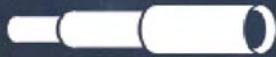




the
spyglass



winter issue
twenty twenty-one



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ANSWER THESE
QUESTIONS

& I'LL GIVE YOU
A NEW YEARS
RESOLUTION
FOR

2021

// JANICE KO
DESIGN // ANASTASIA BLOSSER

Pick a country to visit.

- a) England, I want to visit all those free museums!
- b) Brazil! Bring on the feijoada and warm weather.
- c) Using Japan's various vending machines is definitely on my bucket list.
- d) I think I want to explore more of Canada instead.

Choose a word:

- a) Wander b) Iconic
- c) Shiny d) Purpose

If you could do anything for one day, what would you pick?

- a) Visit your favourite fictional world, these virtual sorting hats just aren't cutting it.
- b) Attend your favourite team's sports game and get some new merch.
- c) Skydiving or scuba diving- anything to get my heart racing!
- d) Honestly? I'd rather stay in.

What's your least favourite part about winter?

- a) The slush gets my socks wet.
- b) It gets dark so quickly!
- c) It's so cold and the 20 cm snowfall doesn't help.
- d) Nothing, I love all of winter!

What do you like to do in your free time?

- a) Online shop
- b) Watch TV/Movies
- c) Hang out with my friends!
- d) Go on pinterest (or any social media, really)

IF YOU ANSWERED MOSTLY...

A

Read more books! Whether it be the classics or the newest YA adventure, reading can help you both emotionally and academically! Here, I'll give you a goal to start off with: 6 books for 2021- that's 1 book per 2 months! Doesn't sound so bad, right? Already like reading? I challenge you to 14 books this year. Happy reading!

B

Be more active! That's right everyone, I'm telling you to choose the stairs. Exercise can be a great outlet for stress and helps to keep your body healthy! With all this online school it's important to look away from the screen and move around. Trust me- your back will ache a lot less. Maybe pick up a new sport or go for a walk around your neighbourhood! Anything counts as long as you're moving!

C

Try something new each month! With all this time at home it leaves a person bored after switching between Netflix and Instagram for the umpteenth time. Maybe give doodling on some paper a try or bake a new cookie recipe! This is a great way to help stop the months all blurring together and who knows, maybe you'll find a new favourite hobby!

D

Put yourself out there! Making connections and friendships is one of the key factors that defines your high school experience! Whether you're in the ninth grade or the twelfth, don't feel like it's ever "too late". It never is and the more you try new things and meet more people, the more experiences you'll

FOURTEEN



Sometimes, to be Jewish is to be understanding of what it is like for astronauts on satellites looking down on Earth. It is to be disassociated from most people, yet acutely aware of them as well. It is to be in that fine in-between of feeling safe and secure and feeling as though your entire life will be uprooted.

To be Jewish is to be something far more complicated than a six-letter word.

Historically, being Jewish has been somewhat of a taboo. From being portrayed as blasphemous tricksters in Shakespeare, to enemies of the state for republics and regimes with little more than the flimsy prop of fear supporting them, the Jewish people have only ever been portrayed as outcasts.

Despite Jews not having to hide in attics for safety or view their menorahs as contraband, they're not entirely free from anti-semitism— ideologies that spiked during the days of oppressive German and Russian societies did not topple over with the same speed those regimes did. In a survey the European Union's Fundamental Rights Agency conducted less than two years ago that attempted to explore the perception of anti-Semitism in Europe, they found 89% of Jews living in countries such as Germany, France, The Netherlands, Poland, and the United Kingdom, among many others, felt as though anti-Semitism increased in their country in the past decade. More than a third feared being physically attacked.

While it's easy to ignore each individual Jew who participated in this survey, their overall message, one passed on from generation to generation, is much harder to brush off: Jews feel unsafe. What's worse is that Jews also feel unsupported.

Anti-Semitism in politics— arguably one of the most powerful facets of society— is prevalent on both the right- and left-side. On the right, it is much more apparent to non-Jews: the Trump administration (which, at the time this article was written, was recently voted out of office) was notorious for its anti-Semitic rhetoric, among its other unpatriotic (or, perhaps, Neo-patriotic) ideologies. Trump, while signing an executive order to fight anti-Semitism on college campuses, had two outspoken anti-Semites in his party (Robert Jeffress, who damned Jews to Hell, and John Hagee, who called Adolf Hitler a "hunter" sent by God). Trump himself has also refused to discredit white supremacists outright on multiple occasions.

Anti-Semitism on the left, however, is just as apparent to Jews. Whether it's human rights activists suddenly falling silent when the rights of Jews have been infringed upon or politicians refusing to meet with Jewish community leaders, the fact that anti-Semitism is in the left at all is an issue and one that is only noticed by those it affects.

MILLION

This issue is much closer than we would like to believe it is. Anti-Semitism in Canada is following the disturbing spike it has received in many other countries: according to Statistics Canada, a 2018 police report found that hate crimes against the Jewish population grew by 63 percent in 2017, from 221 to 360 incidents. In total, 18 percent of all police-reported hate crimes that year were anti-Semitic. There are also several Nazi monuments in Canada at the time this article was written.

This isn't an article claiming that Jews are the most oppressed minority in society: to claim that title for any minority would be ignorant and insensitive to the plights of other populations. However, this is an article claiming that, through years of forgetting the past and subtle anti-Semitism ingrained into our lives, we, as a society, have failed to acknowledge the decreasing amount of security for the Jewish people globally.

Perhaps this is a divine joke, but a complicated article such as this only has one fitting end, and it is a simple four-stanza poem written by German Lutheran pastor Martin Niemöller in the 1940s:

First, they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a socialist.

Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

// LEAH BEL BEN-TZUR
DESIGN // DAVID WANG





An Era of

Once meant to punish socially-incorrect behavior, the term cancel culture has been tossed around unironically, corroding its original mission for social equality and replacing it with ideological censorship. “Cancelling” is the spoken manifestation of educational, social and political changes that were beginning to occur in the early 2010s, arriving hand-in-hand with the shifting societal need to ensure everyone’s emotional safety. It has restricted an era of civil conversation, outgrowing its original definition and turning the internet into a petty pass/fail fight for acceptance where Charli D’Amelio is ostracized for not eating a snail but J.K. Rowling continues to sign book deals.

Based on personal attacks rather than constructive criticism, “cancelling” finds its roots in moral intimidation. Cancel culture alienates offenders without offering redemption, instilling the notion that acceptance in society is only possible through hidden, bigoted beliefs or blind compliance. The movement’s constant defensive attitude has undermined its quest for justice and turned battles for equal rights into jokes. As left- and right-wing politics polarize, cancel culture fuels the anger felt on both sides and concentrates this tension in an online stage, creating an age of common enemy identity politics where the members of society connect through shared hatred.

With the rise of social media, activists have been using it as a viable medium to create change while cancelling ce-

lebrities for remaining silent on political issues. This activism is shallow and performed to improve a person’s reputation. It is concerned with creating equal outcomes for inequality which requires constant readjustment and satisfies the need for surface-level justice rather than eliminating the root of the injustice. Cancel culture illustrates the fine line between rules and principles. Because it operates on a book of rules about how to behave, it allows for blind compliance whereas a principle requires critical thinking that is backed up by the beliefs of the individual. When combined with the trademark performative activism of social media, cancelling has become a trend rather than a crusade for justice where everyone is trying to be more woke, or socially-conscious, than their peers.

Debates made in opposition of cancel culture argue that social justice activism and its common-enemy politics are corrupting society in direct defiance of the freedom of speech. While this behavior is unsustainable for

Intolerance



societal growth, free speech should not justify hateful speech because free-thinking does not create an allowance or justification for discriminatory ideas. On the contrary, it allows people to reach these conclusions of inclusivity on their own and through a process instead of being told the right answer and being unable to support it. Rather than “cancelling” people for single offenses, everyone should be granted the kindness to learn from their mistakes while being held accountable for their actions. This privilege of redemption should be removed when the perpetrator refuses to show remorse. Their actions need to be addressed in a way that helps them learn and understand and as the offender, it is their responsibility to grow.

The dilemma society faces is how to reconcile essential liberties such as free speech in our digital age while protecting the existence of marginalized groups and removing extraneous privileges from those in power. Rather than putting aside contempt to resolve a unifying issue, cancel culture has been amplifying an already overinflated political climate where contradictory groups attack each other instead of working together to create long-lasting solutions to equality and justice. The notion that only perfect media can be consumed is not feasible nor sustainable and must be eliminated. There is a space between worshipping the author and segregating their media. Within that space, we must be able to consume critically, recognizing flaws in art and the bigoted opinions they

reflect. Acting like these problematic figures and their work does not exist is not the solution because it buries the issue without facing it.

As social consciousness progresses, nothing can be kept ideologically pure for long. Cancelling is not an effective nor sustainable way to grow as a society and only ends up defeating its own mission. However, its purpose of holding people accountable for their speech and actions is a worthwhile pursuit which creates a safer environment for marginalized communities. It is an attainable end goal so long as we are willing to think about our own beliefs, educate those who show repentance and work towards self-improvement. Be mindful, be critical, be thoughtful, because there are more mature solutions than moral superiority.

// ANASTASIA BLOSSER
DESIGN // CELINA XIAO
GRAPHICS // FREEPIK

THE FATE OF CINEMA

Evolution is constant; all things grow and evolve to avoid becoming extinct or replaced. Charles Darwin was the first to declare that for a species to survive they would have to evolve and pass on these traits to their descendants. Those who failed to adapt to their changing environment were left behind.

While technology is not a living species, the growth and evolution of tech in just the past decade have been transformational. I often find it difficult to grasp that Netflix is only twenty-three years old. It is by far the most established streaming service. Secure in its position of power over several of its upstart successors, such as Disney Plus and HBO Max. Customers can access all kinds of exclusive content on these platforms from the comfort of their own homes and our dependence and fascination with these services has only amplified under lockdown.

The pandemic has not been kind to the entertainment industry, but it has been especially hard on our forsaken theatres. Not only have they been shut down due to lockdown protocols, but the content they depend on to attract people has been stalled. Movie studios and theatres can't profit off their big-budget Hollywood blockbusters anymore, and theatres are forced to shut down for health and safety reasons. This symbiotic relationship between studios and theatres is threatened by Hollywood's ability to adapt to the limitations of the pandemic, and begin a stronger relationship with streaming services.

It would be quite dramatic for me to say that the COVID-19 pandemic killed the theatres when all it had actually done was accelerate the inevitable.

Companies like Netflix grow and thrive because they adapt to the advancement of technology and cement themselves to our culture. Unlike theatres, Netflix creates its own content, which grants them the freedom to be their own supplier and distribu-

tor. Movie theatres are completely dependent on their suppliers for their product, binding themselves to the movie studios, who are unwilling to run theatrical releases during a pandemic.

Besides, the cost of a Netflix subscription is \$14.99 per month, which provides customers with access to a multitude of content. Meanwhile, a general ticket at the cinema typically costs nearly as much, at about \$13, which only lets us watch one movie.

The final nail in the coffin is that, because it is an online platform, Netflix is much more accessible to the general public. This has proven itself useful in drawing in customers when cinemas are out of reach.

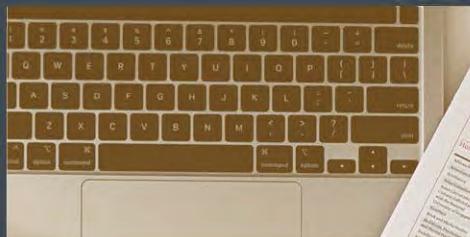
It breaks my heart to think of a future without movie theatres. I have such fond memories of spending my days seated in a dark room with a crowd of people and a bucket of warm popcorn nestled securely on my lap. There was always something special about being in a room with strangers, gathering together to immerse ourselves in front of the screen. I remember going to see the new Star Wars movie with my dad and being amazed by the millennium falcon dangling from the ceiling, the stormtroopers placed at each entrance, and the crowds of enthusiastic fans piling up to watch the movie together. The atmosphere was intoxicating. The entire community had come together to escape from their ordinary lives and get lost in a new one. It is a social experience that no streaming service can ever replace. When we eventually return to our normal lives, I only hope that the cinemas will still be there waiting for us.

// SARAH GRISHPUL
PHOTOGRAPHY // RACHEL LIU
DESIGN // STELLA WANG

EVERY SEPTEMBER

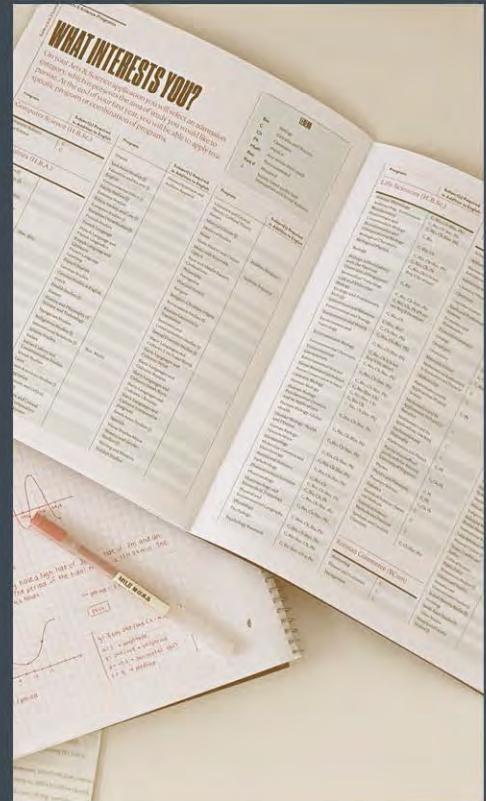
Every September for the past four years I've been hit with the same wave of dread, anxiety, and stress as soon as the words "university" left someone's lips. It's something that keeps me up at night, making me toss and turn in my covers until exhaustion eventually steals me away. At any family gathering or casual conversation it was brought up in, it left me wondering: am I supposed to have this all figured out? Everyone around me seemed to know what they were doing, where they intended to go— what they wanted.

Every September I realize what a ridiculous predicament life leaves every seventeen-year-old in. It seems absurd to have a teenager, somebody who isn't even old enough to vote, make this big of a decision, yet it's exactly what each grade twelve goes through every year. Though the mere thought of university applications is something that roots fear into my heart, it was comforting to find out that people around me felt the same. To be completely honest, I thought that this was a battle I was facing all alone. This battle I face with my fear of the future is something all my peers experience as well.

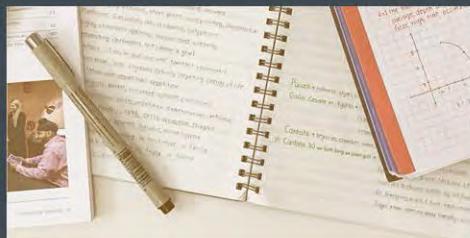


Every September, I learn, albeit with great difficulty, how to control my worries. I have this nasty habit where I worry prematurely and, in most cases, what I spend so many nights worrying over doesn't even happen. We all like to be prepared for things, no? Studying for your upcoming math test or practicing your strokes over and over again before a swim competition. The thing is though, no matter how much you prepare and worry for those things, you're not guaranteed to succeed. Harsh, huh? Well, it's the same idea with your future. You can't worry about all these things that could happen when you don't know how things will happen.

Every September, I remind myself that balance is the key. Finding balance between worrying and preparation is one the most difficult battles I've fought but I'm happy to say that I believe it's coming to an end. See, there's a very, very thin line between the two. But if not travelled upon carefully, it could be your downfall. What I'm trying to say is: being in charge of what you can control and leaving the rest to the future is the best course of preparation anyone can take. I guarantee you, many adults don't even have everything figured out, but the difference between the ones who are content and the ones who are worried is simply a matter of living their lives day-by-day instead of extensively planning ahead.



Every September, I tell myself that it's okay to not have everything figured out. Everyone has their own paths to tread and if yours takes two years longer, so be it. Everything works out in the end and it's more important that you take the time to really figure out what it is you want. Sometimes, the best way to tackle what seems like such a monumental decision is by diving headfirst into the water. Preparing for the future can be quite demanding, it requires you to put so much thought into it that you may neglect the present. Remember to enjoy every moment, every little detail about everything that makes you feel good—whether it be watching the snowfall on a quiet evening or laughing with your friends over a joke told ten minutes ago. Don't get caught up in your expectations of what your life should be. Instead, enjoy every single day.



// JANICE KO
PHOTOGRAPHY // NADJA
MARJANOVIC
DESIGN // ANASTASIA BLOSSER

A 'stan' is defined as a person who likes a certain piece of media and expresses that, in particular online. This initial definition seems harmless, but the connotations that come with the word itself have almost completely villainized the meaning. A stan is now considered an obsessive fan; someone who dedicates all their time to their preferred media and who will defend their faves with their dying breath. The concept of an obsessive fan isn't a new one; if you look back around 20 years ago, people in the year 2000 were also fans of celebrities and athletes to the point where they would have numerous posters on bedroom walls or several team jerseys in their closets. Stanning celebrities, artists, and athletes were common enough back then, so why do people find the concept so strange now? Despite the term "stalker fan" or "stan" being coined a few years ago, the origins always will be rooted in their dedication to artists and content creators. But are all stans really that bad? Or is it simply the loud minority who create this negative stigma for fans who are otherwise normal people?

The average internet patron has one of two opinions on stans: They either assume that stans are angsty children with an inherent need to idolize a celebrity, or that stans are angry kids coming together under the safety blanket of a fandom, hoping to accomplish some good with a large group of people of unwavering loyalty. The rise of using social media as a weapon against political evil is one that is incredibly new but has already proven to be effective. Most stans aren't a bunch of teenagers who were born to lead others into battle for the greater good of society. It is only through this dedication that so many people were able to come together for a mutual fight against oppression. Last summer, BTS stans matched their idols' million-dollar Black Lives Matter donation within 25 hours, something that is not only notable but almost unheard of. The same fans, along with hundreds of other fandoms, attempted to book tickets to a Trump rally, selling it out, only to have the arena almost barren. Along with spamming fancams in the timelines of problematic hashtags and crowdfunding to worthy causes, the new generation of stans has proven that they are more than simply angry children with an internet connection and something to say.



Stan



On the flip side, some stans can be incredibly problematic. There are cases of rabid fans swarming celebrities at airports, invading their privacy, and entitling themselves to know the personal lives of their idols. If you just thought of a particular event where something like this happened, chances are you were pretty disturbed when you found out that the people who did this were those in the same fandom as one of yours. It's almost scary to imagine that there are people out there who would go to great lengths to have the lives of their idols exposed for their own entertainment or satisfaction. A more recent example of this is the concept of faceless creators. Gamers like Dream, CorpseHusband, and many more like to keep their pedestrian lives separate from their online lives, and they keep this divide by not revealing their face or too much personal info. Certain fans who are desperate to know more about the person they idolize sometimes go to great lengths to invade their privacy, even attempting to locate IP and real-life addresses. These cases are far and few, most just being trolls (like the Dream GPS Twitter account), but the idea of it scares people enough to make outsiders very apprehensive about the fandom as a whole. The actions of 10, maybe 100 people out of a million or more can sometimes be loud enough that it distorts the entire outside perspective of a fandom, and that's where the judgement stems from.

Whether you personally believe that stan culture is toxic and repulsive and shouldn't be encouraged or you believe that it's not as bad as people think, you cannot deny that stans are a force to be reckoned with. These warriors of the internet, these hordes of screaming fans, these hackers and protesters, they are doing something worth taking note of. Perhaps stans are just teenagers and young adults taking their share of the spotlight. Perhaps they're a bomb waiting to explode... or perhaps stans are just angry kids with too much to say.

// TIA HARISH
DESIGN // DAVID WANG

Loona

The French Pietà

a short, true story about the French Revolutionary Jean-Paul Marat

In the sad processions of marketplaces and above the filling streets, all around the city hung a mid-day heat in the tired way that Paris would. It was then, in the confusion of the heat, that the young Charlotte Corday, who by noon began to knock at the same door for what was the second time that morning, promised herself unfaithfully that tomorrow, a Sunday, she could rest.

"Impossible," the woman at the door replied. "As my sister said to you earlier, Marat is unwell. He will not have anybody."

A voice came from deep inside the apartment. "Who is it, my love?"

"A woman by the name Corday," she shouted back, "all the way from Caen. She says she has the list of Girondins that fled to Normandy."

Mlle. Corday entered what was a small apartment smelling strongly of ink, a very unassuming workspace for a revolutionary, that held little connection to the image she had manufactured in her mind since her departure the day before.

"He is through that door there," Simone said. "Though I must inform you, my husband is very weak. You must not stay for longer than five minutes."

When Simone returned to her work the visitor had already disappeared into the hallway, stopping only at the threshold of the bathing room. She stood idly for a seemingly indefinite amount of time, hesitant to approach the man writing furiously in the copper tub. He was a terribly unattractive man, his face having been irreparably marred by blisters and sores and a sullen disposition subsequent to contracting a disease in the Paris sewers. By the spring of that year, 1793, Marat was confined almost entirely to his medicinal bath; this, which allowed for little society or distraction from his political writing, never did upset him, and ultimately only ever ensured him to be but a short distance from his wife and her work.

"You came from Caen?" Marat asked.
"Yes," the young visitor said, "I have things to tell you."
"And I am here to help. I am a Friend of the People, after all."

"You must have many friends, then," she said, handing over her thin leaflet of nonsense.

Marat took the list with damp hands. "None," he replied, wetting his quill, "unless, of course, under the present circumstance... Do you promise not to hurt me, Mademoiselle Corday?"

"I do not understand."

"You and I share a common goal, do we not? I say, then, that we are friends; now, do you promise not to hurt me?"

"Friends do not usually make this promise."

"There," Marat said conclusively, "we are more than friends."

Stretched over the mouth of his tub was a green tarp on which he could write. Sounding out each name as if he were conjuring them up on his own, the unoriginal Archimedes began to transfer his visitor's list to his plans for tomorrow's publication. "I thank you, Mademoiselle. One cannot feel whole if they do not do, at all times, what they think is right." And then, in a changed voice, "their heads shall fall within a fortnight."

"But, Monsieur," the visitor said softly, "must it be so?"

"What a naive creature you are... We are slaves, Mademoiselle Corday! In a hundred separate, bleeding agonies, we are but slaves. To false morality as much as to the bourgeoisie! Has it not been well proven in Paris that they are more willing to give up their lives than their riches...? Tst! Beware, Mademoiselle, do not be taken in by popular ethics. I need not explain to you that the blade and the bucket are but a means to the realization of our common undertaking; that those men in Paris, whose heads hadn't ever been used for good until they were lopped off, have not given their lives to the revolution any more than I have, sitting plainly in this tub! No, no—I implore you, understand that the poor have done everything, but know that the Jacobins do far more."

He spoke in rhythmic strides. And although the direct effect of his speech was grotesque to her, the visitor developed a certain reverence for the man's cadence which almost transformed his character. Presently did she feel a particular emptiness in her heart. She played at the chance of leaving, of returning home to Caen, of seeing her sister again; as if the wild absoluteness of his beliefs had washed her clean. This feeling, however, was as short-lived and temperate as her appreciation, and it was then that Marat felt a sudden intensity just above his breast. In a breath, the young woman deflated entirely, and in the next, she filled with guilt, and no sooner did Marat realize the true nature of the young woman's visit did he see the kitchen knife sticking out from in between his ribs.

Marat committed to a brief struggle before abandoning it entirely, sinking lamely into his cured bath, his right arm draped over the outside of the tub. He lay open, giving his form somewhat to the reminiscence of Jesus dying in Mary's arms; the very thought of which made his audience feel whole with remorse, filling the little stretch of emptiness in her heart amid a once infallible wealth of reason. She kneeled before the tub, looking to the dying Marat. The thick curtains, which shut out any notion of daylight, generated a certain darkness which concealed everything but the high parts of his face: the rounded cheeks, the abrupt nose, an awkward mouth; all of which cracking at the surface and slightly damp with vinegar, giving to the somewhat ironic suspicion that he had already begun to rot. The murderer and the martyr shared in what was left of one another; though, in the present circumstance, it was impossible to tell which was which.

Satisfied with his wound and half-sick of his odour, it occurred to the young visitor that she could leave. Stepping out of the darkness and into the parlour, the visitor, now violently sobbing, took notice of the fresh widow working faithfully at her printing machine. "Is everything all right, Mademoiselle?" Simone asked.

The two women met each other with a strange silence, on the edge of some great precipice. Suddenly an indeterminate distance was created; a distance which, wholly imagined by Mlle. Corday and not yet understood by Simone, nonetheless separated the innocent from the guilty, and the guilty from her exit. "It has to be," the visitor replied, and it was precisely the real tragedy of this realization, mingled with the lucid product of nerves, that made the guillotine seem closer than the door.



mikkel canivel 09

The first song I ever sang was "For the First Time in Forever". The moment I stepped on that stage, I just fell in love with performing. Now, I'm in a pop-rock band called Girl Power, and last summer we had the chance to go on the "Boys of Summer" tour. It was insane because I'm used to performing at Ribfest or local charity events, but this tour was in America and we prepared a huge setlist. There were crowds of 3000-5000 people that were singing along to our songs and we had meet and greets, autographs, pictures, everything. I was living my dream. I still remember on the tour, I got bronchitis on the second day and I had a fever and strep throat but no time to go to the doctor. I struggled a lot but I remembered my older brother, Eric, and his experience as a hockey player. He is going after his dream of making it to the NHL even after dislocating his shoulder. He's so determined and passionate to live his dream and that inspires me so much because it shows that you can do anything as long as you're determined and have the right mindset to get it.



Being an only child is tough. I've always wanted a sibling, whether older or younger, boy or girl. I hear many stories about how having a brother or sister sucks, and that they wish that they didn't have to deal with them. On my end, I really wish I had a sibling; I'm the type to do anything for them, from supporting their academics and sports, feeding and providing for them, and sacrificing for them -- I would do it without a second thought. But this made me realize that I need to be thankful for what I have. At the end of the day, I've still got my mother, grandmother, aunt, and uncle with me. I've also got a lot of tremendous friends who I talk to on a daily basis, and that's all that I need. So everyone, take a moment to appreciate how you are here today, who you're surrounded with, and the opportunities ahead of you. Continue to embrace your memories and build on your relationships.



cindy kofman 10

RHHS wasn't my first high school. In fact, it was my third. Prior to attending high school, I was the guy who played Minecraft at the library after school, chased girls, and got decent marks in school- a pretty average 8th grader in my opinion. Yet everything changed when I was admitted to one of the top academic programs in Canada for high school. Suddenly, I was in an environment with peers who learned calculus in 5th grade, were internationally ranked scientists and mathletes, and talented musicians. Immediately I felt out of place. Nonetheless, I focused on what I could control, which was my outgoingness and how hard I worked. The program was a paradigm shift and the exposure to such further standards blew my little middle school bubble away and got me craving for more. After more than a year, I realized that the program, though life-changing, was itself a limiting bubble and for me to continue to grow I had to once again find new people who challenged my paradigms. I did this by continuing to seek people who were interesting and driven to do cool things. From then on, I learned to stop caring what other people think and let my curiosity push me outside my bubble and comfort zone to grow.



ayyub hussain 11

sigil wen 12

I think RHHS has had a great impact on me, especially as a student. It was my first time in the public school system, I guess you can say, because I was [in private, for elementary [school]]. I was kind of exposed to a lot of opportunities. [There were] a lot of programs that I didn't know even existed, for example, IEP, I didn't know that it was actually really a thing. I think it's great. I think it's a benefit. It benefits me a lot. [The IEP] allowed me to kind of have, like, peace of mind. For example, when I'm having tasks, I don't need to rush. It decreases my anxiety. I [also] believe RHHS has kind of helped me be more social in a way. Because it's, it's, it's gotten me exposed to different groups. And it's kind of allowed me to find my own friend group— find my own niche in a way. [I'm] like finding people that have similar interests, and similar hobbies, things like that. I would probably say to like my younger self, first of all, [to] take a deep breath. Once you come to RHHS, yes, you will kind of, I guess find yourself and you will find [your] people.

of rhhs

FEBRUARY 2021

WORK WORK



HUSTLE AND BUSTLE

As a society, we tend to glorify “workaholism”, creating a hustle culture where we perceive success as a result of constant productivity. Elon Musk famously tweeted in 2018, “There are way easier places to work, but nobody ever changed the world on 40 hours a week,” expressing the popular belief that simply by working hard, people will achieve great things. While it is important to put in the effort, there are some flaws to this reasoning. Most people who follow Elon Musk’s philosophy are blind to the fact that privilege and luck can just as easily be attributed to someone’s success. Yet, this workaholic mindset encourages the idea that those who rely solely on working diligently and making sacrifices will gain the status, wealth, popularity, or dreams they desperately desire. Working hard towards those goals is celebrated in our society, as we receive external praise for our dedication and are condoned for slacking off. However, while it is important to put in the effort and maintain a good work ethic, hustle culture is a toxic lifestyle.

Wanting to be productive may seem like an innocent endeavour at first, but it is easy to spiral into bad habits. Hustle

culture strings us into tying our self-worth to our achievements, tricking us into believing that we are solely defined by what we produce. As students, we are rewarded with validation for scoring high on tests or delivering well-crafted presentations, regardless of whether we had forsaken several meals or nights of sleep. This positive reaction reinforced the idea that our identities and self-worth depend on our achievements. Yet, upon receiving a poor grade and losing that acclaim, we immediately blame ourselves and interpret ourselves as worthless. Another flaw of this lifestyle is that we've convinced ourselves that by constantly working, we will achieve more. A busy calendar is perceived as successful, as having plans and tasks to do makes us appear accomplished and valuable. On the other hand, a bare calendar could indicate the opposite, and that we are unwanted and incompetent. This toxic mindset promotes the idea that time not spent working is wasted, making ourselves feel guilty whenever we are presented with a break. We soon become addicted to working and being busy, so much so that we often forsake our own health.

It's easy to disregard our physical and mental health when we live in a society that demands productivity. If left unattended and neglected, our well-being will begin to deteriorate. Bragging to our friends about our lack of sleep each night isn't a healthy habit that should be glorified. Eating only granola bars or consuming multiple cups of coffee will only degrade our physical health. Pushing aside our need for sleep, meals, and personal relationships will not result in productivity but instead will accelerate stress levels and inevitably lead to burnout, and keeping friends and loved

ones away to have more time geared towards work isolates us.

Being burnt out feels exactly as it sounds, like someone doused us with a fire hose, leaving us emotionally drained and dead inside. It can get frustrating when we're unable to accomplish the tasks we've set out to do, permitting negative emotions to accompany our exhaustion. However, we can choose to view burnout in two different ways. The first being an act of failure. The second a call to change. By willing ourselves to slow down and reflect on our needs, we can live more sustainable lives. Whether it is getting more sleep at night by retiring to bed early, eating a healthy meal, or allowing ourselves a break, learning to be more mindful of unhealthy habits and engage in healthier ones can make life, and work, a lot more enjoyable.

While there may be success and acclaim from being constantly productive, it is not worth the damages that are done to our well-being. Preserving and improving our health will only make us stronger towards approaching tasks and goals in the future. After all, if we continue to keep a car running without stopping for gas, it is bound to break down. It can be difficult to separate from the toxic mindset of hustle culture, but by treating ourselves more kindly we won't have to depend on to-do lists to make us feel valuable.

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The Wishing Well

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A heartbroken little satyr trudged through the forest, grass rustling gently underfoot as he lifted his hooves over the roots of ancient trees.

Time was irrelevant to creatures such as themselves, and yet, the concept of eternity weighed upon them the way it weighs on the hearts of mortals: she said she'd love him forever. Alas, eternity was much too short if she could leave him so easily!

Caught up in his woes, the satyr hadn't realized he fell until he was already facedown amid the leaves. Disgruntled, he picked himself up and found himself in a small clearing. In the centre of a lush swath of grass was an old, stone well, filled with surprisingly clear water that rippled though the air around it was still. As the satyr approached the well, it spoke to him.

"What does your heart desire?" It crooned, brushing little ripples across the reflection of his face in its waters.

The satyr didn't hesitate to answer. "I wish you would bring her back to me."

The well chuckled. "Ah, but that is a matter of her heart and not yours. I cannot fan a flame that does not exist."

Disappointed, but nevertheless undeterred, the satyr went home.

The next day, he returned to the well. Again, he made his request, and again, he was denied, but he did not give up. Days turned to weeks, and weeks turned to months. Each morning without fail, the satyr visited the well. At first, he only begged the well for his lover to return, with no success. But as time went on, he befriended it, sharing playful banter and letting its soothing waters tend to the wounds in his heart. He would boast of his adventures, of the wild parties he had attended, and of the sleepless nights he spent wistfully gazing at the stars, wondering where he went wrong. And the well would listen, giggling at his jokes and distracting him with the reflections of funny-looking clouds in the sky. At times, the satyr found himself pondering how curiously full of personality a simple wishing well could be, but each time the well would imitate a bird, or strike up an interesting conversation,

and the subject slipped from his mind just as quickly as it appeared.

As the days grew shorter and the nights became colder, the satyr noticed that the well was beginning to grow sleepy. Its waters moved more slowly and its voice became quieter. Still, no matter how bitter the frost or how thick the snow fell upon his forest home, the satyr made trips to the well at dawn to stay with it as it grew still and silent.

One day, the satyr called to the well and it did not respond. Panicked, he gathered what little dry wood he could find and sparked a small flame, blowing hard until it grew big enough to melt away the ice. The well let out a groan as it woke up.

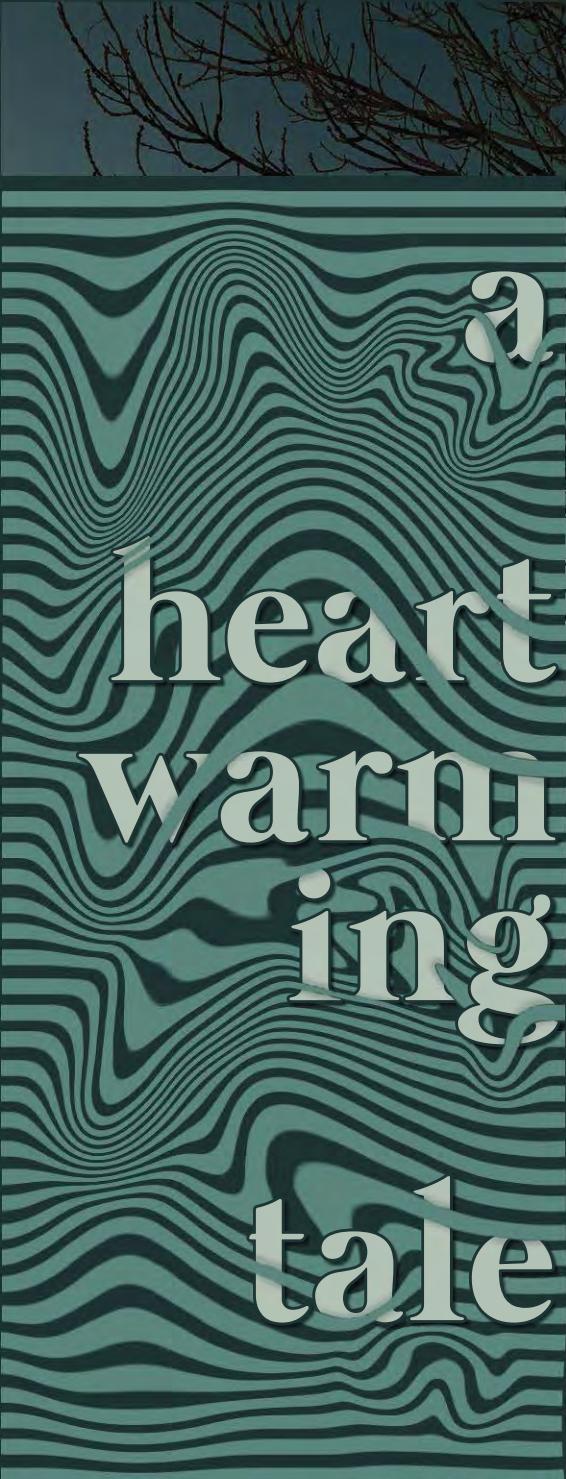
"What does your heart desire?" It asked, just as it did the first time they met.

The satyr fell to his knees. "It desires no winter, and only clear skies and sun. It desires to find one of its kind."

The well fell uncharacteristically silent. Desperately, the satyr pressed his hands against its snowy stones. "I wish you would stay with me forever, even through the bitterest of winters and the darkest of nights."

As if a great quake shook the earth, the waters of the well swirled violently, and the satyr scrambled back in fear. From the depths of the well emerged a beautiful naiad, shivering in the cold and with droplets of water crystallized upon her eyelashes like diamonds. Shaking even while enveloped in the warm embrace of her savior, she smiled, finally free of the curse that bound her for centuries.

And so, the satyr and the naiad of the wishing well, who had made the same wish at the same time, took care of each other through the bitterest of winters and the darkest of nights, stoking small fires and curling up against each other to keep warm. Together they waited for clear skies and sunny afternoons, as the forest woke up and the grass ruffled in the wind. Together they lived, and together they loved, and together they slowly forgot the pain of their pasts.



heart warming tale

// YASMIN ANNING
PHOTOGRAPHY // KERRY YAN
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In an age where we find ourselves increasingly vulnerable to feelings of loneliness, many seek opportunities of escapism as a temporary source for emotional elevation and optimism. The second season of *The Mandalorian*, released this October, satisfies that by delivering a heartfelt story about the love and resolve given through family. Produced by Jon Favreau, this Disney+ original series is an exhilarating addition to the iconic "Star Wars" franchise. With an incredibly talented production team, the second season is an exceptional work of sci-fi/fantasy that distinguishes itself as a delightful silver screen experience for both fans of Star Wars properties and casual viewers alike. Undeterred by few technical flaws, the second season of *The Mandalorian* transcends the first whilst delivering a much needed sense of hope in these perturbing times.

Continuing with a mostly episodic narrative, the second season consists of the titular character Din Djarin, who travels the galaxy on a quest to reunite The Child—sensationally known as "Baby Yoda"—with his kind. The storytelling primarily fixates on the heart-warming paternal bond between the lone wolf type Mando and the absolutely adorable Child, as well as developing the rich fictional culture of the Mandalorian people. These elements help establish an intriguing space-western and samurai-epic subgenre that enriches the emotional yet action-driven story.

The Mandalorian presents viewers with some of the highest quality entertainment with never-before-seen visual effects. It offers astonishing imagery through its dreamlike extraterrestrial worlds, along with heart-stopping action sequences in the form of space dog fights and grounded combat scenes. Additionally, in Star Wars tradition, composer Ludwig Göransson delivers a truly riveting and award-worthy soundtrack, with the ability to completely immerse viewers in the intensity of the fictional world.

Similar to the prior season, this season has some pacing issues that mostly stem from the inconsistent episode run times. Regardless, the story is still able to successfully portray strong emotions of love and hope; themes which are staples of the Star Wars universe. *The Mandalorian's* second season propels viewers on an emotional rollercoaster by gifting them with scenes of captivating adorableness, light-hearted comedy, suspenseful mystery, and tear-jerking realizations. Not to mention the unimaginable and show-stopping cameos of beloved characters from the past.

Personally, as a long time Star Wars fan that had become disillusioned with the franchise, *The Mandalorian's* second season was able to reintroduce the fascination I first held for the fantastical world as a child. In a year marred by adversities and stressful decision-making, this series had the ability to usher in long overdue excitement while reigniting my passion not only for Star Wars, but film entertainment as a whole. An added bonus is that the premise and formidable quality of the show allows for it to satisfy a large audience, enabling me to share my enjoyment with my closest friends who were previously uninterested in the franchise.

The newest season of *The Mandalorian* is surely a well-timed release. Among the chaos and anxiety of the surrounding world, this Disney+ original offers a refreshingly simplistic tale about the love and meaningfulness of family. Through its exceptional employment of modern technological effects, stunning action and a phenomenal musical score, the first ever live-action Star Wars show dishes an engrossing experience that communicates a heartwarming story about family and identity. In all, *The Mandalorian* has the ability to transport viewers to a world from "a long time ago, in a galaxy far far away", allowing them to escape into the wonders of their imagination for a much needed repose.

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year

THE WORLD IS DUSTED IN WHITE, AND THE AIR STRUMS WITH ANTICIPATION.

This time of year should be filled with warmth from the fireplace, which permeates through the contrasting bite of winter, and untainted joy which radiates from a source that can only be described as family. Instead, the sandstone brick house --built upon a stark hill-- it is dark and very still. Here the climate grows harsher, and the only season's greetings to be heard are the echoes, and groans of the tired dwelling. Sometimes, there are figures which dance on drywall, interrupted only by the syncopated flicker of light bulbs, straining under the weight of unpaid electricity bills.

IT IS HERE WHERE I LIE, YET MY MIND IS FAR AWAY.

IT IS HERE WHERE I AM PARALYZED WITH FEAR OF WHAT MIGHT LIE AHEAD.

IT IS HERE WHERE I HAVE FOUND A HOME, AND A HELL.

While I can finally say goodbye to this place, I must also say farewell to a truer home (one which offered stability and warmth within its walls).

THE FINAL SEASON OF THE FOUR IS HERE.

I can fondly look back on the time spent here. Whether it was staying after school for exec meetings, where we planned, and debated strategies to outdo past events, and to engage new students. Whether it was watching the game and cheering on our team, during a tense game while clutching the forlorn homework you were pretending to do. Or even just walking through the halls and hearing the faint- yet resonant sound of music from room 1069, I have found warmth here. We will soon leave the stable, and comforting environment that is high school, and embark on different pathways. The next step is nearing, and interviews, auditions, entrance exams and essays are it's prerequisites (all a part of a key which will unlock my future).

I'm ready for this aren't I? I'm ready to step into the next chapter. I've dreamed about this escape, and I've planned for it. We know that we need to progress autonomy our parents to progress in our development, but I'm there and I'm ready.

AREN'T I?

Well, I am well versed in the menial chores of everyday life. I am able to provide for myself financially. I am independent in every physical way. But am I emotionally? I am terrified. Nightmares, and paranoia plague me. Hours home by myself turn into being alone with my greatest fears. I've been reprising the role of an adult in a child's body for years now, and I now wish to be recast.

My childhood was exchanged for this part which was crucial to the show my family presented; a feature production, maniquered, and ready to play from nine to five (available for special viewings).

IN REALITY THE ROLES WERE ALL WRONG!

Parents' and child's reversed, and now-

And now I want to go back.

I want to-

BUT I CAN'T RETURN TO A PAST THAT NEVER EXISTED.

So instead I will continue to throw myself into my studies, and strive for a future away from this trainwreck. I have chipped away at myself year by year to reach the next stage.. I have sacrificed and fought tooth and nail to succeed. There's so much riding on this. The stakes are too high to fail now.

BUT WHAT IF I DO? WHAT IF IT ISN'T ENOUGH. WHAT HAPPENS?

What happens if I bare my work before the masses, and am turned away? What happens to the hours- to the years of dedicated study? To the passion which kept me going through the pain, and the trauma? What happens if the doors shut in my face, and the small envelopment which reads "we don't want you"?

WELL. I'VE LEARNED THAT YOUR BEST MAY NOT BE THE BEST. AND THOUGH IT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH FOR SOME, IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU AREN'T ENOUGH.

Your worth, and that of your work will not wither away, and their existence will not cease. These pieces will remain, perhaps untouched in their own prestige for a period of time, and they will wait patiently for when you return to them.

I know that I will hurt, oh so terribly. It will feel as though there's no other way, and that the tunnel's exit has been sealed. I've survived worse. And chances are... I will survive worse.

So I will cry, and momentarily mourn what could have been. Then I will look into what it is, and explore the new path before me. I will venture into my future, and though hazy with uncertainty, I will keep going. I will begin again, for my life will not end there at the hands of a school who will not let me in. If I truly respect the value of the subject, and believe in the merit of my work, then I will still pursue it.



lonesome night cityscape

// SAMANTHA LEE
PHOTOGRAPHY // KERRY YAN
DESIGN // ELIZABETH TSYBEN

Glass in hand, I took a sip from my drink, looking at the New Year's celebrations through the window. I wondered why people even bother welcoming a new year. For me, it was simply another day. Wake up, go to work, go home, and sleep. I had no problem with it. I was not envious of them.

I was not envious of them.

What was there to be envious about? I had everything. I sat on a luxurious couch on the top floor of a hotel most people wouldn't even dream of being able to afford. I was validated and praised by the people around me, and I was simply good at my job. What would I possibly be envious about?

I could not dream.

I could not dream about making friends or forming genuine bonds. What was there in life that wasn't work? I only made connections if it could benefit my work. What use were my emotions if they simply got in the way? While other people dreamed their days away, I worked to live up to expectations and in the process, exceeded those expectations. My life was perfect in every way. I had everything.

Except for you.

I had everything except for you. You had reached out and shown true, genuine kindness, and I had almost felt tempted to show my emotions. It was strange. How come it was so hard to push you away? Why did you persist when you were surrounded by so many people who would welcome you warmly? It didn't matter now. Because you had found happiness with another person. Because once again, I pushed you away, far away – too far that I almost regret it.

I didn't regret it though.

I did regret pushing you away. Had I accepted your kindness without resistance, would you be happy? And would I be happy? But I'd cling to you, desperately holding onto the only part of my life that brought me true warmth. Would you reveal your true intentions as soon as I got too attached? I didn't want to believe that – not after I said that to you.

"Leave."

No, I didn't mean that. I loved the way your eyes smiled and the way your laugh sounded sweeter than any song I'd ever heard. It shattered my heart to see nothing but sorrow spread across your face at a single word spoken in the iciest tone. What could I have done instead? I hated how much pent up emotion I could hide behind an indifferent expression every moment after that word had slipped out of my mouth. I regretted everytime I had pushed you away just to avoid feeling the pain of abandonment.

I regretted not loving you sooner.

Yes, love. A concept I never cared to understand or seek. It was yet another emotion I wished not to show because it brought too much pain. It was too late to make a great confession of love because another had whisked you away with a promise of wonder and mystery. And I sit here alone on a couch with my drink and an empty spot reserved for you. I was not delusional. I knew very well that you wouldn't come, yet I still longed for your presence. I looked out to the nighttime cityscape as the New Year's celebrations slowly died down, wondering how you've been this past year and if you'd still be willing to listen if I poured my heart out to you.

"I'm sorry."

These were the words I so desperately wanted to convey to you. I shouted them a million times over in my head, but they didn't reach you. Because I didn't know how to show my feelings. Instead, I took another sip of my drink as a single tear rolled down my cheek, whispering,

"This is the bittersweet taste of my own loneliness."

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