

THE AKADEMEIA POST

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Editor's note

In her recent book, *Orwell's Roses*, Rebecca Solnit explores the life of writer George Orwell. She reminds us that, "this man most famous for his prescient scrutiny of totalitarianism and propaganda, for facing unpleasant facts, for a spare prose style and an unyielding political vision, had planted roses." How does investing in beauty and seemingly unquantifiable activities fit into a life of a person who cares for justice, truth, and human rights? In a time when we observe firsthand the use of ideology as a shield against the complexities of human existence and as a tool to control private and personal life, focusing on the particular aspects of life and pursuing independence of thought, joy, and beauty become acts of resistance.

Perhaps this is what we aim to do in this issue - to celebrate independent ideas, moments in our community's life, and its intricacies. The vibrancy of this resistance is potent. Flip (or scroll) through the pages and see our broad engagement with issues such as climate change, involvement in charity projects, or learning to put together a conference. Our journalists explore what entertains us and how we make decisions, and showcase the poetry and art flourishing among our students. When I browse this issue, I see brave young minds planting roses, and I am hopeful.

Read and belong,
Sonia Blank



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HELP FOR UKRAINE



PAH



Red Cross

As seen above, Akademeia is extensively engaged in helping Ukraine to get through the current situation. From individual students involved to initiatives from teachers, parents, students, and the student council, you can all help. Fundraisers, collection of foods, clothes, and other supplies. Activities organized by the school. Lessons where we, as students, have the opportunity to teach. We notice immense participation from all of you, and, once again, encourage you to help. You can make a difference, and just because you can't do everything doesn't mean you can't do something.

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ART FROM UKRAINE

Борис Гуменюк - Коли чистиш зброю

Коли чистиш зброю
Коли щодня чистиш зброю
Розтираєш її духмяними оліями
Затуляєш її собою а сам мокнеш на дощі
Пеленаєш її як малу дитину
Хоча досі ти не пеленав дитину
Тобі лише 19 і ані дитини ані дружини
у тебе немає
Ти ріднишся з нею зі своєю зброєю
і стаєте ви суть одно

Коли копаєш землю
Коли щодня копаєш окоп чи траншею
Пригорщами вигрібаєш
цю дорогу й ненависну землю
Кожна друга пригорща засипається тобі в душу

Вона скрипить у тебе на зубах
Ти ламаєш до неї нігті
Зрештою – у тебе немає і ніколи не буде іншої
Ти залазиш у неї як в лоно матері
Тобі в ній тепло й затишно
Ти раніше ніколи не відчував її так близько
як зараз
І стаєте ви суть одно

Коли ти стріляєш Навіть
коли вночі і ти не бачиш обличчя ворога
Навіть коли ніч ховає ворога від тебе, а тебе від ворога
І обіймає кожного з вас, як свою
Ти пахнеш порохом
Твої руки, обличчя, волосся, одяг, взуття
— Скільки не мий — порохом пахне
Війною пахне
Війною пахнеш
Ти і війна одне ціле.

Borys Humenyuk - When you clean your weapon

When you clean your weapon
When time and again, you clean your weapon
When you rub strong-smelling oils into your weapon
And shield it from the rain with your own body
When you swaddle it like a baby
Even though you've never swaddled a baby before —
You're only nineteen, no baby, no wife —
The weapon becomes your only kin
You and the weapon are one.

When you dig trench after trench
When you dig this precious this hateful earth by handfuls
Every other handful reaches your soul
You grind this earth between your teeth
You don't, you never will have another
You climb into the earth like into your mother's womb

You are warm and snug
You've never felt this close to anyone before
You and earth are one.

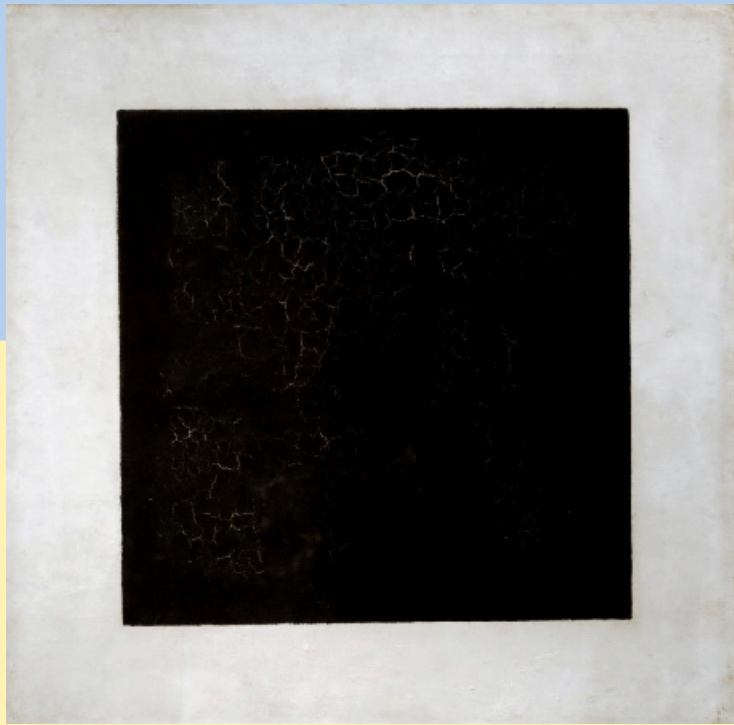
When you shoot
Even when it's at night and you don't see the enemy's face
Even when night hides the enemy from you and you from the enemy
And embraces each of you as her own
You smell like gunpowder
Your hands, face, hair, clothing, shoes —
No matter how much you wash them — smell of gunpowder
They smell of war
You smell of war
You and war are one.

Translated from Ukrainian by Oksana Maksymchuk and Max Rosochinsky

ART FROM UKRAINE

Kazimir Malevich is a figure of global renown. Though traditionally celebrated as a Russian artist, he was born in Kyiv where he remained until the age of 18 and later became a professor at Kyiv's Art Academy. He was highly influenced by Ukrainian folk culture as well as eagerly wrote letters in the Ukrainian language. He is one of the only Ukrainian artists whose works touched upon the Holodomor of 1932-33 (in which from 4 to 10 million Ukrainians were killed) as well as one of the ones "cleaned" by the Stalinist regime in the 1930s alongside Lev Kramarenko, Eugene Sagaidachny Theodore Krichevsky, and Michael Boychuk.

To this day, his 'Supreme' contributions to the development of abstract art affect audiences with their audacious purity. His works serve as reminders of artists' direct engagement with their political contexts but also the significance of their origins and identities which must be understood, celebrated, remembered.



Kazimir Malevich (1915),
The Black Square, oil on linen



Kazimir Malevich (1932),
Peasants, oil on canvas

Change in our mindset: Climate Change

Maria Rutkowska



As far back as I can remember, my dad would tell me stories about what winters were like when he was my age. He would tell me about swift and heavy snowfalls, so heavy, in fact, schools would close for the day. He would tell me about ice skating rings, made by pouring water on the school football pitch in sub-zero temperatures - you could skate until late March. 40 years later, our winter wonderlands are rather muddy, with river-ponds on each side of the pavement. We accept these drastic weather changes as they come, without considering that they may be a coincidence, but a scientifically proven fact - global warming.

Mr. Marcin Popkiewicz, a physicist, who presented a seminar on Climate Change: Facts and Myths. His seminar opened with a simple but profoundly impactful question: do you believe in global warming?

This set the tone for the rest of the information-dense (and humorous) seminar. Mr. Popkiewicz began by challenging the fundamental claims of climate change deniers, as well as the very notion of 'believing' in something that, in his words, is not a question of faith.

Mr. Popkiewicz presented a range of alarming visuals and statistics, including extensive climate forecasts for the coming decades. Perhaps the most memorable conclusion was delivered as a metaphor. Mr. Popkiewicz compared the current situation to an overflowing bath; in his words, it would not be enough to turn the tap down. We must turn it off completely.

The situation may seem dire, but, according to Mr. Popkiewicz, it is not hopeless. He highlights the importance of transition to a zero-carbon economy soon, before it is too late. So, will we ever ice skate on a school football pitch? The answer may be uncertain, but let's not lose hope just yet.

Personal Development Scheme - Animal Welfare

Jakub Rudnicki, Aleksandra Trawkowska and Julianna Podoba



100 million. That is the collective number of animals that have been exploited for the purpose of clinical and industrial animal testing in the year of 2021 alone. As part of animal testing, animals are most frequently bought from auctions and taken from slaughterhouses moments before they are killed. They are then kept in inhumane conditions and used by companies "to provide data that they can use to defend themselves when they are sued by injured consumers". As remorseless as it is, animal testing has been around since the 17th century.

The "Animal Welfare" PDS group aims to aid animals and inform communities of the harm done to species and how they can help. Firstly, our goal was to educate ourselves on different topics.

Furthermore, our PDS group organised a fundraiser for a dog shelter in the outskirts of Warsaw. We used the money from the fundraiser to buy supplies and food, to help the dogs there, and improve their enclosures. From the early morning, until late in the afternoon, the group worked for hours rebuilding parts of the dogs' enclosures and having fun with them. We managed to attach door flaps to trap more warmth in their homes during the winter, change the straw in their kennels, and cleaned their habitat.

As enjoyable as the experience seemed, we discovered the true nature of dogs that have been abandoned and maltreated by their owners and shone light on the cruel and not-talked-about nature of dog breeding.

But perhaps, we learned even more about the true nature of human beings.



Mind over Matter: 21st Century Minds Conference

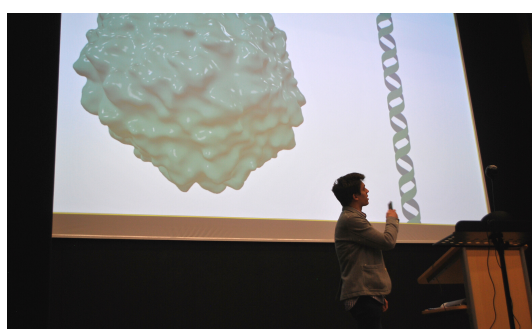
Maria Rutkowska

Since the beginning of November, one of the 5th form PDS team has been working on organising a scientific conference. The goal of the conference was for it to be run by high school students and be aimed at a high school student audience. This meant that the students themselves contacted the speakers, organised the sponsorship and run the whole event. The event included Akademeia High School A-level students as speakers, as well as 3 external ones: Profesor Beata Lipska, Ms Aleksandra Bartosik and Mr Wojciech Galej.

Being part of this Personal Development Scheme, I can say that it has been a learning experience. I have thoroughly enjoyed the whole process. Everything from organising the speakers to running the whole event on February 19th 2022. Our team is planning on posting the conference online, on YouTube, for others to enjoy. Be sure to check it



Team members from left to right, Zuzanna M., . Maria R. Victoria S., Maya K-F., Gabriela L., Maria R-H., Ada Ś., Ester R., Gabriel M., Mr Tomasz Cebo





AHSe - A Heartfelt School Event

Paulina Gąsiorowska

On February 2nd, I had the *honour* of talking to Mary Stabińska (Year 13) - the organiser of AHSe (*Art Honouring Shared Experiences*), an exhibition aiming to feature the artistic ways in which our community has faced the issues posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. As the interview occurred two weeks before the event, it presents you with an intimate glimpse into Mary's intentions, reflections, and expectations for the exhibition, hence allowing you to compare it with how it actually transpired.

Paulina Gąsiorowska (PG): Firstly, where did the idea come from?

Mary Stabińska (MS): I was reflecting, as one does, after New Years' Eve, which I spent with my family. There was a lot of time for reflection about how busy the year has been for all of us and how many things changed. I also knew the same was true for my friends - there were these shared hardships we all had to go through. And, you know, for me as a very creative person, the first thing I thought of was painting or writing a poem because it's like a natural thing, a repetition of something that happens in your life. And then I was like: why not open it up to everyone? It's a cool thing, so I just thought it'd be fun to share it with my friends and other people at school. So, yeah, that's how the idea was born.

PG: What are your expectations for the exhibition?

MS: I just hope to spark conversation, to have this space for discourse about what this year taught us and... I don't want to say 'draw lessons' because that just sounds like unnecessarily trying to make things complicated. I really just want to create a space and hope we'll be able to have a physical exhibition that feels safe and aware and considerate of the things that made it the way it is. I just hope we have fun with it and many people decide to join and share their experiences.

PG: What do you think Akademeia students have to offer in terms of the 'pandemic experience'?

MS: I think the most we have to offer is in terms of impact on academia that COVID had, like for 6th Form, who is really deep into the application process which was very hard for me and my friends. I just want us not to feel alone in that process, especially since I, starting it in Y11 or Y12, felt like it because not many people talked about it. But also, for younger years who are not thinking about university yet, the pandemic has had a great impact on their social life. Akademeia is already a dispersed space - we all have our classes in very small groups, we all write A-Levels with different people, so it's not easy to have that one stable friend group. And so, at least from what I've noticed, those shared experiences are how we build relationships and from that experience of school life we can bring a lot to this project.

PG: Do you think this will be an expressive experience only or will it also have a remedial role in the students' lives?

MS: I sure hope so. We have very little influence over the way the COVID reality looks like. I sure hope new friendships or conversations will be sparked, maybe two people going through a similar family situation, similar education experience exchange advice and learn something from it, take that advice from someone and interpret it into their own path. I think that'd be very valuable because we all have a lot to give and share. So, yeah, it's definitely going to help.

PG: Will you be contributing personally?

MS: Yeah, I hope so. I've pieces I'd like to put out but if there're too many, I won't put mine up. **I'm creating the space; I won't monopolise it.**



Shelf life

Thea Szymanska

Throughout most of human history, books were rare. Not only were they difficult to produce and acquire, only a select few were literate and had access to the beauty and abundance of information that books could offer. These days, information is more accessible than ever. People all over the world have access to and can comprehend written texts; yet still, we keep hearing frightening accounts of people neglecting reading, rejecting the aesthetic dimensions of literature in favour of more digestible media. Why is that, and how do we fix it? How is the Akademeia bookshelf connected with this problem? Here to answer these questions is Mrs Bella Szala, a lifelong book lover, Head of the English Department, and the founder of the Akademeia Bookshelf Initiative.

Thea Szymanska (TS) : How was the Akademeia bookshelf created?

Bella Szala (BS) : We wanted to have something original, something visible for the community to share their passion and favourites regarding books. It came up two weeks before the start of the school year so we had plenty of time to work on the idea.

TS: What is your opinion about people claiming they don't enjoy reading?

BS: Well, frankly speaking, I disagree with that statement. There are no people that don't enjoy reading, there are people that haven't found the right type of books for them. Moreover, I believe that the place where you read is also vital in order to enjoy reading. It matters that it is a cozy place where you can grab a cup of coffee/tea and dive into the wonderful book to escape to another realm.

TS: Everybody knows you are a fan of paper books, why would you recommend them over digital versions?

BS: Personally, I love the smell of the paper in books as well as the feeling of the soft paper in my hands. I am aware that certain people might not share my passion towards paper books and I totally understand that.

TS: Are there any plans or initiatives planned regarding the Akademeia bookshelf?

BS: Yes, I'm glad you asked. We plan to organize book buying trips where students will be able to choose books and those books will be added to the bookshelf.

TS: Do you want to add anything from yourself to the readers?

BS: Yes, guys, I know some of you might think you don't enjoy books. In life you are going to encounter lots of things you don't enjoy. You, yes you. Step out of your comfort zone. Go, explore, fall, rise again and repeat.

The Akademeia Post team would like to thank Mrs Szala for her time and her contribution to this issue.



The Akademeian dilemma of choosing a pathway

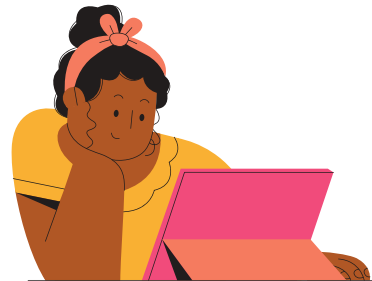
- a sarcastic guide about how not to make decisions.

Lubaba Shaki

Rumor has it that the Year 10s will be (preliminarily) choosing their academic pathways this March (gasp). If you're one of them unfortunate ones and are struggling to decide, this article is for you. But if you are not struggling and have already decided... well, denial is the first stage of grief.

With the intention of preparing students to make important decisions and guiding them to achieve their full potential, AHS asks students to choose between several intricately crafted academic pathways by the end of Year 10. The process ultimately induces a spectrum of feelings among students. Many know what they want, confident in their choices. Many are still unsure, conflicted on the options provided... and rightfully so.

I don't think I have to emphasize the significance of choosing the correct pathway...The course of your life is about to be determined by the excruciating and inevitable choice made by your 14-year-old self. A choice dictating the subjects your future will be focused on along with the required core ones (condolences to those hoping to get rid of math altogether. That's not happening). A choice that raises a lot of questions. What about those who are content with the package but just don't love that one subject? What about those who want subjects not included in the package? As much as there are people who are decisive and know what they want, there are also people who are unsure, need more time, or are, quite frankly, clueless. One thing we can be sure of is that many will be modifying the courses to their will.



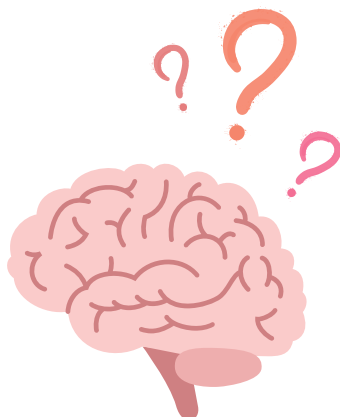
This, however, will require numerous head-spinning, gut-wrenching, painful discussions with mentors and parents. The only way to get through them is to make sure you sound truly delighted even as your soul is dying inside.

It is recommended to make a pros-and-cons list for your pathway of choice. But there's always the risk that one might be color blind to the red flags of the soc-sci pathway. Some might even think that physics is a good choice (it really isn't).

Now, perhaps you have been talking to your more experienced peers, hoping they could shed some light on the dilemma. It's crucial at this point to better understand and analyze your options (which for some may not be enough, and for some way too many). I'm simply asking you not to make your choices based on who you are and what you love, but to choose the option that will disappoint your parents the least. Are you to choose with your head or heart? The answer is simple: I don't know. Google it.

One thing I do know is that this is NOT the time to chill. Stress yourself out as much as you can, because this will direct the trajectory of your life. Let your mind wreak havoc, because this is, in fact, a life-or-death situation.

Want some actual advice? Don't overthink the future. It doesn't help. Trust me, I know. Instead, I recommend dwelling on the past. That's a much better use of your time.





Food For Thought

Aleksander Korobowicz

We know Akademeia students are hungry for knowledge, but in order to develop our brains further, we need to eat nutritious meals.

Thanks to the efforts of our amazing cafeteria staff, we don't have to worry as whether we want to enjoy a nutritious vegetarian lunch or just need a quick breakfast, they are always on hand. Their smiles and friendly welcome make not only our day but our time at Akademeia so much more rewarding. In return, we as students aren't afraid to say "Hello" or to ask about the cooks' day which not only makes for a comfortable time but also allows for building positive relationships with the school staff!

Recently, I had the pleasure of sitting down with Ms. Izabela Nikiel, a member of the kitchen staff, to look at the situation from her team's perspective:

Aleks Korobowicz (AK): What motivates you to get up so early in the morning to cook many meals for all the teens?

Ms. Izabela Nikiel (IN): It's most importantly our passion, as each of us have many years of experience in this field, and basically every member of the team was with AHS since the very beginning. We also love to talk to students who share their energy and joy, and are open for short conversations when serving lunch, and that's also what gives us motivation.

(AK): What makes Akademeia different from other schools in terms of the kitchen?

(IN): We have our own way of cooking. We always check every product we buy to make sure there are no unnecessary add-ons, instead, we try to use as little frozen foods as possible, and our suppliers are verified so we always know what we cook for our students. During my 15 years of experience, I saw what many students eat in schools, and I knew that this kitchen must be different, with a healthier approach.

(AK): Does working in a smaller environment help you communicate with the team and make your time in this school more pleasant?

(IN): All the cooks have experience from around the world, and after working in many well known restaurants, we quickly learned to communicate without using words. We all enjoy working together, and it has a positive affect on the community in school.

(AK): Is there anything the team would love to see students do to help improve the kitchen?

(IN): It would be great to see some form of box or a board where the students can leave a note saying what they would love to see for lunch, we are open minded and it would be lovely to see students engage more with the cooking.

In summary, it's the small but genuine things that mattebecause of how much heart and passion is put into our food every single day. That's what makes the school canteen great, and that's exactly what our wonderful kitchen team provides. Therefore, it's important we thank them for every meal and recognise their efforts.



Quantity Over Quality

Why are Netflix Original movies getting progressively worse?

Jagna Schmude

I am not whatsoever qualified as a movie critic but perhaps because of the availability of various movies on many platforms, we all have been given the opportunity to become one. After watching Netflix Original *The Royal Treatment* with my sister as we both screamed in agony and of second-hand embarrassment every two minutes, it was impossible not to wonder why someone gave this movie a green light. It made me wonder: is it truly profitable for Netflix to produce those vast amounts of low-quality content?

Is it truly profitable for Netflix to produce those vast amounts of low-quality content? The release of the first instalment of *The Kissing Booth*, and then *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (not the finest cinematic piece of art but considered by many to be bearable and at least watchable) marked its beginning. Alongside a couple of well-written, higher-budget series, a wave of insufferable hallmark movies and teenage romantic clichés kept getting more common among the plethora of Netflix Originals.

My subjective observations can also be supported by an official audience census. Let's take a look at the already mentioned *The Kissing Booth* trilogy. The 2018 version scored 55% on the Rotten Tomatoes' Audience Score. However, its second instalment broadcast in 2020 scored only 39%, and the final one from 2021 – only 17%. As one critic concluded, "there's less of the original's overt sexism, but Netflix's most-watched romcom series is as odious as ever." The same happened with the second most popular trilogy among teenagers, *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, with the first instalment reaching an impressive 85% Audience Score. The sequel, unfortunately, managed to score only 40%.

NETFLIX

The sequel, unfortunately, managed to score only 40%. Yet the movies are still getting a viewership, even if they are downright awful. One can only wonder why that is the case. Surprisingly, Netflix rejects the idea that the preferences of the audiences are based on gender and age. However, the worse quality content seems to be made just for a stereotypical Netflix user – a female, 80% possibility between the age of 18 and 34, and 67% chance of having no bachelor's degree. Those statistics evoke a high school girl, who, since she does not work, can dedicate the number of hours to watch all the original teenage clichés for Netflix to gain profit.

Still, the key also lies in diversifying the content. The Netflix algorithm is estimated to be worth \$1 billion. Anyone can find something for themselves, from horror movies, through TikTok reality shows to animated stories. Yet even if the low-budget clichés are not our cup of tea, many would fall into the trap of clicking on one of those low-budget movies, because it "sounds" or "looks" good. Is it then our own fault that Netflix keeps producing low-quality content? We click, it counts towards the viewership. Even if we don't enjoy it, Netflix thinks we do – or at least gets the profit it desires. We click, they deliver. And so, the vicious cycle of movies not wanted by many continues.

Netflix's strategy model of releasing thousands of low-budget and a few well-written original pieces seems to be working for now. Hopefully, the balance will remain between Netflix Original's cheap films and award-winning series. Otherwise, the only movie I am going to be watching with my sister during our next movie night will be yet another story of a poor girl who fell in love with a prince on a white horse.

Spidey Spectacle in Serious Need of Cobweb Removal

Zofia Jastrun

Four teenage girls in a dark cinema room watching the much-anticipated cinematic masterpiece – *Spider-Man: No Way Home*. One crying her eyes out, another watching the movie for the second time and constantly urging the rest to pay attention because they are about to miss a ‘great scene,’ the last two exchanging suggestive glances and frowning upon the absurdity of the script.

Take your guesses as to which of the two were engaged Marvel fans, caught up in the depths of its super-heroic universe, and which have seen a maximum of three of the movies in no particular order.

As MJ, Peter Parker’s girlfriend says, “You should expect to be disappointed, that way you’re never disappointed.” Her attitude perfectly mirrored my own approach going into the cinema.

While watching the movie, I began to wonder how deep into the Marvel universe you have to be to appreciate the haywire world of The Avengers. Is it even possible to enjoy the movies knowing neither prior storylines nor the multum of characters of characters reappearing on-screen to everyone’s delight? I assume it is, since my mom, even less of a marvel fan than myself, did in fact like it. Nevertheless, I left the cinema feeling like I really missed the ‘greatness’ of the movie, wondering whether it was me or Spider-Man who was the issue, whether it was the film’s predictability and that all key issues were completely avoidable, or my own marvel-ignorance that stopped me from fully comprehending its depth. Although this was a superhero movie meant for children, it still felt extremely shallow. Sitting in the cinema, I felt like the apparently obsolete idea of having a clear plot was abandoned in favour of forcing in as many old characters as possible to exploit the box office’s potential to the fullest.



Perhaps it was the perspective of an outsider from the marvel universe that allowed me to attribute the shortcomings of the script with greater care, since my attention wasn’t diverted by the excitement of seeing Tobey Maguire or Andrew Garfield. My first issue with the script was how it merely brushed through the surface of some major plot points. The fact that Spider-Man’s identity got revealed and charges against him were brought was resolved in a matter of minutes, the only consequence being that Peter and his friends got rejected from MIT. For me, this would have made for a far more interesting story than the opening of the multiverse. But then again, this might simply be my lack of marvel-enthusiasm speaking.



The second thing that bothered me was how the storyline which *was* pursued – was pursued badly. The way the doors to the alternative universes came to be opened was almost absurd – Peter Parker dashingly risking the fate of the world just to help his friends get into college. The later events were as unlikely. Spidey refusing to send the villains back to their universes of origin (where death awaits) and nobly deciding to ‘fix’ them, ignoring the fact that there is a 100% chance of collateral damage in the form of innocent civilians – in this case [spoiler alert!] Aunt May. And while Peter Parker has always been known for his naivety, this is just a step too far, making the whole plot seem not authentic and, to put it frankly, cheap.

So, what happened to the movie? At least from the perspective of someone completely and utterly outside of the MCU, the plot gave way to a spectacle. There was more focus on the shallow thrill of universes colliding and seeing friendly faces than on actually creating a believable and reasonable storyline.

The solution might be, from time to time, to produce an original movie instead of endlessly trying to blow the dust of old franchises. Definitely a lesson for the Reboot and Remake obsessed world of Hollywood.

Star-Struck: Why does astrology influence people's lives?

Julianna Podoba

"I'm a Virgo"

"That explains a lot"

I say: "Nonsense"

I have often experienced people justifying situations, their relationships and even their behaviour with Astrology, and the question I would like to ask is why do people believe in the stars dictating their fate?

There are several reasons people choose to 'believe' in Astrology. You might use it as a hobby, just as something to have fun with and explore. Spending your time reading horoscopes, getting to know the characteristics of each zodiac sign and being able to 'understand' yourself better sounds fun! You are a Libra. Google says, you are charming and beautiful. Nice! But is this an effective way to get to know yourself?

A danger might be that people start associating others solely by their zodiac signs; influenced by their experiences with one or a few people of that star sign judging that someone might be a bad person just because of their birth date. Instagram posts, quizzes, TikToks all provide advice; "What sign am I least compatible with?" "What sign is the worst?" This leads to stereotypes, zodiac signs, and how they have developed into a trend, limit people's connections with each other basing one's involvement with others on what month they were born in. It gives astrology a justification for anything you do or anything that happens: "Everything happens for a reason." "They're just like that because they're a Scorpio." "I'm an Aries and he's a Capricorn, we fight because we're not compatible."

Some people interested in astrology find themselves communicating and discussing it with others, which gives them a sense of belonging in a certain community, but is it reliable? Absolutely not.

Is it a clever way to defend yourself when you are in the wrong and rationalize situations that are irrational and unexplainable? Probably yes.

Being a person not that interested in astrology, only recently I decided to get into it and research the characteristics of my zodiac sign. Of course, I found myself agreeing with the description; "Self-sufficient, ambitious, perfectionist, realistic."

I guess I might be a real Virgo.

Astrology is not about predicting concrete events, it is not about rationalizing situations in our lives. Researching the psychological reasons as to why we believe in zodiac signs and horoscopes, I came across the Barnum effect where people writing horoscopes give characteristics that others interpret in a way that is 'personal' to them as individuals. They believe it is highly exact, this usually happens when seeing a 'good' personality trait that we, no matter if it is a hundred percent true, are able to find in ourselves.

Another phenomenon we do not realize our brain does is confirmation bias, we unconsciously want to find evidence and truth within every piece of information given to us and when noticing the truth, we tend to find the source more reliable as well as omit those less accurate.

Lastly, even though there is no way that the stars under which an individual was born affect their brain it can later affect their personality by choice. We control how we develop and what we behave like. When reading a source, supposedly talking about 'us,' that we find reliable and we believe in, it might happen that we do not question what is said and adjust with the given personality traits.

In conclusion. Explore astrology with care. Don't get too into it.



Because We Could Stop For Verse

Paulina Gąsiorowska

Thanks to Poetry Club, we explore poetry that stretches wide and deep, verse that makes us stop and think and share, lyric that digs and digs (and digs) into the very corners of our souls. We read and write together, encounter and compare poems linked by author or theme or form, present to each other works of specific poets, some of whom occasionally turn out to be... us.

The passion of discourse, plot twists and turns, cliffhangers and resolutions of those sessions could not possibly be harnessed in a single piece of prose like this one. You must hence satiate yourself with the following sneak peek... or join us.

...

In January, the debut poetry collection of Kate Baer (a New York Times bestseller) *What Kind of Woman?* acquainted our group with the mainstream poetical landscape. Likened by the poetess herself to an "angry friend", it provoked in us reflection and criticism, reflection about criticism and criticism of reflection.

...

2020 - the first poem we discussed - polarised us. It touched upon topics of celebrity culture and pandemic nihilism, of 'complaining about the price of coffee/as if it isn't becoming extinct' and 'two men running for office/it doesn't matter who they've ruined'. Whether in form or moral, these sounded unfashionable, almost banal. As if they weren't the central forces of cultural discourse less than two years ago. As if their potentiality of causing global generational trauma hadn't already been realised to its fullest. We reckoned - society's become acquainted and perhaps bored.

There was, however, an image that captured our attention: 'would it be so wrong if we cut off/every billionaire at the knees'. Violent, provocative, refreshing. We figured, perhaps we just need new modes of expression about

worldly issues - make them important and trendy and fresh again, make them appeal to our increasingly accelerating tastes for 'shock value'. Otherwise, we may as well blame all our problems on the cursed number that is 2020.

...

The next poem we encountered was *Things Men Say To Me*. On a neighbouring page, yet from a distinct (though not distant) field. A composition of throwaway remarks so raw they seem unreal. A patchwork of condescension and casual misogyny. A piece about men but not for men. At least not from the outset.

The poem draws a simple yet subtle dichotomy between the silent 'women writer' and the man - an older speaker sharing 'Fun facts!' like 'I knew your mother before you were born'. Despite societal superiority, his words reveal insecurity: 'Tell me why you're so mad about men'. He can't grasp the concept of woman, limited only to his idea of one - 'Let me/tell you all the ways I see a girl like you.' His shift between asking for explanation of her 'angle' and sharing his own 'story' and 'opinion' is disturbingly (though not unsurprisingly) swift. We realised, perhaps some attitudes have lingered too long in our culture. Conversely to our previous reflections, perhaps it's still not quick enough.

...

What Kind of Woman? We may never know. But this was just the beginning, the debut...

Pieces Read:

- Kate Baer - *What Kind of Woman* (2020; *Things Men Say to Me*)

Pieces RECd:

- John Ashbery - *Farm Implements and Rutabagas in a Landscape* (poetry)
- Rebecca Solnit - *Men Explains Things to Me* (prose)
- Stevie Nicks - *Kind of Woman* (music)



POETRY CLUB: SO THEN, STOP FOR VERSE.

untitled (RECOVERY)
anonymous

I had been broken into a thousand pieces
Every single part of me
Had been picked apart
Thrown onto a stack and lit on fire

Even the carefully threaded shells
Had eventually been shattered
With simple words spoken by simple minds
Yet dripping in venom

I felt no warmth in the world
Except for the times I set it on fire
Except for the times I fought back
The times I showed my true desire

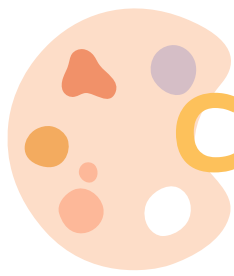
All I wanted was to be loved.
Because I had lived my life believing
To be loved by someone else
Is equal to loving yourself.

I had been broken into a thousand pieces
Now they spit at me when they see the way
I pieced
Myself
Back
Together.

The venom from their words is my crown
The fire from their minds is my sceptre
If I became evil in their world
Then who are the people that shaped me?

I had been broken into a thousand pieces
I had been broken down
I had been;
Broken.

Was I ever the villain?
Or did you just want me to be?



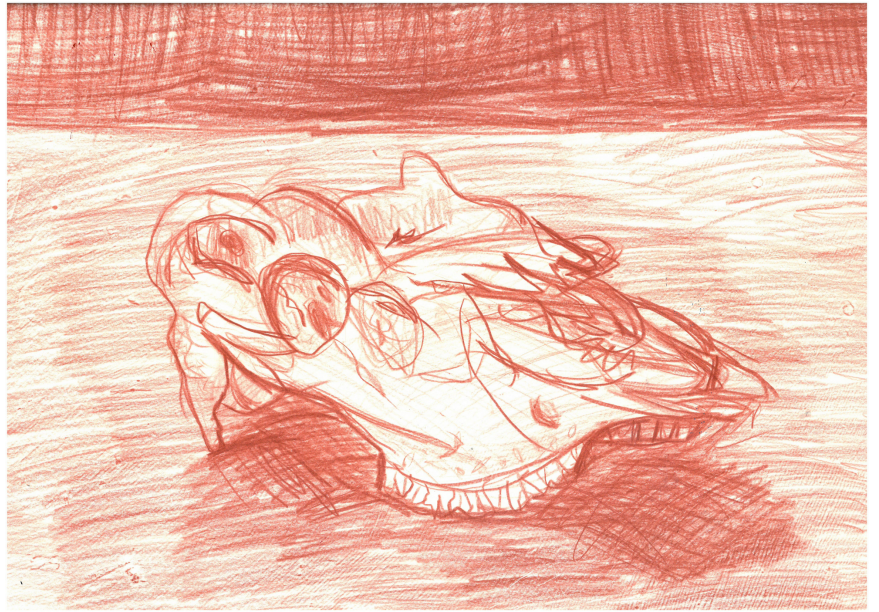
Creative Corner

The art department is starting a new initiative: art of the month! The pieces will be displayed in the hallways and the canteen. We hope you will take a moment to pause and reflect on your peers' work. For your convenience, we collected the chosen pieces from last month here. They are also displayed on our covers! Enjoy!

Hues

anonymous

I see
myself at a distance
in a cloud
of moments of various
hues
dynamically dancing
in a ritual commemorating
their place
in this painting
the brush I hold in my
lifted hand drips



Zlata Rutskaya, Y11



Michalina Mościcka, Y11



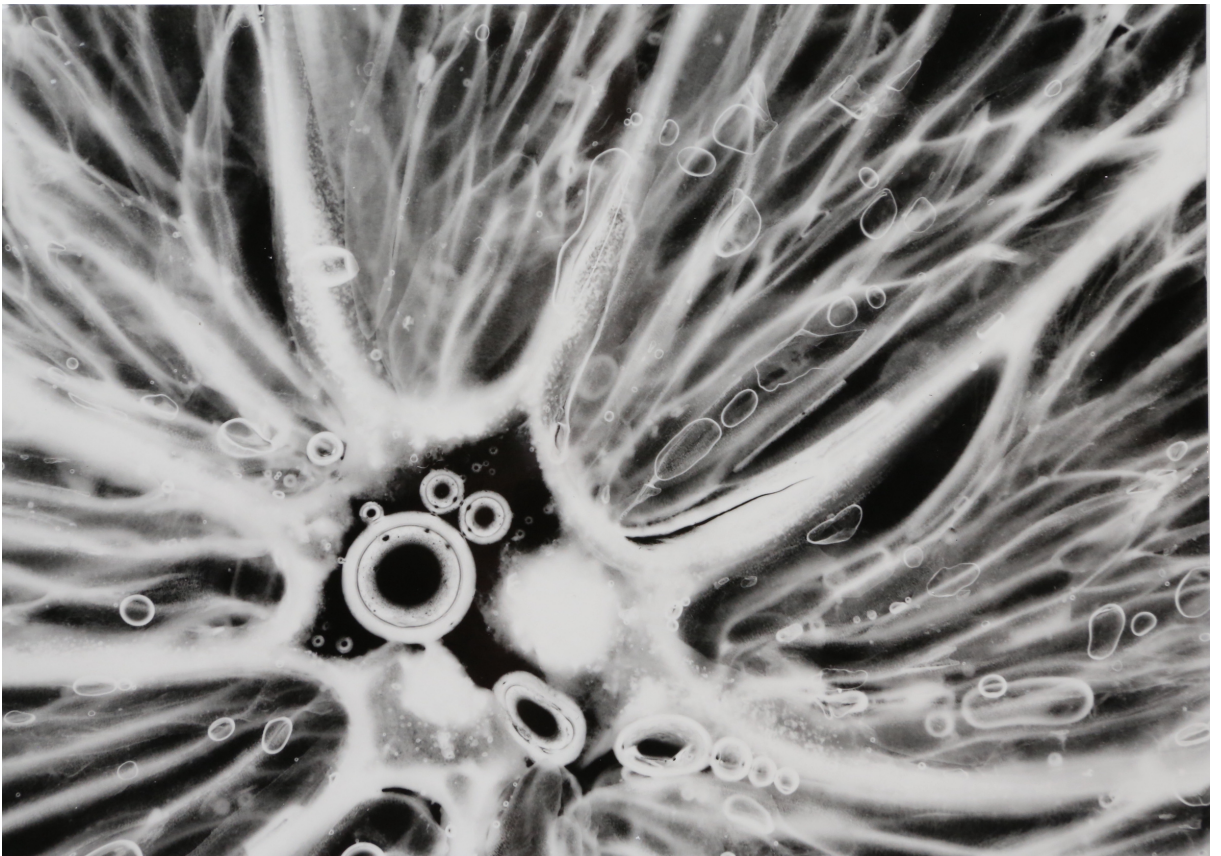
Creative Corner



Vova Melnyk, Y13



Franek Golebiowski, Y12



Zlata Rutskaya, Y11

Japanese Cheesecake

Iga Schmude

During the winter season, when it's cold and snowy, everyone wants to sit under a warm blanket with a hot cup of tea in their hand. Of course, we should not forget about a piece of something sweet that will make us forget all of our problems.

Can you relate? Then Japanese cheesecake is perfect for you! This recipe will surely warm you up. The only thing you have to do is just put an apron on and relax. Although, please be careful near the cookstove, we don't want you to get too hot!

Equipment:

Cake pan, Parchment paper, Mixing bowls, Spatula/whisk, Mixer, Heat resistant container (baking tray, roasting pan, bigger cake pan)

Ingredients:

80 ml of milk, 40 g of butter, 135 g cream cheese (eg. Philadelphia), 4 eggs, 40 g of cake flour ($\frac{1}{4}$ of a cup), 15 g of starch, 80 g sugar, 1 tablespoon of lemon juice

Directions:

1. Mix milk, butter, and cream cheese in a bowl
2. In order to mix the ingredients, put the bowl in a water bath to slightly warm the products up, then mix it with a spatula
3. In a different bowl, separate the yolks and the egg whites
4. Put all of the yolks into the bowl with milk, butter, and cheese, mix it all up and slowly add starch, flour, and lemon juice (mix until smooth)
5. Heat the oven up to 200 degrees
6. Take the bowl with egg whites, whisk it with mixer
7. Slowly add sugar (beat until stiff foam)
8. Step by step, gracefully, add the whipped egg whites to the other ingredient bowl



9. Put parchment paper into the cake pan on the sides and underneath, brush it all lightly with butter

10. Put the dough into the cake pan

11. Pour hot water into the heat resistant container (the level of water should not be higher than the height of the cake pan), next put the cake pan inside the container

12. Put it into the oven for 10 min, after 10 min change the temperature to 150 degrees and leave the cheesecake baking for another 40 minutes



13. Turn off the oven, open it but do not take it out straight away (Leave the oven slightly open for 30 minutes or more)

14. Open the cake pan and put the icing sugar as desired

15. Wait for the cheesecake to cool down and enjoy!



No kicking around! just kicking around!

Aleksandra Trawkowska



Among the many exciting announcements during our weekly assembly, Alexi Van-Dorst (Year 11) announced the participation of our school in the first edition of the Warsaw Schools Football Tournament. This competition will take place in March 2022 and our school will compete against schools such as IB Raszyńska, LO im. Stefana Batorego, LO im. Tadeusza Czackiego and many more. This initiative was prepared by Mikołaj Makosz, student of 2 SLO im. Pawła Jasienicy. Akademeia Post reporter, Aleksandra Trawkowska, interviewed Alexi Van-Dorst, member of Akademia football team.

Akademeia Post Reporter (APR): Alexi, I assume that you are a fan of football, where did your story begin? Why are you interested in football?

Alexi Van-Dorst (AVD): So, my story began at a young age. I started playing football on pitches with my friends when I was more or less five or six years old and from there my passion for it evolved. I started playing regularly in school teams and fell in love with the professional side of the sport. My favourite team is FC Barcelona, and I am a very big fan of them. Well, now their situation is not the best, but I will always remain their supporter at their best and worst.

APR: In our school there are many students who share this passion with you. Who are those people, who is on our school team?

AVD: I can announce that the team is now complete. We have 20 very talented, skilful, dedicated players who are doing a great job at training. We had a bit of a problem with the selection because of the number of people interested. The priority always was the Football Club and its members, then the situation got a little bit complicated. Nevertheless, now the team is complete, and I have a lot of respect and faith for them. I know that we'll do great.

APR: What inspired you to start this initiative in our school?

AVD: The initiative was proposed by my friend Mikołaj, and he suggested to get involved and I decided to help him as much as I could, I helped him organise the tournament and to support him with organization aspects. I am a football fan and there are a lot of football fans at school, and I really want to make our school participate in such events and show that we can also go beyond academics and, we have this kind of holistic side to our community.

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APR: It is definitely something new and something beyond our normal school life, hence what are the plans for our team? Do we have an official coach?

AVD: Yes, of course and it is the one and only Mr Maciej Domoradzki. We have a lot of training to do, we are going to probably incorporate weekend training sessions in order to prepare our team so that we can be as best as we can during the tournament.

APR: I think that our team is going to do fantastic in the tournament, but what are your expectations for our team in terms of the play as well as experience?

AVD: Well, as simple as it may sound, the most important part is the fun and let's try to win this thing!

APR: Is there anything you would like to add? Maybe something directed to our audience?

AVD: I would like to address that to everyone reading the "Akademeia Post": Let's get as involved as possible, let's support our team, let's create a support group, because that's what we need and let's win this tournament.

AHS Band

Maria Sommerfeld-Mikulska



Why is music important in our lives? We may think that music is nothing but a simple pleasure, but it's more than that. Mr. Kacper Zasada, the leader of the Student Band, said: "I truly believe that listening and practicing an instrument improves your brain significantly and like nothing else, makes you stay close with your most intimate part of yourself and ultimately makes you grow as a human being. Mr. Zasada is a passionate, multi-instrumentalist who was inspired by music throughout his whole life, "It was with me in my childhood, it was with me in my years on stage, it is with me in my good and my bad times." He assembled the band with the help of Olga Szytejko, who is currently less involved in the project. Ms. Szytejko offered him the job and, as he says, "I was offered a great opportunity and I decided to fulfill it the best I could".

After a very successful winter concert, the band is getting ready for its next big performance. From what we know for sure, the school band is preparing for the end of the year ceremony, but it is possible that we will see them perform before that. Mr. Zasada states that "We are now focused on preparing 60 minutes of solid material that is consistent and we can perform it at a good level at any given time. That alone gives us a permission to apply for the bigger shows outside the school. Creating an independent school band which can perform constantly in the various musical venues would be my ultimate dream to fulfill here." During the last performance, we could see eleven people participating in the band, but since then they have grown.

The band consists of two guitarists, a bassist, four singers, a saxophonist and three pianists playing on keys or electronic keys. During their last performance we could spot Mr. Anders on the drums, but this term a new drummer can be seen in the music room. Not every school has a band, and we are lucky enough to have a large amount of dedicated and musically skilled students, who with the help of the school's resources, are able to share their talents and passion with us.

Mr. Zasada notes that, "My main goal with the AHS band is to create an independent organism where band members could express their needs and interests in music with no limits. The most important thing for me is to see that students are eager to devote their late hours in order to improve their performances and help each other with a big dose of fun and respect towards one another." We are eager to see them at the end of the year, and in the years to come.



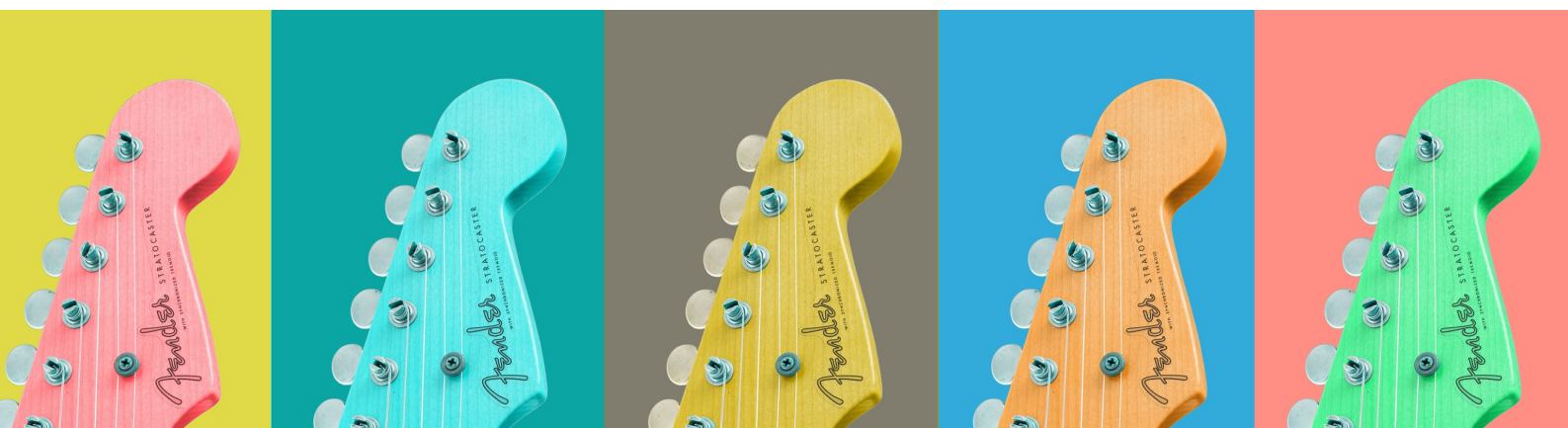
APJamz:

Liam Higgins



Friday lunchtimes in the canteen have been “enlivened” with music. For some reason, one of the more disruptive members of staff saw it fit to steal the speaker that the P.E dept. use during lessons and to subject us to their song selections whilst they make sure that everyone is sanitizing their hands and queuing up properly. We thought that we should publish a sample of the songs that this miscreant member of the faculty has been subjecting us to, and ask for suggestions for playlists for Friday afternoons from the student body, in order to make Friday lunchtimes a bit more fun (and so that we don’t have to listen to old people music).

1. 9-5 Dolly Parton
2. Shake it off – Taylor Swift
3. Walking on Sunshine – Katrina and the Waves
4. I’m a believer- The monkeys
5. Friday – Riton and the Nightcrawlers
6. Baby I’m your Man - Wham
7. Don’t stop me now – Queen
8. Honey, Honey – Abba
9. Get Luck – Daft Punk
10. Come on Eileen – Dexy’s Midnight runners





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