



ISSUE 1 | OCTOBER 2018



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hello and welcome to our very first edition of Living Lifestyles magazine.

This issue we have interviews with BeefBank and all the wonderful things they are doing for our community, Ashwin who is a comedian, yoga with John West and many more. Remember to stop by our reviews section for an insight to local businesses and performances while having a peek at our short stories.

Remember, if you want to contribute, send us an email!

- *Corina*



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turning the tables on hunger

BEEFBANK

BeefBank needs your help to turn the tables on hunger. Living in a first world country like Australia, we tend to find it easy to think that topics like poverty and hunger don't really exist here because it isn't so easily seen. But unfortunately, this isn't the case with more and more Australian families finding it harder to stay afloat each year. The ever-rising cost of living is seeing the number of Australians needing food relief on a steady incline that doesn't seem to be going down any time soon. This is why there is more of a need than ever for companies like BeefBank to be providing these families with the assistance they need to ensure they don't have to spend another night hungry.

However, companies like BeefBank can only do so much. Lack of funding and donations means there are still thousands of families being turned away due to not being able to keep up with demand, this is where you can help.

BeefBank is a non-profit organisation that provides meat to frontline charities such as FoodBank, for distribution among the homeless and needy in Australia. BeefBank has made it their mission to "turn the tables on hunger and help put food on the table for families in need."

So how can you help? BeefBank are always looking for donations of whatever people are willing to give. A donation of \$30 can help feed someone for an entire month. BeefBank also accepts donations of animals from farmers and they host a range of charitable events to assist in their fundraising. Most notably they have an up and coming charitable dinner on the 27th of October endorsed by celebrity chef Paul West and stand-up comedian Ashwin Segkar will be the MC. Head on over to <https://www.beefbank.org> to donate and buy tickets.





BeefBank Story.

Paul West to be key guest speaker at BeefBank's first annual dinner in Brisbane.

Celebrity chef and newly appointed BeefBank ambassador Paul West will be the key guest speaker for BeefBank's first annual dinner in Brisbane to be held later this month.

An auction will be held during the dinner to help raise money for BeefBank and will include exciting items such as signed copies of West's book "The River Cottage Australia Cookbook".

The dinner will be hosted by Australian comedian Ashwin Segkar and will include second guest speaker Matt Kirkegaard, a Brisbane based freelance beer writer, to entertain guests.

The dinner will be held at Cribb Street Social in Milton, QLD, on October 27, 2018 and will include a three-course meal plus three wines. The event starts at 6:30pm

sharp and will run through until 10:30pm.

Not-for-profit organisation BeefBank aims to help people in need by sourcing fresh meat to give to Foodbank Queensland. Their vision is to ensure all Australians have access to enough food. They receive support from farmers and transport companies who assist through donations but rely on the generosity of others to help get them through.

Tickets are \$55 each and are on sale through BeefBank's website. All proceeds from the night will be used to help fulfil BeefBank's vision.

"A copy of the celebrity chef's signed book will also be up for auction on the night."

- Contribution by Sarah Andrew, written by Anonymous



Just a Hug(h)e Fan of Music

Meet [Hugh Hansen](#), an aspiring cellist from Toowoomba who is now currently playing in the University of QLD Symphony Orchestra (UQSO).

Coming from a family with a musical background, Hugh decided he would try his hand at the cello in 2008 after growing up watching his 2 older brothers playing the double bass. What started out as just something he wanted to “give a go”, quickly awakened a musical passion inside of him. Playing in annual talent shows in Toowoomba, and being nominated for a group play in 2012 and 2013.

Getting into UQSO is an accomplishment in itself, many young musicians fail to make the cut each year and Hugh was nearly one of them. Submitting his audition late, and from the other side of the world he had to Skype call his mother at 3am and was lucky enough to find a 40-minute recital video he had done in year 12. His performance of Mala 2 and Beethoven 9 in this video was thankfully enough to get him into the program, and now Hugh has been placed at 3rd desk.

Being inspired by the likes of Ed Sheeran, Hugh keeps a vibrant energy about him and tries to emulate that throughout his music. He has accomplished a lot in his short time on the Brisbane classical music scene having already performed with big-name Australian artists such as Miller-Heidke, and in 2015 even Josh Pyke, a performance Hugh himself describes as one of the biggest moments in his career. Although his talent on the cello might be what Hugh is most known for, he has a diverse range of musical tastes and passions. Drawing inspiration from Folk, Country and Aboriginal music;

he also writes and composes his own original songs. Telling his own story through his music, Hugh just lets his “emotions fall onto the page” captivating anyone lucky enough to be around to hear it. He’s an artist who thrives off what the audience gives back. The engagement and interaction from the audience and fans fuels Hugh’s passion and is why he wants to one day teach music himself.

Hugh’s someone who thrives off energy and loves seeing people learn. He wants to one day be a classroom music teacher and share his love for the art with the youth of Australia, assisting in shaping the next generation of aspiring musicians.

He’s a fun loving and energetic artist with a knack for anything creative, hoping to extend his creative reach into the realm of writing. Just an overall passion for putting pen to paper Hugh hopes to later down the track write a novel of his own and bring happiness to people outside of his music as well.

Hugh is definitely one of the young classical musicians to watch. Performing on stages with some big-name stars in the industry; yet still loving the feeling he gets just performing for those passing by in the park, he really loves the art, and his overall happy energy rubs off on anyone who meets him.

- [Written by Lachlan Naligan](#)

Yoga Yarns

by John West

Quite a few years ago, a friend of mine told me that I “needed yoga”. I wasn’t sure why I needed it but, being adventurous, I thought I’d give it a try.

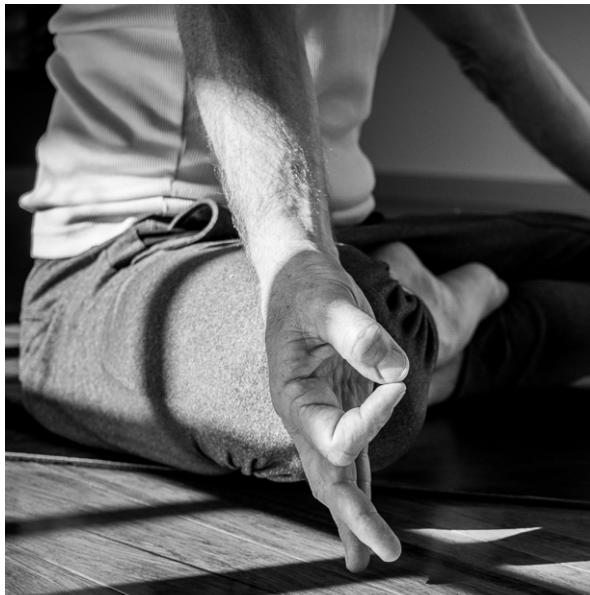
It was these words that led me down the long and winding path that is yoga. If you look past the physical side you will find like I did, that it’s a never-ending path. *Yoga is the original holistic system*, which dates back thousands of years. It takes care of the body, mind and the soul.

Anxiety and depression are not unique to our current era. While I was waiting in the Delhi airport for a flight back to Australia; I saw the quote “if you are depressed, you are living in the past, if you are anxious you are living in the future, if you are at peace you are living in the present”. This is certainly true, today our ancestors must have been affected in a similar way.

When I arrived home, I pondered on who had come up with such an insightful saying. The answer of course lay with Google and found that it’s attributed to the Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu who lived approximately 2500 years ago.

Yoga can help with the three key notions of that quote. The secret lies not only in the exercise component but in combining it with the breath and meditation practices. If you’re not combining pranayama (breath practice) and dhyana (meditation) with asana (postural work) then you are merely doing exercise.

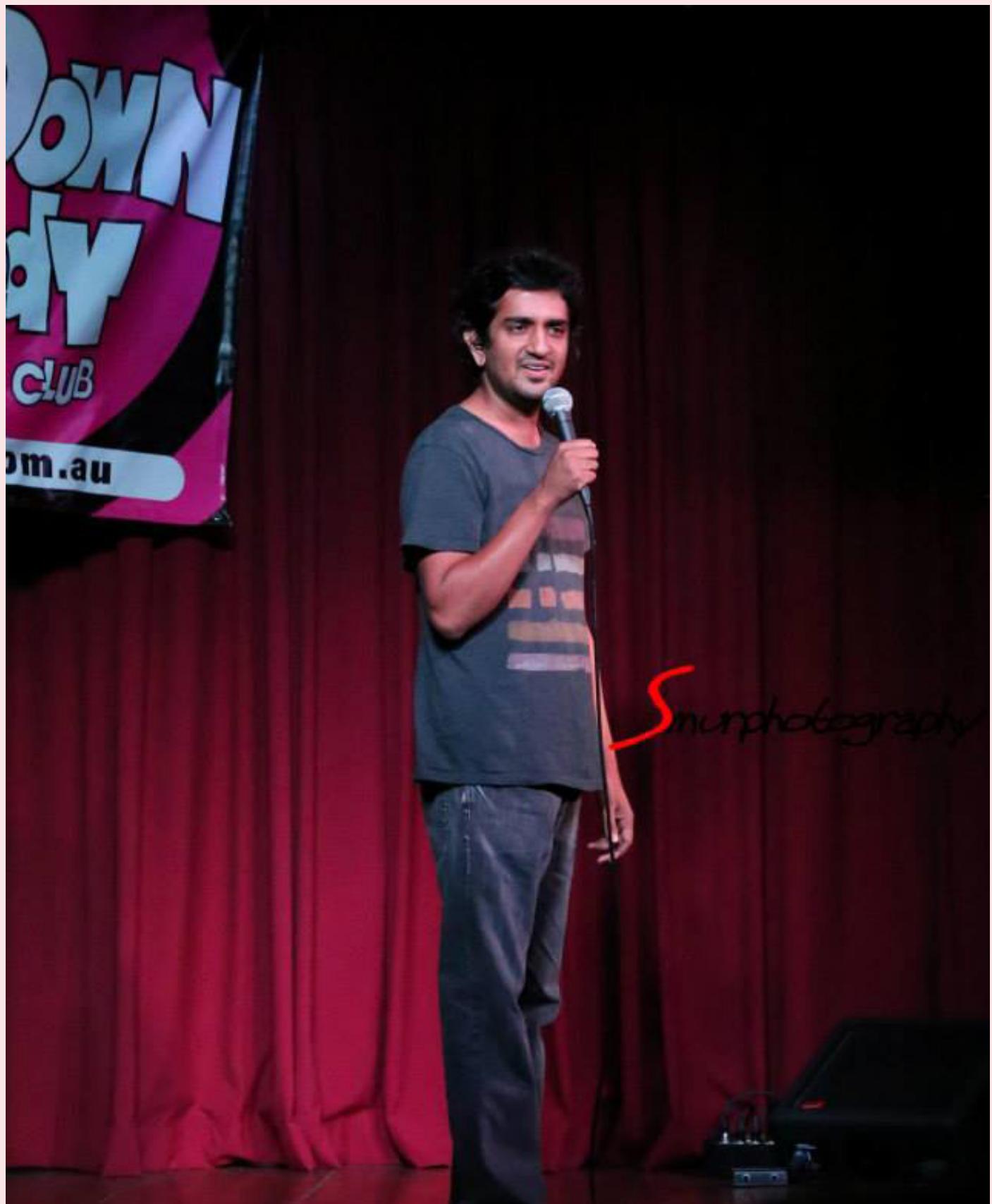
- Written by John West



“If you are depressed, you are living in the past, if you are anxious you are living in the future, if you are at peace you are living in the present”



Image Credit: Kelly Ryan Creative, July 2016.



AN AFTERNOON WITH ASHWIN

Ashwin Segkar is a talented Brisbane stand-up comedian and writer. He is also a radio announcer for ABC Radio and Director of Baker Street Marketing. Ashwin was born in India and travelled through New Zealand, Malaysia, England and Australia,

Hi Ashwin, thank you for meeting with me and doing this interview.

Thanks for having me.

What qualities do other comedians have that you admire?

I admire comedians who have the ability to do dark humour, impersonations, and those who can do 10 minute stories that captivate an audience. That's a great skill to have.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

Sometimes things pop into my head just as I'm about to fall asleep. Other moments of inspiration come from things that have happened to me over the years, things my family have done, embarrassing things I've done and random events that have gotten trapped in my subconscious.

How long does it take to prepare a piece?

Sometimes ideas just come out ready to try - half of them bomb, but it doesn't take long to get those ones ready. If it's something I'm consciously trying to write from scratch and make funny, that can take a few days to work on.

Most memorable show?

There's not one that really stands out but I like doing my own solo shows where I can bring in props, costumes, scientific equipment, drum kits and go on a more unusual adventure with the audience than you can usually do when they're drunk at a sports bar.

What are the main mistakes comedians make?

We all do it, but I feel that the biggest one is misreading the room. There are also things that make your friends and family laugh, but won't make a room full of strangers laugh... so figuring that out can take time. The beauty of comedy though is that it's built on making mistakes. No matter how long you've been doing it, you're going to try jokes that don't work.

What were you like in high school?

Well, in primary school I was a leader of a demon fighting gang for a day and I was more extroverted. However, that changed when I got to high school and I became a lot quieter. It was most likely due to the bullying. One time I was bundled up in a duffle bag and carried to soccer practice.

What do you do in your spare time?

I like to take my shoes off and walk on the grass in the Botanical Gardens. One time I was talking to myself and my backpack was nearby. I received a few strange looks and I got questioned by the police. I also like to cook, especially experiment with puff pastry and salmon. I like to see what inappropriate things I can combine with salmon and still have it be edible.

What is the funniest thing that has happened to you recently?

My flatmate was getting a haircut and the barber told him that he likes Brisbane more than England as there are not as many Indians here, while England has way too many. So, I started gathering a flash mob with a few friends and myself, where we'd dress in traditional Indian outfits and get a mass haircut with the guy. We didn't go through with it after the hairdresser rang to say he'd disciplined the staff member and changed their barber training to try to avoid racist chit chat. Would've been a fun flash mob.

If you were the CEO of a company name one thing you would make compulsory in the office and one thing you would ban in the office?

I would make it a four-day work week for everyone with an open plan office space. I would ban shoes and limit hierarchy so we feel less trapped.

What is your favourite place to hang out?

The Botanical Gardens and my parents' place. They've worked hard and are now well off enough to have a bathtub. It's my favourite thing to do there, along with a curry and a catchup.

How do you describe your comedy style on stage?

I seem to talk about culture and the experience of being a migrant a bit. Done with a bit of surrealism and physical humour.

What are some of the things that make you happy?

Watching funny videos on YouTube, walking in the park, old friends and unusual physical movements. I'm a bit nostalgic so I enjoy meeting up with my childhood friends. We don't meet that often but every few years we like to take a week-long holiday for a catch up.

Margaret

A child's perspective, although simple, can be a powerful thing. From an early age the ideas and values that we will carry with us into adulthood have already begun to form.

By the time we're adults, it becomes harder for us to accept the need and find the desire to change. But what if children were given the tools adapt fluidly to change? Would that make adulthood easier to navigate?

Author, Lifestyle and Business Coach, Margaret Bruanack believes that her writing can empower children while they're young to discover happiness, in even the worst of situations, while encouraging them always be asking questions.

Her first children's book 'I love Being Happy' explores what it means to uncover happiness in all that life has to offer us.

"The simple thing of this book for a little kid having the gratitude and seeing that everything can be done from an energy of happiness. Most people go into the trauma and drama of oh my god this is bad."

She explains that it's all about asking yourself during these moments 'What's good about this?' instead of focusing on the negative, which most of us (especially adults), tend to do.

'What you're doing is just asking the universe for a different possibility so you don't go down the rabbit hole. Because

most people go down the rabbit hole and start beating ourselves up. This question stops you from going into judgement and beating yourself up."

Margaret admits that even though her life has been filled with trauma and grief, she is grateful for all her experiences and hopes that they will have the power to nurture and inspire others.

Her third children's book I love being Curious, to be released soon, is about encouraging children to ask questions and live in the curiosity of a question.

Questions are a great thing. Most questions will lead you to another question and then to another and so on but what happens when we're given an answer? We stop asking questions and bring the exploration of life to a halt.

"With children, there is a willingness to keep playing, most adults don't see their lives as a playground, and they see it as hard work."

- Written by an anonymous

Braunack



A Chat with Dan

Dan Whiffen is originally from the UK and brings his talent to Brisbane in the form of five different restaurants. He was underwhelmed with the robotic and basic service of the places he visited here in Australia, which is starkly contrasted with the warm and vibrant atmosphere of the UK hospitality venues.

As a co-owner of Mr. Edwards Alehouse and Kitchen, Dan wanted it to become a household name. By doing this, he took on every piece of online feedback. Nowadays, he knows that anyone can say anything online and that the customer may have come in on a bad day.

Facebook is changing their reviews to give a recommendation instead of a star rating which he embraces wholeheartedly.

The design of the restaurants have a UK flavour while being named after the surrounding areas to give it a local vibe. One in particular will be hosting the BeefBank Annual Dinner 2018.

Cribb St Social will host the event on the 27th October 2018. This charity event by BeefBank is to help source meat for FoodBank to help out the homeless and the marginalised people in Australia. Dan was asked to host this event and after hearing about all the great work BeefBank does, he was excited to be part of this event.

As a restaurant owner, Dan understands food wastage is a significant problem, so he is inspired to find ways to help out with the community. Being part of this event is a great way

to find out strategies of how his establishments can help.

So come along to the event and experience the warm and inviting atmosphere Dan has so carefully cultivated.

- Written by Louis Cassidy

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My Lunch with Sarah

Sarah Andrew is the director of [JKA Public Relations and Media](#). I sit down with her overlunch to chat with her about business.

What do you hope to accomplish within the next year?

Move into our own space. Our own offices, own identity, a home for the magazine publishing company, two podcast studios, an interview room, a laidback studio, board rooms, a show room of what we can do. I want to raise our profile so people know who we are and what we do. Plus, keep on building the team.

What has been your biggest challenge?

I think that me stepping up, being seen, and believing in what I know is possible. I do business different to everyone and take risks. There is no way we can fail. If it doesn't work, we go around and find a different way. Like having a flat tyre, we change it instead of keep on driving.

How important is company culture to you and what measures do you take to maintain your desired culture?

Company culture is important and I want to surround myself with people who are willing to achieve in their own life and the company. I want to have people who enjoy what they do and who love coming into work. I also want them to have fun and creating a different pathway that hasn't been seen and being ok with taking risks. We maintain this by consistently communicating what we want and what we require.

What are your values as a company leader? How do you ensure these values are upheld by employees?

My value is about creation, getting out there and out-creating myself every day. I find out what people value, what they hope to get out of being here at JKA and what they want to achieve in their own lives. With the people I interview, I seek to find out if their energy is congruent to the company before they even come aboard. For my employees and interns; I have a regular meeting with them to see if they are still passionate about creating and if there is anything they may require (within reason as I do have a company to run).

What features make a good leader?

Committing to yourself, knowing that you want, be willing to take risks to get there, and be accountable of their own actions. A person who is willing to give everything a go, being practical and pragmatic, looking at everything, the good, bad and the ugly. Someone who doesn't exclude anything, willing to listen, having an allowance, not making it wrong but not making it right.

Would you describe yourself as a risk taker?

Yes, I am willing to choose what works, even if at times it doesn't look like it. I'm willing to do different possibilities and do what others are not willing to do.

Tell me about an accomplishment that shaped your career.

Five years ago, I came back from Bali, looked at my life and thought there had to be more possibilities. Access consciousness fell into my lap and my life changed. I used the tools I was given and discovered lots of things I was living by, were actually other peoples' realities. I wasn't having my own reality. That really changed the way I did



business and the way I lived my life.

What do you do when you are not working?

Working is a part of my whole life and so I don't exclude it. The adventure of living is business for me. I include everything in my life.

You are a new addition to a paint set. What colour would you be and why?

The whole rainbow as I want to have it all. I would mix different colours together, try different colour combinations, leave other colours out and see what happens.

Any advice for to other women who are running their own companies?

Have commitment to yourself. Know what you know and be really open to have allowances to other peoples' interesting

point of view but always choose for you and what you can do for you. Don't exclude anything - things that are silly stupid, too tough could actually be the door that opens to new business. Never give in, never give up, and never quit. The thing you think is the hardest or the most complicated, that is when change is happening so embrace it.

What makes you happy?

By committing to me, having everything I desire as my own reality, my own world, knowing that I can trust myself in every choice. There is no good or bad choice, there is just a choice and I can choose again. People who are choosing to create with me and creating for themselves.

- Written by Corina Pelichowski

Proud Henry

Our pick of the month is Proud Henry Wine and Ginoteca. They are located on Wickham St in Brisbane and this is why we love them.

As soon as you walk in, the candle-lit bar gives off a romantic and cosy feel and you are warmly greeted by the staff. The peacock, Proud Henry himself, overlooks the establishment from his perch above the abundance of gins which can be mixed in a variety of different ways.

There is usually a sweet-voiced singer but it is still low enough to have a conversation or you can sit out in the back area during the warmer evenings. The staff have a deep knowledge of the gins, where they are from, and what herbs, spices, fruits and even some vegetables to give you an authentic gin experience.

Proud Henry also has gin tastings available in a room with a long wooden table and comfy chairs. Here you get to sample a variety of

flavours from around the world and from local sources. Bookings are essential.

Coming up at Proud Henry is their Seven Deadly Gins event for Halloween. They have crafted a liquid juniper-inspired embodiment of the seven deadly sins so get your tickets before they sell out.

I personally like coming here because of the atmosphere and the talented staff. I never know what I want, but I ask for a gin that is sweet... or sour... or has a herb flavour to it, depending on my mood. They really deliver a top-quality drink that I can quietly enjoy under the fairy lights with my husband. The soothing teal colours help us unwind after a long week and is one of our favourite places to visit. Highly recommend!

- Written by Corina Pelichowski





Metro Arts

Walking down the Edward street towards city botanic gardens, it's almost inevitable not to notice the iconic 109, a beautiful heritage-listed-building on the left.

Metro Arts, with its well-designed meaningful logo, is where you can get your dose of contemporary art.

The building, formerly known as Coronation House, has been home to local and international artists for nearly 40 years in its vibrant venues with something on all year round! 109 Edward street, is a five-storey building with heaps of flexible space to perform, rehearse, exhibit and watch retro movies on a big screen.

By the time you step in, you feel the warmth and character from its wooden floor and unique posters all over the place. It's just a melting pot of history and modernism.

So, if you're looking for an art gallery, non-traditional performance, a talk, workshops, or simply meeting great inspiring and creative people, that is the spot! Just visit metroarts.com.au and see what's on.

There's an Espresso Bar in the Foyer, and a bar just a couple of stairs down, all in one place in the heart of the Brisbane city.

- Written by Rozbeh Fakhr

Director

Have you heard of Perun Bonser? If you're not a Western Australian local, you probably wouldn't have but he is an energetic director with a desire to see Indigenous stories be shared with and related to by a much larger community.

Originally a trained dancer, Perun found that cinematography allowed him to truly express the ideas which swirled around inside. Much like a modern-day Shakespeare, he tells stories centred around relatable and timeless themes such as strength, community, loss, family and seeing the beauty all around. With ties to Bunuba and Ngarluma indigenous peoples in the surrounding Kimberly region, Perun's films often try to show more human perspectives of the land and the people that seek a spiritual connection with it.

2015's gritty yet ultimately inspiring short film "Fighter" is a perfect example of Perun's art as it speaks of a man's struggles with family, community and loss while he deals with being a middle-aged Indigenous wrestler in Australia. Perhaps reflective of his own desire to be strong or instil such strength, many of his films portray stout characters who grow and persevere in the face of adversity. His films tell stories that ultimately build us up and tell us we can be, the struggles we face and asks us to look back at history and to never to give up.

Look out for The Shore, a short film currently in pre-production sure to follow Perun's trend of telling realistic and grounded stories that are dark yet in due course uplifting to watch.

- Written by Hayden Adams





Maksim Mrvica Piano Concert Review

Croatian pianist Maksim Mrvica came to Brisbane on 26th September last month for his debut tour. This world renowned live performer excited the Brisbane crowd with his electrifying energy and compelling stage presence. By the time you step in to the piano concert, you could feel right away that his immersive music experience is something that you will not regret diving into!

The building where he performed at, is known as the Brisbane City Hall. It has been an iconic landmark, which represents the heart of Brisbane which attracts thousands of tourists around to globe to come. It also makes the building a perfect match to Maksim in performing his live piano music with the colorful shining lights. This ground-breaking pianist specializes in showcasing classical music reimagined with electronic elements, combining strong personal style and a rock star charisma.

One of my most favorite pieces of Maksim's album was 'Mission Impossible' that he performed as the finale. Maksim's cover of this theme is included in the crossover album *The Movies* which was released in 2012. This theme music has quite a lot of electronic effects in its background music, creating a complex and modern style. He also added many techno beats to increase intensity of the theme music. His compelling emotions on stage with the dark, reddish lighting create a captivating music experience to audiences, which enchanted them from start to finish.

- Written by Tina Ping MA

Seoul Bistro



Wings. ALL. YOU. CAN. EAT. WINGS. Nuff said. 7 flavours of spicy, crunchy and sweet goodness in one mouthful...who needs 12 spices when you can have 7 flavours! For \$22 choose from crispy friend, honey wasabi, peri peri, buffalo and yang nyum with unlimited sides of chips, garlic bread and lemon iced tea. But wings aren't just the only delicious Korean delicacy on the table. Don't think you could go through a mountain of wings? Try their delightfully sweet Bulgogi Beef, don't feel like Korean tonight? Transport yourself to Japan with their Japanese styled crispy chicken Katsu. With their friendly staff and family environment Seoul Bistro brings Korea to you as you sit and wait letting the wafting smell of crispy fried chicken wave over you. Seoul Bistro truly is the food for your soul. Whether you choose to indulge your Viking spirit and go through an infinite loop of crispy fried chicken or you decide to be civilized and try one of their Japanese or Korean styled dishes, Seoul Bistro has a delicacy for everyone.

It's the perfect destination for friends and family who are just looking to try something different, or for those who think they can get through 3 baskets of fried chicken (you won't) Because ultimately the chicken is better at Seoul Bistro. Duh duh duh dun.

- Written by Kevin Wong



The Importance of the Little Things

What makes you happy, like, truly happy? The kind of happy that makes you feel as if life is beautiful and that you're glad you're here for it?

For the longest time, I thought it was about having big achievements and looking pretty. At least until I found myself becoming more and more dissatisfied and frustrated with my situation. My outlook seemed bleak.

I had to take a deep look into why, and I started to notice I wasn't paying attention to all the little things that give me that warm feeling of wonder and contentment. Those small things that are as simple as a quiet moment with a cup of tea, taking that extra few seconds to get a closer look at that plant growing out of the crack in the wall on your way to work, or the feeling of comradery with the crowd at a music event.

Once I noticed, I became infatuated with finding that same kind of appreciation in everything I did. I fell in love with cooking; there's something truly freeing about dancing and singing along to your favourite music while creating something delicious to nourish your body. There was a satisfaction in having a clean space after putting in just that little bit of extra effort when I'd otherwise wanted to sit down with my foodbaby. I felt energised and curious, the fear and trepidation of being seen as weird

or alone was outweighed by my desire to know. To know what it's like to watch a movie by myself in a theatre, to see if those markets in my suburb had a good variety and a warm atmosphere, to experience again, the feeling of checking out a book and sitting in the park to pour through its pages just as I did as a kid. I was in love. I definitely still had my troubles and stresses, but they didn't feel so all-consuming as they once did. I was okay with the fact that I didn't yet know if I was going to be successful because I was enjoying the journey.

Slowly, I found myself sharing my discovery with my friends, I felt that I needed to share this love with them. I found it easier to extend invitations because I was able to think of all these curious things that I'd seen during my everyday activities to do and see together. It didn't always have to be large or extravagant. Sometimes, it was as simple as stopping in for a quick chat after work, or it was organising a bimonthly board game night.

I feel connected and valued. I still want to be pretty and achieve my goals, the only difference now, is that I know I'll be there to support myself this time because I've found my happy, little things.

- Written by Louise Reid



Finding Happiness

I have always been happy from time to time but it wasn't until I met my husband Dan that I felt truly happy and content with life.

I was living in a share house with my boyfriend. We were in a 6.5 year relationship and it was going ok. Being young and naïve; I didn't know how to communicate on how I felt about certain things and he was oblivious to the things that were hurtful.

He wanted to explore all the things that life had to offer, namely flirting with people in front of me and not understanding why I had an issue with it. While I myself, couldn't seem to make him understand why I was so upset with his actions.

I met Dan at one of our many house parties. His long blonde hair and moustache made him look like Westley

from the Princess Bride and he brought a fancy bottle of wine. I was curious but confused. It was a house party where the only type of wine was the one that came from a box.

I went and sat by the campfire and Dan soon joined me. My mouth was dry and my heart pounded. He was gorgeous and intelligent; I was hoping that I sounded somewhat sophisticated. We talked about anything and everything; conversation just flowed. He had good eye contact and never overstepped his bounds. It was a nice change to the general conversations at parties which ended awkwardly with "thanks, but no thanks. I have a boyfriend." It was a great night.

Soon after that, one of my housemates moved out and Dan, seizing the opportunity, moved in. Great, here was

this beautiful, smart, fun guy moving into the room next to mine. I had no idea of how to interact with him on a daily basis. So, I offered to do his washing. It was to save water by adding his clothes to mine, honestly. Not to provide a chance for me to talk to him.

One day he asked me if there was anywhere to go for a run as he wanted to cross-train for ice hockey. I showed him the national park near our place and it suddenly became routine. Do note, I dislike running and early mornings... but somehow by 6am I was ready to hit the bush trail. We did this for months. I was in denial of falling for Dan. "He's a good friend" I would say (cue eye roll from close friends).

I was happy being around him and sad when he was not around. My boyfriend at the time was hanging out with our friends that didn't understand boundaries so it was toxic for everyone. It was difficult to call it off, I didn't feel that I had the strength.

It all came to a head when my boyfriend and I started arguing more and more. He was planning on going down to the snow for a job while I wanted to stay in our home town and continue with my teaching contract. We were planning separate lives and didn't know it. I knew that a long-distance relationship was not going to work for us, there was simply no trust. To avoid creating more confusion for me, Dan wanted to give me some space and he moved out. We fell out of contact for a time but I then realised how much I wanted him in my life.

My boyfriend broke one of his promises to me and that was the final straw. I called off our relationship and moved out. I had enough. I moved into my own place and focused on myself for a bit. After some time, I gave Dan a call and we went from there. Then one day, I woke up

and his clothes were beside mine in the wardrobe. It was easy and natural. We didn't even have to think about it.

Dan and I spent the first few months of our relationship really communicating what we both wanted. We talked about careers, family, and travel... all the way down to who does the cooking. Neither of us like it but I will cook if it means not having take-out every night.

I was finally happy. Coming home and seeing him working at the home office was a delight. Making his lunch in the morning, knowing he would be sitting in the park with the drink bottle, sandwich, and small bag of lollies still brings a smile to my face today.

The same year we started dating, Dan proposed. We were down in Victoria at the snow and had a beautiful view of the snow fields. It was perfect. Sure, it was quick going from girlfriend to fiancé, but we talked about it and agreed on a long engagement before getting married.

We agreed to not limit the other person in any way. If there was something he wanted (say hanging out with an ex-girlfriend), and I was not comfortable, we would find a way to work through it together.

We agree that it's us vs. the problem, not partner vs. partner. The ground work was difficult but it has certainly paid off. We don't fight. Ever. We say "I'm feeling grumpy at you right now. Leave me alone for a bit then we can talk." And it works for us. And we are happier for it.

Find your happiness. Communicate with your partner and get to the root of the issue and work on it together as a team. I know everyone is different but everywhere you look; communication is key.

- Written by Corina Pelichowski

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