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The Daily Mississippian

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Double Decker is Here

After kicking off on the bed of a pickup truck in 1996, the Double Decker Arts Festival is now an established Oxford tradition. In its 24th year, this annual celebration of music, art and food will bring together all kinds of people — local artists, out-of-town musicians, fun-loving students. Read on to learn more about how to make this year's Double Decker the best yet.

NINE MOST INSTAGRAMABLE SPOTS ON THE SQUARE

Online editor Annie Sharp put together a list of the most Instaworthy destinations at Double Decker. Get your 'gram planned for the Square's most photogenic weekend of the year.

LUCERO IS 'LONG-RUNNING, HARD-WORKING, BAR-ROCKING'

"We're kind of the old standby," Lucero's Ben Nichols told the DM in an interview ahead of Double Decker. Read about the band's Memphis roots, literary influences and Oxford connections inside.

WHO'S ON STAGE AT DOUBLE DECKER?

Planning to stop by the Double Decker stage this weekend? Check out this guide with information about all the acts playing Friday night, as well as the headliner, Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit.

10

ALUMNI ARTISTS RETURN TO OXFORD FOR DOUBLE DECKER

"If I can inspire one person that comes to my booth (who is) a young girl, that would mean more to me than anything. That's what I love about doing shows," said artist Debra Hewitt.

MUD DAUBERS BRING STUDENT TALENT TO DOUBLE DECKER

"Of course as artists we want our work in people's hands and homes, but it's also a great opportunity to talk to people face to face," said president Will McComb. The student ceramics group is returning to Double Decker to sell one of a kind pieces.

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THE DAILY MISSISSIPPIAN

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Columns do not represent the official opinions of The University of Mississippi or *The Daily Mississippian* unless specifically indicated.

The Daily Mississippian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be e-mailed to dmletters@olemiss.edu. Letters should be typed, double-spaced and no longer than 300 words. Letters may be edited for clarity, space or libel. Third-party letters and those bearing pseudonyms, pen names or "name withheld" will not be published. Publication is limited

to one letter per individual per calendar month. Letters should include phone and email contact information so that editors can verify authenticity. Letters from students should include grade classification and major; letters from faculty and staff should include title and the college, school or department where the person is employed.





MEMBER NEWSPAPER

Year after shooting, OPD increases security

MASON SCIONEAUX

THEDMNEWS@GMAIL.COM

On the opening night of Double Decker Arts Festival last April, a single shot was fired into the air inside The Lyric, sending those in attendance at the Jersey Party hosted by Epic Entertainment into a panic. Only one person was injured by broken glass at the event, and now, nearly a year later, festival organizers are working to increase security this weekend.

A year removed from the shooting at The Lyric, Oxford Police Captain Hildon Sessums said OPD could not have done anything to avoid the situation.

"I don't think we can prevent something like that, because it happened at a private establishment," Sessums said. "I think our response to it was outstanding. We had the place locked down, officers knew what to do. Sure, there was panic among some of the Double Decker-goers, but our officers sprang into action and did what they were trained to do."

Sessums said that the security for Double Decker is taken very seriously, as OPD works with the fire department, emergency services,



In response to the shooting at The Lyric during Double Decker Arts Festival last year, OPD plans to increase security on the Square this weekend.

Visit Oxford and outside groups to ensure that attendees are safe. It also employs additional temporary officers and investigators in plain clothes spread strategically across the Square.

"It's paramount that Double Decker goes off smoothly," Sessums said. "It's one of the biggest tourist attractions for Oxford. We feel personally responsible for everybody that's going to be

on the Square on Friday and Saturday."

Double Decker coordinator Lee Ann Stubbs also stressed the importance of security in creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere for everyone in town.

"I think that we try to make a safe place for Double Decker," she said. "We communicate with OPD Emergency Management throughout the festival and the planning of it, so we do have steps in place to make sure everyone is safe, and we have plans if anything were to take place."

Stubbs said she expects record crowds of 60,000-65,000 people on the Square this weekend, which she said makes safety even more of a concern.

In addition to Double Decker, the Ole Miss baseball and softball teams are hosting home series this weekend, which are expected to increase turnout at the festival. Stubbs and Sessums said Double Decker weekend is a huge economic driver for the city.

"Double Decker is awesome for the city, for the economic impact of the city," Stubbs said. "It's bringing so many people here for the weekend to fill up our restaurants, fill our hotels, shop in our stores. We collect art vendor taxes and food vendor taxes for the weekend, and we consider this weekend to be as impactful as a football weekend or graduation weekend."

Now in its 24th year, Stubbs said Double Decker is continuing to grow in size and scope, cementing Oxford as a cultural hub in Mississippi. Stubbs said approximately 300 art vendors applied for a spot at the festival this year, and though they had to turn many away, she said this aptly demonstrates the growing reputation of the festival.

"Double Decker has become one of the premier festivals across the Southeast and earned a great reputation," Stubbs said. "It has grown from the bed of a pickup truck, playing music, to bringing so many people and renowned musicians to the town."



PRESENTATION	PRESENTATION	PRESENTATION	PRESENTATION	PRESENTATION		
Hayden Kelsey Benge	Emory Elizabeth Wills	Lee Joseph Easson	Anna Therese Beavers	Mariegene Eliza Almand		
B.S. in Integrated Marketing Communications "Who's Liable? The Intersection of Free Speech and Content Regulation on Social Media Platforms" Directed by Cynthia Joyce Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 4:00 pm Overby Conference Room	B.E. in Engineering "Hydrogen Production by His Mutants of Artificial Hydrogenase" Directed by Saumen Chakraborty Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 3:00 pm Coulter 201	B.S.C.S. in Computer Science "Indoor Localization Using Smartphones: Approaches, Issues, and Challenges" Directed by Feng Wang Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 3:00 pm Weir 235	B.S.C.J in Criminal Justice "Al-Qaida, Boko Haram, and ISIS: Tracking the Shift in Women's Involvement" Directed by Ashleen Williams Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 3:00 pm CISS Conference Room	B.A. in Biology "The Developmental and Behavioral Effects of Early Life Stage Cannabinoid Exposure in Zebrafish" Directed by Kristine Willett Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 2:00 pm TCRC 3056		
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IF IT'S NOT ON THE 'GRAM

ANNIE SHARP THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

Online editor Annie Sharp put together a few suggestions of places to snap a pic to show off your weekend look and keep your 'gram looking premium.

1

Rooftop of the Graduate Oxford

If you are going to do this, you have to commit. Take the picture as the sun is not quite setting but about to, precisely between 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., also known as "Golden Hour."



Rooster's Balcony

Not just any spot up there, either. Turn right immediately when you get up the stairs, and face toward the bar so the Square can be your flawless backdrop. With the white courthouse behind you and the bright blue sky contrasting with the red brick of Oxford City Hall, you are guaranteed to break the internet.



Tallahatchie Brick Staircase

This location is tucked away from the crowds, so you don't have to rely on Photoshop to edit unwanted people out of your premium photo. Plus, who doesn't love to play around on a staircase during a photoshoot? You can sit, lean on the railing or stand to show off your entire outfit. The possibilities are endless!

Telephone booth

Sometimes being basic just feels right, and this is one of those times. Not every school has a red telephone booth straight out of England, so for your followers' sake, use it.

Possible captions: "It's London Calling again!" "Operator, I'd like to place a call to the Queen." "Get the Oxford look #maybeshesbornwithit" "Reality called, so I hung up."

Classic Courthouse Picture

Oxford isn't Oxford without the Square, so this picture is a must, especially during Double Decker. You will be able to see all the festivities going on behind you, which will make for the perfect backdrop. If you are feeling adventurous, throw a prop in the picture. Food, art, maybe a cute drink? Just be creative.

Street View

If you want to take a picture that shows off the unbeatable small-town vibes that the Square gives off, this is the best place to do it. Round Table and My Favorite Shoes are painted such a vibrant blue that it will brighten your picture and you, and everyone looks good in blue.





This staircase is an influencer magnet. Wear a color that pops, so when you are against the orange wall, you will shine. This spot is ready for you to take a full body, or even, if you are feeling brave, a close-up. Play around with the stairs or, if you dare, use the street view. With Double Decker fully on display, you are bound to get some quality content.

Possible caption: "Whoever said orange is the new pink was seriously disturbed."

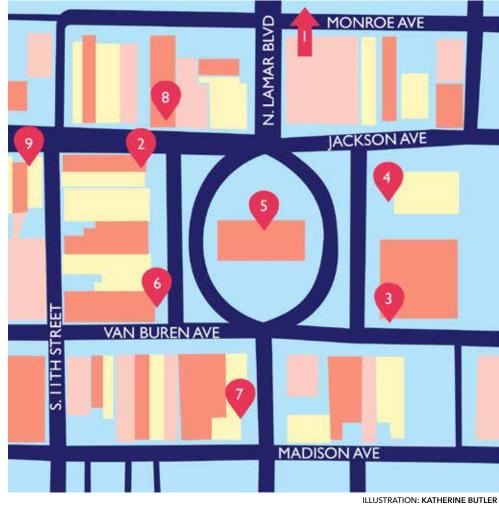
Bouré Balcony

Just like the Rooster's balcony, if the sun is shining, you really cannot go wrong with this location. Get up there, order some food and start snapping pictures.

Funky's Pizza & Daiquiri Bar

When the sun goes down, it's best to move your modeling session inside, and the best place to do this is definitely Funky's. Get yourself a colorful daiquiri and pose like your life depends on it.

Possible Captions: "Negative funds, positive vibes" "Double Decker @ the happiest place on earth" *if it rains* "When it rains, I pour."



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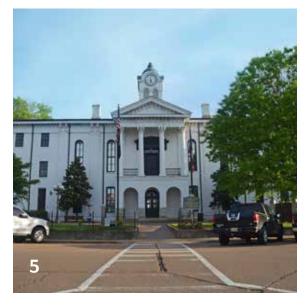
DID IT REALLY HAPPEN?







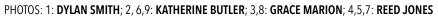




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24th Annual Double Decker Arts Festival **Music Lineup**

Friday April 26, 2019

8:00 P.M.-9:00 P.M.- Eric Gales

7:00 P.M.-8:00 P.M.-Thacker Mountain Radio Hour 6:00 P.M.-7:00 P.M.- Lilly Hiatt

Saturday April 27, 2019

8:30 P.M.-10:00 P.M.- Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit 7:00 P.M.- 8:00 P.M.- Shovels & Rope 5:30 P.M.- 6:30 P.M.- Lucero 4:00 P.M.- 5:00 P.M.- Durand Jones and the Indications 2:30 P.M.- 3:30 P.M.- Emily King 1:00 P.M.- 2:00 P.M.- Cedric Burnside 11:30 A.M.- 12:30 P.M.- Kate Teague 10:15 A.M.- 11:15 A.M.- UM Salsa Project

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1

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'Long-running, hard-working, bar-rocking'

LIAM NIEMAN

THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

Lucero, the longtime Memphis country-rock band, is one of the oldest acts to take the Double Decker stage this weekend. They're veterans of Double Decker, Americana music and Oxford.

The band's lead vocalist, guitarist and songwriter Ben Nichols, who was on the way to pick up his daughter from daycare, said it's an interesting spot to be in.

"We're kind of the old standby," he said. "Not the upcoming new kids, or the band that's about to blow up, and we're not the big famous act coming to town. ... We're the long-running, hard-working, bar-rocking band from Memphis."

Lucero, consisting now of Nichols, Roy Berry, John C. Stubblefield, Rick Steff and Brian Venable, is also familiar with Oxford's everyday scene. They've been playing shows at Proud Larry's and, most recently, The Lyric since they got their start in the late '90s. But Nichols said the band is "overdue for a trip to Oxford." Their last concert in town was in 2016, when they played at Thacker Mountain Radio Hour.



"Oxford was very friendly to us right from the start," Nichols said. "It's been a long time. We've been doing this for 20 years ... It's always a pleasure to come down to play Oxford."

Nichols said he likes the feeling of the town, a "next-door neighbor" to Lucero's hometown of Memphis.

He especially likes the town's books, including those of Larry Brown. Before Brown's death in 2004, Nichols had the chance to meet Brown twice at Proud Larry's — once when Brown was very drunk, another when he was very sober.

"I've tried to write some songs that were like his short stories," he said.

Nichols has always been a literary-minded songwriter most visible on his solo album "The Last Pale Light in the West," which is based entirely on Cormac McCarthy's "Blood Meridian."

Lucero's latest album "Among the Ghosts," Nichols said, contains pieces borrowed from stories and books. He took a scene from Tim O'Brien's genre-bending book about the Vietnam War, "The Things They Carried," PHOTO COURTESY: LUCERO

for the song "Everything Has Changed."

In the story, O'Brien writes of how Lt. Jimmy Cross, conflicted over his war responsibilities and his girlfriend back home, crouches in his foxhole and burns up the letters she wrote him. In Nichols' version: "She was all I once desired / Burned her letter in the fire / One morning by the river in the rain."

"Among the Ghosts" also has a visual connection to North Mississippi. Its cover is a tintype of a flooded church taken by Michael Foster, whose studio is located in Water Valley. Lucero's guitarist, Brian Venable, ran into Foster at an art show and the two connected, leading Foster to come to Memphis to take the band members' portraits.

In Memphis, Foster showed them the image that now appears on the album.

"We saw that flooded church and immediately fell in love with it, like most people do," Nichols said. "It's just such a striking photo, or tintype, actually ... I thought it was a perfect match for the tone of the record."

Another artist that Lucero collaborated with for "Among the Ghosts" is Nichols's brother, filmmaker Jeff Nichols ("Mud," "Loving"), who created a short film based on the song "Long Way Back Home."

Starring Michael Shannon ("Boardwalk Empire"), who has appeared in all of Jeff Nichols's films, the video provides a visual grittiness to the song's Southern Gothic crime story. Ben Nichols called it "the coolest thing we've ever done."

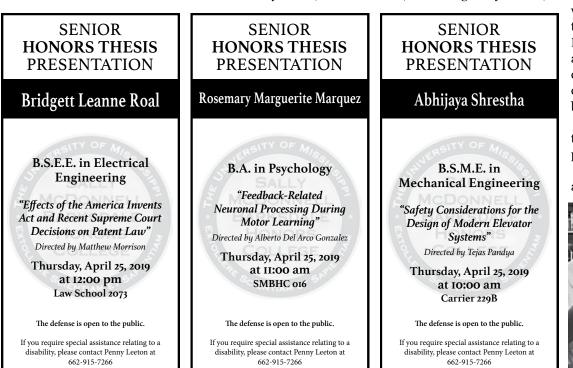
Constantly touring and recording since their 1998 founding, Lucero has become a feature of the Memphis music scene. Last year, Memphis Mayor Jim Strickland even declared an official "Lucero Day" on the 20th anniversary of the band's founding.

But the Memphis rock scene's had a tough past week. Last Saturday, Omar Higgins, the frontman of hardcore punk band Negro Terror, died of a stroke at age 37. Higgins was in Oxford this February to play a concert alongside a documentary about his band.

Nichols said he hopes and believes that Negro Terror, and the grieving Memphis music community, will carry on.

"(Negro Terror is) the kind of band that definitely made a statement and had a message. The whole area needs bands like that," he said. "I've got confidence that the Memphis rock 'n' roll scene will continue to be very fruitful. It's kind of a wild card — you never know what you're gonna get."





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81

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Double Decker on stage **FRIDAY**



6 P.M. - LILLY HIATT PHOTO COURTESY: LILLY HIATT VIA FACEBOOK

LIAM NIEMAN THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

This year's Double Decker Festival will open with Lilly Hiatt, a no-nonsense rocker influenced equally by southern Americana bands and grunge artists. Her latest album is 2017's "Trinity Lane," which borrows the name of the East Nashville street she lives on and was recorded by a member of another Double Decker act (Shovels and Rope).

On the album's title track, Hiatt sings of the reality of living on Trinity Lane — boredom makes her want to drink, she's hesitant to leave her place, her neighbors are selling drugs. But "I know how that goes," Hiatt sings in the song's refrain.



7 P.M. - THACKER MOUNTAIN

EILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

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Between their sets, Thacker Mountain Radio Hour will record its weekly show, featuring music by Lilly Hiatt and Eric Gales. Friday's Thacker will also feature author Helen Ellis reading from her book "Southern Lady Code."

After picking up a guitar at age four, Eric Gales quickly gained a reputation as a child prodigy until his debut album in 1991. Gale, who just put out his 19th album "The Bookends," is widely hailed as one of the blues' finest guitarists.

The best songs on "The Bookends" combine the arena-jolting guitar playing of rock legend Jimi Hendrix and frequent collaborator Gary Clark, Jr., with the traditional blues chops of Muddy Waters and Albert King. Gales' night-ending set is sure to shake North Lamar up.

GALES



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HEADLINING: Jason Isbell and the 400 unit

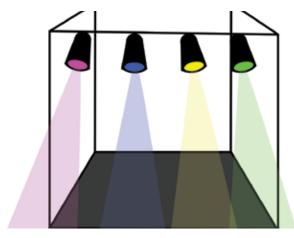


PHOTO COURTESY: JASON ISBELL

Led by a former Drive-By Trucker, Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit are an Americana music powerhouse. Now on their third album, Isbell and his backing band, made up of Sadler Vaden, Jimbo Hart, Derry DeBorja, Chad Gamble and Amanda Shires, picked up two Grammy Awards in 2018.

Isbell, known for his heartfelt reflections on relationships, actively questions those sort of songs on "The Nashville Sound." Instead, he takes a political turn, analyzing his place of privilege as a white man on songs like "White Man's World" and "Hope the High Road" with the mantra that "there's no such thing as someone else's fight."

"I've heard enough of the white man's blues / I've sang enough about myself," Isbell sings on the latter track. "So if you're looking for some bad news / You can find it somewhere else."



For the rest of Saturday's lineup, see thedmonline.com.



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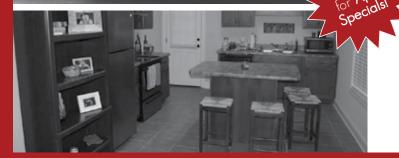


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SENIOR SENIOR SENIOR SENIOR SENIOR HONORS THESIS **HONORS THESIS** HONORS THESIS **HONORS THESIS** HONORS THESIS PRESENTATION PRESENTATION PRESENTATION PRESENTATION PRESENTATION **Elizabeth Jean Weathersby Dylan Patrick Fink Kimberly Ann Thornton** Mary Linley Albert Natalie Scott Williams **B.S. in Pharmaceutical** B.S. in B.B.A. in **B.A. in Public Policy** Sciences **B.A. in Biological Science Integrated Marketing Managerial Finance** Leadership, History Communications "Fungal-Algal Speed Dating: "Neurotoxic Effects of HIV-1 "The Economic and Social "A Pro-Life Re-Alignment: qp120 and Interaction with **Exploring Symbiotic Potential** "Clicks & Mortar: The Impacts of Gender Parity in Proposing a Shift in Focus of Fungal-Algal Cocultures" Allopregnanolone" Modernization of Boutiaue **Employment and Education**" Toward Demand-Side Anti-Directed by Erik Hom Directed by Jason Paris **Retail to Aid Rural** Directed by Bonnie Van Ness Abortion Advocacy" Revitalization in Mississippi" Thursday, April 25, 2019 Thursday, April 25, 2019 Thursday, April 25, 2019 Directed by Melissa Bass Directed by Cynthia Joyce at 4:00 pm at 9:00 am at 1:30 pm SMBHC 016 Thursday, April 25, 2019 **TCRC 3056** Holman 230 Thursday, April 25, 2019 at 9:30 am at 3:00 pm Odom 101 **Overby Conference Center** The defense is open to the public The defense is open to the public. If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at If you require special assistance relating to a If you require special assistance relating to a disability, please contact Penny Leeton at disability, please contact Penny Lee 662-915-7266 662-915-7266 662-915-7266 662-915-7266 662-915-7266

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UM alumni artists return for Double Decker

MORGAN O'NEAL

THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

Each spring, the Oxford community looks forward to Double Decker, an annual festival on the Square showcasing both local and external art, music and food. In addition to the music lineup and participation of the Square's storefronts, over 100 artists will fill art vendor booths and line the Square with their artwork.

Several of these art vendors are Ole Miss alumni who return to their college town to sell their crafts and take part in one of Oxford's favorite traditions. Oxford native and Ole Miss alumna Debra Hewitt said that during her time in Oxford, the town was centered around literature more than artistry.

"When I grew up there, (Oxford) was coming into that artsy (movement). I graduated in 1988 and, back then, it was more of a literary place than an artsy place," Hewitt said. "It was kind of the beginning of that era, so it's neat to come back. For me, it's my home. It's changed so much but it's changed so much for the better. It's become a very cultural, artsy town," she said.

Fifteen years ago, Hewitt

realized her true calling was art. She now lives in Birmingham, Alabama and is returning to Oxford for the second consecutive year to sell her abstract pieces at Double Decker Arts Festival.

"I had to trust that this was what I was supposed to do. I had never had an art lesson before, and (now) this business is literally a full-blown LLC that's in about 30 stores across 10 states," she said.

Hewitt said she took a leap of faith with painting, something that she hopes young artists and Ole Miss students are inspired to do as well. For her, it's about a lot more than just the paintings.

"If I can inspire one person that comes to my booth (who is) a young girl, that would mean more to me than anything. That's what I love about doing shows," she said.

Class of 2018 alumna and abstract artist Emory Ryals realized her love for painting during her years at Ole Miss. She will be returning as an art vendor at Double Decker for the second year. Now a special education teacher in Marks, Ryals credits Oxford for the opportunity to make art into a side career.

"I think Oxford allowed me to see that there was a possibility to painting rather

9 am - 6 pm



than just a hobby, (that I) could really make it into a business because there are so many artists to be inspired by (in Oxford)," Ryals said. "I'm most inspired by the Delta, where I come from, but Oxford helped me put it into action. Oxford opened up possibilities for sure."

Allie King, a senior who studies graphic design at Ole Miss, is one of the select group of students who have access to the art department's small letterpress studio. She uses this equipment, a modernized version of an old-fashioned printing press, to create stationary, greeting cards and framable art targeted at young women.

"My junior year, I started getting tired of staring at a screen all day. I wanted to find something that I could start making with my hands again because I love working with my hands as an artist, so I took a letterpress class," she said.

King and several of her

PHOTO COURTESY: EMORY RYALS

peers applied to be art vendors at Double Decker on a whim for fun, doubtful that they would be accepted. As one of the few chosen, King said that the support from her friends and family has made all the difference in her journey of creating what she loves.

"I've always been the person attending Double Decker, not selling, so it's going to be really interesting to see that side of Double Decker from the artist standpoint," she said.

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Friday, April 26th

Mud Daubers bring student talent to festival

BELLA ST. AMANT

THEDMFEATURES@GMAIL.COM

On Monday afternoon, the atmosphere in the claysplattered ceramics studio on the ground floor of Meek Hall was buzzing. In preparation for Double Decker, a group of upper-level art students is working diligently to produce plates, bowls, mugs and an assortment of other ceramic creations to be sold at the Mud Daubers booth on Oxford's Square this Saturday.

Mud Daubers, aptly named for a variety of wasp that builds its nests from mud, is a student-led organization under the guidance of ceramics professor Matt Long. Its members are both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in the advanced ceramics class.

Mud Daubers participates in year-round efforts to raise money for initiatives that benefit art students. Each year it brings in renowned artists to come to the university for demonstrations, student critiques and presentations.

Money raised from Mud Daubers events also sponsors students to go to national conferences, like the annual conference hosted by the National



PHOTO: JOHN SCOTT

The student-led ceramics organization, Mud Daubers, will be selling an assortment of ceramic creations at Double Decker Arts Festival this Saturday.

Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts. Mud Daubers' fundraising events includes providing soup bowls for the charity event Empty Bowls, a Christmas sale on Business Row, and other Ole Miss alumni events.

This year's booth, will contain the work of about 15 ceramics students who will be showcasing pottery of all shapes and sizes. Pieces from Mud Daubers span from the common— like vases and platters— to original sculptures. Along with the work that will be sold at their booth, the trophies for the winners of the Double Decker Spring Run were also crafted by Mud Daubers ceramicists. Rosa Salas, vice president of the Mud Daubers and BFA candidate in ceramics, said one of the group's goals is to

create a variety of ceramic pieces. "The work that we are selling is part of the larger body of work we are completing throughout the year," Salas said. "It's important to have the more familiar items like the mugs or bowls that will go on sale at Double Decker, but we are also interested in developing our fine art experience with ceramics."

The organization has a longstanding presence at Double Decker, and this year is no different. Mud Daubers has brought students' pottery to the festival for at least 12 years. Its booth is staffed by the artists, and 60% of the proceeds goes to these individual artists.

Senior art student Shelby Bickes sold pieces at last year's Double Decker through the Mud Daubers booth. She said that one of her favorite experiences was getting to display her art for her family and friends.

"It was really rewarding to see that people had come to Double Decker to support me and Mud Daubers," Bickes said. "I loved being able to explain the meaning of some elements and symbolism in my pottery to people who ultimately brought it home."

The Mud Daubers booth at Double Decker provides ceramics students a space to share their craft with the Oxford community and other visitors who make their way to the Square every spring. Second-year graduate student and president of Mud Daubers Will McComb said that the festival is a great way to connect with customers and other artists.

"Of course as artists we want our work in people's hands and homes, but it's also a great opportunity to talk to people face to face and tell them what we do," McComb said.

This weekend, you can find Mud Daubers' work located at tents 108-109 outside Soulshine Pizza.

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NFL DRAFT

The DM War Room: 2019 NFL Draft Predictions

JOSHUA CLAYTON **GRIFFIN NEAL**

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WR A.J. Brown Griffin:

After logging 160 catches, over 2500 yards and 17 touchdowns in his past two seasons, there's a legitimate case to be made that A.J. Brown is the best receiver to ever to suit up for the red and blue. Brown wasn't utilized properly at Ole Miss, frequently lining up wide, whereas he'll likely make his money in the slot in the NFL. He's got Jerry Rice-level swagger and will shred your ankles faster than Hugh Freeze pressing send on a university-issued cell phone. While Brown isn't an undersized, white receiver who played QB in college, look for the Patriots to snag him at the tail end of the first round.

Joshua:

All of the hype was on D.K. Metcalf coming out of the combine, but I still think Brown is the most well-rounded member of the NWO. Brown can go outside and take you deep or play inside at the slot and shake you up with superior route-running and dangerous elusiveness after the catch. He's liable for a big play every time he touches the ball and has the confidence to make an immediate impact wherever he's drafted. I think he's off the board somewhere in the second round.

TE Dawson Knox **Griffin:**

Phil Longo should be barred from coaching college football for the rest of his life for the way he used Dawson Knox. Knox, who hasn't scored a touchdown since high school, will be the steal of the draft. He's a 6-foot-4, 250-pound DOG, with tissue-soft hands and breakaway speed. He reminds me of George Kittle. Look for a team, like Jacksonville or Washington, to make a splash and draft Knox in the second round.

Joshua:

Ignore the lack of production in his last two years in Oxford. NFL scouts have dismissed the box score for Knox after looking at the simplistic Longo offense. The bottom line is the best NFL teams, like the Chiefs or the Patriots, use tight ends heavily and since this is an imitation league, other teams will be looking to do the same. If Knox can improve his blocking, he can be a playmaker for a team for years to come. This is a deep draft of tight ends, but Knox could be a steal for a team in the fourth or fifth round after an impressive Pro Day.

OT Greg Little Griffin:

After entering his junior season as a potential top-10 pick, Little's draft stock has plummeted, due in part to a lack of motor and effort. But as Joshua writes below, Little is a physical specimen. If he

lands in the right situation, Little has the potential to be an All-Pro left tackle. He's the quintessential boom-or-bust candidate. Okay, I don't know much about scouting lineman, so I'll defer to the experts and guess he goes early to middle second round.

Joshua:

Little has somewhat faded into the background this offseason, but the fact of the matter is NFL teams know it's usually not a bad idea to take a 6-foot-5, 325-pound monster with elite foot speed. Tackles are always at a premium because they're arguably the cornerstone of a football club, considering they protect the most important player on the field. He'll probably go somewhere in the second or third round.

WR D.K. Metcalf **Griffin:**

D.K. Metcalf did the one thing that no one, not Richard Sherman, Terrell Owens nor Kevin Durant has ever been able to accomplish: he made Stephen A. Smith eat his words. On ESPN's First Take last week, Metcalf said, "You haven't seen me yet. You haven't seen a D.K. Metcalf in the league yet." Smith, enthused, responded by rattling off the names of Calvin Johnson, Jerry Rice and Randy Moss, to evidence his point that D.K. isn't that special. Metcalf, wearing a pink hoodie that was probably an XXL but fit like a workout shirt,



FILE PHOTO: CHRISTIAN JOHNSON

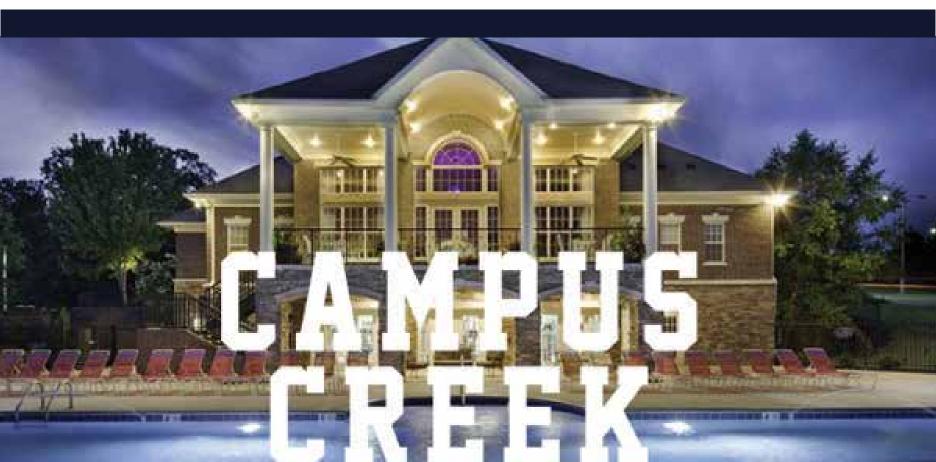
Wide receiver A.J. Brown celebrates after catching a pass by Jordan Ta'amu for a touchdown during the game against South Carolina earlier last season. South Carolina won the game 48-44.

responded: "You haven't seen a 6-3, 230-pound receiver run a 4.33...with a 40.5 inch vertical." Stephen A. was speechless. Metcalf will be the first receiver taken off the board in the draft.

Joshua:

Metcalf's draft stock rose to the stratosphere when that picture surface on social media. You know exactly what picture I'm talking about. He dwarfed

A.J. Brown in that photo and, breaking news, A.J. Brown is not a small guy. The receiver with defensive-end size has the potential to have a dominant skill set similar to his cousin, Calvin Johnson. He was the star of the NFL Combine when he ran a 4.33 40-yard dash. He struggled with the lateral movement drills but who cares -- HE RAN A 4.33 40-YARD DASH. First round pick.



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