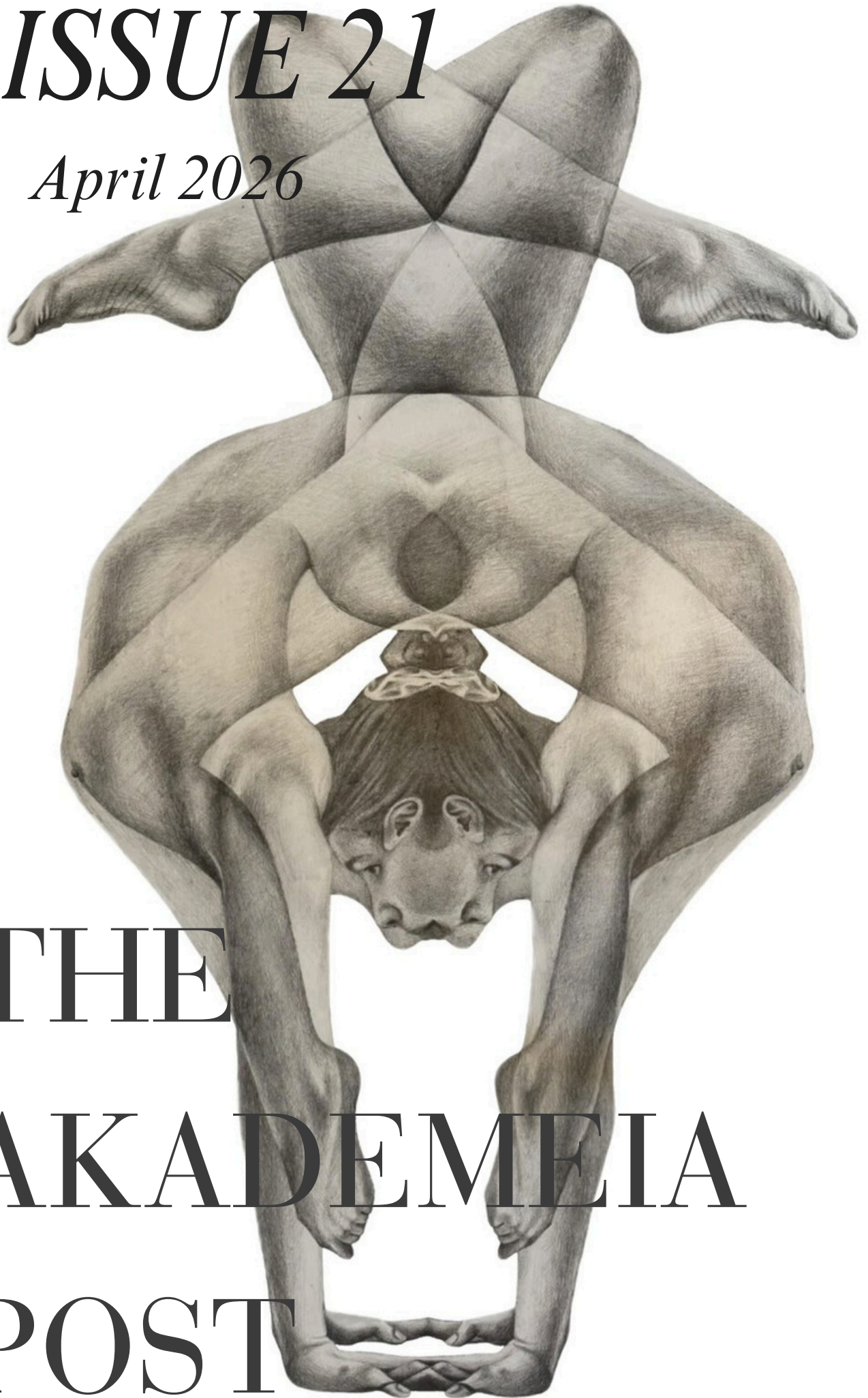


*ISSUE 21*

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THE

AKADEMIEIA

POST

# EDITOR'S NOTE

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With this Spring issue, I want to take a moment to thank my Senior Designers, who have helped develop and shape this newspaper into what it is (and what it looks like) today. The consistency of the Akademeia Post's professional aesthetics has been established by Kaja Oszczyda and Lea Fisher, our accomplished and hard-working Year 13s. As they transition out of their roles and out of Akademeia, I want to recognize their commitment, heart, and passion they have left in the metaphorical editorial rooms. I make this the priority of this editor's note, because I find it to be the essence of the journalistic community we have created – a sense of legacy, cooperation, and an unexpected harvest of talents and open doors. We wish them all the best on their journey, wherever they go, they will add structure and colour, just as they did here. Thank you.

Read and Belong,  
Chief Editor  
Sonia Blank

## MEET THE TEAM!

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**Front Cover:** A. Zeszuta

**Back Cover:** A. Zeszuta

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# AKAMUN

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*Lena Jankowska*

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO MODEL UNITED NATIONS**

Our school, Akademeia, takes pride in hosting the prestigious MUN every year, with the highest ratings on mymun. This year, the three-day conference took place in February with eleven committees, around 200 delegates and renowned guest speakers, all organized by the AKAMUN Secretariat.

It is one of the best examples of a well-organized MUN that connects both professional and fun sides of it. It is great for both beginners and more experienced mun'ers, helping them develop their skills and create new relations.

## **WHAT IS MODEL UNITED NATIONS?**

Model United Nations, as the name suggests, is a simulation of the UN designed for aspiring and ambitious students interested in global issues and debating. It recreates the atmosphere, style, and cooperation of an actual UN. It is open for not only humanities students but also offers committees for students with different interests, for example the "Commission of Science and Technological development" for STEM students. You also have the opportunity to challenge yourself by taking part in a committee that is different from your interests which is highly encouraged. For the entire weekend, which, I know, sounds scary at



first, but you get to debate, collaborate, and create connections. It is crucial, if not mandatory to dress formally in 'western business attire' which means white shirts, blazers, long skirts, or black pants.

## **WHAT HAPPENS DURING THE CONFERENCE?**

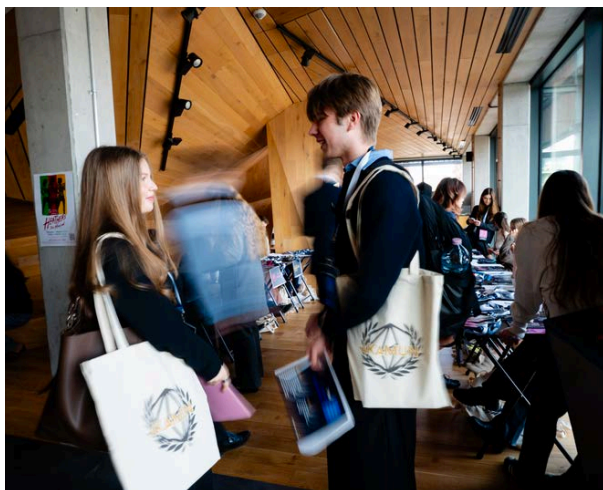
A usual MUN weekend starts on Friday and ends on Sunday. Each day typically lasts 8 hours, similarly to school day, but they are much more dynamic and engaging.

The conference usually involves a social (a type of a party), which allows you to relax and connect with others after a couple day of hard working.

You also have coffee breaks in between committee sessions which allow you to communicate with others either to talk over your alliances or just to socialize. Many schools also offer coffee and snacks.

The first day begins with an Opening Ceremony, where a guest speaker is

invited. Last year on AKAMUN it was a past polish president Bronislaw Komorowski and this year it was the current Mayor of Warsaw, Rafal Trzaskowski. It is a great chance to listen to what professionals think of the current situation around the world and ask questions. After the Ceremony begins the General Assembly where members of the Security Council read their opening speeches. You also get to contribute by asking them Points of Information about their statements. Majority of Saturday and Sunday is spent on committee sessions. The conference finishes with a Closing Assembly where chosen delegates get to read out resolutions.



## COMMON FEARS

A common fear about MUN is being forced to speak out loud in front of a crowd. But it is mostly a myth. The truth is, MUN gives you a great chance to develop your public speaking skills, but you chose how and with what pace you do that. The only time you have to speak is when reading your pre-prepared opening speech to the other delegates in your committee. If you don't feel confident enough you are not required to answer POI's (points of information which are questions about your countries stance on the issue). During committee sessions you are encouraged to take part but there is no pressure if you prefer to observe and listen first.

Sometimes new delegates are worried about being un-prepared or about being inexperienced. Fortunately, there's plenty beginner committees to choose from, where the Chairs are prepared to welcome and help new delegates

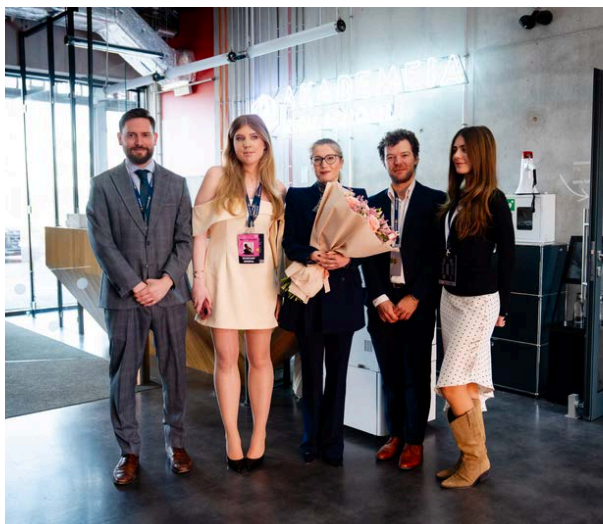
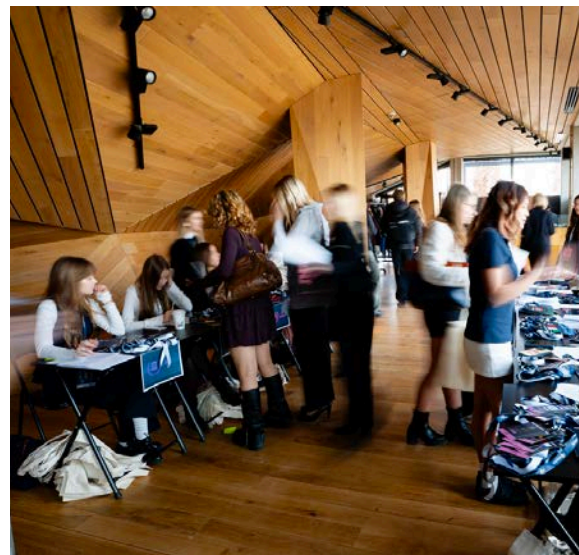
without intimidating them. Socialization also isn't mandatory but believe me when I say it is incredibly easy to make new friends on MUN's. Since you spend most of your time in committees not only debating but also doing the fun punishments and unmoderated caucuses you get to interact.

## WHAT CAN YOU GAIN FROM MUN

This extracurricular always looks great on your CV, whether you're applying for internships, summer camps, or universities. They aren't only an enjoyable activity they are also a skill building experience.

Joining the MUN club at Akademeia also offers international trips. This year we went to ECPMUN to Prague and in March we had a trip to Yale MUN in Rome. Where we not only debate but also sight see and get to spend time with our friends.

About friends, as I mentioned a couple times before you get to make new friends and collaborate, helping you form business relationships in the future.



## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

There's a helpful website: [mymun.com](http://mymun.com) where you can find all conferences, that are not only happening locally but also internationally. After you create an account, you chose the conference you want to attend, and the website guides you through the application process. Typically, you have to choose, two or three committee preferences, describe your experience (even if you have none) and explain why you want to attend or what do you hope to learn. After you submit your application, the organizers should reach out to you in around a week or two.

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# FROM FOUNDATIONS TO FUTURES

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## IGCSE & A LEVELS AT AKADEMEIA

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*Irene Kim*

With college admissions becoming increasingly competitive, admission offices often lean toward students that have proved their capabilities and comprehending in heavy workloads. One of the most important factors when choosing your next school is its academic curriculum. And for those reading this article, you most likely have considered the compatibility of you with the IGCSE and A-level program.

The IGCSE program is the international version of the British GCSE curriculum, applied to numerous schools including Akademeia. A strong strength of the IGCSE and A-levels is its versatility and independence. With several potential academic pathways to pursue, the program encourages students to build their self-discipline, confidence, and the boldness to accept mistakes and ask for help.

The program is designed to provide in-depth knowledge in specific fields, with students being able to choose preferred A-level subjects to focus their studies on. However, the IGCSE curriculum doesn't strand you in the quicksand of deciding your pathways, instead it gives you two years during the IGCSE, to experiment

with different subject areas you might be interested in. It is tailored to prepare pupils to a more rigorous A-levels, allowing them to utilize their potential to their fullest.

Nevertheless, students transferring from other international curriculums, such as the International Baccalaureate or Advanced Placement, may feel the program to be traditional in comparison. Since the IGCSE diverged from the original British GCSE curriculum, it may appear to be focused mainly on exams and knowledge-based understanding, rather than skill-based learning.

Despite these structurally conventional sides, the IGCSE and A-level program boasts a number of advantages as well. Such as depth and specialization by focusing on fewer subjects, typically three to four, allowing intense



understanding on specific topics. On top of that, students can show well-roundedness by the wide range of subjects to build a solid foundation in the earlier years. Another example being the variety of assessment types, such as oral, written, and practical evaluations over the years. Such qualities are executed within Akademeia through the school's philosophy, including values such as passion for learning, resilience, integrity, kindness, and respect. These values reinforce academic success, as well as encourage students to excel beyond the exams, to develop them into compassionate and responsible individuals.



A unique factor of the IGCSE is the Percentage Uniform Marks (PUM), which is a standardized grading system to measure students' accomplishment in comparison to peers, rather than relying on the raw evaluations of the assessments. This helps to prevent unfairness amongst previous, current, and future examination grades, to eliminate the possibility of harder exams negatively affecting students' final grades. However, Akademeia does not currently host the feature of PUM's within its internal exams.

In essence, the IGCSE is regarded as a globally well-recognized program that offers a traditional yet flexible course that gives foundational platforms for future leaders and experts. With Akademeia's high performance scores in both examinations, it could be said that the program is well fitted and integrated into our very classrooms. Therefore, the IGCSE and A-levels in Akademeia provide a reliable platform to grow intellectually and personally for the students who aspire to thrive in a structured academic environment, as well as to explore their interests.

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# THE ART OF IMPROVISATION

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*WHY THE WOŚP WEEK DEMANDED CONSTANT REINVENTION*

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*Anastazja Rybakiewicz*  
*Jasmin El-Abrashy*

## **MONDAY/ 19.01.2026**

3 hours of sleep, 3 black coffees and 30 unread emails - that is NOT how I started my day. Walking into the school, I felt like everything is surprisingly under control. My inner peace didn't last long - it was after a few hours I realized the emails which were supposed to be taken care of a week ago have not been sent, the auction pieces are nowhere near being ready and the agenda for Friday's concert changes by the minute. On top of that, we are teenagers in the 21st century - so why does nobody pick up their damn phones? Until 4 p.m., whenever I asked if everything is ready for the volleyball match, the only response I received was "don't worry, everything is taken care of". So how did I end up apologizing to Ms. Czerwonka, Mr. Franzel and the volleyball team for cancelling the event just half an hour later? Well, at least we had a bake sale to cope with it.

## **TUESDAY/ 20.01.2026**

3 hours of sleep, 3 black coffees and 30 unread emails - this time, it was the exact way my day started. All night, I tried to confirm that everything is under control. After what happened on Monday, I was convinced I must check it all myself. Having called a meeting with the WOŚP team, discussing all objectives for the week and showing the slides everyone is to present, everything was supposed to go smoothly. Unfortunately, one person forgot to turn up for the 6th form assembly, so I ended up improvising once again. After that, on our



group chat, I reminded everyone, "Please, please, please guys don't be late for the 5th form assembly" and then proceeded to be late myself - I must say, I set a great example to be taken seriously that day. See, I thought all of us would meet in front of the auditorium a few minutes early, but since most people were not there, I started searching for them throughout corridors. It turned out they were already in the auditorium, and our slides came up a bit earlier than planned, which meant I entered the stage after the first slide had already been presented. At this point, I had had enough of everything.

## **WEDNESDAY/ 20.01.2026**

Finally, a win. I spent the morning firing questions at the basketball tournament organisers like a press conference: Do we have snacks? Is everything confirmed with Boss? Are we ready? And for once, the answer was yes. Parent-teacher meetings meant not every teacher who wanted to play could join, but the tournament still felt like a success: organised, energetic, and on time. Despite the setbacks, I was glad that something is going according to plan. We also made a last-minute decision about

Friday's dress code. The prior plan had been cohesive: black and red ties for performers. In the end, miscommunication and time pressure pushed us towards something simpler: WOŚP stickers. Not perfect but fitting and allowed for everyone to express their personality on stage – and that is what our school promotes.

## **THURSDAY/ 21.01.2026**

That was the day I became a moving target in the corridors - late to half my lessons, and every few metres a teacher stopped me to ask about the finale. To every class I disrupted in the process: I am sorry.

Meanwhile, the concert schedule kept shifting by the hour. Performers dropped out, new acts appeared, soundcheck slots moved, MC speeches had to be rewritten to match the ongoing domino effect. Football day drew the biggest crowd (no surprise there), so after classes I triple-checked the essentials: snacks, prizes, photographers, players. Thankfully, it held together allowing me to focus on the concert and auction without also putting out fires elsewhere.

## **FRIDAY/22.01.2026**

Preparations for the finale started early in the morning. The soundcheck team arrived late, but thanks to the buffer time for inevitable last-minute changes we incorporated in our schedule, every performer still got a chance to rehearse. Nevertheless, the soundcheck timetable quickly became more of a suggestion than a schedule.

The whole day, I could not do anything that wasn't related to WOŚP. Everyone kept asking questions when I walked past: Will I be excused from lessons? What time am I performing? I just wanted to say *Guys, I do not have every detail memorized and you received all information via email.* Hours before the concert, we kept modifying the MC speeches and trying to print them, so I

ended up not knowing the final version until the last minute.

From 2 p.m. onwards I felt like time is moving three times faster than usual. In what felt like the blink of an eye, the concert began.

Despite a few slips, I was genuinely proud of how the concert and auction turned out. It was my first time using a microphone - not to sing, but to speak as an MC (I'm usually behind a drum kit, safely hidden). I didn't test it before going on stage, assuming it would be fine. Spoiler: it was not. I couldn't turn it on and spoke without amplification for a while - an unplanned lesson in humility, delivered live.

Swapping between drumming in two bands and introducing performers to the crowd was demanding. The auction finished rapidly (stress has a way of doubling the tempo), fewer people attended than we'd expected, and we ran into a few technical difficulties while on stage. Still, the performances were excellent - and the audience had favourites. From the conversations I had afterwards, "Skyfall" (added very last-minute, after we learned about the singer's availability just a day before) was one of the highlights of the night.

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## **SATURDAY/23.01.2026**

Thinking back, WOŚP week was - without question - an enormous amount of work. Could it have been better? Absolutely. But have we learned from it? Do we know what to do differently next time? Also, yes. Because isn't it what high school is for? Trying new things, failing, getting humbled, improving, and discovering what you're capable of when the timetable collapses and you must rebuild it in time.

It's about stepping out of your comfort zone, working with people you wouldn't normally talk to, and experimentation – the fact that AHS gives us opportunities for it is what makes it so valuable.

On that note, thank you to everyone who took part in the preparations - especially those who stayed until the end, truly trying to help, not just those who signed up at the beginning for volunteering credit and to pass the PDS criteria.

A special thank you goes to our sponsors, whose vouchers, pastries, and food buffet made the concert and auction evening genuinely warm and welcoming. And the biggest thank you goes to Ms. Łukasik, who supported us constantly throughout the week. After the events ended around 9 p.m. (when we'd practically had to usher people out) she and I were still there, cleaning, packing, and putting everything back.

It wasn't perfect, but if it was, that'd mean the teachers did the work for us. Instead, it was our chaos.

## **A SUNDAY OF GENEROSITY/ 24.01.2026**

Sunday, 25 January marked the 34th edition of Wielka Orkiestra Świątecznej Pomocy (WOŚP), one of Poland's most remarkable annual charity initiatives. This year's collections were dedicated to supporting the diagnosis and treatment of gastrointestinal diseases in children. At Akademeia, students had the opportunity to contribute in two ways. Many participated in the internal events organised by Anastazja, while others signed up to become official WOŚP volunteers, collecting donations outside the school on the final Sunday of the charity. I had the responsibility of coordinating the external volunteers: from recruiting students and guiding them through the registration process to preparing them for the day of

collections. The process of signing everyone up was at times a little chaotic, but after plenty of organisation (and patience) we succeeded in assembling a team of 20 official volunteers ready to represent the school.

The day itself was busy and demanding. Volunteers spread out across the city to collect donations, working independently or in small teams.

The biggest challenge was the weather, since it was far from ideal, but despite the bitter cold and wind, everyone persevered with impressive dedication and enthusiasm. At 6:00 PM we gathered back at Akademeia, where the counting process began. Each volunteer carefully summed the contents of their collection box before the totals were verified by an official WOŚP coordinator, who confirmed the final amount.

The result was truly extraordinary. Akademeia raised over 150,000 zł, surpassing last year's collections of 120,000zł, an achievement made possible by the generosity of the community and the commitment of our volunteers. We are incredibly proud of everyone who took part. Their enthusiasm, resilience, and willingness to give their time helped make this year's WOŚP collection a great success for our school.



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# MEET THE STAFF - MS LADZIŃSKA ON LAW, POWER, AND SOCIAL ORDER

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*FROM DISCRIMINATION LAW TO TEACHING APPROACH, MS. LADZIŃSKA REFLECTS ON THE IDEAS THAT SHAPE HER AS A LAWYER AND EDUCATOR*

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*Lena Szlaga*

**M**s. Ladzińska is a prominent figure at Akademeia. As Head of Boarding, official SQE solicitor, civic litigator, and so much more, her expertise connects education, law, and public service. She isn't just teaching A Level Sociology and Media - she instills her passion in students every single day.

## **1. What initially sparked your interest in law, and at what point did it become your passion?**

My interest in law really began with a broader curiosity about how legal systems actually give effect to something as abstract as “fairness”. But if I had to identify the moment that curiosity became more intellectually focused and rigorous, it was when I encountered Kimberlé Crenshaw’s work on intersectionality. In particular, her analysis of *DeGraffenreid v General Motors* had a lasting impact on me. In that case, black female claimants challenged a seniority system that disadvantaged them in practice, yet the court rejected their claim because it insisted discrimination had to be framed as *either* race discrimination or sex discrimination, not a combination of the two. What struck me was how clearly that reasoning revealed a structural limitation in anti-discrimination doctrine: the law’s preference for neat, mutually exclusive categories over the more complex realities



people experience. That observation stayed with me when I began practicing employment law, especially in discrimination cases. In tribunal proceedings, I repeatedly saw claimants required to compress multidimensional disadvantage into rigid statutory boxes in order to satisfy evidential thresholds. The issue stopped being purely theoretical and became something I could observe operationally within the legal process itself. From there, I developed a great interest in how legal doctrine evolves, or sometimes fails to, in response to social complexity, which is one of the things I want to look at in my PhD research.

**2. After studying and practicing law at an elite level, what excites you the most about the subject today?**

What excites me most at the moment is observing how legal systems respond when they are placed under genuinely unprecedented pressure. One of the clearest examples is the rapid development of AI, which is already reshaping not just how legal services are delivered, but how justice itself is administered. In jurisdictions such as China, for instance, courts have introduced online dispute-resolution platforms where parties can file claims digitally and proceed through multiple procedural stages (sometimes all the way to judgment) with AI tools assisting in tasks like evidence assessment. In cities such as Beijing and Guangzhou, these systems are already being used to process high volumes of e-commerce, IP and contract disputes. What I find particularly compelling is that these innovations don't just raise technical questions, but they go to the doctrinal core of law. They force us to confront issues of accountability and bias. So, we're now in a moment where discipline has to grapple, in real time, with how to preserve substantive justice within increasingly automated decision-making structures. From an academic perspective, that tension is fascinating: it's slightly unsettling, certainly, but also intellectually exhilarating, because it places foundational legal concepts under active reconsideration.

**3. You are interested in feminist jurisprudence. What role do you believe it should play in legal education?**

In my view, feminist jurisprudence shouldn't be treated as peripheral strand of legal study; it is foundational to how I practise and teach law. For me, it isn't an intellectual side

interest but a guiding framework which I use to encourage my students to interrogate the assumptions about power and objectivity that are embedded within legal systems. Engaging with feminist theory doesn't require rejecting traditional doctrine; rather, it helps lawyers to understand that doctrine itself is produced within a social context. When students are trained to read the law with that level of critical awareness, they tend to become more careful and ethically attuned advocates.

**4. You are a lawyer specialising in employment law and discrimination claims - how have critical legal theories influenced your definition of equality and power? How have these changed over the years?**

Early in my legal studies, I understood equality primarily in formal terms: equal treatment under the law. Over time, critical legal theories, particularly feminist and critical race perspectives, helped me see that equality is also structural. Treating everyone the same can still produce unequal outcomes if systems are built on unequal foundations. My understanding of power has also shifted: it's not only something exercised openly, but something embedded in policies and institutional practices. This has made me a more effective lawyer because it allows me to identify injustice where it might otherwise appear invisible.

**5. You have many responsibilities here at Akademeia — from Head of Sixth Form and Boarding to a university advisor and a teacher. What does your typical day look like?**

No two days are the same, which is part of what I love. Mornings might begin with check-ins with boarding supervisors, followed by teaching Sociology or Media

lessons. Later, I might meet Sixth Form students to discuss university applications, review personal statements, or assist with LNAT preparation. In between, there are meetings with parents, safeguarding responsibilities, and strategic planning for student development. It's a busy life but incredibly rewarding!

### **6. How do you bring your professional legal experience into the classroom?**

I try to make learning feel real. I draw on my practice to show students how abstract concepts take shape in real disputes. For example, when discussing global development, we examine how transnational corporations exploit weak regulatory regimes in the Global South. I encourage students to explore questions such as: what happens when a company headquartered in Europe outsources production to countries with weaker environmental protections? How do supply chain structures affect workers' rights? These discussions allow students to connect sociological theory with contemporary economic realities. When we discuss Sociology or Media theory, I encourage students to test ideas against these real-world scenarios, just as lawyers test arguments in court. For instance, we might apply theories of globalisation to examine corporate social responsibility campaigns or use intersectionality to critique workplace diversity initiatives that fail to address structural power imbalances.

### **7. What do you believe is a common misconception about A Level Sociology as well as Media Studies?**

A persistent misconception is that Sociology and Media Studies are 'soft' subjects. In practice, they're anything but. Sociology is empirically grounded – in data analysis, longitudinal research and ethnography – and

that very body of research often shapes public policy and legislative reform, particularly in areas such as employment, discrimination, education, or criminal justice. Students aren't just learning theory; they're retrained to scrutinise methodology, test validity, reliability and build evidence-based arguments. Media Studies demands a comparable level of rigour, requiring sustained engagement with representation, ideology, and audience theory. Both disciplines cultivate analytical habits that translate directly into law, policymaking, and other professional fields. So rather than being "soft," they are disciplines that train students to think critically and reform-mindedly about how societies operate.

### **8. What do you find most rewarding about working at Akademeia, and how has the school shaped your own development?**

What I find most rewarding about working at Akademeia is that it's a place where education isn't treated as a script but as a conversation. I value being in an environment where students question and connect ideas across disciplines, because that kind of curiosity makes my role intellectually engaging rather than routine. The school has shaped my development by pushing me to be both structured and flexible at the same time: organised in how I support students, but open-minded in how I respond to their needs and perspectives. I am the biggest fan of my students, mentees and advisees and I feel very privileged that I can observe them grow as scholars but also as people.

*Whether in the classroom, the boarding house, or the courtroom, Ms. Ladzińska encourages passion for learning and critical reflection. Her dedication ensures not only knowledge, but also confidence to challenge ideas and pursue their passions.*

# DOES ILLEGAL MEAN IMMORAL?

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## *LEGAL SYSTEM'S COLLISION WITH ETHICS*

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*Lena Szlaga*

Many things are illegal: stealing, murder, blackmail... Yet, people sometimes commit these acts thinking they have the right reasons. The central question is this: is the illegality of an action sufficient moral reason to refrain from it, even when it seems harmless or necessary at the time?

Law recognises exceptions. Stealing is generally wrong, but if it allows serious harm prevention, the legislation may excuse it. Murder is illegal, killing in self-defence is permissible. If killing someone is necessary to protect oneself, does the act still make a person morally bad?

One way to approach this question is examining whether the law and morality are connected or conceptually separate ideas. Laws create social obligations, and social obligations create unwritten rules. Law allows coordination and social stability upon general obedience. But what justifies obedience to law in the first place?

The legal positivist view, called the Separation Thesis, associated with H.L.A Hart, claims that morality and law are separate concepts, yet legality still is valid as it provides social order. Thus, one doesn't need to agree with an immorality of something that they won't do due to its illegality.

On the other hand, the view shown by Lon L. Fuller in his book 'The Morality of Law' states that if legality is detached from morality, it has no binding force. Law is meant to meet moral standards in order to make sense.

Yet, this leads to a difficulty of defining the moral standard. Some locate morality in religion, but most people think illegal actions

are bad, such as stealing, killing, or blackmail. However, that view is very limiting - and maybe there is a different way to define it. Perhaps, best interests of those affected could be a better way to define morality.

The complexity of the issue of ethics and legality become clear when examining real cases. As an example, the case of Tony Martin, who had shot a 16-year-old burglar. Barras was shot in the back and legs, while his partner, Fearon was shot in both legs. While they managed to escape, Barras died a short distance away from the house. While Martin claimed self-defence, the court decided his force use was excessive, resulting in Tony Martin being convicted and imprisoned.

It goes to show that morality doesn't always align with legality. Laws are crucial in maintaining order, and a widespread disobedience would destabilise the society. Yet, laws shouldn't be our only moral guidance, because - as history shows - justice systems can uphold inequalities.

While law adherence is generally important, moral reasoning cannot be only limited to that. Sometimes, the right response might be to seek law reforms. Acting fairly requires both consideration of one's own interests and the broader social good. There is no clear definition of morality - but what is key is to understand why we obey the laws. Then obedience is justified.



# RECOGNITION VS EXISTENCE

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## *THE HISTORY OF TAIWAN*

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*Si Yun Shin*

### **TAIWAN - THE SMALL ISLAND IN EAST ASIA**

Taiwan, officially known as the Republic of China, is one of the most developed countries in East Asia. As the result of the quick growth of Taiwan, in the 1990s Taiwan had been called one of the 4 dragons in Asia (South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong) meaning that these four that the four countries and regions were rapidly catching up with Japan's economy. Taiwan remains one of the wealthiest countries in Asia and in Asia and is home to many influential brands such as TSMC, ASUS, and Hon Hai Precision. As you can see, Taiwan is highly impactful in Asia. However, only 12 countries officially recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state, and these countries have limited impact in the international community. Why did Taiwan come to be in this situation?

### **THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR**

To understand the reasons, we should go back to about 100 years ago. In 1945, Chiang Kai-shek's – the first president after the Republic of China government was established – justification for starting the war as a means of achieving national unification and eradicating the perceived threat of

communism. At first, the Republic of China was superior in many ways because the U.S supported Chiang Kai-shek and Taiwan. In 1947, The Zhōng Guó Míndǎng, led by Chiang Kai-shek, occupied Yan'an, the Communist Party's stronghold. However, from late 1947 to 1949, the situation was reversed. There are many reasons for this, such as economic collapse, inflation, and internal division, but the biggest reason was public opinion. In the second half of 1947, the Republic of China gradually lost territory. Finally, on October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong declared the founding of the People's Republic of China. On the other hand, Chiang Kai-shek established the Republic of China on the island of Taiwan, where the government remains today.

### **LOSING GLOBAL STANDING**

Although Taiwan lost the Chinese Civil War, many countries initially recognized Taiwan as the legal government of China. Taiwan was one of the victors of World War II and was a founding member of the United Nations (UN). During the Cold War, capitalist countries like the U.S. and those in Western Europe recognized Taiwan as the legitimate government of China. However, from 1975 onward, the number of newly independent countries in Asia and Africa started to

increase, and many of them supported the People's Republic of China (communist China). The UN passed a resolution recognizing mainland China as the legitimate government of China. This incident is the main reason why most countries do not recognise Taiwan as a sovereign country.

After this, many countries began to sever diplomatic relations with Taiwan to establish trade relations with China. China continues to assert that there is only 1 China. As a result, only 12 countries now recognize Taiwan as a sovereign country, and these countries (Belize, Eswatini, Guatemala, Haiti, Vatican City, Marshall Islands, Palau, Paraguay, Saint Kitts Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Tuvalu) are relatively small and have limited influence in the global community.

### **THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE**

What do the people in Taiwan think about that? According to the Taiwan Public Opinion Foundation, 77.4% of Taiwanese think they are Taiwanese, 6.4% of Taiwanese think they are Chinese, and 10.4% of people think they are both Chinese and Taiwanese. The number of people who consider themselves Taiwanese has increased by 63.9% as compared to 30 years ago. There are many reasons first, the current generations didn't experience the unified China. This can make them feel Taiwan and China are a different country and should not be unified or part of China.

The other big reason is ideology and the political system. The Taiwan government started with Capitalism and democracy so citizens can vote for their president by themselves, and the media is not limited. However, China has a different political system compared with Taiwan. Only one party, the Chinese Communist Party controls whole things and as you can see Chinese president Xi Jin Ping has been in power for over 10 years (since 2012) and the media is censored. You can't say bad things about the Chinese government, that's why DeepSeek can't answer about Chinese politics, you can't use the internet freely, which could be a reason. Hong Kong's return to China also gave the motivation to protect democracy. A new cold war is emerging between liberal and anti-liberal forces. And Taiwan is near the biggest anti-liberal state, China, so Taiwan became an important role for pro-western countries.

### **TAIWAN IN THE SPOTLIGHT**

Although Taiwan isn't recognized as a country by other nations, Taiwan plays an important role in global politics. The new cold war is occurring in 21st century centered on NATO members supporters and Russia-China-Iran axis supporters so for the USA, Taiwan is a position for defense from the axis. The other reason is most semiconductors are made by Taiwan's company TSMC (about 90% of semiconductors were produced at

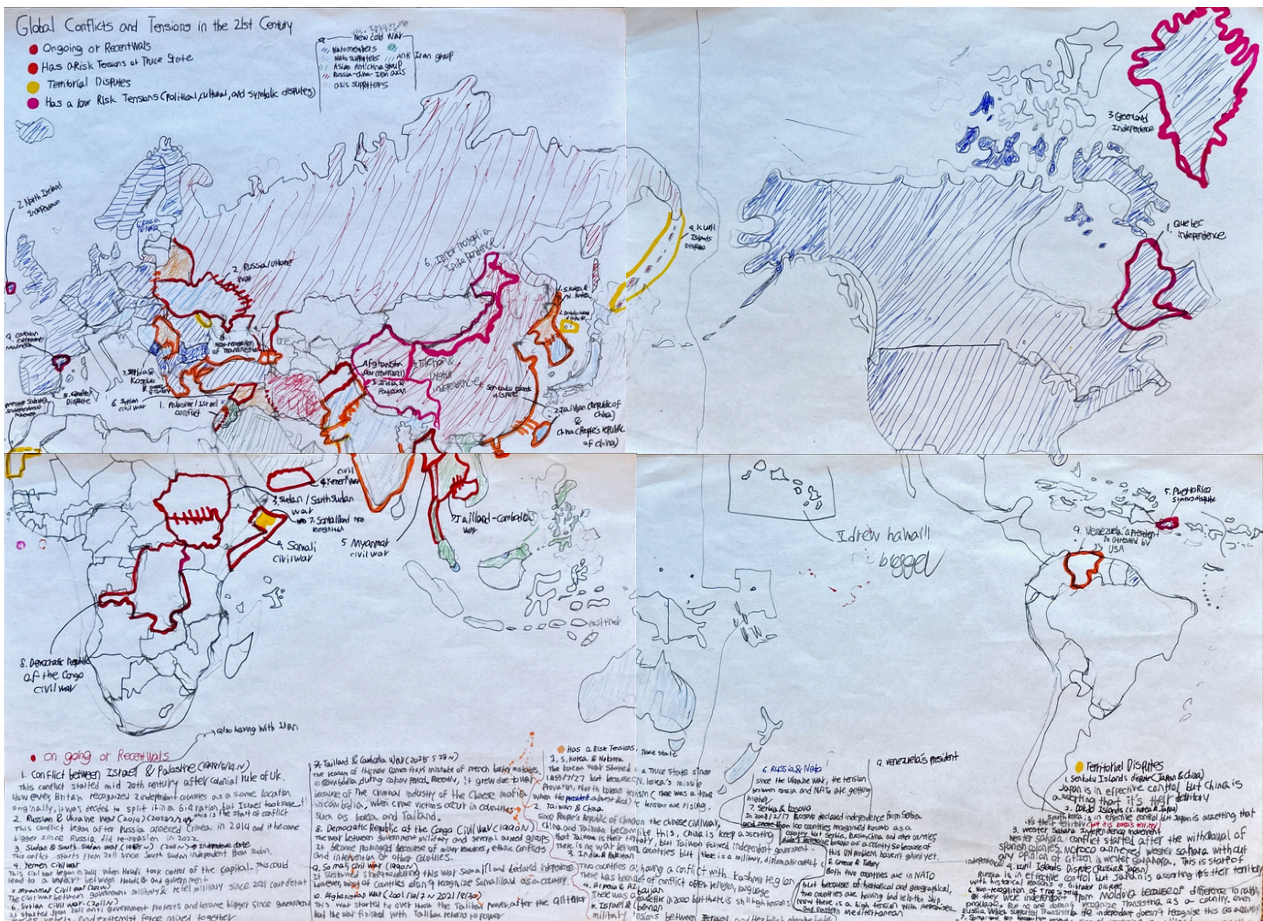
here) so if Taiwan is invaded by other countries, the semiconductor company or factory will be destroyed, and this can be a damage to most of industries which is related to semiconductors like IT, Car, and military industries being paralyzed. So, countries like China can't invade easily.

### THOUGHTS FROM OVER THE BORDER

In Japan, Takaichi Sanae was elected as the Conservative party which is Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). She is anti-China, so, her views are aggressive to China. In November 2025, she said 'China's Taiwan invasion could be a situation that threatens Japan's

existence' so this means if China invaded Taiwan, Japan could intervene. Because of this, the Chinese president is doing actions like banning Japanese seafood, travel advisory of Japan and limiting rare earth to Japan. Because of this the conflict between China and Japan is getting bigger. As you can see, Taiwan is always a reason for conflict in East Asia.

Although Taiwan can't use their flag in the Olympic or other sports competitions and isn't recognized as a country by most countries, but Taiwan has a big impact on globality.



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# CAN YOU REALLY OVERTAKE A SNAIL? A DIVE INTO INFINITY

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*Mikołaj Nowak*

**I**nfinity sounds simple – something that never ends. But the moment you take even a small look closer at it, it begins to challenge everything you thought you understood about numbers and reality itself.

## **ZENO'S CURIOUS REFLECTION**

Let's take a look at a paradox attributed to the Greek philosopher Zeno of Elea. Imagine you are at the start line of a race and your only competitor is a snail. As you obviously know it cannot travel as fast as you, you decide to give it a head start, waiting for a few minutes after the snail has started. Finally, you start running and after a few seconds you are already half of the initial distance away from the snail. Then, a fourth, an eighth, a sixteenth and so on. Your distance away from the snail keeps decreasing and, in fact, you will always be able to half the current distance away. What does this mean? Zeno argues that since the distance can be halved an infinite amount of times, to overtake the snail you would have to complete an infinite number of tasks. Therefore, you can never overtake the snail. But you clearly can. This action is called a supertask- an infinite number of actions in a finite amount of time. If you think about it, anything you do can be divided into an infinite process.

## **THE PARADOX OF HILBERT'S HOTEL**

Another well-known example displaying a paradox of infinity is Hilbert's Hotel. The German mathematician David Hilbert pictured an imaginary hotel with an infinite number of rooms and, at the beginning of



our story, an infinite number of guests. Now, what can the hotel manager do if a bus containing an infinite number of new guests arrives? The answer here is quite simple: they should tell every guest to move to the room that is twice the number of their previous room. This way, every odd-numbered room will be freed up for the infinite number of new guests. It may seem that, using simple math, the manager can make space for every potential guest there is to come. However, that is not the case. Imagine a new bus arrives: there are an infinite number of guests, every one with a name that is a different string of the numbers 1 and 0 (for example 1011000...). Now, the manager starts assigning every room number to a single guest. By the time the hotel is fully booked, there will still be



guests outside of the hotel waiting for one. This is because it is impossible to run out of guests in this specific bus. You can understand it this way: if the first number of the guest in the first room is 1, choose 0 for the first number of the still-awaiting guest's name. If it is 0, choose 1. Do this again for the second number of the waiting guest with the second number of the second room's guest. Continue for the infinite number of rooms. This way, you find a new guest who does not yet have a room assigned to them because at least one of their numbers will not match any other guest's number. Thus, the infinite hotel has run out of rooms.

**TWO INFINITIES**

What is going on in these two paradoxes coming from the concept of infinity? Well, there are in reality two very distinct types of infinities- the countable and the uncountable. Both the supertask from Zeno's paradox example and the bus of guests that the manager was unable to fully allocate had to do with uncountable infinities. These are the ones which often stand behind problems that mathematics cannot really explain. The countable infinite sets are ones that you can at least start to count (e.g. natural numbers- 1, 2, 3...). You will never reach the end, but you can at least believe you're getting somewhere. With the uncountable ones, you cannot even begin anywhere. For example, how do you start counting all the real numbers in between 0 and 1? What would the first, smallest number you start with be? Such

does not exist. In Zeno's example: after how many halvings would you actually overtake the snail?

**WHAT INFINITY TELLS US**

Though it may seem as only confusing and carrying no significance for real life (since we cannot have a real physical one in our universe), infinity does have real applications in mathematics, and so, as it turns out, in life. Calculus, one of them, is used to find the area under curved lines-graphs. The method is based on dividing portions under curves into infinitely many pieces to get the exact area when a simple formula cannot be used (like for the area of a square). By breaking a curved region into thinner and thinner rectangles (getting more and more accurate) and then taking the limit as their width approaches zero, it is possible to calculate precise areas, distances, and rates of change, including ones in the real world. This concept, except in mathematics, is also crucial in all fields of study, ranging from economics to medicine to engineering.

This idea of limits also answers the apparent contradiction in Zeno's paradox: although there are infinitely many divisions, the total distance approaches a finite value because the divisions get smaller and smaller. In other words, an infinite process can still produce a finite result.

Infinity is more than a mathematical curiosity explored by philosophers and mathematicians like Zeno of Elea and David Hilbert: it challenges how we understand reality itself. What seems impossible can become logical and even trivial when seen through mathematics, especially in fields like calculus. In the end, infinity reminds us that even the simplest actions hide endless complexity. And that does not only apply to overtaking a snail.

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# REINVENTION OR REPLACEMENT?

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## *THE CONSUMERIZATION OF EASTER*

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*Helena Jurczak*

**I**n a society where progress is a predicate, tradition becomes someone else's payout. The modern human being, obsessed with constant growth and novelty, is easily undermined, easily destabilized, and therefore desperately in need of one constant in their life. This is where the trap of consumerism snaps shut. However, the constant is not the products themselves – by nature, they endlessly change – but it is the obsession: with being up to date, with staying on top of trends. This obsession translates into the phenomenon of ceaseless shopping, which now is not an exception, a deviation from the norm. Consumerism is present and effectively promoted, as we perennially see the latest ideas for Christmas, Valentines, and Easter gifts (both physically and online), thus the problem begins when one person's addiction meets what seemed to be indestructible: heritage and tradition.

The urgency of modernity should push us as humanity to value tradition. Instead, we decided to use it as a product, that one can profit from (other side of this deal buys it with a 200\$ price tag and after a day dashes it into trash). However, it is tradition's

constancy and continuity that allows us not only to honour the past, but also to build our future.

Sharing folklore creates a true sense of connection between one another, as well as a sense of stability both in our relationships and in our connection to the universe. What makes it stable as well is the sense of reoccurrence. But what makes it come back is us. As people, we are the only ones who can push towards its preservation.

Yet it no longer seems to matter that the original tradition carried an entirely different meaning. In Christian traditions, Easter represents the resurrection of Christ; the baskets were once a moment of joy after the time of Lent. Filled with simple delicacies (eggs, dairy, chocolate) which symbolized rebirth and renewal, it was an intermission, a modest reward. Going further back, in ancient



cultures, Easter (then referred to as the equinox) marked the transition “from the dark days of winter to the brighter days of spring”. It was a time to pray for a fertile harvest and to acknowledge the possibility of starting anew.

Now, as Easter approaches, social media feeds become flooded with gift suggestions for family members, friends, and loved ones. These presents (usually in the form of a basket) are overflowing with massive piles of candy, expensive skincare, and other ‘must-have’ items. The comment sections beneath these videos - particularly the ones showcasing Easter baskets for tiny daughters and sons – form three distinct groups. First come the horrified realists, demanding to know why a preschooler requires a skincare routine more advanced than their own.

Next arrive the loyal admirers, applauding the influencer as Mother of the Year for curating a basket that rivals a luxury department store display. And finally, there are the quietly devastated viewers, suddenly reevaluating their childhood after realising their own Easter haul consisted of a chocolate bunny and perhaps a pack of crayons.

But maybe the current trends are simply a new tradition, a product of modern culture. Yet, what do they symbolise, if not constant chase for the so awaited ‘new’? Modern Easter baskets no longer represent the beginning of the emergence; instead,



they mark the start of its absence. These are gifts for everyone today, and for no one in a week. It excites briefly, then disappears into a drawer, a bin, or the back of a closet. We cannot speak of a new beginning when we bury ourselves under tons of soon-to-be landfill products. It is not a new tradition but a rootless pattern, repeated over and over again in the latest plastic shell.

The loss of tradition in the basket is replaced by a provisional substitute: a product that holds no value beyond its \$150 price tag and a “run, not walk” TikTok recommendation, that is not going to be trendy and ‘new’ in two weeks’ time. What was once a symbol of renewal has become evidence of exhaustion - not of celebration, but of consumption. And as that shift progresses, tradition loses not only its meaning, but its legacy.

# NESTLE'S ATROCITIES

*HOW NESTLE HAS BEEN SLOWLY POISONING THE WORLD THROUGH THE YEARS - PREFERRED PROFITS OVER PEOPLE*

*Leonid Karpenko*

You've probably heard of Nestle, after all they own over 2000 brands in 186 countries. Some of these include Nescafe, Nespresso, Nesquik, Nestle Purina, ~23% of L'Oreal Paris, water brands in most countries (Nałęczowianka in Poland), and many more. The Nestle brand is seen as a regular mega-corporation however there has been growing concern over their human rights abuses and unethical practices.

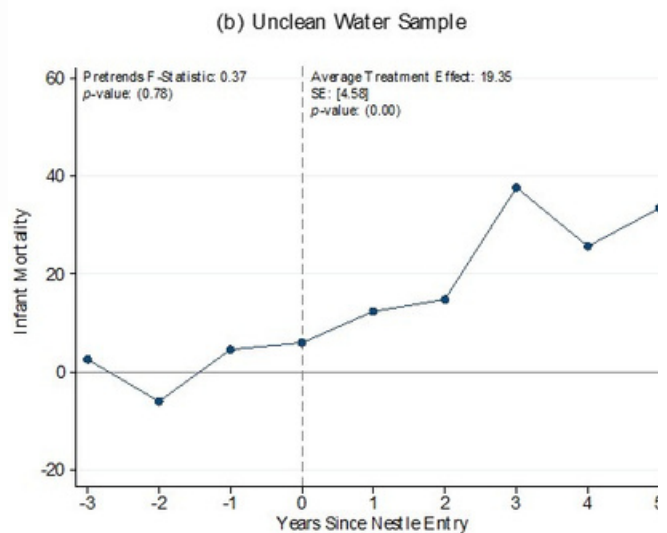


In 2007, multiple groups including the International Baby Food Action Network and Save the Children reported that Nestle's assertive marketing of their baby formula in third world countries was unsafe for children and could lead to deaths.

There were three main problems identified when mothers would feed their children the Nestle baby formula:

- **Sanitation**
- **Nutritional value**
- **Loss of ability to produce milk**

The sanitary risks with the baby formula are mainly due to the need to mix it with water; if said water is contaminated (as is often the case in developing nations) it could poison, and potentially even kill the baby consuming it. The low literacy of these emerging countries only adds to the problem, as many mothers are often unaware of the steps required in proper sterilization of the formula, increasing the risk of contamination. Nestle also doesn't concern itself with what language the country that they're shipping to uses.



The nutritional value in baby formula is also concerning, as it is missing essential nutrients and antibodies present in normal breast milk. The lack of these nutrients is troubling as they prevent diseases such as diarrhea, bacterial meningitis, and ear or respiratory infections. WHO (World Health Organization) has recommended that babies should be breastfed for at least the first 6 months after birth, as breast milk is the ideal food containing the aforementioned nutrients and antibodies needed for the baby.

Nestlé's baby formula is also a critical threat to losing the production of breast milk. Nestlé directly exploits this flaw by dropping off "samples" of baby formula at hospitals and allowing mothers to "test" the baby formula, which leads to a loss of ability to produce milk, causing a growing reliance on Nestlé.

One of the most shocking practices used by Nestlé's is the use of African slaves for cocoa. This issue applies to the chocolate industry as a whole, not just Nestlé. More than 60% of the world's cocoa comes from West African plantations, multiple reports have documented the widespread use of slavery and child labor in these plantations. According to the 2010 documentary "The Dark Side of Chocolate" the children working are typically 12- to 15-year-olds; the Fair Labor Association has criticized Nestlé for not carrying out proper checks.



In 2005 a lawsuit was filed against Nestlé on the behalf of 3 children from Mali. The lawsuit alleged that the children were trafficked to Côte d'Ivoire where they were forced into slavery and experienced beatings on a regular basis at work in a cocoa plantation. A 2016 study published in Fortune magazine found that approximately 2.1 million children in several west African countries still harvest cocoa at unliveable wages (~70 cents per day). These "cheap labor costs" - which are comparable to slavery - allow Nestlé to cut back on costs and earn even more money. However, Nestlé maintains the claim that they don't support child labor.

Nestlé owns most popular brands that we see in everyday life, but behind the scenes they are slowly poisoning and abusing third world countries and their people just to keep up profit margins and reach quota's. People's lives have been ruined or lost due to a corporate supergiant's selfishness and prioritisation of financial gain.

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# THE GRINDSET NEVER STOPS

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*Violeta Pehlivanova*

**M**any people crave validation after completing a task—a simple “Good job” often pushes them to continue working and inspire others. Yet paradoxically, today’s drive to constantly do overshadows merely being in the present. About 62% of the Gen Z population say they feel pressured to stay productive even outside work hours, with teenagers also grinding 24/7. We know this nonstop hustle harms physical and mental health, yet it spreads like wildfire on social media. Issues stemming from engaging in extreme and constant work can cause severe health consequences ranging from chronic sleep deprivation and impaired cognitive function to elevated risk of heart disease and even cancer. Numerous journal articles reach this same conclusion, so why do we let the mindset persist amongst us?

## **LOCK IN**

Grinding—or “hustle”—culture refers to the societal belief that nonstop productivity defines success and personal worth. Common sense screams the harms: constant stress is causing burnout epidemics left and right and sleep deprivation is making error rates spike by 30%. Yet people still urge each other to “lock in” and power through. Are they victims of the media-publicised “benefits” like Andrew Tate’s rants on 18-hour days? Or rather their brains have turned to mush due to brain rotted media consumption, shredding their focus span to 8 seconds?



Either way, people promoting this lifestyle rarely recognise the harm they are causing to their own well-being, trapping themselves in a validation-seeking cycle.

## **LOSING YOURSELF**

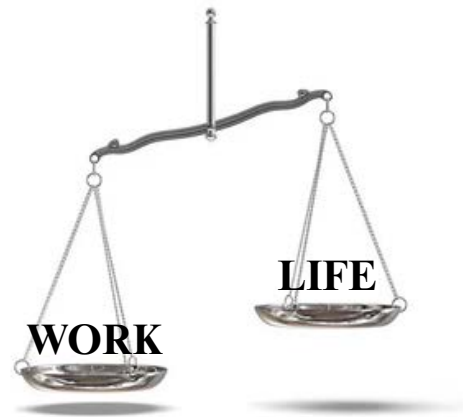
This mindset does not just exhaust the body—it wears away one’s identity. Consider a university student filming “day-in-the-life” videos at 5 a.m., blurring work, study, and self until their personality fades into a productivity model. Following influencers’, no-quit mantras of waking up at dawn and cold plunging to improve efficiency ultimately leads to detachment—living by borrowed notions instead of your own dreams. Relationships suffer (missed dinners with friends), hobbies vanish (no time for reading or sports), and joy becomes tied to the completion of a task checklist. It is a personal crisis masked as inspirational ambition.

***CAPITALIST ENCOURAGEMENT***

Blaming social media, however, misses the bigger picture—corporations add fuel to the fire only for profit. They target impressionable youths to advertise their products and ultimately fuel the capitalist machine. Think Longchamp bags and Stanley cups—brands selling “office essentials” via sponsored hauls. It is not solely the influencers who establish and keep a trend popular: companies ensure longevity by planting ads in “morning routine” videos. This ties grinding to capitalism, with the encouragement to work beyond contract hours, post on TikTok, and feed the enterprise. While working overtime should always be rewarded, businesses have begun building burnout into their systems, so profit is certain, turning humans into revenue streams.

***EFFECTIVENESS,  
OR LACK THEREOF***

Most people will praise work ethic and, in the same breath remind you to take breaks. This denying of one’s problems is not uncommon to humans and has never been; however, why do we continue to allow such opportunities for burnout when action can be taken? Sweden’s 4-day workweek pilot studies provided answers for the alternative: 71% reported higher job



satisfaction, productivity rose significantly in some firms, and well-being seemed to improve (fewer sick days). However, the country experienced some financial hits—like \$120,000 extra monthly costs for staffing stalled worldwide adoption—a luxury not every economy can afford amid inflation and stagnation. Due to inability for a systematic fix, individual solutions become key as likely nobody will tell you how to draw lines between your work and personal life.

***RECLAIM YOUR GRIND***

Giving your all does not mean drowning in work for mere fleeting validation. Excessive productivity only serves to create a distraction from every other aspect of one’s life. Following the advice of influencers can lead to not only the loss of personality, but also complete detachment from one’s identity by consuming and blindly living by another person’s notions. It all eventually returns to the capitalist machine—everyone should ensure that their motivation to work stays individual and separate from their personal life, while still remaining enjoyable. Constant work is not a pursuit that should be praised and encouraged but rather managed and kept at the back of one’s mind.

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# LEFT ON DRY LAND

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*THE TRAGEDY OF JAN HEWELIUSZ FERRY IN THE NEW TV SERIES  
COMMENTS ON THE SINKING OF TRUST IN POLAND OF THE 90S*

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*Daria Wierzbicka*

**P**icture yourself standing on a ferry a ferry deck in the middle of the night. The wind is blowing, the sea is rough and you know the Baltic Sea in winter is deadly. People around you are not tourists looking for adventure. They are workers, sailors, military, drivers, parents. To travel from Świnoujście to Ystad, Sweden, you buy a ticket, step on board, and trust people in charge that they know what they are doing. Passengers do not inspect the engine, question the captain's skills, or check the weather conditions themselves- they trust that someone else has done it. In January 1993, that trust cost people their lives.

*Heweliusz*, the recently released series (2025), directed by Jan Holoubek is inspired by the tragic sinking of the Polish ferry MS Jan Heweliusz- one of the most devastating marine disasters in Polish History. The story behind *Heweliusz* is not only about a shipwreck but also about trust, insight into the 1990s and fragility through perspectives of those left behind, especially women.

The early 1990s was a confusing time in Poland. The fall of communism brought hope but also instability. The country was rebuilding its political and economic systems. Institutions were still new or poorly organised. Rules existed but were not always followed. When people boarded the ferry,

they did not think they were in danger. Like most passengers, they believed that safety checks had been done by someone responsible. *Heweliusz* reminds us that trusting others with our lives is something we do every day- often without realising it.

Women especially play a significant role in this story. Some of the people who died were female sailors, working in a male-dominated profession where women were rarely acknowledged or valued. Their deaths were often mentioned briefly and without attention of lack of protection they had in such jobs.

At the same time, many women who were left behind on land- wives, mothers, daughters- were forced to confront different kinds of survival. Many of them



lost their primary source of income over night and left without financial security. Some families had to fight in court just to receive minimal compensation which was insufficient to support their family long term. Others never received any form of payment. Many women were forced to find work while raising children while dealing with grief.

Aneta Kaczkowska played by Justyna Wasilewska portrays these hardships. She is the widow of a truck driver lost in the disaster and the series shows her grief in a quiet but realistic way. She deals with everyday struggles while dealing with pain. We see her sorting her husband's belongings, worrying about money and even selling her and her children's possessions to survive. She was left completely alone with little support from others. She doesn't receive help from institutions or support from the community. Viewers watch her fight and take care of her kid while rebuilding her life. Although she is an ordinary woman with little possessions, she refuses to compromise or get involved in dishonest deals. She is driven by justice and a need to know the truth. Through Aneta, the series represents forgotten victims and families, portraying the struggle for dignity and recognition.



Another one of the most important characters is Jolanta Ułasiewicz. As the wife of the captain blamed for the disaster, her narrative takes place through confrontation. Early scenes show her absorbing the public's accusation, watching media turning her private grief into a public issue. Later, she bravely faces journalists and refuses people to treat her husband as a scapegoat. She fights to protect her husband's honour and to tell the full truth about what happened.

Together, these women are the emotional fundamentals of the series. Aneta's story shows the harsh reality faced by ordinary families in early-1990s Poland, dealing with grief, financial instability, complicated paperwork. Jolanta's story focuses on the moral side of the tragedy - showing how media and public opinion can turn private suffering into public blame.



One of the most touching scenes in Heweliusz shows families identifying victims. People push past each other, call out names and search for the bodies of their loved ones.

Through simple but powerful scenes, selling belongings, speaking to officials, listening to radio news that accuse loved ones, and searching for truth - the show turns a historical disaster into a personal and human experience.



The journey to Sweden was meant to be a routine. Instead, it showed how fragile life was during Poland's transition time. The end of communism brought freedom to travel and work abroad but it also exposed dangers to people without proper protection or liability. Moreover, institutions were reorganising and procedures were not always clear or properly enforced.



Heweliusz reminds you that history is not only about political change. It is about real people standing on a real ship while making life-changing decisions in uncertain times. It reflects real life in which many families must cope not only with loss, but also with confusion and lack of clear information while searching for answers. It makes us remember the people on board of that ship, not just as numbers, but as individuals trying to survive in a world that is changing faster than they could adapt.

# POP CULTURE UPDATES

## *THE OFFICIAL DIARY OF A FANGIRL*

*Zofia Kowalska*

Dear reader, Your favourite fangirl is back, thriving, and delivering. We're only a few months into 2026, yet we already seem to be drowning in rumours, announcements, scandals, and the occasional successes if the stars align. From Harry Styles announcing a new album, through Timothée Chalamet's latest undoubtedly iconic endeavours, to the long-awaited Grammy awards, this piece is a tour through all the moments that *matter*. Hope you enjoy, x.

### ***THE KING OF POP IS BACK!***

It's been a very long, very painful wait since the last time we have heard any new music from Harry Styles in 2022. Well, March 6th has changed *everything*. Yes, you read that right. Styles' fourth studio album has been officially released under the glorious name *Kiss All The Time*. *Disco, Occasionally*. Between the disco

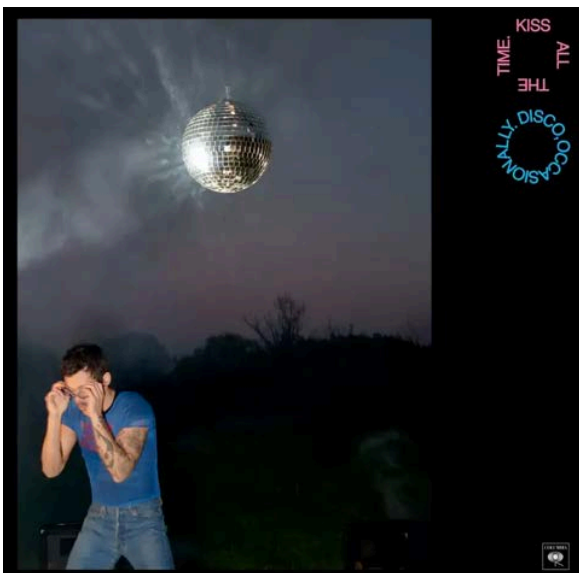
ball on the cover, Harry's look, and the swirly font, the visuals perfectly mirror the vibe of the songs. If that isn't a flawless album title and cover combo, then I don't know what is.

At midnight on January 23rd, Harry surprised us with the release of the album's lead single *Aperture*—a track that feels like Donna Summer through a modern lens, with echoes of Lorde and a subtle Djo-inspired twist. The result is nostalgic, euphoric, and impossibly addictive. *Aperture* lets the light in.

Before the announcement, album was teased through a global billboard campaign, including Warsaw, with phrases like “we belong together” and “see you very soon.” And if that wasn't enough, the *Together, Together* Tour was announced, and the presales started shortly after the single release: 30 nights in New York alone, with additional dates in London and Amsterdam. Unfortunately, Warsaw did not appear on Harry's schedule—at least not yet. However, there is still hope for another leg of the tour once his residency wraps up. It turns out that Harry missed us just as much as we have missed him, after all. So yes, Mr. Styles, I suppose we *will* be seeing each other very soon, on tour.

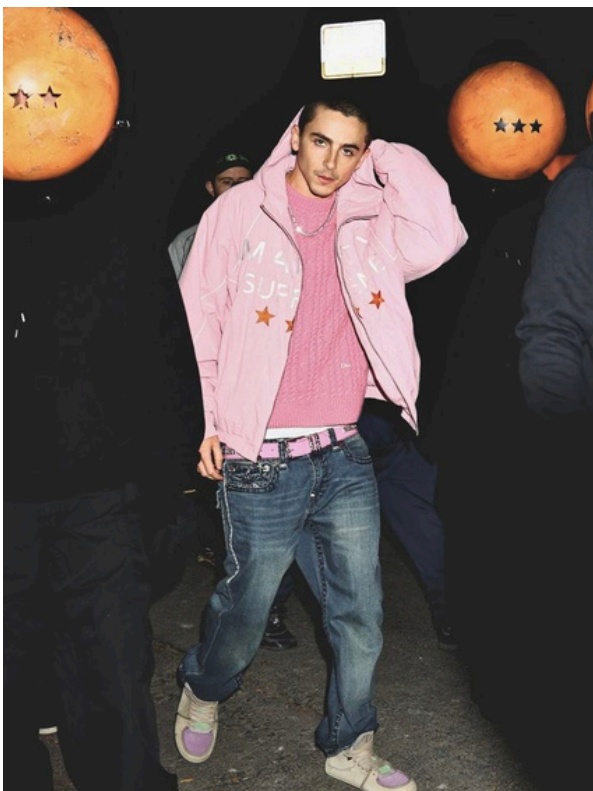
### ***MARTY SUPREME: THE EVOLUTION OF TIMOTHÉE CHALAMET***

Like many, I fell in love with Timothée Chalamet after his devastatingly beautiful performance in *Call Me by Your Name*



and have remained, admittedly, a little obsessed ever since. 2026 opened on a cinematic high with the strongly anticipated premiere of *Marty Supreme*. Well, I don't want to spoil too much, but... If I'd have to sum it up in a single sentence: I completely understand why Timothée has built an entire personality around this film. If I were behind that performance, you wouldn't hear me talking about anything else either.

But the phenomenon, which was far more interesting for me to observe, was the drastic shift in Timothée's entire persona. The once androgynous, soft-spoken French boy with curls and poetic eyes, he became... Exactly, who even is Timothée Chalamet today? Does calling his own performance "top level sh\*t" make him pretentious, ungrateful, maybe even a little bit insufferable? Or maybe he's just finally taking appreciation of his own craftsmanship?



Although Timothée's career was always carefully observed by the public eye, the spotlight has been particularly blinding during the aggressively loud promotion of *Marty Supreme* and the swirling alter-ego rumours surrounding EsDeeKid. Some fans have pointed out a relatively minor resemblance with Chalamet's eyes and the rapper's—conveniently, EsDeeKid does not reveal his full face. When asked directly about the situation, Timothée responded with a plain: "No comment... You'll see, all due time." And well, eventually we did.

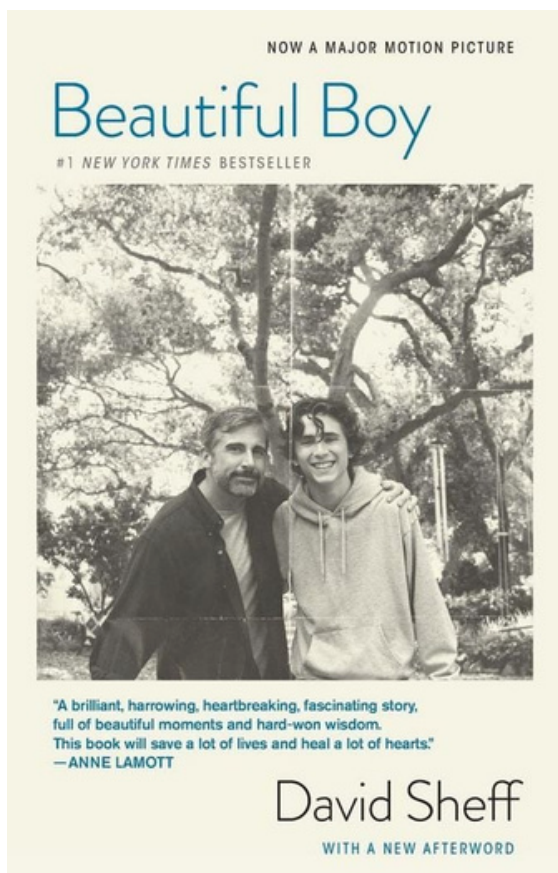
The conspiracies were officially disregarded when *4Rows Remix* featuring Timothée Chalamet officially dropped. The feature sparked controversy, largely due to its unapologetically explicit language. But let's be serious—what exactly were people expecting from a rap track? Beyond the lyrics, critics were quick to describe Timothée as brash, cocky, even overly sexual.



There is, however, a clear difference between changing one's public image and drifting into plain ignorance. In a recent interview at the University of Texas,

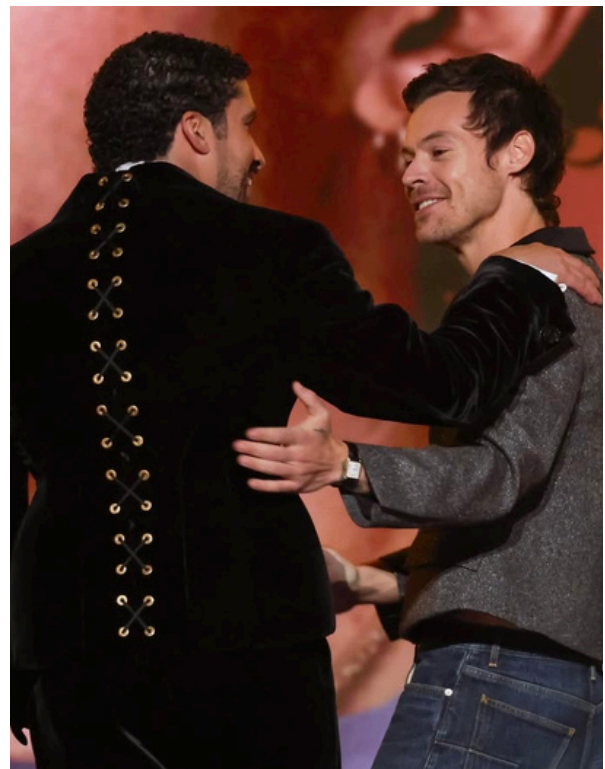
Timothée managed to embarrass himself by casually remarking, “I don’t want to be working in ballet, or opera, or things where it’s like, ‘Hey, keep this thing alive, even though like no one cares about this anymore.’” Speechless, honestly. The level of disregard from someone who once spoke about art with such reverence is truly staggering. Timothée “What is this earth without art? Just a rock” Chalamet is clearly gone and buried.

At some point, certain things simply become indefensible. Many people seem to say that it’s “not that deep”. Maybe it isn’t. Some things don’t have to be particularly relevant to be heartbreaking. Referencing the great film *Beautiful Boy* directed by Felix Van Groeningen: “Have you seen my beautiful boy? Tell him I miss him.”



### 2026 GRAMMY AWARDS: RECAP

This year, the Grammys weren’t exactly revolutionary, but they certainly had their moments. Bad Bunny took home the most relevant prize of the night, Album of the Year, for *DeBÍ TiRAR Más FOTOS*. During his acceptance speech, he shifted the focus from trophies to politics, declaring: “Before I say thanks to God, I’m gonna say: ICE out!,” which carried a particularly powerful echo in a room full of people that oftentimes prefer to stay quiet. That is what made the 68th Grammy awards worth remembering—it was less about trophies and constant celebrity glaze, and more about unity and courage to speak the truth.



Song of the Year went to Billie Eilish for *Wildflower*, a win that felt like quiet redemption after last year’s edition. Meanwhile, the fiercely competitive Best New Artist category was secured by Olivia Dean, permanently securing her well-deserved spot in the music industry.

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# STEAM'S REFORMATION OF THE GAMING INDUSTRY

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*Jan Janczar*

## **HOW WILL THE GAMING INDUSTRY BE AFFECTED BY STEAM'S NEW PRODUCT?**

For over two decades Xbox and PlayStation have dominated the console gaming industry while competing for the loyalty and money of their customers. In a recent turn of events 'Steam' — a prominent PC gaming platform announced the launch of their own console called the Steam Machine, scheduled to be released later this year. This new product risks to completely rearrange the traditional order of console gaming.

## **HISTORY OF THE CONSOLE WARS**

'The console wars' as we know them today started sometime in the early 2000s with the release of the PlayStation 2 (2000) and the original Xbox (2001). This was the time when Xbox took Sega's place as one of the 'big three' console producers. At this point, Nintendo was still in the 'top 2' producers however, following the failure of the Wii U in 2012, Xbox replaced Nintendo cementing their rivalry with PlayStation. Every few years, each company releases a new console, which is then heavily compared to the products released by rival brands in terms of sales and parameters. Within the last 3 generations, PlayStation is clearly the one achieving higher successes, selling around 300 million units in the past two decades.



## **BACKGROUND ON STEAM**

Steam is currently the biggest PC gaming platform out there. It has roughly 147 million active monthly users, who can play any of the more than 100 thousand different games offered by the platform. Steam allows small indie (independent) game developers to compete with large triple A studios on the top rankings. This phenomenon can be seen in the massive success of Stardew Valley — a pixelated independent farming simulator which as of the 20th of January 2026, sits at 11th on the top charts of games played ahead of massive triple A Projects such as Cyberpunk 2077 or Elden Ring. Steam also provides a way for gamers to access both Xbox (e.g. Microsoft Flight Simulator or Starfield) and PlayStation (God of War: Ragnarok or The Last of Us) exclusive games without necessarily having to buy entirely separate consoles. This makes gaming much more accessible and affordable. That is precisely the reason why the release of the Steam Machine

threatens to lessen the need and desire to buy Xbox or PlayStation consoles in the future, as you will be able to play more games on one device. All games already owned by the user will be transferred from their gaming account to the Steam Machine. This would come with a potential price increase of about \$100-\$200 (the official price has not yet been announced) as compared to other consoles available from Xbox and PlayStation which cost about \$550.

## **FUTURE IMPACT AND INFLUENCE**

Customers who purchase the Steam Machine will have access to a much wider range of games than those who buy of the traditional giants. This could mean that some of the more dedicated gamers will be willing to dish out the extra money for the ability to play all of their Steam games and more in one place. One other aspect of console gaming which is currently an inconvenience for users is the fact that online multiplayer is locked behind an additional subscription. While it is not yet clear whether the Steam Machine will have this feature available for free or not, the odds seem to be hinting at it being available to everyone.

## **POSSIBLE FLAWS**

Some have raised their concerns about the new product, as they worry about what would happen if one company had such much control over the gaming industry and market. This amount of influence would be dangerously close to becoming a monopoly, which worries the gamers. They know that



when having near-full control of a market, a company can change prices or anything else on a whim, and others will not be able to do much about it. For now, the gaming community can only hope that this dark scenario will not come true.

## **WILL THE CHANGES HAVE A REAL IMPACT?**

Xbox and PlayStation are and have been the main console manufacturers for quite a long time. This may change soon as Steam will soon release a platform of their own. This new product will have both pros and cons to it; however, I believe the comfort of having your entire gaming collection available in one place outweighs the potential risk of a monopolisation. This privatisation may likely not even happen since the console will have a very steep price point making it less affordable.

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# DOES NUREMBERG PREVENT THE PAST FROM REPEATING?

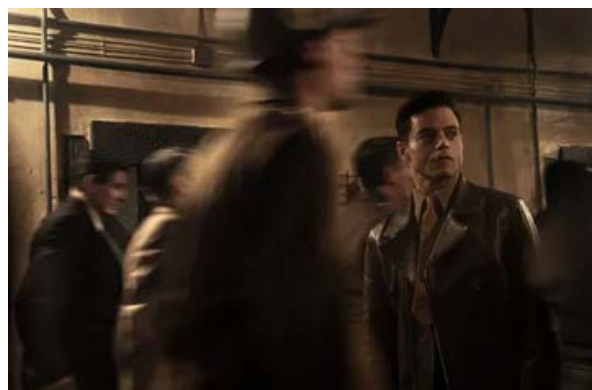
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*Helena Bruździak*

The 2025 film *Nuremberg*, starring Rami Malek and Russell Crowe, revisits the historic Nuremberg Trials with a clear purpose: not just to recount what happened after World War II, but to ask whether remembering is enough to stop history from repeating itself. Rather than focusing on graphic depictions of Nazi crimes, the film centres on responsibility, morality, and the uncomfortable truth about how ordinary people can commit extraordinary evil.

The movie follows the psychologist Kelley played by Rami Malek who is meant to study the highest-ranking officials of the Nazi regime, getting uncomfortably close with the second in command to Hitler: Herman Göring. The movie is based on the true story of a psychologist who wants to write a book on why evil exists — based on his relationship with the Nazi commander.

One of the film's strongest ideas is its portrayal of the banality of evil. The Nazis on trial are shown not as inhuman monsters driven purely by madness, but as men who once lived ordinary lives, made career decisions, followed orders, and justified their actions through ideology and obedience. The audience's instinct to distance themselves from the perpetrators is challenged by the approach. Through emphasis of their humanity, *Nuremberg* suggests that evil is



not an anomaly of the past, but a possibility rooted in ordinary choices.

This idea of the 'banality of evil' is most clearly explored through the psychologist's character arc. Over the course of the film, we see Kelley gradually becoming more unsure of himself as he slowly develops a relationship (and even a friendship) with the high-ranking Nazi Hermann Göring. This dynamic is arguably the film's greatest strength, as it places the audience directly inside Kelley's moral uncertainty. As his professional role begins to blur with personal connection, the film forces viewers to confront how empathy and familiarity can weaken moral clarity.

Russell Crowe's performance as Göring plays a major role in this effect and has rightly received widespread praise. He gives the character a genuine charm and likeability, making Göring unsettlingly charismatic rather than openly monstrous. Scenes showing his vulnerability, as well as moments involving his seemingly sweet and normal family, add emotional complexity and mirror Kelley's own inner conflict. However, this is also where the film's most significant limitation emerges.

Rami Malek's performance is particularly effective in capturing this tension. His character embodies quiet intensity and internal conflict, forcing viewers to reflect rather than simply judge. Russell Crowe, on the other hand, brings authority and moral weight, grounding the film in the seriousness of the legal and ethical questions at stake. Together, their performances prevent the story from becoming a simple good versus evil narrative.

Although *Nuremberg* clearly attempts to connect past horrors to present-day risks, these parallels remain mostly implicit. The film trusts the audience to make the connection on their own, which adds subtlety but also limits accessibility. Viewers without strong historical or political awareness may miss the relevance entirely, reducing the film's effectiveness as a preventative warning rather than a reflective one.

In terms of tone, the film remains largely restrained, avoiding sensationalism or shock-driven storytelling. This restraint



gives the narrative credibility and seriousness, but it also creates emotional distance. The lack of visceral impact means that the warning may resonate intellectually rather than emotionally, which limits its power to provoke action or cause lasting discomfort.

Overall, *Nuremberg* functions as a thoughtful but imperfect warning. It successfully reminds audiences that the perpetrators of history's worst crimes were human beings. However, its narrow focus, subtle modern parallels, and restrained tone prevent it from fully confronting how easily similar patterns can re-emerge today. The film ultimately suggests that remembering the past is essential—but on its own, it may not be enough to stop it from repeating.

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# THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS AS MOVIES

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*Lena Jankowska*

**T**he seven deadly sins – lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy, and pride – have haunted planet Earth for over 20 centuries. They were seen as behaviours that could lead away from God and are

interpreted as the original sins that have enough power to start a chain reaction of many other misdeeds. But what if these ancient warnings were brought to life in films? Movies have a unique power to show how humans behave, showing extreme emotions, obsession, rage, desire, apathy and more. We can explore and identify each sin by looking through the lenses of cinema.

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## 1) LUST

Lust is often interpreted as an intense desire or obsession that can often cloud judgment and control, but “The Great Gatsby” reveals it is much more dangerous. The main character’s, Jay Gatsby’s interest for Daisy is not just romantic, it is obsessive. It consumes him. Everything he does, from earning a fortune to his extravagant parties, exists to recreate a moment from his past. At this point, so many years later, Daisy has become only an idea in his head and his passion for her is mainly powered by lust. Leonardo DiCaprio plays a man trapped, unable to accept reality. Gatsby doesn’t love Daisy as she is, he loves the idea of her. The beginning romanticises lust by the use of dreamy visuals, until the bubble bursts and it depicts lust not as a physical temptation but as a destructive emotional fixation.



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## 2) GLUTTONY

Gluttony is overindulgence, taking more than you need. “The Hunger Games” turns gluttony into a political metaphor. While the Capitol (the ruling district) drowns in luxury, extravagant fashion, and endless consumption, its subjects, the other twelve districts, suffer. This imbalance a major theme in the movie and is disturbing to watch. They have pills to help them throw up, just so they can eat more at parties, further emphasizing their overconsumption. But gluttony is not only about food alone, it’s also about power, excess and morally blinding. It’s everywhere, in architecture and attitude. It also shows how indulgence has the ability to become a weakness. Gluttony is also a symbol of moral decay, showing how a society can rot, and is very much applicable to current societies and countries, especially where wealth and suffering often exist side by side. For example, in Venezuela years of corruption, economic mismanagement and the imbalance of power led to hypermigration, food shortages and loss of trust in public institutions.



### 3) GREED

Jordan Belfort, the main character of “Wolf of Wall Street” is if greed had been given human form. The movie is loud, chaotic and excessive, mirroring the endless dissatisfaction of Jordan. Money is never enough. Success, no matter how big, is never satisfying. In his world wealth is addicting. But the higher the risks, the bigger the consequences. What makes the movie so compelling is how seductive and enviable ‘greed’ appears at first. That makes his collapse: the loss of his company, money and reputation, so powerful to watch. It is like a car crash, you know you should look away but you physically can’t.



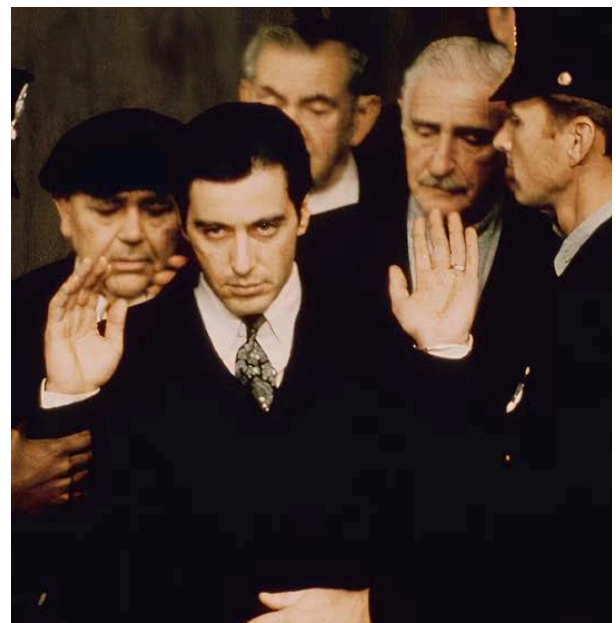
### 4) SLOTH

Sloth, laziness or apathy is one of the most common sins. Woody Allen manages to capture it in “A Rainy Day in New York” a slow, almost nostalgic movie. Gatsby, the main character, drifts through the city with no real direction, hiding behind romantic ideals of what life should feel like. Rather than focusing on his promising future he allows events to unfold around him, avoiding responsibility. The constant rain slows the pace of the movie and is a sort of pathetic fallacy that mirrors his feelings. Sloth here is not about idleness but about refusal to mature and face reality. The film shows sloth as seductive and poetic, showing how passivity can feel beautiful while preventing progress.



### 5) WRATH

While wrath is typically described as uncontrollable anger or rage, “the Godfather” shows it as a rather quiet and controlled force, making it far more dangerous. Michael Corleone’s transformation is the best example. At the beginning he alienates himself from his family but once wrath enters his life through betrayal and loss he is changed completely. His anger is not compulsive, like his brother’s Sonny who got killed due to his temper, but it’s planned and calculated. What makes the Godfather, so unsettling is how morally reasonable wrath appears. It is framed as necessary, almost honourable, showing the nuances of how wrath can manifest. By the end of the movie, wrath stripped Michael of humanity and empathy, ultimately destroying him.



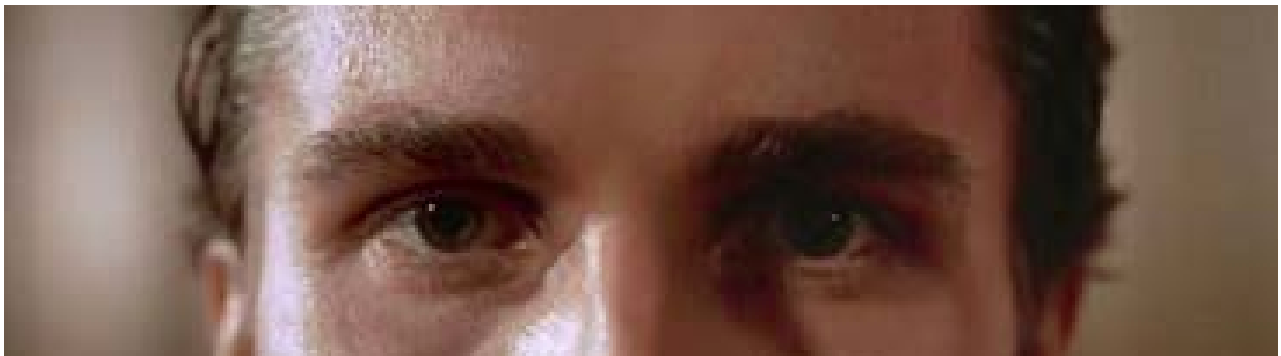


## 6) ENVY

Envy is jealousy of what others have, wishing to have their success, possessions, or qualities. Envy is the leading theme of the “Black Swan”. It is everywhere, in Nina’s thoughts, movements and looks. The main character is surrounded by competition, fuelling her need to be perfect, turning impossible expectations into self-destruction. The dark visuals create a feeling of being trapped in Nina’s twisted mind. She hallucinates and at the end goes mad. Envy is a force that doesn’t need an enemy because it creates one from within.

## 7) PRIDE

Patrick Bateman in “American Psycho” is obsessed with status, appearance and superiority. He is so obsessed, he is swallowed by pride. Beneath his ‘flawless’ exterior he is cruel and empty. His pride allows to dehumanize others, seeing them as objects rather than individuals. The movie exposes pride as hollow and fragile, masking deeply hidden insecurities. Watching the “American Psycho” is unsettling, not only because of the bloody moments but it also shows how an initially innocent emotion, pride, can turn into a destructive, murderous force.



# THE 2025 FORMULA 1 DRIVERS' CHAMPIONSHIP

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*A SEASON THAT REDEFINED THE GRID*

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*Kesaria Nakani*

## **UNEXPECTED START OF THE SEASON**

The last race of F1's 2025 season was one for the books. Abu Dhabi Grand Prix did not just end this year's championship but rather it also marked the end of Max Verstappen's four-year reign and the beginning of a new era led by Lando Norris. Verstappen's long-standing championship streak was finally broken as Norris claimed his first World Championship title, becoming the first British world champion in five years and delivering McLaren their first drivers' title since Lewis Hamilton's win in 2008.

At the start of the season, many fans and experts around the world expected the usual agenda from this year's championship which would consist of regular Red Bull dominance, Max taking home his 5th championship and typical bad race finishes from Ferrari. However, the Australian Grand Prix had a different story to tell (apart from Ferrari which barely even made it to top 10 at the finish).

It was there that, then 25-year-old, Lando Norris claimed an unexpected race victory, opening the season with McLaren splashing across headlines



worldwide and signaling to the F1 world that the balance of power might finally be shifting.

While the results of the first race did not seem extraordinary at first glance, it most definitely shifted the mood regarding the future development of the championship. This excited fans and viewers all around the world as now it became much more unpredictable to guess the results of each Grand Prix.

That longing for fresh drama was not new. Since Lewis Hamilton lost his 8th world title to Max Verstappen in 2021 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, the F1 world has been completely dominated by Red Bull. Every drivers championship since 2021 was won by Max Verstappen, Red Bull team also dominated the constructor's championship

and almost every race ended with a victory for either Verstappen or Sergio Perez and as much as this was exciting for Red Bull supporters, fans were tired of watching the same agenda every week.

## ***RISING CONFLICT***

After the Australian GP, McLaren struck again at the Chinese Grand Prix, but this time, it was not Lando Norris on top. His teammate, Oscar Piastri, claimed victory, signaling that the team's dominance would not rest on a single driver. In the following races, both Piastri and Norris frequently battled at the front, trading wins and podiums, showcasing McLaren's strong comeback.

However, with Max Verstappen removed from the championship battle, a new tension emerged – not between Red Bull and McLaren, but within McLaren itself. The rivalry between Norris and Piastri intensified, as each driver sought to make themselves the team leader. What had begun as a promising season for the “papaya team” now turned into an internal battle, adding a new layer of intensity to F1's most unpredictable season in years.

## ***THE HEATED RIVALRY***

Throughout the 2025 season, McLaren's title fight was as internal as it was against rivals. While Lando Norris often received most of the strategic priority and spotlight in media coverage, Oscar Piastri quietly racked up strong performances, frequently challenging his teammate for wins and points. However, the subtle signs suggested the team and the Principal Zack Brown, often favored

Norris in critical moments, from slightly more aggressive pit strategies to key race calls such as giving up lead position which gave the idea that team clearly wanted to protect Lando Norris rather than to treat the both drivers equally.

During the 2025 Singapore GP, Lando Norris made an aggressive move on the first lap that resulted in wheel-to-wheel contact with teammate Oscar Piastri. The incident clearly showed Norris's eagerness to be number one instead of a team player. Piastri's frustration was visible on team radio: *“That wasn't very team like... Are we cool with Lando just barging me out the way?”* The incident was ruled as a racing incident, but it highlighted the growing tension and rivalry within McLaren, even amid its strong season.



### ***UNEXPECTED COMEBACK***

After a difficult start of the season, Max Verstappen seemed to be out of the fight for the championship, considering after the Dutch GP where he was 104 points behind the championship lead, a deficit so large everyone seemed convinced he was finally out of the championship fight after 4 long years of constant domination. However, he seemed to prove everyone wrong after coming back stronger than ever from the last half of the season.

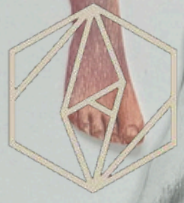
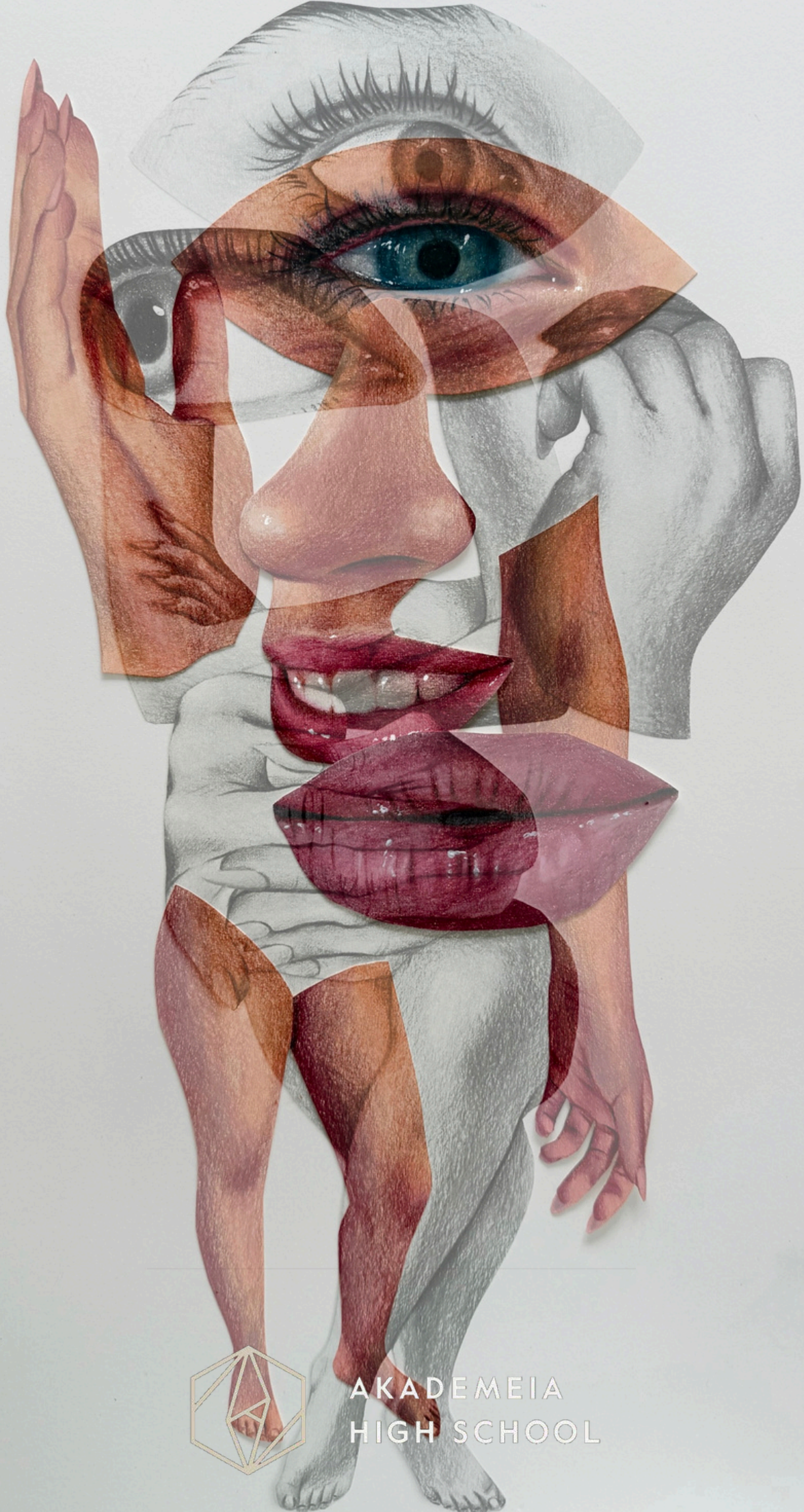
As Red Bull introduced new upgrades and Max's performance started improving, it led to his remarkable run resulting in winning 5 out of last 8 races in the final stretch of the championship, including wins in Las Vegas, Qatar and finally culminating in Abu Dhabi.



Despite Red Bull's efforts, Max ended up losing the championship battle, resulting in Lando Norris becoming the first time World Champion of F1 in 2025, only being 2 points ahead of Verstappen, while being 13 points in front of his main competition his teammate Oscar Piastri.

### ***START OF A NEW ERA***

This season highlighted the end of the Red Bull reign and marked the beginning of a new era. From internal rivalries, dramatic accidents on and off the tracks, the 2025 season progressed in ways most people would have not imagined. Now all that is left for us is to see what this new era will bring for the world of F1 and its fans all around the world, especially considering new regulations and the changing contrast of the grid.



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