

Kendrick Lamar drops quasi-soul masterpiece *Untitled Unmastered*

Timmy Michalik
Staff Reporter

On March 4th, the world was graced with a "rough draft" of Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp A Butterfly*, titled *Untitled Unmastered*. What was once assumed to be a case of internet tall tales and rumors, surfaced the rough and tough masterpiece untitled unmastered. Labeling this work of art as one singular genre would almost be blasphemy to the genius himself. Rolling off the tongue rhymes with jazz cat coolness is Kendrick's forte, along with lyrics discussing society, oppression, racism, political corruption and... a little bit of heartbreak. The album's tracklist even flows freely, starting from untitled 1 all the way through untitled 8, taking you on a slow dive through what seems to be a world of psyched-out minimalist trip hop, seducing your unconscious with the easy growl of deep voices and mind grasping basslines.

The real question is, what do we call this? Is this a movement?

Is this a product of the internet and the newest age of technology? Or is he hip hop's answer to *Good Will Hunting*? the underestimated mastermind's journal that could quite possibly save rap as a whole, and an artform. Breaking the album down piece by piece, it only begins to unravel how complicated and tedious K. Dot can be with his sampling techniques. What really reveals how advanced this album is the excellent jazz scores that happen underneath all of the in your face lyrics, subliminal messaging, and the mastering of what seems to be a huge inspiration to Kendrick's style as a whole, Deltron 3030's 2000 self titled debut *Deltron 3030*.

As the world of pop culture knows, Kendrick is an extremely congenial artist, appealing to all genres and music fans alike. Releasing a remix to Taylor Swift's "Bad Blood", winning back to back grammys, and having a few Top 40 hits, yet some how, is the most appreciated hip hop artist in the modern underground music scene. The fact that he is able to balance such a cool, calm, and collected or itself proves what kind of guy

he is, and if that isn't enough, just listen to one of his albums. His main goal recently seems to be bringing institutional racism to the fore front, and taking pride in black culture, and spreading the positive notion around for all to enjoy.

Whether or not a music fan is attracted to his style, there is no denying that his power and creative brilliance ooze out onto his last two albums, which are not even a year apart, that have set new boundaries in the rap game.. or broke them. Real artists know how to make fans happy, along with critics, and surprise masterpieces like untitled unmastered. Is a prime example of the growing creative field in the music scene and the impact it has on society. Some say this is not as good as Kendrick can do, but I say even on a bad day it displays the fundamental elements of what experimental hip hop is. And he mastered it, once again. Long live King Kendrick.



XCOM 2 welcomes back its commanders to the gamers



Courtesy of Google images

Justin Bennett
Staff Reporter

The XCOM franchise has always been known for its unforgiving gameplay that takes real skill and strategic thinking, or luck, to come out alive; *XCOM 2* is no exception. It assumes, likely correctly, that humanity lost in the 2012 reboot *XCOM Enemy Unknown*. Now, 20 years later, humanity has been subjected by the aliens, and you must lead the resistance movement to expose the alien's true plans and kick them off Earth once and for all.

Gameplay wise, *XCOM 2* is very similar to its predecessor; before each mission you can select who to go on each mission as well as their gear. Combat is done in a tactical turn-based fashion where XCOM needs to complete an objective and then either kill all the enemy forces or extract. Between missions you can purchase new gear for the troops, set new research projects, and construct new facilities for the Avenger, XCOM's mobile base.

New in *XCOM 2* is a Risk like overworld map from where you can move the Avenger around to investigate rumors for additional

supplies, make contact with new regions around the globe, or head to different mission sites. It's important to take initiative in *XCOM 2* because the aliens also have an endgoal: the avatar project. As time goes on the aliens will fill bars on the avatar project, if it fills up a timer starts and if that timer hits zero, it's game over.

Of course, you won't be able to stop the aliens without soldiers to fight the battles, and the soldier customization in *XCOM 2* is off the charts. You can change a soldier's name, hair, voice, and give them helmets, glasses, bandanas and even custom backstories. Also, *XCOM 2* features weapon customization, allowing weapons to have scopes, laser sights, extended magazines and other nifty attachments. In addition, *XCOM 2* has full modding and steam workshop support.

XCOM 2 also has far more emphasis on story than in *XCOM Enemy Unknown*. However, because of this, *XCOM 2* is far more linear than its predecessor. In order to reach the final mission, there are more scripted missions and mandatory objectives that must be completed. In addition, you have to make sure you keep hitting ADVENT blacksites to keep the avatar project timer

down. When and in what order those missions are done, that's up to the player. Also, there is still almost zero character development with the rest of the Avenger's crew.

Stealth is a new gameplay feature in *XCOM 2*, but its been poorly implemented; because most missions have a time limit, you're forced to engage the aliens at some point, whether you like it or not. In addition, *XCOM 2* is very buggy, with many minor and some major issues that have still not been fixed, some were even problems in *XCOM Enemy Unknown*. Finally, despite being a resistance force, it's still relatively easy to get overpowered in *XCOM 2*.

Overall, *XCOM 2* is a solid core game and its modding support means it will likely be in the spotlight for years to come. That said, there are still a fair number of issues affecting the game, many of these modders have already fixed. In total, *XCOM 2* gets a three out of four paws, it's a great choice for any strategy lover, but it will get stale fast without mods.



Disney fails to disappoint with *Zootopia*

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Staff Reporter

When *Tangled* and *Bolt's* director Byron Howard, *Wreck it Ralph's* Rich Moore, and *Zootopia's* Jared Bush got together to create Disney's newest release *Zootopia*, their goal was to publish a film that would entertain all ages. Needless to say, they succeeded. The movie follows a *Hunger Games'* environment with different habitats surrounding the capital, Zootopia. It's animation mimics the same doe eyes as seen in *Bolt*. The team's creativity is unmatched with another exciting storyline, like another one of Disney's newest films, *Inside Out*.

In a world where predator and prey live in a utopian harmony, the story begins with *Once Upon a Time* actress Ginnifer Goodwin. She voices the main character Judy Hopps, a bright eyed and bushy tailed rabbit whose dream is to become the first bunny police officer. Goodwin's character relates to most of Disney's heroines with her determination to make her dreams a reality.

As a new police officer of Zootopia, Judy comes across Nick Wilde; a sly fox who is cynical of Judy's motto, "you can be anything in Zootopia", voiced by *Identity Thief's* Jason Bateman. Nick gets Judy's foot thumping in fury as he criticizes all that Judy has worked for. The fact that he is a predator already gives Judy suspicion, which alludes to the fact that they will somehow be partnered up to cause the essential conflict needed to keep the story flowing. Naturally, they become an unlikely pair when he is caught as a puzzle piece in a case Judy is as-

signed. Disney changes course from most films with a thrilling, detective-like theme, carving a new path from its usual template of chasing after romance. Their adventure takes off with more mystery around every corner, their problem solving always interrupted by bickering with each other. But their partnership proves valuable when Nick's clever confidence saves Judy from her intimidating boss. Their friendship grows as they uncover more about the case and each other.

The only critique would be the main song played in the film. Shakera's new single "Try Everything", is one of the only songs played besides the typical instrumental film music. Although the song is catchy and positive, it is overkill as the pop star Gazelle sings it at a concert for the ending credits. The scene is unrealistic and unnecessary.

Yet, Disney should get another pat on the back for a film the world has now deemed number one. It's positive message about being yourself and not judging people for what's on the outside reaches out to all ages, just as the directors intended it to be.

So, next time you're scrolling through the new movies, stop and think when you see *Zootopia*. It's light-hearted humor, impressive grasp toward the viewers, and honest message sets the bar high for our generation's film future.



Potbelly makes its debut in Brighton to sandwich lovers

Trevor Kracht
Staff Reporter

There is a new sandwich shop in town and it's here to stay. Potbelly is rolling in along with the new restaurants coming to Brighton. This new restaurant is located on Grand River in between McDonald's and Wendy's. They offer a wide selection of sandwiches from the classic Turkey Breast to a Pizza Sandwich. You can also order breakfast sandwiches. It has become a popular shop for high school students.

Starting in 1996, Potbelly has quickly spread out to over 300 shops around the US. Brighton is just the latest town to have one of these unique sandwich shops. It all started as two guys selling sandwiches out of a antique shop in downtown Chicago.

First of all, the sandwiches are decent, and the prices really aren't that bad if you compare it to a similar shop like Firehouse and Subway. The six dollar sub is still a thing here however, the quantity of food is a bit smaller than its counterpart. Potbelly is like an upgraded and more traditional version of Firehouse. Except this place offers a much wider

variety of foods. You can even order salads and shakes. You may not have as much customization on the sandwiches however you can put some customization on your sandwich.

The atmosphere in this restaurant is very peaceful and relaxful. It has more of a classical feel and many places to sit and enjoy your sandwich. It's better to see pictures of the original restaurants then to see plastered wallpaper. They play an older genre of music like country and classical. Compared to a place like Jimmy Johns or Subway, Potbelly definitely has a much better atmosphere.

Considering the food choice and the overall quality of this restaurant, I would recommend this place to anyone who likes sandwiches. They even offer a catering aspect for all different kinds of parties. This may not have the customization of Subway however it trumps in taste and price. I will give Potbelly three out of four paws simply because its atmosphere and quality of food.

