

THE APRIL '23 EDITION

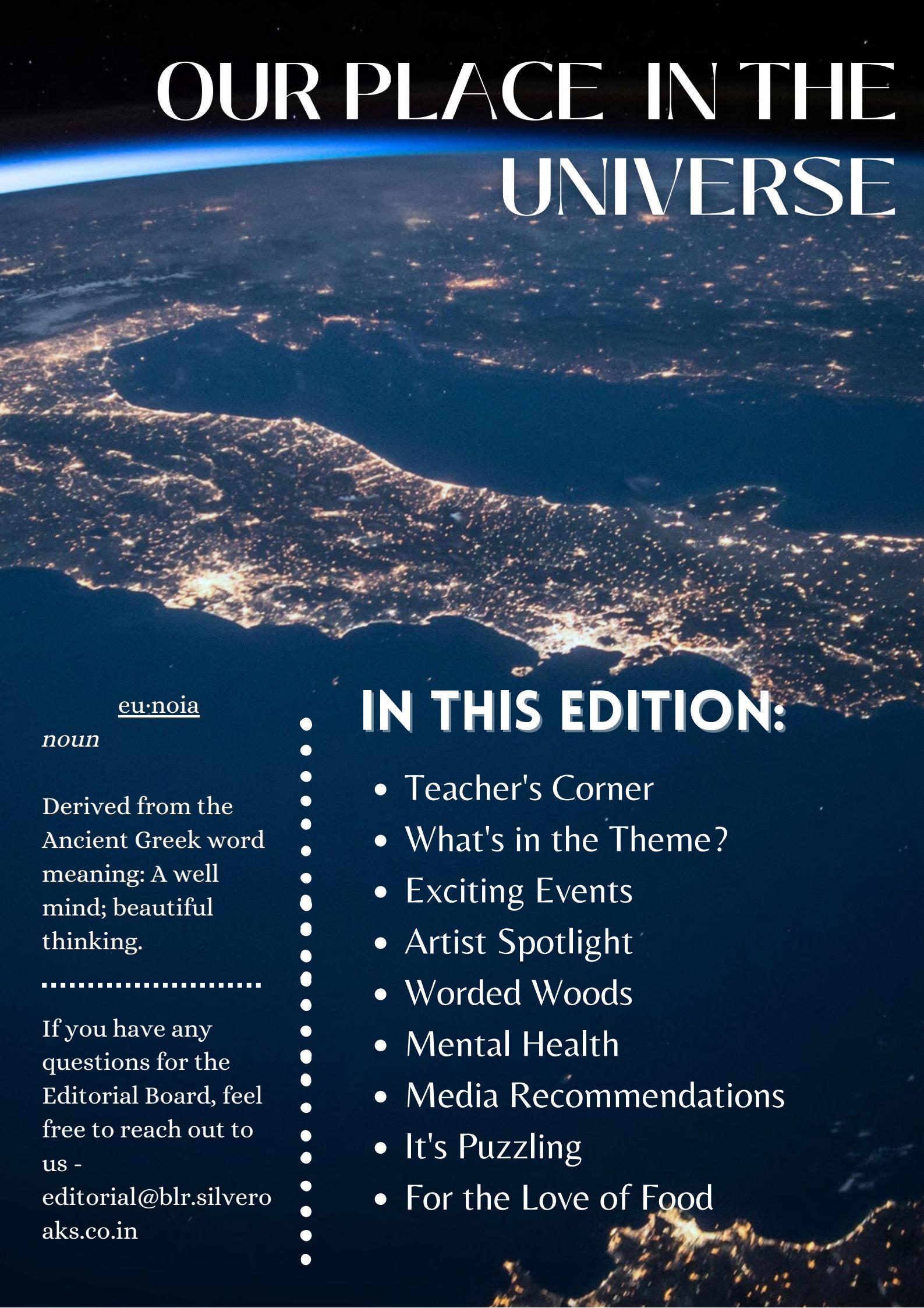
OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE

EUNIA



SOSB OAKHUB | ISSUE #5

OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE



eu·noia

noun

Derived from the Ancient Greek word meaning: A well mind; beautiful thinking.

If you have any questions for the Editorial Board, feel free to reach out to us - editorial@blr.silveroaks.co.in

IN THIS EDITION:

- Teacher's Corner
- What's in the Theme?
- Exciting Events
- Artist Spotlight
- Worded Woods
- Mental Health
- Media Recommendations
- It's Puzzling
- For the Love of Food

“Our Place in the Universe”

-Aparna Dutta

TEACHER'S CORNER

In the Bangalore spring of late January, awaiting the umbrella of Pink Trumpets to envelop the city, I often gaze at the sunset curation in the sky, contemplating the

stances humans take on an everyday basis. The connection of our minds with reality is probably the only thread that ties us to this mortal world.

But we seldom realise that mortals are not the central point of the universe. Rather, the totality of our existence lies in the connection we establish with other points and the route we take to nourish this connection.

Kantian Ethics tells us to act based on a sense of duty, and that morality is a form of knowledge of which humans have an intuitive awareness. But the perplexity of this morality debate seems to have engulfed the warmth humans discovered during the nascent stages of civilizations. Conquering the lands, sea, and space gave humans a triumphant sense of ownership. But where have we brought our world with the perpetual idea of Mine and Thine? Have we moved forward even by a few steps when we peek into the vices that cloud human behaviour?

Tracing human history, we can easily cascade the ladder of conflicting ideologies shared between us humans and our nations; the process of creating an antithetic world began centuries ago. But does our reality mirror the struggles of the bygones? Or does morality station itself only for those at the point of vantage?

Subaltern voices have endeavoured to navigate the course of history... but time and again, deft sailors have channelled their might and transposed our morality with avarice. Where, then, do we place ourselves in this cosmos of conflict, in history seemingly free of any blemishes, in a future paved by this condensed layer of objective reality?

Immersed in such ruminations, one's gaping eyes did not realize that the sky's art was soon beaded by night—and that this conflict shall continue despite the changing palette of hues.



What's in the Theme?

RIPPLE IN THE OCEAN

By: Neel Sukul



Sometimes we explode with feeling — raw sentiment and passion. Our cheeks bloom roses and our eyes behold the stars. But something occludes our cadence: a slight hesitation, a withdrawal of cards. We fail to form words. And even if we do, they don't make sense to others.

But can someone else's validation determine the integrity of our feelings? Who has a say in deciding what we feel and what we do not? It is all beyond our control, really. We're all entitled to our respective feelings, springing forth from the fountains of our heart, and pouring into the environment of our reality. If one feels something, the awareness surges through them. However, feeling is not a quantifiable substance that can be measured, or, in some cases, explained; neither does it have to be.

Truth be told, we don't possess control over most things in life. Perhaps that is why we are so possessive about the remit of our dominion — the elements of life we do, in fact, have the power to change. Nature, the primordial force governing our planet, isn't one of them; and that clearly stings some of us. Yet, Nature merely extends to the surface of our own planet — covering one globe of life amidst supposedly a thousand, or ten thousand, or five hundred million thousand globes like the one we live in. When met with the magnitude of the universe, who are we but pores of light afloat in the rift of time? Our knowledge expands everyday, and so does the universe every second... on a far larger scale and speed than observable, recordable, or even conceivable for that matter.

And so it occurs to me that our presence in the universe, against the grandeur of it all, is almost negligible. Are we then invisible? No. Our actions, no matter how smattering an effect they have, regardless of how silly they seem, still do have a consequence; nothing is inconsequential. For all the warped ways in which we have exploited the earth's amenities, depleted its resources, feigned stewardship, or have sought to repair the same — our lasting scourge serves a purpose. And to that, I say, take charge, because the fate of the universe may, someday, rest in the palm of your hands.

THE UNIVERSE'S PARADOX

By: Ashwika Madhur



From the most potent clouds of antediluvian elements came the emergence of the stars, solar systems and galaxies. Among the billions of galaxies created, and thousands upon thousands of solar systems, all carrying several many planets, one of them was our own Earth. Isn't it funny?

Out of all the possibilities of how Earth could have risen, it grew to be covered in water and land. The smallest change in the hieroglyphics of the makeup of our planet, and life wouldn't be able to survive. Do you ever wonder how the universe managed to engender these precise conditions? I'm puzzling you now, aren't I? But it's really not my fault that so many unanswerable questions arise once we try to comprehend such convoluted topics.

In the modern age, the acme of complexity – the creation of technologies – can be simplified by numbers and measurements, through maths alone. But thirteen billion years ago, when planets did not exist, and we did not yet exist, how did the universe get everything into shape? I can't help but wonder: does the universe have its own language? Does it, by any chance at all, have a code, a script of rules encoded into its system that tells it what to do? It's just so perplexing to think that it was all a major coincidence, as if it was all destined by fate, or a stroke of luck, that everything in the universe is how it is.

People have many, many *wild* theories on the universe. Now, I'm no genius, but I don't think humans will ever know why the universe is the way it is. Humans, such young creatures compared to the universe, may be smarter than the rest of the organisms on Earth; but they are certainly not smart enough to decipher the universe's paradox. We exist in an impossibly vast cosmos, barely constituting one little particle of a larger nebulous cloud. All we can do is feel at peace with Earth's perimeters, and arrange the pieces of the puzzle that form our own planet.



EXCITING EVENTS

1 Opera: Blue Expedition

Article by
Sidhanth Kashyap

PANI! What is water but a doorway into another world? Water is our lifeline, our blue gold. It is our sustenance. Water is all around us, and yet we choose to take advantage of its existence through ignorance and greed. We have no concern for the very thing we depend on.

We pollute the trenches, waste basic drinking water, and abuse the source. Up to 45 liters of water is wasted per day! This problem is growing rapidly, and all of us need to do something about it. That's where we come in.



The senior wing of Silveroaks came together for a show that we will never forget: an extravagant musical, The Blue Expedition, put together by the senior acorns of our school. Months of preparation and dedication from the cast and crew culminated in a stunning 90-minute musical performance that captivated the audience from start to finish. Not only did it manage to captivate the audience – it also captured the very soul and premise of water. From dances to acting, to prop design and management; the acorns of Silveroaks put their blood, sweat and tears into ensuring that this play would be at its very best.

But we can't take all the credit, of course. This event would've never been possible without our hardworking teachers. They were the backbone of our event, the ones who were willing to put in the work to ensure everything would go smoothly in the background. They were our mentors throughout the month-long preparation. They guided us throughout the process – be it acting, dancing, or prop-making. They cannot be thanked enough for their contribution.

The highly anticipated opera production was a tremendous success that left audiences in awe. From the intricate sets and costumes to the talented performances of the cast, The Blue Expedition was a true showcase of the school's artistic talent and dedication. More than a showcase, it was a message. A message that we need to communicate to the rest of the globe regarding water conservation.

If we don't actively try to fix this ongoing issue in our current ecosystem, this play would all be for naught. Thus, we need to strive to be better. To do better. To become the best version of ourselves, and thereby create a better world.



“ Sports Day: when the acorns of Silver Oaks can demonstrate their skills in an array of athletic sports. The event dawned on a sunny Saturday. Students ran around the school, decorating both their tents and the participants. Then: the clock struck nine; the houses lined up. Silver Oaks’ Sports Day 2023 had begun. ”

2 Sports Day

Article by Dhivya Iyer

The day started off with a march-past of the houses, led by their respective leaders. Having been informed that the best march-past would win a trophy, every house gave it their all. The captains were shouting orders, the vice-captains were shouting a little louder, and the teachers were watching as the senior school organised themselves into their houses and marched proudly.

The first event was the 75m dash by M2- the Whales took first place in both the girls and boys category. Next, the 75m dash for M3 (with the Tuskers winning first in both categories), followed by the 75m dash for M4 & above. The Tigers won first place in boys and the Tuskers in girls. The second event was an entertaining teacher’s lemon race, won by Sagar sir, with students lining up to cheer on their teachers and houses.



Next, there was the much anticipated tug of war. In the first round, the Tigers were pitted against the Whales and the Tuskers against the Hawks. An enormous effort led to the Whales triumphing over the Tigers, and the Tuskers overtook the Hawks. The final round was split into three sets. The Whales won the first set. Despite this, the Tuskers regrouped and took the next two sets in a sweeping victory.

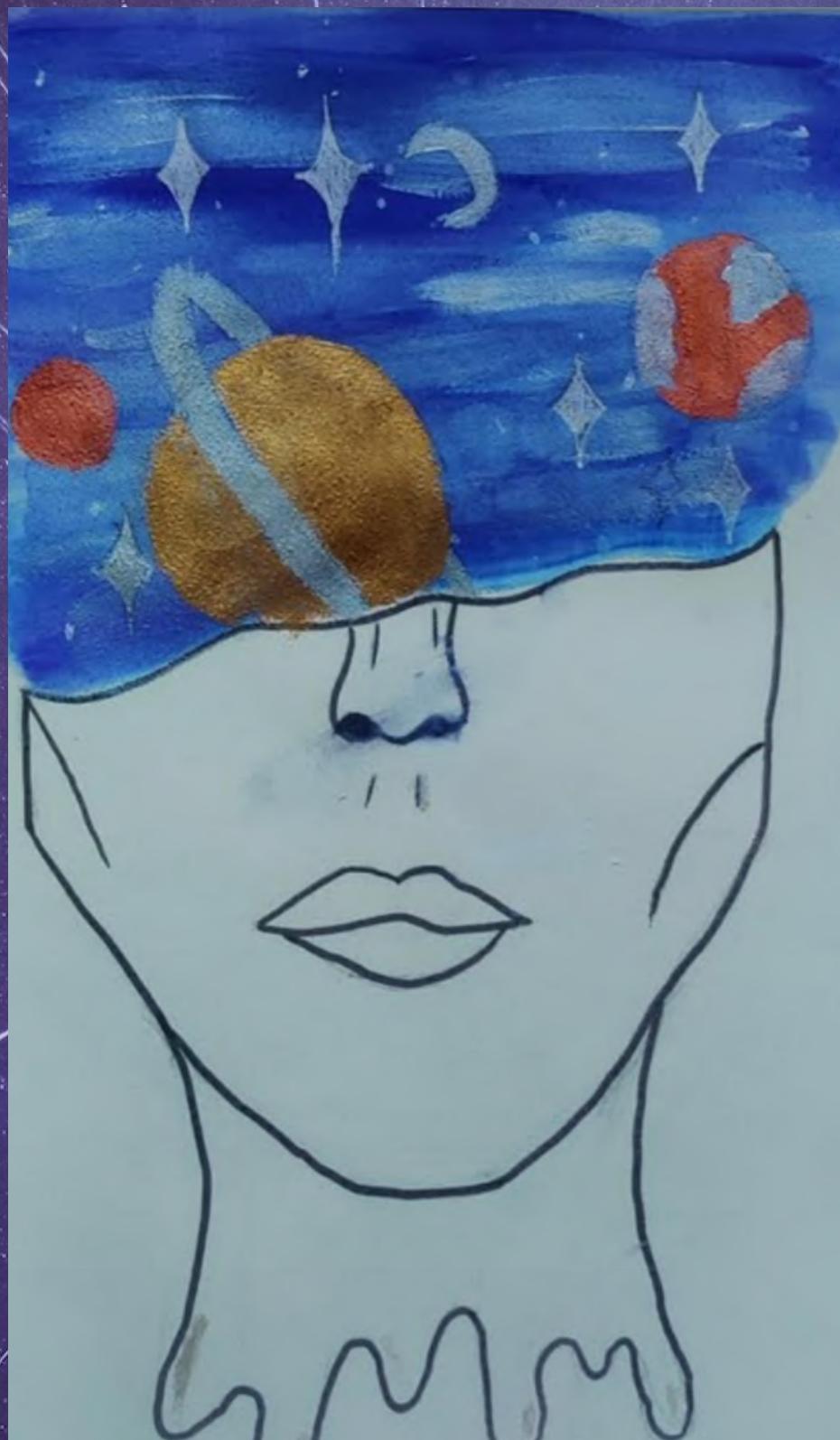
Prior to the last event, a small awards ceremony for the broad jump and throw ball took place, with all the houses collecting victories across categories. And, finally: the relay. Students gathered next to the track, shouting themselves hoarse as the teams raced past. Victories, losses, and fumbles passed as the event came to an end.

And, finally: the awards ceremony. The suspense was built up for both the march past award and the championship trophy. The march past was won by the Tuskers, with the house screaming with joy and running up to the podium to collect their trophy.

Edwin sir prepared to announce the overall championship; the houses were breathless with hopes and nerves. After a long pause, the winners were announced: the Tuskers! The students of the house celebrated, hoisting the trophy (and their captain) up in the air. There were photos, congratulations and hugs all around.

Unfortunately, Sports Day ended on a bittersweet note for the houses that lost. It’s important to remember that every participant gave it their best, and a loss can be seen as motivation and reason to improve at your sport. Overall, Sports Day was a tremendous success, and the acorns continue to look forward to more fun and competitive events.

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



DIVISHA AGRAWAL:
The Universe In You

Worded Woods



Specks of Dust

In this vast world, we are merely specks of dust.
Inventing AI, cars, and robots will never make us essential enough.
Out there, there are many more planets—much like Earth, Jupiter, and Mars.
Long ago, a man asked: Will humans make it to the stars?
From that thought, look at us! We have come so far.

In this big jigsaw puzzle called Life,
Humans' role is to make a change, time after time.
Each one of us is a puzzle piece, a part of the whole. A part of the whole that we call home.
That's what keeps our world running; after all, before getting up we always fall. But we can keep falling, night and morning; as long as we stand up, without complaining and mourning.

Aditi Raman

Perseus

Day 338.

It's been three hundred and thirty eight human days since they have discovered us. The telescope keeps pointing at us, and, together, we sparkle and turn, the distant, twinkling lights of other stars in our cluster eclipsing our dance. We would sing, too, but they cannot hear us. Our voices cannot traverse the space between the living and the light; so we move, and the lights turn brighter as our gases and dust shift here and there.

The stars keep burning. There's a black hole in the centre of every spiral in our cluster and they keep sucking in matter. The nebulae are thriving, and there is a supernova. It happened millions of years ago, but the light must be reaching the humans just now.

Maybe that's what's keeping their eye trained on us.

Whatever it is, we keep doing what we have done for centuries and millennia, because if the humans turn away from us...

If they turn away from us, we are not sure what we will do.

Day 473.

The telescope has moved away sixty-four times in the past one hundred and thirty five days. The galaxies despair when they move away, but we cannot stop functioning. We do not know what keeps the human's interest so fleeting. Yesterday, or what might have been yesterday but could have been

years ago, a galaxy sung. His stars started to hum and his black hole joined in, and his sister and mother exchanged a look before singing along, too. We could hear them. The first singer waited for the song to be captured by the millions more in our cluster, and he takes his lover by the hand, and together, they dance. His sister takes her lover, too, and there are four of them dancing and millions singing, and suddenly there are millions dancing and billions singing.

We do not know if the humans can hear us. We do not know if they care.

We do not know so many things, but she is dancing with her lover while her brother sings a hymn, and we think: Maybe we do not need to know everything.

Day 529.

There is another telescope in the sky of the planet of the system that is home to life. It's bigger, shinier, and clearly new. It points at us, and if we squint, we can see a needle from the ground pointing at us, too. We have half-lost interest in the humans, but still, he perks up. His lover rolls his eyes fondly. He hums, and his sister laughs, starting up a slow, mournful beat to contrast his energy. Her lover picks her up and together, they sway to the music, and he tries to make his lover move, sing.

His lover relents, his sister giggles at them. Her lover is singing, and she keeps going as his lover and him start up a new, overlaying hum.

Soon enough, the rest of the cluster has joined in. It's loud, and deep, and we are lost in the music and world and we forget about the humans.



Day 539.

The telescope and the needle have not moved from us; and there are enough stars and nebulae in the galaxies and enough galaxies in the cluster, and enough dust and dirt and gas that we wonder:

Can the humans hear us?
Can they hear us?

We take a deep breath. The telescope is trained on us.

The needle moves, covering our entire length.
"We are Perseus," we say; she and her brother are leading with their lovers.

"Perseus," the humans name us, not so long after, and we do not know if it means they can hear us.

But it does not matter anymore—there is a hymn being sung and a dance spanning millions of light years across.

Dhivya Iyer

"Through our eyes, the universe is perceiving itself. Through our ears, the universe is listening to its harmonies. We are the witnesses through which the universe becomes conscious of its glory, of its magnificence."

- Alan Wilson Watts

Querencia

Everyone has hunted for it
At least once in there life;
Albeit it's never there,
Never in sight.

They roam across a million paths,
Searching and Analyzing each spot,
Hoping to find even a single clue,
That their special one has been wrought.

Often they find—
Not a single thing.
That could lead
To discovering.

A place they hunt,
A querencia been made,
For that person,
To feel protected and safe.

The one role
That they must play
So coherent waves,
Will not decay.

Humans shall hunt for years to come
For the place in the universe that has caved;
For the role they must play past fail,
To maintain balance in life with thy sharp blades.

Destiny

Like a seed in a boundless field,
We are planted in the cosmic yield.
A speck in the grand design,
Lost in the vastness of time.

But though our roots may be small,
We reach for the sky, standing tall.
A tree among the stars,
A beacon shining from afar.

Our branches spread, reaching out,
To touch the mysteries, there's no doubt.
Like a ship on an endless sea,
We sail towards our destiny.

We are the fireflies in the night,
Guided by our own inner light.
Our place in the universe,
A symphony of stars that disperse.

Like a drop in the ocean's tide,
We may seem insignificant, yet we abide.
In the grand scheme of things,
Our existence sings.

Kavya Ramineni

Never Understood

Who created the universe
Was it god, or science
Was it created through an explosion
Or peace in the spiritual mind

Are we the puppets of god
Or just a figment of one's imagination

Are we reliving our past lives
Or are we a mere simulation

Were we created for a purpose
Or just for fun
Were we an accident
Or was it for something worthful

For all I know
We all serve a purpose in this universe
We are meant to enjoy life
All in this big, vast universe

And are we the only ones there
Or are there more
Creatures wandering here and there
Aliens unexplored

I guess we will never know
Maybe sometime we would
But all I can say is
I never understood

Khwaish Garg

Mental Health

Welcoming Philautia

By Alvira and Sanjana.

Philautia (uncountable):

(rare, archaic or historical) Self-love, self-acceptance;



Fitting in; with the latest trend, that friend-group you tried so hard to be a part of. Increasingly, you feel the strong urge to mould your interests, wants, hobbies, dresses and every other sphere of your existence based on society's decree. And when you do present yourself to the world, it's a fragile, fake mask, threatening to shatter any second, and reveal that weird you, but heaven knows you can't risk that. So you move around, precariously, as though walking on splintering ice, day in and day out.

Well, ironically, we all are; hiding underneath the pretence that it's not acceptable to be idiosyncratic, unconventional, and uncover our true ethos. But that's simply not true. Think about this for a second, anything that you do that people think is 'weird', is only labelled that way because we have something we've labelled as 'normal'. It is a social construct. And why would anyone in their right minds let some sort of societal idea dictate their choices? Why would you be conscious about who you are just because the world doesn't want you that way?

It is time to let go of that mentality. You don't have to 'fit in' to be 'accepted'. People often push their personal boundaries to be welcomed by other people. Why? You shouldn't have to make yourself uncomfortable for the sake of acceptance. We run around trying to feel included, but you shouldn't have to change to meld. Stop for a second, and realise how far you've come, all the obstacles you overcame and how you deserve to be, unapologetically, you with pride. Be that wonderful person you are, and be proud of it. You are who you need to be. You were made this way for a reason, and no one has the right to tell you that that is wrong. Stand out if you must, but never disregard your own self-respect and dignity as an individual for the world.

So go on, wear what you want, read that "weird" comic, wear unconventional makeup or jewellery. Listen to that 'cliche' artist, and live your gorgeous, chaotic life to the fullest. Be the way you are. Be your wonderful self. Remember, where you are in the present does not have to be where you truly belong. And sometimes, you carve your own unique place in this vast universe.

Embrace Philautia.

MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS

Tweens [7-12]

Books



George's Cosmic Treasure Hunt

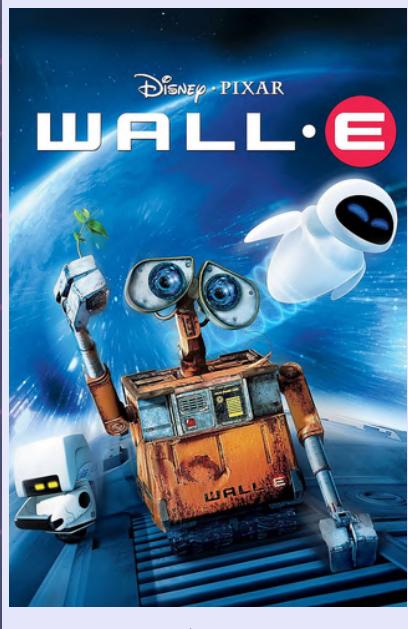
Movies



Zathura: A Space Adventure

An adventurous, intergalactic movie about two siblings who are thrown into the depths of space because of the board game they're playing. Together, they must survive the game in order to return home.

Written by Lucy Hawking and her father, Stephen Hawking, this is a book that takes readers through an intergalactic treasure hunt to save the world. Features fun fact pages about the universe.

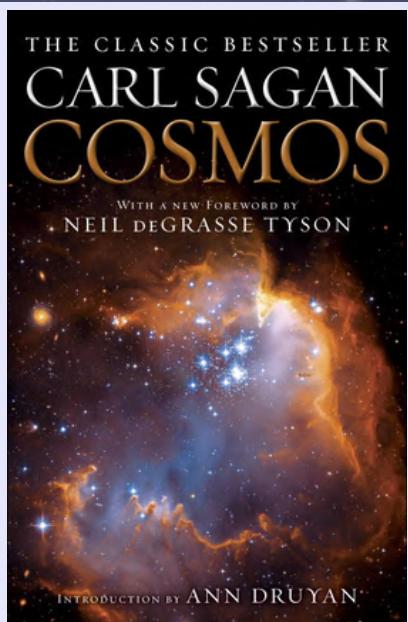


WALL-E

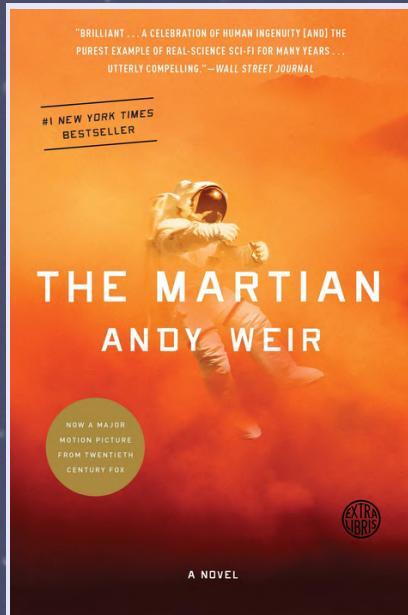
A heartwarming movie about a robot on Earth to pick up the trash humans have left behind. The story follows WALL-E as he falls in love, traverses the universe to the last humans, and reminds them what it's like to live again.

Teens [13+]

Books



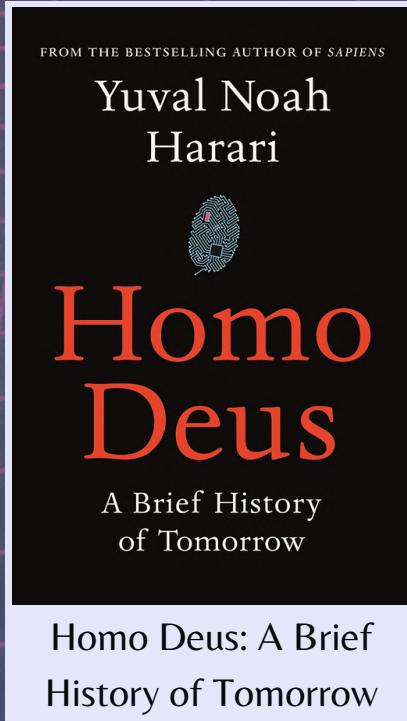
Cosmos



The Martian

A beautiful story about humanity, survival, and space exploration. Mark Watney is stuck on Mars, and this book tells us his story as he tries to return home, where he belongs. A movie adaptation was released in 2015.

Written by Carl Sagan, this book covers "anthropological, cosmological, biological, historical, and astronomical matters". Despite being an educational book, Sagan's way with words puts a spin on previously unknown topics to explore the world and reminds us that the universe is more than just stars and planets: it is everything, interwoven.



Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow

In another stunning non-fiction book, Yuval Noah Harrari explores the future of humanity and the changes we might see in the world. While his previous book, *Sapiens*, explores how we came to rule the Earth, *Homo Deus* blends disciplines to offer an incomprehensible, but undeniable, picture of our future.

Teens [13+]

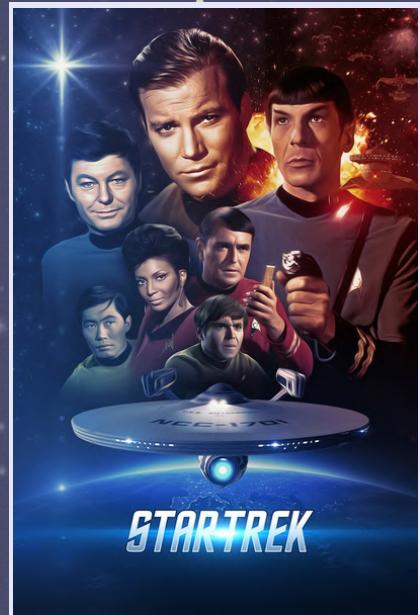
Movies



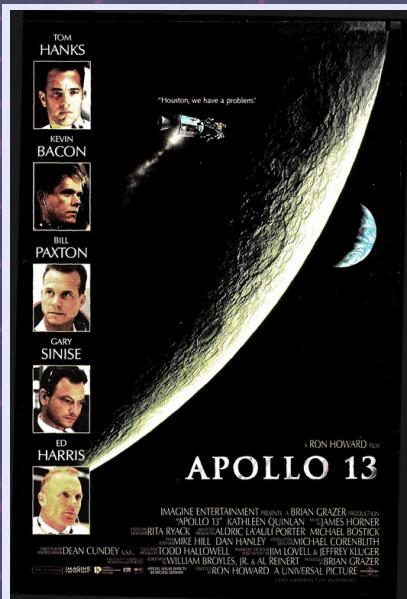
Hidden Figures

Another biographical drama, *Hidden Figures* explores the story of three female African-American mathematicians, who played a vital role in the early years of NASA, and assisted in the launch of John Glenn.

TV Shows



Star Trek



Apollo 13

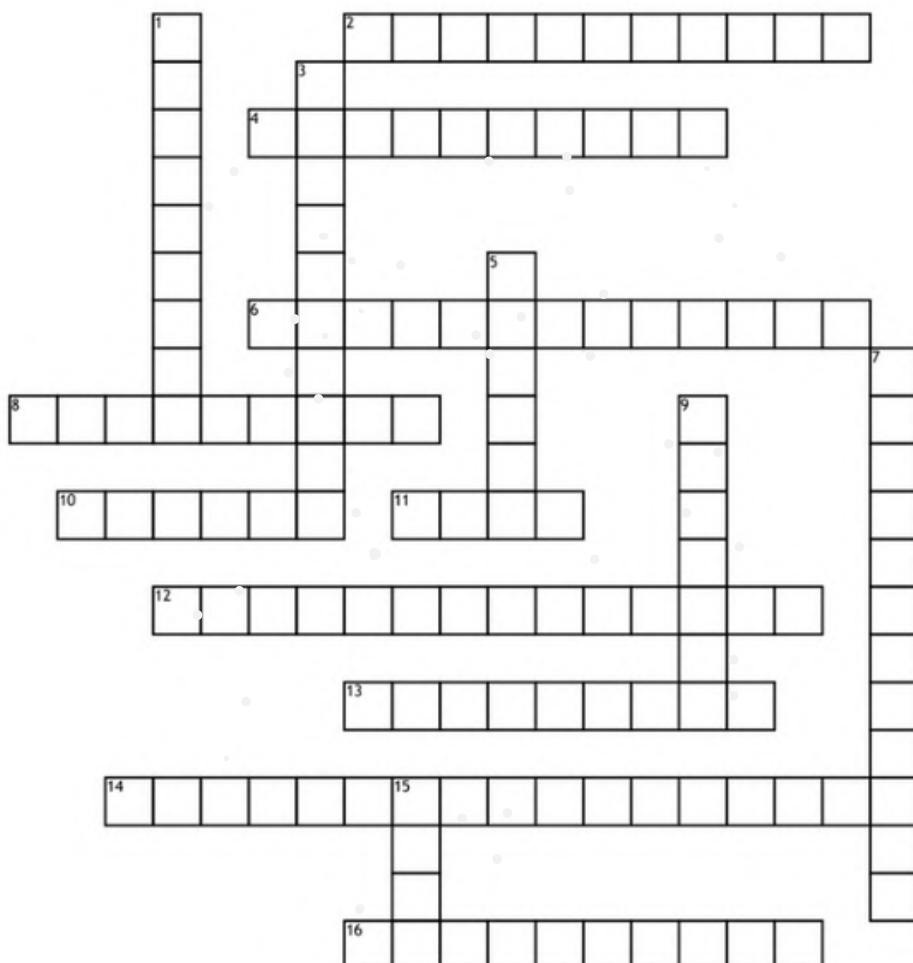
Released in 1995, the movie tells the story of the Apollo 13 failure, and NASA's subsequent efforts to bring home the three astronauts on board. The balance of tension and emotion in the story makes it one of the best space movies of all time.

Star Trek originated in the 1960s and grew to fame as one of the most recognisable media franchises of all time. The various adaptations follow the crew of the U.S.S Enterprise, as they “explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no [hu]man has gone before.”

IT'S PUZZLING.

Kavya Ramineni

Stars, Galaxies and the Universe



Across

2. Pair of stars that revolve around each other and are held together by gravity.
4. Nightly luminous stars from main sequence stars that are more massive than the sun, which becomes larger than giants in their third stage.
6. An observed change in the frequency of a wave when the source or observer is moving.
8. The colors in the spectrum of a star moving toward earth are shifted slightly toward blue.

10. A collection of stars, dust, and gas bound together by gravity.

11. A large celestial body that is composed of gas and that emits light.

12. A spiral galaxy in which the sun is one of hundreds of billions of stars.

13. The study of the origin, properties, and evolution of the universe.

14. The brightness of a star as seen from earth.

16. Unknown material

Down

1. an object so massive and dense that even light cannot escape its gravity.
3. The total amount of energy stars give off each second.
5. A large cloud of gas or dust in interstellar space; a region in space where stars are born.
7. The coldest temperature possible.
9. 14 billion years ago, a sudden event that sent all matter and energy outward in all directions.
15. A star that suddenly becomes brighter.

For the Love of Food

- Palak Bafna,
M5 Mirage



Crispy Veggie Sticks

INGREDIENTS

- Boiled Raw banana- 1
- Sweet corn- 1 small cup
- Pomegranate- 1/4 cup
- Cashew nuts- 1/4 cup
- Boiled Potato- 2
- Crushed bread- 2
- Grated Green chillies- 6
- Cheese- 1/2 cup
- Crushed bread crumbs
- Maida to dip
- Salt
- Oil for frying

METHOD

- Smash the boiled raw banana and boiled potatoes in a big bowl.
- Add cashews, cheese, grated green chillies, sweet corn, pomegranate to the smashed vegetables.
- Add salt according to taste.
- Make the dough into thin and long sticks before setting them aside.
- In a separate bowl, combine Maida and water to make a paste.
- Now dip the stick in the maida liquid and roll over bread crumbs.
- Heat oil in a pan.
- Deep fry the sticks.

Enjoy!

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