

# Music as a coping mechanism

## Students are increasingly looking to music for stress relief

GUILLERMO RIVERA  
Staff Reporter

**M**arijuana is often used by those looking to let out steam at the end of the day, but today, some are turning towards music production for a better sense of calm.

“Smoking is a way of meditation and decompressing, and with music, you can do the same thing,” Emeka Nnakwe, a junior at Georgia State, said. “Any art form gives the same effects. It is calming to create.”

And once many previous smokers found more confidence in making music, they were able to further themselves from their previous smoking.

“I took a week-long break from smoking to focus more on my music, and I definitely felt more productive in the studio,” sophomore Tash Toufiq said. “I did miss it, but I

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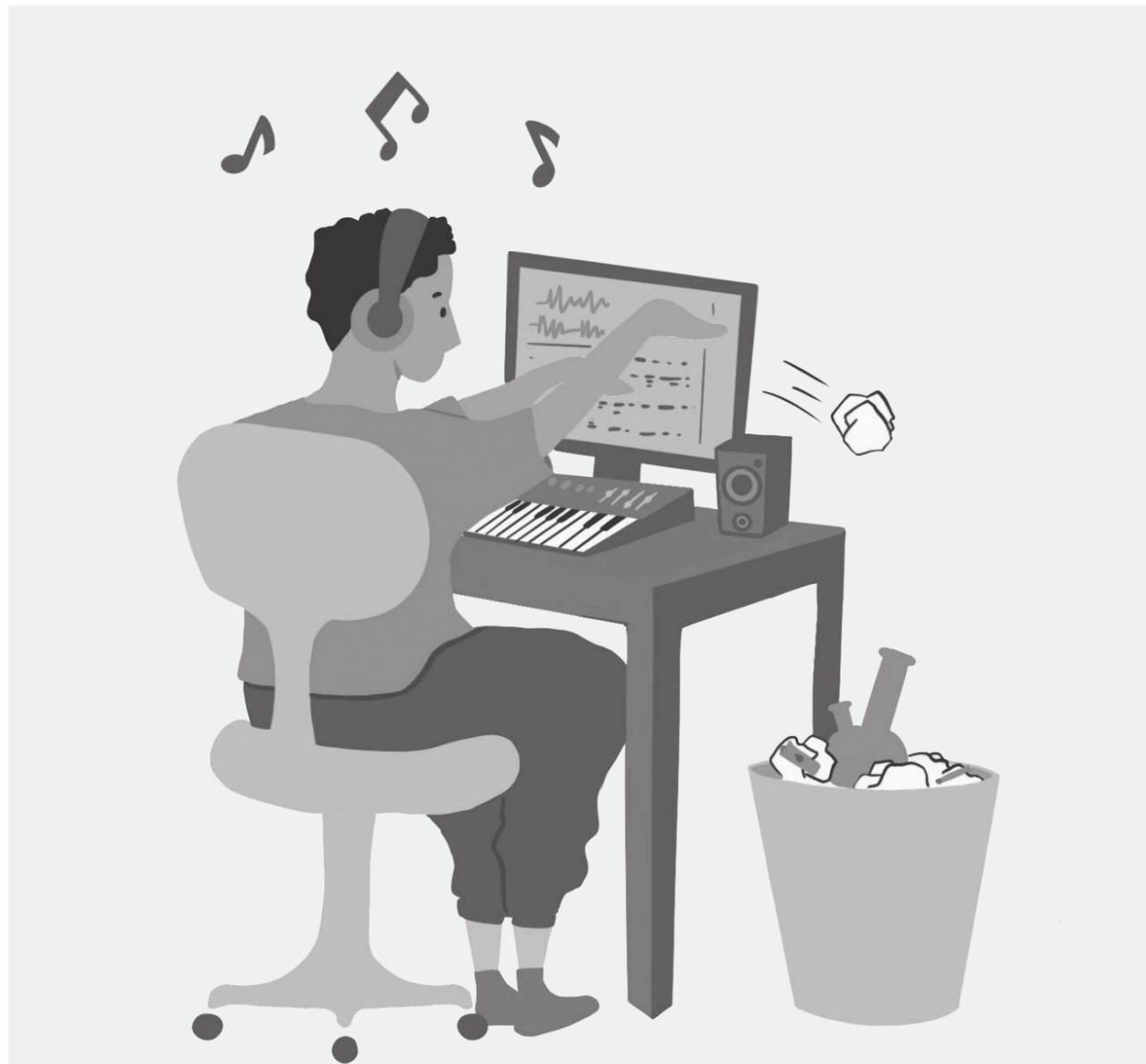
— EMEKA NNAKWE  
a junior at Georgia State

didn’t really feel like I needed it.”

Students slowly integrate marijuana into their daily lives due to the fact that it can also help control their emotions, which can overall help improve their mental health and get rid of daily stressors.

“Sometimes people use drugs to cope with problems that they have and to kind of regulate their own emotional states,” Dr. Olivia Calvin from the Department of Psychology at Georgia State said. “People can feel the need to use something even if it’s not in a physiological sense.”

At the same time, making music can also be an outlet for a person to control their emotions and put their thoughts and



stresses into something physical, or in this case auditory.

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Delving into different art forms, including music, allows students to decompress in a very similar way to recreational drugs and can replace said previous behavior. Making music is a great way to blow off steam if it’s writing, recording, producing or simply just picking up an instrument and playing some random notes.

# From student band to SXSW featured artist

## Lunar Vacation makes waves in the pool rock scene

MARY PITTS  
Staff Reporter

**L**unar Vacation, an Atlanta based pool rock band whose melodic tunes are beloved by more than 88,000 listeners on Spotify, has grown up.

The group has progressed from suburban high school band kids to official SXSW Music Festival featured artist. Lunar Vacation is comprised of keys player Matteo DeLurgio, drummer Connor Dowd, guitarist Maggie Geeslin, guitarist and vocalist Grace Repasky and bassist John Michael Young, the latter three of which attended Georgia State.

“We all went to the same high school and met through mutual friends,” Young said. “All the guys did marching band together so we knew each other from that. Grace had demos she wanted to record so she came to my house with them and eventually Connor was around and we jammed and formed that way.”

Since their formation in 2016, the band has gained a solid following in Atlanta where they have played shows at venues

like the Drunken Unicorn, The Masquerade and local festivals. Their fan base began to grow even more when Lunar Vacation connected with Canadian indie rock band Calpurnia via social media.

“We linked up with Calpurnia over Instagram when they reached out,” Young said.

Calpurnia’s notable online following, propelled by frontman Finn Wolfhard’s fame from starring in Netflix’s *Stranger Things*, pushed Lunar Vacation further into the spotlight. Lunar Vacation began traveling with Calpurnia, performing as their opening act.

“We played a show in Nashville with Calpurnia, then a show at the College of New Jersey,” Young said. “Then we played a DIY show in Columbia and then made it down to Savannah for Savannah Stopover Festival.”

Lunar Vacation’s dreamy sound has received recognition from the industry; most notably, they were offered a spot on the 2019 SXSW Music Festival lineup.

“We got involved with SXSW when we were invited to be an official artist,” Young said.

Located in Austin, Texas, the festival has the potential to elevate up and coming bands by providing a setting to “make professional connections, elevate their musical careers, and

discover the next wave of musical talent.”

The band, whose musical influences include Alvvays, Tycho, Stereolab and SALES, has grown up in terms of both Spotify monthly listeners and their ever-evolving sound. Their songs feel dreamy and lighthearted with a psychedelic rock feel.

“I guess you could say our sound has matured as we’ve grown up,” Young said. “People called us surf rock when we started but we were never quite that in my opinion. Now we are definitely much farther from that categorization. The used of synths has definitely expanded since we began.”

While they have come along way since originally forming the band, Lunar Vacation’s high school ties give them the advantage of a close-knit family unit when on the road.

“We are definitely a family at this point,” Young said. “We all care about each other on and off stage and invest time in hanging out outside of just making music. We also have developed our sound together as a band and have really grown our live performance to be something we hold at a high standard.”

**UPCOMING ATLANTA SHOW:  
MARCH 30, PURGATORY AT THE MASQUERADE**