

# UConn's a cappella groups shine at Jorgensen



Members of A Minor performing at the Fall Rush Concert at the Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on Sept. 10, 2026. The concert allowed UConn's a capella groups to showcase their styles and share information about joining. PHOTO BY MAK BLAKE, GRAB PHOTOGRAPHER/THE DAILY CAMPUS

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The University of Connecticut A Cappella Association kicked off the fall semester with their semi-annual rush concert held at Jorgensen Center for the Performing Arts on Thursday, Sept. 10.

For UCACA President Eva Dannison, now in her seventh semester with the association, the rush concert has always been more than a showcase.

"It's my favorite night of the year, especially being in Jorgensen," Dannison said. "It's really electric, super high energy. So being able to just share our love and our energy with everyone in the audience is really awesome and very unique to UConn A Cappella."

The concert featured all 10 of UCACA's groups, each with different voices, purposes and members.

"We're very lucky to have 10 really incredible, awesome groups, all of different vibes, genres, kinds

of music," Dannison said. "Being able to showcase that in Jorgensen at a rush concert every semester is really special to us."

Rubyfruit, founded in 1999 as UConn's oldest all treble group. It is built around themes of women's empowerment which carried the group from local shows like Celebrate Mansfield all the way to an opening slot for Sammy Rae and the Friends in Boston.

A Completely Different Note, the university's oldest lower voice ensemble, also founded in 1999, brought the energy of a group with six albums under its belt, the latest being 2024's "Noteworthy."

A Minor, born out of the Asian American Cultural Center in 2004, represented UConn's oldest gender inclusive group, one that has reached the International Championship of Collegiate A Capella quarterfinals twice and taken home awards for choreography and percussion along the way.

Extreme Measures, another

gender inclusive group formed in 2004, showed off their arrangements and high-energy style that has led to four full length albums and features on the "Voices Only" compilation series.

Every arrangement the group performs is written in house, Nick Jokl, the group's president and a fifth-semester political science and communications student, wrote in a text message.

"We are a group that's rooted in community and rooted in music," Jokl wrote, describing an ensemble that has grown into writing increasingly complex and intricate arrangements since its founding.

Husky Hungama brought a different presentation entirely, fusing Western pop with traditional Asian music through five-part harmonies, a sound fans can also hear on their EP "Saffron."

Notes Over Storrs, founded in 2009, mixes performance with tradi-

tion. They also carried home a third-place title and an award for outstanding choreography from this year's ICCA quarterfinals.

Drop the Bass, founded in 2013 around the idea of female empowerment, sang "Where is My Husband?" by Raye — a song many know and love.

The Rolling Tones, a gender inclusive group dating back to 2005, leaned into everything, from pop to rock and indie.

The Conn Men, UConn's all male-identifying group and one of the association's most decorated, marked the run-up to their 25th anniversary, with a history that includes a 2008 performance at the White House and opening performances for Rockapella and Pentatonix.

Closing out the roster, the Hus-Keys, based in Storrs since 2022 after forming in Hartford in 2016, showed off the same skill that's taken them to the CT Flower and Garden Show and holiday caroling at Bradley International

Airport.

Dannison said the biggest draw isn't any single group, but the sheer range that 10 of them performing together can offer.

"The second that you get into a group, you're connected with your group, but also being connected with the wider community of UConn A Cappella is something that's really unique to having 10 groups," Dannison said. "You're a part of your own group's family, but you're also connected with this massive community and network of really awesome people."

That message can resonate with freshmen in the crowd, many of whom will audition for one of the association's groups soon.

Dannison's advice to them was simple: don't overthink it.

"Do everything," she said. "Say yes to everything. We've all been in your shoes before."

For a campus as large as UConn's, she added that a cappella has a way of "making this massive

campus feel a lot smaller."

Jokl, who auditioned in the fall of his freshman year, called that the best decision he has made since coming to UConn and offered a similar message over text.

"Sing and be true to your voice," he said. "Don't sing like you think you should sound like, sing how you sound like, because I promise you, your voice is beautiful."

He noted that members of Extreme Measures have joined with no experience beyond singing in the shower and that reading sheet music is not a prerequisite for auditioning.

In Jokl's eyes, the rush concert does something for the groups that other performances can't.

It is a night "about growing the community," he wrote, and about finding more people to share music with.

"I think community is something that we're lacking right now, and I think that music is a great way to spread that," Jokl wrote.



FALL INTO READING:  
BOOKS FOR THE SEASON



**by Eva Nyquist**  
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If you're anything like me, you like to theme your life with the seasons. Now that fall is (basically) here, I've put pumpkin spice in my coffee order, started watching "Gilmore Girls" again and broken out my books.

Reading is one of the best fall activities because of its versatility. Looking for an excuse to sit outside and watch the leaves change? Grab a book and take a seat on a bench. Stuck inside because of the rainy weather? Grab a book and curl up in bed.

Of course, you'll need the perfect fall book to complete the cozy atmosphere. Here are some recommendations.

**The classics**

If you don't know where to start when book browsing, you can always revisit the classics. Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" is one of those novels you can't skip; it chronicles the romantic relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, and, conveniently for this list, it begins and ends in autumn.

The tender relationship between the characters makes this the perfect fall read for anyone wanting something heartwarming with just enough drama to keep them hooked. Really, any of Austen's works would do — I'm partial to "Emma."

"Little Women" by Louisa May Alcott is another classic autumnal novel that shines in its intimate moments between characters.

When you're done reading, you can watch Greta Gerwig's acclaimed 2019 film adaptation.

**Novels with film adaptations**

If film adaptations are important to you, you could try the eerie young adult novel "Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children" by Ransom Riggs, then watch the movie starring Asa Butterfield.

Or if you're not into the creepy, you might want to pick up the most recently released prequel to the "Hunger Games" trilogy, "Sunrise on the Reaping." The film adaptation will be released in late November, so now is the ideal time to read it. I encourage you to start the rest of the "Hunger Games" series if you haven't already!

Trilogies or series in general can be especially great in the context of the fall semester; they provide something familiar to lean back on during the stress of school, and it can be motivating to set a goal to finish all the books in a particular trilogy by winter break. I recommend "The Chronicles of Narnia" by C.S. Lewis and "Dungeon Crawler Carl" by Matt Dinniman.

**Fantasy**

Following in the genre of fantasy — which in my opinion, is at its peak reading time during the back-to-school season — when all you want is to escape from your classes and enter a magical realm, I high-

ly suggest "The Hobbit" by J. R. R. Tolkien.

Set loosely in autumn, the adventures of Bilbo Baggins feel like a warm afternoon in the foliage-filled woods, where I find myself longing to be on days with torrential downpours. The "Lord of the Rings" trilogy has the same feel with a much larger commitment, so if you like "The Hobbit," you should read it too.

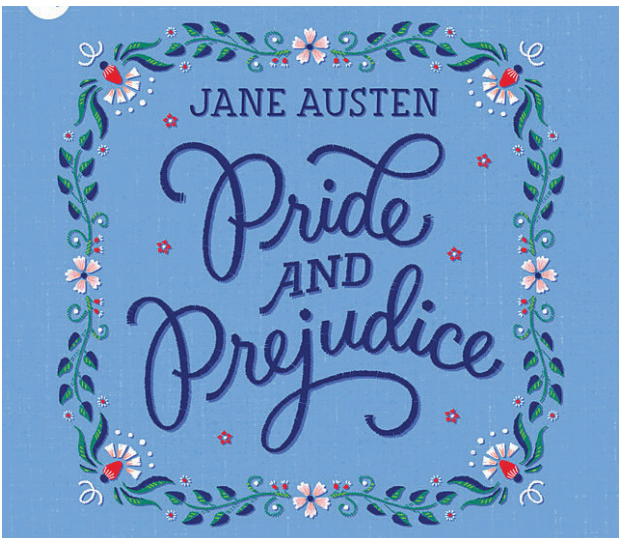
Speaking of school, it can sometimes be helpful to see your struggles with a stressful semester reflected on the page. "The Secret History" by Donna Tartt and "Stoner" by John Williams are two fantastic books that portray the college experience.

Looking for something a little less serious in nature? Try "The Love Hypothesis" by Ali Hazelwood and similar contemporary romance books.

"The Perks of Being a Wallflower" by Stephen Chbosky is set in high school, but is an excellent read (and better than the movie) about school and coming of age.

**Miscellaneous picks**

Not every novel you read this season needs to take place in fall, though; sometimes, it works otherwise. I read "The Picture of Dorian Gray" by Oscar Wilde recently and loved it. The setting is second to the book's themes, but in those themes of isolation, transi-



The cover of Pride and Prejudice audiobook on Spotify. This audiobook was narrated by Kate Redding.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JANE AUSTEN ON SPOTIFY

tion and beauty, I find a sense of autumn.

Last year, I read "The Bird Hotel" by Joyce Maynard and despite its tropical setting, it was perfect for the beginning of the fall semester, when I was clinging to the remnants of summer break.

**Horror**

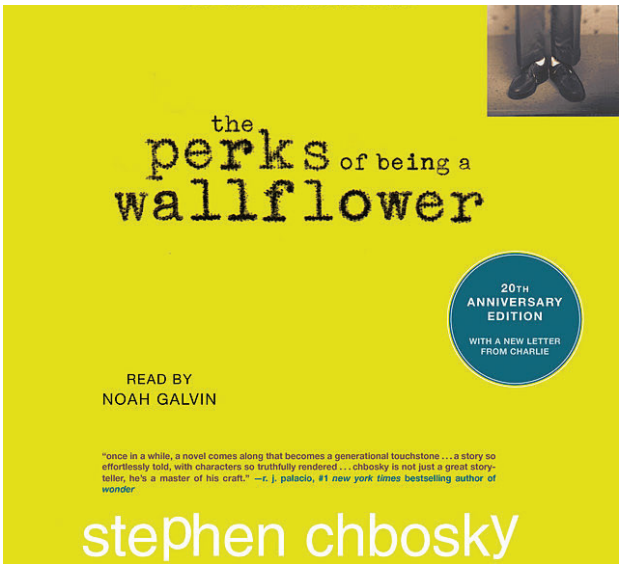
Okay, enough about arbitrary vibes. What fall is really known for is Halloween, and to prep for the upcoming spooky season (if it hasn't already arrived for you), you should be well-versed in horror literature.

Easily, start with the king of horror, Stephen King. If you haven't already read his acclaimed novel "It," start there — but if you have, or just aren't up to the book's 1000-plus page challenge, try some of his other works like "Salem's Lot," "Pet Sematary" and "The Outsider."

You can also travel back to horror's roots and experience defining novels of the genre like "Frankenstein," "Dracula" and works by the revolutionary gothic writer Edgar Allan Poe.

If you're interested in more contemporary mysteries, you could try "Strange Houses" by Uket-su, which doubles as a sort of puzzle — another fall activity!

Or, if none of these suggestions appease you, pick up a book you've been putting off and finally crack open the first chapter. Reading is a fantastic hobby to fill downtime between classes and enjoy the crisp fall weather, even if you're not typically a reader. Who knows — maybe you'll fall in love with it!



The cover of The Perks of Being a Wallflower audiobook on Spotify. This audiobook is read by Noah Galvin.

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