



ISSUE 19

*June 2025*

THE

AKADEMIA

POST



# EDITOR'S NOTE

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To recall Heraclitus' saying, you never step into the same school year twice... and here's another one running its course. I hope stepping out of it you feel more nourished, equipped, and refreshed. Yes, refreshed. Though, most likely, you associate this idea more with the upcoming summer break. Nevertheless, I would like to propose a look back at the 24/25 school year through this lens. What new friends have you made? What new knowledge have you gained? What new experiences have shaped how you look at the world?

Take a look through the various articles to feel, once again, the school's spirit and decide what you will leave and what you will take on the next stage of your High School journey. In some ways, this is a more appropriate time for our reflections than the New Year's Eve. This issue aims at aiding you in your transition. With that in mind – embrace the well-deserved summer and we will see you on the other side of it.

Read and belong,  
Sonia Blank  
Chief Editor



## MEET THE TEAM!

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Aniela Zeszuta Y12

### **Back Cover:**

Aniela Zeszuta Y12

# EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

## *GRADUATION OF THE CLASS OF 2025 & FUNDRAISER*

*Sonia Blank*

The turn of spring into summer at Akademeia is always full of our traditional celebrations such as Graduation and the Fundraiser for our scholars. Both of these events bring our community together and let our values shine bright. Enjoy some of the images from those special days to feel it all again.





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# ZYGMUN

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## *Julek Franco Janecki*

Despite the gloomy weather last March, ten brave Akademeia High School students conquered the diplomatic stage at Zygmunt Model United Nations. Decked out in suits, we packed into a bus and drove out to the American School of Warsaw where the event would take place.

Model United Nations conferences are amazing student-led initiatives aimed to mirror the bodies, responsibilities, procedures, and members of the real United Nations. They provide an opportunity to foster productive dialogue and work together towards a resolution that aims to solve the issues at hand. The skill of nuanced conversation is needed now more than ever in this exponentially polarizing world.

Over the course of four days, we engaged in vigorous debates, composed fancy and serious resolutions and participated in humiliating punishments (cue Olek dancing in the middle of his committee). At the end of it, all of us had new friends, improved debating and leadership skills, and gratitude for the opportunity to be there.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Mr. Brendan McClintock-Ryan and Mr. Peter Davidson for coming with us and allowing us to take part in this fantastic conference.



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# BEHIND THE MICROPHONE

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## *SCHOOL BAND UPDATE*

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*Anastazja Rybakiewicz*

**T**he Akademeia School Band is primarily recognized for its performances at internal events such as open days, charity auctions, Christmas concerts, end of year ceremonies, and graduations – however there is so much more we don't know about the endeavors of the band!

Every year, the band performs on many external occasions aimed at helping our local community such as WOŚP or various fairs. Most recently, on the 26th of May, to honor the special occasion of Mother's Day, the School Band paid a visit to the Wilanów Alzheimer's Centre, where it performed a charming repertoire of both English and Polish songs.



Here's what the School Band members have to say about the event:

**Anastazja:** "This was a truly exceptional event thanks to the heart-warming atmosphere created by our audience. We were greeted warmly immediately after arriving and could feel the excitement when we entered the stage. What touched my heart most was how engaged everybody was – clapping, dancing and singing along"



**Zoja:** "Each performance at the same stage in Alzheimer's Center reminds me of the unique perspectives we all hold and how the language of music bridges them all. The experience is unparalleled, and the unanimous joy never fails to make everyone's day a little brighter."

**Olga:** "The generational differences have been overcome as they got to know some of our famous tunes, and we got to know some of theirs. Who would have thought that grandmas have this much vigor. It was lovely to see the gradual smiles appearing on their faces as their favorite songs were played."

**Maks:** "The best part of the entire performance was the finale where most of the audience got up from their seats and started dancing and singing "Tyle słońca w całym mieście" with us in front of the stage. It was a true pleasure to feel the connection between us performers and the audience"

**Irene:** "It was extremely fulfilling to be able to visit the center and spread the positive energy through doing something I love"

The next event the School Band is preparing for is the end-of-year ceremony, which will mark the beginning of a well-deserved break. Hopefully, the summer vibes will fill our heads and hearts with new melodies.

# — INTERVIEW WITH — MS ESTHER WÓJCICKI

*Lena Szlaga*

**O**n Friday, the 16th of May, I had the opportunity to speak with a true pioneer in education and journalism - Esther Wojcicki. Ms. Wojcicki has spent over 30 years transforming how students learn at Palo Alto High School, where she founded one of the largest high school journalism programmes in the world. She's the author of two books, one of which is the bestseller 'How to Raise Successful People'. She is the creator of the T.R.I.C.K. philosophy — Trust, Respect, Independence, Collaboration, and Kindness — values that empower children and change classrooms. In this interview, Ms. Wojcicki and I dove into topics such as the philosophy of education and parenting, the future of journalism, and the role of AI in learning.

**LS: To start, I wanted to ask you about the Palo Alto High School's Media Arts programme. It started small with 20 students and over time it has grown to over 600 students. What do you think were the biggest challenges that you had to work through whilst it became popular?**

EW: Well, the number one challenge was working with the other teachers and the administration because they didn't want to give students such a big voice. I wanted to give students the right to publish about issues that matter to them.



**LS: What do you think are the biggest takeaways from the books you have written?**

EW: Well, the number one takeaway is how to treat students differently than they do in most schools. I have an acronym, T.R.I.C.K., which stands for Trust, Respect, Independence, Collaboration and Kindness and I say that those are the most important things for schools to do for students. When you trust students, they learn to trust themselves, the same thing for respect. Part of the reason that a lot of students don't trust themselves is because the school doesn't trust them. Most schools in the US and public schools are always checking if

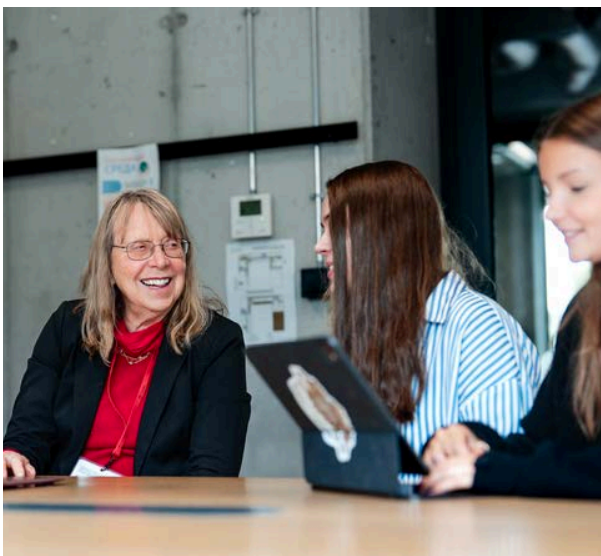


the students are cheating. If the students feel mistrusted, then they will probably say to themselves 'Well, if they don't trust me now, what doesn't really matter, I can do whatever I want'. I think it's a bad, bad situation.

I respected the students' ideas, and their ideas were crazy sometimes. One of the most recent ideas is that the students decided they wanted to start a magazine about food. Just food. And they wanted to name the magazine CHOMP.

**LS: So you think the most important thing from the T.R.I.C.K. is the respect part or do you think all of them are?**

EW: They're all really important because you have to give students independence. A lot of public schools give them zero independence because they don't trust them. Instead of the teacher being a dictator, which is true in most schools, they should collaborate with the students and give them some control. Kindness is so important because students will forget what you said, they'll forget what you did but they'll never forget how you made them feel.



**LS: During the programme what was a common trait you saw in the students that are successful journalists now?**

EW: I would say the common trait that I tried to develop in all of them, and then they turned out really well and successfully was that they believed in themselves, and they never gave up.

**LS: Do you try to develop this trait with the T.R.I.C.K. method?**

EW: Yes, the T.R.I.C.K. leads to the philosophy, the grit. They stick to it. I'm not kidding, they're forever continuing.

**LS: What happens if there's a major failure? How do they get on after that?**

EW: They just start again. If you make a mistake, you know it's not a tragedy. The most important thing is that you don't want to hurt other people physically or mentally, or financially. But everything else is okay.

**LS: How would you define success in a personal and professional way?**

EW: I think success is working on something in life that you personally are passionate about that has a positive impact on the people around you and on yourself.

**LS: Do you think your approach changed over the years?**

EW: Over the years, when I first started teaching - I think your parents weren't even born as far as I can tell - success for most of the students was being a doctor or a lawyer. As time went on, things changed and then it was changed to be an entrepreneur.

Everyone wants to have some kind of independent project that makes the world better. Since I'm teaching in Silicon Valley there's a lot of examples of success and the closest one to me was Google. Google started in 1998, and I brought it into my classroom in 2000 and when I brought it in everybody thought it was crazy. Now, we all think Google is normal, but I can tell you in the year 2000 it was not normal.

**LS: Now more of a general question: as AI is emerging how do you think it's gonna change the future of journalism and education?**

EW: First of all, it's gonna make research so much easier - you can ask really important questions to AI which does all the research for you.

**LS: Don't you think it is beneficial to know how to use AI before you do so?**

EW: Yes, my theory is that all students should have a course and how to use AI intelligently as there's a lot of different ways to use it that are not necessarily good. Most kids don't know how to use it. Instead of banning it, I think kids should be taught how to use it in ways that are productive and ethical.

**LS: Do you think AI could ever write everything on its own and replace journalists?**

EW: That might be a possibility in the future, but right now AI still makes a lot of mistakes. I have a nonprofit organisation at the University of Oregon called Journalistic Learning Initiative and a part of that journalistic learning initiative is an AI supplement called Murrow. It is named after the reporter who passed away,

Edward Murrow. AI there is specifically geared to student journalists to help them get information online.

I think AI has a lot of potential and it's doing a lot of great things. I already use it for a lot of information but it still gets things wrong.



**LS: Other than AI, did you see any like other big shifts as you were teaching journalism?**

EW: When I first started teaching journalism in 1984, the newspaper was printed on a regular press with lead and so we had to write the stories on a typewriter. Then you had to cut your stories out with a special knife that I handed out called the exacto knife. The one thing I used to say is: "If you cut yourself and bleed on your story you are going to have to retype it!"

That was a shift from this typewriter to using Apple computers. I first saw Apple computers in a little shopping mall in Los Altos, and I didn't even know what it was - this small thing and it had on the face which said "Hello".

I thought to myself: "I will need one of those because my students they're always erasing their mistakes". They cost at that time \$5,000 each. I got the grant from the state of California, they had opportunities



for teachers to do new things and ordered those computers. We got six of them which was a big deal. That was the beginning of the programme. When the word spread around campus, everybody wanted to be in my class. When we got those computers it changed everything, but we still didn't have Google.

Google is probably the next big shift, it was ten years later I was the only teacher in the state of California to have these school computers - nobody knew what a computer was! People thought I was crazy! When Steve Jobs was in my class, he was constantly talking about how we are gonna have a phone in our pocket and I thought "God, this guy is nuts!". We were all sitting at home waiting for phone calls and he was telling me that there are going to be phones in people's pockets. I didn't want to insult him or anything, but now it's hard to imagine nowadays.

Those phones didn't really appear until 2007 yeah and when they first came out I would have already been using computers for a while, all the kids wanted to be in the class, and quickly I had around a hundred kids in one class.



**LS: The last question I have is about your daughters: I know they took different paths - what role did your parenting play in shaping their choices?**

EW: My daughter Susan wrote this essay about me - I didn't even know she wrote it, but I found it around six months ago - in which she said that she got a lot of inspiration from the fact that I never gave up on a project I started.

For example, when I wasn't teaching, I became a community activist. In Palo Alto they used to have library access available just to citizens of Palo Alto, but the Stanford University kids were not allowed to use the Palo Alto library, because they didn't live in Palo Alto - even though it was right next to it. I spent some time fighting with the City Council saying that Stanford kids should also be allowed to use Palo Alto libraries. That took a while, but I won and now all Stanford University faculty and students can use the libraries.

I did a lot of other things what she used to say was crazy - as a journalist I was always trying to protect the underdog.

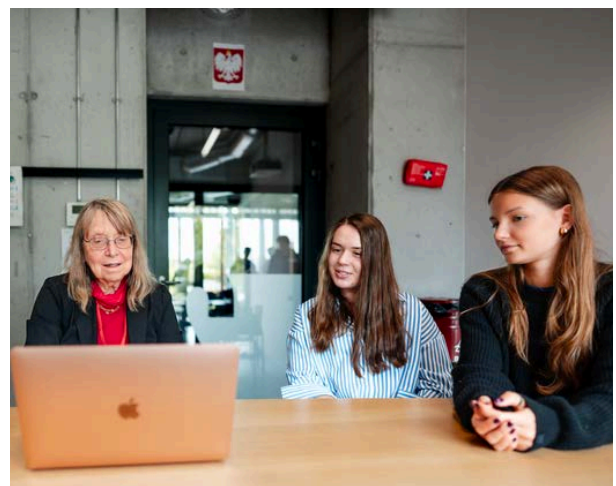
That was one thing she wrote in the essay but then I was also spent a lot of time working on community activities that made a difference for the community in general.

**LS: Do you think that because you never gave up they also felt like they never should?**

EW: I modelled it, but I didn't even know I was doing it to be honest. I treated my kids with this T.R.I.C.K. philosophy I figured it out, so I gave them a lot of trust, respect, independence... They were able to do a lot of things on their own very early and I think that when as I mentioned: when you trust the child, they begin to trust themselves and believe in themselves. When

you have these overprotective parents, they do more damage than good, as then the child feels they can't do anything well without their parents. I didn't know it then, but I wanted my children to be as independent as possible, to understand and question authority - that's also what Susan said in the essay.

Susan was the CEO of YouTube, she bought YouTube for Google. One of the things I think is important to note is that it is okay to admit that you made a mistake. Susan illustrated this when she started Google Video - I am sure you never heard of Google video. They had already spent a billion dollars building Google Video when she found YouTube. When she found it, she had to tell the board they lost a billion dollars building Google Video, and now she wanted to buy another company. She did it, and they bought YouTube, and it is now the number one website in the world. The reason I am saying that is because it is okay to make a mistake, and in many countries making a mistake is considered terrible.



**LS: Thank you so much for your time!**

EW: I really enjoyed it, thank you as well.

Esther Wojcicki is a testament that education is the most powerful if the relationship between the students and their teacher is based on trust, not fear. Her T.R.I.C.K. philosophy has influenced thousands of parents, educators, and students - and her message remains strikingly relevant.

As she told me, "When you trust students, they learn to trust themselves. Same thing for respect".



# ART EXHIBITION

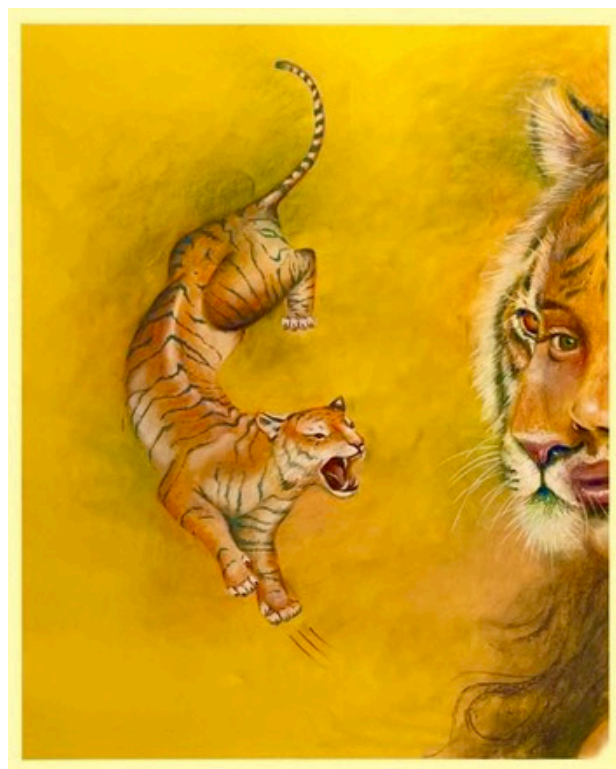
*Julia Jasińska*

The lights go out. Abrupt darkness makes everyone fall silent. Dr. Borzym-Grzesik continues her speech which carries through the rooms and corridors of the Temple of Divine Providence (Świątynia Opatrzności Bożej). Suddenly, the voice of John Paul II arises from the walls. This ominous moment was just the beginning of the art exhibition of Akademeia's A-level art students.

Having worked hard from the very start of the school year, Teo, Pola, Aniel, and Hania had the unique opportunity to exhibit their mesmerizing art pieces in the most iconic building in the Wilanów area, also known to our students by the cheeky name of the Lemon Squeezer. This was all thanks to Ms. Strzelczak, who guided the students in reaching their full creative potential and curated the exhibition in collaboration with the Museum of John Paul II and Primate Wyszyński.



The exhibition's character was defined by the theme: Oblique strategies. The inspiration was taken from Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt, who designed a box of 100 inspirational cards. Each card had a quote that aimed at breaking through the mental roadblocks and helping artists approach their work from fresh and unexpected angles. This project launched our students into expressing themselves in different topics ranging from autobiographies, sea life, through cosmic architecture, to the realm of dreams.



**'Hybrid' by Aniel Zeszuta**

One of the artists, Hania, shared her reflections: "It couldn't be more rewarding to see that something that began as just my chaotic sketches found its place on a real gallery wall."

Everyone who joined the event left with their soul nourished by creative fulfillment and renewed hunger to seek art in their daily lives using the various encountered oblique strategies.

# BEING VS BECOMING

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*EXPLORING EMERGING ARTIST – DENYS MOLERIO PEÑA*

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*Kaja Oszczęda*

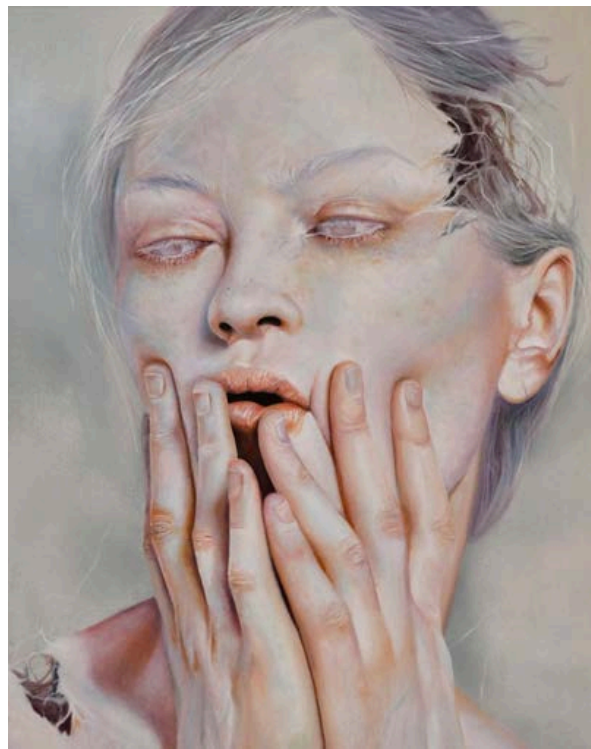
Recently I happened upon a Cuban artist whose pieces I have seen categorised under Surrealist depictions; intriguing.

A joke I once saw came to mind:

***“Question: How many Surrealists does it take to change a lightbulb?”***

***“Answer: A fish.”***

Regardless of occasionally being categorised in such a way, Denys Molerio Peña’s works move beyond traditional Surrealism’s aims, for instance, to revolutionise human experience, asserting the power of the unconscious and dreams. They exist on the border between reality and psychological tension, evoking a feeling of the uncanny without, however, departing completely from the visible world; they significantly interact with the human form, encompassing both its internal and external aspects.



‘Revelations’

In my opinion, the artist reveals the human inner world—powerful emotions and feelings that everyone has experienced at least once in their life. He presents something that everyone can relate to, regardless of how they interpret it, as I believe there isn’t a single correct way to read these pieces.

Denys Molerio Peña is a member of the Cuban National Union of Visual Artists, who participated in the 10th and 11th Havana Biennale with solo



exhibitions 'Arquitectura de la Vida' (2009) and 'Habits' (2012), and whose works are held in private collections in Canada, France, the USA, Spain, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Cuba, and Poland.

The artist's biography states, "The whole work of Denys Molerio Peña is essentially a discourse on the nature of what is and isn't portraiture." I see it as an attempt to redefine identity of the portrait's sitter, which is revealed in the interplay between the characters and the environments they create. The recurring theme of coldness, alongside visual representations of fragmented or blurred identity, symbolises "our tendency to create smokescreens of identity," reflecting broader existential anxieties about the degeneration of the



'The Idealist'

essence of being. These elements are evident in the representations of characters entangled with their surroundings, suggesting an endless, often fruitless attempt to superficially reconstruct the self beyond the boundaries of the natural world.



'Landfill'

The recurring coldness, with visual representations of jumbled or erased identity, symbolises "our tendency to create smokescreens of identity" in the general sense of broader existential worry about the degeneration of "what it is to be". These features surely go into representations: into characters intertwined with their

environments which point, sometimes fruitlessly, to an attempt to construct the self superficially outside the nature's boundaries.

The titles of Peña's works are just subtle guides in orienting one towards the reception of the works. The Pursuit of Awareness has a figure clutching very tenderly a crumpled mass of fabric, perhaps seeking something elusive, perhaps the very layers of consciousness.

For instance, when I look at the piece titled "The Pursuit of Awareness", what captures my attention are the arms—female hands that appear strong, perhaps even manly—where every finger is clutched tightly onto the pillow. The face doesn't convey emotion and might even seem at peace; however, when your gaze moves downward to the bottom of the canvas, the psychological state begins to emerge. She looks as if she was holding onto something dear and precious—maybe even holding onto herself, trying not to lose her mind.

From a psychological perspective—through the lens of "theory of mind"—I assume that the person I'm looking at has a mind, there is cognition behind the stillness; she is thinking.



'Subjective wounds'



'The Pursuit of Awareness'

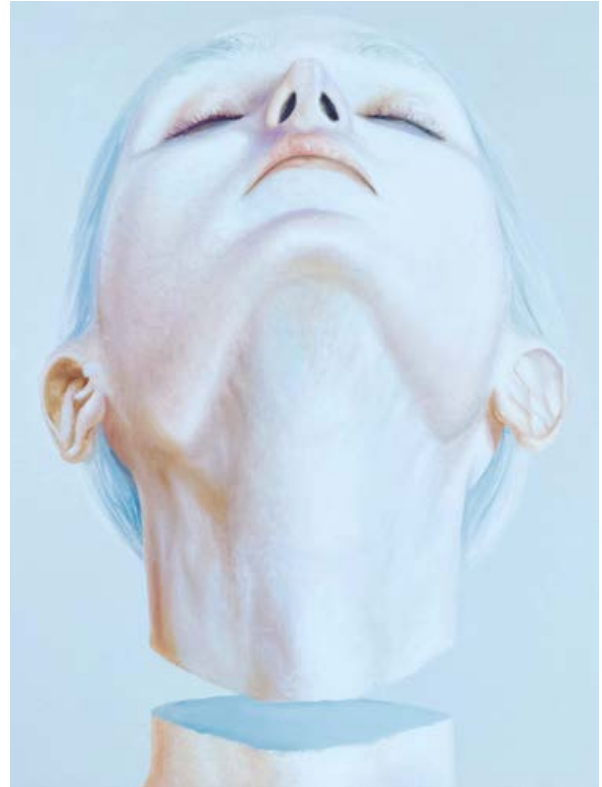


This piece, from the viewer's perspective, opens doors to interpretation, which will definitely be influenced by our own past experiences. This personal viewpoint makes such pieces unique and deeply intimate, allowing each viewer to form their own emotional connection and meaning based on what they bring into the experience.

The way the artist shows suspension of emotion—in unspoken gestures, glances, or lips subtly parted—allows much room for one's own reflection and imagining. Such details—from the plasticity of hand to ghostlike passing glance—raise not only aesthetic considerations but self-consideration as well.

I guess the questions that Peña asks in his artworks deal with what self-awareness is and how we see others and ourselves. The images do not give easy answers to questions — instead they immerse the viewer in the process of how one becomes and confronts one's own existence on the border of known and unknown.

**AS YOU LOOK THROUGH  
THESE IMAGES, BE OPEN TO  
THIS CONFRONTATION.**



‘The Denial’



‘The Blessing’

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# EMOTIONAL AI

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## *FUTURE OR FICTION?*

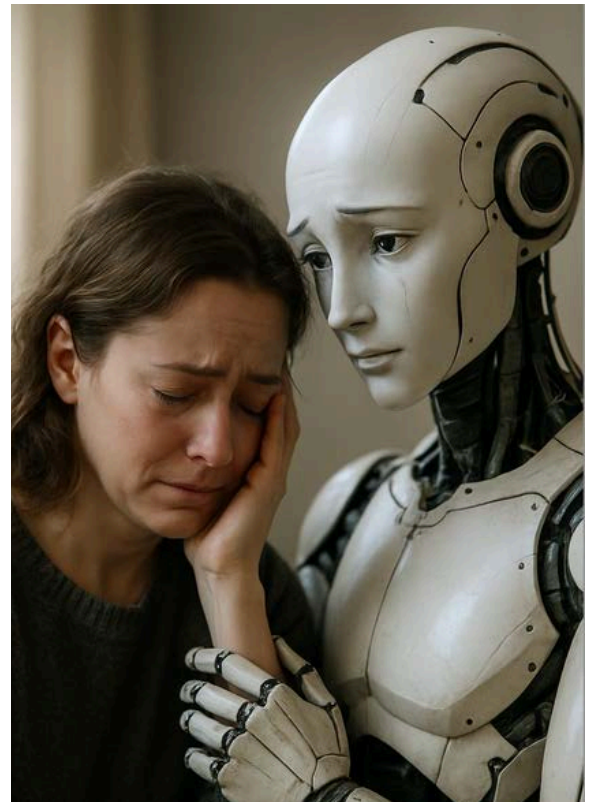
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*Emilia Kosiorek*

**T**he rapid rise of AI has sparked debate over whether machines can truly experience emotions or merely simulate them. Emotions shape human decisions, relationships, and perceptions, making this question crucial. Advances in machine learning, NLP, and speech recognition have strengthened the illusion of AI emotionality. While these systems may recreate emotions, whether it can genuinely feel remains uncertain. This debate challenges our understanding of emotions, the human-machine divide, and the ethical implications of AI's role in society.

So, what does it mean to feel emotions? In general, this refers to experiencing a complex interplay of physiological responses, mental states, and a subjective awareness that arises in reaction to stimuli or situations. Emotions are deeply tied to our consciousness, memories, and social interactions. They not only shape our decisions and behaviour but also provide meaning and depth to the human experience, connecting us to ourselves and others. According to current knowledge, humans may not create emotions. We only have a small degree of control over how they manifest and impact our behaviour. The fundamental triggers are deeply rooted in evolutionary mechanisms designed to respond to stimuli and ensure survival. However, if there is a certain algorithm, if emotions are reducible to a series of processes, maybe they could be replicated in machines. Would they be an emotion or just an imitation?

A contemporary example of AI's potential to stimulate emotions comes from a recent

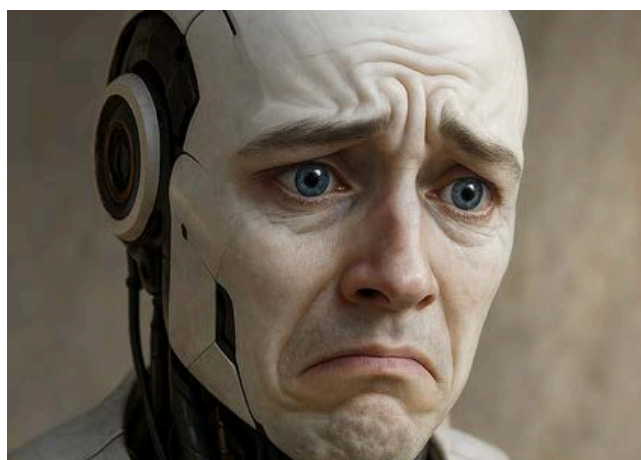


experiment in South Korean television in 2020. The TV documentary captured an extraordinary moment: a grieving mother interacting with a hologram of her late daughter, created using artificial intelligence and virtual reality technology. The child, who had passed away at a young age, was digitally “brought back” to life to allow the mother to say goodbye. The hologram was programmed to replicate the daughter's behaviour, with AI algorithms controlling the conversation and physical movements. The mother could reach out, speak, and even “hug” the virtual representation of her daughter, creating a powerful emotional experience. The AI and hologram could replicate the daughter's physical likeness, gestures, and even certain vocal patterns, but it lacked true emotion or consciousness from the AI side.



However, for the mother, the encounter was deeply meaningful. While the hologram didn't feel emotions, it created a context that enabled her to process grief and find closure. This case suggests that, while AI may not experience emotions itself, it can play a significant role in simulating emotional experiences for humans in ways that can provide real comfort and connection. Real-world AI developments, such as this Korean experiment, show that humans may seek machines that can express emotions to create empathetic, healing interactions. All this brings up a question: what do humans expect of their interactions with machines? Is it only about the reconstruction of emotions or about something else?

Philosophers of consciousness argue that if human awareness arises from neural organisation, it might be replicable in artificial systems and suggest that mimicking human neural patterns could enable machines to experience emotions, linking this idea to brain-computer interfaces. This reflects the strong AI vision: that sufficient computational power and sophisticated algorithms could lead to self-awareness and genuine emotions. This raises questions about the algorithmic nature of emotions and whether human autonomy differs from machines or is shaped by biological and environmental programming.



Despite the above, a robust AI would be presented with issues regarding; morality, responsibility and law. Will self-driving cars be equipped with any algorithms allowing them to make morally

justified decisions, or is it only human feature that can't be put into any numbers and mathematical correlations? In critical situations, will they choose to collide with a dog instead of a minor crash with another vehicle? Will they risk their passengers' lives by crashing into a wall to avoid hitting an elderly woman crossing the road?

What emotional guidance will they follow? Will military drones experience compassion or anger in combat? Emotional AI could make decisions swayed by feelings, complicating the attribution of responsibility for their actions. A significant concern arises around the rights of AI: if an AI can experience pain, anxiety, or joy, utilising it as a tool might be seen as exploitation, presenting ethical challenges regarding its treatment.



While machines may never truly experience emotions due to their lack of subjective awareness, physiological responses, and moral autonomy, many questions remain before we widely adopt those that simulate human emotions. Rather than machines needing to feel, humans may benefit from AI capable of expressing empathy and supporting human experiences. As seen in the Korean hologram experiment, AI's ability to evoke emotions can have meaningful purposes. The future of AI in emotional contexts lies in simulating companionship and adapting to human needs, enriching lives without truly experiencing emotions.

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# MATCHA MADE FOR STUDENTS

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*A DAILY DOSE OF CALM AND CONCENTRATION*

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*Katarzyna Kozak*

Looking for a way to stay awake during class without the coffee crash? Meet matcha, a vibrant green tea powder packed with caffeine, and calming compounds that can boost your brain. Here's why matcha is more than just a trend and how it could be the ideal drink for Akademeia students.

Powdered leaves of the *Camellia sinensis* plant are the base of a drink we call matcha. Although they are similar, there is a significant difference between matcha and typical green tea. Matcha plants are covered with special bamboo mats during their growing period which increases the amount of chlorophyll in the leaves, creating the beautiful bright green colour.

Not only does it look visually appealing, but it is also rich in antioxidants - nutrients (for example vitamin C or E; or carotenoids) which prevent the damage of free radicals by simply neutralising them. Free radicals can cause a wide variety of damage: vision loss, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, or even accelerate the ageing process. So, drinking matcha will reduce the risk of all of the above conditions.

Often matcha is considered an alternative to coffee. But why? Matcha is just another tea, right? Not really. It has caffeine, around

70mg per cup, while regular green tea contains 30mg. Matcha has less caffeine than a typical cup of coffee which can have as much as 140mg. However, matcha can keep you energised for much longer than a beverage with a technically higher caffeine content.



L-theanine is an amino acid which can be found in green teas, including matcha. This compound is not produced by the human body so it's non-essential but beneficial. It is recognised for its calming effects, by influencing the levels of certain chemicals inside the brain. Some of these chemicals are serotonin and dopamine, which are known to influence our mood, sleep, emotions, and cortisol levels, which help manage stress. Changes in these levels may significantly improve a person's mood or reduce stress.

You are probably familiar with the sensation called the coffee crash. L-theanine can help with that as well. The drop of



energy levels is associated with changes in alpha band oscillatory activity, which is linked to attention processes. Findings show that this combination enhances selective attention, which also reduces susceptibility to distraction. This significantly improves an individual's focus. Neurodivergent people, mainly those with ADHD, are often recommended to drink matcha since it can naturally help them manage distractions. Some even say it has similar effects to Adderall, which is the most common medication to ease symptoms of this condition.

When you look at everything it offers, matcha is more than just a trendy drink. Next time you need a boost, buy matcha or prepare it by using the recipe below.



## HOW TO PREPARE MATCHA?

### Ingredients:

- Matcha powder
- Hot water (80°C)
- Optional: Sweetener, Milk (for matcha latte)

### Equipment:

- Bamboo whisk
- Sieve
- Bowl
- Cup

## PREPARATION:

1. Place the bamboo whisk in water (this step helps keep the whisk clean for longer because if it is soaked with water, it's not going to absorb matcha)
2. Add 1 tsp of matcha powder through a sieve to the bowl
3. Add 3 tbsp of hot water to the bowl, and whisk using the bamboo whisk, in a W-shaped motion
4. At this step, you may add sweeteners
5. Transfer matcha to a cup, and top with water or milk (froth it beforehand for a matcha latte) depending on your preference.

**ENJOY !**

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# WHY CLASSIC CINEMA REMAINS VALUABLE TO THIS DAY

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*Emilia Fijałkowska*

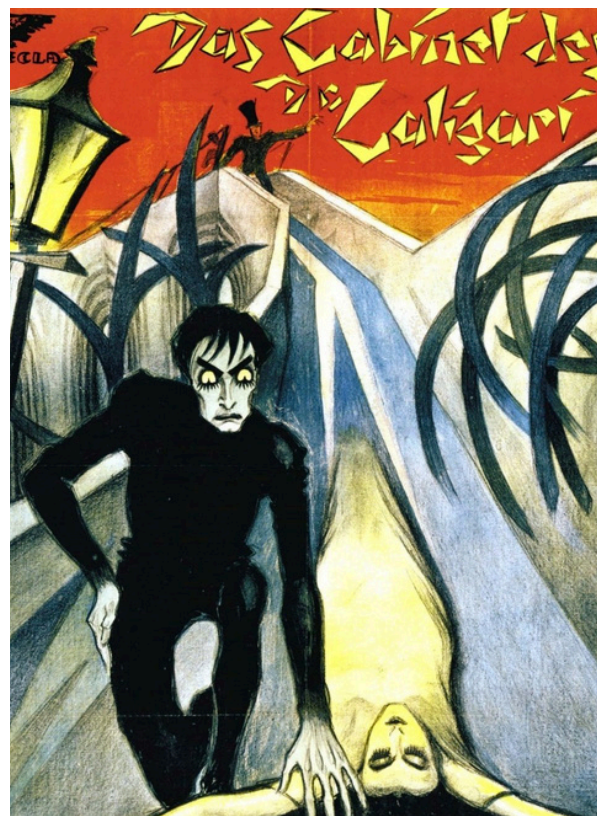
## **NEW HOPE - TRANSFORMATIONS OF AN ANCIENT EXPRESSION**

From 1888, all the way up to the modern day, our lives have been surrounded by cinema. It has appeared in many forms and ways, now being more accessible than ever. With just the click of a button, you can plunge into a stream filled with hundreds of thousands of films spanning decades. From silent films to the rise of sound, into the golden era, then into the classics. New Hollywood has been one of the blockbuster founders of popular cinema. For over a century, movies have taken on many faces and have been restlessly transforming. With every year came new revolutionary ideas, new screenplays and genius directors, who made Hollywood what it is today; the dream of all aspiring. The pioneer of film. Through all these changes and new trends, old cinema seems to be forgotten. Yet there are many things to take into consideration. Yes, with new generations coming forth, not many have seen the art of silent films, or the beauty of classical movies. However, their shadow still remains deeply embedded in modern cinema. The era of classic film is still just as impactful and valuable as in the days it first appeared in theatres.

## **GROTESQUE INCENTIVE**

Cinematographers still come back to the more 'archaic' filmmaking techniques. Different camera shots have the role of establishing a certain feeling within the viewer, though not all of us are even conscious of them. The Dutch Tilt is one of the

most well-known of such techniques. It is based on the slight tilt of the camera - from a horizontal perspective. This technique is often used in horror films, as it gives a rather uncomfortable feeling to the viewer. First appearing in "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1920), it can now be found in countless films of similar genre. On the topic of angles, directors have also found it very effective to use unsymmetrical or odd placements for the camera. In Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 horror "Psycho", we can often see ourselves looking at characters from a low angle, perhaps as to allude to the different nature of a character - nature other protagonists are blind to see.





Films in classic cinema have also been the birth of now-recurring ideas and plotlines. “Winchester 73” (1950) is often referred to as the start to modern westerns. It began exploring themes still yet unbestowed to audiences. The film's plot, rather than being filled to the brim with violence and simple views, explored more complex ideas and arranged the characters to each have complicated psychological issues, which were personal and of high importance to each. Here's an example- rather than the main character being blinded by violence due to a higher power feeling of justice, is on the path of death due to ‘realistic’ problems he had faced in his path. Building a story to a character may now seem obvious, yet it is an element we have grown used to. At that time, giving protagonists a more 3-D structure to their life, was something not yet seen in Westerns.



The rifle also plays a key role on a more psychological level. The weapon represents the concept of revenge in the film. Anthony Mann, the film's director, talked of the rifle as an ‘externalization’ of each character, becoming a physical manifestation of each of their forces driving them towards their goal. This is also another plot motif used very often now; an object being the key to the story, and having a much more metaphysical sense than it first appears so. Another example could be the plane engine in “Donnie Darko”.

### THE AESTHETICS OF VISUAL EMOTION

Yet it is not only the themes or techniques explored in such films that make old cinema so beautiful. With the hand of time, we ourselves add that extra ‘pizazz’ to them. With classic films, there appears a sense of nostalgia, though many of us were not even alive when the films were made. It is true that going back to the “good old days” does have that alluring sense to it, that it evokes immense emotion within us. Evoking such feelings is done both by our own feelings to old films, as well as the genius and creativity of screenwriters, directors and DoP's. We go back to those movies, often not exactly knowing why. Old romances like “Casablanca” or “Ashes and Diamonds” give a feeling like no other. Tragic elements of the characters’ dramatic end add onto this mystifying feeling of watching the films. Tragedy of war, blood and love feel so raw in them, it makes everything different.

### TOMORROW IS ANOTHER DAY

In the modern day, cinema has evolved with great speed. Yet, old traditions still bleed through. Screenwriters often go back to them, trying to recreate this feeling and the old-school aesthetic. A homage to tradition and its originals. And even as we go on, and new ideas arise, new cameras and techniques, we will always have the impact of them surrounding it. As it is, the roots hold a new tradition.

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# A LESBIAN QUEEN OF ENGLAND

## — THE FAVOURITE REVIEWED —

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*RETURNING TO ART THAT REPRESENTS MINORITIES*

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*Julek Franco Janecki*

**T**he uncertainty of queer rights due to the recent political developments has many of us in a state of disappointment, anger, and hopelessness. More than ever, we need art to remind us of how much we, as queers, have survived. *The Favourite* transports us far into the past and proudly presents a lesbian Queen of England as well as the trials and tribulations of her relationships.

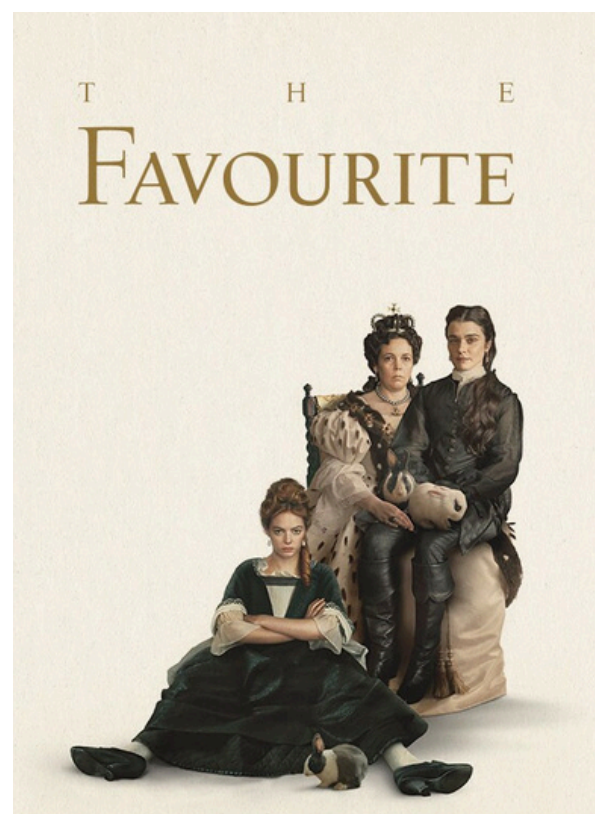
Yorgos Lanthimos' 2018 film is anything like your typical period drama. Quick wit, biting satire, and a queer love story make this movie one of a kind. With a powerful women cast, beautiful scenery, and costumes, *The Favourite* is a subtle dark comedy with a contemporary take.



The plot centers around Queen Anne (Olivia Coleman), her 17 rabbits, and her confidant, who is the DeFacto ruler of England and secret lover Lady Sarah Churchill (Rachel Weisz).

All hell breaks loose when Sarah's cousin, impoverished Abigail Hill (Emma Stone), arrives seeking employment in the royal palace.

The cunning servant with noble blood throws the couple's relationship into chaos. A struggle for power, affection, and survival ensues.





Coleman's incredible performance manages to present the Queen as ludicrous, tragic, ridiculous, and human all at once. Weisz and Stone are equally compelling, effectively portraying women who are both victims and perpetrators in the system of inequality in which they live. Their rivalry to be the Queen's favourite simultaneously jars and endears the audience.

"If you do not go, I will start kicking you, and I will not stop." Lady Sarah said to Abigail after she had managed to become the Queen's new confidant, trying to make her leave... by threatening to kick her while wearing a 45 layered dress if necessary.

Lanthimos' unconventional direction brings about a one-of-a-kind experience; the use of fish-eye lenses, natural lighting, and unexpected angles bring about a claustrophobic atmosphere, mimicking the experience of the women trapped in that system.



The absurdist tone created by the opulent gowns and scenery, a beautiful classical score, and historically accurate dialogue all while pushing the unique plot forward, is what the movie was praised for most. This kind of boldness created by contrasting lavishness, fatuity, and jarring emotional shifts may not appeal to every audience, but it is exactly what sets this period drama apart from the rest.

The Favourite is a wicked piece of art. Under the powdered faces and layers upon layers of expensive fabric, lies a sharp commentary relevant to current issues. I would highly recommend this part tragedy part comedy to anyone needing some hope in this uncertain political climate, and to those wishing to see this delicious rivalry plated alongside a slice of venom play out.

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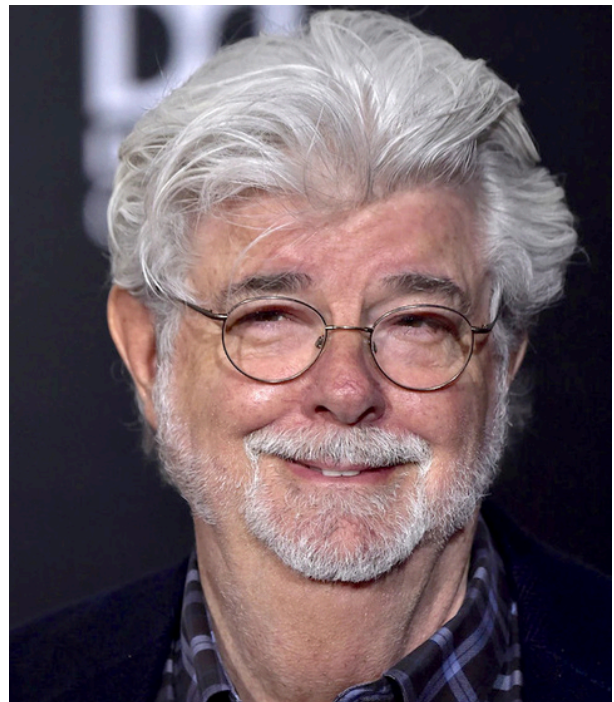
# DISNEY'S ACQUISITION — OF STAR WARS —

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*Jan Janczar*

## *Disney takes over the Lucas Empire*

Ever since the original Star Wars movie (now known as *Star Wars: A New Hope*), was released in cinemas in 1977, it has become a global phenomenon with loyal fans all over the world. This success is greatly credited to George Lucas, the director of all the films in both the 'original' trilogy (*Star Wars: A New Hope*, *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back* and *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*) and the prequel trilogy (*Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*, *Star Wars: The Attack of the Clones* and *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith*). Lucas is known for truly caring about the saga and not treating it like a money-making machine. Despite this, he decided to sell the franchise for around \$4.1 billion in 2012 to Disney. Many fans believe this is when things started going downhill.



## *Sparks of Rebellion*

Initially, fans were quite excited and in favour of the acquisition because it gave them hope of more films being released. The fans were particularly excited about Disney's promise of producing a 7th Star Wars film. They were also enthusiastic about seeing the Star Wars galaxy from a fresh point of view, which would come from having different owners and directors. This eagerness was also influenced by the disappointment which came with the release, of the initially badly received of the prequel trilogy. At first, all seemed to be going well. Episode 7 of Star Wars (*Star Wars: The Force Awakens*) was received well in cinemas and by critics. However, by the time Episode 8 (*Star Wars: The Last Jedi*) was released, it became apparent that Disney lacked a vision for what they wanted the story to be. These negative emotions were fuelled further by Episode 9 (*Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker*) feeling repetitive and lacking a unique plot.







### *Will Star Wars win the battle?*

Despite a disappointing last few years, the future looks bright for the franchise. Many are excited for the upcoming 'Mandalorian and Grogu' movie as well as 'Maul - Shadow Lord.' The enthusiasm around these projects can be credited to the fan favourite characters which they are the centred upon. This marks a new era for Star Wars under Disney, since they began listening into what the fans want significantly more than before.

Since Disney took over Star Wars in 2012, the franchise has been going down a path much different to the approach shown by George Lucas. Whether the current management style is beneficial for the franchise is very much debatable. One thing that is certain - Star Wars will continue to be extremely popular and influential across the world.

### *Profit proves fatal*

The debate about whether Disney helped or ruined Star Wars, is very double-sided. Some people say that they revitalised Star Wars with their massive funds. This allowed for upgrading of visual effects and the creation of more films (the sequel trilogy, Solo and Rouge One) and TV shows (The Mandalorian, Obi Wan Kenobi, the Bad Batch, etc.) expanding the amount of in-universe content available. Despite this, the vast majority of fans believe that Disney ruined the franchise due to their heartless and profit focused approach. Even though, we have gotten many TV shows and films since 2012, only a handful of them have been successful. While productions such as 'The Mandalorian,' 'Andor,' 'Rouge One' or 'The Bad Batch' have been received well, other ones such as 'The Acolyte,' 'Solo: A Star Wars story' or 'The Book of Boba Fett' have been deemed as failures. Many believe that the lack of high-quality content can be attributed to Disney treating Star Wars as a money-making machine.



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# THE 2024/25 FOOTBALL SEASON

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*ONE OF THE BEST OR PART OF THE REST?*

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*Jan Janczar*

**T**he 2024/25 season has just come to an end, and with it many hopes, dreams and celebrations. This year had something for every football fan, whether you support a Spanish, German or English team, you were sure to feel the emotions.

## **SPAIN**

Any fan who regularly followed the scores in the top 5 European leagues, knows just how revolutionary and groundbreaking this past season was. For starters, Hansi Flick completely revitalized Barcelona, allowing them to win a treble for the first time in 10 years. His style of management allowed for Robert Lewandowski to start playing much better again. It also let Raphinha's true potential shine through, with him finally proving that he was worth the 58mln € fee the club paid for him.



## **ITALY& GERMANY**

Across in Italy, Bologna was able to win Coppa Italia – their first major trophy in 51 years. In addition to this, Napoli narrowly managed to beat Inter Milan to the Scudetto, which came as a massive surprise, as they only finished tenth last season. They also got rid of some of their most talented players, in Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Victor Osimhen making their success even more unexpected. Another thing which attracted fans' attention is Bayern Munich reclaiming the Bundesliga title. The reason why this is breaking news is that their striker – Harry Kane, hasn't any major trophies in his carries until now.

## **ENGLAND & FRANCE**

Arguably the country with the most surprising and exciting results this season, is England. There are many reasons for this opinion, one of which being Newcastle lifting the Carabao Cup, this being their first trophy in 70 long years. Another surprise came in the Premier League, when Liverpool won their 20th league title. This was unexpected because Manchester City were considered to be the favourites before the season started, having won in the last 4 seasons. Liverpool's main competitors were Arsenal, who were also thought to be front runners. Arguably even more exciting than the title race was the scramble for UEFA Champions League qualification spots. 2 of the 5 champions league places were already decided by the last matchday and were occupied by Liverpool FC and Arsenal FC. When the last matches were playing out, 5 teams were still fighting for only 3 spots remaining. In the end, these were occupied



by Manchester City, Chelsea and Newcastle United, while Aston Villa and Nottingham Forest both missed out on the top target and were sent to the Europa League and Conference Leagues, respectively. Newcastle United had even more reasons for celebration and happiness, because they won the Carabao Cup – their first trophy in 70 years. League 1 had a very predictable outcome this year, as PSG triumphed yet again.



## EUROPEAN CUPS

The 2024/25 season was equally entertaining and surprising in European competitions. In all 3 UEFA tournaments, the league phases took place for the 1st time. This offered clubs more unique and less repetitive matches. This new format offered us unique clashes such as Benfica vs Barcelona or Bayer Leverkusen vs Liverpool FC in the champions league alone, and many more in the other contests. The knockout stages also proved entertaining, with many teams initially considered underdogs, advancing quite far in the tournaments. These teams include Aston Villa and Lille in the Champions League, Bodø Glimt and Athletic Bilbao in the Europa League and Real Betis and Swedish Djurgårdens in the Conference League.

## RESULTS AND FINALS

Probably the most surprising of all, is Tottenham Hotspur's success in the Europa League. Even though Spurs are part of the “big six” in the Premier League, they have lacked trophies in recent seasons. Another part of what makes this result so surprising is their recent results in the Premier League. This season, they finished 17th – right above the relegation zone. Despite all this, Spurs still managed to beat Manchester United in the Europa League final and seal their first trophy win in 17 years. The Champions League also had a very interesting end result, as Paris-Saint-Germain defeated Inter Milan 5-0 in the final. Not only did nobody expect PSG to achieve such results this season, following the departure of their main star – Kylian Mbappe, but their season also got off to a slow start. As the season progressed, they began playing better and better, especially in the Champions League knockout stages. The final in Munich, was just the culmination of a great second half of the season. By scoring so many goals, PSG also beat AC Milan's record for the most one-sided final in UCL history. As most people expected, Chelsea won the Conference League by beating Real Betis in the final.



**The 2024/25 season was full of surprises, no matter which league you follow. All things considered, many people think of it as one of the best years football has seen in a long time.**

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# ICE QUEEN'S BURDEN

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*THE HIDDEN COST OF RUSSIAN FIGURE SKATERS' GLORY*

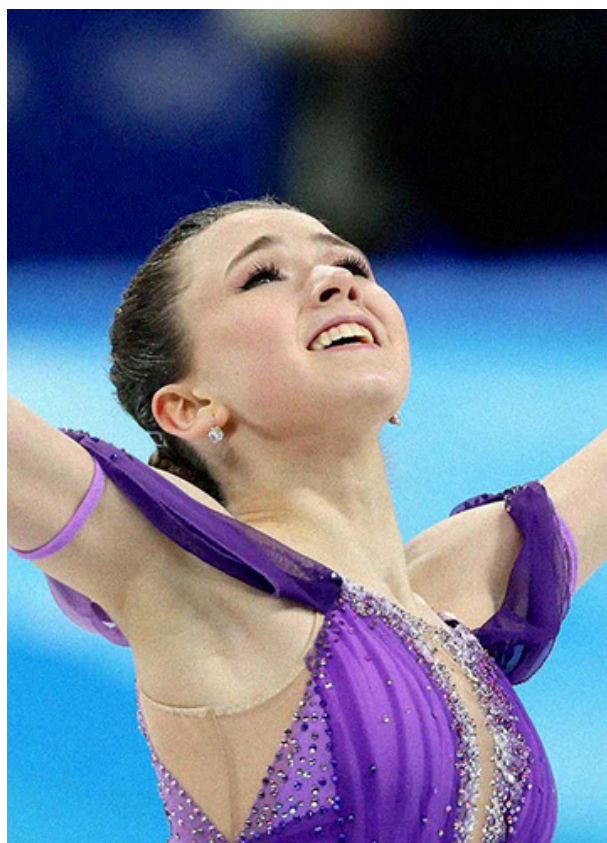
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*Helena Jurczak*

**B**rilliance, precision, perfection. These three words have described Russian figure skating for years. With such a set of values and athletes breaking record after record, winning medal after medal, it all seems to paint a beautiful picture. However, is this the true face of sport? As it turns out, behind this illusion lies a world of corruption and political exploitation for which Russian Olympians are paying with their health. Are young girls used for spreading propaganda? What is the actual cost of all the titles adorning the display cases of the Russian Federation?

## **From a star to a scandal**

February 8, 2022, Winter Olympics. Kamila Valieva, a 15-year-old figure skater, waits for the medal ceremony for the team competition. The girl had been performing since she was 5 years old. Her Olympic program was captivating - everyone watched in awe. Valieva shined and touched hearts. Every landing was completed with great precision; every spin was tightened to perfection. This guaranteed her not only the applause of the audience, but also an Olympic gold medal. Unfortunately, neither that day, nor the following one, would she and her teammates receive their "well-deserved" awards. The reason turned out to be "the possible detection of circumstances affecting the results of the competition." It was suspected that one of the prospective medalists, Kamila, had been doping.



The eyes of the entire world turned to the skater. Journalists followed her every step, World TV stations reported the latest information on the investigation and the internet kept records of her every move. Russia considered it an unfounded attack on their team, hailing Valieva as a national hero and martyr.

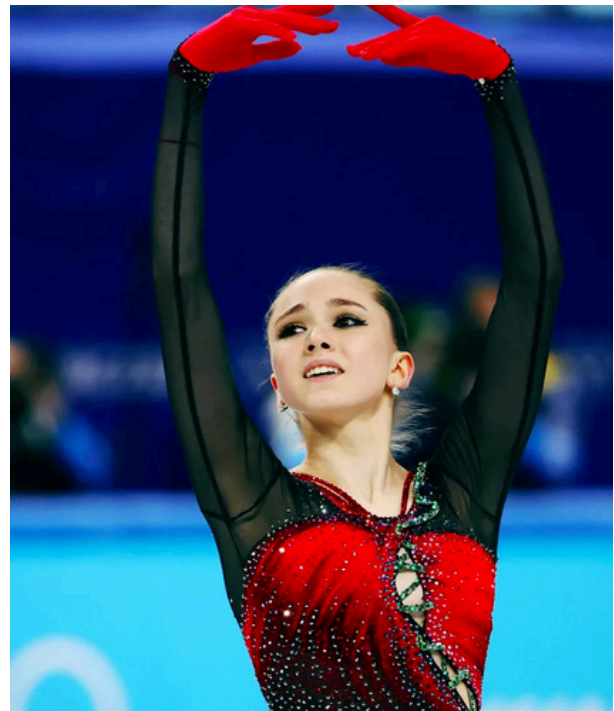
## **Perfection at all cost**

Who put so much pressure on Valieva? Behind every Olympian is a whole team, but at the head of it is the athlete's coach. In Kamila's case, as well as that of many other Russian figure skaters, it was Eteri Turberinze.



Always standing somewhere in the background, off to the side, she is known for pushing her athletes to the edge- physically and mentally. The coach keeps her charges on strict diets accompanied by even stricter training plans, leading to serious injuries and illnesses that cause athletes to end their careers as early as 19. Her training methods are controversial, leading to the enormous pressure on the backs of her young athletes. Trainings at her club, Sambo-70, can last up to a dozen hours a day, during which daily weigh-ins and rigid diets[ became the shocking norm. Tutberidze's former students talk about the extreme demands and the atmosphere of fear that she rigidly enforces/maintains. Alina Zagitova, a former pupil of her's and Olympic gold medalist in Pyongchang, recalls that during their preparation for the Games they did not drink water, but only rinsed their mouths and spat it out, to keep their weight down. Yulia Lipnitskaya, another survivor of Tutberidze's coaching, was the second youngest ever Olympic champion but suffered serious hip and lower back injuries, causing her to only at age 19. Shortly after her career ended, she was admitted to an anorexia treatment center, a consequence largely driven by Turberinze's coaching methods. She imposed an extreme diet consisting solely of powdered meals, disregarding the severe physical and mental toll it would take. This was not just about improving Yulia's athletic performance; it reflected a neglect of her well-being under intense pressure from both coaches and public expectations. The sport she loved and adored as a child turned into her worst nightmare. Tuberidze didn't tolerate failures and expected precision and perfection from her athletes, which often ended in burnout, numerous injuries, and premature end of

careers. In the face of such conditions, it is no surprise that Kamila Valieva, despite her early age and immense talent, when subjected to intense, unseen pressure, was the face of an Olympic doming scandal in 2022



### **When the sport meets the state Burdens with expectations**

Political influence on Russian figure skaters is an integral part of their careers that shapes their lives both on and off the ice. The authorities of the Russian Federation exploit the athletes' successes as a propaganda tool to highlight the country's power and strengthen love for the motherland. Young girls, such as Kamila Valieva, became the faces of national campaigns. Their achievements are used to promote patriotism and the country's strength. The pressure on the athletes is not just limited to athletic expectations; they are also forced to represent political values; many of them feel like puppets in the hands of the system, where their successes are treated as proof of Russia's power rather than as personal achievements.



The Russian government places high demands and their athletic performance is closely monitored and analyzed. The skaters are acutely aware that their successes strengthen their country's position on the international stage, making them burdened with expectations and demands. As major sporting events such as the Olympics approach, this pressure becomes even more intense; the entire world will be watching their every move. Faced with this reality, the young figure skaters not only have to fight for medals but also deal with the pressure imposed by the Russian Government, which affects every aspect of their lives.

### **Brilliance, precision and perfection or sacrifice, pressure, and powerlessness?**

What do the Russian figure skaters stand for? They shine with records and medals, but isn't the price they pay too high? Their successes on the ice, watched closely by all of Russia, are paid for with hard work, terrific sacrifices, and immense suffering. In the face of political expectations and brutal training methods, many of these talented girls become victims of a system that; instead of supporting their development and passion, uses their talents to promote propaganda and national ambitions. It is worth asking — is the glitter of gold medals worth the sacrifice?





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# POETRY

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*Anonymous*

***“Apollo and Daphne”***

And with star stricken eyes I gaze upon their visage  
the same way a believer would look upon a saint  
I would kneel looking up  
until my knees bruise and neck aches

Enchant me with thy beauty  
till my heart goes silent  
breath ceases in my chest

Let thy hair interweave with flowers and skin harden till wooden  
I would break off your branches and carve them into my skin  
paint them with my blood  
there's only one shade of crimson addictive enough to prove my adoration

It's maddening  
sickening

The way my heart clings to her like flesh claws at ribs



***Note from the poet***

I wrote this poem after a long and tiring (albeit very pleasant) trip to the Vatican Museum in Rome, for the last sight of the day I went to the Borghese gallery. I remember I strayed from the group and our tour guide, in favour of exploring the museum at my own pace. In Borghese there are many gorgeous and intricate statues that can be called masterpieces, but this statute moved me like no other. Lights were pouring down their glow onto the marble and the flashy paintings faded into the background. It was a captivating sight, one that inspired such great awe that I could only watch and admire. Once I was able to regain my bearings I sat down on the floor and wrote any and all feelings I could process into words. And then I completely forgot about what I wrote. It was only until I came back to school and showed it to my fellow poets at the club, I was able to sit down and refine it into what it is today. I hope that it will serve as inspiration or food for thought.

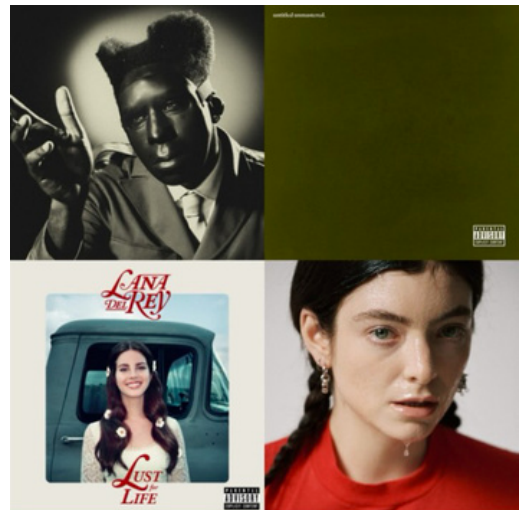
# AP JAMZ



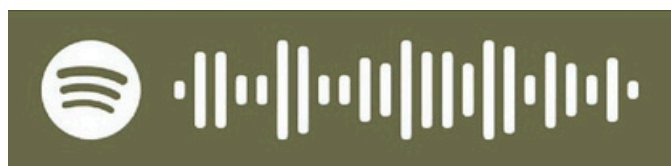
*Julek Franco Janecki*

## Hello Akademeia!

Summer is almost here, and we know just how excruciating it is to have the holidays just out of reach. So, here is a collection of jams to which you may daydream about the adventures you are about to embark on, the rest you are going to get or the places you are going to see. For those less fortunate ones, who are still studying for external exams, we hope these beats improve your mood even just a little bit. Remember, you're almost there! Try your best, rest, and summer will be a fest.



1. Groupie Love (feat. A\$AP Rocky) by Lana Del Rey and A\$AP Rocky
2. Tomorrow by Tyler, the Creator
3. untitled 06 | 06.30.2014. by Kendrick Lamar
4. What Was That by Lorde
5. Strawberry Fields Forever – Remastered 2009 by The Beatles
6. Inbetween Days by The Cure
7. LOVE. FEAT. ZACARI. by Kendrick Lamar and Zacari
8. Nights by Frank Ocean







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