

Poetry and Pupusas: El Centro's third consecutive celebration of the spoken word



Host, professor and poet laureate Rachelle Escamilla (seen to the right) joins students in sharing powerful creative pieces.

PHOTOS BY AJ FERNANDO

Hayley Matto

Staff Writer

History was passionately shared when a group of 33 on-campus creatives gathered in El Centro to partake in pupusas, poetry and powerful storytelling last week.

Rachelle Escamilla, Cal State Monterey Bay (CSUMB) professor of public speaking, creative writing and poetry and Monterey County's current poet laureate, opened the night.

"I think that it's our job as academics for us to dig up what people don't have access to through using the library and the archives," Escamilla said. "This is an important part of being an academic and a Latino for me."

Escamilla then dove into a personal story about her grandfather's experience as a bracero: a Spanish-term meaning "one who works with his arms" that refers to a past labor agreement allowing Mexican laborers to work in U.S. agricultural and railroad industries. Escamilla's grandfather also helped sue the USDA for not enacting benefits very similar to today's SNAP benefits.

"Him and the other guy that were named in the lawsuit did get beat pretty severely regularly for having sued

the USDA, but they did win the case," Escamilla said. "Apparently my grandfather's work is foundational to food justice in the United States. The point is not to say that I'm standing here as a representation of that legacy, but that you all have something like that in your families...it's hidden in the archives, you have to dig for it."

Escamilla shared where she found inspiration for a few of her own poems, most of which stemmed from more discoveries in her own family heritage.

"If you know the tropes of Chicano culture then you are familiar with a few of our female tropes that reappear in our literary mythology and culture. La Llorona, is a woman that cries by bodies of water, and if you are a human and bring your babies by a body of water, she will drag their bodies down into the water and to the pits of hell," Escamilla said, sharing a little historical context with the crowd before reading her interpretation of this literary character.

Escamilla read a final and more recent poem of hers, "I did a poetry reading at the Monterey Bay Aquarium in front of the kelp forest, and I was reading my poetry to a bunch of teachers...it was a really fun and special night."

Her piece spoke on the nature along our coast line, making frequent metaphors about moon jellies.

Before passing the torch to the students to read their works, Escamilla facilitated a question and answer segment for the audience to ask her about her published works. After, a number of students bravely took to the center of the full room to read their own works of poetry. The pieces ranged from centering around love, to death and loss, their mothers and their own heritage and familial culture.

Bianca Valencia, a fourth year psychology major, said, "I started here [El Centro] August 2024 and since then we've hosted this event three times, but I know it had already been a recurring event before my time as part of El Centro. We do try and change it up a bit, we used to do Pozole and Poetry, but the pupusas were a huge hit last semester so we decided to bring them back!"

"I think it was a good turnout, I really enjoyed hearing the students share too. It felt really engaging," Valencia said. "Honestly I like when we are in smaller spaces like this because it gives a community feeling, when we are in bigger spaces it doesn't feel as intimate."

Children's Book Drive

Associate Students are partnering with the College of Education to put on a book drive for on-campus families. Read ahead for more information.



Women's Rugby

Learn more about the traditions that making CSUMB Women's Rugby the longest running sport's club on-campus.

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"The Running Man"

Our columnists took on "The Running Man" this week, covering both film adaptations and the original Stephen King novel.

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Bust a move: Exercise is Medicine program debuts first Just Dance Competition

Hailey McConnell
Contributing Writer

Students were moving and grooving to win the top spot at Exercise is Medicines' (EIM) first Just Dance Competition. Using the beloved video game, Cal State Monterey Bay's (CSUMB) Kinesiology department wanted to offer students a fun, alternative way of exercising that creates community and support for others.

However, the Kinesiology department was not alone in facilitating this competition. Collaborating with CSUMB's Otter Dance Team, some of the members participated in the competition, while others were set judges. With the campus dance team present, there was non-stop support for fellow students that wanted to exercise through dance.

"It is all about the community aspect, I see people more inclined to do exercise as a part of a group," said Manuel Estrada, a fourth year student and EIM physical activity leader. "Being yourself speaks volumes and encourages others to participate."

Right at the door, excitement poured out of the staff. Dressed in costume to resemble certain Just Dance sequences, they greeted students with smiles and information on where to go once inside.

After passing through the door adorned with gold streamers, the welcome table greeted everyone with potential prizes and winnable merchandise. Ranging from stress balls shaped as weights to bracelets and stickers, that could be won by spinning a wheel.

Inside the classroom, all the tables were cleared to make room for the designated dance floor; seats on the outskirts of the dance floor sat all 20 contestants. Colorful strobe lights and lit glow sticks - given to students upon arrival - were the only lighting - an atmospheric vibe for the competition.

The judges sat at a long table along the back wall, which showcased the randomized bracket for the competition. Before the competition started the dance team led students through a warm up consisting of



Using beloved video game Just Dance, Exercise is Medicine aimed to provide students with a fun outlet for movement.

PHOTO BY HAILEY MCCONNELL

different dances such as the Wobble and Cha Cha Slide.

"We definitely got our heart rates up, we are sweating in here and dance is a great way to get active and it is not your norm exercise," said Ashley Holland, an EIM physical activity leader and fourth year kinesiology major.

The competition progressed in a bracket style, where two people would compete and whoever won would advance to the next round against a new dancer.

"We judged them on how well they dance, with their facials and the energy they brought to the performance," said Daniela Zapien, a third year hospitality and tourism major and member of the Otter Dance Team. "This event brought light to the love of dance which I loved and I think it did great getting people excited to come together."

There were six rounds that lasted two minutes each, where Just Dance sequences were pulled up on

YouTube and the contestants matched the avatar's dance moves to their best ability. Participants danced to the Justa Dance choreography for songs including "Call Me Maybe" by Carly Rae Jepsen and "Pump It" by the Black Eyed Peas. Shouts of support from both the staff and the dance team could be heard while students were dancing.

Even though there were only two contestants competing at a time, everyone was encouraged to dance with them rather than sit on the sidelines. In the end, though, there were special prizes given to the top three winners: an exercise band for third, a massage gun for second and a Polaroid camera for first place.

"This was so fun and the first time I have played Just Dance in a while, so I was surprised cause it actually felt like a workout," said Justin Ho, a fourth year computer science major who competed. "I like working out with my friends and this brought that same feeling."

the Lutrinae

The Lutrinae is a weekly campus newspaper covering CSUMB and its neighboring areas. Here at *The Lutrinae*, our goal is not only to educate and inform the public, but to entertain, to spark creativity, to encourage diversity of opinion, and to build a sense of community on campus and with the neighboring cities.

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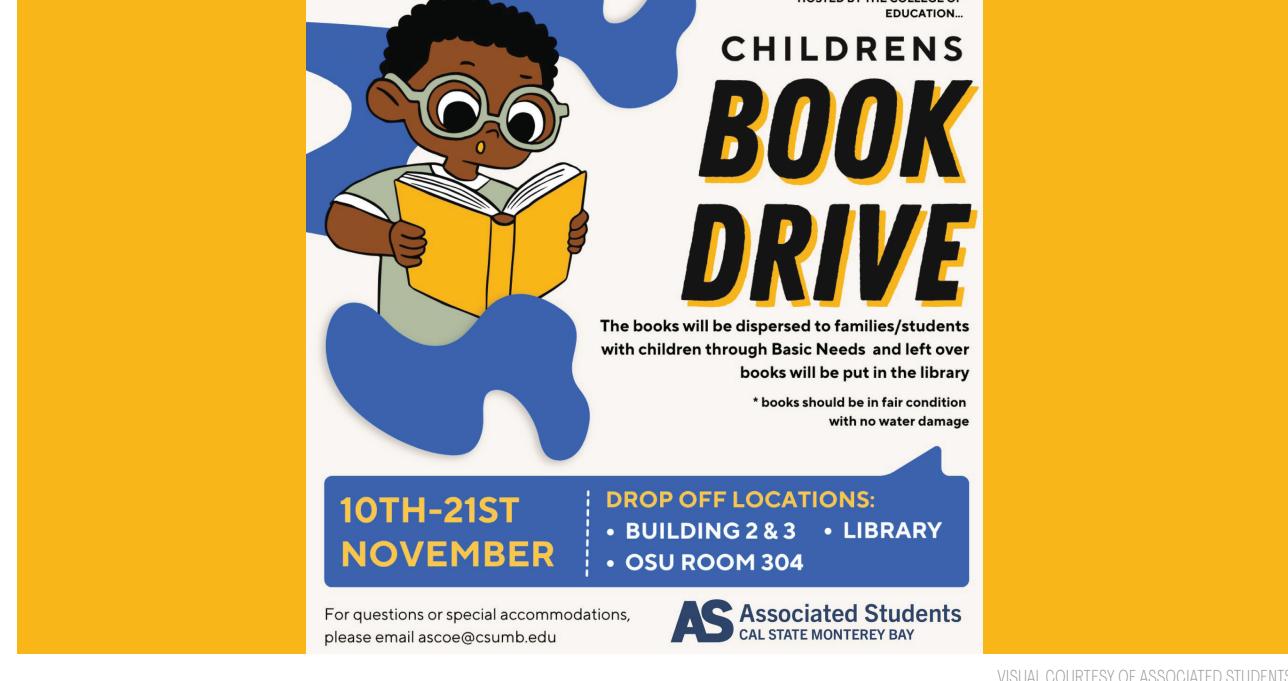
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Novels in November: AS hosts Children's Book Drive



VISUAL COURTESY OF ASSOCIATED STUDENTS

Jocelyn Corona

Staff Writer

Hosting their first ever Children's Book Drive, Associated Students and the College of Education hope to give the gift of reading to on-campus families this holiday season.

"Reading from a young age allows for the development of language, cognitive and social skills," said Piper Ellison, the College of Education senator. "These skills are crucial in navigating the world, and any opportunity to support young readers should be encouraged."

Organizers believe donations will help increase the accessibility of reading to many CSUMB families.

Books donated will be given to students with children through Basic Needs, with leftover books being donated to the Tanimura & Antle Family Memorial Library on campus.

The books that are in highest demand are for younger children (ages 8 and under). However, any donations from baby books to age appropriate young adult novels are accepted. Donated books must have little to no damage. Water damaged books are not accepted.

There are multiple drop off locations on campus

including: Tanimura & Antle Family Memorial Library, Building 2, Building 3 and Room 304 of the Otter Student Union.

Do you have any unused children's books or young adult novels laying around your childhood bedroom? Now's the time to put them to good use. Contribute to a culture of facilitating literacy for young minds on campus; find a donation location near you, and get your books in before Nov. 21.

Want to contribute, but don't have any leftover books? Shopping at a used bookstore can be a more sustainable option for students looking to donate. Two options nearby campus include The Friends of the Marina Library and Lighthouse Books.

A roughly 15-minute drive from campus, The Friends of the Marina Library is open Tuesday through Sunday and offers a variety of used books in good condition - perfect for donation. Proceeds from the bookstore directly support the needs of the library branch and staff.

About the same distance off campus, Lighthouse Books is independently owned and operated, specializing in offering used books and media for an affordable price.

Honoring tradition, Women's Rugby Club now thrives



CSUMB Women's Rugby keeps team spirit alive through unique traditions performed before, during and after the match.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CSUMB WOMEN'S RUGBY

Hailey McConnell

Contributing Writer

When Cal State Monterey Bay (CSUMB) first opened its door to students in 1995, it offered a variety of sports clubs including the rough and tumble sport of rugby, for women.

In 1995, women's rugby was relatively new to the sports scene with the first World Cup being played in 1991. The rise of women's rugby clubs began on American college campuses in the 1980s.

The club survived some lean years, but this year it's more popular than ever. The standing 23 members of the club are a variety of women and gender nonconforming people are a mix of players with previous experience, as well as those who have never played rugby before coming to CSUMB.

"You can say you are not competitive, but when you are having fun, you want to win and being here with these wonderful people who say they love to play and have fun, it makes me joyful and these people push me to do better," said Genesis Ramirez, a third-year student who plays forward.

CSUMB Women's Rugby functions as a club, so it runs for the entire school year, but most of their matches are played in the spring. Their league starts in January, where they play in the West Coast Collegiate Women's Rugby Division II, where they will largely be competing in tournaments. There are 10 players from each team on the field at a time during their competitions, where they play against teams like Cal Poly Maritime and St. Mary's College.

Rugby is a contact sport that is played without padding. It can be known to be an aggressive sport, but the players say they love and respect the game and their teammates make it possible to be comfortable on the field.

"Before Stanford 10s I was worried about being tackled cause the sports that I have done that were combat related, it was in a more controlled environment," said Hope Johnson a third-year student who is a first-time rugby player, "but in rugby, it is more chaotic, but I learned through that tournament that I was fine."

According to team members, they want to create a comfortable environment due to their year-round schedule. All skill levels are invited, so they continue to cover the basics of the sport, such as passing and tackling, every week.

"Older veterans are saying this is the first time they are seeing so many people stick around because people come and go, but having recurring members makes us a lot closer," said Isabella Pineda, the safety coordinator of the rugby club. "We had our first win in five years last year because previously the team was so small they had to forfeit games."

This uptake in members has benefitted the team's ability to play by contributing to their relationship with the sport as well as each other. Additionally, their community is enriched through their club traditions.

"Shooting the boot" a tradition where after a member earns their first try (similar to a goal or touchdown)

they have to drink from the shoe they played in during their match. This occurs after the match at a social that is hosted by the home team, who also are expected to bring food for themselves and their competitors.

That isn't the only tradition they engage in during their post-match socials, the "B*tch of the Pitch" is also known to make an appearance. This is where one team rewards a member of the opposing team with a piece of merchandise from their university for standing out during the match.

"My goal is community while I am here, so just getting along and playing for fun and playing for good team workability," said Elizabeth Dyck, a first-year who plays prop.

While there are post game traditions, they also have traditions they keep during each game. These include wearing rainbow ribbons, covering their cheeks with glitter before they play or chanting "Saturdays are rugby days" before each match.

These traditions and the club are kept alive through dedicated members who spend hours on and off the field through workouts and practices, some of which dedicate time to learn the sport by watching plays in their free time.

Women's Rugby at CSUMB is an environment that strives for community that grows with each other, and it shows when team members ask for commitment to the game and point to a motto that says something to the effect of: If you mess up, mess up 100% (only in more colorful, profane language).

If you were a superhero, what would be your super power?

Maddie Honomichl

Social Media Manager

Would you fly like Superman or swing through the city like Spider-Man? Tune into our Instagram @thelutrinae to see how on-campus Otters responded this week.





‘The Running Man’: Is it worth running from the page to the screen?

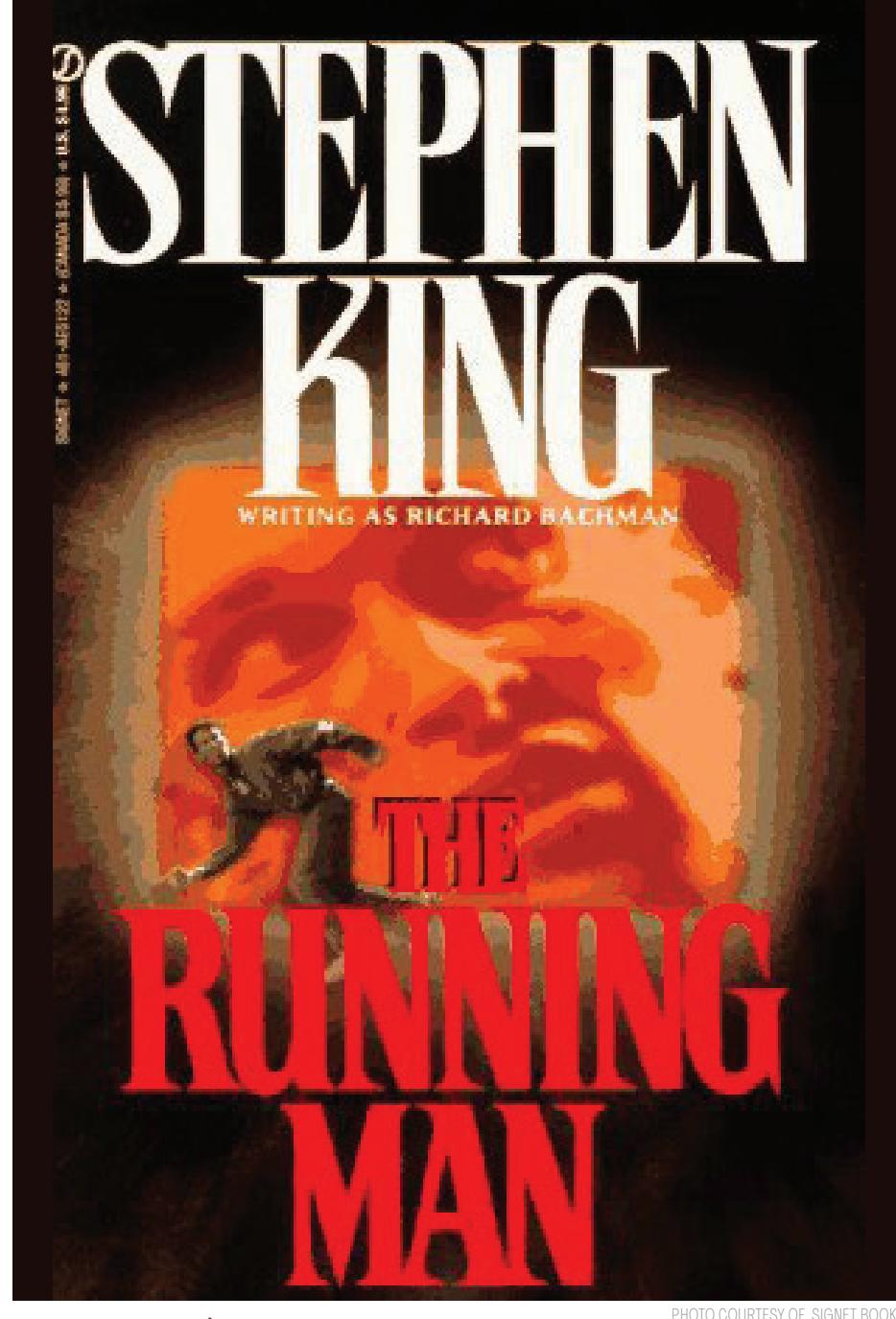


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PHOTO COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES



Eli Heck and Hayley Matto
Staff Writers

This week, Hayley of Hayley's Hot Takes and I (Eli, columnist of the Reading Raft) are tackling “The Running Man” story from all sides: the 1982 Stephen King novel, the original 1987 film adaptation and the newest blockbuster “The Running Man” (2025). With three versions spanning more than four decades, each brings something different to the table. Let's walk before we run and start off with the original text.

Going into “The Running Man,” I wasn’t sure what to expect. I’ve never been shy about my mixed, often negative feelings toward King: I can recognize his talent, but his character choices and writing style often leave a sour taste in my mouth. That’s why I was surprised by how quickly this book pulled me in.

Set in an alternate timeline 2025, “The Running Man” (1987) paints a dystopian future where the masses are numbed by screens and a mega corporation known only as “the Network” has near total control over society. The network creates shows and entertainment to placate the public that usually come in the form of sadistic games where contestants risk humiliation, mutilation and often death to hopefully earn enough money to survive.

The most extreme of these is The Running Man, a show where one contestant has 30 days to evade a nationwide manhunt, spearheaded by a team of hunters given nearly infinite resources by the Network. If they survive, they win a billion dollars. The catch? The record for survival is 8 days. The story follows Ben Richards, who enters the game out of desperation to afford even the most basic medication for his 18-month-old daughter, who is dying of pneumonia. During his desperate struggle for survival, many of his closest friends, people along the way and much of the network go down in a blaze with him.

What stands out most is the pacing. The book is relentless, and King writes fear, exhaustion and desperation with vivid clarity. You feel exactly as Richard does, heart

pounding, hiding in a sewer beneath a boiler you just set to explode, skin burning as you huddle against the heated metal of the grate. It’s a world that feels hopeless, but never flat. Richards’ emotional and psychological spiral, the grim knowledge that he’s unlikely to survive, paired with the relentless drive to keep going kept me invested the whole way through. The tension works. The adrenaline works. And despite my reservations, I found it genuinely compelling.

But enjoying this book doesn’t mean ignoring its faults. King may be one of the most prolific writers of popular fiction, but his work, especially from the ‘80s and early ‘90s when King wrote under the alias Richard Bachman, often reflects the worst aspects of that era. The casual use of racial and homophobic slurs along with the sexualization of women, is tiring and unnecessary, and at times pulled me out of the story completely. Some might argue “it’s just how people talked back then” (as is often done for writers like King) but I don’t think this excuses it. The writing and the writer are connected, and the consistent choices he makes on the page reflect more than just a desire for realism.

Hayley cutting in here, I went and caught “The Running Man” film adaptation in theaters on opening night. While it seems to have followed the King novel pretty closely in plot, it definitely faltered in capturing the same haunting and gruesome theme. Instead, it pivots to frame Ben Richards as our next modern-day hero.

In my cinematic journey this week, I also found myself watching the 1987 adaptation of “The Running Man,” which, despite stretching even further from the novel’s plot, seems to be far more near and dear to the audience of that time’s hearts than the latest adaptation.

So where did this latest film go wrong? In short, it can be summarized by two things, the acting and the modernization. Glen Powell is our Richards, a supposedly anger-riddled new father who ends up on this show to win

“new” money to help afford medication for his daughter and escape living in the slums. Sounds familiar, right? However, Powell doesn’t really deliver anger, sarcasm most definitely, but his portrayal of an angry, determined father came off as super unserious to me. It felt like, instead of pulling inspiration from the novel, Powell was given instructions to model his version of Richards off the veteran American hero Richards, whom Arnold Schwarzenegger played in the 1987 film.

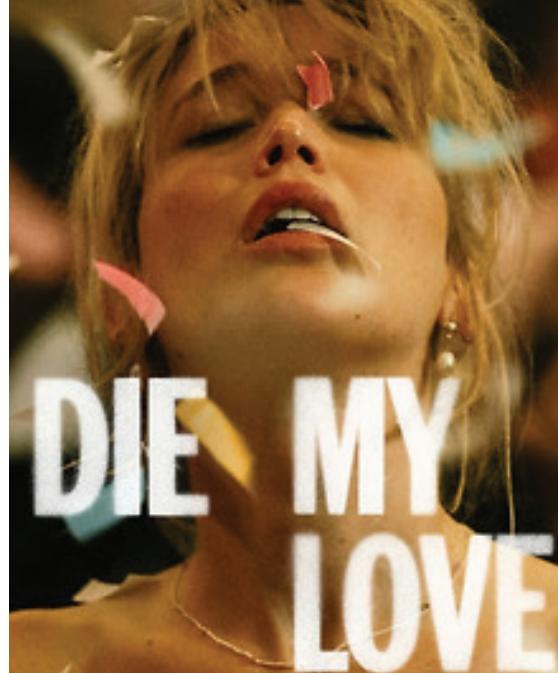
This story, as Eli mentions, is meant to be set in 2025, which for the 1982 novel and even the 1987 film, makes total sense, with both predicting a dystopian version of the future. This didn’t work well for our current adaptation, since we are already in the year 2025, yet the film added futuristic elements to the story. Likely to poke fun and fear into our current society, but it didn’t really work for me. It felt like they weren’t sure what genre they wanted this film to be and instead blended social criticism, comedy and the hero archetype together in a way that just didn’t land.

“The Running Man” 2025 gets a 2.5 out of 5 for me. Worth a watch if you are a die-hard King fan or have kept up with all the other adaptations of his novels that have hit the big screen this year, like “The Long Walk” and “The Monkey.” Otherwise, stick to the novel, or even spend some time at home watching the 1987 version before running out to the theater.

Eli here to round us off, across both the book and the film adaptations, “The Running Man” is a story about societal powers, spectacle and survival. The novel takes an approach that is sharp, fast and more unsettlingly violent. As Hayley said, the latest film contrasts this with a more modernized action hero story, coming at the cost of the grit of the original. Overall, I would give the original novel 3 stars. I enjoyed the storytelling and plot; however, I am reminded why I have a complicated relationship with Stephen King’s writing.



Jennifer Lawrence delivers an emotionally devastating performance in 'Die My Love'



HAYLEY'S
HOT
TAKES

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BLACK LABEL MEDIA

Hayley Matto
Staff Writer



A thick cloud of despondency filled the theater as the credits rolled for "Die My Love." That sinking feeling in my chest seemed to affect not only myself, but the entire audience as we gathered ourselves to walk out of the theater. That proved to me how impactful and successful this movie was at conveying its story.

The movie starred the long awaited duo of Jennifer Lawrence as Grace, with Robert Pattinson as Jackson. This young couple from New York move into a fixer-upper farmstyle home in the south that had belonged to Jackson's uncle before he died by suicide.

We watch the couple go from a passionate, primal sort of love to new parents quickly, with both seeming unsure how to adjust to the new shape of their family. For Jackson, it seems he can't shake his dreams of becoming a musician and working on the "road" nor alcohol. Grace is coping with feeling unfulfilled and undesirable to Jackson, as if she's been put into a box of motherhood and that any other facet of her identity and needs are no longer noteworthy.

This film is adapted from the 2012 drama fiction novel "¡Maldito amor!" by Ariana Harwicz (which translates from Spanish to "Die, My Love")

I couldn't help but notice the film had many themes, plot points and direct connections to another well known short story, "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, starting the moment the film opens on the couple entering their new home with yellow floral wallpaper to the yellow hues that overlaid the film like a filter.

The parallels, however, don't end there as we come to learn Grace is a writer, much like the female narrator of the "Yellow Wallpaper" who has to hide her writings

from her husband. Grace's behavior and that of the female narrator parallel each other. Both destroying the wallpaper, scratching it with their fingers until they bleed and crawling around animalistically in the home's tall grasses. Also, the male love-interests in each story both try to handle their mentally ill wives in a manner that shows they aren't sure how to help or to love, but they will attempt to do what seems to be the best answer to them.

Despite its parallels to other stories of mania, some differences that really made this film stand on its own in an incredibly modern way were the way they used the female characters, the sound design and their approach around Grace's relationship with her son.

The dynamic between the other women in this film and Grace brought another modern concern to this film. I encourage the audience to try and see when any of the female characters ever choose to support one another in their struggles. Grace was failed all around by the women in her circle, so it would seem. Until perhaps the very end- but I will leave it up to you to decide if it was too little too late.

Grace didn't reflect the stereotypical signs of postpartum depression, another thing done in contrast to the "Yellow Wallpaper." Instead, she had zero issue taking care of her son, often acting with maternal instinct. Something that I think Gilman was making commentary on was the lack of knowledge around women's mental health, especially regarding postpartum depression, of the medical field in the eighteenth century. Whereas in our current time, we use the idea of postpartum depression as a scapegoat, used to disregard a struggling new mother's mental health journey. As displayed by this film, this idea can be ignorant and dismissive to what is really going on in a woman's life.

I believe Lawrence captured this perfectly, not only in her depiction of a nurturing gentle mother, but also within her relationships with other characters. Soothing her husband, his sick father and her mother in law, she showed up in undeniably nurturing and intuitive ways for them all. In turn it makes it even more heartbreaking when she's disregarded and shoved into a box and labeled in a way that she didn't quite fit. A remarkable performance from Lawrence, exhibiting incredible emotional depth, acting that shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone who has seen her in other films like "Mother" and "Causeway."

A lot of the movies I discuss go into detail about the sensory experience. However, this film particularly used sound to its advantage by letting the audience into Grace's headspace. Through uncomfortable sound design, like a dog ceaselessly barking and whining, a fly buzzing and children's music playing on a loop to really get you as uncomfortable and uneasy as Grace herself.

"Die My Love" also played into moments of silence, where there wasn't noise in the background to give not just give Grace relief but also us. This drove the sensory experience over the edge in a very successfully immersive way, and had the audience mirroring the emotions of Grace: when she sighed in relief, so did we. These sort of immersive details had the audience sympathetic to Grace quickly despite not truly understanding her plight or having our own reasons to resonate with her.

All in all, this film gets a 5 out of 5 for a sorrow-filled spicy take. I can't picture a world where Lawrence doesn't win an award for her acting in this one. "Die my Love" is playing in theaters now, and trust me when I say this is not one you want to miss seeing in the cinema.

Santa Cruz Serenity

Photo by Fernanda Orozco Gonzalez



Upcoming Events

Monday, Nov. 17

Folklorico de Monterey Bay is having a Baile Folklorico teach-in, hosted in the Meeting House from 3 to 5 p.m. Guests will learn a wide range of traditional Mexican dances. Remember to bring a water bottle!

Monday-Wednesday, Nov. 17-19

CSUMB's theater club The Performing Otters are hosting auditions for "Urinetown: The Musical" this week. Auditions will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. in Heron Hall rooms 120, 118 and 120 for each date, respectively.

Tuesday, Nov. 18

Channel your inner superstar at the Helen Rucker Center's Lip Sync Battle from 5 to 8 p.m. (Building 12, HRC Rm 120). Whether you choose to let loose or bring your A game, come and have fun!

Tuesday, Nov. 18

"O Captain! My Captain!" Join Film Club at 6 p.m. in CAHSS 1401 for a movie screening and discussion of "Dead Poets Society."

Wednesday, Nov. 19

Join the Otter Marketing Association and Business Career Mentor Ray Johnson for a hands-on resume building workshop (BIT Building Rm 119). Whether you're starting or expanding your resume, come from 2 to 3 p.m. for professional tips, feedback and guidance.

Puzzles

WORD SCRAMBLE

It's the last week before Thanksgiving break! Can you unscramble this list of seasonal words?

laet orwk

ryrlabi

idtngusy

tbuounr

eoiffc sohru

dlainede

acvaiont

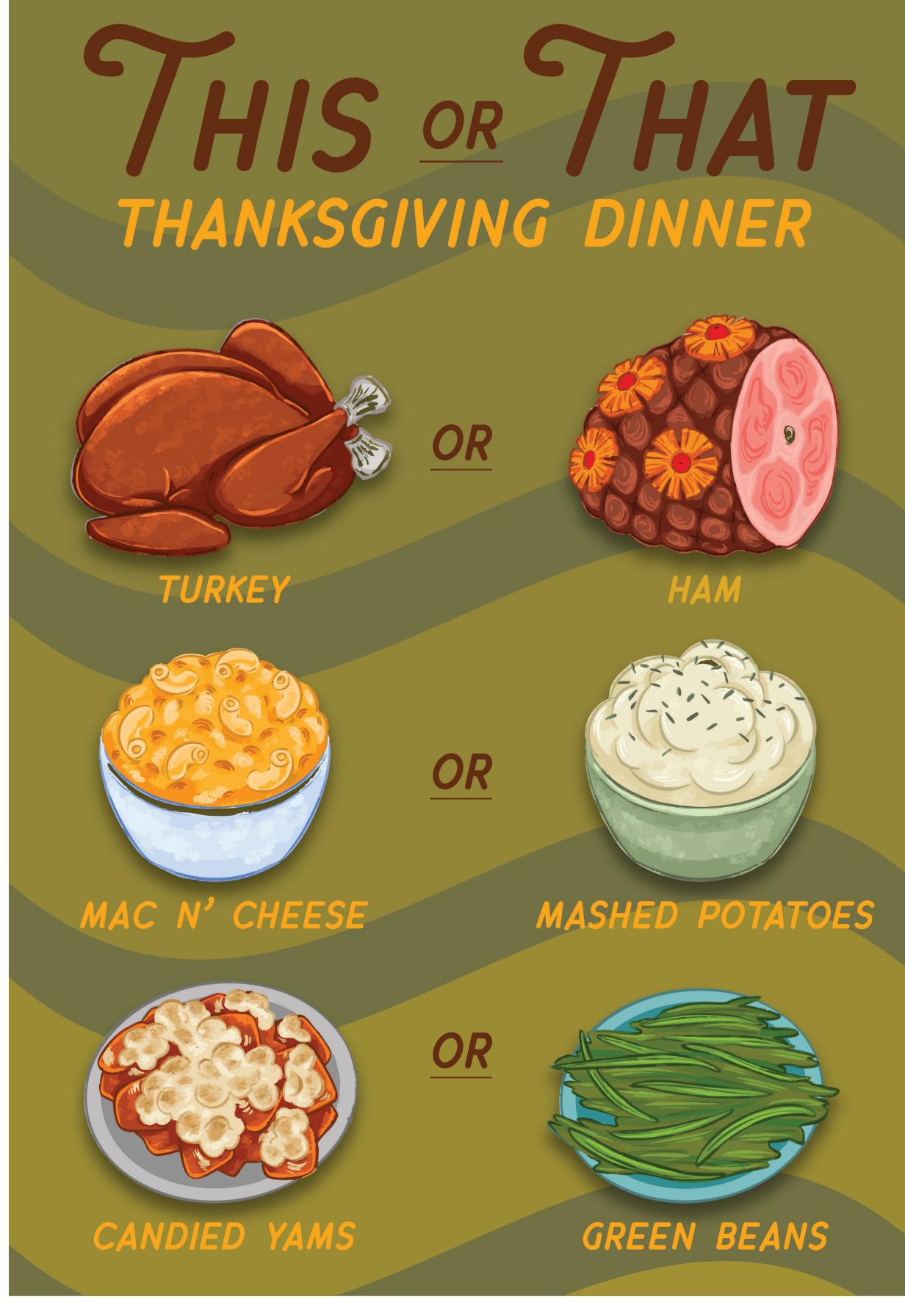
emaigntssn

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dhylioa

'This or That' Game

ILLUSTRATION BY AMANDA RICHMAN



ANSWERS:

assignument, holiday,
library, burnout, deadline,
hours, vacation, caffeine,
late work, studying, office

VOLUME 9