

Arts & Entertainment

Jan-Ru Wan's "Observing the Inner Voice"

By Nikki Wertz, Staff Writer

On Feb. 7, guest artist Jan-Ru Wan will be presenting her artwork at the opening reception of her exhibition "Observing the Inner Voice." Born in Taiwan and educated in the United States, Wan has created large-scale three-dimensional garment and fabric sculptures that have won her a number of awards and fellowships in a span of 20 years. These sculptures almost appear to be literal shells of the human soul if not the human body. Her pieces often explore the influence of culture on an individual's beliefs and values despite the consistent similarities in desires and needs shared by all human beings.

"Observing the Inner Voice" is no different, as it will examine the connections between art,

religion and spirituality. The reception will take place in the Gaddy-Hamrick Art Center's Weems Gallery at 5:15 p.m. There will be two opportunities to hear Jan-Ru Wan discuss her artwork: the Artist Lecture and the Gallery Talk. The Artist Lecture will take place in room 137 in Gaddy-Hamrick from 4:30 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. The Gallery Talk will take place during the opening reception and will be at 5:30 p.m. These events count as Academic/Cultural events.

If you are unable to attend any of these events, don't worry! Jan-Ru Wan's work will be exhibited in the gallery from Jan. 24 to Mar. 5. The Gaddy-Hamrick Art Center is located behind Carlyle Campbell Library across the big parking lot, the Weems Gallery be-

ing open to the public from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, and from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

For non-art enthusiasts or those intimidated by art, be assured that the show is worthwhile. The attention to detail and craftsmanship was obvious and was evidence of Jan-Ru Wan's 20 years of experience as an artist. I visited the exhibition before the opening reception with little information on the artist and her work and found exhibition to be completely compelling. As an artist, I find Jan-Ru Wan's work awe-inspiring.

Photo by Laney Flaughter



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your home, there are still plenty of other ways you can help these animals. Summer Langdon, a student at Meredith, has been volunteering at the Raleigh SPCA for about a month, and says that she wanted to start volunteering because she has "always loved animals and...wanted to help make a difference and find abandoned or homeless animals caring owners, while making sure that they have the proper care they need before adoption." In her work at the SPCA, Summer grooms cats and cleans up their kennels and is also currently working toward completing dog care training. About her

work at the shelter, Summer said, "I definitely feel like I am making a difference when helping at the SPCA! It is a great feeling when you know you have helped one of the animals by providing them the care and support they need to get adopted into a loving home."

According to the Raleigh SPCA's website, where a lot of detailed information can be found about volunteering requirements, as long as you're over 18-years-old and can commit to volunteering for at least one shift per month, you can be eligible to volunteer. They offer a variety of tasks for volunteers, including pet matchmakers, dog walkers, kennel keepers and more. For more information on how to volunteer, visit spcawake.org.

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Another Magical Mary Poppins: A Review of Mary Poppins Returns

By Ashleigh Murr, Staff Writer

Disney's 2019 *Mary Poppins Returns* is a brilliant performance that sparks childlike joy, imagination and hope. The movie is a refreshing continuation of a classical story with a hopeful message. As a nanny myself and with knowing the history behind the story from Disney's 2013 *Saving Mr. Banks*, this movie encourages me by highlighting the difference one nanny can make in children's lives. The light and airy feel of this film protests the world's common lack of imagination. Daily, society bears heavy, serious topics including sharp political disagreements, outrageous crimes, and environmental travesties, but the film prompts its viewers to the freedom of imagination and joy, even if for only two hours.

It is cute and whimsical

overall; however, even as a children's movie, parts seemed overly cheesy, such as the very last scene when first Michael Banks, followed by many others, is lifted up by balloons high into the sky. Despite this light tone, the film's climax is somewhat suspenseful as the Banks family tries to save their home by "turning back time" on Big Ben as Jack, a London street worker, attempts to climb to the top and physically move back the clock hand.

Due to the changing times and technology, the imagery and imaginative scenes were portrayed more clearly and cleverly than in the original 1964 *Mary Poppins*; even so, the film stayed true to the mix of reality and animation of the first. In a particular scene in which Mary Poppins, Jack, and the three Banks children enter

into a china bowl, the film has an animated background with live-action characters amidst. A similar mix of media occurs in the first *Mary Poppins* movie; however, the newer portrayal of this strikes me as much more advanced which made the scenes with animation more engaging than the ones in the original film due to the smoothness of the live-action characters against their background, as much as possible given the scenario.

The scenes still carry the nostalgic feel that brings viewers back to memories of the original film. The acting within this movie is impressive. Emily Blunt's performance of *Mary Poppins* is extraordinary and, in my opinion, outdoes Julie Andrews' original Poppins character. She appears refined and strict in her

demeanor, but her character's sweet, helpful and imaginative qualities shine through Blunt's smile: However, though Blunt's musical talent is decent, it does not live up to Andrews' by a long shot. On the other hand, from the opening scene the viewers get the pleasure of hearing the extremely popular Lin-Manuel Miranda from the hit Broadway show *Hamilton*. His acting and musical abilities did not disappoint. According to an interview with USA Today, he was drawn to take the part by the stunt of climbing up Big Ben at the climax of the movie, as he wanted to be a stunt man when he was younger.

If you're looking for a happy, fun and childlike musical evening, I highly recommend *Mary Poppins Returns*, but be prepared for moments that may make you chuckle at the cheesiness.