

# Trollinger House hosts open mic night

Kit Arbuckle  
Reporter

On the first Thursday of every month, student artists gather in a large, high-ceilinged room in the Arts & Letters learning community and share their artistic work with an enthusiastic audience. The first open mic night of the 2010-2011 school year, titled "The Inaugural Night of Microphones That Are Open," featured short stories, poems, songs, fiction and nonfiction. The subjects included trains, road trips, oranges and love. Some participants created the work they exhibited while others read or sang the work of favorite artists.

Regardless of genre, subject, or author, the audience was unfailingly supportive. Anyone with enough gumption to sit at the front of the room and perform would be celebrated and welcomed, regardless of preparedness. Even with all that encouragement, a few attendees showed up merely for the pleasure of listening.

Sophomore Caitlin Wang Fleisig, who organized this year's first open mic, said that the Arts & Letters learning community wished to create an open, laid-back atmosphere for the

performers.

"While we want (everyone) to take the event seriously," Fleisig said, "we are open to anyone who wants to participate, whether they are masters of what they choose to present. Or simply beginners trying to share an art form for which they have an appreciation."

Fleisig also said she believes it's important to have cultural events on campus, like open mic, that are totally organized by students. "Events such as this that are completely student run allow anyone on campus to experience a true artistic community, rather than an academically imposed one," she said.

Attendees of "The Inaugural Night of Microphones That Are Open," performers stepped up with an acoustic cover of Justin Bieber's hit "Baby," a song about laptop troubles set to the tune of an Irish jig, a hilarious and deep poem entitled "Dinosaurs," a short story by a Columbian author about a dentist, several works originally intended for an English class and more. The atmosphere was light-hearted and fun and the audience was wholehearted in their praise.

Open mic takes place



BRIAN ALLENBY | Staff Photographer  
Sophomore Mary Van Johnston performs at Open Mic Night hosted the first Thursday of every month by the Arts & Letters learning community.

at the home of the Arts & Letters learning community, 201 W. Trollinger Ave. The festivities begin promptly at 8 p.m., and can end as late as 10 p.m.

# Lady Gaga: The unofficial Twitter queen

With more than 5.7 million followers, the quirky singer holds the title

Alex Trice  
Online Editor-in-Chief

Lady Gaga frequently makes headlines for her outrageous fashion style and avant-garde personality. But recently, Gaga made news in the realm of online social media. With more than 5.7 million followers, the "Poker Face" singer has become the newest Twitter Queen.

She dethroned Britney Spears as holder of the popular title given to the public figure possessing the most followers on the microblogging site Twitter.

After a concert, Gaga gave an inaugural address to her followers in which she accepted her new position. "Thank you for beginning my reign as Twitter Queen," Lady Gaga said in the posted video message. "May you always have soft cuticles when tweeting. May you never have carpal tunnel. And I vow to always tweet and tweet again."

The ability to receive constant updates on celebrities like Lady Gaga is part of the reason Twitter's popularity has experienced a huge rise among college-age students. Elon junior Kierstin Coatney said she follows Gaga because she thinks the singer is interesting.

"I just like how she isn't afraid to be herself, even if she tends to 'stand out from the crowd,'" Coatney said.

As Twitter gains in popularity, celebrities are often the most "followed."

Senior Kara Griffin, who also follows Gaga on Twitter, said the reason she does

is because: "Lady Gaga is crazy, but her over-the-top quirkiness is refreshing."

Other reasons for Twitter's increasing popularity include its ability to promote social information and connections, to help the individual establish a reputation, according to Janna Anderson, associate professor of communications and director of Imagining the Internet.

"The value of Twitter is in the eye of the beholder," Anderson said. "You find there what you seek. If you are a casual user sharing personal information, you can do that. If you're a professional and like to know insights from others in your field, it is an incredible gift to you."

Anderson also said she hopes students don't just use Twitter to follow popular musicians like Gaga.

"I would like to see students pursue thought leaders in areas they are interested in," Anderson said.

Sophomore Greg Brzozowski, an avid sports fan, uses Twitter to follow the latest goings-on in sports news.

"I think it's the most underrated news source in the entire world," said Brzozowski. "I follow a lot of reporters and broadcasters on my Twitter and I always go there and am able to find the most up-to-date news. Those 140 characters can say so much."

Brzozowski admitted he used to be a Twitter skeptic who thought the 140-character blogging



site was "pointless." But he changed his mind after a friend was able to show him the site's benefits.

"I started to use it because

I felt like I was missing out. To anyone who is a skeptic, I would say, give it a try. You might be surprised," Brzozowski said.

## Web roundup: Videos and links going viral

Alexa Johnson  
Senior Reporter

The Internet is chock-full of viral videos and phenomena that are classically here today, gone tomorrow. Here is a brief roundup of what is new on the Web, at least for the next week or two.

### Paste Magazine is dead

The economy dealt a tough blow to lovers of music and the printed word. Last week, Paste Magazine went under, fired most of the staff without notice and killed the print publication because of lack of funds. Although the publication will live online, the content is just not as good. Paste is the most recent music magazine to exit the scene.

[http://gawker.com/5627700/paste-magazine-is-dead?utm\\_source=feedburner&utm\\_medium=feed&utm\\_campaign=Feed%3A+gawker%2Ffull+%28Gawker%29](http://gawker.com/5627700/paste-magazine-is-dead?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+gawker%2Ffull+%28Gawker%29)

### Arcade Fire's "Wilderness Downtown" video

"Seriously nifty" is an accurate way to describe the customizable video for Arcade Fire's song "We Used To Wait." Just plug in an address to see shots of your hometown (or wherever you chose). Not only is this video impressive feat of HTML 5, but it's even more impressive that most people aren't creeped out by Google having real images of their house and street. A word of caution: if you haven't downloaded Google Chrome, do so before trying to launch this video and let the multiple screens do their own thing.

<http://thewildernessdowntown.com/>

### Hipster dinosaurs

A match made in hipster heaven, check out BuzzFeed's illustration of the coolest prehistoric animals around, pre-extinction of course. Much like the adorable website Hipster Puppies, these coloring book dinosaurs discuss important issues like volcanic integrity, Polaroid film and Wilco. And, seriously — is anyone really surprised Tyrannosaurus looked like Buddy Holly?

<http://www.buzzfeed.com/ihatedinosaurs/hipster-dinosaurs-pz>

### American Apparel's Downfall: A Tale in 10 Ads

High prices, ridiculous employment standards, soft-core porn ads and a CEO in denial — so many things have led to the fall of the expensive basics distributor that Flavorwire created a visual illustration of A.A.'s downfall for the Cliff Notes version. The T-shirts: Nice. The tights that cover everything except butt cheeks: less practical. It's the end of an era.

<http://flavorwire.com/114113/american-apparels-downfall-a-tale-in-10-ads>