

The Centurion



The Award-Winning, Student-Run Newspaper of Bucks County Community College

Volume 57 Issue 10

April 14, 2022

Bucks-News.com

@Centurion_Bucks

Bucks Students Feel The Pain at The Pump

EVAN LECHOWICZ

Centurion Staff

Mixed emotions surround the college community as gas prices inflate to levels we have never seen.

Oil companies around the world have increasingly bumped up the price of oil causing gas prices to soar. Recently, underground fresh oil recovery has been problematic fraught with environmental concerns and decreasing supply. This has affected college students and how much they are spending at the pump.

Kailey Marsden, a communications major, takes the majority of her classes at Bucks online because she is also a full-time worker.

“I just think that the country’s got to do what it must do, and it does affect me because I do drive a lot. Like when I go to Maryland or like anywhere else that is a long distance. But I do not give my car a full tank of gas every time I fill up.” Marsden said.

Marsden along with the other students, states that it would be easier to save for the future without inflation.

“Of course, I want the gas prices to go down again. But it is honestly not too bad for me. I do not leave my tank completely empty before I fill it up. I fill it up when it is like half a tank, so it looks better in my bank account,”



Photo Courtesy Of Unsplash

Marsden stated.

Like Marsden, other online students are having trouble paying for gas.

Maddie Pollock is studying elementary education through Bucks online as well. She agrees with Marsden, that it does take a toll when she fills up her car. Her main reason for travel is work.

“I do have to pay more for gas which sucks, but there is really nothing that I can do about it, so, I just fill it up a half a tank and then

go from there,” Pollock said.

All college students have difficulties with these prices, especially the students that attend in person classes.

Centurion writer, Tara Birnbaun, also a communications major is worried and stressed over how much is coming out of her wallet when she must fuel up.

“Well, I have spent almost double between traveling from home to school to work. And I am frustrated but hopefully it gets

better soon!” Birnbaun said.

Students from other campuses are worried about the fuel prices as they travel to classes in Newtown.

Brooke Keller, an interpersonal psychology major, must travel from near the Perkasio campus, all the way down to Newtown to attend some classes. This can take a good chunk of change from her pocket to put into her car.

“It is different than my situation a year ago when it was not really

a problem to drive to Newtown.

And now it is like you must pick up extra hours at work just to be able to afford gas.” Keller said.

She recently took a trip to Virginia to visit a friend but thought of cancelling because she might not be able to afford the round trip with gas prices rising.

“For somebody that is going to college and also working, it’s not a good time to be paying upwards of forty dollars for half a tank of gas,” Keller adds.

Final Wordsmiths Event For This Semester

AILEEN F. GORMAN LEONG

Centurion Staff

Don’t miss this exciting opportunity to get to the final event of Bucks’ Wordsmiths Reading Series of 2021-2022 on Friday, April 29.

It is available to attend in-person at the Zlock Auditorium on the Newtown campus, or join online on Zoom, and enjoy an evening filled with the words and worlds of two seasoned poets, Jane Hirshfield and Luray Gross.

The opportunity to experience poetry performance live is “an experience unlike any other,” says Professor Ethel Rackin, Professor of Language and Literature at Bucks, and Director of Wordsmiths Reading Series and Poet Laureate Program.

“The Wordsmiths Series has helped to establish the college as a hub of literary and artistic activity for the community and beyond,” says Rackin.

The Bucks Wordsmiths Reading Series has been running since the 1960s, and as well as bringing together a vast and diverse community, it gives students the perfect storm of possibilities to connect what they have learned in the classroom with the wider world: perhaps something that is needed more than ever right now.

“The Wordsmiths Series is one of the ways that Bucks contributes to the vitality of the arts community in Bucks County. The series brings together poets and non-po-



ets, students, community members, and visitors,” says Rackin.

This is for everyone. Sometimes people can be intimidated by poetry or think that “poets are deceased or pretentious. When they attend a live reading, it brings home the point that poets are people just like us!” says Rackin.

“Every semester, students tell me that they are so glad they attended and would be likely to attend again. The same is true for the general public. The events are accessible, lively, and fun. They are created to appeal to a wide audience of newcomers and regulars alike,” she adds.

And those who attend are in for

an absolute treat with Hirshfield and Gross. “The series is dedicated to equity and inclusion,” says Rackin, and one way in which this goal is accomplished is to make it a regular practice to pair a local poet with a visiting one.

“Both Hirshfield and Gross are seasoned professionals in their field,” says Rackin. “Hirshfield will be visiting us from California and Gross is a Bucks County native. Both poets write about the natural world, human nature, spiritual issues, and more. There is a profound honesty, directness, and beauty in each poet’s work.”

So, what’s in store for the evening? “A relaxing, enjoyable,

inspiring evening,” says Rackin. And then some more...the event is free, and open to all, and there are also some VIP tickets that can be purchased.

VIP tickets are \$15 and include reserved seating and entry to the reception from 6 p.m. to 7:20 p.m. outside the auditorium. The reception includes light hors d’oeuvres and two wine, beer or non-alcoholic drinks per person. VIP ticket holders must be 21 and older. IDs will be checked.

Both free and paid tickets can be obtained online at www.bucks.edu/tickets or at <https://ci.ovationtix.com/36202/production/1094184>

Tickets can also be obtained at the Zlock box office outside the auditorium on Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., or on the day of the event.

The reading will also be broadcast on Zoom. So, get down to the Zlock or get on Zoom and catch this last opportunity to experience live poetry in the Wordsmiths Reading Series for 2021-2022 on Friday, April 29. And don’t fret that this is the last. The series will start up again in the Fall, with more information to follow.

Photo Courtesy of Unsplash

INSIDE

Living Through Music

Phillies Look Promising

Keystone Award Winners

King Richard Inspiring and Uplifting

Sports

Phillies Look Promising This Season

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Email your letters to :
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Letters should be limited to 500 words. They will be edited for spelling, space and malicious or libelous statements. Letters must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. For identification purposes, letters must include the writer’s full name and telephone number.



EVAN BOYLE
Centurion Staff

After an extended offseason, baseball and the Philadelphia Phillies are back. The Phillies have made some major signings this offseason, will it be enough to make the playoffs?

The Philles haven’t been to the National League Playoffs in 11 years and haven’t been to the World Series since their 2009 loss to the New York Yankees.

The Phillies have signed two key outfielders to bolster their lineup in Kyle Schwarber and Nick Castellanos.

Schwarber (29) is a former first round pick of the Chicago Cubs who helped end their 108-year World Series drought, in 2016. Schwarber recently played for

Washington and Boston where he ended the season with a Batting Average of .291.

Now for Nick Castellanos, he was drafted by Detroit back in 2011. He has most recently played for Cincinnati; his batting average was an astounding .309.

What these two great bats bring to us is more hits, and hits bring runs. Schwarber can bat leadoff, although not being the fastest player, he gets on base.

Castellanos brings a big right-handed bat and someone who can protect Bryce Harper from getting pitched around.

Bob Knittel, a roofing Foreman from New Jersey said “The lineup hasn’t had this much power and stability since the 2008 team”.

Castellanos and Schwarber will

be joining the returning lineup of Ryhs Hoskins, J.T. Realmuto, and the MVP Bryce Harper.

If National League MVP Bryce Harper stays on his current path, he’ll help the Phillies get to the playoffs.

Hoskins is coming off a season ending core injury. Before the injury Hoskins was on pace for a career year. Let’s see what he can bring to the plate this year.

J.T. Realmuto is arguably the best catcher in baseball, he does everything on the field extremely well. J.T. had an underwhelming season last year, only batting .263 at the plate. Hopefully J.T brings up that average and really helps this loaded lineup.

Another Phillie hoping to return to form is Arron Nola. Nola had

a great 2020 season, but his 2021 season was less than stellar. For the other star pitcher on the Phillies, Zack Wheeler, he’s hoping to build on the season he had last year but that’ll be hard because he was so great.

When asked if the Phillies can end the playoff drought, Ryan Buczek, a Business student at University of Pittsburgh answered, “Yeah we should. With the two key players we added along with our all-stars from last year. Our lineup is sixth best in the MLB, I believe, but the only thing I’m worried about is our bullpen and losing games that we should have won.

Ryan makes a great point, our lineup can compete with the best of them. Our bullpen seems like

Photo Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

A Radiant Legacy Student Take-Over Event

Graphic Design students from Bucks County Community College take over for an evening of fun and socialization at the Michener Museum in honor of Keith Haring.

- Take a walk through the *Keith Haring: A Radiant Legacy Exhibit* and find your way to the curated event afterwards.
- Enjoy refreshments, snacks, crafts, and music in honor of Keith Haring and his love for the arts.
- Take part in a scavenger hunt for a chance to win a prize.

***Pre- Registration Required**
Please register at
<https://www.michenerartmuseum.org/event/a-radiant-legacy-student-take-over-event/>

\$15 Members
\$25 Non-Members
\$5 Students

Located at the Michener Museum
138 S Pine St, Doylestown, PA
Saturday, April 23rd
7pm-11pm



Photo Credit: The Michener Museum



Photo Credit: The Michener Museum

Profile

Living Life Through The Lens Of Music

COLIN RICCARDI
Centurion Staff

For most people entering their twenties, the pressure of trying to narrow down a career and going through school is ever-present. However, for a 20-year-old assistant manager at a local Bensalem deli, music is the only thing John Brandt is worried about.

Working the closing shift at the local deli, popping in his earbuds, and getting to turn on his favorite tracks is what John looks forward to the most. That is of course, until he gets home to his sanctuary of happiness where his creativity takes hold.

From the moment he wakes up to the moment he goes to sleep, music is on his mind.

However, listening to music is only the start of what John is getting out of the industry. For John, listening, playing, mixing, mastering, and everything in between is what drives him throughout his day.

John is a unique sound engineer who uses music to encapsulate his creativity in something positive, all while leaving the pressures of the real world at the front door.

At first glance you are greeted with an impressive afro for a 20-year-old and a scraggly beard that personifies his personality. At about 6 feet tall, John takes pride in his afro which is the centerpiece of his appearance.

While he currently has no plans of attending a university, he hopes to one day turn his favorite pastime into a career as a music producer.

“In order to for me to be in the right space to work with music, I would have to be in a space

where I’m like, ‘Hey, I want to be creative, or I want to be happy.’” Emotions create a place of Zen when in the right headspace, which affects the music John produces.

“I deal with mixing, mastering, and I do produce my own sounds. However, I do love to work on remixes that use master tracks that range from Michael Jackson to Madonna.”

Some of his favorite tracks to play with happen to be hits from a few of history’s biggest artists of all time. While he loves to dissect some of his all-time favorite tracks, he is especially good at remastering some of the King of Pop’s hits by highlighting vocals or by elevating sub levels of production.

From an early age, John knew music was his passion. Hearing the sounds that came from some of his earliest inspirations that include Michael Jackson, he became infatuated with how certain sounds could bounce off the walls to create a luscious melody.

From this early age, John picked up a plethora of instruments and continues to learn and incorporate them into his craft. “I play many instruments ranging from synthesizers, drums, piano, guitars, and a bass. I do have a trumpet, but I have a tough time buzzing my lips, so I am still learning.”

All this, and he still mastered the ability to run the Audacity program, a program that allows producers to effect individual layers of music, and his massive soundboard on top of his desk.

In the first half an hour of watching, it is clear he knows

what he is doing as he plucks each string and hits each key with precision, turns each knob and lever to its needed position.

There is a lot of baggage that comes with music technology. Each knob and lever do something so small that even a minor hiccup can throw off an entire project, ruining hours of work. Every microphone has a set distance to capture specific sounds and changing something ever so slightly could change a project drastically.

The effects that John plays around with inside the Audacity program range from dampening audio to adding distortion, each of which requires immense knowledge of how to incorporate them effectively.

There is a level of expertise that comes with John’s ability to deconstruct and explain exactly what he can do with some of the biggest songs from some of the biggest artists of our generation. John takes the heavily praised “Billie Jean,” by Michael Jackson and breaks it down layer by layer explaining how the King of Pop created the mega hit.

As an example, John isolates the vocals and explains how Michael used his voice to create unique sounds. “Michael created several background vocals and stacked them together to create the illusion that there are several voices. He made different tracks for the highs, lows, and mids for the song. This gives the song that gorgeous sound.”

After watching the artist at work, he explains just why he does music and how it helps him. “Music is as important to me as



to say, happiness is key. I cannot stand silence and that is one thing that a lot of people will say they like.”

Music has become a necessity for people all over the world and for people like John it is that one true escape from the despair the real world has to offer. “There must be ambience for me to think and just hearing music enhances that feeling. It allows me to feel like I am okay and feel happy. It keeps me from feeling uncomfortable. Some use music as a distraction, I use it as an enhancement.”

There is no right way to fuel that creative passion or to seal off the negativities of current events, but music can be a start. “Music gets around to a lot of people and as an outlet, it can be extremely diverse but ultimately it depends

on the person.”

One this is for sure, and it is that music is where John Brandt finds his peace. As he strikes each drum, strums each chord, or as he adds effects to audio files, John is pouring his creativity and turning it into happiness.

Photo Courtesy of Colin Riccardi

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Transfer Fantastic Friday Event (11 a.m.):
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Centurion

The Centurion Wins 15 Keystone Awards

CHASE ZEMITIS
Centurion Staff

The Centurion Newspaper at Bucks County Community college won 15 awards in the 2022 Keystone Media awards contest including first place in general news, layout, design, website, and video story.

The Centurion, which is entirely student run and financially independent, has won nearly 150 awards in the contest since 2010, making it one of the most-honored student newspapers in the state of Pennsylvania.

Journalism professor Tony Rogers said, “The awards were a result of the work done in the spring and the fall semesters of 2021, during the height of the pandemic where enrollment at Bucks was hit hard by the pandemic”.

Much of the award-winning work was focused on the pandemic, including the fallout from the historical 2020 election and the effects on college’s enrollment

The Centurion newspaper competes in Division three of the keystone contest, which includes two -year colleges from across the state.

Before the pandemic, The Centurion distributed print copies to all three campuses of the college but the lack of students on campus has led to PDF versions being sent out to students via email instead.

Lucas Darling, a sophomore at Bucks and the Centurion’s editor in chief said, “The writers and editors put in a lot of effort to make the paper happen. I’m happy that those efforts are being recognized.”

Rogers said, “Enrollment at



From Left To Right, Colin Riccardi, Lucas Darling, James Bonnell

Bucks was hit hard by the pandemic, which meant the Centurion was operating with a much smaller staff and with many students working remotely.”

“I’ve never been more proud of my students,” he continued. “This has been an incredibly difficult time to put out the paper and they’ve still managed to do terrific work”

Rogers said he was especially proud of the fact that the paper won second place in the newly created Diversity category, for articles on a celebration of pride month, a virtual Juneteenth event and an article on the history and impact of Black History Month.

Full List of Centurion Winners

General News First Place: Beloved Bucks Professor Dr. Christopher Bursk Dies at Age 78:

Echo Rogers

Ongoing News Coverage Second Place:

Year Two of the Ongoing Covid-19 Pandemic: Alyssa Allebach, Gabriella Pirmann, Lucas Darling

Public Service/Enterprise Package

Second Place Special Report: The Covid Shutdown at Bucks, One Year Later: Gabriella Pirmann, Lucas Darling, Alyssa Moore

Public Service/Enterprise Package Honorable Mention Special Report: The Fallout From the 2020 Election: Lucas Darling, Gabriella Pirmann

Feature Story Second Place: A Conversation with President Ganther: James Bonnell

Sports Story Second Place:

Bucks Women’s Soccer Team Season Preview: Mitchel Wilbur

Sports Story Honorable Mention:

Bucks Men’s Soccer Team Season Preview: Colin Riccardi

Review Second Place: ‘No Time to Die’ is a ‘Perfect Send-Off for Craig’s Bond’: Mark Ruffin

Review Honorable Mention: ‘Shang-Chi’ is ‘Action Movie Perfection’ Mark Ruffin

News Photo First Place: Pastor Aden Visits Bucks Once Again: Gabriella Pirmann

Layout and Design First Place: A Socially Distant Year: John Madden, Olivia Ruddell

Website First Place: www.bucks-news.com: Lucas Darling

Video Story First Place:

Dealing With Covid-19 Stress: Alyssa Moore

Video Story Second Place: Centurion editor keeps putting out the paper, despite the pandemic: Alyssa Moore

Diversity Second Place: Celebrating Pride Month with Senator Steven Santarsiero and Kevin Antoine; Bucks County Community College hosts Virtual Juneteenth Event; The History And Impact Of Black History Month: Echo Rogers, Mark Ruffin, Lucas Darling

A Centurion In King Arthur’s Country

HAL CONTE
Former Centurion Editor

At first glance, it’s a sight that might not seem out of place in Bucks County — exquisite foliage, enthusiastic groups of students, and a pleasant climate, but look around and things appear off.

Cars are driving on the wrong side of the road, people are carrying bags with the names of strange grocery stores such as “Waitrose” and “M&S”, and measurements are in kilometers, not miles.

Open your ears and hear the chatter and it’s obvious you are far afield. Since October, I’ve been attending the University of Warwick in the Midlands of the United Kingdom, seeking to obtain a master’s degree in Global Media and Communication.

Although it’s half a world away from Bucks County Community College, my eventual journey here began as a Centurion editor, when on a trip to the Keystone journalism awards, another alumni of the paper told me they were planning to study abroad in the U.K. after transferring to Temple.

As soon as I heard about this possibility, I was hooked. After attending Temple and studying abroad in London during the summer of 2019, my obsession was only redoubled. I planned to return to the U.K. as soon as possible but had to acknowledge the likely financial burden of doing so.

Almost as an afterthought, I attended a Fellowship Advising session at Temple in February 2020. Seeing a group of professional, intimidating graduate students discuss their applications, both successful and unsuccessful, to the Fulbright, Marshall, and Gates scholarship, I figured I might theoretically make a go at an application just to say I tried, but probably would never do so given the limited time in my schedule.

Like a twisted genie, coro-



navirus lockdowns arrived just weeks later, depriving me of my remaining in-person undergraduate education — but also granting me time to prepare a Fulbright application, which, with the help of fellowship advisor Dr. Barbara Gorka, I submitted in October 2020, just days prior to securing a job at Gannett’s Lebanon Daily News.

To my surprise and delight, I learned that I was accepted as a finalist in April of the following year and set off for the U.K. again in September.

Classes here are high-stakes and

challenging — some professors base their entire grade on a single essay — and some elements remain online. But for the most part, education has taken place in-person, mask-free, and among a cohort of interesting students just as international as I am.

My classmates include citizens of Russia, South Korea, China, India, Hong Kong, and more. As a former Centurion editor, I’ve gotten involved with student media — I am finance editor at the Boar and editor-in-chief of the Globalist - and my skills in InDesign and other Adobe programs have been

invaluable in securing the position and laying out each issue.

Coventry, the city nearest to the University of Warwick, is smaller than Philadelphia, but much safer and is the U.K.’s 2021 City of Culture. There have been many art galleries, book talks, and other events worth attending.

A train trip to London and back is roughly equivalent to \$50, and I’ve been in and out three or four times so far, seeing Hamlet at the Globe Theatre, visiting the British Library and Tate Modern, and walking up and down High Street in Kensington during the Christ-

mas season, marveling at the abundance of fashionable goods on sale, and their eye-watering price.

I plan to return to the U.S. at some point and obtain a PhD, but I’m not sure when that might be. I started my journey hooked on a rumor but living here has proved even more addictive. It might in part be the tea, but it goes beyond that.

Photo Courtesy Of Hal Conte

Entertainment

King Richard is Inspiring and Uplifting



BY MARK RUFFIN

Centurion Staff

The names Venus and Serena Williams are synonymous with tennis and excellence. The accolades of these amazing woman are known to most people.

Filmmaker Reinaldo Marcus approach to the film, “King Richard,” is unique because he decided to focus on what made the sisters special: the support of their family. The film could have easily been a copy and paste of the sister’s life, but the film is a study of the Williams family.

What is interesting about “King Richard” is that even if you are not a tennis fan, this film will move you.

The film is a powerful drama that is magnetic and moving. It lives and breathes the story of

Serena (Demi Singleton) and Venus (Saniyya Sidney) Williams’ beginnings on the tennis court in the ‘90s and the family environment that cultivated their blindingly bright futures – particularly driven by their father, Richard Williams (Will Smith).

“King Richard” is a contemporary drama that has the makings of becoming a classic.

“King Richard” tells the story from the perspective of their father and coach. This approach should not work, but while it may take away focus from these talented women’s accomplishments, it only strengthens the foundation as to how we understand these tennis champions.

Following very commercial Will Smith movies, such as “Bad Boys for Life,” “Aladdin,” and

“Gemini Man,” the actor steps out of his comfort zone as Richard Williams.

In “King Richard,” Smith plays against his type; he is awkward and misunderstood. Early in the film, he gets knocked down and beaten by teenagers in front of his children. He is rarely eloquent. Richard Williams is quite the opposite of the larger-than-life persona of Will Smith.

“King Richard” is patient. It is not easy for a movie about a real person, never mind two famous tennis athletes, to take its time to develop a bond with an audience. However, between Zach Baylin’s fantastic script, Reinaldo Marcus Green’s direction, and several memorable performances, the movie manages to both sit with you and hold your attention.

Sure, it has the all-too-familiar inspiring energy one would expect from a movie on this subject matter. However, staying focused on Serena and Venus’ upbringing at a specific time and then homing in on certain elements of their relationship with tennis as well as their family, is confident and deliberate which leaves you wanting to follow the Williams’ achievements for a lifetime.

“King Richard” is a movie that leaves one blown away by Serena and Venus Williams as you’d expect, but even more than that, the movie deliberates a memorable message about how powerful upbringing is to creating good people and success.

It’s a cathartic experience about the weight of being protected, genuinely loved, and respected

by a parent. So often we are fed stories about successful people who were broken down, forced and/or hardened by their passion or profession and this take on the sub-genre was refreshing. “King Richard” is a beautiful example demonstrating that confident and balanced diligence can create world champions.

Grade: A

“King Richard” is available on Hulu and HBO Max

Photo Courtesy of Warner Brothers

“Morbius leaves a lot to be desired”

BY MARK RUFFIN

Centurion Staff

Sony’s Marvel universe has kicked off its 2022 slate of feature films with “Morbius,” starring Jared Leto as the titular Dr. Michael Morbius. The film, which has experienced multiple delays due to the pandemic with its original release date being March 2021, and then in October of the same year, has finally been released and it should have stayed buried.

Dr. Michael Morbius is a famed doctor who specializes in blood diseases, having concocted life-saving synthetic blood that has apparently saved more lives than penicillin.

His research is fueled by his own condition, a rare blood disease that affects his ability to walk, which leads him to rely on crutches for mobility. He is also inspired by his best friend, Milo (Matt Smith), whom he met in a hospital when they were both children and who suffers the same affliction.

When Morbius makes a breakthrough in his research, successfully extracting DNA from a bat and attaching it to another animal, he and his work partner, Martine (Adria Arjona), carry out the experiment.

Obviously, it does not go as planned.

Like the inception of the Green Goblin, Michael wakes up in the lab as a murderous superhuman vampire. His face is transformed into a terrifying creature with long fangs and sharp claw-like nails. He can move at superhuman speed, crawl ceilings, and fly.

There’s just one catch: he needs to consume blood every six hours.

When Milo catches word of this, he turns himself into the same creature but because he drinks human blood rather than synthetic like Michael, he has an even more nefarious side. The rest of the film sees them fight it out

as Michael tries to stop himself from fully indulging in his monstrous side, walking the line between hero and villain.

While Marvel Studios have been putting out success after success, the same cannot be said for Sony Pictures.

We get barely any backstory into the protagonist we are meant to empathize with through the entire film. We know little about Dr. Michael Morbius and the film tries to give us a character that we can identify with as he cares for young children and tries to cure his best friend, but it all feels like filler.

The central problem of “Morbius” is a lazy and uninspiring script. No weight or depth is given to any character and the humor that is thrown in just does not work.

Being a villain origin story of sorts, it is fair to draw similarities with another Sony Pictures film, “Venom.” However, “Morbius” lacks all charm and devotion to its main character by hoping lengthy action sequences and jarring images of Leto and Smith’s animated faces will make us forget about how poor the script is.

“Morbius” prioritizes action over substance, doing little to

establish character arcs, dynamics, and backstories in favor of focusing on action sequences, fights, and flashy CGI.

If there was anything positive about this film, it would be that Leto does feel somewhat comfortable in the role. Instead of letting the lazy writing wash over him, he does what he can with it.

With Leto having a recent stream of flop performances as Joker and Paolo Gucci, Morbius may suggest that Leto works best in less eccentric roles. “Morbius” is a disappointing film that leaves a lot to be desired sadly.

Grade: D

“Morbius” is currently playing in theaters everywhere.

Photo Courtesy Of Sony

