

the Reckoner

of Marc Garneau C.I.

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NEWS BOARD

A board to keep the student body informed about their school and local community.

Rhythm, Melody, and Artistry Unite: Arts Night 2023

by ANDY SUN

On 30 May, the cafeteria transformed into a hub of artistic expression as Marc Garneau Collegiate Institute hosted its annual Arts Night. The evening served as a celebration of the vibrant art community in the school, highlighting students' talents in visual art, dance, and music.

Earlier during the day, the gallery was set up with various displays of artworks. Students lined up in the halls to appreciate various visual arts works, from still life sketches to clay pots to acrylic graffiti. These works were made by students taking visual arts courses throughout the semester.

Later, during period four and after school, students involved in Arts Night gathered to prepare for the evening's event, which would begin at 6:00 pm. Once preparations were made,

students, parents, teachers, and supervisors gathered in the cafeteria with performers and staff waiting backstage near the music room, eager to show off their performances.

The show started off with a captivating performance by the guitar class, who played pieces like "Imagine" by John Lennon. This was followed by a beautiful vocal performance of "Mystery of Love" by Sufjan Stevens.

As the night continued, a multitude of performers took centre stage, contributing to the artistic magic. The string ensemble and symphony orchestra filled the room with a string of harmonious sounds, performing scores like "The Force Awakens" and "Frozen." To conclude the first half of the evening, the art of movement was brought to life by dance performances which featured a Bol-

lywood mashup and Blackpink inspired choreography.

After a quick intermission, the show was restarted by the wind ensemble, who performed soundtracks like "How to Train Your Dragon." Their consonance could only be followed by the collective voices of the Musical Theatre club, singing "A Million Dreams" and "Requiem," as well as a vocal performance of "Cupid" by Fifty Fifty, accompanied by piano and drums.

Nearing the end of the evening, the percussion ensemble got onstage, delivering energetic rhythms. Finally, the culmination of the evening came with the teacher band, featuring an all star team of Mr. Pearce, Ms. Brennan, Mr. Larter, Mr. Ferrero-Wong, and Ms. Doyle.

All in all, the evening was enjoyed by students, audience



Photograph: Justin Wei

members, and teachers alike. When asked about the event, Grade 10 student and Wind Ensemble player Michael Wen said, "The experience was amazing and all the acts were extraordinary," as well as remarking, "Arts Night really highlights the importance of music, dance, singing, and all other forms of arts in our community." Mr. Pearce, the saxophonist on the teacher band, also commented, "I was impressed by the professionalism of all of the students who performed. The

pieces were all well rehearsed and sounded beautiful. And the tricky choreography of moving multiple ensembles on and off-stage went flawlessly."

The success of Arts Night was made possible by the guidance of the lead organizer, Mr. Ferrero-Wong, who Mr. Pearce also commented on, stating, "My hats off to Mr. Ferrero-Wong. It's not easy starting at a new school and organizing a major event like Arts Night, but he did a stand-out job." In addition, Grade 10 wind

ensemble player Rachel Cheng commented on her favourite moment from the evening, "It was hilarious when Mr. Ferrero-Wong conducted 'Frozen' in an Olaf onesie."

As the final notes faded away, it was evident that Arts Night was a night to remember for those who attended. As an event run biannually at the end of each semester, its continued success serves as a testament to the consistently exceptional artistic community at Marc Garneau CI. ■

MGCI Hits the Track for Cancer Research

by NEVETHA ARULLINKAM



Photograph: Sam Li

Relay for Life is a movement active in 6 000 communities that aims to raise awareness and fundraise for cancer research, cancer prevention, and support for those with cancer. It has partners—like the Canadian Cancer Society—in twenty-nine different countries, which support committees in running Relay for Life events and collecting donations.

On 1 June, over two hun-

dred students gathered in the cafeteria dressed in matching white T-shirts for MGCI Relay Day 2023, hosted by the school's Relay for Life chapter. The event took place at the school from 10:17 am to 7:30 pm.

Students earned points for their team by either completing laps around the track or participating in an event of their choice. To show solidarity with cancer surviv-

ors teams were asked to have at least one student on the track at all times, to represent the ongoing nature of the fight against cancer. Each lap completed earned teams one point per person. “This year we really tried to make it a ‘do what you want’ type event where it really just looks like something out of the CNE, but is more relevant to the entire Garneau student body,” said Relay for Life Co-President

Allan Li.

After the opening ceremony and a victory lap, which is a four-hundred-metre lap completed by all participants, students were able to participate in some of the many events available in the backfield. They moved between a wide range of competitive and non-competitive events, with participation in the latter and losses in the former earning five points each and wins in competitive events earning fifteen. For the competitive events, students could participate in volleyball, three-legged race, trivia, tug-of-war, and more. Among the non-competitive events were karaoke, chess, water balloons, and polaroids.

“We also just got a way for teams to bond with each other better through everyone’s faults, like stumbling on each other in the three legged race,” Allan said.

“In my opinion, the best activity was karaoke,” said Grade 9 participant Mariam

Mirza. “Loud, offkey, and probably horrible to everyone else’s ears, it was a spectacular experience for all of us.”

Freezies, donuts, and cold drinks were among the items sold throughout the day to contribute to the organisation’s cause. The ice cream truck situated near the field and the hot dog stand across the street also joined in, agreeing to donate ten percent of profits earned from MGCI Relay for Life participants to Relay to Life.

After the fun in the field concluded, a pasta and salad dinner was served courtesy of Ms. Gunn. Student volunteers aided in putting together and serving the meal.

When the points from the various activities were finally tallied up, the team that earned the most points out of the twenty-eight teams involved was the team named “Zixuan gave us the money.” They were awarded one movie ticket per team member. The

team in second-place received Krispy Kreme donuts and the teams placing in third, fourth, and fifth received candy.

To conclude the day, participants attended the Luminary Ceremony. A luminary is a special white bag containing a candle dedicated by a participant to someone affected by cancer. The bags, which had been decorated by students earlier in the day, were placed on the tables of the then-dark cafeteria as students walked through the rows of glowing candles. The ceremony was held at the end of the event to allow participants to honour loved ones and take a moment to reflect.

“Relay for Life has always been important to me, especially given my family history with cancer—my aunt and grandmother both passed away from the disease,” Allan said. “Relay is about community. It’s about bringing them together and uniting them with a single cause.” ■

Building Bonds: New Discoveries on Music and Dementia

by SUSANNAH WELKE

More than fifty-five million people are living with dementia. Across the globe, families are watching their loved ones drift away, people are dying without ever remembering they lived.

Dementia is one of the most globally feared diseases [1]. Targeting the brain, this disease breaks down memory, language, and almost all intellectual functions humans perform. It strips a person of their personality, their memories, essentially their being. It's considered particularly cruel because it not only affects the patient, but their loved ones. Watching a father or a sister slowly lose themselves, not even remembering your name—that's the vicious sting of dementia.

For years, science has been unable to answer our questions when it comes to these neurological diseases. No known cure for dementia has yet been discovered, and pharmacological treatments have only resulted in short-term improvement of singular targeted symptoms. Thus, an industry of alternative non-pharmacological therapies has arisen.

A new targeted music therapy co-developed by Northwestern Medicine and the ITA, therapy through the arts, bridges the gap between dementia patients and their past.

Studies have found that the part of the brain which houses musical processing functions remains well preserved in patients affected by dementia [2].

The famous book *Musicology* by Oliver Sacks analyzes several severe cases of dementia. The musician Clive Wearing was among these cases, and is often credited to have kickstarted the research on music and dementia.

Clive, at the time of his interview, had a memory span of 15 seconds. Every moment of his life felt like he was being reborn, like he was emerging from darkness all over again. He relied wholeheartedly for every function on his wife, Deborah. When sitting down at a piano, however, Clive came to life. He began to play Prelude 9 in E minor as if he'd never taken a break. Before playing, he had had no recollection of the instrument or the piece, but as soon as he touched the keys, his fingers had a memory of their own.

It's this recollection that these new intensive music therapies hope to uncover. With personalized pieces handpicked from patients' childhoods, trained music therapists are able to improve the presentation of symptoms holistically. Northwestern's study, called "Musical Bridges to Memory" shows an improvement in social interaction, as

well as neuropsychiatric symptoms [3].

While musical treatments have been an ongoing and prominent topic of discussion amongst neurologists for years, this new approach has the unique ability to connect caregivers to their loved ones again. In an article by Marta Paul [4], lead study author Dr. Borna Bonakdarpour remarked that "Patients were able to connect with partners through music, a connection that was not available to them verbally."

With a disease as taxing on families as dementia, it's crucial to the wellbeing of the patient and caregiver that they find a way to connect. When conversation is such a key part of how humans do this, it can prove difficult to find ways to help them bond. Memory, cohesive speech—or even any form of speech at all—may be inaccessible forms of communication. Music, however, could be the perfect solution.

The developing method uses live musicians to serenade patients with their caregivers, and depending on their level of cognitive function may even allow them to participate. Some programs allow participants to use intuitive instruments such as tambourines or shakers to contribute to the music-making process and are encouraged to sing and dance.

The program, which included twelve sessions over three months, showed the patients as engaging in more eye contact, being less agitated and distracted, and having elevated moods.

This music therapy methodology is a huge advancement in the treatment of dementia. It's one of the first studies to priori-

tize developing new methods of communication between patients and caregivers, and has executed its goal amazingly. The program has found a way to bring back the person that was once lost to the disease, and allowed them to communicate through the language of music. It has, and will continue to, change so many lives. ■

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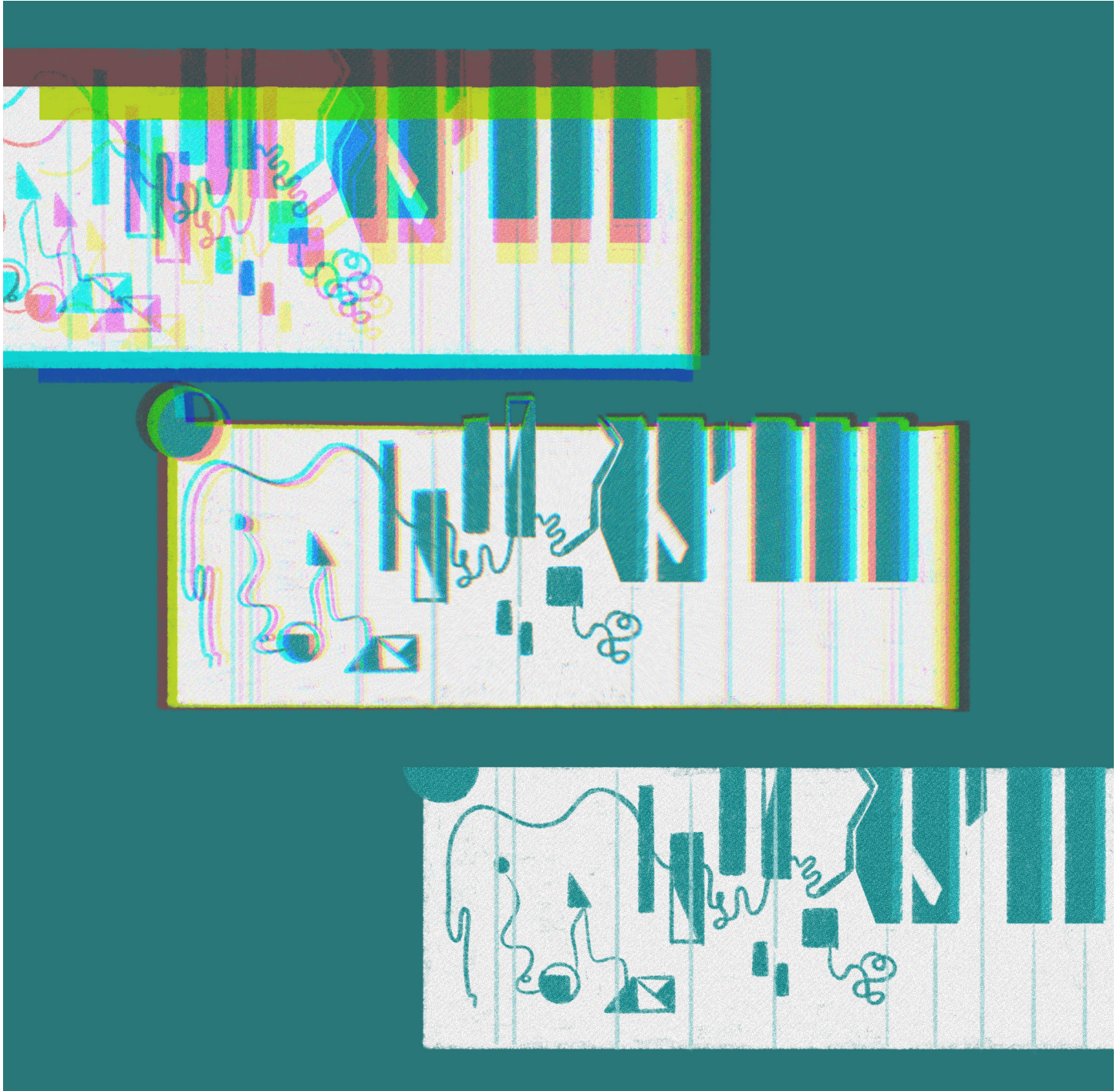


Illustration: Grace Zhu

LIFE BOARD

A board for imaginative self-expression through written and visual content.

Bus Ride Under A Snowy Sky

by PAUL SHUR

A loud BEEP signals the end of class. In an instant, textbooks are slammed shut and chairs hastily stacked. This was then followed by a mad dash to the door as bodies and backpacks struggled to fit through the tiny frame. To no one's surprise, I was at the front of the mob.

Four minutes. That's all the time I have before the bus arrives at the school stop. Leaping down the stairs two steps at a time, I slip into my jacket and kick open the front door.

The Canadian winter wind greets me with a howl. Ignoring the dagger-like flakes of icy snow stabbing at my face, I stumble towards the road. Drops of moisture fog up my glasses, but I could still vaguely make out the blue and red bus turning the corner. Desperate, I ignore the crosslight and run across the road, breathing hard but just in time.

I get on the bus, pay my fare, and head towards the back.

And then, I saw her. A gorgeous girl with umber hair and soft toffee eyes. Her face reminded me of the sun; you couldn't look at it straight, but once you do, the image is forever burned in your mind once.

My first reaction was nervousness as a heated blush

crept up my face. Then I felt confused. "She isn't a regular on this route, that's for sure." I think. Probably not even a frequent bus rider; the way her eyes darted back and forth from the Google Maps on her phone to the bus stop name gave it away.

In any case, I quickly avert my gaze and sit somewhere else. The brazen middle school personality I once possessed had wilted long ago in the stressful grounds of high school. Heck, I didn't even know if I still remembered how to start up a conversation, and especially with a girl w-a-y out of my league no less. Without a second thought, I plug

in my earbuds and slowly fall asleep to the gentle rocking of classical music; my refuge in a crazy world.

I jolt awake to a sharp poke on my shoulder. Looking up, I noticed that the man who woke me was pointing at my earphone cord, which had disconnected during my slumber. That's when I realized that the loud booms of music coming from my phone were not only heard by me but also by the other passengers.

In an instant, my once pale face turns bright red. I hastily shove the cord back in and mumble a quick apology. Discreetly as possible, I shoot a



Photo: Yameen Aziz

fast leftwards glance to see if the girl from before was there. To my horror, not only was she still on the bus, her humour-filled gaze was directed right at me.

Wishing to maintain what was left of my dignity, I look away and try my best to appear nonchalant. In truth, I wanted to crawl into a hole and hibernate for the rest of winter, which now felt colder than ever.

God must have felt sympathetic as the bus quickly reached my stop without much turbulence. I wanted to erase the whole experience from my mind, so it isn't hard to imagine my trembling face when the girl gets off with me.

Under the darkening sky illuminated by

the fluorescent car headlights, we lock eyes. I search my brain in panic, trying to find something, anything to say. A dad joke? Pickup line? A quip bringing up what happened on the bus?

She walks closer, and I prepare myself for the awkwardness.

Instead, with a tinkling voice and a radiant smile, she laughs:

"Hey! I like your music taste."

A tidal wave of relief, shock, and gratitude flows into me. With confidence and meaning that I haven't felt for years, I utter a single word from the bottom of my heart:

"Thanks!"

■

Puddles after the Rain

by JERRY HONG

Each raindrop falls like a ping-pong ball
from the sky.
But these balls don't bounce;
They splatter on the ground
Creating webs of water.

Each splash marks the start of growth.
As the rain continues,
The webs weave a net that flowers.
Later still, they bear fresh fruit.

The fruits are harvested soon after the
rainfall.
Children flock outside,
Their gathering tools with them
And reap the crops that the rainfall grew.

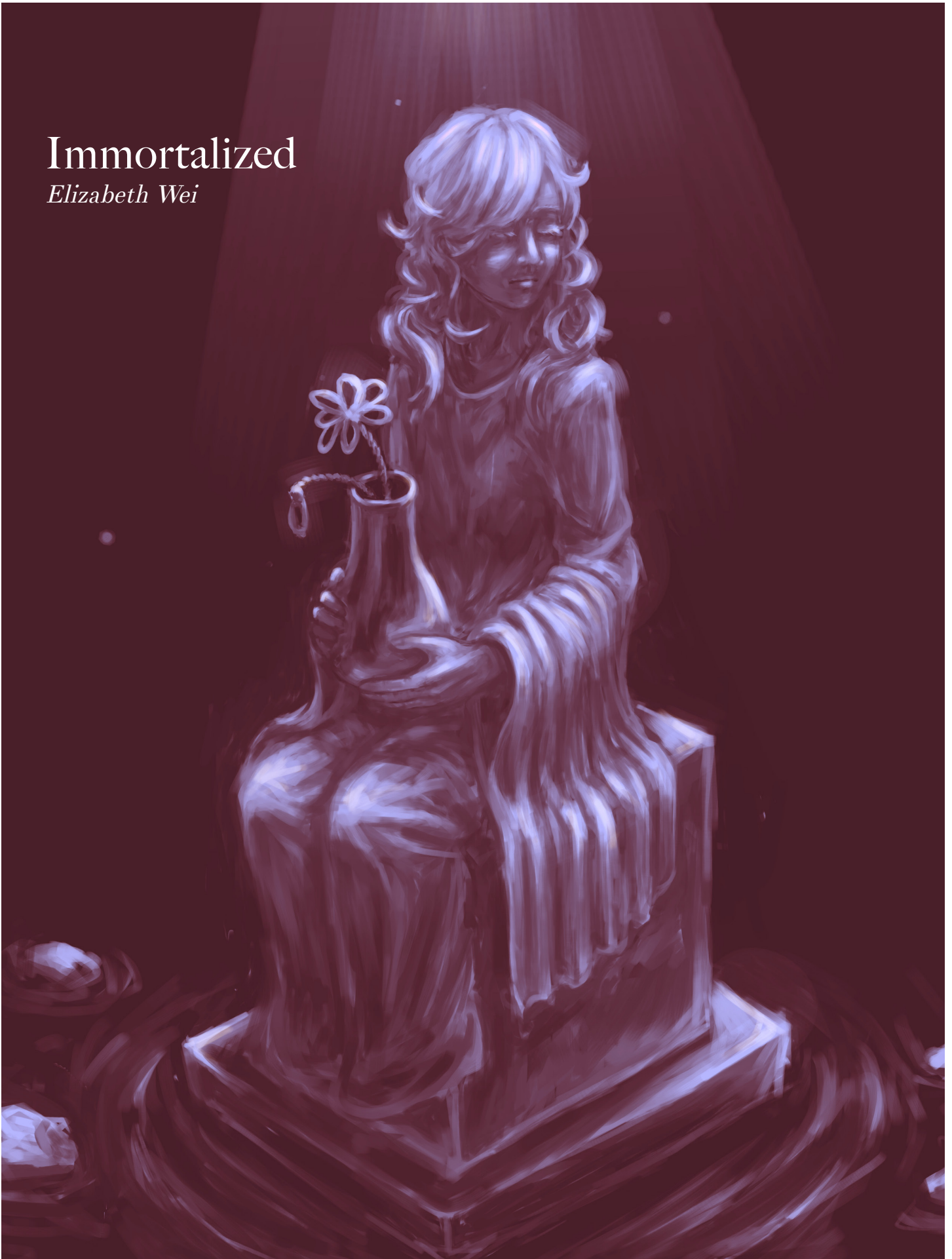
Once the night gently eases upon them,
the children
Retire to their haciendas,
Where, like sailors scavenging for wind,
They dance for rain.

Synopsis: Jerry tells of a rainfall and the
puddles that are created as a result of it.

Illustration: Sonia Ravindran

Immortalized

Elizabeth Wei



the apartment

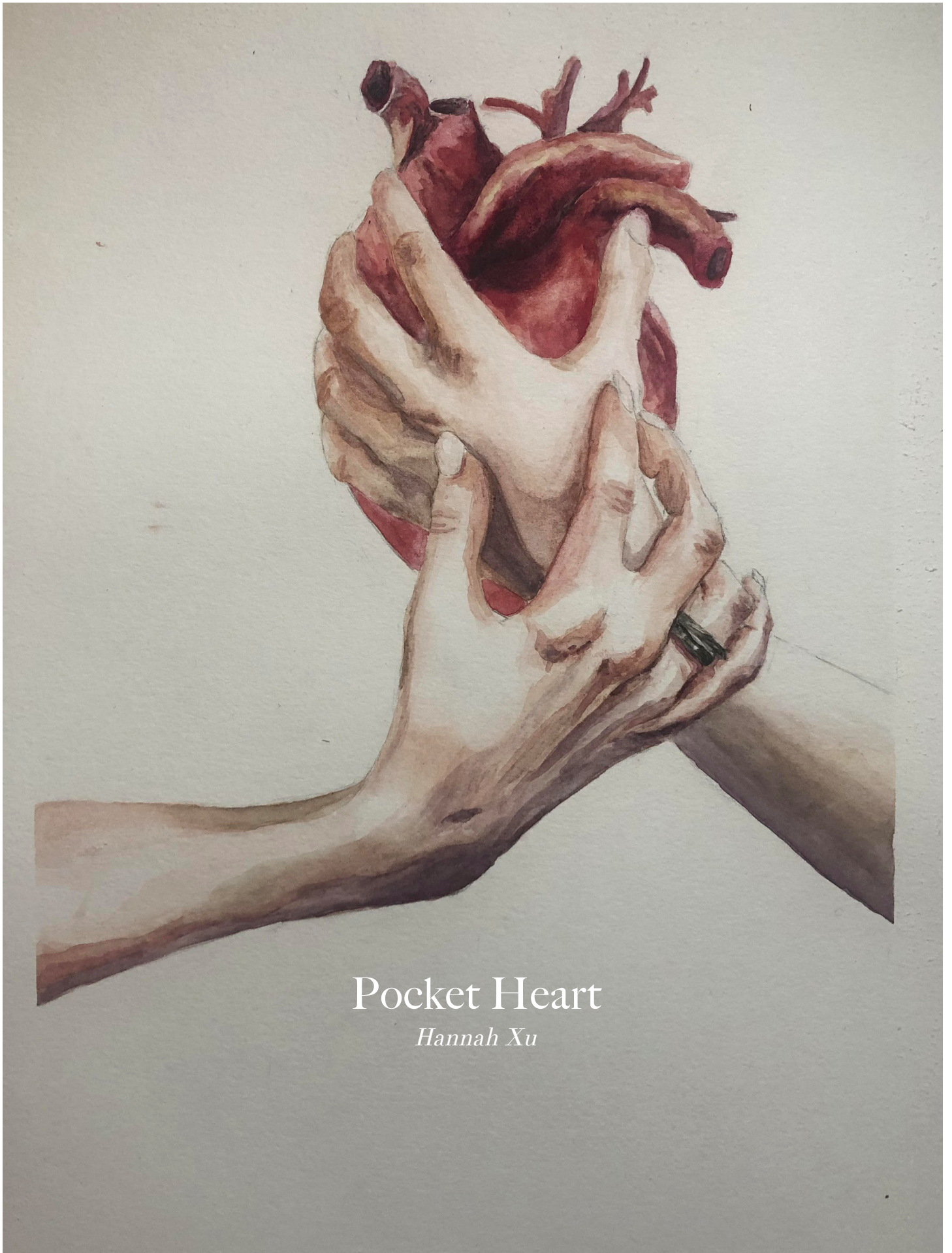
by ZIXUAN XU

REC



Illustration: Ivy Liu

i have a vision of us on the fourth floor
 of a dusted, white-walled apartment
 you strum a serenade and i sing to the world
 that's refused to hold us like we each other
 it's summer and the sky is an ocean again
 canned cold cola captured through film
 i chug as i scrawl out our lives in my papers
 and like magic, verse becomes music
 composing the misty soundtrack to
 a future only our hearts can design
 and like magic, friends become lovers
 i can almost see the hazy golden glow
 that clings to your frame as you move
 how long will i dance in the kitchen
 before you tell me to come to bed?
 that's when i gasp awake at midnight
 and remember dreams only breed dreams.



Pocket Heart

Hannah Xu

EDITORIAL BOARD

A board that amplifies student voices through supported opinions.

Should Donald Trump Have Been Banned From Twitter?

by ORIANA ZHOU and EILEEN KUANG

Intro:

Re-launching the lost and loved debate columns of the Editorial board, Oriana and Eileen discuss the reasoning and principles behind the suspension of former U.S. President Donald Trump's Twitter account. Although his account was reinstated in late 2022 due to Elon Musk's overtaking, Trump's Twitter ban, along with many other notorious personalities, begs the question: should social media companies be able to censor their users' accounts?

Eileen:

Guess who! Wharton Business School graduate, Forbes-recognized billionaire, first American president to be impeached twice during their term, instigator of domestic terrorism, and of course, the first American president to be indicted—for some 34 felony charges [1]. Oriana might try to tell you about how little any of Donald Trump's personal information matters; contrarily, when it comes to cultivating a space that must limit dangerous, instigating, and extremist content in order to even exist, it matters. At the end

of the day, Donald Trump and similar figures cannot coexist with true free speech on any legitimate platform.

Elon Musk reinstating the accounts of Donald Trump, Kanye West, and other previously banned figures in the name of free speech and a feeble attempt to push back on right-wing censorship should be concerning. Not only are Trump, West, and the like notorious for being incredibly bigoted—that is, racist, sexist, homophobic, anti-Semitic, and overwhelmingly offensive [2]—the danger lies in their sheer influence. When you allow public figures to sustain an

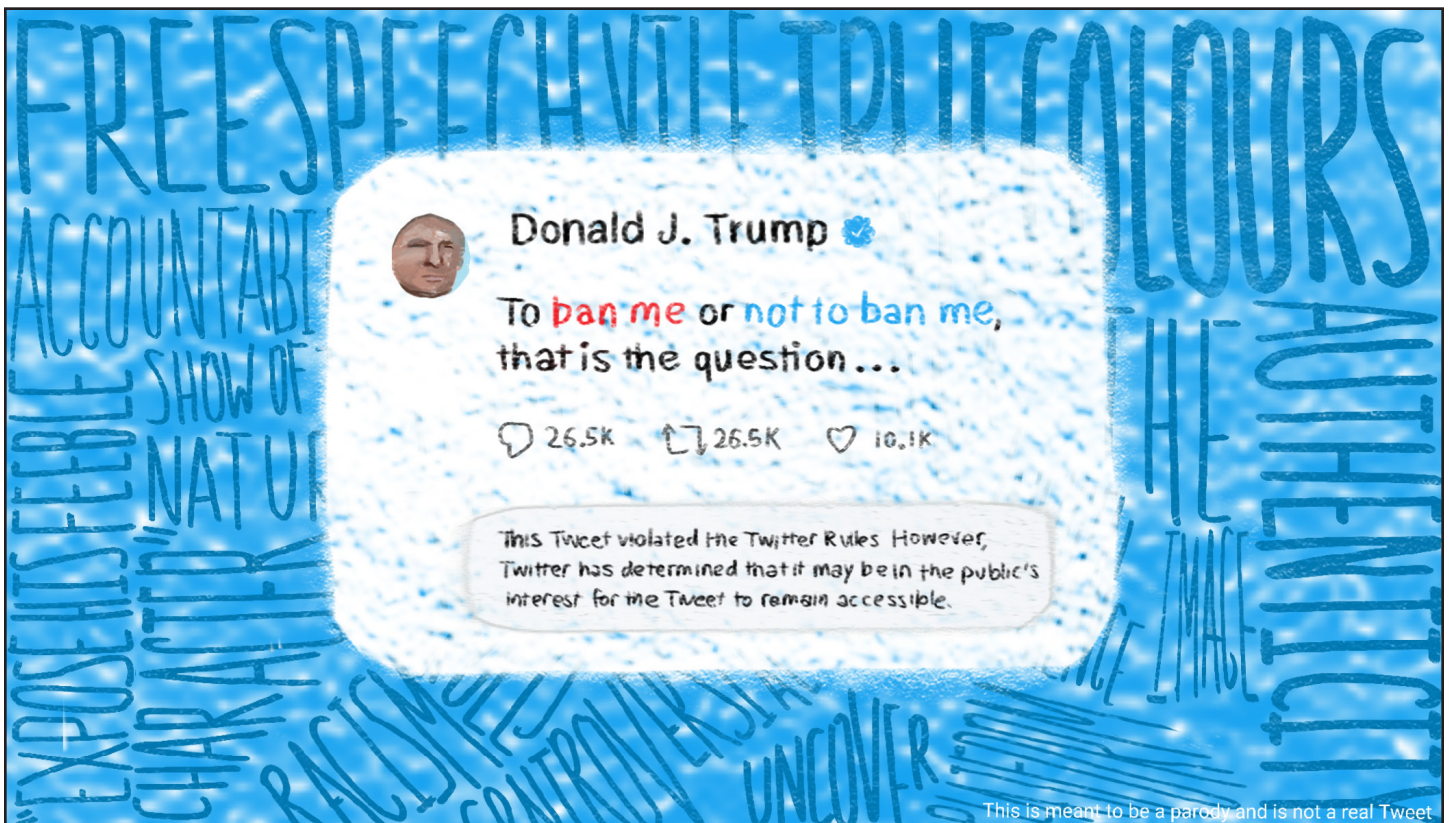


Illustration: Yuewen Gao

online platform in which they truly believe that they can say anything about anyone without any consequence, you create a dangerous space for public discourse. Stubborn and unwavering followers will inevitably resonate with and promote this bigotry, building and sustaining online communities that flaunt destructive rhetoric. By combining masses of fans of controversial and influential figures, an algorithm that, according to Twitter themselves, favours far right-wing accounts, and an emancipating sense of anonymity online, you foster a spread of fake news that can quickly thrust itself into heavy real-life consequences. The January 6th storming of the Capitol is directly associated with Trump's intense dedication to the idea of a stolen election; the ex-president tweeted several remarks inciting his supporters to 'converge' on the Capitol to 'fight for him' [3].

Oriana may try to minimise the impacts of domestic terrorism that killed 5 people with a slap on the wrist, citing that at least now we know better. The issue is that politicians whose bigoted opinions may be 'exposed' through Twitter or other mainstream social media platforms don't exactly tend to hide those opinions. It is clear that Donald Trump's racism has stained every aspect of his political career: when he is asked interview questions, when he is campaigning, while he is critiquing other politicians and considering policies [4]. The unique part that Twitter plays is simply to his advantage. By allowing him to intimately engage with millions of online users and broadcast dangerous opinions and rhetoric, Trump normalises bigotry and empowers those who believe in these existing fringe ideas. Ultimately, my critique is that even if it is true that Twitter may have served as an accountability mechanism for Trump's platform, this non-exclusive benefit should not be prioritised over the overwhelmingly dangerous impacts that exist solely on the opposing side.

Oriana:

Trump is a troll. Eileen agrees with that. I agree with that. In fact, we need to thank Trump for being a troll and thank Twitter for allowing him to be a troll. Make no mistake that Twitter and Trump's ability to exercise free speech on the platform has exposed the feeble-charactered President that he is. Eileen wants to argue that Trump-like figures and people who make similar statements to the disgraced president should be banned. But one can wonder, without Twitter and Trump's numerous Twitter rants, would we even know the Trump that he is today? The answer is no. With the rise of political consultancies, authenticity of candidates has long been masked from the public view. Consultants carefully curate impeccable images of candidates, presenting to the public the type of politician and candidate they want to see [5]. Not the type of person the candidate truly is. In the case of Trump, without Twitter, Trump simply wouldn't be Trump. Instead, Republican consultants would have painted a completely different portrait of Trump — an outsider, a sophisticated businessman, a philanthropist, and a perfectly hinged politician. It is only thanks to Trump's tweets, specifically his numerous rants, that we know the unhinged politician he is. It is thanks to Twitter that we know the vile comments or the disregard for national security that the former president has [6]. It is thanks to Trump's tweets that the American Civil Liberties Union was able to sue the Trump administration for immigration rights and clarifying policies regarding migrant workers [7]. In the case of Trump, Twitter has served as an accountability mechanism, not a harm. In fact, social media has been effective in exposing individuals, which allows voters to truly know their candidates. Moreover, banning all Trump-like figures would be even more harmful. We allow them to hide certain statements, which covers up their fringe ideas or masks their incompetency to serve

in office. Secondly, such tweets serve as an avenue for public discussion. Discourse and discussion of all policies that political candidates, or political writers discuss is crucial to a thriving democracy and accountability. Allowing leaders to express their ideas on public channels opens up greater access to criticism from pundits to ordinary citizens. Let's be clear. Fringe views and conspiracy theories will exist in either world. The difference is how society chooses to combat these dangerous ideas. In Eileen's world, supporters and like-minded figures will turn to echo-chambers, or platforms like Truth Social, away from the rest of the world where their fringe ideas are not known to the public [8]. Providing them with mainstream platforms prevents alienation from society, and allows greater criticism from the general public. Their statements aren't ignored, but instead, they reveal more about what a politician truly believes. Most importantly, this shows that the public has a right to know what each politician stands for, which provides the most representative view of who they will vote for. Eileen wants you to believe that refusing to engage with controversial political figures is the best way—you let their supporters stay in echo chambers and refuse to actively address these views. ■

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Dumplings - A Proverbial Cultural Superfood

by SAM LI

Global politics has always been marred by divisive nationalism and power struggles, where the plight of human suffering is often met with indifference. In the midst of an especially bad period of turmoil and geopolitical divides, perhaps it's more important than ever to highlight humanity outside of politics – the foods that bind people together in these tough times.

There is nothing more culturally iconic in the culinary world than dumplings. From savory fillings wrapped in delicate dough to hearty morsels fried to perfection, they have undoubtedly captured the hearts and palates of people across the globe. But the history and cultural significance of dumplings is far more multifaceted than just their scrumptious tastes.

Chinese folklore dates the origin of the dumpling, *jiaozi*, back to 200 BCE during the Han Dynasty, where physician Zhang Zhongjian found his entire village suffering from frostbite. He took scraps of dough and filled them with medicinal herbs, chili, and meat as a remedy. He fed this to the entire village; this amalgamation of traditionalist medicine and savoury flavours cured everyone within days.

Although this legend is found in mystics and most definitely irrelevant as a source of historical recount, it does have a huge significance on the cultural positioning of modern day dumplings.

Every year around February, Chinese families come together at home to celebrate the beginning of a new lunar calendar, where often 3 or 4 generations sit down together and undergo this delicate process of making *jiaozi* – each fold and crimp representing a labor of love, a gesture of care and affection.

As chopsticks reach for the platter, conversations flow, laughter ensues, generational bonds are built and strengthened. From grandparents passing down age-old techniques to

friends catching up on life's joys and challenges, the act of savoring these dumplings fosters connections that transcend the table – the beloved meal binding everyone together.

This effect has been especially prominent in recent years, as the hedonistic treadmill of capitalism tore multigenerational families apart. The young men and women who used to live a modest life taking over the ancestral farmland were now pursuing a career of accounting, education, and law in supercities of the future, a rather toxic culture of productivity engrossing their lives.

Only then do people realize the value in traditionalism, in the disembodied threads that connect them to their roots. As these young people navigate the fast-paced urban landscape of Beijing and Shanghai, allures of material wealth and career advancements often overshadow the importance of familial bonds.

But every new year, dumplings serve as a humble reminder in the power of communal harmony. The act of preparing and enjoying these culinary treasures fosters an atmosphere of togetherness and unity that is so special to China's 1.4 billion people.

The dumpling has fostered growth in many similar ways within countless other cultures around the world as well.

Take the South Asian and Middle Eastern superfood samosa for example, a triangular-shaped, deep-fried golden brown crisp. Samosas have become an integral part of celebrations and street food culture. They are enjoyed during religious festivals such as Diwali, Eid, Navratri, and are often used to break the fast during Ramadan.

The Tibetan momos, Japanese gyoza, Polish pierogi and even the Italian ravioli all share a similar purpose in their respective cultures, emphasizing the role of food as a unifying force and a way to celebrate shared heritage.

Perhaps you've always looked at these delicate pieces of culinary mastery as just that – a flavourful and fulfilling bite of food. Perhaps they are just that. But there is a certain beauty discovering the hidden intersectionalities within our childhood memories; for billions of people around the world, the dumpling represents a rich tapestry of culture, an embodiment and spirit of culinary creativity, communal sharing, and the intermingling of diverse traditions. ■



Illustration: Colleen Chang

The Lines of Comedy

by MAXIM MOHAREB

Humor is a universal concept, with the act of comedic playwriting being one of the world's oldest professions. Given that stress is at an overall historic high, this has led to comedy gradually finding itself into more and more of people's lives.

With the introduction of TikTok, a certain style of comedy has seen a meteoric rise in popularity. It has slithered into the eyes of millions, for the better or for the worse. This type of humor is none other than the style of insensitive comedy.

Insensitive comedy is a style of comedy that tends to take a defining characteristic of a group of people and incorporates it into a joke. This characteristic tends to be something like religion, culture, race, ethnicity, language, profession, or status.

We often hear of this controversial comedic style in the news, whether it be Dave Chappelle's comments on the LGBTQ community [1], or Chris Rock's usage of slurs to create a divide between the black community [2], these incidents are all examples of insensitive comedy.

There have been many talks about why there's a need for such insensitive comedy to take place anyway. After all, you can be funny without offending someone. The only problem is that comedy's unique position as 'fun entertainment' allows comedians to talk about things they actually care about without destroying their livelihoods, something that you cannot say for all professions.

An example of this is the story of Lenny Bruce, a comedian of-

ten referred to as the most controversial comedian of all time. Lenny Bruce was a stand-up comedian in the '50s and early '60s, and used his platform to really push the boundaries of what was acceptable [3]. He commonly talked about topics such as satire, politics, religion, sex, and vulgarity in ways that challenged societal norms and helped pave the way for furthered free speech in America.

Now, the problem with getting rid of insensitive comedy is that comedians, and the populace in general, would lose their way to talk about topics that may be sensitive but important. This would significantly challenge our ability to make an impact in the world, something that nobody wants. And you can't really make an impact by not saying anything new. After all, if you write jokes with political correctness in mind and also want to impact the world, you end up saying nothing.

This isn't to say that comedians should have leeway in the jokes they make. Instead, it's important to know what the boundaries are for comedians, and people in general, when making said jokes. This brings up questions like: is there a line for which anything past it is too taboo when making jokes? Should this line be audience dependent, and if so how? And finally, when somebody is inevitably offended by a joke, is the comedian always at fault?

To answer these questions, I ask the reader. What do the best jokes told by the best comedians all have in common? They make somebody the victim. The usage

of 'victim' in this context, and for the rest of the article, isn't necessarily a bad thing, and it can be all types of things. There's self-deprecating humor that makes the teller of the joke the victim. There's humor that could be making an aspect of life, a cog in the system of our society as the victim. Contrasting this with insensitive comedy, it's obvious that insensitive comedy usually makes that characteristic of that group of people the victim.

However, it doesn't always have to be this way. You can use insensitive jokes in a way that doesn't offend anybody but also brings up the problem at hand by not making the victim the insensitive portion. For example, if I wanted to joke about a language, I could portray that I'm the victim of the joke as I'm somebody not experienced in that language naively believing something. This allows the usage of things that people care about in your jokes while also not being offensive. A great example of this style would be the comedian Conan O'Brien, who uses his egoistic persona to make naive assumptions about things and has himself be the victim of the joke.

The great thing about this style is that it allows jokes to be directed to a community of people who'd find that joke more relatable than just a general joke. For example, a joke about Indian people doesn't have to be offensive, just relatable to Indians. And as long as nobody is being offensive, these directed types of jokes can help us better understand other cultures as we learn

from just hearing what type of things they have to deal with.

This leads to my final point, understanding your audience. Comedy and humor is meant to be used to unite people, understand differences, and find ways to naturally overcome those differences while laughing as a collective. If the comic finds a way to accomplish this, they have succeeded.

This leads to my own personal answer to the question of where said boundaries should be drawn. I believe those boundaries are drawn by the audience, the people. In the '30s, it wasn't possible to even think about the things we think about today, much less joke about them. How-

ever, times change, and I find that comedy leads that change. If the people want a certain type of content and nobody feels offended by the victimhood that inevitably comes from jokes, then that content is permissible. Otherwise, it is absolutely not permissible and the comic is completely at fault.

"For ordinarily when one abandons himself to violent laughter, his condition provokes a violent reaction" - Plato [4]. Comedy is a complex shape, with many lines connecting to all of us in a way. Yes, that means you too. And while Plato may be correct that comedy can come with a share of disapproval, discontent, and maybe even violence in

the worst cases, it can also give us moments of pure ecstasy. Moments in which we forget about the traumas hiding in our shadows, and instead gaze at a world worth living in. So, maybe, just maybe, the risk of crossing a line or two is worth it for the laughter that may follow. ■

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