

Taylor Swift delivers ‘The Life of a Showgirl’ album



PHOTO | GENIUS

“The Life of a Showgirl” album cover.

By Hannah Graham
Copy Editor
By Mackenzie Byerlee
Copy Editor

Taylor Swift’s 13th studio album, “The Life of a Showgirl,” brought a mix of glamorous charm and unique style for a fun experience as a listener. The album, released on Friday, Oct. 3, was unlike anything she has ever released before.

We truly had a spiritual experience. Throughout our entire listen, we just wanted to get up and dance. It was the antithesis of her last album, “THE TORTURED POETS DEPARTMENT,” where all we wanted to do was lay down and cry.

She definitely used her glitter gel pen to write this one.

We could easily see how this is the fruit of years on tour. Her previous albums’ voices crept into each song.

“Opalite” is what we think it would sound like for “Bejeweled” from “Midnights” to go out to the club with the “Lover” album. The voice speaking in “The Fate of Ophelia” was so clearly our bookish “evermore” while “reputation” covered it with her brass and drums.

Swift has a rich tapestry of media literacy to pull from, and she made use of every thread. She referenced Shakespeare in her first song, aligning visuals in her special release music video with the famous painting of

Ophelia’s drowning by John Everett Millais. The newly engaged showgirl made her love for her fiancé, Travis Kelce, an overarching theme for a lot of the songs. In “WiSh LiSt,” she sang about dreams she hopes will come true with Kelce.

“I just want you,” Swift said. “Have a couple kids, got the whole block looking like you.” What we loved about “Actually Romantic” was that it finally addressed the unnecessary hate Swift received for merely attending her boyfriend’s games. The internet could not stop talking about her. Meanwhile, she was having the time of her life and falling in love.

“Opalite” was all about creating your own happiness, a double-meaning with the titular gemstone which is manmade. It is infectious joyous, and we felt like we were in “The Perks of Being a Wallflower” with our arms out through the car sunroof listening to it.

There were a couple of misses on this album for us, though. “Honey” pairs a soft, emotional set of lyrics and piano with a trap beat, and it is a sonically dissonant disaster. We cannot see her winning awards with this.

We also felt that “CANCELLED!” was, ironically, tone deaf. The song is a rock anthem about how cancel culture is toxic and fame is fickle. We as a society hold

celebrities to insane standards of behavior, especially women, but we do not think that Swift should be trying to find solidarity with those who are cancelled. She should have sat out of this conversation, not tried to create space for celebrity grievances.

Already, anti-fans have pounced on “Eldest Daughter.” Opinions without an ounce of nuance abound.

The song is a satirical treatise on the pitfalls of social media, which rewards falsity and apathy. It uses the language of the internet – unbothered, trolling, memes, hot take, bad bitch, savage, fire – to point out how lame it is that we are punished for sincerity.

Swift is tired of trying to be nonchalant when she just wants to marry her man and earnestly love him out loud.

However, audiences hear “But I’m not a bad bitch, and this isn’t savage,” and they stop at the cringe without thinking she could have the wherewithal to make that an intentional choice. It takes critical reading skills to understand art, and not everybody has them.

While we are not prepared to call this her best album, we think that people just do not know how to have fun sometimes. They overanalyze the lyrics on the hunt for philosophy, and they can not appreciate whimsy.

‘Wednesday’ is a gothic mess



PHOTO | NETFLIX

Jenna Ortega as Wednesday Addams.

By Jay’Mi Vazquez
Managing Editor

I went into “Wednesday” season two with high expectations. After all, the first season was not just a viral sensation, it struck a rare balance between dark comedy, supernatural intrigue and teen drama.

Jenna Ortega’s performance became iconic overnight, and the show managed to inject new life into the Addams family legacy.

But watching the first half of season two? It was a frustrating experience. So frustrating, in fact, that I did not even bother finishing it when the rest of the season premiered on Netflix.

The only thing about the show that still works is Jenna Ortega. She remains the beating black heart of the series. Her

portrayal of Wednesday Addams is sharp, intense and delightfully deadpan.

Even in the most convoluted scenes, she somehow manages to bring the dark aura of her character to the show. If anything keeps this show from collapsing completely, it is her.

Unfortunately, though, not even her performance is enough to salvage what has gone wrong here.

Season two leans harder into horror and world-building, expanding the universe beyond Nevermore Academy. We get more of the Addams family and darker mysteries brewing beneath the surface.

On paper, that sounds great, but watching it makes the story overstuffed. The series introduced too many new characters, causing tons of subpar subplots.

To me, the show’s plot becomes a tangled mess with no clear center.

What is even worse is that the pacing is completely off. The first half of the season, just four episodes, is supposed to set the stage for a bigger payoff later, but it drags.

Instead of tightening the mystery, the series swings wildly between cartoonish violence and forced emotional drama between several characters and storylines. The result is a gothic fever dream that is hard to follow and even harder to care about.

The show’s tonal imbalance is one of its biggest problems. Season one walked a fine line between creepy fun and genuine character development. Season two, by contrast, goes heavier on gore and supernatural horror, but with less heart.

Supporting characters from the first season are now pushed aside or underdeveloped. Enid Sinclair, who had a compelling arc in season one, feels sidelined. New characters were introduced with some promise, such as Bruno Yuson, and then became forgettable.

Even members of the Addams family, like Gomez and Morticia, appear without being given much to do other than random side quests.

One big structural issue is Netflix’s decision to split the season into two parts. While that might work for some shows, here it only highlights the weaknesses.

Part one is all setup with no payoff. Four episodes in, the show has barely gotten started, and it already feels like it is running in circles.

In the end, I tapped out. And I do not regret it. The promise of Wednesday has been buried under messy storytelling, over ambition and a total loss of what made the show feel fresh in the first place.

Maybe the second half pulls things together. But based on what I saw, it is just not worth the effort.

Nike x Skims rips off Yeezy



PHOTO | SOLE SUPPLIER

Nike x Skims ad, announcing the collaboration.

By Solé Scott
Editor-in-Chief

Kim Kardashian is again biting off the creation of others for her new collaboration with Nike.

The collection was announced back in February and made its way to stores on Sept. 22, and I am still scratching my head on how this collab came to fruition.

My first thought is why would Nike partner with a Kardashian who is not an athlete, nor has any athletic abilities that she is widely known for.

Her company Skims is a shapewear brand, and I do not understand the connection between workout clothes and tight see-through garments.

What I will say is that this collaboration is completely inspired by her ex-husband Kanye West and his Yeezy line. The neutral colors were his style and will always be his.

Even her launched fashion show in New York City was a copy of Kanye’s 2015 show when he showcased the dull and emotionless models standing there while everyone gawked.

Like all her brands, this feels inauthentic, as Kardashian again inserts herself in a space where she is not an expert.

For example, she had a makeup line called KKW, and she was not a makeup artist, nor did she do her own makeup. She has a fetish for slapping her name on products.

Let us revert back to her Skims and Nike collaboration.

The material of the clothing on the models and customers looks thin and see-through, and that is shocking.

I went on TikTok to see reviews, and my assumptions were right. Customers mentioned the material quality was lacking.

Some of the pants were confusing to me, as I noticed it was a weird built-in thong design that is visible to all.

I also call bull to the claim that Nike.com states, that this collection can produce over “10,000 ways” to combine looks with just 58 items available.

The price range is \$38–\$148 for this collection. This is a normal price range for Nike

and other sportswear brands like Adidas and Lululemon.

I will commend her on acquiring this collaboration. The company is seven years old and has already propelled Kardashian to design pieces for the United States team at the 2024 Olympics as well.

She is fantastic at marketing and selling. I nor anyone on this earth can fault her for her decision making.

What I do know is that we all have free will to choose to buy and spend our money wherever. I will not be buying anything from Nike x Skims, but others will, and that is completely fine.

Kardashian even confirmed that there will be a shoe added to the collection some time down the line. I am intrigued to see the design of that shoe and how much will it cost.

I just wish she would be honest about where she got her inspiration from and stop acting as if she put blood, sweat and tears into a project that has already been out for other company for 10 years.

SOUTHERN NEWS

Advisers: Cindy Simoneau
Frank Harris III

Contact information:
Email: scsu.southernct.news@gmail.com
Newsroom Phone: 203-392-6928
Fax: 203-392-6927

Mailing Address:
Southern Connecticut State University
Adanti Student Center Room 222
501 Crescent Street
New Haven, CT 06515

Issues printed by: Valley Publishing, Derby, CT
Follow us on Twitter: @Southern_News
Like us on Facebook: facebook.com/thesouthernnews
Visit us online: TheSouthernNews.org
Print edition online: OurSchoolNewspaper.com/Southern

Solé Scott
Jay’Mi Vazquez

Section Editors
Brianna Wallen
Brandon Cortés
Julian Markese
Lily Rand
Wade Barillaro
William Gagné

Staff Reporters
Vacancy
Daveny Dabrowski

Copy Desk
Mackenzie Byerlee
Hannah Graham

Editor-in-Chief
Managing Editor

News Editor
Features Editor
Sports Editor
Photo Editor
Photographer

Photographer

News Writer
Sports Writer

Southern News welcomes any and all comments and suggestions. If we make a mistake, please contact us and we will publish a correction or clarification in the next issue.

We are the student newspaper of Southern Connecticut State University, and we welcome the writing of all Southern students and faculty.

To submit a piece, email it to scsu.southern.news@gmail.com, or stop by the Southern News office on the second floor of the Student Center, Room 225. Electronic submissions are preferred.

Visit www.TheSouthernNews.org for more.