

July 2021  
Issue #5

# solucky

*Grilled Cheese  
& Mango Pickle*

"And with their marriage  
came me, a hybrid,  
a mutt, something unique."

*Is the American Dream  
an Illusion?*

Read a new perspective  
of the American Dream

*Euphoria Fashion*  
Breaking down the  
different styles  
within the popular  
show

*The Green Mile*  
Check out our  
interview with Calvin La



# LIZ HEYDON



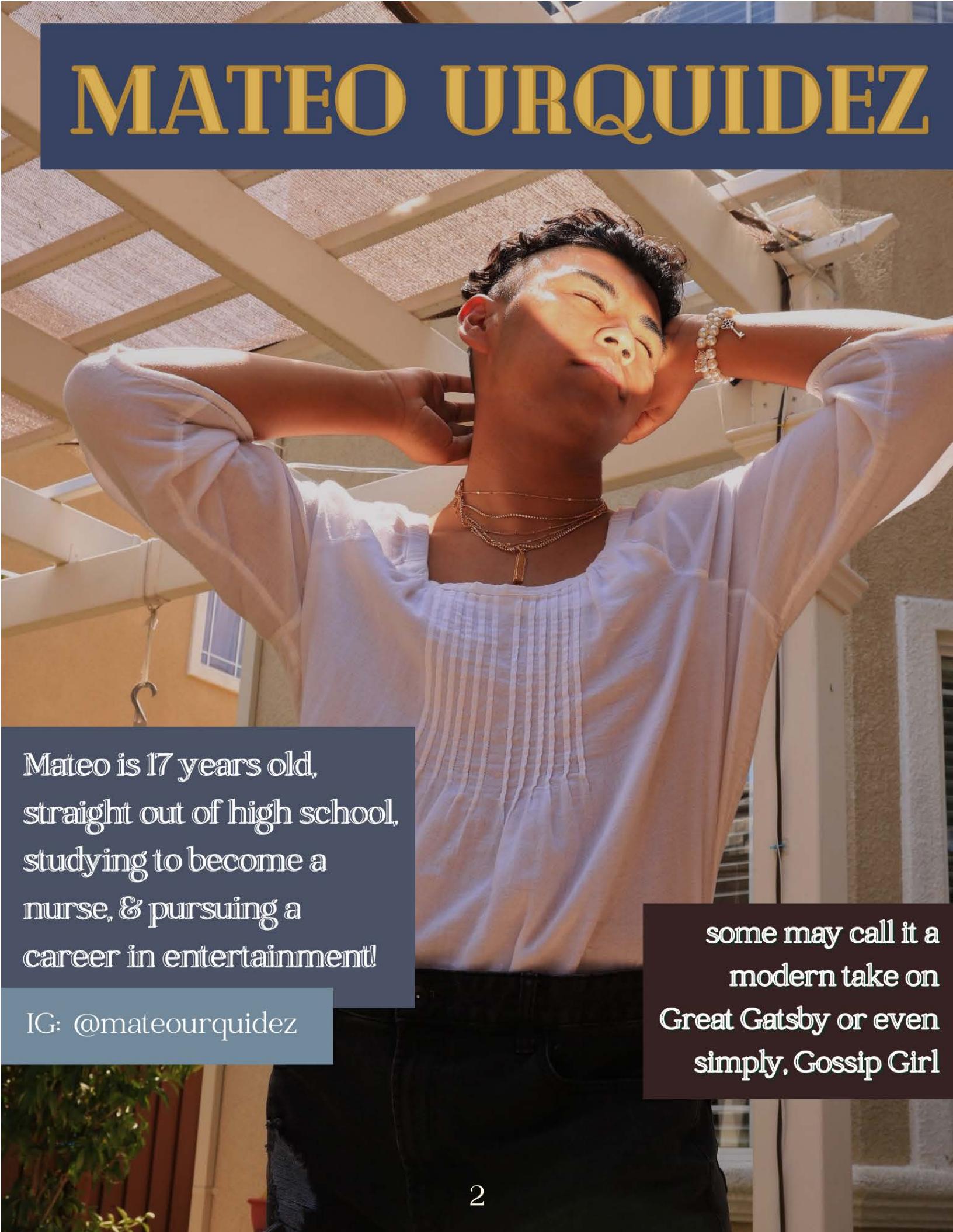
Liz is an 18 year old Libra majoring in Public Relations with a minor in Fashion Business!

IG: @thats sobethy

Creative Director:  
Sanjana Solanki,  
IG: @sanjana.solankii

Cover Photographer:  
Amrutha Gururaja,  
IG: @amruthagururaja

# MATEO URQUIDEZ



Mateo is 17 years old, straight out of high school, studying to become a nurse, & pursuing a career in entertainment!

IG: @mateourquidez

some may call it a modern take on Great Gatsby or even simply, Gossip Girl

Tori is a 19 year old studying Fashion Business & hopefully she'll style you one day!

IG: @torihuynh

Either way, our goal was to emphasize the lifestyle of "old money"

**TORI HUYNH**

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Disha is a 19 year old English major at San Jose State University, & is passionate about music & dance!

IG: @dishaax.x

This entire photoshoot was completed in Sunnyvale, California

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# OVERVIEW

# BRAND OVERVIEW

by Sanjana Solanki,  
Founder of solucky

As the month of July goes by, the progress of solucky as not only a brand but a magazine as well has only continued to grow. At the very beginning of this month, as mentioned in the last issue, solucky completed yet another collaboration with Sweetener Beads called solucky x sweetener. Every single solucky collaboration has brought us experience & learning when it comes to selling or marketing an idea/product to our audience. We learn more about our audience's preferences & the overall expectations of business. In addition to our frequent collaborations, we were able to include a creative photoshoot with the models: Alisha Gupta, Sonika Saraiya, Disha Desai, & myself, Sanjana Solanki. The style of this photoshoot was meant to represent the theme of this month's issue, which will be elaborated on shortly after this piece..

Other than the completion of the solucky x sweetener collaboration & a photoshoot, we have taken it slow for this month's time frame. Just like our readers, we have taken this time to enjoy the relaxing summer & prepare for what comes next: the start of a

new school year. For a large portion of our team, school is back in session in the upcoming month of August 2021. As a result, we thought it would be best to give this month off from collaborations & focus on future projects. Consider this as foreshadowing for future amazing projects & collaborations!

Despite slowing down through the month of July, solucky still managed to hit a milestone: we now have over 200 monthly subscribers! This was an amazing moment for every single person who has put their time into developing this online, entirely free, monthly magazine. It feels great to welcome so many new readers into our community. In addition to this, we managed to welcome some new members to our team! We recently added Sraavya Apuri, Hrithik Jari, Niya Maudgalya, & Amrutha Gururaja to the team & cannot wait to see what they bring to the solucky table!



Sraavya Apuri,  
Interviewer



Amrutha Gururaja,  
Cover Photographer



Richa Bav  
Photo Editor



Niya Maudgalya,  
Photographer



Hrithik Jariwala,  
Magazine Designer



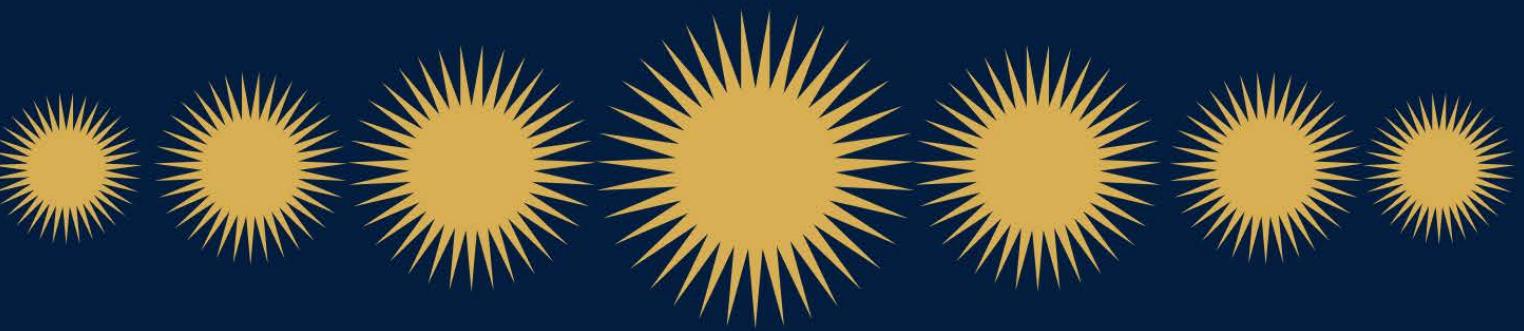
courtesy of Sanjana Solanki

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courtesy of Amrutha Gururaja

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# MAGAZINE OVERVIEW

by Ananya Dutta & Henry Pham,  
Head Editors

This month, we decided to take a risk & explore a theme that hadn't truly been done before: The Roaring 20(20)s. We created a tailor-made aesthetic & guideline for this month's issue & drew inspiration from a variety of sources. Some of these include the original 20s, The Great Gatsby, Lana Del Rey, & Euphoria. As a result, our content this month looks a little different. Most of the pieces this month, as a result, focus on themes such as the American Dream, Euphoria, immigration, & more.

We are also very excited to include a number of one-time submissions from the solucky community. Our pieces include a trend piece analyzing Euphoria fashion, a Film/TV review of The Great Gatsby & Euphoria, our first poetry submission, a social perspective piece on the American Dream, & much more. These pieces are enhanced by our custom aesthetic (dubbed "sleek glam") which features warm colors, classic fashion, & more. This issue is very special due to the time it took to cultivate both the aesthetic & piece. We hope you love it as much as we enjoyed making it!



courtesy of Amrutha Gururaja



courtesy of Heena Bains

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# TRENDING ON HENDI

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# EUPHORIA FASHION

by Ananya Dutta

\* \* \*  
\* \* \*  
Breaking down what we can learn from  
this show & use to our advantage.

In 2019, the highly-anticipated HBO show Euphoria was released & made waves across multiple different communities. It was one of the first mainstream shows to thoughtfully depict LGBTQ+ characters & tackled a variety of social issues from drug addiction to abuse/exploitation. Although it may have its flaws (seriously, why did the characters have to be in high school?) the show racked up many accolades & is widely regarded as highly influential.

Beyond its progressive writing, Euphoria is also known for its iconic outfits. It accurately portrays the wide range of Gen Z's fashion styles & ushered in the new era of fashion for the (20)20s. Throughout watching the show, I identified 4 distinct styles that are commonly found in Gen Z & portrayed by the main characters of the show.

## 1. Effortless Casual

The main character, Rue, is the one who exemplifies this style. Her looks consist of low-effort but still cute outfits. Some of her wardrobe staples include flannels, oversized t-shirts, & jeans. Rue (played by Zendaya) more than once samples styles that transcend gender-rules & show the audience that fashion does not need to subscribe to the binary.

## 2. Sleek Glam

This aesthetic is OWNED by one of the secondary characters, Maddie. Played by the effortlessly beautiful Alexa Demie, this look features a lot more elements that you would expect for 2020's version of high fashion. Although the character is versatile with her fashion choices, sometimes opting for a more classic/girly look, she is known for her sexy two-pieces & bedazzled makeup looks. Maddie's "sleek glam" look is also reminiscent of the 1920s due to the incorporation of sparkle & jewelry. If you've watched the movie version of The Great Gatsby, you'll notice the sheer amount of bedazzled headbands, sequins, & shine. I'd make the argument that Maddie's look is an updated, evolved version of that.

## 3. Grunge Chic

This look is rocked by the lovely character Kat, who is played by Barbie Ferreira. Kat is a plus-sized character which is sometimes overlooked but incredibly important. She spends the season finding her own personal style & channels power into her dark, grunge-inspired looks. Kat's acceptance & eventual love for her body struck a chord in me & reminded me of how important it is to express your own style no matter what people think. Her wardrobe staples include chokers, fishnet pieces, & darker makeup looks.



#### 4. Manic Pixie Dream Fashion

Manic Pixie Fashion is my name for the look worn most by the character Jules, played by Hunter Schaffer. Jules is a character who embraces her femininity, which translates directly into her looks. They mainly feature graphic liner, dresses, pastels, & overall more girlish looks. There's something slightly eccentric about the outfits + makeup that Jules wears, but that only makes you love her more.

As someone who just started getting more interested in fashion, watching Euphoria & thinking critically about the wardrobe choices has helped me a lot. It allowed me to identify the distinctions between different aesthetics- which is important because it made my outfits look more put together. If you're also inspired by Euphoria's phenomenal outfit choices, I definitely recommend going on Pinterest & putting together moodboards of whichever aesthetic interests you the most. Also, don't be afraid to mix it up once in a while. Just because the characters stick to one aesthetic (for the most part) doesn't mean you need to. For example, lazy days, I'll dress more like Rue (Effortless Casual) but when I'm going out to parties I go for a Maddie look (Sleek Glam).

The overarching lesson here is one that we've been preaching since the start of this magazine: don't be afraid to push boundaries with fashion because each & every one of these characters did it & they're known for being fashion icons now.

Who knows? You might be next.

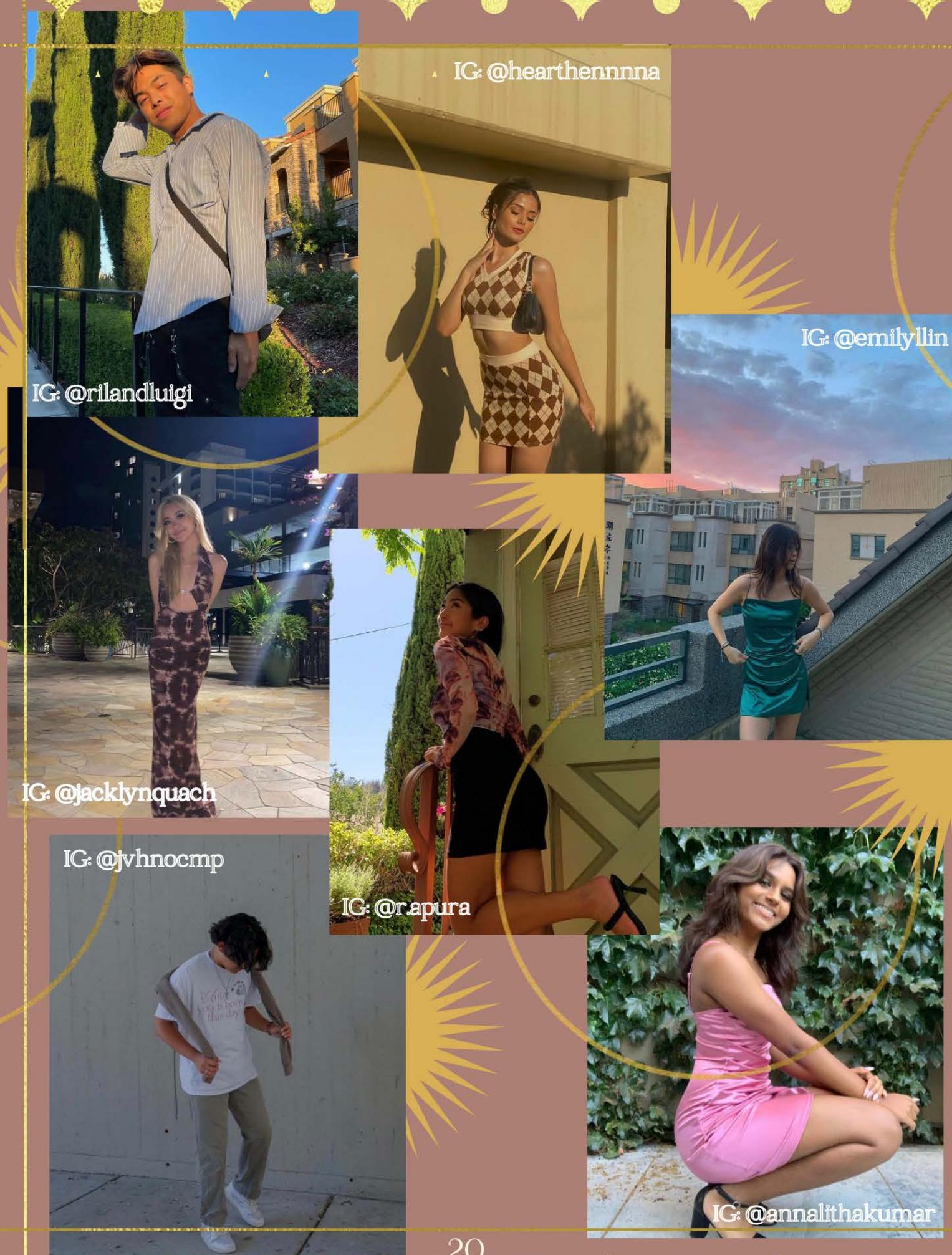


courtesy of Prisha Jain

# FRIDAY FASHION FAVORITES

by Riya Patel

Instagram handles of each individual are attached - to find more favorites, check out our Instagram highlights (@solucky.life)!





courtesy of Heena Bains

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# A BROWN GIRL'S GUIDE TO: THE AMERICAN DREAM

by Disha Desai

Our parents traveled a long way from home, leaving their memories & loved ones in search of the ever-elusive American Dream. My dad recalls many of the challenges that he faced when our family first immigrated to this country. For example, many immigrants experience a heavy language barrier that they have to work through, & that was just the beginning of the differences that were apparent. For immigrants & their families, working through different cultural expectations & other such challenges that come with the "glamour" of the American Dream create conditions that impact most areas of their lives.

As a young brown girl, it was difficult to look around me & know that I was different from everyone else, from the coconut oil my mom would put in my hair for its growth & health, to the "stinky" Indian food that she would pack me for lunch. I would come home with a half eaten lunch because someone had pointed & laughed at the food I was eating, & I often felt like I didn't belong in any groups.

I was so afraid of being made fun of, that I decided to reject my culture & tried to be more "American". It was incredibly difficult to appreciate & love my culture, when I was made fun of for so long. As I got older, I realized how important it really was that I had grown up with a knowledge of the traditions & culture around me.

The reality is, my parents sacrificed an immense amount for my family, all while learning to adapt to America at the same time. I grew up hearing about the importance of education & living up to immense expectations surrounding it. This is a byproduct of the sacrifice my family had made in the past since my parents grew up with fewer resources, which impacted the way they treated me & their view of education. The generations that came before mine, like my grandparents & parents' generations, had to struggle to get to where we are today, so they push us to be smarter & better.

As immigrants, we are inevitably pushed towards assimilation, & it is not always a choice. We are oftentimes called "whitewashed" but we live in a place with different cultural ideas where we end up having to reject our culture to fit in. Learning to love two cultures just the same took time, when I wanted so badly to be "American" instead of embracing the beautiful culture I had grown up with. Though, not everyone from the same culture acts the same way (stereotyping), & it is our experiences & roots which shape us into unique identities. My roots are Indian, but I experience an intersection of two cultures.

I used to have a tough time accepting my culture & felt I had to choose a "side", when instead I chose to embrace both the American Dream & the role of an immigrant's daughter.

I love the spirituality & beauty of Hinduism, but greatly appreciate the emphasis on freedom & feminism in America. I love Indian sarees & chaniya cholis, but I also really like American fashion. I appreciate ideas & things from both cultures. Ideas of equality & individuality in American culture, & the importance of family & relationships in India. Indian food & spices have a special place in my heart, but when I am craving food at 1am it's usually Taco Bell or McDonald's that I end up getting.

Along the way, I have learned that being a part of both cultures has always given me double the exposure to ideas & the creative talent which have shaped me into the person I am today. Having one foot in both cultures has allowed me to both experience the American Dream & be a part of my beautiful & vibrant Indian culture.



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IG: @toriihuynh



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courtesy of Tori Huynh



courtesy of Prisha Jain

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# WHITE PICKET FENCE

By Yash Aggarwal

Outside you see a garden full of beautiful flowers & buzzing bees  
With the sun shining to highlight the green, yellow, orange, & blue  
Right outside your house & the world beyond

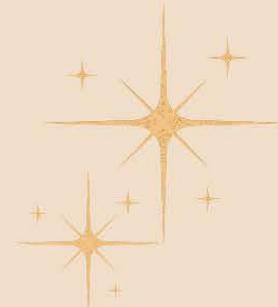
A white picket fence in your front yard  
Keep it painted, keep it clean: show your neighbors who you are  
But one day a creepy neighbor moves in, so you build the fence higher

The tall picket fence was knocked down yesterday by a reckless driver  
Replace the fence with a concrete jungle  
Now nobody can get through your fence

A new family from India moved in next door, they're kind of weird  
Their kids keep climbing over so add barbed wire on top  
The kids can't play on your wall anymore

A strange man picked the lock & planted weed near the wall last night  
The government installed a security camera to catch more strange people  
Now nobody goes outside near walls anywhere

I'm looking at my tall concrete wall topped with barbed wire with a blinking  
red light of a security camera staring back at me  
I wish I could take it all down to see the beautiful world outside again



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courtesy of Heena Bains

# GRILLED CHEESE & MANGO PICKLE

By Akhil Joondeph



The searing heat of dried red chili peppers cuts across my tongue as the bitter undertones of crackled mustard seeds ride alongside in harmony. Sour, pungent, fermented flavors, vaguely reminiscent of kimchi dance along my cheeks, creating layers of counter-melodies perfectly complementing the symphony already playing their encore. just as the violins reach their final trill, a fanfare of rich, decadent sharp cheddar blares into existence, overpowering the spice & funk of the previous concerto. This battle continues, each band attempting to play louder, faster, & more powerfully than the other until they meld together into a glorious fusion I never knew I needed so badly.

& with a gulp of water,  
silence.

Grilled cheese is just about as American of a food as there is in existence. Nothing is more ubiquitous than two slightly under-seasoned & under-cooked slices of bread with a just-melting slice of bright orange cheese in between. No one knows where grilled cheese is truly from, & that makes it all the more American.

Mango pickle on the other hand is just about the most Tamil food in existence. You can find a jar of it in the kitchen of any family, with Saran Wrap guarding the lid to prevent any uninvited guests from enjoying their share of the bounty. The almost unbearable sourness paired with a relentless dose of pepper makes this rowdy condiment almost uneatable to anyone not used to its punch.

And so the marriage of these two staples from completely different worlds seems almost impossible. Sure, opposites attract, but how could a fiery Tamil woman ever find her match in a smooth, American man of unknown origins? Well, you should ask my parents.

My father is undoubtedly an American. Born to two white parents in suburban Seattle, he is what any of us would think of as the perfect American boy. Even though his Russian-Jewish grandparents may have been treated as aliens during a bygone era, his allegiance to the country has never been questioned. & his mother's jumbled ethnicity has made his heritage fairly ambiguous — very much like our grilled cheese.

My mother was born in the United States, but moved to India with her parents before she could form complete sentences. By the time she could write, she was back in the states, but grew up in a profoundly Indian home. While having always been an American citizen, the United States has never been the country she first associates herself with culturally — she has always been, culturally, a Tamil woman, sun-ripened & punchy like our mango pickle.

And with their marriage came me, a hybrid, a mutt, something unique.

I have always known I was different. I am not sure if it was the Oscar-deserving side-eyes of my Indian peers, or the unfiltered remarks of my school classmates that came first. But the combination of these attacks catalyzed the growth of a strong sense of cultural confusion within me.

I didn't want to be different at school, so I began listening to pop music, wearing trendy clothes, & watching cartoons on television. I brought my dad along as my chaperone, and packed grilled cheese, without mango pickle, as my lunch.

At the same time, I could not be seen as an outsider during my Indian after-school commitments. I made sure I knew the newest Bollywood movies & could sing along with their title songs. I tried to reject my father altogether & opted to enter the classroom alone. I even tried to reject my Ukrainian last name & adopt my middle name instead — the winding Srinivasan of my mother's family.

But as I grew older, I began to understand my inability to escape my other halves. I couldn't pretend I was only part of myself in every social environment. That was silly, tiring, & never really worked anyways. And so I began eating my grilled cheese with mango pickle.



courtesy of Akhil Joondeph

See, this unusual fusion has been a staple food in my household for as long as I can remember. The sacred communion of family dinner would, at least once a month, consist of plates of cheesy American fast-food goodness topped with a dollop of my paati's homemade fermented elixir. This dish is an American invention, but it isn't innately American. It is, in many respects, an embodiment of the American dream — an innovator making its own path while using the immense resources of this country, elevating its status & prestige. In this case, the sum of the parts is far greater than either of them individually.

It's the most perfectly balanced food I know, with just the right amounts of salty, bitter, creamy, & spicy flavors. And as my taste buds matured & I began to enjoy this prasad alongside my parents, I began to see myself on the plate and enjoy that, too.

Someone, somewhere said "You are what you eat." And while this saying is objectively silly, I can definitively say in this context, it rings truer than any other idiom in the history of the language. I am the golden brown sandwich on my plate, the harmony of heat & mellowness, the union of America & Tamil Nadu, the unlikely combination that is indeed beautiful. And as I saw my food as neither a quintessential American nor Indian dish, I realized I did not have to be either of those to be a part of my community.

The reality of America's promise is ambiguous, centuries of immigrants unsure where to draw the line between staying true to their past & melding into the established American culture, being something different but not different enough to be criticized or ostracized by purists or their families back home. And I am a child of this promise. I still don't know if I would consider myself American, & I still feel uncomfortable claiming I am Indian & nothing else. But I have embraced my confused culture as what it is — a bit ambiguous, a bit curious, but certainly not anything bad: just like the grilled cheese sandwich seated regally next to a bright orange blob of pickled mango on my plate.

And so I grab my napkin, wipe my hands, & prepare to savor my next bite with pride.



courtesy of Akhil Joondeph



# REVIEW HEENA



· COLLABORATIVE PLAYLIST

# sleek glam

spotify playlist of the month · july

Created by **sanju** · 20 songs, 1 h 20 m



PLAY



Filter

Download



The Roaring 20's was a very eventful & glamorous time period. An era full of parties, rebellions, & very much so a transition of culture in every aspect possible. When thinking of the 1920's, I think of the feeling of rich and pure. As chaotic & energetic this time period was, Disha Desai & I, Sanjana Solanki, felt that the overall lifestyle of this period was to live freely, enjoying every single moment carefree. To really capture this feeling & idea of a lifestyle, some artists that came to mind were Lana Del Rey, Travis Scott, Ariana Grande, Kanye West, & more. Artists like these have a certain touch to a majority of their songs, despite the fact that they fall into different genres of music, they all share the same feeling that their music portrays & makes their fans feel..."rich in emotions".

Link: <https://open.spotify.com/playlist/6C5l7xH9loTPhnChsppq?si=O2I3279ddal843ec>

(I am aware that not everybody has the same taste in music as I do! If this playlist isn't your style, check out this column next month & we'll have something new for you)





# THE GREAT GATSBY & EUPHORIA:

## INVESTIGATING CULTURAL IMPACT

by Anandita Prakash

Media & culture have a rich, complex relationship. Whether it is pop culture, beauty culture, party culture, or anything in between. Culture is often defined as "the arts & other manifestations of human intellectual achievement regarded collectively", or "the customs, arts, social institutions, And achievements of a particular nation, people, or other social group". And while media can be heavily influenced by a certain culture or aesthetic, it can also help grow a new or already existing culture or aesthetic. Every book, movie, song, or piece of media that has withstood the test of time has had a large impact on the culture & aesthetic of a certain era in time. In the 1920s, it was the novel The Great Gatsby written by F. Scott Fitzgerald. And today, it is the US adaptation of the tv show Euphoria, created by Sam Levinson.

The Great Gatsby, an American classic that is a staple read for most US high schoolers, is a novel that explores many themes, the strongest one being the tragedy of the American Dream. Set in New York, 1922, during the Jazz Age (when Prohibition was still in place), it is about a young man named Nick Carraway & his interactions with those living in Long Island. Particularly, a young millionaire named Jay Gatsby who is determined to reunite with his former lover (& Nick's cousin), Daisy Buchanan. Euphoria is an award-winning television show that has quickly reached popularity among most US high schoolers through its portrayal of darker subject matter that teenagers experience today. Set in present day Los Angeles, it follows the stories of six young adults & their experiences with sex, drugs, friendship, love, identity, mental health, & trauma with the focus being on Rue, a 17 year old girl who has just come back from rehab.

While Euphoria & The Great Gatsby are both important pieces of media that portray complex issues relating to the time period & setting they both have significantly different relationships with their influence on culture & aesthetic.

When The Great Gatsby came out in 1925, it was favorably reviewed, but severely underperformed in comparison to F. Scott Fitzgerald's other novels, This Side of Paradise & The Beautiful & Damned, both also released in the 1920s. While writing the novel, Fitzgerald took a lot of inspiration from the actions of those living in the same time as him, as well as specific events from his own lifetime.

The "Roaring 20s" was a time period known for its economic prosperities, jazz music, promotion of illegal & rebellious activities (including the sale & consumption of alcohol), flapper culture, unrestrained sexuality, & a general increase in expression through all forms. All of these aspects of the 20s were fully explored & included in Fitzgerald's novel as a way to comment on the hedonism of the era & the way that social norms were thrown out the window in an attempt to only seek material pleasure.

The Great Gatsby was further inspired by events taken directly from Fitzgerald's life; he met a young woman named Ginevra King when he attended Princeton, & upon meeting, they were both deeply infatuated with each other.

However, Ginevra's parents disapproved of Fitzgerald, who was poor, & said that he could not marry her & shouldn't even think about pursuing her because of his social & economic status. Fitzgerald, hopeless and ready for death, enlisted in US Army during World War I. Fitzgerald was stationed in Alabama when he met Zelda Sayre, who he later married. Most of these events inspired Jay Gatsby's story, & many other people that Fitzgerald met & interacted with inspired the other characters in the novel.

Euphoria, when it first came out in 2019, made headlines in the news for the very raw & unfiltered portrayals of the teenage experience; people were shocked, impressed, & felt represented by the storylines that each episode covered, from the visuals to the soundtrack of the show. The creator of the show, Sam Levinson, adapted the show from a television program in Israel under the same name which also deals with the day-to-day lives of young adults & what they experience, & worked with the creators of the Israeli version (Ron Leshem, Daphna Levin, And Tmira Yardeni) to produce the show in America. Like Fitzgerald, Levinson took experiences from his own childhood dealing with anxiety, depression, & drug addiction.

However, when the series came out, it had an incredible impact on youth culture, ranging from music to makeup. The style of makeup & clothing that is shown on Euphoria has trended in youth fashion & party culture, as well as showing up & making a big impact in fashion shows, red carpet looks, TikToks, & various other makeup trends to name a few examples. Gen Z is known to take risks when it comes to makeup, fashion, & everything else that they partake in, & Euphoria has helped cement the bold looks that are inspiring new fashion & makeup trends every day.

Each character has a distinctly different style of dressing, from the androgyny of Rue's outfits to the bold & colorful makeup that Jules chooses to wear: from thick, neon eyeliner & eyeshadow to body glitter, jewels underneath the eyes & stylish, scandalous outfits. Euphoria is shaping culture every day. It has been inspired by, & continues to expand the idea that present day fashion & beauty challenges antiquated beauty standards, & should be bold & dramatic, expressing the emotions of the current generation.

The Great Gatsby & Euphoria have complex relationships with culture & aesthetic in different ways, with some shared similarities. The Great Gatsby was heavily influenced by 1920s party culture & aesthetic, representing the Roaring 20s in great detail & tying it into significant themes & heavy issues of those living through the times. In a different sense, Euphoria was able to make a cultural impact by forever changing & influencing the different aspects of youth culture & aesthetic of the current 20s through a myriad of different platforms including social media, fashion shows, corporate trends, & much more.

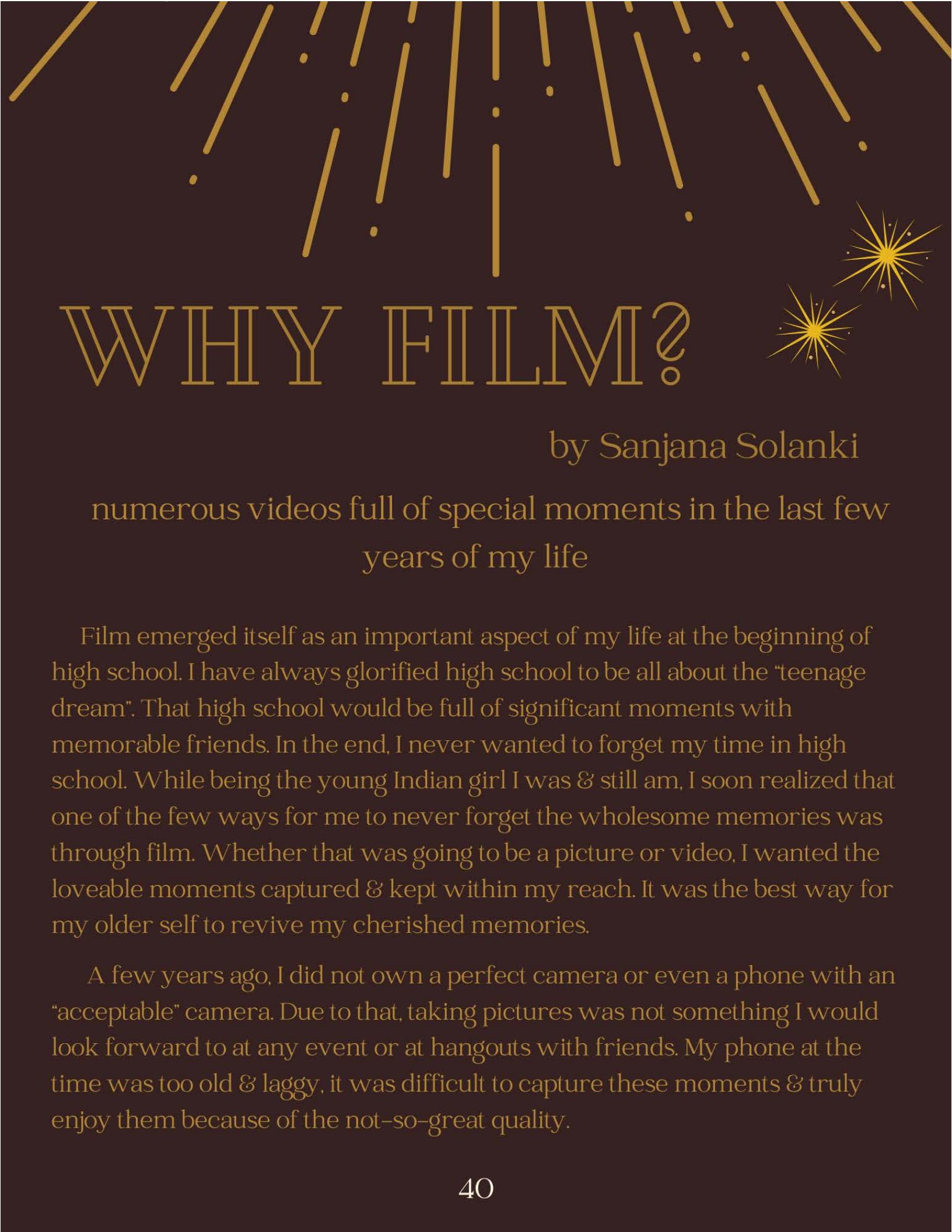
Both Gatsby & Euphoria encapsulate the experiences of those living in the 20s of different centuries, & they will forever represent & carry on the lessons, hardships, dreams, influence, & culture that surrounded the generation living in those times.



courtesy of Sanjana Solanki  
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# FILM WITH



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## WHY FILM?

by Sanjana Solanki

numerous videos full of special moments in the last few years of my life

Film emerged itself as an important aspect of my life at the beginning of high school. I have always glorified high school to be all about the "teenage dream". That high school would be full of significant moments with memorable friends. In the end, I never wanted to forget my time in high school. While being the young Indian girl I was & still am, I soon realized that one of the few ways for me to never forget the wholesome memories was through film. Whether that was going to be a picture or video, I wanted the loveable moments captured & kept within my reach. It was the best way for my older self to revive my cherished memories.

A few years ago, I did not own a perfect camera or even a phone with an "acceptable" camera. Due to that, taking pictures was not something I would look forward to at any event or at hangouts with friends. My phone at the time was too old & laggy, it was difficult to capture these moments & truly enjoy them because of the not-so-great quality.

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This led me to realize my appreciation for the option of recording videos on my phone. Taking pictures & taking videos had no difference in speaking of quality, but when it came to capturing moments & feelings, my videos were superior to my pictures. I felt that videos could grasp the energy in a certain moment more than a simple picture could ever do. This soon resulted in my desire to film everything that came my way, from hanging out with friends to school events. I captured everything on my phone, as well as on the phones of my very generous friends with phones that were much more technologically advanced! Every vlog I have ever recorded/edited can be found on the website in film › vlogs!



# THE GREEN MILE

## WITH CALVIN LA

by Sravyya Apuri

"In every work of art, the artist himself is present" – Christian Morgenstern

Behind the striking visuals of Calvin La's trailer from his new short film "The Green Mile", the concept embedded into the short film runs much deeper into Calvin's personal life. In a recent interview, Calvin opens up about how the film gives an insight into the "recent traumas from people & experiences". The short film itself represents a part of himself & the unsaid emotions/experiences that have been fueled into making this project because it reflects "6 months of recovery & healing from the toxic people, experiences, & abusive situations" & the "nights alone staring at the walls...trying to piece it all together by processing all the questions & thoughts". However, the project does not solely focus on the traumatic experiences or people, but rather "on the process of processing trauma & all the little things that come along with it as well as the lasting effects it may leave on someone's life". Calvin acknowledges although he has not found peace entirely, & there are good & bad days. But "knowing that [he] has grown as an individual & learned so much about [himself], [his] trauma, & the people & experiences of [his] past at least gives [him] some kind of peace".

In a time of uncertainty & challenges, we often find ourselves lost, confused, or overwhelmed. That be with simple circumstances, or by the people around us, however, "The Green Mile" is intended for its viewers to know that "it's okay to be lost, that it's okay to be alone with all of these uncomfortable feelings & emotions in your head because processing these intense emotions from life & trauma takes time."

On a personal note, Calvin mentions how art "is meant to be experienced in a communal setting", & the fact that "there's something beautiful about how art can naturally draw people together to have one communal experience." It reminded me of the numerous moments in cinema that really resonated with the masses. For example in the Dark Knight trilogy by Christopher Nolan, there is a dialogue said by Alfred, "Why do we fall sir, so we can learn to pick ourselves up", a dialogue directed towards Bruce Wayne when he was at his lowest point. This dialogue hit home to many viewers because that emotion or sense of support is something everyone felt & wanted at some point in their lives. Similarly, based on the thought & intention put behind "The Green Mile", I feel like the emotion depicted in the short film is something that viewers will instantly have a connection with.



courtesy of Prisha Jain  
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courtesy of Natalie Getz

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# MODERN RICH

## PHOTOSHOOT



IG: @DISHAAX.X + @SONIKASARAIYA + @SANJANA.SOLANKII + @ALISHA\_G9

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# IS THE AMERICAN DREAM AN ILLUSION? \*

by Prisha Jain

The American Dream (n): the ideal by which equality of opportunity is available to any AMERICAN, allowing the highest aspirations and goals to be achieved.

Is the American Dream an illusion? In short, yes. But you're here to read why. Remember that capitalized word in our definition up there. We're going to come back to it.

Before we can dismantle the American Dream's validity, we have to look at how people are able to find success through this principle. First-generation children of immigrants know it all too well. The lecture at the dining table about how much our parents sacrificed to bring us here, how hard they worked, how they

walked 25 miles barefoot through the rain to school everyday so we should shut up & do our Kumon homework. To be fair, they're right. They're projecting, but they're right.

For many of us Bay Area immigrant children especially, our parents did achieve the success the American Dream promises. Sundar Pichai, the CEO of Google, as my very proudly Indian mother constantly reminds me, was born & raised in Chennai. The tech industry offered new beginnings for so many immigrants in the late

90s, which have only grown in number. But the allure of America began much earlier for our parents. They grew up in India\* watching television that showed them the luxury of New York City, listening to radio shows about the growing American military, & hearing from their peers the exciting things their "uncles abroad" sent them. America wasn't just a place, it was the dream itself. Everything good happened in America. It had to. The world would explode if it wasn't.

\*In this case, India is interchangeable with most countries that have undergone colonization by a European nation. This includes, but is not limited to, the United Kingdom, France, Spain, & Portugal.

After the world ended on Y2K, immigrants flocked to America with an H-1 Visa & a pair of rose-colored glasses. It was the dawn of a new era, & there was a whole new group of 20-somethings ready to take America by storm. And take it they did. Asian-

Americans are demographically the wealthiest community in the United States. But we're new. Let's zoom out, & flip to the other side of America: the one the immigrants didn't see in their media exposure to this country.

The injustices against the Black community are more visible than ever before due to social media. Black Lives Matter, a movement founded in 2013 to protest police brutality against the Black community, gained extreme traction in the summer of 2020 following the violent murder of George Floyd. This movement mobilized millions of people, & opened hundreds of thousands of eyes to the extent of the racial injustice that Black people face.

From slavery to Jim Crow to redlining to police brutality, America has failed to create a safe, equal environment in which Black people can find success. Hip-hop artist J. Cole said it best: "Why every rich black n\*\*\* gotta be famous, why every broke

black n\*\*\* gotta be brainless? That's a stereotype, driven by some people up in Ariel Heights." Rich Black people are (1) more often men than women and (2) usually famous in some capacity. Music artists & athletes are the main examples that come to mind. Where is the Black representation in Silicon Valley? Wall Street? The explanation is not that Black people are not capable (they are arguably the most resilient community in the United States), but that they are kept from these places due to systemic racism.

The only way they can break free economically is by proving to be entertaining to White people (i.e. being an athlete, artist, etc). Slavery, in the most literal sense of the word, is over. But the continual prevention of Black success by White people unless it benefits them, keeps wealth concentrated in White communities. There are hundreds of examples: stricter laws for the usage of crack cocaine (more common in Black communities) versus powder cocaine

(more common in White communities), the imprisonment of Black people for nonviolent marijuana crimes while marijuana cafes owned by White people make profit, & even most recently in the 2020 Summer Olympics, Sha'Carri Richardson being banned from the Olympics for marijuana usage while Megan Rapinoe is being celebrated for her candor in using CBD while she trains. But I digress. Systemic racism is an issue that deserves to be talked about on a much more extensive scale, not just summed up in a hundred-ish words by a random Indian girl talking about the American Dream. Speaking of which, let's go back to that.

We've analyzed the immigrant experience & dipped our toes into systemic racism, but what does it all have to do with the American Dream? Marginalized communities who have lived in America for generations are blocked so heavily from the luxury that the Dream offers. They are not White, & so

they do not have the same opportunities to attain that wealth.

Immigrants come to the United States, consumed by the intense desire to "make it" & live the luxurious life they believe America to offer. And, as we know, many of them do. So why is it that cities like San Ramon & Cupertino, very wealthy but Asian-dominated, even exist? Isn't the whole point to assimilate & live peacefully among people of all races?

The answer is simple. The American Dream only applies to Americans. Remember the definition at the top where I told you to remember the word American? We're back to that. Immigrants from across the globe, & members of communities that have been oppressed for generations do not fit the bill. These people simply are not seen as American: at least, not as true American is to be White. And to

of an American as a White man. This is why wealthy Asians congregate in one place: they will never fit into the "ideal" American society. To achieve the American Dream, you must be American.

To call the American Dream an illusion is not fitting- the better word is propaganda. The working class trudges through life tirelessly, conditioned to believe they are achieving something great. Immigrants leave their home countries & further American technological advancement. Members of marginalized communities work thankless, laborious jobs that keep White CEOs in power. The American Dream is not real. It is the mechanism by which White people use people of color to maintain the racial hierarchy while keeping them from questioning it.



courtesy of Prisha Jain

# GRIND CULTURE

by Anandita Pandey

During my last bout of swiping through the endless stream of Instagram stories on my screen, I came across a tweet by sports reporter Lindsay Gibbs which read: "Stop glamorizing "the grind" & start glamorizing getting 7+ hours of sleep at night, having healthy relationships, feeling safe at work, taking sick days, being paid a living wage, working hard when you're at work, boundaries, & self-caring your way to success." I immediately double tapped in agreement until, to my surprise, I saw the comment section flooded with fervent disagreement & critique of the sentiment. In retrospect, such push-back shouldn't have surprised me.

Grind or hustle culture, coupled with conceptions of the American Dream & capitalism, thrives in the Bay Area & the multitude of POC & first/second generation immigrant populations it encompasses. Too often in my own circles have I witnessed the romanticization & even competitive nature of my peers overworking themselves to the point of skipping meals, losing sleep, & missing out on non-work facets of life. Driven by the illusion that such a "grind" is necessary in order to reach success —a concept which in itself too subjective to generalize— teaches us that life aside from work is unimportant, when frankly the opposite is true. Unhappily chasing a future of success costs us our present, making it easy to lose sight of what we are even working for in the first place. While many individual factors such as class, culture, familial responsibilities, etc greatly influence a person's work life, it is vital that we recognize that we are more than our work. By finding the right amount of ambition & hustle to satisfy us while still allowing us to maintain our physical, mental, & social needs, we can strike a work-life balance that keeps us healthy & allows us to be happy in our present. Below are some steps to consider:

## 1. Set boundaries

Setting boundaries between your personal & work lives is vital to maintain their balance & prevent one from seeping into the other. If possible, work only in designated hours & avoid working in time allotted to spend with your friends & family. Maintaining distinction between work & the rest of your life will also prevent burnout & protect your relationships.

## 2. Prioritize self care

It is easy to convince ourselves that we HAVE to work, but not as easy to convince ourselves that we HAVE to rest, relax, or play. Thus, we need to intentionally place importance on the things that make us happy, even if they seem trivial in comparison to work. This can be going to the gym, getting your nails done, watching TV, spending a night in, & even spending a night out or taking a sick day or time off for our health.

## 3. Consider what or who you are working for:

Far too often it seems people are working towards the goals of other people. Specifically amongst South Asians, parental or cultural expectations of one's education & career determine the career paths they choose, inhibiting them from exploring & pursuing their personal interests. We should ask ourselves, if you didn't consider what others expect of you, what would you genuinely want to do? Remember your goals do not have to align with those of others & aim to pursue your answer in whichever way possible.

## 4. Do not compare yourself to others:

A simple statement I once heard was "It is impossible to fall behind in your own life." While it is easy to feel that others are achieving more success or are ahead of you, remember that your life is not theirs. There is no timeline or fixed path meant to be followed in life. It's okay if you haven't figured out exactly what you want to do yet or reached milestones that others have. Furthermore it is never too late to rediscover passions, reconsider what you want to do, & align your life to be authentic & fulfilling for yourself.

In the wise words of Harry Styles, "If you're happy doing what you're doing  
nobody can tell you you're not successful."



courtesy of Heena Bains  
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# NAILXPRESS

NailXpress is a platform to support home based/studio based nail artists! They provide a wide variety of nail artists located in multiple states to choose from & book appointments with. To see where their artists are located, head to their website & register with NailXpress!

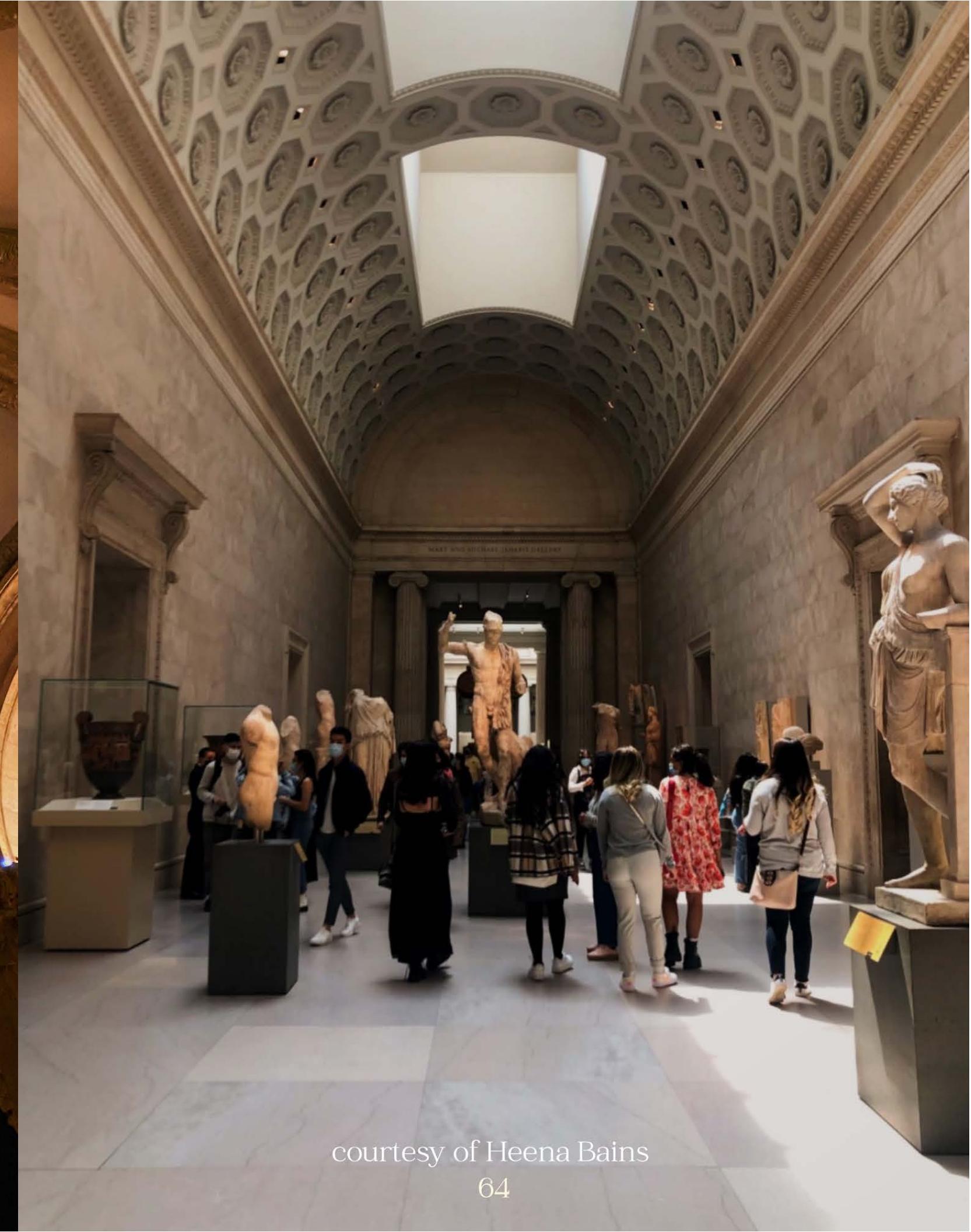
Mehek Kasliwal, the founder of NailXpress, started this website to be able to support professional home-based nail artists like herself, & provide them with a platform to showcase their talent as well as expand their business. During this pandemic, many nail artists lost their source of income because of the very long, world-wide pandemic.

Contact Information: [nailxpress.net@gmail.com](mailto:nailxpress.net@gmail.com)





courtesy of Sanjana Solanki  
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courtesy of Heena Bains  
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# APPLICATIONS

Every application listed below can be found on our website, in the applications subsection of the magazine subsection!

## Contributors Interest Form

The Contributors Interest Form is for anyone who is passionate about something & would like to contribute/broadcast it through this brand. Being a contributor will give you voluntary experience from solucky as a brand/magazine and/or simply showcase your work submission(s). This form will allow you to choose what kind of position or submission you want for solucky. We welcome any kind of passionate work or workers, so feel free to send us a submission at any time! The link to this Google Form is linked below.

Link ~ <https://forms.gle/7AwTsQG7LfEv9HzG8>

## Collaboration Interest Form

Our Collaboration Interest Form is open to anyone who is passionate about a certain cause, product, or kind of service that we can offer to our audience. This collaboration can be for either profit, non-profit, or simply marketing purposes. We welcome any kind of local business owners, small creators, organizations, etc. As long as you have an idea for a collaboration that could work well with both of our audiences, feel free to send us a submission at any time!

Link ~ <https://forms.gle/7AwTsQG7LfEv9HzG8>

## Magazine Interview Interest Form

For a chance to be featured in one of our upcoming monthly issues, submit an application to be interviewed! The Magazine Interview Interest Form is open to anyone who believes they have a good influence on their community overall. This application is open to anyone, feel free to submit an application even if you feel that you are unsure if you fit our description for who to be interviewed. We like to pick those who should be interviewed based on our issue's theme for that month!

Link ~ <https://forms.gle/q6QeGUf2P6qpV6tZ8>

## Magazine Ad. Interest Form

If you are a small creator, business, organization, etc., check out the Magazine Advertisement Interest Form for an advertisement in one of our upcoming monthly issues! Your advertisement would be created by one of our Graphic Designers & then placed within one of our monthly issues. Within an issue, an advertisement will take up an entire page, & will include any information/graphics that you provide. Advertisements go for about \$3 each. The link to this application is linked down below!

Link ~ <https://forms.gle/7AwTsQG7LfEv9HzG8>



courtesy of Niya Maudgalya  
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# THANK YOU FOR READING THIS MONTH'S ISSUE!

Find more information about solucky & our magazine by typing “solucky.life” into your browser

See you next month!  
– solucky Team ♥

Text “@solucky” to 81010 for updates