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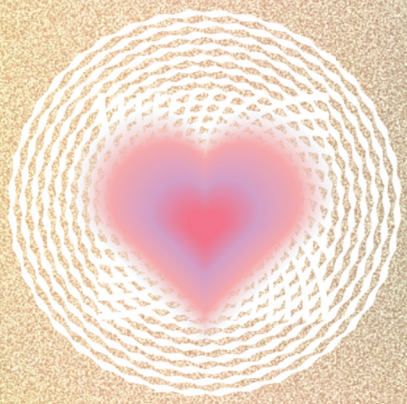
EPIPHANY

Epiphany (n.) a sudden, intuitive perception of or insight into the reality or essential meaning of something, usually initiated by some simple, homely, or commonplace occurrence or experience.

The entirety of our lives is marked with milestones and a series of firsts. The first trembling steps of a baby, on their tiny, tiny legs as his or her parents shriek in excitement, running for the nearest camera. The scream of a child as they cling to their parents' legs, refusing to be parted on the first day of school. The sense of exhausted yet exalted trepidation as the dean hands you your degree and you walk down the steps of the stage, wondering: "what the f*** should I do now?"

We are constantly on the move, pressured, by these huge, life-changing events that are supposed to define us, imprinting the societal definition of "identity" that marks and shoves us into tiny categories where we are then forced to operate for the rest of our lives.



We are surviving instead of living

From the moment we are born, we find ourselves in a perpetually infinite race, forever eager to prove that we're better than everyone else around us that we often forget the reason we started the race in the first place.

"Epiphany" is the universal, introspective pause button that we all wish we had. We ask that you not just celebrate the big things but to also look at the little things, the raucous, head-tipped back, full-bellied laughter that a is a result of being surrounded by the people you love the most, the atmosphere of laziness that comes with a an afternoon of not having anything to do and being perfectly content with that.

escapism

Escapism (n.)

the tendency to seek distraction and relief from unpleasant realities, especially by seeking entertainment or engaging in fantasy.

You wake up, eyes blinking blearily against the harsh afternoon light that filters through the window.

How did I get here?
Where am I?
It's 3pm??!!

Questions begin to bombard your already aching brain as you clumsily attempt to piece together the events of last night.

Two ice-cold showers later and the memories start to coalesce into something more substantial.

Flashes of shot glasses, sloppily half-assed dares made in the dark and drunken giggling as you and your friends dart between alleyways, feet pounding relentlessly on the asphalt, with the moon and stars being the only witness to the hell you've raised.

"Hey." A voice interrupts your brooding as you look up, your best friend sitting next to you, equally dishevelled.

"Last night was crazy huh?"

All you do is nod, too tired to come up with a response.

A beat of silence passes between you both.

"Wanna do it again?" they ask, a glint of mischief dancing in their eyes.

You find a small smile forming on your lips, still drunk on the taste of last night's freedom, the stirrings of adrenaline flowing through your veins once more at the thought.

"Hell yes."

Inspired by stories like the Maze Runner, Hunger Games and Divergent, Semester 2's theme of "Escapism" is a belated celebration of the "no-f***-given", rebellious, "staying-out-till-the-break-of-dawn", teenage spirit that we have been forced to stifle for the past two years.It's time to take the saying "You Only Live Once" far too literally as we break free, run wild and never look back, no matter what the consequences.

In this issue we "romanticise" life, but not in the dreamy, ethereal nature of our previous semester. This round, we dive into the nitty-gritty aspects of life, the messy adrenaline-fuelled nights where you might just be a bit too tipsy to remember what you did the night before. After being robbed of so many chances in the past, it's time to make sure we never ask ourselves the question "What if I had-" again. So, don your edgiest clothing, blast your music as loud as you like, and take no prisoners, because these are the last shining years of our lives in this no-holds-barred issue of MONGA 2022.

END OF SEMESTER 2, 2022

The same four girls from earlier in the year gather in their office for what seems like the last time as a team. There's a bittersweet tinge in the air as we sit down to what I joke is the "Last Supper", a comment which is immediately responded with a barrage of protests.

"There's no such thing as a Last Supper for the four of us."

Nice to see you again!

If you've picked up this physical, or for some of you, digital, copy of MONGA, having no idea what to expect, well hi there! I'm Ashley, the Head Writer for the year 2022. Along with my fabulous team of fellow editors and incredibly talented team of subcommittee members, we've worked in our blood, sweat and tears into the final iteration of our brain baby which you're holding right now (so please treat it with care!) Although our team is, self-admittedly, one of the more "chill" departments, that doesn't mean we haven't faced a s*** tons of stuff going on behind the scenes, while we curated this magazine. From it being only the four of us, with midnight meetings, cracking our heads over content ideas to stressing over event coverage and task delegation to our subcommittee, it hasn't exactly been a cakewalk. Nevertheless, we've persevered and whatever feedback we've gotten from you guys, for better or for worse, has been integral in making us better individuals, especially when it comes to honing our craft. So from the bottom of all our hearts, we would like to humbly thank everyone who has stuck by our side. From electing us into office, all the way to ordering our magazine (which is FREE by the way, so no excuse hehe), it's been a hell of a roller coaster ride! The four of us could have never imagined that we'd make it this far without every single one of you, so thank you, thank you, thank you for letting us be YOUR editors for the year 2022.

We hope you love this magazine as much as we do, as a little bit of our collective hearts is on every single page.

Signing off for now,
Tshee, Jingwei, Chai Ting and Ashley <3

how to read monga issue '22.

lawlessly.

At MONGA, we aren't in the business of narcissitically telling you how to read your magazine. Everyone (including our writers, media and graphic design team) views the world through their own specific lens, so whether you want to start from the beginning, middle or end, that's up to you! Maybe you need a break from assignments, because all the tabs open on your screen are starting to bother you, or maybe you wanna take a trip down memory lane of your time at Monash in the year 2022. Regardless, our little digital magazine will always be here and ready for your perusal!

our love language spotify.

Okay, maybe we do have one teeny, tiny rule... We've curated a playlist that specifically embodies the very soul of this semester's magazine theme and we'd HIGHLY recommend that you have it playing in the background as you scroll through. Just open up the Spotify app, click on the camera icon and scan the bar below to plug in and enjoy! Alternatively you can always click the link down below to be redirected to our playlist page.

if you got it, flaunt it.

Our beloved graphic design team has gone to great lengths to ensure that the magazine this year is as Instagrammable as it always has been, therefore, with a simple screenshot and click of a button, you can unashamedly show off your favourite piece of work in this semester's MONGA on Instagram, allowing all other university publications to see the slightly in envy (side-eye emoji). Also if you find yourself in our magazine, feel free to snap a pic and use us to get yourself some well earned clout (wink eye emoji), BUT only if you tag us @musamonga, cause if you don't tag us then how are we gonna repost your beautiful stories -_-

down to some serious shit.

The stories and articles here have RANGE and there's definitely something for everyone, however we will acknowledge that, being a student-led magazine, some articles do contain sensitive content that may not appeal to all. Therefore, we have placed trigger warnings before the beginning of each article, to ensure that continue to remain a safe space for all our readers <3

TABLE OF CONTENT

humans of monash. 1

13 MONCH.

random sh*ts in monash. 27

46 potraits of monash.

events. 50

monash fit check. 154

160 monash local businesses

snapshot challenges. 164

172 thematic months.

internal photography projects. 208

231 writers' corner.

MUSA'22. 243

MONGA'22. 259

279 Attributions.

Photographer: Shawn Wong. Writer: Elly Zulaikha. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

FAHEEM

humans of monash #1

I've been on the move all my life. I was born in Seoul, South Korea because my dad worked there as a diplomat. I've lived in eight different countries, including Malaysia. After Seoul, I moved to Iraq, but then we left because of the Americans. . . bombing and all.

We went to Bangladesh and lived there for about four years. Then we went to Canberra, Australia for another three years before we came back to Bangladesh for four years. Those four years were the worst four years of my whole life.

I got clinically diagnosed with OCD at 11 years old. I got suicidal back then, so my dad was like, you know what? We need to get you treatment. The psychiatrist told me I carried a deep sense of perfectionism. When I was still in Australia in 2010, I did a month of fifth-grade class before going back to Bangladesh.

Unfortunately, I had to repeat the fourth grade as the Bangladeshi education system focused more on rote learning, whereas the Australian education system was more holistic. We were shoved down with so many subjects and textbooks for the sake of "learning". By the time the half-yearly exams came, I had a complete breakdown due to how much I needed to study. I never had to study this much before in my whole life!

But anyway, luckily, my dad was there and he helped me out. He developed a structured study plan for me and then you know what? I got the highest cumulative marks in my class– around 746 out of 800. After that, I received so much recognition and praise from my classmates and teachers. I felt good about it at first, but now I have to uphold this expectation. I couldn't. Then in fifth grade, came the Ramadan break.

I started having suicidal thoughts as a result of my religious mom. She instilled this fear in me that, let's say, if I miss a prayer, she calculated how many years I'll be in hell. Or when you're in the grave, you're going to be bitten by snakes, the angels are going to hammer you because you didn't pray and read the Qur'an. So, I had these messed up, incoherent thoughts until I got so scared, that I'll offend God, anger the prophet, or I'll end up in hell.

Those thoughts drove me insane. They just kept coming, you can't turn it off because that's what OCD is like. But when I do housework like cleaning, it's like 'no thoughts, head empty', literally. Yet, the thing about my OCD is it's about control and power. Because of my dad's job, I did not have the liberty to experience a lot of things.

I could never hold friendships down because people were never that genuine and they lost touch with you as soon as you were out of their vicinity. I had to leave a room I made my home several times. I lived several different lives. Each new country and city felt like it was a new life for me. Leaving places all the time messed me up–emotionally, psychologically & physically.

The OCD was how I was somewhat able to reclaim control over some aspects of my life. For example, my bedroom was the most sanctimonious place. It was where I kept all the things I loved. And when I was a child, I LOVED stationeries and I would buy all sorts of stuff which I didn't necessarily need–but hey, I bought them because it was cute!

Having to move around a lot, I discovered that I have a profound appreciation, or rather deeply sentimental and attached for objects I can call my own. Yet, I don't feel the same for people anymore because. . . if you do, you'll be in deep trouble. Yes, I do appreciate the brief and ephemeral friendships I have with the people I've met throughout my life, but it's never stable for me.

My therapist once asked me if I think I'm defective or anything, but I don't think so. Imagine – there are 500 pieces of a puzzle, but this puzzle happens to have an extra piece so now it has 501 pieces. I am that puzzle piece that doesn't fit anywhere on the puzzle. I'm just. . . me, you know? It sounds cliché as hell, but every person is unique in their ways.

But I feel really good about this year, this semester, about myself. I have a lot of hope and optimism, although sometimes I can be pessimistic. Now I feel like it's all clear. Like there's still hope, there's still hope.

hope

(noun) a feeling of expectation and desire for a particular thing to happen. | I have a lot of hope and optimism, although sometimes I can be pessimistic.

humans of monash #2

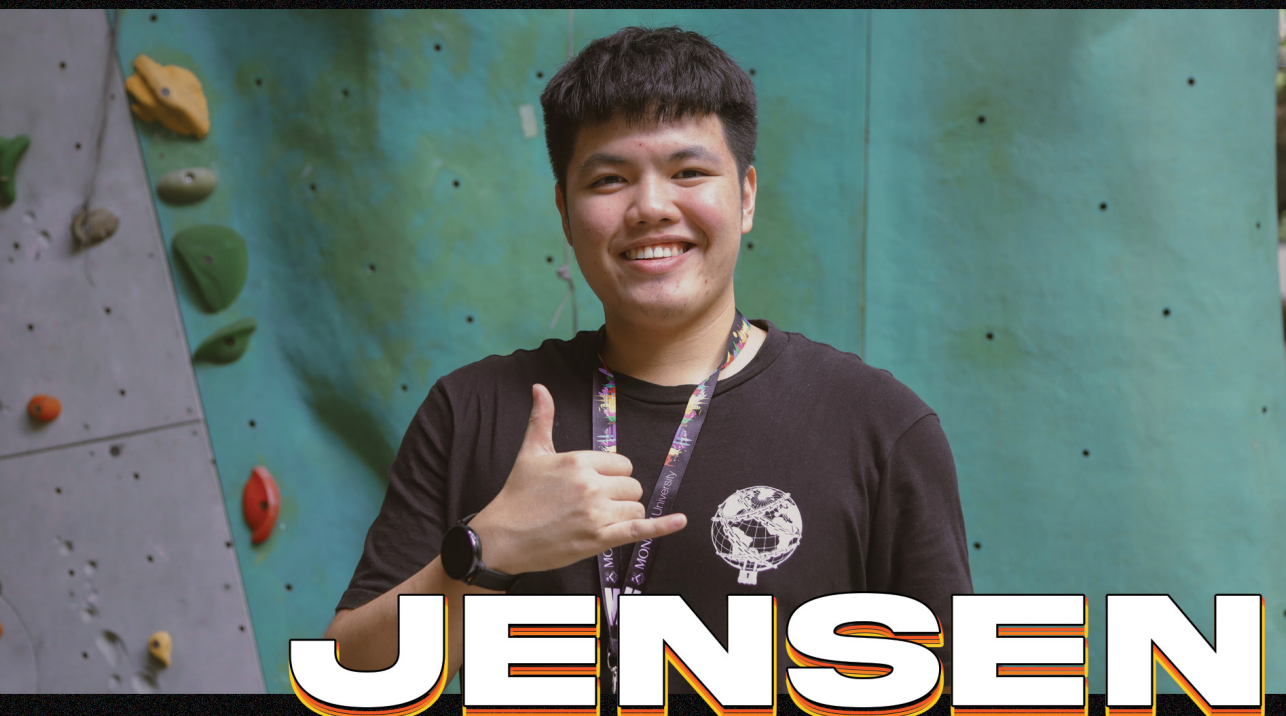
There's a word sonder, and sonder if I'm not mistaken is the realization that everyone has their own story, their own struggles, their own everyday life. I feel like I'm always drawn to people. I always love just getting to know people and know their story, because everyone has a story worth telling and I feel like this was the opportunity for me to tell my story. Thank you for listening.

All right so, I'm going to focus on, you know the emotions that I felt recently. And how that led to me releasing my newest song, called "okay.".

The song is a very simple, yet sharp reminder, that no matter what you are going through, we will be OK. I got to writing this song because of the pandemic, and during those times, just like a lot of people I assume, I went through a pretty dark period of my life. I mean, I went through a dark period of time because obviously, you know there's the normal, Oh my God, I can't see my friends! you know, I'm away, I have to stay at home. Oh my God it sucks— but I actually ended up losing a lot of my friends—they didn't die—but yeah, apparently you know there was a very complicated situation going on where some of them didn't really like me anymore or something like that.

So, they kinda teamed up together and decided to stop interacting and start talking to me at all right? And these were not just friends,— these were not, you know, people I just said hi and hello to— these were people I considered my brothers 'cause, I knew these guys for six to seven years of my life, you know. I spent a large chunk of my life with these guys. So anyway, losing them wasn't the easiest time, it took quite a toll on me. You know you lose your closest friends, and it's like you lose your brothers. And because I lived in a small town overseas, it was really hard for me to make new friends and from that sudden loss, I realized very quickly that no one is gonna comfort you.

Photographer: Tsheten Yangden Bhutia. Writer: Shaura Naeem. Designer: Winnie Ooi.



No one's gonna, you know, comfort you just because you don't feel OK. Or just because you feel down—because it's not their business. You know at the end of the day you are in charge of your own happiness. You're in charge of your own mental health so, it's a very, hard, and cold concrete slap to the face. But you know I understood, and at that moment I stopped complaining so much, I stopped sobbing so much, and thinking *Oh my God why don't I have friends? And it became more of a How can I effectively use this time?* Because back then I would go with my friends, and I mean we lived in a pretty conservative country so there was no getting drunk and smoking and all that, but we still hung out. So now that they're gone, *how do I use this time more effectively? How do I use this time to benefit myself?*

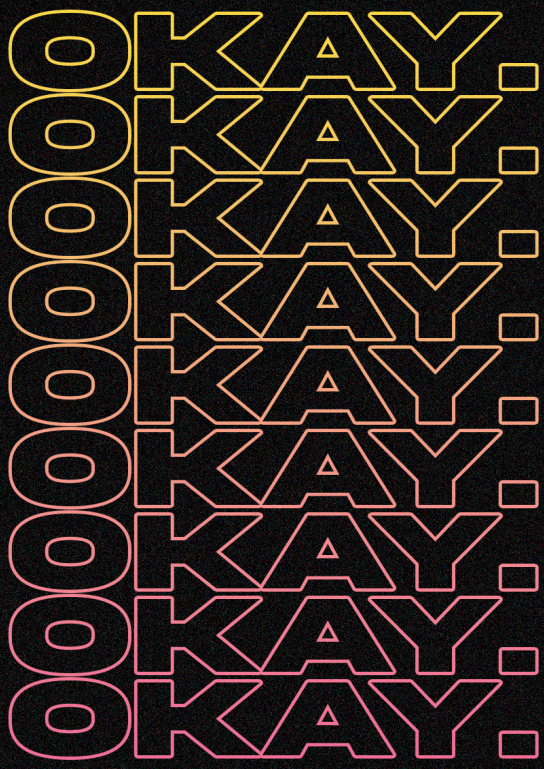
And at that point I already started making music. And ever since I was young, I had that curiosity, and now that I had quite literally all the time in the world, I'm like alright, why don't I, instead of crying both metaphorically and literally—I mean I had some sad nights. But you know, instead of crying and moaning. Why don't I, take my energy, and take my time and put it into something that I truly love. And music is not going to leave you. One Spotify click, and you can listen to any song. You can listen to rap, country music, Justin Bieber, over and over again. To anything. So, I decided to focus and really dedicate my time to my music, and that was how we got here, and how this song was created.

'Darling, you will be okay.
And all the bad things they will all fade, will all fade.
Why are you crying? It's only Friday, only Friday.
And I hope I can still see you someday, see you someday.'

– okay. By Jensen

When I tell people that I'm a musician the first thing they assume is, "Ah, you play piano. Very good." Truth is, I am talentless, when it comes to instruments—but I am pretty damn good when it comes to music production. I make everything using my laptop, I just learn off of YouTube. And one thing a lot of people ask me as well is, "If you're doing music, then why the hell are you in Monash doing business? Isn't that kind of counterproductive?"

And the thing is, a lot of it (making music), you can learn straight from the Internet for free, I've picked up all of this from YouTube. The whole aim for this song was to make it short and simple because, it's a reminder, it's a reminder for myself. It's really just me talking to myself. So why should I bring in metaphors you know like, you are the sun of my life, the flowers to my seed—this type of crap, when it's just like you will be okay. All these bad things will fade, they will go away eventually. Do not give up. I want to be able to still be here in the future and see myself happy and just shining bright, free from what caused me to write this song in the first place.



But the thing with art is it's never predictable. A lot of people think that, oh, you guys make music, you know just press a few buttons and then out comes from the factory this finished product. But a lot of it is honestly trial and error. This song in particular however— it was very spontaneous. I thought of the lyrics very quickly, and what I do for lyrics, is that I would just keep writing. I tried not to stop because then, you give yourself writer's block. So why limit yourself when you can just allow yourself to be free and flowing with ideas? And then at the end of the day you can pick the good ones and discard the rest.

And like I said, the whole purpose of the song was to be a reminder. So, every time I listen to it, it's just a cycle of, Alright, you know we've been through this. We've been through the melancholy, the sadness, and all that stuff—we've been through it—that feeling of desperation, and the feeling of hopelessness, so why go through it again, when I know the right things I need to do. I don't claim to be a mental health advocate, I'm just speaking from my story, my experience. What I found worked for me, was to learn to focus on myself. A lot of people say Oh, you got depression? Well, just BE happy. And it's bullshit.

So, one thing that I found works for me, was to focus on myself—all aspects of myself. I go to the gym, yesterday I swam—all that stuff's been great for my physical health. For my mental health, I try not to put too much stress on myself, I try to treat myself. You don't want to, just treat yourself, you also have to work. I focus on my ambition, what gives me hope, a bright future.

The tragic part of being a musician is that you'll find that musicians or artists often—I'm not trying to generalize—but what I found is that they usually have some sort of pain in their life where they went through some sort of dark times that allow them to talk about something right because, it's like the whole rapper thing—if you're not from 'the hood' not from 'the ghetto', a lot of people might feel your music is disingenuous—because these people express their art from a place of pain, and from a place of real experiences. I rap too but I don't rap about getting hoes, getting lit, and all that crap. I rap about my life, learning how to be confident, dealing with haters, dealing with people who doubt me, so it's always drawing from life experiences.

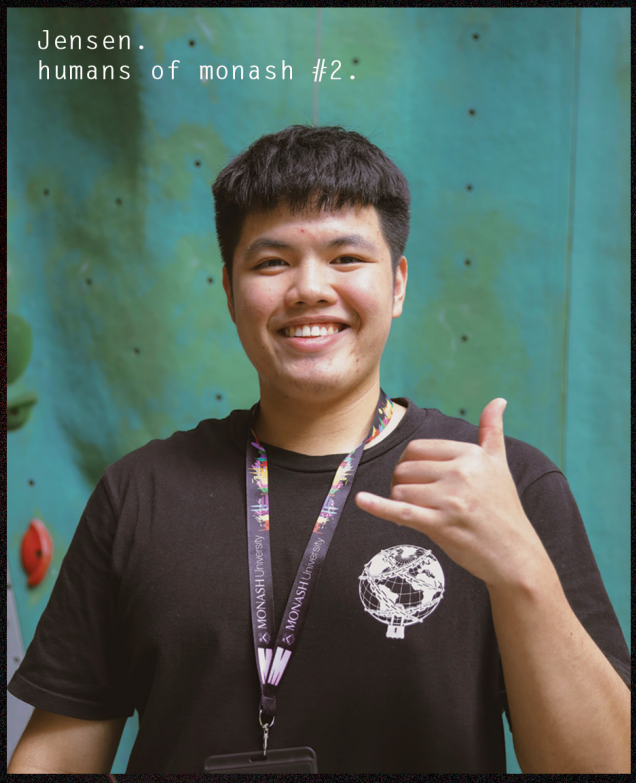
I think I'm a very family-oriented person. I love my family. My brother and sister, Jermaine, and Jenelle, they mean everything to me. When I lost a lot of my closest friends, I realized very quickly that all I had was that—family. And they never, once disappointed, you know, they never once let me down and they were always there for me. I love them so much. They were with me, every step of the way. And when I would do performances, they were the ones who helped record it, they would always be there to support, rain or shine. One of the things I told them a lot, especially right before I left to come to Malaysia was, Be great. You guys are going to be great.

Everyone's got potential right? I don't believe in people being stupid unless they voluntarily choose to be. I don't believe in people being incapable. There are people out there with no limbs doing things we cannot even imagine. So, what's your excuse? We have no excuse; we have to try something.

I want to make my parents proud. I mean of course they're proud of me and they let me know and I love them so much. But I want them to do that old people thing where they tell everybody about their grandkids. You know that their grandkids are doing this and that. I want them to be so proud of me that they go around telling their friends, "Well my son is doing this, my son is doing that."

And those are the three most important things for me: To do my siblings right, to make my parents proud, and to succeed for myself. I know it sounds selfish, but if you don't take care of yourself, then who will? Like I said earlier, no one is going to come save you, give you a pat on the back or a hug and tell you it's going to be ok. Your friends do it because they care about you but at the end of the day it's their choice to do that. They don't have to, it's not like there's a gun man in your house making them do that.

So yeah, three things: Do it for yourself. Do it for your siblings. Do it for your family. Because those are the people who stuck with me through thunderstorms, tsunami, earthquakes, you know when my ground was not stable and I had nobody, when I felt alone; they were that foundation that allowed me to build up myself, to be strong, and confident in myself. I count my blessings because you know when you take away everything I have, at the end of the day I still have an incredibly supportive family, and I owe everything to that.



Three things:
1. Do it for yourself.
2. Do it for your siblings.
3. Do it for your family.

-Jensen-

Alright, let's talk about something more positive now. Let's leave all this dark stuff behind. One thing I'm very excited about is to start performing now that fingers crossed, COVID cases go down and we can start easing restrictions. I'm in the music club already, and hopefully we can get to have actual face to face live performances because I have a lot of pent-up energy that I just want to, get on stage, and let out. I want to jump around. Get people going, and then of course hit everybody in the feels with the sad songs too. I'm very passionate and very excited, I cannot wait.

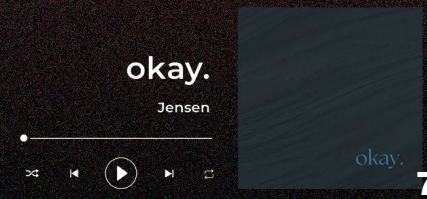
And I know you know people always say stuff like, "Guys go hit that like and subscribe button, it means the world", and all that, and I do all this for me. You have to do something for you because you want to. Because when you take away the fame, take away the girls who want your number, take away the power, the money, you still have to have that same passion. That's how you know what you really love and how you know what your ambition or your future is. So of course, you know I love making music, even if my only fan is me.

But again, without my family, my friends, without the beautiful fans supporting me, it makes it all incredibly grim. It's like being at the gym by yourself. Cool. You get your space or whatever, but at the same time you don't have anyone pushing you, you don't have anyone encouraging you, and so with the fans, there's just every nice comment out there pushing you to do more. Oh, and shout out to Sebastian, who's this amazing kid from Europe that I met on Instagram, and from the first day I told him I made music he has been so incredibly supportive, even though we've never met physically, he's supported every song or content I've made, he's always there to comment, and show love. So, huge shout out to Sebastian. And I told him that, anything you want in the world, if you're crazy enough to think that you can do it, you can do it. So, from the bottom of my heart, I appreciate and love all of my fans, all of my family and friends.

I'll leave you with this, no matter what you do of course—don't do anything illegal. Make sure your passion is legal, right? But as long as your passion is, you know good for society as a whole. Do it and when you do it, make sure that you have heart that you face fear and conquer the challenges ahead.

You can listen to Jensen's newest single *okay.* on all streaming platforms.

Darling, you will be okay, be okay
and All the bad things,
yeah they will all fade,
they will all fade
Why are you crying?
It's only Friday, only Friday
And I hope I can still see you someday,
see you someday



"She's into superstitions, black cats and voodoo dolls"

She's always had these two sides to her. Upon initial impression, one would perceive her as rather dreamy, a little ditzy, spontaneous, bright-eyed and bubbly. Essentially, what one would deem, the ever so controversial Manic Pixie Dream Girl. She would just randomly whip out her deck of tarot cards and tell someone she had just met all about their wondrous love-life, making intense eye contact, staring deep into their soul, trying to create a sense of affinity between them.

Nurul liked leaving a magical impact sometimes but most times this then leads to people never seeing past this side of her. If one were to genuinely get to know Nurul, they'd realise that her wants, needs, motivations, and desires aren't just surface level. She manifests independent goals for herself but is constantly misunderstood for just having quirky idiosyncrasies and for always being high on life.

humans *of* monash #3

Photographer: Sean Tan. Writer: Shabnam Kaur Sidhu.
Designer: Winnie Ooi.

The Nurul I know is indeed full of life but in the sense that she makes you feel at ease. She opens herself up to you so that you don't feel the need to conceal your eccentricity. Her vulnerability allows the circle she's in to enjoy embracing a fantasy that isn't merely just a concoction of one's imagination. Her way of doing away with conventions revitalises a way of life that lets you live freely.

It's hard to see Nurul as someone constantly being misunderstood for lacking depth and complexity. Once you get past the initial impression, you come to realise that she pays attention to every word you say. She'll sense your discomfort and immediately make you feel at ease, whether it's through words or her comforting mannerisms.

Nurul's eclectic style and her inexplicable antics aren't weaknesses but instead, make her so immensely captivating if you're one to see beyond the whimsical trope. She teaches you that being vulnerable isn't a weakness but instead opens you up to a contemporary culture of saying exactly what's on your mind and embracing instinctiveness.

Photographer: Shawn Wong. Writer: Rain Lee. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

humans of monash #4

RAIN
RAIN
RAIN
RAIN
RAIN
RAIN

LIVING WITH BIPOLAR II AND ADD

"Don't freak out, it's just a small matter."

To a perfectly normal person, it may be. But to me, before therapy, before treatment, it meant the world had come crashing down for me. Unbeknownst to me, I had Bipolar Disorder (Type II) and Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), which are psychological conditions that are genetically determined.

I had no self-esteem, but full blown "self-confidence" (basically a nice way of saying narcissism). That led me to many places which I didn't want to head to. Every conversation that spewed out of my mouth would somehow lead to me, myself and I. I freaked out at every little thing. Everything was a distraction to me, I could never focus. My grades were failing, my social life was becoming a mess and I didn't know why.

My breaking point was when I lost an entire group of friends. Then, I decided I would have to seek the opinion of a professional psychiatrist. Late in November 2021, I went for my first appointment and was provisionally diagnosed with my conditions. Eventually, in December 2021, after some tests, I was formally diagnosed with Bipolar II and ADD and put on medication.

At first, I told my psychiatrist that I was afraid to take the medicine because it would make me, firstly, seem like a crazy person and secondly, I would develop a dependency on it. After a long talk, he made me understand that mental health conditions are equivalent to physical health conditions. He likened my bipolar disorder to high blood pressure, where medical treatment was vital to lowering blood pressure, while ADD was like a long-lasting flu, that would eventually go away but medical treatment would still be required at first.

Months into medicine, and those by my side have told me that I've gotten calmer, much more mellow, much more relaxed, and I find myself being less distracted.

To the people I've hurt, I'm sorry. To the ones that are going through anything, stay strong and remember it's okay to seek help.

Here I am, telling my story. Seeing a psychiatrist, having mental health issues, taking medicine and seeking treatment for them do not make you crazy. Don't forget - mental health is as important as physical health, and seeing a psychiatrist and/or counsellor is as important as seeing a doctor for a flu.

Writer: Elly Zulaikha. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

NIC

Nic.
humans of monash #5.

humans of monash #5

When I was in primary school, I really wanted to impress this girl. So, I was like 'Wouldn't it be sick if I wrote a song for her?' But turns out I did not sing her a song, in fact, I showed no one that song but I was like you know what? It's kinda cool.

I used to like listening to a lot of ABBA and just seeing them perform on stage, singing their songs and people shouting their lyrics back. . . that hits something in me and I was like 'I want that'. I want to be on stage, I want to sing my own songs, and be big enough so that people can shout my lyrics back to me. Every time I watch a YouTube video of live performances and the crowd actually shouts the lyrics back, I get so inspired, so emotional. That's how I got into songwriting.

Speaking of songwriting, I didn't know how to contain my emotions back then, like I never learned how to let them dissipate – because when you're angry, you can keep it to yourself but it'll always be there, so, it has to go somewhere, right? I don't like receiving comfort like 'Oh, it'll be okay', 'Oh, you're gonna be fine' – I hate it. So, the way I manage this is with songs.

Let's say you're listening to a song of mine, and you read the lyrics and go, 'I don't get what this guy's saying' – but it's just how I feel at that time. So, when I listen to it, I kind of go like, 'Damn, I was feeling ***that*** at the time'. Also, you know how people go through lyrics and they go 'Holy shit that's so deep' and you can quote it on Pinterest or some shit? I used to have that mindset.

Every line that I wrote, I have to be like 'Oh my god, can they quote this on Pinterest or use it as a caption on Instagram?' I'll be so fixated on that thought that I wouldn't be satisfied with the things that I write. But now? I think the lyrics don't need to sound deep all the time. It's okay to make it sound like it doesn't mean anything. It's kind of messy, but like painting, you know? When you look at Picassos painting, yes, there's no set picture, but you can kinda get how he was feeling at that time so that's how it is in a sense.

I remember when I was 5, I would write songs but it never really went anywhere because I was 5 right? And then I started making music 3 years ago. I was in a phase where I was like 'Okay I just want to put my music out, I don't care'. I used to control myself too much like 'I don't want to release this because I don't think it's good enough.'

But at this stage in my life, and then coming here as an exchange student in Australia and everything, I realized that it's okay to make what you want. You don't have to make things that a lot of people would necessarily like. You just need to make things that you identified with. So, I started doing that and I've been doing great so far.

But to be honest. . . this whole thing started out as a joke with my friend. I used to go over to his place in Nadayu and we'll make songs. I would only rap and I like it because of the satisfaction of hearing it, whether if it's smooth. . . So, when we made those songs, we'll post them on SoundCloud. But because I wanted to cater to the masses, I decided to like put up sad boy songs (I was a sad boy back then so ***obviously***).

People— and I mean my friends and the occasional one or two listeners— would compare me to like Keshi or Joji in terms of 'the vibes'. But yeah, because at that time I already had an interest in this, it then kinda hits something in me as well. I really, really enjoy this and I wouldn't mind doing this for life. Ever since then, I've been trying to like get my shit out there.

Now I would describe my [music style] as my own genre? I can't even pinpoint it because I've been listening to a lot of artists in the past like two, or three years ago, and I just pick and choose those who inspire me.

Scarlxrd, Bring Me The Horizon, Brakenc – these artists have taught me different things in terms of like building up my track. Now it's kind of like heavy bass, a little bit of screamo, and rap. Plus, now that I'm in my 'I don't really care anymore' phase, I'm merging my Spotify and SoundCloud together so essentially, I'm bringing the rap from SoundCloud onto Spotify.

NOW IT'S KIND OF LIKE

HEAVY BASS, A LITTLE BIT SCREAMO AND RAP

If I get to start over, I think I would consider posting my SoundCloud songs earlier on Spotify because then the audience that I would've been able to reach out to, would be consistent with the audience that I'm trying to reach out to now. I potentially could have gathered a fanbase instead of starting all over like I'm doing right now. I wouldn't say I would a hundred percent change things, but I would like to see the outcome of that but that's not possible. I don't regret it so far, which is good.

Coming here to Australia and people tell you, 'Hey, your shit's actually good' is like my culture shock you know? And when you move to a different place, social media like TikTok especially will change your 'For You Page' – like the audience is different. So, I've actually had someone from Warner Records LA reach out to me a month plus after coming here – which is great news, yeah! I don't think that would've been possible if I stayed in Malaysia.

NOZIROH

Nic

My manager has been telling me hey you should push your content; you should start being more active on social media so. . . I've been doing that. My view count has gone down but the people who engaged with my content are the people I want to be engaging in my content. Like I don't need a hundred thousand views, but the five hundred, and seven hundred who watched my content are the people who are interested in what I'm doing. Essentially, I found my target audience, yeah.

Regardless, I can't imagine a life where I'm not doing music because I've set my sights on becoming an international artist and I'm so deep into that hole that I cannot see myself doing anything else. I once had to do an internship where I had to be a social media manager for a company and it was straight hell.

I was told I have 'creative freedom' yet it feels controlling. Because at the end of the day, as much creative freedom as I have, I still need to comply to their guidelines. I still need the boss's 'OK' and I understand that as a company, you want to keep your image consistent? And I don't think I can do [long-term] because when I do creative things, I like to push boundaries, I like to explore new things, I like to see what I can do that can potentially dispose of old ones or better than what people have already put out there, a fresh take or perspective on things you know?

Check out Nic's latest single titled NOZIROH on his Spotify by scanning the Spotify barcode.

"Welcome to Paradise"

Noziroh by Nic

Follow Nic on social media:

TikTok: @nlsw_ || Instagram: @nlsw_ || Twitter: @nlsw_ || Youtube: Nic

"EH, WHAT YOU WANT TO EAT TODAY AH?"

"GO CHECK MONCH LA!"

THERE IS NOTHING MORE IMPORTANT TO US MALAYSIANS THAN FOOD, THEREFORE MONCH SERVES AS MONGA'S VERY OWN FOODIE GUIDE THAT WILL (HOPEFULLY) HELP ALLEVIATE THE BURDEN OF DECIDING WHAT AND WHERE TO EAT.

PS: A LOT OF THE CAFES WE FEATURE ARE VERY DATE AND INSTAGRAM WORTHY (WINK WINK)

therefore

Written by Ashley Lim
Photographed by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

Lot 02-G, Menara Symphony, 5, Jalan Professor Khoo Kay Kim, Seksyen 13, 46200 Petaling Jaya, Selangor

The second game was Lomba Memasukan Pensil Kedalam Botol and it was as easy as racing to insert the pencil into the bottle and it was played in a team of 2 with each participant standing in one line.

The best part of the event was that there was food everywhere!! Everywhere from the food bazaar to the merch stall! We sampled the Indonesian Sambal at the food bazaar, which was very spicy and savoury, and also had 'Choki Choki' chocolate, which surprisingly originates from Indonesia!

As students sampled delicacies and tried their luck with games, a number of students were also seen enjoying the live performances taking place at the same time. There was a diverse array of musical performances taking place, where Indonesian songs were performed, and everyone sang along.

The event's inclusive and interactive approach helped to instil a sense of belonging and familiarity for those from Indonesia. This approach showcased a unique blend of both patriotism and multiculturalism and was a refreshing change from hectic University life.

"Independence day is a reminder of our old heroes who sacrificed their lives for us, and the struggles they faced." Said Agnes, an Indonesian student currently studying in Monash. "This event made me feel like I was back home, celebrating with my family."

Aside from showcasing Indonesian culture and development, the event was also especially successful in celebrating diversity. This was especially evident from the multiethnic audience who attended the event.

" I'm having a blast, the energy is so vibrant and it's so much fun!" said Jamaal, a Monash student from Sri Lanka, who attended the event. "It's a great demonstration of culture for us international students!"

Rapa-pump-pump (RM18) is a smooth roasted butternut squash soup, dotted with onion confit, chantilly cream and adorned with a small pink edible flower. Although soup is often thought of as just a starter and quickly dismissed once the main meal arrives, this was definitely not the case. Light, subtly sweet, with gentle, savoury flavours of roasted garlic and just creamy enough so that one does not feel too satiated, it took us less than five minutes to annihilate the entire bowl. Easily one of the best things we had the entire time.

Sunbathing Scallops (RM32) was a simple appetiser of four lightly seared scallops on a spoonful of roasted cauliflower mousse and encircled by drizzles of herbed butter and a seafood emulsion. Visually, this dish is a wonderful mix of warm reddish, orange and light yellow tones, nicely complimented by the pink backdrop of the plate. The taste itself is reminiscent of an ocean breeze however, the texture of the scallops left a bit something to be desired as it was overcooked and on the chewy side, without the supple softness that usually comes to mind when we think of perfectly cooked scallops. Coupled with the hefty price tag of RM32, this dish may not be the most bang for your buck.

Seeing as the brunch options were available all the way till 4pm, we jumped at the chance to order It's A Big Day (RM42) which is Therefore Cafe's rendition of the classic "Western" breakfast that we often see on kopitiam menus, elevated to PJ cafe levels. The dish consisted of beet-cured salmon gravlax, haricot beans, sauteed wild mushrooms, a petite salad, roasted potatoes with herbs, pomegranate seeds, fig slices, grilled chicken cheese sausages, an english muffin, fruit preserves and a choice between scrambled eggs or an omelette of which we chose the former. Although on paper it may seem like a lot of food, the dish was of average breakfast plate size, with a pool of creamy scrambled eggs taking up most of the plate. Other than the slightly watered down mushrooms, the rest of the components of the dish were relatively up to par. The salmon was laid on top of the english muffin that had been slathered with fruit preserves, cutting through the earthy flavour of the beets with a tinge of sweetness. The roasted potatoes and chicken sausage were the stars of the show as there was a sense of comfort to their heartiness that rounded off the breakfast nicely.

Our next brunch item of the day was the Shalala Lamb (RM 33). Brought to the table in a cast iron serving dish, this oven-baked shakshuka contained Australian minced lamb, organic eggs, ricotta cheese, pesto kale herbs and two buttered and toasted slices of sourdough bread. Two delightful egg yolks oozed through the sea of red tomato sauce, providing a nice creamy reprieve from the acidity of the sauce and slight gaminess of the minced lamb. The crumbled ricotta cheese and pesto kale added another caveat of complexity to the dish, providing a saltiness and herbiness that would have caused the flavour itself to be far too monotonous without it.

The final and second favourite dish of the day was Pesto Memento (RM28), a short grained arborio rice risotto, with kale herb pesto, sauteed wild mushrooms, tomato confit, fontina cheese and fresh leaves (this sounded slightly sus to me when we ordered it but it's all good guys). This dish is one of their few vegetarian options. Now, I am personally in awe of vegetarians because I'm very much a carnivore at heart (GIVE ASHLEY HER KBBQ‼) and often grow hungry when I eat just vegetarian meals, but this risotto was a pleasant surprise both flavour-wise and "filling-up-my-tummy-wise". Often, risotto uses bases such as chicken or beef stock to bring out the starch in risotto resulting in the creamy, rich texture and taste that we know and love. However, this risotto was able to achieve the very same satisfying mouthful, made even better with the herbaceous flavour of the pesto. The shavings of cheese gave a sharp tang, sour-sweet bursts of tomato and earthy mushrooms rounded off the dish nicely and we will definitely be coming back for more of it.

Unfortunately, we were far too full to order any desserts however we were able to wash down all of our food with a medley of drinks consisting of:

Hojicha Latte (RM15) which to my disappointment, was lost in the sea of milk and sweetener, lacking the nutty taste that I love so much.

Sunkissed Violet (RM15) was a visual stunner as the butterfly pea
tea lent its signature dark blue-purple hue to the drink, accompanied by grapefruit puree, mint, lime, orchid syrup and sparkling water. The taste of the drink transported me to a serene garden in the spring countryside, however do make sure you stir it up first to allow the flavours to mingle with each other or else you'll end up with a mouthful of drab, blue-tinted tea.

Passionate Pair (RM15) was a cold-brewed lemongrass tea, accented with pear puree, passion fruit and boosted with a refreshing zing of sparkling water. Overall, it was refreshing but forgettable as I was unable to taste the fruit that had been advertised in the menu.

And finally the most basic thing anyone can order in a cafe: two iced lattes. Pretty much a staple at any cafe, this was another drink that went down without much fuss but nothing too spectacular either. With that, this Head Writer's very first MONCH in two years comes to an end :(Being a bit of a cafe hopper myself during the weekends, the dishes at Therefore Cafe, with their cute names and of course notable ambience was a good addition to my cafe rotary list and all of their dishes, despite their flaws are still most assuredly MONCH-approved!

Food: 6.5/10 (note: if you go PLEASE ORDER THE BUTTERNUT SQUASH SOUP)
Ambience: 7/10
Price: 6/10
Accessibility: 8/10
Service: 8.5/10 (the servers really dealt with all our shenanigans and were incredibly nice about it)

Luckin Kopi

MONCH APRIL EDITION.

LUCKIN KOPI

Written by Natasha Maya
Photographed by Jerry Foong
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

14, JALAN PANGGONG, CITY CENTRE, 50000 KUALA LUMPUR, WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN

Located in the heart of KL, a cosy unassuming restaurant sits between rows of buildings in Jalan Panggong. The exterior of the restaurant is simple with a touch of traditional nostalgia as seen by the wooden details of the entrance.

We made the mistake of coming right during lunch hour on a Saturday (this was before Ramadan) which meant that we had to jot our names down and wait. But it all worked out in our favour because it gave us the chance to explore the area behind the shop lots and take a lot of Insta-worthy pictures!

The wait took less than half an hour and the service was relatively quick considering that the whole restaurant was full. But not to worry, the seating arrangements were spaced out well enough that we had our privacy while eating.

Their menu had an interesting range, from local delights like nasi lemak and mee goreng to lighter food such as toasts and buns. After a good 20 minutes and a lot of "Wow this looks good, oh wait, this one looks good too," we finally decided on the following:

1. Luckin Kopi Kaw Cold **RM5.50**
2. Luckin Cham Cold **RM5.50**
3. Salted Egg Rice - Chicken **RM13.50**
4. Luckin Sizzling Chicken Rice **RM18.90**
5. ABC **RM8.90**

Honestly, the drinks themselves deserve a whole article on their own - it was so good that I could probably write a poem about it. The Luckin Kopi Kaw Cold was refreshing and rich, with a slightly bitter aftertaste (but in the best way). I don't know how they did it, but they managed to find the perfect balance of milky but not too milky. And despite the ice melting, it maintained its rich caramelised taste throughout the meal. As a broke uni student, nothing beats affordable yet good quality caffeine! :')

As for the Luckin Cham Cold, I personally did not enjoy the first sip but after a while it grew on me. It was the perfect blend between tea and coffee, two of the best tastes in one! And to top it all off, our Ipoh-born photographer approves of their cham, going as far as to say that it was almost on par with Ipoh's cham! (That's when you know it's good good).

The Salted Egg Chicken Rice looked good in the menu pictures, but tasted even better than it looks. Don't let the small portion fool you, it turned out to be very filling that we had a food coma afterwards. The chicken maintained the familiar crispiness and tenderness of fried chicken, but without being dry or oily. Even the sauce is good, not too thick, not too salty with just a hint of chilli to compliment its milky flavour.

Personally, the Luckin Sizzling Chicken Rice was the star of the show. It was served raw on a hot plate and a waiter came every once in a while to flip the chicken to ensure that it was thoroughly cooked (so that my lack of culinary skills would not be the end of me). With a mixture of corn, chicken, thick gravy, blocks of butter and rice over a banana leaf, this meal was both visually pleasing and incredibly delicious. Every ingredient complimented each other such as how the corn added texture to the soft tender chicken. Thankfully, they were also very generous with their portions because I could not get enough of it!

Unfortunately every great establishment has their flaws, and this came in the form of their ABC. For full disclosure, we are not huge ABC fans but we've tasted a few good ones in our lifetime. Don't get me wrong, the ABC was still pretty good and I think those with a sweet tooth will enjoy this. If you're adventurous with your desserts and your taste buds are looking for something new, this could be for you. It was served with an interesting combination of lychee, black jelly, peanuts, orange skin, red bean and corn which made it very visually appealing. Although the ingredients did not seamlessly blend with each other, the sweet shaved ice bandung syrup was refreshingly good to cleanse our taste palates after the heavy yet satisfying meals.

Considering the restaurant is only a 5-minute walk from the Pasar Seni LRT, the location is quite convenient. We would definitely recommend this place to any person looking for an innovative local restaurant. We confidently dub this restaurant as MONCH-APPROVED!

Food: 9/10
Ambience: 7/10
Price: 7.5/10
Accessibility: 8.5/10
Service 8/10

MONCH MAY EDITION

MINGLE CAFE

55, JALAN SULTAN, CITY CENTRE, 50000 KUALA LUMPUR, WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN KUALA LUMPUR

Written by Sreana Habiba
Photographed by Luanne Choong & San Jun Hoe
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

Located in Jalan Sultan, one stop away from Pasar Seni and amidst a line-up of various other tempting cafes, Mingle Cafe sits unassumingly, its entrance covered in foliage and plants, as if trying to set itself apart from its competition. Immediately upon entering you're greeted with an enticing, extensive collection of cakes, pastries, loaves and cupcakes - good luck trying to resist yourself from saving desserts for the end! Walking in, you get encased in the rustic, vintage and homely feel of the cafe right away. Its warm ambient lighting, eclectic posters and paintings covering its walls, assortments of memorabilia strewn around the cafe, and especially their use of upcycled furniture - they even used old doors as tables - truly sets them apart from other vintage cafes.

The cafe was fairly crowded since it was rush hour and it was the day after Raya as well, but even so everything we ordered came relatively quickly and the staff were very friendly. The first thing we ordered was their cappuccino, and we all agreed that it was the only thing on their menu that wasn't up to par - it tasted somewhat bland and watered down, and it won't impress actual coffee-lovers.

Their food menu ranged from Malaysian options to Western ones, so we had a variety to choose from. We decided on:

1. Nasi Ulam (Daging Rendang) - RM 27
2. Salted Egg Chicken Spaghetti - RM 27
3. Chicken Burger - RM 25
4. Cappuccino - RM 12
5. Lotus Biscoff Burnt Cheesecake - rm 22

We started off with their salted egg chicken spaghetti, and from the very first bite it won us over. The pasta was perfectly al dente, well-salted, and the egg flavour was perfectly balanced - it coats your mouth in such a way that it hits all the right spots in your taste bud. The chicken pieces were satisfyingly crispy and juicy; all of which resulted in a dish that not only fulfilled our stomachs, but also gave us plenty of aesthetic pleasure as well.

Next, we had the Nasi Ulam, which is a traditional Indonesian and Malaysian mixed dish consisting of a blend of aromatic herb rice, and it also turned out to be one of our favourites. The rice was incredibly fragrant, and the beef was so soft and buttery that you could pull it apart with just your spoon. It was served with a side of salad including rocket and thyme basil, which added the hint of freshness and greenness that this dish needed. All in all, everything in the dish was well-balanced, fragrant and fulfilling, and the quantity was good for the price as well. It also had the added factor of looking extremely appeasing.

Next was the chicken burger – this was interesting. It was an amalgamation of sweet and savoury flavours, with the egg mostly overpowering the whole thing. The bun was flavorful but slightly burned at the edges. The actual chicken could have also been juicier, since it failed to really give us that hit of dopamine when you bite into a really delectable burger. Regardless, it was still tasty, just not the best burger we've had in our lives.

And finally - desserts! We had to give their flavour of the month a try, which was the Lotus Biscoff Burnt Cheesecake. The first bite quite literally melted in our mouths - it was so lusciously soft and smooth, with the cheesecake being perfectly creamy and, well, cheesy. It was, as its name states - burnt from the sides and impossibly soft on the inside, which created a heaven of an experience for our taste buds. Although we did enjoy the cake, we also noted that the price (RM 22) could be a bit less, and the Lotus Biscoff flavour could be more pronounced.

If you're looking for a place to eat that has an incredibly warm and homely ambiance and amazing bites both savoury and sweet, this is the cafe for you! One of our photographers who's a Penang local also noted that the cafe gave her Penang cafe vibes, which is also a plus for them. And lastly, if you're a Harry Styles fan you're going to love Mingle Cafe because it was all their playlist consisted of. We definitely were not complaining.

Food: 9/10
Ambience: 8.5/10
Price: 7/10
Accessibility: 8/10
Service: 8.5/10

monch !

the August edition

photos by Dina Ghazali and Timothy Wee
written by Shaura Naeem
designed by Megan Tang

Halab KL

35, Jalan Berangan, Bukit Bintang, 50200
Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala

Right in the heart of KL, stood Halab, a Middle-Eastern restaurant that offered a whole host of Syrian, Yemeni, and Arabian-inspired dishes. We visited Halab during the afternoon, and given the long queues, we had seen just a while away, for Halab KL's famous shawarma, it was clear we were at the right place.

In terms of access, I'd say that location wise, Halab was on a pretty deserted street, propped up on a slanted hill, that made it hard to find, and navigate to. Furthermore, because of Halab's notoriety, there were numerous branches in the area, dedicated to different things, like a dedicated street for serving Halab shawarmas, and another restaurant for fulfilling deliveries, so locating the main restaurant in the midst of it all proved challenging.

The restaurant was bustling with people, and the interior—heavily inspired by Middle-Eastern culture— fit with bright, patterns, framed pictures that decorated the walls. The restaurant followed a two-toned black and white approach in their interior design, which exuded a modern, yet fine-dining experience. Most notably was the semi-cut out behind a glass partition that allowed patrons to view the chefs at their craft—be it carving meat on the rotisserie, or tossing kebabs on the grill.

After being seated, we took a look at their extensive menu, and no that is not an understatement. We knew we couldn't try everything, even if they all looked mouth-watering good, so we settled on ordering crowd favourites, and dishes that seemed unique to Halab. With that being said, here's what we ordered:

Adani Teapot- RM 15 (Size Small)

Hummus- RM 17

Daoud Basha- RM 35

Grilled Chicken- RM 32 (With Cheese)

As stated before, we unfortunately arrived at one of Halab's busiest hours, which meant the staff were incredibly occupied fulfilling existing orders, to the point that there was a backlog of orders for a specific dish—their shawarmas.

One thing surprising about the restaurant was that they simultaneously made shawarmas for the secondary Halab corner down the street, which created a massive backlog as the restaurant was juggling orders from two restaurants. I'd argue this was a poor organisational structure, as it really limited the ability for the staff to fulfil most of the main restaurant orders. As a result, we weren't able to order any shawarma options, which was incredibly disappointing, as the shawarma was regarded as the restaurant's selling point.

Adani Teapot (RM 15)

Not too long after placing our orders, the wait-staff served us our tea in an exquisite Arabic pot, covered in brass and metal. Along with the pot came three small cups, just a tad bigger than your average shot glass. Now Adani tea is a spiced milk tea that gets its origins from Aden, Yemen. It's known for its rich, sweet taste and was often had by people on cold winter days. Given its strong aromatic blend, it was made to be drunk in small amounts, which explained why our cups were smaller than average.

As the tea was poured into our cups, the fragrance of the blend of spices wafted in the air. The tea itself was warm to the touch (not scalding which was a plus), and had a creamy golden look to it. It was rather unfortunate that our first sip of the drink elicited a lacklustre response from all of us. We were expecting to be hit by the sweetness, and spices of the tea, however Halab fell short on delivering just that. While the taste of cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, and cloves were present, the drink felt watered down, as it lacked any form of the syrupiness from the sweetened condensed milk.

I do personally think that Halab has the potential to improve upon their tea, by sweetening it a little bit more, and aerating the flavour for a more cohesive taste experience.

Rating: 3.3/5

Hummus (RM 17)

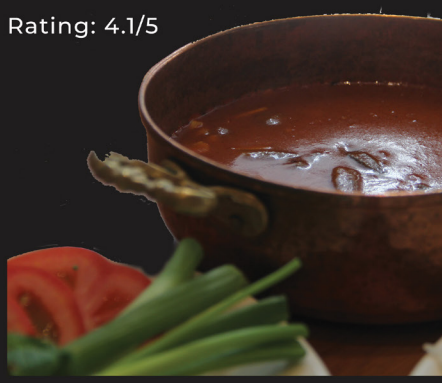
The hummus came in a lovely bowl, with a basket of bread. Where Halab differed from other Middle-Eastern restaurants was in how the bread was presented. Halab had individually packaged their bread, which meant that we could decide how much bread we wanted to use, so we wouldn't end up with leftovers. I think that was a pretty smart decision on their part, as it limits the amount of food-waste generated.

Hummus to put it plainly, is a spread or dip with strong Mediterranean and Middle-Eastern roots. It's essentially made up of mashed chickpeas, tahini, and a generous seasoning of garlic and lemon. Hummus is often whipped and then spread on a platter or bowl, with a heavy drizzle of olive oil and a sprinkling of paprika and spices. Special flatbread, which was fluffy, warm and soft, would help dip into and soak up the hummus.

The bread served by Halab however was slightly stale, and not at all warm. This did slightly lessen the experience of enjoying the hummus, however our first taste of the hummus was truly magnificent. The spread was smooth, creamy and packed with flavour, yet it was just the right balance, as the taste of the tahini and garlic was not overpowering at all, which was often a problem at most restaurants. I'd go as far as to say, it was probably one of the best hummus spreads I've tasted.

Although the hummus was one of the stars of the show, my overall rating was sadly undermined by the bread served alongside the hummus as it failed to meet our expectations.

Rating: 4.1/5



Doud Basha (RM 35)

Next up was Doud Basha, and this was something I've not had before, which meant I had no frame of reference for what the dish could offer, and needless to say I was excited. Doud Basha was essentially the Lebanese and Middle-East's version of

meatballs that are braised in a decadent tomato sauce and simmered for hours. These tender, juicy meatballs are made up of ground beef, lamb, or sometimes, a combination of both. The name comes from a famous basha (the title given to a high-ranking officer during the Ottoman Empire), called Dawood, who supposedly ruled over Iraq and Lebanon, and had this dish created and named after him by one of his chefs.

Just as we were finishing up on our hummus, a small metal pot with handles on both sides was placed on our table, followed by a plate housing a heaping bed of fragrant white rice. We were met with a symphony of flavour on our first bite. The tartness coming from the tomatoes, enhanced the subtle flavour of the meatballs, that seemed to fall apart in your mouth. The pillowy rice helped marinade the sauce even further, adding just a bit of contrast to the sauce. It was absolutely divine in every way possible.

We couldn't stop ourselves from devouring the entire dish, and craved for more. I definitely see myself coming here just to have this again.

Rating: 5/5

Grilled Chicken w/ Cheese (RM 32)

Last on our list was the grilled chicken. We opted to pay extra for cheese as it was a crowd favourite choice, and who could say no to cheese? Most Middle-Eastern restaurants serve their rendition or take on Grilled Chicken, however I think Halab did something different by offering an 'add-cheese' option. I was skeptical that the cheese might not go well with the dish, but I was glad to be proven wrong.

The grilled chicken came on a silver platter, with a generous dollop of garlic sauce, flat bread and char-grilled vegetables. The chicken was juicy, and had a delicious smoky touch as it had been on the charcoal grill. The melted cheese only helped brighten notes of lemon, and garlic that were used to season the chicken, by cutting through the acidity. Paired with the aromatic rice that came with the Daoud Basha, the chicken was yet again another highlight of the meal. One thing to note however was that the chicken was not served with any other pairing of a side dish aside from veggies, which felt incomplete, and not really worth the high price as other restaurants often served their Grilled Chicken alongside a side-dish. Apart from that however, it was a fantastic end to the meal.

Rating: 4.7/5

Overall Review

It's clear that Halab KL was an amazing restaurant that served an incredible variety of authentic middle-eastern cuisine, that was just bursting with flavour. It stood on the pricier side, but given that most of the meat options included lamb or beef, it is understandable, moreover the interior of the restaurant demands it be priced on the high-end side.

Would I say it's worth the price? Yes, I would; the food itself was delicious, the waitstaff were friendly even though they were dealing with multiple orders, and if you can afford to sit through some traffic, it really is an enjoyable place to visit at least once just for that amazing Daoud Basha.

monch !

the September edition

photos by Nursyafiqa Aleeya
written by Kay Ng
designed by Megan Tang

Wizards at Tribeca

215, Jln Imbi, Imbi, 55100 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

A pastiche of Western and Eastern dishes has become a common feature of the trendy KL cafe. That being said, Wizards at Tribeca and its gastronomical treats set itself apart from the typical café food many have come to expect. This should come as no surprise, given that it is the heart-work of the same team behind the award-winning Yellow Brick Road café in Damansara Heights, and the equally successful The Red Beanbag in Publika.

Located on the ground floor of Tribeca Serviced Suites, Wizards sits conveniently within KL's Golden Triangle – the main shopping and nightlife district. This opulence is evident as soon as you step in and experience Wizards' elegantly decorated interior.

The restaurant's high floor-to-ceiling windows welcome ample sunlight into its large, leafy space, ensuring you never feel like you're shoulder-to-shoulder with the restaurant's other patrons.

Wizards' cohesion of sophisticated décor and its menu's lush descriptions promises customers an experience that goes beyond the palette, making it an ideal place for a date or a fancy, Mimosa-worthy brunch. But fair warning – its hefty price tag might not make it a very student-friendly option!

Their fare leans neither Western nor Eastern, having a fair balance of both, and even fusion dishes that lay betwixt, such as the eyebrow-raising Shiitake truffle Somen and Matcha Ravioli. Among these was the deceptively plain-sounding **Spicy Vongole (RM 33)**, which turned out to be an interesting Chinese twist on a classic Italian pasta dish and a definite must-try.

The linguini is tossed with Shao Xing rice wine instead of the traditional white wine, along with sautéed clams, chili, garlic, anchovies, and datterino tomato. Flavour-wise, the dish was creamy, slightly spicy, and smoky, a wonderful combination when paired

with the distinct brininess of the clams and sharp tang of the tomatoes. The Shao Xing rice wine also imparted a substantial amount of complexity and depth into the dish but was subtle enough to stay true to the flavor profile of a classic Italian vongole. Not to be eclipsed was the wonderful hand-made texture of the linguine, which was thick, chewy, and slightly al-dente.

However, the less adventurous can rest assured as Wizards' menu also comprises the usual brunch fare. Those with a sweet tooth can try the **Almond Crusted Brioche French Toast (RM 35)**. It's practically compulsory for any brunch café worth its salt to be able to make a good French Toast, and Wizards did not miss the mark.

Their fluffy and buttery brioche toast was generously coated with sliced almonds, and its earthy nuttiness was a welcome addition. To balance out the heaviness of the butter and mascarpone cream were a melange of fresh berries and a healthy drizzling of what tasted like raspberry reduction. You also have the option to adjust the sweetness to your liking as the Gula Melaka syrup is served on the side. Overall, the dish was simple, straightforward, and well done, making it a reliable brunch staple.

As for the Asian menu options, the varied selection of Bao's looked appetizing and promising. However, the **Tempura Prawn Bao (RM20)** left much to be desired.

Its bombastic description of "fresh tiger prawns in cornflake tempura with flying fish roe and calamansi aioli", gave way instead to a plain breaded prawn, wrapped in a lettuce leaf and a charcoal bao, which was sorely in need of more "calamansi aioli". Given its hefty price point, the dish was disappointing in terms of both flavor and value.

To rehydrate after tears shed for a wasted 20 ringgit, Wizards offers a wide selection of beverages ranging from juices, teas, mocktails, and wines.

Something to note for coffee connoisseurs with very particular tastes – Wizards offers a healthy selection of specialty filter coffees alongside the usual black and white, grouping them by the supplier and delineating between them even further through the beans' country of origin. They even go so far as to describe the region the beans were grown in, along with the variety of beans, the way the beans were processed, and the overriding notes of the coffee. Clearly, they take their coffee very seriously.

However, those who prefer something uniquely refreshing should try the **Yuzu Iced Tea (RM15)**.

The underlying flavor profile of the tea was reminiscent of Oolong, which was beautifully complimented by the heady blossom notes of the Yuzu. As opposed to a classic iced tea, it was not overly sweet, allowing you to relish its mild complexity.

Overall, Wizards is a fantastic place if you're looking to try a contemporary café that blends modern taste with some classic Malaysian flavors. Just be sure that your wallet is prepared to get a little skinnier with every bite you take.

Food: 7.5/10

Ambiance: 8/10

Price: 5/10

Accessibility: 6/10

Photographers: Yang Thong Chen, Shawn Wong, Sean Tan, Tsheten Yangden Bhutia, Wong Zi Yi, Timothy Wee, San Jun Hoe, Luanne Choong, Lim Xin Yi.

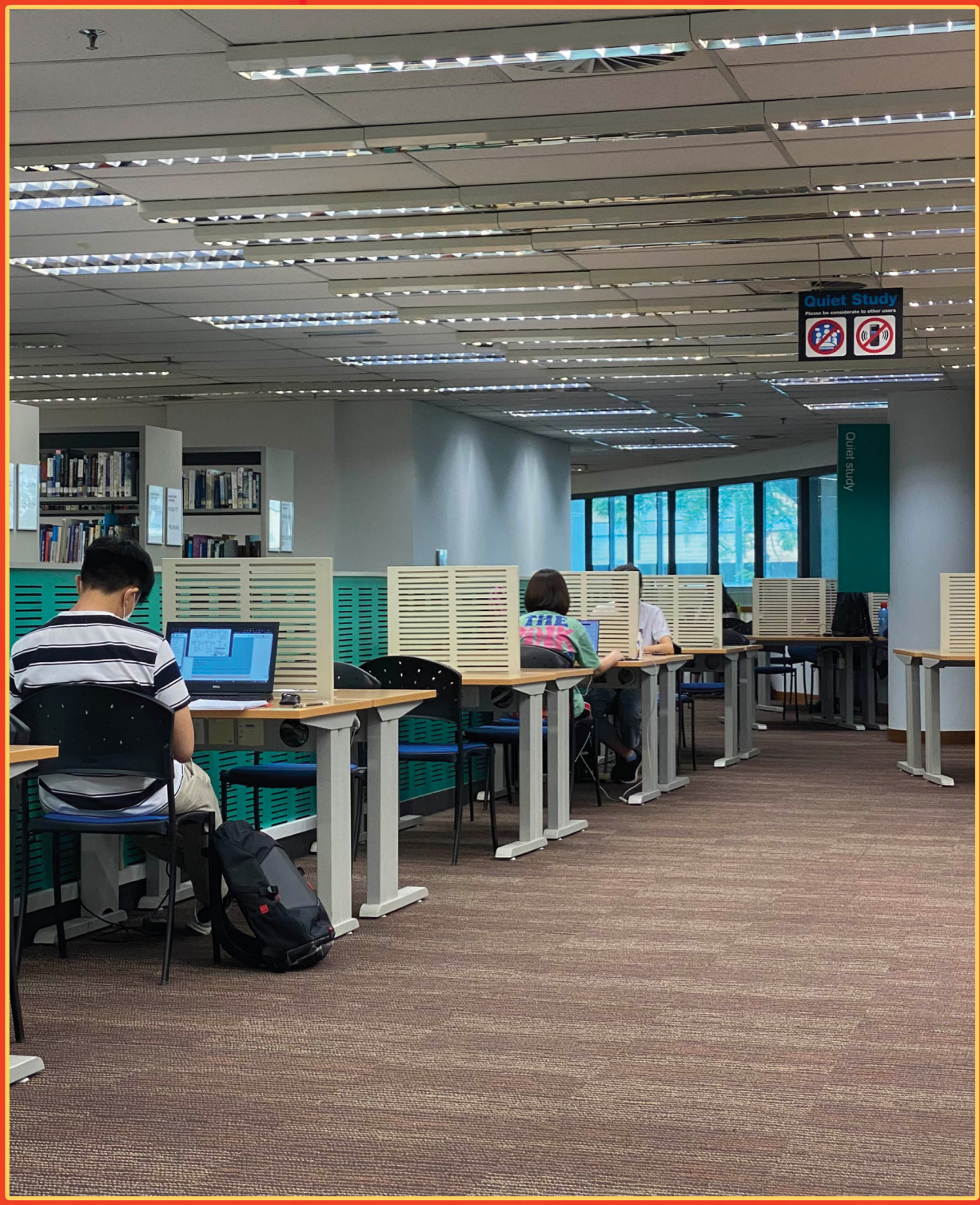
Designer: Chai Ting Ho.

random sh*ts in monash.

Ps

MONASH
BUSINESS
SIMULATION

TOAST



True to its name, “Random Sh*ts at Monash” is a celebration of all things Monash. From staying up till 3am in the library during SWOTVAC or capturing a particularly beautiful sunset over the football field, this is a corner for us to showcase and appreciate the tiny things that make life in university worth living for.

CEMA
TEAM MONASH
MONASH
University
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ORS
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MONASH
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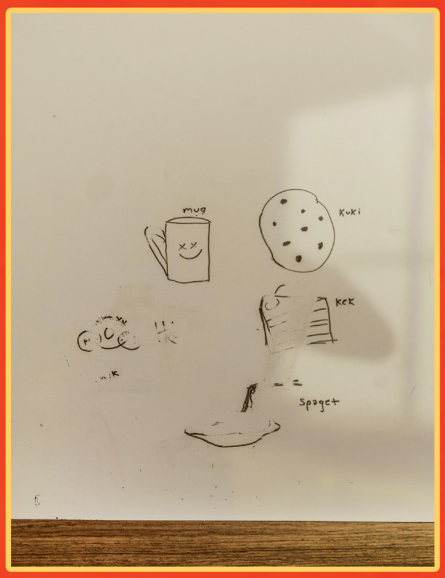
MALAYSIA
11

BEAT THE HEAT!
Just press the button to turn on the heater.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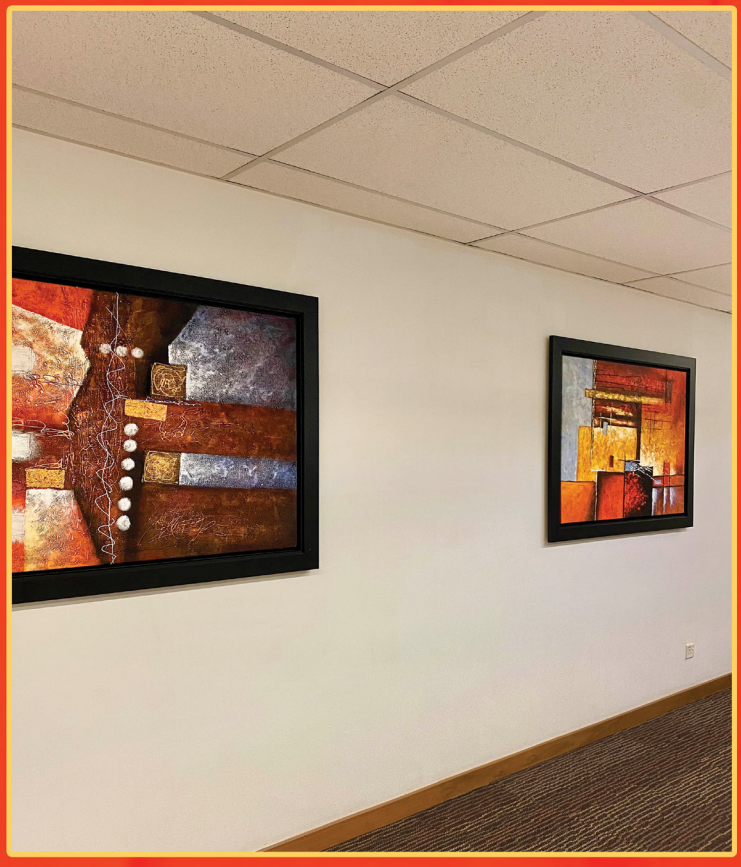

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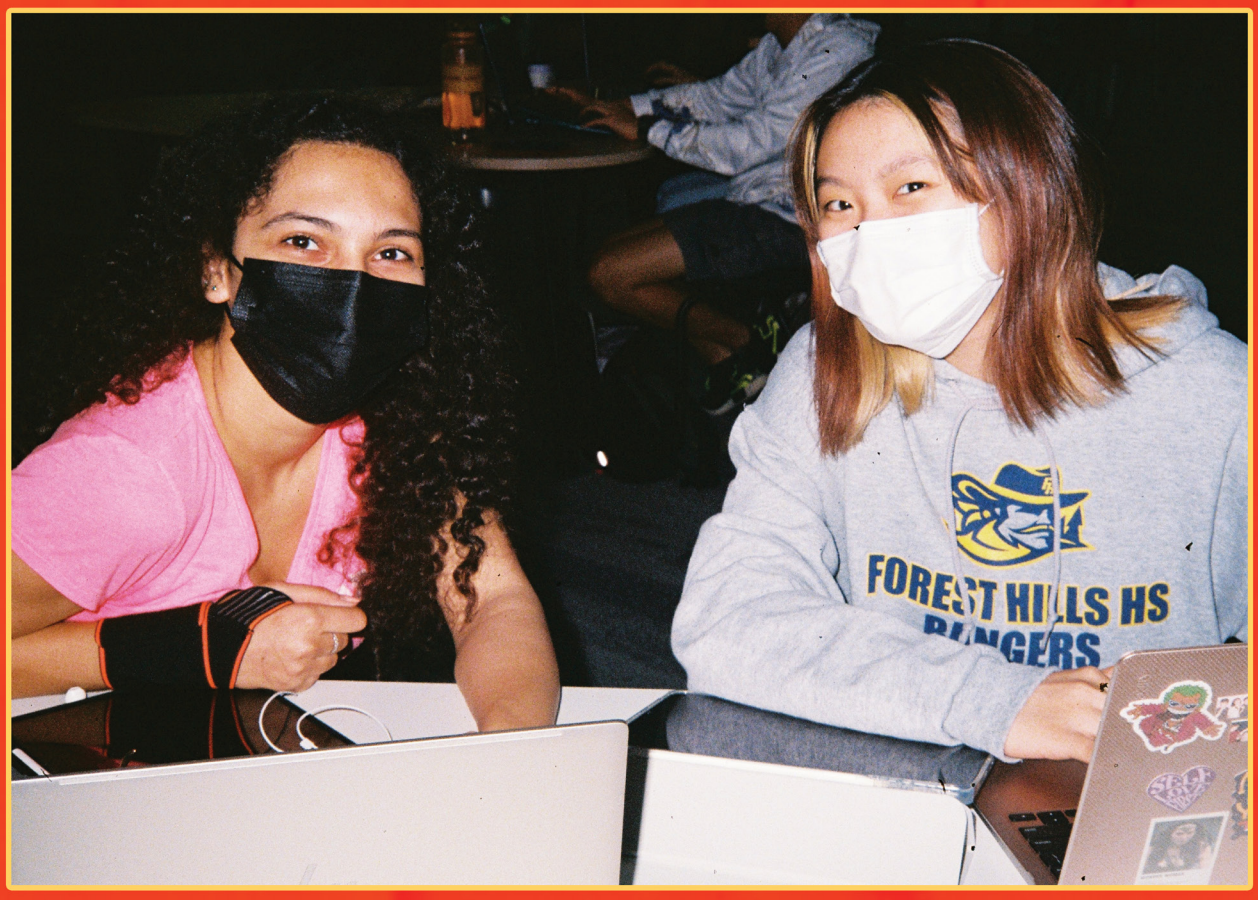
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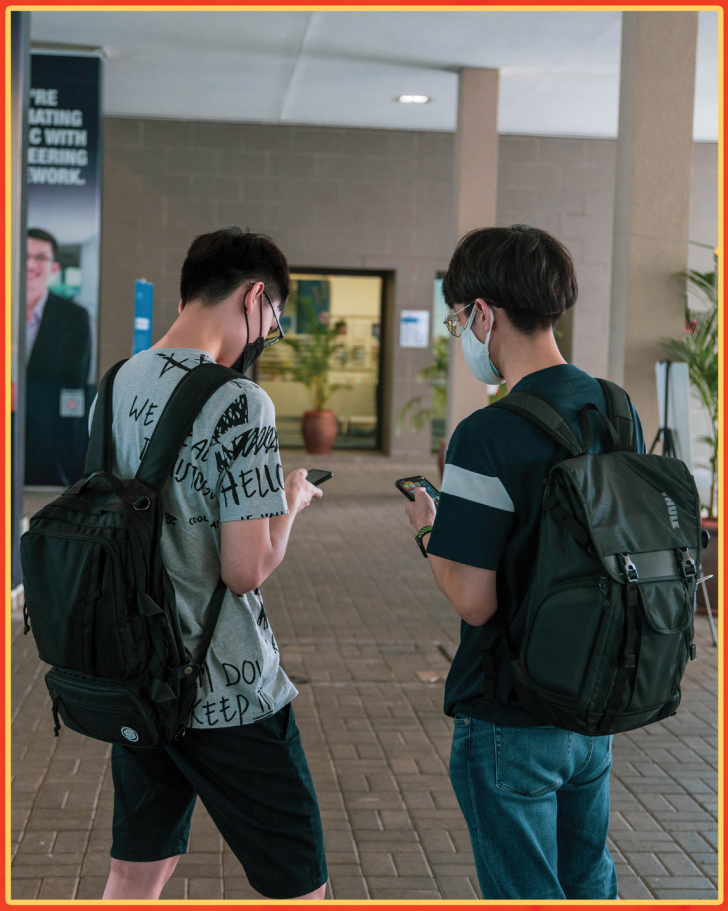


STUDENT
FINANCE
FUTURE STUDENTS
INTERNATIONAL STUDENT PASS
U.S. POLO ASSN.

Amazing

HOOP FOR THE BEST

random sh*ts in monash: b-ball edition.

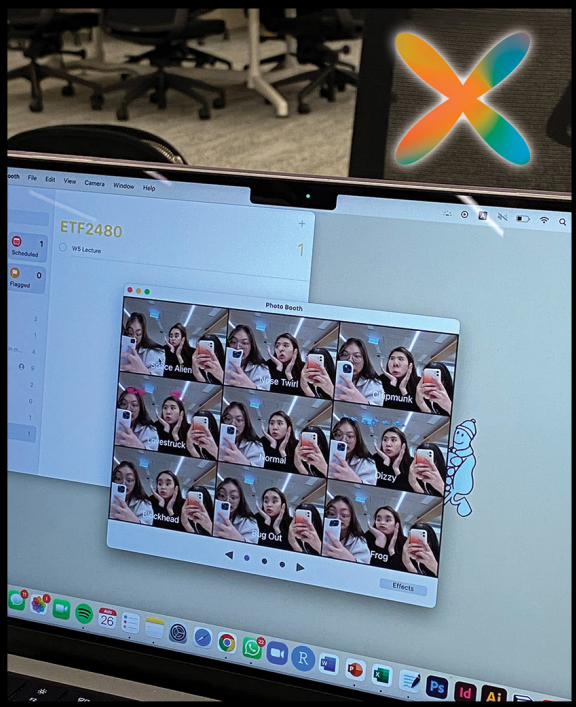
Photos taken by Yang Thong Chen.
Designed by Chai Ting Ho.

EXCHANGE POV

random sh*ts in monash: aussie campus edition

PHOTOS BY WONG ZI YI. | DESIGNED BY CHAI TING HO.

Caulfield Non-Residential Colleges


ETF2480
Photo Booth
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MINOR FIGURES
MOCHA

MONSU.CAULFIELD
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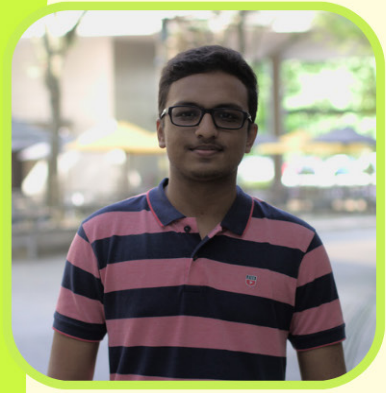
MONSU.ORG
MAKE OLD NEW AGAIN
BRING IN THAT OLD HOODIE OR TEE YOU RARELY WEAR ANYMORE AND ADD A NEW PRINT TO IT
SUSTAINABILITY WEEK
SCREENPRINTED BY @MONSU.CAULFIELD

your own interpretations of the world through image making.
Every image you make adds to this history...

POTRAITS OF MONASH.

WE WOULD TRULY BE NOTHING WITHOUT OUR READERS. PORTRAITS OF MONASH IS A CORNER FOR US TO SHOWCASE AND APPRECIATE ALL THE BELOVED FACES THAT MAKE OUR MAGAZINE THE SUCCESS THAT IT IS <3

PHOTOS TAKEN BY HANIF RAFLI, NURSYAFIQA ALEEYA, SHAWN WONG, SEAN TAN, YANG THONG CHEN



NO FEAR

VEVARASANA
peace begins with a smile

MONASH

SEMESTER 1 ORIENTATION

MONASH

YANG THONG CHEN

TSHETEN BHUTIA

design by

CHUNG PHEI SING

WELCOME

7-SCHOOL

spirit week

DESIGN BY CHUNG PHEI SING

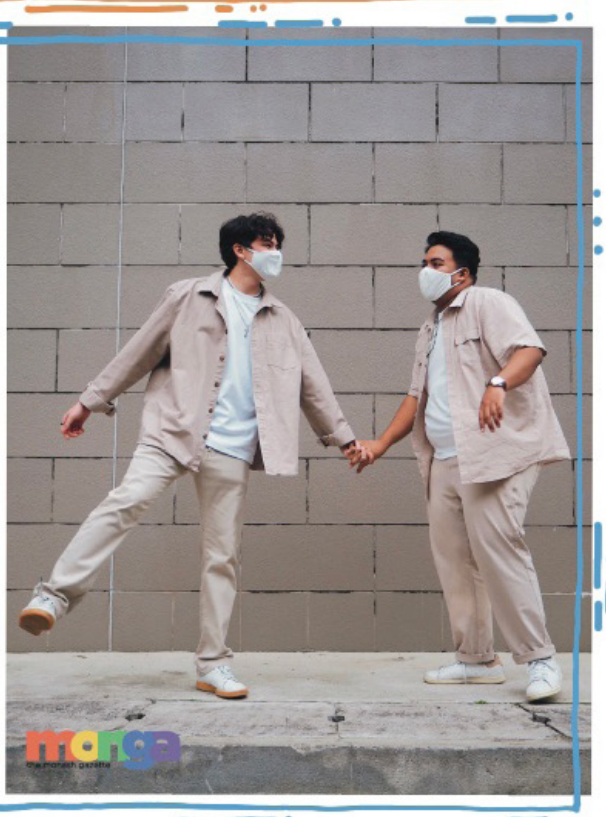
DAY 1 - CHRISTMAS IN MARCH

DAY 2 - DUO TUESDAY

DAY 3 - COLOUR WARS

DAY 4 - SUPERHERO THURSDAY

DAY 5 - 70'S FRIDAY



TOO GLAM TO STRESS

PHOTOGRAPHERS :
NURSYAFIQA ALEEYA
LIM XIN YI
TIMOTHY WEE
YANG THONG CHEN
TSHETEN BHUTIA

MONA
GA

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HANIF RAFLI .

Every Tuesday from 5-8pm, Monash Board Gaming Club welcomes students from different schools and distracts from the never-ending online assessments. By setting up the venue, music and slides, we ensure that our members can enjoy their fullest when joining our session!

Currently Monash Board Gaming Club has around 50 board games which ranges from family feud to strategic games which enables a spectrum of challenges and fun. Not to mention, our club works like a board game cafe, where members can come in anytime to have some fun!

As our club revolves around our members, we make sure their voices are heard as we buy new board games according to the member's suggestions! With any extra fees, we will spend it all on the members by allowing them to feast on some pizza!

SH BOARD
ING NIGHT

DESIGN BY CHUNG PHEI SING.

All in all, the purpose of this club is to create a welcoming board gaming community, to allow new students to join or for your group of friends to come in and play as well. We hope joining the Monash Board Gaming Club gives you the opportunity and reason to prosper your friendship at your time in Monash University.

Photographed by Hanif Rafli & Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

SOS MINGLE NIGHT

GRN MOVIE

Amidst the stifling, stress-filled haze that was Week 11, came a saviour in the form of Monash's Green Representative Network (GRN) Outdoor Movie Night which was held on the 18th of May 2022 at 6.30 pm. Admission into the event was free of charge however students who had pre-registered but all students who were interested in spending a relaxing night underneath the stars were welcome. All participants were also given the chance to win Grab vouchers via a lucky draw during the event as a small appreciation gift for participating.

In keeping with the club's theme that advocates for environmental appreciation and sustainability, the event was held at the Monash Football Field, with the setting sun providing a perfect backdrop for the movie: Netflix's "Don't Look Up", which consists of A-list celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio, Ariana Grande and Timothee Chalamet.

Photos by Wong Zi Yi
Designed by Megan Ching
Written by Ashley Lim

The event began with a mingle session as students milled and socialised amongst each other, all of them bringing along a myriad of picnic supplies, the field slowly dotted with colourful blankets and mats, with many students leaping upon the opportunity to attend one of the first on-campus events held in the past 2 years.

NIGHT

GRN MOVIE NIGHT

Pizza, snacks and coolers of drinks were also provided during the event for those who had registered earlier, however most students were encouraged to bring their own cutlery as part of GRN's efforts to reduce waste and encourage a more eco-friendly lifestyle.The movie began as soon as the last rays of Sun dipped below the horizon, with a line of fairy lights providing soft and cosy illumination.

Despite being understandably busy during the event, GRN's President, Lim Yi Shan expressed her gratitude and elaborated on her experience of hosting the club's first offline event:

"While there were many hiccups along the way, our committee had pulled through and made it a successful event even without prior experience in hosting a physical event together. We were glad for the opportunity to finally provide our fellow GRs and Monashians a fun and relaxing time, and are so grateful to hear that some attendees said they experienced an actual uni-life event for the first time."

Photographer: Tsheten Yangden Bhutia. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

SOIT X SOE X SOP DESTRESS NIGHT

date: 21st october 2022. time: 1830 hours - 2100 hours.
venue: monash sports centre

destress night

It's showtime!
MPAC
DRAMA NIGHT

MPAC PRESENTS: A NIGHT OF DRAMA

To conclude the hectic month of May, Monash Performing Arts Club (MPAC) hosted their annual Night of Drama on the 30th and 31st of May, the first time since campus reopened. Registration was done through google forms and was priced at only RM5 for students to enjoy a collection of five acts, each spanning around 15-minutes long respectively. The members of the club were separated into groups and given creative freedom to address the burning opinions they have about the world around them. And the result? A dramatic two-hour event filled with audible gasps, stifled giggles and even a loud "what the fuck" directed at plot twists from the audience.

Located at the student lounge dance studio, the intimate setting provided viewers with an immersive experience by granting a close-up view of the actors' raw and emotional facial expressions. The subtle movements and shift in energy was also easier to detect due to the close seating arrangements to the flat stage. Although the small room was packed, it was still spacious enough to comfortably accommodate the attendees while still maintaining social distance.

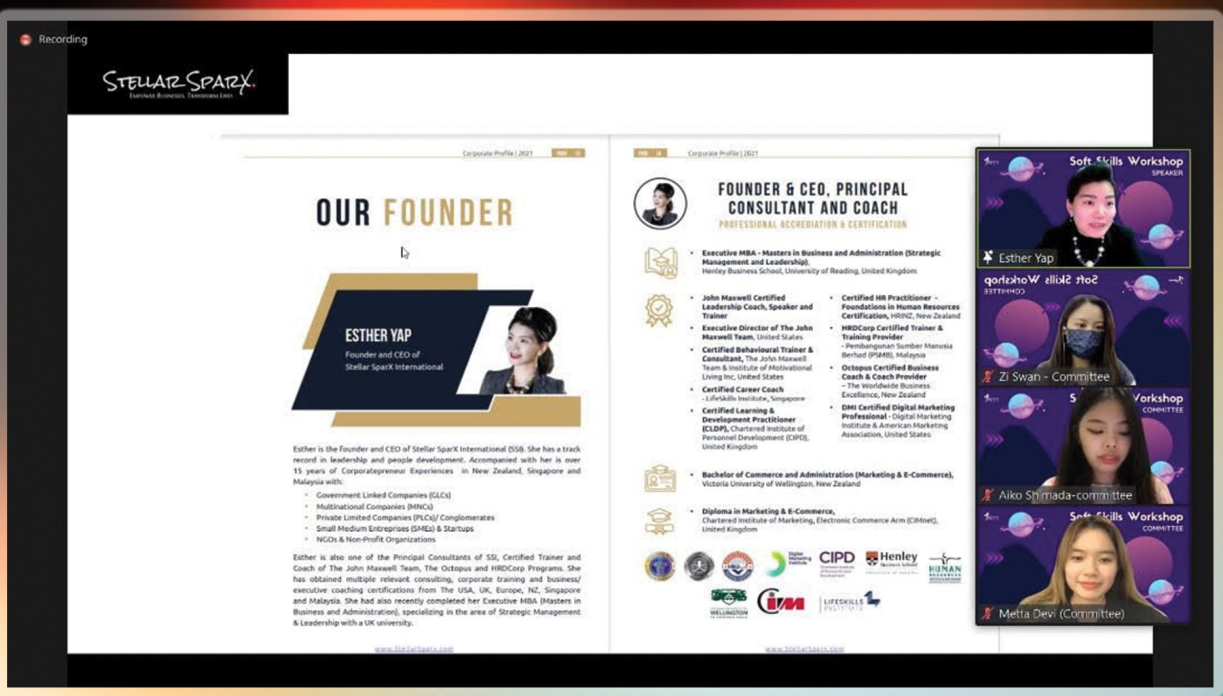
The event officially started at around 7:15 p.m. after a brief warning regarding the elements of violence, addiction and self-harm that was present in some of the plays. MPAC members successfully demonstrated their skills in acting, directing and script writing by effortlessly introducing thought-provoking topics through their impeccable performances. The first play consisted of a heated argument between a wife and her cheating husband who was exploring his sexuality, each dialogue cleverly revealing more details about their background. The second act featured a forbidden love story between two highschool kids who introduce an expiration date to their relationship, the plot twist being that they were cousins all along (the crowd was shook at this one). The third play followed a symbolic representation of a troubled high-achieving student who was confronted by her neglected inner self. The fourth act embodied an abstract take on the experience of losing a loved one and how it could drive a person to insanity. The last act portrayed a toxic relationship and how the characters overcame their worst selves by being apart.

Despite the number of performances, it was not overwhelming as there was a 15-minute intermission after the first two plays to allow audiences to fully grasp the storylines and process the plot twists. And by the end of the event, the audience was buzzing with excitement and chatter, enthusiastically discussing the different plots amongst themselves. They also had the chance to take pictures and mingle with the performers after the show.

From the start, the intention of the event was to spark conversations which wouldn't have otherwise happened. Judging from the impression it left on the audience, this event was definitely a success. One of the driving factors to the smooth event can be credited to the teamwork between members of the club. The seamless transitions from one scene to the next truly brought the performances to life. We certainly look forward to seeing more of MPAC and what they have in store for us in the future!

-Natasha Maya

MONASH CAREER PEER SOFT SKILLS WORKSHOP



Monash Career Peer (MCP) soft skills workshop brought along with it a plethora of sage advice, guidelines as to how to learn to be a better human being not only in the workforce but just in your everyday life as well, along with thought-provoking entrepreneurial discussions. Our speaker for the second day of the seminar was Miss Esther Yap, who is the founder and CEO of Stellar SparX International. She has extensive experience in leadership and people development, as well as over 15 years of Corporate Preneur Experiences in New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia. After being introduced, she started off the seminar talking about the importance of emotional intelligence and how pertinent it is to have it in regards to being in a working environment; it is the hallmark of being a good teammate and a good leader. It also ties in with our communication and teamwork skills as it helps us to understand other people better and gain empathy.

She discussed how to apply Law of Awareness to recognize your communication strengths and limitations, how to understand how others' viewpoints and how to work with differingpersonalities in the workplace. She talked about how to move from 'me' to 'we' team: through communicating and appreciating the styles of others and working well together.

Next, she talked about various other 'quotients' a person can inhabit - SQ (social quotient) which means having social awareness and AQ (adversity quotient) which deals with how you respond to challenges, among many others. "Empathy can only be communicated properly if you CAN communicate it properly," she said about having a high enough EQ. She also used a volcano analogy - how if you're not able to effectively manage high feelings and if you don't have a sufficient EQ, your feelings and emotions will bottle up and eventually

WRITTEN BY SREANA HABIBA
DESIGNED BY CHARLENE GOH

implode, consequently damaging your relationships and career opportunities. Therefore, it is crucial to exercise your emotional intelligence as it is a fundamental thing to master. Throughout her talk, she included many interactive sessions through which participants could offer their own insights in regards to the topics being discussed, which allowed the listeners to integrate the material in a more comprehensive manner.

After a break, she talked about the Maxwell Method of D.I.S.C., which is a tool for improving emotional intelligence of any individuals and teams at any workplace, with the aim of improving communications and increasing team productivity. It guides the application of it for continuous professional and leadership development. For example, D archetypes are dominant and determined, I types are influencing and inspirational, C types are competent and conscientious, S types are stable and secure and so on. This tool, Ms. Esther said, is vital for improving productivity and harmony on a professional level. At the end of each workshop, Ms. Esther held a QnA session where participants got to inquire her about their personal experiences, which was followed by a lucky draw and winner announcement.

Ultimately, the goal of this seminar was to guide the participants in improving and growing their inner lives and their emotional worlds, as well as urging them to be cognizant of their productivity types which will then in turn be fruitful and prolific when it comes to their careers.

WE DESERVE BETTER: A PEACEFUL PROTEST BY MONASH LANKANS

Sri Lanka, the beautiful island nation in the heart of the Indian Ocean, currently faces the worst economic and political crisis since the country's independence. Over 22 million people have been left to fend for their own without access to food, water, gas, electricity, and medicine, all by a corrupt government that mismanaged the country's funds to the brink of destruction.

Millions of Sri Lankan's spend their days stuck in an endless cycle of waiting for basic goods. Shops have been forced to shut down because they do not have electricity. Homes do not have air conditioning or fans, and young children and infants have been suffering from heatstroke as Sri Lanka copes with one of their hottest years. People have died standing in lines for hours under the sweltering heat to fuel their tanks.

Although corruption has run deep through the country for many years, the pandemic coupled with the current government's failure to respond effectively has pushed Sri Lanka to what people have been calling, 'near the point of no return'. During the height of the pandemic, the government made the fatal mistake to ban fertiliser imports, declaring Sri Lanka an organic farming nation, which drastically impacted the agricultural industry and led the country to become heavily reliant on imports.

"You can't hide forever. The government has to be accountable; for all they've done toward the minority groups, like the Tamils and the Muslims. It's sickening how this was kept under wraps for so long, and only now is it all coming to light, more people are seeing how corrupted they really were." said Lakshani Sathasivam, a Sri Lankan student from Monash.

For the first time however, things are different. The historically divided nation stands united, with the collective goal of setting things right. And the group at the forefront of spearheading this change is the youth. Aamina Mustaqdeen, Monash's Sri Lankan country representative in Malaysia, shared her insight on the situation, "We, the younger generation, are being more vocal about this now, especially with social media—it's different. Our parents didn't do much about this, they went about their life, but we the youth, we're loud, we're opinionated, and we are trying to clean up their messes, because this is our world to live in."

Aamina and the Sri Lankan community in Monash University Malaysia gathered on university grounds for a peaceful demonstration on the 5th of April 2022. They join the legions of Sri Lankan people scattered over the world, all standing together in solidarity for their brothers and sisters at home.

"It's hard to hear our family back home talk about the struggles they face at home, and all we as Sri Lankans living abroad can do is to pray and spread awareness about how bad the situation is at home," said Lakshani.

"We are Sri Lankan students from Malaysia, we are far away from home still feel the fire inside our people, our brothers and sisters are fighting for our country, people are out on the streets to build a future for our next generation. We hear you; we see you; we feel you. Our hearts are with you all!" said Thineth Nanayakkara who was at the demonstration.

For the Monash students that want to help, both Aamina and Lakshani echo the same sentiment: Be kind and mindful towards your Sri Lankan peers.

"They're going through unimaginable pain, and people leaving hate online towards the Sri Lankan community doesn't help," said Lakshani, "We shouldn't compare different country's problems. They are all valid."

"You know, I'm living abroad, I have a roof over my head, I'm very privileged to have this, but my brothers and sisters at home do not have that luxury, so please donate to them if you can," said Aamina.

Although it may seem insignificant, signing petitions have historically been crucial to advocacy, and spreading awareness. "The biggest thing you can do is talk about it, spread awareness, donate, and sign petitions. The more eyes we have on them, the harder this will be to hide. Put pressure on the government, on your leaders. We all just want this sorted as quickly as possible," said Lakshani.

"There's only so much we as citizens can do, I remain hopeful because hope is all any of us. That and our voices."

If you are able to donate, please refer to the link for a comprehensive list of verified donations and petitions: https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/1LMM2-wGsGCl5-33t-1qVLCbzEWxwi3s-qXaCCW1v4lk/mobilebasic

Written by Shaura Naeem
Photos by Jerry Foong
Design by Megan Ching

GRADUATION SEM 1

PHOTOS BY TSHETEN YANGDEN BHUTIA
DESIGNS BY CHARLENE GOH

JULY ORIENTATION X MONASH 101

JULY ORIENTATION X MONASH 101

Photos by: Sean Tan

Design by: Aerin Tang

JOM MAKAN

Photos by: Shawn Wong

Design by: Aerin Tang

JOM MAKAN

Photos by Timothy Wee
Design by Megan Tang

Welcome to SOS

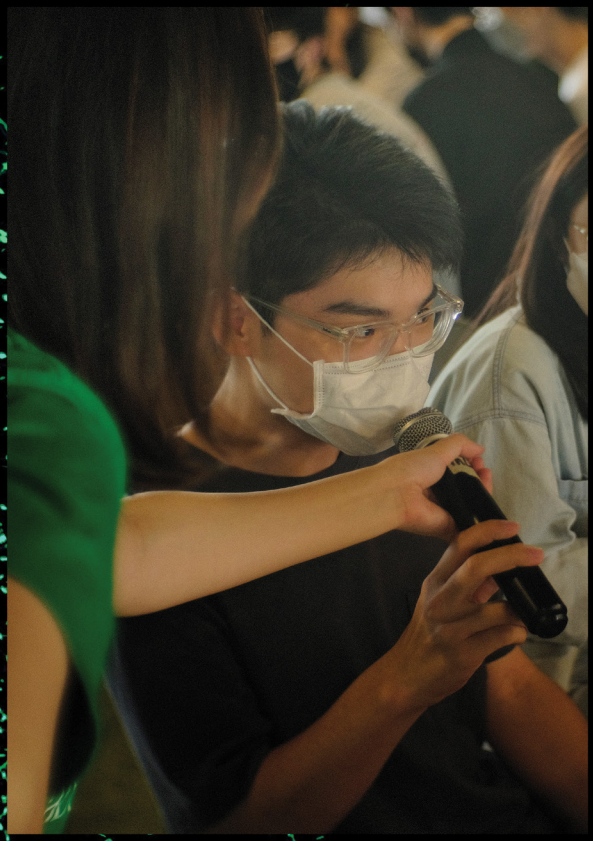
BY MUSA SOS

HELLO SOIT CODERS

Photos by Sean Tan

Design by Megan Tang

APOLLO
Pandan



MONASH MUSIC CLUB ORIENTATION

Photographed by Lim Xin Yi, Sean Tan, Tsheten Yangden Bhutia, Yang Thong Chen
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

OPEN FLOOR!

SOP X SOE PHARMGINEERING RACE

Squid Game but make it STEM.

The school of engineering and pharmacy have collaborated to organise a joint event known as the Pharmaengineering Race of 2022. The event took place bright and early, with registration starting at 9am on the 6th of August 2022, with 10 stations scattered throughout Monash University.

It served as a bonding opportunity for students from both schools as they were brought together in groups of 4-5 students, with each team having to co-operate and sharpen their critical thinking skills in order to beat their opponents and gain points before moving onto the next station. All of the station games were facilitated by “Game Masters”, identifiable by their bright pink T-shirts, whereas contestants sported turquoise T-shirts. The team with the most points, Group 17 (Teoh Shi Yil, Phang Liang Jie, Indii Chooi Weng Ning, Ree Shing Chen) came out on top, followed by Group 10 (Joshua Ee Xian Zhen, Jordan Poon Kee Liang, Ryan Liew Le Huai, Tan Ting Jie) and in third place, Group 2 (Andrew Joseph Ng Man Loong, Andrew Miller Prince, Jovis Wong Jie Je, John Wu Chi Xian).

Yi Tan, the point person from the School of Pharmacy said that as it was their first time organising a physical event with the School of Engineering, initially it was difficult however she mentioned that their collective experience certainly made the process much smoother.

Most of the games were centred around either a physical (Bottle Flip, Save The Egg, Balloon Duel), mental element (Know Your Drugs, Know Your Patient, Monkey See Monkey Do) or a combination of both. Whilst moving from station to station, groups were also racing against each other to complete a treasure hunt, where a total of 10 virtual tokens in the form of QR Codes of pictures were placed randomly around campus. The first team to collect all 10 tokens and show them to a “Game Master” would then be declared the winner of the Treasure Hunt.

"When I was first awarded the responsibility to manage the physical aspect of Pharmgineering with Yi Tan, I was expecting some friction, as there is with any collaborative agenda. However, I was mistaken because the entire process was extremely smooth and enjoyable, with only a few minor issues. We managed to pull off a huge chunk of detailed planning and the difference in perspective helped tie together Pharmgineering and make it a success. Yes, I am not denying that doing the event internally may be a lot easier, but after having been able to work with the amazing team from the School of Pharmacy, I truly believe that the benefits overcome the cons. Not only were we able to meet new people, but we also managed to get a glimpse of how different schools operate, which opened our eyes beyond just Pharmgineering but also gave us a better idea of the variety of schools Monash has to offer. In short, I believe that even with its cons, having inter-school events is the way to go forward as more physical events start to grow." said Shoandeep, Head of Internal Events for SOE.

The event wrapped up at 3pm and unlike the actual Squid Game (and fortunately for our contestants) there was no huge doll ready to play Hide-and-Seek with them, with one of the more difficult parts of the event, other than the station games themselves, was having to navigate Monahs's labyrinth-like campus, where even I, myself got lost in a few times.

Finally, Janice Lee who spoke on behalf of SOP as well as SOE said: "We definitely look forward to future collaborations with the School of Engineering because we were incredibly impressed with how systematic and prepared their team was, allowing for the event to be executed well on both sides. We're also planning to hold this event annually and even hope to incorporate the other STEM-centred schools such as SOS and SOIT."

Photographed by Hanif Rafli & Jerry Foong
Written by Ashley Lim
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

SOB X MUIG SUMMIT: INVESTMENT

Photographed by Shawn Wong
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

CNS Week
a week of fun

Photos taken by Lim Xin Yi, Tsheten Yangden Bhutia, Sean Tan
Written by Shaura Naeem
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

We kicked the start of the new semester with the much hyped Clubs & Society week. C&S Week took place between the 1st to 5th of August 2022, and Monashian's were met with an amazing line-up of clubs to choose from, perfectly tailored for you to find the community that best fit YOU. New and older students were free to browse through an array of clubs that ranged from high-range, sporty activities like the cheerleading club— to much chiller clubs that focused more on unwinding. Best of all, C&S week was jam packed with fun activities and performance. The Monash foyer held many booths, each creatively decorated with banners and posters by enthusiastic club members. The Monash Career Peer Club for instance had a "Manifest Your Dream Career" section in their booth for students to scribble down on a Post-It— what they wanted to be in the future. Over the course of C&S week, these bright, yellow sticky notes filled with aspirations soon covered their booth. One thing was certain, every booth was packed with members that were passionate and proud of the clubs they represented. Now, it would be impossible to list out all the clubs that were present at C&S week, so here are just a few of them:

BOARD-GAMING CLUB

This club has been active for almost 5 years, and according to Cheeshen from the School of Engineering, who was manning the booth at the time, it was one of the best places for people to connect. Members would gather together every week and play games ranging from Secret Hitler to Catan. If that sounds like something fun, definitely give it a go.
"Honestly, boardgames can feel intimidating, and very scary because you might not how to play, or the strategy but don't worry, we've got people from all different schools, from beginners to experts, that all love to play and once you get the hang of it, it'll feel exhilarating."

LEO CLUB

The Leo Club encourages students to participate in a range of social service activities. If getting down to business and taking action sounds intriguing, this is the place to be. At it's core, the Leo Club continues to give back to the community whatever they can.

Members can join in on beach clean-up activities to save the environment, or even join a soup kitchen to feed the homeless. Whatever the cause, know that you would be making a change to the community and helping those around you.

"It feels good to help people and make the environment a safer, better, place. We're looking forward to scheduling more events now that COVID restrictions have lessened, and we hope to have more community-based activities in the future." said Giselle from the School of Business who was leading the booth at the time.

ENSEMBLE CLUB

The Ensemble Club is for anyone that feels they need a safe space for them to be their authentic self. Whether you're in the closet or out and proud, the Ensemble Club is just the place for you to be.

"When it comes to registration, we don't have a limit on how many can join, we're open to everyone." said Nadine from the School of Arts who was at the booth.

The club acts as a network for queer individuals or anyone that struggles with feeling excluded from the conversation. With bi-weekly (pun-intended) meetings that focus on peers sharing their stories and having discussions on issues not often brought to light, to watching movies that represent the queer community, this group is the place to feel supported and understood.

Most importantly, members value and respect discretion, and there is no pressure to act a certain way— to be yourself.

With C&S week wrapped up, the sentiment amongst all the clubs is clear. Join a club, even if you feel shy. You might enjoy yourself more than you realise.

Refugee Awareness Day

Refugee Awareness Day
Refugee Awareness Day

Photos taken by Luanne Choong
Written by Elly Zulaikha
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

Between the 24th and 26th of August, MUMeds in collaboration with Ref-UP Monash, a carnival was held in celebration of Refugee Awareness Day. This event was held to promote and provide refugees in Malaysia with a free platform to grow their businesses. It was also an opportunity for the Monash student body as well as staff to gain awareness about the refugee community and support their local businesses.

Throughout this event, refugee-owned businesses were invited to the Monash campus to set up their shop (at zero cost!) and sell/promote their products to the students. Curious onlookers promptly filled the foyer as early as 10 AM on the first day of our visit, indicating there was a great deal of interest in the event. There were ten booths in total, seven of them involving refugee-owned businesses and three were game-related booths.

Located at the Monash University Foyer (or The Rock if you're more familiar with this name), the open setting of the area coupled with the large overhead fan provided a cool breeze to curious visitors. Due to the overwhelming crowd, we visited the first stall, SevenTeaOne, with the most products on display, mainly various dried teas packed cutely in batik-motif sachets, small glass jars, (delicious) biscuits, and handmade soaps!

"We are very happy today to participate in this Refugee Awareness event under Monash University where we have an opportunity to expose our teens in doing business, getting in touch with the community, and also fundraising for our centers." We are very grateful to Monah University," said Mr. Lai Chong Haur, director of SevenTeaOne.

This social enterprise is based in Shah Alam, where they foster inclusivity in communities by providing training and employment "or differently-abled teenagers as well as members of marginalized communities. Currently, they have 24 differently-abled teens from the B40 background, all of which are trained under various social and employment skills. When asked whether they have plans to expand their center, Mr. Lai added, "If we have the financial capability, we hoped to open up more branches in other states so we can help other communities there."

"They also sell their products online and it is available on Shopee, Lazada, Facebook, and of course, their website at seventeaone.my.

Next to SevenTeaOne was the Lady Ayaz Sewing Centre, an organization run by Pakistani refugee women. Founded in 2016, they have trained 31 refugee women with sewing skills and are now a thriving small business that sells an array of handmade goods such as hair scrunchies, toiletries bags, purses, laptop sleeves, and more.

Other notable stalls present during the event were Rohingya Women Development Network, which sold handcrafted items like reusable face masks, reusable sanitary pads, and tassel earrings, Picha Eats where they sold various (and tasty!) pre-made meals, Bread of Hope, led by Somali Refugee Community Malaysia, who sold freshly baked goods by Somali women and lastly, Kneading Peace, a start-up by Same Skies who offered handcrafted products made by refugee artisans.

Of course, the game booths drew some crowd among students. With an admission fee of RM1 across the three stalls, we paid a visit to the Flip Tic Tac Toe booth, challenging players to test their flipping skills in a classic game of tic tac toe. Some players flipped us away (pun intended) with their amazing skills, earning cheers whenever someone managed to complete a row of three boxes with their cups. Then there was a classic party game, of course, which was the water pong booth, an essential serotonin-induced activity to see how many balls a player can get into empty cups.

Before heading off to class, however, we stopped by the Nuts in A Cup booth, where players tested their chopstick skills to fill a cup with as many peanuts as they could in under 60-seconds. It was an entertaining sight, even nerve-wracking as some players went NUTS (again, pun intended) while they scrambled to pick up peanuts.

As the carnival draw to a close on the 26th, we checked out the Refugee Encouragement Board where colorful sticky notes adorned the blue board as people left tons of warm and heartfelt messages to refugee communities in Malaysia. We look forward to this carnival for next year!

MUSA X UNBOUND

Photographed by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia & Yang Thong Chen
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

Monash Got Talent

The Long-Awaited Return of Monash Got Talent

After being deprived of live performances for two long years, Monash Got Talent (MGT) 2022 was exactly the excitement we needed to cope with week 6 stress. Held in auditorium 4108 on 2nd September from 7:00 p.m. till 10:30 p.m, MGT did not disappoint with their wide range of performances.

Registration was quick and simple, with small snacks provided to all the attendees to munch on while watching the show. The hosts also invited a panel of credible judges to assess our talented participants. The first judge was singer-songwriter Victor Chua, a former member of Royal Selangor Philharmonic Choir, who had performed across the UK and Malaysia. Next was independent performer, SHN, whose famous songs include so cool and apocalypse. Lastly, we have Monash's very own former music club president, Zhao Xuan!

To start off the event, RESORT (a local indie-pop band) blessed our ears with their hit singles Fix Everything and Terrible Conversations, as well as teasing the crowd with an unreleased song.

After that, talented Monashians dazzled the crowd with a total of 15 acts, each just as captivating as the next. Half of the total performances featured brilliant vocalists, some singing familiar English songs that the crowd enthusiastically sang along to, others rapping original pieces, and even an emotional Mandarin song to end the night with. The other memorable performances included beatboxing, dancing, drawing (in under 6 minutes!), and an entertaining range of instruments such as the cello, guitar, and harmonica.

Needless to say, the crowd was mesmerised with every performance, clapping their hands to the beat, turning on their flashlights, and singing along. One wholesome example is the crowd humming along to Doraemon's theme song while the participant played the harmonica on stage. At the end of every performance, the judges also provided words of encouragement and constructive feedback which the contestants humbly accepted.

Although there were some technical difficulties, the two MC's handled it well, cracking jokes and effortlessly engaging with the crowd to keep them entertained throughout the duration of the event. This resulted in some pick-up lines being said into the microphone, and even a brief controversial debate about 'pineapples on pizza' and 'milk before cereal'. Contestants also handled the slight delay gracefully, not letting it deter their performance at all.

Photographed by Dina Ghazali & Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Written by Natasha Maya
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

A lucky draw was held near the end of the event while waiting for the judges to tally up the scores. And a total of 20 lucky students who registered for the event got to walk away with Grab vouchers. After a suspenseful wait, the results were in and the top 5 winners were announced.

At fifth place, we have Uma Lemkage with her powerful performance of 'Rolling in the Deep', channelling her inner Adele and leaving quite an impression on the judges. She easily owned the stage with her confidence and effortless stage presence. At 4th place is Chia Ye Xiang who gave the audience an electrifying performance with his electric guitar. Despite covering a complicated song like She's a Genius by Jet, he managed to pull it off skillfully.

The second runner-up is the one and only Jensen Chuah who performed his own original song Mine (Mind) which is inspired by his perception of relationships and how it requires compromise from both parties to make it work. In case you missed it, you can check it out across all streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, YouTube Music, and even social media platforms like Instagram and TikTok.

The first runner-up is Lew Xin Yun with her harmonica. Who knew such a small instrument could move such a large crowd. Her Doreamon piece definitely pulled some heartstring and evoked a sense of nostalgia as the crowd reminisced about their beloved childhood show (ah the good ol' days *sobs in assignments*). She easily captured the crowd's attention with her sassy personality and comedic one-liners, even prompting one of the judges to suggest that she could qualify as a stand-up comedian.

And lastly, the winner of Monash Got Talent 2022 is...none other than Joseph Sim Yong Siang! He absolutely blew the judges away with his legendary beatboxing skills. His victory was very much well-deserved after blessing the audiences with such an unforgettable performance, starting from the second he confidently stepped on stage, the playful interactions with the judges and his buzzing energy. Despite his obvious talents, he remained humble by saying that "the crowd made the performance", in reference to the loud cheers from the audience.

All in all, Monash Got Talent was a truly enjoyable event. Definitely looking forward to what the talented Monashians have in store for us again next year!

Photos taken by Sean Tan & San Jun Hoe
Written by Arooj Nasim
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chan Ting Ho

NDONESIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

"Monash has often been known for holding gatherings and events that represent its multicultural student population. Indonesian Independence Day was celebrated on August 17th, and the event day 2, which was held on the 18th and hosted by PPI Monash, showcased some of Indonesia's finest cultures through a series of things such as the Indonesian local food festival, the Indonesian traditional games booth and several cultural performances that Indonesian students performed at Monash Malaysia. The entire foyer was vibrant with game booths, food stalls, merch stands as well as Indonesian and international students mingling together and trying everything out.

We were lucky to have experienced the authentic way of celebrating the day as the team managed to pull off a similar celebration as anyone back in Indonesia would. A couple of games were played at the booth and the first game was called Lomba Makan Kerupuk otherwise known as the crackers eating competition. Each participant was given a cracker each that was hanging above them and they had to jump and reach for it. The first to eat it entirely wins

The second game was Lomba Memasukan Pensil Kedalam Botol and it was as easy as racing to insert the pencil into the bottle and it was played in a team of 2 with each participant standing in one line.

The best part of the event was that there was food everywhere!! Everywhere from the food bazaar to the merch stall! We sampled the Indonesian Sambal at the food bazaar, which was very spicy and savoury, and also had 'Choki Choki' chocolate, which surprisingly originates from Indonesia!

As students sampled delicacies and tried their luck with games, a number of students were also seen enjoying the live performances taking place at the same time. There was a diverse array of musical performances taking place, where Indonesian songs were performed, and everyone sang along.

The event's inclusive and interactive approach helped to instil a sense of belonging and familiarity for those from Indonesia. This approach showcased a unique blend of both patriotism and multiculturalism and was a refreshing change from hectic University life.

"Independence day is a reminder of our old heroes who sacrificed their lives for us, and the struggles they faced." Said Agnes, an Indonesian student currently studying in Monash. "This event made me feel like I was back home, celebrating with my family."

Aside from showcasing Indonesian culture and development, the event was also especially successful in celebrating diversity. This was especially evident from the multiethnic audience who attended the event.

" I'm having a blast, the energy is so vibrant and it's so much fun!" said Jamaal, a Monash student from Sri Lanka, who attended the event. "It's a great demonstration of culture for us international students!"

"Sinaga Alfredo Waldemar, the President of PPI Monash Eunoia, said that the reason this event was planned was to make the Indonesian students at Monash feel like they were home, so they can celebrate independence regardless of where they are. Our initial thought was to have an offline celebration after 2 years of online events. We came up with this idea of a 3 day event, chose 3 specific days, and there we go! We also got great help from MUISS and MONGA so props to them!"

The event was therefore successful in creating a sense of an integrated community and demonstrating Indonesian nationalism on campus. We were so happy to be a part of the Indonesian Independence Day Celebration. Thank you for having us and Happy Independence Day, Indonesia!

Photos taken by
Sean Tan
Designed by
Januli
Wikejoon

PSYCHOLOGY MINGLE NIGHT

MONASH CUP HIGHLIGHTS

Photographed by Nursyafiqa Aleeya, San Jun Hoe, Shawn Wong, Yang Thong Chen

Designed by Chai Ting Ho

MAKING AN IMPACT AS OPINICUS' NEW CAPTAIN WITH VIDULA DILNATH LIYANAGAMAGE

Interviewed by Kwak Juyeong
Photographed by Luanne Choong

Q- HI! COULD YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF BRIEFLY?

I am doing my 2nd-semester, 3rd year in Mechatronics Engineering. The work in the past 2 years was online, and I have been enjoying the new exposure in Malaysia since February.

Q- NICE! TIME TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU. WHAT IS YOUR PERFECT ROUTINE BEFORE A MATCH?

Especially when we have a game ahead, talking out works the best. Sharing about what bothers you would feel much easier when shared within the team. What ultimately boosts the team is staying connected.

For this year's Monash Cup I met the captain of the Opinicus, Vidula Dilnath Liyanagamage. His energetic, calm, and powerful delivery of words brighten up even the cloudiest of days. He was confident about this year's Monash Cup games. "I am not going to lie, but our team struggled at the beginning," he smiled, "but now I can feel it has made us more passionate about the games."

Vidula's first impression of the Monash Malaysia campus is 'unexpectedly refreshing,' more so after attending two years of online courses. To Vidula, leading a team constantly requires you to prove yourself, not about what you are already good at, but what direction you propose to them. Vidula's personal goal and thought process, which is continuously evolving, is tightly intertwined with his position as a captain– like an intricate cobweb.

He recalls his high school experience as a prefect, where he appreciated every moment of student recruitment and peer support. The memory is special not because he spent too much time in school and devoted himself to making others' school years memorable, but because he still resonates with the feelings from his experience as a person who witnessed his personal development throughout that time. "I saw the true impact such a practical responsibility can actually bring to the community; that fulfillment is still what drives me as a captain."

Q- AS A CAPTAIN, DO YOU THINK 'TIMES HEALS EVERY CONFLICT' OR 'WE HAVE TO TALK IT OUT'?

Especially when we have a game ahead, talking out works the best. Sharing about what bothers you would feel much easier when shared within the team. What ultimately boosts the team is staying connected.

Q- WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF THERE WAS A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TEAMMATES?

As a captain, being neutral and fair are the keys to opening the teammates' hearts and discussing their concerns. Sometimes the situation turns into one versus the majority. In that case, I always put a lot of weight on the team's voices. Before making a decision, garnering as many opinions as possible is what I perceive as a way of consolidating emotional gaps and conflicts. I also believe that being factual sometimes strengthens the effectiveness that ties the team, which is also something we need to pursue.

Q- WERE THERE HARDSHIPS PREPARING FOR THIS YEAR'S MONASH CUPS?

It was slightly difficult to gather the participants for the Cup. But now, during that period, I felt much more enthusiastic about this year's game altogether.

Q- HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR TEAM USING AN ADJECTIVE?

I would say 'fun'. The teammates are friendly and cooperative in finding the best way to achieve positive results. But what truly binds the team strongly is the same amount of workload.

Q- NICE! TIME TO KNOW MORE ABOUT YOU. WHAT IS YOUR PERFECT ROUTINE BEFORE A MATCH?

I normally listen to music while preparing for the game. And motivational speeches are also useful. Back in Sri Lanka, when I used to play cricket games in school, listening to some inspiring motivational speeches boosted my confidence to stay focused before the game started and strongly motivated.

Q- WHAT ENCOURAGES YOU THE MOST?
THINKING ABOUT MY FUTURE GOALS AND WORKING TOWARDS THEM GIVES ME A POWERFUL BOOST. EVEN THOUGH I FAIL SOMETIMES, THE FACT THAT I AM MOVING FORWARD

pushes me to try again. Setting goals for the games and my life is a great routine I found after I started sports. As I finally see myself with endless possibilities, I am more determined.

Q- WHY DO YOU THINK WORKING OUT OR BEING A SPORTSMAN MATTERS IN LIFE?

Building up your character is one. Being in a sports team helps you to understand many curves and relationships in your life on a different level. It gives you what circulating situations pierce life. For example, dealing with conflicts is what we always struggle with. Sports is a combination of endless conflicts between your rivals, sometimes the teammates, but most importantly, yourself.

Contemplating what this problem signifies, what your stress tells you, and how to upgrade yourself before, during, and after the game transforms you into a different personality, and that is an exciting experience.

Doing sports is like studying or meeting new people; it requires faith, confidence, and hope to make something better in life. And not to be a freeloader!

Q- WHAT DO YOU MOST LOOK FORWARD TO IN THIS YEAR'S MONASH CUP?

I am hoping that everyone in the game has memorable experiences. It would be so much more to talk about when it is celebrated with victory; the process towards the final result is rich. I will remember this year's cup as a memorable journey.

Q- WE'VE COME TO THE LAST PART. WHAT IS YOUR GOAL AS A TEAM CAPTAIN, STUDENT, AND PERSON?

As a captain, I want to win at Monash Cup. Besides that, I hope to provide everyone with an equal opportunity and leave no one behind in this great opportunity. As a student, getting good results from my effort is my current goal. I want to start something of my own as a person. I would like to get the most experience as a captain and student because I believe everything I appreciate changes me profoundly.

WELL, THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME FOR THIS INTERVIEW, VIDULA. ALL THE BEST FOR MONASH CUP!

HOW DOES THE FRESH-FACED MANTICORE TEAM CAPTAIN, THEVIN MAN, HANDLE THE PRESSURE?

Interviewed by Fasihul Alam
Photographed by Luanne Choong

Thevin Man, this year's house captain for Manticore, is a third-year Mechanical Engineering student. Despite not knowing the local crowd, Thevin effortlessly overcame any potential communication barriers and garnered a likable outlook from his peers and teammates with the power of FRIENDSHIP!

Thevin is not just a smooth talker though, he's also experienced in various sports especially his favorite, badminton (which he has been playing since college) - we love a consistent king. However, despite the inclination towards badminton, Thevin has also played his hand in pool, dodgeball, and more interestingly "captain ball". It is refreshing to see Thevin coming out of his comfort zone to enjoy life and embody the spirit of the Monash Cup.
Manticore always makes joint decisions.

Q- WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING CAPTAIN, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR LEADERSHIP STYLE AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM YAN JUN, YOUR PREDECESSOR?

Unfortunately, I haven't met Yan Jun personally due to me being in Sri Lanka at the time but we did have a brief conversation on Whatsapp.

Other than that, I'm the type of person to listen to my team first, their ideas are more valuable to me than my own opinion. So, I always advocate for dialogue amongst my team and so none of my decisions are mine alone.

Q- SO, THE MANTICORE MOTTO IS "HEAR US ROAR": HAS IT BEEN CHALLENGING TO KEEP YOUR TEAM'S SPIRITS IN THIS POST-PANDEMIC ERA, ESPECIALLY SINCE MANY PEOPLE HAVE DEVELOPED "AGORAPHOBIA" AFTER BEING ISOLATED FOR SO LONG

Initially, it was really hard, most of us didn't know each other but since the nature of the games in Monash cup this year is very team-based, it helped a lot of us develop our skills and communication during

training, and now it has led to motivation and overall team spirit skyrocketing as well. I **said it once, and I'll say it again, POWER OF FRIENDSHIP wins all!**

Q- WHAT GAMES HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN SO FAR AND WHAT ARE THE ONES YOU'RE LOOKING FORWARD TO THE MOST?

If I could make a list it would consist of Badminton, Cricket, and Dodgeball. For badminton, we are in the fourth finals(out of five) and for dodgeball and for cricket we are in third place so it is exciting!

Q- BASED ON YOUR OBSERVATIONS, HOW HAS PERFORMANCE BEEN FROM OTHER HOUSES, AND ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT COMPETITION?

Yeah, of course, I am. I believe all four houses are equally matched and they all have different strong bases.

For example, Opinicus is strong on the bases Manticore isn't, so it would be unfair to say which house is doing well based on performance alone. But on a side note, I would say Leviathan is my biggest competitor.

Q- WHAT HAS BEEN THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE FIRST PHYSICAL MONASH CUP IN THREE YEARS SO FAR? WHAT ARE YOUR EXPECTATIONS AS HOUSE CAPTAIN?

Seeing the competitiveness of the Monashians has been really interesting but regarding that, I remember having a talk with my team captains telling them to just enjoy the process because if you have fun, wins will come naturally.

I love this idealistic mentality, it is a breath of fresh air and exactly what we need for the Monash cup (in my opinion).

Q- WHAT ARE YOUR PRIORITIES AS HOUSE CAPTAIN OF MANTICORE?

Let every player have the opportunity to show their worth in at least one sport, I don't want anyone feeling like they are not enough or want to be left behind. regardless of winning or losing I believe they should still experience the Monash cup.

We love an inclusive king!

One of the most refreshing conversations I had this semester, thank you Thevin and I want to see Manticore roar hard this year!

CLEMENT CHUI'S SECOND GO AS LEVIATHAN'S CAPTAIN

Interviewed by Sreana Habiba
Photographed by Luanne Choong

Clement Chui, a third-year Global Studies student, is no stranger to the role of captain in Leviathan. After fulfilling his duties as captain in 2021, he stepped down, only to be re-elected this year again due to some internal affairs issues (i.e. tea and drama). To touch on the surface, the previous captain was not exactly up to par, so the committee unanimously decided he should step down.

With that, Clement came back as the captain of the house. Now, this was no easy task – they were almost about to finish the selection period, and he realized they had lost almost a month's worth of time finding players and recruiting.

Thankfully, amidst all the chaos, he had a lot of help. Each sport had a volunteer to be the team captain, and they started discussing their predicament and communicating about players and recruitment. It was undeniably challenging for him, dealing with the extremely heavy workload – juggling this duty and his assignments – but he told the committee, "Don't feel like this is overwhelming, let's think positive, and let's do it as efficiently as possible."

The whole house came together and built up their communal identity, and they really did Strive to Thrive in this Monash Cup.

Q: LAST YEAR, YOU GOT THE POSITION OF CAPTAIN WHEN THE MONASH CUP WAS BEING VIRTUALLY CONDUCTED. WHAT HAS IT BEEN LIKE DEALING WITH EVERYTHING NOW THAT IT'S OFFLINE? WHAT FEELS DIFFERENT?

In terms of being easier to manage, online was definitely better, since there were only 4 to 5 sports last year, and it's also easier to manage e-sports.

But if you talk about which one's better, it's definitely offline because the amount of interaction you get from offline sports like basketball and volleyball is unmatched, plus you get to see new faces and meet new people every day. Especially after the pandemic, this is what we really needed to get back on track, to socialize instead of just staying at home and playing games.

Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OR EVENT OF THIS SEASON?

As a captain, I play three sports – frisbee, captain ball, and volleyball. And honestly speaking, I did not really attend much of the competition because I always put myself in the substitute position, but my favorite sport would definitely be volleyball. I played one or two games as a substitute player and the amount of enthusiasm and care among the houses is really great to see.

As soon as you make a point everyone starts shouting "Score! Score!". It feels like when you take a moment, you go "Wow, so this is how far we have come after the pandemic. Who would've thought we could be out here without a mask, you know?". When Leviathan loses in a sport, it's heartbreaking because you want to win for the house and for yourself, but even then I'm sure everyone always has fun because they play with their hearts out.

Q: CAN YOU GIVE A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF WHAT THE SCORING SYSTEM IS LIKE, FOR THOSE OF US THAT DON'T HAVE A GOOD IDEA ABOUT IT?

So rough overview, we have 20 sports and how it works is all of the sports are put into a round-robin system, which basically means everyone has to face each other no matter how many times you win or lose. One group category, for example, has all 4 houses inside them so all houses have to fight each other, regardless if you win first or second or lose all.

During round-robin, it's more or less to play for seating into quarter and semifinals. How you gain points is you win one match, you get 10 points, something like that. The more rounds you win, the more points you get. 30 is the maximum number you can get. Imagine you keep winning all the way to the finals and you get champion or you get the first seat, you get an extra 30 points.

Q: WHAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP STYLE DO YOU IMPLEMENT ON YOUR TEAM?

Oh, it's definitely the type where you remain as positive as you can, one, and two, willing to understand other people's points of view which I think is very important. Three is being understanding. If you're understanding you get an insight into other people's points of view, which is good because that makes communication much easier.

So, even when you realize your own house made a mistake, you can communicate with them and ask them why they did what they did instead of putting blame on them and saying they're not qualified to be in Leviathan. Because if you do that, people will think you're misusing your position as captain and abusing that power. So it's best to communicate and understand their position and where they're coming from. Being compassionate, basically.

Q: HOW DO YOU MOTIVATE YOUR TEAM MEMBERS WHEN THINGS AREN'T GOING AS PLANNED OR WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG?

When something goes wrong, I will always call for a meeting, where I'll straight up be like "Person A, you know what you did, and I won't explicitly blame you for what you did, but please let me know what happened during that time and what's the cause of this issue that happened." When something problematic happens, it's always the house committee we have to go to to discuss the issue.

But, for example, if something happens in futsal – I won't go to the committee but directly go and talk to the players. Confronting them is definitely the way I go about it, but without getting angry; you evaluate the situation and then you make a decision.

In Leviathan, I think what is really good is whenever our team loses we'll say, good job no worries, there's always next time! Instead, let's think of this as a really good moment we all shared together, and let's cheer for Leviathan. You know, comforting words.

We have this funny way of motivating people. If you get champion, we'll say "Boss belanja makan," which means the boss will treat you guys to dinner. If you win then you're getting the treat. Food is definitely the best motivator [laughs]. And everyone makes big demands for expensive food and the leader will be like "You guys are crazy!". It will lift everyone's spirit up for the moment, and they'll think - at least I didn't lose this in vain, I felt really happy playing this.

Q: LASTLY, DESCRIBE THE CURRENT MONASH CUP IN THREE WORDS.

I would say really fun, and it's hectic. And the last one I would say memorable. Because in every event – and I don't mean to throw shade again – there's always a lot of tea and drama and it's really hectic, lots of drama between houses as well as with other houses – but that's just part of the process! But at the end of the day, everyone's having fun and creating memories. So for me, it's fun but hectic, but a really memorable and good experience overall.

WE WRAPPED UP THE INTERVIEW WITH A FEW LAST WORDS FROM CLEMENT. HE URGES AND ENCOURAGES FIRST AND SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS TO TAKE PART IN THE MONASH CUP EVENTS AND TO MAKE THE BEST OF THEIR TIME IN MONASH. THERE'S ALSO A NOSTALGIA FACTOR TO THE MONASH CUP, HOW IT IS AKIN TO SPORTS DAYS BACK IN HIGH SCHOOL. ALSO, CLEMENT ADDED, ALONGSIDE MAKING FRIENDS YOU MIGHT ALSO MEET YOUR FUTURE WIFE OR HUSBAND AT THESE EVENTS SOUNDS LIKE HE HAS WATCHED WAY TOO MANY K-DRAMAS, BUT THE AMBITIOUSNESS IS MUCH APPRECIATED NONETHELESS.

HOW DOES THE FRESH-FACED MANTICORE TEAM CAPTAIN, THEVIN MAN, HANDLE THE PRESSURE?

Interviewed by Kay Ng
Photographed by Luanne Choong

Culebre's House Captain in 2022 is none other than Dhiliban Soundharraja, a third-year student who believes in pushing himself in every respect. Not only is he double majoring in Microbiology and Medicinal Chemistry, but he's also a NASM-certified personal trainer! With such an illustrious STEM background to complement his hearty dedication to athletics and physical excellence, Dhiliban demonstrates both brains and brawns, truly embodying Culebre's motto, "All The Way".

I managed to steal some time from his busy schedule juggling write-ups for an inhumane number of lab reports, preparing for tests, organizing meetings and training sessions, and practicing for Monash Cup – all while acting as figurehead and mediator for a team of head-strong athletes. He was in the middle of studying (of course) and very graciously made time to sit down with me for a quick chat about his personal experiences as an athlete and some of the challenges he's faced as House Captain.

Q: WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO GET INTO SPORTS?

Basically, I've been a sports person since high school. It's a recreational activity for me. I was also captain of cricket in high school – I played the state-level division. When it comes to sports, I find it exciting; it's a good thing for me. I find that it keeps me engaged. I was determined to enter Monash Cup since 2020 and become House Captain. But because it was online, there were no physical sports; it was mostly online activities. After 2022, I took the chance.

Q: YOU SEEM TO HAVE A LOT OF EXPERIENCE WITH TEAM SPORTS. WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT THEM IN PARTICULAR?

It's really fun and interesting to manage people, and most of the time, it really helps you to improve your problem-solving and critical thinking skills. You learn how to manage your team – it's fun, interesting, and challenging. I love the more challenging aspects of my life.

Q: OH? WELL, WHAT'S THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU'VE FACED AS HOUSE CAPTAIN?

Miscommunication between committee members. I have to be friendly and approachable, and I can't take one side. I need to properly listen to both sides and make a firm decision. It's happened so many times in my House. So, what I do is organize a meeting so we can sort it out immediately.

Q: YOU NEED A LOT OF PEOPLE SKILLS TO BE HOUSE CAPTAIN.

Yeah!

Q: INTERESTING. YOU MIGHT'VE PARTIALLY ANSWERED MY NEXT QUESTION (LAUGHS). WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE YOUR GREATEST STRENGTHS AS AN ATHLETE AND SPECIFICALLY AS HOUSE CAPTAIN?

I think I have patience, and I'm a good listener. As I said previously, I'm good at critical thinking. I make quick decisions. And as an athlete? Because I've been in sports for so long, I think my stamina and my strength are really good.

Q: GIVEN YOUR TRACK RECORD, I BELIEVE THAT. COULD YOU DESCRIBE SOME OF YOUR FUNNIEST, MEMORABLE, OR WEIRD EXPERIENCES AS HOUSE CAPTAIN?

Because it's been two years since we organized a physical Monash Cup, people don't really know how to organize things, and there have been a lot of miscommunications between Houses.

Funniest thing? I don't think there's been many, to be honest. It's mostly misunderstandings. We'll book the venue in the morning, but in the evening, it'll be booked by another house. So, the slots often change, and we have to talk to the House Captains.

Q: SO, IT'S MONASH JUST BEING A BIT OF A MESS?

(Laughs) Organizing, yeah. I believe they're new here. They need to properly organize things. I believe they will do it in future Monash Cups. Especially in tryouts and selecting players. Another funny thing that's happened is people come and randomly register their names – and people think Eight-ball pool is a bowling game. But Monash doesn't have bowling.

Q: IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH HOUSE DO YOU THINK IS CULEBRE'S BIGGEST RIVAL?

I'd say Manticore. They're especially strong in a few sports. If you take Culebre, we're all equal in terms of talent and skill. Because at the end of the day, you get higher points if you're a champion in one sport. For Manticore – in futsal, cricket, and maybe three more sports, the players are really strong, and it rapidly increases their scores.

Q: IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'D CHANGE ABOUT MONASH CUP?

So many miscommunications occurred in Monash Cup 2021, and as I mentioned earlier, it was mostly regarding the scheduling for tryouts. For example, in the morning we would communicate to all our players that this evening we will have this sport, and everyone needs to come here. Our House players are there, but Manticore is there too, and they say that in the schedule it was allocated for them. I think Monash Cup 2022 will address this issue.

The second thing is the lack of sponsors. It's 2000 ringgit per House this year, but I was told by previous House Captains it used to be more than 2000 ringgit.

The third thing is that some athletic sports were removed, such as swimming. There were so many students who couldn't participate because of the unavailability of these sports.

THANK YOU FOR FITTING ME INTO YOUR SCHEDULE, DHILIBAN, AND BEST OF LUCK WITH THE GAME! I TRULY DON'T KNOW HOW YOU DO IT – YOU'RE AN INSPIRATION!

MONASH CUP CLOSING CEREMONY

RACING TOWARDS THE FINISH LINE: MONASH CUP CLOSING CEREMONY

Written by Ashley Lim
Photographed by Luanne Choong, Shawn Wong, Yang Thong Chen

We may not be as eventful or as party-going, as some of our fellow universities within the region but we Monashians can certainly make an event memorable when we want to, with the Monash Cup Closing Ceremony, being one of the biggest events of the year, with celebrations going on long till the dead of night, the sense of school spirit and pride greatly rejuvenated after a long 2 years in the pandemic.

Throngs of students began showing up at the Concourse Area at 6.00pm, with many students sporting their house colors, their arms barely balancing the food, drinks, and sweet treats from the Monash Business Club Bazaar, who, in collaboration with Clubs & Societies, brought in several local vendors that served to keep our bellies warm and our thirsts quenched throughout the night.

The microphone screeched slightly as the MCs of the night: Jean and Myzan took to the stage to officially begin the evening's festivities, with a brief opening speech by none other than our very own Sports Officer Lee Jia Jing (JJ). He extended his gratitude firstly to the entire C&S division who have been working tirelessly for the past 3 months to execute Monash's first post-pandemic Monash Cup. He also thanked Monash Cup sponsors profusely, especially Genysis for allowing us the use of their studio to stream and conduct our E-sport tournaments. The audience was then swept away by Hero's cheerleading performance as well as a range of performances by the Monash Music Club who dazzled us with their

performances that ranged from original rap pieces to absolutely heart-wrenching covers of famous pop songs such as “There’s Nothing Holding Me Back”, “Unfaithful” and “Nothing’s Gonna Change My Love for You”, which got all of us a tiny bit in our feels.

By 6.30, tensions began to build amongst the murmuring crowd as the final performances for dance and cheer were announced, the two events that would determine the overall Monash Cup winners of 2023, a fact that was not lost on most of the supporters as opposing roars of “CULEBRE”, “MANTICORE”, “OPINICUS” and “LEVIATHAN” shook the Concourse Area, with some students going so far as to stand on tables and chairs for a glimpse of theirteams’ routines.

The performances were punctuated with screams and shouts of awe as the dancers and cheers truly gave it their all, one penultimate push, to the finish line for the sake of their respective houses.

The crowd then slowly dispersed into the bazaar to join the hordes of hangry students that were lining up for warm brown bags of pan-fried dumplings, ice-cold plastic cups of Thai tea, and boxes of gooey cheesy fries, whilst we were serenaded by “Dandos” a band brought in from Taylors University as well as the Monash Music Club. Phone flashlights were switched on and bodies swayed in time with the tunes of our generation's classics such as “Enchanted”, “Still Into You” and “Youngblood”. The intermission ended with a giveaway by C&S as well as a shout-out to MUISS who advertised their flagship event: Monash Cultural Night.

At long last, the moment we were all waiting for had finally arrived: the announcement of the winners for 2023's Monash Cup, which rumors from the grapevine was a heated competition between Manticore and Culebre. As JJ announced the winners for the last two categories of the year: Cheer, which went to Culebre, and Dance, whose gold was clinched by Opinicus, it dawned on us that now was the moment of truth.

Weeks of blood, sweat, tears, and training would all come up to this moment

"And the winner for Monash Cup 2023 goes to... CULEBRE!"

Screams of excitement and chants of "CULEBRE ALL THE WAY!" exploded from the crowd as Culebre's athletes rushed, as one, towards the stage, the sounds of footfalls like a beating drum as ecstatic hugs were given, hands were shook, congratulations were exchanged amongst each other and the green ceremonial flag waved proudly in the cold night air, a dark green beacon of victory, stark against the deep blue velvet backdrop of the star-studded night sky.

Being a part of Culebre myself, I cannot deny that it was one of my favorite moments back as a Monashian, taking me back to the Sports Days of old when I was younger and much more carefree. And isn't that what these events are all about?

To feel, for just a moment, that you're part of something a lot bigger than yourself. To feel, for a split second, that sense of belonging we all crave deep down within ourselves. The first Monash Cup after 2 years may not have been perfect but it will certainly be the most memorable and I'm sure, it has lit the competitive fire inside of all of us which will burn long and bright for next year's festivities .

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GAMERS HIDEOUT

MEET YOUR MP'S

Note: This event coverage is for informational purposes only. MONGA is not affiliated with any political party mentioned in this article.

The Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2019 has shifted the national and state elections voting age from 21 to 18 years old, potentially introducing a total of 5.8 million new voters on the ballot. Built upon comprehending the significance of this change, Monash Political Awareness Club (MONPAC) was founded this year to create a space for Monash students to equip themselves with knowledge about Malaysian and global politics.

Despite being a newly established club, 'Meet Your MPs' panel session would be their third event this semester. Panel members that were invited include YB Wong Chen (Subang MP), YB Teresa Kok (Seputeh MP) and YB Fahmi Fadzil (Lembah Pantai MP). The purpose behind this event was to provide the audience with an opportunity to ask any burning questions they may have regarding GE15, democracy, or the Malaysian political landscape in general.

The panel session took place on 22 September 2022, from 4:15 - 6:00 p.m. at Auditorium 1. All Monash students and staff members were welcomed to attend, either by registering their attendance online beforehand or through walk-ins. The event turnout rate was impressive, with eager students filling up half the auditorium. An admirable feat considering that it was held during Week 9.

To kickstart the event, the club's president, Chester Chan, began with a short speech detailing the inspiration behind the club as well as highlighting the importance of raising political awareness among youths. After the speech, the club's event manager took the lead in asking questions to the panel. Several issues regarding the political scene were addressed including the issue of brain drain which refers to the high percentage of highly qualified Malaysians that wish to leave the country, usually by students who study overseas and do not return. As a response to this question, YB Fahmi Fadzil stated that if presented with the opportunity, it is advisable for students to explore the world and learn from other countries so that they could bring that knowledge back to Malaysia. He also recalls his personal experience in the United States and how that has helped him shape his characters and inspired him to make a difference in the country.

PANEL SESSION

Written by Natasha Maya / Photos by Yang Thong Chen
Designed by Januli Wikejoon

Another issue brought up was fake news and how that could influence the results of the election. YB Teresa Kok took the lead in sharing her negative experience with fake news which caused her to be arrested and detained in a high-security prison. To summarise, the MPs encouraged the public to be wary of false information and attentively conduct their research before and during the election period. They also urged everyone to watch parliament meetings and intern with parliament members if they have the chance.

After an hour of fruitful discussions, the panel was open for questions from the audience. A QR code was provided on the screen for students to send their questions anonymously. Alternatively, they could raise their hand and ask the questions directly to the MP's through a microphone. The political enthusiasm of students was clear as questions kept piling up.

There were also students seeking advice on how to win the upcoming MUSA election. The words of wisdom imparted include telling the running parties to take time and truly question what do Monash students want and work from there. They also recommended researching the reasons why students drop out of Monash and find solutions to combat this issue.

Despite the large influx of questions, the common one was about how to restore hope and trust back to the government. As a response, the MPs acknowledged the concerns that the students may have regarding the fairness of the general elections and encouraged students to volunteer as polling agents. This is to give students a chance to witness democracy in action as they can monitor the elections and remove any doubts regarding foul play during the election. For the students that wish to assist in raising political awareness, they are encouraged to share credible information on their social media.

The final piece of wisdom imparted by the MPs was for all eligible Malaysians to vote!

Glossary
YB = Yang Berhormat (Honorable)
MP = Member of Parliament
GE15 = 15th Malaysian general election

Diversity and

DAY 1 & OPENING CEREMONY

This is certainly not the beginning of the work that we're doing, we don't want to say "yes, we have done our job" and pack up after this, we want to say that we are continually evolving in this space and looking at how we can improve and adapt to these challenges overtime so I hope everyone enjoys the week. However, it's not just one week, it's 52 weeks of the year that we focus on this. – Professor Beverly Webster who responded to my question on what she thinks of EDI week. Professor Beverly Webster who responded to my question on what she thinks of EDI week.

Speaking of EDI week, it was the first of its kind in Malaysia as the first ever student and staff collaboration event that was held for diversity of all kinds! Inclusivity week stretched across with cultural diversity on day one, mentall wellness on day two, gender equity on day 3, and gender and sexual diversity on day 4. For this event, most of the entirety of campus grounds was revamped to accommodate all the activities and workshops and there was a lot!

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

On day 1, MUSA and MUISS team set up a booth promoting the unique backgrounds of all Monash students with a wall of sticky notes with quotes from students all across the globe and in different languages (p.s. even the Library got an addition to welcome EDI week!). With the collaboration of the library staff and the diversity and inclusion committee, a new collection of books celebrating the spirit of EDI week were showcased.

Of all the books showcased there, "The Gender Games" by Juno Dawson caught my interest the most, as it details how gender is predisposed to us by society from the minute we are born. It is quite a brave topic to be tackling and it shows how Monash is prepared to handle things moving on, in regards to diversity and inclusion.

InclusIvity week

DAY 2 - MENTAL HEALTH & WELL-BEING

The theme for day 2 was mental well-being and as such, the campus foyer paved the way for many booths which were set up by the mental health club. I was able to meet with the Vice President of the club Ann Marie, a psychology student, "This event is really important, whether you care about your mental health or not that educated on it yet, I still think [the event] is an accessible way to teach people mental well- being skills at home, and you don't have to splurge just to go to therapy."
I couldn't have put it in better words than that, and to showcase some mental well- being skills students can do themselves various booths and workshops were held to teach students for free of course and some even had cool freebies (I am a freebie hoarder so it really tickled my itch).

Photos by Lim Xin Yi, Shawn Wong, Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Designed by Megan Ching
Written by Fasihul Alam

DAY 3 - GENDER EQUITY

Day 3 began with the theme of gender equity. Apart from various activities that allowed students to immerse themselves in, there were also informative workshops like creating awareness of respect and gender equity and some mindful activities with none other than the head of mental health and well-being in Monash University Malaysia, Dr Mui Gee. Other than that, the crowd was quite sparse for this day unfortunately, so hopefully next EDI week the activities are revamped so students are engaged throughout the week!

DAY 4 - THE (FABULOUS) CLOSING CEREMONY

Day 4's theme was diverse genders and sexualities and this day by far was the most packed, not only in terms of students that showed up but the sheer number of educational and fun activities that graced Monash grounds.

The day started off with the various LGBTQIA+ booths showcasing handmade work of people from these diverse demographics. Trinkets and baubles, artwork and clothing lines, whereas each item was made from love and care and were sold at a reasonable price for students– one could buy the market out and still be wanting more.

One of the booths showcased Juan Vilanueva's art, a drag performer from KL. They had gorgeous earrings, bookmarks and original art pieces. I was able to get Juan's two cents on EDI week and they said: "It's good that Monash is doing this, being able to talk and engage and ask questions regarding this topic is important. We should make this (EDI week) a common thing; a norm. I hope soon, this is going to be just any other bazaar not just labeled as inclusivity because that's what inclusivity is all about." And I couldn't agree more!

There was also a planetary talk featuring Dr Esther Ho, an openly out and LGBTQIA+ affirming individual where they opened up their life story and helped students gain some solace. What struck me the most was these words by Dr Esther Ho: "You are so valid, and you have every right to be here and be comfortable in this university and your time here should be safe for you to explore yourself and also to make connections." I would be lying if I didn't tear up during their session and I got the biggest hug I have gotten from an adult to date when I approached them for their two cents.

Speaking of connections, Ensemble set up a riveting showcase of performances on Thursday evening with LGBTQIA+ affirming artists and performers to really connect with the audience. The first line-up of performances was from the Monash dance studio, flourishing their moves in a beautiful and captivating rhythm hyping up the already growing crowd.

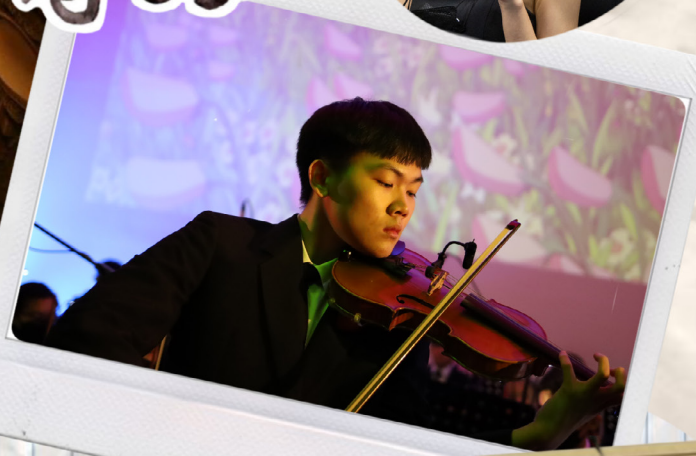
Solo performances from the likes of Jensen Chuah, Pang Guo Ling and Rohan Dias didn't fail to captivate the audience as well. After Rohan's heartwarming performance which made the audience literally swoon to him, I was able to sneak him away and get a few words from him, "Everyone did a pretty good job at promoting inclusivity and diversity throughout the week, even being able to showcase artwork by a drag performer (reference to Jaune) was pretty rad in my opinion. I think Monash should keep doing this because you want to create an environment where all types of students are accepted and the first step is actually doing, rather than putting fancy words on a poster so I applaud Monash for that."However, the event was still far from over and Ensemble still had a few trump cards to deal with. The first of which was Miss Ramya Gopal's spoken poetry that pierced my soul. Her words were strong, honest and retold a story that a person could make a play out of. Her words "In the entirety of my life so far, Allah (God) has given me three precious heirlooms; each one passed down from one Tamil daughter to the next. The first is a complex relationship with the body, the second is a complex relationship with gender and sexuality, and the third is a complex relationship with desire." It was truly a moving piece.

Following that, the evening hosts, two final year students, Kiki and Triny, lamented on how people were still chattering when Miss Gopal was performing, but they felt that it was better to not overpower her voice with theirs and what matters the most were the people who were listening– and I couldn't agree more.

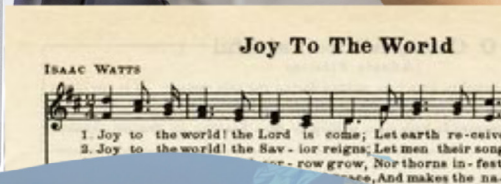
Shortly after Miss Gopal's heartfelt spotlight, the audience was then greeted by **DRAG PERFORMANCES**. Yes, you heard it right, a drag performance on campus grounds! Miss Keisha, Nessy Candor and Acne Star "popped their fucking ass" to iconic songs and a stellar performace– truly the drag performances became the highlight of the entire week and captured the raw essence of EDI week by letting these artists express themselves unfiltered. However, there was still one last performance and it was none other than the Indie band "Time machine", serenading the crowd with a stellar performance with their new singles and an adrenaline inducing cover of "All I wanted" by Paramore (which I definitely didn't cry and scream to).

After the final performance, EDI week was officially over. EDI week has been the best event Monash has conducted (this year) with the joint effort of the students and staff. All their hard work was definitely appreciated by all, especially by the International students. Hope to see this event return next year!

monash chamber orchestra



"Where words fail, music speaks"



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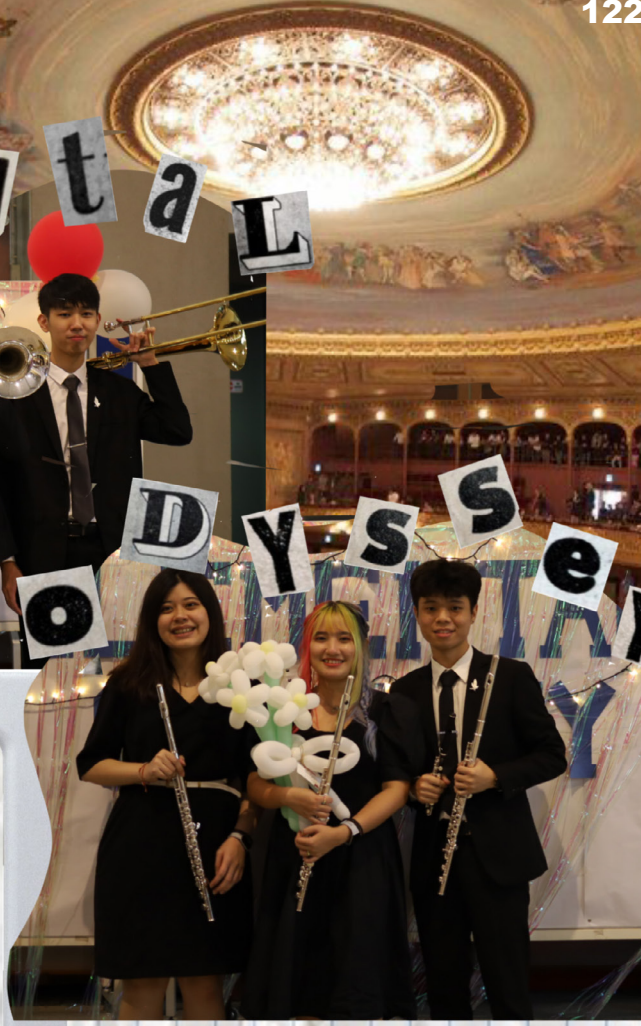
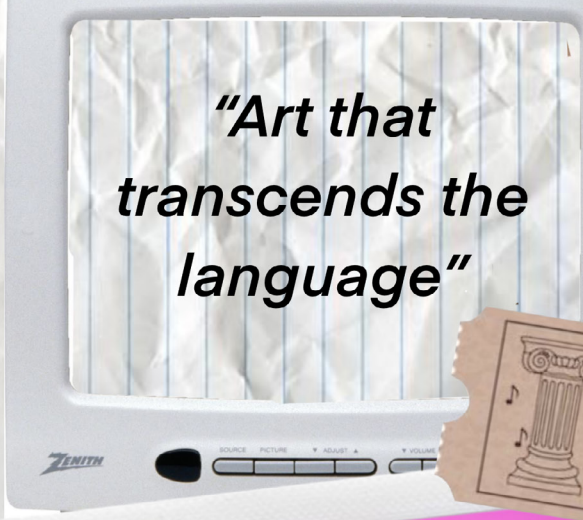
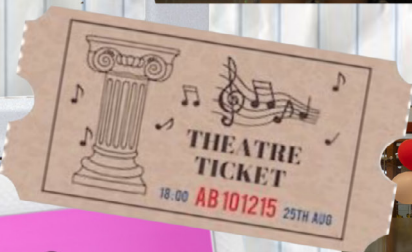


"Art that transcends the language"





Photos by Jerry Fong, Nursyafiqa Aleeya and Yang Thong Chen

Photos by Nursyafiqa Aleeya
Design by Megan Tang

SOS x SOB

"Starry Night"

Local
District
Shop

CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM

A TEDx MonashUniversityMalaysia EVENT

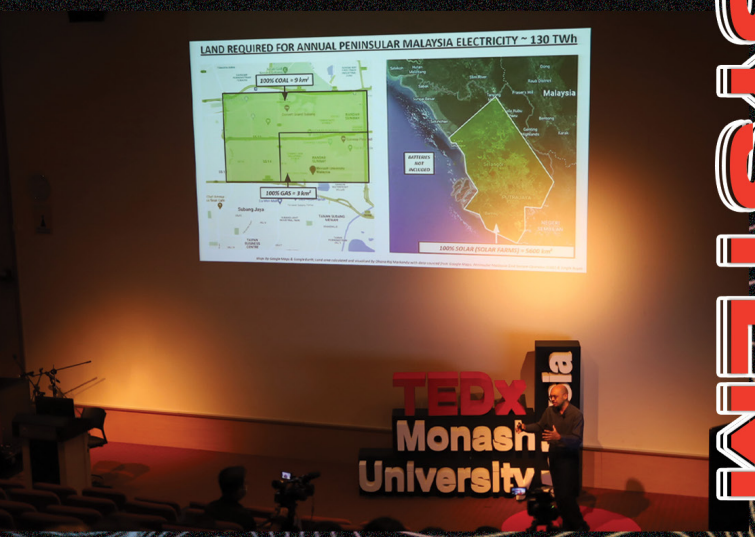
x = independently organized TED event

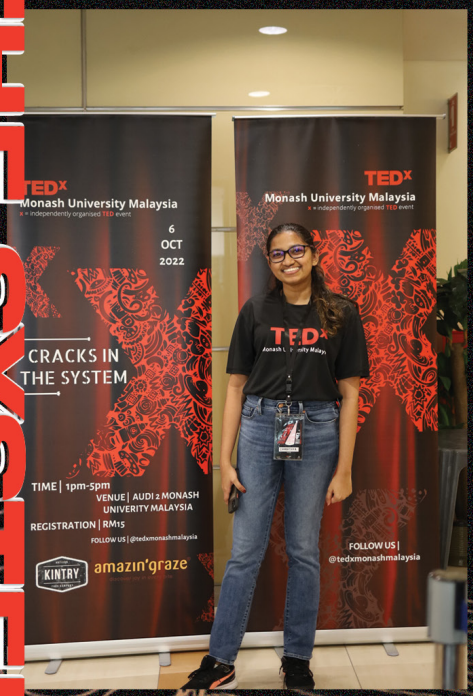
Designer: Winnie Ooi
Photographer: Tsheten Yangden Bhutia

DATE: 6TH OCTOBER 2022
VENUE: PLENARY THEATRE, MONASH UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA

TEDXMUM

CRACKS IN THE SYSTEM





TEDx
MonashUniversityMalaysia
x = independently organized TED event

MONASH

One night, all the flavour in monash cultural night

Monash Cultural Night (MCN) was held on the 9th of October at the 4 points by Sheraton Puchong. It was the first ever MCN night after the Pandemic so expectations weren't necessarily low. The dress code was Traditional wear/Formal wear so most students were highly encouraged to express their culture through their outfits. The event hall was filled with colours, people were absolutely feeling the vibe. The lovely representatives from MUISS invited me in. I asked one of them, Michelle, the inspiration behind her outfit. She told me she wore a traditional Batik which was handed down from her mother. The thing I love about cultural events like this is that we all come closer as a community and bond over our cultural and familial ties with food and our outfits. Moving onto the event itself, after a short introduction from the current MUISS Heads Rashwan and Kayla the first performance began.

CULTURAL NIGHT

KELUAR

The Performances

The first performance was a heartfelt song from Korea to ease the audience into the night. After that, with a complete change of pace the Hip-Hop dance group from Korea came and gave the audience Korean swagger and from the audience's reactions it sure was stunning! The next country was Pakistan, this performance was unlike any other as they took us to a journey through the different states of Pakistan and what each region brings to the table literally too with their food and cultural differences. The city of Peshawar stood out to me the most, a city built upon ancient legacies and monuments; how cool is that?! But that was not the only thing Pakistan had to show, they ended their showcase with a bombastic group dance which took the audience through various Pakistani music genres. The next country to show their colours was Mauritius, and oh boy were their colours vibrant! The stage was covered with fiery colours of red and pink and straw top hats of course.

After Mauritius's refreshing performance, Sri-Lanka also known as the Pearl of the Ocean debuted their performance showcasing their culture through traditional dance, a whimsical piano piece that guided us through the countryside and beaches of Sri-Lanka and a riveting spoken poetry session, truly a diverse array of showcases from Sri-Lanka. Next up was Malaysia, although it was a short performance it was by far one of the more memorable ones as the performances showcased a traditional dance which showed the unrelenting and indomitable malay spirit woman singing in Malay as a Male interpretive dancer moved with her vocal rhythms.

Moving on, the Middle East showed the audience the several countries that fell under its umbrellas through powerful traditional dance which got the people of the middle east to where they are now. My favourite was from Jerusalem's performance which showed an energetic dance expressing the open hearts of the people of Jerusalem. China came next, with a powerful song about Maternal love which got the audience bringing out their flashlights and swooning over themselves with the song, definitely the most wholesome moment of the night. Now, Probably the biggest showcase of the night was India. They showcased the theme of love, not just any love though. It was Royal love, through this theme India took us through a journey of how Indian Weddings celebrate two people's love, each performance was bigger than the next and the audience felt it. I definitely saw some people scream and dance with the dance group on some of the tables.

The second last performance was from Bangladesh which also showcased the theme of love. But this was young love, Bangladesh took the audience through a story of two lovers who were classes apart but that didn't stop them, breaking many societal norms to be together, that is the Bangladeshi spirit that made me proud to be from Bangladeshi and this performance definitely won my heart!

The last performance was from Indonesia but it was definitely not the least, it retold a popular Indonesian story called "Bawang Putih Bawang Merah" through a musical drama. During one of the climax scenes the main character loses her father and the narrator(who was live on stage) sang a mournful ode called "Bahagia Menanti' by Radhini, a song about loneliness and darkness but also with a possibility of hope.. For the future.

Award Ceremony & Ending Notes

After the Performances the bulk of the event came to a close, but the night was still young and the audience was still left wanting more. After Rashwan and Kayla's ending speech where they talk about the importance of MCN and diversity in general. After that, a fashion show was held which showcased how drippy each culture truly CAN be. Malaysia gave us FIERCE, Japan gave us ELEGANCE and India gave us gorgeous ROYALTY and the people were eating it up, I had to stand on a chair to get a better view with the large cluster of people hounding the sides of the runway!

The award ceremony was held soon after where the true royalty ascended to the throne of MCN night. The king and queen of the night were both from Indonesia and their lovely Prince and Princess were Pakistan and India respectively. From the performance aspect, the winner was India deservedly. The runner up performance was Pakistan and the most creative one was Bangladesh, South Asians for the win!

After the event, I reached out to Kanak, the CRO of the event to gain insight on how everyone collaborated for this event and the challenges they faced along the way. "Definitely not easy, especially considering that our predecessors themselves didn't have much idea about conducting mcn offline was definitely difficult to start with. We started from absolute scratch and started planning in the first sem of the year itself. As it comes with a big scale event, many people were involved and everyone had genius ideas but was hard to execute because of several reasons. But we definitely had to make sacrifices, get everyone on board for it. Towards the, personally i didn't expect to be sold out but we did!! It was really great cause MCN was like MUISS's baby." Thank you Kanak for helping me finish this article, certainly looking for how next year MUISS events will be like!

Written by Fasihul Alam
Photographed by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia & Yang Thong Chen
Designed by Januli Wikejoon

Posibuddy Wellness Week!

With the semester quickly coming to an end (how has it already been a year??), the strain is starting to show on all of our faces, the bags under our eyes begging for SWOTVAC so that we can have a tiny bit of breathing room before plunging into the chaos of exams.

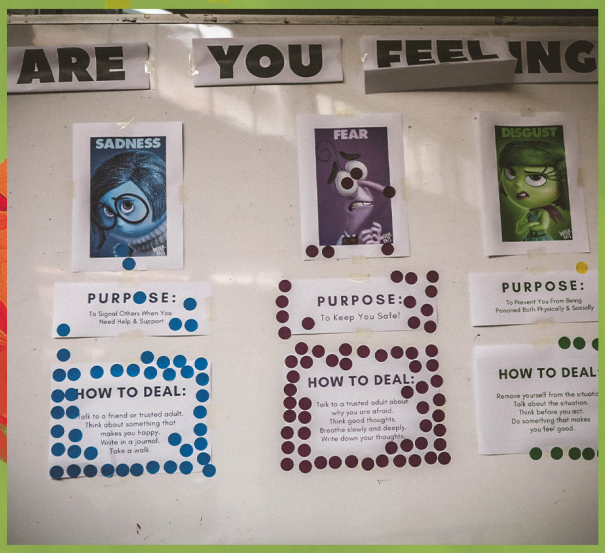
Thankfully, our beloved Welfare Department has provided us with a semblance of relief in the form of their annual flagship event: Wellness Week which was held in conjunction with World Mental Health Day. The event aimed to increase awareness about mental health whilst also facilitating a positive and open environment that celebrated wellbeing.

The festivities kicked off with the "Sapot Lokal Fair" which spotlighted 10-15 student businesses that sold a range of products including: sweet treats, upcycled artwork, crocheted items and pre-loved clothes. However, the highlight of the day was most definitely the free goodies, handed out by the Welfare Department. By participating in their "Take What You Need and Give What You Can" activity, they were then able to receive a free bag of popcorn. The students were then treated to a surprise free coffee by the famous Kee Nguyen stall, with the line stretching all the way from the foyer to Mad Alchemy as sleep deprived students rushed gratefully to grab their free cup of joe.

The second day saw a continuation of the Sapot Lokal Fair as well as the "Take What You Need and Give What You Can" booth, with a new addition of a photo booth that allowed students to commemorate their memories of the first physical Wellness Week after nearly 2 years of online learning. Ms Na Mui Gee, head of the Monash Counselling Department was also cordially invited to give a mental health talk titled: Dealing with Stress & Burnout, a session that was incredibly informative and helpful for the Monash community, as we struggle to continue balancing being full times students as well as figuring out our place in the world.

The third day saw even more student turn out as the Welfare Department's official Instagram @musa.cares made a surprise announcement at midnight, which was the arrival of Waka Waka Gelato's pop-up store which would only be there for a short window of 2 hours, from 12pm to 2 pm. Throughout the day, the "Positivity Playlist" noticeboard was also set up, where students were encouraged to write their go-to song that uplifts their spirits.

For the final day of Wellness Week, the Welfare Department took the saying "Breakfast of Champions" a bit literally as they provided the student population with free sandwiches from Monash's very own sandwich and toast stand. Warm and delicious, there were smiles everywhere as students chowed down on their free breakfast which provided them with the perfect energy boost for a long day of classes. The very last event that was held to wrap up Wellness Week was Just Dance, held at the Porch where students were given the opportunity to bust out their best TikTok dance moves.



Written by Ashley Lim
Photos by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Designed by Januli Wikejoon

After the event, I had a brief but insightful conversation with my office neighbours, Jasper and Ina about their term in office and their preparations leading up to Wellness Week.

Q: WHAT'S IT LIKE BEING THE FIRST POST PANDEMIC AND FULLY OFFLINE WELFARE OFFICERS?

"It's been a tough but interesting experience trying to readjust back to the physical campus life, as it was a challenge to try and get all the internal operations of the department up and running again, while also learning the ropes of the role. However, it does feel rewarding to know that we've managed to get the ball rolling again!"

Q: WHAT ARE SOME OF THE MOST DIFFICULT CHALLENGES YOU FACED FOR WELLNESS WEEK?

"Aside from the usual time constraints of getting an event up and running, the process of getting our external vendors approved was one hell of a ride especially with all the delays and procedural shakeups thrown at us by the finance department."

Q: AS WE ALL KNOW, YOU GUYS HAVE BEEN RE-ELECTED AS WELFARE OFFICERS FOR THE YEAR 2023! FIRST OF ALL I'D LOVE TO CONGRATULATE YOU AND SECONDLY, WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FOR THE FUTURE OF THE WELFARE DEPARTMENT?

"There will definitely be a lot more care packages and giveaways that the students can look forward to as well as more mental health centred initiatives such as campaigns and an upgraded Wellness Week in 2023!"

MONASH BUSINESS CLUB HALLOWEEN NIGHT!

Photographed by Luanne Choong
Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

RIDMA

DESIGNED BY CHAI TING HO.

On 25th september, MUSA announced the "Top" chef event which was one of the few virtual events in Monash. Students from all schools were encouraged to participate in the 4 day event. I had the privilege of being able to interview Ridma who was one of the participants and the winner for not one but two dish categories. Ridma is an engineering student which frankly surprised me because the stereotype is engineering students don't have time for anything that doesn't get them closer to an HD, so seeing him taking the time to participate in this event was interesting. Especially when I asked him what cooking meant for him. He said "when I first joined uni, cooking was just a necessary skill but then I started cooking dinners for my friends and it stuck to me I guess and it became a love language. And the food, i just love food in general, i don't spend money on anything notable so i get to experiment with cooking a lot!"

NON VEGETARIAN

Ridma made the Aglio Olio Spaghetti with prawns. For this dish, Ridma recalled his Sri-Lankan heritage for the spice factor, but also wanted to create something easy and simple as he is a student. Combine those two elements and you get a perfect home cooked meal for one.

VEGETARIAN

For this section, Ridma made spicy garlic and mushroom tomato pasta. What he lacked in meat, he made up for it with punchy ingredients. I asked him about his biasness to pasta. He answered "The thing with pasta is that you can put all sorts of ingredients in it and it will still come out good and it's so versatile and that's why I love to cook with it." personally i love pasta too, not because i'm broke though. Definitely not..

WHEN ASKED ABOUT HIS THOUGHTS ABOUT TOP CHEF, RIDMA SAID THAT HE REALLY LIKED THE WHOLE EVENT AS IT GAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DESTRESS BEFORE EXAM SEASON HIT AND HE WOULD LOVE TO PARTICIPATE AGAIN NEXT YEAR. THANK YOU RIDMA FOR HAVING TIME TO CHAT WITH ME AND I HOPE TO SEE YOU WIN AGAIN NEXT YEAR TOO!

TOP CHEF WINNERS

RANJANIDEVI KANNAN

Desserts have always been my Achilles heel, so when asked to cover the winners of Top Chef Monash, I immediately jumped at the chance to interview Ranjanidevi Kannan's (@randeedeeeeee) winning plate, aptly named: The Decadent Trio, which, as the name suggests consists of a beautiful brownie trio of the following flavours: salted maple brownie, white chocolate mint brownie and cheesecake brownie. These decadent fudge-style brownies have a delightful balance of sweet, salty and rich flavours that complement each other supremely and go exceptionally well with a cup of soothing tea!

I wish I could have met her in person, however due to the time constraints of SWOTVAC, I had to arrange for the interview to be held over Zoom instead. However, her bubbly and cheerful aura more than makes up for it as her enthusiasm bleeds through the screen and carries our conversation marvellously. Before beginning our interview, she briefly introduces herself as a Year 2 Semester 2 student, hailing from the School of Science.

Q: CONGRATULATIONS ON WINNING TOP CHEF MONASH! WHAT INSPIRED YOUR DISH AND THE FLAVOURS BEHIND IT?

A: Funnily enough I was watching The Food Network, for inspiration because I do bake for a living and then it just sort of hit me! The three particular flavours that I chose are actually my favourite cake flavours, because they aren't very heavy on the sweetness to the point where it's cloying, so I thought to myself

"Why not turn them into brownies?"

And from there I had to of course test it out, do some careful measuring, because in baking like many things there's a lot of trial and error, just a little bit too much of this or that can result in everything just sort of failing. But, thankfully it worked out in the end and I was able to reimagine my three favourite flavours into brownie form!

When asked about her stance on the controversial mint chocolate chip topic she laughs and states firmly that she is Team Mint Chocolate Chip all the way!

Q: WHY DESSERT IN PARTICULAR? WHY NOT OTHER CATEGORIES?

A: Before she had me, my mom actually used to run a bakery, but once I was born, she found it difficult to balance between the two, so eventually she chose to step away from the business and take care of me instead. But, she never totally gave up on her passion, because she compiled a book of her recipes which she then bequeathed to me when I was 8 or 9 and honestly I've been baking ever since!

Q: SINCE YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU DO BAKE A BIT FOR A LIVING, WHY NOT PURSUE THAT AS A PROFESSIONAL CAREER?

A: Initially, I did consider culinary arts as a pathway, because my personal dream career has always been a professional baker, but then I decided to just keep it on the back burner as a hobby for now and enrol for my current course which is Environmental Biology. I told myself that I'll dive into the sciences first and then once I've graduated and my life becomes more stable I'll definitely revisit the idea!

Q: DO YOU PERSONALLY HAVE A VERY BIG SWEET TOOTH?

A: Surprisingly I don't! I've always preferred my flavours to be well-balanced, which is why when I was testing out the recipes for the brownies I always ensured that there was always a twist to the flavours instead of the plain go-to chocolate which can be overwhelming and sort of monotonous sometimes. I personally believe that desserts don't have to just be one distinct flavour palate. There'll always be more creative ways to incorporate other flavour profiles, whether it's sour, salty or even a bit bitter!

Q: ANY ADVICE FOR PEOPLE OUT THERE WHO WOULD LOVE TO START BAKING BUT MAY BE A BIT TOO AFRAID TO TRY IT OUT? BECAUSE WE ALL KNOW THAT BAKING CAN BE A VERY PRECISE ART, ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES DOWN TO ALL THE TINY MEASUREMENTS AND PRECISE TIMINGS.

A: Patience is definitely key! Like a lot of things in life, baking definitely doesn't magically work out the first time you try it. It's kind of like when you make pancakes: the first one that comes out of the pan will always be just a bit wonky but as you continue making more, you'll be able to see tiny improvements with each batch. Most of the time, as you practise everything just sort of falls neatly into place and even if it doesn't, you never know if it could inspire a totally new dish!

AND WITH THAT WONDERFUL TAKE ON BAKING (AND ON LIFE IN GENERAL, WHEN YOU TRULY THINK ABOUT IT), MY DELIGHTFUL INTERVIEW RANJANIDEVI COMES TO A CLOSE AND WE WISH EACH OTHER GOOD LUCK FOR ALL OUR UPCOMING ASSIGNMENTS AND FINAL EXAMS.

AMANDA TAN

One of the contestants for this year's Top Chef Competition is Amanda Tan, a first year first semester student pursuing Psychological Science. For this competition, she had prepared an extraordinary four course meal for the judges. However, the main focus of this interview is on her scrumptious appetiser.

Her dish is a mini 3-way egg muffin, filled with an assortment of fillings, along with garnishes of fresh alfalfa sprouts and Caesar sauce. The egg muffin assortment includes one with sweet crunchy bell pepper and cucumber cubes, another with portobello mushrooms, and lastly crisp bacon and cheese egg muffins, with an extra dump of cheddar cheese melted on top. It is similar to muffins but a healthier and smaller version, which makes it the perfect mini bite to start off an amazing course.

Q: WHAT WAS THE VERY FIRST DISH THAT YOU'VE EVER MADE? DESCRIBE THE MEMORY.

I think the first dish that I have ever made is chocolate chip cookies, but that was when I was four years old. The only reason I remember it is because I have a picture with my best friend at the time. It was my first attempt at baking, so that was quite a memorable experience. We also had the guidance of our parents because we were like four, and probably not even able to reach the oven *chuckles*.

I remember that they (the cookies) smelt really nice as chocolate chips usually do. So yeah, it was quite a nice feeling which I still feel today when I bake. You're eating something that you made from scratch on your own. It's quite a sense of achievement.

Q: NAME THE MOST IMPORTANT INGREDIENT(S) THAT YOU CANNOT COOK WITHOUT.

It depends on what I'm cooking. If I'm cooking Chinese cuisines, which I usually do, then I would say seasonings, soy sauce and oyster sauce. You can't do anything without those or else the taste of the dish would be tasteless. And in Western dishes, salt is quite an essential ingredient as well as vegetable oil when frying.

And definitely eggs! It's not used in every dish, but when you add it together with other dishes it makes the meal complete. A very simple solution in case you didn't cook enough.

Q: IF YOU HAD TO DESCRIBE YOUR DISH IN THREE WORDS, WHAT WOULD THEY BE?

Healthy, colourful, and 香 (xiāng) [Translation: Fragrant]

Q: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO MAKE THIS DISH?

As a traditional Chinese family, the dishes we prepare are usually straightforward with rice, veggies, meat etc. Because appetisers are uncommon in my family, I really had to think about this.

Honestly, my first choice was devilled eggs but it is a classic appetiser and I was scared that it wouldn't be that original as other contestants might do the same exact thing. I couldn't really think of Chinese appetisers so I chose Western.

I really wanted to try doing the egg muffin for quite a long while since it became a trend two or three years ago. And this time I finally got to try it out. It was my first attempt.

Q: IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES IN A CHEF?

The first is creativity. I'm not that creative, but I know that it is an important quality. If you look at cooking competitions, you see that they do not always have the ingredients they want. And even here when I'm cooking at my dorm I can't easily get the ingredients I need. So you have to be creative and know how to substitute it and keep your heart open for the results even if it is not what you're expecting.

Another quality is definitely hygiene. I wouldn't want to eat what I cook if it isn't hygienic.

Q: IS THERE ANY CHEF/COOK THAT YOU LOOK UP TO? AND WHY?

Although I like cooking, my interest does not come from those cooking shows. Most of the recipes I learn to cook are from the app '小红书'.

Though, the one chef that I look up to is my mom because she taught me everything from the process of handling different types of meat to the basics of baking.

Q: LASTLY, DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR THE NEWBIE CHEFS OUT THERE WHO WOULD BE INTERESTED IN TRYING YOUR RECIPE?

I would say try what you want to try, not just based on how cool it looks. The most important thing is your heart. You can't simply do it. You can't do it for the sake of doing it. You have to do it with your heart. That's the one thing that my mom always tells me. Put attention and detail into it. That's a big part of every dish that I make.

THIS WAS TRULY ONE OF MY FAVOURITE INTERVIEWS SO FAR. THANK YOU SO MUCH AMANDA FOR SUCH A FUN AND LIVELY INTERVIEW SESH! HOPE TO SEE MORE OF YOUR COOKING IN THE FUTURE! <3

SIDENOTE: IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED IN EXPLORING NEW RECIPES DURING THE SEMESTER BREAK, AMANDA HIGHLY RECOMMENDS USING THE APP '小红书'~

SOIT X SOE

Photos by Lim Xin Yi
Written by Shaura Naeem
Designed by Megan Tang

de-stress night

The much needed de-stress night was the perfect way for Monashians to wrap up a long semester's work of deadlines and assignments. Held by the SOIT and SOE for students on the 27th of May, from 6:30PM -10:30PM; this event was one of the many coveted for occasions post-covid by everyone. Expectations and excitement for such an event were at an all-time high.

This event gave students the option to play some games and chill with friends at the student lounge, join a LAN party which took place in the badminton lounge or even head out to Audi 1 and watch some movies on the big screen.

The night started off with students trickling into the student lounge where they were met with good food and even greater company. Upon entrance, you would register by the table and then you were free to join a round of snooker, or some fun board games. Mostly however, students seemed content chatting to themselves while snacking on pizza that was being served, while a handful of students huddled around by the couch lost deep in what seemed to be a very competitive board game.

The lounge had been transformed into a fine hangout spot, with dimmed lights, and disco lights, followed by the steady thrum of people having a great time. There was a long table spanning nearly the length of the lounge stacked with boxes of pizza, and you had your pick of snacks and drinks. The event organisers did an amazing job making sure everyone got something to eat, not to mention them checking in on students that seemed to be by themselves ensuring no one was left feeling alone.

"It's been good, being able to look forward to tonight as a way to de-stress," said Jasper, a first year student from the School of IT. He and his friends, Manan and Abhishek, had just finished a gruesome assignment and found that nights like this were essential to keeping their mental health in check.

Audi 1 had a completely different vibe altogether, with snacks being handed to students as they entered the auditorium. The room had been slightly dimmed and students had voted for Free Guy as their movie of choice to be played in the hall. Students slid into their seats, arms full of snacks, and as they awaited for the movie to start, they murmured amongst themselves, smiles donning their faces.

"I've had a full on stress breakout from wearing masks all day trying to finish my assignments," joked Isha, a student from the School of Arts and Social Sciences. She and her friend Shameema were thrilled to see Ryan Reynolds on the big screen and were beyond relieved to finally untangle the mountains of stress they were carrying from a jam-packed semester.

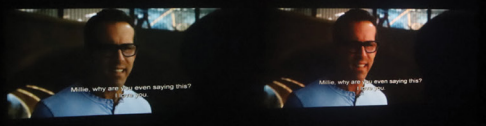
"We're heavily caffeinated, overly tired, but still really excited to be here, because we haven't had anything like this because of COVID, so

we're trying to attend as many events as possible to make up for all the time we've lost to the pandemic."

Min Hao, the representative for the School of IT, said that one of the most rewarding things about planning such an event, aside from seeing students enjoying themselves, was being able to see everyone physically for the first time. JQ, the representative for the School of Engineering echoes this sentiment of finally seeing everyone together. Lastly, above all, the representatives wished to thank the dedicated team that came together to put together the de-stress night.

"The organising team was absolutely spectacular during the entire event, and a huge shout-out goes to both the SOIT and SOE subcommittee teams along with Ally and Sue Wern for the whole tiring and fun process of planning an amazing night!"

Well here's to more de-stress nights for students to let loose and have fun!



MONASH BALL

We made it folks. We survived the second semester filled with long lectures, all-nighters and "maybe I should just drop out" jokes. So, what better way to commemorate the end of our year-long battle with assignments and exams than an enchanting night of iridescence.

The Monash Ball was held on 20th November (Sunday) from 6pm onwards at Dorsett Grand Subang. As promised in MUSA's Instagram post, the venue was about a 10-minute drive away from campus. You know it's nearby when even someone like me could somehow miraculously arrive on time.

Although it had been 3 years since the last Monash Ball, MUSA definitely did not disappoint. All 500 tickets were sold out and despite this large number of people, the ticketing process was relatively smooth without any agonising long queues. Fortunately, the venue was also spacious enough to accommodate everyone comfortably, avoiding accidental gown-stepping.

This year's theme was ✨Iridescence✨. And let me tell you the best thing about Monashians is that we understand the assignment. Some of the prettiest dresses I've ever seen were in that ballroom that night. While most opted for a classic black dress, there were also large puffy ball gowns and form-fitting sparkly dresses. The guys (and girls) looked especially striking in their suit and tie (shoutout to that one guy in a fur coat!), a refreshing change from the usual hoodies and sweatpants we see on campus.

To cement this magical occasion, not one, but two photo booths were available outside the ballroom with shiny backgrounds and fun props to spice up the pictures. The photo-taking process was swift which thankfully made the short line move quickly. After that, the pictures were printed on the spot and each member of the group received their own copy.

One of my favourite highlights of the night was the complimentary Inside Scoop ice cream which served various flavours to cater to each individual taste (this accidentally sounds like an ad – I promise it's not). I got the malted chocolate ice cream and damn it tasted so good even though it melted into cold chocolate soup (I may

A few pictures with the decor outside later, I made my way into the ballroom filled with round tables and chairs. Each table accommodated up to 10 people so even those who came with large groups were able to sit together or at least near each other. The free-seating arrangements made it easy for those who came in a smaller group to join other small groups and meet new people. Ushers were also around to ensure that everyone had a place to sit.

The hall was filled with excited chatters and music which was open for people to add their preferred songs in. By 7:30pm, the ball officially began with a few words from the MC and a short speech by the MUSA president. After that, the first dish out of an eight course meal was served on the table's rotating tray (it was giving Chinese dinner in a fancy restaurant vibe).

The eight course meal were:

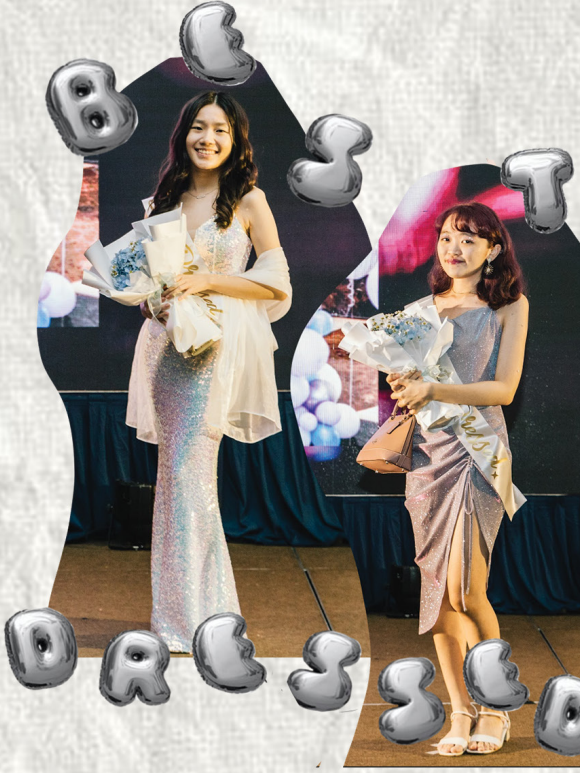
TWO HOT AND COLD COMBINATION (VEGETARIAN)

VEGETARIAN SPRING ROLL
BEAN CURD ROLL WITH SPICY PLUM SAUCE
2. BRAISED SZECHUAN HOT AND SOUR SOUP (VEGETARIAN)
3. ROASTED CHICKEN WITH PRAWN CRACKERS
4. STEAM SEA BASS WITH SUPERIOR SOYA SAUCE
5. STIR FRIED TIGER PRAWNS COATED WITH SALTED EGG YOLK
6. BRAISED BAILING MUSHROOM WITH TAU KAN AND BROCCOLI (VEGETARIAN)
7. VEGETARIAN FRIED RICE
8. MINCED BEAN CURD JELLY WITH LONGAN

My personal favourite dishes of the night were the vegetarian spring rolls, roasted chicken, steam sea bass and tiger prawns. The second dish – the soup – was good too but a tad bit too spicy for me and the rest of the people on my table. Fortunately, the portion of each dish was large enough to satisfy the whole table's appetite which was great so that I didn't feel guilty for having seconds.

By the sixth course onwards, everyone was getting full and the attendees began walking around and mingling with each other.
To entertain us while we ate, Monash Music-Club gave spectacular performances as usual. Different performers would come up on stage during the intermissions while waiting for the next course so that there was never a dull moment. There was also a guest performance by 2COVR as a finale to the musical acts. Another exciting highlight of the event were the generous lucky draw prizes. The lucky draws were done after every meal was served which prevented it from being a lengthy process since some of the attendees were not present when their numbers were announced. Lucky draw prizes included Razer Mouse (2 winners), Grab Vouchers worth RM150 (3 winners), XiaoMi Fit Band (1 winner), Google Home Mini (1 winner), and Starbucks Gift Cards worth RM50 (multiple winners). Attendees could also flaunt their stunning outfits by posting a picture of themselves at the event with the hashtag #monashball2022 as well as tagging MUSA to stand a chance to win the Best Dressed Award. In the end, there were two winners with memorable dresses that sparkled under the lights as they received their respective bouquet and sash. They definitely captured the essence of the iridescence theme!

Prior to the event, nominations for Best Monash Duo were open to all Monashians and a total of 6 pairs of duos were nominated. The pairs were invited up the stage briefly before a QR code was available on screen for attendees to vote for their favourite duo. After the winners were crowned, Monash Street Dance Society graced us all with a hot performance. Even the crowd was quick on their feet, moving closer to get a better look of the show.

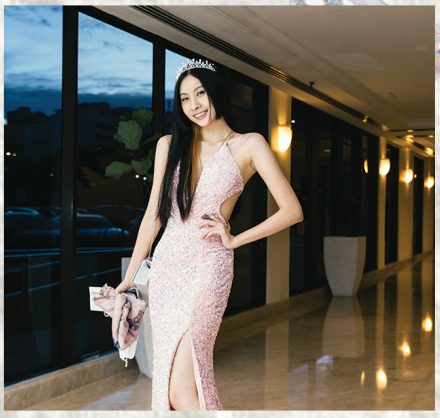


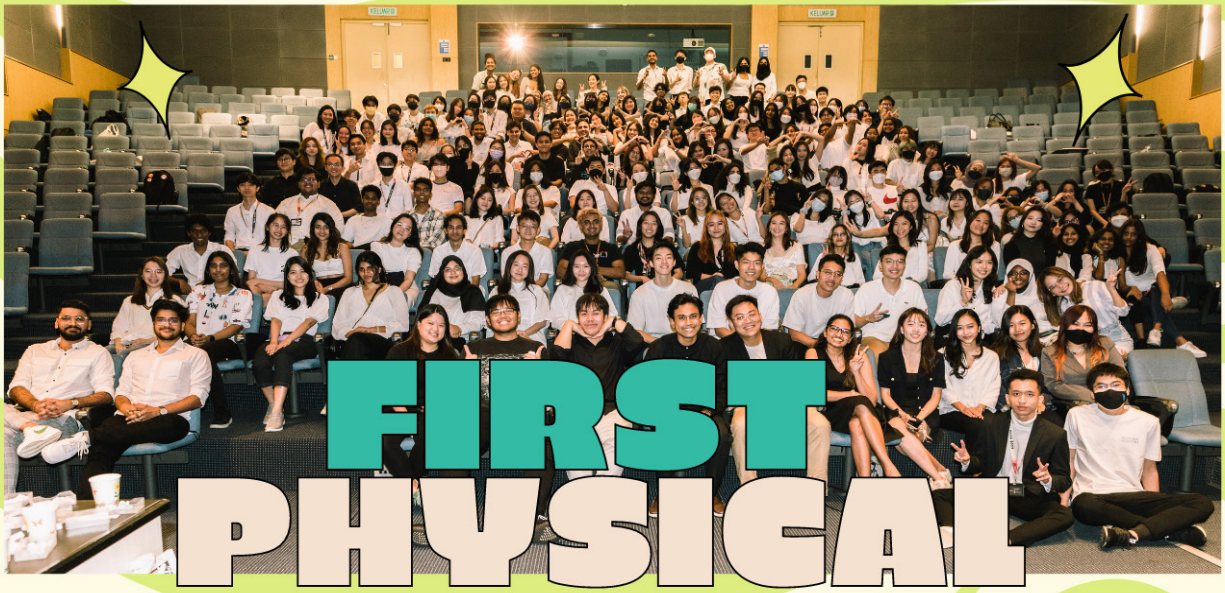
Lastly, what is a ball without opening the dance floor? Not gonna lie, dancing while sober as a uni student felt off, but that didn't stop some people from busting out some wicked moves. There even was an ever-growing human train circling around the dance floor.

But as they all say, all good things must come to an end and the dance party ended quite quickly, which was fair enough for those in high heels. It was also unfortunate that there was no allocated time for a slow dance for those who came with their dates (it could have been a whole romantic 2000's movie slow homecoming dance scene).

Sadly, we had to evacuate the ballroom around 11pm. But for future reference, this just means that you have more time for an after party ••. Regardless of how short the night felt, Monash Ball definitely lived up to its hype, especially for those in their final year. Also considering that there was a limo parked outside the venue, I can confidently say that it must have been a memorable night for many.

Article by Natasha Maya
Photos by Yang Thong Chen
Design by Megan Ching





FIRST PHYSICAL MSC

SCAN TO VIEW "MUSA DID WHAT?"

Interested about upcoming events? Wondering when your merch is going to be here? Are your elected Office Bearers really up to par? Catch up on all the latest scandalous and piping hot tea of MUSA in MUSA Did What!

Sem 2 * Graduation

Photographed by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

Read a Secret,
leave A SECRET.

I have a fear of missing out on my youth :(

hooked up with Someone from MUSA in the disabled toilet.

by the end of it,
you were loving someone
who used to exist,
and i was loving someone
who never died.
I know I deserve better,
but i'm not strong enough
to end things with him.
I THINK I'M IN
LOVE WITH MY
LECTURER
I wish I can
live up to what
is expected of me

MONASH FIT CHECK

2022

New York Fashion Week's got nothing on us! This corner is dedicated to all the fashionistas that constantly turn heads and drop jaws with some of our favourite fits of the year!

Photos taken by Luanne Choong, Nursyafiqa Aleeya, Tsheten Yangden Bhutia, Yang Thong Chen.

Designed by Chai Ting Ho.

MEGAN CHING (@_PRETTYLITTLEART_)

1. WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO START THIS BUSINESS?
I've always liked art, however I got more into digital illustrating/art in recent years which started as a lockdown activity and quickly turned into a lifelong passion ! In the beginning, I only casually showed my artwork to close friends who encouraged me to create an art account and post my work online. Hence, the birth of my art account @_prettylittleart_ (pls feel free to follow HAHAHA)

Because it was lockdown, I was watching a lot of Youtube videos relating to digital illustration and discovered that many creators have their own online stores! And it was from there that made me realise how easy it is to start an online business! (and it also looks good on the resume HAHAHA) and yeah ultimately it's because I really enjoy the whole creative process from illustrating, to packaging, to advertising on social media and thought why not make something out of it <3

2. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR YOU TO FINISHED A COMMISSIONED ARTWORK?

Hmm it really depends! Two main factors would be if it's during the semester and if the person commissioning the artwork has a clear idea of what they want. To give a gauge, the fastest I have completed a commissioned artwork would be around two - three days!

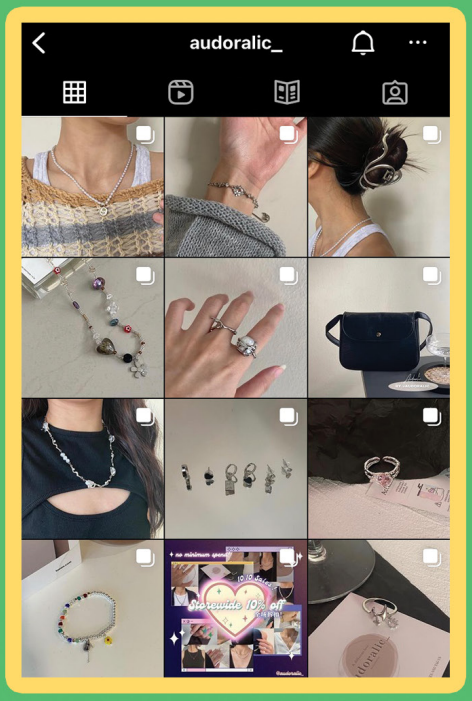
3. SHOW US YOUR BEST WORK

Oh man is this what picking between your children feels like hahaha. Hmmm if I had to pick one in particular, it would probably have to be this one here below:

I would say it's because it was the most memorable process wise! I remember I came up with the idea when my mom fetched me home from school and passed by this house which had a whole wall of detergent bottles with bean sprouts growing in it.

I remembered being so amazed by it that right after I got home I immediately took out my ipad and started drafting the final product you see today <3

XINYI (@AUDORALIC_)



1. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE ACCESSORY TO WEAR?
Personally, I really love necklaces, and my favourites are usually something more unique. One of my most recent favourites is our N212 necklace, something youthful and goes pretty well with most of my outfits!

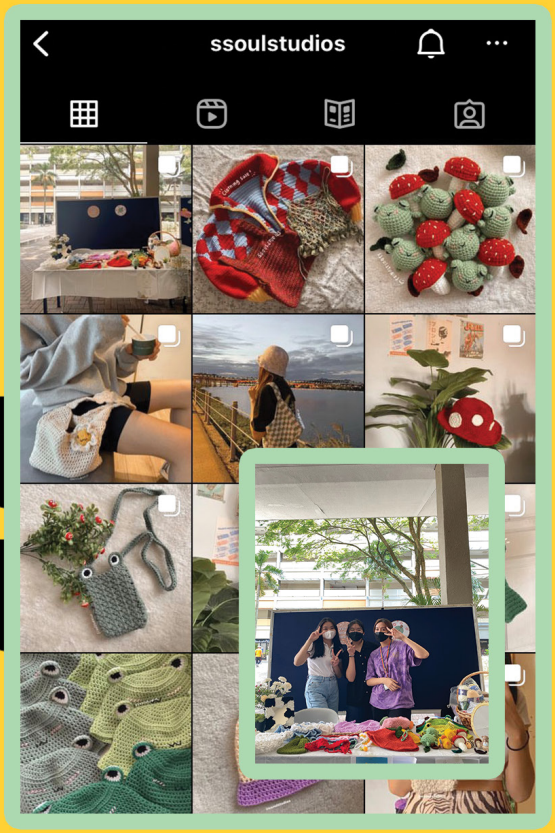
2. SHOW US YOUR TOP 3 BEST-SELLERS
Our best-sellers are definitely necklaces. The N167 is popular across genders since the design is unisex and cool.

If I had to choose something other than necklaces for our bestsellers I would say our R072 ring. It's easily adjustable and stainless. Everyone loves it

Our recent N211 necklace too. I think the pearl and silver combination is pretty chic and most people like the vibe, since it's easy to match

3. WILL YOU CONSIDER HAVING A POP-UP STORE ON CAMPUS AGAIN?
Yes definitely! Having the pop-up on campus was so fun! Hopefully, I'll have the chance to do it again the coming semester before I graduate.

AIAIE (@SSOULSTUDIOS)

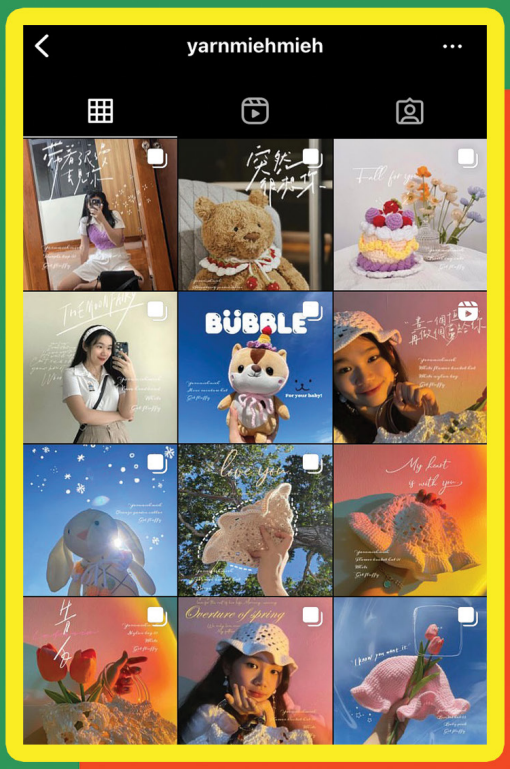


1. WHEN DID YOU LEARN HOW TO CROCHET?
I've started picking up crocheting during November 2020, when all of us where locked up in our houses for quarantine. I stumbled upon a TikTok on this girl who showed what she has knitted/crocheted and the way I was so surprised with the amount of things you're able to do just with a hook and yarn. As soon as I saw that TikTok, I immediately went to Daiso to buy myself a hook and yarn, and my unhealthy obsession with crocheting begins from there!

2. WHERE DO YOU DRAW YOUR INSPIRATIONS FROM?
Most of inspiration comes from Pinterest and other crochet creators that I admire and follow. However, the funny thing is that most of my designs that I've sold on my small business are just random ideas at 3am :D Don't be surprised if you catch me making patterns around that time :d

3. HOW MANY DIFFERENT CROCHET ITEMS DO YOU SELL?
The main thing that I sell are bucket hats! However, I do also sell bags, amigurumis, tops, cardigans, and many more! I take commissions as well so the items that I sell can be endless ;)

HEIDI LEE (@YARNMIEHMIEH)



1. HOW DID YOU GET INTO CROCHETING?
I was too bored during a quarantine+ semester break so I bought a hook and some yarns :) I got inspired by my aunt and also @ssoulstudios! Although it's really tough in the beginning, but after a couple projects it got bearable for me hehe

2. DO YOU CONSIDER YOURSELF AN EXPERT IN CROCHETING?
Honestly, I wouldn't say I am, but taking numerous orders and customs did level up my crocheting skills. Even if i think I'm the best, there's always someone better.

3. SHOW US YOUR CUTEST CROCHET ITEM EVER!

MORE CUTE WORKS FROM @YARNMIEHMIEH

SNAPSHOT CHALLENGES

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN MONGA & MONASH MALAYSIA PHOTOGRAPHY SOCIETY.

SEM 1

1. HOME
2. DUSK TILL DAWN
3. BOWLS OF HAPPINESS

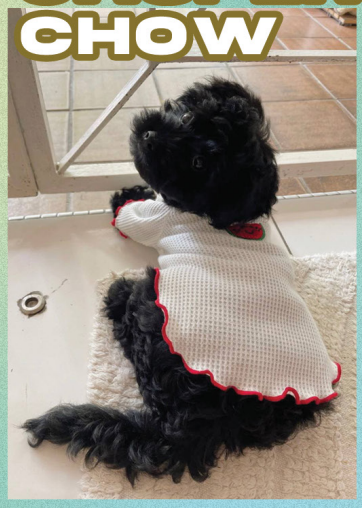
SEM 2

1. PLACES YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE
2. HAPPY TOGETHER
3. THE NIGHT IS STILL YOUNG

Home

Design by: Aerin Tang

JASPER CHOW



FT. JODIE

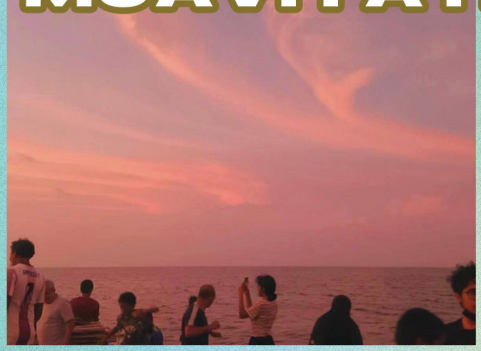
i wear cute clothez
mai hooman giuz me
in exchange 4 belly

PRISSIE ONG

SWEATER WEATHER

but it's too hot in Malaysia for sweaters.

INAN MUAVIYATH



WHERE THE PEOPLE ARE

reminds me of the feeling of my heart being utterly full of joy and contentment while surrounded by the people I love most.

DUSK TILL DAWN

DUSK TILL DAWN
DUSK TILL DAWN

SAKURA MATSUYAMA

Summer Evenings

You lived by the beach and I was always chasing sunsets. That day you stood in front of me and fell in love with the view. Its funny that day I fell in love too.

NIITYA LAXMI GOBINATHAN

Magic Hour

Every sunset is a work of art. My favourite time of the day is when the colours dissolve into a palette of orange, purple and blue - magic hour.

DARYL KHOR

Good Times

Memories I won't forget

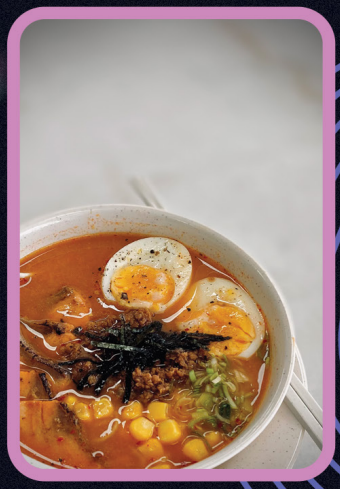
Designed by Charlene Goh

BOWLS OF HAPPINESS

DESIGN BY: AERIN TANG

IVAN LIEW

IT WAS ONE OF THE BEST BREAKFAST I HAD WITH MY FAVOURITE PERSON!



ATHAN

FOOD HAS ALWAYS BEEN SUBJECTIVE, BUT ONE SHOULD NEVER JUDGE A BOOK BY ITS COVER.

XIN YI

BEST POKEBOWL EVER

PLACES YOU CAN'T PRONOUNCE

GAN JO-ANN

THE OTHER SIDE OF PARADISE

One of the hidden gems in Penang.

WILLIAM

ADVICE FROM A FIREWORK.

Leave a little sparkle wherever you go.

SEAN TAN

HOPING FOR SIMPLER TIMES

Purposely waited and timed the photo when there was no one in the shot so that it really looks rural. Just wanted to give a feeling of looking at simpler times before living in the big city we are now.

Designed by Charlene Goh

HAPPY TOGETHER

Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

Journey of Life" The significance of every moment is to be relished with the right people in this voyage we call life

Gilbert Tionardi

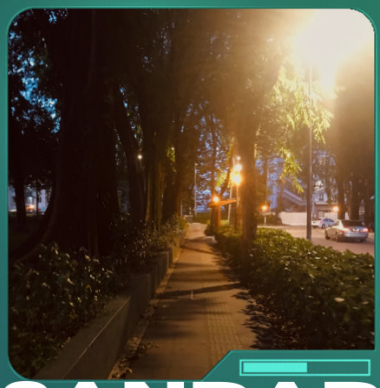
Gracelyn

separated by nation, reunited by portraits.

one of the many reasons to smile

Megan Ashley

THE night is still young



SANDAR MAUNG

THE NIGHT IS STILL YOUNG

" NO MATTER HOW DARK YOUR DAY IS, BE STRONG AND HANDLE IT"

"GUESS I'LL MISS THE NIGHTS CAMPING IN THE HIVE TILL NEXT MORNING."

HEIDI LEE

SHAWN WONG

PURPLE SKY

"YOU MAKE ME SEE WHO I AM WHEN I DISCOVER YOUR COLORS "

Designed by Tan Zi Swan & Chai Ting Ho

A HUGE THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED IN OUR SNAPSHOT CHALLENGES THIS YEAR!

butterfly effect

MARCH THEMATIC MONTH

THE TERM "BUTTERFLY EFFECT" WAS COINED BY EDWARD LORENZ IN THE 1960S WHO, BASED ON CHAOS THEORY, SUGGESTED THAT SOMETHING AS MINISCULE AS THE FLAPPING OF A BUTTERFLY'S WINGS AS IT TAKES OFF INTO SWEET, SPRING AIR COULD CAUSE MINUTE CHANGES IN THE EARTH'S AIR PRESSURE, A CHAIN REACTION, A TORRENTIAL FALLING OF DOMINOS THAT COULD POSSIBLY LEAD TO A TORNADO TEARING UP THE TEXAS COUNTRYSIDE.

THE MULTIVERSE THEORY SUGGESTS THAT OUR UNIVERSE, WITH ITS HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF GALAXIES AND SEEMINGLY ENDLESS SEA OF STARS, SPANNING TENS OF BILLIONS OF LIGHT YEARS, MAY NOT BE THE ONLY ONE.

THAT IN ANOTHER UNIVERSE, SOMEWHERE IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT COLLECTION OF STARS AND PLANETS, THERE IS ANOTHER VERSION OF OUR WORLD AS WE KNOW IT BUT WITH ONE SLIGHT DIFFERENCE.

WHAT IF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT HAD NOT BEEN RAVAGED BY A PANDEMIC? WHAT IF YOU COULD, AT THE PRESS OF A BUTTON, RESET YOUR WORLD, RETURN TO EVERY SINGLE EVENT IN YOUR LIFETIME AND NUDGE YOURSELF IN ANOTHER DIRECTION? HOW WOULD THE WORLD AROUND YOU OR EVEN YOU, AS AN INDIVIDUAL BE DIFFERENT? WOULD YOU BE HAPPIER? SADDER? MORE AT PEACE WITH YOURSELF?

THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT CELEBRATES ALL THE WHAT-IFS, THE OTHER "YOUS" THAT COULD HAVE BEEN. INSPIRED BY THE CLASSIC HEART-WARMING MOVIE "IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE", MONGA GIVES YOU THE "REDO" BUTTON THAT SO MANY OF US HAVE PINED FOR IN SEPARATE MOMENTS OF OUR LIVES. WE INVITE YOU TO LOOK BACK ON THE CHANCES NOT TAKEN, THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT JUST SLIPPED THROUGH OUR FINGERS, AND HOW OUR FUTURES COULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH MORE DIFFERENT THAT IT IS NOW.

by Sreana Habiba

WASTED TIME

Design by: Aerin Tang

When I look back upon the expansive yet monotonous yore of the past twenty years of my life, the sentiment that I feel the strongest isn't necessarily regret. I did the best with what I had at the time, that's the mantra I've been trying to incessantly memorize. However, what is life but a yawning chasm of wistfulness, of what-ifs, could-have-beens or should-have-dones? While I'm not plagued with bad decisions and treacherous regrets, there are a plethora of instances and phases of my life that I wished had gone differently - either by the flick of the wrist of fate or by my own actions.

What especially haunts me as I reminisce on my past is wasted time. All the days, months, years I've let pass me by without actively participating in my own life, giving into extended bouts of daydreaming and waiting for things to happen to me instead of taking control of my life and making them happen firsthand. As a teenager, I was painfully shy and self-conscious, and with the added trappings of having to perform femininity at all times, all the unhealthy and damaging messages I'd been spoon-fed through movies and TV shows and social media - they all amalgamated to form a me that I wasn't really proud of. A me that was passive, self-involved, unmotivated, focused on all the wrong things. My attention and energy had been diverted not into doing my best to study and get the best grades, but into needlessly vying for validation in whatever form it may come in, into wasting my time with the wrong boys and the wrong friends.

Had I been conditioned differently somehow, consumed different kinds of media and mixed with different crowds, I would probably be someone I wouldn't be able to recognize now. Someone who has nothing in common with me. I often find myself wondering - what would have gone differently if I had utilized the time stretching out in front of me and been more proactive? I wonder where life would have led me had I given into it with abandon, lived my adolescent years with all the zest and passion I could muster. Would I have been better or worse? More fulfilled, more confident, more self-assured of my own capabilities?

Sure, if I had a different mindset back then or if I wasn't so debilitatingly anxious and shy, maybe I would have acquired a variety of experience regarding things like love, my career, friendships and just life in general. On bad days and stagnant stretches of time, I find myself envisioning the 'me' the exists in this ostensible alternate reality: I imagine she has her life figured out. I imagine she's more self-adjusted, braver, stronger. It's easy to fall into the trappings of believing in a 'you' that exists in an parallel universe, who is somehow better, smarter, more likable and competent because life had gone differently for them. It's indubitably more appealing than the life that you're currently living.

But I also staunchly believe that there is no other way my life could have gone. I had to go through things - or not go through things, in my case, let life pass me by - in order to realize that I need to start truly living. To not just float through life. And even if I did waste years of my life: so what? I can start now. I can do all the things I wished I did and experienced when I was younger. Sometimes it's hard for me to remember this, but it really is never too late to start. Just start here, right now, with whatever life has given you and make it beautiful and meaningful. That's all any of us can ever do.

by Shaura Naeem

THE ROAD TAKEN LOOKS REAL GOOD NOW

I love the idea of filmmaking and storytelling. Always have, and probably always will. I love the way ideas, visions, dreams, come to life on the screen. The nuances in how emotion, setting, and ambience is portrayed in film. It's something I could talk about for hours. And so naturally, when it came time for me to search for university courses, I couldn't help but be drawn to film production, to screenwriting.

I went as far as to apply for a film school in Sydney for a diploma course, not really expecting much of it, but lo and behold, I got in. I actually got into my dream school. I was beyond ecstatic, couldn't wait to share the news with my parents— because well, I hadn't told them I was applying. Didn't want them to get their hopes up in case things didn't pan out.

But as fate would have it, my dreams of attending film school crumbled as quickly as they had materialised. My parents—notoriously traditional Asian parents, who wanted their only child to 'do them proud', didn't think film school was the way. It wasn't the law, business, or med school they expected their daughter to sign up for. It was shrouded in uncertainty and doubt. What would everyone say? What kind of parents would send their kid to film school? The film industry isn't for people like us. And so, no matter how badly I wanted it, I couldn't follow my heart. I had to stay behind. It was hard, I felt trapped, and it fuelled this dark bitterness towards them. It didn't seem fair.

I often found myself thinking, how different my life could have been, if I was allowed to spread by metaphorical wings. Do the things I wanted to do. Would I have been happier? Would I have made a name for myself, now surrounded by incredible opportunities that only come with going abroad? It's hard to say. On one hand, a part of me resents my family for clipping my 'wings', for holding onto me; but another part understands. I'm everything to them. They do all they can to make sure I have the best possible life. They truly thought what they were doing was in my best interests. I'll admit, I didn't have this epiphany immediately; it took me years to come to terms with their decision— to even accept it.

I like to believe that when things don't go our way, we end up creating a new path for ourselves. I was left clutching the pieces of my broken dreams, desperately scrambling to find another road, and in doing so I found my way to Monash. It wasn't the dream I had envisioned, but it quickly became something better than what I could've hoped for. This new path led me to discover my love for communication studies— something I wouldn't have realised, had things happened differently. I found friends, built relationships, and had experiences that I wouldn't trade for anything in the world.

It's funny, past me would have jumped at the chance to rewind time, to do things differently. In fact, it was something she would fantasise about on the daily. But the me now? Well, she hardly cares. The me now is content with where she's at. And I gotta' say it feels fucking good to actually believe it.

So sure, I guess I didn't get to learn the craft of directing, producing, screenwriting from my dream school. But why should I let that stop me? As cheesy as it sounds, where there's a will, there's a way. We're in a world where knowledge is quite literally at our fingertips. So yeah—so what if I didn't get to pick the path I most wanted. So what if my life could've been different? That's what makes it life. We can plot our lives, try to set goals for ourselves in the future, and sure, we can always work towards that, but the beauty of life—living, is that everything about it is uncertain. The universe is pure chaos, and the littlest things can change the entire trajectory of your life. Isn't that horrifying? Nerve-racking? Exhilarating? Whatever it is, it's what makes life worth living.

MISSING SIGNAL(S)

by Elly Zulaikha

What does it mean when someone texts you first?

Is it out of necessity because of work?
Is it out of boredom?
Is it the burning curiosity you have of someone else?

And what is the appropriate reaction anyway?

Do we reply politely?
Do we leave them on read?
Do we block and archive them altogether?
Or do we keep the conversation going for days, weeks, months, and years before stopping at once?

Regardless of the reason(s), I am terrible with texting. I either read too much into each text or I somehow arm myself with million assumptions of why someone would text me in the first place.

Of course, I'm not counting close friends or family members. I know their intentions well enough to not pay attention to my never-ending series of 'what ifs' behind their texts.

As a socially inept person with a debilitating fear of humiliation and rejection, I have formed this habit of forming assumptions and worst-case scenarios out of anyone I have never encountered or have limited interaction(s) with. Even when I know someone, I tend to read into patterns and make hypotheses too quickly, especially if it involves a misunderstanding, arguments, etc.

And so, my short-sightedness caused me to miss some signal(s) that I received last year from whom I'll refer to as 'once a classmate'.

"Hii, I'm XX from ABC."
"Oh hey, XX."

What was their intention in the first place? Why did they text me first? What brings their attention, their desire to hit up with a casual "Hii"? Why did they choose me out of 50+ people in our unit WhatsApp group?

Do you want to be friends? Were you testing my responses? Were you bored?

Tell me why.

I get that It's normal for people to text a few times– talking about the weather and asking what major are you in and all– before growing disinterested when the conversation seems like it's heading to nowhere.

In fact, I'd freak out if I suddenly spilled everything about myself in one night – yes, that occurred to me not too long ago and my reaction permanently left an embarrassing taste ingrained in my mind. I shudder thinking about how I'm bound to meet this person someday on campus, one way or another. Anyways. . .

I shrugged it off at first. Plus, with me being very awkward, I didn't think a few fleeting texts meant anything serious, let alone when they strike a conversation randomly at 9 PM.

Thus, my experience was exactly that. It started innocently enough, and it ended respectfully in such a brief period.

"If we meet on campus one day, that'd be pleasant."

There seems to be more going on behind it. Or was it? It sounded logical to bid goodbye that way.

So why can't I shake it off now? Why now? Did I miss something? What is my gut feeling trying to say about this?

I can't blame the pandemic for causing me to be this dense at basic texting etiquette(s), right?

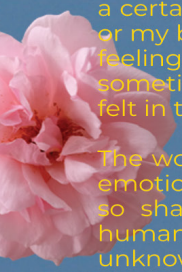
And so I am left with the regret that I'll never know what might happen if I didn't stop at "You too! And stay safe!". Had I returned the gesture by texting first, just what would happen back then?

Would a friendship blossom if I kept the conversation going? Or would it turn into something else?

Meh.

by Natasha Maya

WORDS BETWEEN SILENCE



Words rarely come easy to me.

Which is ironic considering how I identify myself as a writer. Yet, a wall sits between my heart and tongue. The whole concept of saying what I feel is foreign to me. Sure, I am aware that certain things make me feel a certain way - sometimes my heart drops, or my blood boils, or my eyes sting. But the feelings are never tangible enough that I sometimes question how much of what I've felt in the past is real.

The words in my head are a murky pool of emotions so deep that I fear I may drown, or so shallow that I come to question my humanity. I rather not dive in because the unknown brings me comfort than the alternative of confrontation. But what if, I lived in a world where I swam in my emotions and the words to express how I feel came out easily. Would I be more content? Be loved by others more? Be able to fully love others in return?

In that world, I'm back in my highschool years, meeting him for the first time. I'll come back home and acknowledge how his smile lingers in my mind. And when he asks me to hangout with him alone, I'll allow myself to wonder if this could go beyond the strict perimeters of friendship. I will say "Thank you." for all the times that he compliments me instead of rolling my eyes, and I'll be able to compliment him back. We will be sitting side by side in the library as we always do, but this time I do not flinch when he leans in closer. I will not talk about other boys for the sake of pushing him away, and he will not get jealous or defensive. I'll let it show that I feel sad when he brings up other girls, and maybe he'll stop and we'll talk about us. I will not laugh or change the topic when he asks me out on a date and I'll realise that perhaps we may have a shot together. I'll allow the emotions to build up from the bottom of my heart till it reaches the tips of my tongue.

And when we walk back to the library with the burning red sunset hanging above us and a comfortable silence approaching like the night, I'll allow the words to spill out: I like you.

In that world, my thoughts will be spoken into existence, never to be forgotten or buried away. And who knows where a simple emotional expression would have taken me. Perhaps, he'll look stunned, until a smile creeps in and he says those three words back. Or perhaps he'll burst out laughing and our friendship fades away. Regardless of the outcomes, I will have spoken my feelings into existence and that silly highschool crush was real.

But as much as I ponder about the what ifs of life sometimes, I know that nothing I do can change the past. The feelings have faded, and we've both moved on with our lives. The memories of us are but a droplet in a sea of what could have been.

Ever since then, I've learned to be more vocal with how I feel, leaving no room for what ifs. As a result, I'm with someone I really like now, which would not have been possible if I've kept my feelings bottled up like before.

So to anyone who's reading this and struggles with opening up, I hope this article can inspire you to take the risk and speak your mind. I know that I still have a long way to go, and I still have trouble finding the right words to say. But as cliché as it sounds, life is too short to not take a chance.

PHANTOM LIMB

by Ashley Lim

"You don't want a sibling. They're tedious, annoy the shit out of you and honestly if they're younger than you, you might just end up taking care of them instead of your parents."

A lot of people have told me how fortunate I am, having been born the only child, allowing myself to be the sole receiver of my parents' affections (and punishments). Despite that, I've always wanted a sibling regardless of their age - older brother, younger sister- I don't care, I've just always wanted one.

I guess it's more for the feeling of solidarity and companionship than anything else. With two middle class working parents, I often found myself spending more time alone than with anyone else. After school it's right back to four walls and a ringing silence in my ears that I've endured, but can slowly drive an individual mad. Sure, I had my extended family and my cousins, but being in a whole other state didn't leave much room for interaction other than the usual family gatherings.

But life goes on doesn't it? I made friends, I grew my social circle and the silence didn't seem as deafening anymore, but it was always there, a tiny kernel of hope and desperation that one day I wouldn't have to come back to an empty house.

Until one day, when I was around 15? 16? And my parents sat me down for a "talk". My mom could barely look me in the eye and even my dad in all his stoicness seemed to crack a bit under the pressure of the words they were about to deliver to me.

And a couple of minutes later I understood why.

It was as if a pile of bricks had been dropped onto my head, leaving me dazed, confused and dumbfounded.

I had had a sibling. An older sibling to be exact.

Barely in the beginning of her second trimester, my mother had miscarried. The zygote hadn't attached properly to the uterine lining resulting in what my dad described to be a "spontaneous abortion."

What do you do when you receive news like that? What do you think? My mind raced at all the possibilities, of all the things that could have been.

An older sibling that could chauffeur me around, pay for my food, that I could fight with over the most trivial things. If it had been a girl, we could have gone cafe hopping whenever we wanted, I finally could have had someone that could take good Instagram pictures without having to rely on my parents and their horrendously bad angles. And if it had been a boy, well I would have had someone that could protect me and honestly that I wouldn't mind beating the crap out of at whatever games we chose.

Or maybe... I would have never been born at all.

My parents had started life late... and looking at their financial situation at that time, I don't think that they would have chosen to have another child (to be fair I'm already a handful). So... if my sibling had been born would that mean technically I wouldn't have?

Thinking of an older or even male version of me makes my head spin but then again they wouldn't necessarily grow up to inherit all my wonderful (see here: annoying) qualities right? They'd just be this whole other person, a whole other individual with an amazing rich life that would mirror mine but with so many minute differences that they would basically be a stranger.

Scientists say that amputees can experience phantom limb pain, a neurological condition wherein pain is still felt in the area where an arm or leg has been amputated despite it not being there. The nerve endings at the site of the amputation continue to send pain signals to the brain, making them think that the limb is still attached to their body.

And maybe that's what I experienced and am still experiencing: the ache of the possible sibling that I could have had. The ache for all the memories that never had the chance to be made. The gaping hole of loneliness for the other person whose life we will never know.

Maybe it's fate. Maybe I was chosen for a reason instead of my lost sibling, but I just hope (if you believe in the concept of the soul like I do), that they had your chance to be born again.

So, dear sibling if you're out there, thanks for giving me my chance.

FAVOURITE CRIME

Those things I did. Just so I could call you mine
The things you did. Well, I hope I was your favorite crime.

Inspired by one of the songs in Olivia Rodrigo's hit debut album SOUR, Favourite Crime talks about the type of passionate love that is all consuming, world-turning and which burns too bright and too fast, leaving you the shell of a person that you used to be

The way a song near-perfectly encapsulates the exact sentiment or experience you're going through at a moment in time. The way a song takes your heart and warmly cradles it, comforting you, while simultaneously breaking it apart, obliterating you. For me, that song was August by Taylor Swift.

The parallels were unsettling and uncanny - whatever I was going through with this guy took place in August, we weren't actually in a relationship, he was 'never mine', etc, etc. When it first started, things were good and sweet and right, as these things often are; but gradually it sucks you into a pit of all things murky and desolate. The rot travels through your gut and builds a home, takes root within your very being and you feel unfixable, unlovable.

This relationship - or situationship, if you want to call it that, I still struggle to find a label for it - made me have several epiphanies about circumstances like this. If you create an atmosphere with all the elements of tenderness, intimacy and vulnerability, you're bound to feel like you're in love. An atmosphere filled with whispers of sweet nothings, of holding them close until the space between you is absent and holy, him telling you he loves you so sincerely and so softly that you almost believe him, of warmth and comfort and silence that feels cathartic. None of which is love. A microcosm of it maybe, but not the real thing. You give something the perfect resources to survive and the ideal conditions to thrive in, a controlled environment, it blossoms - while in actual real life scenarios, it probably would not. It would struggle and eventually die.

Love is in the hard places, not carelessly, lazily, accidentally constructed spaces where only good feelings exist, and the only reason those feelings exist is because the thing - what we had - wasn't real, and you can construe and mould things that aren't real to fit whatever fantasy you have in your head because nothing existed in that space to begin with. *You were never mine, you weren't mine to lose, etc.*

AUGUST

Writer: Sreana Habiba. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

The uncertainty of it all, how it makes you second-guess and doubt every action you take and everything you say. How nothing is ever, ever enough; how love is never enough - to sustain a relationship, to make someone stay. When someone isn't 'yours', you're never sure where you stand with them. You're always hanging on the precipice, trying to anticipate their next move. *Wanting was enough, for me, it was enough, to live for the hope of it all.*

The song August, fundamentally, expresses the sentiment of settling for less than you deserve, knowing it and yet still not caring because you're willing to make yourself small, willing to shrink your needs if it means having the person and living in the facade and delusion of being together because that's better than nothing at all. I remember asking him, after trying for five whole minutes to squeeze these words out, terrified I'll sound too vulnerable or too pathetic or too in love with him, the shame soaking through me while trying to ask him this with some semblance of grace and dignity as if that was even possible: *why am I not enough for you?* I don't remember what he said afterwards. Probably empty words trying to bring me solace and stumbling over his own words. It's sad how I'm always rummaging through our history, through what we had, to find proof of something good and real so I can come up and say, see, look. What we had was tender and beautiful and warm and golden, even for a little while. Because if it wasn't, what was it all for? Whose ghost did I love?

After it all ended and I was finally left disillusioned, instead of regretting it I actually felt somewhat grateful. Because now I know that I'll never let myself get involved in a situation like that again or fall so deeply for someone who wasn't emotionally available, because I know how much it can scar you. How it can make you question your own worth. I never want to go through that again, I hope I never will.

Scan the spotify barcode to listen to the song 'August' by Taylor Swift.

"Your back beneath the sun
Wishin' I could write my name on it
Will you call when you're back at school?
I remember thinkin' I had you

But I can see us lost in the memory
August slipped away into a moment in time
'Cause it was never mine
And I can see us twisted in bedsheets
August sipped away like a bottle of wine
'Cause you were never mine"

august

BETTER

Writer: Natasha Maya. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

Disclaimer: A toxic portrayal of love

At the end, it all boiled down to actions he could not take back. The severed friendships, the late night shouting matches with his mother, the mountain of debt accumulating in his bank account. There were other things too, like his ego that he left when he stood outside of her house begging for her to come back, his self-confidence that he lost in the process of changing himself, his heart that he broke by mistrusting her with it. All these things he thought he could recover if he could just win her back.

It was not supposed to end like this, no one expected a guy like him to walk down this path. He had a good thing going for him; a likeable personality and a face that compelled girls to smile at him wherever he walked. He was not necessarily smart but he was charming enough to convince teachers to bump his D's to C's. And the one thing he took the greatest pride in was his speed, he never won first place, but he was a familiar face on the sports podium.

He noticed her in the second year of high school when no else did. It felt like catching the first glimpse of sunlight as dawn broke. They ended up sitting together in the first class and she avoided all his attempts at small talk. He refused to change seats though, because she always had perfect scores on her quizzes and all he needed to do was glance from the corner of his eyes to get an above average grade without studying.

But this arrangement did not last long. Three weeks later, she confronted him about his tendency of copying her answers for every task. The guilt swallowed him whole and he gave the most sincere apology that he could muster. She looked surprised for a split second before huffing and walking away in the opposite direction.

For the next week, he brought little gifts to apologize - candies, canned drinks, chocolates. Each like a candle trying to melt an iceberg. And his last offering was pushing his answer sheet to the side of the table which made it easy for her to look at his work. She took one glance and burst out laughing. The ice had melted.

All the things I did,
just so I could call you mine.

He loved the way that she was always trying to get better - that is until better took the form of another guy.

The following week she had a sudden experimental phase where she came to school in different fashion styles. Day one was somewhat of a grunge look with a red flannel and ripped jeans. Day two was a preppy style with a dark skirt and a collared button up. Day three was an e-girl look with noticeable make-up and fishnet stockings. Day four was a soft-girl aesthetic with a lilac crop top and a white skirt. He told her she looked good that day and she stuck to that aesthetic throughout the remainder of their highschool years.

Their list of mutual friends slowly grew and he found her in his own close-knit friendship circle. She grew out her short hair and blended in with all the other girls in the group. Everyone was always watching whenever they conversed, giggling to themselves. But he was always focused on her, the seamless conversation they had about video games, action movies, this small town and how they couldn't wait to escape it. And then she confessed her romantic feelings for him, and for the first time in his life he felt like a prize, something worthy.

It did not take long for him to yearn for her, not in the sweet way that a child yearns for a teddy bear, but in the desperate way that a drowning man yearns for oxygen.

That should have scared him and yet it only pushed him to give more of himself to her. He would provide her with anything that she asked for because he could not think of any other way to repay her for how she made him feel.

Her voice of reassurance was the only thing louder than the noise of doubts creeping in his head whenever he failed a test or when he lost a race or when he felt unlikeable. Despite all his failures, she'd look at him with the same nervous admiration every time.

And he admired her too. He thought she was the prettiest girl he had ever seen even when none of his friends seemed to agree. He loved the way she learned how to follow fashion trends that he liked. He loved the way that she joined the gym just so she could keep up with him on the track. He loved the way that she got good grades and tutored him without making him feel inferior. He loved the way that she was always trying to get better - that is until ***better*** took the form of another guy.

better

Are we gonna make it? The thought ran wildly through my mind. A slow decay, that's the reality of us. Yes, life happens and it occasionally gets in the way. But I sensed it began with fewer texts, fewer calls, less of everything that shined eagerly in the beginning.

They say when you are with someone long-term, everything about them becomes a familiar routine. Sinking into that routine is supposed to feel mundane and it's normal. But I came across something/someone said that when you're used to chaos, the mundaneness of your romantic relationship terrifies you or makes you uncomfortable, when in reality that's what is supposed to happen in a thriving, healthy relationship.

Is this gonna hurt? At first, that was my assumption. As with any breakup, we're bound to feel hurt. Hurt because our partner abused or manipulated us, hurt because of betrayal, and so forth. Since day one, despite the moments of excitement we shared together, my inner self has been preparing for this goodbye. Because rarely do people stay around in our lives, except for a select few such as our closest friends or family members, I'm always in the state of 'fight or flight'-- in the sense that if I absolutely have to flee, I would prepare in advance.

Writer: Elly Zulaikha. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

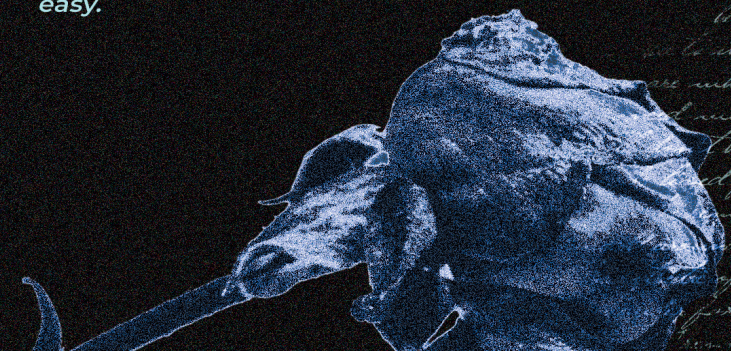
IT'LL BE OKAY

A short story inspired heavily by Shawn Mendes's It'll Be Okay.

Oh, we can try to sedate it, but that never works. Indeed, my 'preparedness' can never save me from this inevitable fall.

I start to imagine a world where we don't collide. The universe sent you for me, perhaps for obvious reasons. A preview, almost– of what it looks like to love the right person. But because it was the wrong time, we had to leave after meeting halfway. I don't regret, per se, that we were together for a while, but perhaps it felt like 'what a shame' to witness such an ending.

Because as soon as I heard you discreetly implying you were willing to let me go just like that, I couldn't process it, at least not at first. It could be because of the way you casually dropped this in one of our long calls. Yet a part of me knew it was bound to happen and I shouldn't be taken aback– but I did anyway. "I don't want to keep you to myself if you find someone better than me. You deserved them way more than I do. In fact, I'd be happy for you, Elise." That's what you said. So you knew it too? *If you tell me you're leaving, I'll make it easy.*



It's making me sick but we'll heal and the sun will rise. Now I'm surrendering to time to nurse me back to life. I might feel stuck for a while, but I don't want to deny what I'm going through. If it takes me crying all night for weeks on end or feeling the bitterness all of a sudden, then so be it. *It'll be okay if we can't stop the bleeding.*

We don't have to fix it, we don't have to stay. But you know what? I'm relieved that we chose to move on in the most respectful, mature way possible. Forget the blame game, forget the silent treatment. And since we've been fostering this at the beginning of our relationship, to sit down and discuss our true feelings, closing this chapter became bearable. Almost like we slowly slip our hands away from each other in a sea of people. Because *I will love you, either way, Henry.*

It'll be okay, soon. The right person and the right time will come. I wish you all the happiness in life, Henry. And thank you for loving me. I hope what I offered you throughout our time together will be cherished.

It might be so sweet, it might be so bitter.

Scan the spotify barcode above to listen to the song 'It'll be Okay' by Shawn Mendes

Oh, the future we dreamed of is fading to black
Oh
Oh, there's nothing more painful
Nothing more painful, oh-woah

I start to imagine a world where we don't collide
And it's making me sick,
but we'll heal and the sun will rise

If you tell me you're leaving, I'll make it easy
It'll be okay (It'll be okay)
And if we can't stop the bleeding
We don't have to fix it, we don't have to stay
(don't have to stay)
I will love you either way
Ooh-ooh, it'll be oh, be okay
Ooh-ooh

- I'll be Okay by Shawn Mendes

Writer: Ashley Lim. Designer: Winnie Ooi.

5 STAGES OF GRIEF

They say there are five stages of grief.

Stage 1: Denial

I'm okay.
No, I'm not

I don't miss you.
I miss you so much that the mere mention of your name renders me powerless.

Why did it have to be you?
I don't know.

There are so many things that, deep in my heart of hearts, I want to tell you, but I refrain. I hold back because of ego, my swollen sense of pride that eclipses my normally rational mind. I'm stuck in a senseless, stupid battle of wills, a war fought by one liner texts, cold shoulders and blatantly ignoring you in hallways.

Ks, instead of okays, GNs instead of goodnights, when the hell did I become illiterate? Why the fuck can't I talk to you like a normal person? When did sending you a single line of text become so difficult, my thumb hovering over the green and white arrow button as I think for the 50th time whether I should send it or not. In the end, the cursor backtracks, erasing the message that was meant for you and silently I turn off my phone so as not to be tempted to type it all out over again.

My solution?

I throw myself into my work because if I allow my mind to wander, even for the briefest of moments, all the roads in my conscious thoughts somehow go back to you. So, I work. And I work and work and work until I run myself ragged... to the point where my eyes can barely open and my mind shuts down before my head hits the pillow.

But the torment doesn't end, because you're right there, in the blurry nowhere between conscious and unconscious so far yet so close that I could almost touch you, but a shadow, a mere silhouette of the real you that fades as the sun rises. And when I wake up, I don't know what hurts more, being with the version of you in my head that leaves as soon as I open my eyes, or seeing you but not being able to be with you at all.

Stage 2: Anger

And just as much as I long for you, I hate you almost just as much.

I loathe, abhor you with every cell in my body. But it's a misdirected anger, one internalised from hours of agonising and aching over you.

a note for you:
the universe sends us exactly what we are ready for at the exact time we need it in our lives

I'm not really angry at you.
I'm angry at myself.

But it's easier to blame you rather than compartmentalise my feelings, shove them into a tiny drawer forcing it into the back of my head and praying to every God imaginable that it never resurfaces.

It doesn't work like that.

So yeah, as much as I love you. I hate you. I hate you for making me feel this way because I'm caged by my own heart. A gilded cage of my own doing, constructed out of my own hubris, of which only you hold the key to, as unknowing and ignorant as you are.

I beg of you, free me.

Stage 3: Bargaining

Friends attempt to console me but their words fall onto deaf ears. Invites go unanswered, lectures go unwatched and interests lose all meaning.

That's when the insecurities rear their ugly head and the deals begin.

I make deals with myself, with God, with any higher being in the universe who might be listening.

Please just give me one chance.

I plead to no avail because my soul feels just as hollow as it was when you left and it seems that the pain will never, ever stop no matter what I trade for the possibility of your existence in my life.

Stage 4: Depression

So, I turn to other methods.

I attempt to fill the absence of you with others. Meaningless swipes left and right across dating apps, 2AM conversations with other potentials... but none of them come even close and after a while they too fade to the background.

In the struggle to forget you, I make a deal with the bottom of a bottle, exchanging my memories of you along with my sobriety for some peace of mind.

The fiery burn is a sweet soothing relief and for a few hours I can forget you.

Alcohol provides a temporary blindness and ignorance from the harshness of reality but even the most heartbroken of people need to come up for air eventually.

Stage 5: Acceptance

Time doesn't heal all wounds. But it does lessen the blow.

I come to terms with the fact that you will never be mine, a realisation that on bad days, I still struggle to accept.

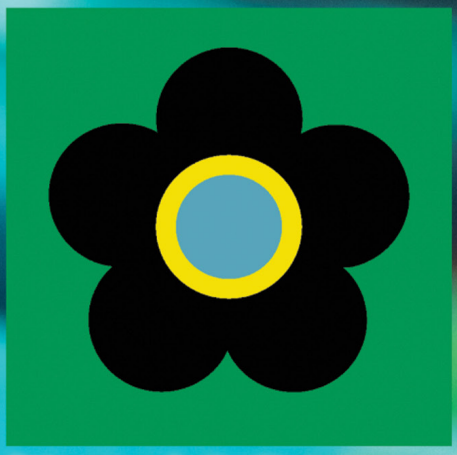
But that's okay.
Because above all, I am still human.
I can and still will be able to live in a world where we will be nothing more than what we are now.

I do not regret falling for you in the first place, but I do resent myself for loving you a bit **too deep**, falling a bit **too fast** and realising it a bit **too late**.

That, in the collective story of me and you, was my one true crime.

HELLO FUTURE

MAY THEMATIC MONTH



The process of homeostasis in the body is a self-regulatory process that ensures all our bodily functions maintain stability while we adjust to any changes in our external environment. Without this regulation, our bodies would shut down and perish.

It is in our very nature, threaded into our very DNA that we, as humans, are wary and apprehensive of change. We fear rocking the boat too much, so we just lay there, allowing the waves to take us wherever our destiny sees fit.

But see, I don't believe that. I believe that you have a say in where you end up, who you become and the future you want to lead. I steadfastly believe that we have a hand in our own future but we're just too afraid to take the leap, because what if it all doesn't work out?

To that I say: what if it does?

We have all been affected one way or another by the past two years… and maybe some of us do not see a point in going on. But you, dear reader, you are still here and have so much more to offer to the world than you think. So take flight, go and reach out for the stars so that when we are long gone, and there is nothing left of us except the memories passed down to our loved ones, they can look up to the heavens and say:

"They lived freely and without regret, chasing their dreams."

Inspired by NCT Dream's repackaged album, "Hello Future" MONGA invites you to tap back into your inner child, shed off the shackles of the pandemic, look forward with a spark of hope in your eye and tell us of all your repressed dreams, big or small, without fear or judgement. Because…we can spend our entire lives being miserable and held back by what society tells us to be or we can break free and embrace the flighty, tumultuous mistress known as the future.

Struggling

BY ASHLEY LIM

We all have big dreams and big thrills.

Get all As
Get into a good university
Graduate with all HDs
Get a good job, 5 figure salary and above only
Marry before they call you an old maid
Have a family

I'm now 20 and I've just barely ticked off the first two but it feels like I'm doing well, right? I'm in my 3rd year, maintaining my grades, planning an exchange semester, one internship already under my belt, already looking for my second one and currently the editor for this year's magazine.

I'm on the right track and my future is as secure as I can get it to be
Or is it?

It's amazing how three small words that collectively make up one single intrusive thought suddenly brings it all crashing down. Like Icarus who flew too high and too close to the Sun as well as his hubris blinding him to reality, I suddenly feel the metaphorical wax melt off of my wings and I'm plummeting, plummeting, plummeting into a sea of anxiety.

The air turns to lead in my lungs, my hands turn clammy, my clammy palms sliding against each other as I attempt to mash down the panic into a little ball, forcing it to disappear.
It doesn't work.

Spots fill my vision and the panic constricts my lungs, like a python asphyxiating its prey and suddenly I'm drowning on land. Cynical thoughts fill my head, images of failing, every single thing that I think can go wrong as I play out every scenario in my head, an endless, infinite loop that I cannot break.

Everyone is doing better than you
Life is a race and you're falling behind.

A visit to the emergency room and as I lay on the bed, watching numbly as the nurse takes a vial of blood for me, the exhaustion continues weighing me down as I contemplate the other four tasks on society's checklist that I have to face, whether I'm ready or not. I feel like Sisyphus, staring down the spherical face of that goddamned boulder that he's forced to push every single time, only for it to come crashing down, waiting for him at the bottom of that hill, tauntingly waving its defiance in his face.

That was the first time I ever had a panic attack.

And I would continue having them intermittently, but everytime I do, I get better, I learn to cope, I learn what coping mechanisms I need to help me get through a bout of anxiety. Honestly, I don't know why I'm pouring out this tiny part of me into words, but if it helps someone... anyone who reads this feel better about themselves, then my job here, as a writer, will have been fulfilled.

And I guess that's the moral of my story, if I even have one: it's that the future can wait, the future will not suddenly disappear if you take time for the present. Because if you spend too much time living and planning for the person you want to become, you'll never be able to recognise the one you still are.

Hello, Future ♡

BY ELLY ZULAIKHA

"Hello, future."

The words echo into oblivion. The silence was loud and deafening, but I know someone, or something out there, is listening to me.

"It was rather impolite of me, isn't it? if i don't offer you a greeting."

Again, no response. Fair enough.

"I'm aware of my. . . lack of manners in the past, for insistently asking 'when will the future be here?' because, well, that's the thing you never miss your timing, not even once."

I may be deranged, as I attempt to 'banter' with this construct that is the 'future'. Yet here I am, buttering up to the 'future' when I've been haunted by the past, and now masking that pain and exhaustion by 'living' precariously through the present.

"There is not a single ounce of hope left in my future. I used to look forward to your arrival, when I thought things would get better from there. I used to pine for you when i'm anguished at the cruelty of my present, which forced me to face it head-on even when I said to them, 'I can't, I'm tired'."

I swore time used to move awfully slow, but now it forbids us from catching our breaths. The world is failing me, or us, dear readers, due to the amount of devastating news being vomited left and right.

"I feel like I'm on autopilot most of the time. I don't have the autonomy to even stand defiantly at whatever's pulling me to you, even when I'm not ready (nor if I ever will) to face the unknown that is you."

I swallowed the biggest lump forming in my throat, while I struggled hard to fight back the tears that'll blind me if I don't contain it.

I'm sorry future, for my nonsensical rant over here. I know you couldn't care less about my existential issues. After all, you're here because you are part of the equation. You're just doing your job here.

"Future, I'm beyond burned out. I'm constantly analyzing all the possible scenarios I could take that might change the trajectory of my life. I want to stop, but I can't. you say 'be prepared', which i am! But please, I'm tired. Please fill my head with nothing so I can float in the abyss in silence for a few seconds. I need it, I promise I'll get on with my life after this ad break."

I blinked a few times, I could sense my eyes and throat getting dry by the minute. That, and I'm feeling those cold sweat slowly dripping down from my forehead. I'm getting nauseous and light-headed here by my own thoughts and words.

"So, future. wake me up when you're here. I'm just. . . going to take a nap."

S2 Thematic Semester

MIDNIGHT MEMOIRS

"If your friends leaped off a cliff, would you follow them?"
"Hell, I'd probably be the one to leap off first."

Midnight Memoirs is all about celebrating the rebel in you, about celebrating that one crazy, drunken night, that one unforgettable party, that one exotic stranger you hooked up with at 3am night that you will never properly remember, that one earth-shattering (even maybe slightly illegal) leap into the void.

Designed by Chai Ting Ho

Wow, so blue.

I've never seen such a pristine sky. The floating white cotton-candy clouds scattered in the bright blue looked like islands where angels belonged. Standing in a 35-degree weather with a crop top and denim shorts, I waited for my boyfriend to pick me up. In just a day, I was flying off to the land of spiders and all sorts of creepy-crawlies. I felt my heartbeat slacken as I began processing how much time I have left with him. But as I saw him pulling up, any sentimental feeling I had left was knocked out. "It's your last day here. Let's do something crazy. Let's spray paint that building we pass by every day!"

"What? No! Are you out of your mind?"

"Hey, come on. Sometimes, it's alright to be bad as long as you do it well."

During my last night before my new adventure, we painted the wall of an apartment building white, blue and red, and had a wondrous time. But that wondrous time was like running water. On the day of the flight, he drove me to the airport and squeezed me one last time. That one last time felt like a curse. When I landed — after being delayed for nearly five hours — the spider-infested land froze my bones with its barren cold. I couldn't decipher the train announcements because of the crappy speaker, and found that I had accidentally ended up somewhere two hours away from home. I remember police officers walking by when my friends and I were smoking pot on the sidewalk. I caught a guy filming me on the train with a sadistic grin on his face. And yet despite all the shit I went through, none of those came close to what I was about to encounter. It started with the texts...

"Hi French fry."

"What's shakin' bacon?"

I got to know Chris on social media. After texting on and off for almost a month, we decided to have a spontaneous rendezvous. Getting off the tram, I scanned around. I was like a motion sensor security camera trying to identify its target. Within 3 ticks of the second hand, we locked eyes. First, I saw his build and then I heard the accent. I could swear my pupils must have shapeshifted into stars. He had this mysterious magnetic force that unbolted the screws in my head. But while eating dinner, I felt the screws tighten up again. Our conversation was like a not-so-pleasant Uber ride. He was introverted — kind of dorky. Our talks seemed to hit so many sharp breaks and red lights which got me feeling like I was car sick. On the way back home, my mind kept playing out our dinner together on a loop. The dinner was like sitting in a weather where the sun couldn't be burning brighter, but the air, the chair, the floor and even I weren't being warmed by the blaze. Like there was something blocking the heat. Lying in bed, right before jumping into and falling down the rabbit hole to meet Alice in the abyss of dreams, I realized how alike I was to a vintage scarf. Chris probably just appreciated its design but didn't find it interesting enough to pick up and actually wear.

But with the next daylight, I was brought with a piece of grand news. There was the slightest of a hint he might want to wear the scarf. He asked me to hang out on Friday. Oh my god! God must have answered my prayers and summoned the cupid at Piccadilly Circus to secretly shoot an arrow at his heart! This is a miracle.

With fast heartbeats like the intro to Taylor's Wildest Dreams, I sailed my ship to his home Friday night. After having some small talk and devouring two tiny blocks of happiness, we headed out to hunt. As we walked in the city, the 'special' brownies in our stomachs started to weave invisible wires that wrapped and compressed our brains. We saw people dragging their sleeping bags on the streets and thought they looked like kings and queens wearing their weighted robes. The stars tried and failed to outshine our auras. And everything just seemed so hilarious. We were in Winter Wonderland.

I wouldn't say our hunt was a big success but we managed to bring a couple of preys back to his. Relaxing on the sofa with legs crossed, we watched Rick and Morty while enjoying our food. No matter how hard I was trying to focus on the plot, I couldn't help but be distracted by the vibrant colors beaming out of the laptop. They were beautiful and mesmerizing. And as the episode ended, he proved my blossoming hypothesis true by wrapping his warm arm around me.

Oh shit.

My brain went blank and I looked into his eyes.

Wow, so blue.

I've never seen such pristine eyes. Maybe those brownies did a number on me or maybe there was something in the air, but the white wiggly scribbles in the bright blue looked like strings that tied my soul to his. Those eyes were piercing — like he could see all my thoughts. I quickly broke eye contact — a thinly veiled attempt to hide my twitchy heartbeat — and resumed watching the car-

-toon. My efforts of distraction were futile because they sure as hell didn't stop my mind from getting carried away in its secret fantasy. I could see my fingers tracing down the lines of his biceps. I could see myself gripping his neck and attacking those cherry lips of his. I could envision myself utterly destroyed — my arms tied at my back with his necktie, lying prone on soft twisted sheets as he pulls my hair with one hand and grabs my hip with another.

And it was like a bell going off in our hearts, enchanting and beckoning us to start feeling each other's body temperature, feel it rising to the boiling point. We locked eyes again. Oh fuck.

He was so rugged yet gentle. His mercilessness unleashed this filthy little monster in me. And every time he showed care, it groomed that little monster. He tossed me on the bed and tentatively drank from the sweet waterfall. Our gasps enveloped the sound coming out of the cartoon. With one arm, he flipped me over like a pancake and through the mirror in the room, I saw us merging into one as we lost more and more control — giving in to our animal instinct. It was the hottest shit ever. I saw him knitting his brows while pounding me and biting my neck. He fucked me so hard that made Mammon no longer want anything less.

Choke me. Fuck me harder. Do whatever you want to me.

I couldn't stop him from ravaging past trees and planting new seeds in my garden.

Lying in bed, being spooned by him, I saw fresh red freckles

on my shoulder. My garden was overrun by plants that grew cute little red fruits. While chit-chatting with Chris, I felt my core shivering, but I wasn't quite sure if it was because he hit the spot too good or because I knew deep down I did something bad. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to hurt you. But I honestly don't think I can say no to this mystical interlink if there's still a next time.

Curse. The word 'curse' has always carried a negative connotation. No one in the world would be happy knowing they are cursed. And I used to think that my curse was the most crestfallen, wretched thing that could happen to me. But if this curse gifted me a garden filled with the color of passion; the most heavenly scenery to savor — even if it means that I have to bury you under the roots of rosary peas — I'd choose to be cursed.

I mean, it's alright to be bad as long as you do it well... right?

Art by Januli Wikejoon.

We can sail away tonight
On a sea of pure moonlight
We can navigate the stars
To bring us back home
In a place so far away
We'll be young, that's how
we'll stay

-Neverland, Finding Neverland-Broadway recording, 2015

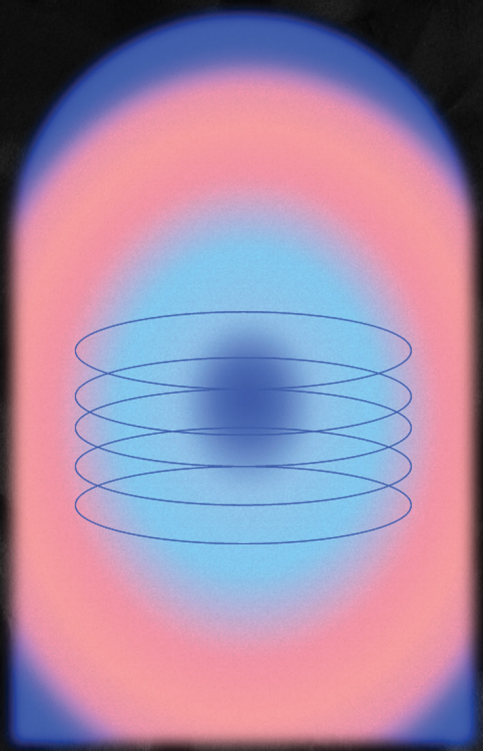
To all the outcasts, the dreamers, the journeymen, and the wanderers. We are all searching the night and the dark for our hidden stars. I believe we are all lost in some way. Experienced loss and rage, anxieties and stress. We are all searching for meaning right? Something to hold on to, something to count on. What is the point of all the mess we make if not for that?

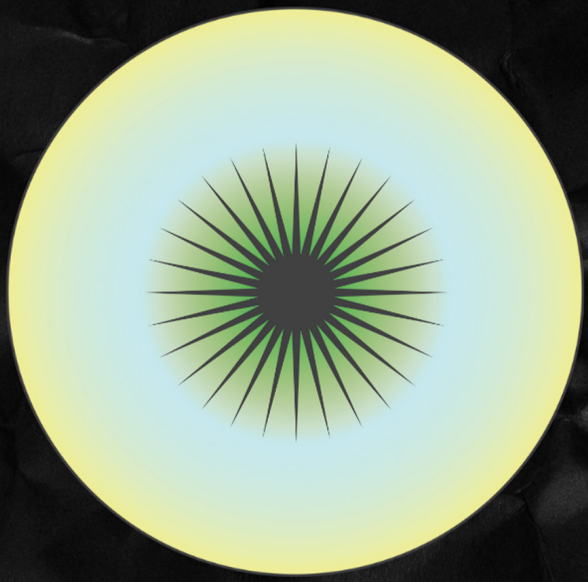
Everything you are doing right now is an endless expanse of mindless possibility. We are all rolling the dice, floating specks in the void of nothing, which is meaningless. So why? Why do we do what we do? What is the point? Why am I here, why now?

On earth, we are briefly gorgeous. Briefly lost and briefly found, then briefly lost again. We might never know why we exist and be always left to wonder. But regardless we are still the first draft of ourselves. Ever present, filled with mistakes and spelling errors and that's okay. When life itself is random and chaotic why be perfect? For the seconds in the infinity that are given to you, find your reason and meaning. Make time remember your answer to the chaos that you are given.

So, make mistakes. Knowing your struggle and giving it a place to rest within can help you learn to be whole. We all seek to be understood before we understand. Just like an empty bucket that has a hole in it, no matter how much water you try to put in, it will always seep out. Being accepting of yourself can only be done by you alone otherwise no matter how much acceptance someone tries to give you, it will never be validating enough.

I think the greatest thing we can have, is to see ourselves when we look at others. To be compassionate, to empathize, to be kind. Not for the sake of others or because we might gain a semblance of something out of it. Because the world around you can be unyielding and brutal. As a Holocaust survivor, Victor E Frankel says, "Forces beyond your control can take away everything except one thing, your freedom to choose". So, choose to be kind. To feel for one another, if you don't, don't expect anyone else to either.



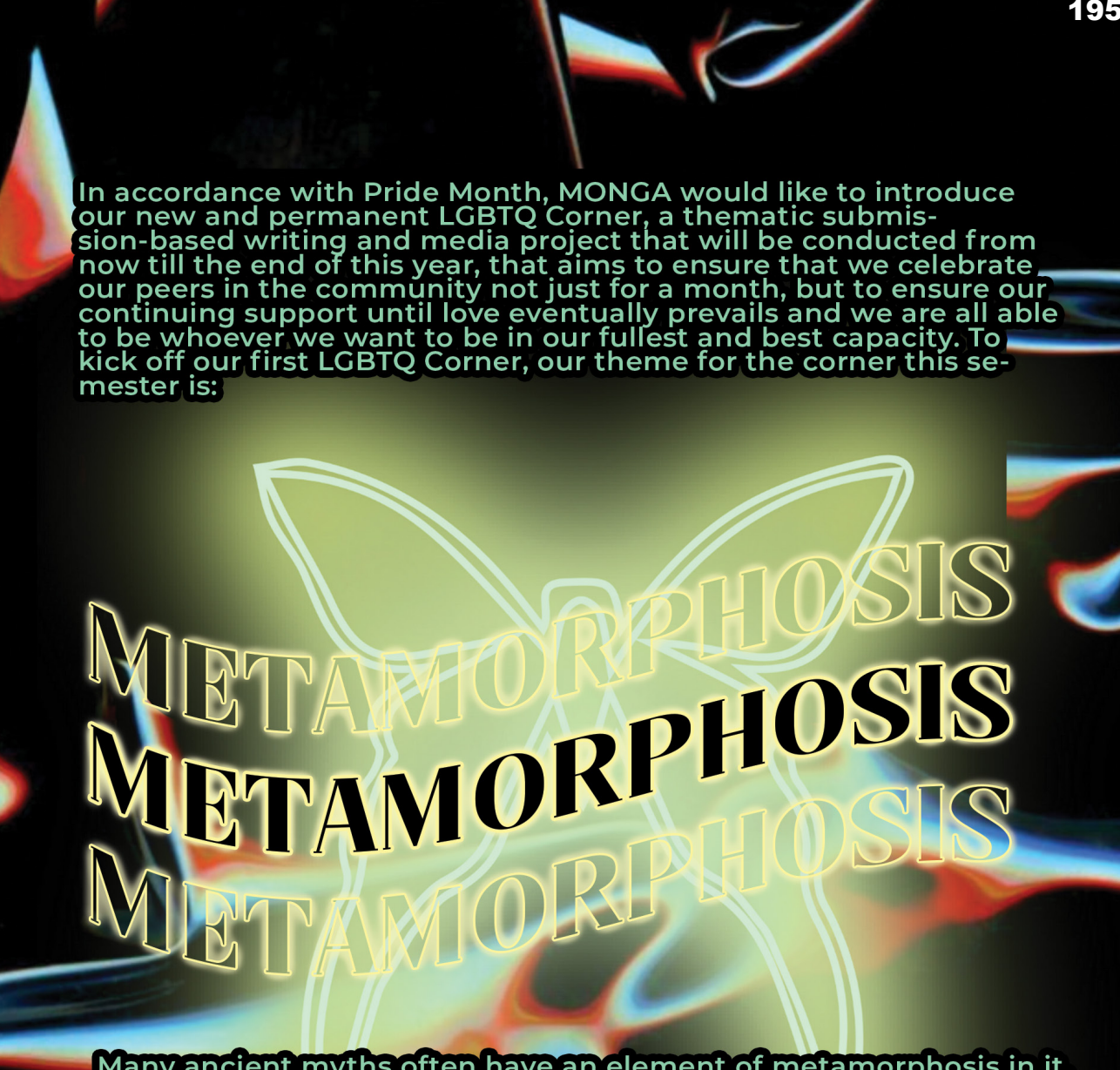


To all those who are hurting and or in pain, nothing we do can ever change the outcome of how we feel. The only thing we can do is how give it meaning. Have heart, and believe that when you reach out in this vast space of nothingness someone might choose to reflect and be kind in return. We are all on this journey of failure, redemption, identity, and above all else the need to connect: to be loved and to love.

Finally give space to the red chilies, the waterfalls, the quiet midnight noise of 3 am, the crumbling paper, and the golden hours of life. They always seem important like the things you never want to forget. We might be living in the humanity of those moments since we never know our finality. Even with all the static of chaos, we are still here solid and real. So, to all the wanderers don't forget to take your dust, and run across the stars all the way back to Neverland.

Written by Januli Wikejoon.

In accordance with Pride Month, MONGA would like to introduce our new and permanent LGBTQ Corner, a thematic submission-based writing and media project that will be conducted from now till the end of this year, that aims to ensure that we celebrate our peers in the community not just for a month, but to ensure our continuing support until love eventually prevails and we are all able to be whoever we want to be in our fullest and best capacity. To kick off our first LGBTQ Corner, our theme for the corner this semester is:



Many ancient myths often have an element of metamorphosis in it, often described as the transformation or transition into something that is new, beautiful and unexpected. Even natural substances may also undergo metamorphosis: the unrelenting heat and pressure over thousands of years may eventually turn tiny organisms into petroleum, and coal into diamonds. And the most beloved of natural metamorphoses is probably the transformation of caterpillars into butterflies. Like most things in the natural world, the process of slowly realising and accepting your sexuality is a long and difficult journey, but one that will undoubtedly end with you emerging from your chrysalis stronger and more resilient than before. MONGA invites you, this Pride Month, to celebrate and acknowledge your story, serving as a reminder of your personal identity, wherever you fall on the spectrum. Whether inspired by a celebrity, a close friend or even a passerby, tell us your story (anonymously if you feel more comfortable) of how you started becoming who you were truly meant to be all along and of feeling completely and 100% comfortable in your own

YEAH, SEX IS COOL BUT...

"I worry sometimes that I would never receive the love they write about in books, the one's they make movies about, because everything I've ever seen has always revolved around the aspect of sex. Sex has been a topic rarely discussed in my neck of the woods, and when it was brought up, I found myself cracking jokes as a way to steer clear of the conversation. It remained taboo at home, which meant it was an easy topic to dodge, but amongst friends, sex was used to represent the pinnacle of popularity.

It's not hard— to sound like you know what they're talking about— to refer to moments and pretend that you've gone through them, so that people don't think you're a freak, so that they think you're one of them. And I know that not everyone has sex before marriage, and that the concept of virginity is flawed and outdated, but there is an undeniable stigma around virgins, more so as time passes. The question always comes back to, are you not desirable enough for someone?

And I think I struggled with that greatly, because sex isn't and wouldn't ever be something I'm interested in. It feels weird to type that out, because I've always thought and believed it to be a part of everyone's life, but the thought of sex repulses me. For the longest time I felt horrified at myself. I tried to bargain and convince myself that I only hated sex because no one could find anything to love about my body. That I only hated sex because I hated myself. And maybe a part of that remains true, but I'm a lot older now, and with time I've grown to appreciate my body for what it is, and though I may not go so far as to say I love myself; I am damn proud of myself. But one thing still remained. The thought of having sex continued to disgust me, still made me want to hurl.

But why?

Why was something everyone seemed to prattle on about, make movies about, sing and talk constantly about, something I didn't want? Was I scared? Did I think I'd be bad?

I genuinely thought I was damaged. Broken. That something just wasn't clicking in my head the same way it did for everyone else. I constantly skirted around conversations where my friends would gush over guys, or anyone they found 'hot'.

Sure I knew when someone was conventionally attractive, and aesthetically pleasing to look at, but did it make me feel hot all over? No. Did I understand what exactly my friends were saying when they said they wanted to take these people to bed, to rip their clothes off and show them a good time? No. But I pretended like I did. And as I grew older, people began asking questions, wondering why I never really talked about my crushes the same way they did.

And of course this made things even more confusing because I quickly realised that I drew a line between romance and sex. It's often intertwined— almost exclusively portrayed in the media as one and the same, but that wasn't exactly the case - at least

not for me. I found certain people fascinating and had this urge to be with them in a romantic way. I longed to spend time with them, and bond on an emotional level, but had little to no interest in the sexual element that was expected to come with that sort of connection. Needless to say I felt like a walking contradiction.

It didn't help that around this time I began to realise I wanted to be with girls romantically, the same way I did boys. It felt like the universe was throwing another curveball my way, because now was I gay? Bi? Pan? I didn't seem to fit anywhere, because all these labels were sexual orientations, and I on the other hand was completely averse to sex.
The internet is a wonderful, magical, place filled with all sorts of knowledge, and for me it's where I found who I was. Where I first heard about asexuality. Asexuality. A term that was part of the LGBTQIA+ community—defined as having little to no sexual feelings or desires, unlike allos (people that did have sexual feelings and desires). People that identified as ace could still feel and desire romantic relationships, they could even be biromantic, panromantic, or even homoromantic. Reading those words, a wave of complete relief washed over me. It sounds cheesy to say that I felt like I finally belonged, and maybe it is, but that sensation of finding people that viewed love, sex, romance, the same way you did, and not feel ashamed about it... it's euphoric.

I started following accounts owned by ace influencers, slowly building this bubble of people like me, which was incredibly validating, and I learned how asexuality in itself was a spectrum with a range of varying degrees of sex aversion, with some aces being more sex favourable than others. I read stories about aces who managed to find and forge meaningful romantic relationships with other aces and even allos. I read stories of aces who lost their loves because they couldn't give them what they wanted. There were stories where people shared how some believed asexuality wasn't real, that it was just something people said to get attention, that everyone wanted on some level to have

That asexuals just needed to ha good sex to know they weren't ace. And although it initially hu to read comments filled with such hate and vitriol, it brought me comfort to know that the ac community had turned these harsh words into running gags amongst themselves; slowly taking its power away. I began t do the same, and soon found myself making jokes about my asexuality. Finally being able to laugh and love the part of myse had long thought to be broken. It's a rush knowing that a whole host of people like you existed, and that it was okay to just be me, and if the people I cared about, cared about me, me bein ace wouldn't change things. An it didn't. The friends I've told co tinued to love and be there for me. Sure I did have to explain myself a couple of times before they understood, but honestly, they took it way better than I could've expected. And I'm beyond grateful for that.

Coming out as ace to your parents is tricky, telling Asian parents you don't want to have sex Well on paper that sounds like a good thing. God knows the amount of times they've tried drilling in the whole 'no sex before marriage' idea. But what there was no sex even after ma riage, you know? That's not son thing I can easily bring up. But that's something I hope the future me eventually tackles, an I have no doubt she will. Having the lexicon to finally describe who I was, was the best thing that's ever happened to me, and if you made it to the end of this long-winded story, and if any pa of this resonated with you, here are some of the things I wish I heard when I was struggling wi figuring out my identity.

You're not alone, you're not broken, you're not damaged. You're loved.
I hope you eventually love you, and all you are too.

-Written By: Anon

THE GIFT

BY AIMI OTANI

“I have a gift for you.”

I couldn’t quite tell if I was happy or scared. She refused to tell me what this gift that was chained and secured with the most sophisticated lock was as if it was caging a yet-to-be-known creature. Even I, the greatest locksmith of the heart, wasn’t able to crack it. I guessed and guessed, but I still couldn’t hit the jackpot. I was the boiling water in an ordinary pot, continuously bubbling. Just couldn’t swallow my chagrin. But at the same time, while I was concerned about the gift, I couldn’t believe how much I cared. I was shocked at how much I have changed from the beginning.

We met at a bar in November. That day, in dim lights, I saw that fire of desire in her charcoal eyes when she asked me if I was alone. Fleetingly, I saw minuscule shining stars floating. But after five seconds of playing catch, she diminished them. I hated the way she spoke. Her personality was spiky like a sea urchin. I was so sure that she was only going to be a one-night-friend who I would never get in touch with again. All of these thoughts formed at the speed of light the moment she tossed back the ball to me with a “Holy Shit!”. Where the hell were her manners? Unbelievable. We were total strangers a few seconds ago and still sort of were..

I walked home that day in the quiet late night. No cars, no bikes, just serenity. By the time I separated myself and the world with my lids, ready to commit to my dream, I had already erased ninety-five percent of her from my mind. But she was not a quitter. From the bottom of the valley that her first impression threw herself into, she climbed up to where I was resting with just a backpack full of sorcery. And cast a spell on me. Was I mad that she was a witch? No. I was teleported to a new world where I couldn’t see anything but her. And I couldn’t help but falling in love with it. Yet every night, just before I lay to rest, I awoke to the old world I grew up in, and the accumulation of this routine had my fear grow in me like the mold in a humid bathroom. I couldn’t tell if I merely adored the new world alone with her or if I was fond of her. Standing at an awkward and tilted place on the hill together, looking into each other’s eyes, I didn’t know which direction to set my next footstep.

“On the day she promised to hand me the gift, I was a broken retro metronome. In a taxi, on the way to her place, I spared no effort to control the unsteady swing. But there was no way she didn’t notice. She was a musician by nature—me being even a bit off-tempo would have caught her attention. Fuck. However, time never waits. We soon arrived at our destination. It was winter but I was sweating like the sun had grilled me for hours. As she slowly walked into her room, I dashed into the restroom. I was not ready. I wasn’t ready for whatever she was planning. What if I like the gift a little too much? What if I don’t like it at all? My concerns were like tangled hair and I was attempting to work it out with a wide-toothed comb so carefully to avoid any tears.

As I finished fixing my hair and made my way to her room, the metronome cured itself and ticked at a simultaneous pace as the second hand. Sixty beat-per-minute enlarged and thickened the fog in my brain. I gripped the knob and twisted my wrist. And there was light. And through the light, there she was in front of the piano. The gift was a live performance of an original song about us. My heart soared high up into the sky and my arms gave her an inescapable sudden hug. Then, her being a competitive person, gave me an inescapable sudden peck in return. I sat beside her on the duet bench, gazing at her silhouette and feeling the rhythm while she sang. It was pure happiness. That realm we were in blocked every worry that may exist. But just when she played the last note, time froze. All the noise vanished except the faint sound of her breath. As she looked into my pupils trying to study them, I saw that fire of desire in her again. My body turned into a magnet and my mind turned into fuel. I dragged myself onto one of her legs. My hands caressed her shape while hers gently wrapped around my waist. Our moist lips interlocked, and during our hockey match, she began to shake the leg I was perching on. I couldn't resist knitting my brows. The unruly yet delicate cries that were encased in gasps broke our silence. Her devilish grin made me melt on her knee. My mind caught on her fire and we were together in flames.

The night blazed a little too hard that left me a good burnt. I can't help but laugh at how I was simulating again and again in front of the restroom mirror how to perform a perfect reaction when she presents me with the gift. To me, the heart-piercing gift wasn't the song or the frantic yet beautiful interlink we had. The greatest gift was her and only her. On the hill, affirmation grew in our eyes. Fuck locksmiths. Simmering love was what uncaged our untamed and tender creatures of heart. As they merged into one in the air, I looked up at the distant tip of the mountain and held her hand. And there we took our very first step up the hill, sure and firm.

WOMEN'S MARCH

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY SINCE THE SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT AND BEING A WOMAN IN THE 21ST CENTURY MAY STILL BE RIDDLED WITH OCCASIONAL PREJUDICE BUT OUR SISTERS FROM A CENTURY AGO WOULD BE IN AWE WITH HOW FAR WE'VE COME IN THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT. IN ACCORDANCE WITH WOMEN'S DAY AND WOMEN'S MARCH 2022, WE ARE PROUD TO ANNOUNCE A CREATIVE COLLABORATION WITH ENSEMBLE THAT AIMS TO CELEBRATE THE POWER AND JOY OF EMBRACING YOUR OWN PERSONAL BRAND OF WOMANHOOD IN A SAFE, OPEN SPACE, FREE FROM JUDGEMENT. TELL US YOUR STORIES OF BREAKING GLASS CEILINGS, FLIPPING OFF THE PATRIARCHY AND CARVING YOUR OWN JOURNEY IN A WORLD THAT IS STILL OCCASIONALLY PROGRAMMED TO PUSH YOU ASIDE.

THE MALE GAZE

"MALE FANTASIES, MALE FANTASIES, IS EVERYTHING RUN BY MALE FANTASIES? UP ON A PEDESTAL OR DOWN ON YOUR KNEES, IT'S ALL A MALE FANTASY: THAT YOU'RE STRONG ENOUGH TO TAKE WHAT THEY DISH OUT, OR ELSE TOO WEAK TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT. EVEN PRETENDING YOU AREN'T CATERING TO MALE FANTASIES IS A MALE FANTASY: PRETENDING YOU'RE UNSEEN, PRETENDING YOU HAVE A LIFE OF YOUR OWN, THAT YOU CAN WASH YOUR FEET AND COMB YOUR HAIR UNCONSCIOUS OF THE EVER-PRESENT WATCHER PEERING THROUGH THE KEYHOLE, PEERING THROUGH THE KEYHOLE IN YOUR OWN HEAD, IF NOWHERE ELSE. YOU ARE A WOMAN WITH A MAN INSIDE WATCHING A WOMAN. YOU ARE YOUR OWN VOYEUR."

· MARGARET ATWOOD

— BY SREANA HABIBA.

Designed by Chai Ting Ho.

THE MALE GAZE

Add a little The patriarchy, systemic oppression of women, daily microaggressions, reproductive rights sanctions... the lexicon for discrimination towards our gender is endless. Focusing on these realities is mundane and difficult, especially since it's a lived reality for all women, but I think being cognizant of the workings of these issues is important if we want to challenge them head-on. What I've been contesting with lately, barring some of the bigger issues in feminism, is the concept of the 'male gaze': it's the idea that men view women through a distorted lens that sexualizes, objectifies and dehumanizes us. Through this lens, the woman only exists as a commodity, an object of desire for the man, with no real inner life of her own. That in itself is abhorrent enough, but what really feels disturbing to me is that almost all of us have internalized this masculine gaze. If you think you haven't, think again! Examine where all of your notions of femininity and beauty come from! Then get to work on dismantling it.

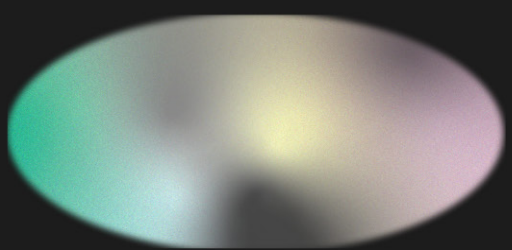
For as long as I can remember, almost from my early teen-age years, I've felt a nagging sensation of somehow being watched, of feeling like I was putting on a perpetual, unending performance for some imaginary audience. Even when I was alone in my room I would feel this constant need to look pretty, to sit or lie on my bed a certain way, to move with grace, etc; when I was in public I had to be demure, polite, soft-spoken, never taking up too much space (god forbid!). It was only a few years ago that I realized who this 'audience' was: the male gaze that I internalized through societal norms, through TV shows, movies and books, through my interactions with men, and especially through social media. The pressure of having to look and dress a certain way did not come to us inherently; these ideals of beauty and of sexiness have been force-fed to us since we were little girls. We spend hours of our days shaving our bodies, meticulously putting on makeup, choosing the right outfits, doing our hair, obsessively analyzing every part of our body and our personalities so that it's infallible and beautiful, something you could put in a gift box and wrap a pretty bow around. It seeps into intricate habits as well, like what we eat, how we eat, what kind of media we consume, what kind of music we listen to and so on. It's exhausting and dehumanizing. It is built to pit women against each other, to have women always be catering to men, to empower men by any means. But the first step to rejecting the male gaze is simply being conscious of it.

The systems in which we live, our societies, is one of the main facets to blame. We just exist inside of it, oblivious. But that doesn't mean we can't reform or even completely reject these ideologies - in fact, we should! It's the only thing we can do. If you're reading this, regardless of your gender, I urge you to take a closer look and examine the preexisting biases or notions you have regarding things like race, class, sexuality, and especially gender. How do you treat and view the women in your life? Do you sometimes accidentally perpetuate mildly misogynistic rhetorics by making lighthearted but offensive comments? Do you call your male friends out when they make crude remarks toward women, when they make rape jokes or sexualize them? If you're a woman, do you instantly and subconsciously view women as competition instead of your allies? Do you make sure to uplift them whenever you can? Do you subconsciously view women as 'lesser', as being less competent somehow than men? Question your biases, however inconsequential. Then question the people around you. Corny as it may sound, we're all in this together - sweeping changes always start with you and your interpersonal relationships.

So what's the antithesis to rectifying this issue? We don't have definitive answers, but I think a good place to start would be openly talking about it with other women, building solidarity with them, helping each other out. Analyze and examine all the subtle signs and messages you come across in media and in real life that bolster the male gaze. Then look inwards, and ask yourself what it is that you, as a human being, actually want for yourself. Just live for yourself; let yourself be free. It's easier said than done, I know. But it is the only way we can achieve true empowerment.

I LEAVE YOU WITH THIS QUOTE FROM AGNÈS VARDA:

"THE FIRST FEMINIST GESTURE IS TO SAY: "OK. THEY'RE LOOKING AT ME. BUT I'M LOOKING AT THEM." THE ACT OF DECIDING TO LOOK, OF DECIDING THAT THE WORLD IS NOT DEFINED BY HOW PEOPLE SEE ME, BUT BY HOW I SEE THEM."



THE MALE GAZE

IN A DELIRIUM

— BY SHABNAM KAUR.

I swipe. I swipe a lot. I swipe incessantly. I swipe so much that I hate myself for it but I can't stop myself from it.

The app, the people, the desires, needs, wants; the simplicity of it all makes it so accessible to construct a fantastical fictionalised reality for me.

People become objects. I have an addiction. If I like an object, I need that object.

Left, left, left, right.

It's a match! My heart skips a beat. My hopes spring eternal. I make a mistake. I get too ahead of myself.

I am 22. I want something but I don't know what that something is. I want to feel something. I want to fill a void but fill it with what? Love or lust or neither?

Left, left, left, right.

We start talking. I don't know them but I feel giddy, I feel whole. I feel wanted; I feel happy.
I become a version of myself I don't recognise. I become needy. I become sad.

Their attention consumes me, it keeps me going but then it fizzles. I self-sabotage.
I am passionate, smart, crafty, quirky, a little unhinged in a good way but I fail to see these qualities in myself. I become envious of the one thing others have. Attachment.

Left, left, left, oh, a superlike!

I am a commodity too I realise. I could advocate for anything but myself. My desire for attachment was accompanied by shame, anxiety, emptiness.
I was desperate to know what it felt like to be wanted. I was desperate for intimacy but intimacy came with rules. They say "I only want something casual".
I respect the forwardness, the honesty, the bluntness but it stings. I muster the courage to accept their want. I convince myself that if I accepted the want, it would be a stepping stone to fulfilling my want.
'This user has unmatched you'
I grieve the loss of someone that I only knew two-dimensionally. My fantasy shatters. I am back to square one. I am right where you left me.
Except, you don't know that; you move on and obtain your 'something casual'. I overthink too much. This is so cliché of me. I can't pin down why I'm so bothered.

Left, left, left, right. Here we go again...

I objectify and get objectified. I am a feminist but this experience isn't liberating. I create this façade of wanting to fulfil what they wanted while convincing myself I was acting like a progressive feminist.
I am what I like to call 'a self-destructive masochist'.

Left, left, left, *delete account*

I need to build a relationship with myself. I will not settle for crumbs. I deserve the whole cake. I need to stop seeking. I think it'll be worth it.

THE FALL OF THE 'PICK-ME' AND THE RISE OF WOMEN

BY NATASHA MAYA.

"I'm not like other girls."

Is honestly my favourite punchline as a joke, simply because of how ridiculous it sounds. And my friends are always in on it as well, along with the rest of the internet sphere, always ready to make fun of the concept of 'pick-me' girls.

But there was a dark time *shudders* when it was not a joke, but rather a defensive statement pertaining to one's uniqueness. Because heaven forbid you, the main character of your own 2000s teen movie, could ever be as "dull" as the other hyperfeminine female antagonistic characters.

So, what is a 'pick-me' girl? To put it simply, it is usually a girl who puts other girls down in an effort to seem superior in the eyes of the opposite gender.

Typical phrases include:

"Girls who wear make-up are so fake. I don't wear make-up because I'm all natural."

"I only hangout with boys because girls are so dramatic."

To be clear, there is nothing wrong with choosing not to wear make-up nor is there anything wrong with wanting to be friends with boys. However, the problem arises when a girl feels the need to shame other girls in pursuit of these things. You can have traditionally masculine interests like football, video games, beer etc., just don't shame other girls who prefer traditionally feminine activities. Girls are allowed to enjoy anything they want without needing to be defensive about it.

But this article is not to shame 'pick-me' girls because to be frank, society has a tendency to make fun of girls enough as it is. And as embarrassing as it sounds, I too had a pick-me girl phase (in my defence it was also my Wattpad phase). At age 12, I deemed myself to be a rare female breed because I...read *gasps*. Quirky, I know. My Facebook was flooded with questionable posts that pit women against each other with the whole "other girls vs me" type of content. It is almost as if women are one-dimensional beings that could only fit into one mould.

Many of the girls I talked to recall their own 'pick-me' phase. Perhaps you even had a pick-me phase yourself. It is important to understand that the issue does not stem directly from the individual. Rather, it is years of conditioning through unrelenting patriarchal values and the media which shape young impressionable girls to become competitive against each other.

Throughout history, it has been a man's world and women have to fight each other to receive male validation in order to be considered relevant. Traditional values still trickle down and influence us today, reinforced by societal pressure to conform Throughout history, it has been a man's world and women have to fight each other to receive male validation in order to be considered relevant. Traditional values still trickle down and

-

“influence us today, reinforced by societal pressure to conform by acting as passive side-characters in a man’s life. Could you really blame girls for trying to deviate from that association? For wanting to be different?

Films and books which fail to portray women as multifaceted characters are also to blame. The copy-pasted troupes of a hyperfeminine mean girl against the nerdy or sporty protagonist leaves an impression that girls can only be one or the other. The audience is meant to relate to the socially awkward yet relatable main character whose whole plot often revolves around getting a boy’s attention. At the same time, it demonises other girls for being too “girly”, depicting interests in make-up and fashion as something shallow and superficial. This may lead to internalised misogyny because it cements the belief that one type of girl is better than the other.

Fortunately, times are changing with new waves of female representation that allow women to act freely and to be loved unconditionally. It is time we understand that every girl is their own main character regardless of their interests and how they choose to present themselves. With more women as creative directors in the entertainment industry we are now exposed to media which celebrates the average woman, the woman who is loud, the woman who is messy, the woman who exclusively wears pink, the woman who chooses to follow the stereotype or the woman who chooses to break the stereotype.

Let us stop desperately trying to be the exception and be proud of the similarities we may share with each other as women. Let us celebrate the rise of women together. There is no longer a need to be a ‘pick-me’ because the conversation has shifted in finding ways for this patriarchal society to pick ***us***.

WHEN 'NO' ISN'T ENOUGH

— BY ELLY ZULAIKHA.

Content warning: Mentions of rape and violence

“Do you want a lift from me? I can drop you off at the train station anytime.”

“No, thank you, hahaha. I prefer to sleep on the train.”

“Are you sure? Let me pick you up, then you can sleep at the train station.”

“Nope, that’s okay. But thanks for the offer!”

Imagine someone you never met telling you this two days after getting acquainted. Can you imagine how weird and uncomfortable it was for me? Or the countless and almost guaranteed instances where I receive not-so-discreet stares from motorists and drivers alike whenever I’m waiting at a bus stop? Don’t even get me started on what I wore whenever I go out– to work, for school, or for an outing.

I could be wearing a worn-down potato sack and, still, men have the AUDACITY to OGLE at me, laser-focused and determined to find my ‘hidden treasures’.

I could still remember this boy from my English tuition class who was practically training to become a certified stalker and creeper. No, it wasn’t an innocent attraction. He was ***obsessed*** with me. Upon every opportunity to pair up for a project, he insisted on being my partner. He would stare at me whenever he could as if I was a prized object. When I told him, “Don’t touch my things!” he would purposefully stare at me while doing the very thing that I forbade him. I was grateful my classmate Emily (bless her) would always protect me from the creepy boy. Even though he was tall and lanky for an 11-year-old boy with bowl hair, he was no match with Emily, who was strong and athletic. Yet, with Emily around, I still felt unsafe.

And the last straw happened when that boy followed me all the way to the toilet. He stood at the entrance, and I remembered this clearly in my mind when he said, "Remember me?" while blocking my path. Of course, you dumbfuck! You gave me a lifetime's worth of nightmares!

You're the reason I get easily shaken when men are being insistent towards me when they throw unwanted advances despite the million 'No'(s) I gave. It's like no matter how discreet or blunt my no is, nothing can stop a man from saying or doing things that cross the line of harassment.

You can't tell a woman, "Oh, maybe if you explain to them nicely, they would understand." Yeah, I can personally vouch that that sentence works in only one out of every million scenarios.

If this was the case, then, how come we still come across news where women were murdered, raped, burned alive, fired from a job, humiliated when they say 'No' to a man?

HOW MANY INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY(S) DOES IT TAKE TO SLAP THE SHIT OUT OF SOCIETY THAT THIS IS STILL A PERVASIVE ISSUE EVEN IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

What's even more mocking is how we still dedicate ***just one day every year on 8th March*** to celebrate and honour women for their achievements. It's even more hypocritical when this celebration only extends to certain ethnicities and nationalities.

And you know damn well how annoying it is when someone who belongs to a majority, comes up to virtually give a 'pat on the back for less fortunate women on this day, yet simultaneously ignore, perpetuate and justify misogynistic practices and lashes out when someone counters with, "Yeah but have you ever looked closely at why women of color face more discrimination daily?"

No shit Sherlock! This is the reality that assumes its place once 8th March ends.

Yes, I appreciate and am delighted to see women are increasingly being recognized, honoured, and celebrated on this day– so much so that we'll fill up our social media timelines with 'Shoutout to my girlies', share inspirational stories about women, and even gift each other with material things because 'It's your day.' But why stop at just one day out of 365 days in a year? Why not every day?

Fine, if we can't celebrate every day, all I ask for you, dear readers, no matter what your gender or race is if you see someone being harassed, please stand up to them. When they confide with you and share how uncomfortable and terrified they are, don't interject. Listen. Believe their words. Don't shame them.

SO WHAT?

BY ASHLEY LIM.

I curated a Spotify playlist which I titled "어쩌라고." which in Korean means: "So What?"

Yeah, it sounds obnoxious I know, but bear with me because I swear I have a reason. I'm a 20 year old Malaysian Chinese female who comes from a relatively traditional extended family. Very joystick-toting, "no boyfriend yet ah?", children-are-meant-to-be-seen-and-not heard type family. You know what I'm talking about right?

So, it's no wonder that I get weird looks at every reunion dinner when I tell my family, confidently and unashamedly in response to their barrage of questions, that I don't even plan on looking for a boyfriend till I'm 26 or 27.

"No one will want you by then." They joke.
"Wouldn't you be an old maid by then?" They tease.
"Marry a rich man la." They advise me.

(When one of them said that I actually candidly said: "I'm not going to marry a rich man, I plan on *being* the rich man.")

True story.

Of course all of these are said in jest, or so I hope.
I often sweep these under the carpet, attributing this behaviour to years and years of generational ideals that stem from patriarchal behaviour.

And besides, it's just my extended family, it's not like I have to see them every day right?

Just smile and let it slide Ashley.

But there was one thing that really, really hit home while I was driving my mom back from our dog, Boba's, vet appointment. My usual vet is a wonderful woman in her late 20s whom we adore mainly because of her patience when it comes to us fretting over Boba.

"The vet will make a good wife one day. She's sweet, soft spoken and patient."

Which are amazing attributes, I agree. But is that really all a woman is meant to be? I mean she's a successful vet who regularly performs surgery on animals, a feat that I can't even begin to wrap my head around because of the stress and emotional weight of the job. And the one thing that my mom takes away from that is that she's good "wife material"?

Yes, being respectful to your future partner is one of the core foundations of every marriage, but does that mean every "good" wife has to be sweet and soft spoken? And what about their male counterparts? When I asked her what makes good "husband" material she went on to list out:

"Well, he should be the breadwinner of the family, tough and carry on his family name."

heavy sigh

The thing is, I can't blame her for thinking like that, but I grew up in a world where the Internet liberated me from such ideals. Which is probably why if you ask anyone in the MUSA office or even my fellow editors that I honestly, in the most respectful way possible do not give as much of a f*** as I should when it comes to these traditions.

I've always been a feminist, which I think many people often associate with the fact that I'm misogynistic, which is the farthest from the truth (my shrine to NCT Dream in my office will certainly prove otherwise). The thing about feminism, or at least my version of is that I just want the same number of opportunities to be provided to the female community, without having to put down anyone else. I believe an individual, regardless of the reproductive organs they are born with, should be treated based on their merit and qualifications without prejudice, a quality which extends to my image of an "ideal husband".

WHO SAYS THAT MEN CAN'T BE STAY AT HOME DADS?

WHO SAYS THAT WOMEN CAN'T BRING BACK THE BACON WHILE ALSO FULFILLING THE MATERNAL DESIRE TO HAVE CHILDREN?

WHO SAYS THAT MEN CAN'T CRY AFTER THEY'VE HAD A LONG DAY AT WORK?

These gendered stereotypes of husband and wife need to be crumpled, tossed out of the window and purged in every other way imaginable, because we live in a society where women are marrying later and having less children while men are learning how to be more emotionally vulnerable in a world that has always forced them to repress their feelings.

SO WHAT IF I PRIORITISE MY CAREER OVER MY LOVE LIFE?

SO WHAT IF I WANT A GUY THAT'S JUST AS SWEET SPOKEN AS I SHOULD BE?

SO WHAT IF I WANT SOMEONE WHO ULTIMATELY ISN'T GOOD "HUSBAND" OR EVEN "WIFE" MATERIAL BUT JUST A GOOD PARTNER?

Check out 3 more articles for Women's March by scanning these QR codes. Happy Reading!

CREATION STORY

— BY ANONYMOUS

POST-SEMESTER REFLECTIONS BY AIMAN AND KIKI. AN INTERVIEW

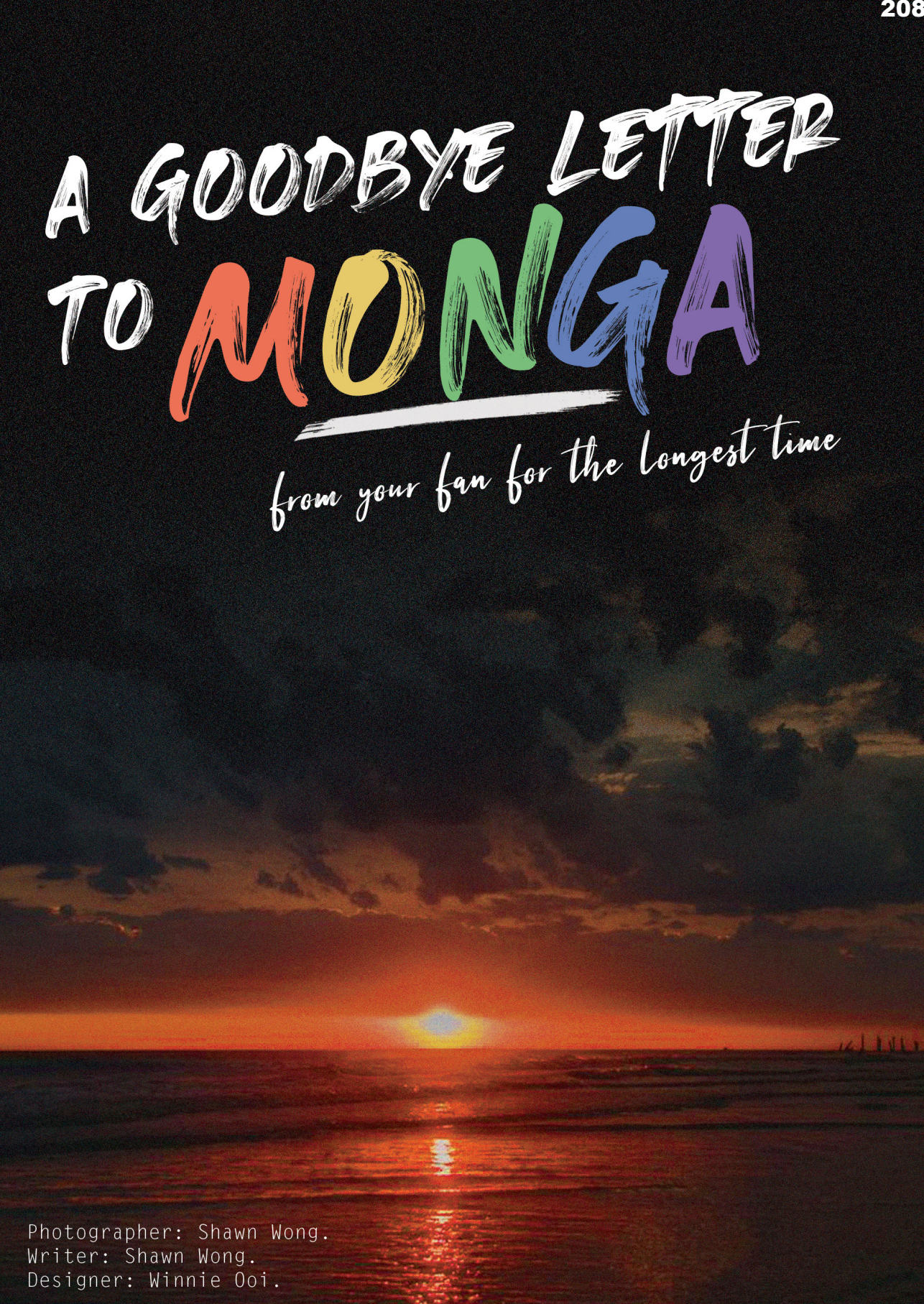
— BY AIMAN & KIKI

TO ALL MY FOREMOTHERS

— BY MAEESHA SERAJ

A GOODBYE LETTER TO MONGA

from your fan for the longest time



Photographer: Shawn Wong.
Writer: Shawn Wong.
Designer: Winnie Ooi.

IS THIS FATE?

It was a normal afternoon. But the moment where my brother brought home an issue of MONGA remains pretty vivid in my mind. What came into sight was the rainbow logo of the magazine and a shot of the Monash field filled with happy faces. I picked it up, found the first few pages boring, loved the last few pages. Finished reading it got me into thinking: "Am I a creative person?" And if the answer's yes, is photography the way to show it? The idea of publishing was new to me but the desire to create has sparked in me. Since then, every new MONGA issue became one of those things that I looked forward to the most. I got my first camera in the following year, took some shots on the streets, got angry stares from strangers; took some portraits of my friends, got happy smiles from them. I've never been so passionate about a hobby until it became what I would put 100% of me in it. I didn't know what a good photo can do to a person back then but photography, it is the damn thing that I want to do for a lifetime. 7 years later, here I am, covering and creating about 20 contents for MONGA.

SOMETHING CONFUSING

Joining MONGA felt nostalgic and new at the same time. I guess you could say joining MONGA has made me less of a boring person because walking around campus with a camera and asking strangers for a quick photo has brought many new friends into my life. And I appreciate that every single day because it's true when they say your lens will bring magic into your life. I joined MONGA with a clear intention to share the best work I have to offer and to help cover events happening around campus. Unfortunately, in my first year of MONGA, Covid hit and made it impossible to do the latter. Nonetheless, I was still able to publish some of my favorite shots to date. This year, MONGA felt normal again, in a way that I had to find a balance between rolling out my personal projects and covering for official events.

Still, I believe I have given out my 1,000% for all the projects I was involved with. Each photo I took, I spent hours on Lightroom finetuning them, assignments barely mattered to me in some nights. Many years later, I would come back to look at what I've produced for MONGA and still proudly say that those are the best work I've ever done.

CHERISH THE FLOWER

To Tshe, thanks for being the greatest Head of Media of all times. I barely knew you from the time where we were both subcomms, but you've shown unmatched leadership skills and you're the type of person who'll give it all. I'm so glad that you got to take care of MONGA and I hope you'll continue to do so in the following year and I'm sure that MONGA will be better because of you, it has to be you. Thanks for all the extra efforts that you've put in to glue all the subcomms together. My girlfriend won't forget the night where she spent her birthday photowalking with all of us and I promise I'll treasure the MONGA Media lanyard for the rest of my life. From the bottom of my heart, Thank you Tshe. To the whole MONGA Media team 2022, thanks for being so supportive to each other throughout the year and without all of you, many of the projects' coverage would not be possible. I hope most of you can continue to take good care of MONGA next year and even bring MONGA to new heights. To anyone who plans to join MONGA, I hope you fall in love with MONGA in the process because at the end of the day, this thing will be your firstborn baby.

FINAL BOW

Well, I guess this is as far as I can contribute to MONGA. But maybe, just maybe somewhere down the road I can still see the photos I took being featured in MONGA, who knows. I've been very proud to be saying "I'm from MONGA" for the past two years and I'll still proudly say I was part of MONGA in the future. As I'm writing this, I still cannot believe how much MONGA has changed and shaped me overall as a photographer and as a person. MONGA felt like home, now I'm leaving this home to see what's out there for me, maybe I'll get stuck in creative loopholes, maybe I can't contend with the crushing pressure of creation. But few things are certain, I'll never stop taking photos, I'll never stop going out to the streets, and I'll never stop making people smile. I take photos to remind people around me that they deserve to be happy, to be the best version of themselves, to live in the moment. So, whoever's reading this, keep yourself a work in progress, be free, be fearless, go be the best version of yourself. In the end, they will know.

Smile, Shawn

T U R B U

A collaboration between Elly

Taking in the fresh air and the coolness of the evening breeze, it seemed cruel that, in the midst of admiring the beauty in nature, I am reminded of the bitter reality I can't seem to escape. What is reality, if you ask? I don't know: you tell me.

As if the world only asks me to fall, only endless darkness.

At times, I recognize the darkness. Sometimes it feels familiar, even in pitch black, I could make of myself better than when I am standing in bright light. As ironic as it sounds, sometimes the darkness feels terrifying to walk in. What if I fall into an abyss and never come out of it?

At the end of this road, where should we be? What should we become, in what form?

The thing is, I don't even know who I am most of the time. I show pieces of myself to those I call my friends, but none would ever come close to knowing the real me. But how can they? How much of my authentic self have I shown to them, anyway? I wouldn't be able to guess. If I can't recognize my true self, how would I know and love myself for it?

I'm already overwhelmed to be myself barely, is anyone listening?

What is my purpose?

I may look like I have figured out things that I want in my life, maybe only a few aspects, but trust me, I don't know what else I should look for. Call me ridiculous, but I don't have hopes for the future. Some may not believe in the world ending, but I do. It's not like I have a choice but to ignore it, how can I?

L E N C E

Shawn Wong And Zulaikha

So then I ask: Why am I here in this world if I'm going to witness its destruction and then be judged for the choices I made here?

I don't know how I came to be, maybe somewhere, at some point in my formative years, I lost sight of myself.

Can someone just embrace me?

And so, I cling to whatever temporary form the world can offer for now. Fictional world, stories, music, food, cats, and a few people I still care about. Fleeting as they may be, they're the closest I can taste of what it means to be alive. Alive and breathing. Capable of feeling emotions, though it seemed that I can only feel too much or none at all.

But of course, how can I forget writing? I still have reservations about calling myself a true writer, if all I could write (and share) is my suffering. And yet, if I hadn't been able to form words, I don't think I would be sane enough to go through what little I have in life at this point.

At the end of this road, if we must become something in this form, I hope to be myself.

I'm sorry dear reader if you leave feeling drained after reading this. I just have to get this off my chest, however much I can, though I don't think I'll ever be free from this. But if you are like me and are still finding your true self, I hope you know you're not alone in this. I know we'll be okay. Hang in there, alright?

I hope you feel the same way, it's okay to be here, just as we are, just like now tonight.

Inspired Heavily by ATEEZ'S Turbulence

Design by Megan Ching

SEA OF EMOTIONS

SEA OF EMOTIONS

SEA OF EMOTIONS

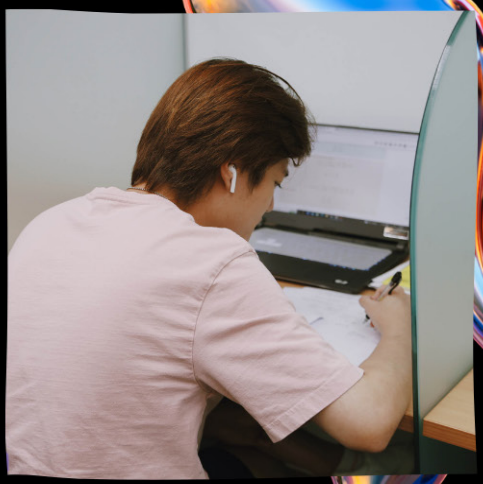
Peeling off an onion in front of my treasures,
Hell on earth is the theme of the day,
Listing it all down like a ledger,
My priceless treasures I accept whatever you all say.

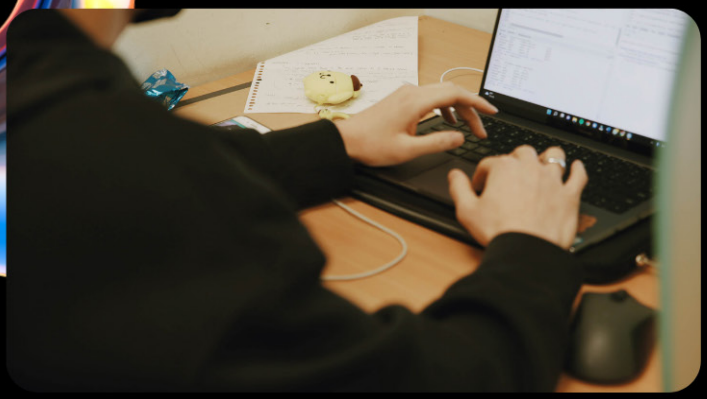
Round the clock the den is calling the fox,
Sprinkling water to grow the roots,
Storing a pungent smell in a box,
Hoping that next time I bear fruits.

Written by: Ahmad Nabil
Photos by: Shawn Wong
Designed by Chai Ting Ho

EXAM POV/ STAYING LATE AT CAMPUS

Photographed by Tsheten Yangden Bhutia | Designed by Chai Ting Ho





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FILM NEGATIVE

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Photos by
Tsheten Yangden Bhutia

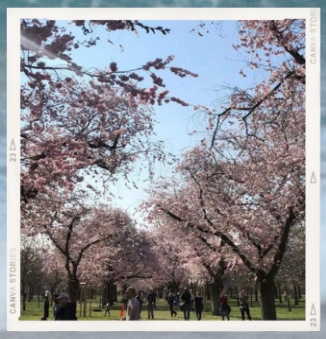
Vernorexia

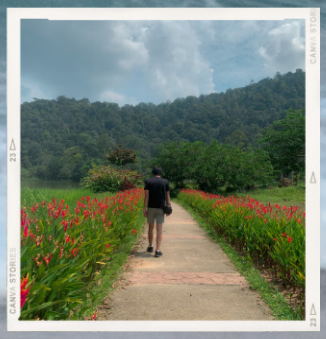
(n) A romantic mood inspired by spring.

Designed by Aerin Tang.

Vernorexia

Photos by
Nursyafiqa Aleeya





Vernorexia

Photos by Wong Zi Yi

Vernorexia

Photos by Lim Xin Yi

Photo by San Jun Hoe

Vernorexia

Photos by Shawn Wong

Vernorexia

Vernorexia

Photos by Kiki Marisa

Photos by Sean Tan

Vernorexia

Photo by Luanne Choong

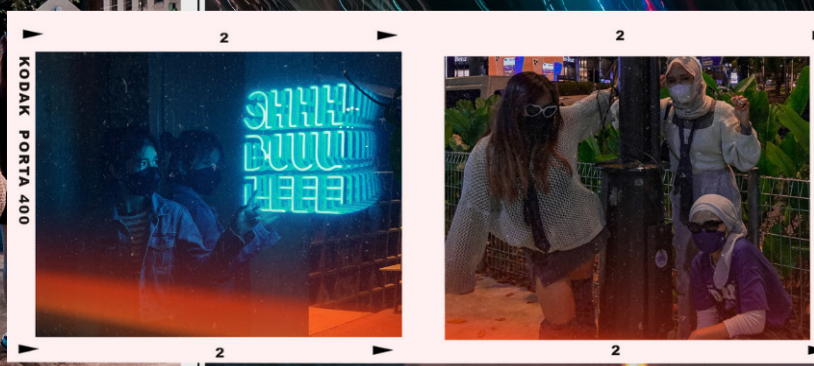
escapism

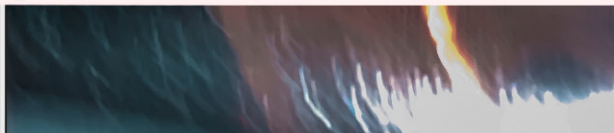
(n.) the tendency to seek distraction and relief from unpleasant realities, especially by seeking entertainment or engaging in fantasy

Photos by Wong Zi Yi.

Photos by
Lim Xin Yi.

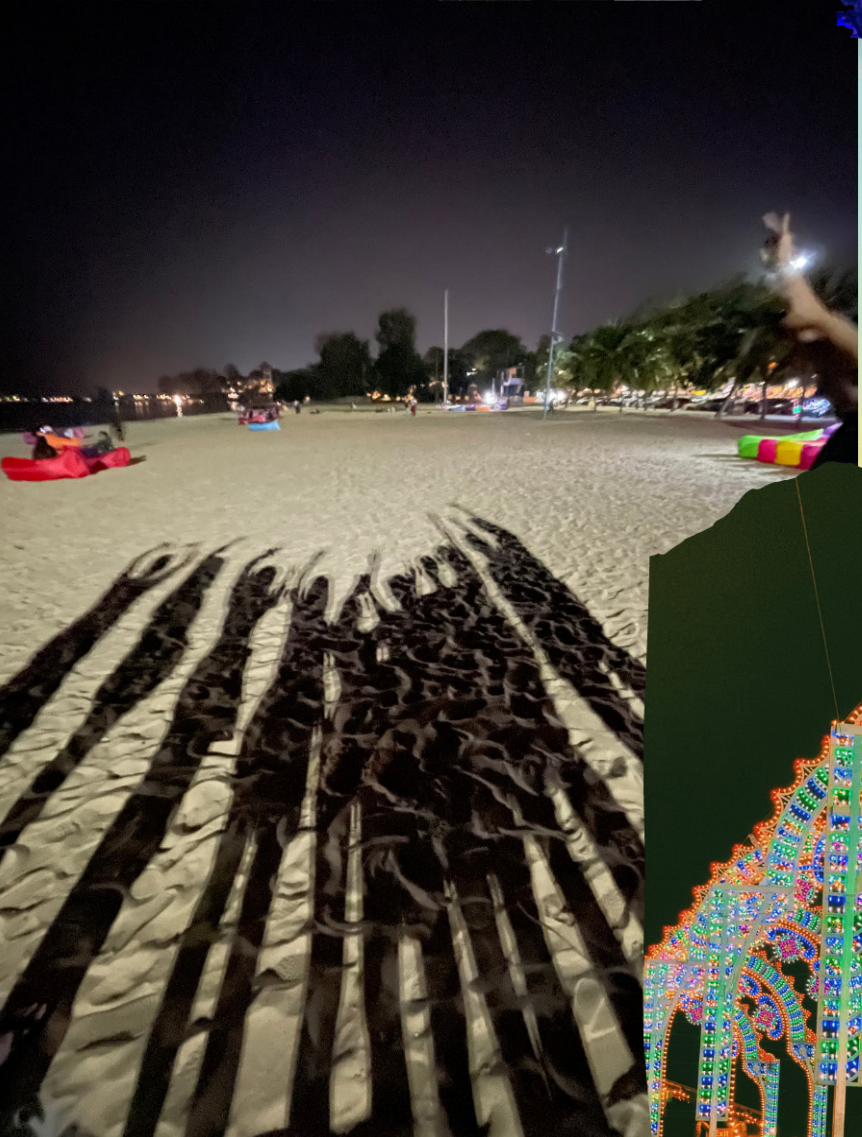
Photos by
Nursyafiqa Aleeya.





Photos by
Shawn Wong.

Photos by
San Jun Hoe.



ONE STEP FORWARD TWO STEPS BACK

BY ASHLEY LIM

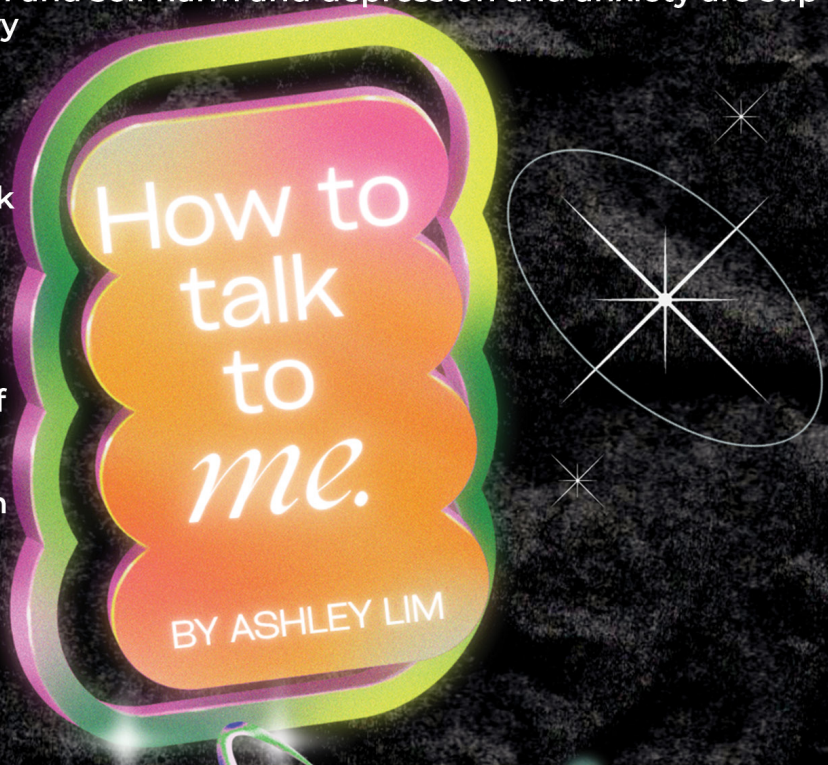
"Sometimes...I don't know how to talk to you."

I hear this a lot when I tell people about my mental health. From parents and friends alike. This is usually accompanied with some sort of pity or discomfort in their eyes, followed by an awkward pat on the shoulder as they try to formulate a response.

And honestly? I don't blame them... because how the hell are you supposed to reply to the words:

"Yeah, I've self harmed before but I've been clean for roughly, hmmm 5 years now?"

When asked about it, I often say it with a nonchalance which is a stark contrast to the words themselves, saying it as casually as if I was asking about the weather. A nonchalance which often catches people off guard because mental health and self harm and depression and anxiety are supposed to be such heavy topics right? Topics that are introspective and just layered with levels of trauma that have to be peeled back delicately one by one in order to get to its root cause.



So, yes, once I drop that bombshell a lot of people have no idea how to talk to me, afraid that a change in tone, the wrong word used could trigger a panic attack, causing me to unravel into a million useless pieces. Like I'm some sort of delicate china doll which needs to be packed with bubble wrap, stuck in some dark protective corner of a closet and then left to heal.

I assure you, that is not the case. Well, not for me anyway. In many ways I am grateful for my depression, I am grateful that it has hollowed me out so terribly that I've had to find other ways to find peace. Because although it has made me infinitely sadder, it has also given me the capacity to experience every other emotion just as infinitely.

An op-ed on the Roe v Wade ruling told from the perspective of a staunch pro-choice feminist.

Song Recommendation: The Man - Taylor Swift

I wrote about the Roe v Wade ruling for my final paper in AMU3451 (Freedom and power in the media), mostly because I have a raging passion for women's rights. Not the "I condemn men in every way possible" type of feminism, but more of the "girls just want to have FUNdamental rights and equal pay" type of feminism.

So, when I heard that the inevitable happened, I, of course, lost whatever hope I had in the American justice system and constitution (not that there was much to begin with anyway).
But I'm not here to talk about politics or Republicans or the Supreme Court because that's a huge, heaping hornet's nest that I just do not want to get into.

No, I'm here to talk about the very essence of this issue which is just: women... and the fundamental right to choose what to do with their own goddamn bodies.

You might be thinking: "Why the hell does she give so much of a damn about a ruling that has nothing to do with her?"

Well, the very retraction of abortion access by a group of individuals, not only affects pregnant mothers in America, but it sets a global precedent for other governments. It's basically saying:

"WE, A MAJOR FIRST WORLD COUNTRY, ARE GOING TO TAKE AWAY A

ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD

TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK

WOMAN'S ACCESS TO A MAJOR HEALTHCARE PROCEDURE AND IF YOU STILL GO AHEAD WITH IT, WE'RE GOING TO TOSS YOU IN JAIL, ALONG WITH THE DOCTOR THAT DID IT, EVEN IF YOU WERE RAPED OR THE BABY WAS CONCEIVED OUT OF INCEST"

Call me a feminist all you want (it's really not the insult you think it is), but men shouldn't be telling women... or anyone else for that matter what to do with their bodies.

Did you know that the penalty for raping a woman, in the United States is actually markedly lesser than the pentalty a woman receives for getting an abortion, regardless of whether it was medically necessary or not? And that's not all, here's another cute tidbit for you: a doctor who actually performs said abortion, a job they were trained years for, could actually be sent to jail.

For doing their goddamned jobs. For saving a life.

And here I thought the world couldn't get any less fucked.

TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK

I'm ready for the "pro-lifers" to come in with the "life begins at birth" and "all lives are precious" arguments, and to you I say this: I'm sorry, but you aren't pro-life, you are pro-birth.

Because if you were pro-life, you would be regulating the mass shootings that happen so often now in American schools nationwide that it's... and I'm horrified as I type this, considered normal. Just another average day in the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

Land of the Free, my ass. More like the land where the uterus is more regulated than firearms.
Where's universal healthcare?
Where are the subsidies for marginalised communities, where abortions are even more essential?
What of mothers that could die if they carry the baby to term? Ectopic pregnancies? Potential stillbirths?

Tell me, what does your "all lives matter stance" argument say about that? When does the life of the mother suddenly outweigh that of the foetus? Is the mother not as deserving of life as her potential child?

The moment the very children you are attempting to "save" are born, your radio-silence on these matters are deafening and your pretentious preaching is suddenly silenced as you turn to other matters you deem more worth your time.

Take your hypocrisy and your cloyingly condescending court decisions and shove it down your throats, please, instead of up their uterus. -

Growing up on American media (High School Musical, Grease, FRIENDS and the such), it deeply, deeply saddens me to watch a country that I once thought had so much potential, that emphasised so particularly on their citizens' rights to choose, suddenly rip a fundamental right out of womens' grasps, handing it on a silver platter to governments who should have absolutely no say in the matter.

I mourn for the absolutely devastating blow that has been landed on nearly half a century's worth of women's rights advocacy,

I mourn for the generations to come that will have to continue to tirelessly pick up their protest signs and megaphones as they march for the right to their own bodies,

But ultimately...

I mourn for the future of young girls everywhere in America as they sit, shivering in their bone-chilling bathrooms alone, legs spread, bent and misshapen clothes hanger in hand as they are forced to make the impossible choice between unprepared motherhood, potential death or a life forever condemned behind bars, if they are caught choosing themselves over the life they did not want in the first place.

ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD
TWO STEPS BACK
ONE STEP FORWARD

MOTHER, AM I A WOMAN NOW?

Mother, I wore that dress you bought, it's pink, with frills around the bottom. You did my hair up in that ponytail and made me wear some lipstick. You told me girls are supposed to look pretty all the time. I'm five, but I hope I'm more of a girl now.

Mother, it's hard for me to sit with my legs crossed, I feel more at ease with them spread. You don't tell my brothers to do that, mother can you tell me why? Oh. Girls don't sit like that. Girls sit straight, tilt their body at an angle, and keep their hands on their lap. I'm seven, I'm looking pretty and sitting still. I hope I'm more of a girl now.

Mother, I'm not yelling, I'm just excited. Why do you tell me to keep my voice down during the football game? My dad and his friends are screaming because their team won, why can't I join in? Oh. That's not ladylike. I'm nine, I'll be quiet, sit still and look pretty. I hope I'm more of a lady now.

Mother, there's blood rushing out, everything hurts. What's happening to my body? Oh. Things are changing. You hand me pads and tell me this is the start of my womanhood. So was I not one all those years before? I'm twelve, my underwear is stained crimson, and it feels like my insides are being ripped apart. But I'll be quiet, sit still, look pretty because I know I'm a woman now.

Mother, it doesn't seem fair for us girls to set the table and clean up after the boys. They're playing out in the yard, and we're here scrubbing their spit off our plates. Mother your hands are scarred from all the meals you've made dad, but has he done the same for you? Oh. That's a job for the women. We're supposed to be in the kitchen, supposed to keep the house meals out for the men.

Written by
Shaura Naeem
Designed by
Januli
Wikejoon &
Chai Ting Ho.

I'm sixteen, I'll make sure the boys get fed. I hope that makes me a proper lady now.

Mother, you're looking to pair your daughter with a man. One that promises her a life in a cookie-cutter house, dog, and all. One that promises to make sure your daughter carries on being a woman. Because you're terrified, she won't be one away from you. That my womanhood was something I could lose. That I was only a woman if people around me agreed. What if that's not something I want? Oh. Women are supposed to want this. Women are supposed to want to carve slices of herself out for the men to dig in. I'm twenty four, and I'm tired of supposed to's. Mother, I am a woman, but maybe not the woman you want.

Mother, you tell me women are supposed to have children. We're meant to continue this cycle. But what if I poison them with the wisdom you've taught me? What if I ruin them like how you've ruined me? I can't blame you, but I do. For I'm a woman, looking up at the only woman that I know— a mirror of me. I'm getting old, and I'm being told my eggs are dying, that my purpose as a woman was fleeting. I'm a woman, but a wasted woman.

MOTHER, I HAVE BEEN A WOMAN ALL THIS TIME,

YET IT FEELS LIKE I'M NOT ENOUGH OF ONE.

Stacks of History

You whisper in my ear about the rumours. It's no surprise you've heard them

"Some of the kids have sex in the stacks."

You glance over at me, a devilish smirk on a perfect face

I suppose it's no coincidence you tell me this when we're searching for history books

Your tongue darts out to lick your lips—an invitation to sin

And the library feels staggeringly more intimate than it did moments ago

Did you get off on the idea of imagining me pressing myself against you between the history of Rome and Cyprus?

The idea of us writhing together, tangled mess of limbs hidden by centuries old academia?

Were you hoping I'd be okay being on my knees for you as your fingers gripped the spines of Homer and Wilde?

Or were we truly just searching for books?

Because I swear, then and there by the stacks, I wanted to make and destroy history with you

Written by Shaura Naeem

Design by Megan Tang

Hey you.

Nice of you to pretend to be surprised, but yes I have the uncanny ability to read facial cues. AND I hear a faint tinge of sadness in your voice.

You are emotionally disconnected, mentally exhausted - and probably physically underfed. A pile of tasks and obligations to wade through. Too many of them, too little of you.

You do what is required of you. Smile like you were taught how. You are always going to be what they think you are. You have cultivated within yourself to be constantly on the lookout for the speed bumps, potholes and sudden bends in the road ahead. Smooth things over and make them nice. Lie to everyone " I am happy" like it was a fulltime job. When you look at your life, it feels like the rest of your story has already been written.

breathe

A creature of duties. A life well-acted.

Inside, you are a comet that breaks into smaller and smaller pieces and just disappears.

Okay, you did your time and it's time to plot an escape.

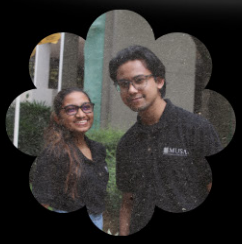
Have a break and allow yourself to step back from the edge. Give yourself an afternoon of absolutely nothing to do. Or dust off your passport and go somewhere - if time and money permit.

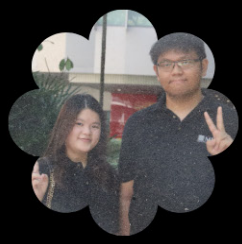
Be whatever you need to be. Do whatever occurs to you in the moment. See what it's like , and what you are like somewhere else. Look at yourself and see you. And love you.

Hit the reset button now. Breathe.

- anon.

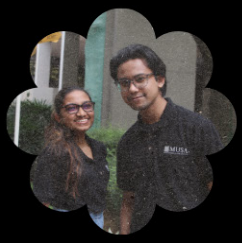
EXECUTIVES

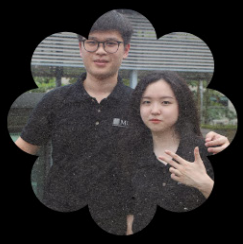
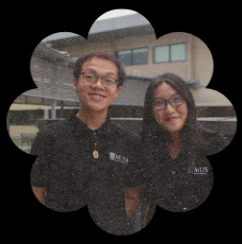


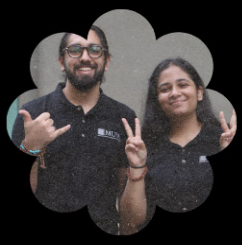


BUDGET COMMITTEE

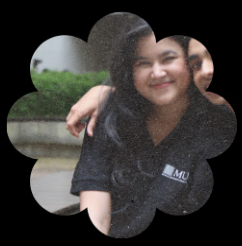
EDUCATION AFFAIRS COMMITTEE





ACTIVITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE



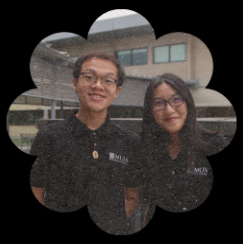
MEDIA AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

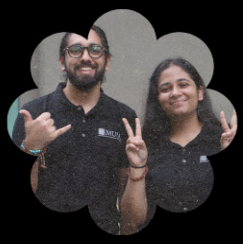
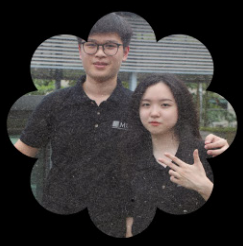
WELFARE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

CLUBS & SOCIETIES

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SERVICES

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES



last words from MUSA '22.

DOMINIC LEE

President

Leading a student organisation is not easy, let alone one as large in scale as MUSA. As far as University experiences go, the time I've spent in MUSA will count among my most cherished memories of my time here in Monash. Throughout the various challenges faced by MUSA 2022, I'm glad that I'm able to look back and count the Office Bearers I've spent the last year with as "family". Through them, I've learned what it means to be a leader and to become a better person. Hence, to MUSA 2022 and to all the students out there who gave me a chance, I want to sincerely thank all of you for allowing me to serve as your President. Is MUSA stressful? Yes. But do I regret anything? Nope, given the chance to start over, I'd likely have done it all the same. Nevertheless, if I had one regret, it would be that I wasn't able to complete everything that I've wanted to complete throughout my time in MUSA since 2020. But Rome wasn't built in a year, and future generations of MUSA will continue to take up the mantle of leadership for years to come. I wish future generations of MUSA all the best and hope that they experience the best of fortune and peace as experienced by MUSA 2022! Once again, thank you to MUSA 2022, the Monash student body and good luck to MUSA 2023!

IMAMUL ARIFFIN

Vice President

Serving the students of Monash has been one of the greatest privileges I have in my life. Thank for placing your trust to allow me to serve you! I hope the slogan "for the students, by the students" will be embedded continually for future MUSA's officer bearers, because at the end of the day, being elected as an office bearer is for the purpose of glamour, but ultimately to be of service of the student community..

CHAMATHKA JAYASEKARA

Vice President

Was it stressful? Oh yeah. But was it worth it? Hell yeah! I'm glad to have made some of my greatest University memories with MUSA 2022. More than everything I'm grateful to have had a place I belong, for the amazing people I met, and for the friendships that were made. I'm very thankful to each of my subcoms who did an amazing job and supported me throughout. I consider myself very lucky to have had such an amazing bunch to work with. Thank you MUSA 2022! and Good luck for 2023!

BRANDON LIM

General Secretary

Ciao Bella.

AURELLIA WARDANA

Treasurer

Being a Treasurer is not an easy task, but we made it out through the rocky road. MUSA has definitely improved my abilities in many ways.

LOUIS GARVIN

Treasurer

Without the existence of a great supportive MUSA team, it would have been a hell of a journey.

KOO SHI TIAN

Head of C&S

I remember starting off in January as a C&S Head not expecting to get much from this position, little did I know that being a member in MUSA would grant me with so many great and fond memories. Starting off with C&S week all the way to Monash Cup, I can't believe it's all over. Especially won't forget the amount of krisis we constantly face throughout the year :') Shoutout to Liza my partner hehe and big thanks to my C&S team for always believing in us <3 I won't forget all the inside jokes we had, Shu's meme board and JJ's side chicks constantly raiding the office HAHA. I hope everyone in C&S enjoyed their time serving throughout the year because you guys did a wonderful job (even with the all the external pressure). I wouldn't change a thing about this year, especially the people hehe. I'm looking forward to what the C&S committee of 2023 has in store, all the best to you guys!

ELIZAVETA LEYTGOLD

Head of C&S

MUSA 2022 has definitely been a memorable experience, and I want to thank my team for everything, from preparing for the on-campus C&S Week and Monash Cup after years of having both online to having our very own meme board in the office (shoutout to Mr. Worldwide and the handsome man). We've had our highs and lows, but we've made it through and had a great time doing it. You guys are the best team I could have ever asked for, and I'm going to miss solving last-minute things with y'all. Good luck and all the best to C&S 2023!!

DIAS SEKAR NABILA (KAYLA)

Head of MUISS

ALI RASHWAN MOHAMED

Head of MUISS

I'll be back

SHERREN ZHOU

MUISS Secretary

MUSA is a great place to advance our university life through immense opportunities and room for personal growth. It is incredible to see, understand, and learn the distinct personalities in each of the MUSA Office Bearers and relevant parties encountered during the term, allowing me to grow as a sophisticated individual for society. Thank you MUISS 2022 team, for your effort and determination in assisting the international students; while celebrating our diverse cultures that prompt excitement, euphoric experiences, and remarkable memories :3 Aside from the countless challenges and emotional roller coaster faced, I am grateful to be able to serve international students as a part of MUSA and MUISS. Looking forward to future improvements in 2023.

SACHEEV RAJESH NATHANI

MUISS Treasurer

I learned a lot in my year as a MUISS Treasurer; mostly how much my patience could be tested. On a more serious note, I'm glad to have been part of such a great team and I'm happy to have worked with all of you!

KHRESNA PARAMAPUTRA

MUISS Activities

What a year and what an experience it was!! With a great team in MUISS and MUSA 2022, this experience has given me some of the best moments of my life in Monash. Being an OB has its own challenges but no challenge have been too difficult to handle with my hardworking subcommittees working beside me and the continuous support from my fellow OBs in MUISS 2022. I am grateful and pleased to have been working with all individuals in MUSA and MUISS 2022 and I wish all of you the best in your future endeavors!!

HAMAAD DULVI

MUISS CRO

It's been an insane year w all the ups and downs but big props to the whole MUISS team for helping make MCN the best event of the yearr. Good luck to future CROs trying to top this year's MCN hehe

OMAR YASSER

MUISS Publicity

Its been a great experience being an OB in MUISS this year, planning many events and initiatives, helping international students out and seeing the positive feedbacks. MCN was undoubtedly the best MUSA event this year. Thanks to all OBs and subcoms who helped us make this year a successful and enjoyable one:)

JESSICA LIM

MUISS Editors

Dear all MUSA especially MUISS and MUISS MEDIA FAMILY, I move on today, strengthened by the support of all of you guys, unlike any other. Thank you for helping me to grow, allowing me to learn, and for all the kind words you've shared. I will miss you all. My heart is smiling, Sincerely.

MUHAMMAD RAIHAN HAFIZH

MUISS Editors

ZAINAB ILYAS

MUISS Welfare

Being in MUISS and working with such a supportive team has been a great experience!!

KANAK DUBE

MUISS CRO

This year was a rollercoaster ride!! But we love rollercoasters here, wouldn't want it any other way. MUISS is a family, once in a lifetime type of experience kinda thing. Being in the best department of muiss :p came with its challenges but the entire CRO team was nothing but resilient, hardworking and fun to work with. Thank you MUSA and MUISS for a lovely and learning experience, one that i will keep with me till the end ❤

KUAH YIN YEE (ANGELINA)

C&S Secretary

Truly grateful to have a chance to work with all the amazing people in C&S 2022. Special shoutout to my partner, Melissa for always having my back when crisis arises 😂 (appreciate it). All da best C&S 2023. Peace out.

LIM SIEW YING (MELISSA)

C&S Secretary

Waltzing into the C&S committee one fine November morning was one of the best decisions I've made that led me to where I am today. Couldn't be more grateful and appreciative towards C&S 2022 peeps for all the fun and laughter you've brought to me personally throughout this year. And to my partner in crime Angelina, couldn't have blossomed my google sheets skills without you :3 Good luck C&S 2023! Hope y'all are as fun and chill as us ;)

BATOOL ALI RIZVI

C&S Treasurer

In hindsight, I'm glad I applied to this division, C&S 2022 was best group of people to share this experience with. Couldn't ask for nicer, funnier and more cooperative people to get through this year with! Will I miss treasury? Yet to find out, but I'll definitely miss the learning and the people, shout out to Sorna and our subcoms! Goodluck to MUSA 2023, you might need it!

SORNAVALLI DHANAPALAN

C&S Treasurer

Grateful to have been a part of the awesome and supportive C&S team!

TAM SHU SHIAN

C&S Publicity Officer

Sooooo ready for retirement after two years of C(risis)lubs and Societies, but am definitely gonna miss the people in this wonderful division! Love you C&S 2022 FamBam <3 your dear meme PO signing out! And hoping that C&S can continue being the most fun division next year! (I'll be watching heh)

AGILL RAJ

C&S External Liaison Officer

Heyyy y'all! Looks like the year is finally over and well, on to the next year ahead! We hope we have served you well this term and you have enjoyed Monash Cup to the fullest. Ciaoz and see you all soon.

LEE JIA JING

C&S Sports Officer

Being in this department for 2 years is certainly not easy. However, there's a lot of irreplaceable memories and skillsets obtained throughout my first half of my University life, and many are thanks to here. C&S Division remains one of the most fun and chill team I've ever worked for, and I couldn't thank everyone in the team enough for it. Hopefully the successors carry on this environment down the road!

ALFAYER FAHROZI SUHANDRI

Publicity Officer

MUSA means more than just an organization; it's a family to me. MUSA has shaped me into an independent individual; everything that I gained here is priceless. From the bravery of talking with a lot of people for the very first time to handling a lot of great individuals with different personalities and backgrounds, it's a once-in-a-lifetime journey that I took. I'm forever grateful that I made this decision. To my partners, Chien and Wini, thank you for being by my side to serve in this position. Huge thanks to both of you for accepting me as your partner, we did our best to serve the student community. To my publicity fam, thank you so much for rowing the boat with us and always being there whenever needed. Without you, MUSA this year couldn't stand up and stand out. So cheers to everything that we've done, and I hope to see more in the future! Well, people say that a part of a journey is the end; however, I hope that this end can be the beginning of our long-term relationships in the future. Remember to keep your heads and eyes open at all times. When you have problems, come to them, solve them with an open mind, and never run from them! :) Once again, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to serve the student body! 😊

LEE CHIEN YI

Publicity Officer

This year has been challenging for everyone, whether you are a MUSA committee, a subcommittee, or a student focusing on your studies. It's a daily struggle to balance between school, extracurricular activities, and social life, but we've all made it! Didn't we? *a pat on the back* Next, I would like to thank the MUSA committee members for being so welcoming when I first entered MUSA. Besides the warm welcome, I am also grateful that each interaction, even the short ones, provided me with the opportunity to improve and learn more about myself. It's been great working with y'all! Thank you for being so understanding all this time! Lastly, from the bottom of my heart, I would like to thank my never-not-striving partner, Alfa, for providing guidance and being an understanding partner. Also, huge thanks to our subcommittees for putting in the effort to help the student body with us. I could never ask for a better team! I'll see you guys when I see you!

NIRAEN PARANJOTHY

Activities Chairpersons

It has truly been such an experience to be a part of MUSA for 3 years straight, from a subcom to an office bearer! the last year has genuinely been a memorable one for me especially since I got to bring all my visions to life with physical events! I couldn't have done it without my passionate team working relentlessly and having the support of my besties <3 however all good things must come to an end so for the last time 'let's reel it in', it's been a good run MUSA!

YAP MENG YAH

Activities Chairpersons

It's been a great pleasure to be a part of MUSA 2022 and given the opportunity to serve the students as MUSA's Activities Chairperson. To my MUSA another half, Niraen, will all my heart, thank you for guiding and tolerating me throughout the year as my reliable partner, never would have done it without you, in all honesty. And of course, to my team of lovely and cute subcommittees: Anna, Amyra, Sonia, Michelle, Wey Ling, Kar Min, Shira, Faiha, Wai Kwang, Dylan, Kent, Thomas, Stanley, Jessica, and Natalie, thank you all for being patient with us, supporting and being a part of us up until this day. Glad to say despite the ups and downs faced externally and internally, we have made it this far and our term has come to an end. However, you will be seeing me in the office again next year :P Therefore, with a heavy heart, goodbye to MUSA 2022, and hello! MUSA 2023.

AISHATH INAN MUAVIYATH

Welfare Officer

MUSA 2022 has been such a memorable rollercoaster ride that there's too many things I want to say, so I'll say only the one most important thing; thank you to Adrian, Matt, Saf, Osman, Jason, Jie Xi, Chloe, Vihaan, Aisha, Kouthar, Iris & Heidi, for being the loveliest team throughout the whole year, you guys really made the department what it is and I know I'll miss you guys the most <3 and of course, thank you to Jasper for being the best partner I could have ever asked for and I can't wait to do it all again next year in MUSA 2023! <33

CHOW KHIN NYP

Welfare Officer

To the students, it has been an honor serving everyone of you and making sure the welfare of the student community is taken care of! To the best welfare team, you guys are the best and I appreciate every single one of you so much! This year has been a really challenging one but I'm so glad to have been able to do it with y'all! Be proud of yourselves for achieving all that you have achieved! To MUSA 2022, thank you for giving me the chance to serve the students alongside you all! I have learned a lot through this experience and will never forget the moments we all had together! Lastly to Ina, you are the best partner I could ever ask for and I don't know what Id i'd ever do without you! MUSA 2022 has been fun! Time to do it all over again in MUSA 2023!

HEW ZHAO YAN (YANEESE)

Wom*n's Officer

Being a part of MUSA 2022 has given me the opportunity to serve the women and marginalized communities on campus as the Wom*n's Officer, having the chance to promote inclusivity for students through our initatives has been a privilege.Thank you to the students for your tremendous support towards our initiatives and what our department stands for <3 To my amazing partner, Aoi, I'm so grateful to have gone through this memorable and fun adventure with you as it has been such a blessing to work with such a dedicated, reliable and supportive partner like you I'm proud of the both of us for what we've achieved and for making it this far despite the challenges we've faced, I wouldn't have it any other way mwah <3 Finally, I would like to thank our passionate and ambitious subcommittee members: Isha, Jeremy, RueYie, Amelia, Padma, Nadah, Dahami, Darya and Raveesha, for bringing our events to life, MUSA Wom*n's 2022 has the best team that I could ever ask for! Yaneese, signing out :p

AOI TAKEDA (ANGELINA)

Wom*n's Officer

First, I would like to thank every student who has taken interest in our departments and have engaged in our events and Instagram posts and our lovely subcommittees who have helped us to run as 2022 Wom*n's Officers Department. I hope our department has done our best to commit to our motto and have strived to creat a safe and supportive environment by promoting the culture of non-discrimination and acceptance by having events such as Safe in Space, SRH and You, and code red care package giveaway , spreading awareness of diversity that Monash Malaysia has. However, admittedly there are still room for improvements to make every students' campus life better. Hence, I hope to reflect my learnings from this term to next year and contribute to a batter university experience for all, especially for the female students and the queer community. Overall, engaging in this role has taught me a lot and gave me a lot of opportunities to grow as an individual which I am very thankful for. Last but not least, I want to thank my amazing partner Yaneese (Zhao Yan) for being very supportive and reliable partner. Without you, I couldn't have commit to this role and have a lot of fun despite the workload and hardships that we had. I would never forget all the memories we made and will miss them a lot. Thank you sooooo much!<3 Again thank you everyone who has supported Wom*n's Officers Department 2022, and hope you all will give a lot of love and support for next year as well.

SHAUN MATHIAS

School of Business Representativ e

To support and guide the largest school population in Monash from an academic and leisure standpoint was a daunting task, and I would give all credit for our accomplishments to our team. Condensing their competencies and calibre into a few words is difficult, but they were paramount in driving our ambitions for the year. I thank the students of SOB who have supported us throughout this journey, as MUSA is centralized around catering to the student population. We hope the future SOB Representatives can continue to drive SOB to its fullest potential. And finally, to Lia (if you read this), although we only met via a rare circumstance, I would not choose to have anyone else as a partner for this role. Thank you everyone

NATHALIA SAMUEL PANGESTU

School of Business Representative

First, a shoutout to Alfa for introducing me to the position and MUSA. Secondly, I would like to thank my whole SOB team and those who stayed until the end of the year. It was great to have you guys as my family in MUSA. Being exposed to a significant leadership position has allowed me to learn by doing. I have never been so grateful to be exposed to a fantastic community and able to work with the other departments. Lastly, shoutout to my partner in crime, Shaun Mathias; thank you for always being there. You always amazed me, which encouraged me to learn more from you. Anyways, kudos to everyone in MUSA and my SOB team and good luck to my successors~

SHARIFAH AMINAH

School of Arts Social Sciences Representative

LONGEST YEAR OF MY LIFE but I now have a new family :) Thanks to everyone in my team, everyone who supported me, I really couldn't have done it without y'all :')

ABDUL NAEEM GREEN

School of Arts Social Sciences Representative

It's been a year huh. Passed by quite fast. It's been an honour to serve as the Male SASS Rep. Been a weird journey not gonna lie. Had its ups and its downs. Fun times and more not so fun but stressful times. Made a lot of new friends along the way that's for sure and definitely was a great way to interact and get to know more of you. I'd like to just say thanks for my partner Aminah for really pulling through, she for real the GOAT. I'd also like to thank my wonderful team for carrying so much. It's been a rough year for me personally but they really helped get things done and moving. Anyways on that note, thank you for having me SASS and allowing me this opportunity. I wish you guys luck in the future, and am confident Ariel's gonna do just great.

CHEE MIN HAO

School of Information Technology Representative

Welp, one year passed just like that. Everything felt like it was yesterday, but nonetheless it's time to pass the baton off to the next generation of hopeful leaders. Thank you to all who I've crossed paths with in MUSA that have gave me valuable lessons to learn regardless of aspects, and of course I can't say this without my subcommittee team - Alicia, Caleb, Christine, Ashley, Tze Ying, Kai Yun, Sean, William, Jun, Jasper, Kien Hooi. As the final act closes its curtains, so do the people. I hope that whatever has been maintained and built in 2022 can be continued in 2023 with some new sparks. After all, not only we stand up and stand out, we also do things for the students, as students ourselves. before I end, shouting this on top of my added 15kg fat that was gained throughout this MUSA term. SIIIIIIUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUUU To end is to also close with a bang. So, commencing subcommittee protocol 259 - HEHE 开饭咯!!

ALLY TEH

School of Information Technology Representative

MUSA is a great place to develop, learn and meet new people from all sorts of backgrounds. However, managing this school representative position is not an easy task. A big thank you to all of my subcommittee members (Alicia, Caleb, Christine, Ashley, Tze Ying, Kai Yun, Sean, William, Jun, Jasper, and Kien Hooi) for their significant contributions over the course of the current year. Without them, I contend that it would be impossible to pull off events like the Industry Engagement Fair and the Industry Trip. Last but not least, I want to thank my wonderful work colleague Min Hao for helping me throughout the term by serving as a mentor, friend, senior and listener.

LOH JIA QUAN

School of Engineering Representative

Master have given EngCom Dobbies a sock. EngCom Dobbies are free!

LIM SUE WERN

School of Engineering Representative

Looking back, MUSA had help me grow tremendously throughout this whole year (so, ya thanks to JQ for dragging me into this experience). Also.... found a picture of the entire committee at the start and end of our term on my phone that day (to reader: feel feel to head to the office to take a look at the before and after picture XD). But all in all the pictures just reminded me of how time flies amd how far the entire committee had achieved. I had actually spent one whole year with the committees and you guys had been a huge help to me (couldn't had made it withouthout them). Hence, they definitely deserve a big shout out <3. And ya as per what JQ said, Dobby is free hehehehe.

MEGAN ASHLEY HOO

School of Science Representative

Shoutout to our SOSSY 2022 team (Angel, Addina, Angeline, Ai Aie, Mark, Ryan, Tze Yi, Qiao Yi, Zoe, Elika), our events wouldn't have been made possible without you guys! Also, if it wasn't for MUSA, I wouldn't have had the opportunity to meet my amazing partner Adrian Teh O Ais. Stay tuned for our Linkedin post.....

ADRIAN TEH

School of Science Representative

Working in MUSA have brought me wonderful oppurtunities in creating fond memories for the students while working alongside my team (Angel, Addina, Angeline, Ai Aie, Mark, Ryan, Tze Yi, Qiao Yi, Zoe, Elika). And a special shoutout to my partner in crime, Meganmind for being the best partner to work with!

LEE JIN SYUEN (JANICE)

School of Pharmacy Representative

At times when things get overwhelming, these people here whom I could turn to for support made the journey worthwhile. It has been a memorable experience indeed; and I'm proud to have been part of the team!

KONG SHI HAO (JAMES)

School of Pharmacy Representative

It has been a rollercoaster ride with ups and downs! Nevertheless, it was a fruitful journey which has transformed my campus life in ways that I couldn't have possibly anticipated! Deepest gratitude to Janice Lee, my partner in crime and right hand man and my fellow subcomittees who selflessly contributed to MUSA SOP for the benefit of the pharmacy students. There's one thing that I wish to share to whoever is reading this: when you are walking down the darkest path of your life,take heart and remember that there's always light that shines through the darkness, all you need is PERSEVERANCE!

MUAWIYA MAHOMED

School of Medicine & Health Sciences Representative

I'm incredibly grateful to have been a part of this journey with the MUSA '22 family, my reliable and diligent rep partner Vaish, and our fantastic subcommittee. It certainly was an insightful experience – the deflating downs, and the more-than-redeeming ups. I wish the best to all the wonderful people who've made this an experience to cherish for many years to come!

VAISHNAVY RAO

School of Medicine & Health Sciences Representative

The journey might have been rocky but I managed to pull through with the help of everyone in MUSA including my subcommittee. It was a great memory and a badge of experience. Im glad to have been part of the team. mind for being the best partner to work with!

last words from MONGA'22.

DANELLE YAP

There is no I in team but there is a ME; Shoutout to Jing Wei for this opportunity to be her WHOLE team.

CHARLENE GOH

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be a part of MONGA's graphic design team! And also thank you Chai Ting for the support and guidance you provide!

MEGAN TANG

gRapHic dESiGn is mY pASsioN. but on a serious note, I've really enjoyed working in MONGA and I'm immensely grateful for being given this opportunity. Thank you Chai Ting <3

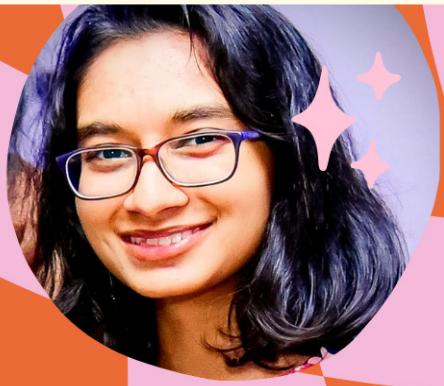
WINNIE OOI

it's been an amazing one year journey in MONGA. super grateful for the people i met here and also the experiences gained in graphics design are also invaluable esp when i have the opportunity to try different styles of graphics design that i've not tried before!! love monga owo

TAN ZI SWAN

It was fun being a part of MONGA this year! I got to explore and try out different design styles I wouldn't dare to try by myself! Special thanks to Chai Ting too for being the best leader I could ever ask for (girl really did everything to make sure all the designs are great!!)

JANULI WIJEKOON



It's been an amazing experience working as a graphic designer for MONGA the past year. They gave me the opportunity to express creativity through graphic design while gaining new experiences in the world of design and art. Thank you for everything MONGA :)

MEGAN CHING

So grateful to have joined MONGA this sem ! Special shoutout to Chai Ting for everything <3

SHAWN WONG

MONGA has been part of my life for the past 7 years, and being part of MONGA for the last 2 years co-creating many of these creative pieces just felt unreal. MONGA felt like home, and I'll always be proud to say that I was part of this big family. I love my photos, every single one of them, hope you love yours too.

WONG ZI YI

Celebrating 2 years in MONGA (yay). This year, it feels so amazing to actually be present on campus and capture all the happy faces through my lens. Shoutout to media team for being such a fun bunch, I love you guys!! Fk covid, 2022 was amazing.

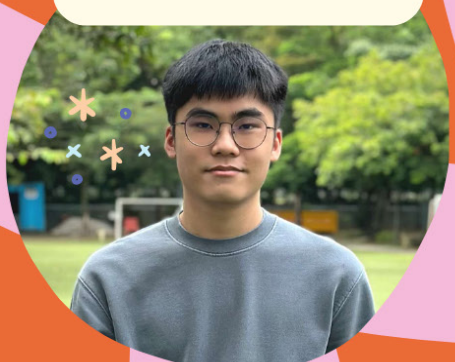
NURSYAFIQA ALEEYA

It's been such a joyful journey with MONGA. I met such interesting and wonderful people who share the same creative passion as me and suffice to say, I have never felt more satisfied and content working in a group than with my media team... MONGA teamwork is elite no cap xx. Forever grateful that I got to be a part of MONGA and for the friends I made through the experience and opportunity. One of the best decisions I made in 2022, definitely wouldn't have it any other way.

JERRY FOONG

Never would I have imagined being able to meet so many people who could vibe so well with me. Went in for the passion and out of curiosity but came out with people who mean more than friends to me. MONGA has become one of the homes I can go back to where I can relax and just be me unapologetically and I hope that I was that type of friend to the rest of MONGA too? Lots and love and laughs for the 2022 team ❤❤❤

YANG THONG CHEN



Make friends first, take photos second, play tetris third. In no particular order. Either way, MONGA is still the right choice.

LUANNE CHOONG

I've learnt and explored so much for the past year through MONGA's lens, it's been fun being part of this family :)

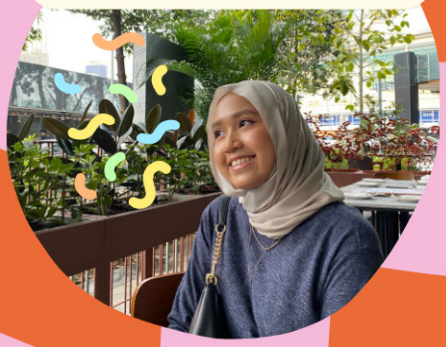
LIM XIN YI

There's no F in MONGA but there's friends and fun. MONGA media 2022 has been wonderful, and I'm beyond grateful to have been able to spend one of last semesters with this amazing bunch of people :)

TIMOTHY WEE

From hunting down spiderman, to exploring KL in the middle of the night. Monga and the community of subcoms truly added colours to my uni life.

NURUL IRDINA

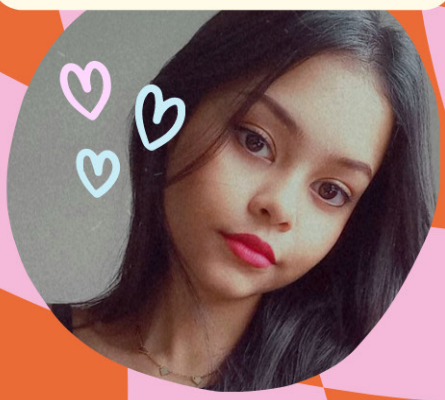


I've been in MONGA for two years now and I can say that 2022 has been unforgettable, period. It has been an amazing way to end my final year in Monash as class of 2022! I've left my mark now - it may fade, but will alway remain and I'm okay with that. But there's only one con: leaving MONGA and the friends I made :(

NATASHA MAYA

Had a blast! Beyond grateful to be surrounded with creative and talented people!

SREANA HABIBA



I loved being a part of MONGA! Loved the creativity, the support and all the stories, and especially loved how many swifties we had on our team <3

SHABNAM KAUR

I'd never felt such freedom of expression until I was a part of MONGA. The experience of being able to write for MONGA has been equal parts enthralling and memorable.

ELLY ZULAIKHA

MONGA is truly a creative outlet made by the students, for the students— I wish more students would join in and share their art in the future because when you leave and you look back, you see a piece of you live inside MONGA's pages forever, and I think that's beautiful for memories sake.

SHAURA NAEEM

Being a part of MONGA allowed me such freedom to create and explore ideas I'm so proud of. More importantly, being able to listen to different students and have the privilege to share their stories was incredibly rewarding. The environment here was so positive and supportive—and I do hope more of y'all join in—you have no idea what you're missing out on!

AROOJ NASIM

Had an amazing time! So grateful for all the people, stories and priceless memories!

JUYEONG KWAK

Great to be in this amazing community! I hope I can attribute more of my original viewpoint next year. Looking forward to see how MONGA change me and vice versa.

SAN JUN HOE

A year full of events means a year's worth of fun. It's been amazing to work with everyone over at MONGA. Shoutout to my homies on the media team, you all always make everything fun, exciting, and worthwhile. It's been awesome to be part of this mini family; it definitely made 2022 wonderful!

SEAN TAN

The not a subcomm contributor subcomm or something lul.. Had lots of fun with you guys!

AERIN TANG

It has been a great year being a part of MONGA and working with this creative bunch!

CHUNG PHEI SING

Working under MONGA was fun but I also loved working under Chai Ting <3. I am glad I get to be involved in this creative community, even if my creativity was sucked dry I still got to contribute my own ideas and see other people's.

ASHLEY LIM

HEAD OF WRITERS

"Sometimes writing can be painful. You have to sit with the darkest of inks and let it flow."

Fortunately, this is not one of those times. For as long as I can remember, I've loved writing, putting out my words, as vulnerable as they are, into the world. There's a sense of permanency and resilience about it. It's no wonder that words of affirmation is one of my top 3 love languages. So, instead of dwelling on the finality of my term this year as editor, I'd rather express my gratitude, the best way I can, to three very special people.

To my favourite cinnamon roll, Chai Ting: You are our team's heart. Your optimism and positive outlook on life is as solid and stoic as your unwavering faith. I honestly don't think MONGA could be what it is without your creative vision. You are so incredibly kind and caring in a world where that is often taken for granted and the world would be a much better place if all of us could be a little bit more like you. You are sunshine personified, so much so that you light up every single room you walk into. Thank you for being that light at the end of the tunnel that we all need, but please remember that there will be a time where even the brightest of lights can be inevitably eclipsed and that we will always be here for you when that time comes.

To my work wife, Jingwei: You are the mind of our quartet, with the perfect blend of beauty, brains and humour. Of all the girls, I've known you the longest and thank you for letting me (voluntarily? involuntarily?) drag you into the MONGA team hehe. Your solidarity in the face of endless event coverage requests, (some) anonymous student criticism and insistent Instagram DMs is honestly inspiring. Not just anyone can handle being a liaison to our magazine and you've done the job beautifully and I couldn't ask for a better person to be our collective spokesperson.

Thank you for all our early mornings in the office where it's just you and I working in comfortable silence, knowing that you will always (literally and figuratively) have my back.

To my favourite bad b*tch, Tshee: You're the very soul of MONGA, with the best sense of style I've ever encountered. When I first met you, not going to lie, I was initially afraid because you radiated a pretty intimidating aura. But you are actually one of the most fiercely loving and deeply caring people I've ever met, although you may not express it as extravagantly as other people. You constantly live on the edge of exhaustion and often take on most of your burdens onto your own shoulders while still trying your best to make time for others and I wish I could have just a fraction of your strength, especially being an international student in a foreign country. Thank you for showing me that life has to be lived as authentically as possible.

Our term as 2022 Editors has undoubtedly been a roller coaster of emotions but for better or worse, I'm glad that I got to weather every single moment of it with you guys. We may have started this journey last year as strangers, who were thrown together and left to handle the very first physical magazine post COVID, but I'm eternally grateful and privileged that I am able to call three of you my friends and confidants. MUSA would have been a dull canvas of greys, blacks and whites without you girls so again, thank you and I love all three of you. No matter how, where or when we go from here, you will always have a special place in my heart as the best team and friends I've ever worked with <3

xoxo,
Ash.

CHAI TING HO

HEAD OF DESIGN

Bite-sized digital letters for the souls that made my time here in MONGA a magical one 💌

To my editor girlies, I'm so thankful that our paths crossed a year ago :') I love how we just instantly click from the get-go. The 4 of us are so different in so many ways, but omg our chemistry is a 100/10 for reals. I couldn't ask for a better team to do this with.

To Jing Wei, you're such a boss babe man, you always inspire me so much with how passionate you are with the things you love, and how you strive to live your life to the fullest. Thank you for always making sure that I'm not overworking myself and for always supporting me especially during the high-stress mag design season, it means so much to me, really ;-; Know that I got your back too always, care about you so so much girl! Big love to you for also never failing to make me laugh with all your punny puns and chaotic stories too, okay la they're quite funny :p. To Ashley, you're one of the bravest and strongest people I know. I always love hearing you speak your mind and share your thoughts about things that you care about. I love how you always keep going on even when things get rocky, your strength is truly like no other. Thank you for always welcoming me with the loudest "Chai Tingggg!" and for all our conversations about anything and everything, I really cherish all of this ;-; You'll always have a friend in me through the good and the bad, here for you always. To Tshe, you truly have one of the biggest, kindest hearts I know. You're always willing to go the extra mile to make sure everyone's okay and having a good time, and you are always so present and genuine in all that you do, which really inspires me to do the same. Thank you for always making me feel so heard and seen with the small things that you do, for always checking up on me and for being such a safe space. I'll always be here for you okay? I gotchu girl <3

I can confidently say that you three are definitely friends for life. Thank you for always believing in me and for always showering me with so much love and warmth in your own way. More than anything, thank you for being who you are :') Although we're going into different seasons of our lives venturing into different things, you girls will always be a constant in my life. Love you three so so much! (and let's make Korea happen guys hehe, it WILL make it out of the group chat :^))

To my amazing, talented subcomms and contributors: Megan Tang, Megan Ching (we have 2 megan's on the team HAHA), Zi Swan, Winnie, Januli, Daniel, Aerin, Charlene, Phei Sing & Gerald! It's been a HUGE honour to be able to work with you :') Over everything, I'm so blessed to get to know you all personally. I'm also SO proud of how much you've grown in your time here, more than you know! Please keep designing, keep diving into your creativity, you all are so talented in your own ways, and you all never fail to amaze me with your crafts! Yall, these are the peeps that make sure our insta feed and magazine pages look so aesthetically pleasing. You all deserve all the credits for all your hard work. You all played a significant part on the team, thank you for saying yes to being part of this. Love you all so much ;-; <3 let's all continue to keep in touch okie?

I have so much more left to say, but no words can really describe how attached I am to MONGA and everyone who's been a part of my Editor journey. It's so bittersweet closing this door, but I'll always look back at this period of my life with the biggest smile on my face because of all of you. To Ashley, Tshe, Jeanette & Danelle, you have all of my support and love as you run as MONGA Editors next year! YOU GO GIRLS, you're going to do amazing I know it <3

💌✨, chai ting

JING WEI LAU

HEAD ADMIN

What better way to sum up my time in MONGA than listing down the pros and cons of being MONGA's admin? :'D

PROS

- Having the chance to work with 3 immensely talented human beings and more than grateful to have developed a unique bond with each one of them <3
(A) Being able to bring creative media projects to life with my partner-in-crime, Tshe <3
(B) Being able to grab breakfast and occasionally watch Brooklyn 99 in office with my workwife, Ashley :'D
(C) Getting cookies and cute encouraging notes from my favourite hufflepuff, Chai Ting during assignment weeks <3
- Having my own office/ "woman"cave to hide in and do work when I don't feel like socializing with other humans hehe
- Being able to unleash my 'punny' self for the sake of MONGA's social media presence (if you guys aren't BOARD of my puns yet, it means I NAILED it :p)
- Got to recruit an admin assistant this year!! Thank you Danelle for lifting so much of my burdens this year and I'm more than proud that you've been elected as my successor <3 all the best next year ily

CONS

- Admin work > assignments (I have priorities ^^)
- High chance of being called out on Monash Confessions for not featuring some students on MONGA's Instagram page (am i sorry? Maybe...no NOT REALLY we can't possibly feature every one of you on our feed :')
- Receiving weird DMs on MONGA's IG (some of yall should stop asking us how to book a badminton court or where to buy a cake)
- Having only one subcomm (I LOVE U DANELLE but I wish I had more subcomms to spoil <3)
- Being constantly reminded of how broke MONGA is :((jk but we really do need new equipment)
FORMS, FORMS, FORMS and MORE FORMS

In all seriousness, I am beyond grateful to have been a part of MUSA's most creative department in my final year. The opportunity to serve Monashians relatable and intriguing content has been more than fulfilling and my uni life wouldn't be complete without MONGA :') To my girls, Tshe, Ashley, and Chai Ting, I couldn't have asked for better partners and I am so proud of us to have made it this far. All three of you have showered me with so much love and support throughout this entire journey. Honestly, I wouldn't be here writing this without you guys :')

To the rest of the team, I would like to thank you for all the effort you have put into MONGA's projects. I know it hasn't been easy for everyone to juggle both studies and MONGA duties yet you guys managed to create tons of amazing content for the student body. This publication honestly wouldn't have been possible without your tremendous contribution and the four of us are truly grateful for that <3

Last but not least, I would like to thank all the students who have shown us constant support. We really hope that all of you enjoyed seeing our content as much as we enjoyed making it because the heart of MONGA always lies in the student body <3 With that said, I am more than ready to step down from my role as an editor and begin a new chapter of my own. I wish nothing but the best for next year's editors and I WILL come back to visit HEHE (pls don't throw away my Ghibli posters in the Editors office tq :')

Sincerely,
Your punny admin

TSHETEN YANGDEN BHUTIA

HEAD OF MEDIA

It's crazy how I'm typing this at 4 am, and Chai Chai is going to kill me because I was supposed to submit this last night!!!! But I just wanted to try my best to sum up my year as the MUSA Editor.

I joined Monga when one of my SOIT seniors, aka Mikey, told me that I should try applying as a subcomm because I give off Monga vibes (IDK what that means, but I am assuming it means someone coolllll). 2 years later, Monga has become the most significant part of my uni life.

To my predecessor Jared. Thank you so much for believing in me even when I felt like I wasn't good enough. You have always been patient, and I keep returning to you whenever I have an issue. You have always been there for me, and I couldn't be more grateful. I hope I lived up to your expectations as a successor :')

To Jingeybells, Cinnamroll, and Miss Kpopismylife, It's crazy how I put my trust in three random strangers and decided to run for such a significant role (I would have killed myself if we had bad team dynamics). It feels like yesterday that we were sitting on zoom for hours, preparing for the election. Being an international student has been challenging, and you guys felt like home to me in a foreign land. Your presence made me feel like it was okay to once rely on someone else. I try to act tough, but y'all could always see right through me. I genuinely think that you guys made me a better person. I hope you girls know how grateful I am for everything you all do for me and how much I value our friendship. My love for you guys knows no bounds. If only you could see yourself through my eyes. You girls are one of the most talented people I've ever met. I am so glad our paths crossed, and I hope we all can stay as friends for a long time.

To my Subcoms Xin Yi, Syaf, Dina, Timothy, Jerry, Zi Yi, Sean, Shawn, Jun, Luanne, and Thong Chen, thank you so much for believing in me and applying as a media subcomm. I vividly remember interviewing every single one of you, and seeing you all grow so much in a few months has been the proudest moment for me. I cherish every single moment that we have spent together. All the random lunch and dinner sessions, the never-ending meetings at the MSC table, staycation at KL (the escapism walkkkkk/project so lit istgg), walks around campus to take pictures and the haram stickers you guys send in the group chat T-T. I'll miss taking Polaroids every time you guys come to meet me in my office. Thank you for showing unconditional love and support to your head <3 I SINCERELY LOVE YOU ALL FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. To the remaining talented Monga subcomms and contributors, thank you so much for being a part of the team. It was such an honour seeing all the content you guys put forward. I love reading all the writing pieces and admiring all the designs (ngl I have asked Chai Ting to teach me to start designing too). Without you, Monga wouldn't be what it is. I truly appreciate you guys <3 To the student body, thank you so much for believing in me and electing me as the editor for two consecutive years. Transitioning from an online to a physical semester wasn't easy (especially with the amount of pressure we had), but seeing you guys appreciate our work really pushed and motivated me. It genuinely makes me so happy, and I hope to continue this next year as well, so please look forward to Monga 2023.

Lastly, to Tshe, please don't be so hard on yourself. I know this year hasn't been easy on you, and despite everything, you still managed to get through it. I hope you noticed that you have changed. You have. You have become stronger. You started saying "no" more often. You opened up to many people and started talking about your feelings. You can eat alone now. You can travel all by yourself. You love Monga so much that you are doing it again next year (RIP mental health), but I hope you continue to stand up for yourself and do what is best for Monga. I hope you can execute all the projects you couldn't take on this year. But mostly, promise me that you will not forget to enjoy along the way. You know you deserve the world.

Love,
Yours Tshe

MONGA 2022

HAPPY
2022
MONASH University
EOS RP

Attributions

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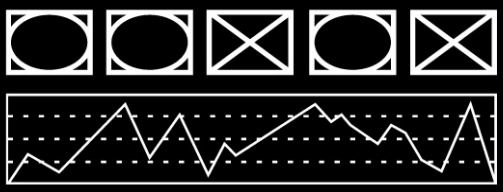

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