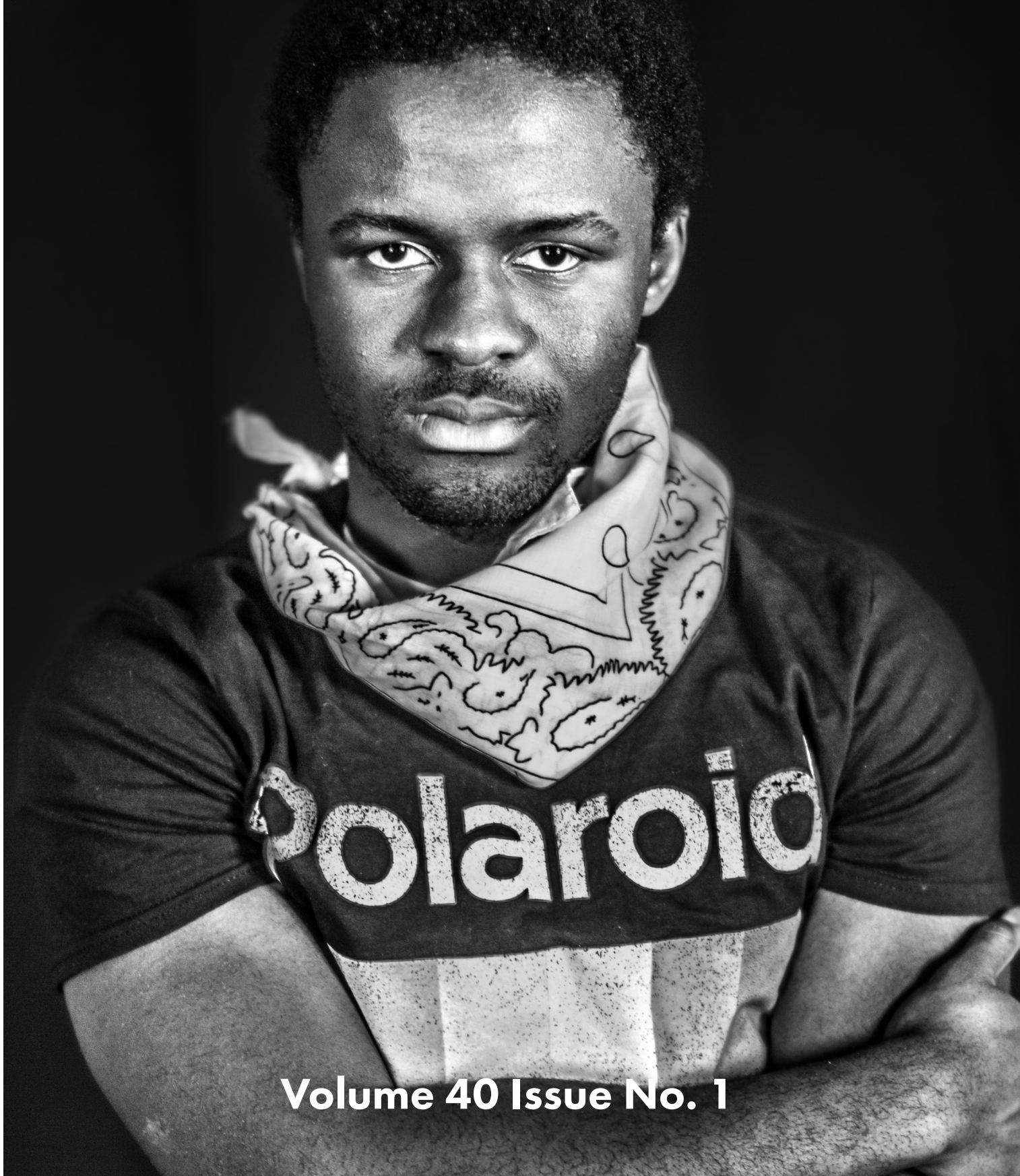


The Press



Volume 40 Issue No. 1

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Letter From The Editor

Oh, boy.

Here we go.

Another semester approaches.

Sorry, no, no it's here. It's here. Agh, my head's probably somewhere else.

Really, we're just trying to rearrange our summer selves into our college-mode code--the mold that'll fill us for the rest of the year. And then again, that'll be broken and rearranged--you know, just a constant state of evolution.

It's funny, this very 'zine went through it's own period of revision. Revised by two executive editors, looked at by multiple eyes and layed out by multiple helping hands. It almost functions like this fantastic living breathing organism.

You can get lost in a vintage car cemetery in Germany with contributor Michaela Steil, grapple with how the power of industrialization has overcome the music industry in a features piece by Alosha Gusev, and even immerse yourself in the Philippine Student Organization (PUSO) Sayaw's elements of dance with contributor Tristan Manaloto.

We're eclectic--the best writers are in my opinion. In a sense, we've created an ideal, alternate universe where many different people can happily and peacefully thrive in the same space. Egalitarianism is being crushed by the shoes that are shined by immigrants.

"The idea of country," said music journalist, Lizzie Goodman, interviewed by features editor Conor Rooney, "is one where you come from somewhere else to locate yourself. It's a country founded on the notion of immigration, on the notion of possibility, promise and opportunity."

It's safe to say that we're all at wits end right about now.

Although, writer, professor, and 'bad feminist,' Roxane Gay said, "writing bridges many differences."

I wholeheartedly believe so and everyone in the Stony Brook Press intends to do just that--lessen the gap, smooth the rough edges, reintroduce empathy into our social discourse.

This is the way the semester starts--not with a crash, but with a bang.

Right, but after all, we're still youngins.

What do we know?

-Nirvani

NY Metro Reptile Expo

By Katherine Hoey



It was a wet Sunday afternoon, and the parking lot outside the Westchester County Center was nearly full. Fog cut off the tips of the buildings. Groups of people of all ages and backgrounds were returning to their cars, carrying glass tanks of all sizes under towels and umbrellas. A man carrying a tank with a 20-pound tortoise exited the main entrance of the center as little kids looked on with awe.

Despite the bad weather, nearly 200 people lined up along the grand steps underneath 60-foot white pillars. They were all here for the New York Metro Reptile Expo.

Bruce Lowder, owner of Animal

Encounters, in Putnam Valley, New York, started the reptile exposition in 1992 as a fundraiser for the nature center he worked for at the time. The first event had just 18 vendor tables.

"We expected only around a hundred people," Lowder said. "But more than 900 showed up."

Today, the White Plains expo averages 5,000 attendees at each event, with those in the winter months being the most popular, he said.

At the expo's prime time, around 12:30 p.m., the center was nearly at capacity. People eagerly inched toward the entrance, waiting to receive an

entrance stamp on the back of their hands of a small black turtle.

Once inside, the smell of popcorn was in the air. The sound of crickets chirping could be heard underneath the incoherent white noise from all the humans. There were people and tables with tanks (on them?) everywhere. Each table had an array of animals — tarantulas, candy-colored frogs, insects, lizards, crabs, geckos, turtles and snakes, which were mostly ball pythons.

Historically, snakes have always been the most popular animals at the show, though in recent years, the expo has seen a lot more lizard breeders, particularly of geckos, Lowder said.

"It's great to see how the hobby has flourished over the years, drawing together a hugely diverse group of people to share in their love of a common hobby," he said.

Along with the reptiles, amphibians and insects for sale, the expo also featured prey items. The occasional table emitted the pungent odor of insects. Bin after bin was filled with thousands of crickets, cockroaches, coconut hookworms and hornworms. Two tables had freezers stocked with rats and mice. Pets and prey were laid out side by side, awaiting their purchasers.

One table even had live rat pups for sale, their red pulpy bodies squirming under a heating lamp.

There was a bit of an alt-grunge vibe from both the crowd and vendors. Many were heavily clad in tattoos and piercings, wearing metal band T-shirts with colored hair. The vendors come from all over the tristate area, some as far as Virginia and Ohio. The event also attracted families and groups of friends of all ages.

People surrounded each table. Some came for the experience, but most were passionate hobbyists seeking the latest snake morph.

A morph is the result of a mutated gene on a strand of DNA in an animal's chromosome that causes a variation in coloration or pattern. Over time, breeding for the desired dominant or recessive gene will predictably create the abnormality.

Some morphs sought after include spider morphs, which dilute the python's patterns into thinner lines, and pastels, which lighten up the scales

"It seems that the explosion of ball python morphs has really caught the fancy of many snake breeders," Lowder said.

Dan Sullivan, 25, from White Plains, New York, has been keeping snakes since he was a young boy. Expos provide people with a hands-on experience that they wouldn't normally get from a pet store or through an online purchase, Sullivan said.

"Being able to speak face to face with vendors allows me to see if they're exaggerating the uniqueness of their python morph," he said. "Many vendors act like any other salesmen, using any tactic to convince you that their product is the best."

A 65-year-old turtle breeder from Maryland, who requested to remain anonymous and go by Tom, boasted about the large sales volume he had at the event. Tom has been breeding turtles for 25 years, and he currently has over 300 turtles in his home, which is being renovated to accommodate a fully-equipped breeding facility, he said.

Tom emphasized that had he made his "thousand bucks" and would be leaving the expo with only two remaining turtles. He leaned in and said that three of the turtles he had sold today were illegal to sell in New York.

"Security told me I had to get them off my table now," he said with a laugh.

"So I sold them. I got them off the table, didn't I?"

The turtle he sold was a bog turtle, a species native to New York. It is illegal in New York to buy, sell, transport or have in possession any native reptile protected by law.

Despite growing up in Rockland County, New York, Tom chose to sell the native species anyway. Though Tom may be a passionate breeder, his choice of action raises ethical concerns. Where he originally purchased the bog turtle was also unclear.

To protect animals from irresponsible owners and breeders, many laws have been put in place. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is a treaty that protects listed animals from exploitation due to international trade. Along with CITES, The Lacey Act of 1900, is a United States conservation law that prohibits the trade of wildlife that has been illegally taken, possessed, transported or sold.

With the exception of breeders like Tom, the majority of small-time private breeders appeared to abide by the rules and sell for the joy of it, not the profit.

Mike Curtin, 40, sole proprietor of Scattershot Exotics in New Jersey, has been in the industry for over 10 years. Curtin specializes in Australian pythons, but also breeds Argentine boas.

"In any industry, there's gonna be the good and the bad guys," he said.

"The problem with most high-volume or multi-species vendors is that they are not always focused on the long-term health of individual animals," he said. "They are looking to have a high turnover rate, investing as little as possible into each animal."

High-volume vendors don't have the ability to test every animal, and their employees seldom know how to properly care for exotics, he said.

Many part-time breeders don't rely on breeding as their main source of income, Curtin said. They are more often a part of the industry for the reward of raising the animals they're passionate about and interacting within the reptile community.

Like many of the breeders at the NY Reptile Expo, Curtin recalled childhood as the time he began raising reptiles.

"I've been keeping reptiles ever since I could catch critters at the local pond to bring home."





LEONARDO
CASTILLO

Stony Brook Students Help Bring Reusable Menstrual Products to Tanzania

By Margaret Osborne



In the United States, the average disposable menstrual pad costs about 20 cents. In Tanzania, it's nearly five times as expensive, at about \$1 per pad.

According to Dr. Kamazima Lwiza, a native Tanzanian and the director of Stony Brook University's study abroad program to Tanzania, many women there cannot afford to buy menstrual products, so they go without.

Young girls stay home from school during their period each month, not only because they lack hygiene products, but also because the schools have few toilets, if any.

"It's easier to handle yourself if you're at home," Lwiza explained. "I don't want them not to go to school. It's a shame."

Lwiza helps organize the study

abroad trip to Tanzania. Part of the program includes student-run community service days.

Last summer, two students, Kunika Chalal and Alyssa Dirico, wanted to come up with a project that would help people long after they left Tanzania, something that would "really make an impact," Chalal said.

After researching and talking with Lwiza, Chalal and Dirico decided they wanted to teach girls how to make reusable pads using materials easily accessible in Tanzania.

Both Chalal and Dirico are sophomore biomedical engineering majors and aspiring surgeons.

Lwiza said the girls took on the project enthusiastically. Initially, they wanted to go to Walmart in the United States to buy what they needed.

"That's not going to work," Lwiza said. "When you're in Tanzania, there's no Walmart. You don't want to teach somebody using stuff they're not going to be able to get. You've got to go to Tanzania, get the stuff in Tanzania and create what you want to create ... That's a big challenge."

But Chalal and Dirico decided to create a prototype before they left anyway. They planned to then go to the market in Tanzania to see which materials they could easily buy.

"We stayed up until 5 in the morning the night before we left for Africa making the pads, gluing our hands together," Dirico said.

They engineered three different prototypes using felt and a tablecloth, and put them under a sink faucet to test their absorbency.

"It was an interesting adventure



for us. We looked at it as an experiment, you know, we're engineers," Chalal said, and jokingly added that they used the scientific method to find their best model.

When they arrived in Tanzania, the two students took their prototype to the market. A woman approached them, asking what it was used for.

Lwiza made the students explain, using limited Swahili and hand-waving to demonstrate the purpose of their hygiene products.

"The woman got it," Lwiza said. "She got so excited. She said, 'I want to learn. Teach me how to do it.' To me, that was the best part, because a woman like that is going to teach others."

By the time they were done explaining, they had gathered a crowd of "at least 50 women," by their estimate, who were interested in learning how to make reusable pads.

The two students planned their pad-making class for women entirely by themselves. Their fellow Stony Brook students were more interested in organizing days of physical activity and mental health awareness.

That was fine for Chalal and Dirico. "We'll just do it ourselves," Dirico said.

"We need to do this. Sure, we might break some social barriers a little bit, because this isn't something talked about, but we've got to try somewhere. Even if we only teach one," Chalal said. Although only about 30 women

came to their class, which they advertised through word of mouth and one poster, Chalal and Dirico hoped this would create a snowball effect, with the women teaching friends and family members how to make the hygiene products.

In all, it cost about \$60 to make 50 reusable pads with scraps to spare—much less expensive than the \$1 per disposable pad that Tanzanian women usually spend.

The experience had a profound impact on both students, who said they are now more grateful for easily accessible feminine hygiene products in the United States.

But they're not finished with their work.

On Wednesday night, the two students were selling chocolate bars and halal food to fundraise for the next group of study abroad students travelling to Tanzania.

Additionally, they are in the beginning stages of forming a club at Stony Brook, so students can make reusable pads that would be distributed in Tanzania, or even across the world.

Chalal and Dirico are working with the undergraduate student government to try to fund their idea, and they also plan to discuss logistics with the study abroad office to see whether it would be feasible to send reusable pads and instructions to make them with future study abroad students.

Lwiza, too, is hoping to expand the reach of Stony Brook's study abroad program to Tanzania both by increasing the number of students who go there from 20 to 50 and by increasing the budget. Last summer, all of the money used to create the products was fundraised by the students, but Lwiza thinks that may not be enough this year.

He plans to ask for funds from banks or other organizations that might be interested in what his students are doing.

"I think we're changing lives," Lwiza said. "And that's the kind of impact I want to see. So, we learn, but we leave a little mark where we go."



The Divine She: 7 by Beach House

By Sarah Kimura

When Beach House released “Depression Cherry” and “Thank Your Lucky Stars” back in 2015, I was a junior in high school and very depressed. I listened to both albums the first time in the same way: lying in bed late at night with a pillow over my face because I was crying so hard I could not face myself. It is sad to imagine, but I look back at it fondly and almost humorously, as though that moment feels distant yet familiar. It’s like looking back at what needed to happen so things could allow themselves to be much better.

Three years later, I would listen to Beach House’s aptly titled seventh LP, “7,” driving to class on a weekday morning. Rain is coming down, traffic is bad, but there’s an undeniable smile on my face, and I am shocked. Beach House has been a landmark band for allowing sadness and melancholy into my life in a healthy way that was never destructive. Their music had allowed me to always be gentle with the truth of how deep a sadness could

be. “7” instead ignited feelings of hope and acceptance.

“7” sounds familiar coming from the dream pop duo, but with a significant backbone. Alongside the familiar elements — a lilting guitar, melting vintage synths, Victoria Legrand’s breathy low vocals and the reverb placed over it all — are more declarative sounds that propel themselves forward. For one, this is the first Beach House album that has featured live drums throughout, adding an anchor to these elements that glide around effortlessly. Add a surprisingly reverb-less acoustic guitar as featured in “Lose Your Smile” and a punchy synth loop in the more unfamiliar “Black Car,” and a new standard gets built for what we can expect from the band.

This album breaks free from what we knew as Beach House while still admiring the foundations that they had already set, proven by how they still recognize the themes and motifs already set by their discog-

raphy. "7" feels like the moment before triumph looking forward, while fondly looking at the contemplative, floaty moments left behind on "Depression Cherry" and "Thank Your Lucky Stars." "There's a place I want to take you," Legrand sighs in the opening track, "Levitation," off of "Depression Cherry," an album full of melancholy over sentiment, like grief for memories long gone. "Space Song," seemingly the thesis of "Depression Cherry," skyrocketed as the most popular song of this era, tonally exuding a moment of desperation and a search for something more. "Thank Your Lucky Stars," a spiritual predecessor to "7," more formally used the themes and sounds found on the next album, ironically shown by their album art that both feature black and white photos of Legrand's mother.

In the 13 years of existing as a band, Beach House has always been quiet and choosy over how they talk about their discography. "7" is a bit of an exception, as promotional posts and lyrics for the album came with an essay attached that details the process of creating this album and the contexts it exists in. The band explains how their 2017 release of "B-Sides and Rarities" "helped us clean the creative

closet, put the past to bed, and start anew," and this deliberate choice then makes "7" feel like a clear, bold step in a new direction. Their choice to declare what "7" means in the context of the music that came before it shows that the band clearly desires to progress on their own terms, and it shows.

There is a sentimentality, but it does not brood or linger. Beach House knows what it takes to move forward, and so does the spirit of "7." The band is also less scant on addressing the lyrical presence of "she" on this record. Legrand has addressed this before, and when asked who "she" was during a Reddit AMA two years ago, she states, "The She, the Big She, the metaphorical She, the actual She, the mother, the daughter, the feminine energy, the feminine world... not just memories but the living with it. Being a woman myself, and all our history and our present, our future. There is unlimited inspiration in the She."

"She" embodies something spiritual and atmospheric, and while this character may admittedly be addressed much more directly on "7," it does not lose its ambiguity. "Get dressed to undress/depressed



to impress/all night long," Legrand sings on "Girl of the Year." This "she" progresses from her ghostly presence on "Thank Your Lucky Stars" into a confident character, seemingly sad but always self-assured, like Lana del Rey's all-American persona. The band states, "The energy, lyrics and moods of much of this record grew from ruminations on the roles, pressures and conditions that our society places on women, past and present. The twisted double edge of glamour, with its perils and perfect moments, was an endless source." "She" may be wrong, inconsistent and imagined, but her spirit is confident, and exists regardless.

The magic of Beach House that still comes alive on this record is of the same spirit that they describe the divine "she." Their music is never forcefully declarative — their lyrics are always elusive and ambiguous — and I can't see it existing in any other way. It builds something that insists on making room for itself. Their music doesn't crescendo, it swells. Legrand doesn't sing, she croons. They weave a wall of sound that feels like its own world, and rightfully so. Alex Scally, when asked about the name of the band, has said, "One thing Victoria and I can agree on is that our music is its own world. And, I think that's very much what the 'beach house' feel is: going off to a different world. It's not really a vacation; vacation for me is when you go away, but you're still thinking about all the things you've left behind."

The ambiguity Beach House always built seems deliberate enough where the listener can fill in the blanks with their own version of this world. Beach House is only the pretense to begin to build worlds of our own. They create the film score to crucial moments in our lives. Perhaps the houses I built in the confines of their albums were with melancholy and sadness, a reflection of the difficult things I had been working through. This seems to be true of most Beach House fans, shown by the countless number of posts on r/BeachHouse explaining the ways their music cemented itself in tumultuous periods of their lives. This gap between the worlds they create within their albums and the worlds we all personally create for ourselves is the truest magic.

Maybe the resolution I feel when listening to this record isn't that wild. I am in a time in my life where I am looking forward with excitement, my mental

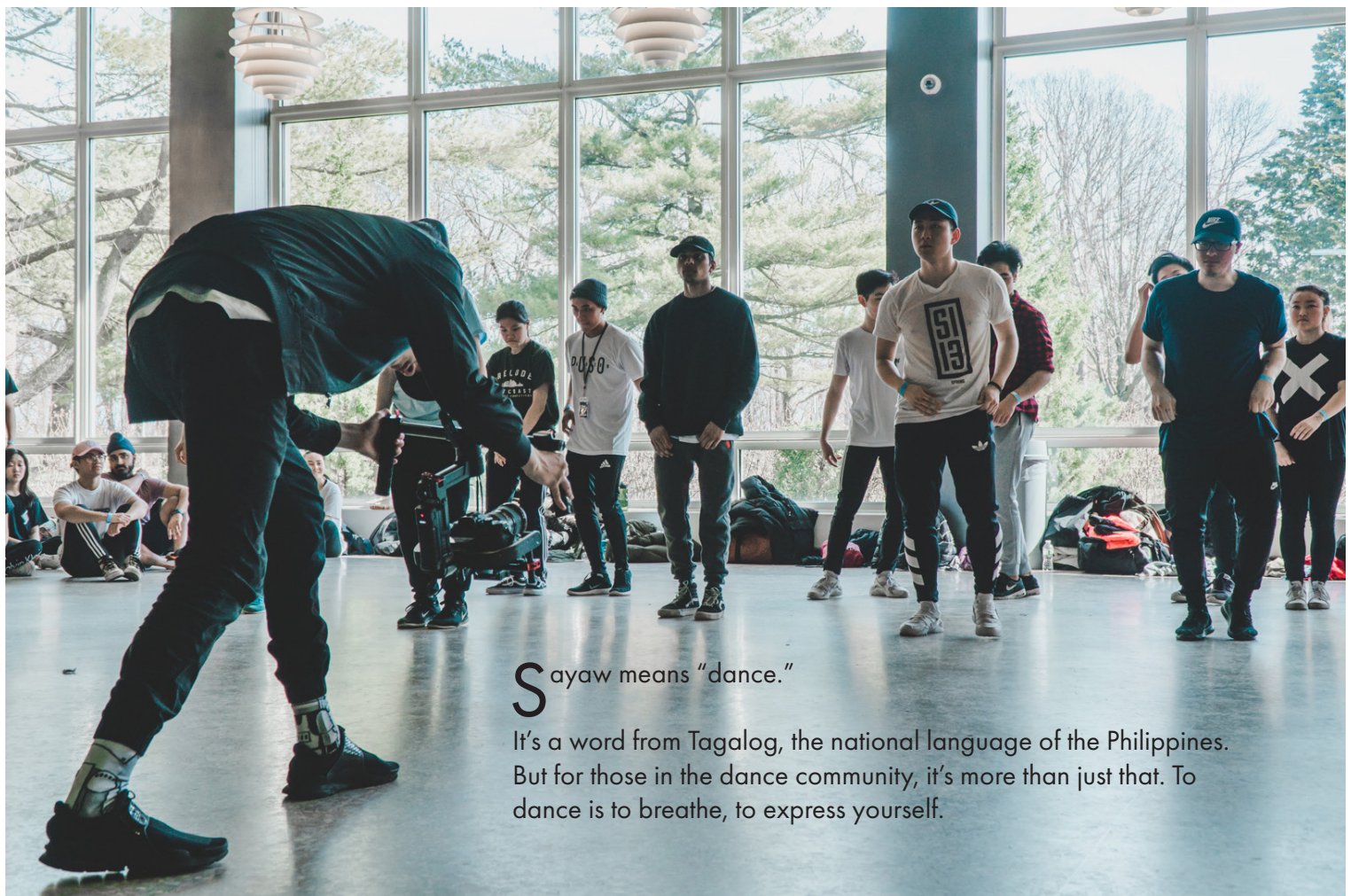
health has seen a more optimistic turn these days, and I am growing increasingly comfortable in my feminine identity. And I think a lot about a post I saw on the Beach House subreddit of a fan explaining how they met Victoria Legrand after a show. "Your music saved my life," they said, and Legrand returned, "No, you saved your own life." I believe this to be true. I guess that makes me the "Girl of the Year."



PUSO SAYAW

Stony Brook University's Largest Dance Competition

Story By Tristan Manaloto | Photos by Victor Yu



Sayaw means "dance."

It's a word from Tagalog, the national language of the Philippines. But for those in the dance community, it's more than just that. To dance is to breathe, to express yourself.

PUSO, or the Philippine United Student Organization, is a cultural club at Stony Brook University. It consists of three dance teams — PUSO Cultural, PUSO Ballroom, and PUSO Modern — that perform and compete at events both on and off campus year round.

The club hosts the annual PUSO Sayaw, Stony Brook's largest dance competition.

It draws in the best of the best from across the East Coast to compete and showcase their talent and love for dance. March 3, 2018 marked the 8th annual Sayaw Dance Competition and Showcase in the SAC Auditorium.

In the morning, dancers attended three workshops in the LDS Center. They learned choreography from world-renowned dancers and judges Selene Haro, Isidro Rafael, Joesar Alva, and Haeni Kim.

Judges Selene and Isidro taught a joint workshop at Sayaw. As veterans of the California dance community, they were proud to see a variety of dance styles and described the East Coast as having a unique sense of camaraderie unlike anything they've experienced before.

"We've taught in the East Coast before, but this is definitely the largest workshop," Isidro said. "There's a different sense of community here compared to other parts. We see people supporting each other, clapping for each other in class, and genuinely having a good time."

Unlike most dance competitions, PUSO Sayaw hosts workshops and its competition on the same day. This is in large part due to the availability of the judges. Normally, dance competitions will teach workshops the day after the event.

Selene commended the dancers for their dedication to taking all three workshops in addition to competing at night. "I'm pretty amazed at how many people there are this early in the morning," Selene said. "Teams usually will just practice all day on their own until the moment they perform. These dancers are different because they're creating bonds with other dancers at the workshops and creating a supportive vibe instead of just staying with their own team."

PUSO's Modern Co-Director Robert Cho described the atmosphere in the LDS Center. "We may be on different teams, but during workshops we're not competitors. We're fellow students in class who motivate and push one another to be the best we can be."

At night, 19 dance teams performed on the SAC Auditorium stage, three of which were from PUSO. Nine teams competed and 10 showcased.

"PUSO Sayaw is our organization's most well known event," Ashley Villmar, president of PUSO said. "We started planning for it during the middle of fall semester and met several times a week to discuss our vision, teams, judges, PR, and more. The SAC Auditorium capacity is 595 seats, and once again we are proud to say that we sold out."

Dance styles ranged from hip-hop, interpretive and urban to ballroom, cultural, and burlesque. Many of the teams incorporated contemporary, modern, and jazz elements in their sets. Dancers themselves were just as diverse and came from all backgrounds and age groups.

Haeni Kim, 20, is the first international judge at Sayaw and came all the way from South Korea to be at Stony Brook. If her dancing wasn't already impressive enough, she judged teams with dancers four years older than her.

"I feel really honored to be here because I remember I came to the U.S. six years ago to take classes as a student, and now I'm judging," Haeni said. "People are more open to different styles here. In Korea, there aren't many foreigners but in America there are so many different dancers."

First place was awarded to HeartBreak Crew. Mint Dance Company came in second, and Stuy Legacy, the youngest team which was made up of high schoolers, was third.

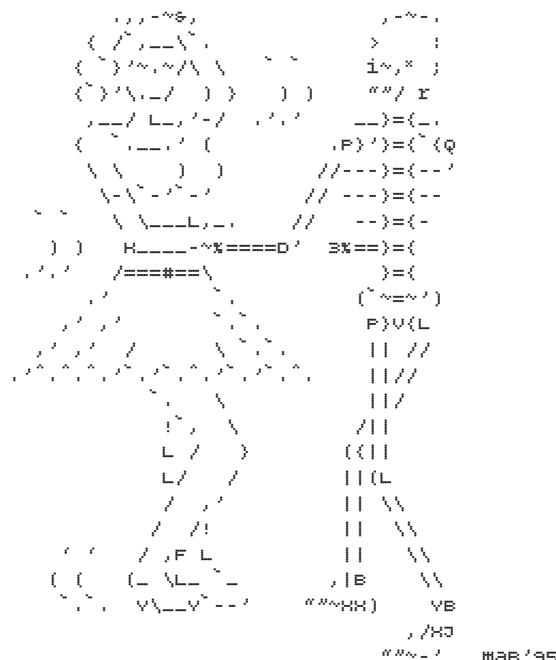
PUSO's mission statement is, "To create a social environment in which Filipino culture is advocated, discussed, and celebrated." The Sayaw Dance Competition and Showcase is not only a way to celebrate dance, but more importantly, a way to educate people on Filipino culture. A huge, integral part of Filipino culture is, and always will be, dance.

Stony Brook University contains a hidden treasure trove of talented, dedicated dancers. If you look to the Staller Music Balcony, you'll always see them practicing in front of the mirrors, honing their craft. You can even see groups of them dancing on the pavement near Staller Music or in the LDS Center, sometimes for long hours deep into the night.

Despite their busy academic schedules, Stony Brook dance teams like PUSO Modern make time to dance in hip-hop competitions across the East Coast. Competitions like ELEMENTS, which takes place in the heart of Boston, and Prelude in New Jersey, bring in an audience of over 1,200 people and over 400 competitive dancers.

Despite the university's decision to suspend the dance minor, dance is still alive and breathing. "A lot of us have a huge passion for dance, and Sayaw is a big example of that," Alexandria Scala, the head of PUSO Cultural, said. "At Stony Brook, we're more than just our major, and dance allows us to connect and express ourselves in ways that other things can't."

Judge Joesar Alva, who competed on America's Best Dance Crew with the Boogie Bots, was surprised to learn about the suspension of the dance minor at Stony Brook University. Being a firm advocate of dance, he wanted to reassure students to never let go of what they love most. "It's important, now more than ever, to keep dancing because it's an outlet for an already crazy life," Joesar said. "Never give it up because it connects each and everyone of us. If dance is the reason that you breathe, do it."





“Never give it up because it connects each and everyone of us.”



***“If dance is the reason that
you breathe,
do it.”***



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All your winners and losers revealed!

And who did the stars vote for?



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ARCTIC MONKEYS THE RECORD

VELVET UNDERGROUND COVER FOR SBP



The Strokes



MEET ME IN THE BATHROOM

AN INTERVIEW WITH LIZZY GOODMAN BY CONOR ROONEY



EVERY WU-TANG CLAN SONG RANKED!!!

New York City in the late 1990s was undergoing a fair amount of changes. Mayor Rudy Giuliani was cracking down on crime and cleaning up a seedy Times Square, turning its grimy sex shops and villainy-ridden streets into a gleaming, Disney-like paradise for tourists (what would New York be without the Hard Rock Cafe?). People seemed to be moving back into Gotham. The city was in an upswing of sorts, though not just economically. Culturally, a new generation of kids were reinventing what “New York” music could be. Whether or not they thought people would give a shit is another story.

During a time where Seattle still seemed cool enough (fresh off of the frenzy that was “grunge”), and polished pop stars like Britney Spears dominated the mainstream radio airwaves, New York seemed old and tired. To be a band in New York during this time was a chore, and quite honestly a disservice to your friends (who now had to come watch you play). That whole “New York” thing was done. The Velvet Underground were long gone, the Ramones’ time had passed, and the Talking Heads were forever separated by bad blood. Despite this, bands like the Strokes, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Interpol and LCD Soundsystem found their sound in dingy nightclubs, bars and lofts throughout Manhattan and Brooklyn -- proving both to themselves and others that there was enough creative juice left in the streets to foster a new generation of musicians.

As an aspiring journalist, Lizzy

Goodman visited New York City in the summer of 1999. She had just completed her freshman year of college in Pennsylvania. With absolutely no concrete plan in mind, she felt like New York was an open book compared to her previously structured lifestyle of chores and academia. Coming from a small-town life in New Mexico, she saw the allure of the city as rebellion, youth and an element of the unknown. She was inspired by the silhouette of an idea that drew people like Bob Dylan, Madonna and Lou Reed to the city before her. After college, Lizzy spent years writing about those bands that would come to define this new era of New York. Writing for publications such as NME and Rolling Stone, she had a firsthand account of how many of these artists came to be who they are: from the Strokes’ famous homecoming Halloween show in 2001 to the “final” LCD Soundsystem show at Madison Square Garden in 2011. Her new book “Meet Me in the Bathroom” is an oral history of what it felt like to be a part of this new generation of New York rock bands, told by the people who were there. Lizzy spoke to me over the phone about the “myth of New York,” the current state of music journalism and the recently announced television adaptation of the book.

A theme in this book is “New York” as sort of an idea above anything else. Where did that mythmaking of New York City originate, and how has that narrative changed over the years?

Lizzy Goodman: There are a lot

of answers that I would buy. I feel like it’s the idea of America, in general. The idea of our country is one where you come from somewhere else to locate yourself. It’s a country founded on the notion of immigration, on the notion of possibility, promise and opportunity. New York is the place that you go to get the deepest, purest essence of that idea. In terms of pop-culture, the people I always think about are [those like] [Bob] Dylan and Madonna — where their origin stories have become the lure of their stardom. Dylan came from Minnesota, changed his name and kind of shed his old self — adopting this new self en route from west to east. Madonna came from a similar part of the world, landed at the airport in New York, got in a cab and said “take me to the center of everything”. These mythic stories get told and retold (whether they’re true or not) about these characters. They have become heroes of our modern pop culture, which is a kind of mythology that we use to tell ourselves who we are. It’s a big fucking thing, it’s only the whole idea of America — reduced to this one thing!

You described two shows at Madison Square Garden as sort of the inspiration for writing this book and documenting this era of music (LCD Soundsystem’s last show and the Strokes the next night) What did both shows represent to you? Was it a “passing the torch” sort of thing?

Lizzy Goodman: It dawned on me that here we were at Madison Square Garden, one of the most

famous venues in the world... and there's this line of black limousines out front. That's what happens when there's an event in New York City that has power and importance. There was a sense that this was a destination event for the city that night (both nights) that made me realize that these bands that had been a part of what felt like a relatively small community had become the new establishment rock stars of our generation. That was... notable. It felt like the beginning of a new part of the story, and the end of something I had been participating in. I could see that something was ending while something else was beginning.

You said on "Seth Meyers," "In a post-internet world, it's almost never too soon," referring to the questions about whether or not this era in New York was ready for a reflection like "Meet Me in the Bathroom." We're presented with so much information daily that it can be hard to remember that events from an hour ago didn't happen 10 years ago. Do you think it was too soon?

There's a line from Stewart Lupton [of Jonathan Fire * Eater] in the book, and he describes New York City in the late 90's as going out and feeling "nostalgia for an hour ago." I think that's it. Think of these scenes as recurring — that every group of young people who are creative and want to make stuff are going through a version of what these people did [prior to them]. There's a pattern to it, sociologically almost. Each one has its own unique characters and those are based on the

context in which that happens (in which that scene is born) whether it's war or poverty, those make unique the way that a particular scene develops. In this case, the internet is a huge one, as well as 9/11. These are the factors that were stirred into the pot of just another group of young, really talented people making really amazing shit. Those were the factors that made our time have their particular flavor.

The "nostalgia for an hour ago" piece is when you feel like everything you're doing is almost being documented and contextualized in the moment that it's happening — this is what the internet does. As you're observing or participating in something meaningful to you, you're also attempting to put in on your Instagram story. It's constant nostalgia for the present moment. I'm old enough to remember a time when we went out every night, and there was no record of any of it. It's just lost to the annals of history and to our own memories. Whereas now, there would have been so much more recorded information about everything that we documented [in this project]. In some ways that would make the job easier, but in other ways harder. There's this sense that every bit of what we're living through is being recorded in the moment that it's happening (and analyzed), and we're feeling nostalgia for it as it's happening. Which is why we're all so anxious all the fucking time, by the way.

Were there people that didn't remember anything?

I'm a big believer in the strong,

differing recollections of particular moments and I knew that would be the case going in, which is why I chose to do it as an oral history. It's supposed to feel like a time capsule... It's not reported fact. You're trying to tell the truth about how it felt to be there — which is not necessarily the same as the truth about what actually happened. Because each person's lived experience has value and it's their truth, while perhaps technically false in certain cases. It's still the truth for them. It's not like I'm saying there's not responsibility to get accuracy — what I am saying is that the goal was never to be like, "What actually happened at this bar on this night was...". The goal was to give all the people who should have a say in what happened the space and time to say what they remember. The hope, then, is that the truth exists for the reader in being able to internalize (via reading all these different accounts) the sensory, absolute value truth of what happened. Are you asking, if I understand you correctly, how much people remembered or fought with their own memories? Is that what you mean?

Yeah — that's probably a better way of putting it. I mean, sometimes it's hard to remember what happened a week ago depending on how much is going on, so sometimes I know it can be tough to put it together.

Totally! Ask yourself this: Do you remember what you were doing ten years ago on a Tuesday that felt like every other Tuesday? It's just not the nature of memory. A

lot of these things... It's partially drugs, it's partially that there are disagreements, and it's partially that the nature of memory is not to chronicle things in a fact-oriented way. An event has to happen that makes enough of an impact that you choose to remember it, and in choosing to remember it you color it with your own lense — it's Rashomon.

I can imagine that it must have been incredibly difficult to build a narrative out of everything. How do you even start? It must have been hard to put everything together once you've spoke to everyone.

Yeah, I mean it almost killed me — seriously. From the process of attempting to sell it to finishing it was six years. The first three were loosely spent researching and gathering information. I thought I was writing, so to speak... sort of synthesizing what I was gathering into a coherent narrative. About three years in, when I was aware that I had to turn something in relatively soon, I realized I had absolutely nothing. I had a ton of stuff but I didn't have a story on the page yet, and that was very humbling and terrifying. I had to leave the city to get the clarity I needed and the space both physically and mentally from the story itself in order to make the thing that you're now reading. Yeah, it was just extremely hard. I don't even know how to talk about how I did it except to say that I wouldn't know how to do it again.

If you're interested in the strategy of how it was assembled, I did develop a platform of how to do

it and I stuck to that. You kind of cast a wide net, you interview everyone you possibly can, but there were a couple questions that I asked everybody so that I could have some pillars to start to build a story on. One was 9/11, one was the myth of New York, one was the particular origin story of their band or their band, or whatever the thing was that qualified them to be in the project. A version of that I did for each major character. There's probably, I don't know, twenty or thirty primary characters in this story (if you think of each band as a character, which I did). New York City is the lead character, and each one of these bands and artists serve to support that primary character's story — which is the evolution of New York. That was all well and good until I actually started to do it and I thought, "Oh my god, this is an impossible maze of hell and I'm never gonna get out of it, and it's a miracle if this book doesn't ruin my career."

How has music journalism shifted since the beginning that trend in the early 2000s? Was there more of a sense of agency over who you could cover? Was the impact of finding a new band and writing about them larger than maybe it is now?

I don't know! I'm happy to say, honestly, that one of the ironies of becoming somewhat successful writing about bands is that by the time anyone thinks you're successful at it, you sort of really don't know anything about new bands anymore. I am asked often what I'm listening to or what do I think about the state of music jour-

nalism right now, and the answer is that I'm sort of the last person to know. When I was 25 I could answer that with great authority and now, It's like I don't really have a day in, day out relationship with how music journalism is going on a kind of "new band" level. I will say that I think... there is so much material out there and a lot of it is really good and a lot of it is really bad. The role of the "critic," for lack of a better word — and I kind of don't like that word, I want a different word — the role of the critic is very different now. There used to be profile writers and critics. — there used to be this split. You were either a thinky analyst of sound who would write these very sophisticated record reviews, or you were someone they sent out into the world of rockstars to get them to say stuff they're not supposed to be saying. Those two genres of people were really different. That has changed — magazine journalism doesn't exist in the same way anymore. Music journalism isn't really journalism about music anymore, it's culture journalism.

All of these different categories that used to be separation of church and state have blended. For me, that's been very beneficial and really exciting. My brain never sat well with any of those particular categories. I really wasn't a great critic, but I also wanted to write profiles that had more analysis in them about what a band or an artist meant to the society rather than to their genre of music. So the ability to expand the scope of what music journalism has to cover, and no longer have to write in the fifth paragraph of every profile

a detailed description of what that band's music sounds like — I really appreciate that those rules have gone out the window in a post-internet world.

What I was going to say more broadly is that think the role of the music journalist — let's just say it that way — has always been on some level to help be a trusted voice for people who love music about why something they love is beautiful or great, or to give them more insight into the people who make this stuff. It's to serve the love of music. The fan is all of us, in theory. The fan is the community of people who feel less alone in life because Big Star exists. That role is more important than ever because there is more stuff being made than ever, and there's more confusion than ever about what is good and what isn't, what means what in the culture, what it represents and where it's coming from. The people I read regularly are more important to me than ever because I'm just so overwhelmed that I need them. Obviously the structure of what music journalism is has been completely turned upside down — as has every other kind of media — but the role is just as important as it's ever been.

Why do you think England and New York have this call-and-response sort of relationship? Why does England look to New York, and vice versa?

Lizzy Goodman: I mean, I think it's huge. Britain and America have been discovering each other's bands since the dawn of rock and roll, feeling insecure about themselves in the context

of the other. This is a huge generalization, but Americans think British stuff in general is cooler, whereas Brits think American stuff is wilder... more free. I mean, it goes back to the blues! We've seen it in every major era of music. The Americas had previously been the big, lumbering, stinky kids whereas the Brits had been something similar to the Jam — just these sleek, impossibly cool styled, sexy, sort of androgynous beings. I always thought that was very funny, like, "Finally! We get to represent this!" In politics, there's that famous phrase "special relationship" — between British and American culture we have our own version of that, and with music in general. I feel like in a way that's familiar — they see what happened here with a certain amount of clarity that we don't. When it's in your backyard, you don't understand it with the same objectivity. You don't — in some cases — appreciate it. A lot of the American bands that are in this book (Interpol, Strokes, Yeah Yeah Yeahs, etc.) are still, on some level, shell-shocked this many people give a shit. As soon as the Strokes struck note one of "The Modern Age," England knew immediately. There's a clarity that you have when you view someone that's so much like you, but also so clearly the other. England and America have that because we're completely different places, completely different cultures.

You recently announced a TV adaptation. What can you tell me about that, if at all?

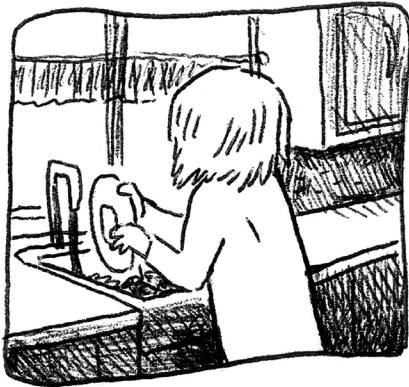
Lizzy Goodman: Well, I'd be happy to tell you what I know!

We're working on it, it's in development. The execution of it has not started yet. It's an insane feeling to have all these people on board wanting to help bring to life this thing that you work on in private — it's really strange, humbling and odd. The idea is for it to be a doc-series — so a multi-part rendering of what you read in "Meet Me in the Bathroom" — just visually represented. The people who made "Shut up and Play the Hits" are making this. That notion of experiential documentary-making is what we're aiming for. So it should feel like you're watching something visually the same way that "Meet Me in the Bathroom" attempted to make you feel.

SLOWLY, I AM
LEARNING
TO LISTEN.

• A STORY FROM A GROUP HOME •

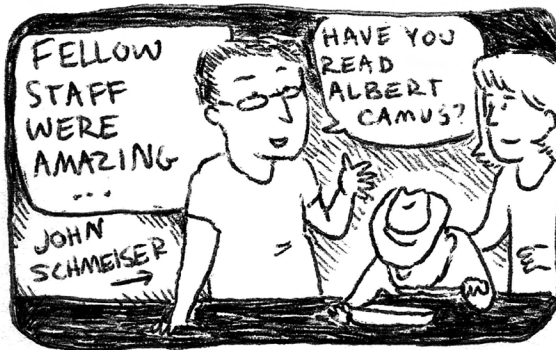
by PAMELA BEST



WHEN I FIRST STARTED WORKING HERE, EVERYONE WAS SCARY



THEY YELLED OFTEN, MOST COULDN'T TALK, AND THEIR FILES WERE FULL OF HORROR STORIES.



I HAVE BEEN AN EMT. FOR A WHILE, AND THAT HAS CLEARED UP MY ANXIETY A TON...

BUT THIS WAS DIFFERENT.



I FELT
THREATENED
BY THEM..
THEY FELT
THREATENED
BY ME.



I WAS A
STRANGER IN
THEIR HOME.
I DID NOT
SPEAK THEIR
LANGUAGE.

GOD KNOWS,
THEY HAD THE
RIGHT TO BE
WORRIED.



I HAD NO
IDEA WHAT THE
HELL I WAS
DOING.

I NEEDED
TO LEARN
HOW TO
LISTEN.



TIME DOES AMAZING THINGS, THOUGH.



EVERY DAY BRINGS A NEW, INSANE STORY... BUT IT ALSO BROUGHT CONFIDENCE...



... UNEXPECTED CONNECTIONS.

AND THE MOST SATISFYING CUP OF HOT CHOCOLATE I HAVE EVER MADE.

HA-CU-CU

GOOD ASKING FOR HELP KEVIN!



ASL sign for "HELP"



I HAVE BEEN BLESSED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERSTAND THE MISUNDERSTOOD.

I AM STILL WORKING ON IT ...



BUT I AM SLOWLY LEARNING TO LISTEN



YOU'RE IMPROVING A BUNCH

THANK YOU.



The Highs and Lows of Varsity

By Dalvin Aboagye

Since the release of their self-titled debut “Varsity” back in 2015, indie rock band Varsity has spent much of their time honing their incredibly upbeat sound.

The Chicago outfit — made up of lead vocalist and lyricist Stephanie Smith, guitarists Patrick Stanton and Dylan Weschler, bass guitarist Jake Stolz and drummer Paul Stolz — leans heavily on the side of positivity, creating an air of optimism wherever they’re played.

Tracks like “Amanda” and “Turns Out” off of their debut feel like walking through a ray of sunshine with undercurrents of a cloudy day underneath. They effortlessly combine bright guitar riffs and lyrics, producing catchy earworms that stick with you the entire day.

Recently, the singles they’ve been dropping in preparation for their sophomore outing “Parallel

Person” signal a change in pace.

Melancholy songs like “Krissy” and the end of “Must Be Nice” show they’ve found a good middle ground, retaining their good vibes while exhibiting a whole spectrum of emotion. We hit up Stephanie and Patrick to fill us in on what to expect from their new record arriving on April 27th.

How did you guys get together?

Patrick: It’s not that exciting. Dylan, Steph and I were just playing together. Dylan and I both wanted to play bass because we’re pretty obnoxious and it sort of just evolved from there. We went through some lineup changes and then we met Jake and then his brother Paul and that’s the current lineup today. But yeah, we would try and play songs. Either we would try and learn a cover pretty poorly and work on some ideas we had and we just kind

of started from there.

What's goes into the creation of one of your songs or albums?

Stephanie: We pretty much always start with a chord structure or a melody first and then. like, jam on it as a band and get it to a place that we really like structurally, and then the lyrics are actually last.

Do each of you have a different role to play or is it all pretty much equal?

S: I would say we all take responsibility for our own parts on our own instruments. Everyone can bring ideas to the group. I think typically Dylan and I will bring ideas to the group but it's happened other ways for sure. I write all the lyrics. I guess that's the only thing I take full responsibility for, but everybody has the opportunity to give their own input and change other people's part and really determine their own arrangements and stuff like that.

Storytelling is a major part of all your songs. It's like a friend filling you in on what's been happening since you've been gone. Where'd that come from?

S: Yeah, I think that I'm super into storytelling. I went to school for documentary filmmaking 'cause I love other people's stories, I love telling stories, I love interviewing people, so I kind of viewed this as another outlet to like continue the storytelling kind of theme that I've always just been attracted to.

Do you usually pull from your own experiences or from others?

S: Both, I would say. Usually if it's other people's I try to protect the innocent, if you know what I mean.

The singles you've dropped from "Parallel Person" sound like they strike a balance between being upbeat and moody. What did it take to get there? How has your sound evolved over the years?

S: I would agree. We're generally drawn towards major chords and happy melodies, I guess, or like at pretty catchy melodies, but the lyrics aren't necessarily in step with the initial sort of takeaway from the song. As far as how we've changed, I don't

know. Maybe Pat can speak a little bit on that.

P: I think we're better at structuring songs and arranging songs and getting the mood of the song, getting there quicker. We've been writing and playing together for so long now that we can read off each other. We know each other's strengths and weaknesses, I suppose. So it just seems more efficient and more direct. It's all-around a better approach and hopefully that's reflected in the song writing.

What do you want people to come out thinking after listening to "Parallel Person?"

P: I think we spent a lot of time of making sure it sounds good. It's the first record we recorded in a proper studio, so we did take a lot of time to make sure that we got all sound right. I would put some headphones on and pay attention to that.

S: Yeah, I think also it's the kind of album that when you listen to it more than once you're gonna notice different things, because we were kind of like meticulous and intentional about how we mixed it and how we arranged it. So I think like little nuances will come out with more listening, especially for people who don't necessarily listen to lyrics or arrangements the first time through. When I listen to an album, I just listen for the vibe first and then, like, hopefully with more listens new things open up to me. I think people will be rewarded, especially with headphones.

Do any of you have any significant influences? Or are you just trying to create a feeling?

P: We are trying to generate a feeling for sure, and each one of us I know has specific reference points for guitar, bass or drums or what have you. As far as the record in general...

S: Like, at the time we were listening to a lot of Cate Le Bon, iThe Eagles, iThe Strokes, Arthur Russell. Not that any of these people are anything the same, but we all were listening to kind of the same type of music. We actually have a playlist on Spotify of all the songs we were listening to when we wrote the

album. I think it's called, like, "Parallel Person inspiration" or something. Even though all these different bands don't sound necessarily the same, I think good arrangement and playing off of each other is something that we all really appreciate and strive for. Also, we're watching a lot of band documentaries too. We loved tThe Eagles documentary.

P: Loved that documentary. Very good.

S: I was super into the George Harrison documentary.

P: I watched one about Blondie that I hated.

Your visuals (cover art, music videos, etc.) seem to have changed as well. It all feels like a cohesive package that's still familiar.

P: Yeah, that feels accurate.

S: Yeah, especially the music video for "Must Be Nice" I feel like that. I love the artist that animated that music video. His name is Shane Beam. He's great and I think he really did capture the mood of

the song, which is kind of what we enjoy doing is like handing over our songs to different visual artists and seeing what they come up with. So far it's been really great. We have only had positive reactions to all the artwork that's been created for us.

Do you let artists go off of what the music sounds like or do you come in with suggestions?

P: It depends. It's a case-by-case basis, usually. For this record the actual album art was done by our friend Claire — Clare Byrne — who has done almost all of our album art, so that's probably why it feels a little familiar. We had a reference point that we started from a photograph a while back and then we sort of gave that to Clare and let her listen to the album, and she came up with something that's really great and it really fits.

Recently you've been hopping from city-to-city doing shows. What's the reception been between locations?

P: It depends on where we go.



S: Yeah, I mean actually it's hard to predict. We went to Fayetteville, Arkansas and had a great show at a DIY space. We went to Austin and had some pretty good shows at South by Southwest. I mean, in major American cities we do pretty well and then it's always such a treat when we go to, like, a small city that we don't necessarily know anybody in, and people come to our shows and are excited to see us. That's always surprising, but it shouldn't really be because with the internet you can totally discover new music and track a band you like and go to their show. But I'm always just really amazed when people come up. I guess Fayetteville is probably, like, the best example of that. It was like a Monday night at a small DIY venue and like the most appreciative, fun crowd came out, which was great.

What music have you guys been listening to recently? What do you usually listen to throughout the day?

P: Today I was listening to the new Hop Along record. It's very good. I was listening to this band we played with in Austin, Texas —, they're called Why Bonnie. I missed them when we were down there but I found their name and I was listening to their EP today and I really like it and I bump it every so often.

S: I'm listening to, I don't think this is new music, but Sam Evian today and I'm always bumping Fleetwood Mac.

P: Yeah, I listen to Fleetwood Mac a lot too.

S: And there's a new Cate Le Bon single out, which is great.

P: The record label Drag City just finally put out new music on streaming services so I've been listening to the Silver Jews record "American Water." I really liked it.

S: Ooh, and Frankie Cosmos has a new record.

P: Yeah, that was dope. I like R.E.M. I like the Smiths a lot. I listened to the new Amen Dunes record, which is pretty good. I liked the second track a lot but the first track is called "Intro" so I guess the second track is like the first actual track on the record.

What are you guys currently up to? Do you work on new music in between shows?

S: Yeah, it's a slow process but we are working on two new songs and we are just gearing up for a release show tomorrow. We have a show tomorrow in Madison Wisconsin and then we have a release show in Chicago on 4/20 and yeah, we're gonna hit the east coast and Canada in May. We're kind of just gearing up for that but we're also writing new songs. We pretty much write like two songs at a time.

Currently, they plan on making two appearances in New York in May on the 5th at Union Pool and the 7th at the Mercury Lounge.

So, Uhhh, Is Independence in the Music Industry Attainable?

BY ALOSHA GUSEV

Independence in artistry is supposed to be the ideal. We want artists to represent themselves and convey their convictions, but so often these values are foregone in favor of quantity and compensation. In the past, independent acts represented the self as opposed to the conglomerate; for individuality as opposed to conformity, and historically if a group wanted to maintain their personality, at least as conveyed by the music, it was key to keep outside influences at bay. That said, of course we want our musicians to evolve with us and not pretend that they're the same 90's "slacker bois" 25 years later, but we also don't want them to lose the realness that we latched onto initially. Unfortunately, music entertainment is a hot commodity, and therefore the more ears any given group can reach, the more money they stand to make, whether that is the goal or not. Power corrupts, and sadly compensation for the hard work put in has the capacity for negative consequences.

In the 70's and 80's, record labels were consolidated by parent companies that today

consist of three major labels: Sony BMG, Universal Music Group and Warner Music Group (and EMI before being bought out by Universal in 2012). These corporate monoliths continue to dominate the industry to this day, and can have incredible yields; In 2011, a Nielsen SoundScan report found that cumulatively, the Big Four made up about 88 percent of the market, with independent labels making just over 12 percent (though this has been shown to be steadily increasing within the last few years). Each of these companies has countless subsidiaries that have subsidiaries of their own, which corner and prey on every niche imaginable, from industrial-post-hard-core-synth-pop to ringtones — I mean, probably ringtones — and move artists from subsidiary to subsidiary based on sales. The gradual corporatization and the industrialization of the music industry created a pervasive perception: that it is imperative for an artist to label up if they hope to make a living out of their art. This attitude is totally prevalent in any genre, including the most iconically independently-gearred, like punk and hip-hop.

In the early 1970s, punk, the genre as well as the lifestyle, came out of a teenage demand for some new element that could have the power and energy to spit in the face of all things established. Listening to the raw and resolute lyrics of Bad Brains, you'd hear them expound on police states, revolutions against the bourgeoisie, and the conflicting emotions that arise when in love with a sex worker. Alternatively, you could vibe with the gothic and bass-heavy feel of The Dead Kennedys, or maybe you'd dig the passionate and yet disinterested vocals prevalent in projects from the godfather of punk, Iggy Pop. Whatever the case, it was clear punk was an attempt at innovation, if not liberation, from the supposedly oppressive stylings of innovators past. The hope here was for these young rebels to establish themselves and their way of life as legitimate. Unfortunately, to reach legitimacy they had to conform to the standards already set. The Sex Pistols, for example, were a legendary group whose name, history and mythology largely surpassed their music in the modern zeitgeist but were initially signed to

EMI, one of the Big Four music labels, and produced by Chris Thomas, mixer for Pink Floyd's seminal album "The Dark Side of the Moon." The Clash, another huge name in the first wave of punk, released their debut record under CBS (now Sony Music Entertainment, a subsidiary of another from the Big Four). Though their flippant attitudes and often violent antics were loud enough for people to lose their minds, they required the security of learned management to get their message across.

There's another facet of this issue though that's best exemplified by rival companies Death Row Records and Bad Boy Records. Each was founded by upstarts in order to unionize hip-hop artists who had been abused by greedy labels looking to profit off of the sudden market for rappers from poor and dangerous communities looking for ways out. Death Row, the West Coast label founded in large part by Dr. Dre in 1991, was responsible for continuing the career of its co-founder, as well as bringing both Snoop Doggy Dogg and 2Pac, two of the most celebrated rappers to date, into the corporate world. Unfortunately, the connections and associations that came with being part of a major label, especially one so closely connected to the volatile lifestyle of a gangster rapper, resulted in the death of 2Pac

and the departure of Dre, who went on to found Aftermath Records (now a subsidiary of Universal Music Group). Subsequently, the label became infamous for not paying royalties to their musicians and, after some legal trouble, the entire Death Row catalogue ended up at Entertainment One, a Canadian music distribution company. On the other coast, Bad Boy Records, founded by Sean Combs in 1993, is most notable for the production of the Notorious B.I.G., another incredibly iconic rapper. The company was likewise supposed to be a playground for up and comers, but soon became another subsidiary of Warner and then Universal. Though these labels had the benefit of being founded by the very musicians they would produce, the result was the acquisition of both by soulless executives, who would now have power to distribute the music of the people. You can now listen to any of these artists on the streaming service giant Spotify. Was this steady decline into conglomerate limbo an inevitability? Is it the only response to such aggregation of media acquiescence?

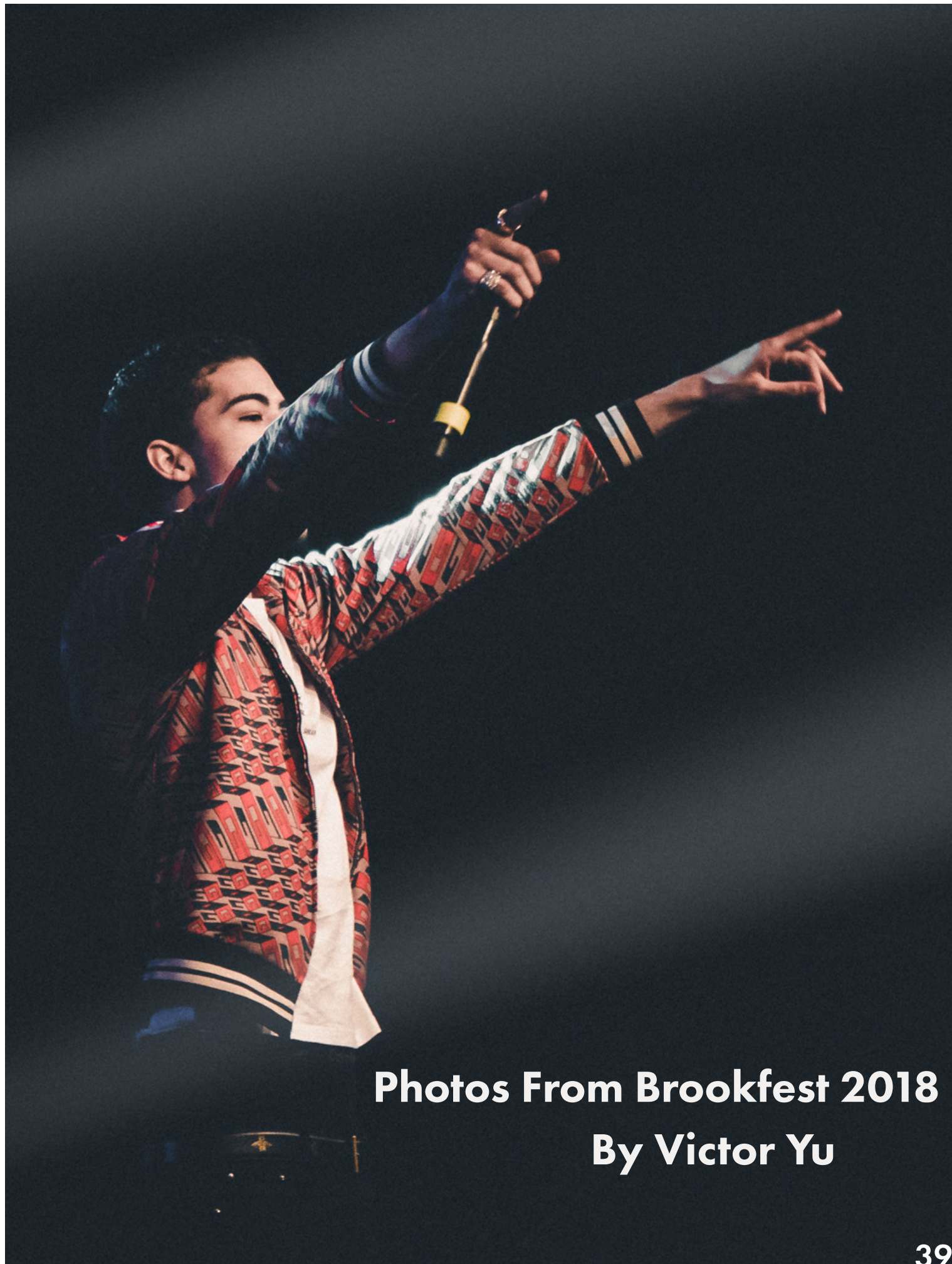
In the age of the internet, there's clearly been some shifts in these dynamics. It's now not only possible but easy for any asshole with a laptop and a downloaded Audacity file to create something truly unique and even popular, and

add that sound to the musical milieu. But with the internet comes some obstacles as well, namely the oversaturation of an already well-saturated market. What was once an artist screaming into a vacuum reaching for validation is now an artist screaming into a vacuum while millions of Hoovers and Dirt Devils and Swiffers sing four chord songs and Pachelbel's Canons in cacophonous harmony. Of course there are free streaming services (Bandcamp, Soundcloud, Youtube) that musicians can use to independently distribute their art, but the likelihood of an unknown artist becoming known is astronomically improbable. Thus they enter the premium streaming services (Spotify, Apple Music, 8tracks) that at once work to further the careers of established talent while helping to

spread the work of independent musicians. But the well-documented pitfalls of Spotify keep independent musicians unknown, what with the lackluster compensation and the corporate-playlists that recommend similar established artists and leave the independents in the dust. There are outliers that are able to survive in this landscape; the underground icon MF Doom has been able to maintain his reputation, style and dignity while using labels to distribute his tunes, and Thundercat has used his friend Flying Lotus' label Brainfeeder to distribute music while staying relatively red-tape free. And, of course, there is the independent poster boy: Chance The Rapper, who was able to win Best New Artist and Best Rap Album at the Grammys last year for his 2016 album *Coloring Book*, the first streaming-only album to do so, without the help of a label. However, it has been acknowledged that *Coloring Book* was distributed exclusively on Apple Music, calling into question the independent brand Chance has cultivated for himself.

As acting music director at Stony Brook's radio station WUSB, my main job is listening to and critiquing music sent into the station from promotional companies or independent artists, listening to the diverse playlists curated by our staff and searching through our extensive music library for celebrated albums as well as rarities. The point is that I listen to a lot of good music and a lot of bad music, and the distinction definitely doesn't lie in the standing of the label. What is clear, though, is the effect that branding has on music. A mediocre artist could get by solely due to their attachment to a well-regarded, even independent, label like DFA or Wharf Cat. It's understandable that musicians would seek out management to deal with financial matters that can get unnerving and frankly boring when the reason they enter the industry is to create and promote their art. The fear, though, is that this safety will come with unwanted side effects that could ruin the vibe. Even when distilled to the purest possible levels

of independence, the anti-establishment punk scene and the artist-run hip-hop labels were unable to stop themselves from succumbing to the allure and security of corporate overlords. So, then, is it possible to achieve mainstream success while maintaining a distinct lack of cogness? Or is it the responsibility of the audience to go as deep underground as necessary to find the truly unprocessed material that pop culture seems so starved of? Or, I dunno, does this maybe all mean that independence isn't really worth it? And that maybe that's not what people are looking for? I'm gonna sleep on it.



Photos From Brookfest 2018
By Victor Yu

***"I be ballin' right there, where the Knicks play
Get cake gotta make sure momma's rent paid"***

***"I was dead broke,
got my shit straight"***

***"Switch lanes, now
they switchin' up,
n****s bitch made"***

***"I been finessin' since the
6th grade***

***Switch blade,
I might cut a hoe off
if her s**t fake"***

Jay Critch



A Boogie Wit Da Hoodie



21 Savage





*"They thought I only rapped about murder and pistols
I'm tryna feed my family, I ain't being political
You ain't givin' out money then they look at you pitiful
You make a couple million, n****s greedy, they envy you
Ayy, fuck that other side, we gon' shoot up your Sprinter
I used to sell that crack and spray that MAC out that rental
N****s run and hide when we roll down the window
Got a extendo and a hoodie, he can't wait for december
Got a extendo and a hoodie, he gon' show 'em camera
Lost his faith in Jesus Christ, he prayin' and a
Police gunned his brother down, this show handle*

*Loadin' up his chopper,
he gon' show 'em
Black Lives Matter"*

This album is in no way intended to glorify addiction



J. Cole is the Therapist Rap Needs in "KOD"

Quari Alleyne

"The real is back, the 'Ville is back," and J. Cole has in fact brought it back stronger than ever, at a time when it was desperately needed. If you're anything like me, your faith in the state of hip-hop has slowly spiraled downward the past couple of months. You've been forced to resort to old school classics, which, considering how fast music is digested today, are albums like Kendrick Lamar's "DAMN," Rick Ross' "Rather You Than Me" and Jay-Z's "4:44." All of which were released last year. Or a West Coast debut from one of my favorites, Nipsey Hussle's "Victory Lap," which released last month.

Or perhaps you've gone back further and found yourself reaching for classic Marvin Gaye, Al Green or Aretha Franklin records trying to get music to touch your soul the way it once did. All in an attempt to try and numb yourself from the current mainstream rap that loses its meaning the moment the second hook is recited.

But then April comes around. And as an Aries, I'm ecstatic.

Kendrick becomes the first rapper to win a Pulitzer prize for "DAMN." Jay-Z takes home a Peabody for his executive production of "TIME: The Kalief Browder Story." And Kanye West announces the release of both

his long-awaited solo album on June 1 and his collab project with Kid Cudi on June 8, as well as the lineup of his G.O.O.D music counterparts, Pusha T and Teyana Taylor, in May and June, respectively.

But April 20 got the ball rolling for what is to come. On a date that has most stoners rolling up, J. Cole wittingly makes you reconsider with his fifth recorded studio album, "KOD." The album's title, a triple entendre, a play on words uses the acronym to give the album a sense of direction, completely up for the listener's interpretation: "Kids on Drugs," "King Overdosed" and "Killing Our Demons" — all of which encompass the album's content.

Cole tackles the issues of addiction, depression, anxiety and other mental health woes a majority of youth face as they turn to vices to suppress their feelings of pain.

The album's intro, entitled so, begins with an explanation of where Cole believes addiction stems from, cleverly using the analogy of a newborn baby's response to joy and pain. A female voice is heard saying, "A newborn baby has two primary forms of communication. Laughter, which says, 'I love this.' Or crying, which says, 'This frightens me, I'm in pain.'"

All throughout, Cole

pleads for his mind to be shut off, under the jazzy beat. The track, although just an intro, gives the listener a good idea of what will be addressed and just exactly where J. Cole's head is at. Cole shows how wicked his mind can get in the middle of the album with "The Cut Off," a track that features what seems to be Cole's maniacal alter ego, Kill Edward. The song is dedicated to a former friend turned foe of Cole's, who ultimately crossed him somewhere along the way. He infers that if he were to lose control of his sanity he would resort to violence on the man who crossed him.

The album is extremely introspective and one of the the album's deepest songs, "Once an Addict," reintroduces us to some of Cole's darker thoughts. The female voice returns to open the song and questions whether God is pleased when we are suffering. The song later describes the lineage of drug use to suppress pain that began with Cole's mother, who, as he has mentioned multiple times before, battled her own personal bouts with alcohol and crack cocaine. The pain Cole vicariously felt through seeing the tears from his mother's eyes fueled him to lead the same path. Cole spits through gritted teeth, fighting back tears, "I know she intoxicated/and soon this high that I'm on comes crashin' down/ She lit, talkin' drunk shit, I'm

pissed/But I'm still all ears like
basset hounds/Thinkin' to myself,
"Maybe my mama need help/
Don't she got work in the morn-
ing?/Why she do this to herself?
Hate how she slurrin' her words."

Yet Cole, unlike many other mainstream artists, does not glorify drugs and other vices. He uses his personal traumatic experiences to paint a vivid portrait of the ills that the use of drugs can bring on songs like "Friends," "ATM" and "1985." Cole understands that impressionable minds are drawn to what they are exposed most frequently. And in a day and age when they're force-fed images of their idols glorifying drugs, money and fame they are tempted to do the same. But without a blueprint and knowledge of the adverse effects that come as a result, they are left unaware of the feelings of inadequacy, stress and depression that are attached, resulting in a vicious cycle that they are constantly trying to run away from. But Cole doesn't only blame hip-hop; he also points at the black community's ignorance and dismissal of mental health issues that are seemingly indiscernible. "Without the drugs I want you be comfortable in your skin. I know you, so I know you still keep a lot of shit in/You running from yourself and you buying product again/I know you say it helps and no I'm not trying to offend/But I know depression and drug addiction don't blend/Reality distorts and then you get lost in the wind."

What Cole does so well on this album and those that precede it is, tuning into what society is in dire need of hearing. He doesn't record tracks that will feed his pockets or his ego, but

those that will hopefully reach the ears, hearts and minds of those who need his assistance the most. Cole offers his veteran advice to young rappers who may not be aware of their impact on "1985." He plays devil's advocate and highlights the duality that exists among young black rappers who come into a boatload of money, fame, impact and responsibility that they aren't always cognizant of. He says that he too during his adolescence dabbled in the care-free unconscious acts of drinking, smoking, sleeping around and not giving a damn about who saw. But he then flips the coin in the second verse, telling these artists in the coolest way possible that if they stay the course they're on, "In five years you gon' be on love and hip-hop." For those who are not tuned in to the low-level entertainment that exists within the black community, "Love and Hip-Hop," analogous with "Dancing with the Stars," is for washed-up pop stars and retired athletes alike, where once-prominent rappers go to end their previous monumental careers. But if you're Cardi B... it's where you start.

Sonically, the album finds an exquisite balance between "knockers," heard on "KOD" and "ATM," and melancholy tracks that make you close your eyes and nod your head at a steady pace, scowling at witty rhyme schemes, metaphors and his uncanny flow.

Cole acts as a martyr for the issues many young people experience in this fast-paced society, embodying their issues as his, deeply exploring his mind, the introspective artist he is, and releasing what is needed. He plays the role of the O.G., or the

uncle in your family who you find constantly saying, "Back in my day," and going in-depth about the one time he had to do "something strange" to get his fix. But unlike your uncle, Cole does so in a way that only he can, effortlessly meshing his voice over self-produced beats.

This album does not preach — it instead serves as a therapy session. One that gives listeners a look into the life of a multimillionaire rapper who not only recognizes his impact and greater responsibility to his audience but identifies with the same struggles they face as well. It drives the age-old saying home, that "Money doesn't buy happiness," and neither does "medicating" with vices, regardless of how they disguise themselves.

How We're Slowly Losing Our Ability to Think

By Jeni Dhodary



On Wednesday, April 11, Indian American political commentator and filmmaker Dinesh D'Souza sailed into Stony Brook University with a keen mission. His goal was to dismantle the accusations of fascism plaguing his party by the "radical left." Yet what began as a seemingly harmless defense of President Donald Trump and the Republican party transformed into a hostile depiction of all leftists, liberals, and Democrats as "fascists" and "racial terrorists." With the exception of a few dissenting students, the silent, predominantly white crowd of about one hundred devoured Mr. D'Souza's divisive claims as sheer truth, many even applauding him from the audience every now and then.

I was taken aback by Mr. D'Souza not because his political

views differed heavily from mine, but because of the logical and factual inconsistencies with which he upheld his claims. "If you recited the twenty-five points of the Nazis in a Democratic rally," he began, "you would get applause." He provoked many by using Obamacare as a case for the Democratic Party's socialist leanings. He depicted Keynesian politics as the politics of fascism.

His provocativity increased as he incited the crowd: "The Republican Party is the only party that does not have to be guilty of racism; everyone else does." In the crowd, I saw faces of firm Americans too engrossed in party politics to confront the truth: that they too are complacent in a system that subtly but inarguably marginalizes those who are poor and of color, those unlike them.

The danger of fascism is in its inability to recognize itself. When I looked into the twenty-five premises of National "Socialism," or Nazism, that Mr. D'Souza claimed the Democrats represented (because according to him, all Democrats are socialists) and the history of racism under Republican presidents, I uncovered something I had already known: that the face of modern conservatism is coated with lies. For example, Mr. D'Souza claimed that President Nixon had never expressed racist sentiments. Yet all it takes is a simple Google search to realize that this is not true. The demagoguery that the left accuses the right of is accurate. It really is that bad on the other side. If it isn't, the quieter, more rational conservatives need to "speak up" like they demand of America's

peaceful Muslim population. Their silence is complacency.

Mr. D'Souza's prejudiced claims should not have shocked me. He has openly mocked the survivors of the Parkland massacre on Twitter and has been notoriously identified by various media outlets as a divisive figure. Yet it is still startling when a man compares his felony of making illegal campaign donations to the heroic civil disobedience of Martin Luther King Jr. His exact response when a member of the Stony Brook's Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) shouted "You're a felon" from the crowd? "MLK was a felon too!" To that I say, Mr. D'Souza, you can confront the oppressive tactlessness of your claims or you can continue to live under the illusion that you are a visionary. Visionaries do not embody warped stereotypes the way Mr. D'Souza does. They do not enrage people by perverting truths.

At that point, are you for the people or dividing the people? I assume you succeeded with the latter because of the ardent applause you were met with in the end. A woman even stood up to blow you a kiss and give you her prayers. Was there anyone in the crowd that dissented to his beliefs aside from the two vocal students in the back left of the auditorium? If so, why did you clap? There is a difference between respecting a speech with applause and a speech that does not merit applause for the dogma it contains.

How many guests went home at the end of the event believing Mr. D'Souza's claims? When he

substantiated his praise of the Republican party by claiming that Nixon was never a racist, how many actually researched to assess his claim? How many discovered that there are online voice recordings of the president disparaging African Americans? How many instead used Mr. D'Souza's misinformation to passionately hate the left for the mistakes of the right?

All Americans — regardless of their political affiliations — must confront the danger in simply accepting a figure's claims without skepticism. We must listen, question and then we must uncover. The fallacy of modern thinkers is in their dependency on other thinkers instead of the truth. The power of the masses lies in their ability to think. The best way to lose that power is by being too lazy to exercise it.



Dinesh D'Souza
@DineshDSouza



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I am thankful this week when I remember that America is big enough and great enough to survive Grown-Up Trayvon in the White House!

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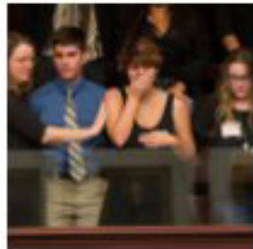
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Dinesh D'Souza ✓

@DineshDSouza



YOU CAN TAKE THE BOY OUT OF THE GHETTO...Watch this vulgar man show his stuff, while America cowers in embarrassment



Swifty & *Thrifty*

Photos

Michaela Steil

Nirvani Williams



Giselle Maronilla

Lei Takanashi



Carlos Lopez

**“Does Barry Manilow know
you raid his wardrobe?”**



Louis Marrone

Bender asked the stickler detention teacher, Richard Vernon, from the iconic 1985 film "The Breakfast Club." Little did this grunge criminal know that lots of millennials consciously choose to wear outdated apparel today.

The idea of thrifting, or visiting second-hand thrift stores in the hopes of buying cheap and rare clothing, gained clout well before Macklemore's infamous song, "Thrift Shop." According to First Research statistics, a leading market analysis provider, approximately 16 to 18 percent of Americans shop at a thrift store. Vintage appeal spreads through a wide audience: broke college students just trying to experiment with vibes from different eras, families who are on a strict budget and cookie-baking grandmas who want to collect nostalgic items.

A couple of Press heads, friends from outside of the publication and I decided to go on a thrifting spree of our own. "How has no one grabbed this yet?" business executive, Frank Gargano asked, holding a mint-condition, Sun 600 series Polaroid camera being sold for \$12 at Island Thrift in Centereach, Long Island. The Costco-like warehouse had aisles filled with racks of colorful, vintage clothing. There was even a section on the left hand side of the store with a collection of vinyls where I bought Santana's first released vinyl in '69.

The girls and guys separated in two halves of the store: girls on the right and guys on the left. Megan Valle from our multimedia team pulled a giant, fur coat out of an entire rack of colorful jackets--jaw to the floor. Giselle Maronilla, multimedia editor, confidently put a sunset red and orange beaded-sequin top in our overflowing cart.

"Fashion allows me to express myself in a visual way," she said grinning at her choice. "I feel like in this day and age, acceptance regarding how you dress and how you wear your clothes on your body is becoming greater. What looks good is subjective."

Meanwhile, on the boys side, they were raiding the jacket section with executive editor, Lei Takanashi, running through hangers like it was his job. Copy editor, Justin Ligan, showed me a black sleeved, Harley Davidson jacket, but told me that his only reserve for buying it was because on the breast pocket, it said Harley Davidson Cafe.

"Like I find myself trying different clothing or color choices all the time," said culture editor, Dalvin Aboagye. "It really just comes down to having another way of being comfortable in your own skin. Sometimes there are points where I feel like doing more while sometimes there are times where I'm like, this is definitely gonna be a lazy day for me, so why not dress accordingly, you know?"

Thrifting allows us millennials to express all facets of our personality and emotions in a time where content from every era is just a click away. It's funny, in early 2000s sitcoms, young characters would usually make fun of their peers if they sport their "dad's clothes." I mean, a Yankees baseball cap was always a 'Dad-item' until recently. There's something exhilarating about digging through cluttered racks and shelves with the musty smell of the 80s cyph circles permeating the air and, of course, the possibility of finding something really awesome.





Robyn Duncan

But why is there such an appeal among millennials to wear clothes from their parent's era? Perhaps we're facing a huge identity crisis and want to revert back to the ironically named "silent generation" when independence and rebellion defined the 1920s and 1940s. According to the Forbes article, "Vintage Fashion: Unzipping The Mystery," vintage style actually originated in the '20s when World War I ended and Americans indulged more in material items. Urban environments flourished as the Modernist movement, which stemmed from a rejection of Enlightenment thinking in an effort to represent the new industrialized reality that took shape. Artists and musicians began to blossom in new ways, surrounded by the cultural excitement of the Harlem Renaissance.

Vintage clothing became extremely apparent during the women's rights movement, though. A woman's ability to vote, work outside of the home and pursue life as more than just being a housewife was revolutionary. Flappers and their followers seized and celebrated these freedoms by dressing in what was considered to be rebellious attire. Women embraced head wreaths, cloche hats and bobbed cuts instead of traditionally acceptable hairstyles. Bold women wore whatever they wanted to – from garters with silk stockings to above-the-knee skirts and dresses, cigarettes in hand.

In the context of American fashion now, both women and men are emulating raw, rebellious, grunge styles seen in the 20s. This living form of art holds power – power to control a part of one's image. A person can play a role, embody a story, or represent an era based on what he or she chooses to wear. As the idea of fashion rapidly evolves in the eyes of a pink-drink, J. Cole-listening millennial, I can't wait to see how we'll make the past our own.



Dalvin Aboagye



Nirvani Williams



Frank Gargano





Margaret Osborne







Is Trump Still Funny?

By Joe Amendola

How do you satirize what is already a joke? How do you peel beneath the surface to reveal the underlying absurdity within when the surface no longer exists? Does pointing out these absurdities encourage meaningful activism and change, or does it lull people into a false sense of complacency and hopelessness? How do you create a caricature of a consequential figure without minimizing their real world harms?

These are all tough questions with no straightforward answers, but that isn't stopping anyone from trying.

Showtime's "Our Cartoon President" is the newest entry into the already bloated Trump-satire micro-industry. The show follows a cartoon rendering of Donald Trump around the White House as he attempts to perform a job

he almost certainly has no interest in doing. The show attempts to make colorful characters out of everyone in the president's orbit; Trump's immediate family, speechwriter Stephen Miller, Vice President Mike Pence, White House Chief of Staff John Kelly and pretty much anyone else even tangentially related to the spectacle of modern politics has their own animated doppelgänger.

The results have been underwhelming, to say the least.

The show has been almost universally rejected by the media and the public alike, with just a 30 percent critic score and a 39 percent viewer rating on the popular review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes. But the crushing un-funniness of the cartoon is only

secondary to its other shortcomings.

The show seems to want to point out what it sees as important and unexamined truths about the real estate mogul-turned reality star-turned president. It wants you to know that Trump is an infantile slacker who shows open disdain for even the most basic processes of governing; this, of course, has already been exhaustively reported. It also wants you to notice how the president continually places bets on the nation's worst and most bigoted instincts in order to periodically shore up his base, even though we've all witnessed this play out live on national television multiple times. Half of the jokes in the show are just references to things Trump has already said or done, and the cartoonish stunts he pulls in the show only seem a half a step up

from what presently constitutes reality.

In the worst moments of “Our Cartoon President,” the show — presumably unintentionally — makes Trump out to be a prototypical lovable goofball patriarch, in the mold of Homer Simpson. It would be hard to imagine this being the goal of the series, and the fact that Trump is a real person, whose policies have resulted in concrete material horrors for multitudes of marginalized people, hardly makes this a welcome byproduct for someone

record of defending torture, and has been accused of facilitating it while in charge of the Guantanamo Bay Prison.

Is this really the goal? To make the representatives of the ugliest features of empire into belabored, likeable underdogs who have to answer to an imbecile? Sure, the fact that a pair of ruthless and scheming men — who’ve spent their whole career dealing with other ruthless and scheming men — found themselves answering to a lazy pampered egomaniac is quite humorous, but this all could’ve been shown without

have a Donald Trump? ‘Saturday Night Live’ does, and Comedy Central does, and talk shows do, and Johnny Depp does. There are more Trump-branded spoofs, parodies and sendups than there are Trump-branded hotels,” Poniewozik remarks.

Herein lies the problem: Donald Trump is not an understated, mysterious figure ready to be picked apart and deconstructed. He’s an ever-imposing monstrosity who occupies a permanent presence in our lives; all his fuckups, transgressions and predatory

admissions have a permanent home in an increasingly unavoidable media cycle that now lives in our pockets.

In the past, political satire has operated on a sort of illuminating smugness. Take Jon Stewart, former host of The Daily Show, for example: He metic-



watching.

The show also portrays Generals John Kelly and H.R McMaster as sympathetic operatives who are desperately trying to bring a semblance of competence into the chaotic West Wing. However, both Kelly and McMaster have been accused of serious crimes and harmful views in their own right, with McMaster being accused of aiding and abetting human rights abuses while serving as a military commander during the Iraq War. General John Kelly also has a long and exhaustive

making them out to be relatively agreeable professionals. McMaster has since been fired by Trump

“Our Cartoon President” is a tremendous failure, but it’s only a small part of the problem.

America has political satire fatigue. As James Poniewozik of The New York Times reported in his review of “Our Cartoon President,” multiple parodies of the president have found homes on television.

“Who, at this point, does not

ulously deconstructed the political sphere during the Bush era, peeling back layer after layer in order to expose the idiocy of current events. While funny, the message of the show always boiled down to the same essence: Look at how dumb these people are, and look at how smart I am.

This method no longer works in an age where the idiocy is self-evident. No further analyzation is needed, and satire — no matter how clever — ends up having nothing new or interesting to say; it’s redundant when juxtaposed with the news. When reality is a

tragedy and comedy all at once, it's hard to even see the utility of satire for satire's sake.

Armando Iannucci, who is the creator of "The Thick of It", its American reboot "VEEP" and the director of "The Death of Stalin" is perhaps the best living satirist. He also shares these concerns about the state of political comedy. In recent op-ed for The Washington Post, Iannucci described how reality has become stranger than fiction:

"No showrunner in his or her right mind would make their sitcom president urge his press secretary to go out on Day 1 of his administration and change the laws of math. If a hapless Sean Spicer character on a TV comedy had to spin photos showing a half-empty Mall into proof of the biggest inauguration crowd ever assembled, ever, period, President Trump would tweet that it was 'unwatchable.'"

Aside from problems of comedy, there is also the role — or lack thereof — that satire plays in real world changes. For example, did The Daily Show do anything? Did it stop the war in Iraq that it was so ardently against? Or slow down the rise of the right-wing Tea Party political movement, something it skewered over and over again? As of today, America doesn't have any less of an outsized military presence around the world, and the Tea Party movement has had incredible electoral success and fundamentally changed politics.

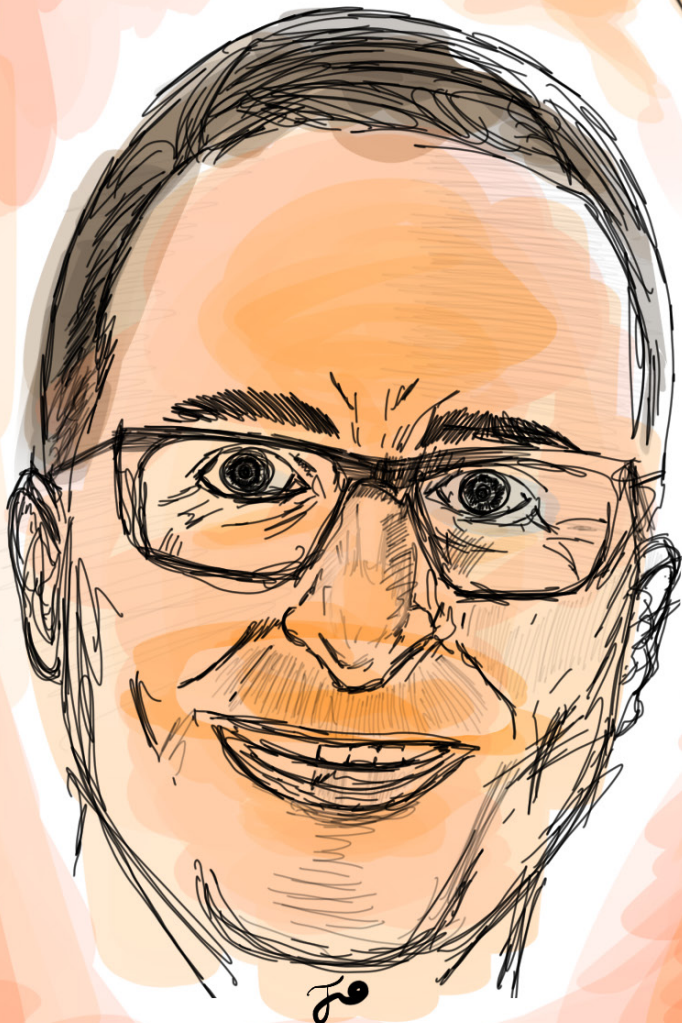
Satire is important. It has the ability to inform and has historically had a role in fighting against censorship. But political satire untethered from any meaningful concurrent call for action has the ability to be both ineffective and detrimental. As journalist Padmini Parthasarathy notes in Firstpost, this can be incredibly damaging:

"Too much satire, too much culture, too much self-care, can lull us into a false sense of security. Look, the world is still spinning! We have nothing to worry about, we think. But there are too many lives at stake to disengage from the political world like this."

And he's right. Political satire doesn't have to cure all the world's ills, or stop every five seconds to give a rousing call to arms like Vladimir Lenin at Finland Station circa 1917; but the moment the consumption of media and satire becomes a substitute for civic engagement in life is the moment we cross a dangerous threshold.

"Our Cartoon President," or any other Trump-centric comedy, isn't the cause of this problem, but rather exists on a continuum with much of the progression of liberal political comedy in recent years. After all, it's hard to know how to strike the right balance. At its best, satire can be thoughtful, informative and genuinely hilarious. The problem comes in when it sees itself as something else, or when it utterly fails at its proper goals in the first place.

As we wade into increasingly bizarre and dangerous waters, many long-standing cultural institutions will be forced to rethink their overlying goals and practices. Satire is merely one of them, and whatever conclusions and new forms it comes to will undoubtedly be insignificant in the broader context of political and social change.



LEONARDO
CASTILLO



What It Means To

Be Hispanic

By Carlos Lopez

LATINOS UNIDOS

HISPANOS UNIDOS

LATIONOS UNIDOS

America has this thing where it likes to change the slogans of social movements to better represent the white middle-class community. For instance, Black Lives Matter has been altered to All Lives Matter. What more could you do to slap a community right in the face? Well, Trump was able to give a backhand to the Latino community in his 2018 State of the Union by asserting, "Americans are Dreamers too!"

Trump's relationship with the Hispanic community can be described in no another word but ambiguous. One month he said that Mexico is sending drugs, crime, and rapists, but, the next month he said that they are amazing and hard working people. The same ambiguity could be said about Trump's opinions on Puerto Rico. So, by saying that Americans are Dreamers too is quite strange.

Without a doubt, the termination of DACA; which affects about 800,000 recipients, and the termination of the Temporary Protected Status; which affects about 200,000 participates, makes the prospect of roughly one-million Hispanics living in America completely ambiguous.

These Hispanics who have participated in programs such as DACA and TPS have had to face the decision of what to do after their documentation has expired. After being permitted to live in America for almost a decade, it's no easy task to pack your bags, leave the country and restart your life. They are not getting any younger, nor do they have time on their hands to arrange a

lucrative fallback plan. They're in a precarious predicament of "what now" and face the decision to either stay and hope for the best or be forcefully relocated to a strange land that has little to offer them. Nevertheless, hope still shines throughout the Hispanic community with protests showing America that the community won't back down without a fight.

As for the thousands of Dreamers, immigrants, and first-generationers, they hold their own opinions about the whole ordeal of things. Below are the thoughts of two first-generation Americans and their own opinions on the current status of Hispanics in today's America.

Evelyn Lopez, a freshman at Stony Brook, is a first-generation Mexican-American who has seen her family build a life here and support her so that she can have the opportunity to pursue higher education. She is secretary of the Stony Brook chapter of Long Island Immigration Student Advocates (LIISA) and is an advocate for minority rights. These are her thoughts:

Do you think there are any misleading connotations about Hispanics in America?

"The biggest one I've been hearing lately revolves around speaking Spanish. People think that Spanish is not welcome here, but we are welcome to speak whatever we want. I feel like Hispanics are seen as below. Hispanic have 'lower jobs' and people expect you to be like that. My parents, unfortunately, weren't able to get

a good job here, but they have something. I have the privilege and opportunity to go to school and do something better. The stereotypes people hold against you can really put you down because that's what they think you're gonna be."

Do you feel welcome here? Why or why not?

"It's half and half. Half of the people are welcoming. But the other half are the racist people and I have seen that a lot since Trump became president. The minute that you defend immigrants, the minute you define that you're Mexican, suddenly they put a stereotype that you're not worth anything. Would it be different if I were white? It puts you on the edge. I feel like I live a limbo. I don't belong in the states and I don't belong in Mexico. I feel I like I don't fit into both. Mexicans would say I'm too American but Americans would say I'm too Mexican. So what the hell am I?"

Cristiano Chavez is a first-generation Salvadoran-American who has lived in Long Island for his entire life. He graduated from SUNY Old Westbury with a BA in psychology and is currently enrolled in a master program for social work at Adelphi University. Like Evelyn, he is apart of LIISA and has his own opinions about the current views toward Hispanics.

How do you feel about the current administration and its relationship with the Hispanic community? How do you feel about what's happening with DACA and TPS?

"It makes me feel livid. I'm always upset on updates about DACA and TPS. TSP is what a lot of Salvadorans rely on. I have loved ones that I spoke to and they were like, 'I don't know what to do. I have to go back and I can't go back.' I view it like this, the recent administrations are ones that opened the gates to the inner racial prejudice and discriminatory ideas that people have had for decades. People didn't want to talk about it because they knew it was something that shouldn't be talked about. But with recent changes on how the country views these communities; the president is talking about it so that means others could talk about it too. It triggers headaches because people don't understand that the government is so powerful. What the president says could change the minds of millions."

First-generation?

"First generations is more of a privilege. It's a privilege because my parents had to go through the most to get here and to be born in a hospital, to have my social security, and to have my birth certificate. It is something that not everyone in the Latino community has. Being first-generation is also a struggle to understand. For you to ask your mom why do we have to do this instead of that. You start to see what you are able to do and not able to do. It's very confusing for a lot of children while growing up."

These thoughts are only a few that represent the thoughts of thousands of Dreamers, immigrants, and first-generationers. In such mystery times, the Hispanic com-

munity has come together to fight back such repression. They have shown the determination of what can be defined as The American Dream. So, what does it mean to be Hispanic in an America which seems to trifle them?

Cristiano Chavez

"So as a Latino, I define it as an understanding of what makes me, me. I embrace being Latino by talking to people. As important as it is to educate others, it's important to educate yourself. I embrace it just by being myself or learning something I didn't know about the Salvadoran culture. In my community, I support the local Central American businesses. Instead of going to Applebees, your local pupuseria esta ahi (local Spanish restaurant is right there). You got to support them by helping your community. You have to see where your money goes."

Evelyn Lopez

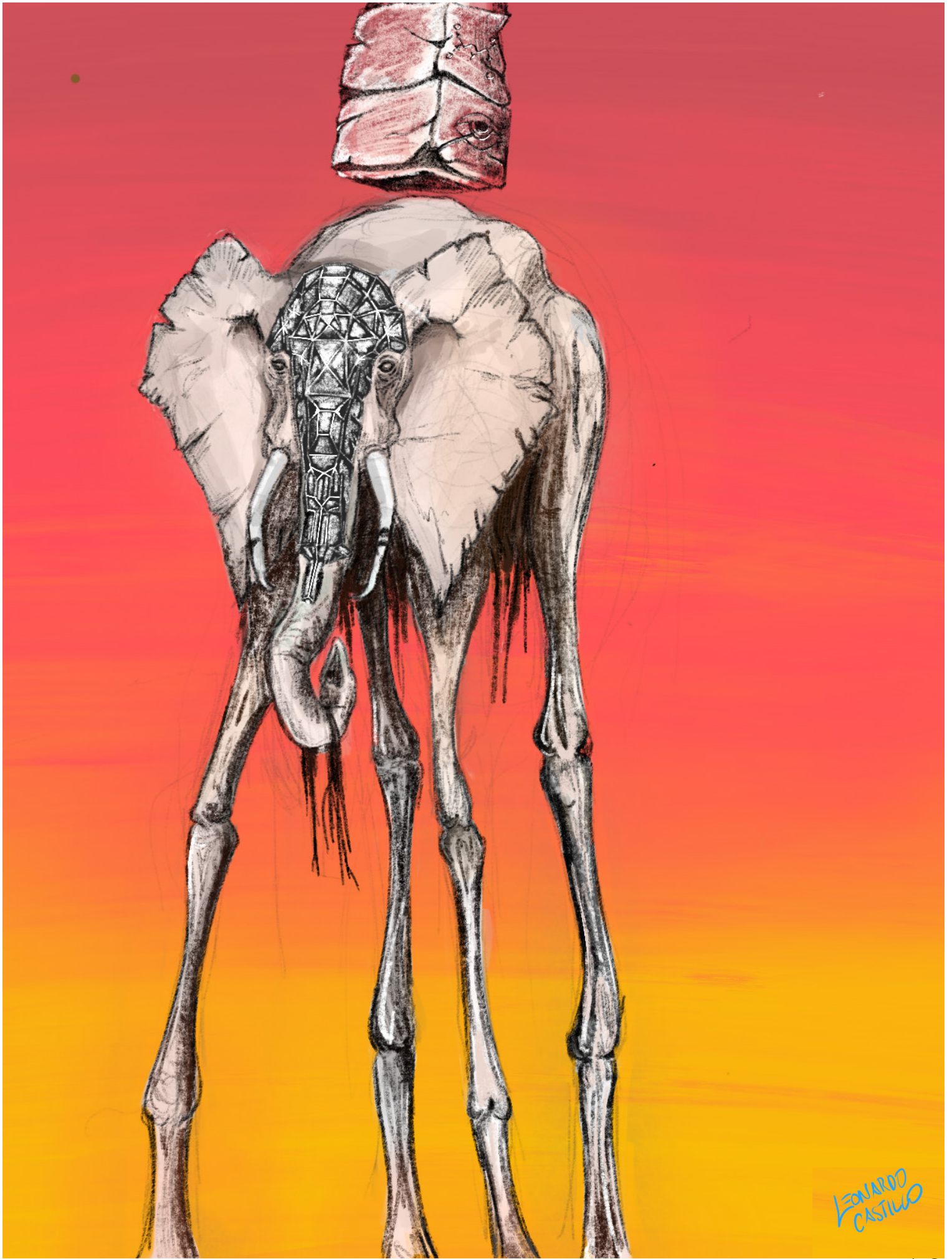
"To be Hispanic is to be proud of your roots. Proud to be brown. Proud of being from an immigrant background. Represent it whenever you can, but not only represent it but defend it. You're allowed to stand up for immigrants despite the backlash. Also, loving yourself and loving your community. I feel like Hispanics are family-based, so I feel like we should embrace that to continue helping our community, because if it's not us, then who will?"

To answer my own questions I like to put in these words: Being a first-generation Salvadoran-American has a lot to do with how I see myself. Yes, I do think

that Hispanics are portrayed in misleading ways but then again which ethnic group is not? I know that this whole immigration issue is no simple task and if I had no connection to this community of immigrants maybe my ideology would be different, but, it's not. Nevertheless, I do feel welcomed by parts of the country; some more than others but not by everyone.

I have seen my parents struggle to give me what I need, and at times, what I want. Knowing that my parents have gone far and beyond to make my life easier provides me with this burden of doing life right by getting a stable job and having attainable, but realistic, goals. I am the lucky few for having the proper documentation, for having parents who were TSP recipients but later obtained citizenship, and not having to worry about what's going to happen in the following months. However, I can't say the same for my cousins, aunts, uncles, and anybody else who is affected.

I just know one thing for certain, now more than ever is the time to represent my culture. Now more than ever is the time to represent all of our cultures. Not only if you are Hispanic, but if you're African, Asian, Middle Eastern, or Latino don't ever stop representing want makes you, you. Because if it's not you, then, who will it be?



LEONARDO
CASTILLO

A vintage car is partially visible on the right side of the image, with its body and window frame in focus. The background is a dense forest of green trees, heavily blurred to create a bokeh effect of light spots. The overall scene is bright and natural.

Vintage Cars in Germany

Photos and Story By Michaela Steil





Michael Fröhlich has been many things in his life: a fashion designer, band member and race car driver. Currently he has settled on running his luxury car dealership in Neanderthal, Germany. But beneath this professional exterior is a eccentric man, one who has invested in highly sought after vintage cars and decided to put them in his backyard to watch them decay.

Starting in 1984, Fröhlich began collecting luxury cars from 1950, his birth year, and placed them to rot in a forest next to his house. The collection, now complete, is open to the public to view, explore and photograph upon permission from the man himself.

The property is located right off of a busy road and would be easy to miss if it weren't for the rotting firetruck at the entrance. The property blends in quite well with the surrounding mountainous terrain, and besides the entrance, none of the other cars are visible. Not until the gate is opened and you enter the property can you see the cars that line his driveway and lead to the rest of the park and his home.

His personal house is most accurately described as an oversized cottage. It is quaint, colorful and lively-- a huge contrast compared to the rusting hunks of metal he is known for. The disparity between the two sides of his property is perhaps the best metaphor for the man himself: a bit contradictory, but more than anything, extremely interesting. He is a man whose livelihood is based on cars and has an immaculate home, but yet he has a collection of rusted, falling apart cars littered throughout his garden.

His Autoskulpturenpark ("car sculpture park") has been open for 18 years. According to Fröhlich, the cars are more than just art; they are a statement. By allowing these cars to be overtaken by nature he hopes to embody the idea that nature is stronger than man-made work, which is symbolized by the cars.

“We demonize cars, but in 100 years nothing will be left,” says Fröhlich in regards to the automobiles. “We watch as all the seasons and animals tear apart what once was the mighty Rolls Royce.”

The first car he accumulated for his collection is also his favorite — a white 1950 Jaguar XK120 adorned with the number 278 on the hood and side doors. The same model in working condition can be sold for up to \$190,000. Fröhlich himself used the car during his three-year stint as a racecar driver and even used it to win the 1984 Neanderthal Grand Prix.

Upon his victory, Fröhlich was reluctant to get rid of the car. “I looked at it and said, ‘This is my brother,’” recalled Fröhlich. “It is a piece of my personality.”

With his Jaguar to start off the collection, he began to gather cars and other motorized vehicles across the globe, from England, America, France, Italy and more. By the time he was celebrating his 50th birthday in 2000, Fröhlich had all of his “brothers” there to celebrate with him, as well as 1,000 guests, including local media.

Despite the initial local coverage, his park is not well known among his fellow Germans. When asking some of the Neanderthaler people, most did not even know of his park, and if they did, had not visited. A fact Fröhlich does not seem to care too much about-- he seems to care more about the message of environmentalism rather than publicizing his old cars.

Now, 18 years later, Fröhlich drives an old American police car replica to his dealership while his wife runs the park and allows visitors to enter. His luxury car dealership is also known as Fantastische Fahrzeuge in German, which translates to “Fantastic Cars” in English.

Contrary to the stereotypical car lover, Fröhlich is also extremely passionate about the environment. When first creating his park, he approached the local water department and informed them of his plans.

“It was much like a wedding,” recalls Fröhlich. “Complain now, or forever hold your peace.”

Fröhlich ensured that he took the proper precautions as well, otherwise his intended statement would not explicitly get his point across. At heart, Fröhlich is an environmentalist.

Prior to even setting the cars out, Fröhlich made sure to remove any part of the car that could potentially seep into the ground and water. At the time of acquirement, many of the cars were still in driving condition, but now, none of the cars have a complete motor in them. They either have no motor or only parts of one. “You can be crazy and have hobbies and care for the environment,” says Fröhlich.

Currently, if anyone wishes to visit the park themselves, they must visit Fröhlich’s website and get directly in contact with him. Without a response or permission, going onto his property is trespassing.

In the past three years there has been an increase in visitors and while his wife controls entry, patrons are more than welcome to approach the man himself should they see him while observing all these fantastic metal beasts that are slowly being torn apart by nature.



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Fröhlich was reluctant
to get rid of the car.***



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