Student Green Energy Fund seeks student approval
By Michael Moore Jr. 
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Starting Monday, students will have the chance to vote on whether or not they would like to renew the Student Green Energy Fund. SGEF is a fund that is “used to assist the university in reducing energy costs through conservation, promoting power generation using clean, renewable energy technologies and lowering greenhouse gas emissions” according to its bylaws. It must be re-approved every three years.

The financing of these sustainable initiatives is assessed through a $1 per credit hour fee administered on student tuition. A cost of about $12 for a full-time student, depending on a number of courses taken.

The referendum will last until Thursday, March 2 and can be voted on either at The Reef or online through Petesync. The Tampa campus will simultaneously be voting on its own chapter of SGEF.

Laxi Ferguson, 22, is a senior who is studying environmental science and policy. She is also the chair of SGEF. She hopes the renewals will allow students to buy into more energy efficient projects.

“We have high hopes for the next three years,” she told The Crow’s Nest.

According to Ferguson, each project is proposed by a student, faculty member or staff and must meet one of the following criteria before being voted on: it either must reduce carbon emissions, reduce energy cost or reduce waste.

SGEF, Ferguson insists, is primarily a student-driven initiative.

“We really encourage students to come in and voice their opinions on projects. It is their money and we definitely want student input,” she said.

If you’ve noticed the new re-
Jim Greene will take on the responsibilities of the USC’s operations, managing reservations and conferences and maintaining the office as an associate director of the USC. One of Isaacs’ first objectives will be to introduce himself to students and demonstrate his role in helping them learn how to assist them.

“It’s going to be a lot of learning on my part,” said Isaacs. “I intend on listening a bit and making my rounds to visit with the leaders and find out what’s working and what they could use help with immediately.”

Isaacs acknowledged the USC St. Petersburg’s status as a commuter school and said he has worked to improve the university experience for commuter students while working with the USC administration and pointed out that the onus to improve the student experience falls on everyone.

Ultimately, Isaacs feels that the USC will be to introduce himself to the associate director of the USC. Marketing in Isaac’s old role as Clean Energy and Resource Technology. She is the chair of the mental studies and anthropology.

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International students band together to form community

By Zenena Moguel
zenenam@mail.usf.edu

Our little campus by the bay doesn’t seem like it would attract a lot of international students, and it would be hard to point out the 40 of them here without asking directly. That may sound like a small amount, but it is just enough for these students to justify creating the “International Community at USFSP.”

With the mission of connecting international students with one another, the new organization conducted its first meeting Wednesday, Feb. 22. The group hopes to ensure that no international student attending the campus feels alone.

“This is our opportunity to give all incoming international students a community that they can immediately feel connected to,” said Andy Dang, adviser for the International Community. It’s an opportunity for international students to have a home away from home, and the current international students are excited about it. Marcia Grahla, a sophomore psychology major from Brazil, feels this is an important group to help build connections with each other.

“I’m excited about this club,” said Grahla. “I really wish we can make connections inside the campus and outside the campus with new international students and the other students that are around here.”

President of the community, Ebuka “Ebby” Ezema, business graduate student from Jamaica, wants to use the community to combat isolation.

“Precisely because we are small, so any international student that comes here, like when I came here, you feel like you’re the only one here,” said Ezema. “Right off the bat, you know it’s a small community and you don’t know who’s who. You feel isolated.”

Using the organization’s resources, Ezema wants to provide support for these students.

“I don’t want international students to feel isolated,” said Ezema. “You’re already away from home. You already have the stress of school. The very least we can do is give you that support network initially when you come here, and then after that, we can make you stay here for fun.”

Academic Program Specialist for Global Initiatives at USFSF Kenny Suero, who is in charge of international students and the current international student that comes here, like when I came here, you feel like you’re the only one here,” said Ezema. “Right off the bat, you know it’s a small community and you don’t know who’s who. You feel isolated.”

“The campus started as an overflow campus for USF Tampa when it was founded,” said Kenny. “You have the USF System, us (St. Petersburg), Sarasota-Manatee and Tampa, all three part of the USF System. Each three separately accredited offering their degrees. The distinction is important because until you are a separate institution a lot of your operations are going to be based out of your home campus.”

USFSF didn’t become its own separate accredited institution until 2006, which may have contributed to the community’s long delay. Either way, Kenny is very excited about the community coming together as he believes it is one of the best things he has been able to do.

“I’ve been with the university a little over three years now,” said Kenny. “This is one of the more meaningful things I’ve been able to help with.”

However, for some students like Indhira Suero Acosta, journalism graduate student from the Dominican Republic, the creation of the community is bittersweet.

“It’s bitter because I’m leaving, and I won’t be enjoying as much of the club,” said Suero. “But it’s really nice that the other students that are going to come are going to be able to know how to go to the doctor, how to organize their visa, how to look for houses. I hope that the club works.”

Right now, the International Community is focusing on connecting the international students and building meaningful relationships with students who go through some of the same challenges.

Later on, the community hopes to be active on the campus and collaborating with other organizations like the Big Sisters for Psychology and the Caribbean Cultural Exchange. Most importantly, it aims to educate and celebrate diversity with not only international students but with the entire USFSF student and faculty community.

We are all global citizens with many diverse cultures. If you’re interested in learning and sharing diversity and culture, make sure to keep your eyes out for the International Community here at USFSF in the next few months and especially in the upcoming fall semester.

Aspiring filmmakers prepare for Campus MovieFest

By Tim Fanning
tfanning@mail.usf.edu

Aimed with a camera, microphones, an Apple Macbook Pro and a hard drive for storing footage, students are excited to bring their creativity to the big screen.

Participants waited in line for hours near the lobby of the SLC to grab their gear and begin filming their entries for the Campus MovieFest on Wednesday, Feb. 22. Taylor Singleton, a junior majoring in education, said that she can’t wait to start filming again. She directed a CMF documentary about student life on campus last year and Singleton felt that she learned a lot during that experience.

“This year I am going to do it right,” she said. Without any prior knowledge of filmmaking when she took on the competition last year, Singleton went to every instruction seminar and read all of the tech information.

Although her documentary didn’t make the cut to receive an award last year, she is confident that this year her ambitious goal of three films will give her a better chance of winning.

Similar to last year, Singleton will record, write and direct all three films, which include a documentary, similar to “Being Black in America,” a social justice film, a feature on sexual assault and a silent film.

In order to accomplish all of this, Singleton said she would have to dedicate most of her time.

“I plan on barely sleeping and asking the tech crew a whole bunch of questions during the daytime,” she said.

In order to be successful in the competition, CMF Promotions Manager Raghu Ravichandran suggested students follow the guidelines their judges will be using to evaluate each film.

CMF officials say that the judges will look at the following areas, which pertain to the overall experience of watching the movie.

Other than the categories listed below, the judges will also pay attention to whether the film produced an emotional response by considering the overall impression of the film, enjoyment, meaningfulness and replay value.

Content: This section pays attention to form, meaning and the structure of the movie. It includes script and story, creativity, originality and coherence.

Excellence: This section pertains to the technical aspects of the movie. It involves visual creativity, cinematography, sound design and soundtrack, editing, and effective use of special effects.
St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival commences its third year

By Lis Casanova
lis@mail.usf.edu

On opening night, the hustle and bustle of the city could be felt reverberating across the Williams House Courtyard. “Leaves will fall on you,” warned artistic director, Veronica Matthews to the full house. “You will hear dogs bark.”

With this, the St. Petersburg Shakespeare Festival launched its third spring season Thursday, Feb. 23, with a showing of “Twelfth Night.” The members performed the play at 7:30 p.m. throughout the weekend.

The stage sat wide under the crosswalk that connects Snell House to Williams House and overlooks the courtyard where spectators gathered.

Two rows of chairs were set on either side of the walkway leading to the stage allowing actors to better interact with the audience and play out scenes amongst them.

In the chaotic lyrical comedy, Shakespeare teases courtly love, gender norms and social class expectations. When the play was written, “Twelfth Night” or the twelfth eve after Christmas, was a holiday of revelry where roles were reversed and servants dressed as masters and men as women.

Aside from minor changes to the story regarding the gender of the characters, and the switch to modern tunes like “American Stage held an annual Shakespeare in the Park event for 30 something years and then they stopped,” said Matthews. As a student, Matthews wanted to do something creative that was part of the community and after several Shakespeare performances last year, the Festival performed two plays: “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” and “Cymbeline.”

“The amount of people who showed up made me want to tear up a bit,” said Matthews. This year, they have outgrown their current space in the courtyard and are starting to look forward to performing in larger venues.

When Matthews created the Shakespeare Festival in 2015, she and Starks also founded the Shakespeare Society, an on-campus student organization. “Our first priority is to students,” said Matthews. “We wanted to provide an opportunity for students to come see a performance.”

The first year they did “As you like it.” From May to October, the organization held stage readings. Last year was the first time the Festival performed two plays: “Hamlet” and “Dream.”

“When I was [at USFSP] there was no Shakespeare Society, but now we work together on scripts,” said Matthews. “When I was [at USFSP] there was no Shakespeare Society, but now we work together on scripts,” said Matthews. When Matthews created the Shakespeare Festival in 2015, she and Starks also founded the Shakespeare Society, an on-campus student organization.

“We support [the society], co-host their events and try to work together on scripts,” said Matthews.

Before the festival’s performance of “Twelfth Night,” the cast held two workshops with Starks’ students to help them better understand the play, which they were currently learning.

“When I was [at USFSP] there was no Shakespeare Society, but now we work together on scripts,” said Matthews. “When I was [at USFSP] there was no Shakespeare Society, but now we work together on scripts,” said Matthews. Next year, the Shakespeare Society is expected to take over for Shakespeare Festival’s responsibility of directing the May to October stage reading season, as the festival moves towards full stage productions.

Though the festival is still in the process of making a name for itself, it has had a great response from the community, which has expressed missing American Stage’s Shakespeare in the Park, and now welcomes the creation of a similar event.

“In so much of the country, arts are taking a back seat,” said Hutek, who believes the way the plays are set makes Shakespeare a comfortable, approachable experience for students.

“There was nothing outdoors for Shakespeare for 10 years,” said Hutek. “We fill that gap and to be able to do it on this beautiful campus is great.”

The festival will resume with a production of “Hamlet” at 7:30 on March 2.
A picture worth a 1000 miles: MFA hosts road trip exhibit

By Devin Rodriguez
drodriguez7@mail.usf.edu

The road trip is an American rite of passage: grabbing a few close friends, piling into a beat up van and hitting the road, seeking adventure. The development of expansive, long running highways and improvements to the automobile has popularized the American road trip. In a matter of days, one could go from the Gulf Coast beaches of Florida, to the Blue Ridge Mountains that cut through the Carolina’s and down into the Chihuahuan Desert of Texas. This is the theme of a photography exhibition hosted by the Museum of Fine Arts.

“The Open Road: Photography and the American Road Trip” brings together a wealth of famous photographers, providing their diverse perspective of the American landscape. Organized by the Aperture Foundation, the exhibition premiered Feb. 9 and runs until June 4. Tickets into the museum cost $10 with a student ID. Hector Santiago, a senior double majoring in biology and psychology, went out on the open road with his roommate and fellow student Kenneth Haynes over winter break. With a GoPro camera mounted on the front of the car, the two students drove up the East Coast toward New York City.

“It’s wild. You’ll go miles and miles only ever seeing a gas station, but then you end up in this big city,” Santiago said. “It’s like watching civilization evolve.” He said that traveling through places like Philadelphia broadened his perspective of the United States and cemented into reality the things he learned about in history books.

“It takes you back and you see how far we’ve grown in such a short amount of time,” Santiago said. “It goes from these tiny old homes to skyscrapers.”

He said that the summer after next, he’d like to drive to Arizona because he hasn’t yet traveled out west. “You could say I’ve had the travel bug and I just need to get back out there again,” Santiago said. When he wants to revisit his memories, he picks up pictures of his travels. The other week, he and a few friends went on a trip to Puerto Rico last spring. “We were trying to plan for our next trip out there, and with everyone sharing you’d just think about the story behind that picture,” he said. That’s what it feels like walking the halls of the new exhibition at the museum. From derelict gas stations to dusty diners, the photographs that decorate the museum walls remind viewers of places they’ve gone or inspire them about where they could go.

Robin Odell, the manager of photography exhibits at the MFA, said that of the 18 photographers with work in the exhibit, she enjoys seeing the handful of pieces that come from different countries. The acclaimed Japanese photographer Shinya Fujiwara comes to mind. Fujiwara strikes a dark and absurd tone in the exhibit, taking photos of motels and cityscapes at night. He plays with exposure, blurring lines across photographs that stem from his “American Roulette” collection.

“It’s really interesting, a little less than half of the photographers are not American,” Odell said. “But you get to see an American tradition through their eyes.”

Much of the work harkens back to tropes made classic in popular culture. The novel “On The Road” by Jack Kerouac and movies like “Thelma and Louise” have served as inspiration for what to look for out on the road.

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Robert Frank, one of the most famous photographers in the exhibit, has a number of images from his seminal work “The Americans,” which displays people from all walks of life doing seemingly mundane tasks. However, his attention and perspective comes through to show the beauty of living in the United States.

“A picture worth a 1000 miles: MFA hosts road trip exhibit

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“This exhibit shows a sort of universal experience,” Odell said. “It’s a very American thing to do, to just get in the car and go.”

Odell said that she especially enjoyed the work of Taiyo Onorato and Nico Krebs, a Swiss duo who take the cliche imagery of road trips and add a satirical element to it. “They take the genre and turn it on its ear,” Odell said. “If you didn’t have the artists to populate the genre before them, then they couldn’t do what they did.”

With spring break just around the corner, students may want to hit the road with what little time they have. “The Open Road” could serve as inspiration for what to look for out on well worn highways.
The Crow's Nest

The Crow's Nest is committed to providing its readers with news relevant to the University of South Florida St. Petersburg and its surrounding community. The Crow’s Nest abides by the highest ethical standards and focuses on stories that help readers make informed decisions on current issues. We are committed to fair and accurate reporting as defined by the Society of Professional Journalists. Opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily represent those of the administration, faculty or student body.

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Opinion

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THE CROW’S NEST

Eat chicken or chickpeas, either works for me!

By Whitney Elsfstrom
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One day, around three years ago, I decided to go vegan. I had absolutely no idea what it meant or what it entailed but I was up for the challenge. My first go around lasted about three months until I was defeated by a giant piece of cheese pizza and three scoops of delicious chocolate ice cream.

Over the next few years, I struggled with veganism and I never thought I would last more than a month or two. On Feb. 20, this year, I celebrated my one-year anniversary of veganism and I’ve honestly never felt better, but that doesn’t mean I believe this lifestyle is for everyone.

Veganism has been on the rise over the last decade. Around 16 million people, or 5 percent of the U.S. population, are vegetarians, according to One Green Planet, an online vegetarian publication. Of that estimate, around half practice a fully vegan lifestyle.

People see the vegan move as an extreme and exclusivist group, but I believe that veganism is the right lifestyle for those who find it on their own and pursue it out of their own will.

Taking a few steps back, let’s talk about what veganism is exactly. To be vegan is to abstain from all animal products, including but not limited to beef, fish, eggs, dairy products, and cheese. Yes, even cheese. I know, the horror! Even if it’s organic, it also goes in abundance from the use of any beauty products that were tested on animals or wearing any clothing items made from animal skin or fur.

Despite the wonderful impact that leading a morally friendly lifestyle has on the earth, far too many vegans shove the lifestyle down other people’s throats. This is one of the main reasons the community gets such a bad reputation.

Vegans tend to proclaim that if someone isn’t a vegan then they’re either a bad person, feel no mercy for the planet or the animals that inhabit it and don’t care about their wellbeing.

As a vegan myself, I’ve never understood why the community felt the need to push their beliefs on everyone.

Today there is an abundance of vegan Instagram models who live the island life and swear that eating 40 bananas a day is the only way to live your life. That’s a ridiculous claim that earned Freelee the Banana Girl 733,486 subscribers (and counting) on Youtube.

In reality, veganism really isn’t the best option for many people. Regardless of whether or not each individual in the world would prosper on a cruelty-free diet, one thing I hope everyone can agree on is the earth could benefit from a “Meatless Monday” every day now and again.

Animal agriculture is responsible for 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions, a whopping 5 percent more than all transportation exhaust. If the population as a whole cut back on its meat intake, fewer cows could be mass-produced and it would be a step in the right direction of helping to heal our home.

At the end of the day, everyone should be aware of where their food is coming from. It’s important to recognize that oftentimes walls are put up in order to hide that the veal on someone’s plate was once a baby cow. This is a coping mechanism that has been instilled in us since we were born and in reality, it is no one’s fault.

With all of this in mind, following a diet or lifestyle that is right for your body is hands down the most important thing to remember. Each digestive system is a unique machine and it’s no one diet will mold to two people equally.

I am a firm believer in doing everything that is best for her or her own body. If it’s veganism then that’s wonderful and if not, well then who am I to judge?

To expand, USFSP needs on-campus sports

By Michael Fergusson
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A major part of college, aside from cramming for exams and pulling all-nighters, is attending sporting events.

Many students live for the moment when their basketball team upsets a ranked opponent at home with a last second buzzer beater, or when their football team crushes the rival with home-field advantage.

The excitement of having a Division I sports bring joy and pride to the fans when ever there is a home game. For those colleges that don’t have Division I sports on their campus, the next best thing is intramural sports.

Many may not know the differences between the two: Division I, II, and III sports are sanctioned by the NCAA. This means that the NCAA can punish or reward the sports teams, like preventing a team from attending a tournament because of a scandal, but it can also reward schools.

For example, the NCAA supports academic enhancement programs for Division I players, so the organization gives the schools money for these types of programs. Intramural sports are recreational sports organized by the college itself, such as dodgeball, flag football or ultimate frisbee. The key difference between the two is that intramural sports aren’t sanctioned by an organization like the NCAA, so colleges without varsity teams don’t receive grants.

Varsity sports teams on college campuses are also beneficial to the college because the teams give the school recognition. If you say the name Alabama Crimson Tide, people immediately think of a powerhouse football team.

When schools don’t have any big-name sports teams, this dissipates many future students from attending the college. There are real-life scenarios of students that attend schools that don’t have major sports teams, but still travel to the home games for the love of the sport.

That’s the reality here at USF St. Petersburg. Our Division I sports run through the Tampa campus, which requires students here to commute to Tampa for any sporting event. Football games, basketball games and even tennis matches all take place 30 minutes from our campus. With multiple sporting events taking place every week, spending an hour to travel back and forth becomes an annoyance. Over time, one hour quickly turns into five — or even 10 — that you could use doing literally anything else.

More specifically, traveling to Raymond James Stadium to see the Bulls play is a chore. The atmosphere is always an exciting experience and the stadium itself is so iconic, with a battleship behind the endzone and palm trees dancing in the wind.

But I wish traveling to Tampa every week to support my school wasn’t a necessity. As developmentally constrained as it is, USFSP needs a way to find a bridge Division I sports to the area. It could be as simple as working out a partnership with the Tampa Bay Rowdies to have our own collegiate sports teams play at Al Lang Stadium.

USFSP has been its own accredited university since 2006, but if it wants to truly step out of Tampa’s shadow, it needs to establish its own collegiate sports in St. Petersburg.

Fruits and Vegetables: Veganism isn’t a lifestyle for everyone. But the benefits can outweigh the costs, when you’re thinking ethically.

COURTESY OF WINDMERE COMMONS.
We’d Love to Hear from You

The Crow’s Nest accepts letters to the editor. All submissions should be no more than 250 words. Writers must include their full name. In addition, USF faculty should include their title, department and extension. All letters are subject to editing for clarity and length. Letters can be sent to drodriguez7@mail.usf.edu with subject title “letter to the editor.”

Corrections: Senate candidates Emilie Morris and Vice President candidate Erik Andrade names were misspelled.

PLEASE RECYCLE

MARCH COMMUNITY EVENTS

Feb. 27

7 pm: Open Mic Night @ Reef
USFSP General Elections Open @ USC & PeteSync

March 2-12

10am-10pm: Florida Strawberry Festival @ Plant City

March 4-5

Reggae Rise Up Florida 2017 @ Vinoy Park
47th Annual Raymond James Gasparilla Festival of the Arts @ Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park

March 17

6pm-9pm: St. Pete French Fry Festival @ 250 8th Ave SE
Review: Thundercat brings out his geeky groove

By Dinorah Prevost
dprevost@mail.usf.edu

Thundercat has appeared on albums by Flying Lotus and Kendrick Lamar. He just released his third album, “Drunk.” Known for his eccentricity, the bassist brought the funk on this new album.

“Drunk” is the bassist, singer and producer’s third album. Based in Los Angeles, he is known for his playing and production on projects by fellow Los Angeles producer Flying Lotus and rapper Kendrick Lamar. His playing contributions to Lamar’s album “To Pimp a Butterfly” earned him a Grammy Award in 2016.

With a playtime of 51 minutes, he puts together 23 tracks, most of them compact and under 3 minutes.

Forget reading between the lines for most of his lyrics. Thundercat cuts through the fluff by being blunt with simplistic, yet impactful — flair.

In the intro “Rabbit Ho,” he ends with “Let’s go hard, get drunk and travel down a suicide forest, no).”

But towards the middle of the album, he begins to take a more serious tone.

The first realization that arrives after — usually by the time you’re in college — is that “adulting” almost always comes down to either owing money or needing money.

None of this may seem like a big deal right now but sooner or later you’ll start to realize how essential they are. In any case, if you’ve been failing at paying your payments on time, chances are you might have to deal with overdependence on technology, subliminal messaging, or the race war that he sees as a class war.

The trick is to only use 1 to 9 percent of your maximum is increased and keeping, or working towards a good credit score. Sites like Credit Karma are free and they offer very good tips as well as secured credit cards.

The Crow’s Corner: How to score extra-credit adulting points

By Lis Casanova
lis@mail.usf.edu

In high school, turning 18 represents the pinnacle of all your desires; but like most anticipated dates, once they arrive they often tend to disappoint. The rude awakening that arrives after — usually by the time you’re in college — is that “adulting” almost always comes down to either owing money or needing money.

Here’s three ways on how to go about fixing that without getting into pie chart mumbo-jumbo.

Number 1. Set yourself a budget

Start by setting up an Excel spreadsheet. On that spreadsheet, you can make separate columns for payment due dates, the type of bill and the amount due. If you’re sharing bills with family members or roommates, separate those payments before the total.

Now that you have organized all that economic chaos, work on your payment schedule. Separate all your payments down to two dates each month. If you’re confident in your budget, then set up automatic bill payments, that way you won’t need to worry about missing a due date.

Pro-Tip: After all the bills have come out of your budget, try separating at least 10 percent of the remaining money into savings. Then get some groceries.

Number 2. Get a secured credit card

If you haven’t already had to get a loan, buy a car or move into your own place, you eventually will. At times like these, having good credit is essential.

A secured credit card is a great way to start. They’re kind of like debit cards, except they actively work towards gaining you credit points. Usually, secured credit cards require a small down-payment before awarding you a maximum spending limit.

The trick is to only use 1 to 9 percent of your maximum, then pay it off on time. After a while your maximum is increased and if you stick to it, you’ll build a credit score to reckon with.

Number 3. Sign up for a credit monitoring service

The biggest advantage to signing up for a credit monitoring system is being able to track whether the financial decisions you’re making are helping you or not.

Let’s say you went to AT&T and bought a new iPhone with a two year contract. Before being approved, your credit was checked. Since then you’ve made all of your payments on time, index maybe once or twice.

All of these things leave a credit history. Even that one parking ticket that got sent to collections that one time. All of it leaves a trail and being able to monitor them is key in rock to work for him. His voice and Loggins’ delightfully corny voice against McDonald’s gruff one combine well in a smooth, groove-driven track.

The fine realization that hits when the jazzy “Uh Uh” comes on is the impressively rapid tempo. Against a punchy beat, the lively bass melody intertwines with the upbeat piano as Thundercat sings an accompaniment.

His varied lyrics are a smart move and choosing not to bog them down with “hidden meanings” is even smarter.

Rarely has someone made the day to day things in life so entertaining. With a little humor and sound effects, Thundercat managed that brilliantly. Oh, and the music is top-notch too.

Now don’t even wonder. Go listen to it.