Theatre

By Lauren Harrington (Journalism)

Journalism students from Dunboyne College of Further Education took a trip to see Nuala McKeever's wonderful one woman play, "In the window," in Summerhill theatre on 15th January 2025. Nuala McKeever is a comedian from Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 2023, with the assistance of Johanna Dawe LMETB further education colleges commissioned Nuala's play, 'Truth, Love or Promise,' to celebrate International Women's Day.

'In the window,' is about Maragret, a woman that is struggling with loneliness, suicidal ideation and grief. These subjects are considered taboo and rarely talked about openly. We see a struggling woman with a glass of wine in one hand and a bowl full of pills in the other, with no thought of turning back on her decision to end it all. Until we meet young Chris, a police officer and a highly nosey neighbour! Nuala uses a humour element in her play to deal with these issues, which is realistic in most cases as it is a defence mechanism for a lot of people going through hardships. The play was raw, emotional, heartfelt and funny all at once.

With little props, Nuala was able to perform so well that it was easy to visualise everything that was going on in the story. She had a chair, lamp, side table and a record player. For the audience, including myself, it was a house and there was four people on that stage. Talent! Her choice of

music combined with the story gave it a real emotional element. The characters she played pulled on heart strings.

I think the performing arts, like this play, makes a big difference in tackling taboo subjects and bringing awareness to issues a lot of people have like grief, depression, loneliness and suicidal ideation. Art is subjective but I thoroughly enjoyed Nuala's play, and I think the main message I got from this show was, love conquers all.



### Epic Museum & The Jeanie Johnston

Pre-University Liberal Art, Arts Culture and Journalism students visited EPIC museum and the Jeanie Johnston famine ship as part of their studies. Taking guided tours of both venues this was an informative and thoroughly enjoyable day for all.



## Seamus Heaney Exhibit & MOLI

Liberal Arts students along with Journalism students visited the Seamus Heaney Exhibit and the Museum of Literature Ireland as part of their studies. This was a thoroughly enjoyable and informative day for all.

## Equine Therapy hub field trip

Special Needs Assistant, Speech & Language and Occupational Therapy Assistant students visited Stewart's Care Regional Equine Therapy Hub in Kilcloon Co. Meath. We were given a tour and an in-depth talk about the services provided by Terri Brosnan (Equine Therapy Manager). These services include world-renowned equine-based therapy supporting children and adults with intellectual disabilities and autism. The Regional Equine Therapy Hub is a unique service that has become an essential learning facility combining equine therapy, horticulture, pottery and community. Situated close to Dunboyne College, facilities visited by our students at the hub included an accessible play therapy area, a stable block to house the specialist horses, an outdoor arena and a new sensory trail to engage senses and improve memory and learning for Stewart's Care service-users and their families.



## DCFE TRIBUNE

## Newgrange

Pre-University Arts Culture visited Newgrange as part of their Archaeology module taking a guided tour of the site and completing valuable primary research. This was an insightful and illuminating visit to Brú na Boinne.

## Dublin Criminal Court

Journalism students visited Dublin Criminal Court as part of their Writing Skills for Journalism module. This visit offers students a first-hand experience of the logistics of court reporting as well as an insight into how Journalists write and research court reports.



## Community Support Day

Our Healthcare Assistant and Nursing students helped organise a community support day for people from local nursing homes to visit the college. With the help of our Beauty, Hairdressing and Professional Cookery students, they were treated to various beauty treatments as well as delicious afternoon tea. Everyone took part in musical bingo followed by some musical entertainment from our first-year music students to round off the day.



## Student Voice Creative Corner

### Another World

by Alyssa Meade

I gaze intently,  
into the softness of your eyes.

A stolen paradise,  
where bliss resides.

A different world untouched by time,

As ecstasy dances,  
gentle and refined.

As the world does pass by,

dreams of what could be, softly fly.

In sleep, I still, and soon drift away.

To a place where only love can stay.

### Haiku

### Computer says No!

By Ciara Corcoran

Computer says No!

Get back outside to engage

With the elements.

## Whispers of the Western Moor

By Eve Kennedy-Crowley

Beneath a sky of weeping grey,  
Where cliffs rise sharp from restless spray,  
A manor stands in mournful guise,  
Its shadow black against twilight skies.  
The wind laments in hollow moan,  
A spectre bound to haunt its stone.

Through brambled paths, the heather blooms,  
A sea of violet masking tombs.  
The moors are vast, their whispers low,  
Of love betrayed, of grief's cold woe.  
By loughs that gleam with ghostly light,  
A phantom bride walks every night.

In shadows deep, the storm does wail,  
As candles quiver, faces pale.  
The west wind brings a lover's cry,  
A vow unbroken though they die.  
And still, beneath the midnight's gaze,  
The cursed are lost in time's dark haze.

## Blood Moon Justice

By Eve Kennedy-Crowley

The desert stretched wide and empty, bathed  
in the dying embers of sunset. The sky burned  
red, sinking into hues of indigo as the last light  
of day retreated beyond the jagged peaks of  
the distant mountains. The air was thick with  
dust and the scent of sagebrush, the heat of  
the day still clinging to the earth, though the  
night wind carried the promise of something  
colder. Something ancient.

He rode alone.

His horse—a sturdy, dust-covered mustang—  
moved at an easy gait, hooves kicking up the  
dry earth of the trail. The bounty hunter sat  
tall in the saddle, his silhouette sharp against  
the horizon, wrapped in the long folds of a  
duster that had seen too many years and too  
much blood. The brim of his hat cast a shadow  
over his eyes, but even in the dim light, they  
glowed a pale, unnatural gold.

Ahead, in the distance, a crumbling homestead  
stood alone in the desert—a carcass of a place  
long abandoned. The barn was half-rotted, its  
roof caved in, the house no better. A hollow  
wind whistled through the broken beams,  
carrying whispers of ghosts and old sins.

But he wasn't hunting ghosts tonight.

He pulled his horse to a stop at the edge of the  
clearing. The scent hit him first—sweat, gun  
oil, and the metallic tang of a man too long  
without a proper bath. His quarry was here.  
He could smell him.

The bounty hunter swung down from his  
saddle, boots landing soft in the dust. He  
moved slow, deliberate, one hand resting easy  
on the worn grip of his revolver. His long



shadow stretched ahead of him as he crossed the yard, the boards of the porch groaning under his weight.

Inside, the house was dark. He stepped through the open door, the scent of rot and mildew thick in the air. Dust hung in the beams of moonlight seeping through the slats in the roof. Somewhere, a rat scurried through the walls.

And then—breathing.

Ragged. Uneven.

The bounty hunter’s lips curled into a slow, knowing smile.

“You can come on out now, Hollis,” he drawled, his voice deep, edged with something just a little too rough, a little too sharp.

A scuffle of boots. A chair scraped against the floor.

From the far corner of the room, a man stepped into the dim light. He was tall, lean, and mean—his face all angles, his eyes sharp with the kind of cunning that came from a life on the run. A Colt rested in his hand, but his grip was too tight, too anxious.

Hollis MacCready. Bank robber. Killer.

A bounty worth five hundred dollars, dead or alive.

The bounty hunter tilted his head, watching him like a wolf might watch a wounded deer.

“You gonna stand there all night, or we gonna do this the hard way?”

Hollis exhaled sharply, his knuckles white around his gun. “Hell, I know who you are,” he spat. “The Lone Wolf. Some say you ain’t even a man. Some say you’re Death itself.”

The bounty hunter smirked. “Death don’t take bounties, Hollis. I do.”

The outlaw didn’t answer. Instead, he raised his pistol.

A shot rang out.

The bounty hunter didn’t flinch.

The bullet slammed into his chest, the force sending him back a step, but he did not fall. Did not bleed.

Hollis’s eyes widened. He fired again. And again.

Three shots.

The bounty hunter staggered, then slowly, he straightened. The holes in his duster smoldered, the wounds beneath them already knitting closed. He exhaled, rolling his shoulders, the last of the pain slipping away like a passing storm.

Hollis took a step back, his face pale beneath the grime. “What in the—”

Then, the moon rose.

Silver light flooded through the shattered roof, washing over the bounty hunter’s face. He shuddered, a deep growl rattling in his chest. His body twisted, muscles stretching, bones cracking. His coat fell away as his form shifted, his hands curling into claws, his teeth lengthening into fangs. The golden glow in his eyes burned brighter, fiercer, and unnatural.

Hollis turned to run.

Too late.

The bounty hunter lunged, moving faster than any man had a right to. He hit Hollis hard, driving him back against the wall. Wood splintered. A scream tore from the outlaw’s throat as claws raked across his chest, cutting deep.

Hollis swung wildly, his knife catching the bounty hunter’s side, but it barely slowed him. The werewolf snarled, slamming him down onto the floor, pinning him beneath a heavy clawed hand.

“No,” Hollis gasped, his breath hitching, his eyes wide with terror. “Please—”

The bounty hunter bared his fangs, leaning in close. “Justice don’t take beggars.”

Then, he struck.

Flesh tore. Bone crunched.

The screams lasted only a few moments before the desert swallowed them whole.

When it was done, the bounty hunter rose, blood dripping from his maw, his breath heavy in the silence. Hollis MacCready lay still, his throat torn open, his life stolen by the same violence he had so often dealt to others.

The werewolf exhaled, the beast inside him calming. He turned to the window, watching as the moon drifted higher, silver, and serene.

A debt had been paid tonight.

With a low growl, he reached down, grabbing what was left of the outlaw and slinging the corpse over his shoulder. Five hundred dollars was still five hundred dollars.

And dead men still paid bounties.

He stepped outside, the wind cold against his bloodstained skin. His horse waited, patient and unbothered, as if it had seen all this before. He secured the body to the saddle, then swung himself up, glancing back at the ruined house. Another job done.

Another name crossed off the list.

As the Lone Wolf rode into the night, the desert stretched wide and empty once more.

But this kind of behaviour isn’t just towards Taylor Swift, but all music artists, actors, influencers. Anybody you can think of with a following, comes with obsessive fans. In their eyes, their person cannot do anything wrong, and they defend them with their lives.

But why do people feel the need to have this level of devotion to one individual? Why do people spend their lives, following someone else’s?

Psychologists narrowed it down to the fact that this type of ‘fan behaviour’ was passed down through generations dating back to tribal leaders and warriors. People seen them as people in power and more important than any other civilian just because they had fame and power. This is why we idolise celebrities like we do in today’s world.

Continued from Page 8.

The growth of social media in the past decades hasn’t helped this whatsoever. A celebrities social media presence doesn’t help the fact that fans feel more personally connected to them, whether it’s seeing an Instagram picture of their pet or their daily Starbucks order, it makes them feel like they know them on a deeper level. This behaviour is often referred to as “parasocial relationships” or a one-sided relationship. These people don’t know you, but you know everything about them. A little creepy to think about if you ask me.

**But at what point does liking a celebrity go too far?**

A study done in 2003 shows that there are 3 levels to attachment to popular people:

**Entertainment social level: this is the most common form, where people follow celebrities for their own enjoyment without knowing much about them apart from their work online.**

The second Is Intense Personal Level: this is where fans think they know these celebrities on a more personal level, they fee strong emotional connections and even defend them online if they’ve done any wrong in the eye of the public.

**The last and most intense of theses attachments is called Borderline Pathological Level. This is where the obsession comes into play, their whole life is consumed by this one person. They may stalk, do everything in their power to be noticed by their idol or believe that they one day will have some sort of relationship with this celebrity.**

**Save the seals!**

By Lauren Harrington

It is against the law to intentionally disturb or harm a seal, but humans are intentionally and unintentionally posing a threat to their lives daily. Human-related activities like unsustainable fishing, habitat destruction, entanglement in discarded fishing materials and pollution pose a massive risk to our sea pup’s lives who play a critical role in the balance of marine ecosystems.

**“Harbour seals are considered a species of special concern in Ireland as their numbers have been slowly declining, with only 3,000 – 4,000 remaining today. Grey seals almost went extinct in Ireland in the early 1900s due to hunting, but recent protections have allowed their numbers to start to recover, and today they number approximately 8,000 – 10,000.” (Zoo, 2025)**



Unsustainable fisheries play a massive role in the harm to our seals in Ireland. As we are the consumers, we must stop supporting them. Seals rely on fish to survive, they don’t have the luxury of a plant-based diet like we do as humans. “There are an estimated 4.7 million fishing vessels worldwide, hauling in an estimated 171 million tonnes of fish each year,” (Ireland, 2025) Seals are indicators of marine health. If population of seals changes, this can indicate environmental issues like pollution, climate change and unsustainable fishing.

Why do we need seals? Seals play an important part in our marine environment. Seals are part of the food chain, as predators and prey.

Its no shock to anyone that there is a terrible dark side to having influence and popularity in the modern world. In fandoms, there is a sense of community that people feel free to be themselves and share positivity surrounding their favourite celebrity, but even angels have shadows that haunt their wings. People aren’t perfect, I’m not perfect, far from it, celebrities too, but obsessed stans fail to see where their celebrity messes up and should take accountability.

This then starts a war online between fans and those who dislike a celebrity’s actions. When a celebrity is ‘cancelled’ there are two opposing sides who battle it out on TikTok and X and it creates an incredibly toxic atmosphere online. This doesn’t help anyone in the long run and it’s a waste of time in my opinion. I believe that it’s not up to the fans to defend their idol, especially if they’ve done something morally wrong.

I think that finding a balance between liking someone and fangirling over someone online if incredibly important. Loving a celebrity isn’t necessarily a bad thing, if it brings you joy then who am I to judge? But when it gets to a point of depending on someone emotionally, then I think you need to take a step back and think about if this is the way you want to live your life.

**People should be able to enjoy someone’s music or work without someone else berating them for liking them. I think respect between fandoms is something that is always needed but sadly, its not that easy.**

So next time you find yourself in an online argument with someone over your favourite actor or artist, just ask yourself If all of it is really worth your time of day.

Seals help prevent the overpopulation of fish and this helps the balance of marine ecosystems. “Irish seals, longtime ecosystem balancers, bio-indicators. Their health reflects sea health. Pollution threats, including microplastics, harm seals, marine life, and humans. Protecting coastal waters is vital for the well-being of all interconnected elements in our marine environment,” (Ireland, 2025)

There are many risks our seals face daily, marine pollution including ingestion of plastics and entanglement in fishing gear which could lead to serious injury or in most cases, death.

**“Although banning single-use plastics is a step in the right direction, The Ocean Cleanup reported that 44% of marine debris in the Great Pacific Garbage Patch came exclusively from the fisheries industry,” (Ireland, 2025)**

By reducing the amount of unsustainable fishing and pollution of the ocean with plastics, we prolong the lives and breeding of seals. Overfishing reduces the availability of their prey, therefore they cannot feed. Climate change including changing ocean temperature and rising sea levels have a massive impact on marine ecosystems.

**For our seals the changes affect their prey, breeding patterns and reduces suitable habitat for them.**

Although, extreme weather events and storms are having a growing impact on human lives and the global economy, those affected most by our changing climate, are the wildlife who call the threatened

Continues on Page 10.



Continued from Page 10.

marine environment their home. Seals are semi-aquatic animals, which means they need land time to digest, rest and re-oxygenate their blood. Seals, like humans need their space. If seals are disturbed, this can have an effect on their natural behaviour thus causing an effect on marine ecosystem. Disrupting a seal in their land time especially pups, can lead to stress that causes mothers to abandon their babies. Seals are beautiful and if you are lucky enough to come across one, give them their space.

**Oceans cover more than 70% of the planet and are home to important species and ecosystems that we rely on for food, livelihoods, climate regulation and more.**

There are many ways we as humans can help restore our marine ecosystems and prolong the lives of wildlife mammals including seals. Reduce your use of plastics, small changes make a big difference. Reduce, reuse and recycle. Reduce your carbon footprint, “The climate crisis threatens the health of our oceans and the marine wildlife that call them home. Sea levels are rising, and we are experiencing more extreme weather globally, and carbon dioxide — a known greenhouse gas — is making our oceans more acidic. This acidity contributes to the loss of corals, or coral bleaching. The climate crisis is something we know how to combat — by drastically reducing greenhouse gas emissions,” (Oceana, 2025)

**Making changes to your diet including only eating seafood that is healthy and from well managed wild fisheries can help reduce the extinction of wildlife. When the next election comes up, make sure you are voting in someone who support important ocean policies to help protect our marine life and ocean.**

Avoiding products that directly and indirectly effects marine wildlife and the ocean-including plastic products. Bringing awareness and teaching everyone including children about the importance of oceans and marine wildlife is crucial. Picking up after yourself on beaches and participating in beach clean ups make a huge difference to marine ecosystems.

The more people actively participating in ecosystem restoration and understanding of how important our seals are can make a difference. Seal rescue Ireland is a charity dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick, injured, or orphaned seals. They are the only charity in Ireland dedicated to this important matter.

**“We run a 24-Hour Rescue Line, supported by just over 600 Rescue Network Volunteers who help to assess, and transport seals to our care, covering a whopping 3100 km of coastline. Our Seal Hospital is designed to cater to the care and rehabilitation of seals until they are healthy enough for release. Our expert Animal Care Team provides around the clock care to vulnerable seals for 365 days of the year. SRI strives to promote ocean conservation and sustainability through education, community engagement and research programmes to protect our marine environment and all life within. At our visitor centre, we welcome and educate guests from all over the world on threats facing marine life and promote ocean conservation and sustainability,” (Ireland, 2025)**

There are many ways you can directly help Seal rescue Ireland’s mission. You can help by volunteering, donating, adopting a beautiful seal, visiting, fundraising etc.

Visit their website to start making changes today for a better tomorrow. <https://www.sealrescueireland.org/get-involved>

## Lifestyle

### The Importance of Fitness and Diet

By Jack Van Der Mescht



One way in which you can instantly improve your life is by improving your fitness and eating healthy. Fitness and diet are important as it makes both your mind and body healthier. Adding fitness and a healthy diet into your lifestyle can make a huge difference to your life, as it allows you to burn off energy into something productive. You can improve your fitness by doing any form of exercise, whwether that is running, swimming, cycling, lifting weights or walking.

Some ways you can improve your diet is by consuming less sugar and processed foods like fast food, white bread and frozen foods, eating more vitamin and mineral rich foods like spinach, kale, onions, broccoli, blueberries, and oranges, eating low calories carbohydrates like rice, oats, potatoes and sweet potatoes, eating lots of meats like chicken, beef and lamb, fish like salmon, tuna and prawns and eggs are very good for you too. These foods will give your body the best nutrition to function to the highest level.

**Improving your fitness and diet brings physical and mental benefits to your life.**

Some of the physical benefits of improving your fitness and your diet is that your stamina and breathing will become better, your heart will return to its regular heartbeat quicker after any form of physical activity, which will also help reduce the risk of cardio arrests and other heart problems, your muscles will become fuller and more defined, your body itself will look leaner and more defined, and your body fat will reduce and your energy levels will increase.



Some of the mental benefits of improving your fitness and diet are that each time after you exercise, your brain gets natural dopamine, which is the hormone that gives you gratification, you will feel more confident when you improve your fitness as your body will look better, exercising and improving your diet also helps reduce brain fog too, which allows for your brain to function better and you will overall be more productive.

**Each time after you exercise, your brain gets natural dopamine.**

## Film Reviews

### The Batman

By Billy Kerrane

DIRECTOR: Matt Reeves

Actors: Robert Pattison Collin Farrell Zoe Kravitz, Paul Dano

Box Office: \$772.8 million

Date released: March 4th, 2022

The batman 2022 is a film based on the dc comics superhero Batman it is directed by Matt reeves and this specific film is based on Frank Miller’s landmark comic book series “Batman: Year One.” Miller’s series, published in 1987, takes place on Batman’s first year as a masked vigilante and leads up to his first encounter with Gotham City. I think this movie took a really different take on the Batman series.

**I like how they don’t show his origin story despite showing how much of a rookie he is to the hero scene.**

The main protagonist the batman (Bruce Wayne) is played by Robert Pattinson.



**Coming from the twilight series this character is very different and many people wrote this off by saying he couldn’t portray batman and that the two characters were too far apart, but Pattison really showed his acting range here by giving and amazing performance as the billionaire vigilante.**

Other outstanding performances for me were delivered by Paul Dano as the Riddler and Zoe Kravitz as Selena kyle/cat women. Paul Dano’s The Riddler is an extraordinary antagonist and portrays the Riddler as if he has some mental illness, he displays borderline personality disorder which gives

this movie a serious tone than previous films. He has a motive while displaying hatred for the rich and wants a better life for the poorer people of Gotham.

**Zoe Kravitz as Selena kyle was the perfect casting she has such a heartbreaking origin, and this movie makes us connected to her character.**

This movie goes into many stereotypes mainly about how the rich and the poor live their lives. This is an exceptional film with a realistic approach to the superhero genre. I would give this film a 9.2/10 with the sequel set to release in 2026 I hope it can extend on the already beloved characters.

### Anora: A Gritty, Heartfelt Tale of Love, Power, and Survival

By Eva Lewis

Running time: 2 hours 19 minutes

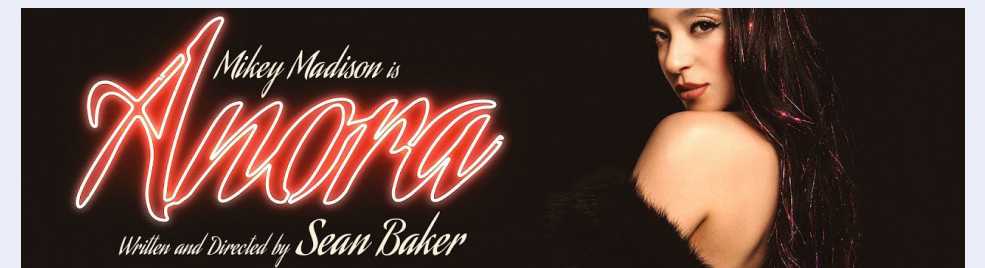
Director: Sean Baker

Lead Actors: Mikey Madison, Yuriy Borisov, Mark Eydelshteyn

Rating: 4/5

**“Anora” set against the colourful backdrop of Brooklyn, is a compelling story that explores privilege, class, and the complexity of relationships.**

On the surface, Sean Baker’s powerful, spirited and rollicking “Anora” unfolds wildly with an often-comedic tone, through several flawlessly produced, high-energy set pieces laced with witty remarks. When we first meet Mikey Madison’s vivacious Russian American Ani (short for Anora), we know that she makes a living off exotic dance and sex work. She leads a humble life and is not waiting around for a knight in shining armour to whisk her away from the club she works at.



But this is in part a Cinderella story, so the knight does appear one day. He is Ivan (Mark Eydelshteyn), the prodigal son of a Russian oligarch. After their impulsive Las Vegas marriage starts a series of events, Ivan’s wealthy family steps in and wants to end the marriage. As hostilities increase, Ani finds a surprising ally in Igor (Yura Borisov), a hired enforcer whose allegiance starts shifting.

**The dialogue is crisp, often infused with humour, yet it does not shy away from delving into profound themes. The movie, “defly comments on questions of class, privilege, and the wealth divide,” according to critics, highlighting Baker’s skill as a storyteller.**

The visual storytelling is captivating with dynamic camera motions and framing that encapsulate Brooklyn’s diverse settings. By giving viewers, a visceral connection to the characters’ travels, the cinematography enriches the story (Clarke, 2024). The soundtrack features a blend of contemporary tracks and original scores that resonate with the film’s themes. Notably, Take That’s, “Greatest Day,” is prominently featured, adding a poignant touch to key moments. “Anora” has garnered significant acclaim, winning the Palme d’Or at the 77th Cannes Film Festival. It was also named one of the top 10 films of 2024 by the National Board of Review and the American Film Institute (NPR, 2024). The film received six nominations at the 97th Academy Awards, including Best Picture, Best Director for Sean Baker, Best Actor for Mikey Madison, and Best Supporting Actor for Yura Borisov.



## Film Reviews

### Wickedly Disappointing!

By Anu Griffin

Hold onto your broomsticks because the much anticipated and widely advertised “Wicked” film has crash landed into cinemas, and it’s not the magical journey I was promised. Despite the star-studded cast and the beloved Broadway legacy, I think this film fell flat on its face.

First off, let’s talk visuals. Director Jon M. Chu, known for his vibrant work in Crazy Rich Asians, seems to have lost his touch here. For me the film dragged on for what felt like an eternity, yet nothing truly dramatic ever happened. Scenes meander aimlessly, stretching minor plot points into drawn-out sequences that add little tension or excitement.

By the time the credits rolled, I felt like I had sat through hours of buildup with no real payoff.

I think the plot focused too much on how the witches originally met instead of moving on with something more interesting.

Now, onto the performances. Cynthia Erivo as Elphaba and Ariana Grande as Glinda showcase phenomenal vocal and acting ability, but they’re let down by a film that is aggressively over lit and shot like a TV advert.

The pacing is another wicked issue. At a bloated two hours and 40 minutes, the film drags its feet, making it a test of patience rather than entertainment. The narrative is cluttered with unnecessary subplots.

### When the credits roll, you’ll be more relieved than satisfied.

In an era where audiences crave innovation Wicked plays it disappointingly safe. It relies heavily on nostalgia from the original Wizard of Oz, failing to bring anything new or imaginative to the table. It’s a missed opportunity to reinvent a classic for a new generation.

In conclusion, Wicked is a visually unappealing version that struggles to balance comedy and darker tones.

Save your time and money, this is one trip to Oz that’s not worth taking.



## Music Reviews

### Gone are the boyband days!

By Kate Mahony

Harry Styles is most well-known from his glory days of world famous boy band One Direction, but after the breaking the hearts of teen girls everywhere in 2016 when the band went on hiatus he went underground until May of 2017 when he released his debut solo album Harry Styles more commonly known to his fans as HSI.

This album is a far cry from the pop songs that he started out with in his boy band days, opening with ‘Meet me in the Hallway’ a slow and sombre start to an incredibly raw and beautifully written album.

Leading into the album’s single ‘Sign of the Times’ is a drastic change in tempo. The song itself is worth the amount of positive praise this album has received, with the clear emotion conveyed through the lyrics.

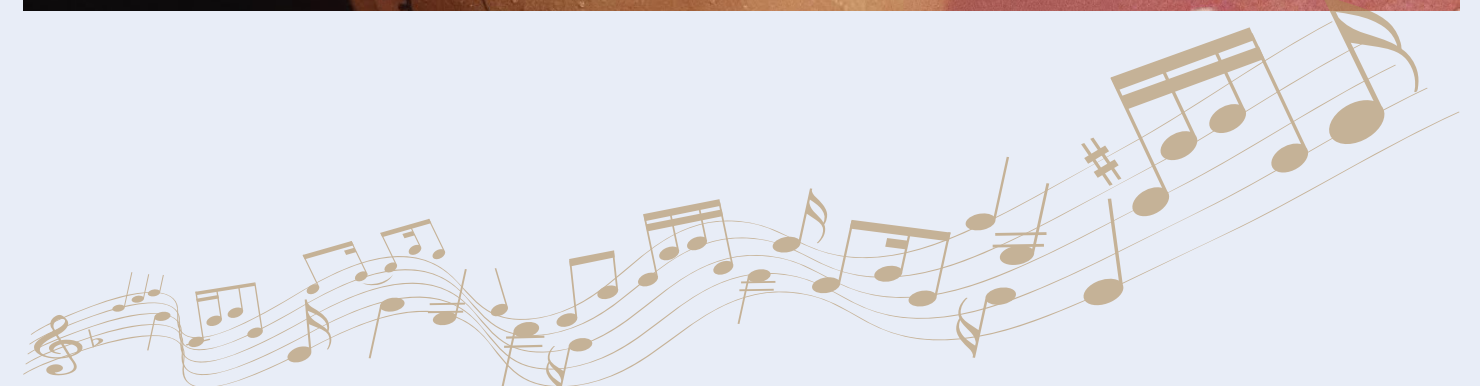
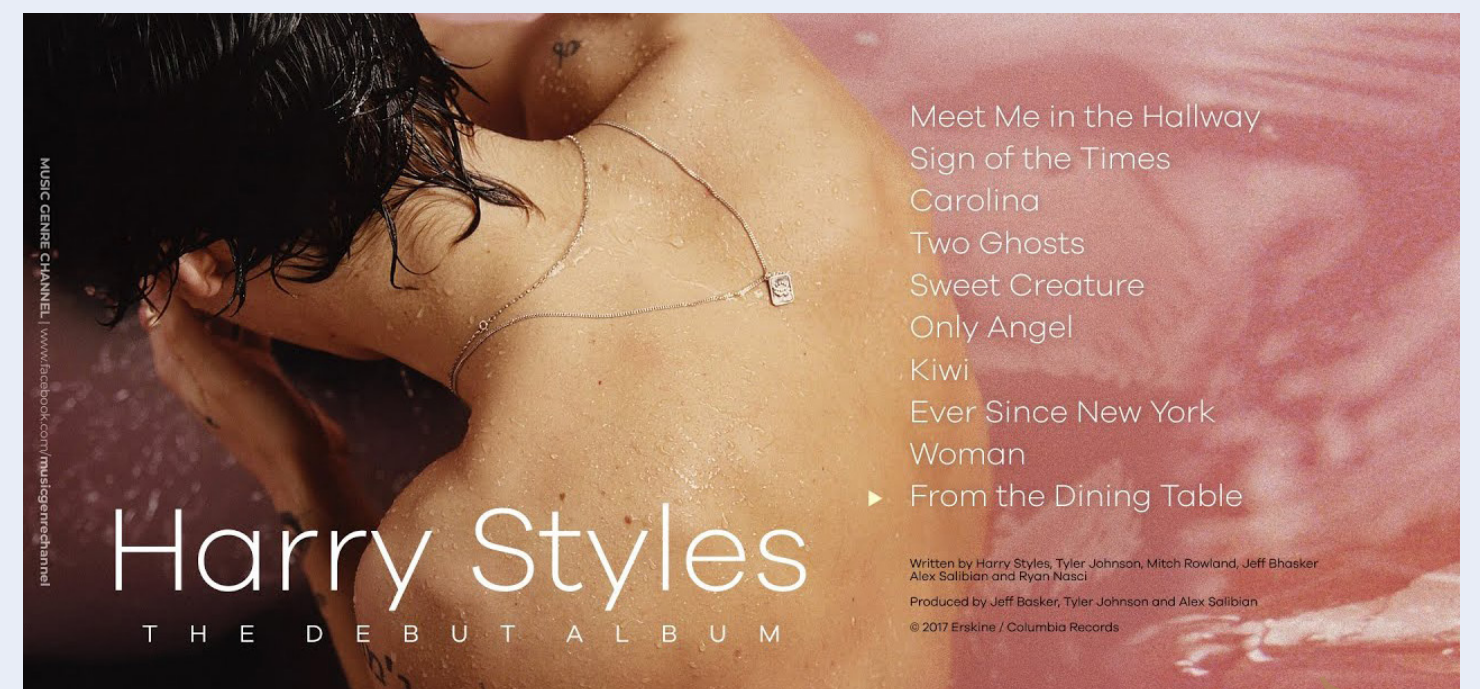
A great song to add to your crying playlist I might add! It is not only slow tempo and emotional songs in this album but also a hint of pop rock with ‘Carolina’, ‘Kiwi’ and ‘Only Angel’ displaying the talent in diverse ranges Styles is capable of now that he can showcase his talent on a solo stage.

Styles has said “I’m very proud of this album. It’s a piece of me I’ve never really put out before. I’m happy, I’ve just loved writing and being able to put it into an album. I’ve never made one myself before.”

He has said that most of the album was written in Jamaica where he flew his band over and they went through over 70 song ideas, they spent two months recording and writing to cut down to the final 10 that were released.

The album was incredibly well received by all fans of One Direction and solo fans.

I thorough enjoyed the listening experience and would highly recommend giving it a listen. I would definitely recommend watching the music videos too! Styles has a great eye for cinematography and bringing his songs to life.





## Music Reviews

### Lana Del Rey “Did you know that there’s a Tunnel under Ocean Boulevard?”

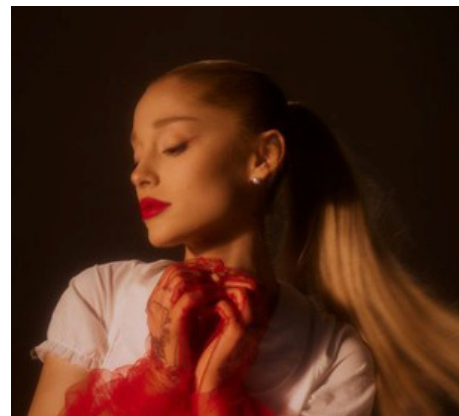
By Elizabeth O’Keeffe.



Lana del Rey never seems to disappoint, she is a creative and musical mind, who’s music transcends over time and connects with those who love the melancholy sound of her voice. I have been a Lana fan for years and I can unbiasedly say that this album is a classic. Released on March 24th 2023 as her 9th studio album Did you Know that there’s a Tunnel under Ocean Blvd, encapsulates all of her feelings of emotion and longing.

### Ariana Grande Reveals her Major Secret in her New Album ‘Eternal Sunshine.’

By Ellen O’Keeffe.



Can an album overshadow a cheating scandal? Or can it tell us the true story? Ariana Grande reveals major secrets and truths in her seventh studio album ‘Eternal Sunshine’ concerning rumours of breaking up a family out of boredom.

In 2024, the popstar was involved in a major cheating scandal that almost destroyed her career, when rumours surfaced online that Grande had an affair with her Wicked co-star

This album has many songs that are very melancholic and sad, but it also has a mixture of great pop songs which Lana is more famously known for especially in mainstream music. These different types of songs bond well together.

For instance, songs like Sweet and The Grants which is an anthem about Lana’s love and trauma from her family the Grants are in complete contrast to songs like A&W and Peppers which are songs that make you want to go to the club and dance!

When I listened to the album on my CD which is how all albums should be listened to! I had emotions of sadness, joy, regret and nostalgia.

**I cried throughout most of the album, as the lyrics really touched my soul.**

If you in any way appreciate art you need to listen to this album, you may or may not have heard of the song called Let the Light in from this album, but I highly recommend for you to give it a listen, it will change you!

Ethan Slater, who were both supposedly in happy marriages at the time. The couple apparently started dating while they were with their spouses, Dalton Gomez and Lily Jay.

**Grande was painted as a wicked witch online for apparently getting with Slater when his wife had just had their newborn child.**

However, this is not the case. According to Elle Magazine, sources confirmed that these allegations were not true, and that Grande had been broken up with Gomez since January 2023 while Slater and his wife had been separated before they even started dating. On March 8th, 2024, Ariana Grande put an end to the rumours and allegations by releasing her album ‘Eternal Sunshine.’ The title of the album is inspired by the film ‘Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind’ which follows the character of Joel, played by Jim Carrey, who undergoes a procedure to erase his ex-girlfriend Clementine from his memories.

On the album, Ariana devastatingly sings about how her ex-husband Dalton Gomez is her, ‘Eternal Sunshine,’ singing, ‘I’ll be the first to say I’m sorry,’ and how she has now,

Lana wrote this album with her musical partner Jack Antonoff an incredible producer. He helped her produce this unique sound from the album. There is a mix of trap music and melancholic pop. The song Taco Truck x VB is basically a trap remix of Venice Bitch from her album Norman Fu\*kling Rockwell. Again, there really is a contrast of sounds on this album.

**The album got a lot of recognition especially on TikTok with many of her songs trending amongst the Gen Z generation.**

While this was great for the Album, I found that it made the album into a bit of a mainstream spectacle and not many people really cared about the deeper meaning behind the album.

Overall, I absolutely loved this album it will go down in music history in my opinion as one of her most creatively challenging Albums.

I will end this review with my favourite line from the album “What you doin’ with your life? Do you think about it? Do you contemplate where we came from?”

“found a good boy,” (Ethan Slater) but he’s just her, “eternal sunshine.” Grande obviously wants to erase her past from her mind and start of fresh with her new man. The singer even acknowledges the rumours in the song, “true story,” singing lines like, “this is a true story about all the lies you fantasised,” and “I’ll be the villain if you need me to.” Even though she plays the good witch in Wicked.

**The album is beautifully composed, with breathtaking vocals and refreshing sounds, reminiscent of 90s R&B but with a futuristic vibe.**

Particularly the song “The boy is mine” and “Supernatural” that sound like you were transported to the 90s in a spaceship. The lead single “yes, and?” is a house music anthem that claps back at the allegations made towards Grande with spicy lyrics like “Why do you care so much who’s-I ride?”

**Ariana Grande is not scared to confront the rumours and haters in her refreshing and bold album ‘Eternal Sunshine.’ Listen for yourself to uncover the true story.**

## Gaming Review

### Star Wars: The Skywalker Saga Game

By Darragh O’Reilly

I purchased the Stars Wars game on an 80 percent off deals, so it seemed worth it, and I was impressed. The graphics are great as it is a 2022 game. The game begins at episode 1 were you play as a young obi wan were you then meet a young Anakin Skywalker. The game basically plays through all nine movies and some of the lightsabre’s battles are so fun to play you are also able to use the force and there are loads of iconic ships you can fly across the galactic.

**It brings me back to when I was a kid watching all the movies, the game feels nostalgic as it allows stars wars fans to play through all nine films and explore the open world of the universe.**

The game versions an open world once you complete the story which lets you explore meet new characters and completely new missions.

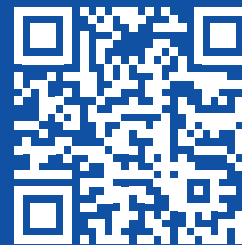
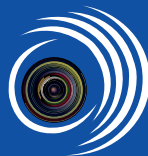
The unique aspect to Star Wars is the huge characters and the number of characters I can say with the roster they haven’t missed one there are hundreds of characters that are all featured in the movies. The dialogue is the same in the films as it is in the game voice lines and sounds are taken straight from the movie making it even more realistic.

**The humour is replicated well just like in the films making it a good game for adults and kids to play.**

The play follows the same age rating as the movies at PG 12 there is no blood or gore so the game definitely applies to kids. If I were a parent, I would let my kids play this even if he/she isn’t 12 or above as the game isn’t difficult or hard, the missions are simple especially if you’ve seen the films which I think most kids have. This game is a fun experience and great entertainment. I rate this a strong 8/10.







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