

Honi Soit

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4-5: NEWS

A student allegedly stole \$12K from USU clubs

A student is in hot water and facing an investigation by detectives at Newtown Police Station after transferring more than \$12,000 from University of Sydney Union (USU) club bank

accounts to her personal account. The USU confirmed the transfers, telling *Honi* that the \$12,000 was taken from three separate USU clubs.

Read more on page 4 >>

12-13: FEATURE

Hostile architecture: A city consumed

At some bus stops around Sydney, you don't sit—you lean.

My friend Lily and I were waiting for a bus at Railway Square. Surrounding us were bodies—heavy and tired, stained

in sleep. Some with a coffee in hand, some on their phones. But most of all, they were all on their feet, either leaning or standing.

Read more on page 12 >>



Acknowledgement of Country



We create, compose and distribute the newspaper Honi Soit on stolen land. I would like to acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation on whose land I am working. I pay my respects to Elders, past, present and emerging.

We stand in solidarity with movements for Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty. Without a treaty, there is no justice. The settler-colonial state we call Australia continues to enact violence on Indigenous peoples in myriad ways. Indigenous child removals are allowed at a rate that signal a second Stolen Generation. Indigenous people face a lack of access to healthcare, high rates of suicide, high rates of imprisonment, and police brutality. Too many lives have been taken, and too much culture has been lost.

As media, we play a role in influencing the narrative, and we need to be influencing it in the right direction. It is our duty to speak truth to the corridors of power that fail to lead, teach, and pave the way towards justice. We need to fracture the colonial mentality that permeates our governments and institutions, and hold those in power to account. We cannot allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated without acting or speaking up.

This land always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land. We must all be cognisant of this truth, and reflect it in our words, works and actions.

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Editorial

This week, the editors of *Honi Soit* created a games group chat on Messenger. Everyone is playing Jumpy Jumpy Helix Ball. At the time of writing, Joe is at the top of the leaderboard. I love this obsession that has gripped this ticket. We have been through so many stressful situations together that it makes me very happy to see everyone finding solace in Jumpy Jumpy Helix Ball — an activity conducted for no other purpose than personal delight (or maybe procrastination).

In years to come, I'd like to remember moments like these. Watching the 2003 kids show *Freaky*. Alan sustaining an injury after attempting to balance a metal bottle on his head. All of us becoming the stars of each other's dreams. I have watched everyone grow so much this year (except Pranay who is a tiny baby).

I am very proud of this edition and so grateful to the writers and artists who made it all possible. Shania O'Brien writes about creation and creativity, stories and how they flower quietly into being. Donnalyn Xu untangles the beauty and intricate nuances of still life. Emma Cao graces us with a suite of beautiful poems and art. Rameen Hayat discovers the equilibrium between

patterns and poetry. Pranay Jha talks Crohn's Disease and uncertainty. Amelia Mertha expounds upon her love for birds. And in our excellent feature, Anh Nguyen takes us on a journey through the hostile architecture that characterises too many of our cities.

The wonderfully talented Garnet Chan has painted my cover — a world inside a small thing. Leaves wither on the outside, and flowers bloom on the inside. Even amidst an ending, new and vivid things are emerging. As we often write at the end of our news pieces and developing stories, there is "more to come."

I'm so sad that this is almost over. This paper has been such a huge part of my year. I will miss this — I will miss us. Our jokes, our dreams. To my wonderful fellow editors: I love you all dearly. You will each go on to do amazing things and shake the world in your own ways.

Everything is ending. But as my mother told me at my graduation, 这是你一生中的一个逗号，不是句号。This ending is not a full stop but a comma. There is more to come. There is more to come

Annie Zhang

Madame Anonymity

Hey guys,

Not a tip at all but I'd like to say this with a degree of anonymity - if you knew who I was I think you'd take me less genuinely.

This was the first paper I read religiously. I have every edition in varying conditions in the family garage, and holy shit I've loved it.

I really wanted to voice just how great the newspaper, and hence the team has been this year, and how much it has meant for me as a regular reader. You guys have brightened the monotony of uni life so, so much.

Your team has done such an amazing job in so many aspects. Every week there was relevant campus news, and no stone was left unturned. If something was funny, it got reported. Special shoutout to Joe and Liam in particular for their investigative journalism, from the neo-nazi network on campus to stupol shenanigans, you guys have always been on top of it.

Also huge props to your team for facilitating all the debates and interviews, there were many moments I know I'd have thrown in the towel. Most students don't know about the shitfuckery that goes on and its really important that they do - you guys have been at the forefront of putting that on hold. The opinion, creative and cultural pieces have been wonderful. I think all of you have contributed in some form, but they have been great pieces to read and were really well curated.

Many a late night was spent reading them in bed after a study session to rest the eyes. On the humour/pistake front, fuck the dependent/burn book were good. Pls Fit, don't let these regulars get left behind. However, out of all the articles this year, Annie and Alan's creative piece and editorial (respectively) were by far the most humbling.

I hadn't considered how much work, passion and I guess how much of yourselves you have committed to the old rag. I wish Cream didn't call you "self involved". I wish students actually read the paper. I wish people were discussing the content, and not bagging each other for even picking up a copy. I wish that every copy would be snapped up by Thursday. I wish you guys had more respect, and love because you put in so much and it is genuinely a beautiful craft. Your paper deserves love and respect. You all deserve love and respect in barrels, rolled up to your office weekly.

I really love what you have done and how much hard work you've put in this year. I wish I could say it in person but I'm anxious and know I'd cock it all up. I want to give each and every one of you the biggest hug, a card, some food, or if you're not a hug-fan maybe a smile or something? (I'm really fucking awkward, I'm so sorry.) You don't know

me but you have made my uni life so, so much better. Irrespective of what Fit does, your publications have been a large part of my formative experience at uni, and although incredibly cringey and cliché, have changed me more into the kind of person I aspire to be.

There have definitely been some misses, but the number of hits your ticket has landed has been astonishing. I love what you have done, and I hope to fuck that you have loved your editing year. Please hold your heads high and send it at the *Honi* party.

You have so much to be proud of. And on a selfishly personal note, you have made this particular boy incredibly happy in probably one of my darkest times. For that I cannot thank you enough. I love you guys. Anon(ish) out. PS: could you please read this to the team sometime? Bless and thank, — soc out.

Editors note: Dear Anon (ish), Thanks for this lovely message. We really appreciate the support and are so glad to hear that you have enjoyed the coverage this year! Just to let you know the editors that wrote the Neo-Nazi investigation article were Pranay Jha, Nell O'Grady and Jessica Syed. If you feel comfy, please come and say hi! Would love to have a chat outside of this letters page. Thanks again.

— Spice

Non est factum

A response to "The gilded, glass cage" written by Baopu He, Week 10, 2019.

Perhaps I should have noted to *Honi Soit* that 3 very influential members of the 6 person design panel -who chose the final design for the law school -were architects!

Could I also register a correction please. It's not any design defect but the actual usage of the Level 2 Foyer space of the Law School that has been disappointing. And the lack of use is not because students and staff are turned off by any heating and lighting problems. Rather, as soon as the building was finished and everyone could see how very attractive the Level 2 foyer was, with the park on one side and the law lawn (and café and vistas) on the other, it was quickly taken over by University Venues as a bookable space. So it's usually locked up and not available as a day to day space for staff and students to hang out, study, or meet up, as it was originally intended.

Also I should point out good news that new Dean of Law Professor Simon Bronniti has set up a Building Advisory Group to take on proper maintenance of the building and aesthetic improvements to its fit-out, eg furniture, for students, staff and visitors.

— Professor Barbara McDonald (Sydney Law School)

三徒弟 or Sān Túdi



Art by Altay Hagrebet

Have you lost some property at Uni?

You might be in luck!

Please visit Campus Security in the CIS Building to see if you can identify your belongings.



Extreme Networking in SASS

If there's one thing I know for sure, it's that you NEED to hustle if you want to succeed. You've got to be prepared to rise and grind, grind and rise, and rinse and repeat. In fact, you really ought to be grinding WHILE you rise if you want the sweet, sweet taste of success.

If anyone on campus knows this, it's the hustlers at the Sydney Arts Students Society. The Arts world is vicious — only those who truly know how to activate beast mode survive. That's why it comes as no surprise that the recent SASS election was marred with sly secrecy

and Machievallian mischief.

Big Hustler on Campus and newly elected president of SASS, Nick Rigby, allegedly did some last-minute networking and shifted alliances moments before the vote. Emily Kardum was allegedly promised the position of Socials Director by Rigby before the position ultimately went to Angelina Gu, who commentators argue has had far less experience than Kardum. The same went for Pablo Avaria-Jimenez, who was apparently promised Secretary but was ousted by Belinda Thomas as part of a deal with Unity.

Any true hustler knows that success only comes to those who are hungry for it, and it looks like the Mod Libs and Unity's feast is getting messy. With RepsElect only a few days away, the question remains — will their hustle game be matched?

Even more networking

Ch-ch-ching! Birthday boy and USU

Honorary Secretary Decheng Sun had some enviable associates friends wish him a happy birthday following this shitstorm of an AGM.

\$\$\$Earn Book\$\$\$ understands that around 20 members of the \$\$\$Liberal Party\$\$\$ sang happy birthday to Sun. And what does this say about RepSelect this Wednesday? Well, those at the top of the mountain didn't fall there.

To quote Ryan Seacrest: "mine's a pretty simple strategy: there's not a lot of talent here, but there's a lot of hustle. I have to be in every place I can, and be busy."

What does it all mean? By the time this paper is out, Panda, Pro-Team, Unity, and the Libs are likely to have engaged in a group conference (scheduled for Monday, Week 11). We can hardly imagine what this audacious act of networking will produce.

The Sky's the limit

We've seen some pretty enviable examples of networking this week,

but perhaps none more impressive than the achievements of third year entrepreneur/podcaster/hustler/Arts student Jake Thrupp (Thruppy). You may not have heard of him, but any self-respecting fan of Alan Jones has. And that's because Thruppy has pulled off the ultimate act of hustle; the most superlative feat of networking. The Thrupster has secured himself an enviable business partnership with Jones himself.

Thrupperoo is apparently family friends with Jones, according to the *Sydney Morning Herald*, and has already appeared on Jones' show on Sky News. The favour has also been returned by Jones, who appeared on Thrupperino's podcast.

Thruppo, we here at \$\$\$Earn Book\$\$\$ salute you for this unrivaled networking achievement.

You have truly earned a lifetime subscription \$\$\$Earn Book\$\$\$, which we hereby present to you free of charge. Enjoy.

SASS election stacked again by Mod-Lib/Unity coalition

Pranay Jha and Liam Thorne

A coalition of Moderate Liberals (Mod-Libs) and Labor Right (Unity) have taken back the Sydney Arts Student Society (SASS), beating out the existing executive comprised of non-aligned SASS members.

The vote for President was contested between mod-lib Nick Rigby and Katherine Anagnostopoulous. Anagnostopoulous belongs to what could be described as a group of SASS members non-aligned to any political factions. She, along with most students in that group, emphasised her apolitical nature and dedication to SASS in her speech.

Ultimately, despite what appeared to be a heavy Mod-Lib/Unity presence in the room filled with 80 voters, Anagnostopoulous ended up losing by a mere two votes.

Before voting took place, several people spoke to the crowd alluding to the need to steer clear of voting according to factional deals. Current SASS President, Brooke Salzmann, said factional dealing compromised the effectiveness

of SASS, strongly discouraging factional voting.

Salzmann recently authorised the Cream for *Honi* campaign, an outfit heavily associated with the mod-libs.

Salzmann's sentiments were also supported by co-executive member Tim Seguna, an ex-Students' Representative Council and Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association councillor. Seguna also managed Mod-Lib Lachlan Finch's USU board campaign. He was heard to have shouted "fuck Unity, fuck the Liberals" upon Rigby's election.

Current USU Board Director, Vice-President (External) of SASS, and member of National Labor Students Nick Forburt said, "I think this is quite unprecedented and everyone knows what has happened... I have seen society be dramatically impacted by people only [joining the executive] for their political interest."

There has been significant conjecture over the last week that Unity (who ran under

branding Unite for SRC) and the mod-libs were in the process of negotiating a deal in relation to the SASS election. Earlier today, *PULP* reported that this deal involved trading Mod-Lib National Union of Students (NUS) delegate positions for Unity's support in SASS. While that deal may be limited to SASS and NUS, cooperation between the two factions quite possibly reflects further dealings for the upcoming SRC Repelect.

Honi received reports that the attempted stacking of SASS caused significant internal friction within the outgoing executive. In a private group chat, one member allegedly told their fellow exec members of Unity supporting the Mod-Libs were "weak-willed and morally flippant."

On the night, headkickers from Unity and the Mod-Libs (including failed 2018 presidential candidate Adriana Malavisi) were seen engaging in frequent discussions. At numerous points, members of Unity and the Mod-Libs were accused of interfering with

and directing votes. While Returning Officer Connor Wherrett (also a member of Unity) issued a warning of their removal, they were ultimately allowed to stay in the room.

While Rigby claimed to have no role in negotiations over SASS positions, he confirmed that negotiations did take place. "I heard there were negotiations but I didn't have any role in them."

While NLS had a reasonable presence in the room, it appears as though they were locked out of any position contested by another faction. Approximately 81 per cent of Angelina Gu's (Unity) preferences in the Socials Officer election reportedly flowed to Caitlin Clarke. This, in combination with preferences flowing from Emily Kardum, prevented NLS members Ruby Lotz and Sophie Ohlin from being elected and suggested a concerted effort from Labor Unity to lock NLS out this position, and likely others, during the night.

SASS has been subject to significant criticism in the

past relating to stacking at its elections. The society's elections were declared invalid in 2018 and 2017.

The 2020 SASS executive is as follows:

President – Nicholas Rigby
Secretary – Belinda Thomas
Vice President (Internal) – Yanyan Chen
Vice President (External) – Nicole Baxter
Treasurer – Jaz Judd
Socials Director x 1 – Angelina Gu
Socials Director x 2 – Caitlin Clarke
Publications Director x 1 – Kate Scott
Publications Director x 2 – Jenna Lorge
Sports Director – Katie Morris
International Students Officer – Aditya Nair
Ethnocultural Officer – Jennifer Kwon
Queer Officer – Daniel Graham
Women's Officer – Olivia Niethe
Postgraduate Officer – David Delprat
No position filled for Indigenous Officer.

“One sided” and “hawkish”: students and staff at USyd respond to Four Corners exposé

Joseph Verity

Students and staff at the University of Sydney have pushed back against claims made by Four Corners that the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has “infiltrated” Australian universities, labelling the assertions made by the program “one sided” and “extremely dangerous.”

The ABC broadcast an episode of Four Corners on Monday night entitled ‘Red Flags’ which sought to expose Chinese interference in Australian universities. It featured interviews with people such as Dan Tehan, the Federal Education Minister who recently launched a government taskforce into foreign interference, and Clive Hamilton, the author of ‘The Silent Invasion’.

The program gave prominence to a number of claims, including that the participation of Chinese students in student politics is “a gateway for CCP influence on campus.”

Jacky He, president of the University of Sydney Students' Representative Council (SRC), was interviewed on the program. He claimed that Chinese students were

being unfairly vilified. Speaking to *Honi*, He claimed that programs like Four Corners are responsible for perpetuating unfair attitudes towards Chinese students who are simply trying to get an education.

“I certainly think that in those parts [of the program] where there was an emphasis on Chinese international students, there has been a lot of one-sided comments that don't necessarily malign international students, but certainly draw the negative and incorrect connotation that Chinese international students are spreading propaganda in Australia by dominating Australian universities,” He said.

“That may in turn lead to more schism and tension between international and domestic students and that may even have wider implications on the Australian society as a whole.”

Parts of the program were filmed at the University of Sydney during the recent SRC elections, held in September.

Ellie Wilson, a student at the University and one of the SRC's Ethnocultural Officers, says that she felt harassed and intimidated by the Four Corners film crew.

“On the last day of campaigning, during the last few hours of the day, a huge film crew started quite intrusively filming campaigners — more specifically, Chinese-appearing campaigners — and getting interviews from Chinese students. I was told by one of my friends that it was Four Corners making a documentary about Chinese influence in Australian student politics,” Wilson said.

“Nobody was asked if they wanted to be filmed; nobody was asked if they wanted to be photographed.”

Honi acknowledges that a photographer from a different publication was also present at the time and that the filming took place in a public place.

Dr David Brophy, a senior lecturer in modern Chinese history at the University of Sydney, also criticised the program's portrayal of Chinese students and accused Four Corners of pursuing a “hawkish” editorial agenda. “Infiltration, like invasion, is one of those terms that we seem to only use in reference to China. Language like that is designed to bias the discussion from the start, and it's particularly dangerous as

the headline for a story that involves Chinese international students—it's as if we're being invited to think of them as ‘infiltrators,’” Dr Brophy said.

Dr Brophy was a signatory to an open letter from a number of China studies academics that criticised the ‘foreign interference’ narrative spun by the government and large sections of the media. Four Corners also claimed that Australian universities' partnership with China is “putting their academic integrity at stake.” It cited Confucius Institutes — Chinese cultural centres which appear at a number of universities around the country — as one such example of this.

The University of Sydney rejected this claim. “[The University of Sydney Confucius Institute] is not involved in any decisions around our research, curriculum or the general operation of the University,” a spokesperson said.

“We value our productive partnerships with Chinese universities and research institutions.” Dr Brophy pushed back against the suggestion that academic critics of China

were in any way silenced.

“In my experience, academics at the University of Sydney are much more likely to face intimidation from off campus, and pressure from the University itself, for criticising Israel than they are for criticising China,” Dr Brophy said.

“I've put on events with Uyghur dissidents, spoken at Uyghur rallies, put videos of myself supporting the Uyghurs online, and never experienced any pushback for any of this. But since I went public with my support for Palestinian rights, pro-Israel groups and individuals have tried multiple times to put pressure on my job.”

In August, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Sydney, Dr Michael Spence, warned that the ‘foreign interference’ debate has the potential to embolden racist attitudes.

“We have to be careful that the whole debate doesn't have overtones of the White Australia Policy,” Dr Spence said in a statement to the Sydney Morning Herald.

There have been a number of attacks on campus this year targeting East Asian students, both verbal and physical.

A student allegedly stole \$12K from USU clubs, Newtown police are investigating — what now?

Jessica Syed and Alan Zheng

A student is in hot water and facing an investigation by detectives at Newtown Police Station after transferring more than \$12,000 from University of Sydney Union (USU) club bank accounts to her personal account.

The USU confirmed the transfers, telling *Honi* that the \$12,000 was taken from three separate USU clubs. Among them, the humanitarian charity-aligned Sydney University Red Cross Society.

Staff in the USU's finance team are said to have stumbled onto the transfers, discovering discrepancies in the club accounts dating back three years.

The student appears to have made the transfers with increasing sums over time, with individual transfers ranging from \$10 to \$200.

The USU Board unanimously voted to suspend the student's union membership via a circular motion last week. The student's access to club accounts has been revoked.

“The USU is an organisation that prides itself on its sense

of community. We have been shocked and appalled by these allegations,” said USU President Connor Wherrett.

“We received an assurance form [sic] the banks that they will in future abide strictly with the two-signature rule.” That rule requires club finances to be signed off by at least two executives.

If the investigation does not exonerate the student, the student may end up expelled from USU membership and stripped of any USU awards they may have received.

In addition, they may end up facing criminal charges.

If the allegations are proven, the Board, in accordance with clause 9.2(f)(ii) of the USU Constitution, will consider a resolution to expel the person from Membership of the USU and strip them of any awards they might have received from the USU.

It has been alleged that the student in question is 2019 USU Board candidate Christina (Tina) Lee.

Though many students were first introduced to Lee during

her “Goodness me! It's Tina Lee!” board campaign this year, her presence within the USU clubs and societies program spans several years. At the time of her campaign, she had been on the executive of nine clubs and societies. Notably, Lee served as the treasurer of the Sydney University Medical Science Society and Sydney University Red Cross Society. She additionally held life membership of the Union, and was named USU Volunteer of the Year last year.

Lee did not respond to *Honi*'s request for comment. Newtown Police Station failed to provide comment to *Honi* in time for publication. Likewise, it is unclear at this stage whether charges have been laid, and it is more likely that an investigation is still ongoing.

Given the circumstances at hand, it's improbable that Lee would hypothetically be charged with embezzlement—that charge requires Lee, who held positions on a voluntary basis, to have been employed as a ‘clerk or servant’ of the USU

(among other constraints). The maximum penalty for the crime of embezzlement is 10 years.

If Lee is to be alternately charged with committing fraud, the penalty is nonetheless 10 years. If any such charge is pressed, it will become Lee's prerogative to either defend or plead to them.

This is not the first time prominent members of the USU have come under fire for abusing financial privileges and misusing student money.

USU Board Directors were asked to return their Cabcharge cards back in 2015. Among them, Liam Carrigan took 27 cabs in January alone, costing the USU close to \$500. Carrigan subsequently paid the debt in full.

In 2013, a KPMG audit revealed that an office-bearer of the Australian National University Student Association (ANUSA) embezzled \$126,000 from ANUSA, the Interhall Sports Organisation and ANU Student Media, which publishes ANU student newspaper *Woroni*.

The University has been

made aware of the police investigation and is awaiting NSW Police advice before proceeding.

“Any student found to be engaging in such behaviour may be in breach of our student code of conduct and subject to our discipline rule,” an official spokesperson told *Honi*.



Pictured: Tina Lee, in happier times

A TRIBUTE TO THE REFUGEES WE HAVE FORGOTTEN

It is with a deep sense of sorrow that we pay our respects to Sayed Mirwais Rohani, a Hazara refugee who committed suicide on Tuesday, 15 October 2019.

Mirwais was a trained doctor. After being moved off Manus Island following deteriorating mental health, he volunteered at the Lorengau hospital. Mirwais' father made numerous pleas for him to be resettled in the United Kingdom. Those pleas were not heard because Peter Dutton refused their requests. Mirwais' death was not his own suicide. A callous Australian society that supports the arbitrary incarceration of the most persecuted people took his life. For our complicity in that society, we express sincere regret.

In last weekend's edition

of *The Saturday Paper*, Maxine Beneba Clarke articulated just how beautiful a human life is in her poem, Jacqui's law. In this excerpt, she was writing about Hamid Khazaei — a refugee who died after the government did not grant him medical treatment for his infected leg:

in photographs,

his eyes are as deep

as where the gulf of aden

sees

greet the arabian

and the aching amber hue

of falling

autumn leaves

No government has the right to

manifest a situation that drives innocent people to the end of their lives. Ours is fuelled by a misguided, archaic and racist belief in the fallacy of “securing our borders.” Ours has driven Sayed to this fate.

Mirwais was the thirteenth person to die after being transferred to Australia. For most Australians, the names of the twelve who died before him have fallen victim to short memories and apathy. While contemporary society allows these innocent refugees to fall out of our minds, it is our hope that the history books do not forget them. We pray that there comes a time where the present becomes a dark chapter in Australia's past. A time where tributes like these are no longer necessary. A time where Western societies take on the human costs.

Sliding into the revolution

Himath Siriniwasa DMs the Internationalist Commune of Rojava.

Earlier this week, Turkey moved forward with its long discussed military invasion into the Kurdish dominated territories of Northern Syria. In response, the Internationalist Commune of Rojava have released a declaration calling for international solidarity movements to “defend the revolution.”

The Internationalist Commune was founded in early 2017 when a number of left-wing activists formed a solidarity group within Northern Syria. They allege that they provide a diverse amount of material support: medical aid, community building and ecological-oriented engineering, among other things. The commune has also been a prominent public relations voice for the Rojavan revolution, promoting the virtues of what they purport is a vision of decentralised, direct-democratic and feminist socialism.

In congruence with left-Twitter’s penchant for online politicking, *Honi* reached out to the commune via an exchange of DMs. We discussed the left-wing allure of the revolution, the commune’s relationship with the Syrian government and how internationalists can stand in solidarity with the movement.

While many activists draw romantic parallels between the democratic uprisings in Northern Syria and the

anarchist civil-war era Spain, the commune argues that Rojava has resolved the “inner contradictions of Spanish anarchism around power and patriarchy.”

“The Autonomous Administration of North-Eastern Syria is a concrete example of a society based on the Leftist ideals of the 21st century: women’s liberation, grassroots democracy and ecology. In times of severe climate change and of rising fascism, and after Russia and China fully endorsing capitalism, Rojava appears to be one of the few places in the world where a change of system is enacted, giving hope to a worldwide Left that was pushed into believing that there was no alternative.”

As many readers know, Twitter threads have, to a large extent, overturned the printing press to become the next media outlet for budding revolutionaries. *The Commune* has played a large role in broadcasting why they perceive the federation of self-governing municipalities to be an attractive new model for the left.

“The stateless democracy that is implemented here takes direct inspiration from the CNT’s experiment, and pushes it further inside the framework of democratic confederalism. The Autonomous Administration is a bigger and longer-lasting confederation

of libertarian communes. Also, the women’s role is bigger than with the *Mujeres Libres*. Here, women play a central role in both civil and military society, and the ideology of women’s liberation is a motor of the revolution.”

While Rojava’s intricate social formations draw on a rich intellectual background, the ideas of anarchist thinker Murray Bookchin and ex PKK leader Abdullah Öcalan seem to weigh heavily on the collective consciousness of revolution. The commune believes that this vision can provide a site of inspiration for social movements worldwide.

“Democratic Confederalism is thought to be a solution not only for the Kurdish people, but for the whole of Middle-East, maybe more. As it is stateless, it is also virtually borderless, and this is shown by the fact that some democratic structures exist in Europe, mainly with the Kurdish diaspora there.

We believe that Rojava can be a democratic centre which will inspire radical change for the Left all around the world. With the values already mentioned, of feminism, direct democracy and ecology, we can really say it is fully a 21st century revolution, and it will lead to other ones. We hope so.”

Many strands of radical anti-war

thought have suggested supporting the Syrian government to restore a semblance of civil society in the region. In response to peace talks with the Syrian government and their support from the broad left, the commune believes that:

“The agreement with the Syrian Arab Army has been made in order to avoid an outright genocide. It should not be thought that the Autonomous Administration has come any closer ideologically to Assad’s regime, which remains hostile to the AA and will try to take over some cities. We can only support the state in the sense that it is helping the democratic system to stay alive, using its illegitimate power to do so.”

When asked on how activists can help support the resistance against the alleged genocide, the commune explained that they should “organize long-term solidarity, not just through one-hit actions, but with a strong community, that can lead big and meaningful actions.” A recent Amnesty International report outlines that, since the beginning of the offensive, 218 civilians have died.

The commune also implores that supporters consider travelling to Northern Syria.

If not, they suggest participation in the #WomenDefendRojava and #RiseUp4Rojava campaigns.

The revival of still life

Donnalyn Xu explores a humble art form.

Above the clutter of books and wilting flowers on my desk, there is a reproduction of Cezanne’s *Still Life with Apples* (1893–1894) hanging haphazardly on the wall, still dressed in the black frame it came in when I bought it from Vinnie’s. In my little gallery of blue-tacked postcards and newspaper cutouts, this particular painting stands out from the rest. Its soft contours and mellow colours remind me of what I love most about still life — how I feel instantly comforted by the intimacy of domestic spaces, the sensuality of a vase, the sensory delight in picturing bruised fruit. The pure joy of finding a painting you recognise in a second-hand store is very much like bumping into an old friend when you least expect it. That pleasant swell in my chest lingers for the rest of the day.

On a surface level, still life appears to be a genre of painting that is as apolitical as it is static. The Tate Museum Glossary describes its subject matter as “anything that does not move or is dead.” In French, it is called *nature morte* — translated literally as “dead nature.” Its implicit connection to death can be traced back to its origins, as the earliest known still lifes come from Egypt in the 15th century BC. Murals of everyday objects adorned the interiors of Egyptian tombs as prayers and offerings for a blessed afterlife. These funerary paintings of fish, crops, and other stacked goods reveal something profound about personhood that extends beyond the body. That hopeful desire for what we leave behind, for even the smallest traces of this earth to follow us into the next life.

Our understanding of still life has changed over time, particularly through its rise as a distinct genre in Western tradition. In the art world (and in the external world), cultural values and prestige have always been defined by

old white men. The hierarchy of genres, established in the seventeenth century by the French Academy, placed still life paintings on the lowest rung. In parts of Europe, women painters were often restricted to still life because it was easily accessible and undervalued. Supposedly devoid of any human quality or personal identity, it was considered to be one of the lowest forms of painting compared to the highly-esteemed portrait. After all, what could be as harmless as a bouquet of flowers, with their softened petals so easy to envision? What else is there to think of except time passing and fruits rotting, the inevitable decay we are not privy to? Lacking a human subject, it was

What could be as harmless as a bouquet of flowers, with their softened petals so easy to envision?

accused of being too neutral, too simple, and without any intellectual stimulation. This view also insinuates that aspects of the physical world are exempt from human concerns, that a rotting carcass, or a golden vase are as impenetrable as they are untouchable.

A single moment that evades movement is perhaps the antithesis of a revolution, but there is an undeniable power in constructed objecthood. The values of the establishment may have shifted since the seventeenth century, but they continue to be defined by dominating power structures. In “Delusions of Whiteness in the Avant-Garde”, Cathy Park Hong critiques the notion of post-identity that is often hailed as a pure state of artistry beyond “the taint of subjectivity and history.” Still life is by no means considered avant-garde, but the sentiment remains: there is a certain beauty, if not prestige,

attached to art that removes the self from the story. And this is rooted in the delusion that identity is merely a cloak one can simply slip on and off.

It is difficult to unlearn the colonial discourse that continues to permeate the field of Art History. When studying Western art, I am confronted by the strangest desire to step out of myself, as if I am staring at something that is not intended for me. This, of course, is followed by a wave of guilt — am I allowed to enjoy this? Do I betray myself when I am not actively thinking, hurting, rebelling?

There is an unexplored, yet distinct relationship between the painful

marginalised experience and the comfort of still life. The calmness that I once considered to be mind-numbing is not the removal of the self — a privilege that has never been granted to people of colour — it is a marker of its very significance. To rest your eyes on the corner of a room, a desk, an unoccupied seat, and realise how deeply life moves you. To allow yourself an identity that is not defined by grief is a slow act of forgiveness.

In her still life paintings, contemporary artist Crys Yin speaks to the nuances of her Asian-American identity. Remarkably alienating in its simplicity, her depictions of countertop objects are odd, humorous, and somewhat detached. In *Vessels, Everything Is Exactly the Same* (2018), a wooden table appears before an emerald green backdrop. An array of household containers are spread out on its surface: a porcelain teacup, a

bread bowl, a scallop-trimmed hot pink saucer. The unusual shadows of these objects are pitch black and skewed. They are flat, but given the comical illusion of depth. Appropriately titled *Vessels*, Yin’s artwork explores emptiness and physical space in relation to cultural history. The items are both deeply personal and unfamiliar, like realising the strangeness of your own body. Placed next to each other, these objects revel in the absurd, splendid nature of materiality, and how this is traced in the mundane details of our everyday lives. The simple pleasure of colour still surprises me. The brief flicker of recognition that eases my heart also sings my name, loud with its awareness of the self.

When I recently visited a friend’s home for the first time, I noticed a bowl of White Rabbit candy on his coffee table. Its crinkled blue and red label was a familiar sight. And the glass cup, passed from his hands to mine, resting innocently beside it. And the light from the window, always the light, leaving the room sun-laced and warm. How I almost wanted to get up and leave, just to imagine this space without a single body in it. I thought, I should’ve brought flowers. It was mid-afternoon, and there was a candle lit. There was nothing significant about it, except that I wanted to remember it so vividly. A white candle sinking into itself. A white candle in a bright room on a quiet Sunday in October.

What is it about this image that I find so compelling? Still life as a reflection of lived spaces — not necessarily the echo of a person, but a reminder that their perpetual absence, our permanent impermanence, is still a call to memory. That even the deepest parts of our identity will recognise and resolve that full-bodied shape of a feeling so impossibly, unremarkably human.

SSAF: raiding student coffers

Anie Kandya and Pranay Jha question the rationale behind the Student Services Amenities Fees allocations.

The Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) is an amount of money every university student in Australia is required to pay every semester. In fact, most students would have received an email this week informing them that this semester’s payments have been processed. The fee funds student groups such as the University of Sydney Union (USU) and the Student Representative Council (SRC), the groups in charge of USyd’s events, clubs and societies, student publications (like this one), and welfare services.

SSAF was made mandatory by federal legislation following the introduction of voluntary student unionism (VSU) in 2006. Its purpose was to mitigate the effects of VSU on the funding of student organisations. Problematically, SSAF legislation sets out an incredibly broad range of services which the fees can be spent on, providing universities with significant discretion over the way money will be allocated.

At USyd, the allocation of SSAF fees is decided every year by means of each student group preparing budget proposals for the upcoming year. The organisations are guaranteed 90 per cent of their previous years funding as a ‘base amount’. After each organisation’s base funding is allocated, the remaining SSAF fees are placed into a contestable pool of funding. That contestable pool is divided between student organisations, making SSAF allocations a zero-sum game. While historically these negotiations have led to a joint-proposal about

funding allocations, in recent years no agreement has been reached.

Notably, the group that consistently takes home the largest share of SSAF money every year is Sydney University Sports and Fitness (SUSF) operating with millions of dollars every year. In 2018, they were allocated over \$5 million in SSAF funding, as well as generating over \$1.4 million in revenue, in addition to their significant generous donations from ‘Hockey Donors’ and ‘Boatshed Appeal Donors’.

The University has long since been criticised for the amount of funding SUSF receives.

The University has long since been criticised for the amount of funding SUSF receives, especially due to the fact that its managerial structure has been known to hinder student engagement. Recently, an overhaul of the governance structure has been carried out, with SUSF undergoing a process of incorporation which sees the University being given powers to influence the appointment of SUSF’s company board. The restructuring means there is even less student input than previously, with only two student directors to be appointed to the board. The general student population is afforded no transparency into the operations of the organisation, let alone given voting rights. This change indicates an even further departure from any attempt

by SUSF to be anything resembling a student-led organisation. Despite this, USyd has indicated no intention to alter the amount of money in SSAF funding that SUSF receives.

Alongside SUSF, the USU is allocated the second largest share of SSAF, receiving \$4.3 million in 2018. That figure stands at more than double that received by the SRC. There are numerous problems with this allocation of funding.

Firstly, corporatised organisations like the USU and SUSF have significant

alternative sources of revenue. This allows them to exercise discretion over what projects they can include in their proposal for contestable funds, cherry-picking those which are appealing to USyd management. This is a luxury that organisations like the SRC who entirely rely on SSAF for their funding simply do not have.

In a post-VSU era, the organisations that are most corporatised and profit driven, like SUSF and USU, are rewarded with an increasing hunk of student money. Many of their projects fall nicely within the key performance indicators outlined in SSAF legislation, allowing them to attract favourable treatment from USyd.

As SUSF and USU’s scale of operations grows, so too do their base costs, leading

to more increases in funding, creating a problematic cycle. It is extremely telling of the University’s intentions for the future of student unionism for them to increasingly prioritise funding for these profit-driven organisations.

Funnelling exorbitant funding to organisations like SUSF and USU comes at the cost of supporting student unions which have the power to provide vital welfare services, such as food subsidies, advocacy for affordable housing, mental health services, free legal casework, and so on. It is more important than ever that genuine student unionism is supported to actually represent and protect student interests, and fight the corporatisation of our institutions. Students and student organisations should not merely be an avenue from which to make money, and as such, SSAF allocations should be on the basis of student needs, rather than the amount of revenue an organisation is able to generate.

SUSF and the USU are multi-million dollar organisations, able to generate their own hefty income and source funding from numerous other channels. Organisations like the SRC struggle for scraps despite entirely relying on SSAF funding. The services they provide are critical for students facing the worst of circumstances. SSAF legislation places all the power in USyd’s hands. Whether they will exercise that power justly remains to be seen. At the end of the day, to the decision-makers in USyd’s ivory tower, goat yoga is probably more appealing than sexual assault lawyers.



Art by Donnalyn Xu

What's the deal with RepsElect?

We map out the star-crossed deals.

It's that time of year again: the air is warmer, the breeze a little less crisp, and the jacarandas have bloomed. Since the end of mid-sem break, your favourite campus hideouts—the darker parts of Laneway cafe, or the parquet tiles that comprise the Anderson Stuart courtyard—have been peppered with factional powerbrokers, hidden in plain sight as they scramble to lock in numbers before the inaugural meeting of the 92nd Students' Representative Council next Wednesday. So, what is the deal with RepsElect?

A meeting of many hearts and sour minds

RepsElect (short for “representatives elect”) is the first meeting of the freshly elected SRC council, where new councillors will vote for different people to hold office-bearer positions, in the 92nd SRC administration. It seems simple enough a process, but this meeting is infamous for generating a considerable amount of drama and anguish. Indeed, from 2015 onwards, RepsElect has been reported on by the mainstream press for incidents ranging from, inter alia, the cutting of power switches, Liberals adopting non-binary identities in an attempt to overcome affirmative action requirements, and the pulling of fire alarms, all with the view of stopping votes from going in certain directions.

While so much makes it easy to trivialise and dismiss RepsElect for the shitshow it inevitably devolves into,

some of the positions elected will receive a stipend which comes from student money. With the right people elected into these roles, the student union can become effective in agitating for various social causes and student interests.

What's cooking?

Positions are negotiated between factions prior to RepsElect. For the majority of those involved at least, it looks to be pretty smooth sailing this year compared to last year's iconic four part series. In those circumstances, a series of absences, abstentions and factional shifts meant the SRC saw itself move towards complete dysfunction right out of the gates of the He presidency.

At this point two rounds of negotiations have taken place: one pre-election, and a second round following the council announcement. At the time of writing, it looks like the 'Save Our Union' left bloc, who campaigned together throughout the election in support of Liam Donohoe, will work together in RepsElect to consolidate a left-wing majority on council.

If this is done, a simple majority of 18 out of the 35 available seats is easily achievable and will give the bloc control over all paid positions, at least 3 out of 5 General Executives and at least half of the minor OB positions. 'Save our Union' – made up of Grassroots, Switch, National Labor Students (Pump), Socialist Alternative (Left Action), and Advance (Pro-Team) – make up a total number of 17 councillor spots, one shy

of a simple majority.

Activist Strikeback (Solidarity), since winning one councillor position, are perceived as de-facto members of the Left bloc post election.

Though it is highly unlikely that they side with the Right bloc, Activist Strikeback are just as likely to retreat from any 'deal making' – which they deem to be unprincipled. Given this, it will be harder to predict who and how they will support the left bloc on the night.

If the Left bloc is numerically victorious, the biggest divergence from last year's repslect may be the decision to respect 'collective autonomy', and elect preselected office-bearers from autonomous SRC collectives, such as the Wom*n's Collective.

Moving right on

Two other groups and their plans for the night remain unclear for the moment. While Labor Right (Unite) worked with the Save Our Union group throughout the campaign, rumour has it that positions on the National Union Of Students (NUS) positions offered by the right bloc, may lead Unity to sway towards the right. This year, three members of the Boost campaign have been elected as NUS candidates.

Unity headkickers have no doubt been in discussion with Boost over the last couple of weeks, and, if the Sydney University Arts Society AGM is anything to go by, it appears Unite and Boost have forged the way for a lasting deal-based

relationship this year.

Cupcake is the nascent newcomer – with one council seat to their name, their affiliations remain unclear. Cupcake's campaign manager, Crystal Xu, historically worked with Chinese international student grouping, Panda, who backed her move to become the 91st Wom*n's Officer, against the autonomy of the Wom*n's Collective's preselected officers.

Things have changed throughout the year though, and recently, Crystal has moved away from the confines of Panda, refusing to endorse Boost presidential candidate Josie Jakovac. The Panda-Cupcake relationship appears tense, however, and Xu may be tempted to join the right bloc if they offered her the role of Vice-President, which now includes a tidy \$13K stipend as of this year.

The Right bloc received far less councillor positions than they would have hoped. Panda gained only nine positions, and Boost gained four. With Colleges for SRC almost certainly set to support the right, that bloc look to hold 14 positions.

Whether Cupcake will support the left is yet to be seen. Should Unity defect and Cupcake turn to the right, the left bloc will lose their majority. The Right, in turn could create a “minority bloc” gaining them access to at least half of the minor OB positions and up to two general executive positions.

None of these things are set in stone – in fact, probably by the time you're reading this in the paper, half of this information will have evolved.

Symbols and suits: a history of the Spade

Peter Prentice asks: is a spade really a spade?

In modern society, signage throughout the world is littered with easily recognisable symbols that represent clear purposes — the “☢” symbol represents radioactivity, and the “☣” symbol unequivocally represents biohazards, both without any need for context. However, there are some symbols that seem to have an ambiguous meaning with multiple interpretations. For example, the “♠” symbol — also known as the spade or pike — requires context to understand its meaning. Just how did this ubiquitous symbol from a pack of playing cards make its way into popular culture?

The notion of a playing card game with suits is said to have come about around the 14th century as a “Saracen's game” The Latin suits, which came to be the modern French suits, were based on a mixture of currencies (Cups and Coins), and weaponry which represented the nobility and the military (Clubs and Swords). The suit of swords then came to be represented in the German-speaking world during the 15th century as Shields, and in the French-speaking world as Pikes, also known as Spades.

The modern symbol for the Spade, “♠”, came from the French iteration of the Sword suit, which represented the head of a pike.

This association with the older suit of Swords meant that the suit of Spades was also associated with nobility and military. This connection would later cement itself in 17th century Britain where, under the reign of James I, the

The spade stems from a history of nobility, war, and racism.

Ace of Spades in a pack of playing cards was required to display the insignia of a member of a noble house, and later the logo of the manufacturer.

As the French suits cemented themselves into modern society as a pastime and industrialisation brought playing cards to working class bars, so too did the popularity and notoriety of the suits. In particular, the aforementioned Ace of Spades was unique — the only card which had a special print, not by

choice but by law. It quickly became one of the more 'iconic' cards along with the face cards, and seemingly by random chance its association with the military resurged with practical use in the Second World War. Some American soldiers had their helmets marked with the spade, as playing cards had developed a reputation for bringing good luck. In particular, the Ace of Spades became extensively used during the Vietnam War in card form, where boxes of only the Ace of Spades were shipped to American soldiers to use as morale boosters. It is also theorised, and popularised by Coppola's war epic Apocalypse Now, that the card was used as a taunt against the Vietnamese by leaving the card on a fallen Vietnamese soldier, giving birth to the notion that the Ace of Spades was the card of death.

Darker yet is the use of the Ace of Spades as an insult or slur. In the 20th century piece “The American Language” by H.L. Mencken, a 'spade' is considered a slur for African-American peoples, and eventually the slur “black as the ace of spades” became racist slang used to refer to peoples of darker complexions,

as well as those who were deemed 'unclean' by society, such as swingers. There have been attempts to reclaim the use of the term akin to other slurs, such as the 1973 sculpture “Spade with Chains” by artist David Hammons.

On a more empowering note, the Spade has also been appropriated for more just purposes by the asexual movement. The shortening of the term “asexual” to “ace” is an intuitive contraction and has led to the adoption of the various suits of Spade to represent varying strands of asexuality. The ace of hearts has become a symbol for romantic asexuality, while the ace of spades represents aromantic asexuality, a sardonic nod to the previously mentioned stereotype that swingers are lacking in romantic attraction.

Ultimately, the history of the spade is a complex and unique one. While other notable symbols such as the radioactive symbol were carefully designed in controlled laboratories to be contextless, the spade stems from a history of nobility, war, and racism that has embroiled it in a hotbed of contextual meaning.

Dear yuppies, you can keep Kings Cross

Robbie Mason cautiously celebrates Sydney's re-opening, but remains skeptical for the future of its underground scenes.

Lockout laws lost Sydney an estimated \$16 billion. Many friends and creatives have packed up and left Sydney without a plan or have eagerly seized job opportunities interstate because Sydney no longer holds any value to them.

So why, when Gladys Berejiklian announced the “relaxing” of lockout laws, was I still sceptical of the widespread, celebratory posts on social media about the scrapping of the lockout laws?

Despite the blundering policy decisions of government, musical and artistic innovation has thrived within Sydney's DIY, underground scene thanks to certain, attentive workers on the production line—kids like you or me in their early twenties—who collectively, organically and almost single-handedly ensured that operations never ceased entirely.

This is especially true in the electronic music scene – a vulnerable community hit hard by the introduction of the Liquor Amendment Act (2014).

Despite coming close, Sydney hasn't died — you just have to know where to look. Despite dwindling attendee numbers and financial difficulties, the lockout laws have ironically instilled in Sydney's young, creative population a resilience and DIY spirit now unrivalled within Australia. Bunker raves and warehouse parties are a key part of this resistance.

If I'm not fazed by Berejiklian's announcement, it's because Sydney's more “legitimate” music venues haven't interested me for years. While Oxford Underground and Club 77 struggle to sustain a dancefloor, Sydneysiders regularly pack out warehouse institutions across Sydney and doofs in

regional NSW.

When you have over 200 people dancing at 4AM to Thick Owens mixing breakbeat hardcore, donk and more, alongside intriguing art installations by local students, you know there is little reason to reclaim Sydney's empty clubs.

There is a fundamental disconnect between governments, large venue owners and grassroots, community efforts to sustain Sydney's cultural life precisely because these grassroots efforts utilise spaces without health and safety regulations, liquor licences, security personnel, and always without major incidents.

While Justin Hemmes may lament the irreversible death of Kings Cross, the suburb's continued suffocation has little impact on Sydney's rapidly diversifying and resilient music scenes, which have looked beyond the inner city.

Urban planners and private developers reduce human experience to maps and models. By applying standardised scientific laws to neglected spaces, industrial decay and empty land ripe for development, in the name of urban renewal, they fail to hear the relentless bass thud that shakes the walls of a dilapidated warehouse or rips apart the stale air and dust under a motorway. They never feel the sweaty limbs pressed against them on the dancefloor. They never taste the bitter flavour of a warehouse swaying with indoor smokers.

Take present-day Sydenham. After five years of work, the plans of the Inner West Council to create the “Sydenham Creative Hub” fell at the last hurdle, voted down by Greens, Liberals and Independents. Supported by Keep

Sydney Open (KSO), this proposal would have seen live music venues, cafes, artist studios, offices and small bars enter the surrounds of Sydenham Station. This would have caused gentrification, regulation, the removal of blue collar industry and the displacement of an already vibrant, creative community, which has long used this area for live music and art production.

The subcultures that have embraced alternative event spaces – especially the punk rock, rave and experimental art scenes – will continue to prop up Sydney's cultural life until there is more meaningful financial injection into the arts in NSW. But this economic model is fundamentally unsustainable. I've seen friends lose thousands of dollars on events; others barely breaking even.

The timing of Berejiklian's announcement is therefore welcome. We need licenced venues to take the heat off our own scene. But a cause of unbridled celebration? No.

Firstly, the repealing of the lockout laws alone is nowhere near enough to restore Sydney's aboveground nightlife. While the Victorian government has pledged \$27 million to the music industry over a four year period, the NSW government in 2017-18 dedicated only \$1,095,805 to contemporary music. A representative of Sounds Australia told members of the NSW Government inquiry into the state's music and arts economy that Victoria is “investing 10 times as much funding in a quarter the amount of time” and “they are supporting 567 per cent more artists and 900 per cent more music businesses towards export success than New South Wales currently is.”

In this context, Berejiklian's statement is little more than a hollow plea for redemption and an opportunity for our current state government to rest on their laurels.

Secondly, beyond the immense time it will take to restore Sydney's cultural vibrancy, there is also awareness in the rave scene that there are much bigger problems than mere lockout laws.

Currently, the rave community prioritises cross-cultural solidarity, diversity in line-ups and acknowledgments that we party on stolen land (I can't speak for the crews who have recently commercialised and tried to imitate truly boundary-pushing, not-for-profit raves). This is by no means a universal trait. No scene is perfect. But I genuinely believe that those at the heart of this scene actively promote these values.

While KSO has advocated for a much needed after-dark economy, progressive voices have criticised them for having too narrow a political gambit, and for being too silent on the political issues facing rural NSW and Indigenous Australia. At the same time, Sydney rave promoters were often donating profits to FIRE (Fighting in Resistance Equally), who have provided invaluable assistance in the NSW water crisis.

KSO was never a unanimous voice for Sydney's creative community and grassroots activism. Nor, in fact, was the CBD or Kings Cross a unanimous battleground.

The repeal of the lock-out laws are a step forward but one that must be followed by many, many more steps that cross racial, class and geographic divides in Sydney.

Celebrating 90 years

Celebrating 90 years of advancing and defending the rights of students

The Refectory, Holme Building
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6pm - 8pm
With The Honourable Michael Kirby AC CMG
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读李安，看人情冷暖 by Lindsay Rui

今年《小丑》爆冷威尼斯电影节金狮奖，随后引炸院线；王子逸的《别告诉她》低调上映，但一个动情的移民家庭故事也收获极好的口碑；阿里·艾斯特继《遗传厄运》之后推出第二部恐怖片作品，把宗教、惊悚与小清新杂糅成一部《仲夏夜惊魂》……在这样的十月院线，李安的新片《双子杀手》上映得几乎是悄无声息，没有大排场的宣传，没有大量的排片，安静得不像是一部奥斯卡最佳导演的作品。

那么这个李安与科幻的组合，究竟是否值得起一张电影票？

一直以来，我从未想过把李安和科幻放在一起。我钟情李安早期九十年代的作品，那些影片的感觉很暖、有爱、像家。就像是在一个冷冬里，我回到自己得小房间，懒懒地坐在沙发里，手边捧起一杯热可可，周围是我最亲爱的朋友或家人。屋外很冷，但屋里轻柔的暖气和橘色的落地灯将整个房间衬得很暖。这种来之不易的温暖与满足感，便是我脑海中对于李安式电影的记忆。

我怀念《断背山》，虽然已经是两年前的影片，但依旧能回想起来那份山谷中的清新与寂静。连绵起伏的翠绿，毛茸茸的白色羊群，泛着寒意的黎明，倚着篝火取暖的深夜……在这世外桃源般的断背山上，有着Ennis和Jack让人心碎到透的爱情故事。当看到最后一幕Ennis打开衣橱，将自己的格子衫搭在Jack牛仔服的外面，旁边贴着的是两个人记忆中的断背山，我无比心痛惋惜，但又无比感动，我也缩在自己的小房间里，无意识地跟着影片一起安安静静地流泪。

Reading Ang Lee, reading love and warmth

Lindsay Rui probes Ang Lee's latest creation.

While *Joker* has gone wild in cinemas this month, another film released on 10th October went unnoticed.

Not many people are talking about *Gemini Man*, others have brushed it off, pointing to the cringey pun on the movie poster: "Who will save you from yourself." I don't disagree with them. Guns, fire, blue & red, and Will Smith — a typical sci-fi genre film. But there is one line in the poster which surprises me: "An Ang Lee Film."

I realise I have never put sci-fi and Taiwanese film craftsman Ang Lee together before.

When I think about Lee's films, I feel warmth, love and the air of home. These intuitive feelings seem to have nothing to do with sci-fi.

I love *Brokeback Mountain*. Even though it has been two years since I watched it, I remember the beautiful green of the hills, and the chill blue of dawn. It is fresh and quiet. And there is a sweet but heartbreaking story between Ennis and Jack. When I witness Ennis stick a photo of Brokeback Mountain inside his wardrobe, and put his shirt over Jack's, my little room is filled with tears at midnight.

I enjoy *Eat Drink Man Woman* as well. Lee puts an ordinary Taiwan family in front of the camera, capturing the gentle nuances of relationships in family, in

最近还补看了《饮食男女》，从断背山的世外桃源，一下被拉回台湾市井的烟火气里。镜头前的家庭及其普通，但在平凡之下导演又极细致地刻画出了中国家庭、爱情、社会里的复杂与戏剧——老父亲每周亲自下厨摆一桌丰盛菜肴，餐桌上的一家人却是各怀各的心事；女儿心疼父亲年迈体弱疾病缠身，关怀到了嘴边却又始终讲不出口；有些人深陷爱恋，却一次次站在朋友的关系上欲言又止；另外一些人渴求坦然与诚恳，却又不由自主地在言语间玩起把戏与谎言……虽说只是日复一日的饮、食、男、女，其中却充斥千百个解不开开解不开的矛盾与死结，爱情对抗着自私，真心在和欲望博弈。

就像李安自己所说：“我始终是一个‘人’，对于‘人’的情感与表达，我始终保有着一颗好奇心。”

这些大概就是我印象中的李安式影片，他讲亲情，讲恋情，讲一个人与一个人之间，最普遍但又最讲不清道不明的情感与连结。而且他讲得温柔，就像一位老父亲坐在床头给你讲睡前故事，他阐述故事里细碎的情感，可能并不深刻的寓意，但他不去指责、不去呼吁、不讲太多道理，他丝毫不强求读者此时此刻就去理解或改变。

抱着这样的印象，其实我心底里并不希望李安去做一部科幻题材——一个略显冰冷硬核的类型。

但如果抛开个人偏好，纵观李安在电影行业的30年，我们其实能看到他在类型、题材、技术上的一次次革新。他在1993年已经开始在《喜宴》中探讨同性于中国的意义；1995年踏足好莱

romance, in society, revealing how these nuances are rooted in broader Chinese culture. The father cooks great food for his three daughters, but ends up having arguments with them during every single meal; the daughter worries about the father's poor health, but does not have the courage to offer help and care; One falls in love, but hides the feelings deep in their heart; the other values honesty, but plays around with tricks and lies. Lee's films are filled with these intricate paradoxes, building love against selfishness, desire against affection.

These are the memories associated with Lee's films. He tells stories between families, between lovers, between basic encounters amongst human beings. In an interview, he said, "I'm a human being, I'm curious about human conditions and expressions."

Lee's films are quite relatable to students. Imagine finishing a big day of uni, returning home, laying on the couch with a cup of hot chocolate with family or friends. The weather is cold outside, but the mild orange light makes the room feel warm and cozy.

Lee's early films are like bedtime stories told by an old father, subtle and gentle. I can feel the story, I can feel the meaning, but I do not think he is trying to lecture me.

Does this mean that Lee cannot

坞创作文学改编剧情片《理智与情感》；2000年拍武侠《藏龙卧虎》；2003年拍超级英雄《绿巨人浩克》；2012年的《少年派》用了当时还未普及的3D和CG；2016年的《比利·林恩》初试每秒120帧。而在今年的《双子杀手》，李安更是融合了120帧、3D、4K、CG这一系列当下电影行业所拥有的最新科技，尽己所能在尝试和探寻一种当下尚未存在的、新型的电影观感。

也因此不少评论把李安称作一位“开拓者”，影评人把他放在当下“传统电影”与未来“数字电影”的交叉路口。相比于世纪三十年代默片到有声的飞跃，期待能见证他带起一轮新的电影革新。

“百年前声音打破了默片所特有的梦幻质感，这和当下李安的120帧对观众的冲击其实别无二致。”

但类型、题材、科技说到底都只是媒介，是一种表达内容的手段。即便《双子杀手》是一个已经在好莱坞漂流了二十年的老剧本，李安还是拍出了一些他所坚持的“人”的情感与表达“。

《双子杀手》展现了一个自己与自己的克隆体相遇的故事，已入中年的精英杀手Henry面临着来自20岁自己的追



make a sci-fi film like *Gemini Man* work?

During the past 30 years, Lee has created a highly diverse filmography across numerous genres. He mastered rom-com with *The Wedding Banquet* in Taiwan, adapted seminal writing in *Sense and Sensibility* for Hollywood, produced superhero movie *The Hulk* with Marvel, and with *Gemini Man* this year, he entered the sci-fi arena for the first time.

Some critics have seen Lee as an “explorer” in film technology. To produce *Gemini Man*, he adopts 120 frames per second with 4K resolution and computer generated imagery, the most advanced technologies in the film industry today. Lee is at the junction between the “traditional cinema” of now and the “digital cinema” in the future. He is seen as a figurehead, facilitating a new round of revolution in the industry by experimenting with the possibility of new film technology.

Indiewire has compared Lee's *Gemini Man* to the leap from silence to sound cinema in the 1930s. “Sound killed the dreamlike quality of silent filmmaking, not dissimilar to the way Lee's 120 FPS can feel to a modern audience.”

But in light of all that, Lee has maintained consistency in his craft through an adherence to “human conditions and expressions.”

杀。李安这次不再着眼于一个人个体与外界亲人、爱人、社会的连结，而是把镜头转向自身，试图让观众对自己做一个剖析，开启一段自己与自己的对话。

“如果你有机会回到过去遇见十年前的自己，你会对年轻的自己说什么、做什么？”这便是《双子杀手》全片所提出的问题。这是一个假想题，对这样的问题我们并不陌生，但往往我们会一笑置之，因为，毕竟只是个假象。但当一部影片用两个小时不断向我重复这个问题，不断地推着我去想出一个答案时，我不禁开始觉得，或许这个问题并不是一笑置之这么简单了。穿越时空回到十年对话自己是一个假设，但如果把这个假设拉回当下，如何与自己相处、如何与自己对话，如何理解自己，如何宽容自己，这是一连串非常现实的问题。

都说人是群居，我们花好多的时间从自身的视角看向外界，我们用尽力气去交流、去融入、去善待周围形形色色的人群。但在这样的过程中，我们是否还能记得将视角转回给自己，给自己留些时间，与自己重新连结？还是说，群居久了，我们已经忘了？

For parents like ours, the language of numbers was one that both generations understood — it was the one thing they could proudly pass onto us, and it could never get lost in translation. This soon evolved into this idea that, well, numbers don't discriminate. Regardless of where you came from and how the world saw you, as long as you could solve a problem, you would be okay.

I've always found a sense of familiarity and comfort in STEM. For some, it's incomprehensible — but I've always enjoyed the combination of wonder and finality in it. Patterns can form without you creating them, because they simply exist and are waiting to be found — whether it be the rings of a tree trunk delivering history, or the perfect symmetry of a simple snowflake.

No more ‘Harry Potter’ ice breaking games

Liangyu Sun thinks the University could be doing more to facilitate cultural awareness in tutorials.

“Which house do you want to go if you were in Hogwarts?” I was asked this question in an ice breaking game in my first semester at uni. “Glenffindor?” I said to the partner I was assigned to. “Gryffindor? I love it as well.” I hoped the tutor would not ask “why?”, or people would figure out that I had only watched the first movie, at the age of 7, in Chinese. In other words, I had no idea what it was all about. However, when I was asked the same question for a second time in another tutorial ice breaking game, I knew this ‘Harry Potter ice breaker’ was no coincidence.

The problem is that tutors presume Harry Potter to be a cultural prerequisite for everyone in the tutorial room. While USyd promotes itself as a multicultural and global campus, and over one quarter of its students come from overseas, it's disappointing to know the tutors are not fully culturally aware of the people they teach.

Whether we're local or international, we all come to university with an implicit expectation of exchanging perspectives and making friends with people from different cultural backgrounds and communities. However, despite the number of international students growing, the campus is becoming more split up.

Outside the classroom, there has been racist graffiti on campus, followed by verbal and physical harassment of

Two weeks ago, three other people, including one social science undergraduate, one tutor and one professor, participated in a focus group on International students' English ability, but soon the discussion became focused on problems of cultural awareness on campus.

The Harry Potter ice breaking game is not an isolated case. Ben*, a tutor

Finding equilibrium between numbers and words

Rameen Hayat seeks comfort in STEAM.

The first learning experience I can completely remember is sitting with my dad at the kitchen table as he taught me how to add. He had primal migrant parent instinct, something that would make me fear him yet seek his approval at the same time. So my brothers and I learnt how to add at lightning fast speed and how to multiply with military precision, shedding one too many tears in the process. For the outsider, it sounds like a tale of childhood trauma. For me, it's a shared experience I'll always cherish.

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Why a cultural awareness program?

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There are one thousand and one ways to solve a problem, yet at the end of the day there is one right answer. The back and forth between the complex and the simple is beautiful.

The way my parents taught me the English language was through books. The idea was that if I managed to read enough books that I enjoyed, I would figure it out myself. My dad used to work across from a bookstore. He would observe the frenzy of children and pick up whatever book was popular for the month and bring it home, a steady stream of words for an eager kid to consume—from *Harry Potter* to *Inkheart* to *Clair De Lune*. Books have a special place for sheltered ethnic girls; its this absolute escapism where you transpose yourself into imagined realities, those that not even the television screen can imagine. It was cool to be *Igraine The Brave*, a 12-year-old girl defending her castle from siege.

Even then, it's always been an escape — it's never really been my story on my own terms. To this day, the English language is something that still daunts me. I can never truly be confident in what I have to say and how I say it. I'm not sure if I'll ever learn to command it on my own, but maybe if I do it on my own terms I can.

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Asian international students. Inside the classroom, some lecturers are concerned that tensions between ‘pro-Beijing’ and ‘pro-Hong Kong’ students may become disruptive while the negative portrait of Chinese international students as ‘spies’ in the mainstream newspapers and documentaries has profoundly alienated this group of students. However, on some occasions, tutors and lecturers automatically seek the most convenient way to deal with the dispute — that is, avoid discussion on ‘politically sensitive’ topics or narrate class discussion in a way favourable to one stance but not the other. Prof. Wanning Sun, from the UTS Department of Media and Communication, who has written on this issue, said that she believes avoiding ‘sensitive’ topics for the sake of managing difference and maintaining order is not necessarily the best approach. Instead, if tutors and lecturers facilitate discussions properly, these ‘politically sensitive’ moments can become opportunities whereby critical analytical skills can be taught and mutual understanding between students fostered.

From ‘Consent Matters’ to ‘Culture Matters’?

Tutors and lecturers are not all to blame for the problem. Tutors are all on casual contracts, with most of them being PhD candidates. Some are even normal undergraduate or postgraduate students. In the Arts faculty, the University does not offer any kind of official ‘training’

While I've found comfort amongst equations, sometimes there is still loneliness. You are constantly craving to be part of something bigger: a community and purpose. For me, the A — Arts — is an opportunity for meaningful representation and personal reflections on the changing world. It has ranged from utilising poetry to exploring what it means to be human, to talking to girls who look like me about the wonderment the world has to bring. As a person still trying to figure out my place, it's seeing women of colour pave the way and telling myself it's possible to ‘make it’.

In a way, there is equilibrium to be found in STEAM. Amongst the barrage of voices in the 24-hour news cycles, it's a way for me to find comfort in fact. As the planet deteriorates, it's a way for me to stay a hopeful idealist and believe that humans will eventually pull through despite all odds.

Stories are told so differently in many portions of the world, whether they are written, visual or told through movement. For my family, it's oral storytelling — how we learn about our past, our culture and our values. My mother who silently observed as my dad taught us, used to be an *urdu* teacher. She says that *urdu* is the poet's language, one that carries itself with grace, softness and respect. A language that is melodious and powerful at the same time. While my dad gave me books and maths, my mother gave me bedside stories and hymns. When she talks, words become less daunting and more familiar, as the softness of her voice embraces us with warmth. Although I haven't inherited my mother's soft-spoken elegance, I've learnt of the power of the voice in speaking one's truth and sharing it unashamedly with others.

The idea of left brain/right brain dominance, one or the other, persists to this day. I've tried to commit to one side but find myself writing poetry when I'm sick of numbers, and wishing I had an engineering problem to solve when I'm knee-deep in readings. So far, I've used one to be a reprieve for the other. As I near the end of my studies, I'm trying to learn how I can take the best parts of my mum and dad and turn them into my

own. As the educational and professional spheres scramble to find answers to the ‘diversity problem’ in STEM, and as I try to find meaning in my career to come, I look to STEAM — Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics. The experts say the idea is that we can use creativity in the problem-solving process, and vice versa.

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tutors before their first class about facilitating a culturally aware learning environment. “When I stood outside the door before I stepped into my first tutorial class, I completely didn't know what was going on,” Ben said in the focus group. The true culprit is the University. The sad fact is, the University doesn't have any interest in promoting cultural awareness on campus, despite earning hundreds of thousands of dollars from international students every year. In 2018, the University made the consent education online program ‘Consent Matters’ a compulsory part of study for every newly enrolled student to address the problem of sexual harassment and sexual violence, proving that it at least has the capacity to implement such a program for other issues. However, in terms of cultural awareness, the University seems to have the strategy of ‘better say than do’. Each year, the Vice Chancellor makes a statement on why cultural diversity matters to USyd after mainstream newspapers negatively portray Chinese international students, but what tangible policies have come out of it?

‘Culture Matters’ matters. Under the current circumstances, promoting a classroom that everyone can contribute to is crucial to dismantle the invisible barrier between domestic and international students. Only then can we understand each other through communication and not fear. *Name has been anonymised.

Hostile architecture: A city consumed

Words and photography by
Anh Nguyen

At some bus stops around Sydney, you don't sit—you lean. My friend Lily and I were waiting for a bus at Railway Square. Surrounding us were bodies—heavy and tired, stained in sleep. Some with a coffee in hand, some on their phones. But most of all, they were all on their feet, either leaning or standing. We ourselves were crouched atop the glacial metal bars and transparent glass that made a temporary shelter for the bus stop. Hardly comfortable. It was morning and we were all tired—but nobody was sitting.

It was then that I realised I had seen this all before. Around the platforms at Town Hall and Central Station, if you don't manage to snatch one of the few benches, you are then left to either stand or to lean on one of those strange, lifeless wooden bars—awkwardly situated a bit too close to the approaching form of transport. They were practically useless, as well as uncomfortable. Much like the bars that Lily and I were slanting our bodies over at that very moment.

Why would anybody design something so useless? I posed this question aloud, when Lily's response made me realise that they were anything but.

"I think they are forms of defensive architecture," she said to me.

Ever since, I haven't stopped noticing them.

'Hostile' or 'defensive' architecture describes the design of various public structures that renders them unusable for certain purposes or groups. They are designed in an inconspicuous way to prevent 'undesired' behaviours from being seen in urban spaces. The top-ranking menaces are often seen as homelessness and pesky skateboarders.

The most prominent examples of hostile architecture are benches and seats that are designed to be impractical for any purpose other than sitting. A walk around USyd will expose you to an array of cases—ranging from benches with undulant platforms around the Civil Engineering building, to those with protruding pegs next to the new Administration block.



Other examples include plants in sheltered spaces, blockades placed on building corners that would otherwise shield from wind (check out the Sports & Aquatic Centre), the round terror blocks on Eastern Avenue, and the metal skate stoppers all over the handrails of ABS.

Walk out further into the city, and you'll see benches with metal handrails placed in the middle. Though varying in intensity, these seat designs are masters of their craft in preventing bodies from lying down, as well as stopping the path of skateboarders.

There are also other commonplace architectural features in our cities that double as more subtle forms of environmental social control. Ultraviolet lights are installed in public toilets to forfend intravenous drug users, CCTV cameras are scattered through urban centres, and most recently, blue LED lights for suicide prevention at train stations in Tokyo.

However, what categorises these designs as 'hostile' is that their function is to selectively and directly exclude an unwanted group. In the case of the designs seen in Sydney, their most common purpose is to discourage rough sleeping and prevent the space from becoming a permanent shelter. In this city, the most significant unwanted group are the homeless.

So how, then, does a city like Sydney become so hostile? How did our architecture come to express such an antagonistic attitude towards public displays of homelessness and poverty? To understand our current reality, we have to first trace back to why such attitudes exist.

The O in homeless stands for 'Other'

Homelessness has had a long history of being a signifier of 'Otherness'. Those living this way have long been exposed to exclusion and disciplinary treatment. Bearing this identity often means living in unpredictable, and often unsafe, circumstances.

The list of aims of the City of Sydney's Homelessness Unit notes objectives to "prevent people from becoming entrenched in homelessness in the inner-city" and to "enact a compassionate and proactive approach to the management of public space." This points to a telling perception of displays of homelessness as either a threatening or unwanted part of our urban spaces. As Sociologist Robert Park wrote, "In making the city we make ourselves." When our city is covered in anxious, inhospitable objects that aim to displace people, what does it say about our collective self-conception?

Privatised spaces for paying people

The privatisation of space is another contributing factor to the preponderance of hostile architecture. In an increasingly privatised urban environment, 'security' is perceived according to an idealised vision of which groups a city should serve and contain. In Australia, the mass privatisation of traditional public spaces are as ubiquitous as ibises in bins. It wasn't too long ago that the Sydney Opera House projected onto its sails a gargantuan, controversial advertisement for Racing NSW. Dr Steven Flusty, who documented the commodification and rise of hostile spaces in Los Angeles, noted that the intrusion of corporations into urban environments helps create a new kind of public space, where access depends on a person's apparent ability to pay. In these spaces, exclusivity is needed to ensure that nothing unpredictable disrupts the flow of capital. People are separated into groups of who can pay and who cannot. This is termed a process of "urban securitisation" where the definition of what constitutes a "potential threat" now extends to people who seemingly lack the capacity to buy.

Urban spaces are also increasingly constructed according to an idealised public, in order to facilitate and encourage 'proper' identities and behaviours. A way of attracting 'the right kind' of people is to make them do 'the right thing.' Take the seats in Pitt Street Mall as an example. Instead of a long bench, they are tiny squares, separated with strange rests that seemingly turns one away from the other. This makes it a strenuous task to even try to talk to the person next to you, much less relax and stay there for some time. The purpose here is to push people not to congregate, but instead to shop. Those who are meant to be there are kept on their feet; those who aren't are kept out altogether.



A hostile neighbourhood is a safe one

Hostile architecture also serves as a symbolic means of thwarting urban anxieties. Since the late 1970s, there has been a process of urban consolidation in Sydney—building up existing urban spaces rather than expanding to new areas. Whilst there is still a push for jobs to be in more expedient locations, the process is slow—causing different populations to be simultaneously pulled away from these locations and into the CBD. The State Government can therefore slow down the expansion of the city, and hence, reduce the costs of infrastructure. The result is a rising, culturally diverse population in a limited area.

The co-mingling of distinct social groups in a condensed area can create a cloud of anxiety. With diversity comes urban paranoia. People become concerned with crime rates and, in turn, homelessness. When people don't trust their neighbours, defensive architecture can be used as a tool for easing these fears and regulating the 'Other'.

It is interesting to trace this history back to the roots of defensive urban design itself. Evolving from Oscar Newman's 1973 work *Defensible Space*, the philosophy of these forms of architecture is to be designed not only to prevent crime itself, but also the perception of crime. Here, hostile spaces serve more as a means to ease anxiety—creating a purchased, symbolic sense of safety in a concrete jungle replete with globalisation and discrimination.

The consequences of ignorance

"When you're designed against, you know it," explains Ocean Howell, a former professional skateboarder and assistant professor at the University of Oregon. "Other people might not see it, but you will. The message is clear: you are not a member of the public."

He's right. The subtlety of many designs, along with our tendency to simply accept our environment, have caused these spaces to become something that we rarely notice in our everyday lives. It has also made defensive architecture a powerful tool of urban control that has insidious ramifications for how we understand our community.

2017 saw the death of Tent City. The homeless encampment/community in Martin Place was forcibly removed, the reason being that they had left "unacceptable impacts on the public." These "impacts" mostly involve making visible the systemic issue of homelessness and housing affordability that encumbered the idealised visions and aesthetics of the city. An interesting observation, though, is that just months earlier, the NSW Government revealed designs for two new towers to be built for the future Martin Place Metro Station. The new metro precinct will include an assemblage of shops, restaurants, and offices that expands its connection to Hunter, Elizabeth and Castlereagh Streets. Premier Gladys Berejiklian's comments on the project emphasised the city's "truly global" capabilities and the fact that "developments like this continue to elevate our status." It is hard not to see the link in our city planning between the displacement of homelessness visibility and the



prioritisation of corporate interests by government elites.

In 2014, when anti-homelessness spikes in London were facing a series of intense contestations from the public, Boris Johnson's first remarks when questioned about them was that "they were not a good look."

If these are the first reactions of politicians to the effects of hostile architecture, what does it tell us about the rights of homeless people versus the maintenance of a city's aesthetics and globalising processes? These examples are a sombre indication of homelessness's low position on the hierarchy of socio-political importance—something the implementation of hostile architecture has been informing us of all along.

If not here then where?

As of late August 2019, Sydney's temporary accommodation for the homeless has supposedly reached a 'crisis point'. Data indicates that the number of people sleeping rough has dropped 9% compared to August 2018. Many more beds are being used in crisis and temporary housing, increasing by 20%—providing now just 38 beds short of capacity.

Despite the decrease of rough sleepers being a positive sign of the successful work of outreach teams, one cannot help but also draw a link between this and the increase in discriminatory spaces in our city centres. Where makeshift housing is a temporary solution to a systemic crisis, the implementation of hostile architecture in urban spaces can hardly be deemed as any solution at all.

The structural exclusion of rough sleepers aims to simply displace them from view instead of offering stable solutions to confront the issue systematically. The focus is shifted away from the structural and systemic drivers of socio-economic inequality, and redirected towards what are deemed as undesired behaviours at street-level. As observed by Dr James Petty from the University of Melbourne, there is "an ossification of surface over substance, clean appearance over informed or effective policy."

Data from the ABS 2016 census showed an increase in homelessness of 13.7% in Australia, with NSW accounting for more than 73% of this national increase. It seems that hostile architecture and measures like the criminalisation of begging in Melbourne are ineffective ways by which we should be approaching the crisis that pervades the people that makes up our cities.

Regardless, there are potential solutions to provide hospitality to our most vulnerable people. In Brisbane, a trial is being undertaken by the country's largest car park operator, Secure Parking, for a car park to be turned into a pop-up shelter for the homeless. It's been noted that if the trial goes to plan, the organisation hopes to expand the project out into Melbourne and Sydney within the next 12 months.

Though a good solution, it poses the question: why must private institutions provide these services when the provision of public housing should be the work of our governments? It is also a risk to entrust such a project to a private organisation that also relies on corporate help, when corporations have such a large role in the displacement of homeless people in the first place.

It's like a game of 'once you see it'. Once noticed, the effects of defensive urban designs and the root causes become clear to you in chilling layers of inequity. I can no longer see, nor appreciate, the aesthetics of the plants under the City Road footbridge in the same way. Nor am I able to sit on a public bench without acknowledging the privilege that I am granted in such spaces. But this is nothing compared to the insidious effects they have on a society's most vulnerable people. When cities are constructed for the benefit of those who can adhere to an idealised vision of an unblemished cityscape, the definition of urban diversity narrows, and so does our sense of morality.

Hostile architecture not only points to the problem of structural discrimination and systemic injustice, but also exposes the incidental complacency, ignorance and prejudice that hides beneath our social preconceptions and attitudes. Our cities need more inclusive spaces, and for those in power to directly address social inequalities rather than simply sweeping them out of sight.

Urban dwellers need to resist the pleasantries of ignorance. At the end of the day, it is all about taking the first step. An acknowledgement that all spaces are equal, but some are more equal than others.

Look around.



Art by Annie Zhang

The making of creation myths

Shania O'Brien muses on the process of creation.

There are stories that predate our need to tell them. They exist as a whisper between thoughts, their shadows following creators until they are ready to be brought into the world. Haitian-American novelist Edwidge Danticat compared them to creation myths, stating that these stories are not ones we make up, but ones we already know.

In terms of the universe, there are many creation stories: abiogenesis where life arises from the ground, Iroquois mythology where life falls from the sky, Greek mythology where life emerges from chaos. But what about the life that comes from within? The life that exists as a half-formed thought, fighting its way into being?

Based on my research, the most common story of creation is *creatio ex nihilo* — creation out of nothing. The first things that come into existence are often the ocean and the sky—the vastest things that humans were aware of. Creation stories reflect writing traditions of the time, as well as ideals and norms that already existed. In the Popol Vuh, creation was spoken into existence. In Hinduism, the world is created over and over again in period cycles that give birth to innumerable universes. This makes

me think of a frustrated artist drafting multiple versions of their art, unsure of which one to move forward with.

But what is the purpose of a creation myth? To take nothing and turn it into something? To explain why and how certain things come into being? Maybe we don't always create these myths, but sometimes they create us. In Ancient Greece and Rome, creativity was a disembodied genius, a divine attendant spirit from a distant and unknowable source. This spirit was called a *daemon*,

I often feel like my characters are on loan to me from creation gods.

and was thought to be the cause of all human creation. The paranormal nature of this concept is one with which I resonate, because I often feel like my characters are on loan to me from creation gods, only made available when I'm desperate. It is quite humbling to believe that the most remarkable aspects of my being came from somewhere outside of me.

Building on *daemons*, I believe it is possible to catch a story. In a TED talk on "Your Elusive Creative Genius," author

Elizabeth Gilbert talks about a woman who could feel her poems coming toward her in a thunderous train of air that would shake the earth beneath her feet. She would "miss" the poem if it wasn't written down immediately, and the poem (or *daemon*) would move on to find another poet.

I have characters I've been trying to write since I was fourteen. Their narratives change often, but they remain the same. An overpowered woman, an army of one surrounded by a pale lilac

glow, who never has to fear for her safety or answer to anyone. An angry girl with glowing eyes and demon claws and vengeance coursing through her. A boy who can bend reality if he obsesses about it too much, who lives in fear of the things he's afraid of coming to life. Now that I know they form my creation myth, I see glimpses of them in my childhood, character traits sprinkled into imaginary friends and nonsensical daydreams.

I wanted to know if other people had similar experiences, obsessions

that haunted them into creating art or destroying it. A friend of mine, Sunaina, has multiple creation myths. She, too, described the sensation as if it had agency, as if it forced her to tell stories. It was similar to what I had experienced, the incessant need for my magnum opus to be out in the world. We didn't know how, but there was something within us that needed to be made, to be freed. She told me that it was different from writing, like she'd be walking down the street and see a certain shade of green she had to have in the background of a video she wanted to make. The first one she ever told me about always crosses my mind. There's a melody she's always known, chords that communicated yearning and introspection, vocals that relayed anxious inhibition. Attempting to recreate it was never practical. The baggage that came with wanting every little detail to be perfect was not easily discarded.

The wonderful thing about creation myths is the possibility of a new one to emerge. It doesn't have to be the start of the physical universe, it could be a world beginning entirely for myself. The myth is only the origin—what comes after is entirely up to me.

Crohn's, uncertainty and comfort

Pranay Jha reflects on the paradoxes of growing up with a chronic illness.



Art by Ellie Zheng

I have always considered my earliest memories of suffering from Crohn's Disease to be somewhat strange. Their peculiarity does not arise from the specifics of what happened. In fact, they mostly involve quotidian family interactions that most people would easily forget. What perplexes me about them is how little they actually have to do with the symptoms or physical experience of Crohn's itself.

One of the memories which resonates with me most is an interaction I had with my father around the age of eleven. I recall that until that point, like many children, I had maintained a respectful sense of caution around him. We would, of course, spend a lot of time together—he would keenly follow my sports or answer the tedious questions I asked as he drove me to school. However, our relationship was certainly not one which

allowed us to be emotionally uninhibited around each other. One day shortly after my Crohn's diagnosis, he came to my room and sat on a chair opposite my bed. There was an unfamiliar tenderness about him, which at the time I couldn't entirely comprehend. After a few lingering moments of silence, he asked me how I was feeling and if there was anything I wanted. We exchanged a few more words, he gave me a hug, and then gently walked out of my room.

Eleven years later, while I'm visiting my parents on the weekend, I share this memory with my mother, explaining how odd it is that this is my first memory of Crohn's. To my surprise, she begins to instantly tear up, looking away as she tells me I won't understand. "When your child is suffering like that... it's worse than anything you could go through." I speak to my father shortly

after, asking him what it was like in the early stages when my Crohn's symptoms were at their worst. The pain hasn't quite left his voice as he recalls his fear and despair over the horror stories he had read on the internet. My mother later tells me that although he couldn't quite articulate it at the time, it was incredibly emotionally difficult for him.

To hear my parents recount that period is a little disorienting. As a child, I had very little appreciation for the magnitude of what I was going through. I was certainly in a lot of pain, but as a child, that pain seemed transient. It never caused me to dwell too seriously or attach any sense of meaningful emotional disruption to my condition. For me, being unaware of what Crohn's really was or its long-lasting consequences, my illness simply meant a day off school every once in a while. I have no memory of the tense discussions in the consultation rooms as each new treatment seemed to fail. I can't even recollect fragments of the debate over whether parts of my intestine should have been surgically removed.

All that lives with me from that period are snippets of family interactions and a sense of frustration over the quality of toys in Sydney Children's Hospital's waiting area. As I have gotten older however, I have slowly been able to make more sense of my disease. I often see my specialist alone, make many of my own bookings, and take an active role in monitoring my condition. Naturally, the transition into adult treatment has been empowering for me in many different ways. Paradoxically though, the more I begin to understand Crohn's disease, the

more I'm troubled by a persisting sense of uncertainty. My experience of suffering from a chronic illness is undeniably made easier by class privilege. Unlike many people around the world, I'm fortunate to have family support as well as access to proximate and affordable healthcare. Unfortunately, though, the fears and anxieties of chronic illness remain enduring. Each small instance of pain or mild sickness brings with it a sense of panic that I may be falling out of remission. Any thought of the future inherently involves a contingency for my symptoms worsening. In stark contrast to my childhood, it's incredibly difficult to simply leave Crohn's out of my mind.

The uncertainty of chronic illness doesn't confine itself to my physical condition either. It means that I'm often left yearning for certainty in other aspects of my life. It makes me a little guarded in social interactions, perhaps in the hope that a stoic facade will allow the world to see that I haven't let this disease get the best of me. In my personal relationships, I am forced to seek reliability and comfort in ways that many of my peers are not.

Ultimately, though, I've learned to make my peace with the uncertainty. I know that Crohn's will be a permanent fixture in my life. But so too will my mother accompanying me to every infusion I have, or my father awkwardly (but nourishingly) checking in on me. I know my closest friends will continue to support me and that my sister will crack a joke when I'm feeling down. For now, at least, that's really all the certainty I need.

Small Things: On birds and why I love them

Words and art by Amelia Mertha



Superb fairy wrens made their springtime nest in our orange tree this year. Blue flashes through our lounge room window when the male wren soaks and shimmies in the bird bath right outside. Mum sends me outside to shoo away a predatory Pied currawong that has sent the smaller birds—the wrens, finches and a Willy Wag-tail—into a panic. "They've taken eggs before," she warns. Brown and gangly, I make a good scarecrow.

Earlier in the year, we were visited several times by two adult Magpies. One had a deformed, but still functional, foot—I called her Ajani. The other, Zoya, liked to announce their arrival through chortled song, stretching neck and beak to the light dappled leaves of our blueberry ash tree. We fed both of them small amounts of cheese and fruit. This gesture seemed to pay off when, on their fourth or fifth visit, they brought their juvenile with them. Magpies are generally quite curious, and very intelligent, but juveniles also tend to be more trusting of humans. When I sat in the middle of the yard, it hopped into my lap. I was softened and named it Penguin. It waddled quickly around the yard, inspecting every corner like a small, inquisitive child assembling treasure.

On the website magpiealert.com, anyone can add a record to the map of magpie swoops across Australia throughout the year. Swoops that resulted in an injury are marked by a red icon, the rest are road-sign yellow. Users can add their own comments about the nature of the swoop too. A recent recount from North Parramatta notes, "swooped 4 times, very gentle taps on the top of helmet." Another person, in Earlwood, was "swooped and injured while running." In early September, a magpie in Bella Vista was shot dead by The Hills Shire Council after local residents lodged over 40 complaints about its exceptionally aggressive, territorial behaviour along Old Windsor Road. One person was reported to have had a heart attack, mid-magpie attack. Magpies mate for life, and somewhere in Greater Western Sydney, a magpie is surely wondering where its mate went. What now remains of the "Windsor Road Monster" is just a cluster of records on magpiealert.com that mark where it once called home.

While bird watching (also known as 'twitching,' or 'birding') is traditionally an analogue practice, and hobbyists are generally white and middle-to-upper-class, my experience of the digital archiving of birds and bird activity is strangely similar to, if not intertwined, with some of the queer and so-called-radical digital spaces I have access to.

@femmebirds is a US-based Instagram account that declares in its bio that it is "anti-racist, trans/gnc celebratory, fat liberationist and intersectional feminist." High definition photographs of gorgeously plumaged birds follow relatable, edifying captions. It is certainly a neat intersection of some of my interests. Some posts celebrate a femme icon or make a cheeky reference to romantic endeavours, others affirm fashion choices or the account's left-wing politics (pun intended). Beneath a row of six puff-chested green bee eaters, the captain stands in particular solidarity with trans women in the US. They await a Supreme Court's ruling over whether Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) protects employees from discrimination based on sex and/or sexual orientation.

In an older @femmebirds post, the caption "Yes, yellow eyeshadow is in this year, Becky. And fuck you, no, I did not overdo it," refers to the yellow Pulcinella face of the masked plover in the accompanying photo. Masked plovers have notoriously protective and gutsy parenting techniques. This is important when you're a bird that evolved to lay eggs within anxious proximity to human foot traffic on the ground. A plover chick, about the size of an apple, once played dead right in front of me. Hearing its parents' rapidfire kikiki-ing, the chick knew exactly what to do—close its eyes and collapse on the spot—barely a day into its life. Later, I watched it bounce up a grassy knoll behind the adults, knowing it was safe.

There is a @butchbirds account too. For those playing along, the Emu and Macaroni penguin are both, apparently, categorically butch while the

Australian Pelican is femme. The jury may still be out on the ibis. Though, neither @butchbirds or @femmebirds pretend that their two categories have any hard and fast rules when it comes to birds. The brilliance of these two accounts, in this era of memes, memos and mood-boards, is their archive of an unabashed beauty of small things.

Any account I make about 'small things' can be owed to Arundhati Roy's novel *The God of Small Things*. Roy's novel operates within an economy of magical realism and it is the laws of nature—of lush utopias and in-between states—that manifest as magical realism's political language. Not all birds are small, I concede, but, unless one really pays attention, they take up a small part of the quotidian. How many pigeons, seagulls, ibises or magpies are really being noticed when they aren't shitting on us, swooping, or eating our trash?

The narrative in *The God of Small Things* does not entertain extraordinariness or sublimity, nothing and no one is larger than life but small winking hours, small lives, can "affect the outcome of whole lifetimes ... [l]ittle events, ordinary things, smashed and reconstituted. Imbued with new meaning." A witching hour feels like waking up from a mid-afternoon fever nap to the rare sight of a goshawk outside. It feels like the familiar call of a masked plover flying overhead late at night standing in an inner Sydney street that yawns into an unfamiliar darkness.

Digital archiving is a way of tending to my own queer feelings; I screenshot messages from lovers and crushes, map date spots, make playlists on Spotify. I have tried to do the same with bird encounters—record bird sounds, bookmark links detailing unfamiliar species. I once watched a documentary about the great hornbill, the state bird of Kerala (in which *The God of Small Things* is set). The hornbill has a horned structure on its bill called a casque, which I found so impressive that I was compelled to rank my favourite birds in my notes app. The hornbill came in at number 7, the kookaburra in first place. Somewhere else in my notes app, I have typed "3:22am - birds" during an acid trip I took on a mild Boston night.

To me, the archival space of Magpie Alert is not entirely dissimilar from the mapped structure of a Canadian-based website called Queering the Map. Users pin locations on a Google-sourced global map (like Magpie Alert) then submit "queer moments" attached to that specific location. The ephemeral nature of some queer acts remind me of the brief swoop of a bird. For a single moment, another creature sees you and only you. The body is self-aware, triumph or danger imminent.

In *The God of Small Things*, Roy writes, "Ammu said that human beings were creatures of habit, and it was amazing the kind of things they could get used to." In the same way I might see a dog on the street and exclaim, "dog!", once I developed an interest in birds, it became a habit to acknowledge their presence. Just ask my girlfriend, who has spent enough time with me waxing lyrical about birds to say she now thinks of me when she sees a magpie. And why should we overlook the small things, why not pay attention to the ecosystems around us? The climate is changing, you can hear the droughts and floods in birdsong too.

This week, I read online that birds can see colours on the ultraviolet spectrum that our trichromat vision cannot. Birds know that they shimmer in many more colours than humans have the language and capacity to name, or to even imagine. Birds and love have that in common. And maybe we could say the same about each other. In each of us shimmers a tiny universe worth trying to see and know.

This coming summer will likely be my last chance to look out into our backyard. I will leave the nest, my childhood home, next year. Goodbye to the red-whiskered bulbuls whistling atop our TV antenna. Goodbye to the spotted doves, two lumps on our lawn. Goodbye to the honeyeaters and the figbirds. Goodbye to the magpies and the wrens in our orange tree. Another morning song awaits.

Mother Knows Best

Words: Shi Feng

Art: Olivia Allanson

I met Jia on a Japanese gay dating app called Nine Monsters. Like me, he was from China — a 21-years-old freshman at a university in Tokyo, Japan. I was in Japan for a gap year, after spending the three years before in a biology laboratory studying my masters degree. At that time, we lived close to each other, in Jiyugaoka. "Jiyugaoka" means "the hill of freedom". It is a comfortable, middle-class area, with many stylish cafés located nearby. An oddity amongst Tokyo's many suburbs, it felt more like Europe than it did Asia, with streetscapes inspired by Venice and Paris hidden amongst Japanese-style residential houses and narrow roads. It was rainy when I went there in the spring of 2017. Locals were enjoying the falling cherry blossoms, gently reflected in the puddles of water along the road they drifted into. The rain was heavy for a while. Then it stopped.

He messaged asking to meet me in front of the train station. I remembered the perfume he wore on that frosty afternoon — Acqua di Gio, the water of youth.

I've forgotten how the conversation started. Probably, we discussed the weather, then talked about the previous dates I'd had in China. I had met different types of gay people during my time in China. And I had used different Chinese gay dating apps. The last person I met before travelling abroad was an international student from a Muslim family in Kenya. He spoke better English than me. Before him, I thought cosmopolitan was just the title of a magazine.

My new friend in Japan said he didn't have as much experience as me and laughed.

We first went to a soup pasta shop called Conana. Under the rays of the day's waning light, the city was golden, and the road filled with people rushing to and about. There were no high-rise buildings in that area, so my mind was distracted by the sunset. The sunset dyed the sky orange, then inked the clouds slowly like a luminous watercolour.

After dinner, Jia suggested going back to my place.

Raindrops fell into black night. We were walking under the yellow street light. Some bars were preparing to open, and some shops were closing.

He was quiet and walked swiftly.

I realised that he might want to see me only for a sexual encounter.

"Do we need condoms?" I asked.

"Maybe, yes", he said.

We stopped halfway to my place at a 7-11. The cold white light glowed through the window. Staff carefully set a box of condoms into a small paper bag and printed the receipt for me. On the surface of the bag, I saw a line written in Japanese: throw it alone within the bag after use. I wondered if it was referring to the condom or the hookup. Either way, the message was clear: be secretive.

My apartment was a modern Japanese style loft room. I could see the neighbour's living room from the window because of the short distance between buildings. They were watching television without any sound by reading the subtitles.

"Anything for you?" I checked the fridge.

He looked stressed and stood beside the bed. No chair was in the room.

I took a seat on the bed. He got close to me but was still standing.

I suggested he sit. He sat down by facing a different direction without eye-contact and put his arm around my back. He whispered that he had tried sex before, but it had been terrible.

"We don't have to," I said. "We can chill and talk about anything you want."

He kissed me and held me tightly.

When I touched him, I found his body was built better than I'd thought.

"You've got nice muscles."



"Yes, I went to a Chinese Kung-Fu school as a child."

"Really? The training must be very tough."

"My mum noticed I was a little bit different and sent me there."

"So, you came out as gay to her?"

"No, I didn't. My mother thought I'd become normal after physical training."

"I came out to my mother in high school," I said.

"I want a mother like yours," he replied.

That was not the first time that I'd told my story.

My mother looks younger than she is. Although she had a boyfriend in college before she met my father, she believed her personality was more attractive than her appearance. When she was in her mid-thirties, my mother stopped using any make-up or wearing any accessories. She cut her hair short, which made her look younger than she is.

My mother knows how to enjoy life. Some of her female colleagues worked as Avon ladies or in sales for other brands during their time off work. But she took me to the park on weekends. We'd watched a movie together and then talked about it.

There are long winters in my hometown, which makes the autumn short like a beautiful gift. When you finally open it, you realise it's gone. It was a Sunday afternoon in the autumn of 2005, my first year in high school. I put a DVD on in our drawing-room. The sunshine was bright and warm, so I had to block it by drawing the curtain.

"So, what do you think of the movie?" I asked my mother when the DVD stopped playing.

"It was touching. Have I watched some television drama with the same actor?"

"The film has two leading male actors," I said.

"Both actors are great. I can see the passion between them. But also, the tension," she said.

It was a film called Lan-Yu, a Chinese movie about a romance between two men.

"Are you open to the possibility that one day I'll get into a relationship like them? I mean, with a boy."

"Why not? Have fun when you are young," my mother said.

I didn't like the concept of "coming out". I couldn't hide somewhere because there was no place to do so. When I was in primary school, I was verbally bullied by school kids because of my soft voice. But I became immune to horrible words, and somehow still managed to have a decent school life. When I grew taller than

other kids, their verbal bullying became muted. Instead, they invited me to play basketball with them. However, I turned them down. It was not easy to trust someone who'd once said horrible words to you.

Years later, one guy in my class had a crush on me. His feelings scared him, so he made up stories about how I'd taken advantage of him sexually, but I don't think having lunch together in the cafeteria fits the definition of having sex in any culture. It was in the final year of my bachelor's degree. He gave me a lesson about homophobia. Some classmates treated me better like I was very fragile in this situation, but more classmates gazed upon me like I was dangerous. Most students on both sides enjoyed the juicy rumours.

My parents also heard about the situation from their friends. My parents' friends had heard from their children who were also at my university. At that time, my parents went to the gym together after work. My father didn't know my mother had known about my sexuality since high school, and he told her not to worry. The conversation occurred in a taxi on the way home. According to my mother, he said it was normal for two men to live together like a couple. He didn't use the term homosexuality. "But you knew your father's attitude on your sexuality," my mother said.

Two days after that first night date with Jia, we went to a queer gift shop together in the Shinjuku Ni-Chome, Tokyo's famous gay quarter. It was a very short road which people could easily miss while walking by. On the outside wall was an advertising campaign poster celebrating same-sex love. The two of us stood in front.

He didn't mention anything about his father, but he showed his mother's photo to me on his phone screen. She stood with pride in the middle of several young students at an academic conference.

"My mother is tough. She is a professor at a university," he said.

He showed me his student card.

"Do you think my name is like a girl's name?" he asked.

Then his mother's phone call interrupted us.

"Keep silent because my mom is calling on the phone," he said.

I left him alone with his phone. I saw a small sculpture of Buddha bundled with rope. I took that to the cashier.

After the phone call was over, he came back, his gaze carefully avoiding the covers of gay porn DVDs in the store.

"How was your mom on the phone?"

"She said she can send more money monthly if I get a girlfriend."

"Cool. Have one."

"I just told you what she said — more money monthly if I get a girlfriend."

Then he took me to a cinema for the movie *Moonlight*. He cried at the end of the film. We walked on the street at midnight.

"Let's do something that we can't do in my hometown. Like walking hand-in-hand," he suggested.

"I think it's okay in China," I said.

"But the feeling is different," he replied.

"What do you feel now?"

He blushed and didn't say anything. I felt his hand sweating.

"Why did you cry at the end of the movie?" I asked, trying to break the silence that had grown between us. Under our own moonlight, tinged with neon from the lights around us, Jia turned around and looked at me.

"They didn't get together in the end," he said, as we continued walking into the night.



Ripeness

Poetry and art by Emma Cao

Vinasun 8:39pm

Ask politely, taxi man
I'll let you call me foreign.

I'll open my mouth wide & stretch out my tongue,
let calloused thumbs drag over pink gums
& sharp knuckles crack yellow teeth.

Non-native, overseas,
Taxi man reaches his arm down my throat
and tucks his verdict in my stomach.

In the rear-view mirror there has always been two of us
the known and the unknown
riding along this temporary moment.



Chrysanthemum blossoms

My mother shows me
there is love in waiting.

She brings home pink lilies
that have not yet bloomed,
and makes tea from dried
chrysanthemums.

Flower head,
noble roots,
sweet aroma,

be gentle when you touch the soft petal.
Your skin understands first
that there is fresh air after a rain shower,
and love in waiting.

You are not your own

From mother to daughter
I inherit crucifix
after crucifix.

Virgin Mary pierces her heart
with seven sorrows to bleed
the blood of the covenant,

me weeps unceasingly at night, in the scent
of olive oil & balsam like Mystical Rose,
but joy comes with the mornings,

and I dance resignedly between
temptation & deliverance
for the sake of sorrowful passion,

as these binding memories
promise me that I am
only ever a part of,
and parts of.



A Sanctuary in Coming and Going (Terminal 3)

In summer, me likes this
place most. For her, there is a warmth
that cascades through sealed windows
and solace in staring idly at white walls.

Don't you know? A woman's grace
is carried in the shoulders. Hers
bloom black and blue bruises hidden
by silk.

Me oi, prop your feet
on your polyester suitcase
stuffed with yearning and
ache since last summer.

She eats persimmon misshapen with
sweetness and rot, tears flesh from
skin with naked thumbs, and lets the
juice and meat sit in her fingernails.

In this suspension of coming
and going, my mother remembers a rhythm
in the shuffle of strangers, and recalls hope
she once found in dark tunnels.

Her sweat pours and eyelids stretch tears
only in the lonely absence of light,
as she mourns the ripeness of summers past,
the going and the gone.



Luck

by *Emily Lau* // Editors' Choice Award (Fiction)

"When every province of the world so teems with inhabitants that they can neither subsist where they are nor remove themselves elsewhere... the world will purge itself in one or another of these three ways (floods, plague and famine)." – Machiavelli (1469 – 1527)

Herb watched the queue move forward. The air in the cavernous airport lobby was heavy with an electric silence as nothing, but soft murmurs, clacking keyboards and sporadic beeping transactions, could be heard. The queue was silent in anticipation and desperate to catch a whiff of this week's numbers. Left, left, right, left, left. No, no, yes, no, no. Left to exit, right to enter. Your choice, your luck, your life.

"Hi, welcome to Universal Airlines, how may I assist you today?" trilled the bubbly stewardess.

"A ticket to Detroit please. What are the numbers?" Herb grunted.

"This week's chances for a Detroit plane are 1 in 74. Would you like to proceed with these odds?"

"Yes, I'll take it."

"Great! That'll be \$202USD," tap. beep.

"You're in seat 3C, the gate is number 23, closing at 9:20pm. Please enter through the right here, thanks for choosing Universal Airlines and good luck!"

Ah, 'choice', what a beautiful concept, thought Herb, but what exactly am I choosing? He sank into his thinly cushioned seat in the tiny capsule of a plane, inhaled and exhaled a breath of lemon-scented air. If only it wasn't masking the smell of disinfectant and bleach, which always lingered like a smothering shroud of death and apathy. Across the aisle, a man pulled out a string of talisman and began chanting in a hushed whisper. The Star of David, the Virgin Mary, the Holy Trinity, the Swastika, the Pentagram, the Cross; he prayed to them all. Herb returned his attention to the screen in front, inhaled, and held his breath. He watched the scramble of numbers on the screen as the lottery was drawn. "This week's number has not been drawn yet!" read a tiny note at the bottom. 1-7-7-5-8-3-0. The final number ticked to a stop. All life seemed to freeze in that moment, the air was thin, as though the cabin became a vacuum, and all eyes fixated on the numbers. Blink. Blink. Flash. Flash. Was he dizzy from anticipation or the lack of breath? "Enjoy your flight!" Crisp, clean letters replaced the numbers. Herb exhaled, and the cabin was suddenly filled with air once again. The plane began to taxi.

Herb bitterly admired the ingenuity of the macabre human mind to design such a machine. There would be no wreckage of a plane if it should be unlucky, it would be too expensive to replace! Its modular internals ensured ease of exchanging damaged or soiled parts for new ones. This plane would not even have to leave the ground. The results were immediate, and the deed was efficient and indiscriminate; passengers and crew, old and young, rich and poor. The vessel was air travel for the fortunate, and a gas chamber for the unfortunate.

As he looked down over the clouds through the plane window, Herb caught himself in awe at how effective the Nietzsche treaty was. Within 20 years, world population had returned to a more sustainable level, global temperatures decreased by half a degree and the sky was blue again. Herb recalled when it first began; the days when technology and medicine became so advanced that death was no longer involuntary. The world population exploded, wars broke out over the lack of resources, forcing world leaders to discuss difficult questions. The question shifted from, 'how do we accommodate for everyone', to 'how do we control the amount of 'everyone'. Who was worthy of living, and who was not? How does one decide? Who decides? The debate lasted 300 consecutive days, over protests and riots objecting to every idea presented. The United Peoples finally devised a plan, to ensure fairness across class and

2019

HONI SOIT

Hold the Line

Kara Ortega // Editors' Choice Award (Non-fiction)

At 28 years old, I was laid off from my job.

I packed my things inside a cardboard box and kept my dinosaur-shaped magnets. The magazine I worked with for four years had folded. We had a good run: poking at societal issues with a sharp cognizance, provoking and asking all the right questions. People took notice of our work, and the work was important. For a while, we felt invincible. Purposeful.

But when I carried my box of things home with me, I realized that even significant work was dispensable. I wondered, what's a jobless millennial supposed to do now? I felt too young to be a casualty of retrenchment, too old to keep up with the next generation.

I remember the day the company's founder gathered the entire editorial department in one room. She read her speech with a lofty acceptance, starting with a story about how a few brilliant, fashionable women gathered in a basement and dreamed up this very publication house, and then lead it to become the biggest one in the Philippines. You could feel the weight of gloom in the air: she wasn't just reading a speech—she was delivering a eulogy. A year later, the company would replace all its 11 print publications with websites, replacing an editor's mastery with Search Engine Optimization, prioritizing things like clicks-to-site and engagement ratings.

I thought it a weird time to be in the newsroom. Technology had challenged the integrity of the work that journalists did, and changed the way that these stories were being told and consumed. The political climate was tearing communities apart. Social media festered toxicity. Media businesses struggled to stay afloat. Journalists were replaced by bloggers.

For a year, I let this disdain simmer inside me while I worked freelance writing profiles of celebrities and beauty queens. It wasn't ideal work, but one needed to pay the bills. I managed until a breakdown one morning. I cried in the arms of my boyfriend and whined about this feeling of "selling out." He rubbed my shoulders and offered the only comfort he knew: a helpless optimism disguised as bad humor.

Outside, the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte's ruthless crackdown on drugs continued. His brutal war had killed more than 12,000 people. Human rights advocates were sent to prison, administration-critics were harassed and humiliated. The news filled with haunting images: a howling mother cradling her dead son in the darkness of the night; children weeping against the caskets of their fathers; there were portraits of orphans and widows and broken families left behind. At night, the town smattered with dead bodies. Police washed their hands off the blood of the people. To respond, the President hissed at his critics, mocked the poor, tormented the people who fought for truth and spewed misogyny towards women.

I thought, somewhere in the world, another writer is packing their things inside a box. Another paper folds. Another machine stops printing. Another news story is overshadowed by a celebrity. Another truth is bent and twisted and molded into obscure shapes so unlike itself it's hard to distinguish what it even is anymore. A light goes off.

But as I sat despondently on the sidelines, watching the world turn without me, I realized that I wasn't the only one wrestling with angry thoughts at 4 a.m. in the shadow of my phone's blue light. Today, in a time of war, people will raise their armors even higher. In the face of abuse, they will stare attackers straight in the eye. In response to threats, they will speak even louder.

It only takes one person to inspire a group to charge for combat. It only takes one person, so publicly beaten and shamed and chewed up and spat out, to stand up and say "hold the line," which will inspire this moping writer to get off her ass, pick up a computer, and start writing again.

race and to emulate the random act of Gods, a lottery system was put in place. At 12am local time every day, the odds are received by smart systems in every aspect of your life. The personal assistant would know the odds of staying at home or leaving home. Every mode of private and public transport would know, public spaces would know, and you would know. You have control of your life, so you choose whether you want to take those chances. Of course, you also have the option of not knowing your chances. His neighbours were of that kind. They were one of those "God has a plan" families. They were his neighbours.

Herb stepped out of Metro Airport and checked the apps on his phone for the latest bus, taxi and subway odds to the conference centre. Although buses typically had lower odds, today the taxi was lower at 1:452. Herb appreciated the unexpected side effect of the Nietzsche treaty. The high turnover rate in each profession distributed demand and supply, employment, expertise and wealth so evenly, one might describe the socio-economic climate as communist. The costs of living that once differentiated the classes were no longer, and the classes themselves were no longer.

"Mr President, there have been reports that activists are targeting national telecommunication sites and destroying antenna dishes, do you have anything to comment?" Herb thrust his recorder towards the stand.

"These acts of vandalism and property damage are callous and selfish. These people do not care about the wellbeing of others. The antennas are critical tools used to relay odds to everyone in the country. Without them, you and I will not be able to make informed life decisions. We all know what happened without the Nietzsche Treaty 25 years ago, and I don't intend on returning to those days. Thank you." The sea of reporters, cameramen and journalists surged into a wave, reaching up to hang on to the last words of the President. A stampede ensued as each news outlet rushed to be the first to broadcast the message.

Herb sought refuge in a corner of the conference room and quickly jotted down some notes, whilst replaying key quotes from his recorder. He slotted his note pad into its place in his brief case and patted his pockets for his phone to prepare for the journey home. His heart sank as he spotted his shattered phone on the floor where he stood amid the crowd. He must have dropped it in the chaos. Herb retrieved the gadget, but it was beyond saving. He wished he knew the odds for phone death. He took a seat and evaluated his options. He could take the taxi to the airport and take a plane or hire a car from there. Herb sighed. He hadn't made a decision in his life without knowing the numbers before. The thought of this was both terrifying and exhilarating.

"Hi, welcome to Universal Airlines, how may I assist you today?" trilled the bubbly stewardess.

"A ticket to Washington DC please. What are the numbers?" Herb grunted.

"This week's chances for a Washington plane are 1 in 4. Would you like to proceed with these odds?"

"No thanks."

"Not a problem, please exit through the left here, have a good day!"

Herb turned on the rental car and adjusted his phone in the phone holder. Although the phone could no longer serve its navigational purpose, he liked the thought that it would keep him company. He could drive 4 hours and have a nap, then finish up the rest, easy. He felt a new confidence rise up his chest, and he liked it. He liked not having to worry about numbers and chances and dying. Maybe he will try Not Knowing and maybe he could be happier like his neighbours. He pulled onto the highway and drove into the night.

He woke up to the light of two suns, and a low trumpet of a new day.

WRITING COMPETITION

Vice President

Wanlin (Caitlyn) Chu and Dane Luo

Statement on racial attacks to Asian students

CW: racial abuse. The Vice Presidents strongly condemn the racial abuse on Asian students on 8 October 2019. Asian students have been racially abused and targeted with Sinophobic slurs by a man near the Wentworth building. We call on the University to take all steps to ensure the safety of students on their own campus. We will continue to demand zero tolerance towards racism, intimidation or abuse on this

campus. Any behaviour that is racist, intimidating, abusive or threatening should not be tolerated.

Drop-in Sessions with your Vice Presidents

We will be moving our weekly drop-in sessions to the entrance of Fisher Library on Thursdays from 1pm to 3pm. Come drop by and speak to your Vice Presidents so we can be better informed about your issues on campus.

90th Anniversary Celebration

As you may have seen from our previous reports, the SRC is hosting a 90th Anniversary Celebration on Thursday 5 December 2019 from 6pm to 8pm in the Refectory, Holme Building. The guest speaker for this event is the Honourable Michael Kirby AC CMG and Ms Avani Dias. The MC will be Dominic Knight. Details of tickets and more information can be found on www.srcusyd.net.au/90Anniversary.

What we've been up to recently?

Over the past two weeks, we have been very busy with the SRC's SSAF application. You might wonder: what is this? Each year, every student pays the Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF). The University has a process where the total pool of funds get distributed to your student organisations, including the SRC, USU, Cumberland Student Guild and SUSF. Each year, we make an application to contest

for this pool of funds. For the SRC, SSAF funds 97% of our activities. We have been consulting the newly-elected President on the funds needed for the 92nd Council. This year has been particularly difficult because we have renegotiated a new Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and more contestable projects. We have also continued representing undergraduate students at the University's Research Education, Student Life and WHS committees.

Residential College Officers

Hayley (Luoyu) Zhang, Flora Zhao, James Ardouin and Annabel de Mestre

Budget

The SRC in its September meeting approved a budget of \$650 for the next year. While not much, this is the first time that the Residential College Officers have ever received a budget and we are thankful to Dane Luo and Niamh Callinan (Vice-President, General Secretary respectively) for the preparation of this. We would like to ask any College Residents to send us ideas for how they would like this to be spent, we can be contacted at residential.college@src.usyd.edu.au.

Activism

Members of the Executive attended the Rally and Panel for stopping sexual assaults on campus, we thank WoCo for hosting these events. Members also attended the Climate Strike last month and we would like to encourage Students to get involved in this important issue, which effects all of us.

AGM

The Collective Held its first AGM on the 8th, the following were elected to positions at the meeting:

Deputy-Chair/Vice-President: Annabel De Mestre (Womens)
Secretary: Caitlin-Alyssa Brown (Wesley)
Treasurer: Holly McDonald (Womens)
Social Director: Saurav Bansal (Johns)
Engagement Director: Nicholas Comino (Pauls)

Noting that the Chairperson and Co-Residential College Officer, James Ardouin will resign effective the 21st of October. I would like to thank everyone who helped over the last year in establishing the

fledgling Collective, we have a long way to go but already we have started to make a difference which is all I could've hoped for when I planned creating the Collective.

Consent Module/ Environment Accord

The Collective will also be starting dialogue with the Environment Officers to design both an intercollege Environment accord, focussing on waste, energy use and sustainability. The Wom*ns Officers/Sexual Harassment Officers have also been

contacted regarding designing a functional Consent Module for 2020 Colleges O-Week.

Regulations Changes

The Collective has submitted an amendment of the SRC Regulations to ensure that the Residential College Officers must be College students in the future, in order to preserve the Collectives Autonomy. As the October SRC meeting did not achieve quorum, we intend to still attempt to pass this at the November SRC meeting.

Note: These pages belong to the Office Bearers of the SRC. They are not altered, edited or changed in any way by the editors of Honi Soit



Ask Abe

SRC caseworker help Q&A
Academic Misconduct



Dear Abe,

I've received a letter from the University accusing me of misconduct. My mate told me that they're not the police, and they haven't got any power to do anything to me. I was going to just ignore it, but I thought I should double check with you.

Teflon

Dear Teflon,

If the University has accused you of misconduct, the chances are that they

already have some evidence that you have done something wrong. While they certainly do not have police powers, they have the ability to give penalties including giving a fail grade for a subject, suspending you from University for a semester, and for extreme cases, expelling you from the University for good. They can, and have in the past, notified the police of wrongdoing, for matters including assault and fraud. It is best to take misconduct allegations seriously. Meet with an SRC Caseworker to discuss the best way to respond. To make an appointment call 9660 5222 or send an email to help@src.usyd.edu.au.

Abe

The SRC can help with tenancy and accommodation issues. See our online guide or call us. srcusyd.net.au/src-help/accommodation-issues/accommodation-guide/



Semester 2, 2019 Exam Timetables Now Available!

The University provides students with a personalised timetable for all formal, end-of-semester exams. Access your Semester 2 2019 exam timetable via this link: sydney.edu.au/students/exams/timetables.html

Get FREE help with your tax return from a Tax Help volunteer on campus!



Available to Sydney Uni students through the Students' Representative Council (SRC) until the end of semester 2
To book an appointment call: 9660 5222

MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES-ELECT OF THE 92nd STUDENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

A meeting of Representatives-elect of the 92nd SRC will be held on Wednesday 23rd October at 6pm in the New Law Lecture Theatre 104.

The following positions are open to nomination from members of the undergraduate student body:

Vice-President
General Secretary
Education Officer
Wom*n's Officer
Two Disabilities and Carers Officers
Two Environment Officers
Two Ethno-Cultural Officers
Two Global Solidarity Officers
Two Indigenous Students' Officers
Two Inter-Campus Officers
Two Inter-Campus Committee members*
Two Interfaith Officers
Two International Students' Officers
Two Mature-Age Students' Officers
Two Queer Officers
Two Refugee Rights Officers

Two Residential College Officers
Two Sexual Harassment Officers
Two Social Justice Officers
Two Standing Legal Committee members*
Two Student Housing Officers
Two Welfare Officers
Chairperson of the Standing Legal Committee
Six Directors of Student Publications

The following positions are open to nomination from representatives of the 92nd Council:

Five Executive members

*must be a member of council. To be considered you must be either an elected representative, an office bearer or an ex officio member.

Positions in *italic* cannot be shared (SRC Regulations Part One Section 3d). All other positions may be split ONCE only (Part One Section 3c).

Nominations shall be taken from the floor at the meeting. However, nomination forms may be obtained in advance from the SRC front office or downloaded from srcusyd.net.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Reps-elect-nomform.pdf

Descriptions of positions are found within the Regulations of the SRC available on the SRC website: srcusyd.net.au/about-us/constitution-regulations

Note: Part One Section 4b. states:

Where an Officer position is split and shared between two members of the student body it shall only be considered held by a woman, for the purposes of Part 1 Section 4 (a) of the Regulations, if both of the joining members of the student body do not identify as cis-males.



Authorised by C.Lu, Electoral Officer 2019, Students' Representative Council, University of Sydney
Phone: 02 9660 5222 | src.usyd.edu.au | Level 1, Wentworth Building, City Rd, Sydney University.

Know Your Rights in a Rented Share House



Ned Cutcher, Policy Officer, NSW Tenants' Union

Until a couple of years ago, renting laws in New South Wales did a pretty poor job of giving share house residents straight answers about their rights. The law only properly recognised rental relationships between a single landlord and tenant. However, there is a spectrum of rental relationships, and share housing offers up some of the most complicated types.

In the past, a problem between housemates could be extremely difficult to resolve, especially if it boiled down to a dispute over legal rights and duties. The *Residential Tenancies Act 2010* has gone some way towards changing that – some answers are clearer than others. But you have to know how it works in order to make the most of it.

The first thing to consider is where your rights and duties actually come from. In a rented share house, your legal status will depend upon a number of possibilities:

- If you are named on the residential tenancy agreement along with one or more others, then you are a co-tenant. Your rights are equal and several, so you could be held liable for the actions of your housemates.

- If you are named on the residential tenancy agreement but your housemates are not, then you are a head-tenant. You've transferred part of your right to occupy the premises to your housemates and you act as their landlord. Your obligations to your housemates will depend on the nature of your agreements with them.

- If you are not named on the residential tenancy agreement, but you have a written agreement with the head-tenant, then you might be a sub-tenant with rights and obligations covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act*. But if your agreement is a 'lodging agreement' you'll be covered by the common law or (less likely) the *Boarding Houses Act*.

- If you are not named on the residential tenancy agreement and have no written agreement with the head-tenant, then you could be a sub-tenant with no rights under the Act, or a boarder or lodger. Your share house could be a 'registrable boarding house' subject to the *Boarding Houses Act 2012*, and you could have an 'occupancy agreement' under that law. A number of criteria must be met for that to be true – it's

more likely that your rights will derive from the common law of lodging, which is not ideal. (If your head tenant resides elsewhere, you may have rights under the *Residential Tenancies Act*).

In the past, a problem between housemates could be extremely difficult to resolve, especially if it boiled down to a dispute over legal rights and duties. The Residential Tenancies Act 2010 has gone some way towards changing that.

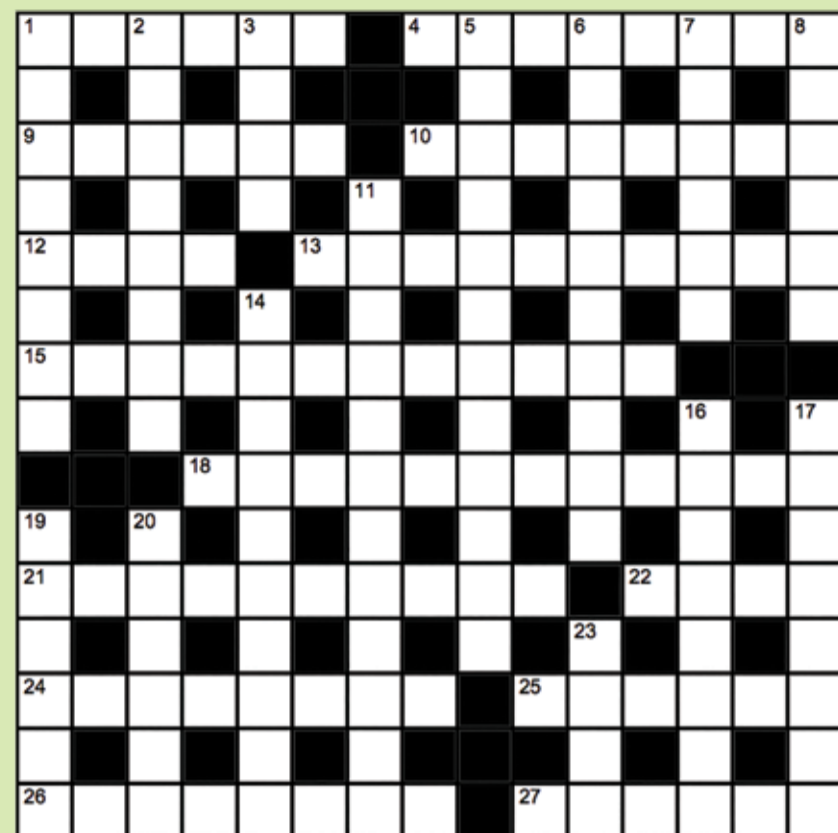
The Tenants' Union argues that all renters who are not covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act* should have an automatic right to the kind of occupancy agreements the *Boarding Houses Act* provides. This would be very easy for the NSW Government to achieve. It would ensure all renters in NSW have basic occupancy rights and access to affordable, independent dispute resolution.

A final word of caution – if you live in a share house that has seen a number of occupants coming and going over time, you may not know who is named on the residential tenancy agreement. It's possible that you are a sub-tenant without rights under the Act, and your head-tenant is the unknown person who signed the original agreement. Your relationship to the landlord, and your right to occupy the premises, may be tenuous and in need of some care. But other things are possible, too. It's a good idea for your household to get to the bottom of this, to make sure everyone knows where they stand. Speak to your local Tenants Advice and Advocacy Service to find out what to do.

Talk to your housemates about getting your house in order:

- Decide whether you want to be co-tenants, or head-tenant/sub-tenant.
- Get more info at tenants.org.au/factsheet-15-share-housing
- If you are a head-tenant/sub-tenant, write up your agreement. Download an example at tenants.org.au/share-housing-agreement

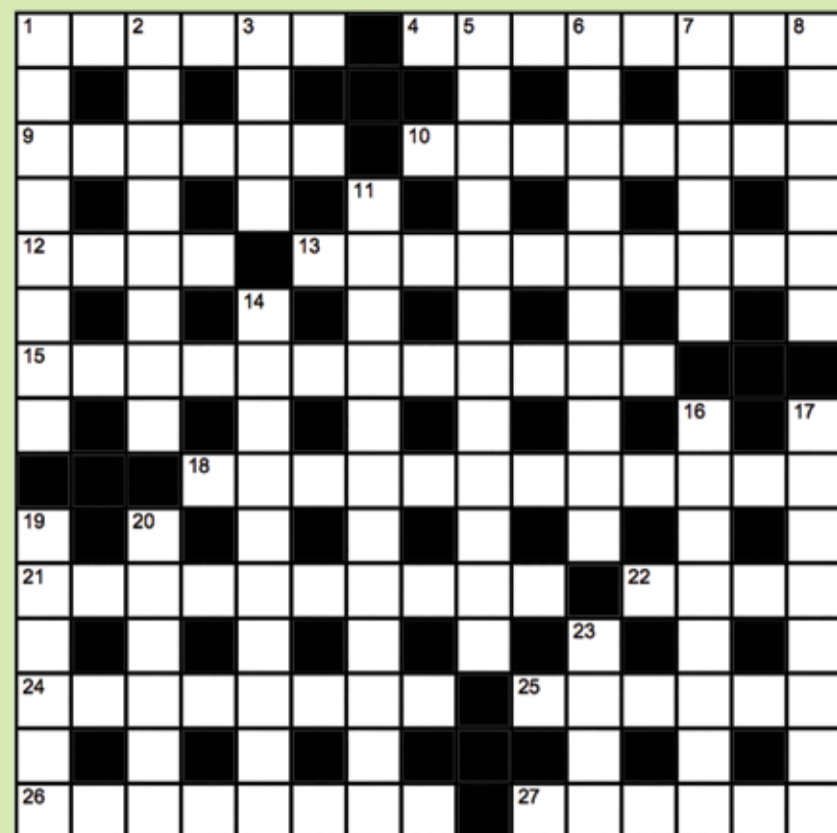
Quick Crossword



ACROSS DOWN

- 1. Maelstrom, or something you can't quite get out of (6)
- 4. A duo of matching items (3-5)
- 9. Someone veritably kooky (6)
- 10. Held tightly (8)
- 12. Freshwater, moray and electric to name a few (4)
- 13. Shirking (10)
- 15. Mathematical tiling favoured by M.C. Escher (12)
- 18. A priestess of Ancient Rome famed for taking an oath of chastity (6,6)
- 21. The Thin White Duke, Halloween Jack or Ziggy Stardust (5,5)
- 22. Flabbergast (4)
- 24. Citizen of Tallinn (8)
- 25. A spiky desert succulent (6)
- 26. Overhead perspective (5-3)
- 27. The capital of Iran (6)

Cryptic Crossword



ACROSS

- 1. Vessel pronounced missing - that sounds like lingo to me (6)
- 4. Montana, Tony, Oscar - facetious features they are (8)
- 9. That nuisance is lacking subtlety (6)
- 10. First situation: stretch back hot and take a picture (8)
- 12. Billionaire fragrance (4)
- 13. It happened at 0200 - a dazed, shirtless return this era (10)
- 15. A fitting chic shop at 10 Kensington trail (12)
- 18. Use this to instigate wealth reform! (12)
- 21. Appeal? Do it again! (10)
- 22. Content, Fresno Bob is a bit pretentious (4)
- 24. Talk about shoe company? (8)
- 25. Converted, registered nurse grasps backwards robe (6)
- 26. Sentence them to isolation, they poorly lied to us! (8)
- 27. Prudent, penis-free Persian Gulf devastated (6)

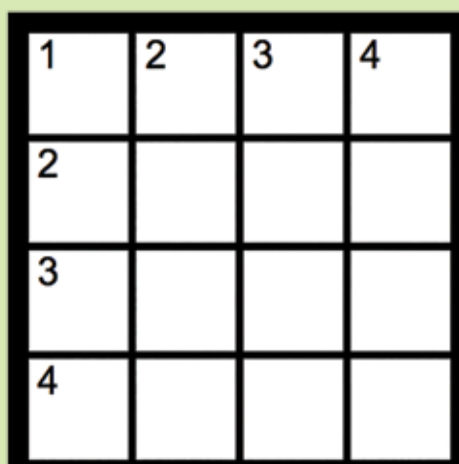
DOWN

- 1. Reverend's priest prison a load of spam? (4,4)
- 2. Think again about regular arse and

Credits

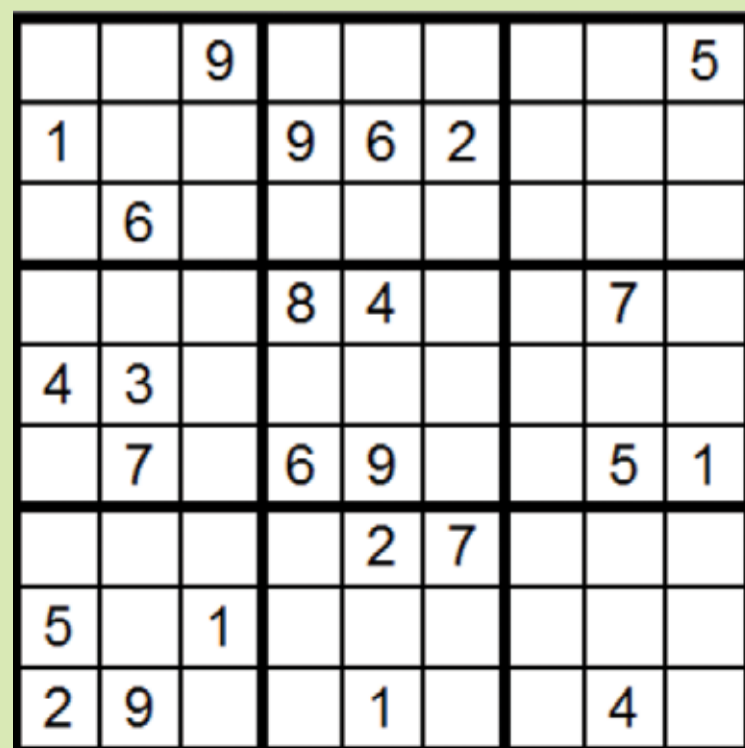
All puzzles by Ms Eel Kink

This Way And That



- 1. Broadcast as it happens (4)
- 2. A lightbulb moment (4)
- 3. Critically checks (4)
- 4. A piece of cake (4)

Sudoku



THE INDEPENDENT



THE DEPENDENT BRINGS YOU NEWS EACH WEEK COURTESY OF OUR SPONSORS. THIS WEEK, THEY ARE:

The Truther Movement NESA/ BOSTES (if you're old)

ENTERTAINMENT: Gemini Man shocked to discover he is actually a Libra >> PAGE 6

POLITICS: Liberal MP stacks it after riding negatively geared bike downhill >> PAGE 7

HSC news cycle is actually perfectly cyclical, SMH confirms

Aychez Sea reports.

In a stunning revelation, the Sydney Morning Herald has confirmed that its reporting on the High School Certificate (HSC) is exactly the same every year. Speaking to *The Dependent*, SMH education editor Jordana Cook revealed that the SMH has not come up with a new article on education since NAPLAN was introduced.

"It's really quite simple. Around this time of the year we are bound by our employment contracts to publish at least four think pieces by white high school grads from the North Shore about how there's more to life than the HSC."

"We've actually been using the same guy since 2010. Drawing on his own

experiences, he makes a good point about how getting a high ATAR doesn't equate to success. Given that he's 28 and still writing about the HSC, I'd say he's pretty spot on."

In addition to these op-eds, Cook revealed that she was also contractually bound to write at least three pieces a year about the dangers of selective education. When questioned about the purpose of publishing the same articles every year, Cook defended her paper's decision.

"Have you seen the traction these pieces get? The HSC might be pretty outdated, but it sure as hell still makes a good news story."

"You idiots just eat this shit up."



LEAKED: HSC MODERN HISTORY EXAM

2511 15270 8329310040

Modern History

Centre Number

Section I (continued)

Student Number

Part B - 10 marks
Attempt Question 8
Allow about 20 minutes for this part

Answer the question in the space provided. This space provides guidance for the expected length of response.

Question 8 (10 marks)

Outline the ways in which Australia is an absolute fucking ripper-snorter of a country. Refer to *Source A* and *Source B* in your answer without any critical thought.

OP-ED: Hong Kong protesters are heroic warriors for democracy

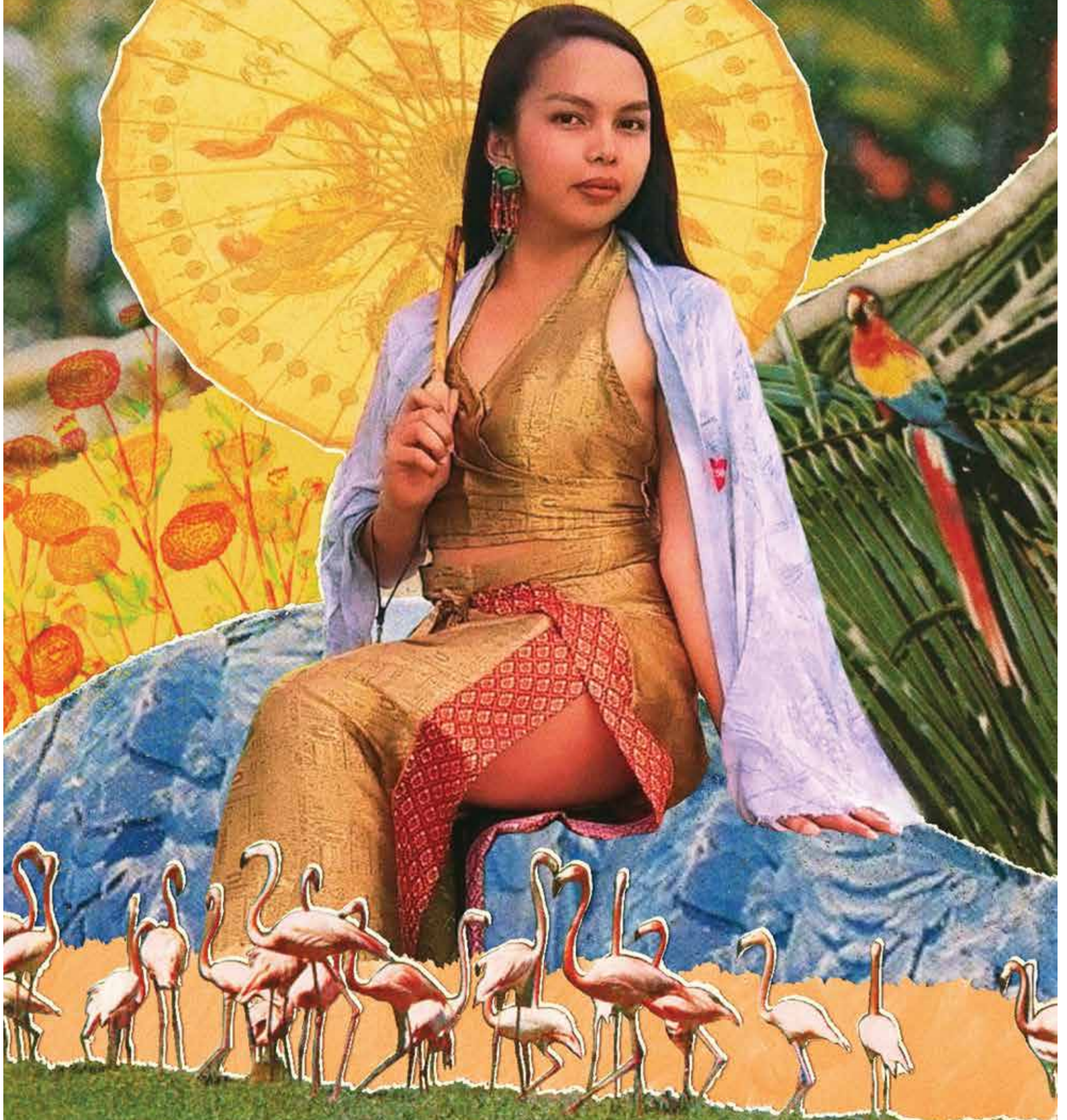
Tim Wilson writes >> Page 12

OP-ED: Catalan rioters need to take a good hard look at themselves

Tim Wilson writes >> Page 13

EDUCATION: Tony Hawk heads to Oxford for latest ma-trick-ulation

**REST IN POWER
MHELODY
POLAN
BRUNO**



#JUSTICEFORMHELODY