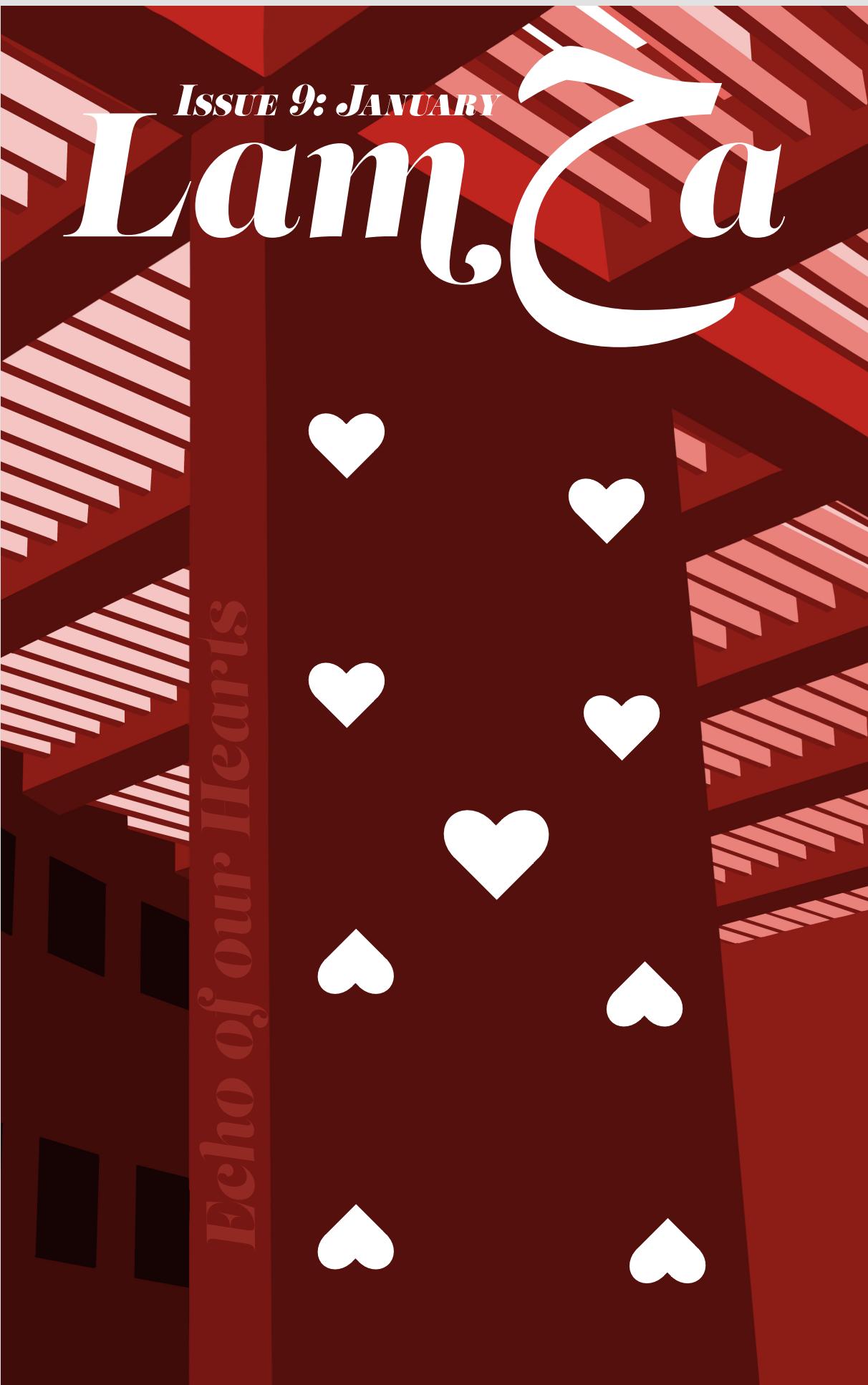
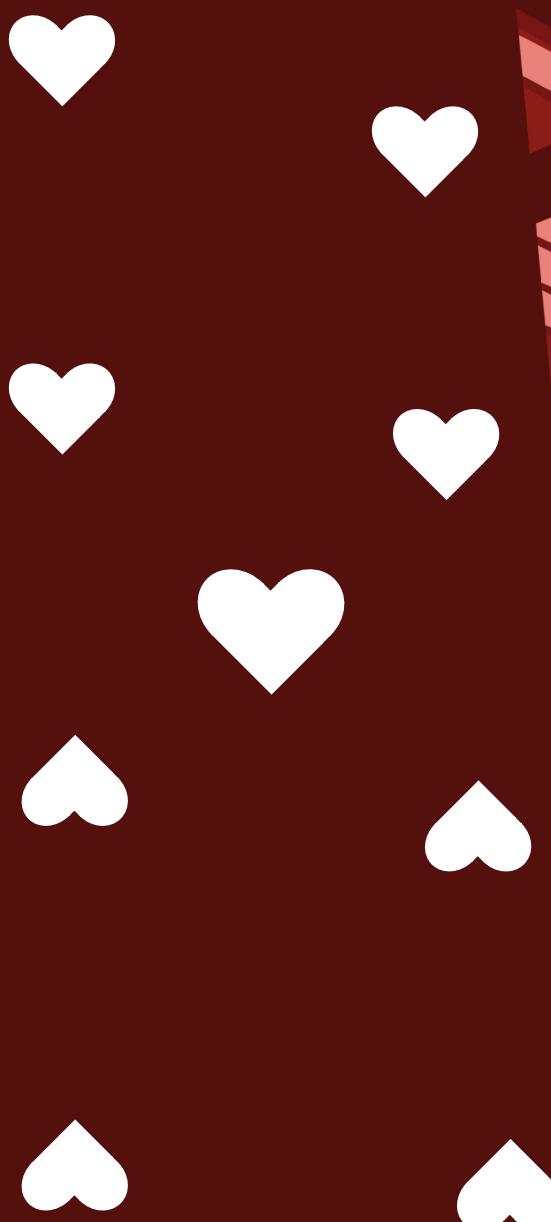


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ISSUE 9: JANUARY

Lamča

Echo of our Hearts



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Editor's Note

LAMĞA /Lamha/, or a glimpse. A glimpse into our student life, and we keep these gorgeous and whimsical days.

These past few months have not been easy for anyone. As students, we are still expected to turn our assignments on time, do well on our exams, organize and attend campus events - all while witnessing horrific and unjust events unfold. This issue isn't only for the students who have had a hard time in the past few months, but for all students who have had to go through something and act "normal" whilst their lives change.

This issue, we bring to you stories and perspectives of students from the exchange semester in Pittsburgh. They went on exchange at a truly extraordinary time with political unrest and social conflict unfolding in the States. Yet, we see stories of friendships, new experiences and critical reflections of their beliefs and values when being challenged by the circumstances. We're so proud of our Qatar campus students for standing up for what they believe, continuously learning and growing, embodying the spirit of our campus. Various other stories on personal identity, global learning experiences and fascinating op-eds also promise various conversations to be sparked upon the pages of this issue.

Thank you to all members of our community for your contribution to yet another rich conversation LAMĞA can help bring forward. Let us continue to be resilient, united, learn and grow together.

Sincerely,

LAMĞA Editorial Board:



Dema Al Shirawi

Table of Contents

Humans of CMUQ

Pittsburgh Yay or Nay

Ireland Learning Trip

Social Synergies

How I Ended Up at CMUQ Because of My Grandma

Don't just buy secondhand. Buy less

Two sides of a coin

Building a stronger you

Backstage Pass

From Pool to Podium: An Olympian's time at CMU-Q

Members Only

Let's learn: Carnegie Mellon Language Club

Artscape

Staff Favorites

Songs of the Month

Poetry

The art behind observational drawing: Capturing the moment.

The Colorful Canvas of Art Collection: A Journey Through Time and Pixels

You are the soul of my soul - art piece by Diana Gazizova

Photo Dumps

6 HUMANS



2 of

21

C

J

21

W

J

21

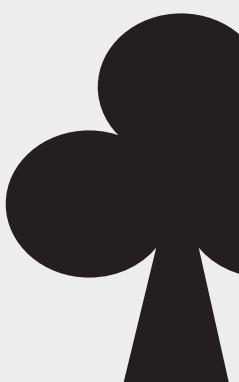
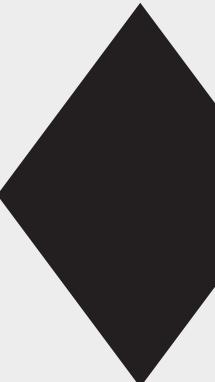
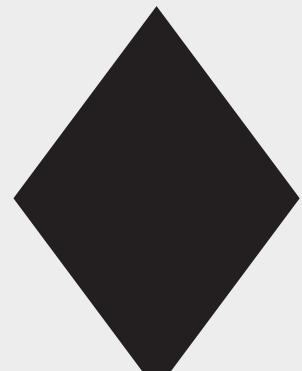
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Pittsburgh Yay or Nay

By Mariam Hamad and Thuc Ngo



What is the first thing you think of when you think of your Pittsburgh semester?



Faisal: Socializing and making new friends. Socializing in that environment was easier due to constantly being surrounded by students with similar interests. I made a really good friend Brandon, from Hong Kong. We met at the gym and started to go together, and now we're very good friends. I'm planning on meeting him in summer.

Kainaat: Making new friendships. It's very insular when you go as a senior from Qatar, you don't have orientation or anything to get used to a new system, so having your support system from Qatar was very important. I interacted and got closer to people who I didn't talk to much in Qatar, as they were people who share similar experiences coming to a new place as I did. Even when we suffered, we had each other, so it made the experience a whole lot better.

Andrei: Lots of room for growth and advancement in academic context, but every other aspect had to suffer because of my commitment to academics. I was taking 5 courses, including a very Operating Systems, which was the most challenging

Yasmina: Entropy+. It's a mini-market near our dorms on campus. I spent 90% of my money there, because our shared cupboard was always stacked with snacks. I think our roommates were also the most memorable part. We would complete 5 puzzles, 4 of which were 1,000 pieces, which is basically 4,500 pieces of puzzle in 2 weeks. We did so many Entropy runs, so much so that we created A Flatmate Situation: Someone would say "We need Entropy", and everyone would pick our jackets, leave the house without question and spend \$17 for a Cheetos and an ice-cream at the extremely overpriced Entropy. We would pick up so many Amazon packages and do shopping haul reveals together. Looking back, I think Amazon really was the unhealthy coping mechanism we developed in Pittsburgh

Sanziana: Travelling. I bought 30 dollars train tickets and went out of Pittsburgh every chance I had, I think we covered 9 states by the end of it

Mayar: Fun. I think of my experiences with my friends. We had a lot of random experiences such as going to a Mexican grocery store, buying a piñata and bargaining for the price in Spanish, and forcing our friends in Fairfax to help us break it. Another thing that comes to mind was when we were pumpkin carving outside, then my friend Mariam went "I think I felt water" and we didn't believe her. It poured rain on us a few minutes later and we had to run inside. These little moments throughout the semester made my experience.

Sara: Fairfax because I truly felt at home while I was there. It really impacted my experience pleasantly because it was a short walk to uni. I also got exposure to see what it's like to live in a city because we were near the University of Pittsburgh. I enjoyed my time with my roommates Hana and Allyssa. I felt close to my Palestinian identity there because of how heated the political climate there was. A monumental event was painting the fence and seeing the community come together to support Palestine.

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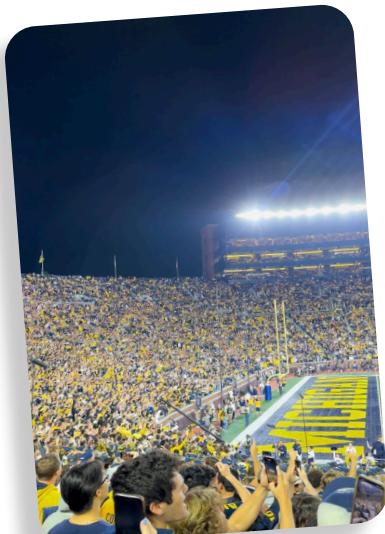
*Did you
travel? If so,
where?*

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Faisal: Yes, I went to Colorado to meet with friends. I liked it more than Pittsburgh because the people were nicer. Pittsburgh was very quirky in comparison.

Andrei: We traveled during Spring Break to DC. We missed the bus and we had the crazy idea to Uber, and paid \$300. There are many tourist places to visit, but also nature. My friends and I biked to the National Park an hour away from the city and we enjoyed the view.

Sanziana: I loved the college football match at the University of Michigan. There were 110,000 students, which is larger than the Lusail stadium capacity. During the break, all of them sang out loud Mr Brightside, which was rumbling the whole space. I think that was the highlight of my experience



Yasmina: I love Orlando the most. We went to Universal Studios. It's a very theme-park style city, so right next to our hotel was the Icon Park. The US traveling experience is a compilation of stories to which we look back now and wonder how we made it safely. In LA, we did laundry at a random laundromat at 3AM after a week traveling out of a backpack and going to a convenience store on an empty street corner. From there, we traveled to Vegas on a road trip with other students, and imagine just within that road trip, we went in and out of In-N-Out three times. Shout out to their Animal Style Fries, extra onion, extra sauce!

Kainaat: DC, Orlando, Texas (I visited a friend who lived there and crashed on her couch). I love DC, the city is really metropolitan and diverse. The cultural and artistic experience I got there was so nuanced, as I encountered people from various ethnicities. I've always been a city gal, so getting a change from the rural college town Pittsburgh felt exciting.

Mayar: Yes, I went to Cleveland, Ohio for my cousin's wedding, which was a multicultural wedding. I also went on a girls trip to DC where we visited Georgetown which was very pretty.

Sara: No, but we made the most of our Pittsburgh experience. We went to a few concerts like the Drivers Era and Travis Scott.

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**3 main
reasons you
say YAY about
Pittsburgh.**

Faisal:

1. I liked the lifestyle, especially Pittsburgh being a walkable city. I also liked living with my friend Tamim and taking care of him.
2. On Thanksgiving, I attended a friendsgiving dinner. I was very impressed with my friend's cooking skills. I think we all got closer from the experience.
3. We were there in a very politically charged environment so I felt influenced to take action, as a Palestinian. I felt that my activism there made an impact, especially with many students unaware of what's happening in Palestine.

Mayar:

1. Late night hot chocolate runs.
2. My friend Batoul that kept sleeping over, she basically became my new roommate.
3. Meeting new people from MSA (muslim student association), MENASA (Middle East and North Africa student association), as well as people who lived in Fairfax. I became friends with a lot of them and shared a lot of fun experiences.

Sara:

1. I got to experience how to be independent and the general study abroad experience.
2. The education. I took a management consulting class where I got to work with real clients. I felt like I was able to make an impact and it was a very rewarding experience.
3. Being there with my friends. I also loved the campus vibes of going to different buildings for my classes.

Kainaat:

1. Walkable. It's very nice to be able to walk around. I walked way more steps than I usually do in Qatar without getting exhausted, because the infrastructure there is very pedestrian friendly
2. The course options. I took a lot of fun humanity courses that we don't have in Qatar on niche topics, such as a course about Gender & Sex in Jane Austen novels - we had a class discussion about Bridgerton! The biological courses provided a lot of resources. I was surrounded by established people in the field, such as PhD students in specified labs and research topics, and found my professional and academic boundaries being pushed
3. Public transportation. I actually like the buses there a lot. There are people from all walks of life who use the buses, and it's like the best place to sit and people-watch. I love the random interactions of strangers I encountered on the bus and thoughts about their lives in the US.

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3 main reasons you say NAY about Pittsburgh.

Andrei:

1. Many groups that are not accepting to people outside of their group. The feeling of belonging was lacking there. I think my social life was not as dynamic on this campus, as conversations were most of the time work-related and internship-centered. To be fair, I had very little free time, so this may have limited my interaction with people.
2. The weather is always fluctuating and quite harsh.
3. Most classes are very big, more than 50 people, so the instructors barely know your name. That makes me not incentivized to reach out when you have questions and that affected my academic experience a lot.

The Flatmates - Sanziana, Yasmia, Sweety (Kainaat too but on a different account)

1. There wasn't much to do within the city. We checked all the tourist must-visits in 2 days, and even the locals there couldn't recommend much else besides restaurants and cafes. If you ask the older people, they would recommend going to a Steelers or Penguins game, which were not our favorite sports.
2. Dormitory wasn't well attended to. When we arrived, there was mold and hair across the apartment and lots of facilities like the AC and door weren't working properly. We couldn't sleep for a whole month due to the constant bouncing sounds of a tennis ball upstairs. One day we mustered up the courage to go knock on their door and nicely asked them to stop. A minute after returning to the room, the constant banging again. Like every sane person, we took a mini suitcase, and banged it against the ceiling. After that, no more bouncing was heard and we could finally sleep soundly.
3. There's a tradition for CMU clubs to take initiative to paint the big on-campus fence. When we painted the fence to express solidarity with Palestine, we took turns painting and standing there to guard. It was scary that people would come and scream at us, but it's the very least we can do for what we believe in.

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What advice would you give to students who want to do the semester exchange?

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Faisal: Go with your friends.

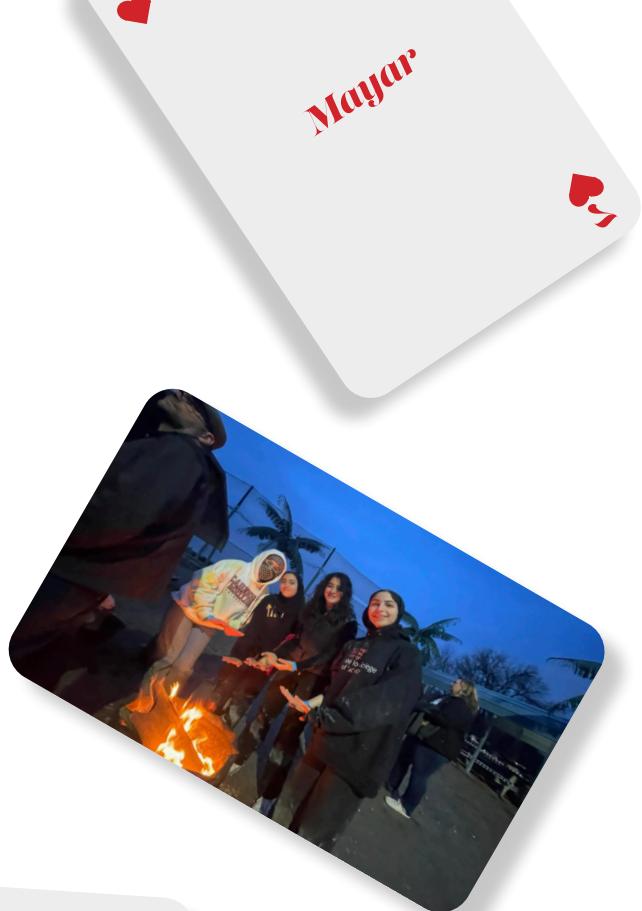
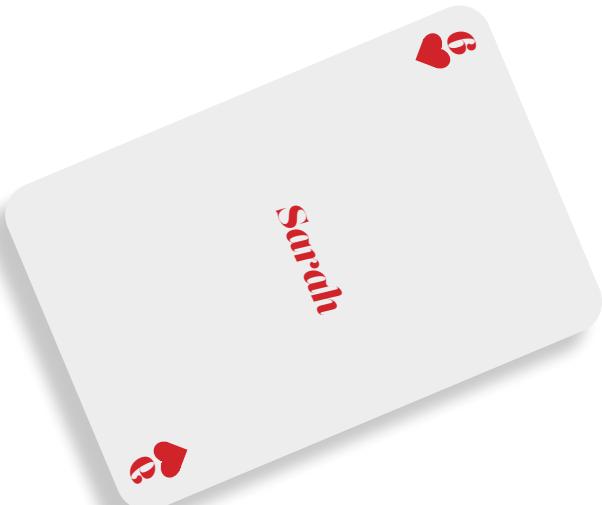
Mayar: Go with your friends and try to hangout with them as much as possible.

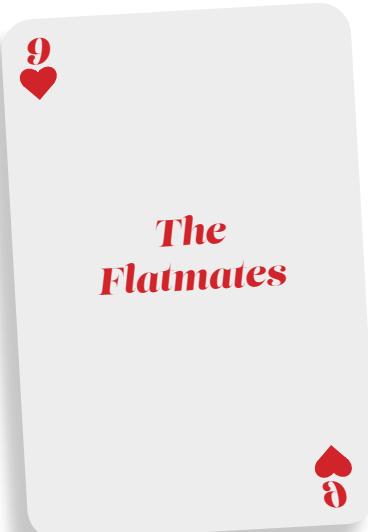
The Flatmates - Sanziana, Yasmia, Sweety: Look at all the available options before you choose Pittsburgh for your exchange semester, for example the study abroad programs, or go to IMPAQ'T and see if you'd like the city. We think that if you decide to go to Pittsburgh, make sure you have the time and means to travel to get the full US experience. If you and your friends can stay outside of the dormitory, explore that option too in case the facilities of where you get assigned to are bad.

Andrei: Take a light loaded semester, or else you miss out on a lot of opportunities

Kainaat: Pack light because you will buy most from there. Souvenirs take up more space than you think. Be open to new experiences

Sara: Make the most out of the educational experience there, like taking classes that aren't offered here and talking to professors whose experiences would be useful for you.





Ireland Learning Trip

By Mariam Abdaleaf

I have always wanted to travel around Europe and thankfully I got accepted into the learning trip to Ireland that took place in the winter break. I can say that Ireland perfectly matched our trip's main objective of women empowerment. On the first day, we visited the EPIC museum, which documents Irish immigrants and their impact around the world. These immigrants migrated to the United States of America specifically due to the famine known as the Irish potato famine, where 1 million immigrants fled the country, and another million died due to hunger. Our tour guide focused on how Irish women impacted the whole world, and one of the stories that stuck in my mind was Mother Mary, a nurse who dedicated her entire life to serving in Africa.

Strolling around Grafton Street, drinking Butler's hot chocolate while the rain poured heavily at night on this day, is something that I always cherish in my mind. Throughout the rest of the trip, we got to visit the iconic Trinity College, where we had a workshop by Work Equal. The organization aims to empower women who are away from the workforce to re-enter the workplace. They focus on helping women write their resumes, equipping them with the needed interview skills, and connecting them with multiple women across Ireland to seek support and empower each other.

On the third day, we visited the Traveler Women's Organization, where we learned how travelers, a minority group in Ireland, face discrimination. They don't receive the same benefits as other Irish

citizens, and people treat them in an unacceptable way. On the fourth day, we visited the Sports Ireland Organization, where they empower athletes across Ireland to participate in the Olympics and other international competitions. The organization formed a campaign named "Her Moves" to get girls across Ireland to start playing sports for a healthier life. After the workshop, we left Dublin and visited Kilkenny City. The city is so small, consisting of only two streets, Kilkenny Castle, and River Nore.



Although I am a person who hates visiting museums and ancient places, Kilkenny Castle grabbed my attention. We got a manual, and each of us embarked on a journey of discovering and exploring each room within the castle. It was spectacular for me to see the castle's vast green garden from the balcony of past Kilkenny rulers' suites.

Within each place we visited, we found the nicest and kindest people. All around the streets, we found posters supporting Palestine. I can say that our last dinner was magical, where we had a Celtic night full of Irish vibrant music and dances.

Each aspect of the trip got me to try new things, build stronger bonds with the girls and my trip leaders, experience long flights, try having a roommate, and, most importantly, witness how Irish women got to impact the world. Ireland, you will never leave my heart!



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Professor, Society of Human Genetics, Medical Genetics Center, Faculty of Medicine, Ain-Shams University, Egypt

Prof. Shawky is a Professor of Pediatrics and Genetics and Head of the Genetics Unit at the Ain Shams University, Egypt. She was responsible for pioneering the construction of the first Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory in the Genetics Unit, and the first Clinic for early intervention program. In her various roles as an academician and a geneticist, Prof. Shawky is the Chief editor of the Egyptian Journal of Human Medical Genetics, Reviewer for the Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal and the Egyptian Journal of Pediatrics, Consultant in the National Neonatal Screening Program in Egypt, and a Reference for scientific research projects referred from scientific centers, such as the Academy of Science and Technology in Egypt. In addition, Prof. Shawky has published more than 125 publications in local and international peer-reviewed journals, as well as authored a chapter on Genetics in the Pediatrics book for undergraduate students in Ain-Shams University. In addition to being on the Board of several committees related to Pediatrics and Genetics in Egypt, Prof. Shawky is also the President of the Egyptian Society of Human Genetics, Egyptian Society of Friends of Families of Genetic Diseases, and Egyptian Scientific Society of Human Teratology.

How I Ended Up at CMUQ Because of My Grandma

By Marwa Darwish

As a junior and senior in high school, I'd sit in the Common Room with my friends, and we'd talk about our plans for university (my favorite topic at the time). One of my friends and I had planned to both study in the Netherlands and move in together. I would work at Brandy Melville and she would work at Urban Outfitters (our 2 favorite clothing stores at the time) so we could share our employee discounts. The others were planning to study in London, New York, Madrid, etc. We'd joke about ending up at QF, saying "Guys imagine after all this we end up meeting up at Graze during uni". I met up with most of those same friends at Graze a few weeks ago.

So, most of us ended up studying in Education City after swearing that it would never happen, and while most of them stayed for similar reasons, my reason was quite uncommon. It was actually my grandma that convinced me that CMUQ was the best option for me.

My grandma was unlike most (if any) grandmas. For some context, she was a pediatric doctor and geneticist at Egypt's largest public university, worked at the university hospital, had her own clinic and was also the editor-in-chief for her medical journal. Because of her research, she was invited to give a lecture at Yale in 2017. With all her achievements and awards, she was the most humble and kind-hearted person I knew. To this day, she is still my biggest idol and inspiration.

When it became time for me to apply to universities, I had my mind set on studying in the Netherlands (where I grew up) since the age of 16. Although my parents tried to convince me to apply to CMUQ because it has a great business program, they knew that it would be close to impossible to convince me, so they didn't try much.

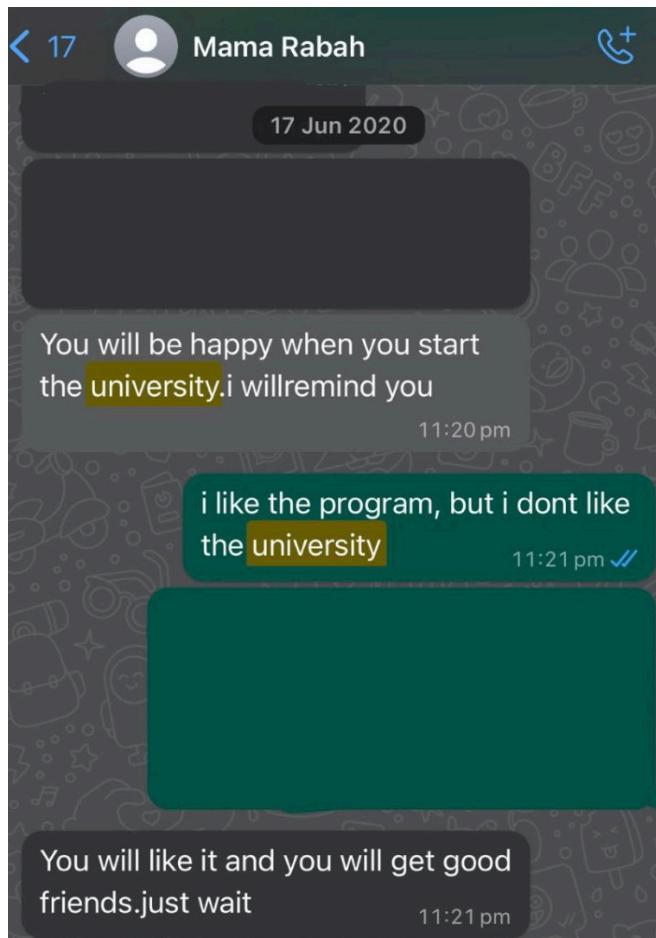
However, my grandma had a friend at Cornell that told her about QF, the universities here and the opportunities they present. From that point onward, anytime I spoke to her she would bring up applying to CMUQ and try to convince me that it's the best option. She would often send me links and screenshots on WhatsApp with facts about CMUQ's ranking and reputation to convince me that it was the perfect fit for my aspirations.

In the end, I decided to apply to CMUQ (kind of hoping I wouldn't get in). This happened in February 2020, before COVID hit, and on April 2nd 2020 I got a message telling me that CMUQ application decisions would come out at 7pm that night. I had a lot of time to think, being stuck at home during COVID, so I told myself that if I got accepted that night, I would actually open my mind and consider going to CMUQ.

I got in, and after it actually sunk in that CMUQ is now an option for me, I spent the entire night making a pros and cons list for CMUQ against the option I was considering in the Netherlands. At 3am my list was done, and it was clear to me from then that CMUQ was the better option

for me. For some reason, it was easy for me to admit I was wrong, and I messaged her saying "I think I'm gonna try out the university in Qatar" and she said, "Try it and I'll remind you of these conversations the day you graduate".

So, I came to CMUQ and I quickly felt like I made the right choice. Although my entire first year was online, I made friends and we met up in person. I have quite fond memories of that year. The first time we went out, I didn't tell my grandma. One of the reasons I didn't want to come to CMUQ was because I assumed I'd struggle to make friends.



But she texted me that night saying "I heard you went out with friends from your university today, I want to congratulate you on making friends and remind you that I told you it would happen".



Looking back at my four years at CMUQ, I often still think about what could have been if I had gone with my initial first choice university. There are a lot of things I would have missed out on had I not come here; the people I met, the lessons I learnt, my semester in Pittsburgh, the club I led, the global trip I planned, the list goes on. What I realized is that sometimes what we think we want isn't what's right for us, and there comes a point at which you realize exactly why you ended up where you are. Yes, I would have probably had different experiences there that I would value just as much, but you can't have everything in life,

and life doesn't end after graduation. There are endless opportunities and experiences for us to take advantage of and just because I didn't get to experience those things between the ages of 18-22, it doesn't mean I never will.

As I prepare to walk across the stage and receive my diploma, I can't help but think about the twist of fate that brought me to CMUQ. ***Who would have thought that my journey would be shaped by a grandma with a stellar medical career, a knack for persuasion, and an uncanny ability to predict the twists and turns of life?*** Unfortunately, my grandma passed away at the end of my freshman year, so she won't be there at my graduation in May to remind me of the times I refused to even hear the term "CMUQ". I also won't get the chance to tell her that she was right, that "everyone ends up at the place that's right for them". At her remembrance, one of her former students perfectly captured the essence of her teachings, sharing how she "taught them to be humans before being doctors". While she may not be physically present at my graduation, her influence will undoubtedly be felt as I step into the next chapter of my life, carrying with me the valuable lessons of compassion and humanity she imparted.





Egyptian Journal of Medical Human Genetics

23 July 2021 ·

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It has been three weeks now since we lost one of the greatest professors in Pediatrics and Genetics and the second leader of medical genetics in Ain Shams University. I know it is very late to write this obituary, but it was very hard to admit Prof. Rabah non-presence in our lives anymore!

Dr Rabah was not only my dear professor who structured my career through the field of medical genetics but also a second mother who checked on me from time to time and a genuine support in the hardest times of my life!

Dr Rabah guided hundreds of students through this tough field step by step, examining thousands of patients in the hospital clinic every week however she felt, and meticulously revising scientific writings and presentations aiming to build a second generation of medical geneticists.

No words can describe how Dr Rabah shaped our lives and how much we are thankful for the impact she left!

Don't just buy secondhand. Buy less

By Thuc Ngo

I'm not sure since when my answer to "Where did you get that piece of clothing from?" has been predominantly "I thrifted it".

At first, it's cool to have something unique that nobody can just go to a random store and get. Gradually, I do realize that there's an obnoxious connotation to it. Wearing mostly secondhand clothing while being able to afford new could easily scream "sustainability fanatic" or "hypocritical ethical buyer", and I get it. Thrifting has evolved from a business catered to the underbanked into an industry that is popular amongst the middle and upper class, due to the perceived more sustainable and ethically superior values than the traditional fashion consumption. Thrifting essentially lifts the environmental burden off the consumers' shoulders, as you're recycling, repurposing and extending the life of clothing that would otherwise be in the landfills, not directly contributing to corporations who actively exploit and destroy the environment. However, if that's the whole purpose of thrift shopping, there's much contradiction and dilemma. We now see resellers coming to big thrift stores like Goodwill to pick out better pieces and upsell them at crazy margins - which could arguably be exploitation at a lower scale than corporations. Even the big secondhand chains themselves are dumping the unsold clothes to the landfills, so the sustainability pledge is fudgy.

Although I haven't been able to resolve these contradictions myself, thrifting has created a ***consume less, consume selectively mindset***, which I've come to realize, is the ***gist of it all***. It has significantly improved the satisfaction in my choice, shopping experience, my sense of style and even my quality of life. Here's my journey, and why you should adopt the mindset regardless of where you shop from - new or secondhand.

Why are we always unhappy with our clothes? The paradox of choice

Barry Schwartz, a famous American psychologist, provided a simple explanation for the paradox of modern day consumerism. You're presented with a myriad of options and are free to choose from them, so when making any decision, you still constantly compare the choice to other alternatives, which reduces the satisfaction from your choice. With social media and the haul culture, you constantly compare your closet to fashion bloggers, influencers and the fashionable girls next door. The comparison reinforces that buying just some more, buying the same things they have, following trends will help you be as fashionable, and finally satisfied with your closet.

However, trends that these sparkly influencers embody change fast, and ***you'll constantly feel discontent with what you currently have if you chase trends***. Moreover, you end up buying things that are bad quality from fast fashion brands just to quench the trend thirst, and they don't really work for your style - ***you just grab them from the sales section at Stradivarius because you've seen someone wear it on the Internet***. Eventually, these products are either too low quality to be reused, or too mass produced by fast fashion brands that they lose out on value.

Remember how the Internet went feral over the funky patterns inspired by the House of Sunny dress worn by Kendall Jenner, and hunted for 'dups' from Amazon to Zara? How many people still wear these funky patterns today, or has the once burning trend become associated with cheap leftover stock at Shein and Bershka? They are doing this over and over again with any new trend, and ***we just perpetuate our own closet's demise by buying trends, not clothes that fit well to your own sense of style, that make you comfortable and happy when wearing***.



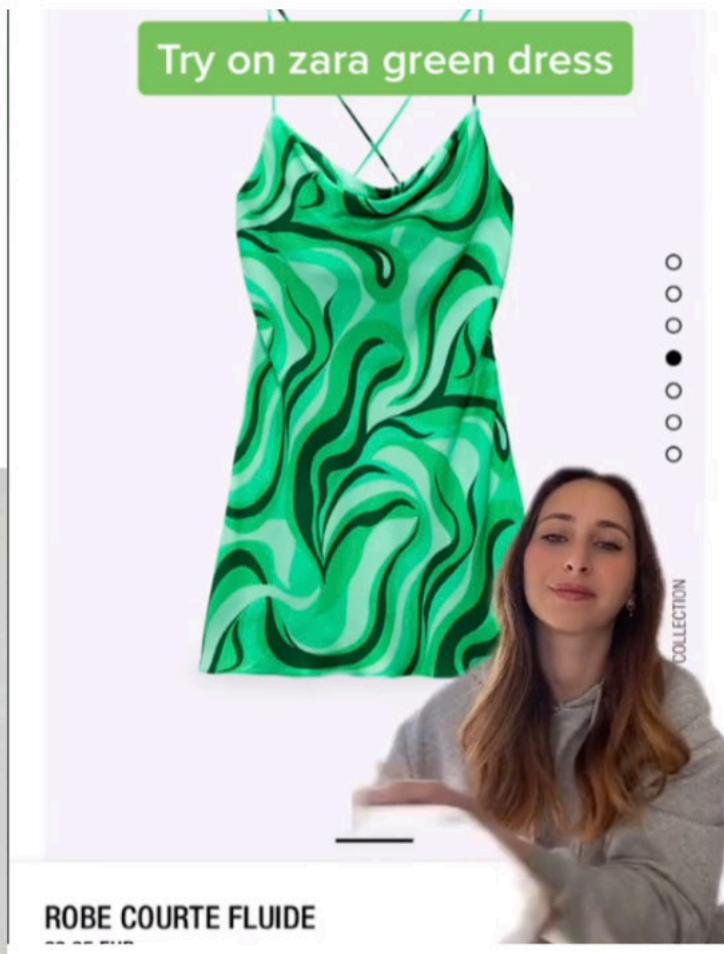
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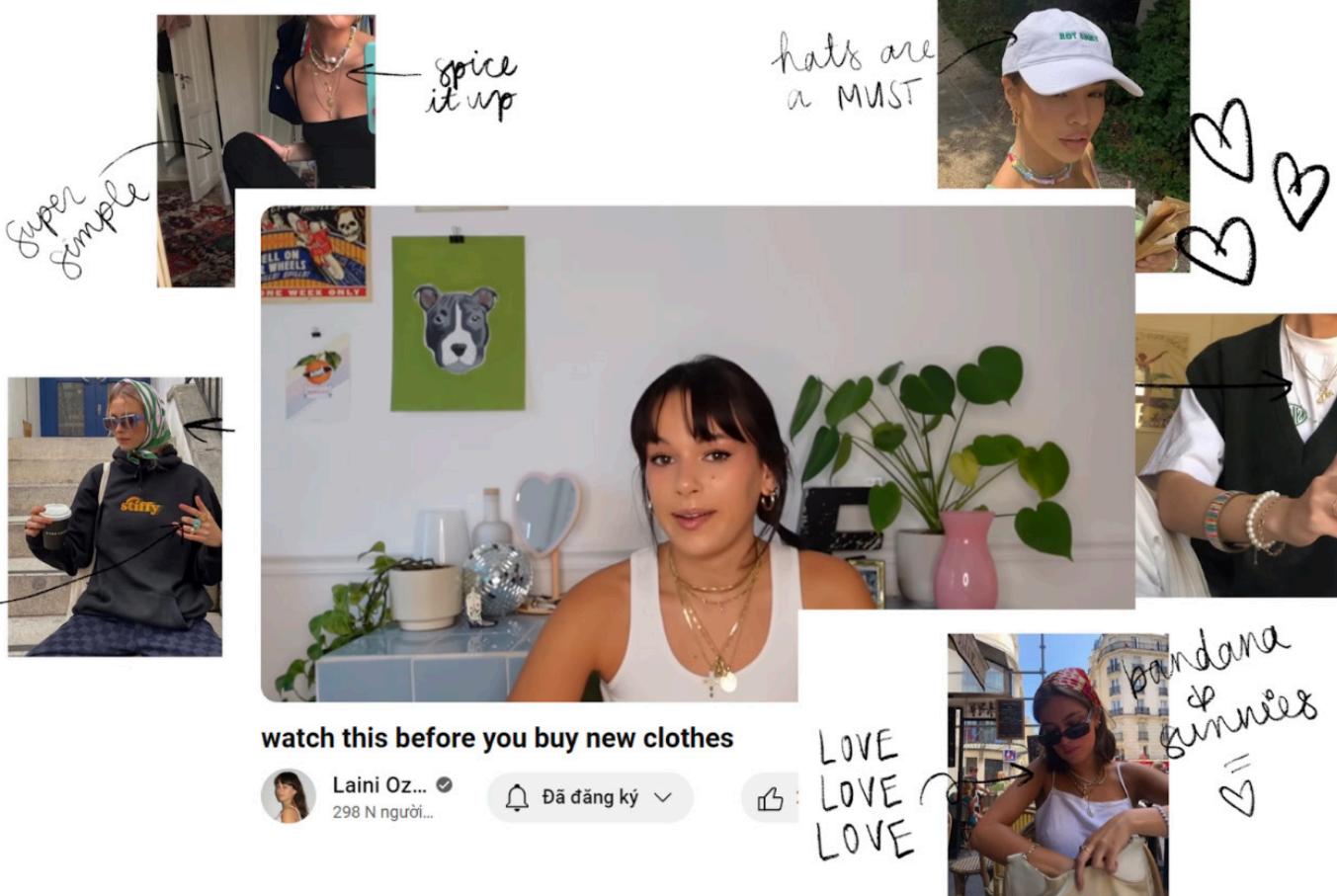


How does buying less help?

Buying less and not participating in trends are what will actually elevate your personal style and make you a happier, more content consumer. First, they make you get more creative with what you already have. You'll be surprised by how many different outfits you can create with the same pieces by switching up the simplest things. Laini Ozark is a fashion channel I love that promotes repeating outfits and not buying into trends, and her big sister advice that sticks with me is: Try accessorizing - sunglasses, jewelry, hat, a different color socks than white and a different pair of shoes when you start finding all of your outfits boring and looking to buy more. What I also like doing is going on Pinterest and finding inspiration from people who style a similar piece that I have, improvising other parts of the outfit with what I have and creating a kind of style cocktail. It's so much more fun than buying from head to toe exactly what an influencer wears online. Remember, **clothes are versatile, you don't need a new piece of clothing, but a different way of styling them.**

Second, they make you a more conscious and effective consumer. When you shift your focus away from buying as many as possible, you can skip many bad choices and feel less overwhelmed by options. Personally, I would pick a lot of regrettable things during sale seasons solely because they were cheaper, and because I had gone around for so long without being able to pick anything among thousands of items. When seeing a new emerging trend, let yourself sit through it a couple of weeks first. If you still like what you see and feel like it can work well with many things you already own, then buy it. **Don't buy a piece that you have to build your everything around.**

We can say many things about how evil the fashion industry is, but many of us, including me, still love fashion - playing dress up and expressing ourselves through clothes. The way you can participate in it sustainably is changing your mindset and consumption habit away from trends and buying as many as possible.



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*consume
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Two sides of a coin

By Mariam Hamad

"How was your semester in Pittsburgh?"- the question I've been asked numerous times since my semester exchange there.

My semester in Pittsburgh felt so short yet so much happened. My experience before and after October 7 were completely different. Do I tell people how I had enjoyed my time until October 7, when the world was watching photos of children being killed by bombs paid for by the country I am in? Do I tell people how I felt more unsafe on my college campus than other areas? Do I tell people how a drone flew over to take photos of us during the fence painting for Palestine? Do I tell people how after we painted the fence in support of Palestine, a counter protest appeared including a lady who was live streaming us and screaming "rapist supporters" and "baby killers"? Do I tell people that every protest we organized was met with racist and zionist media coverage? Do I tell people that a professor and graduate student yelled islamaphobic and racist slurs at students? Do I tell people that my friend and I were violently pushed in a protest by a counter protester? Do I tell people how my friend was spat on by a stranger in the street? Do I tell people how I was met with zionist propaganda plastered all over the streets, university walls, and even youtube commercials? Do I tell people how I was constantly filmed in protests by right wing and zionist students, forcing everyone to cover their faces? Do I tell people that I was told by my own administration that the phrase "from the river to the sea" was anti semitic, although the person who started the chant was a jewish girl from jewish voice for peace? Do I tell people of the countless stares and looks I would receive due to my hijab?

Or do I tell people about how I saw so many diverse people supporting Palestine in protests? Do I tell people how I met a woman at a protest who told me she heard about this protest a few hours before, and immediately hopped on a bus to come join, although she has no personal ties to the palestinian cause? Do I tell people how I would overhear students casually speaking about boycotting Starbucks and Mcdonalds? Do I tell people how I picked up the tartan magazine one day and saw an article reminding students of the genocide occurring in Palestine almost 3 months after October 7? Do I tell people how one day I woke up and saw the fence painted in support of Palestine, and no one knew who had painted it? Do I tell people how I had countless conversations with students from all over who were in support of Palestine? Do I tell people how students would put up posters on campus to counteract the zionist propaganda? Do I tell people how I saw a community rise up in support of the Palestinian people, and to this day are still protesting in support of Palestine?

I don't exactly know how to respond to this question, but all I know is that I experienced a lot last semester. A lot of it was bad, but a lot of it was good. All I can say is that in a country whose government openly supports and aids Israel- seeing huge masses of people protest against this felt inspiring. I will always be proud to be Palestinian, no matter where I am.

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Building a stronger you

By Dema Al-Shirawi

Let's get real about building a stronger sense of self—it's not some fancy endeavor; it's a practical journey that demands commitment and self-awareness. Picture it as navigating through a series of straightforward steps, each contributing to a more resilient and empowered sense of self.

Start by taking a look in the mirror—figuratively, of course. Dive into your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Spot the patterns that shape how you see yourself. This self-reflection isn't about overthinking; it's about understanding and recognizing negative beliefs so you can swap them out for more positive ones.

Watch your words. Pay attention to how you talk to yourself. Swap out the negative self-talk for affirmations and constructive statements. Be your own cheerleader—acknowledge victories, no matter how small. This shift in internal dialogue isn't about some grand performance; it's about building a more positive and resilient self-perception.

Now, let's talk goals. Break down those big goals into smaller, doable tasks. Celebrate every win, even the tiny ones. See setbacks not as the end of the world, but as chances for growth. It's about confidence and building a positive self-concept, not climbing mountains.

Look in the mirror again. This time, acknowledge your strengths and accept imperfections. Recognize what makes you unique. Forget about chasing perfection—be real, be authentic. This down-to-earth approach builds a stronger and more genuine self-concept.

Now, think about the people around you. Your environment matters. Surround yourself with positivity. Build relationships that uplift and support you. Cut ties with negativity—it's toxic. A positive social scene is key to maintaining a healthy self-concept.

Keep learning and growing. It's not about the formalities; it's about continuously expanding your knowledge and skills. Acquiring new abilities boosts confidence and adds to a positive self-concept. Whether it's through a classroom or self-directed learning, knowledge empowers you to handle life's challenges.

So, building a stronger you—it's about adjusting your self-talk, setting realistic goals, acknowledging strengths, and embracing imperfections. No need for grand gestures. This approach doesn't just boost personal well-being; it equips you with the confidence to handle life's challenges with a grounded and authentic attitude. It's a straightforward journey of growth and empowerment.

Backstage Pass

From Pool to Podium: An Olympian's time at CMU-Q

By Mariam Hamad

I interviewed Nada Mohammed Wafa, the first Qatari female swimmer to participate in the Olympics and a two-time Olympian. She is a class of 2016 Business Administration alumni from CMU-Q.



What have you been doing since graduation?

I am working in the Qatar Olympic Committee (QOC) (Head of Olympic Solidarity Unit and Secretary General of the Athletes' Commission) and have traveled around for work and swimming competitions. I'm also the mother of a two year old son.

Can you tell us about your Olympic career, how it started and where you are at now?

I've always enjoyed swimming and just being in the water, so that's how it started. I love how swimming allows me to destress, like if I've been having a rough day, swimming just helps me relax and I just feel good after training.

I've tried many different sports when I was younger such as basketball, ballet, and netball, but the one sport I had the most connection with was swimming. I joined a club called Tidal Waves and just wanted to train to gain a healthy lifestyle and to just stay fit, but the more I pursued the sport the more I excelled at it.



Back in 2008, during the summer, I remember watching the Beijing Olympics with my family and of course, we were watching the swimming events. My eyes were glued to the screen watching the world-class athletes compete against each other. I remember sharing with my family my hopes and dreams – to represent my country Qatar and compete at the Olympics one day!

So, after joining the Tidal Waves swimming club in Doha at the age of nine, I then began to participate in more local and international competitions. My coach noticed the massive improvement I made and thought I was dedicated to the sport and so I decided to take swimming to the next level, professionally. She used to always say "be the best you can be" and that has been my motto ever since.

I then joined the Qatar National Team at the end of 2011. After that I became one of the best female swimmers in Doha and reached the London 2012 Summer Olympics, and continued to work hard to find myself competing in my second Olympic Games - Rio 2016 Summer Olympics.

Now, I still train and what pushes me to keep going is my 2 year old son. Being a mother is something special and he is my inspiration and gave me a reason to continue and inshallah one day he can follow my footsteps and inspire generations to come. I don't train as much as I used to due to more responsibilities, however I try to fit in as many practice days a week as I can.



What was it like being an athlete as well as a student? How were you able to balance both?

It was truly special. The community was so supportive. Balancing was not that easy, I had to prioritize. I had to stay focused, and with time management and organizational skills it was doable. The university was also very understanding and flexible which was great.

What is your most prominent memory of CMUQ?

Staying long hours in uni, using the library study rooms with our study groups, the majlis, food court, east/west walkway, uni events such as Tarnival, breakfast for dinner during exams week. Wow it's all coming to me while I'm typing this haha. It all felt like one big community/family with the students, staff, professors, even the security! And I truly miss it. The best part also was when I found out that I was selected as Class of 2016 Student Speaker

What's one thing you would tell CMU-Q students about their university life?

Enjoy it!! As much as you can because you will not get this kind of experience again. Whether it's the study groups, all nighters, uni events, building relationships with professors, students etc.

After CMUQ

What has been your most difficult experience after graduation?

Trying to figure out what path I'm going to take, starting work in – different/new environment.

What has been your greatest achievement?

Tedx Doha Speaker, student speaker class of 2016, representing my country in two Olympic Games, educator (workshops for athletes regarding their dual careers, post athlete career etc.), IOC Young Leader, Member of the Women's Committee in the Arab Swimming Federation, and QOC Ideal Employee Award 2022.

What made you get into your current job and what do you like about it?

Being into sports ever since I started swimming – it's always so exciting, especially when it comes to hosting/organizing world class events or competing in them, supporting athletes etc.

What advice would you give to students after graduation?

Don't be afraid to take risks, go out there and try new things, follow your passion and always have an open mind.

Is there anything else you would like to say?

Never give up, even if you fail or something doesn't go your way you get back up and try again until you succeed.

Members Only!

"If you talk to a man in a language he understands, that goes to his head.

If you talk to him in his language, that goes to his heart"

- Nelson Mandela, South African politician and Nobel Peace Prize laureate in 1993.

Welcome to a world where languages bridge cultures and open doors to endless possibilities. The Carnegie Mellon Language Club (CMLC) is an example of how communication and understanding different cultures can bring people together. Our main goal is simple yet meaningful: to bring together people through our shared love for different languages and to enjoy and honor the wonderful variety of cultures around the world.

CARNEGIE MELLON
LANGUAGE CLUB

Club Introduction:

Name: Carnegie Mellon Language Club

Acronym: CMLC

How it will work:

- Bi-weekly Language Learning session:** Do you feel that learning a language helps you connect with different cultures and people? Have you ever wanted to learn a specific language but couldn't, maybe due to time constraints or other challenges? Have you tried learning a new language before but forgot it because you didn't get enough practice? Or do you just love the idea of picking up new languages? And do you think knowing more languages could be useful in your studies or career?

If these thoughts resonate with you and you're excited about exploring new cultures and languages, then the Carnegie Mellon Language Club (CMLC) is here for you. Our team of language moderators is ready to guide you in learning and practicing a new language. We're starting with Chinese, and based on what you all need and want, we plan to add more languages soon. We'll provide a variety of resources to help you improve your language skills. Join us and start your journey into new languages and cultures! Who knows, this could be the perfect first step if you're interested in taking a language course or planning to work or study abroad someday :)

- Language Buddy program:** Are you familiar with Karak Connections or Spanish Hour? Our Language Buddy program is inspired by these, offering a similar experience. It's a bi-weekly gathering where you can practice a language you're learning with your friends and colleagues, much like in Spanish Hour. The aim is to deepen your connection with the language and its cultural roots. You might be wondering about the link to Karak Connections. Well, join us and see the unique twist we bring to the Language Buddy program!
- Cultural nights:** While our first two programs mainly focus on our club members, we also think it's important to include and connect with the larger CMU community. To do this, we plan to organize various enjoyable language games and cultural trips. These activities will be a great way for everyone to share their experiences, learn from each other, and grow their knowledge about different cultures.
- Info Session on study abroad trips and fellowship:** Were you aware that CMU has amazing summer learning trips to countries like China, Germany, France, Spain, Jordan, and Costa Rica? Last summer, I had the chance to go to China. As a beginner in Chinese, I was amazed at how much I learned about the language, the people, their way of life, food, clothing, and more in just two months. If you're curious about these trips, like what to expect, how to apply, the cost, and what you'll gain from them, we're planning to hold information sessions. These sessions will give you a student's view and all the details you need. We aim to create spaces for discussion, connect you with the Modern Language Department at CMU, and make the most of language learning opportunities across our campuses.

Additionally, did you know you can even get a fellowship or grant by writing about your study abroad experiences? At least, I didn't until last summer. Sharing this kind of useful info with the CMU community is also a big part of what we do at CMLC!

Why Join CMLC?

1. Learn and practice new languages
2. Deepen your connection with diverse cultures
3. Gain insights into study abroad programs offered by CMU and fellowships offered worldwide
4. Be part of an inclusive, culturally rich community

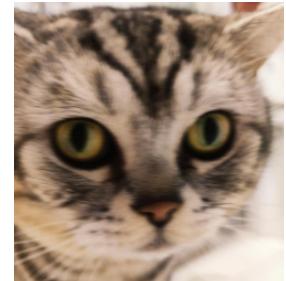
Notes from the President: Salam everyone, I'm Maria and I'm excited to be your President for the Carnegie Mellon Language Club this semester. I have a deep love for traveling and discovering new languages and cultures, which often means stepping outside what I'm used to. My enthusiasm for learning new languages has taught me how much we can connect with different cultures, people, and their unique ways of thinking and creating, all through language. I'm really excited to share this passion with everyone in the CMU community. Let's learn, grow, and create lasting memories together. Looking forward to an amazing semester with you all!



Notes from the Vice President: Hi! My name is Abeeha and I'm so excited to kick off this semester by being the Vice President of CMLC! This is definitely more than a club; we are building a family that values different languages who want to collaborate on learning and exploring diverse cultures. Doesn't matter if you're a beginner, advanced, or have no knowledge of languages at all; this club is for everyone and anyone interested in exciting activities, language games, and cultural trips and events. P.S. if you're interested in TaiChi please hit me up :) Can't wait to meet you on this journey!

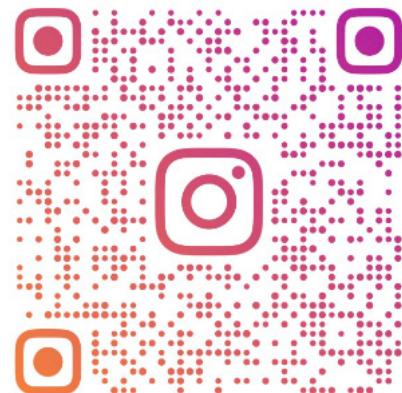


Notes from the Head of Language Moderators: Hi! My name is Erik and I'm honored to serve as the faculty advisor for CMLC. As someone passionate about experiencing different cultures, I chose to come to Qatar for its cultural ingenuity. What better way to immerse oneself in a culture than by learning its language? Join us, and together we will create a holistic cultural experience while learning a new language. Looking forward to having you with us!



Join Us on Our Journey:

If you are interested to know more about our club vision, activities or simply get more information, follow us on Instagram! We will be happy to hear from you about your experience with new languages and cultures, your expectations from us or any suggestions and feedback to help us improve our mission. That being said, let's expand our horizons together with CMLC!



THE.CMLC

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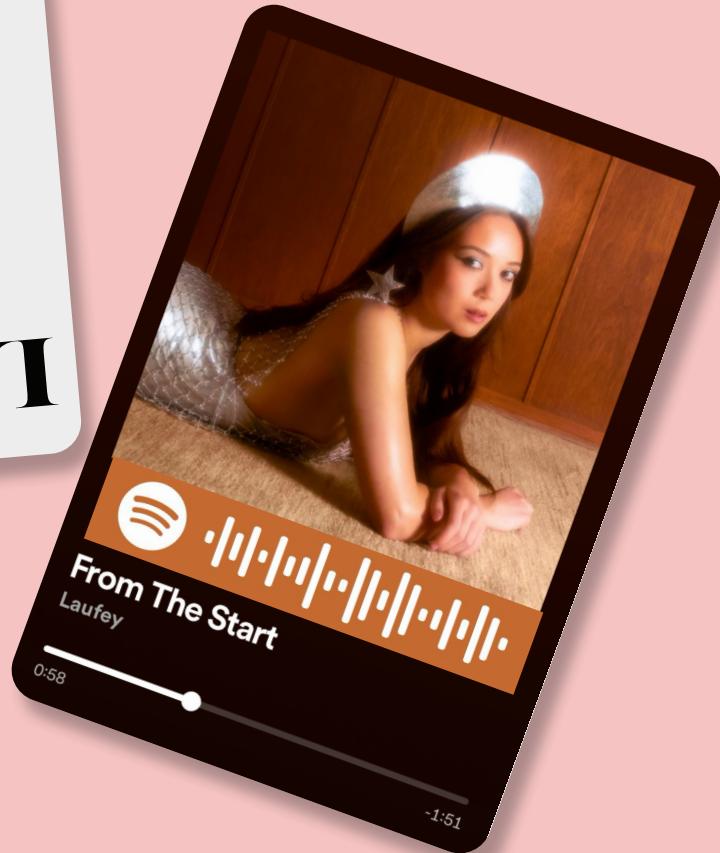
Lam Za Staff Favorites

L

Hala

Throughout January I started listening to a lot of Laufey's songs! My favorite song right now is "From The Start".

T



L Maryam

Throughout January, I've thoroughly explored the local fabric shops and various tailor workshops in preparation for Ramadan. This journey has been truly delightful, especially when witnessing the realization of our efforts in the final products.

T



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Mariam

I've been loving Mina Port lately with this weather. Every time I go there I find something new to love, whether its a cafe, a store, or even a new artwork.

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Trying flower arranging!

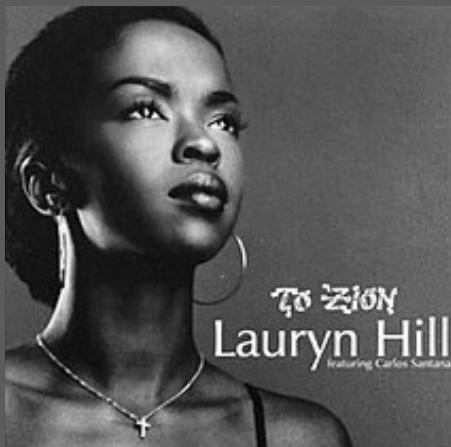
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Songs of the Month

By Abdulrahman Darwish

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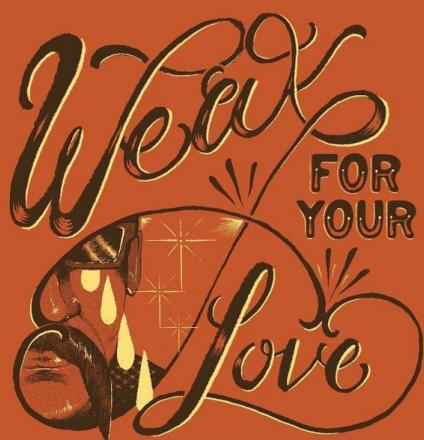
To Zion - Lauryn Hill ft Carlos Santana

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Now. If you know me, you'll understand that soul is one of my favorite music genres. It's not only because of its incredible history but also because of its diversity, allowing for numerous subgenres and the fusion of various sounds. Thee Sacred Souls is an emerging band in the music industry, gaining recognition from major names for their unique blend of Latin American culture with soul roots, similar to Lauryn Hill's work this month. (A little theme going on) The vocals, harmonies, and melodies in their music are insane. I believe this song is perfect for a late-night drive, a bonfire evening, or simply playing in the background. Thee Sacred Souls are undoubtedly underrated, underappreciated, and not receiving the recognition they truly deserve. This song happens to be my current favorite from their discography, but they have an impressive collection of songs that you should also check out if you liked this song. They are also Pro-Palestinian which makes them automatically better as well!

Lauryn Hill, undoubtedly one of the most musically gifted artists to ever grace the industry, again proves her legend status in this song. "To Zion" is a powerful, deep, and incredibly emotional song dedicated to her son, Zion. Lauryn Hill herself considers it one of her all-time favorite songs, and shows that by making sure it has a place on her setlist at every concert. By writing and producing this song completely on her own, it added even more of a personal touch. Even though "To Zion" didn't achieve significant commercial success, it remains one of her most influential works, earning high praise today just as it did upon its release. Let's not forget the guitar playing of the legendary Carlos Santana, which adds to its beauty. This song masterfully blends Latin influences with an R&B touch, making it an absolute must-listen. I'm confident that, like me, you will enjoy it on your first listen and you will add it to your playlist.

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Thee Sacred Souls - Weak for Your Love

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“To a True Friend”

**By Anonymous
Arts & Crafts Club Submission**

A true friend reminds me of a bright star,
The brightest one in the darkest of skies.
Pops up shining amongst others,
You could see it even from the far.

A true friend reminds me of a hidden pearl,
The one that is unseen to the naked eye.
The one that is hidden in deep oceans,
Away, far away from the worldly gloom.

A smile that one friend always gives to you
Is like a ray of sunshine emitting from cloudy skies.
It warms your heart and makes you happy,
Just like when you see the rainbow on the clouds.

Even conversations with that one person
Are just like calm and tranquil waves in the ocean.
They move so deeply, gently, and even smoothly,
So you have a feeling of comfort and relief.

To that one friend with eyes just like diamonds,
Brightly shining every time we speak.
Thank you for being the rare jewel,
And thank you for always being there for me.

The art behind observational drawing: Capturing the moment.

By Najoud Al-Talib
Arts & Crafts club

Observational drawing is a fun practice whether you are someone who draws regularly or not—it can be thought of as taking a picture. It passes time and records memories in place, or alongside, actual photographs. It involves drawing what you see in real time, except the aim does not always have to be hyper-realism. It is a rewarding practice since you would have one more tool that allows you to capture the current moment, as well as naturally improving drawing skills whether that is the aim or not. It is also rewarding because it is a tool unique to you alone, nobody can replicate the way you draw your reality or your perspective of it.

Observational drawing can either be drawing something one has set up to draw, which creates a more focused subject matter (like setting up fruit on a platter—still life) or drawing the environment/setting around oneself as it is. Though both are interesting in their own ways, the latter form of observational drawing is what is concerned with recording the current moment. Most of the time observational drawings of the surrounding environment are quick and sketchy, which communicates the essence of the moment accurately, sometimes more than photographs (like how very messy drawings of people walking on the walkway communicates that they were walking fast, or how one detailed part of a sketch means that was what caught the artist's eye the most, the highlight of their day).

Learning from art history

Notable artists throughout history have done their own observational drawing sketches that are not as appreciated as the artists' full-fledged paintings. Post-impressionist painter Van Gogh created two sketches of his bedroom before creating three paintings of the same subject matter. Although his aim from the sketches was to prepare for the next three paintings, the sketches captured the moment: his bedroom being a restful place to be. His aim in his bedroom pieces was to communicate this sense of rest and refuge, which the sketch manages to do: the composition being the wide view of the bedroom while being inside of it makes the bedroom welcoming to rest in. He was not concerned with realism (as the bed was too big, the room slanted, the perspective skewed), but this observational piece communicates the moment regardless, his perspective of his reality.



"Vincent's bedroom" (1888),
Van Gogh



Own attempts

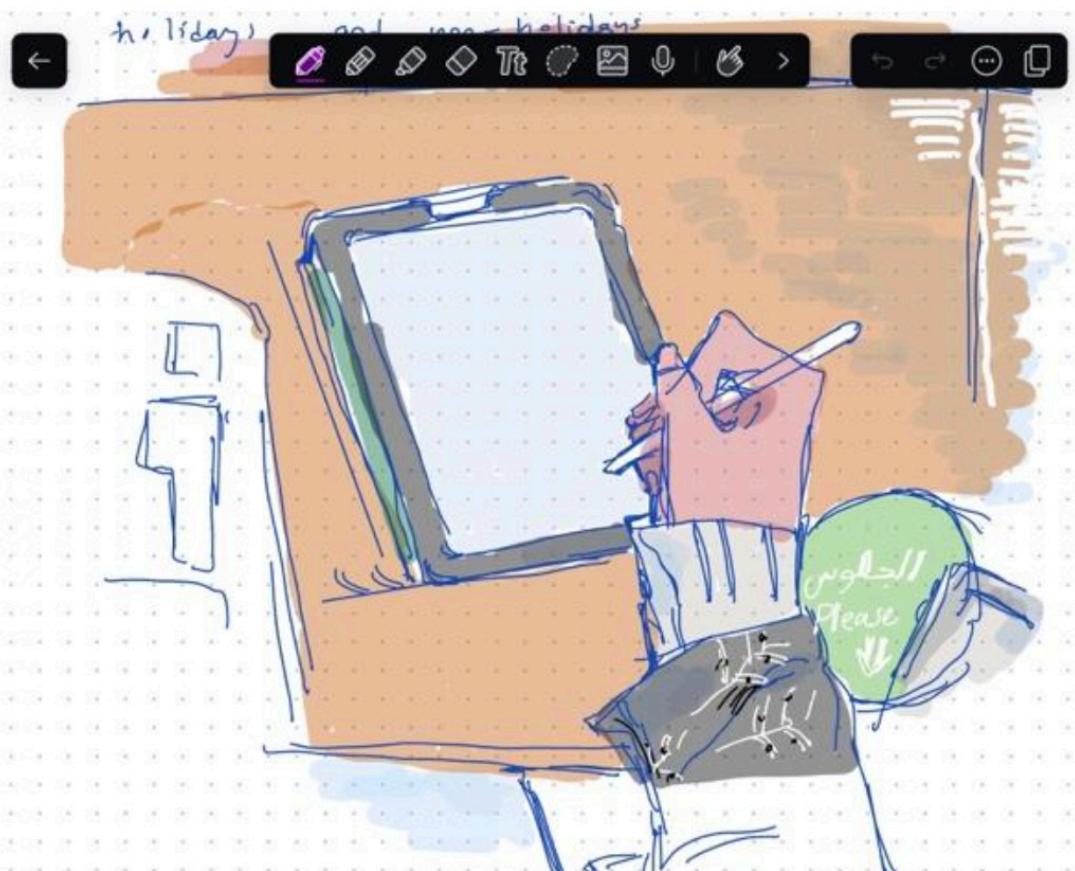
During high school, back when we had to spend hours without our phones, I started using observational drawing as an alternative way to record the current moment (and pass boring class time). It stuck with me ever since.



Car backseat, on the way home



University Cafeteria at 10:30am



In class (digital)

The Colorful Canvas of Art Collection: A Journey Through Time and Pixels

By Maria Mina

"The collector is an artist in his own way, by the way he puts things together.

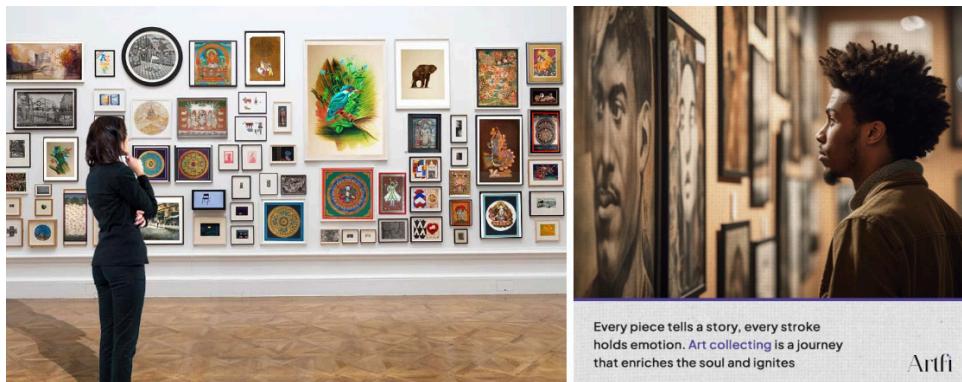
You can read a person's soul from their collection."

- Ayers Tarantino, Art and Antiques, Dec 2008

In a world where the old embraces the new, art collection stands as a testament to the enduring beauty of human expression. It's a realm where the classic charm of traditional art waltzes gracefully with the bold strides of contemporary digital forms. This narrative unfolds a tale of two worlds – the enchantment of traditional art and the exhilarating odyssey of contemporary digital art, each rich with stories and visionaries.

Whispers of the Past: The Enchantment of Traditional Art

Let's embark on a journey through time. Picture yourself in an ancient gallery, its walls a silent witness to history. Here, each painting, each sculpture, is a portal to the past. This is the realm of traditional art collection, where every piece is a chapter from history's grand narrative. Imagine the thrill of holding a fragment of the Renaissance in your hands, or feeling the lingering spirit of Baroque through a sculpture. This isn't merely collecting; it's about preserving stories and emotions that have traversed centuries. Art collectors in this sphere are not just owners; they are guardians of history, curators of time.



Every piece tells a story, every stroke holds emotion. Art collecting is a journey that enriches the soul and ignites

Artfi

A Digital Odyssey: The Rise of Contemporary Art

Now, fast forward to the present, where art escapes the confines of canvas and marble. Welcome to the digital age, where art is born from pixels and code. The traditional brushstrokes have found companions in digital creations, crafting a new narrative in the art world. Digital art collections are vibrant, dynamic, ever-evolving with the pace of technology. They echo the thoughts and dreams of a generation that speaks in the language of the internet and virtual reality. Collecting digital art is more than an aesthetic choice; it's an embrace of the future, a nod to artists who paint their visions in the canvas of technology.

A Mosaic of Masterpieces

Art collection is not a monochrome picture; it's a spectrum that spans across various genres and forms. Fine art collections are like timeless symphonies, resonating with the elegance of the old masters. Contemporary art collections are the rhythm of the modern heartbeat, echoing the complexities of our times. Photography collections are frozen moments in time, capturing ephemeral beauty. Then there's the intriguing world of digital and new media art, a dance of imagination in the realm of the virtual. Art collection is a journey that transcends time and form, a dialogue between the past and the future. Traditional art collections tell tales of history, culture, and timeless creativity, while contemporary digital art collections are narratives of innovation, technology, and forward-thinking.

The Collectors: Guardians of Art

Behind every collection lies the collector, each with their own story. Personal collectors weave their life's journey into their collections, each piece a reflection of a memory, a dream, a moment. Corporate collections are tapestries of prestige and aesthetic expression, adorning the halls of business with creativity and inspiration. Museums stand as custodians of art, their collections a bridge connecting the past, present, and future. And in the quiet corners of history lie royal collections, majestic and timeless.

Among the legendary collectors of such timeless treasures was Peggy Guggenheim, a doyenne of art who amassed one of the most significant collections of early 20th-century European and American art. Her collection, now housed in the Peggy Guggenheim Collection museum in Venice, is a vibrant chronicle of her life and the artists she supported.



Fast forward to the present, where art leaps beyond physical boundaries into the digital realm. Here, we encounter Beeple's "**Everydays: The First 5000 Days**", a digital collage that made headlines for its groundbreaking sale as a Non-Fungible Token (NFT) for over \$69 million. This piece is a vibrant mosaic of daily digital creations, marking a pivotal moment in the history of contemporary art.



Rising stars in the art collection world like Justin Sun have embraced this digital revolution. Sun, known for his tech savvy and keen eye for future trends, represents a new generation of collectors. He's pioneering in collecting digital art, including notable NFTs, signaling a shift in how art is perceived and valued in the digital age.

A Tapestry of Art and Heart

Every art collection, whether it be in a grand museum or a digital gallery, is a tapestry woven with stories, dreams, and emotions. It's a journey through time and imagination, where each piece of art is a thread in the fabric of human expression. Art collectors, regardless of their domain, are weavers of this tapestry, bringing together pieces that speak not only to the eyes but also to the soul.

As we explore these diverse realms of art collection, we realize that it's not just about the art itself. It's about the stories behind each piece, the history it carries, the future it symbolizes. From the hushed corridors of ancient galleries to the bright screens of digital platforms, art collection is a journey that transcends time, a dance of tradition and innovation.

In this colorful canvas of art collection, every brushstroke, every pixel, is a testament to the enduring power of human creativity. It's a reminder that art, in all its forms, is a language that speaks across ages, a bridge connecting the past with the present and paving the way to the future. This is the art of collecting, a journey through time and pixels, a story of tradition and technology, beautifully interwoven in the tapestry of human experience.



By Diana Gazizova





The Tartan Card Deck

Design and Layout by Hala Al Darbasi