

Questions Unanswered

by Anonymous

What would a two-state solution look like, especially if it was governed by Hamas? Would an organization that has routinely demonstrated that they don't care about Palestinian lives be a good group to have in government? How would the borders be regulated? How would the West Bank and the Gaza strip be united? Do you really think that the abolition of Israel is feasible? Do you think that America, who has spent over \$38 billion in funding alone to the military of the Israeli government, not to mention all the other financial aspects that they are supporting Israel with, would allow for Israel to stop existing? If Israel is abolished, where do all the Israelis go afterwards? If they are allowed to stay, would they automatically get Palestinian citizenship, if there is an official state of Palestine? What about the settlers in the West Bank, where they have been terrorizing Palestinians with no consequences for years?

Are ethnostates ethical? If Israel shouldn't have existed in the first place, where should the Jews have gone to flee the holocaust? Does "never again" mean that never again will such an atrocity like the Holocaust happen, or does "never again" mean that never again will Jewish people be the victims to such a genocide? If Israel is the Jewish homeland, does that mean that they aren't welcome anywhere else?

When will the hostages be free? If 210 Palestinians are killed to rescue 4 hostages, does that mean that every Israeli's life is worth 53 Palestinians? Why are these operations being carried out when negotiations free a significantly higher number of hostages? Is protesting the Israeli embassy effective? Even if that's an implicit acceptance of the Israeli government? Can you call for the abolition of the government and simultaneously protest its actions? Should we strive to have a Palestinian state, or strive to stop having Palestinians be murdered? Can we strive for both?

What happens after a cease-fire? When will a cease-fire happen? What would a cease-fire mean? Would a cease-fire bring peace? What would peace mean? What would peace look like? Could the Palestinians trust a cease-fire? (Trust, like when Israel said that Rafah would be safe?)

When will the line be drawn? When will the red line be crossed? On what scale would Palestinians have to be murdered so that the western world finally wakes up? What would be the tipping point? How many atrocities would have to be committed before the universities will take a stance? Would the universities feel guilty afterwards? If they stood by and let the Palestinians know they care more about academic freedom than their rights as human beings? What about the academic freedom of the Palestinians? What about the academic freedom of al-Aqsa university, or al-Azhar university?

How many Palestinian lives would have to be taken before the whole world condemns this genocide? What will happen in 20 years? Will the Palestinians in detention centers be released? Will the children recover their limbs? Will the burn wounds heal? Will the broken bones and amputated limbs and missing family members heal? Will the dead still be mourned? Can this trauma be recovered from? Would the world recover? When will it end? When will it be enough?

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2 WORLD

Protests Are What This University and Community Needs. Police Brutality is Not.

by Juliet Tanzer

This university college prides itself on its liberalism, progressivism and decoloniality. However, the actions and policies of this university and the University College specifically reveals dishonesty in these claims. When students create alternative means of education, when students actualize horizontal power structures in their learning, when students engage in decolonial practice, the university shuts us down. It does this not only through the petty bureaucracy that it has available, for example by preventing lectures from taking place or cancelling venues, but also through violence and police brutality.

“That was only the first night. What has followed has seen the growth of a movement, as hundreds gathered to protest the university’s decision to use police brutality rather than simply meet and discuss with its own students and faculty.”

Protests have been taking place both on the UCU campus and within UU more generally. These protests, organised by students and faculty have at their core a call to boycott and divest from Israeli academic institutions on account of the colonialism, apartheid and genocide that these institutions help carry out. Calls for this divestment have been ongoing for over three years, after students from UCU started an activist organisation called Utrecht in Solidarity with Palestine (USP). As the violence of the ongoing colonisation of Palestine has spiked in the last few months with the genocide ongoing in Gaza, these calls have also spiked. While many of you will remember walkouts and marches going from UCU to science park that occurred in the beginning of the year, you will also know that these marches and walkouts were ineffective. The College van Bestuur (CvB), the highest administrative body at UU, had only allowed a single 45-minute meeting with protesters in the entire 3-year history of USP. Due to this intransigence escalation was necessary.

It is important to understand what this escalation was. It was peaceful, not violent. It was educational, not hateful. It was liberating, not stifling. On the 7th of May, a liberated zone was declared in the courtyard of Drift library. Food was provided, students danced while poetry was recited and lectures on the colonial history in Palestine were planned. Students and faculty sat together in discussion next to the tents they had brought so that they could stay the night. But we were unable to stay. Despite being aware of what

it entailed through the brutality that was inflicted on Amsterdam students the day before, Anton Pijpers decided to have the police violently evict us. We did not cause any damage, did not risk anyone’s safety nor even did we risk disrupting anything as the library was closed overnight. Furthermore, in this decision-making, Anton Pijpers did not even deign to come down and consult us. He once used over 120 000 euros a year on domestic transport, paid for by your tuition fees, so he certainly could have afforded to come all the way to Drift to have a conversation. Instead, over a dozen police vans, alongside two double-length public buses filled with police officers, and additional vans of riot police officers arrived to evict peaceful student protestors. Staff formed a human barricade to protect their students but were unable to, instead being brutalised by police batons before being violently dragged into the public buses where their students would soon join them. Protestors were then illegally dropped off in the middle of nowhere (apologies to the thriving village of Houten) at 2 in the morning after support demonstrators who had attempted to block buses from leaving were knocked to the ground by riot police and some, like myself, even had police vans accelerate into us.



That was only the first night. What has followed has seen the growth of a movement, as hundreds gathered to protest the univer-

sity’s decision to use police brutality rather than simply meet and discuss with its own students and faculty. More liberated zones have since been declared, and all have been met by intense police violence (contrary to a precedent set by universities such as Groningen, Nijmegen, Maastricht and Wageningen, which have all allowed liberated zones in their university). Students and staff were constantly beaten by batons, pepper sprayed and even locked in cages, and all the while the police did not allow urgently needed medical attention to be provided despite the presence of medical practitioners, volunteers and ambulances. Even when a student, who happened to be from UCU, had collapsed and was non-verbal, police were resistant to the provision of medical care and still dropped them in the middle of nowhere despite an ambulance on hand to take them to hospital.

“When students create alternative means of education, when students actualize horizontal power structures in their learning, when students engage in decolonial practice, the university shuts us down.”

I tell you this not because I think you do not know. If UCU does one thing, it allows word to spread, which is why it has been so heartening to see over a hundred UCU students actively engaged in these protests and the erection of these liberated zones. I tell you this because I want to contrast what these spaces have been and the violence used to repress them, because I hope that you can see the differences between what the liberated zones were and how they have been presented by the CvB. These liberated zones must be understood as the liberation of epistemology from a colonialist hegemony. As much as this university will espouse its decoloniality, it is simply a publicity stunt. A decision made to show how they know the future of academia, but an unwillingness to engage with it. If they wanted to engage with decolonial academics, they would have joined our liberated zones instead of destroying them. These liberated zones are an opportunity for knowledge production outside of the hegemony of eurocentrism, they are spaces of epistemic freedom safe from the motivated silencing of western universalism.

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At least they try to be. Instead, they have become spaces of suppression, an unsurprising response to a decolonial movement but nevertheless a disappointing one. A university that claims to be committed to decolonisation could choose to listen to decolonial thought being created and debated by its community members. It could choose to engage with the thoughts of those who have established these liberated zones. Thoughts developed through critical reflection on scholars from Palestine, Africa, South America and the Global South as a whole. Instead, they have ignored the demands of lecturers of postcolonial studies, experts in their field, as they decry the actions of the Israeli state in its expansion of the Zionist project and demand the university act to work against this colonial regime.

University governing and managing bodies have monopolies over much at this university. They have been able to send emails controlling the narrative out to all students, faculty and workers. This has allowed them to present us not as scholars engaged in critical thought who are building a community with food, dancing and poetry, but rather as masked assailants who threaten the peace and bring a grim mood to the university. They have, through their use of police brutality (allowed only because of their ownership over land), a monopoly of violence that they wield against us. I wonder if you can know what it

is to be hit, over and over again, and watch your friends be hit over and over again and know that if you so much as walk forward, you are considered the violent provocateur. Ultimately they have a monopoly on the epistemology and politics of this university. They do not allow us to present our views. They do not allow us to change their policies. And they does not allow us to dissent.

“ I ask you: where is democracy in this system? Where is your representation? Where is your decision-making capacity? It does not exist. What shall you do?...join a movement for a new university. A movement that decolonises this university, that democratises this university, that places the students and staff of this university in the centre.

We have repeatedly been told that how we are engaging with them on this issue is the wrong way of moving forward. That protests are undemocratic and that they have structures in place for this. We have used all those structures already. We have engaged with faculty management and found middle managers powerless to act in support of our cause. We have engaged with student councils and, despite their willingness to work with us, the CvB has in turn ignored

them. This is no flaw in a system but the defining nature of how the university is run. It is a neoliberal system that has removed all power from every actor in the system such that no change can ever be made. Instead, every person simply passes a message up the chain of command to a boss who will ignore us. Even the CvB, the most powerful people at our university, chooses not to act because they must answer to a higher organisation (Universiteiten van Nederland). There is no leadership in this university, only management. Even the mayor of Utrecht, when questioned on her role in the police brutality inflicted on students and staff of the university, spoke about simply following protocols.

I ask you: where is democracy in this system? Where is your representation? Where is your decision-making capacity? It does not exist. What shall you do? Fall into a system of depoliticization where colonial understandings are recreated in the daily outflowing of our fees into funding for a colony in Palestine. Or join a movement for a new university. A movement that decolonises this university, that democratises this university, that places the students and staff of this university in the centre. Not as managers, nor as rulers governing by the baton but simply as leaders, creating spaces for liberation and decolonisation in this university and throughout the world.

EDITORIAL

Dear campus,

Though I hear everyone complaining about how summer term isn't looking like summer – cold, cloudy, raining, windy, and just not great vibes – I have to say, I prefer it this way. I've been crunching on my thesis for the past month, and I cannot begin to describe how sad it makes me to see the sun shining outside, knowing that I can't go out and enjoy it because I have a deadline to meet. Is it mean to wish bad weather onto everyone else because of FOMO? Perhaps.

On a more serious note, this is my last edition as Editor-in-Chief of The Boomerang, so I want to take this opportunity to thank all the lovely, beautiful people in my board, who've been so supportive over the years and whom I've shared many joyous and stressful moments with. Love you guys :) I trust that Jasmine and Yoan will do an even better job at chairing than I've done.

*Kind regards,
Pablo*

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4 WORLD

June

by Maria Drabik

Gay, Loud and not so PROUD. A Chaotic Guide to Pride.

June has come (out), which means ice cream walks, hopes for sun, 8-hour-long labs, and ever-present rainbows waiting for you in every single grocery shop, phone service, and bus stop. Rainbows that are meant to celebrate your queerness and express your pride in the late-capitalist, ever-tolerant society of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

Pride in the Netherlands, where it can be reduced to simple fun and celebration, feels like Kings Day (but with all the colours of the rainbow, not just orange).

Dutch Pride can be so loud that you can feel it vibrating through the bus windows.

At least that’s how I felt when I went to watch Utrecht’s annual procession of boats playing ‘gay music’ (Mamma Mia and Dua Lipa), filled with happy gay people (white, blond men wearing denim) and marked with companies’ logos (*Eat where you are celebrated*) accompanied by banners with statements such as *We Belong* or *Love is Love*.

“ Besides putting a rainbow flag next to their logo, is there anything else being done to make me feel included? ”

“Good that my phone service provider is an ally and makes me belong,” I thought, as I was watching yet another boat claiming to be the most rainbow friendly and PROUD corporation (said no one ever).

Where does it make me belong? Besides putting a rainbow flag next to their logo, is there anything else being done to make me feel included? To make me feel like I belong as a person coming from Poland, where I just don’t have rights? What does my tolerant phone company or rainbow-decorated vegetable aisle change?

Spoiler alert: Nothing.

Would they change anything in Poland?

Spoiler alert: No. (Maybe they would piss off some homophobic politicians).

In my desperation and rainbow overstimulation, I thought: “Does Pride even make sense? I guess it makes people come together to celebrate love without the need for activism because (spoiler alert, again) activism is not seen as necessary in the Netherlands (even though it clearly is.)”

Activism can be useful to people elsewhere, for example in Poland.

I felt physical discomfort seeing an Amnesty International banner with *Stop LGBT-free zones in Poland* you could photograph yourself with.

Cool to know my country is internationally homophobic.

“ ...it’s about showing that I am here and that I desperately want rights. It is about knowing that there are people that support me being here, even the Warsaw municipality. ”

My internationally homophobic country, just like the ever-tolerant Kingdom I currently reside in, holds pride marches in all major cities. They are starting to resemble those in the Netherlands, since the same international corporations need to show that they are internationally PROUD, and full of inclusivity. The concept is similar (*Let’s make the gays come together and let’s show how wonderful we are*), but the marches feel different.

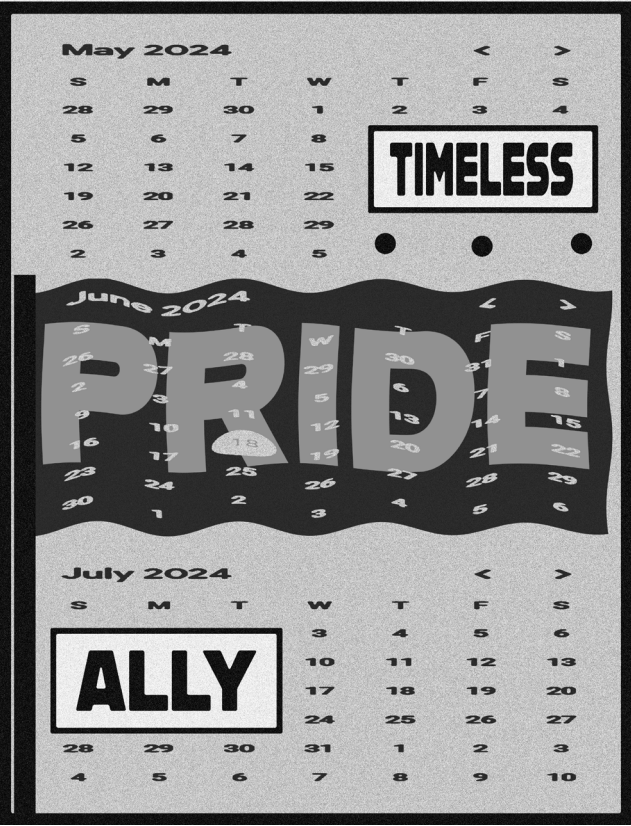
The day of the march is the day when you should be able to walk holding hands with a girl in the main street of your city. It’s the day when you should feel that you are not the only queer person within 10 kilometres. It’s when there are people celebrating love, people standing with you in order to fight for your rights, and people dancing to Lady Gaga, Dua Lipa, and Britney Spears, in hopes of being seen.

In hopes of being seen by the middle-aged men in suits who hold political power. Men, who are either: a) simply homophobic or b) find it extremely hard to introduce queer rights for some reason. I’ve heard the sentence: “It’s not the right time. Poland is not ready for such a dramatic change” way too many times.

When will Poland be ready? And how will I know that it is ready?

Maybe when it becomes as PROUD as the Google and Microsoft corporations or maybe when it gives me the same (meaning: almost non-existent) feeling of belonging as the boats floating in the Utrecht canal? Maybe it is not about rights, but about how you feel?

I don’t think so. Dutch Pride is a pride with rights, a pride that forgets that the



rights and happiness that can be enjoyed today are not everlasting and that they had to be fought for. It is not about the colourful balloons and getting drunk to the sounds of *I Kissed a Girl* by Katy Perry.

Polish Pride makes me feel like I belong. It is also filled with useless corporations trying to prove that they are better than the Polish government, but it’s about showing that I am here and that I desperately want rights. It is about knowing that there are people that support me being here, even the Warsaw municipality.

However, the men in suits, aka the government, don’t care enough.

It is not enough to just exist and enjoy June, even if the ice cream is very tasty, the sun shows up, the labs are bearable, and even if you see rainbows everywhere, if you know that the said rainbows will not change anything. To realise that a boat stating “You belong” does not want to make you feel like you belong, but rather profit from your lack of belonging, even if technically here you do have the rights you so desperately want. Happy Pride Month! Wesolego geja :)

Disclaimer: Since this article was written, gay rights (legal partnership to be exact) have been discussed in the Polish parliament. However, no definitive conclusions have been reached thus far.

Fat Bear Week

by Quetzalli Carrera-López

My favorite event of the year is Fat Bear Week. I first came across it three years ago when a friend sent me an Instagram post detailing the week's winner: Bear 747. I remember seeing the post and thinking one thing: "this is epic." In essence, Fat Bear Week is precisely what the name suggests, a week dedicated to deciding which bear of Alaska's Katmai National Park is the fattest. Now, I understand that this might sound a bit absurd, there is no way this can be a legitimate competition. But trust me, Alaskans' creation of Fat Bear Week easily puts Alaska in the top five places in the world, so bear with me (pun lowkey intended).

“Mama Grazer truly broke all gender roles last fall and served as empowered female representation on an often male-dominated roster of brown bears, being the third female bear to ever win the title

Fat Bear Week lasts a total of seven days and ends on a stunning Fat Bear Tuesday, when the chunkiest bear is ultimately crowned as the winner. The parks' rangers create a tournament amongst the heftiest, most horizontally gifted bears and pit them against one another. It is important to note that, as

a ranger pointed out: "size doesn't always matter", fellas! Followers decide the winner on various factors, including charisma, personality, and, of course, how gravitationally enhanced they are. People tune into the competition globally and enjoy the presence of stout bears through a live camera, offered by the national park, as a means to interact with the mammals. Viewers then take to the polls and eliminate bears each round.

“But trust me, Alaskans' creation of Fat Bear Week easily puts Alaska in the top five places in the world, so bear with me (pun lowkey intended). .

The bears are open to public opinion, but unlike our much-flawed society, they do not get scrutinized for their well-padded figures, rather, they get praised! Whichever bear managed to eat a year's worth of food in six months emerges victorious. This unconventional approval of fattiness can be attributed to the natural process of hibernation. Katmai National Park provides a steady flow of salmon to its bears, in order to ensure that during the six months of their hibernation, where they do not eat or drink until their reappearance in the spring, they are pudgy enough to survive. Their lifeline is thus, quite literally, their fat percentage.

Last year, Fat Bear Week lasted from October 4th to October 10th. The iconic winner was a 128 Grazer, a fierce female bear who, during past competitions, was unable to claim the title because she was busy taking care of her cubs. Last year, however, Grazer was enjoying the single life. With no cubs to take care of, she finally took the time to round her growing belly. She spent the summer being a true fatty, munching on berries, salmon, and grass, ready to bring the title home.

While she only recently became a true competitor this year, the bears did not forget Grazer's apparent protective and formidable attitude displayed while protecting her cubs in the past. Grazer had a reputation that allowed her to hold dominance over the males even though she was single.

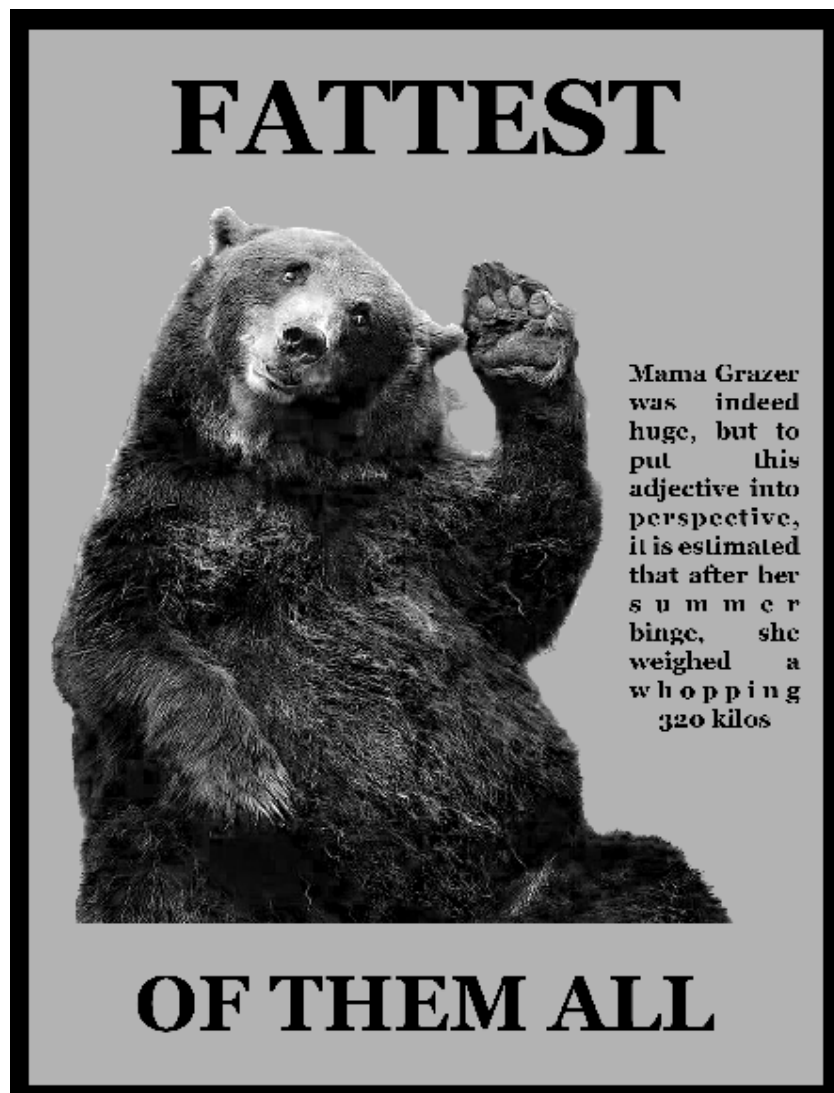
Mama Grazer truly broke all gender roles last fall and served as empowered female representation on an often male-dominated roster of brown bears, being the third female bear to ever win the title. As stated by Katmai National Park ranger Felicia Jimenez: "She was quite dainty in early summer, but now she is huge." Yes, Mama Grazer was indeed huge, but to put this adjective into perspective, it is estimated that after her summer binge, she weighed a whopping 320 kilos.

Some good news is that the entertainment these big-boned bears give us does not stop there. In 2021 the park introduced a new, younger, addition to the competition: chunky cubs. Fat Bear Junior, affectionately dubbed the 'chubby cubby competition' by avid followers, is the fat bear contest exclusively for cubs. The final winner then moves on to the main bracket in Fat Bear Week. This year, that honor was given to 806 Jr. If you take anything away from this article, let it be this: please look up an image of this adorably plump cub, you can thank me later.

“The bears are open to public opinion, but unlike our much-flawed society, they do not get scrutinized for their well-padded figures, rather, they get praised! Whichever bear managed to eat a year's worth of food in six months emerges victorious.

Although cuddly and cute, 806 Jr. put up a fierce competition last year. What's most impressive is that these cubs weigh less than a kilo when born in January and February, but last year's notable winner weighed more than 30 kilos by the end of September. This meant that baby 806 Jr. entered an uneven playing field at Fat Bear Week, competing against two-time champions, like Colvert, and experienced veterans, like Otis. Despite facing strong competition, every bear is (thankfully) a Fat Bear Week winner, as we all eagerly anticipate their post-hibernation comeback in the spring.

I think it's fitting to add that as a homage to this lovely holiday, as I like to call it, I bought a giant brown bear from Ikea and named it 128 Grazer, after the absolute legend of a tank that won Fat Bear Week 2023. With that, I end this article with a gentle reminder: next time October rolls around, make sure to tune into Fat Bear Week to see which bear is the next salmon-eating beast, you will not regret it.



Today, their body was a TV'd massacre

by Jasmine Yi Carder

Trigger warning: Death, Violence, Racism, Sexual Assault

In the midst of finals season, I met up with a friend to go into the city. As we unlocked our bikes he said,

"I think I've seen more decapitated body parts than people today."

I don't remember exactly what prompted this statement but I know that we were talking about Gaza.

There was a kind of morbid humor to what he had said. While neither he nor I have ever been near a warzone, the gore of it, the sheer horror of a city reduced to blood and ashes, was as much our routine as essay writing or grocery shopping. The most horrendous images of human suffering had become almost mundane.

The fact of that mundanity scares me. How can I, the daughter of a war refugee, fail to sympathize or even recognize the true extent of the horrors I'm exposed to everyday? When I see men in prison camps I should think of my grandfather, when I see children crouched in refugee shelters I should see my aunts, when I learn about little girls dying of thirst in their mothers' arms, waiting for rescue which doesn't come, I should think of my mom. Usually, I muster a mild "that's sad," and scroll on. Sometimes, I feel like a monster.

The instances where violent media does hit home are even worse than the numbness. Seeing a picture of big brown eyes peering up at me through clotted blood is enough to shake a piece of my insides loose. In the comfort of my bed, I put myself back together, thinking *I never want to experience this again*. But I know that this wish will not come true. Turning off the flow of media feels tantamount to abandoning the people who have to endure what I am only a mere witness to.

I've known since I was a little girl how important horrific media coverage is. In 1975, my mother was five years old when US troops retreated from her home city of Saigon. It was the end of the first of two consecutive wars my family would weather. Across the world, my thirty year old father had spent the last decade of his life as a conscientious objector, protesting state sponsored killing. By the end of the war, many people like my dad felt that the US had no right to interfere in Vietnam and send kids—the ones who were too patriotic or poor to avoid military service—to slaughter and be slaughtered.

Public disapproval of the war was largely due to it being the first 'television war'.

During WWII, American camera crews stayed in non-combat zones while white-teethed broadcasters reported how swimmingly everything was going. Vietnam was different. A more cynical atmosphere gave photographers and journalists the opening to try and capture harsh realities. Famous photos like those of the napalm girl or the burning monk tarnished America's illusory nobility and sparked mass protests. Many historians cite media coverage as the decisive factor contributing to the US' withdrawal.



In my lifetime, I've seen a similar phenomenon replayed in a different context. In 2020, when George Floyd was murdered by police in broad daylight, there was a camera present to capture it. The person holding it was a girl only one year older than me and the video wasn't originally broadcasted by an official news outlet. However, like Vietnam, the public's response was tremendous. It wasn't as if black Americans hadn't been indiscriminately murdered for centuries; but this one viral video catapulted the Black Lives Matter movement—created a whole seven years earlier—into the global forefront. Videos like that of Floyd drew awareness to deep-rooted systemic injustice and brought about convictions of murderers who would have probably walked away unscathed.

In both cases, without the shock of seeing someone running for their life, suffocated, or burning alive, there would have been little to no pressure from the public calling for the atrocities to stop. Horrific media is shocking. It captures attention more easily than reporting which omits the graphic aspects. There's even a saying for this in journalism. Coined in the 1890s, the phrase speaks for itself: 'If it bleeds, it leads.'

In her article "When Trauma Goes Viral," black reporter Paula Akpan wrote about the decision made by Ahmaud Arbery's family to

post the video of him being chased and killed by three white men while out for a jog. She describes, "The Arbery family...had to decide whether or not they would share the video on social media, considering the inevitable and very public pain it would cause the family versus the potentially huge interest it would stir." Before the video was posted, they had endured 70 days following his murder with no arrests in sight. Within two days of the video being posted, the first arrests were made.

Aside from drawing attention, violent pieces of media hold another important purpose. As Susan Sontag pointed out in *On Photography*, images are nearly irrefutable proof of an event. Since the survivors of Auschwitz walked out of its iron gates, countless people have set about collecting pictures and narratives of Holocaust survivors to ensure that what they endured cannot be erased. Now, videos taken by Palestinians are used to hold the Israeli military accountable. How could they deny targeting refugee camps and aid trucks when the videos are available on devices all over the world? The cruel reality is that people can and will ignore, minimize, or deny almost anything. However, the existence of evidence makes it harder.

“The vast majority of news—no matter where we get it—is ultimately packaged to be consumed en masse, providing the most shocking information as quickly as possible. True nuance and humanity are rare.

Thus far I have been comparing historical and modern examples of violent media. I want to make it clear that a lot has changed in the last few generations. Sontag described one of the unfortunate side effects of seeing mass amounts of violent media as such:

Don McCullin's photographs of emaciated Biafrans in the early 1970s had less impact for some people than Werner Bischof's photographs of Indian famine victims in the early 1950s because those images had become banal, and the photographs of Tuareg families dying of starvation in the sub-Sahara that appeared in magazines everywhere in 1973 must have seemed to many like an unbearable replay of a now familiar atrocity exhibition.

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Sontag wrote these lines in 1977 before the internet, iPhones, or social media were even embryonic. If the atrocities of war seemed banal after seeing a few print photos, imagine what she would have said about the amount of film, video, and testimony that is pumped out of Palestine and Ukraine by the minute. In this day and age, it's too easy for human suffering to become a constant, blurry background for those of us sitting behind screens.

The desensitization that Sontag wrote of is heavily documented. We know humans become desensitized through all kinds of exposure to violence. Many people's blood pressure no longer rises when we see someone being shot in a movie because we have seen it so many times before. There are even studies that show repeated exposure to sexual assault in film can lead people to rate the victims' pain as less severe.

The studies that measure desensitization usually use video game deaths and acted-out rape scenes. My friends and I have noticed that there is a surprising and key difference between fictional violence like those in most studies and actual news coverage of violence: the movies are more empathetic. Even if Tarantino's movies aren't exactly sentimental, most characters in *Reservoir Dogs* are given names, backgrounds, and final words; their deaths are given weight.

Today on the New York Times's 'Israel-Hamas War' live updates, a picture of a child covered in dust and dried blood is titled, "A Palestinian medic carrying an injured child Saturday during an Israeli military operation in the town of Nuseirat in central Gaza." There is no extra information. Similarly, nondescript pictures of children, bodies, and rubble appear if I scroll down or to the side.

Many of the images on social media are considerably more graphic with only slightly more personal information. However, the way that media is framed both in long-form news and on social media is structurally desensitizing. The vast majority of news—no matter where we get it—is ultimately packaged to be consumed en masse, providing the most shocking information as quickly as possible. True nuance and humanity are rare.

When we do feel the gravity of what we are seeing, it is quite literally traumatizing. Many people have a hard time consuming violent content because of past trauma. There also are many studies that link

continuous violent media consumption with low levels of PTSD even in those without a history of the disease. Many news outlets have clamped on to this phenomenon and written articles recommending that their viewers take care of their mental health by minimizing their exposure to news.

“The piece of metal that distinguishes us as viewers and them as objects of viewership is considerably flimsier than we might like to believe.”

While I understand not wanting to jeopardize our well-being, I believe we must understand the choice we make when we choose to look away.

In the last year, I have seen hundreds of pictures of Palestinian children caked in dust and blood. The faces of the children are nameless, blurring into one black-haired, brown-eyed, terror-stricken child. I don't know what their voice sounds like, if they belong to anyone, or if they are still alive. They have no past or future. Their present is forever captured in a single moment, dispersed to millions, gazed upon for something like five seconds. The photo captures either the worst or the last day of their short lives. In return for their vulnerability, they require absolutely nothing of us. When the five seconds are over they quickly fade into the recesses of our minds. Or, maybe we never saw them at all for fear that their suffering would trigger mild to immense discomfort.

These people don't stop suffering when we scroll away or put time limits on our news apps. They serve up their suffering on a platter of pixels and sound bites so that we might do something. When the bloodied child doesn't draw attention, a body lying under rubble might. When the body grows cold and there is still no relief, they send us stories of women with their legs ripped off. When we ignore their missing limbs, they plaster the world with an image of a mother carrying her child's head in a stained plastic bag.

Regardless of whether the media stops shocking or becomes too shocking, the bottom line is that we exist comfortably on one side of a screen while they die on the other. The piece of metal that distinguishes us as viewers and them as objects of viewership is considerably flimsier than we might like to believe.

When my mother is presented with good food her legs instinctively jitter with excitement. Somewhere in the world, there is a woman who used to do the same thing before their kitchen turned to ashes and bullets blocked their next meal. Every time my partner brushes his teeth he gets toothpaste everywhere — it's almost impressive how consistently messy he is with it. Somewhere in the world right now a person is wailing in front of a pile of cracked tile and shattered glass, grappling with the idea that they will never again get ready for bed with their partner. They will never have another opportunity to chide them for their messiness.

It is unclear to me what can be done about desensitization or mental health regarding violent media. However, regardless of what each individual decides to do with this content, I believe one thing remains clear. We cannot let ourselves turn away—physically or emotionally—from the horrors of the world. We have a responsibility as the safe ones to nurture our ability to feel for these people. When we can no longer muster sympathy, when we can't bear to look them in the eyes, when we don't feel the need to help them, then we are lost.

I am probably not the best person to write this article. I haven't done everything I could to help the sufferers of the world. I wasn't able to capture the true complexity of this topic. I haven't even read a fraction of the studies or analyses available. However, we all must do something, anything we feel could make a positive difference. It is not enough for me or you to be mere observers of pain.

Know that every image you see, every story you hear was meant for your ears, your eyes. They are a call for action. If there is something you think you can do, whether it be writing an article, going to a protest, donating to a relief organization, or simply learning more about the conflicts occurring in Palestine, Ukraine, and across almost every continent, then do it.

*Title from the poem 'We Teach Life, Sir'
by Rafeef Ziadah*

8 CULTURE

Challengers

"A ball-slapping good time."

by Alicja Chojnacka

With Alejandra still away on exchange, the Boomerang pages have been missing her very colourful reflections on newly released movies — a void I will *attempt* to fill for this summer edition. To be frank, this is also quite a nice break from the more serious and gloomy topics I usually cover, and as a media studies major, talking about movies is certainly more up my alley.

As most fellow international students, I do not go to the cinema very often, firstly, because it's easy to just watch something on my laptop, secondly, because going to the movies in the Netherlands is a pricey ordeal, and thirdly, because it's simply no longer an option I consider while making plans. Whenever I do watch movies at home, I rarely finish them in one sitting; there's always something that needs to be done, someone will always text me, and, quite frankly, I am not really used to focusing my unwavering

another, dictating the viewer's experience.

Watching *Challengers* was also a nice break from the rather repetitive nature of recent blockbuster movies which seem to be obsessed with biopics. Don't get me wrong, there are some absolute gems to be found between the heaps of them, but once even the best formula is overdone, it's simply overdone. Not to mention how obnoxious an attempt it often is to simply gather more profit by appealing to the rather unhealthy obsessions of different fan bases. But that's a topic for an entirely different article - let me come back to the issue at hand.

Another thing that *Challengers* does right is romance. Even though the plot revolves around the love triangle between the three tennis players – Tashi, Art and Patrick – the movie is primarily focused on portraying the drive to be great, and does not simplify the

limited knowledge of the sport, I can assure you that it simply functions as a gateway in illustrating human passion.

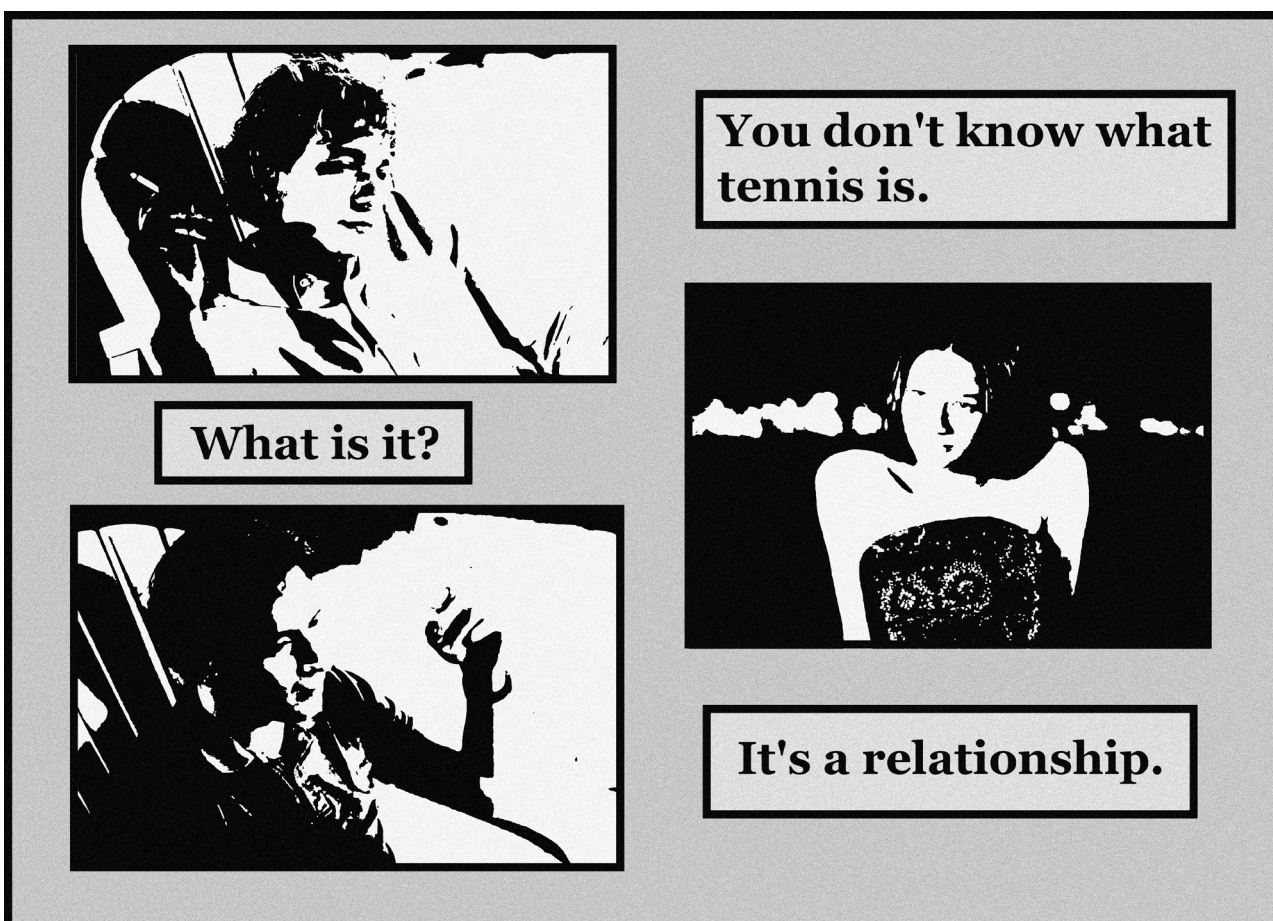
“ Which is why this weekend I really did re-discover why I loved going to the cinema so much - some movies are simply better watched on a big screen, which is also the case for Challengers.

When it comes to more analytical aspects of this movie, I promise that anyone who is remotely excited to nitpick different motifs and symbols will have a field day while watching *Challengers*. All of them are placed as subtle winks to the viewer, who can in turn enjoy the immense satisfaction of the movie, letting them piece together different interpretations without being *too* obnoxious about it.

Now I can finally get to the stuff I truly geeked out about – the camera work and the mise-en-scene. The shots were so varied that the visual aspects of the movie will certainly keep you occupied with nudging the person next to you and excitedly going: how did they do that? From the go-pro feeling of following the tennis ball around the field, to looking at the match from underground but through clear glass (I wish I could tell you how that was done, but I'm afraid UCU curriculum didn't cover that part), and to the satisfying use of head-turning characteristics for watching a game of tennis - I'm serious, keep your eyes on Tashi all throughout the movie and you might have the fulfilment of detecting all the little signs left by the producers. Similarly, the setting never disappointed, and heightened the stake of most scenes. Once again, watching this movie is incredibly satisfying, even if you're not into film analysis.

“ I promise that anyone who is remotely excited to nitpick different motifs and symbols will have a field day while watching Challengers.

Considering how disappointed I was by the recent trends displayed by the movies produced in Hollywood, *Challengers* was quite a nice break. But who am I to judge what a good movie even is? While I doubt this movie will reveal eternal life truths to you, all I can tell you with full conviction is that it is incredibly engaging and fun, as well as worth the watch - and maybe even spending those 11 Euros on the ticket.



attention for at least 2 hours - or sometimes three and a half if we consider the obscene length of most newly released movies. Which is why this weekend I really did re-discover why I loved going to the cinema so much - some movies are simply better watched on a big screen, which is also the case for *Challengers*. This is because the movie's central effect is the tension it evokes, which could not be replicated if you weren't latching onto every word and gesture visible on the grand screen. This palpable tension is heightened even more by the cleverly used soundtrack made up of both electronic dance music and classical music, which alternate with one

characters in the movie's quest to do so. While the love triangle trope is widely known and commonly overdone, this movie does it right as the tensions between different characters heighten the viewer's experience of their competition: and because it's far from what is commonly understood as a love triangle in more heteronormative works, this is the best you're gonna get without any spoilers.

To all the prospective viewers of the movie, whether it's on your laptop or in the cinema – I don't judge –, you really don't have to be interested in tennis in order to enjoy it. As someone who went to the cinema with a very

Jasmine's Book Nook

Minor Detail

by Jasmine Yi Carder



Trigger Warning: Sexual Assault, Violence, Death

I recently visited my favorite bookstore in the city — Bijleveld you have my undying devotion — and I came across the slim, navy cover of *Minor Detail* by Adania Shibli. Several people have recommended it to me in the last couple of months so I decided to pick up a copy. I read the short book in two sittings. My first impression was that it was terrifying; in its topic, in its details, in its casual airs. *Minor Detail* is a succinct and piercing portrayal of the decades long occupation of Palestine.

Before I say anything else I want to make one thing clear: this text is brutal. In terms of horror, it's somewhere in the realm of *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, and I take that comparison very seriously. That being said, I'm glad that I read it. It's one thing to learn about the history of Palestine and Israel, to hear stories of what it's like to live under occupation, and it's another to immerse yourself in it in

the way that's only possible with literature.

The book is broken up into two parts. The first half was much harder for me to read than the second. It takes place in 1949, shortly after Nakba, in the Negev desert. The narrator is an Israeli soldier in charge of a small unit. Their goal is to keep the area secure by hunting down the remaining Arabs. One day they abduct a Palestinian girl. Over the next few days, they proceed to rape, kill, and bury her in the sand. In case you're afraid of spoilers, all of this information is available on the back cover. The choice to advertise the book with such revealing detail is probably because its power lies less in bare events than in the perspectives of the narrators. The soldier's total ambivalence to the atrocities that he and his comrades commit was by far the most disturbing aspect of the book.

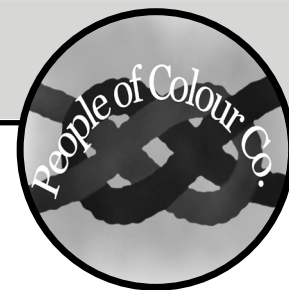
The second part of the story takes place 50 years later and focuses on the lives of Palestinians. The new narrator is a young Palestinian woman with a very unique personality. She

suffers from severe anxiety stemming from her inability to recognize and respect borders. Not being able to grasp societal conventions or political boundaries is incredibly dangerous for someone living under occupation. However, she is also fixated on a minor detail in a newspaper report of the decades-old murder. She decides to set out on a risky journey to uncover more information about the long-forgotten girl. On her journey, restrictions, considerations, and fears that have only ever been described to me played out before my eyes.

Despite a high level of tension, a certain amount of impassivity carries over from the previous half. At some point the second narrator muses, "...no point in me feeling responsible for her, feeling like she's a nobody, and will forever remain a nobody whose voice nobody will hear." This novel, based on a true story, is shocking without being flashy or especially emotive. Its power comes from its blunt portrayal of lives and deaths under occupation.

On Internalized Racism

by Shubhi on behalf of PoCCo



Internalized racism, according to Jabari Lyles: "Happens when people of color start to behave or act in manners that uphold whiteness and white supremacy". One of my earliest encounters with internalized racism was my older cousin proudly telling us how he was repeatedly mistaken for being Latinx, his eagerness to distance himself from his Indian identity evident in his voice. A few years later, it was my grandmother berating my brother for playing out in the sun in fear that he would "become too dark" and in middle school, my friend aspiring to marry a white guy— any white guy. I thought I was immune to internalized racism because I had studied it, until I came to UCU and had to confront the idea of being 'a person of color'. Suddenly, I started noticing the little things — the knee jerk reaction of disgust hearing heavy Indian accents in public and the fear of being perceived as 'too Indian' when wearing a lehenga.

At first I was quite hard on myself — was this another form of self-hatred I would have to confront? Until I realized, of course, this was not an individual issue. Was I naive enough to think constant negative media portrayal of certain accents and mannerisms wouldn't get to me? That I could ignore the ever-present

idea that being light-skinned was the only way to be beautiful? In a world that feeds us ideas about race and racial constructs from childhood, aren't we bound to internalize them? Children internalize a worldview about race quite early on — as early as two years old, children start using race as a way to justify people's behavior (Hirschfield, 2008), and by age five, white children show a higher preference for whiteness (Dunham et al, 2005). Since ideas of race start so young, this internalization of societal pressures can take many forms: negative self-image, overcompensation in order to match white peers, excessive politeness around white people to avoid being seen as improper. Internalized racism is rewarded — because it is associated with knowing your place and upholding systems of white supremacy (Jabari Lyles, 2017).

While internalized racism may not be a form of self-hatred, connection and self-love have been proven to be decent antidotes. On the point of self-love, numerous studies suggest that 'positive racial/ethnic identity', that is, having a generally positive attitude towards their racial/ethnic background, was a good combatant to internalized racism (Benigno 2017; Bryant 2009; Zhen-Duan et

al 2018). However, this identity is hard to build since racism can be so deeply rooted. Maybe this is why they say self-love is a radical act. Maybe it is radical to love yourself when you're taught to hate yourself.

When it comes to connection in young children, explicit conversations about interracial friendships have shown to dramatically improve racial attitudes in as little as a week as shown by Bronson and Merryman (2009). The paper stressed the importance of directly talking about race — using proper terminology and addressing biases, as opposed to vague statements such as 'love everyone'. Since ideas about race are subconsciously taught from such a young age, it takes years and heavy emotional labor to undo its effects, which is why it's important to start conversations about race early — conversations that belong in homes, in classrooms and in movie theaters. Only then can we reshape the narratives that have surrounded us all our lives. One step at a time. Personally, I still have a long way to go, but maybe writing this article has brought me one step closer.

10 COLUMNS

Settling it over a cup of tea

by Pieter Dolmans



In the past few months, my partner has been rehearsing to play a ‘bad guy’ in her amateur drama group. Not having a lot of prior theatre experience, she was surprised when the director complimented her on how properly frightening she was playing this character. Together we wondered whether she was simply that naturally good at acting, or whether there was something else at play. Perhaps there were very little changes that she had to make to her natural everyday disposition to make the director find her scary. This second option sounds like quite an absurd situation, but it is one that many people deal with.

See, my partner is on the autism spectrum, symptoms of which include difficulty recognising verbal or bodily social cues of neurotypical people and difficulty reflecting such cues back towards neurotypical people in one's own speech and body. This communicative incongruence means that the one group (whether it be people with autism spectrum disorder or neurotypicals) is often interpreted by the other as ‘giving

off (what they perceive as) the wrong signals.’ And since we frequently use these signals to interpret a person's intentions, confusion about them can lead to confusion about intentions, which in turn can lead to fear. So my partner was afraid that it was not her acting that made the director afraid, but her neurodivergence.

Unfortunately, such fear is not unprecedented in common narratives. Take as an example the antagonist in *No Country for Old Men*, hitman Anton Chigurh, who is considered to be one of the scariest thriller villains in recent history. This fact alone is remarkable, as his actions are not much different from those of any hitman in any crime film. Instead, Chigurh's most notable feature is his refusal to adhere to social standards. He displays little emotion in his actions, and in conversation he asks questions perceived as casually rude and inappropriate, seemingly not realising how unconventional his behaviour is. This communicative difficulty, which is also commonly found in neurodivergent people such as my partner and I, is what people tend to

point to when explaining why Chigurh is such a scary character, not his brutal killings. What?!

Whether associations with neurodivergent people were intended by the creatives behind such media is often unknown and honestly irrelevant. What matters is that media like this spectacularises the communication barrier between neurodivergent and neurotypical people. And neurotypicals are already much too stubborn to attempt to cross the barrier *without* thinking about it as a horror trope.

Note: I do not have an autism spectrum diagnosis myself, and I should not be considered an authority on it. My intention with my comments on autism is to introduce a larger issue which neurodivergent people (among whom I do fall) face. I have consulted my partner on her experience with ASD to help write this piece. Still, experiences differ and not everyone will feel the same about these topics and situations as she does.

Mila's Playlist

by Mila Frattini



I often like to refer to myself as a morning person, though I can't say that I'm up early with enough consistency to be considered one. However, whether it's a 07:30 early rise for a football game, when it's still dark-ish outside, or a big Sunday sleep-in, as the sun is kept waiting outside my windows past 11:00, music is always there to wake me up. It's the first conversation I have every day, so it has to be a good one. I'd like to share some of the songs that have become regulars – maybe they can help get your days started too.

Sleeper by BADBADNOTGOOD and Charlotte Day Wilson maintains an animated mellowness that eases you out of sleep, and the name is very fitting. Ontario-based jazz ensemble BADBADNOTGOOD brings in streaks of the '70s indie eccentricity, paired with more modern electronic sounds. Sung by Charlotte Day Wilson, in her deep, clean timbre that reverberates through your body; the song has an echo, a hollow rhythm where you can discover the first morning pace. When you're ready to carry forth the drums, you can land in Loyle Carner's intro to *Still*. Maybe you're rolling out of your sheets now, or rubbing your eyes in the mirror, briefly checking in on a neglected plant, or nudging a window so it lies ajar. Carner's voice, recognisable, open, and comforting, raps an honest reflection. It lands softly, it grounds me: “Saying I'm lost, still. Wondering my cost, still. If you hit me then I bruise, ‘cause

I got nothing to lose, I could tell you that it's just as real.” ‘You're not alone’ he urges you. Leave the embrace, move faster, towards something lighter (wash your face). *Balancê* by Sara Tavares, a song part of the compilation *La nouvelle scène créole*. Tavares is a Portuguese singer-songwriter who integrates Fado and the beats of her African roots in a hybrid acoustic pop that has captivated many over the years. Rise with her humming – she sings of freedom.

Now that you're up, I think it's time to hop around a bit more. I'm always late, so at this point I need to shake the grogginess off, and who's better at inducing purposeful cheekiness than Nina Simone? *Do I Move You – Version II* is a masterpiece, in my humble opinion. One of the most powerful voices of the last century, embroidered with her tickling of the piano and harmonious instruments: Nina Simone makes me feel like a woman who can do anything. “Do I move you, is it thrillin'?” The answer better be – (yes, yes) – “then let's start swayin'”. And if you're swaying, you're a foot tap away from dancing. Press play on Neffa's funky *Prima di andare via*; if at this point the shirt you've selected is half on, still stuck over your head, you have to go with it and groove to this track. Electric guitar riffs and r&b drums are trademarks of the Italian musician and singer, who, in this track, is asking his love interest to stay a moment longer. And, oh, all the things he would say if she just gave him a little longer.

Some rock & roll is needed in the morning. Air guitaring in your room while bopping your head up and down is a good-mood guarantee. The beauty of minimalistic pub rock, happy yet melancholic, with blues notes scattered and progressive sequences, will entangle you in the music's narrative. Que in Dire Straits' *Down the Waterline*. Haunting cymbal and foghorn intro turned multi-instrumental forceful melody, ‘tender yet unsentimental’, as High Fidelity magazine commented years ago. And we don't need sentimentality right now, we need Mark Knopfler's ringing guitar and cinematic words.

Look at the time: we need to walk out into the day. Thus, songs to step up your pace, or pace your steps. We need impeccable rhythm. Luckily, Greentea Peng has been blessing us with her music since 2018. She creates earthy soundscapes, layered and multifaceted, sometimes psychedelic, yet accessible. *Nah it Ain't the Same* has a straightforward 90s hip-hop beat that Peng drizzles with digital piano and vocals to make it trip-hop; *Top Steppa* is mystical and chaotic; *Your Mind* is angelic, it feels like people are presently coming together in chorus, unity heightened by the string accompaniment.

Try them out, and let me know whether you had a good day.

Swedish Crossword Solutions

Frustrate	↘	T	Non-acidic mineral	↘	A	Expect	↘	A	Remains	↘	S
Foolish person	→	H	A	L	F	W	I	T			
Cubic contents		W	Harmony	K	Part of a deck?	A	Baby's bottle top	A			
↘	C	A	P	A	C	I	T	Y			
Links	→	R	E	L	A	T	E	S			
↘	S	T	A	I	R	Flowerly shrub	A	Revises			
Indoor step		Murdered	C	Stats	→	D	A	T	A		
Stitch (together)	→	S	E	↘	W	--- Wonka, book character	C	Clothing	M		
Drop		L	Spitting ---, exact likeness	→	I	M	A	G	E		
↘	F	A	L	L	Container	→	C	A	N		
No more than		I	Scottish lord	→	L	A	I	R	D		
↘	O	N	L	Y	Tummy muscles?	→	A	B	S		

Crossword Solutions

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12				
	T	R	E	E		A	P	T	S		L	E	S	S				
13	H	A	I	R	Y		14	T	O	O	K		15	A	M	M	O	
16	I	S	S	U	E		17	A	N	T	I		18	W	A	I	L	
19	S	T	E	P	L		20	A	D	D	E	R		21	N	I	L	E
22	S	E	N	T	I	N				23	M	U	S	C	L	E	S	
					25	D	A	M	S		28	N	A	H				
29	G	A	R	B		33	R	O	T	S		35	W	A	I	T	S	
39	A	R	I	A		40	M	A	R	E	S		42	I	D	E	A	
43	S	C	O	T	T		45	T	I	L	T		46	R	O	A	M	
				47	H	O	E		49	P	L	E	A					
51	P	L	A	T	E	A	U			55	A	T	L	A	S	T		
60	E	U	R	O		61	S	N	A	C	K	T	A	B	L	E		
64	S	N	O	W		65	E	T	C	H		66	A	D	H	O	C	
67	T	A	M	E		68	L	I	M	E		69	C	L	O	T	H	
70	O	R	A	L		71	S	L	E	W		72	H	E	R	S		

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7	9	2	3	5	6	1	8	4
8	5	4	1	7	9	3	2	6
5	2	8	4	1	7	9	6	3
4	1	6	2	9	3	7	5	8
9	3	7	6	8	5	4	1	2
2	4	9	7	6	1	8	3	5
6	7	5	9	3	8	2	4	1
3	8	1	5	2	4	6	7	9

Sudoku Solutions

*Solutions for last edition

KEEP UP WITH THE BOOMERANG



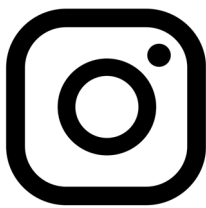
Illustrators
Groupchat



ISSUU
(Archive)



Writers
Groupchat



12 LOGICO PUZZLES

© LogiCo

Frustrate		Non-acidic mineral		Expect		Remains	
Foolish person							
Cubic contents		Harmony		Part of a deck?		Baby's bottle top	
Links							
					Flowery shrub		Revises
Indoor step	Murdered		Stats				
Stitch (together)				--- Wonka, book character		Clothing	
Drop		Spitting ---, exact likeness					
				Container			
No more than		Scottish lord					
				Tummy muscles?			

SWEDISH CROSSWORD

CROSSWORD

	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
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39					40				41		42			
43				44		45					46			
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60					61		62	63						
64					65					66				
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70					71					72				

SUDOKU

1	6				2			
	9	2				1	8	
				7				6
		8	4		7			
4	1		2		3	7	5	8
9	3	7	6		5		1	2
		9			1			
				3	8		4	1
3				2		6	7	

DOWN

1. Small sample of food
2. Gotten up
3. Gush, as a volcano
4. Where a false lash is placed
5. Very slightly
6. Small lake
7. ___ pole (Native American carving)
8. Path for gliding down a mountain
9. Patio seat that folds
10. Memo sent online
11. Look happy
12. Bottoms of shoes
13. Sound of a snake
20. Cost ___ and a leg
24. Wood-cutting tool
26. Castle's watery ring
27. Piece of bacon
29. Auto tank contents
30. Part of a circle

31. ___ de Janeiro, Brazil
32. Fabric in a linen closet that folds
34. Get cash for
36. Wedding ceremony assent
37. Pekoe or Earl Grey
38. America's Uncle
41. T-bone or sirloin
44. Tip of a sock
48. Art gallery stands
50. Sew on or stick on
51. Green pasta sauce
52. Of the moon
53. Enticing smell
54. No later than
56. Soup-serving utensil
57. Detest
58. Openings in piggy banks
59. Computer expert, for short
62. Apex
63. Have some gum

ACROSS

1. Oak or elm
5. Condo dwellings: Abbr.
9. Not as much
13. What mustaches and manes are
14. Helped oneself to
15. Peas, for pea shooters
16. Magazine edition
17. Prefix meaning "against"
18. Sound of a siren
19. House painter's climber that folds
21. Long river through Egypt
22. Mailed, as a contest entry
23. Biceps and triceps
25. River-blocking structures
28. Informal refusal
29. Apparel
33. Goes bad, as fruit
35. Bides one's time
39. Operatic solo

40. Female horses
42. Notion
43. Author F. ___ Fitzgerald
45. Lean slightly
46. Wander around
47. Ground-chopping farm tool
49. "Not guilty," for one
51. Highland that's flat
55. "Finally!"
60. Money in France
61. Surface for party foods that folds
64. Wintry precipitation
65. Engrave deeply
66. Temporary, as a committee
67. Gentle, as a horse
68. Green citrus fruit
69. Piece of fabric
70. Of the mouth
71. Whole bunch (of)
72. His-and-___ bracelets