

THE MURAL

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F I R S T E D I T I O N

FROM THE *Dean's Desk*

The COVID-19 pandemic has been raging on for over a year now and our education system has been under tremendous stress. Most schools have been under lockdown for long periods of time and are struggling to continue with the teaching-learning transaction. With the Covid situation showing signs of improvement, many State Governments have decided to reopen schools. However, as of now, we will have to continue online/offline as parents have shown reluctance in sending their children to school.

At Bishops, though online, we have managed to blend a whole lot of activities and inter-school competitions along with academics. In fact, lately the school has opened up to sports and it is indeed a pleasure to see children get back to school to play football and basketball.

To begin with, the major activity was the English Elocution Competition. Congratulations to the winners for your enthusiastic participation and outstanding performances. The winners were Jai Kshirsagar and Arnav Bansal of Class XII and Zyfn Kothavala and Mohammed Rajkotwala of Class XI.

The IT Club had also conducted an Algorithm Quiz. It was nice to have sizeable number of participants. To name a few active participants - Ansh Vora, Akanksha Mahapatra, Kalpana Panda, Neil Mirchandani, Ninad Deshpande and Kalpak Doshi. The MUN Club is one of the most active Clubs and the students on the board are very enthusiastic. The students have registered with various inter-college competitions. We wish all the participants the best for their club activities.

The editorial committee cannot be overlooked. A big thank you for all the extra efforts taken, the hard work and dedication in keeping the standard of the 'Mural' high. We hope that this committee will innovate and introduce new ideas and raise the bar further. A special mention of Mr. Gary Wright and Ms. Vinaya Patil is in order for organising and coordinating the preparation of the Mural.

With the introduction of the new examination pattern, we expect that students familiarize themselves with the new system. Without clarity in the concepts, answering the MCQs will be a challenging task. Hence, I earnestly appeal to all students that they do not set their academics aside for any reason, since these results will help in securing admission to varied courses in India and abroad.

I take this opportunity to thank our Principal and the staff, without whose cooperation and support facing these tough times would have been impossible.

Ms. M. Hora
Dean

THE MURAL

Music wafting through wireless speakers on a summer day. The fear of missing out. Standing up against prejudice. The search for meaning in our lives. The transformational power of grief. They say isolation is the perfect springboard for creativity. India's deadly second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a collective return to isolation, to a refuge of thoughts and ideas. The desire to make sense of a rapidly changing world. Although our losses were severe this second wave, the creativity and ideas of our students continued to grow: unfiltered, unbound, and unlimited.

The Mural exists as a channel for these thoughts, these fragments of the mind that can only be expressed in art, in writing, in verse. The unique blend of creativity: art, poetry and prose pieces have been specially curated by a fresh new team helmed by Himadri, Kapil and Soham. The newly revamped Mural aims to continue what the magazine does best: shine a spotlight on our students' creativity, their hopes, dreams and musings.

The August 2021 edition of The Mural has the distinction of being the first-ever edition of our student magazine to be compiled and created remotely. With all-new writing, editing, visual and digital media teams, The Mural has been meticulously refreshed and revitalized, while still carefully maintaining its core essence. The articles, poems and artwork in this issue offer a glimpse of the incredible talent of the students at The Bishop's Junior College, Camp. It goes without saying, then, that The Mural continues to bring students together with every new edition, united by a shared sense of optimism, humour, and boundless imagination.

We hope The Mural becomes a platform of inspiration, activism and fearlessness. We hope it becomes a voice of today's generation, blazing the way forward to a hopeful, equitable and brighter tomorrow.

Mr Gary Wright
Supervising Editor
@garywright91



Editors Note

After a year-long hiatus, the Mural is back; and we are more entertaining, more thought-provoking and more creative than ever. With an innovative team of thirty-two members, consisting of budding designers, cartoonists, artists, writers, poets and editors, we present to you a magazine for Bishopites, by Bishopites.

The Mural magazine is the product of the metaphorical sweat, and not-so-metaphorical tears of the Mural team. However, it would be callous to leave unacknowledged the role of the Bishop's Junior College faculty, who supported us throughout our endeavour unconditionally. We owe much gratitude to Vinaya Ma'am and Gary Sir, the supervising editors, who guided us when we were lost, and were always ready to pitch in when we needed help. We would also like to thank our Principal, Mr. Joel Edwin, and our Dean, Ms. Hora, for backing this initiative that gives students the space they need to constructively express what they think and feel.

Now, dear Bishopite, embark on this literary and artistic journey through the first edition of the Mural magazine 2021-2022! It may leave you with a smile on your face, or maybe a few tears in your eyes, but will most definitely give you delicious food for thought, delighting your creative palate.

-The Editors: Soham Chandrachud (Design Head), Kapil Abhyankar (Head Editor) and Himadri Krishna (Editor-in-chief)

GROOVE THROUGH THE BLUES: HOW MUSIC CAN HELP YOU COPE WITH GRIEF

Human relationships don't always work out; sometimes, friends grow apart. The cause of the breakup between two former friends could be time, distance, a silly spat or even just an organic demise of the bond. In her book "On Death and Dying," Elizabeth Kubler-Ross, M.D., described the stages of grief, which may also be applied to the loss of a friendship. Understanding the stages of grief – denial, anger, bargaining, sadness, and acceptance – might help your breakup experience feel easier.

In my opinion, the best way to overcome the grief of the loss of this relationship is to feel your feelings; and the best way to feel them to their fullest is through music. So here are 5 songs that I find, closely correlate to these 5 stages of heartbreak:

1. Denial

Song Beneath the Song by Maria Taylor

The lyrics of this soothing indie-folk song by Maria Taylor reflect the mechanics of the song. She sings about what the song is on the surface, rather than singing about her feelings which she denies in the chorus, stubbornly repeating the refrain "it's not a love song". She is not ready to acknowledge her feelings, and blatantly avoids them throughout the song.



*"Cryptic words meander
Now there is a song beneath the song
One day you'll learn
You'll soon discern its true meaning"*

2. Anger

Hey Sweetheart by Nightmare Of You

This seemingly lively track sung by Brandon Reilly is not as lively as it sounds if you pay attention to what he's singing. He matter-of-factly sends an angsty message to an ex-partner, with lyrics that are eyebrow-raise inducing yet suitable for an angry release. And you're lying if you haven't related to them at some point in your life.

*"Hey sweetheart
Is that your new car?
Why don't you drive it off a cliff?
Because I can't stand your life
Since I am no longer in it"*



3. Bargaining

You're Not So Good At Talking Anymore by I Can Make A Mess

This longing indie-rock tune is sung in despair by Arthur "Ace" Enders as he explores a former relationship, trying to make sense of why it was severed. He seeks closure from his ex-partner, as he sings about why he loved them, and desperately bargains with them to not be let go of.

*"I don't know where we went wrong,
Why would you act like you don't know?
Swaying to the rhythm of our old song
So don't let me go"*



4. Depression

Putting The Dog To Sleep by The Antlers

This slow and sad indie record by The Antlers is depressing in every sense of the word. Nobody wants to voluntarily picture a dying pet, yet this song is filled with imagery of a dying dog who needs to be put to sleep. The dog is a metaphor for a dying relationship, and singer Peter Silberman laments this relationship through this metaphor. He doesn't want the relationship to end, though he knows it's over.

*"Well my trust in you is a
dog with a broken leg
Tendons too torn to beg
for you to let me back in"*



5. Acceptance

Stitches and Burns by Fra Lippo Lippi

This danceable song by the Norwegian band Fra Lippo Lippi, reminiscent of an 80s pop ballad, is the perfect song for someone who has finally got over a person or situation. An optimistic song about acceptance, it leaves you feeling victorious and hopeful. It is a refreshingly positive take on heartbreak and boasts of moving on.

*"Now I don't want to see you anymore
Don't want to be the one to play your games
Not even if you smile the sweetest smile
Not even if you beg me darling, please"*

To make the pain of loss of relationships more tolerable, check out this Spotify playlist, containing the songs discussed above and many more!

- Advika Pawar, XII C Arts





Monkeys can be humans too...

A slightly freakish take on microeconomic experimentation...

Dear Reader,

Before the term 'economic' manages to deflate your interest and coaxes you to flip pages to the next article, I would like for you to focus on the prefix used - 'micro'. The subject of Economics has a very defined yet obscure distinction between its two branches - macro and micro.

My journey through novels and papers by Steven Levitt (a distinguished author/ micro-economist/ the most unconventional thinker of all time) has made me privy to the latter, relatively over-shadowed side of the said subject- the micro side. In my layman understanding, the underrated micro side proves to be the more relatable of the two, as it deals with research: research on individuals like you and me - and draws conclusions on how they respond to all kinds of incentives.

The following is what I grasped from one of Levitt and Stephen Dubner's co-authored papers (It involves monkeys, go figure!)

Classical economist Adam Smith once said, "Nobody ever saw a dog make a fair and deliberate exchange of one bone for another with another dog. Nobody ever saw one animal by its gestures and natural cries signify to another, this is mine, that yours; I am willing to give this for that." In other words, Smith claimed that man alone is capable of transaction and tactical exchange, without actually providing substantial proof for the same.

Is that really the case, though?

The contrary was proven to be true by behavioural-economist, Keith Chen (now a professor at UCLA, USA), who asked a simple, yet slightly ludicrous question- "What would happen if I could teach a bunch of monkeys to use money?" That is exactly what he set out to do.

During the summer of 2005, Chen set up a laboratory at Yale-New Haven Hospital where he proceeded to experiment on 7 monkeys (capuchins, to be exact) to prove that transaction is a process that can be adopted and normalised by any species that has been trained to use the all-mighty resource of capital.



Over the course of 4-5 years, he managed to teach the said capuchins that coins had value, that they could acquire commodities (mainly food) in exchange for those coins, and that the coins were a scarce resource. For example, say a capuchin was given a coin, a treat (marshmallows) and a choice between the two. Whenever the capuchin opted for the coin, the treat was taken away and vice-versa. Thus, they were taught that the coins were as valuable as the treats and that gain of one led to the loss of the other.

Subsequently, Chen introduced several everyday marketplace rituals to those monkeys. He taught them how to bargain and gamble (quite an intricate process), and in a while also made way for price and income shocks. The fashion in which the capuchins reacted to these changes turned out to be astonishingly like how we humans respond to market prices-say, when the price of a commodity rose, the capuchins 'bought' less of it; while in the contrary situation, they 'bought' considerably more of it.

The experiment inferred similar conclusions to several other financial scenarios as well. In a nutshell, we come to realise that monkeys (or any other species) are just as capable of transaction and money exchanges as we are, simply if they are as accustomed as us to do so.

If I ask you to establish a relation between monkeys and humans, you'd say they're both primates, or they're both mammals, or they can both be uncannily sly and so on; but would you ever arrive at the fact that both these species love marshmallows? I think not...

The above experiment is just an instance of the vast array of mind-boggling discoveries that micro-economists have made (and continue to make) concerning just about all aspects of life.

When most individuals are asked to dwell over economics, they visualise Nifty and Nasdaq Charts or assets and liabilities instead of monkeys and marshmallows; but economics is increasingly being recognised as more of an analytical and interpretative science, the demographic tools of which can be utilised in every aspect of modern-day life. Effectively, it is proving to be a study of just about every kind of data- how you analyse the data at hand and what conclusions you draw from it. A quick overview of recent economic literature proves that top economists are studying subjects like cheating students, mixed-race adolescents, airbag and seatbelt effectiveness, and other such incredibly random concepts.

By all means, I will leave you to ponder over another seemingly baseless question- so, what do you think some sumo-wrestlers and a few schoolteachers have in common? (To find out, go check out the book *Freakonomics* by Steven Levitt and Stephen Dubner.)



FOMO- Should we be concerned?



You are sitting at your desk, in your cosy pyjamas, studying, unexpectedly enjoying yourself. Suddenly, your phone kept at the far end of the desk, lights up. Everything inside of you wants to know what that notification is, yet you're trying your best to fight the urge to check your phone because you know that if you do, you're just going to end up on BuzzFeed, two hours later, taking a quiz that says, "Design your dream house and we'll tell you what kind of cheese you are."

"It might just be some dumb advertisement," you think, "but what if it's some juicy gossip?" You finally talk yourself into making that regrettable choice just to find out that someone at the party everyone was talking about at school earlier that day has posted a bunch of pictures on Instagram. They seem to be having the time of their lives. That is when an unfortunate wave of FOMO hits you, and you start brooding over the fact that you're stuck at home in your pyjamas (which aren't so comfortable anymore) on a Friday night, instead of partying with your friends.

FOMO, or the Fear Of Missing Out is the feeling of being left out and missing something "fun" or "important" that is characterized by the desire to be obsessive about what others are doing, rather than focusing on what you should be doing. We've all been possessed by this wave of anxiety at some stage, but to what degree? Can this little four-letter acronym end up ruling our lives?

All social media gives you is an ocean of anxiety - "Did I overlook something my friend captured perfectly?" "I better not miss Kim Kardashian's live-stream, or I won't be included in the discussion about it tomorrow!"

Do you ever feel the need to be somewhere just because your "friends" are there? Have you been overcome by the urge to post something on social media? How many times has that little "conscience" of yours made you want to check your phone every two minutes because you feel like you might be phased out of the loopy ride? Hop on! Nonetheless, beware that this rollercoaster of emotions is hard to get off, but if you don't find a way to get off as soon as possible, you might just throw up and find yourself drowning in a pool of your own upchucked vain sentiment. You might believe that being social and striving to stay connected to the world is a good thing but here's the catch: social media is both a cause of stress and a means of managing stress; it's ironic, isn't it? Be that as it may, have you ever stopped and thought about the fact that social media only distorts our perception about people's lives? We see all the highlights and all the fun they are having, but we rarely ever see the "behind-the-scenes", mundane stuff like going to school, doing chores and the things that everyone goes through throughout their day. Thus, when we try to judge people's lives based on social media, we are only getting small snippets of who they are, and these snippets typically lean towards the perceived "positives" rather than reality.

Now that we've acquired that FOMO can destroy our mental health, we need to figure out how to deal with it. It's not an easy process, but it's not impossible either. You can start by figuring out how to put away your phone when you're having a good time. Try to be with your friends in person rather than online. Don't post about meeting them; that lets others into your personal lives. When you post excessively on social media, you let others define you, but you must realise all you're doing is losing who you are trying to become the 'social media version' of yourself.

Social media is often the 'highlight reel' of people's lives, but that does not mean it should dictate who a person is, or who a person can be. Only you can decide that. Now, hop off the rollercoaster and get back to your reality, and instead of focusing on what you could be missing out on, try thinking about where you are. Replace your Fear Of Missing Out with JOMO: the Joy Of Missing Out.



- Prerna Daswani, XI A ARTS



Prisha Patel Class 12B
Commerce

Symbol of peace

You will not be punished
for your anger, you will
be punished by your
anger.

Neil Mirchandani Class12C
Science

Glow to blow your mind
When you are staring
into the eyes of
death, thou shan't be
afear, let your
survival instinct
overglow your fear





Spiralling Up

Sanaaya Nair Class 12B
Arts

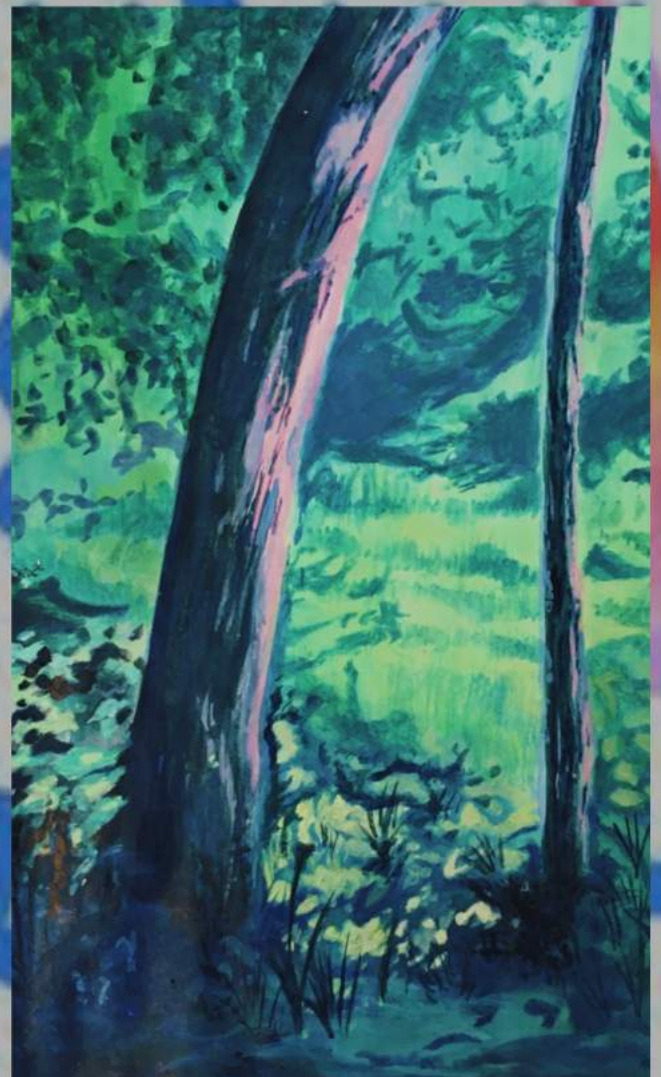
Spiraling up

Consciously letting our
thoughts light up our
path keeps us spiraling
upwards in dark times

Zoya Pankania Class 11B
Science

Into the woods

Nature is like a comfort zone
to me. I like to cycle through
the forest paths around my
neighborhood and that's
how I got inspiration for this
art piece



A Yak In The Woods

Don't shave it!

A yak, bereft of the curse of human voice, has a curse upon its name. The fleas within its dark fibre spectate from within as sharp metallic claws scratch across their pink skin. It takes ages, as the aged yak is stripped of its warm blanket of protection. Ages it takes, yes, for the cake to be baked, for the presentation to be made, and to shave down the entire slew of code for a microscopic bug. Keep lying in the fourth quadrant of Eisenhower's Matrix and the yak will bleed, perhaps even to death.

Its etymology dates back to 1991, when Carlin Vieri coined the term after watching an episode of The Ren and Stimpy show. Who doesn't want cartoons to be a part of life?

All matter can be broken down to as much as possible, wherever it is that we are ambitious enough to reach. Subdivisions, after all, are the pampered children of those topics or divisions that were taken down too

lightly. This is the concept, the air and the water that perfectly forms the imperfect earthen pot, that is, yak shaving.

Performing tasks is the bread and butter of the breakfast that forms the human mind. Those that are necessary, of course, otherwise it will cruelly unwise to accomplish them, given that connections need to be maintained. These connections need to be electric, for their positive and negative effects to move forward in harmony.

Say you want to complete your homework and discover that you haven't any stylus to start scribbling on your papyrus. In the process of searching it, you come across the television in the living room where your favourite sitcom is on play. This reminds you of a book of the similar genre that needs to be renewed from the local library, and so the tale goes on showcasing its limitless length.
tale goes on showcasing its limitless length.

The question now is: Why were you punished the next day in school?

The answer is as simple as silk made out of silkworm saliva: a yak shaved out of the volatility of the amygdala.

The multiple layers of fur on this yak are as unpredictable as the countless layers that humans shed wherever they set their foot at.





The one doubt that trickles down the throat of our situations is how to overcome the thirst of solution. Well, let me disappoint you for a moment as sweet as lime by saying that there is no definite cure. Connections lead us somewhere, but networks lead us 'there'. A line on a smooth sailing plane goes ahead with direction, with a certain burning magnitude that trails by. To limit that which it contains, it needs to be pinned down. Note that to pin is not to end or stop, but to keep the task from flying away into the hands of your nemesis, time.

I can glue back some, or even most of the fur that I have shaved back on the yak, but then again, I won't like it giving me a loathsome expression of heart when I do so. So what do I do when all the fur is scattered in the floor? Make good use of it. There are so many areas where I can utilise all that I have wasted. Seems fairly counter-intuitive, but to quench my thirst I can go to any extent of 'good pain'. If, in the literal sense, yak wool can be a resuscitative entity for nomads across the dentures of the globe for almost a millennium, then can't it be an adhesive to stick our professional lives back together?

I have gone through a similar moral dilemma of working on a particular task for two straight minutes, and going ahead to do something that won't be productive even for a cat basking in the sun. Ever since I came across this concept, I have been scratching my head in the hopes of wrapping it around the idea of an abstract concept, made out of a physical occurrence. At what was probably the end of time did I get to know the answer.

"No. —Is a complete sentence," says Anne Lamott, and oftentimes we overlook this concept of denying to doing something that gives our dopamine a blow to the head, which is fatal, depending on our realisation of it mere seconds later. "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing," composed Greek Poet Archilochus on the decisive nature of the hedgehog and the fox's approach to finding different solutions to a situation.

That is the crux of my very incentive, this exposition. Be the hedgehog.

-Meghna M.

XI A SCIENCE

Dry July

Familiar faces round a table of ten,
Chicken on plates, fresh from the pen.
The food is delicious, the talk is dry,
The air is warm, it's the middle of July.
Lack of comfort and the stench of sweat,
No one daring to open up just yet.
Each holding secrets in their heart,
They sit so close, yet so far apart.

- *Ashma Bhavnagarwalla*
XII B SCIENCE



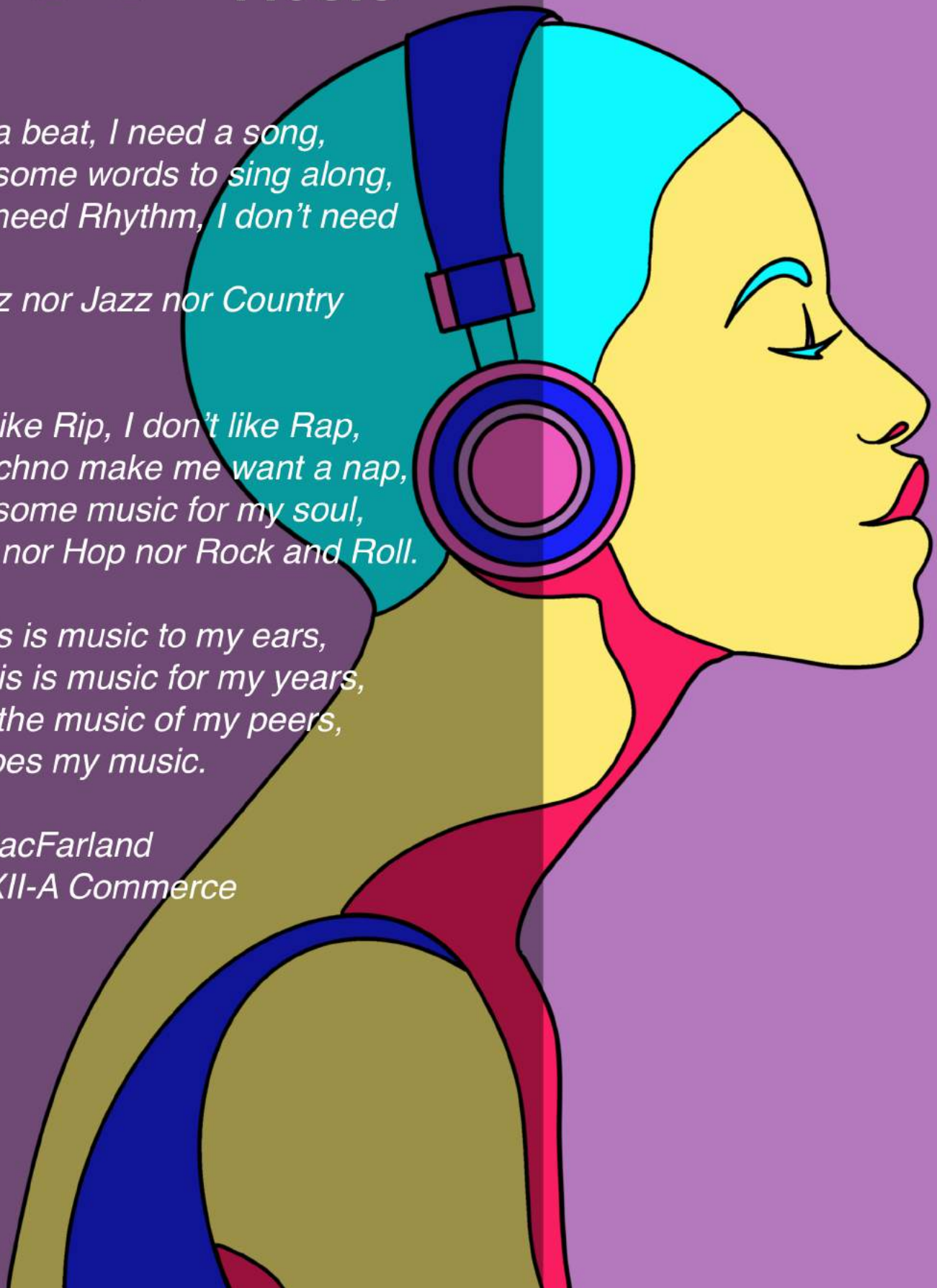
POP GOES THE MUSIC

*I need a beat, I need a song,
I need some words to sing along,
I don't need Rhythm, I don't need
Blues,
No Jezz nor Jazz nor Country
cues.*

*I don't like Rip, I don't like Rap,
And Techno make me want a nap,
I need some music for my soul,
No Hip nor Hop nor Rock and Roll.*

*For This is music to my ears,
And This is music for my years,
This is the music of my peers,
Pop! goes my music.*

*Brett MacFarland
Class XII-A Commerce*



Understanding Gender through Our Closets

(an Introduction to Deconstructing Gender through Fashion)

Joanne Entwistle says in her 2015 book 'The Fashioned Body' that clothes merely add the notion of femininity or masculinity to a person's body; it is the culture surrounding them that ultimately deems it either of the two. This analysis – that gender presentation is fluid across cultures and people – points to the fact that societal views of gender are largely the product of generalised behaviours instead of an innate set of mannerisms.

Gendered fashion is perhaps the biggest contributor to the maintenance of gender as a binary system. A large part of us enacting our gender is the way we dress – it is the most visible way by which people are divided into 'feminine' and 'masculine', with the definitions shifting across cultures and times.

It is with this backdrop of growing interest in the relationship between fashion and gender that we have seen the rise of 'gender neutral' or androgynous fashion, which aims to erase the distinction between what is considered 'manly' or 'ladylike' – a powerful statement, at the heart of which lies a single question: why should my gender limit how I dress?

LGBT+ people have been asking this question for decades – from the lesbians of the 1920s dressed in impeccable three piece suits to the trans women of the 50s in vibrant, flowing gowns on the streets, they have wielded gendered fashion as a tool of both rebellion and affirmation since its inception. The root of this new wave of genderless and gender fluid fashion lies with the LGBT+ community, and is the answer to their centuries-old query: why is gender such a big deal?

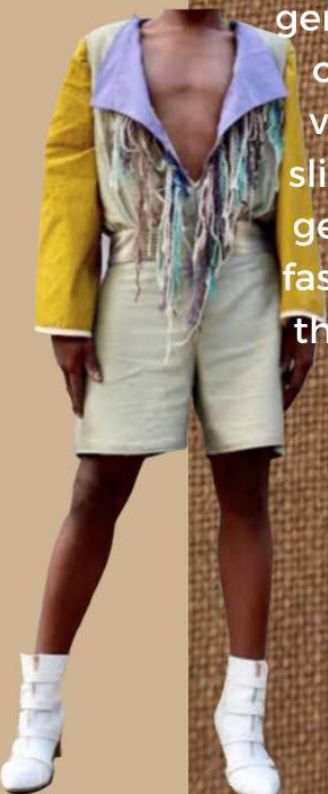
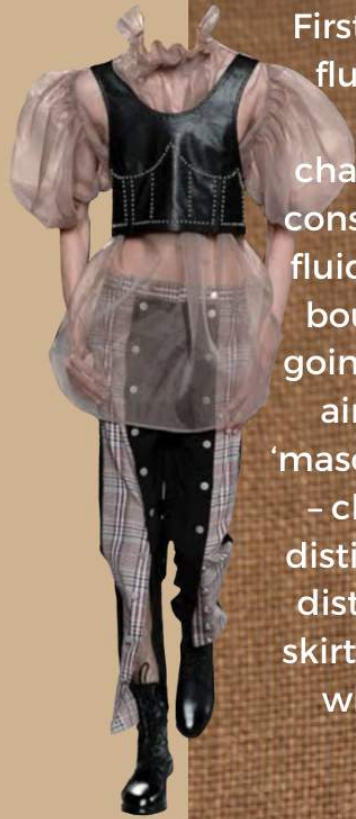


First, to distinguish between gender neutral and gender fluid fashion – gender neutral fashion aims to dull the boundaries between ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’; characterized by long, blowy silhouettes, it removes the consideration of the wearer’s gender completely. Gender fluid fashion, on the other hand, says, I acknowledge the boundaries you’ve put between these genders, but I’m going to unapologetically bulldoze through them now. It aims to disentangle the association of ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ from clothes entirely, and make them just that – clothes. Gender fluid fashion asks us this: What is the distinction between man and woman? How far does this distinction go? What lies outside of it? A man wearing a skirt, a woman wearing a suit, anyone wearing anything – why does that matter? How much does gender itself matter?

The idea of gender is not the problem, as it’s a vital aspect of our existence. American actor Ezra Miller adds, “But if you want it, we can see a world in which we are liberated from the bonds of it and nourished by the joys and beauty of it.” They say the point is not to erase gender, but to make sure it doesn’t confine our self-expression.

Thus, a conversation surrounding fashion can open up the stage for people to deconstruct the binary of gender that is so firmly established in our society, and open up the way for not just trans and non-binary voices, but also the voices of people who feel even slightly restrained by the societal perception of their gender, and the expectations attached to it. Making fashion more inclusive is simply a signal to the rest of the world, blaring the message: your gender is not a constraint, so stop treating it as such!

- Sumedha Sharma, XII B Arts



MEME

Submission time 9 pm
People submitting projects at 8.59 pm



**People say that half
Pune is in Goa.**

**But the real fact is that
More than half of
Bishop's population is
on YouTube.**

BREAK

Waking up everyday
And seeing class timings shuffled



Nobody*
Literally nobody*
Bishopites acknowledgement be like-



Must Be Funny, In The Rich Man's World

Ah, money. The average man's true god, though many are loath to acknowledge it. To quote Beyonce, who runs the world? It is not women, unfortunately. What runs the world is money—bits of paper, with the faces of dead men printed in garish colours, a shiny barcode and watermark without which a person's existence cannot be justified.

Of course, with the talk of money, comes into question the magnificence of billionaires. Who are they, so old, so rich, so pale, so bald, so glorious? Why, they are no more than hoarders, persona grata to the average conservative.

Since ancient times, progress has been the holy grail of humanity. Whether it was farming or the potter's wheel, we've always wanted more. Now, while that isn't a detestable desire, people enjoy vehemently denying its effects, as if it is an embarrassing mole they found on their back.

Five and a half billion dollars. Forty thousand crore rupees. Two billion COVID vaccines. An eleven-minute joy ride to space. They're all the same.

During the pandemic, the 1% gained 1.2 trillion dollars of wealth. Since money is a limited resource, that hefty sum must have come from somewhere, no? Well, look no further, since the working class lost 1.3 trillion dollars on a global average.

An Amazon worker in India has a daily wage of 500/- rupees. Mr Bezos on the other hand, remains spread on an upholstered chair in an air-conditioned office, earning 340000/- rupees per day, without gaining a single callous on his fingers.

And yet, we see no protest, no voices raised in anger, no faces flaming with righteous rage featured on the news. Why? Because when one has money, everything goes. It was from our convoluted acceptance of the filthy rich, did the ruin of the world come about, because: capitalism = $\sqrt{\text{evil}}$.

Whatever vice you might find in your general locality, I can assure you, profit was the God that breathed life into that little demon. A youth such as I could complain about many things, for outrage is my speciality. But what use, if I know not the cause? I have learnt it, and take upon myself, most magnanimously, to inform you, if you please to know it too.

Money waits for no one. To produce it, one requires a large machine, filled with people with pockets and stamina rife for exploitation. Why did Columbus look for India, find America, and steal the Indigenous people's lands? In the name of profit, of course. Why were we, and Black people, colonised? So that we could be cogs that would serve and toil as slaves for the White man's glory.

Why are vaccines being sold for exorbitant prices, being touted as the intellectual property of first world nations when they should be available to all? I'll allow you but one guess. Why are the oceans on fire? As far as my knowledge goes, I don't own an oil pipeline.

Even possibilities as sustainable and necessary as nuclear fuel for a better future have been sullied by corporations disposing of nuclear waste on native land, drawing outrage. Perhaps you're wearing a lovely pair of trousers from your favourite fashion brand. Can we rest easy, knowing they are the result of the work of an underpaid seamstress?

The truth is, even if we boycotted such things, it would matter little. The larger portion of the fault doesn't lie with us, with me, who wrote this at 12am, or with you, flipping through a small magazine's colourful pages.

But even I do not know how to hold those billionaires accountable, their gleaming heads bare, easy targets if not for the thick stacks of money that shield them. There was a petition, I believe, to ask Jeff Bezos to remain in space. If not accountability, I suppose there's always petitions.

Sanvi Apte, 12-A Arts



"CEO, entrepreneur,
Born in 1964,
Jeffrey, Jeffrey Bezos."

Aesthetics VS. ACCESSIBILITY

IN THE VIRTUAL WORLD

It's no surprise that in a world that's growing dependent on visual media, the paradox of accessibility and aesthetic value is rearing its head more than ever. The two go against each other, more often than not. What looks the best is rarely what makes the visually impaired comfortable, and what's best for the latter isn't the most appealing choice for an ultimate user experience.

Make no mistake, the design of any visual media is important. If something doesn't look attractive, it's not going to keep people coming back to it. But, accessibility means plainer designs, higher contrasts (say, black and white instead of grey and blue), and fonts that are not as 'cute'. To make it look better, brands choose designs that are harsher on the eyes. More alarmingly, these small tweaks are touted as changes that make them more inclusive.

Let me give you an example to explain this to you. Twitter is a popular social media app that recently rolled out a new font that isn't optional. This font is curlier, less spaced out and even gave me, someone who has no visual impairment, a headache at first. Scroll down a single tweet about the font and you'll find people who are visually impaired talking about how they experienced migraines, and in a few cases, nausea and worse symptoms, because of how harsh it was on the eyes. The change was needless and called a step towards uniqueness and ironically, accessibility.

A similar problem arises with fonts on other social media. They're not coded to be a part of a normal keyboard. If a screen reader (used by those that are blind) is to go over them, every single letter is read out with its Unicode description. Imagine having a tool that helps you overcome a visual impairment, only to discover that the Internet is filled with fonts that render words unreadable! The use of fonts in virtual spaces is a user's personal choice to make, of course, but it helps to illustrate why bringing this conflict up is important. Brands don't just choose aesthetics because they want to; they do it because it sells, and a lot of people don't care about who the 'ultra-aesthetics' affect.

I would go as far to argue that aesthetic should never take *precedence* over accessibility, especially since there are websites that make it work. Visual appeal is a big part of what makes virtual spaces successful, but where do we draw the line of catering to only the majority of the population? Isn't it fair to say that a product, no matter how 'pretty' it is, shouldn't be taxing to view for the partially blind, dyslexic and those with impaired vision?

In my opinion, the small tweaks that are made under the guise of beautification amount to a much larger change that is often for the worse. Brands should be conscious of the responsibility they have towards all their consumers and hold themselves accountable to make a refreshing user experience that doesn't hamper the comfort of their differently abled consumers. As we progress into a future that's more diverse and welcoming than ever before, the choices we make must reflect this attitude; even at the virtual level.

-Tanvi Dhawade, XII C SCIENCE



Handbook for the Modern Day Existential Rebel

"A moment comes when the creation ceases to be taken tragically; it is merely taken seriously. Then, man is concerned with hope." Absurdism, an existential theory proposed by Camus, explores the idea of the futility of a search for meaning in an incomprehensible universe that is devoid of meaning. The absurdist must encounter "the silence of the universe" where one sees the silence not as a state of indifference and nothingness, but rather a passive existence. This philosophy stated by Camus in "The Myth of Sisyphus" leaves the reader in bewilderment of the gravity of questions they often find asking themselves.

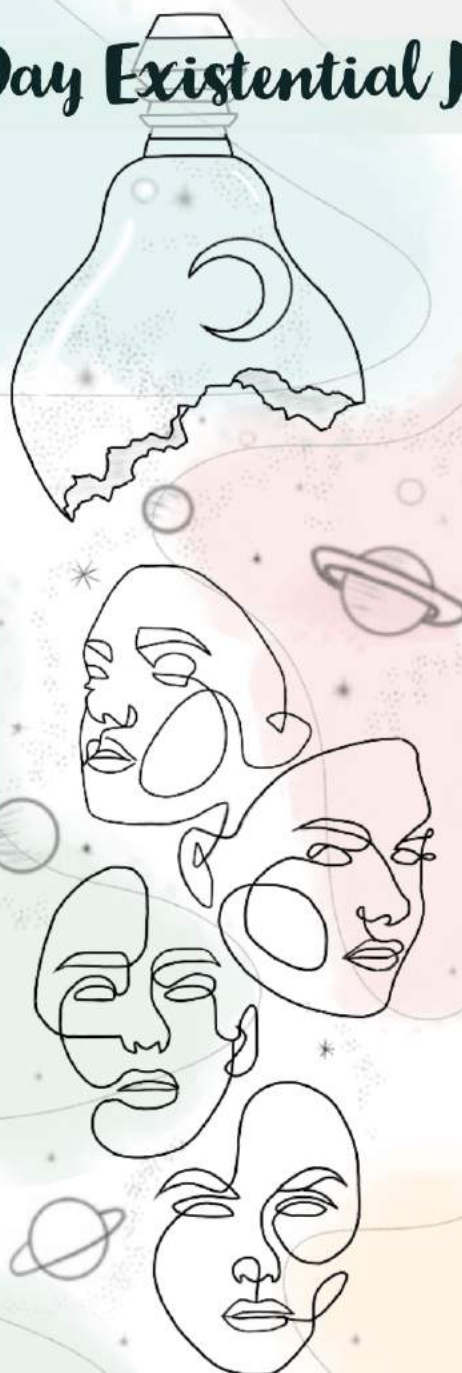
Picking up from where Camus left his thoughts in The Myth of Sisyphus, he explores an idea in his book "The Rebel", that moves in a tangent quite contrary to the belief in the first book. Camus' rebel personifies himself as a warrior and an artist. As a warrior, he struggles for the sake of man's freedom in preserving the dignity of human life. As an artist, his desire for unity and meaning seeks to bring the beauty of human dignity to life in creating a canvas of action that paints the reality of the rebel's acceptance of his struggle. The belief of rallying oneself to fight the apparent meaninglessness of reality is at the core of the rebel's beliefs and is an omnipresent phenomenon in current times.

With the constant influx of situations that shook the world to its core, the general predisposition was to question the existence of an inherent "meaning" to life that would perhaps instill some sense of hope within those who were devoid of it. While many approached the nihilistic path of dismissing any apparent meaning to life, the 21st century "rebels" resorted to overcoming the world's absurdity in the face of adversity. It isn't the physical actions taken by these "rebels" that resonate with the rebellion Camus spoke about, but the metaphorical shift of ideologies from not thinking much of the world to one where they seek meaning to make sure their struggle contributes to the grander scheme of things. Individuals who once thought of themselves as a nonchalant part of the canvas that envelopes the world, but are now the ones that act as the torch-bearers of the search for meaning, emulate the crux of the metaphysical rebellion.

There will never be an absolute answer about whether there IS in fact a larger meaning to life or if the search for it is a spiral only leading downward; but Camus' enthralling ideas seem to have found themselves at home amongst many, and that stands as proof that the search for meaning might not be that futile after all.

-Shreya Paul

XII A Arts



PHOTOGRAPHY



RAJASMIT PURKAYASTHA:
11B SCIENCE

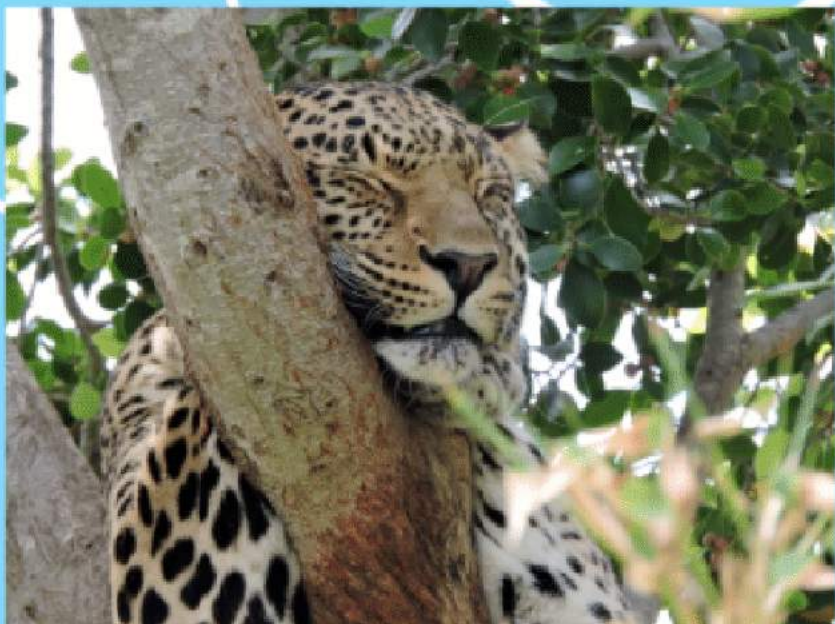
"ACROSS THE UNIVERSE"

"PICTURES AND
PHOTOGRAPHS ARE A PART
OF A YESTERDAY; A
YESTERDAY I DIDN'T WANT
TO LET GO OF"

KALPAK DOSHI:
CLASS12-COMMERCE-
A

**"IN THE RIGHT LIGHT,
AT THE RIGHT TIME,
EVERYTHING IS
EXTRAORDINARY"**

"PHOTOGRAPHY IS
VERY SPECIAL FOR ME.
I SEE THE WORLD
THROUGH A
COMPLETELY
DIFFERENT
PERSPECTIVE WHEN I
HAVE MY CAMERA IN
MY HAND."



AAGAM KOTHARI
CLASS12-SCIENCE-A

**"LAZINESS: A TRAIT SHARED
BY ALL"**

PHOTOGRAPHY



SOUMYADIP NIYOGI :
CLASS11-SCIENCE-A

"MIDNIGHT BLUE"

"A PHOTOGRAPH IS A SECRET ABOUT A SECRET. THE MORE IT TELLS YOU, THE LESS YOU KNOW." - DIANE ARBUS

ARINDAM JOSHI:
CLASS12-ARTS-A

"MONKE"

"I SAW MYSELF IN THAT MONKEY, IT WAS LIKE I WAS LOOKING THROUGH HIS EYES, STARING INTO THE SKY LOST IN MY OWN THOUGHTS"



PRISHA PATEL: CLASS12-COMMERCE-B

"HEAVEN BEYOND BOUNDARIES"

"THE HEAVENS DECLARE THE GLORY OF GOD: THE SKIES PROCLAIM THE WORK OF HIS HANDS."

AN ALLY TO THE LGBTQ+ COMMUNITY



LGBTQ+ is an acronym for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer or questioning. These terms are used to define a person's sexual orientation or gender identity and make them comfortable in their own skin. They celebrate the pride, individuality and diversity of a person.

Over the years, members of the community have faced oppression for identifying and being themselves. In different forms of media, the community has been inaccurately represented and stereotypes have been fabricated.

An ally for the LGBTQ+ community is someone who supports uniform rights, gender equality and various LGBTQ+ social movements, including but not limited to challenging and questioning LGBTQt phobia.

Knowing that someone supports your being and stands up for you is a feeling of being valid and accepted. Being a part of the community, being yourself, which sounds easy and harmless, is perhaps one of the most challenging things in the world. This proves the toxicity of societal norms.

Hardships and hatred are faced by the people from the community every day. It may be the subtle comments of homophobia, several taunts on the life they lead, or even constantly misgendering someone. An ally has been able to be a gatekeeper at times and just a support system at others.

With the rise of social media and people opening their minds to the realities of the world, society has become more inclusive of the LGBTQ+ community and people have started accepting others for who they are. This, along with more knowledge about the community, has helped in making quite a few allies, there still exists a darker part of society; those who do not seem to have any desire to know or talk about the community. Along with shading someone for identifying differently, these people have also accused allies.

Amongst arising issues with the hustle and pressure in the world, mental health has been one of the most talked about issues. It has been equally, if not more difficult for the LGBTQ+ community, as for a cishet (cisgender and heterosexual) person. Any taunt, any joke or any indifference towards a person of the community could be triggering for them as well.

An ally who slowly finds their place as not just someone distant-someone who had silently vowed to voice their feelings and raise them against injustice -but also a friend, subconsciously protects and helps one move past the trauma of backlash they once faced for being themselves.

An ally is more like an action rather than a label, as oppression will not just stop overnight. One needs to be as consistent in showing support and defending the community as the haters are in hurting the sentiments of someone. A cishet ally doesn't necessarily have to have faced all the struggles in life to understand those of someone in the community.

So, does that mean that just because one is an ally and supports the community for its deserved rights, questions the wrongdoings of others and tries their best to never offend someone, they are perfect and on the path of no mistake? Certainly not! It is more than important to accept their mistakes, which would mostly be unintended.

The constant process of learning while still supporting the community is what makes one a better ally. Unintentionally being wrong, perhaps misgendering someone or assuming their label is fine, if they apologize and correct themselves. Do little things like these mean less than the huge gestures others do? Absolutely not! In fact, these could mean so much to someone else.

Being an ally just because your peers are, or for social media purposes, will affect a person of the community negatively but genuinely wanting to bring about change in the society and promising to not let one stand alone in their fight will definitely affect the community positively.

In conclusion, the way one perceives things makes a major difference in life. The biggest of changes have been brought about by the smallest spark in one's heart. The smallest support helps someone smile the largest. After all, the little things are all that matter in the end.

~ Samiksha Bhowmik
XIBARTS

Never Again (hopefully).

I woke up. At least, I thought I did. I heard a voice.

"Would you like something? Some coffee? Maybe some juice?" came a voice.

I looked around. I did not know where I was. I did not know whom – or what – was speaking to me. I rose slowly and sat down on the conveniently placed chair. I was not wearing the same clothes I fell asleep in. I didn't even remember going to bed. What did I remember? Well, there was the firing squad, and then...

"Then?", came the voice.

I jumped out of my seat. "Who are you?", I exclaimed, "Where am I?"

I looked around for something to defend myself with. This was when I finally got a good look at the room I was in. White. No lights, no walls, no ceiling, no floor – nothing. It's like I was suspended in space. I grabbed the chair. It was the only object in sight. 'The Voice' couldn't possibly handle one angry human with a metal chair. But it seemed... invisibly bolted down.

"There's no point in trying, human. You might as well go along with it."
Snickered the Voice.

"Sit. Let's begin!".

I sat.

"Tell me. The last 4 years. Go."



I felt helpless. I couldn't do anything. I wasn't used to this. I had to just *go along with it*.

"Well," I spoke, interspersing some forced chuckles between my obviously prepared words, "So, you see, a lot of people will b–"

"SILENCE! This is not a press conference. You are not here to justify anything. We both know what happened. Did you not know any better? Why would you do such a thing? Explain."

I swallowed my pride and my nervousness and began. "Well how was I supposed to know what would happen? All I wanted was power. World domination. Money. To put those inferior, lesser beings in their place. They were... different. Too different. I didn't like that. Surely, they did not belong with us. I did whatever I had to. I became the most powerful leader I could. I amassed a large army and I went forth. We made them our slaves. The world should have thanked me. But look at it now – entire continents destroyed, a billion people dead, millions enslaved. There was no way I could have known this would happen."

By the end I was crying. I felt sad. Dejected. Afraid. There was nothing more I could do *now*. I knew what I had done. Suddenly, I saw a woman appear in front of me. She had brown hair, wore heeled shoes, and had on a grey pantsuit. She walked towards me.

"Hey", she said. "That voice in the non-dimensional space you're standing in? Me. Well, a version of me that you can comprehend.

My jaw simply dropped. I really, could not comprehend it.

She continued: "Fascinating, isn't it? So, tell me, what do you know about Hitler? Pol Pot? Idi Amin?"

I felt compelled to give an answer.



"We learnt about Hitler in school. I remember. Wasn't he that German guy? The president or something? Didn't he drastically increase the industrial production and GDP of his tiny country? And Pol Pot - a real revolutionary. Instilled proper work ethic into his people. Hitler, Idi Amin - they really changed the course of history. Or so we learnt. We sorta glanced over them in school."

She was angry. Frustrated. Upset.

"Damn humans! Think you know everything. What about the future generations? They don't teach you about the wars, the genocides, the terrorism - nothing! They want you to forget, don't they? They think hushing it up and never talking about it is the right thing to do! You may have single-handedly caused the extinction of the human race. But it isn't your fault. You were right, you know; there was no way you could have known what the outcome would have been. The way humans have swept the history of the wars and the terror under the carpet was the principal reason for this global massacre."

A notepad would have been helpful - I could sense she was about to say something extremely important next. "As the great human Maya Angelou said, "History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, but if faced with courage, need not be lived again.""

"Never again," I said to myself. "No one will do anything like this ever again. Well, hopefully."

~Zyfn Kothavala

Zyfn Kothavala | Class XI C

August 2021

The Bishop's Mural,



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SOHAM CHANDRACHUD (12-A SCIENCE)

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