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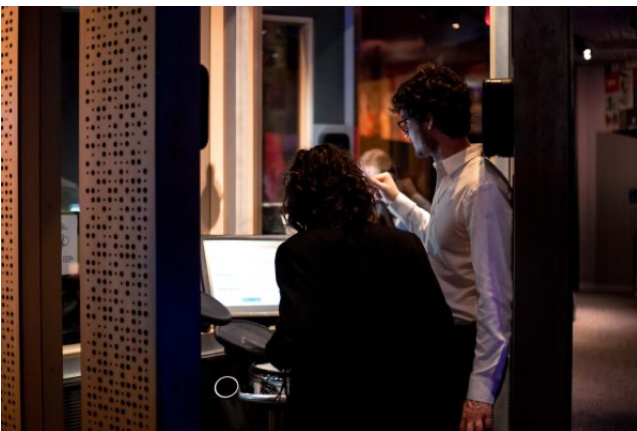
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A Winter Wonderland at MoPOP

Bridget Lawrence, Staff Reporter

A tower of guitars overlooks students who are bumping to the beat of the DJ, while others find themselves transported into a world that is seemingly... small. Instrument-filled rooms are occupied by students, silent on the outside but as soon as one opens the door they are overwhelmed by the sounds of guitar riffs and echoing cymbals.

Winter Ball, hosted by the Students Events and Activities Council (SEAC) is a highly anticipated event that happens every year and this year it was at the Museum of Pop Culture, otherwise known as



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MoPOP.

Initially, the hope was to hold Winter Ball at a different venue that unexpectedly closed down permanently over winter break. With unforeseen obstacles, SEAC had to quickly figure out what their back up venue was going to be.

Luckily, MoPOP was the answer. Despite Winter Ball having been held there two years prior, SEAC was excited and appreciative that MoPOP got to be the location as there are a lot of engaging exhibits.

Iona Robinson, a first-year international studies major, thought that MoPOP was the perfect place to hold the Winter Ball this year.

“The venue is super nice because people can chill and have a good time. They can just talk if they want and go through the exhibits if they don’t want to dance the whole time with loud music,” Robinson said.

Creative Director Marianne Villamil-Obregon helped create the marketing visuals for Winter Ball and talked about how the venue change forced the creative team to recreate the graphics they had already made. Fortunately, MoPOP itself was a source of inspiration and helped bring the winter wonderland theme to life.

“I liked the aspect of snow and MoPOP’s venue having beautiful textures and colors. Our graphic designer used these details,” Villamil-Obregon wrote to The Spectator. “On the day we toured MoPOP, we brought our photographer to take photos of the architecture so the graphic designer was able to embed the photo on the snowflakes.”

She expressed that the collaboration of SEAC members to alleviate the stress posed by last-minute changes was vital and definitely was what made it possible to ensure a smooth execution of the event.

Students had the ability to not only dance to a live DJ but also to explore multiple exhibits that were open. These ranged from exhibits like the Sound Lab where dance goers had the opportunity to be hands-on and play a variety of different instruments. Rooms with keyboards, guitars and drums gave students the opportunity to immerse themselves in sound, both pleasant and repulsive.

Sirena Sawyer, a first-year environmental studies major, is musically inclined herself and really enjoyed the Sound Lab.

“I play guitar and I really like to make music so the instrumental exhibit was super interesting to me and getting to mess around in some of the sound labs with my friends that aren’t into music as me,” Sawyer said.

The Indie Game Revolution exhibit was also open to students and many took advantage of the various games that you could play. There were a plethora of different games and styles, both one and multi- player, that one could play with. It was a lively room filled with friendly competition, yet with the occasional outcry or rage quit after a loss.



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For those interested in music history, students also had the opportunity to walk through a gallery that features the guitars of famous musicians as well as the Nirvana and Jimi Hendrix exhibits.

Students were also given access to the temporary exhibit titled “Hidden Worlds: The Films of Laika.” Students could see the various props that were used by Laika animators to make the stop motion movies like Coraline, The Boxtrolls, Kubo and the Two Strings, ParaNorman, Missing Link and Wildwood.

Kana Komoto, a political science major, and a foreign exchange student, was very excited to attend Winter Ball. While going to an American social event was particularly exciting to her, she was also thrilled to visit MoPOP.

“It’s a really good experience to enjoy American culture for me as an exchange student. I love this event because it’s my first time really experiencing American culture,” Komoto said.

Komoto was excited about all aspects of the dance and was just trying to soak it all in. This ranged from music to the exhibits.

From video games and movie making to jam seshes and boogieing, there was something for everyone at the winter ball. Whether you were all about letting it out on the dance floor or simply wanted to wander around with your friends, amusement permeated this winter wonderland.