

music recs & reviews

Milk & Honey by The Flowers

*"the winds away & now i can't stay
can't i wish you wrong?"*

*I present to you a Flowers classic,
a steady dream of a song perfect
for these foggy nights. The lyrics
are tempting, reminding us of a
bruised connection, misunderstood.
Find comfort sweet and warm with
Milk & Honey.*



birds in my garden by Jerrbooy

*"Now there's something missing...
Just like him I wait again"*

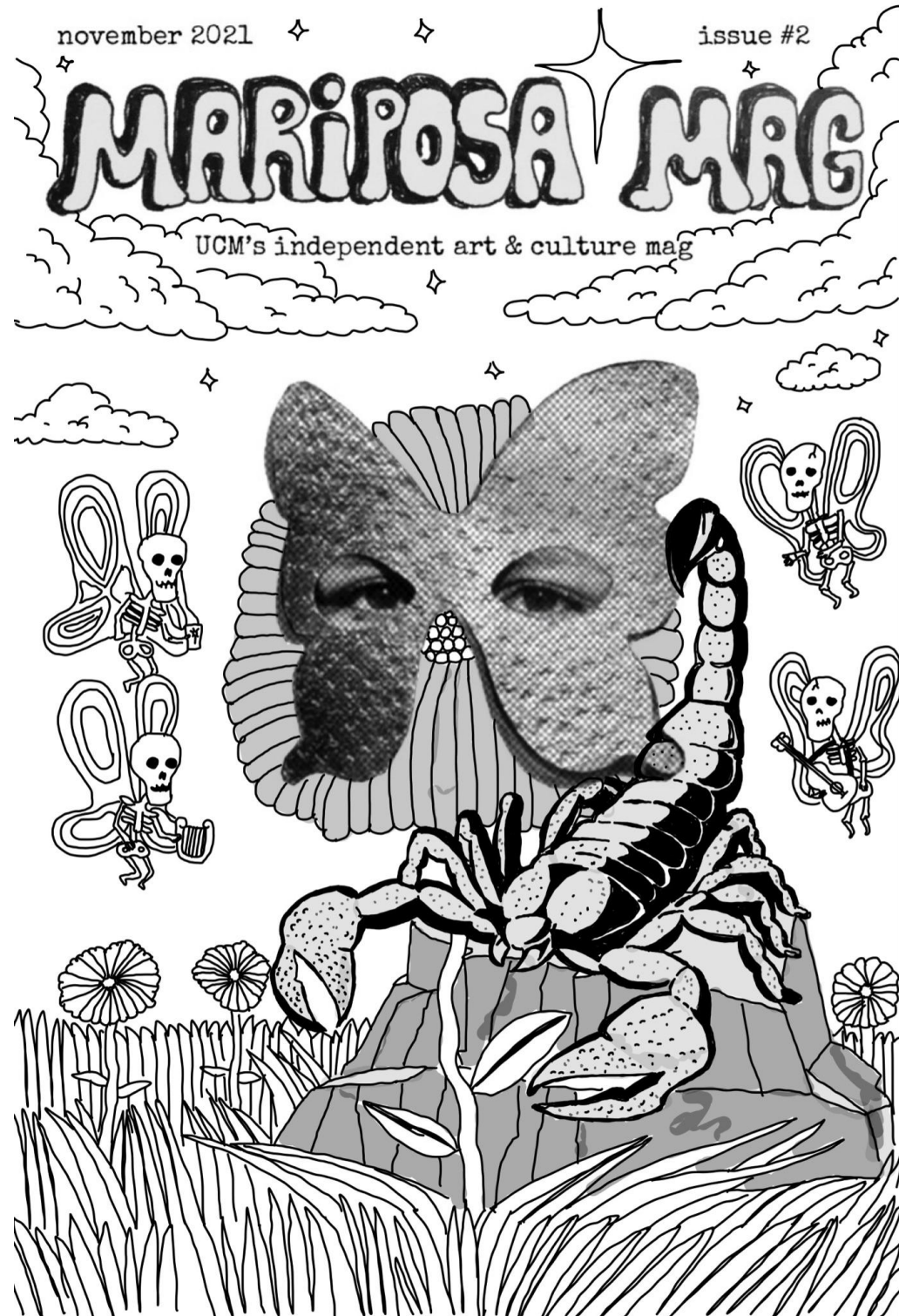
*Lighten the mood with this
sweet sunny song, full of wavy
crashes and bouncy drums.
Soak in the romantic brilliance
of birds in my garden to stay
warm this winter.*



Pumpkin Patch by Ted Barber

*"Feeling left out in the rain
Still gotta carry this crown of shame"*

*This song of cacophony and
magic will make you feel
determined, hopeful, drawn out.,
Just because the autumn season
is ending does not mean the
feeling of waiting and wanting
which Ted so expertly captures
has to end too.*



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Mariposa Mag is a student-led independent arts + culture publication based at UC Merced. Our mission is to connect campus with community, and facilitate a love for our home! MM is a safe place for expression.

Follow us on instagram! @mariposamag.ucm
Follow our art coalition @yam.ucm

Submit anything! Ideas! Questions! Opinions!

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music recs & reviews



Music is one of those universal forms of art; it promotes connection and conversation, but also provides comfort and companionship in moments of loneliness and solitude. Here are some local curated songs to pull you out of, or put you into, a cool, mellow winter funk.

Written by Mahealani LaRosa

Heaven is a Party in Modesto by Salacious Wizard Cult

"Heaven is a party in the Central Valley...
And you just joined a cult!"

You can't help but smile as the chorus of this song tumbles out. If you live in the Central Valley, this song is all the validation you need. Salacious Wizard Cult reminds us that we can make a party out of shared laughter and funky beats.



Arcades and Highways by Emily Yacina

"Because we only have a week before
We go on with our lives once more"

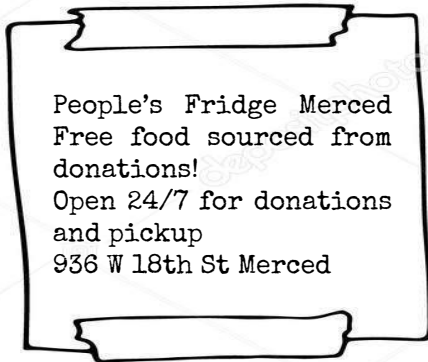
Emily Yacina offers all-consuming love in this fantastic song, touching on the way closeness can smother and inspire at the same time. As the year comes to a close, let this song accompany you as you reminisce. Although it hurts, it can be sweet!



COMMUNITY RESOURCES



Pop-up people's pantry
Free fruit and veggies
Saturdays 1-2:30pm
936 W 18th St Merced



People's Fridge Merced
Free food sourced from donations!
Open 24/7 for donations and pickup
936 W 18th St Merced



Merced Farmers Market
16th and Canal st.
Saturdays
8am-11am



Free Covid-19 Testing:
Merced County Fairgrounds
900 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.
Merced, CA
Mon-Fri, 7am - 7pm



Planned Parenthood monte
3166 Collins Dr,
Merced CA
209-723-7751



Affordable clothes:
Merced Thrift Center
1346 W Main St.
209-349-8018

Merced LGBTQ alliance
@mercedlgbtqalliance

Remember to wear your mask! Protect each other!

a love letter to merced by mahealani larosa



merced is a doorway, the line between sweet heat in my throat, the underbelly of fresh strawberries, sticky fingers, ripped grass, linoleum ragged footsteps on cobblestone downtown, boarded windows, lake reflections, places that nobody else can know, emptiness, nothing fills the air yet it suffocates, inspires, driving towards connection. loud music in the streets, leering eyes through windows, comfortable confrontation, a divide dreamt, suddenly wind, redemption, the crunch of leaves earnest and raw beneath your feet, spinning records and steamy rooms, we come together, such a strange new kind of love, tentative and gentle friendship. here the stars are brighter, and the night envelops you in cold, like orchard branches bare, like dust on the concrete, we pile at the bottom of the slide. so many trees, laughter aching inside, we lay with a kind of lonely, kindred and discarded, towards more, guitar string bloodlines and notes tucked under magnets, art in your voice, hastily uncovering the heart, the center, the city of death and grass... love you merced. -ml



@merced_ghost is a crowdsourced collection of anonymously-submitted photos of Merced. Check out their instagram for cinemas, almond orchards, sunsets, street art, & local oddities, all photographed locally.

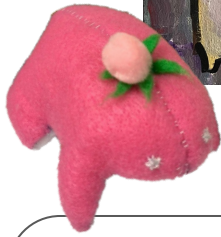


Ask Alice: UC Merced's first anonymous advice column

Dear Alice,
I constantly feel like I'm in a dream. I never know what is going on and most of the time I don't pay attention to what I'm saying. I always feel like I'm on autopilot. I want to feel present again but I don't know how. How do I feel? When will this feeling go away? How can I make it go away?
Sincerely, Dazed Daisy

Dear Daisy,
However dazed you may feel now, remind yourself that this haziness is not permanent. Even when most of the day feels dreamy and distant, focus on those small moments of solidness. Try to build a routine; however repetitive that advice may feel, making a cup of tea every night before bed or writing a short list in the morning might help clear the foginess. And don't be too hard on yourself. We all get overwhelmed and disconnected, but this does not mean we have to bear the brunt ourselves. This time of year especially feels dreary and strange, so reach out to those around you and share these feelings. It might be comfortable to hear that we're all a little dazed too. Good luck!
With love, Alice

STUDENT ARTIST: SHANI CAMPBELL



My name is Shani Campbell, I'm a first year and I create all sorts of things. I like to use my art as a creative medium for my thoughts and worldly experiences.. But mostly for fun! I am taking commissions for handmade frogs like the one pictured above!, contact me on instagram @shani.starr



✧°: * ✧°:* Horoscopes *:° ✧*:*° ✧

a casual outlook for the rest of year, focusing on your sun sign!
-from an intermediate student astrologer



Aries (March 21 - April 19)

Take it easy my remarkable fiery friend! It's okay to be sensitive, but try not to take every little thing too personally. Your persuasion has its limits. Don't trick yourself along with the rest.

Taurus (April 20 - May 20)

Your strong and alluring presence may garner you some attention as this year comes to a close. Resist indulgence, try to balance out your impulsivity with a little rationality.

Gemini (May 21 - June 20)

Feeling disconnected? Although you are considered sociable and light, there is a significant stealthiness to your interactions. Ease up on the maneuvers, and let yourself breathe.

Cancer (June 21 - July 22)

Give yourself time to rest! Your endurance and intuition have led you this far, but now you must soak in the present. Remain willful in your goals and empathetic with those around you.

Leo (July 23 - August 22)

We all have desires Leo, but that doesn't mean we always give in. Behind your ego and boldness lies fear you've been avoiding. It's time to act on your claims of confrontation.

Virgo (August 23 - September 22)

There's something regal about you, lovely Virgo. Beneath your organized appearance, there is inexplicable complexity. Dive into this unknown realm before you become explosive.

Libra (September 23- October 22)

You're always observing others, but what about paying attention to yourself? Your instability can be healed through creativity and balanced connections. Check in on yourself.

Scorpio (October 23 - November 21)

Your inherent mystery and sensuality give your presence substance. Recognize your power, and don't tread lightly when you know that you can do more.

Sagittarius (November 22- December 21)

Your unrestrained energy bursts in all your interactions. Know that they are always laughing *with* you, not *at* you. Your vibrance and positivity prohibit disrespect.

Capricorn (December 22- January 19)

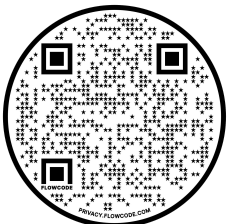
You understand that you are worldly, but this may appear overly critical or assertive to others. Remember to exercise patience and understanding, even if it's hard.

Aquarius (January 20 - February 18)

You may not be conscious of your intensity, but you shine everywhere, Aquarius! Your unique and analytical perspective can only guide you so far. Sometimes you must depend on your heart. Let yourself feel something.

Pisces (February 19- March 20)

Take a break from your never-ending dream world, and join the rest of us in reality. Being withdrawn is comfortable until you forget you are kind-hearted. Share your otherworldly.



scan this code to ask alice a question of your own!

Pavilion Food Review: *the anonymous student*



ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview meal: one (1) waffle, one (1) sausage, and one (1) hash brown
taste: 1/5
looks: 0/5
emotional experience: 0/5

Review: THIS MEAL SUCKED!!!! This shit aint even prison food!! I feel like a prisoner of war!! Actually, scratch that, prisoners of war were fed better than us!! Is this some sort of a torture tactic? Feed the students less and less so they feel so hungry they HAVE to eat anything as long as its food? Sausage was so fucking salty and oily and the fucking hash browns cut off another week off of my life from all the refined oil and grease. Waffle wasn't even that good and it tasted like the fucking inside of my shoe. Pavilion just doesn't know how to take a fucking compliment. I say ONE (1) good thing about them and they just SHIT in my plate the next meal. Remember everyone we are paying 2.3k MINIMUM a semester for them to give us three fucking pieces of food for breakfast.



ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview meal: ham and beans sandwich
taste: 0/5
looks: 0/5
emotional experience: 0/5

Review: you CANNOT talk about uc merced without bringing up the "LEGENDARY" HAM AND BEAN SANDWICH!! This is truly a UC merced dining hall gem!! This is a great american twist on the classic british breakfast of beans n toast. Wonderfully spread beans topped by a scrumptious slice of ham. My sincerest compliments to the chef. You really can't ask for more than this. This may be the peak of the uc merced dining experience. When I pay uc merced 2.3k a semester this is exactly the type of meal I have in mind. Truly breathtaking. Every day I wake up and thank God for blessing me with food like this.

photos and screenshots from @ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview



This fall, an instagram account called @ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview started gaining traction among UC students. Ran by an anonymous student, this account posts pictures of meals from the pavilion and rates them: including ratings for taste, looks, and emotional experience. These posts are highly comedic by themselves, but when you realize that this account only follows the official @ucmdiningpavilion account (and tags them in every single post), the legendary attitude of this account becomes evident. To go even further, the food review account will go on to the official pavilion account and comment under their posts. Most recently, the account commented "this looks like a preschool art project" under a photograph of a colorful vegan vegetable korma. It's obvious that the Pavilion is trying to make up for these slanderous posts by posting their own photos of the food, heavily filtered and idealized in an attempt to seem appealing. The owner of the @ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview is not going to let them get away with that one.

Our editors reached out to the anonymous jokester to ask them about their experience running the account. "I think I made the account back when school started and I was just mad that the pavilion kept serving the same shit every day and the food wasn't that good for what I had to pay for my meal plan. I've experienced a little bit of hate comments and shit, but I never take anything too seriously and most of the hate gets deleted after I roast the fuck out of them. Only my roommates and a couple close friends know that I run the account, and I post a couple hours after I eat so anonymity hasn't really been an issue."

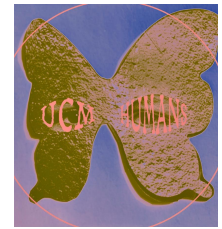
Although these posts are super funny, allowing students to connect over shared experiences and find humor in the unappetizing photos, they do point to a much greater issue regarding the UC Merced dining services and their recent decline in quality. These students deserve better food! Since UC Merced has resumed in person instruction, dining options on campus have become severely limited. The closure of the Yablokoff Wallace dining center and the Summits Marketplace mean that The Pavilion is the only accessible venue which serves 'fresh' meals for students who live on campus.

The @ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview account brings to light the problem that this lack of variety creates for students. Many of the students who eat at the Pavilion are first and second years, new to campus. The poor quality of the food and the limited options for nourishment shed a negative light on UC Merced as a whole. How are students expected to succeed academically if they do not have access to appropriate meals? Some might say that the humor of this page is extreme or exaggerated, but the popularity of this account among the campus community shows that it is working to create discourse around a serious problem. In the comments under these posts, students talk about how the food makes them sick, or how it has no flavor, or how meals are days old, or the same all week long. One student even created a petition to publicize this issue. If you would like to support, the link is included as a QR code! Join thousands of individuals in taking a stand towards access to better food for students.



Thanks to @ucmdiningpavilionfoodreview, the problem surrounding food at UC Merced has garnered attention from the public and the administration alike. Who would have thought a comical instagram account could ignite real change?

Humans of UC Merced



humans of uc merced is a digital archive of our school's diverse students and faculty, showcasing their stories and connecting our community.

find more humans at @tmm_humansofucm on instagram

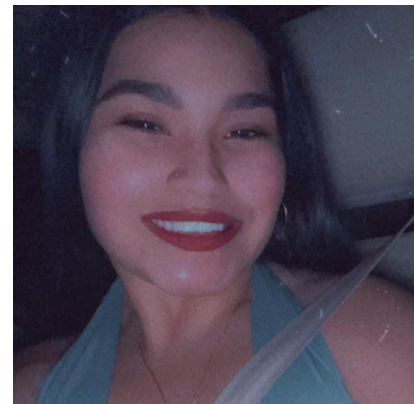


"If you're skeptical about UC Merced, don't be. This school offered me a spot when I was rejected/waitlisted from the UCs I applied to. And, that email changed my life for the better. There is so much history to be produced in this growing school, and we all get to be a part of it. There may be not much to do in Merced, but all it takes is some friends and good company to have an amazing time. Give it a chance!"

Joseph Francis Marquez, Human Biology major and Psychology minor, Fourth-year

"I want to give a shoutout to all the faculty, all the staff members, all the students, all the EDI champions that have bravely pushed conversations to address injustices and inequities in higher ed. At UC Merced, there has been substantial work to move these equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts forward. This shoutout represents: 'I see it, I hear it, and we will continue the movement to become an excellently inclusive community?'"

Cynthia N. Cortez, Deputy Chief Diversity Officer at the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



"UC Merced has affected me in a great way, it's opened a lot of doors and opportunities for me. A lot of my professors have been very kind, even though it's a very small school they're still trying to make you succeed. One of my TAs actually offered me some research in a field that I'm really interested in, neurology. I've had such a great time, people always look down on Merced, but I think it's less about where you go, but what you make out of it. It's also been very welcoming for the minority community, which is something I think more universities should be doing."

Danna Mestas, Biological Sciences major, Third-year

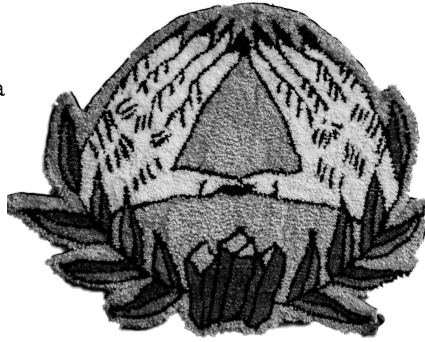
Local Business Highlight: Abracadabra

by matthew alvarez and grace garnica

Abracadabra! A place of wonder, mystery, and magic! Self-described as “Merced’s most eclectic shop [that] is more than just a store... it’s an experience!” Local shop owner Sarah Macias is a born and raised Merced local. She has built her entire life here in Merced- first working at her family’s store, then at Strawberry Alarm Clock at age 20 (another Merced Main street highlight). As a lover of the eclectic 90’s grunge scene she grew up with, Sarah was inspired to create a space in which she could be creative and foster a hub of creativity in her hometown.

“I’ve always worked retail my whole life- I grew up in a family business, it’s been in my blood. At one point, I just kind of got tired of making money for everyone else, and I really love getting involved in the community. Also, being your own boss is just something that I will never give back- I either flourish or fail on my own accord, not somebody else’s.”

The shop serves as a focal point for both locals and college students alike to indulge their creative spirit through the mystifying aura that the shop inspires.



Located on Canal and Main, Abracadabra draws you in with a fantastical, ever-changing front window. Inside, you’ll find everything: ritual candles, crystals and tarot cards, home decor, a dedicated horror section (complete with a VHS collection and life-size Jason cutout), and curated vintage clothing. The store also hosts a number of exciting events such as horror movie nights, a womxn’s club, local band performances, and tarot readings. At the time of this interview, Abracadabra shares its shop space with another store called Kreepy Kawaii.

“... Patti and I found this spot after looking at a lot of other places. We signed the lease three days before the COVID shutdown. Our friends and family were worried for us, but we were both determined, and we didn’t want to live in fear.”, Sarah said. Since officially opening in September 2020, Abracadabra has quickly become a Merced favorite. Groups of UC students, high schoolers, and adults alike frequent the store to find their next eclectic item. Many art objects for sale are made by Sarah herself- “If I don’t create, I wither”, the shop owner told us.



editor’s picks: best of merced our favorite spots



in the city:

- ★ bear creek bike path: get some sweet autumnal air on your next excursion! falling leaves, local critters, and a peaceful creek to keep you calm during finals season.
- Directions from UC: lake rd -> right on yosemite -> left on mckee -> right on bear creek
- ★ coffee bandits cafe: the coziest place to study! they've got art, a zine library, board games, and delicious coffee to boot.
- 309 w main st
- ★ supermarket gallery/store: check out merced’s newest cow-printed art space with super awesome art, clothes, and more!
- 428 w main st

on campus:

- ★ at the back of SSM outside, there’s a cool metal tower! very peaceful spot for watching cows or to gaze at foggy green fields...
- ★ the solar breezeway at the engineering 2 building is a great spot for stargazing on clear nights!
- ★ at lake yosemite, go to the left of the main entrance and follow the shoreline until you get to the tower. graffiti, empty bottles, and the wide lake will greet you.

Memento Mori, Memento Vivere: An evening at the art gallery

This past semester, UC Merced had it’s most impressive and immersive exhibit yet! Young Artists Movement club and the Curatorial Methods and Practice class came together to build an unsettling seasonal living room in the gallery, complete with vintage furniture and spooky paintings. The opening night was a huge success, the gallery consisted of crafted candles, hanging books, and the glass walls were shrouded in plastic for an extra mysterious element. We hope to continue to see big things from the arts community. Check out photos @ucmercedartgallery!



city of murals: utility box project

The city of Merced launched a utility box beautification project in June 2021, a collaboration with 15 local artists who have since been beautifying our streets. photos provided by @mercedmurals Check out these awesome murals downtown!



Karen McComb
@mccombkaren
R & 18th st. by Maria's Tacos



Eddie Rodriguez @eddieorodriguez.art
Corner of 16th & O st.



Alana Perlin
M & 18th st.
by gateway gardens



Madison Ewing
@madisonewingstudio
Main & MLK by Donut Kings

We asked Sarah what her experience has been like witnessing the growth of the UC and its impact on the city of Merced:

“Being from Merced before the UC was here, some locals were really nervous about the change and negativity it could bring to our communities. On the other hand, some people were really gung-ho- But that was a lot of people who were gonna become rich from it. And then you had normal people that were just kind of concerned because it was a huge change. From what I’ve seen, it’s brought culture from all over, it’s brought people from all over. They’re a large part of my customer base, too. Over the past four or five years, I’ve become close and clicked with a lot of students from the UC, I get to see them grow through their years and then graduate, and it’s awesome. And some of them still come and visit.”

If UC Merced students should know anything about Merced, Sarah said “[Merced has] a lot to offer. There’s the town itself, and there’s so much visually, that’s appealing. We’re two hours away from the ocean or the mountains, so it’s a good little safe hub that you can go and travel around from. Merced itself has offered me so many things. And so I think that if people just kind of invest a little bit, that they can also see what Merced has to offer.”

When asked about the future, Sarah said “I feel that I am on a precipice of growth. I have a lot of ideas as far as integrating more of the UC with the community- I have tons of events planned, I’ve got classes that we’re going to be starting here, new vendors that will join the space, there’s really just endless possibilities.”

To keep up with the magic of Abracadabra, hear about upcoming events, and see more from the shop, follow @xx_abracadabra_xx on Instagram and check out their store on 1731 Canal St., Merced, California. ★

your AD here!

Mariposa mag is a non-profit, independent magazine. We are student ran & student funded, with additional generous support from the UCM Global Arts Department.



With a donation, your ad can go here!
Email us at themariposamagazine@gmail.com
for more details.



Mariposa Mag Opinions:

UC Merced can invest in its community...

by a student

The UC Merced Arts department, often known as Global Art Studies Program or GASP, is a hidden gem of the university. It's not a major that many know about. If you tell peers that you major in GASP, the conversation turns into a long winded explanation/defense: 1. What the hell GASP even is, 2. Defend why you're majoring in art at a research/STEM based university that's only 16 years old, 3. For some reason justify whatever plans you have after graduating, something lets say, an engineering student, surely doesn't have to justify as often.

As a GASP major, I take painting, theory, multimedia, critical photography. The classes offered aren't plentiful, but they are individually challenging courses that have made me a better person. I don't think you can say the same about solving chemistry problems, not in the same way. Early mornings in the art lab, drawing, solving the problem of a body until my mind is numb, washing brushes, orange conte stains, sharpening charcoal with a razor, leaving class and walking down the empty halls. The theory of seeing, of culture, learning about the way that images shape our world and opinions. Worrying all weekend about a photo shoot, tying your friend to a stop sign in a busy intersection at sunset to get the perfect shot. I become a recluse in my secret hideaway- the first floor of SSM, the back of the building. The art gallery with its transparent walls, and ever changing insides.

It must be prefaced that this is a love letter, an opinion, and a student perspective, and I certainly don't speak for *all* students. But I love this department, this city, the people in it, and that is what drives me. As an art student, I feel endless support from my professors and faculty members. The same cannot be said for the school itself. If a student enrolled in an advanced biology course without taking the prerequisite, there would be outrage. However, this past semester students were allowed to enroll in Video 2 classes without taking Video 1, greatly hindering the education of those within the department and revealing the true opinions of our administration. The university has placed our art classrooms, our gallery, very tellingly. We're shoved to the back of the school, behind the new shiny buildings. The new Arts and Computational Sciences Building? I'm grateful, relieved the school gave us a new space so desperately needed, but we are still on the lower level, the one that's hard to find; two floors are relegated for computational sciences. There is still no oil painting class; there is no space for one. Last year, the art gallery lost its only storage space, and now uses a spare room that faculty was able to secure for us at the last minute. The only two buildings with studio art classes are an entire campus across from each other. These placements do not come across as deliberate or particularly nefarious, but more so exemplifies the running theme of neglect to the arts by our school.



by investing in the arts.

The foundation of great universities and their communities come from the arts, because the arts are the foundations of culture. What is UC Merced's culture? Is our student culture reflected in our marketing, our clean graphics, the sanitized aesthetics of a university establishing its reputation? Where is the messiness? How do we facilitate love for the city we occupy? Where is the *Merced* in UC Merced?

One of the most common complaints about the UC from locals and students alike, is that there is a disconnect between the campus and the city, a lack of student unity and community. A lack of creativity, a lack of discourse on campus. The city of Merced is a city teeming with art and life and wonder- murals, bustling theatre, diverse ethnic groups, local businesses, fairy gardens, quirky artists, community elders, vernal pools and fairy shrimp, odd landmarks, eccentricities you'd only see in a place like this, a place where the valley inspires. Yet still, many students only venture into town when they take the bus to Target for groceries. When asked, numerous classmates of mine have never been downtown, have no idea there's a coffee shop, an oddities store, a record store, don't know about the best pizza shop in the central valley. They wouldn't guess there's multiple working artist collectives in the city, because all they see is the UC, where they only take an art class to fill a gap in their schedule, and the single bus stop downtown.

It's not to say the university has completely abandoned the arts; programs with the city and the campus art gallery are admonishable and it is not my goal to belittle these efforts. I acknowledge the roadblocks preventing more from happening. However, when compared to the university's investments in STEM programs and research, the disparity becomes concerning.

There are numerous studies stating the importance of art in education, and the ways it not only creates social and community bonds, but molds well-rounded individuals who are able to critically interact with the world around them. The importance of that cannot be overstated in a university setting. Science and art go hand in hand; you cannot have one without the other. Both create a framework for seeing and understanding the world around you, and both contribute to society by intersecting. To create a truly successful research university, the arts must be an integral part of the campus, and this aspect of UC Merced needs dire support.

Building a university from the ground up is no easy task, and I won't presume I could have done it any better. It's been easy to see the investments the university has made in its research, investments that are paying off- we have a medical school in our future, and our rankings rise every year. But what will make students love going to school here? A number on a list won't do that.

If UC Merced wants its students to love Merced, and to use their knowledge gained here to contribute back to their communities, the UC must invest in its arts. ★