

BVIS MAGAZINE ZINE

HCMC, 2023-2024

MR SHOOTER!

We get to know what Mr Shooter REALLY thinks with an in-depth farewell interview

TAKE A SIESTA

Why a midday nap could be the key to better life balance and a happier head!

THE ERAS TOUR

We break down Taylor's record-breaking tour and what makes it such a success

YOUR MOVE

YEAR 13 SHARE THEIR BEST PLAYS
FOR ACING YOUR EXAMS





BRITISH VIETNAMESE
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
HO CHI MINH CITY

A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL



4

MR SHOOTER'S
FAREWELL
INTERVIEW



17

Y12'S EXCITING
INTERNATIONAL
AWARD

LAUFEY AND
THE JAZZ
REVIVAL

24



CONTENTS

3 Letter from the Editor

EDUCATION

- 4 A Farewell Interview with Mr Shooter
- 6 Y13 Study Methods - How to Ace Your Exams
- 8 Photography - Nature: Through the Urban Lens
- 12 International Award Expedition
- 14 Student-led Clubs Interview
- 16 Q&A with Sie - 'The Great Exodus'
- 18 Forester's University Experiences
- 19 Behind the Scenes of BVIS
- 20 Gardening Club - What Is It?

ARTICLES

- 21 The Portrait of Lady Macbeth
- 24 How Jazz Was Revived by Gen-Z
- 26 Who is Marilyn Monroe?
- 28 What is Memory and How Does It Work?
- 30 4 Ways to Stop You Doom-Scrolling
- 32 Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour
- 34 Why a Siesta Could Improve Your Day
- 36 Fun Socks: Why They Rock!

**CREATIVE
WRITING**

- 38 Poetry Competition Entries
- 41 Gothic Fiction

REVIEWS

- 43 Book Reviews
- 46 Film Reviews
- 47 TV Reviews



Behind the magazine: MEET THE CREW

Year 8

Nguyen Khac Nguyen Anh (Tony)
Quach Nhu Minh (Kate)

Year 9

Le Van Thach

Year 10

Ngo Thuy Minh
Nguyen Binh Ann
Nguyen Xuan Minh (Mark)
Paris Ngoc Van Amelia

Year 11

Phung Nguyen Thien Ngan (Ruby)
Tran Kim Khanh
Vu Huy Ngoc Khanh (Karl)

Year 12

Dang Viet To Trinh (Suri)
Khuu Huynh Phuong Nghi (Suri)
Le Bao Ly
Lee SiHoo (Jake)
Mai Minh Thu (Katie)
Nguyen Le Ha My
Nguyen Pham Quynh Anh (Kelly)
Nguyen Phuong Nhi
Nguyen Thanh Truc (Anna)
Nguyen Viet Anh Thu (Emil)

Year 13

Dao Viet Ha (Hallie)
Dinh Ba Duy (Jackson)
Nguyen Hoang Tue Minh
Nguyen Lam Phuong Nghi (Ivy)
Nguyen Thanh Trung (Lewis)

Special thanks to our teachers:

Mr De Lisle
Ms Rose



**Editor in chief:
Dao Viet Ha (Hallie) - 13V**



Tada! It's me Hallie! You've obviously seen me going around the school acting as the head student and keeping track of my fellow Hanoi-ers. However, you probably didn't know that in the meantime I was also busy curating this masterpiece.

Last year, I was a part of the media club; while we were rumaging through projects to take on, Mr Clark proposed the idea of having a school magazine! Without any hesitation, I immediately took on the suggestion, planned out future operations with our media teachers and here we are!

I would be lying if I said that I wasn't even a **tiny bit** nervous when taking on this responsibility. However, once we assembled a team of reliable and hardworking students, I couldn't have asked for anything better. So firstly I wanted to give a shoutout to all my members - aka the names you can see on the previous page. You all have made this project as successful as it was and I really appreciate every one of you!

Dear Reader, from Editor

The theme of this year's magazine is a "free - for - all!" I wouldn't put any restrictions on our first ever magazine, would I? These articles you're about to see won't follow a distinct theme and that's the fun of it!

From book reviews, to Taylor Swift, to gardening, to studying tips, to classic literature... this magazine will have EVERYTHING. Our writers were able to showcase their abilities combined with their interests, producing some of the most intriguing articles you'll be able to enjoy right here.

It's so interesting seeing both the academic and personal lives of our lovely students! Hopefully our lovely readers can take some inspiration and incorporate this content into your own lives!

Although this is my first time being the editor in chief, this will also be my last. However, this certainly won't be the last ever school magazine! Next year, there will be a new editor in chief, new writers, new designers and overall a brand new crew. So if any one of you is interested, make sure to keep track on club signups, contact Mr De Lisle for more details and I'm looking forward to what will continue after this!

With love,
Hallie



AN INTERVIEW WITH MR SHOOTER

Written by Nguyen,
Thanh Trung
(Lewis) - 13C

As we say goodbye to Mr Shooter, Lewis interviews and discusses his biggest accomplishments and most treasured memories at BVIS.

L: Mr. Shooter, thank you for spending your time on today's interview.

Mr. S: My pleasure.

My name is Lewis and today's interview will capture your reflections on your time here at BVIS. This interview will be divided into 3 sections, and for our first one, I will ask you about the fond memories and achievements you accomplished during your time here at BVIS. What are some of your most cherished memories from teaching at BVIS?

I think my entire 9 years here has got cherished memories packed in there. There are so many that it got difficult to find single ones. Seeing many students turn their lives around is a cherished memory. Seeing the way that students arrive and then watching them grow and mature until they're young adults and they're ready to go off into the wide world as fully fledged citizens of the world. I think that's the most pleasing thing a teacher can do, really! Peter singing "My Way" here at the end of a live lunch, I think that is one of my highlights. He was a shy boy and now he is on stage singing his heart out, I think that sums up all the other cherished memories and things like that, you know, there are so many. Your involvement in the student panel for safeguarding conferences. They are all cherished memories.



I appreciate that I'm also included! So, what are your most proud accomplishments during your time here?

I think the behavior system and the house system. The way that we've got the house system here, not many schools have that system of pastoral setup and I'm quite proud of the way that's worked, implemented and the way it's been a success. The behavior and safeguarding concerns where I feel like I've really had an impact and made a difference and that's what I really want, it is not the praise, it's just having that impact and making a difference in young people's lives. That's why I became a teacher.

Do you have any funny or heartwarming anecdotes from your teaching experiences here?

A couple of years ago, maybe last year... the year 13's graduation. A boy came up to me, burst into tears and said that I had made a real impact on him in his life, and he was so happy that he had been under my jurisdiction, so to speak, but, again, like I said, it's not about the praise, but that's really heartwarming just to know that the student does appreciate the work you put in. Sometimes, as teachers we come across as being angry and shouty, but nobody becomes a teacher to be angry and shouty. Everyone becomes a teacher because they want to make a difference in young people's lives. And so, for me, having that student say that I have made a difference to him brought a little tear to my eyes as well! I think I then insulted him somehow, but you know, classic Mr. Shooter's way: work my way around the awkward crying bit by mocking him for something. I think those are the most heartwarming moments. There are hundreds so trying to pick one is very, very difficult, and I don't want to embarrass the number of people who stay in the school who will know the stories I tell are about them.

For our next section, we will discuss your plans and the advice you have for our school. Mr. Shooter, what are your plans after leaving BVIS?

Interesting question! My plan was to get a job - that hasn't happened yet but that's fine. My plan is to go back and get some work, either temporary work or full-time work, but also maybe take a take a break for a couple of months; just relax, have a nice time with my family members. My family lives in the UK so it's nice to be able to spend some time with my daughters and my wife,



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"You are extraordinary human beings, each of you, every person in this school!"

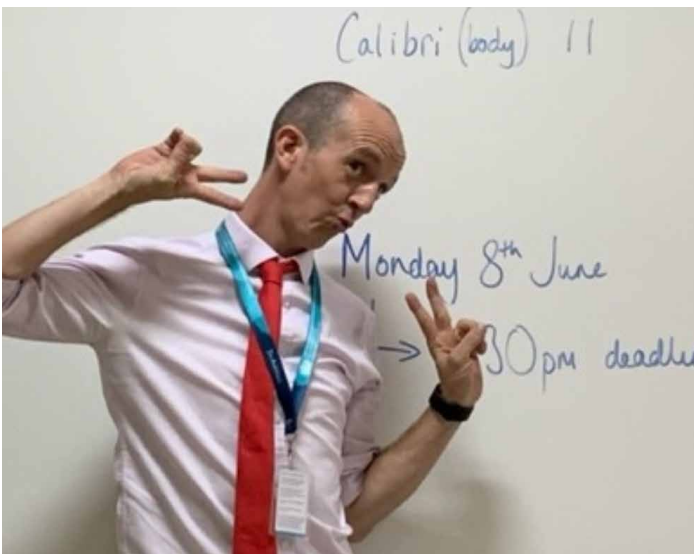
my brothers and my sister, my mom, my dad, etc. So, I can take a little break, play some sports, see family, see friends that I haven't seen for a long time but then get a job at some point. I hope if not, I'll start my own podcast: The Education Consultancy Podcast. How's that?

That sounds really cool, I'm not gonna lie!

Thanks Lewis! Everyone needs a Lewis to give them some courage.

What are some of the biggest challenges you've faced as a teacher, and how would you recommend overcoming them?

In my role as overseeing behavior and safeguarding, my biggest challenges have been the safeguarding challenges, kids who are in challenging situations in their life or mental health situations. They're the hardest ones to deal with. Some of the behavior things you deal with in school are fine, but these are the ones that have an impact on you outside of school. It's very



easy for teachers to say once we leave that door, we forget about school until the next day. You can't do that when you are in the safeguarding role because you hear stories and it's upsetting, you know. So those are the biggest challenges from my point of view is trying to also look after my own mental health while dealing with student's mental health. It's quite difficult.

Yes... And those are some big shoes to fill. So, Mr. Shooter, what are some of the most valuable lessons you've learned from your students?

Get to know them. I've said that to staff all my career, I was taught it on my very first day as a teacher. Get to know your kids, know the context of your kids. Soon as you find out there's not a single bad student in the world, every kid cries out for somebody to get to know them, to understand them. You can't understand students' behavior unless you understand them and their backgrounds. So always make an effort to get to know students, get to know what they like, get to know what they're where they're from, get to know their family backgrounds. You'll find that making that little effort goes a long way.

That is reasonable. We are moving on to our last section, it's about keeping

your connections with BVIS. Will you stay connected with the school community in any way?

Of course, I mean, you know, I put my heart and soul into this place and my hair, apparently! I put most of my body into this place, really! So, I will stay connected. I have a desire to keep communicating with BVIS, but also, I'll be back at some point, so I need to stay connected. I love this school. I love the students. I love the staff. I love everything about this school. It causes me so much stress. My hair falls out, but ultimately this is where my heart and soul are. So, I will 100% stay in touch even with "crazy ladies" like Ms. Dung who's laughing at me right now outside of the office! Even people like that, I will stay in touch with and keep communicating with them. I love finding out where students are, where staff are, how the school is, what developments have happened.

Are there any expectations or hopes you have for the future of BVIS?

My only hope for BVIS is that it keeps improving. The one thing about this school is we've never stopped and we're never afraid to change. We're never afraid to develop in a different way or to move things in a different direction. I think that's the death of a school. Once you

think you've cracked education and made it to the top, you stop and that's the worst thing that can happen to us. School should always be looking for what's coming next. What's next? How do we want to look like in 10 years' time? Do we want to be an old, traditional school? We don't want to be that. So, you have got to keep on moving. You have got to keep on moving with the times developing.

My final question for today's interview is: Is there any final message you'd like to share with the students, faculty, and staff at BVIS? Or would you like to share it with our school on your last school assembly?

I'll say something here. You are extraordinary human beings, each of you, every person in this school. This is an extraordinary school that you won't realize how lucky you are to be in until you leave. Keep being the wonderful people you are. Keep having the courage to stand up and make change happen and inspire others. That's said because it's very difficult to give a message to people who are so extraordinary already. Thank you.

Once again, thank you for your time today, Mr. Shooter.

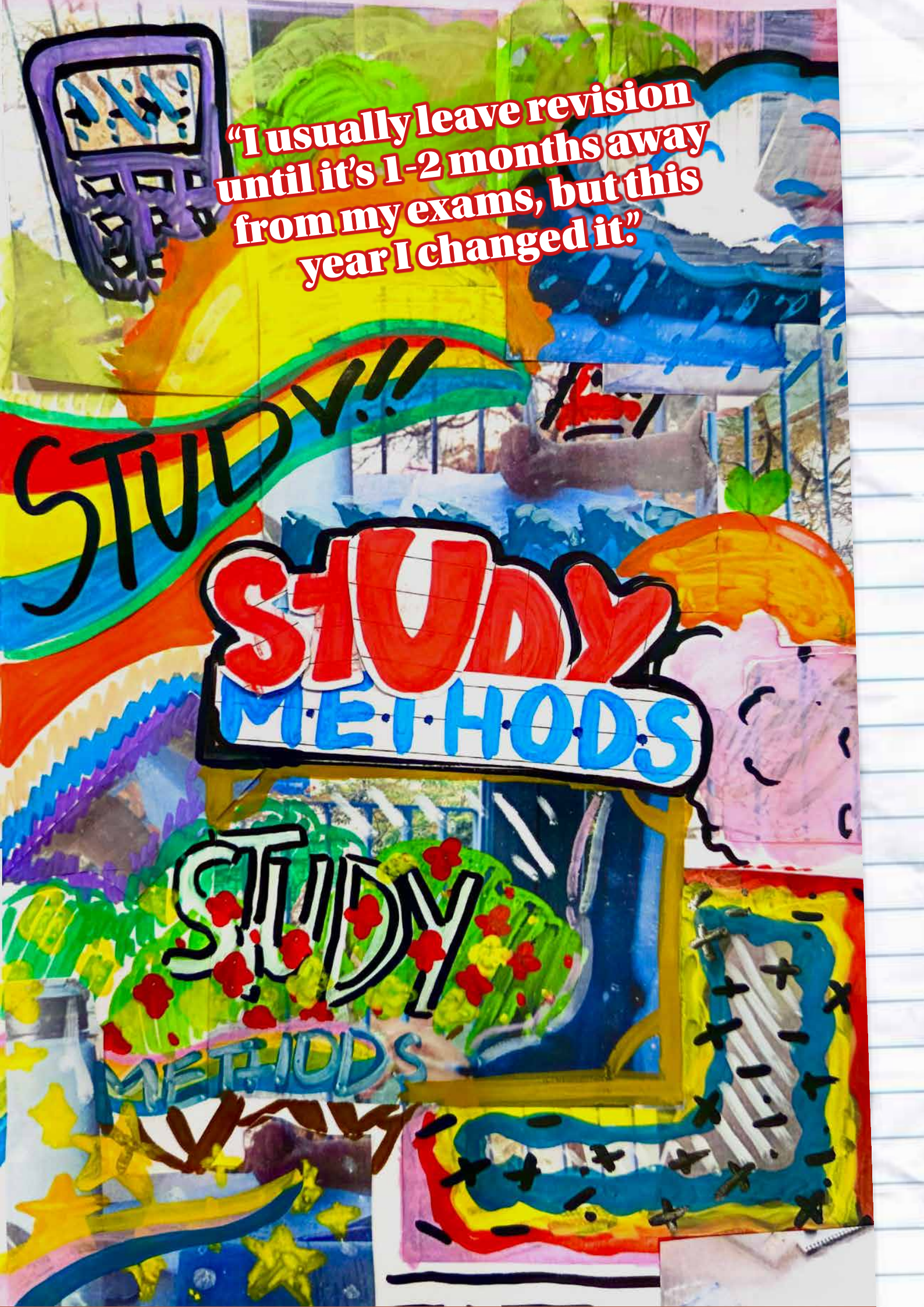
"I usually leave revision until it's 1-2 months away from my exams, but this year I changed it!"

STUDY!!!

**STUDY
METHODS**

STUDY

METHODS



Written by Nguyen, Le Ha My - 12V
 Design by Ngo, Thuy Minh - 10S

Exams can be highly stressful moments in students' lives, with lots of pitfalls and challenges, so why not take some advice from people who have been there, done that? Our very own Student Leadership Team has shared some revision tips and methods to help you ace your exams!

I mostly do past papers, because I believe that the best way to revise is through active learning, which is doing the actual questions. This means I can test how much I've remembered without any help, and do it under pressure, similar to the actual exam.

Get a good sleep before the exam. Divide your world load into small, manageable time frames. This will help your mentality, instead of cramming everything into the last night, this will make you panic even more.



MINH QUAN HOANG - 13V
(ENVIRONMENT CO-CHAIR)

"If I have a lot of spare time, I will create flashcards on paper or a quizlet and revise it regularly. If not, I will read the mark schemes from all the past papers; As Cambridge usually comes up with the same question with the same knowledge points regularly

I usually talk to myself when I revise for the exam as I can remember information better if I speak it aloud and explain it to myself repeatedly. This may seem like a weird method, but it does personally work for me.



PHUONG NGHI PHAM (NANCY) - 13V
(CO-PRESIDENT)

I usually leave revision until it's 1-2 months away from my exams, but this year I changed it. I started my 'revision' at the start of the year by spending an hour a day after school reviewing the materials and I feel that it's working for me. Don't feel stressed and overwhelmed, focus on your next step and eventually you'll ace your exams.



LINH VINH TRAN (JIMMY) - 13I
(HUE HEAD STUDENT)

I would spend 50% of my revising time looking at online resources that summarise all of the content and watching videos (animated, a person talking, etc.) I am also better at remembering graphic information. Using colourful charts, tables, and sketches will help organise similar information and recall it.

Note-taking at A-level is really important.

I would recommend focusing on listening to the teacher in class and then using some time to take notes later. That will help you recall it and build on your long-term memory.



TRIEU DANG PHUNG - 13I
(HANOI HEAD STUDENT)

TIME YOURSELF! - I have this problem with essay based subjects such as Economics. I know that it is really stressful when you practice a paper in timed condition but it really helps to boost your speed of writing as well as how to divide your time wisely.

USE THE SYLLABUS! This helps me to guide my study during exam season (I use the syllabus to divide the content that I need to learn each day/month/etc and ensure that I would revise all of the required content before the real exam date). In addition, the syllabus would guide you on what information to look for whenever you encounter an online revision"



KHANH LINH TRINH BA - 13V
(CO-PRESIDENT)

Nature: Through the Urban Lens

We find out the winners of this year’s photography competition and admire their work exploring nature’s presence in our bustling city!

Lee SiHoo (Jake) - 12S

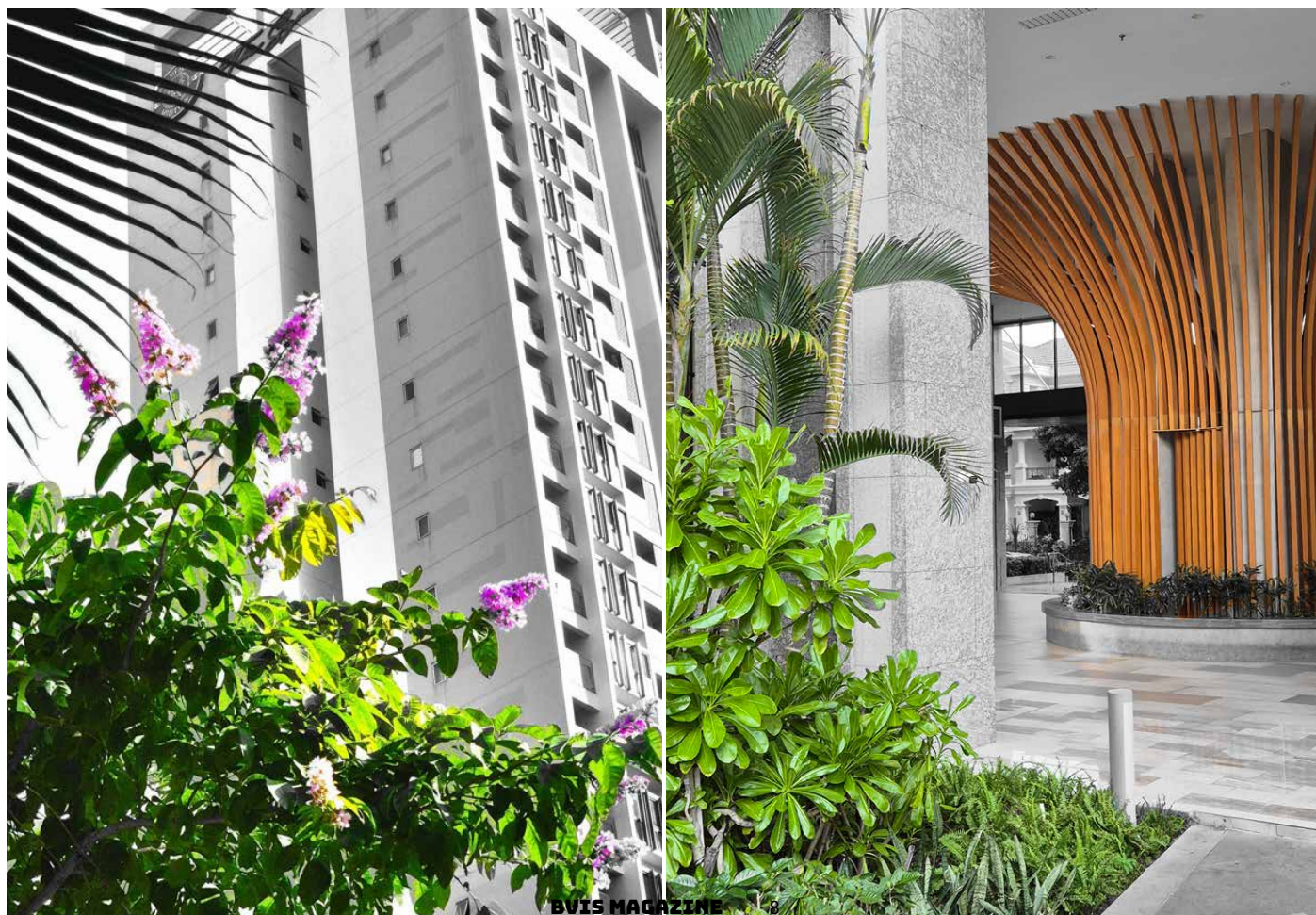
As I’ve aged, I’ve witnessed remarkable advancements in design and technology that have become integral parts of our daily lives. Simultaneously, I’ve become acutely aware of the sacrifices made in the name of progress—specifically, the removal of plants and natural elements to make way for buildings and apartments.

In response to this, I participated in the ‘Nature through Urban Lenses’ photography competition. My goal was to capture the delicate balance between nature’s inherent beauty and the surrounding urban environment. I found inspiration in the ‘Midtown’ apartment complex located in D7, where architecture

seamlessly coexists with nature.

Through my camera lens, I focused on moments that revealed the harmonious synergy between man-made structures and the natural world. I employed a phone app’s ‘color extract’ function during post-processing to emphasize nature’s significance and allure. Personally, I consider the results of my efforts to be successful—a testament to the possibility of integrating nature into interior design and aesthetics.

But if you look at the pictures carefully, you can find that the plant pictures are not fully coloured. The intended purpose was to provide people with a sense that human beings artificially created plants.





Nguyen Khanh Nguyen - 13S

In a tropical climate where the four seasons are absent, it can be challenging for us to experience the distinct changes that occur throughout the year. Through the power of photography, I would love to transport my audience to different seasons and evoke the sensations associated with each one. By using various images of nature, such as dry trees or falling leaves, I want them to imagine themselves immersed in those seasons.





Chung Que Anh - 13S

These pictures I've taken represent the simplicity of life and nature itself. I think us humans rush through life and live in such a hasty manner, sometimes we forget to stop and appreciate the nature around us. Many might think that in this urban setting, finding nature is truly impossible, however at any moment in time and anywhere, nature is still there thriving. We need to slow down and appreciate the things around us, spend time and gaze at the sunset or the crashing waves on the beach, because those moments are what's going to stay with us. These mundane yet extraordinary moments are what makes life so incredible, you need to appreciate what you have during the present because you will never see the same sunset twice.

Tran Bao Duy - 12C

My first photo is the sunset at a wild field in D2, it depicts a corner in the hustle and bustle Saigon still exists a peaceful and wild area where nature still takes the dominance. Delivering a message that the hidden gems of Saigon are still shining silently and it is a pleasure for those people who take notice of those gems.

My second photo is a scenery that is considered as the treasure of Saigon, District 1, the area that represents the development of modernisation within Saigon with high-rise buildings, especially Bitexco Tower which proudly is Saigon's signature for both locals and tourists. The blurred effect of the photo elicits a sense of rush and hurry that symbolises the lifestyle of typical Saigonese.



Dao Chau Anh (Julia) - 13S

Living in the city, surrounded by towering buildings and limited greenery can often feel stifling for me. That's why whenever I can, I would go to a nearby park to free my mind a bit. There, I lay out my picnic towel, settle in, and soak up the nature beauty around me. In those moments, the city's chaos fades away, replaced by the soothing sounds of chirping birds and rustling leaves moving in the wind. It's these simple pleasures that heal my soul and remind me of the beauty that surrounds us, even in the midst of urban life.

INTERNATIONAL AWARD: AN EXPEDITION OF A LIFETIME

This January, 48 Year 12 students took on the International Award, a programme to test students skills, confidence and resilience, culminating in an exciting expedition through Dalat's mountains with both literal and emotional highs and lows.

Written by Tran, Bao Chi (Cindy) - 12B

For the past decade, I thought I had quite the amount of out-of-my-comfort-zone experiences, but in hindsight, none of them could ever compare to the expedition of the Duke of Edinburgh International Award.

The International Award requires participants to complete activities from four different facets: physical, skills, volunteering, and an expedition. This award has been hosted at BVIS for many years, with this year being the first since the COVID-19 pandemic.

When I first heard news of the International award being hosted again, I was quite apprehensive about joining. Obviously, I recognised it as an excellent opportunity to bolster up my CV, and the prestige of having an award under my belt was quite tempting; however, it was still a daunting feat. Trekking and camping were things I had never even thought of doing; I didn't have a clue about what to do.

The final push that made me sign up was that I wasn't doing it alone. I had friends who were all starting at the same point and teachers who guided us through everything from goal setting to meal planning. I knew it would be more difficult than any activity I've done before, but at least I would have support to push myself to completion.

Our trip to Dalat consisted of 2 separate 2-day journeys: a practice journey trekking 7 km uphill and 7 km downhill, and

We spent that night shivering as we huddled together, the vicious wind blasting outside.



the qualifying journey trekking 20 km. The numbers listed are quite deceiving as I felt the difficulty of the practice journey was tenfold the difficulty of the qualifying journey. Perhaps because it was our first time attempting a trek, or that the trek was uphill, the trek felt like it was never ending. We spent that night shivering as we huddled together in our sleeping bag cocoons, the vicious wind blasting outside our tents under the single-digit temperatures of the mountains.

However, the challenge of the practice journey equipped us with valuable experience to improve for our qualifying journey. Through sheer grit, our group pushed through the trek, quite literally, as I recall the scene of Nhi physically pushing Sophia up the final hill. This time we arrived at the campsite on time, and without the wind roaring, we successfully held a campfire complete with s'mores and the classic Vietnamese camping snack, charred sweet potatoes. That night, as I sat by the fire I thought to myself: 'Hey, this isn't all that bad actually.'

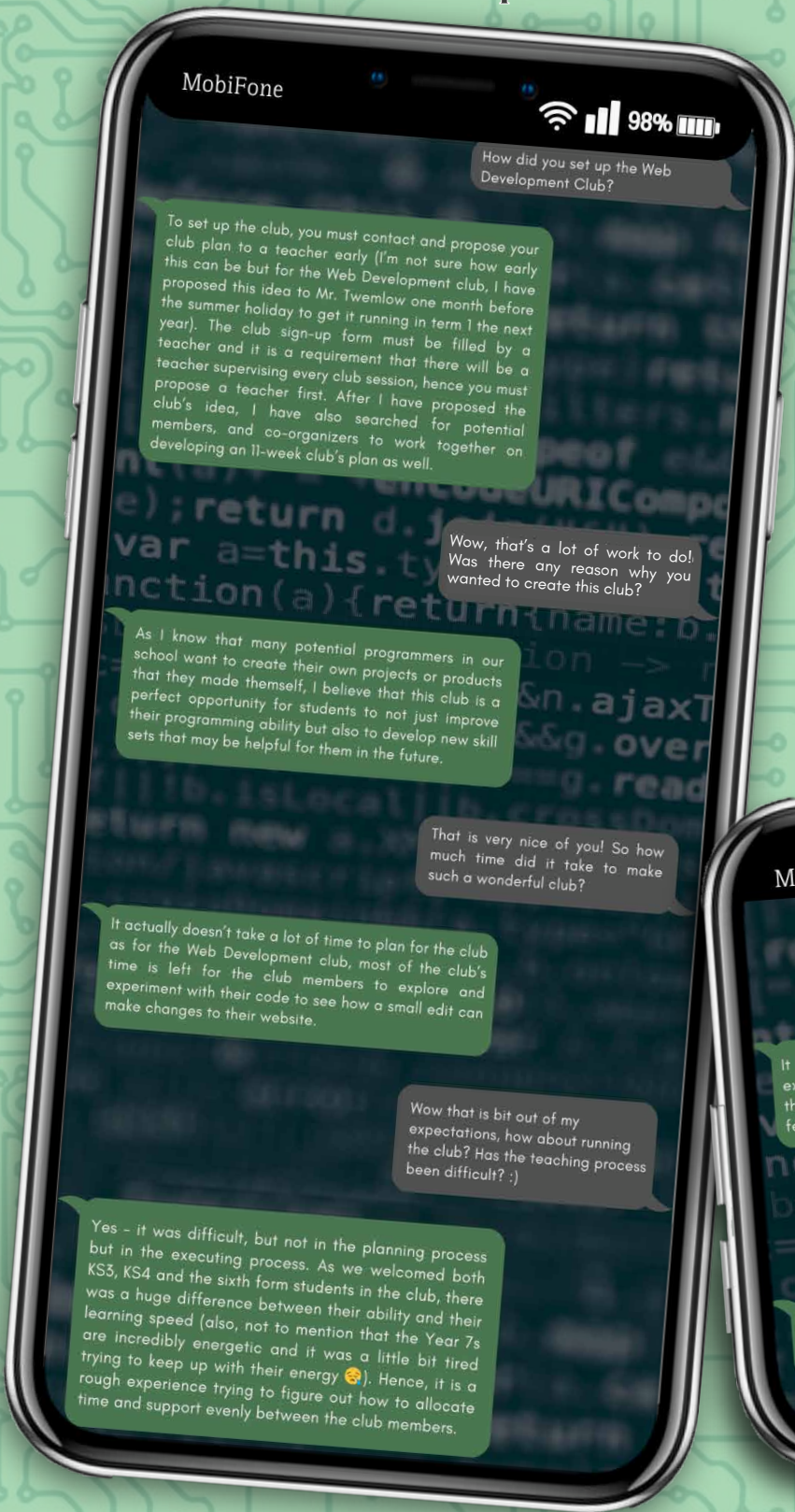
To say that I enjoyed every moment of this trip would be a stretch—quite frankly, a huge lie. There were moments where I wished I was at home, curled up in bed instead of sweating profusely on a mountain, but nevertheless, I'm proud of myself for what I've accomplished. Even though it was strenuous and my entire body ached for the following days, the sense of satisfaction and fulfillment outweighs the challenge. For those who are still on the fence, my advice would be to just throw yourself out there, be bold, and just give it a try. Oh, and stock up on all the Salonpas and pain relief patches you possibly can; trust me, it's essential.



BY STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS

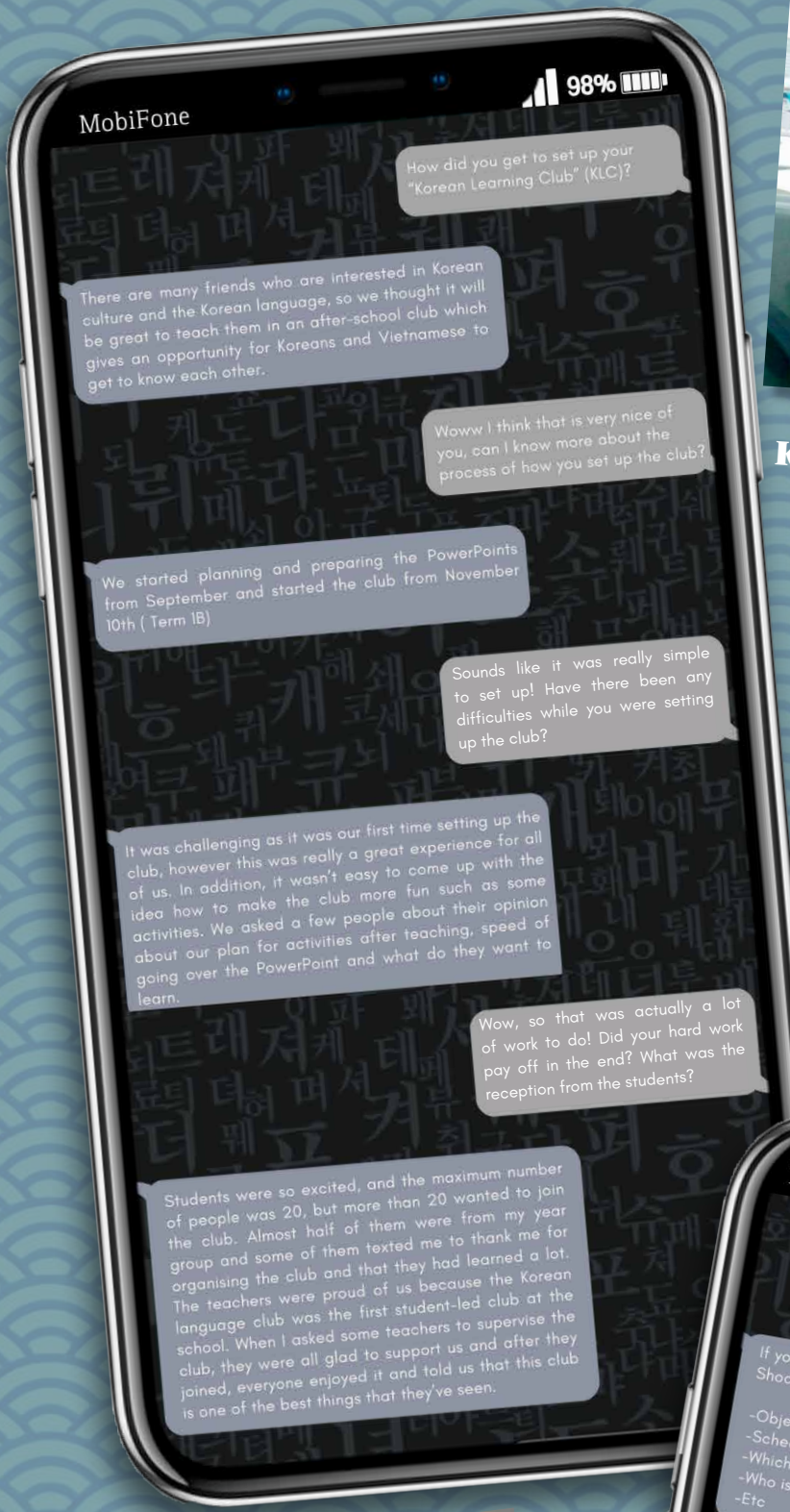
2024 saw the very first student-led clubs, in which BVIS students set up, organised and led their fellow classmates in activities and workshops of their own design. Sihoo Lee messages Nancy (13V) and Seohyeon Moon (13I) who are two of the creators of the Web Development Club and Korean Learning Club!

Written and Designed by Lee Sihoo (Jake) - 12S



“Just remember to have a clear goal...and that you run it with burning passion 🔥🔥”





One of the pictures taken after Korean Learning Club was complete!

“everyone enjoyed it and told us that this club is one of the best things that they’ve seen.”



One of the final project done by our Y13s! (singing a korean song!)



Written and designed by Dao, Viet Ha (Hallie)- 13V

THE GREAT Q&A

Hallie sits down with Sie to discuss her passion project, investigating the migration of Northern Vietnamese to the South of Vietnam in the 20th Century.

Can you give us a little summary about your project?

Firstly I did secondary research, by going into the General Science Library of HCMC. I was mostly interested in the war of 1975, so my slides were based solely off of that event. Then, I turned to Ms Truc and asked for her help on finding more documents, then from there found the US National archives to gain more insight on various perspectives.

Wow, that sounds like a tough process.

YES IT WAS.

How long did it take you to conduct your research?

It took me about three months: one for secondary research, the rest of them working with professors and spending time reading at the Vietnam National Archives.

That brings me to my next question, can you tell me about the help and assistance you received on this project?

I have to mention Ms Nguyen first, she coached me on how to conduct primary research and introduced me to professor Trần Nam Tiến, who helped me with both primary and secondary research.

And how did the primary research go?

The source I relied on the most was family. I asked them about their journey as Northerners of '54. The rest of the information I gathered from photographs and memoirs of a Northern Migrants who worked for the Southern government.

Were you nervous at all going up to present?

Well, yes for many reasons. Firstly the presentation itself, I tried my best not to stumble with my words since this project is very important to me, and I wanted to present it the best I can. Secondly, I wanted to get a recording... unfortunately Mr De Lisle gave me an iPhone that still had a home button. Like when we pressed record, I was either too bright and only the ceiling was visible, or too dark but you can only see the slides (thank you though, Mr De Lisle). But luckily Hallie got that taken care of. Thanks dude.

No problem.

Do you have any advice for students who want start a passion project like you did?

ASK HELP FROM BVIS STAFF. They have more than enough resources for you and they're there for a reason. Don't be scared to just go for it, whatever you're passionate about, no matter how niche the interest is, your peers and teachers will all be there to support you.



Sie at the National Archives Center

On March 1st 2024, our lovely Sie presented the results of her thorough research project titled "The Great Exodus - Exploring the cultural contributions of the Northern migrant community in Saigon (1954 - 1975). This was one of the rare instances where students at BVIS are actively presenting and researching about their own passion projects.

To learn more about this project and her inspirations, I've fortunately gotten a chance to sit down and have a brief interview with Sie, asking her about the assistance and support she gathered from BVIS.

Being able to assist her with filming and design in this project was extremely enjoyable. In the future, I hope to see our students' interests and passion flourish within the school.



BVIS ALUMNI REPORTS FROM UNI: POSTCARD FROM SYDNEY

Forester shares his experiences of living abroad for the first time as he set off for university in UNSW Sydney, and lays out his advice for our soon-to-graduate students heading off this year!

Written by Hai Hoang Duc Nguyen (Forester)

I never thought it would be possible for me to make it to college. It felt like a fever dream or a childhood fantasy of wanting to be a pop star or a superhero with supernatural abilities. My high school journey was challenging, but my final year was kind to me, and I'm truly grateful for the experience. It laid a foundation that will help me go where I want to be.

Pursuing a career, being content, and feeling purposeful in what you're doing or aspire to do is a struggle for many, including me. Initially, I considered America for college for various reasons, but ending up in Sydney has been a delightful surprise.

I had a really kind start in Sydney - I stayed in a homestay with a lovely house-owner who is a very caring and inspiring person, who cooks great food and I got a lot of good life advice and stories from her. I got to stay with my two other roommates who are local but originally are from China & Sri Lanka. We bonded really well and had a couple of fun film sessions together or just reading sessions (either reading material for uni or a random book) after dinner. I was lucky to enroll in my favorite subject just in time for the start of term.

I was thrilled about everything: having my own space to grow, buying massive cookies from the uni coffee shop, visiting the record store for the latest releases, and engaging in meaningful conversations about media topics at uni. I particularly liked a girl next to me in class, who had a great memory for everything except song lyrics. The same yellow T-shirt I wore to tutorial class every week became a funny highlight.

Some of the best experiences were outside university. I encountered many wonderful people and moments. I was invited to travel to a park with a group of Colombian friends I met at a bar. We swam in saltwater connected

to the sea and had a picnic by the beach. My Art & Design & Media Studies Department organized a club to help everyone get to know each other better. Initially, I struggled to open up, but after a mini-game, I had fun conversations with amazing people, leading to a big group dinner. It was the first time I felt a sense of community.

Sydney was also a great decision because I got to witness my favorite musical artists at the Opera House. Seeing Black Country, New Road & Arca was life-changing. Arca, an experimental artist, performing at the Opera House was unexpected but incredible. Both concerts were astonishing, and I felt grateful to be there.

My final year of A-Levels in Art, Media, and Math prepared me well for university. The creative subjects had similar patterns to what I'm doing now but at a more advanced level. In Art, I conducted my own research for my personal statement, and in Media, I demonstrated my understanding of concepts that don't have fixed definitions but can be described through characteristics and personal examples. University emphasizes self-study, with materials like readings and scholarly papers to explore.

My advice to those of you heading to university soon: be present, embrace every moment you can. Prepare to make mistakes, tons of them, both study-wise and in your social life. Try everything you can by joining clubs, attending uni events and building your network with people that you feel positive. Go to concerts, it will be your best source of serotonin, or go to parties if you can. Be curious and constantly asking yourself with questions and engage with your research. Learn more about yourself - being around new people can help a lot with your perception don't be shy just come and say hi. And most importantly, DON'T GIVE UP!



Behind the Scenes of BVIS

Kate interviews the staff that keep the school running to find out more about their jobs, routines also a few of our students' bad habits!

Written by Quach, Nhu Minh (Kate) - 8V

Small schools. Large schools. Boarding schools. Public schools. Private schools. Wherever you go, they would always be there, playing some of the most important roles in a school.

It takes a whole army of workers to run a school. They always go the extra mile. Sadly, it's not a thing most students pay attention to. It's not just teachers of whom I am including, but also maintenance workers, kitchen staff, librarians, counsellor and cleaners. The people who work hard listlessly need some credit. Perhaps Maintenance Staff Day should be established...

You may not realise, but many of our staff members arrive at school long before we do and leave long after we have gone home. For The Black Cat catering staff, cooks arrive at 6am to



start preparing the delicious food we are served each day, while Ms Lien, one of our wonderful cleaners said, "work usually starts at 8:30am, then ends at 18:00." Our librarians come to school at around 7:50 and start work at 8am, ending work at 4:30pm. They're really busy, working different tasks in the morning, at noon, and in the evening! One of our school's guards confirmed that he comes to school at around 7am. As you can see, all the people around us have routines of their own that we do not know of.

You might question: What makes their jobs interesting? Well, many of the maintenance workers have stated that they enjoy socialising with others, and the company of students, or children. One of the school's guards confirmed that he comes to school at around 7am. As you can see, all the people around us have routines of their own that we do not know of.

students with different personalities and different abilities. They even claim that many of the students are adorable ["nhiều đứa dễ thương"] and that their colleagues are friendly. One of the librarians says that she enjoys being around books and students! It's great to hear the joy that little things could bring to others, especially when we all play the main roles in it!

It's not all about quality social time, but also all the humorous or surprising things they've experienced, which makes their work here more 'worth-while'. Just imagine the following scenarios... Kids online shopping for fish during lessons. Students saying weird pronunciations, or, even worse, repeatedly referring to "Skibbidi toilet"(don't ask). The unique costumes students wear during special occasions, such as Halloween which really shocked the librarians. Now, think of a group of friends playing a game together. A game consisting of a Primary student faking death, lying on the floor, while their friends sit around them, pretending to cry. All of these scenes were real stories from our staff members.

Although, as you may know, life isn't just sunshine and rainbows. Many of the school's non-teaching staff have claimed that many students have shown disrespectful acts, whether it be ordering food in a rude tone, or lying to TAs and teachers. As one of the maids shared, there are many times that students have left toilets un-flushed, after using them (and I'm sure you know who you are). The librarians find the noise level students cause very disturbing sometimes. The TAs have claimed that sometimes, students don't get that the TAs, want the best for them. They would think that they 'secretly' hated them, always giving them problems, finding struggles for them. Just think about that idea! It's absurd!

All of the school's unsung heroes have messages to share with you! The maids have a friendly reminder to students to flush toilets after using them! The TAs want all students to

make a mental note of 'the joy of learning'; learning has to be fun, and keep persevering everyday, even if it



means a little bit each day. The cooks hope that the meals they cook for you would be enjoyed more. Finally, one of the guards, who loves children, wants us to make a mental note to be humble, great human beings [học tập cho lên người]. One of the librarians had shared that she encourages all students to read a lot.

Us, students, should really start paying attention to the heroes around us. The legends who work tirelessly for us. Let's do them justice!

Keep in mind any difficulties they face, or any habits they hate most. We could make a huge difference fixing those problems that us, students, are causing!



These behind-the-scenes heroes are the foundations of a school, holding up the walls of the building and ensuring students get the best. Hey, do me a favour. Do them a favour. Whenever you meet one of them, whether it be a guard, a cook, a maid or a teacher, just act kind to them. Smile to them. Wave to them. Say thank you. It doesn't matter. Find a way to express appreciation and acknowledgment. And trust me, it could leave a big impact.

"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is wasted" - Aesop



ECA EXPLORER: GARDENING CLUB



Are you looking for a new club to join next year but can't decide? Tony explains what makes the Gardening Club so incredible!



Gardening club has a variety of goals with the most prominent being: Beautifying the school, Expanding our knowledge of horticulture, reducing our school's carbon footprint, raising money for charity and of course, growing plants! We aim to reduce our school's carbon footprint through reducing electricity usage by making sure classroom lights, air conditioning, projector/ smart board, are turned off through a series of daily/weekly "checks". Furthermore, by selling the plants we grow during school events like Christmas funday we raise money for charities.

Activities in gardening club can



range from painting to arson, there is something for everyone and plenty of tasks in our "supply chain" with plenty of rewards along the way. The garden side of these activities, generally involve planting, nurturing, and transporting, planting your plant involves simply picking your favorite seed or baby plant and putting it in a plant pot with some soil, nurturing is a much more complex task with the need of perseverance in watering the plants, trimming and adding fertilizer daily until it reaches its desired height/ stage, while transporting involves the tedious process of carefully taking the plant out of its pot and moving it to a new home in our painted plant pots.

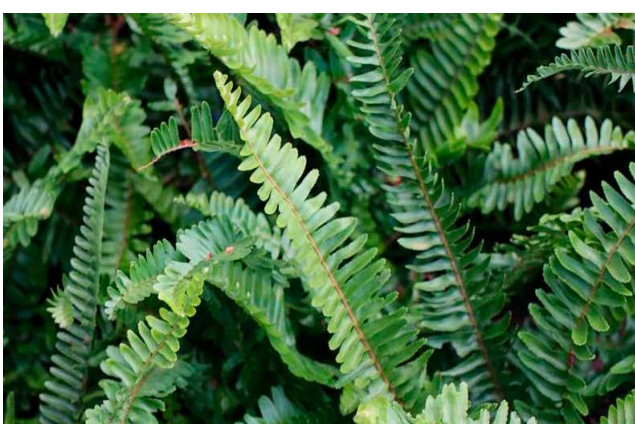
This brings me onto my next point, of course if you don't like getting your hands dirty, you have the option of making and painting plant pots, making them pretty, and then selling them when a plant has been moved into it. Furthermore, you could also go around school turning of lights and air-conditioning, seeing which teacher is the most eco-friendly or clean up the garden, collecting rocks and dead leaves or do research on plants and make posters or presentations. All in all, there is a

massive range of activities you can do in gardening club and as I said, there is something for everybody.

Personally, gardening club is an exciting adventure to look forward to every Thursday as it brings a unique experience you can see nowhere else. Simplicity is it's strength, though a routine of watering, trimming and tending to plants once a week might seem simple and boring, the reward is worth it as you get to watch your own plant grow and grow, beautifying the school and creating a unique environment to enjoy. Of course, growing and planting plants aren't the only thing I do as the more relaxing activities such as painting plant pots and "checking" lights helps me socialize and relax after an exhausting week and also helps me improve my art skills along with allowing me to bring home my own custom-painted plant pot with my own plant inside. Overall, i believe gardening is a club you won't regret joining and something you'll look forward too every Thursday, and of course, if you end up not enjoying it, you can always leave.

Overall, gardening club which is also known as horticulture club is something you shouldn't miss when deciding which clubs to pick on school buddies, it'll be a great chance to enjoy and learn more about our planet and a exciting pastime.

Written by Khac Nguyen Anh Nguyen (Tony) - 8S



The portrait of LADY MACBETH



Written by Nguyen, Phuong Nhi - 12H

If there was one thing every female villain in the history of art and media wanted: it was power. Power over her assets, power over the abusive husband, power within a suppressive, patriarchal society. Who can deny it? Power is the strongest currency one could hold that would get them anywhere and anything. To me, Lady Macbeth of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, embodies this peerless pursuit of power. For a female character written in the 17th century, particularly for one of Shakespeare's most accessible plays, she is a deeply complex figure for all of her cunning and madness; her beauty and brains. Today, we see a similar trope of women crop up in the contemporary media we know and love. I'd like to argue they all take a page out of Lady Macbeth's playbook. Her timeless character becomes an enduring treatise for female ambition and the extent to which women monster themselves for a taste of control.

Written in 1605, Shakespeare's "Macbeth" recounts the story of the titular Scottish general who encounters three witches foretelling his ascension to become king. Initially skeptical, Macbeth is spurred to action by his wife, Lady Macbeth, who goads him to commit regicide against the current

ruler, King Duncan, ultimately fulfilling the witches' prophecy. While appearing to be a willful accomplice to Macbeth's rise to power, Lady Macbeth emerges with a ruthlessness far more developed than her real-life counterpart. She is unmistakably the puppeteer of King Duncan's murder, keenly instructing Macbeth to approach him in his sleep as she intoxicates the chamberlains with wine. She recognizes Duncan stands in the way of Macbeth and the throne and is therefore acutely aware that the only way to elevate her proximity to power is through the vicarious ascension of her husband.

Likewise, her burning desire for power manifests in a controlling demeanor, unafraid to taunt and shame Macbeth to comply with her demands. In Act 1 Scene 5, Lady Macbeth immediately berates Macbeth's hesitance towards the legitimacy of the prophecy, planning to 'chastise' him with the 'valor' of her tongue. Shakespeare's persistent use of a male-coded semantic field characterizes Lady Macbeth as the dominant figure of their relationship, a notion highly subversive to the gender roles of the Jacobean era. More strikingly, the tenor of her Machiavellian plans implies these conventional male qualities to be embedded and inherent to her person. As suggested by Macbeth himself,

she is a masculine soul inhabiting a feminine body.

Lady Macbeth ultimately fails the test of her own cruelty as she falls into a swirling storm of guilt and paranoia by Act 5. Despite not physically killing Duncan herself, her restlessness over the brutal murder devolves into schizophrenic acts that culminate in her suicide. She becomes a mere shadow of her former commanding self. It is a devastating fate that could only inspire pity, raising questions on the solidity of her feminine cruelty.

Shakespeare's nuanced characterization of Lady Macbeth echoes his society's expectations placed upon womanhood, a society in which a woman's worth was defined by her docility and submission. Contradictorily, women as a collective were still viewed as cunning individuals, more likely responsible for poisoning, adultery, treason or murder. This inconsistent moral relativism is no different to how we currently discern and deduce the women in our everyday lives and within the media. Unsurprisingly, the frustrating female condition serves as powerful ammunition for the narratives that proceed in Macbeth's wake.

Shiv Roy: The Modern Lady Macbeth

A corporate 'girlboss' and dubious feminist icon, Shiv Roy from HBO's *Succession* envisages a Lady Macbeth for the modern era. *Succession*, created by Jesse Armstrong, is an American television series centering around the domineering patriarch Logan Roy, owner of global media conglomerate Waystar Royco, as his declining health prompts vicious battles among his children, vying to take control of the family empire by becoming CEO. With a plotline drawing evident parallels

brothers in not wanting the throne.

This completely changes tune in Season 2, however, as soon as Logan dangles the poisoned carrot in front of her – an offer she unflinchingly accepts. Shiv's desire for power has now dissolved any of her liberal credentials. She was willing to give up her ethics and integrity if it meant a step closer to the throne; her obsession with proving herself against the men in her life mirrors the same obsession that plagues Lady

Macbeth are at the root of male corruption; "enablers" of an unjust patriarchal system. While they are certainly valid criticisms, I believe this to be a restricted and simplistic conclusion.

In a world where women are deterministic losers, Lady Macbeth attempts to correct this injustice by pushing the boundaries of any power she can get her hands on, even if it is only by marital association.

In a world where women are deterministic losers, Lady Macbeth attempts to correct this injustice by pushing the boundaries

with King Lear, it isn't a far reach to assume Shiv's character was created by the show runners to embody another feminine tragedy within the Shakespearean canon.

As the only daughter in a family dominated by powerful men, Shiv's cunning and headstrong demeanor renders itself an involuntary act of survival in the carnivorous system she was bred in. In the first season, Shiv worked as a Democratic political adviser wanting to forge her own path of success, unlike her brothers who chose to work for Waystar in an effort to cozy up to Logan. Significantly, Shiv perpetually strived to prove herself morally and spiritually above her

Macbeth's fate.

Through the following 3 seasons, Shiv oscillates between deceptive façades and fickle alliances, all in an effort for the spot of 'She-E-O' of a company she claimed to detest. It reminds me of Lady Macbeth's adeptness in switching between her feminine and masculine impulses. In public, she is the consummate hostess, enticing the King into her home as she weaponizes winsomeness for his perceived comfort. In private, she schemes and reprimands her husband for not living up to the standards of a future king.

Freud's concept of the "phallic woman" - a woman who adopts masculine traits to assert dominance - can therefore be attributed to our two feminine "red-flags". In her famous soliloquy, Lady Macbeth calls upon evil spirits to 'unsex [her]', highlighting that the largest obstacle to a woman's will to power is not her intelligence or courage: it is her gender. Lady Macbeth renounces her feminine qualities as she believes she cannot count on her husband to guarantee her seat on the throne. In her mind, what she lacks as a woman is a 'direst cruelty' that allows her to be cold and calculating, a trait often considered as traditionally masculine. Shiv's shrewd and insensitive banter enables her to be seen and heard by her male cohort; embodying a male persona signifies Shiv a willful participant of their game.

What emerges is a belief that women like Shiv Roy and Lady

Macbeth settles on this objective, for this is the ceiling of how much freewill Jacobean society will allow her, Shiv only accepts this fate approaching the series finale, as it is after she is betrayed by all the men in her life: her business accomplice (Mattson), her husband, and her father that she decides to take the pragmatic approach and settle as the CEO's wife - reflecting how the iniquities dealt towards womanhood have remained unchanged from Shakespeare's time to now.



Blanche DuBois & The Lady Macbeth Effect'

In Act 5 Scene 1, Lady Macbeth begins her gradual descent into madness by perennially washing her imaginary blood-stained hands. The act would be coined by psychologists as 'The Lady Macbeth Effect', a condition in which those who have impure and guilty consciences feel a compulsive need to clean their body. As if the cleanliness of the physical body equates to the cleanliness of the spiritual body, this obsessive physical cleanliness is perceived to be a stand in for moral purity, reminiscent of ritual purifications in religion.

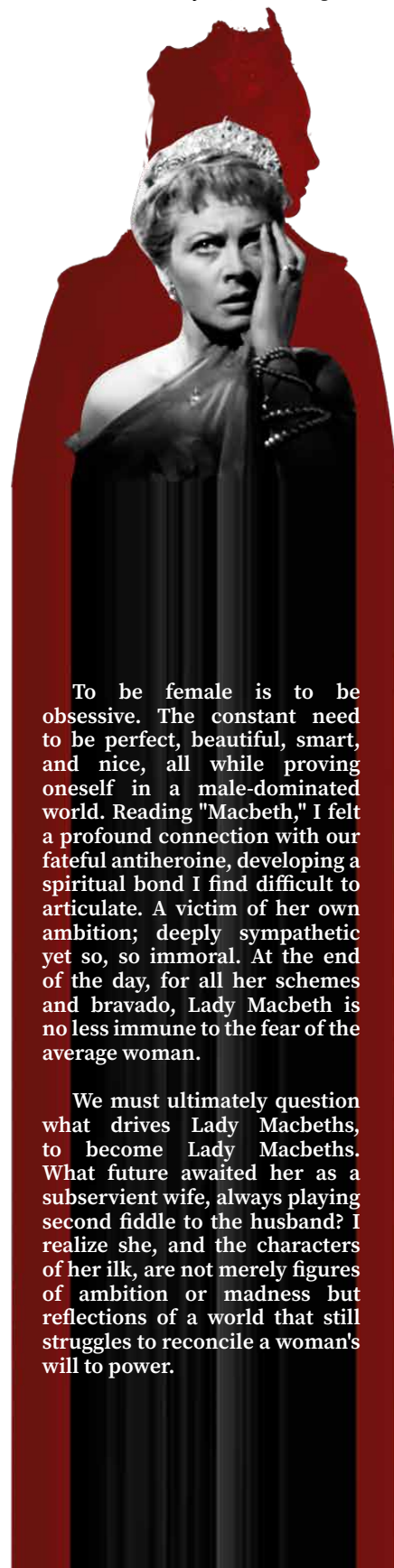
Blanche DuBois from Tennessee Williams' 'A Streetcar Named Desire' exemplifies The Lady Macbeth Effect wholly. Throughout the play, her central activities consist of bathing and applying perfume, a beauty regime bordering on obsession. Initially, Blanche is presented as the archetypal Southern Belle. She first appears on stage dressed in white, the unambiguous symbol of purity and goodness. Her movement throughout the play is moth-like; she detests violence and vulgarity while always remaining a seemingly refined demeanor. In spite of this, Blanche has lived a past that would make the most degenerate person seem innocent.

In her formative years, Blanche had married a young man named Allan. Shortly after their marriage, Blanche discovers her husband in an intimate affair with an older man within a dark room of a bar. She confronts Allan, revealing her knowledge of his homosexuality and expresses her 'disgust'. Overcome with shame and despair, Allan shot himself as a result of Blanche's words. Feeling responsible for his loss, Blanche escapes the trauma of Allan's death through alcohol use and sexual promiscuity.

For a play set in the conservative South of the late 40s, Blanche's sexuality would have been seen as sacrilege, marking her as a social outcast and a fallen woman in the eyes of society. Therefore, she retreats to the waters of her bath to 'soothe her nerves'. Bluntly put, it is an attempt to cleanse herself of her immoral sins, akin to that of Lady Macbeth. Although the bath may provide a temporary respite from reality, Blanche can't truly ever escape her past, nor her presumed adherence to morality.

A particular line that stuck with me was when Blanche intimates her tendency to lie because "a woman's charm is fifty percent illusion". Not only

does it echo the façades Lady Macbeth upholds to appease King Duncan, but the 'illusion', to me, symbolizes the sanity these women convince themselves of possessing after the fact. There's a quiet stoicism in feminine artifice, and it genuinely taps into something so intrinsic and true to the female experience. How much of my persona is artifice held up to the world? To what degree do I let the 'illusion' define the person that I am? What does it take for me to just, let it all go?



Amy Dunne: Lady Macbeth Triumphant

Amy Dunne, the ultimate "cool girl" from Gillian Flynn's 2012 crime novel (later adapted to film), *Gone Girl*—is what I imagine Lady Macbeth to become if she had "won". For one, they are both partners to husbands who initially start off as milquetoast and emasculated, paling in comparison to their ruthless wives. Amy possesses an even-greater edge than Lady Macbeth, for she grew up into wealth and has a global empire with a children's book series based on her likeness. Amy's husband (Nick), on the other hand, comes from a poor working-class family with an emotionally abusive father who later severs his parents' marriage.

Nick ends up repressing much of his emotions while desparately craving positive attention; he cannot stand to be thought of negatively and will go to great lengths, including lying, to keep up the 'good guy' persona that he wishes to project. This is no different from Macbeth, as he too begins the play as a sycophant, morally-bound to his responsibilities to Duncan. It is the sick and poisonous grit of their wives that propels them into realizing their masculinity.

After discovering Nick had an affair, Amy becomes vengeful and plots an

extensive scheme to fake her death and frame Nick as revenge for wasting her life. In a sense, Amy's elaborate self-disappearance, littered with flippant hints and red herrings, mirrors the theatrical plan Lady Macbeth set out for her husband to follow. Amy's behavior traces back to ex-boyfriends whom she framed for rape, with her ruthlessness culminating in the murder of Desi in the now infamous bedroom scene. Like Lady Macbeth, Amy has an all-consuming desire for control and will go at any length to protect her pride, pursue her ambitions, and to overcome the men in her life.

Where Amy Dunne differs from Lady Macbeth is that she is completely sociopathic. She does not succumb to madness or guilt, even relishing in her successes. On the contrary, Lady Macbeth still maintains a degree of remorse, seen in her guilt-ridden soliloquy, as she realizes the collateral damage following the brutality she has conducted. Amy's control over Nick is ultimately depicted as a victory, unlike Lady Macbeth, who suffers the consequences of a broken nation and spiritually corrupt person.

To be female is to be obsessive. The constant need to be perfect, beautiful, smart, and nice, all while proving oneself in a male-dominated world. Reading "Macbeth," I felt a profound connection with our fateful antiheroine, developing a spiritual bond I find difficult to articulate. A victim of her own ambition; deeply sympathetic yet so, so immoral. At the end of the day, for all her schemes and bravado, Lady Macbeth is no less immune to the fear of the average woman.

We must ultimately question what drives Lady Macbeths, to become Lady Macbeths. What future awaited her as a subservient wife, always playing second fiddle to the husband? I realize she, and the characters of her ilk, are not merely figures of ambition or madness but reflections of a world that still struggles to reconcile a woman's will to power.

HOW GENZ REVIVED THE WORST SELLING GENRE OF MUSIC

So you thought jazz was dead? Think again! A wave of young artists with Laufey at the forefront are reviving the ailing genre into the twenty first century. Lewis Nguyen investigates the phenomena of TikTok's genre revivals!

Written by Nguyen, Thanh Trung (Lewis) - 13C

Design by Dao, Viet Ha (Hallie) - 13V



Laufey (1999), Samara Joy (1999), Domi (2000) and JD Beck (2003) are currently the leading artists in the wave of reviving one of the worst-selling music genres in the industry, jazz. FYI, these artists are all born in Generation Z (Gen Z: 1997 - 2012). They are the living evidence for not only how talented our generation is, but how we revived traditions and what is thought to be old-fashioned and irrelevant.

Jazz music is a sophisticated genre of music where improvising skill plays the most important role while performing. Jazz players could be considered as some of the most talented people in the industry as in most jazz performances, they need to devise their own rhythm on the spot, which could be as challenging as cooking a 5-star Michelin restaurant's dish without any guide.

The genre developed in the United States of America in the early 20th century. More specifically, New Orleans, Louisiana, a city that is famous for its distinctive music culture, played a key role in this development. With a population consisting of African, French, Caribbean, Italian, German, Mexican, and American Indian, as well as English, at that time, New Orleans' population was one of the most diverse regions in the South. This is why the most important element in old jazz is that you can hear the sound of freedom, the freedom to say what needs to be said, which is crucial for people who were suffering the unfair treatment and policies from the government based purely on their identity (skin colour, sexuality, etc.).

By living and interacting as a community, their cultures influenced each other, from cuisine, lifestyle, special occasions, and even music. At first, it was African American musical traditions mixed with others and gradually a blend of ragtime, marches, blues, and other kinds of music were introduced. This is when jazz music was born and introduced to the community of New Orleans. Initially, jazz was created for dancing purposes, but in later years, people tended to sit at their spot and listen to music. Since the first published recording of Jazz in 1917, the genre recorded a remarkable growth as its popularity reached other states in the United States of America, and jazz went through a period of extreme popularity between 1933 and 1947 (named Swing era, after swing music, a subgenre of jazz).

Despite being the most popular genre of music in America at the time, Jazz

gradually lost its popularity due to multiple factors. The rise of rock and roll in the 1950s could be named as one of them. African American community started to move on and turned to soul and funk music, which was more reflective of their experience. Remaining Jazz artists and the newbies would take a different direction compared to how it was, either staying traditional or making their music contemporary, or whatever worked.

Back to the present days, even though jazz is still popular today, its commercial success and mainstream impact definitely cannot be compared to its golden age back in the 1930s. Due to the loss in popularity of jazz, it is reasonable for new artists to not take the path and release any jazz materials. This is when the problem started to burst out of its bubble.

Jazz is struggling. However, something has changed. In the early 2010s, Robert Glasper had started the wave of reviving the genre of jazz by releasing an album called "Black Radio" in 2012, which is a smooth blend between jazz and what had previously been known as neo-soul. As quoted by Thom Jurek from AllMusic: "With jazz as its backbone, Glasper, drummer Chris Dave, bassist Derrick Hodge, and Casey Benjamin on reeds, winds, and vocoder, cued by the inspiration of black music's illustrious cultural past, try to carve out a creative place for its future." The direction Robert Glasper took has directly influenced the future of jazz, started a new era of the genre and inspired a generation of young jazz players which we could dub them as The Saviors of Jazz.

Coming from a family of gospel singers, Samara Joy was inspired by her parents for as long as she can remember but she did not really immerse herself in jazz until she was in college, ready to make history as one of the most promising young jazz artists. The young jazz singer was quoted by Jamie Krents, the president of Verve Records, who said Joy's presence "was one of the things that attracted us to her – seeing how genuine and intriguing she was, and how that could shine through on those channels. She's a normal 23-year-old person who happens to be a world-class singer." At the 2023 Grammy Awards, Joy, perhaps the first Gen Z jazz singer, had brought home her first two awards, one of them being the major award, Best New Artist. With this, Joy made history for being the second jazz performer in Grammy history to win an award in this category.

The rise of online social platforms like TikTok, Instagram, etc. has started a new era of information, where users can easily keep up to date with the latest trends at their spot. Musical artists started to promote their music by creating 30-second clips containing a snippet of their music. Since the time limit for these videos was capped around 30 to 40 seconds, these snippets that came with the videos needed to be sped up in order to fit in the time frame, which initially started the trend of sped up and slowed down songs.

Laufey, the Chinese-Icelandic jazz singer, was having success with niche audiences for a number of years, gaining popularity in the jazz community. However, it wasn't until 2022 when Laufey became a phenomenon in the music industry as she blew up out of nowhere, thanks to her savvy use of TikTok. Laufey used the social media platform to build a steady following, sharing personal content such as book recommendations and banter with her twin sister, as well, of course, singing her songs. This combination of sweet nostalgic music and Gen-Z relatability hit a sweet spot for many young people, and by the end of 2022 her song Valentine, which had gone viral on TikTok, had over 18 million streams on Spotify.

It is hard to believe, just about 6 months before her sudden rise in popularity, no one actually had a clue who this "everybody's falling in love and I'm falling behind" singer was (Falling Behind - Laufey). Back to the present, Laufey is one of the most influential artists with approximately 13.5 million monthly listeners on Spotify, 2.8 million followers on TikTok. For most artists, sudden change in popularity could be the result of changing public image, either they are going for a different style compared to what they used to, or just some random controversial tweets like Kanye West or Azealia Banks. Neither is true for Laufey, she did not change her style or her sound, nor post anything controversial, she is just a modern jazz singer posting 30-second meme videos alongside her music on TikTok.

In summary, even though Jazz is still suffering from its loss of popularity due to the rise of other popular genres, young jazz performers, especially Gen Z's artists, are finding their own ways of reviving "the worst-selling genre of music" with the assistance of online social platforms. The takeaway from this revival of Jazz is that there is still hope that old traditions can have its moments once again in today's modernized scenario.

MARILYN DIAMONDS



**DIAMONDS ARE A
GIRL'S BESTFRIEND**

Written by Nguyen, Binh Anh (Ann) - 10V
Design by Ngo, Thuy Minh - 10S

Ann Nguyen takes a look into the renowned, glorious and one and only, **Marilyn Monroe** - her life and her continued impact on today's social media and press.

Norma Jeane Mortenson, or more commonly known as Marilyn Monroe is undoubtedly one of the most influential figures in all of modern media history. Many may associate her with her highly notable Gentlemen's Prefer Blondes pink dress which first premiered in 1953 that has been recreated a handful of times by many popular and well-known popstars, actors and more influential figures in media such as Madonna, Blake Lively, and as of recently, Ryan Gosling at the 2024 Oscars. Whilst some others may remember her for the mistreatment she endured during her career and the appalling way she was found in her home. Let's take a step back and really look at Marilyn's upbringing and all the reasons why she has proven herself to be the unforgettable idol we all know her as.

Norma Jeane Mortenson was born June 1, 1926, in Los Angeles County

and fame, the idea of becoming a glamorous and celebrated actress who would feature in Hollywood movies frequently had allowed her to push through these challenges, believing that better days were destined for her in the future. When approached by a photographer while working in a factory and asked to have her photo taken for a morale booster for military men, her exposure to media would increase as people would run to fawn over her pin-up doll like looks and characteristics.

This would be the very beginning of a detrimental, notable journey that would shock millions for years. As she later pursued further in modelling, her marriage would deteriorate, falling apart before having her first divorce. However, Marilyn refused to let this deter her and her strive to make a name for herself. She would work with full effort and determina-

still the very intelligent woman she was beforehand. In reality, her image as a "dumb blonde" was a giveaway on how women were viewed in the 1900s and how difficult it was for women who were either housewives or careerwomen to be seen as anything more than just a "dumb blonde."

This is well-accentuated when we realize the struggles and tribulations she had endured during her career. She dealt with insecurities dealing with her own femininity yet upholding one of the most feminine cover in all of media across the west. She had an inability to ever bring a baby full-term, damaging her desire to be the mother she wanted to become. Despite all her challenges, she still inspired thousands of women and men around the world with her bold and honest yet light-hearted and down to earth personality. Many coworkers and producers who had worked with

Her public image was a giveaway on how women were viewed in the 1900s and how difficult it was for women to be seen as anything more than just a "dumb blonde."

Hospital to Charles Stanley Gifford and Gladys Pearl Baker (Monroe), a struggling film cutter and an absent father. However, because of the lack of money in her household, she would regularly travel through foster home to foster home and from orphanage to orphanage while her mother was institutionalized later after being diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia. Norma Jeane was then placed into the care of a family friend, Grace Goddard who took care of her for the rest of her upbringing. In many interviews and reports, Marilyn says that she was a victim of bullying and mocking at school, whilst enduring abusive treatment from previous foster homes.

But even at a young age, she had always held a passion for the stage

tion to make sure she would become that star she always wanted to become. With this determination to become famous, she bleached her hair platinum blonde, the blonde we now all commonly associate her with. To add more, in 1946, 20th Century Fox noticed the woman that was Marilyn Monroe and decided to give her a screen test before settling down with a contract with her.

This would also blossom a collaboration with Columbia, now building faster than ever to the figure she aspired to become as a young girl. Her role in "Niagara" was the pinpoint of her career establishment of the "Dumb Blonde." However, despite that for most of her later roles after "Niagara" that had her framed as a woman dependent on a man, she was

her would praise her whenever asked with no hesitation, deeming her as a woman who was truly the embodiment of gleaming beauty.

Yet, her death was one that devastated all, forever holding a grip on society till this day to the inability to figure out what really happened to her the night she died, August 4th, 1962, at the age of 36. Many speculate that she was murdered rather than the idea that she had killed herself from a drug overdose. However, no matter how fiery and sparky each debate is held about her death, from the words of Steven Cohan, a film scholar, "She remains forever, forever young."

EDUCATION

UNRELIABLE BUT ESSENTIAL HUMAN MEMORY

Have you ever doubted your capability of memorising a bunch of flashcards of information or wondered why you have such a bad memory? Trust me, we are all goldfish; it is about how efficient you are in finding a method to generate moments into actual memories.

Human memory is a complex and fascinating process. It allows us to store and retrieve information about our past experiences, thoughts, and feelings. Memory is essential for our ability to learn, make decisions, and navigate the world around us.

Studies have shown that our memories are often distorted, incomplete, and even false. There are many factors that can contribute to memory errors, including the passage of time, emotional biases, and even our

13% of the words. The others constructed the words into stories of their own invention and they remember 93%. By adapting to different methods, but usually in a visualistic way, we can increase out storage, memorisation and also accuracy.

One way that we rationalize our inaccurate memories is through a process called confabulation. Confabulation is the act of inventing or embellishing memories. It can be conscious or unconscious, and it is often triggered by gaps in our knowledge or by the need to make sense of

our memories in a way that is favourable to ourselves. For example, we might remember our successes more vividly than our failures, or we might minimize our role in negative events. Self-serving bias can lead us to believe that our memories are more accurate than they actually are. It can also make us resistant to new information that challenges our existing beliefs.

Despite the fact that our memories are not always accurate, we are still able to rationalise them because they are essential to our sense of self and our ability

Despite the fact that our memories are not always accurate, we still rely on them heavily.

own expectations. It is very common to see that we take our sense of emotions and location for the foundation of memories, but structuring stories can even strengthen your memories more. Our brains pay more attention when it is in the form of a narrative.

In one study, 24 people were asked to memorise a list of 12 lists of 10 words, half of the people remembered on average

our experiences. For example, if we cannot remember what we had for lunch yesterday, we might fabricate a memory of eating a sandwich. Or, if we forget to pay for a pack of gum at the store, we might confabulate a memory of paying for it.

Another way that we rationalize our inaccurate memories is through a process called self-serving bias. Self-serving bias is the tendency to interpret

to function in the world. Our memories help us to make sense of our past, to plan for our future, and to connect with others.

It is important to be aware of the ways in which our memories can be inaccurate and biased. By being more mindful of our own memory biases, we can better assess the accuracy of our memories and make more informed decisions.



STOP DOOM SCROLLING:

4 WAYS TO BOOST YOUR MOOD

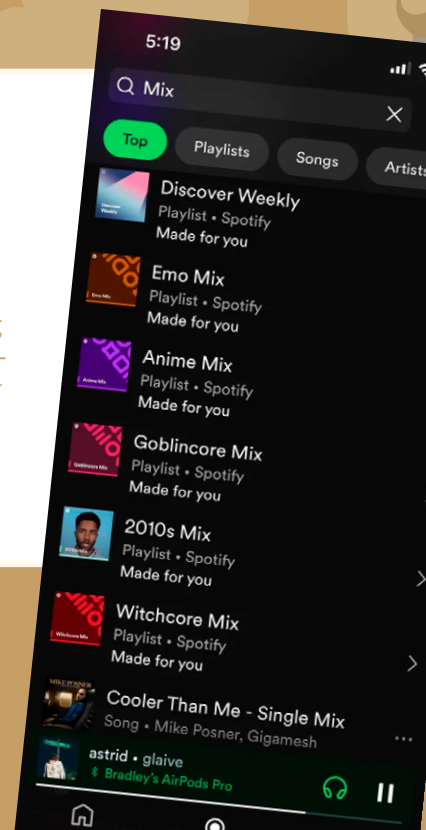
Written by Phung, Nguyen Thien Ngan
(Ruby) - 11B

What to do to brighten your mood instead of scrolling endlessly through social media for hours?

Do you ever find yourself doom scrolling through social media whenever you are bored or at a loose end? Social media overuse has been shown to have negative effects on young people's mental health so I've been searching for healthier alternatives to the endless feed. The list below are not only productive but also fun activities to do during stressful or gloomy times:

1 CREATE NEW MUSIC PLAYLISTS

Personally, this is my favourite method as a music lover. Going through and listening to your playlist, what's better than blasting your favourite songs through the speaker and singing at the top of your lungs to them? At the same time, you can explore genres or artists that are new to you and create diversity in your music taste. Trust me, all your stress and anxiety will flow out of you along with the music!



DEVELOP A NEW HOBBY

Testing out new activities can help distract you from your negative feelings. You don't have to commit entirely to the hobby, just give it a try and see how you feel. For example: during summer 2022, I tried to crochet, and as a result, the hobby stuck with me till this day. So, test out a variety of activities, if you like it, it might be your new hobby; if not, at least it would be a great experience.



WRITE IT DOWN!

This is a method I found on the internet, and it works for me. Whenever you are overthinking or feeling overwhelmed, try to write it out on paper. Just grab a pen, something to write on, and let it all out. Personally, this has helped clear my head very effectively. Afterwards, you can either tear the paper and discard it (like tearing and throwing your negative feelings away) or just keep it for your future self to reflect on.



TALK TO SOMEBODY

Last but not least, talk to somebody. This is probably the most difficult method, but it would be the most effective. Let out your thoughts to someone you trust, perhaps a family member or a great friend. They might give you amazing advice on your problems or just listen which is also great. Doing this would release your negative thoughts, which will lighten your mood. In addition, don't forget to do the same when they come to you for help with their negative feelings.



THE ERAS TOUR

SWIFTIES CELEBRATE TAYLOR'S VICTORY LAP

Written by Nguyen, Thanh Trung (Lewis) - 13C

For the first time, the whole world went crazy for a global tour by a solo music act.

"The most ambitious, spectacular and charming stadium pop shows ever seen", "A mammoth, fan-pleasing 44-song set and extravagant staging", "More than a concert", are just a few reviews from critics who attended the shows by one of the rarest phenomena in the music industry, as well as an enduring pop culture icon, Taylor Alison Swift, more professionally known as Taylor Swift.

After the release of her tenth studio album, *Midnights* in 2022, Swift announced the dates for her sixth concert tour, *The Eras Tour*, which started on March 17, 2023, and ended on December 8, 2024. *AM IS YOURS*

"Before this tour, I remember people would come up to me and be like, 'You just put out five albums that you haven't done tours for, so what's your plan like what are you going to do? You're going to just like, do a show with all the albums in it? And it'll be like, a three-and-a-half-hour-long show?'" and I was like, "Yeah, it's going to be called the Eras Tour. See you there." - said Swift on *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour*.

With a lengthy set consisting of 44 songs, which is entirely taken from Swift's "long live" discography, the singer took her fans on a journey through 10 different, yet iconic "eras" of her music career. One thing that makes *The Eras Tour* setlist different from any other live shows is that the audience could clearly see the transitions between her "eras".

As of August 2023, it is the highest-grossing tour ever by a female artist and second highest-grossing overall based on the first

56 North American shows alone. According to Jeannie Kopstein and Mariah Espada of *Time Magazine*, "the Eras Tour will likely surpass the \$1 Billion-mark next March, while Swift is touring internationally." However, this number is expected to go way deeper than just the net profits generated from the show itself.

According to Swift's official announcement on the date, *The Eras Tour* will be ongoing from March 17 of 2023 until December 8 of 2024. However, being on tour for so long could be Swift's wrong move which could possibly hold her down in her career.

Is It Over Now?

On October 13, 2023, Swift released the self-produced concert film *Taylor Swift: The Eras Tour*, a 3-hour recording of the show. With the same 44-song tracklist as the actual concert, audiences could have the experience of the show if they do not have the chance to watch the actual show. This raises some concerns about the quality of the show since fans and people who would come to the concert already know all too well what to expect at the concert. The only thing that might differ for each show is that Swift would perform two surprise songs and there is no pattern or hints what song she might perform. To resolve this problem, in 2024's early shows, Swift incorporate songs in her discography to make mashups to spice up her performances, for example, at her 2nd show in Sydney, she performed 2 mashups, including 4 songs, 2017's *New Year's Day*, 2020's *Peace*, 2006's *Should've Said No* and 2008's *You're Not Sorry*.

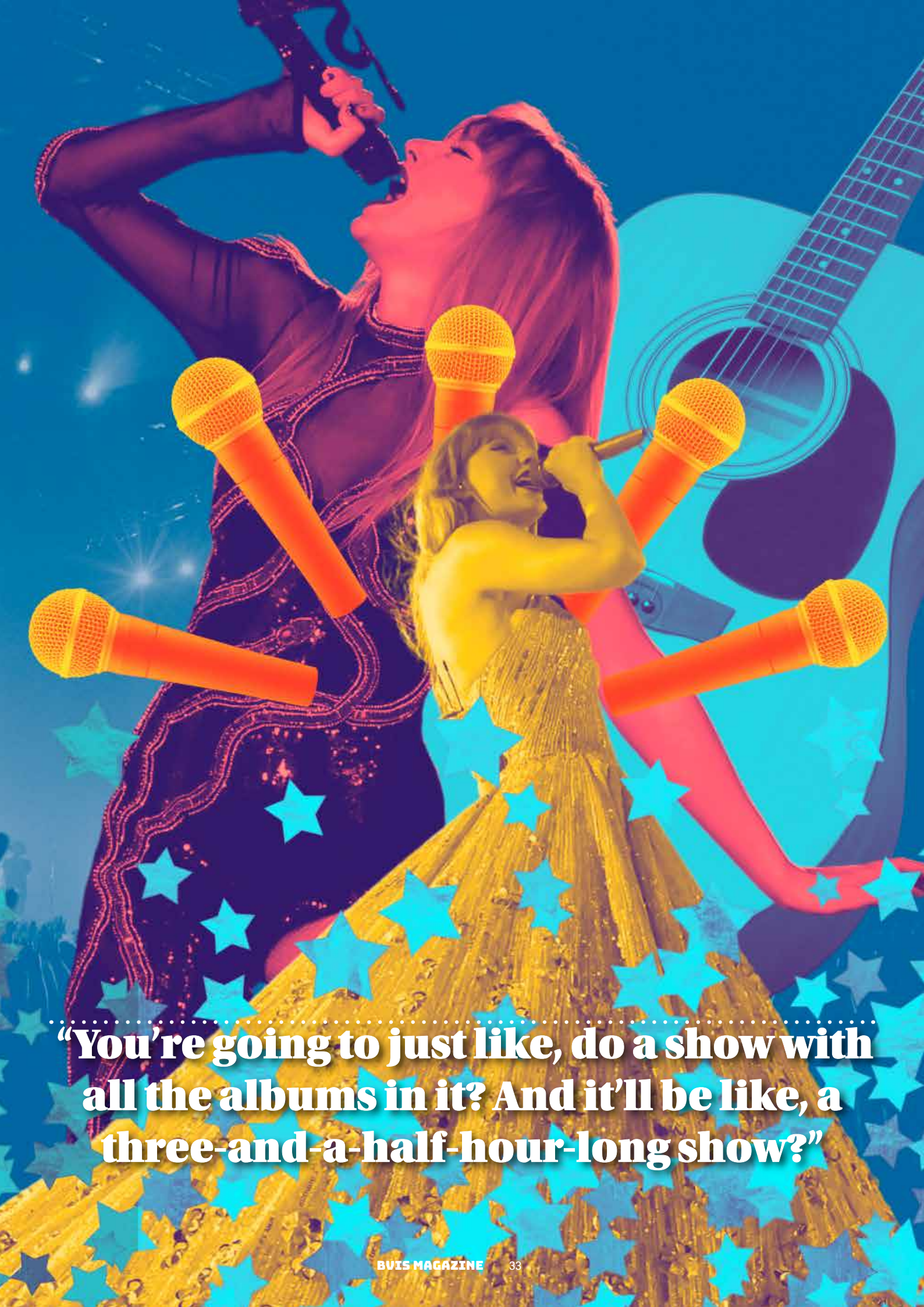
Also, based on what happened in past shows, Taylor Swift might have multiple big announcements for the fans. In

2023, she announced the releases of multiple new projects such as the extended editions of her 2022's hit album, *Midnights*, re-recorded versions of her album, *Speak Now* and 1989 and her eleventh studio album, *The Tortured Poets Department*. With this, we could expect her announcement on the re-recorded version of her debut album and her 2016's infamous full-length, *Reputation*.

Do you think that is all to expect? You're wrong. Including several music acts from different genres, which includes pop-punk icon, Paramore, Grammy-winning indie folk singer, Phoebe Bridgers, Disney's sweetheart, Sabrina Carpenter and upcoming rookies, *GAYLE*, *The Eras Tour*'s supporting acts assist Taylor Swift in the beginning of the concert and these opening performances are just as worthwhile as Swift's performance.

Moreover, during her concert, Swift will bring out several surprise guests that will be performing with her. Let's have a quick look at who Taylor Swift brought out so far. In *The Eras Tour*'s first night in New Jersey, Swift introduced her frequent collaborator, Jack Antonoff, to the stage and performed fan's favorite, *Getaway Car*, a cut from her LP *Reputation*. Also in New Jersey's show, Swift brought out the next big face in rap, Ice Spice and performed their remixed version of *Karma* from her 2022 LP *Midnights*. Looking at Swift's history of special guests, from Ellen DeGeneres, Gigi Hadid, Avril Lavigne, etc., we might expect her to bring out some more unexpected guests.

In conclusion, *The Eras Tour: Is It Over Now?* Of course not, stay tuned and you will be amazed!



“You’re going to just like, do a show with all the albums in it? And it’ll be like, a three-and-a-half-hour-long show?”

OPINION

NAP HACK:

WHY A SIESTA COULD CHANGE YOUR DAY

Love it or hate it, I think that everyone reading this knows the importance of sleep. So, I'll be frank about what I am here to talk about: siesta, an old tradition in Spain, meaning 'midday rest' in their language. You may or may not have heard it before but I'd like to bring it to your attention regardless.

As you can guess, siesta is a nap or rest that takes place early in the afternoon. An afternoon nap: you've likely done it before whether as a kindergartener after a nice, energy filled lunchtime of

at least one person here has had to drag themselves out of bed to their daily obligations, surviving from what scraps of energy you've managed to get from last night. Do you ever look at a little kindergartener being hurried off for their noon sleep and think, 'I wish I got to do that too'. Unfair, isn't it? And if I told you that its perfectly valid to think its just a tad bit unfair? That you should get a break too?

Imagine with me for a second, you're in school right now, you've just had a major test in the previous class, you've spent all

a 'midday rest' - that's what this is. Sleep, while it is recommended and is what its commonly associated with, doesn't always have to be what you do in that time; it could be making time for a calm book reading session on your bed or anything relaxing of the sorts. If we make it a universal tradition, there will be no need to choose between prioritizing 'getting things done' and a well-deserved break because it would become its own form of normal.

This is not a matter of control either, remember that this ultimately is still your time and

Do you ever look at a little kindergartener being hurried off for their noon sleep and think, 'I wish I got to do that too'?

adventures and mischief with your friends or during the weekends when you're feeling particularly lazy and tired. So, you've done it before, one or two stray times a month maybe- except theres just one slight difference. Siesta is a tradition, a tight part of Spanish culture and something that - if allowed (and it already has been in certain places) - happens daily. If you couldn't tell already, I want this to happen and I'm sure you will to.

So, sleep. It is an undisputed fact that it is beneficial; it improves concentration, it keeps you healthy, it reduces stress levels significantly. You know it's important and you know you need it, so I won't go on about it for too long. Not only that but I'm sure

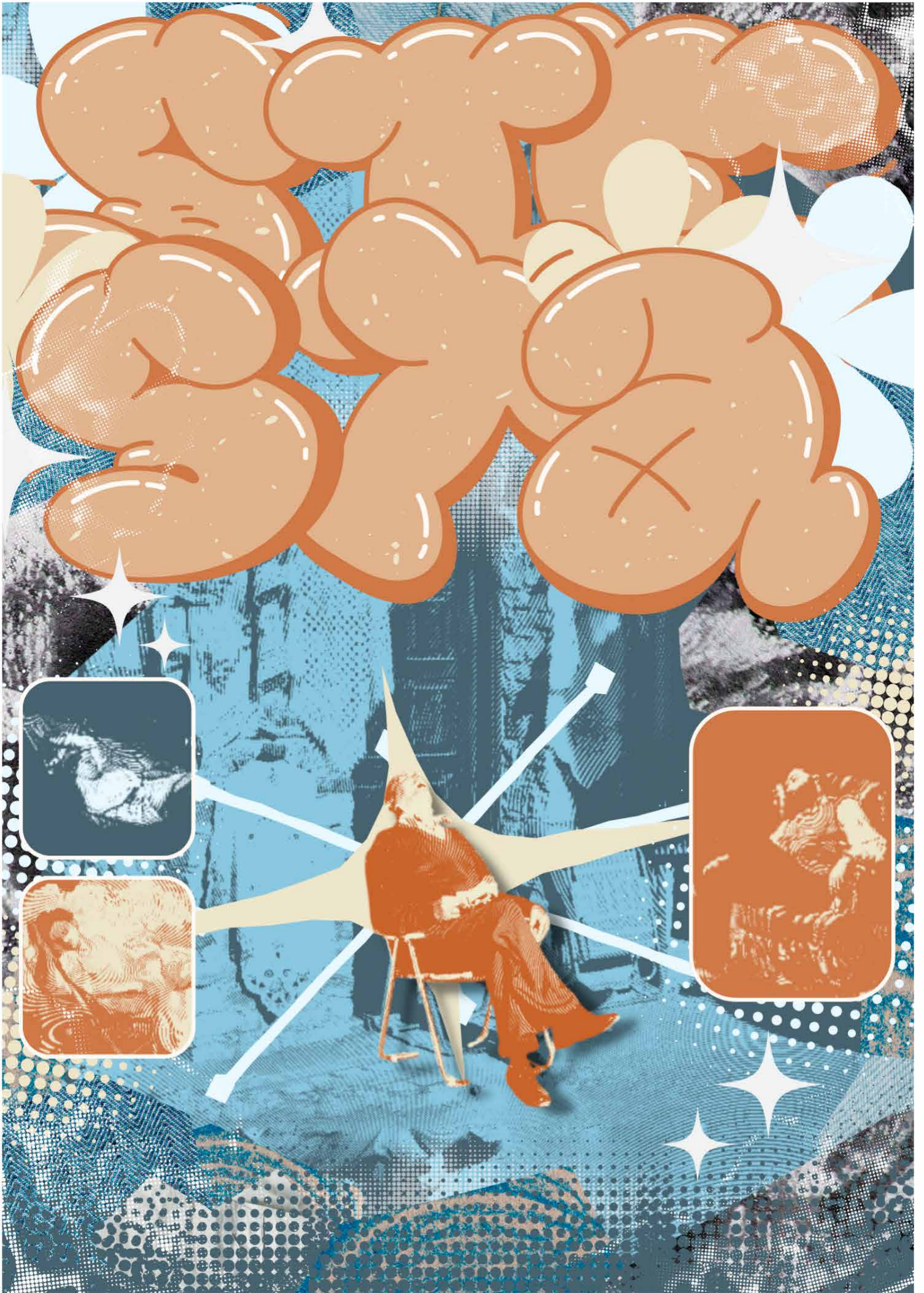
night staying up, cramming for it. Your body is slow to respond, you keep having to rub your eyes and you're feeling antsy. The clock ticks, the bell rings, and now instead of having to march to the next class you're allowed a nap instead. No strings attached, no catch, just purely time for rest.

You may argue that the time could be used for more..useful activities: study, work, and many would agree with you - that's one of the reason why siestas are only limited to a couple of countries - a constant global need and emphasis on productivity along with the conception that it is 'unnecessary' for adults. But you should know that these typically only last for anywhere from twenty minutes to an hour. Also,

your decision, a few buildings closing and a sudden freeness in your schedule won't stop you from choosing to finish a project or get some homework done, its simply there to encourage you to take some time off to rest and recharge.

Well now you know the physical and emotional advantages this could bring with little to no drawbacks, know that this could change things but not enough to be something so out of the realm of possibility. Remember though, that I am simply here to inform and advocate - truly making it happen requires a movement of many.

Don't knock it 'till you've tried it. And at the very least, you should give it a go.



OPINION

FUN SOCKS: BRINGING SOUL TO YOUR SOLES

I write to you here to propose something that might be trivial and ridiculous at first glance, but can actually bring a bit more joy to the monotony of our everyday wearing of garments. I present to you - the movement of wearing fun socks.

Now, I can imagine the looks on your faces - most of you would brush this idea off as improper or an automatic tear down of your social status, but please hear me out. A study by the Journal of Consumer Research by Harvard University found that people who wear non conforming clothing - including

examples listed above, the floor long dress, can only be used occasionally before getting uncomfortable. Socks, on the other hand, are a regular staple in our everyday wear. Also, with socks, if you're uncomfortable flashing it out to everyone, you can always roll the socks down so only you can see it.

Now, lets imagine this into play. You're sitting in a room full of people (for example, this class), with all our mundane black and white uniforms. Your eyes are practically yawning of boredom from the normality of colours. Now, add an array of colourful socks with rowdy patterns and

Research by Harvard found that people who wear non conforming clothing are viewed as more creative, smart, and successful

socks - on purpose, have a more positive impact on their status and are viewed as more creative, smart, and successful than their conforming counterparts. Another study by Northwestern University reveals that the clothing we choose affect the way we act. By choosing to wear fun and silly socks, you are choosing to put these characteristics on to yourself, making you feel better about yourself and giving you a boost of confidence. Doesn't that sound good?

You might be thinking, why socks? While yes, wearing other flashier and much more flamboyant pieces of clothing, such as a sparkly jacket or a floor long dress could all fit the criteria of all the facts listed above, (and i am not disapproving of it), but not every piece of clothing can be so practical. The

quotes. Suddenly, everything is so much more interesting to look at. The tense air of everybody being afraid to step out of line disappears and is replaced with the soothing relief of friendliness.

Clearly socks aren't just pieces of small insignificant pieces of fabric around your feet, it is a humble yet unique and practical display of your personality.

We do not need to be confined by the repetitive and unexciting choices of society-conforming clothing. Let's turn our sock drawers into treasure troves of joy, our feet into canvases of creativity, and our daily routines into celebrations of individuality. I urge you to join this clothing revolution - one pair of fun socks at a time.



POETRY

Some of the contestants of this year's poetry competition have shared with us their fantastic writing. Covering a wide range of themes, the poems explore humans' destructive relationship with nature, finding your identity in a new place, and the simple pleasures of Vietnamese food!

The Hands of Men

Shards of clear glass
Pierce the scattered sky
A knitted constellation
Like paintings come alive

Nature is charm and grace
Seeing her enthralling beauty
Feeling safe as her layers of silk
Embracing us all in safety

But... There's this shocking sight
There are gagged rivers
Which are clogged up and knifed
Leaving a shivering soul

Glancing around I see
Acres of land ripped down
By the scaly hands of men
Humanity slowly drowns

Are we monsters of the borrowed dark
Swallowing up the glory of nature?
Being blind-folded as we embark
On a journey of utter chaos?

I understood too well
How humans are like thieves
We dig into her soul, with greed
Deceiving, then we leave

Now the hills that we climb
Are just seasons out of time
Shinning stars that we reach
Are distant whispers we don't need

...

So,

Have mercy fellow earthlings!
Nature drives this world to life
Nature should be blessed
Not suppressed
Not distressed
She is now powerless

Like us.

The brutality we caused
Is a double-edged knife
Killing the wildlife
Harming our lives

Now, we're simply losing.
This game we created
The HPs Disintegrated
No escape, exit negated

With bleeding trees
Due to startling needs
Earth begins as a seed
Which now withers

Children of nature, what are you doing?
Why are each and every one of us
A fragment of this vicious cycle?
Leading our own death trial?

Couldn't we just pay gratitude?
The currency we all possess?
Don't give me some attitude
Don't regret, lead this world to success – because we've got to

Heal the world before the ships sail
Stop opening Earth's wounds
Save her soul and yourself
Before the time we can't seek help



QUACH, NHU MINH (KATE) - 8V

Where does he belong?

The
man
flies
home
to
his
city,
as
a
roar
of
engines
thrusts
down
a
corridor
of
concrete,
under
the
scrutiny
of
vague
city
lights.

Parched of life,
He dances in pure agony.
His visceral weeps desperately
digging deeper into the soil,
surrounding his bare tree of
culture. At the mere
thought of his
impure identity, he writhes in
torment, shudders in
embarrassment.

The tree's brittle branch;
Now forced to crack under the wind.
It's trunk bleeds profusely of sap;
As it's persistently slashed

And battered by a barrage
of uncertainty and doubt, his tree —
the last of its kind, sitting idly atop a hill
Overlooking the barren reflection of its future.

Luckily.

It receives a kindly gift from a tenderly god
shards of emerald,
His soul now flourishing his roots now sprouting
As he stares blankly at the shadow of yesterday
Before a downpour sinks away his sufferings
and pain the bleak soil of his past.

TRANG, VU MINH DAN (VIO) - 9B



the tree now blossoming with

Vietnamese Food

Vietnamese food to me is everything
It's so good that if you ask me
What my fave food is, then I say pho
What do I miss the most? Then I say food,
If I don't have it for a month
Then it will give me a bad attitude.

Food, it's something that gives me a boost
But it also make me angry.
Now it might sound crazy, but its true,
Sometimes it even makes me sad
I mean if it tastes bad or
Even the owner is mad.

Well it can also make me so mad
Because of how many choices there are.
We can choose pho from the north,
Lau mam from the west,
Banh canh from the south,
And dumpling noodles from the east.

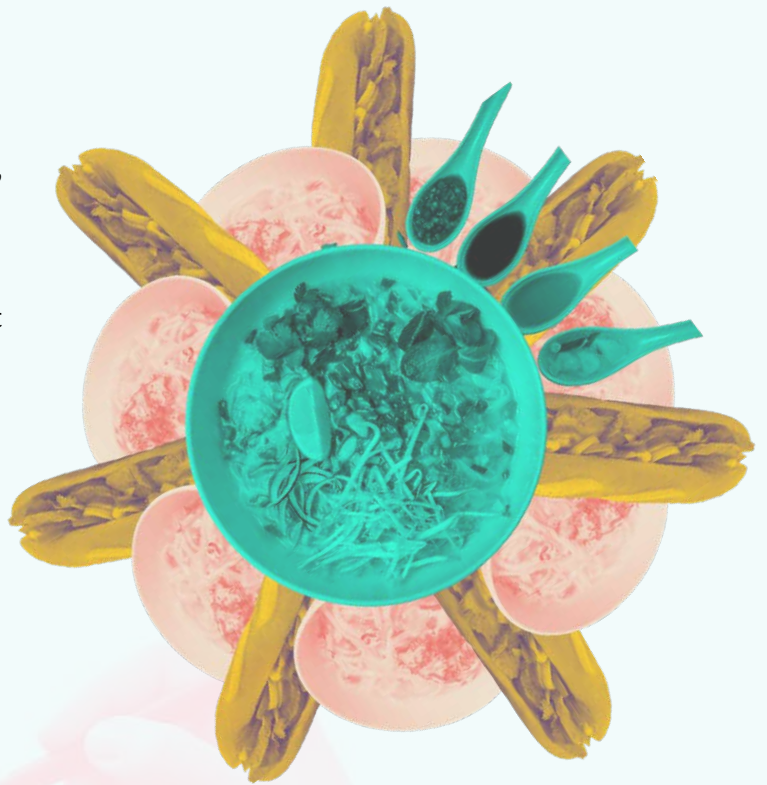
That for something includes soup
It already sounds so yummy as if I'm in heaven
It's as good as everyone mentions
Something as yummy as my imagination
It's just something you can never search for.

Because every time you eat this
It's like a new chapter unfolds
It's rich like a story was yet untold
From the kitchen overflowing of traditions embrace
Comes the soul of a vibrant cultural grace.

Banh mi is a masterpiece in bread
With a layer of meat and vegetables, a melody will spread,
From the crunch of the crust to the softness within
A taste of a beautiful journey thats bound to win.

Gather around the table, feast and dine
Vietnamese food tastes so good what we just find
Slowly taste the savory bite
A new story will open, because Vietnamese food is forever shining bright.

LE, HUYNH THIEN KIM - 9B



GOthic WRITING

Year 7 were tasked with writing in the style of Gothic Fiction, defined by its eerie and suspenseful atmosphere, and dark horror-tinged themes. Can you handle the terror?

The footsteps of our lone hero broke the silence like a piercing knife. She looked up to the sky - the spectral glow of the moon was radiant yet somewhat dim. The weather was a perfect accomplice for tonight's grim proceeding. As she stepped through the oxidized gate, a foul stench shot up her nose; the air was thick of the decaying animal scent. She knew she had to stick with her plan - she could not be arbitrary.

Scarlett's mind was full of thought when she knew she had to do the contrary. The graveyard was desolated, but Scarlett felt the weight of unseen eyes lurking through the shadows, watching her every move. While the wind whispered ancient secrets in her ear, her five senses were alert through the obscure atmosphere. Scarlett ventured through the graveyard swiftly, and reached her destination - the archaic, haunted castle.

Scarlett felt the weight of unseen eyes lurking through the shadows, watching her every move.

The door groaned like it hasn't moved in a decade. Scones were lit on both sides of the decrepit wall, while the ceiling arched into a tympanum. Scarlett had heard about the rumors of this castle before, but did not fear it. The peculiar thing was, why were the scones lit? Who lives here? Scarlett shook those premature thoughts out of her mind, and continued her journey. A winding staircase stood out in the end of the hallway, with portraits whose stares could penetrate one's soul. She ran her hands over the banister - the staircase was so dusty you could have thought snow was falling from a gothic sky.

As Scarlett reached the end of the staircase, a library, stacked with toms, came to her view. The torn books were laid on the shelves, eyeing her patiently. She crouched down to the tomb underneath her foot. Abnormally, the tomb was dusted and preternaturally clean. She gripped her hand over the lid, waiting the moment to arrive. Scarlett was about to open the lid when a hand grasped her shoulder with such force the skin ripped and blood trickled down her arm. She froze.

What was her fate?

Written by Gia Han Le (Susie) - 7V

10TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION
A MONSTER CALLS

MỘT BỘ PHIM CỦA TRẦN THÀNH

REVIEWS

WHAT'S TRENDING AT BVIS

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder

ATRICK JESS
WINNER

THEY'VE GOT COMPANY

The Travelling Cat Chronicles
HIRO ARIKAWA

Lê Bảo Ngọc
KHÔNG PHẢI SỢ ĐỪNG LÀ CƯỜI

TỔ JACH SÔNG KHÁC

GOOD MEN

'Bewitch' com
SUNDA



Looking for your next read or Netflix recommendation? Our own BVIS students share their opinions on the **films, television shows and books** that they have been checking out recently.

REVIEWS - BOOKS

THE TRAVELLING CAT CHRONICLES

– **HIRO ARIKAWA** Written by Quach, Nhu Minh (Kate) - 8V

A MUST READ book! Anybody who has unashamedly loved an animal will feel amazing contentment and delight from this simple yet captivating book, *The Travelling Cat Chronicles*.

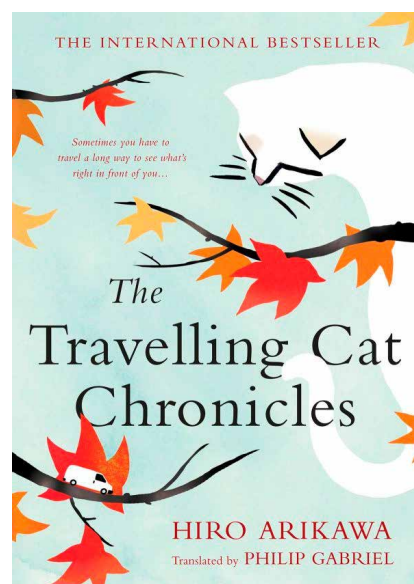
He started off as a cat with no name, living on the streets in pain and misery. Things get worse as he gets into a car accident. A twist of luck comes and he, now Nana, builds an unbreakable bond with a human, a middle aged Japanese man, Satoru. They embark on a journey, throughout the changing seasons of Japan, visiting three different people. Everything seems just fine, and rather ordinary. Until... the purpose for the visits is exposed. Nana's life alters and the world seems to be against him.

The pages of Satoru's strange life get revealed slowly, creating a gratifying atmosphere. Reading this book calmed me down because of its rare gentleness and (surprisingly) striking humour, making my experience with it feel like a warm embrace. The way the author wrote the book is so positive overall, it gives off good vibes and a positive energy, making it the ideal book for all ages, at all times. It's medicine for the soul, soothing and calming. Arikawa's International Bestseller has cunningly managed to leave a forever-lasting impact on readers of all ages. The plot is simple, the message is deep.

.....
It's narrated through Nana's (the stray cat's) sassy and sarcastic style, helping us understand the world of animals in the best way possible.

Another reason to check *The Travelling Cat Chronicles* out: How well do you understand your pet? Or, how well do you understand animals? It makes you think, 'gee, I bet all animals can think'. Us humans, lack the ability to understand their intellectual lexicon, thus, we tend to underestimate our furry (apart from sphynxes) friends. *The Travelling Cat Chronicles* is narrated through Nana's (the stray cat's) sassy and sarcastic style, helping us understand the world of animals in the best way possible.

However, I must say that the vocabulary in this book is rather limited because of Arikawa's simple writing style, although, it has a healthy amount of idioms. The book isn't so thick in size, making it easy to carry around and less intimidating to read.



I tend to read books that deliver a lesson, making my experience with it more worth-while.

The Travelling Cat Chronicles is packed with lessons worth learning in life! It doesn't show it at first though... Lessons about loyalty, generosity, friendship, are just some of them. After reading the book, it has taught me the most important lesson of all: Acts of love, either big or small, can transform our lives.

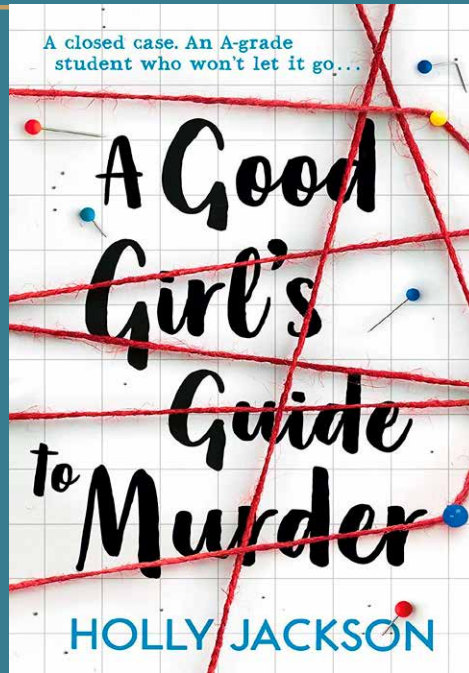


A GOOD GIRL'S GUIDE TO MURDER – HOLLY JACKSON

Written by Phung, Nguyen Thien Ngan (Ruby) - 11B

Nowadays, many people don't enjoy reading books. I was one of those people, before reading this book series.

The book A Good Girl's Guide to Murder is the first book in the trilogy of the same name (book 2: Good Girl Bad Blood, book 3: As Good As Dead, and a prequel novella: Kill Joy). The genre is young adult murder mystery with a romance subplot, recommended for ages 14 and up. The book is available in 2 versions, UK and US. Both versions follow the same plot however the setting of the story took place in different places and time.



.....
“I’m not sure I’m the good girl I once thought I was. I’ve lost her along the way.” - Pip

The first book, which takes place in 2017, follows Pippa Fitz-Amobi's (Pip) journey in investigating a murder case. The death of Andie Bell and Sal Singe has always been the biggest case in Little Kilton, a fictional town located in the UK, which always got Pip so curious her whole life. The case closed 5 years before, in 2012, with Sal Singe being the murderer of Andie Bell; but this never sits right with Pip as she always thought Sal was the kindest kid ever. Therefore, Pip, a year 13 student, decides to reinvestigate this case for her EPQ project.

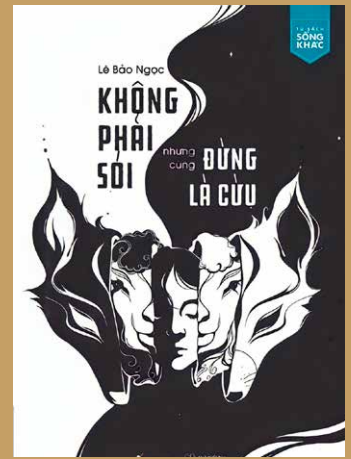
After many interviews and investigations, with the help of Sal's younger brother, Ravi Singe, Pip connects all the dots and reveals the truth buried behind this case.

A close friend recommended this book to me; she promised that it would not let me down, and she was right. Holly Jackson has written this

beautifully - most people dislike reading as the find it boring, however, this book made me forget that I was even reading. The book plays in my mind like a movie, and Jackson has done it effortlessly. The writing isn't too complicated with a fast-paced plot which is very suitable for new readers. In addition, a TV show adaptation of the book series is in the works. Unfortunately, there is no release date yet.

I would highly recommend this book for teenagers who want to start reading more, for people who love the mystery thriller genre, and for romance readers who would like to try something new.

This book has all the perfect aspects for you to binge read for hours. It will keep you up all night not wanting to put it down, guaranteed by me - who stayed up till 1 AM to finish the book!



KHÔNG PHẢI SÓI NHƯNG CŨNG DỪNG LÀ CỪU (A.K.A BE NO WOLF, NOR A SHEEP) – LÊ BẢO NGỌC

Written by Le, Van Thach - 9V

Không Phải Sói Nhưng Cũng Dừng Là Cừu (a.k.a Be No Wolf, Nor A Sheep) - you are not as good as you thought. The thesis revolves around psychology and its power to manipulate the minds of the mortals. As the novel goes on we begin to approach the ugly truth of this warm but cold society. From here, readers realise there isn't a specific composition of right or wrong, we have to live up to our essence.

With a semi-storytelling format and alongside some solid sources from reliable research institutes to prove the case, the author, Lê Bảo Ngọc - a psychologist herself, has successfully given us an interesting tale of suspense and thrills for fellow psychology enthusiasts, A-level psychology students, or anyone who is looking to kill some time through literature.



A MONSTER CALLS

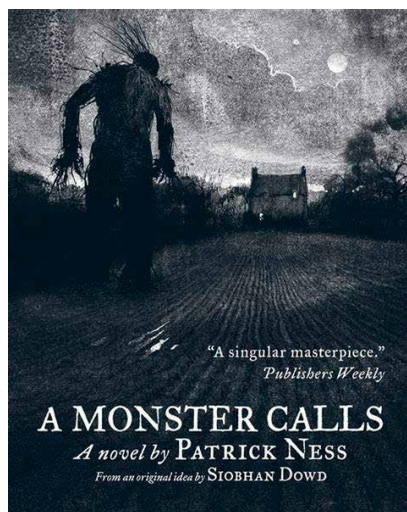
– PATRICK NESS

Written by Quach, Nhu Minh (Kate) - 8V

REVIEWS - BOOKS

The Guardian described *A Monster Calls* as 'Wrenchingly effective'. I would agree. It's one of the most 'soul stirring' and humanly insightful books I've ever read. And it's a book I'm sure you don't want to miss out on.

Conor's mother is suffering from a terminal illness, and the treatments don't seem to be quite working. Whilst she goes through her agony, Conor gets trapped continuously in the dimension of his own dreams, confronting his terrors at the same time - catching the same scene of fright, which now curdles in his mind



like a harmful memory. His terrifying fantasies seem to go on forever, until a monster calls. After each call, a tale is told. When the elemental beast finishes its round of narratives ... it's Conor's turn. Time to tell the truth.

How to move on? Accepting the truth and choosing to forgive may not be as easy as it sounds. *A Monster Calls* talks about the complexity of humans, and how to control traumatic feelings. It's a really great book. There are some parts in which the story twists so terribly, the ending so deep, so intense, so profound, that I could read it over and over again without getting bored. It blends pathos and disappointing realities so smoothly, it manages to soothe readers who face similar experiences.

Reading this story is like sitting on a rollercoaster. Before you know it, the plot's taking a turn; slowly calming itself down - then taking more twists, all to be ended simply and practically. It's absolutely amazing. The topics presented in the book surround everyday problems, worries and behaviours that most teenagers could relate to easily.

There's not much negative to say about the book. But, I felt like it had too much dialogue and not enough

description. However, this meant that the layout of the book is very comprehensible and eases the feeling of the book being wordy. The well split paragraphs and chapters add up to the overall feeling of a lucid account, with a smooth flow of plot.

I would highly recommend this book to people who have found pleasure in telling stories, and are fond of Young Adult and Fantasy, (with a hint of *Slice of Life*) genre books. To those who have ever understood what it is to experience loss and denial and having to accept the way things are. *A Monster Calls* is the ideal book for those who would prefer to read 'not so hefty' books!

Perhaps you're not a great fan of reading. That's alright! *A Monster Calls* has a live action movie said to be just as good as the book (maybe even better...)! Well, it doesn't matter if you read or watch it - you'll still have to prepare tissues (a lot of tissues) in the progress of enjoying this masterpiece.

Through *A Monster Calls*, I hope you'll understand what it is to live on, how to seek valour within oneself and acknowledge the incredible potential of stories.



LET THE SKY FALL

– SHANNON MESSENGER

Written by Nguyen, Khac Nguyen Anh (Tony) - 8S

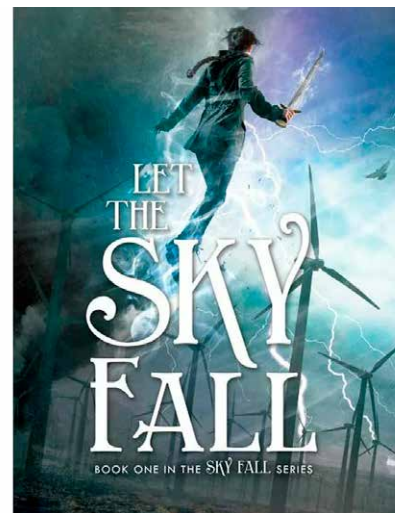
"Let The Sky Fall" by Shannon Messenger is a classic save-the-world fantasy series that tells the tale of Vane and Audra. The narrative is set in a richly imagined universe mixing elements of science with mythology to create a world that is both familiar and full of otherworldly things such as sylphs - beings with the ability to control the winds.

Vane Weston, the protagonist of the story, is the last of the Westerly sylphs, carrying the heavy burden of his heritage and the secrets that come with it. His character can only be described as a blend of humor and curiosity, providing a light hearted counterbalance to the more serious parts of the story. Audra, his guardian and mentor, is determined and loyal. Her seriousness and sense of duty drive the story forward as she aids Vane in unlocking his abilities and uncovering his past.

The story is written from the perspective of both Vane and Audra, showing their individual thoughts and ideas. Their contrasting personalities also create a balanced plot, with Vane's sarcasm and humor balancing Audra's stoicism, adding depth to their personalities and growth.

The main antagonists are the Stormers, a menacing group of sylphs, who set the stage for a classic battle between good and evil. The Stormers' desire to eradicate Vane, Audra, and their allies and the mystery that shrouds their powers and plans create a sense of urgency and danger, propelling the plot with high stakes and intense action.

Finally, the author's writing shines in her ability to balance humor with the darker aspects of the story, ensuring that the narrative maintains a sense of hope amongst the challenges that our characters have to face. This



is shown in the humour and banter between Vane and Audra that is not only engaging but also makes them feel human despite their race, making their journey also relatable and even more gripping.

Overall, "Let the Sky Fall" is a good series with great world building and is an enjoyable read.



MAI

Written by Nguyen, Thanh Trung (Lewis) - 13C

In recent years, the Vietnamese film industry had significantly recorded the robust growth of Vietnamese filmmakers, domestic and foreign (from Vietnam). There are multiple notable examples, for instance, the 76th Cannes International Film Festival marks two important achievements of Vietnamese French filmmaker Tran Anh Hung and director Pham Thien An, and “Em va Trinh” by Phan Gia Nhat Linh became the highest-grossing Vietnamese film of 2022 (97 billion VND). Most recently, during 2024’s Lunar New Year, “Mai” set a record and Tran Thanh became Vietnam’s first “trillionaire” director with 3 movies that have all reached or exceeded the 400 billion VND mark. However, achievements do not guarantee quality. The movie Mai has a lot of notable flaws, and this review will walk you through the reasons why despite its successes, it is not as good a movie in terms of quality.

Disclaimer: this review contains spoilers!!!

Mai, was produced as Tran Thanh’s effort to make a family-friendly movie with touching stories about love and family, although, including too many inappropriate details in a redundant manner, which eventually led to the R-18 label of this movie, the film itself felt like a half-baked cake, with too many ingredients left unbaked.

Melodrama could be seen clearly throughout the plot, involving a tragic life of a single mom who became a female masseuse and how she deals with all the misfortune caused by her father, boyfriend’s



family, and colleagues. That said, it feels like Tran Thanh is being greedy about what he should put in the movie, so he decided to put them all in one movie. This decision accidentally turned the movie into a speed run of more than 10 Korean-drama episodes in one go. Also, as another consequence, many characters in the cast lack backstory development and personalities, this led to them existing in the story line without any good reason besides making the cast more diverse. For example, the inclusion of Binh Minh, Mai’s daughter, does not add anything special to the movie itself while she is supposed to be Mai’s main emotional support, but this fact was outshone by the male lead, Mai’s boyfriend who appears later in the film, which left Binh Minh’s role in the storyline nothing but a place-filler.



making it so corny that it led to discomfort among the audience. Therefore, audiences might be thinking about the ugly ghosts they had seen in a movie instead of the actual intention that Tran Thanh has for the scene.

The language in the movie is also another weakness that Mai has. In Mai, the characters’ dialogue feel corny and empty, most of it feels

Some of the quotes in the movies have gone viral on social media like TikTok or platforms like Facebook, etc., due to its “cringey” nature

One weakness that could be seen in major Vietnamese movies is that they mostly tend to over-simplify elements and details, which could potentially leave space for self-reflection and require the audience to analyse that will lead to better watching experiences and lasting effects. Mai also, unfortunately, takes the same pathway. Some details such as when Mai, the main character gets pushed against the locker and is being harassed both mentally and physically, the atmosphere changes drastically, the coloration turns black and white and suddenly ghosts (acted by the members of cast) appear and interrogate Mai. This detail is Tran Thanh’s attempt of visualizing a Vietnamese phrase “bóng ma tâm lý” or “the ghost of memories,” which refers to the core memories that haunt you for a long time, understood by the term PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder). While this might be nerve racking to watch, the detail itself is too obvious,

outdated and could be described as “being written by someone fantasising about an idealised romantic relationship that might never happen.” Some of the quotes in the movies have even gone viral on social media like TikTok or platforms like Facebook, etc., due to their “cringey” nature.

In conclusion, despite the weaknesses and spaces for improvement, Mai had good marketing strategies, and this might be one of the reasons how it attracted such a tremendous amount of audience. In the future, we can hope that movies from Vietnamese domestic filmmakers have better quality in terms of the production, the story, and the artistic direction.



GOOD OMENS

Written by Nguyen, Hoang Bao Chau
(Emma) - 10V

In the beginning, there was an incredibly bored Year 10 student - one whose boredom made her lack the motivation to even draw a small stick figure or read a short book. She discovered the series 'Good Omens' through social media, which captivated her so much that she watched it for days on end, never skipping an episode, and thoroughly enjoyed the experience.

Oh, right - that Year 10 student is me.

'Good Omens' is a series adapted from the book "Good Omens: The Nice and Accurate Prophecies of Agnes Nutter, Witch" by Neil Gaiman and Terry Pratchett. Gaiman created it as a tribute to Pratchett, who passed away in 2015 and was released exclusively on Amazon Prime in 2019. All six episodes were written by Gaiman and directed by Douglas McKinnon, known for his work on Doctor Who and Sherlock. The show's impressive world-building, captivating visuals and witty humour make for a delightful and entertaining viewing experience.

Season One's main story, narrated by God herself (yes, you read that right, God is a woman in the series) is about the birth of the antichrist as well as Aziraphale (Michael Sheen) and Crowley (David Tennant), an angel and a demon living life in modern-day society. And when I say, 'modern-day society', I mean 'modern-day society' as in "we have iPhones." Crowley was given a mission to switch the then-baby antichrist with the son of an American diplomat, which set Armageddon in motion. This was the moment when Aziraphale and Crowley agreed to work with one another to stop it from ever happening and the beginning of their friendship.



However, unbeknownst to the angel-demon duo, the plan had gone awry. The real antichrist named Adam (ironic, isn't it?), had grown up in the wrong house and the wrong village. This was something Crowley and Aziraphale

REVIEWS - TV

The duo's attempt to save the world was not the only theme the show explored. They also showed past encounters between the two, from the beginning of humanity as well as the French Revolution, where Aziraphale had to be saved from the chopping block by Crowley because he was dressed like an aristocrat - a big no-no for the French people during that time. It also has riffs on Bible stories - such as the story of Job, God's favorite human whom she decided to test. Instead of his goats and children being horrifically murdered, Crowley had turned them into crows and lizards respectively, much to Aziraphale's relief.

This show is amazing in that it brings laughter to the viewer, and it uses over-the-top fantastical elements, from Aziraphale's flaming sword to Crowley's sentient Bentley that can change color.

AZIRAPHALE: "Sorry. What was that?"

CROWLEY: "I said, 'Well that went down like a lead balloon.'"

AZIRAPHALE: "Oh. Yes it did, rather."

didn't realise until Warlock Dowling, the boy the two thought was the antichrist, had turned eleven. Season Two continued the series by having Aziraphale see Archangel Gabriel (his old boss), who has lost his memory, outside of the bookshop he owns.

David Tennant and Michael Sheen (hey, two more Biblical names!) bring life to their characters with copious amounts of comedy and a tiny bit of action mixed, making the series a tale well told. If you have no interest in an angel and demon becoming best friends while an eleven-year-old boy somehow summons the Kraken, this show is not for you.

A 10/10 for me - this show is truly ineffable.









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