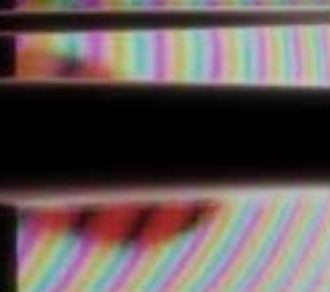
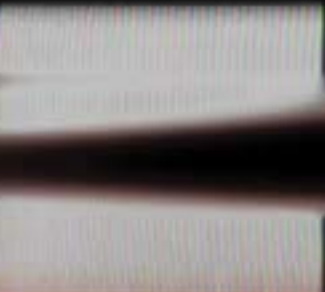
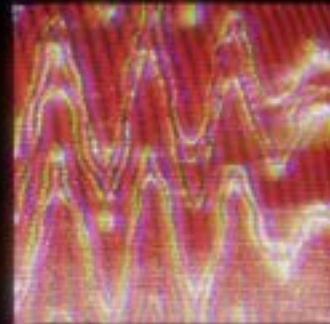
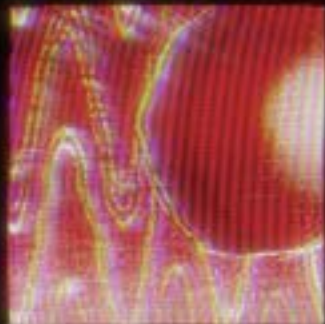
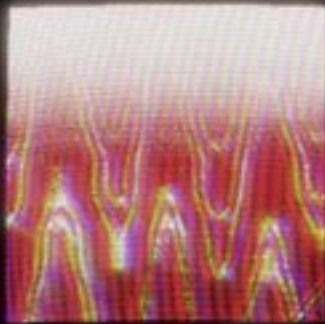


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IMAGE DAY x OCA

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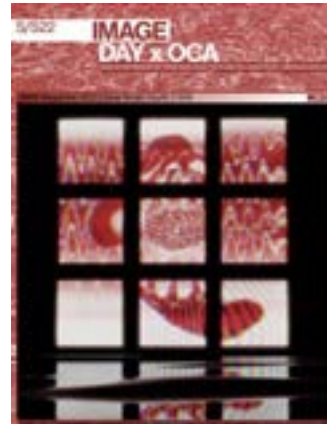
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BEHIND THE COVER



◀ This issue's cover was designed by Kevin Phan and Nicole Nguyen.

“For this year’s cover, Nicole and I wanted to celebrate OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates and Dear Asian Youth’s partnership when making this piece. Nicole Nguyen of Dear Asian Youth created the illustrations, then I edited and designed the rest of the cover. Together, we employed classic iconography with contemporary elements to reflect both organizations’ timelines and histories.”



From the Desk of...

**OCA'S
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR**

Thu Nguyen



**DEAR ASIAN YOUTH'S
FOUNDER AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Stephanie Hu



Dear IMAGE Readers,

It's unimaginable that we are already more than halfway through another year. Not only has it seemed like work and school have come barreling at us in 2022, but each month seems to bring new challenges when we all just want to take a break and rest.

Something we've come to see in the past few years is how rest has become a precious value of Generation Z and beyond. As a borderline Millennial and Gen-Z myself, and closely bonded to my Gen X cousins, I have seen how my peers and predecessors have worked themselves to the point of burnout. Burnout manifests differently in each person, but it largely results in a loss of passion and interest. Truthfully, in my five years at OCA thus far, I have probably burnt myself out 3-4 times and had to find a way to recover and come back. While I've managed to find cures each time, I've been trying to work towards a preventative method: incorporating rest.

There's a lot we can learn from Gen-Z, just as they still have a lot to learn from us. As OCA grows and changes, and as we continue to develop our pipeline of AAPI leaders, I realized that it was important for OCA to partner with youth-founded and based organizations. We are able to support each other, provide intergenerational networks, and strengthen our communities. I am incredibly excited for our partnership with Dear Asian Youth (DAY), which we are officially launching with this special edition of IMAGE Magazine. We hope this will spark important conversations and new ideas among your own OCA chapters and communities, as this is just the beginning of OCA's collaborations with DAY and their youth leaders at both the national and local level.

In Solidarity,

Thu

Dear IMAGE Readers,

In the Spring of 2020, I decided to launch a poetry blog called "Dear Asian Youth". I sought a platform where I could freely write about my Chinese American identity, especially at the height of harmful rhetoric against Asian Americans because of COVID-19. Little did I know, that passion project would soon blossom into an incredible organization to which I owe all my blessings.

And now, a little over two years after founding Dear Asian Youth, we are working hand-in-hand with OCA to bring this collaborative issue of IMAGE to you. To see a physical rendition of what began as a humble blog illustrates not only the power in the voices of young people — but also the labor and love of our incredible team.

Our team is composed of 300 passionate volunteers ranging from 13 to 30 years old. They come from different countries, cultures, and walks of life — but are all equally dedicated to furthering Asian activism. IMAGE has given us the opportunity to highlight their unique voices — and in turn, represent perspectives across continents. I hope that as you read this issue, you will be immersed in images of your home, poems about your resilience, and stories of your mother's laugh. I can only hope that you are able to see yourself within the pages of this magazine.

We thank OCA again for this invaluable opportunity and their unwavering guidance — and are so excited to continue our journey in the Asian advocacy world.

With love,

**Stephanie Hu
Founder and Executive Director, Dear Asian Youth**

CONNECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

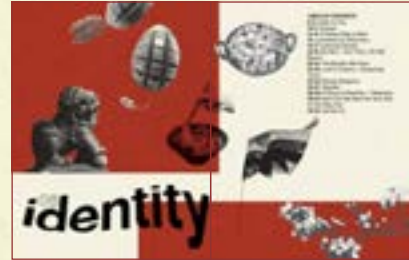


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You don't remember me. Why would you? For you, it was just another day at school. For me, it was the day you took my voice.

2017, my junior year of college: the Honors advanced writing class. The assignment was for everyone to give a presentation on whatever they wanted. I chose to do mine on the lack of Asian representation in the media. I had never been given a chance to talk about the subject in a formal setting, so this seemed like as good an opportunity as any.

I spent hours doing my research and making my PowerPoint pop with colors and images. It was a project I was excited to work on—it was a glimpse into the struggles within my community.

During the presentation, I felt the energy of the topic coursing through me. It started as a spark. As I spoke, the spark grew into a fire that warmed me from within. I was angry at the lack of positive representation and disappointed I had to even talk about it in the first place. But I was glad I had a platform to spread awareness. Public speaking made me nervous, and I was worried I would stutter or stumble over my words. But even I could hear the articulation and clarity in my voice, reinforced by my passion for the topic.

After I finished, the other students asked me questions and shared their comments. I don't recall any of them, but I can remember yours clearly. Do you remember what you said? I doubt it. Allow me to refresh your memory.

You said, "That's cool, but don't we have more important things to worry about?"

The energy rushed out of me and the flames of my passion were extinguished by an arctic gale. I froze in place. I heard your words, but my mind was still trying to register their meaning. Emotions churned in my stomach. I suppressed the bitter bile rising in my throat. I was acutely aware of the rest of my surroundings: someone near me wore too much perfume, the cloying scent making me nauseous; the sunlight streaming through the window cast a harsh glare in my eyes; the wooden podium I stood behind bit into my fingers where I gripped it.

I didn't have the strength and the voice I do now.

So I agreed with you.

I nodded my head, more out of instinct than choice. "Yeah, I guess we do," I said. The words barely came out, but the betrayal they held thundered in my ears. I sat back down, and the next student started their presentation.

I wish another student had spoken up. I wasn't the only Asian student or student of color. I couldn't have been the only one who felt strongly about the topic. Maybe they were just as shocked as I was to say anything. Maybe they hadn't found their voices yet, either.

I wish our professor had said something. Out of all my college professors, he was one of my favorites because he seemed to genuinely care about his students and their education. But in that moment, he didn't support me. His silence made him complicit, and it stung.

I wish, I wish, I wish.

Letter

**"If you're given the
out to defend your
community, take it with
Don't wait as long as
that your feelings
ber that you are allo
aged—to take**

Eric N

Wishes only get you so far. The ones left unfulfilled leave a bitter taste in your mouth.

I haven't forgotten about that day, even after all these years. For the longest time, I regretted not saying anything. I was mad at myself for being so weak. There were so many times when I almost approached you after class or tried to send you a strongly worded email. But I could never follow through.

Fast forward to today, and things have changed. I've grown since then. I've found my place in my community as an Asian American. I've found the strength to speak up. While I can't change the past, I can act in the present.

This is what I wanted to say. This is my letter to you.

What's important to you is subjective. While others, including myself, may share your feelings, they don't discount what we experience individually. Climate change, poverty, hunger—those are all noble and important causes. I care about them, but I care about other issues, too.

As a white male, you've been lucky enough to see yourself in the media. You have seen yourself as the hero and the intellectual and the physically attractive. Growing up, I only saw myself as the nerd, sidekick, and kung fu master with an inauthentic Asian accent. I saw stereotypes and caricatures that were far beyond any accurate recognition.

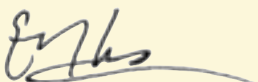
You have the privilege and luxury of not having to care about representation. You've always been represented. You've always been the protagonist, and I've been your tokenized side character. Sometimes, I've even been the villain.

Would your response still be the same now, while Asians face a rise in racism worldwide because of the Coronavirus? I want to believe that it wouldn't. I want to believe that, like me, you've grown since that time. Our community needs allies, and you could be one of them.

What you said hurt. It was ignorant and condescending. It made you part of the problem I was referring to in my presentation. But looking back, it was part of the journey that led me to where I am now—writing for an organization that uplifts the Asian and Asian American community. Representation has gotten better, but we're still a long way away from where we need to be. The cause is still important to me, and I will keep fighting for it.

Even though you'll likely never see this, I've said my peace. Writing this letter was just as much for me as it was for you, maybe even more. I can move on with my life, and you can't take my voice away again.

Yours truly,
An Asian American with important things to worry about,



to You

the chance to speak
yourself and your com-
without hesitation.
as I did. Remember
are valid. Remem-
owed—and encour-
ke up space.”

Whem

For most of my life, I've spent alternate summer vacations in India. Every other summer, usually a day or two after school ended in May, my parents would wake me up early in the morning. "Chalo!", my dad would exclaim—we were always late to leave. We'd drag oversized suitcases full of American presents for our relatives into our car and head to the airport. Sixteen hours later, I'd wake up to the strong smell of car exhaust fumes, factory pollution, and the heat of a billion human beings as we landed in the Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi.

My uncle, a tall man with a round belly, thick mustache that covered his entire mouth, and scratched black glasses, would come to receive us outside the airport, yelling our names and words of excitement as my eyes and ears took in everything around me. The beeping of auto rickshaws and long, meandering conversations between chai-walas seemed to fade into the excited dialogue between my parents and uncle—"How was the flight? Did you have something to eat?" Hindi has a sweet, sticky quality—words often slur into each other with graceful inflections, flipped and rolled r's, and long held out vowels. Coming from curt American greetings and obligatory small talk, these exchanges felt like having my ears drenched in liquid jaggery, each word leisurely trickling off everyone's tongues. Of all the words swirling around me, only half really reached my ears. It'd take me a month of roaming around new and old Delhi, my parent's hometowns, Budaun and Jabalpur, and countless invitations to catch up on life and discuss Indian politics over chai and Bareilly ke pede (a nearby town's renowned milk and sugar cakes) for my tongue to wrap itself around the flavorful four-course meal that was Hindi. Day by day, I could reply to my aunt's cheeky taunts more and more. She could no longer joke about my American accent without me shooting back. In late June or early July, when the monsoon finally arrived, I'd find myself up to my knees in rain water and newfound slang that I picked up from the other kids in the neighborhood. As I taught them my favorite playground game (Red Rover), and they taught me jugaadu cricket (cricket without real wickets, bats, or balls and too many players played in alleyways), I learned to call angsty teenage boys "chichhore", and tell my friends they looked "jhakaas" when they dressed up. Gia, my next door neighbor, was my best friend during this time— we engaged in all sorts of masti throughout my trip.

My Rooh-afza flavored dream would end the day we left and returned back to the United States, where I'd find myself with an Indian accent while speaking to the Immigration agent. English and American culture was a shock to my system as I settled back into my normal life after returning from my colorful vacation. As my mouth reacquainted itself with the hard "r"s and sharp "t"s of English, I could only imagine Hindi's dramatic flow and silky vocabulary floating through the air. It was back to Hindi only in the house, to be experienced through my parents, Hindi-language movies from Netflix playing on the TV screen, or the "Chaiyya Chaiyya" and assortment of vintage Bollywood music playing in our SUV while on the way to the grocery store. But, it wasn't till the pandemic hit, and I wasn't able to escape to the world of Hindi in the summer, that I fully understood what I was missing. As the months went by, I noticed Hindi's shimmering phrases slipping out of my hands like a bar of foamy Dettol soap.. When I muttered "arrey" in frustration, the r didn't quite roll the way it's supposed to. It was like my brain and tongue were split into two warring parts, competing in a tug of war with no clear winner in sight.

How could I restore the balance when there was no return to India in sight? No more rides in yellow and green autos, no more bargaining with the vegetable vendor in the bazaar? What a strange experience- to be a stranger in your own mind, an alien in a language you've loved all your life.

I envied my parents' soft accent that indicated their foreign origin and allowed them to navigate the wild twists and turns of the language. It was incredibly frustrating to have to force the language that I felt was innate to me, and that I should have had mastery in. Out of frustration, I resolved to teach myself what I could; in the summer of 2020, I finally taught myself how to read and write Hindi. At first, it felt like the glossy curves of each sound would never make a home in my mind. Hindi is unlike English in that each sound can be modified by writing it differently, rather than adding separate letters before or

ZUBAAN

IRA SHARMA

after. Wrapping my English-thinking, somewhat Hindi-conversation-fluent brain around the letters was a struggle. However, the long months of time in the house during the pandemic provided the perfect background for me to learn.

It's now 2022, and I still struggle with identifying some letters and sounds. I haven't visited India in 4 long years, but my Hindi hasn't left me. Beyond reading and writing, my long wrestling match with Hindi and my identity continues. However, the war between the two sides has dwindled into a gentle ceasefire; my Hindi-English, or Hinglish, brain is soothed by the Hindustani classical music I discovered during our latest quarantine, and stimulated by the books I read and essays I write in English. My identity has gotten more cloudy—I'm unable to just switch between American and Indian like I could with my 10-year old self—it seems now, I must always exist as both, neither can be extradited from my life. As I walk through my daily life, endless raags, Bollywood and Punjabi music play in the background of my mind. Likewise, my prayers, hopes, and dreams are written out in neat English in my journal. I've come to understand myself as less of a battlefield and more of an ongoing song with international harmonies and a melody unlike any other—tabla blending with guitar, and sitar bleeding into piano as I compose the chorus of my life, note by note.



A Dream Was a Wish

What happens when you can't believe in your dreams? A personal essay.

by Hannah Govan

Prologue: The Road Not Taken

*Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

The Road Not Taken by Robert Frost has been my favourite poem since I heard it in an episode of *The Suite Life of Zack & Cody*. Zack shared his interpretation of the poem in summer school that travelling the harder path can be more fulfilling than the easier route; this illustrated why I dreamed of being a writer rather than following my parents' footsteps. I wanted to believe that I could take the road less travelled by and *succeed*. I fantasized about hard work paying off for your dreams to come true. I dreamed about the magic of dreaming.

Dressing-up my dreams

My favourite early-era Disney princess was Cinderella. I sought out any fairy tale book and movie about Cinderella because

I wanted to consume every illustrated version of the *transformation*. The idea that a dress torn apart by pain and wickedness could become an enchanting gown sewn by wishes and kindness was magical. To me, the glittering garment embodied the pursuit of dreams.

Under my bed used to be a duvet sheet filled to the brim with dress-up clothes. My favourite was a royal purple ball gown skirt I pretended to be the Cinderella dress; the thin veils of synthetic fabric were as soft as blunt sandpaper, but I believed it was my most lavish garment. I would walk up and down the spiral staircase with one hand on the bannister, and the other clutching a handful of the skirt to avoid tripping. Pushing my palm against the layers felt like sweeping across the words of a fairy tale book. Time and age pulled holes into the crinkled petticoat, but I still

felt beautiful. I could vicariously experience the transformation.

When the clock struck bedtime, the skirt never disappeared into rags and frayed cloth and my dreams would never die. Cinderella's garment slept under my bed every night, waiting for me to put on and practise "So This Is Love" in the kitchen. Cinderella empowered me to be kind and have courage. I was an ambitious girl that grew to be an equally ambitious woman. I wanted my transformation from a shy bookworm to a bestselling author to be a Cinderella story.

Fairy Godparents

The idea that many Asian parents want their children to be doctors, lawyers or engineers is a persistent trait that stereotypes itself to this day. My parents were the opposite. Mum's bedtime stories moulded my love for books and illustration, so it was no surprise that I wanted to be the next big author with an award-winning story.

I used to have a pink-and-purple scrapbook that had allocated spaces to write facts about myself, family, and friends. One of the questions was: "what do your parents think you'll be when you're older?" With a pen in hand and the scrapbook held against my chest,

I waddled from the grey living room carpet to the left side of my Dad and the computer. He was either writing another email to the local council, looking at camera equipment on eBay, or viewing custom electric guitars. I waited for him to remove his headphones.

“Daddy, what do you think I’ll be when I’m older?”

“Whatever you want to be, Hannah.”

I didn’t find that answer helpful. Dad knew my dreams, but I was curious about which jobs suited me. For example, my Mum once said she was convinced I would become a contemporary artist because I would entangle the living room walls and furniture with sellotape and string into a giant spider web, akin to Chiharu Shiota installations. I wanted the question answered as a record of my parents believing in me. This is a key instance of how my parents did their best to nurture their only child’s ambitions, to let her dream big in a way that their parents didn’t do for them.

My Dad grew up in Ipoh (Malaysia) as the oldest brother of a poor Tamil family; his “dream job” never existed as he only chose nursing as a career based on the O-levels results he received and left Ipoh for England when he was 19. Dreaming was never an option for him. My

Mum wanted to go to art school but was raised in a huge conservative farming family in Devon. For respect, she either needed to marry young as a farmer’s wife or have a sustainable job — Mum chose the latter. The silver lining was both my parents worked in health and social care, meaning they were prepared to raise a neurodivergent child.

My parent’s careers informed them how not to limit the growth and potential of their only daughter, and I will always love and appreciate them for that. They had to learn from the pressures of their family circumstances that it’s okay to let your child choose “the road less travelled” because that could make all the difference in their happiness.

As I’m writing this, my eyes are glassy with guilt. The pressures of a parent projecting dream careers onto their children didn’t happen for me, but the overwhelming desire to make mine proud meant that I set a high standard for myself regardless of the circumstance. “Do your best, that’s all that matters” was my mantra and anything less was shameful. I compensated for the stereotypes my parents didn’t impose on me — I “Asian-parented” myself.

You can’t go to the ball

Primary school, secondary school, college, and university — they taught me to dream... and have backup plans. I was warned that a long-term income in writing was

rare, then encouraged to develop multiple skills for *any* creative field. That was the new goal.

When I applied for an undergraduate degree in English with Publishing, I joked with my parents that I could get a job at a publisher and weasel my future manuscript into the pipeline. I knew publishing was business-driven, but I didn’t expect my cynicism to skyrocket and impact my ambitions. We were taught that book deals can’t solely rely on an author’s writing skills, they have to *sell*. I overanalyzed my skills, grew confident in my academic writing but became insecure about my creative writing. I started believing that my dreams didn’t matter if I couldn’t profit.

“That would be something to write about in your book!” is a common phrase Dad would say on the phone, and I’ve lost the energy to explain the nuances of becoming a professional author. Whenever he mentioned “my future book” and encouraged me to keep writing, I’d switch off. The childhood dreams my Dad remembered are disconnected from the reality I got used to.

During university, I gradually felt as if education prioritized employability over learning.

Whenever I attended compulsory lectures, seminars, and workshops about transferable skills, I wished to throw myself out a window and barrel-roll into the nearest gutter. I was tired of listening to multiple advisors with the same advice. It seemed that if you did not make an effort to become employable, you wouldn’t earn enough to pay taxes

or support yourself. **If you didn't work to earn money, your existence lacked purpose.**

I didn't fight against the disillusionment. If anything, I proved it right and kept applying for jobs. I came to terms with modern employment and subconsciously decided that dreaming was not worth the struggle if I wasn't employable. Each time I printed a new application, the ashes of my adolescent ambitions trailed behind. I was killing my dream with every skill-based CV, cover letter, and rejected interview.

With my elbows resting against the kitchen table and my fingers racing across each key on my laptop, my face is warm from the cascading waves of emotion I feel thinking about my parents. I refuse to unleash the roaring sea of conflicting feelings I harbor because I'm scared. Tears threaten to overflow and my throat is drowning in air. I physically can't tell them that their sleepless nights, arguments, physical and mental struggles feel wasted on me. They raised me to believe in myself and dream, but my dreams are sinking...

Breaking my glass slipper

I can't believe in words that encourage me to dream, they wilt at my feet like a rotting pumpkin. The future I promised my past self has been broken by the reality of my present.

As a child, I would pretend to be a mermaid in the bath and let my imagination swim gently in an abundance of bubbles, the colour of iridescence that similarly glimmered in any illustrated version of Cinderella's transformation dress. The prismatic shift between sparkling silvers, icy blues, and

soft periwinkles danced with the gown's pleats and folds. It was as magical as a journey to the ball.

As an adult, the shower pelts me with a simulation of rain. Warm droplets envelop my body and burst upon contact like the instant tension and release of a hug. But the spaces that water misses are cold. They are naked, exposed, abandoned and waiting for comfort that never arrives. The silvers and blues and purples that colour my water no longer glisten like Cinderella's dress; instead, they are tears left behind by racing droplets on the shower doors and tiles. The iridescence of dreaming that warmly bathed me only appears in the form of watery fractures in the shower.

By my own hands, my dreams have been picked apart by the hem with a sharp needle, haphazardly re sewn with a thread that doesn't match in colour and is too thick to neatly mend. The fabrics of my childhood no longer fit the threads I have found from adulthood. They no longer fit beautifully like a glass slipper and there is no fairy godmother to mend my dreams back together. I look in the wardrobe and see the dreams I used to love just draping on a dusty hanger, waiting to be given life again. I recognise the hanger in my peripheral and close the door.

The glass is shattered. I broke it.

Epilogue: "I grew a flower that can't be bloomed, in a dream that can't come true"

I joined the BTS fandom (ARMY) during University and I can see where their music informed my disillusionment about the modern culture of dreaming. In December

2017, the BANGTANTV YouTube channel posted a video with members delivering their Happy New Year messages. Suga's video clip particularly resonated with many fans:

"Everything will work out, all of your dreams will come true, and if you don't have a dream, that's okay too. It's possible to not have a dream. If you're happy, that's all that matters."

When I first watched this video, I remember thinking wow, *that is going to comfort so many people who aren't sure about their dreams.* An ironic thought over four years later. "Everything will work out, all of your dreams will come true" was a song that used to thrum between my ribs and performed sweet melodies that grew in volume as I aged. After graduating, the song lost its pulse. I can't tell if my bones still vibrate from its gentle rhythm, or if the track became unplayable when I stopped listening. When did I stop believing "A Dream Is A Wish Your Heart Makes"? Honestly, I don't know.

I don't know if I still dream anymore, but I know it is okay to prioritise happiness and wellbeing over 'the dream.' I think it can be very easy to wish you will be happy once all your dreams are achieved. This ethos is not viable for me right now. After 25 years, I'm diverging away from what I *thought* was the road less travelled and revising my Cinderella story. It's okay I can't believe in dreams, I can still believe in myself. I hope you can too.



Lunchtime by Chloe Sun

I recreated and altered the packaging of Lunchables (the classic tasteless American lunch I envied over my own traditional dishes brought to the elementary school lunch table, which drove the disgusted American kids I wanted to assimilate with away) and juxtaposed that cultural mockery with the beautiful representation of young girls celebrating their heritage. In doing so, this was my interpretation of the classic “smelly lunch” experience many children of color have had — a discouraging and othering experience that directed shame and embarrassment towards our cultures.

American Dream

by Adele Leung

John Doe is a banker. Every morning, while perusing the latest Economist, John Doe scrupulously manducates the leftover carcasses of Vietnamese swine, pot-bellied and skewered for facile digestion; he disliked his mother's facetious sobriquets, always chastising the young man for his persnickety eating tendencies. John Doe is rich, but he could be richer, and his life coach, a Floridian christened with an eponymous shibboleth and an ample cleavage, informed him that richer men have quirks. In chronological order, John Doe's quirks are: chowing down family-size, store-bought Thanksgiving meals before Catholic mass, because domesticity is a patriotic virtue; hurling a drunken mishmash of his father's obscenities at every foreign subordinate with aural faculty, to assert and to subjugate; questioning the hierarchical rigidity of his syndicate posse - or work friends, who sell money together; varnishing his bachelorhood - for better or for worse - with hair product and strictly mechanical intercourse; and, last but not least, ziplining in Costa Rica with a mouthful of Bratwurst sausage, the symbol of American and German kinship for Wall Street omnivores. In his annual, award-winning harangues at the Rockefeller Centre, John Doe manoeuvres the mid-Atlantic elocution nepotism bestowed upon him. When launching charm

offensives against opponents residing eastwards (New York big-shots and stock brokers from Shanghai), John Doe hits his rhotic consonants hard, in hopes that he's the right amount of European - for the former, an optimal minimum; for the latter, a maximum. On space races and Saturn expeditions to Mars, John Doe does not speak; rugged and insouciant, he scavenges extraterrestrial cadavers and copulates with them to the point of asphyxiation.

John Doe is the American Dream. "To embody" precipitates the inhibition - or rather, actualization - of an intangible entity; instead of living vicariously through warfare (or the nationalistic, reductionist attestation of it), the American Dream is the sole contagion for today's expanding coterie around mortgage models in the US and their well-documented downfall. Regardless of which wing of microeconomics they lie on, each bacterium is the result of human behaviour. Sequestered in a landfill of sectarian taglines, America stands out; the country bears the wherewithal to yield concrete, self-subsistent personifications of a descriptor, one sprung from creative writing no less. With a subconscious cognizance of gold-lacquered materialism and its reverberations, John Truslow Adams

was an exemplary raconteur; amidst a nationwide inertia, his belief in democratizing a gilded lifestyle was, to say the least, a farcical misapprehension of recession as a constant. While the writer did not once supplement a straightforward definition of this manner of living - his secondary dilation was a rotary procedure, and likely the sole cause for his treatise's metamorphosis into an epic - the "spirit" he superscribed to industrial stagnation became humanized, institutionalized, and hereditary. On paper, John Doe is a hyperbole; however, through his creators' grit and whimsy, succeeding American Dreams can now jaywalk through the aurified apertures of America's mixed economy - though their distinction from Psycho's Batesman is contingent on will. Their pride is paradoxical.

So, who is John Doe? In a "fair and balanced" chumbox, his face would be blotched with encyclopedia divisions; each coloured in with a cakey, somewhat less translucent variant of wheaten pale. Yes, John Doe has multitudes; they lay amongst the colourblind, documented quarter of alternative media, pursuing equal opportunity within the legal and attitudinal threshold of government authorization. After all, why settle for golden-boy heterogeneity when

vagabonds, once sullied in faraway Cantonese-speaking quagmires, can return to civilization and bake cobblers of red, white, and blue? But I digress - estimating the amplitude of an assemblage, one of proletariats no less, should not halt our deliberation of the American Dream. First of all, an intellectual deficit is the only feasible excuse for such an interpretation. Secondly, the solitary trajectory on which it is reached is an elongated jackpot for antitheses; the dream of a patriot can easily be of fraudulent nature, which would (and has) made for excellent think-pieces for the virginal portfolios of high school journalists. America's current state adorns their arguments with a nice depth. Nevertheless, there will always be believers of bratwurst and the American Dream - some of them succeed.

With respect to the King, and a far West one at that, English nobles in the 14th century owed loyalty and abundance of political power to their ruler. At that time, virtually everyone was of plebian status; they engaged in a primitive lifestyle, and mostly domesticated animals - milking cows and slaughtering animals for meat were part of their daily routine. Few had efficient ways to store their earnings and food, meaning that the conservation of surplus was an improbability. Due to the societal conditions at that time, their living circumstances were not sustainable. The ailments experienced by the peasants lead to mass infections and alas, mortality rates that shot to the sky; eventually an epidemic rose - the Black Plague, which killed a third of the population. In the following years, Europe gradually underwent revitalisation. However, as the feasibility of domestic husbandry methods at that time was still relatively bleak, people had no idea what to do with the residual, undivided land. Since the rural areas were rendered incapable of housing their original residents, the poor were forced to relocate to places with a viability for work and growth.

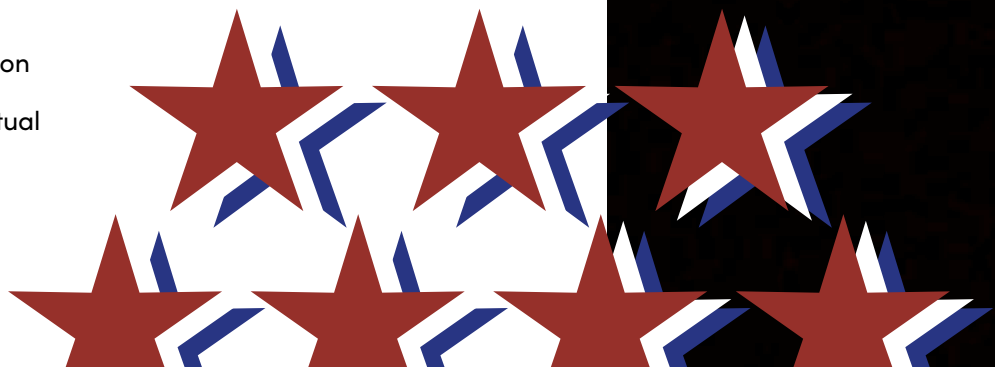
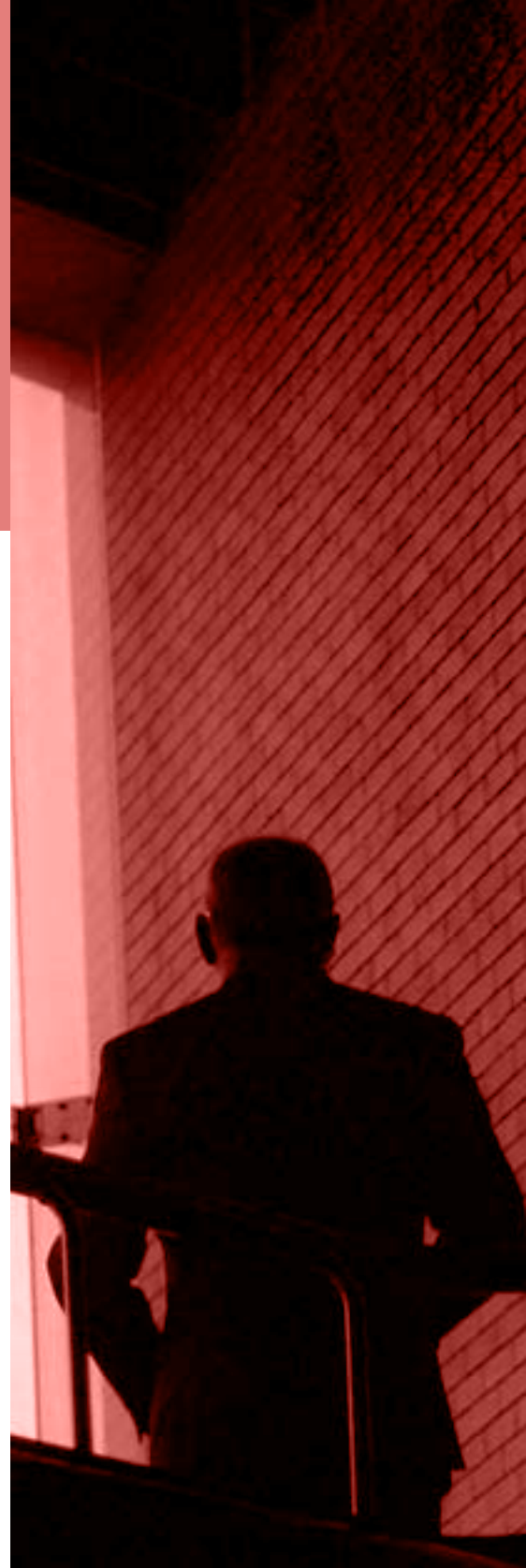
For the bourgeois, while relocation was perhaps a less imminent prospect, a combination of spiritual oppression and financial need eventually led them to flee.

After King George's annulment and subsequent dictatorship, two groups, frustrated by his defiance of orthodox religious practices, swiftly rose in rebellion - much like the phenomenon of partisan polarization in this country's present state.

The Separatists were the more extreme party of the pair. They were initially driven by the belief that they needed to be separated from the Anglican Church, as their country could no longer shelter their beliefs. As noble as this notion was, their later retreat to the Netherlands was not a result of oppression - the pursuit of materialistic entities was not restricted to the rural refugees, as they were too chasing after greater monetary gain. Written accounts of related happenings have been uncovered and studied, in a collective effort to curb reductionist history. For instance, pilgrims, another division of the separatists, are often subjected to veneration because of their insistence on conserving orthodoxy; however, financial prosperity was not excluded from their search for a greater habitat. The other party had similar religious beliefs, but their intentions were more benign; seeking long-term stability, they wanted to rectify the traditional religious practices of the Church and shied away from large-scale disruption. At the same time, they disliked being oppressed by archbishops and other higher authorities. Moving elsewhere gave them a new start, in multiple respects.

And on the new land trod the fallow Does, ever the mercenaries. They grew, anthropoids, squalling for a gluttonous teat they called freedom. It made for a silver-screen flick and a dormant life.

Is the American Dream just a placebo? If so, will it ever be more than a construct? The answers will appease the educated reader, but neither John nor Jane Doe.



sài gòn

by jacqueline pham

bustling streets
colorful markets
sounds of blaring car honks
the smell of motorcycle fuel swarms your air

rich with culture
vibrant with the stories of millions
you truly are a great being of age

a history of tragedy and triumph
you've been stepped on
beaten by
suppressed by
so so many
the ghosts of fighters roam your streets
live in the hearts of your people

oh, you are the heart and soul of so many —
sustaining them with the sweet smell of jackfruit that wafts
through the crowded corridors of your markets
your veins are the gushing rivers that remind them of their pre-
cious youth
a time that was untouched by reality and despair and violence
a sliver of time that encapsulates everything they desperately
grasp on to now that they have drifted long away from your
once ebullient quarters

oh, you are the heart and soul of so many —
for that is why you bring such pain when you come into memo-
ry
you are everything to them,
but you lost everything to them
it's complicated, twisted, a distorted image that depicts the
shattered remains of a once united country
a once united people turned to the missing pieces of a puzzle
a diaspora!
it's beautiful, it's ugly
it's home
it's hell.



our time

by jacqueline pham

my mother always said
keep your head down
walk straight and be quiet
don't let them hear you speak
in your mother tongue, you don't live there anymore
do your work, go home
don't create disturbances
i'm sorry, it'll all be worth it soon.

they told us if we forgot who we were, we'd be rewarded
they said –
learn our language, adopt our ways, wear our clothes
and you too will be free.
we tried
we tried so so hard, suppressed our feelings
our anger
our rage as we continue to be killed
to be beaten
to be called names
they told us we'd be free.

don't you see?
they never meant what they said
only wanted us to be powerless
to be tied by the ropes of their oppression
forget what they said!
generation after generation
we are the people of mountains
of dragons and fairies
of majestic earth and sky
don't forget our strength
our power in unity
hand in hand
towards a better future, my friend
our time is now.

the **burden** we face

by jacqueline pham

i know of the hardships my mother suffered
lone girl carrying herself to a strange land
nothing but the tattered clothes on her skinny back to remind her of the broken home
she left behind but
remembering was wasted time
wasted time worrying about the echoes of exploding bombs and light clacks of touch-
ing bullet shells
wasted time shedding pearls of treasured tears about a homeland ripped apart at the
hands of war
no.
there was always more to be done
more to learn more to achieve more to prove in this newfound land
there was no time for wasted tears.

survivor --
it's who my mother is
it's what drove her to succeed
what kept her from fragmenting
like fragile pieces of porcelain that hit cold pavement
shards of a complicated history
made her forget about the gory sound of gunfire and blaring battle cries
...
the ominous sound of silence

forgive me, mother
for i was only a child who could not see
your constant chastising and repeated reprimands
about my grades
my body
my character
were out of fear
out of fear i too had to survive
that somewhere and sometime, i too would have to learn
to ignore to carry on
to push through to survive

you were only a child.

i was only a child

couldn't understand why my dear mother called me a disgrace
a disappointment
a stupid cow at every flick of the tongue

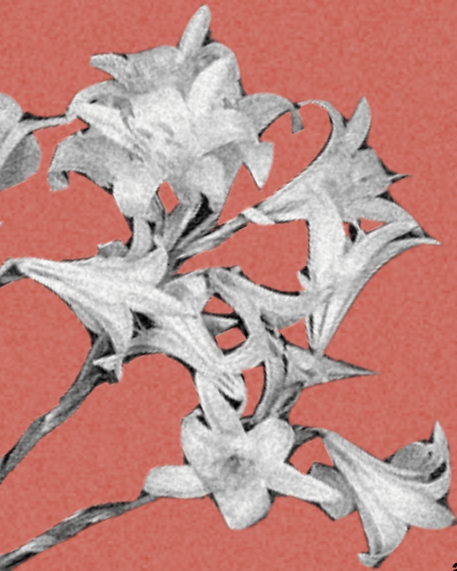
the harsh words branded into my unknowing brain like a burning stone on blood raw skin



author's intention

This piece showcases how generational trauma has affected my own family and identity. It is an ode to my mother and how hard she worked for me to have the privileges I enjoy now, but also how that survivor mentality has damaged my own mental health and being. This poem is an empathetic understanding of the pain that my mother went through, as well as an expression of the anger and despair I feel facing the pressure of being a Vietnamese American.

i stand here now



my body decomposing on itself as i struggle to pull myself up
pull myself up to the sky high expectations and limitations you put upon me
pull myself up even when it feels like my life is passing by me and I'm just
watching
watching myself crumble
watching myself decay
watching myself rot
into a pile of nothingness
of no meaning of no worth

...

are you happy, mother?
are you happy with who you've made?
of who I've become?
a mere sack of blood and meat with no worth other than her labor to live up to
who you need her to be
a bitter shell of a person made up of only the shattered remnants of
your own bitter resentment and sorrow
poisoned by the plague of jealousy and anger

you don't get to cry, mother!
you don't get to take back time, mother!
the harsh words branded into my unknowing brain like a burning stone on blood
raw skin
it is imprinted on the very soul of my being the very existence of my soul
i am a hideous monster.

please don't cry, mother
when i look at myself in the mirror i only see a reflection of my ancestors' pain and
bloodshed
as i lift the weight of the entire diaspora's dream on my weak shoulders
i wonder who i am past the burden of being a punching bag for your leftover aspirations
the burden of
being vietnamese ----- american

forgive me, mother
you were only a child

...

i was too.

queerfully yours

by: Rajeshwari Tagore



“Queer as in “with a girl?” about a date, on the phone with your mum. As in how can you hurt us like this?”

- Riddhi Dastidar

When I think back to my Queer awakening, it was all so obvious. The signs were there all along. Looking keenly at the female characters in films- noticing their outfits and mannerisms, while completely ignoring most male characters. Wanting to be them. Sitting next to my best friend back in school, looking at her beautifully long piano-player fingers and shapely nails. Wanting to hold her hand a little longer, hug her a little tighter. As the popular trope goes, I had an undeniable, confused adoration and respect for my English teacher- the lady who did, quite literally, change my life.

In so many undeniable ways, without my knowledge, I was screaming colours- and I was screaming QUEER.

It has been six years since I came to terms with my identity. Six years since I found a gradually growing community of peers who had my back. Six years since the Internet gave me solace.

And six years, since the closet has been my safe space when at home.

I come from a Southeast Asian household. No, my family does not fit into the traditional mold of a “conservative” family. My family has a rich legacy of coming from a background that dabbles in literature, music and the fine arts. My immediate family encourages me to read extensively and to think outside the box, and to hold my ground and speak up. They encourage me to aim higher and to broaden my mind.

But. And there always is a but.

If I were to ever come out to them- to tell them that I love not only the “men” that they see, but the bodies and minds and hearts that they do not see, that would spell disaster for me. There were two occasions in the past, when I tried to broach the subject of homosexuality, and as luck would have it, it did not go well. To cut a long story short, the first attempt resulted in a 1.5 hour long fight, and an entire ice cream tub being sacrificed to the waterfall of tears.

Growing up in a household like this means I respect my family for being brave about things in unexpected ways; and I despise my family for not being receptive to ideas in other ways.

It means I am a bold voice behind the security of anonymity on social media (yes, the irony is real); while at home, I am a good girl that toes the line.

Existing in such a duality can be exhausting. Yet, it is also exhilarating. Exhilarating because when I am outside the confines of home

(like I am now, living in a different city for college), the freedom that I experience is multiplied manifold- and it makes every moment all the more beautiful. It makes me want to drink in life a little more deeply.

For me, celebrating my Queerness has not been about Pride marches and Rainbow flag- brandishing photographs. I have celebrated my Queerness by loving my friends deeply, and occasionally blurring the line between platonic and romantic love. My Queerness shines through in enduring homophobic social gatherings with nails digging into my palms, waiting to get away and breath, waiting to find solace in that one phone call or on the Internet.

My Queerness grows, every time a friend picks up a flower while out on a walk, and presses it into my phone case. My Queerness screams in a dozen different languages, when somebody plays *Girl in Red*, and I scream-sing “They’re so pretty, it hurts...”

My Queerness transforms into a muffled scream of rage, because sometimes, that is the best you can do in a sickeningly heteronormative world.

Queer? Queer as in?

Queer as in- I am. I am. I am here.

I will be here.

by: Hailey Hua

lost in culture lost in culture

I still remember the first time Mother served xiaolongbao. I'd waited patiently, or as patiently as a child could, watching as she labored over our chipped wood counter for hours, rhythmically kneading the dough into fist-sized circles and delicately shaping them with her calloused hands.

They were small, tan dough pouches shaped like unbloomed roses each containing a ball of beef with bits of green onion. I had never seen anything like them. I stared at the rosebuds, confused. They looked odd to my curious, slanted dark brown eyes; they looked inedible (at least compared to the burgers we'd had the day prior).

"Can I... eat it?" I prodded at the weird thing in front of me. Mother simply laughed and doused the pouch in vinegar and soy sauce.

She slit the bud in half and it bloomed. It really bloomed. The paper-thin skin peeled back like delicate petals revealing a thumb-print-sized meatball nestled in the center of the bud.

"What is it?"

"Your culture," she responded in her thick, Chinese accent.

Perhaps it was the tangy scent of meat wafting to my nose or the way the word "cult-ure" rolled off Mother's tongue but something about that unfamiliar word intrigued me. Little did I know that a seemingly insignificant seven-letter, two-syllable word would have such an impact on me.

Growing up in the United States, "culture" was such a hazy, unfamiliar concept muddled by the internet's definition of Chinese culture and my lack of it.

I still remember that feeling of confusion I felt when I searched up "Chinese culture" on the internet for my fourth grade culture project. I'd expected to see images of the xiaolongbao I'd grown up with but instead, I was met with row after row of stock images displaying lavish parades and beautiful women dressed in ankle-length draping floral gowns with pretty makeup.

The xiaolongbao paled in comparison to the radiant splashes of red and gold painted across the screen. I still remember begging Mother to take me there, to the vivid colors, to the smiling faces, to the large dragon puppets that lay in front of me. But Mother simply sighed and said, "maybe another time" in her thick, Chinese accent.

I still remember that feeling of resentment, resentment for her dismissiveness and resentment because it was her that forced me to stay behind the flickering computer screen longing to be one of the women in ankle-length draping floral gowns with pretty makeup.

This was my culture... right? This was what the internet said was supposed to be me... so why wasn't I a part of it?

That isolation, that detachment from me, it followed me for years. It followed me whilst I insecurely listened to my friends talking about the (mooncake) they had during the (mid-autumn festival). It followed me when my friends talked about the red lanterns they'd strung along their house during the (Lantern Festival). It followed me, this hazy cloud of unexplainable guilt and unbelonging. She was an imposter to herself, who she was supposed to be, unable to relate to others' experiences, something she should be able to do... right?

It has been a while since Mother made xiao long bao. I watch as Mother labors over our counter, rhythmically kneading the dough and delicately shaping them with her calloused hands. Perhaps it was the way the light basked the kitchen in this soft glow but there was this warmth emanating from her.

I can't believe it took this long to realize. This. This is My culture. These fleeting moments I'd thought of with such little regard - they're what defines Me. It's what I've grown up with, what I've failed to appreciate. It's the fragrant dishes Mother would arrange with love. It's the sound of the Chinese dramas echoing through the house while Mother would shell crab and peel fruit. It's the comforting scent of freshly steamed rice wafting throughout our house. This is what culture means to me.

Mango



but she is distance
i've always had a happy childhood
good parents
as imperfect as they were

and there was always her,
an estranged relative that
maybe held me at birth
six months old or nine

or somewhere between
in the space of time i can't remember
but she was there, somewhere
kissed my many moles. melded in my
skin.

and there are always the celebrities
people compare me to
the kids in my class
with the eyelids like mine

like me they were not whole
like me they had left her behind
half of her and so part of me
treating fragments as if they are
whole

it is so difficult to be
a plural thing
people always expect you
to explain. it is never possible.

i should wish to be anything else.

i was a hungry child
with bright eyes
and all i knew in strife
was to read

and still i am that child
just as lost. and i study
shakespeare euripides
and austen and hegel

i feel guilt
i learn it.
i am scared to pick up bulosan
for what if his words ring silent?

i am cavernous
my body is absence
shout into me
and you'll hear no response.

where is the motherland
that i exist to triumph against?

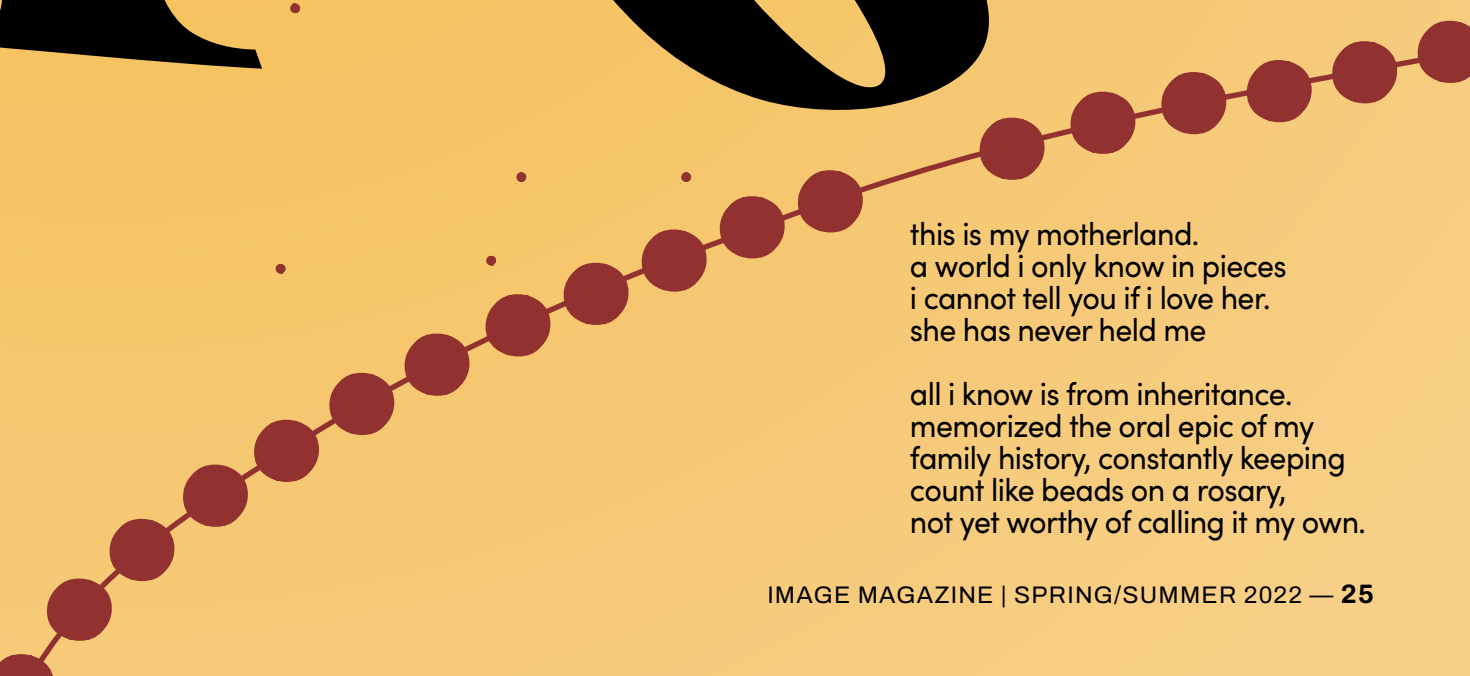
what have you tucked away in the
bawl,
nanay, your wedding gift?
from the woman you broke the chain
of

it smells like age
our old linens and towels
the unopened bed set for guests

this is the life we have built.
but the coffers stay the same.
the granules of sand are still there.

the last supper painting (a color by the numbers) watching over our dining room. the rosary on the thermostat. my title(s), ate, baboot, anak. turns of phrases we exchange in passing, a whispered mahal kita. discussions about debuts. sprinkling the sesame on piyaya. bistek and afritada or maybe arroz caldo in nanay's kitchen. tatay's b-boy days. the walis tambo, the only broom we need. stale chez curls. ranch 99 trips. my nose scrunching at the smell of dipping vinegar at suppertime, even though i know that's the only way to eat lechon kawali. late night boy bawang cravings. the fruit basket on the countertop, if you're lucky, there's a mango, but we all know they're easiest to eat dried. not tastier, but easier. living by convenience. squeezing these tiny particles of your identity into anything easy enough to swallow. anything easy enough to pack into a suitcase.

Home



this is my motherland.
a world i only know in pieces
i cannot tell you if i love her.
she has never held me

all i know is from inheritance.
memorized the oral epic of my
family history, constantly keeping
count like beads on a rosary,
not yet worthy of calling it my own.

GAYSIAN

By A.G.

What it's Like Being Queer in the Asian Community



In many Asian languages, including Vietnamese and Tagalog, there are no words to describe homosexuality or transgender people. Pride parades are almost unheard of and can quickly turn into examples of police brutality.

The few words in Asian languages that describe what LGBTQIA+ means are barely used and not well known. When I used Google Translate to search up what “homosexual” is in Chinese, a language I’ve grown up with, I had never heard of it before. Perhaps this simply shows the avoidance of LGBTQIA+ awareness in my household; perhaps it represents the larger group of many Asian families who shun and view LGBTQIA+ people as something that only exists in the Western world.

This lack of support and awareness has prevented me from coming out to my family. There is no word to describe who I am, so why should I bother? By using Western words, it continues to make it seem as if the LGBTQIA+ community only exists in Western countries. It reinforces the idea that you can learn homosexuality, that you’ve been “infected” or “brainwashed.”

If I came out to them using the word “lesbi-

an,” they would probably see it as a fault of coming to Canada, sending me to a Canadian school, and letting me be around Canadian friends. It would be seen as something “unnatural” and “learned” because to them, Asian people can’t be LGBTQIA+.

My mother always stressed finding the right partner. When I was younger, during one of her lectures about how I could be with anyone as long as they respected me, I asked, “Well then, can they be a girl?” She responded with, “Aiya! You’ve been brainwashed by your schools. Why are they teaching you this?”

Due to this conversation and many others like it, I’ve decided not to come out. I recognise that getting people to accept my sexuality will be a lifelong process, especially as someone part of the Asian community. I do not want to come out in a flashy manner, if even at all. I’ve decided to simply let people find out that I’m gay without telling them. Maybe it’s the fear of how people will react, maybe it’s purely altruistic and I want to destigmatise coming out. Either way, I can recognise that it’s my decision when, how, who to, and whether I come out.

Not coming out has helped protect me in a way. I've never been publicly shamed or harassed, partly because I don't fit what a stereotypical "butch lesbian" would look like. The stereotype of the LGBTQIA+ community consisting of skinny white guys is damaging and adds another layer to coming out – namely, the idea that it's possible for someone else of any other race to be LGBTQIA+.

In popular movies and tv shows, when they decide to add some LGBTQIA+ "diversity," it's in the shape of a white man or woman. As little representation as there is for Asians and other minorities in the media, there's even less for BAME LGBTQIA+.

There's another reason I do not want to come out, and that is that Asia is a very family-focused culture.

Especially as immigrants, we stress respecting our parents and being a stereotypical "good Asian kid." There's an inherent duty that comes with being the children of immigrants; we must work harder, work more, work better because our parents sacrificed their entire life for us. And who are we to throw that all away?

So, who was I to come out and disregard everything that my parents had sacrificed only to be "brainwashed" into being gay? My whole life, there's been the idea that I owe my parents for giving me this life. And as much as I try to dismiss that idea, there's the lingering hesitation and shame every time I do worse on a test or I lash out or I buy something for myself.

As a child, I chronically feared disappointing my parents and did everything I could to make them proud. They wanted me to be successful, and success was being rich with a powerful

partner. This partner would definitely not be the same sex as you. There were so many other expectations, and being straight was so implied that they didn't even mention it. No one did.

Along the way to becoming the "perfect Asian kid," I gave up being straight. So, I tried to compensate. I put everything into school, extracurriculars, playing the violin (I know – pretty Asian). I did extra courses online, hoping that excelling in other categories would make up for my failure in another. My plan was to build up myself so that when I did come out, and my family rejected me, I would be able to support myself.

I'm scared that my mother will see my sexuality as a failure on her part. That she would think that she didn't succeed in raising a happy, healthy child. But she did. Because being gay is not a fault.

My hope is that as the world continues to change, LGBTQIA+ awareness and acceptance in Asian communities will grow as well.

I'm lucky enough to live in a country where people are allowed to be LGBTQIA+ and pride is celebrated, despite people like my family's beliefs. Yet that's something that many people in Asian countries can't relate to.

My hope is that as the world continues to change, LGBTQIA+ awareness and acceptance in Asian communities will grow as well.

A Soup of Serenity

by Julianne Tenorio

nanay dances around the kitchen
as she gracefully cuts up garlic for the *adobo*
or sprinkles in saffron for our *tinola*
her soul permeates the air
as i inhale notes of savory and sour from my bedroom
transporting me back to that sacred continent across the ocean
the *mangga* trees that cover my lola's backyard
and the cacophonous cries of the roosters
the damp grass cradles my feet
as i inhale the humid air that surrounds my skin
my garden of Eden

sitting before me is a vessel of wisdom
no matter if it's a bowl or a plate
cleansing my conscience with every bite, every sip
tranquil waves flow through my veins
warm breaths leave my lungs
the chitter chatter of *nanay's* gossip
the hearty laughs of *tatay*
i am happy here.

and though they would point and laugh
at my tear-stained metal thermos
and the neon post-its with "love mom"
written in messy marker
i always found solace
coming home to leftovers
in peace

a magic cure for every ailment
a place of relief for each anxiety
thank you, *nanay, tatay*
for your calming cuisine
with dishes of patience
and soups of serenity.

Don't Let the Door Hit Your A** on the Way Out

by Dylan Lee

“GO BACK TO YOUR COUNTRY”. Five words that I'd read in news articles plenty of times, five words that I'd heard in stories being told on YouTube videos, five words that strangers memed about on internet forums – five words I'd never been told in person. At least not until my first trip to our country's capital – *my country's capital.*

If I'm being honest, I kind of deserved it.

In 2019, during our Thanksgiving break, a few college friends and I took a five-hour bus trip to our D.C. Of the four of us, I was the only American citizen – the rest were all international students. The Airbnb we checked into was exceedingly cozy – while there was only one mattress, the ground was perfectly fine for us. Over the course of the next three days, we hit the must-see sights around D.C. – the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Library of Congress, the Supreme Court – the list went on. The milky marble that reflected sunlight so dazzlingly filled my heart with awe – and my eyes with temporary blindness. The sheer magnanimity of our capital wowed me to no end. People may have done an incredible number of injustices under the guise of advancing the American Dream, but in that moment, it was hard not to indulge in that American pride – even if for just a little bit. Of course, being a Texan, I found my state at the World War II memorial and took a picture there, in bowed respect for the lives lost – not just in that war, but so many countless others.

Then we hit the museums. I learned something completely new and mindboggling that I have to take this quick minute to share it, and maybe I'm just incredibly slow, but did you know that the Smithsonian isn't just one building? I thought the Smithsonian was a single museum, and the other museums were just their own – it turns out, The Smithsonian, or the Smithsonian Institute, is actually a whole series of museums and research centers that are scattered around D.C., and include places like the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, the Air and Space Museum, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and numerous others. Anyways, we split up to visit whichever of these museums caught our eye, and read all too many placards – although after doing so many



readings for Columbia, the carefully curated placards were a welcome respite from the dense readings of Dworkin and Hobbes. As a final hurrah, my friends and I met up in front of the Air and Space Museum to gawk over the incredible air and spacecraft hanging within the hangar like museum.

I guess plenty of other D.C. tourists had the same idea we had, as there was a line wrapped around the block to get in. We didn't mind – we could catch up and throw random fast facts at one another that we had picked up, musing over the graffiti left by Civil War soldiers in the Washington Monument, and just friendly conversation in general. At some point (I'm not quite sure how we arrived at the topic), I began to talk about a YouTube video I had chanced upon during some late-night procrastination session that I thought was mildly relevant to the topic at hand. It's a brief 4-minute clip from a TV show back in 2012, *The Newsroom*, in which a panel of three speakers are answering questions from college students. The question is asked: “Can you say why America is the greatest country in the world?” The first response – “Diversity and opportunity.” The second – “Freedom, and freedom, so let's keep it that way.” The third – “The New York Jets”, an answer that garners a few laughs. But the moderator is persistent and demands the third speaker give a real answer. The third speaker cuts him off: “It's not the greatest country in the world professor, that's my answer.” He then goes into a monologue, brazenly tearing apart his fellow panelists'

answers, then lists fact after fact proving that America is demonstrably not the greatest country in the world. *Cue nostalgic music*: “But it sure used to be,” at which point he continues his monologue, listing all the great things America used to stand for. Honestly, a beautiful video, and even though it’s scripted TV and probably isn’t completely factually correct, it makes some great points. But what does this video have to do with our visit to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum?

As I said, we were just shooting the crap and catching up on what we had done that day, when I brought up this video. I’m something of an idiot when it comes to speaking before thinking, and this was no exception. I started loudly quoting the video, saying lines like “America *isn’t* the greatest country in the world” and laughing with my friends about it. I say that one more time, when the man standing in front of me in the line turns around and says, “If America isn’t the greatest country in the world, then why are you here?” I immediately shut up, in complete and utter shock. He continued, “Go back to your country and don’t let the door hit your a** on the way out”. If I’m being honest, I was pretty impressed with that line, and my friends and I still jokingly use it with one another as we leave parties and whatnot. But in that moment I was frozen – didn’t he notice that we were joking around? To be clear, I won’t state whether or not America is the greatest country in the world, just because that’s such a terrible question – by what metric are we evaluating greatness? He turned back around all of us just stood there in shock – at least until someone started laughing. I can’t quite remember who it was, but someone started laughing and we couldn’t help breaking down. We then overheard the man turn to the woman with him and smugly say “Those chinks think I can’t understand their chink language but they don’t know I fought in Vietnam.” Overhearing that sobered us all up. Let’s breakdown, point by point, everything that we found absolutely absurd with the situation.

1. He asked me why I was in the US if I didn’t think it was the greatest country in the world.

What? The premises and presuppositions underlying this statement are utterly ridiculous. Are you telling me one can only visit the greatest country in the world?

2. “Go back to your country”

Hilariously, of my four friends, I was the only American citizen – one was Singaporean, one was Indian, and one was Israeli. We all found this one rather amusing, but there definitely was a certain level of shock and confrontation with reality – even as an American, my physical appearance demonstrated a prime example of the perpetual foreigner stereotype.

3. “Don’t let the door hit your a** on the way out”

I don’t actually have any commentary on this besides saying that it was so beautifully executed and honestly, I applaud the man for this one.

4. “Those chinks think I don’t understand their chink language..”

First off, language mate. That’s really rather rude language, but I guess it spoke volumes on your ignorance, or at the very least, your intolerance. And secondly, what? What chink language? My Mandarin is so poor I once said “ ” or “very salt”, instead of salty. To top it off, we didn’t even speak any other language besides English, so I’m not really sure what you heard, but it certainly wasn’t a “chink language”. My Singaporean friend still laughs at the idea that we would ever speak Mandarin given how bad we are at it.

5. “...but they don’t know I fought in Vietnam.”

Oh boy. Like I mentioned – I’m American, arguably Chinese American (I say arguably because my mom is from Hong Kong and my dad is from Taiwan, basically two of the most well-known revolutionary, anti-China countries/territories out there), and my friends were from Singapore, India, and South Africa. Not one of us was Vietnamese. Also, if you somehow thought our laughter and English was Vietnamese, you really didn’t pick much up from Vietnam besides an overinflated ego.

All in all, he was an absolute mess. We managed to procure a great story from the experience, and still enjoyed our time in the Air and Space Museum. There were certainly some lessons to be taken away as well. Firstly, don’t be too loud in public spaces – respect the space of others. And if you must be, do wholesome things, not critiques of the American system without context. Secondly, my appearance as an Asian will mark me as the perpetual foreigner anywhere I go in the West. I will never be able to fully assimilate to the same extent as my White peers, no matter how well-spoken I am, no matter how Americanized I dress, no matter how much I try – it simply won’t be enough, short of some radical cosmetic surgery. Thirdly, America is certainly not the greatest country in the world, at least if you measure greatness through the metric of racial tolerance.

And finally – don’t let the door hit your a on the way out of my essay.**

jamais vu

by Aayushi Agarwal

The last time I lived in New Hampshire, the sky did not seem this vast. Blue and warm and gray and cold and kind and moonlit and unforgiving and sun-bright. How does all of that fit into three letters? My language has at least eight words for the sky, and it still does not seem like enough. I wonder whether the sky expanded to fit the extra words I brought back with me.

Maybe I'm kidding myself.

Maybe the sky is the same.



Maybe I'm kidding myself and the sky is the same,

and it's me that expanded to fit these extra words.

It's been more than two years since I stepped into this memory, but my steps still feel new. Where is the big rock my papa used to help my sister and I climb onto? Granite rock in the Granite State, why is this one so small? I'm glad the squirrels still find a home next to it. Did the deciduous bark we rubbed our stubby color pencils on disappear? I see it in my peripheral sometimes. The huge hill behind it that we used to hike up in our a-size-too-big snow pants in the winter darkness, the same hill that we would crouch on in our flower dresses and whisper to the pretty ladybugs; it must be some kind of magic, it shrinks every time I look.

**I have created a habit of glancing
away when I pass I**



worry the hill will disappear

and then where will the kids play?

In the time I was gone, I learned that the sun is kind. I hold so many light-words now! I have a fixed route for these daily walks with Helios. The ponds the hill the bridge the dog park the dandelions the slope the creek the pool the bridge the dog park the dandelions the slope the pool the hill the sunset (if I time it right). There is a small group of children that run around in the green across the ponds every evening, as their mothers walk up and down the road in between. They are always gone by the time I am heading back. My ma told me that looking at them feels like time travel.

**A girl hides behind the tall bush.
I spy something green.
Do you know about the dandelions?
I didn't know about the sky.**



Hindi makes this time travel easier: the same word is used for both “yesterday” and “tomorrow.” I ate the fruit my ma cut for me tomorrow and I will eat it again yesterday. The sun sets yesterday/tomorrow, the children play yesterday/tomorrow – I find shelter in my lingual Janus. Sometimes I laugh because I moved back here to study English, and only now do I realize how lacking it is. All these words I cannot give to you. Hindi and English belong to the same language family, and yet!

**I feel—
How do I say this in English?**

Troubled? Upset? Perplexed?

I'm sorry, I'm not sure how to explain.

There's a perverse joy I feel in getting lost in translation; my words have not left me. It has been more than two years, and Hindi is still with me. My words that I found in the nine years that I was gone; my words that help me find my way back re-home to autumn highways and summer bonfires. My home-words to which I am forever grateful. Thank you for giving me an eight-word sky.





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love

ay i will learn



LOVE IN THE FORM OF FOOD BY LANG DUONG

“Love Language” by Chloe Sun

In 1992, Gary Chapman wrote a book called *Five Love Languages: How to Express Heartfelt Commitment to Your Mate*. In this book, he outlined the five different love languages (words of affirmation, gifts, physical touch, quality time, and acts of service) and their presentation in romantic relationships. Over the past decade, these love languages have become a popular topic of discussion among my and younger generations, especially when contemplating the many ways in which we express and perceive love within our romantic relationships; however, Gary Chapman fails to broadly connect these love languages to our other interpersonal relationships, such as friendships and family. The fundamentals of our perception and expression of romantic love stems from our familial love, making it imperative to understand how we express and/or perceive love with our family members in order to better communicate to others how we wish to receive love.



Love languages are also typically universal across these various interpersonal relationships, but they are dynamic in subsequence to one's development and are influenced by a multitude of environmental factors – one of the most important and prominent being culture. Words of affirmation have been identified as the most common love language. However, Asian parents have a notorious reputation of being the absolute worst at words of affirmation. This has led to Asian youth, including myself, learning to recognize other unconventional ways that our parents may show love. As the daughter of two Vietnamese immigrant parents, I have recognized that my parents'

“The Sweetness of My Asian Childhood”
by Sara Guo

main love language is acts of service, specifically through food.

Celebrations ranging from birthdays to graduations came in the form of platters and platters of food. Reminiscence of and longing for home struck whenever the aroma of Vietnamese cuisine came near me. Family reunions were centered around the dining room table, with familiar faces surrounding favorite meals. Plates of fresh cut fruit atoned for long and vigorous nights of studying in high school and college. Tears were dried by the pleasant feeling of being full. And the words, “Have you eaten yet,” flutter through my chest almost as strongly as the words, “I’m proud of you.”



I recently graduated from college in May and took a job in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, leading me to move the farthest away from my parents that I have ever been; however, their love is just as strong, if not stronger, across our distance. Not only are these the ways that my parents have expressed their love to me, but they are also the ways I have perceived love from them and learned to give love to others. Love languages are passed down from parents to children, and I am proud to say I have followed my parents’ footsteps. I’ve since adopted “culinary acts of service” as my own love language, from delivering food to my long-distance friends’ doors to cooking dishes for Friendsgivings.

For my parents, food has taken the dominant form of unspoken apologies and expressions of love.

弃婴： Foundling

By Leila Wickliffe

I RECENTLY LEARNED A NEW WORD while shuffling through my adoption documents. I found a small tag that had the phrase: 弃婴. I have studied Mandarin for three years, yet I had never seen either of the characters before. My curiosity got the best of me, so I referenced my Mandarin dictionary.

弃 (qì) means to discard or abandon.

婴 (yīng) means baby.

Together they created an awful taste in my mouth.

弃婴 (qì yīng) means “to abandon a baby.”

That’s what I was, an abandoned baby. It made it difficult to accept myself as it only rubbed salt into the wound I didn’t know I had.

Learning this word reminded me of when kids would reference that old saying when I told them

I was adopted: one man’s trash is another man’s treasure. I remember feeling worthless. I felt as though I didn’t belong anywhere: my non-Asian peers didn’t understand my history or my eyes, yet my Chinese peers didn’t see me as Chinese enough. So I had to settle somewhere in the middle. When I was younger, I was complacent with my place in society. I thought myself to have good manners when I didn’t lose my temper when people pulled their eyes back at me or when they mocked a language I didn’t even know how to speak.

Now that I’m older, I realize those “manners” haven’t done me any favors. For years I believed that staying in the shadows would’ve been best and that it wouldn’t matter if people found me or not. It took me a long time to realize that this was not the case. Ignorance from my peers led me to call into question the

past I never got to know. Although they may not understand the circumstances of my adoption, it doesn’t justify their jokes about my abandonment at the bus station. Sometimes it gets to me. I know that the political climate in China probably led to my adoption, but I can’t help to think that maybe my biological parents didn’t want me, and that’s when that fateful phrase comes to mind. 弃婴. Even after almost eighteen years of life, I can’t find closure with the many questions I still have. Despite claiming otherwise, I want to know who my biological parents are. I want to know if the birthday I celebrate every year is my actual birthday. I want to know if I have siblings. I have many questions, but I know they will most likely remain unanswered.

As I mulled over this new-found phrase, I realized I had been looking at it all wrong. Recognizing that I had made a

fatal mistake in my interpretation wasn't surprising as some people have said I tend to be quite the pessimist. I'm not sure where this trait came from and I can't find it in myself to try a different perspective, but I find this notion to be unfortunately true most of the time. 弃婴 can be a verb or a noun. The sting of the phrase came from the verb definition: to abandon a baby. Knowing this definition contributed to my plummeting self-esteem.

It cemented the idea that I was left because I somehow wasn't good enough for my biological parents to keep me. However, this definition clouded my judgment of the phrase. My perception of my identity, or lack thereof, blinded me to the alternate meaning of the phrase.

Now I realize that the very word that made me insecure gave me purpose.

弃婴 means foundling.

I'm not just an abandoned baby, I am a foundling. As much as it may seem like a euphemism for the less appetizing meaning of the phrase, it brought me great comfort. I was discovered and seen. My biological parents left me at the bus station to ensure that someone would find me. The aunties at the foster care home ensured that I stayed happy and healthy. I found two loving parents, great friends, and a supportive community.

“Settling is never the option. I’ve had to search for my place in my community, but it was all worthwhile once I found it.”

My past shouldn’t be pitied because it makes me who I am, and I’m not afraid to hide it anymore.”

These people showed me my worth. My friends and family have shown me that I'm more than my adoption and my appearance. They've believed in me and respected me, so it's about time I started to do the same for myself. I've been given enough love to last me a lifetime, and as much as I appreciate that, I know now that the love I give myself is the most important.

弃婴 doesn't mean abandonment anymore.

It means discovering acceptance and love within myself.

a map unfin

by: **Stephanie Hu**

within me sits the pacific ocean, sits coral reef
and wailing wales and peaceful hurricanes,
sits tidal waves and the torches of curious seamen.

yet even as cartographers tattoo specks of ink,
translate sacred territories into coordinates,
and gift obscure names to obscure islands,

i am reminded of the untouched lands within me
gently, patiently waiting to be discovered,
volcanoes that will whisper murmurs of blessings
on bladed paths
and embrace the crushing weight of my soul
as i fall,
lands where the rainwater tastes so sour
it turns sweet
and where sand soothes so soft
it melts my feet.

and even long after cartographers return to rest
and even long after i am gone
there will still remain seas unseen.
how wonderful it is
to be a map unfin.

“fleeting”

by: **Nicole Nguyen**

“This illustration was originally meant to be a self portrait representing the feelings of vulnerability during sleep, but in the weeks leading up to its creation, its meaning has grown into simplicity of aesthetics. Art existing as art. If presented this way, the audience can put their own initial interpretations into it and see it uniquely, tailored to their own mind from their own experiences. So with pretty butterflies, a floating girl, and dim colors, I present to you “fleeting”!



reflections on turning 18

on the morning of my 18th birthday, i was met with loneliness and peace.

i heard only pillow-soft winds and the sound of my own breathing.

it's hard to explain the way i felt — perhaps an unfinished puzzle or a stretched-out elastic band, caught in the tension of the past and the present.

on days like these, i always feel homesick. i am reminded of my mother: calloused hands worn with pride, a smile weathered by sacrifice, and arms that shelter me from harm.

i remember the last time i saw her, a gentle moment of togetherness before a permanent goodbye.

i remember childhood summers in my yeye's cucumber garden, the earth's rich brown cradling my feet, light bruises kissing my knees from a chase of tag. from nainai's kitchen, i smell the sweetness of sichuan chili. i run toward home.

finally, i remember the eve of my 17th birthday. how terrifying it was to feel your pulsing heart between the crevices of my weak hands.

today, i carry faint memories of the person i used to be. i think of all the stupid things i've said and done, of the people i love, of the curious future. and when i am reminded of my mother, or yeye's garden, or you, i can't help but cry and grieve.



someday, i will learn

fairy godmother flicks her wrist once the clock strikes 8:00 and transforms my kitchen into a garden of sweet chinese tea, of 5,000-year-old dreams and honest rumblings of the soul.

“watch,” mother says, brews liquid spells with ’s wisdom and pours ancient potions with ’s craft.

“you must learn,” mother says and serves home in a porcelain cup.



//First Words to My Father/

By Eryn Mei Peritz

You know your father loves you. Though you've never written something about your father before, because the focus has always been on the primordial wound your primal birthing branded on you/ it's always been: birthmother/ dear birthmother/ don't leave/ leaving/ you left you left me, you left me behind/ my dear birthmother/ leaving.

I was left behind by the birthing/ but I was left by the birthfather too.

//Perhaps it's also a paternal wound./

I know my father loved me, once. They say, your mother left you because she loved you so much, she wanted the best chance at life for you. But what about you? Where were you? I think I needed someone/ I think I needed someone to say I want to keep her/ I think I need a r-e-a-l father.

I think my fathers love me. But is the father-daughter bond that strong? We never went to that daughter-father square dance in third grade, because I knew you wouldn't like the music. I knew you would get impatient and get upset at my discoordination.

I've started dancing again though. I'm still just as discoordinated.

I know my adoptive father loves me. I never had a foster father. Only a foster grandmother, two aunts, and a mother/ I left behind in China. /Maybe that's why your voice startles me sometimes/ maybe my startling hurts you/ and maybe that's why we don't have the same long-night discussions that I have with my adoptive mother. / Maybe I hadn't thought of that before./

You
know
your
father
loves
you.



I know my father loves me.



I know my father loves me. /I think/ we could be close, but perhaps we need to gift each other more of the emotional care we crave to close the gap between us. /I think/ we can do that. Otherwise, I think I might have to accept this gap as simply our relationship. I'm not entirely sure which it is. //

I know my fathers love me. /Are my bio mother&father even alive?/ I imagine they are with me, always watching./ I feel watched, often.// But maybe that's my /innertigermother/ my innerwhiteperson/ my innerchild/ my innercritic/ my inner me//.

I try not to dissociate all too often.

I know my adoptive father loves me. Before I leave my father again for school, I hug him goodbye. Perhaps this time, I am the one drifting away, /leaving, /going, /leaving, /going, /leaving/ you behind. I've never had a real father before you. I've never been that in touch with my paternal line.

But I'm beginning to try.

I know I love you.

Perhaps it's time that we try for each other.

Perhaps it's time that we care for one another.

Perhaps it's time that I leave my resentments behind, and you as well.

We share the same anger, the same fire, we don't like being taken advantage of, yet we let strangers tear away at our kindness, two pieces at a time, because that is how we love. I think that is how we love each other.

I know you love me. I know I love you. It's time that I tell you again, before we leave each other,

I turn to my father/
/still I'm afraid there won't be a return, but/speaking is my existence/ I speak,

I love you

**and I let your smile/
my smile/
and the silence/**

**rest between us
and the wound.///**



Layers

by Chris Fong Chew

*Like an archeologist, who digs into the earth
Excavating layers to expose long forgotten history
Memories of another time
Piecing together the past,
I am excavating myself, my memories, my past—
Searching...*

Level 1, Questioning:

It started the night a taxi driver said:
“You speak English really well, but you don’t look like you speak English”

How do I explain the complexities of my identity?
The fact that I am Asian-American, the fact that I am Chinese-American.
The fact that I grew up in America.

The phrase that stirred long-buried memories of being called whitewashed in school, of feeling that I’m never enough of each part of my identity to belong.

50% American, 50% Chinese, failing at both.

Growing up in an immigrant community, when everyone else around you is Asian, we don’t question how American you are, but question if you’re really “Asian”

Of course we all are American.

Until I left that hometown, and suddenly had my American-ness questioned in front of my face.

Enter the Five Stages of Grief.

Layer 2, Anger, Denial

The President of the United States of America just called it “China Virus”, the “Kung-Flu”.

We know where this is going to go.

A few months later, a family is attacked while shopping.
Then, the hate crimes on the elderly.
Then, the shootings, the horrible, harrowing, shootings.
In each victim, I see my parents, my grandparents, myself.

I feel only one emotion: anger.

Why should I care about a country that doesn't seem to care about me?

I have lived my whole life here, but I am still seen as a foreigner from another shore.

I reject my American-ness. I am disgusted by it.
I am 25% American, 75% Chinese. I'm tired of this country.
I dream of escaping back to my family's motherland.
I see the beautiful skylines, the modern cities, and a country seemingly on the rise.

I wish to be there. I want to be there. I will be there.
Why should I stay in America? If being born in this country isn't enough to be considered American, why should I stay?

I dream a naive dream of a warm welcome on another distant shore.

But dreams only exist in sleep and I'm wide awake.
My heart breaks.

Layer 3, Bargaining

I take time off from school, I start learning Chinese.
Week by week, a whole new world opens up to me.
Words my parents and grandparents speak come to life, words I have heard my whole life, and never attached meaning to.

I start speaking to my grandparents in the languages

they know best.

I start to wonder if I can move to that faraway land, that distant place that my ancestors called home.
I question if I belong in the U.S. at all: can I reject my American side and let that go?
When my American identity feels like an ugly scratchy worn out sweater, uncomfortably familiar.

10% American, 90% Chinese.

I embrace an old side, a new side to myself, my identity. Something long asleep is awakened.

Layer 4, Sadness

Sadness blankets me.
As the pandemic winds down, and as "normal" life returns, reality hits.
The life I had put on pause over a year ago must resume.

But how do you resume a life built by a you that is no longer yourself.

Layer 5, Acceptance

I am learning to let two worlds converge.
To accept the internal conflict; it's a part of me, passed down from my grandparents, to my parents, to myself.

The journey through intergenerational trauma and triumph

To see meaning in the challenges faced by my grandparents, my parents, myself
To find community, in those who know the same.
To find my own meaning in the term Asian-American, Chinese-American.

I am not a glass half full, I am not a glass half *empty*,
For a glass is not alive. I am alive.

Layers by Chris Fong Chew

I am a flower, a tree, I grow, and learn and I make space.

I am 100% American, I am 100% Chinese.

Neither side need take away from each other,
Both are part of me, that makes me the complex person
I am.

Layer 6, Casting Off

In excavating my layers, I find myself again at home.
Home is not a place, but a feeling, a community. It's experi-
ences, family, friends.

Home is love, home is the heart.

And the heart has an endless capacity, for dreams, for
love, and for self. Myself.

Like a ship leaving the dock, I cast off, back into life.

Artist's Statement:

This piece for me is an expression of the journey I've been on for the past couple years, that I feel many Asian Americans have gone through. Finding our lives disrupted by the pandemic, for some of us returning home to be with family, and seeing the political turmoil and racism across the country.

I began to question my own identity, and tried to connect more deeply with my heritage, and within that stirred a deep crisis about identity, home, family, and intergenerational trauma

Chris Fong Chew 招偉明

THE CLOCK IS TICKING

Salina Guo



With the prevalence of COVID-19 and many new issues arising such as anti-Asian discrimination, I noticed that there was a lack of exposure towards the consequences of climate change and human overconsumption. This was a piece I created in art class that I thought would be perfect for this publication in terms of reminding readers that these issues are still going on and should not be forgotten. Even in my household, climate initiatives are not talked about as much or not at all so it is even more important to create this awareness.

Through the Fog of Night

By Sophia Yeh

What did I look like from your eyes?

Those hazy orbs
of mist,
of ash,
Glancing around the room

They never seemed
to concentrate,
to shift,
into focus around us.

Was I someone you loved?

Were you ever
proud of me,
waiting for me,
did you feel anything

When I embraced you
with tender arms,
and warm hands,
hoping to garner some reaction.

Was there any spark of recognition?

Or was I just another
strange body,
vague figure,
crowding a room filled with strangers

A darling grandchild lost
in layers of paranoia,
of confusion,
in your addle, aging mind.

Who were you?

I try to remember the man
before illness,
before age,
foggy memories from childhood

But the bite of reality sets in
your languid body,
your erratic temperament,
A contrast so foreign to what I knew.

Could I ever begin to comprehend?

My goodbyes were whispered
through video calls,
one-sided conversations,
I began to slowly let you go.

Your funeral was not my farewell
the faded photos,
the marble urn,
my grief already felt years before.

How can you mourn a person you can't
recognize?

I put behind 16 years, amma carries them all
in the line that parts her back,
nano jaan holds them in her arms;
we look at the sky -
I from my window, nano from her bed
and amma, behind the walls
all sipping the same chai.

Blues, Lilacs, Scarlets

I see colours, I count clouds
& wishes & days
till I see my beloved, feel the caress
of lips as gentle as the 7 am sunkissed zephyr;
I give the sky my heart, place all my longings
in its arms - *hold me*.
All the verses the world wrote about love and loving
almost tangible to me;

*In that moment, I see the sky
for more than its white tears.*

My mother's gaze almost touches the horizon;
she is kissed back by the *blues, lilacs, scarlets* -
the 17-year-old henna-coloured bruise
at the back of her palm,
now only a discolouration screaming
of her long-forgotten longings -
she is kissed back at all her wounds;
the clouds carry her warmth
as the sky splinters into pieces

*In that moment, she hears the sky -
an apology whispered to her
from peace, itself.*

Three Generations

My nano glances briefly,
the beads of her tasbih falling -
The sky, the same *blues, lilacs and scarlets*
a reminder for her -
the place where she'll meet nana abbu again.
She counts the beads of her tasbih,
her head bent low
astaghfar for all her mistakes,
alhumdulillah for all her blessings
shukar for the life inked on her skin.
She carries today & yesterday in her arms
lets them go, with every falling bead
& holds them again, as they almost
touch the horizon.

*Nano, amma & me;
the same blues, lilacs, scarlets
but different eyes & different lives
& different times
between love, life and death
made for us almost different skies.*

By Sibgha Alam

Translations:

Nano: grandmother

Amma: Mother

Tasbih: Prayer beads

Astaghfar: Repentance prayer of Muslims

Alhumdulillah: Gratitude Prayer of Muslims

Shukar: Prayer of Gratitude of Muslims

Beauty: Our Fair Lady, Aphrodite

by Zoe Leonard

**Aphrodite is only Asian
when they fetishize her.**

**When they revere her,
worship her,
treat her as an equal -
She is white.**

**Amalgamation of envy,
terror underneath my
bed.
The leering
monstrosity,
Frankenstein's creation.**

**A checklist of different
traits,
awkwardly stitched to-
gether
in the image of her white
seamstresses:**

**Pale skin,
blonde hair,
pink lips,
slight dusting of freckles,
and bright, bubbling blue
eyes
that turn violet as the sun
goes down.**

**Emerging from a shell
almost as light as her
complexion.
With her stare
she turns me to moss,
green as the vines in her
orchard.**

**Asian children deserve to see
themselves in the stories they are told.**

**We know so much about
Aphrodite's beauty, Athena's
wisdom, and Asteria's heroism. Still,
we never hear about Amamikyu's
creativity, Kali's bravery, or
Guanyin's love for humanity.**

**Ferny and fuzzy,
ugly and
unfit,
spreading like a plague
the sickeningly sweet mix of
jealousy and pain.**

**More a weapon than a woman,
more a ghost than a God.**

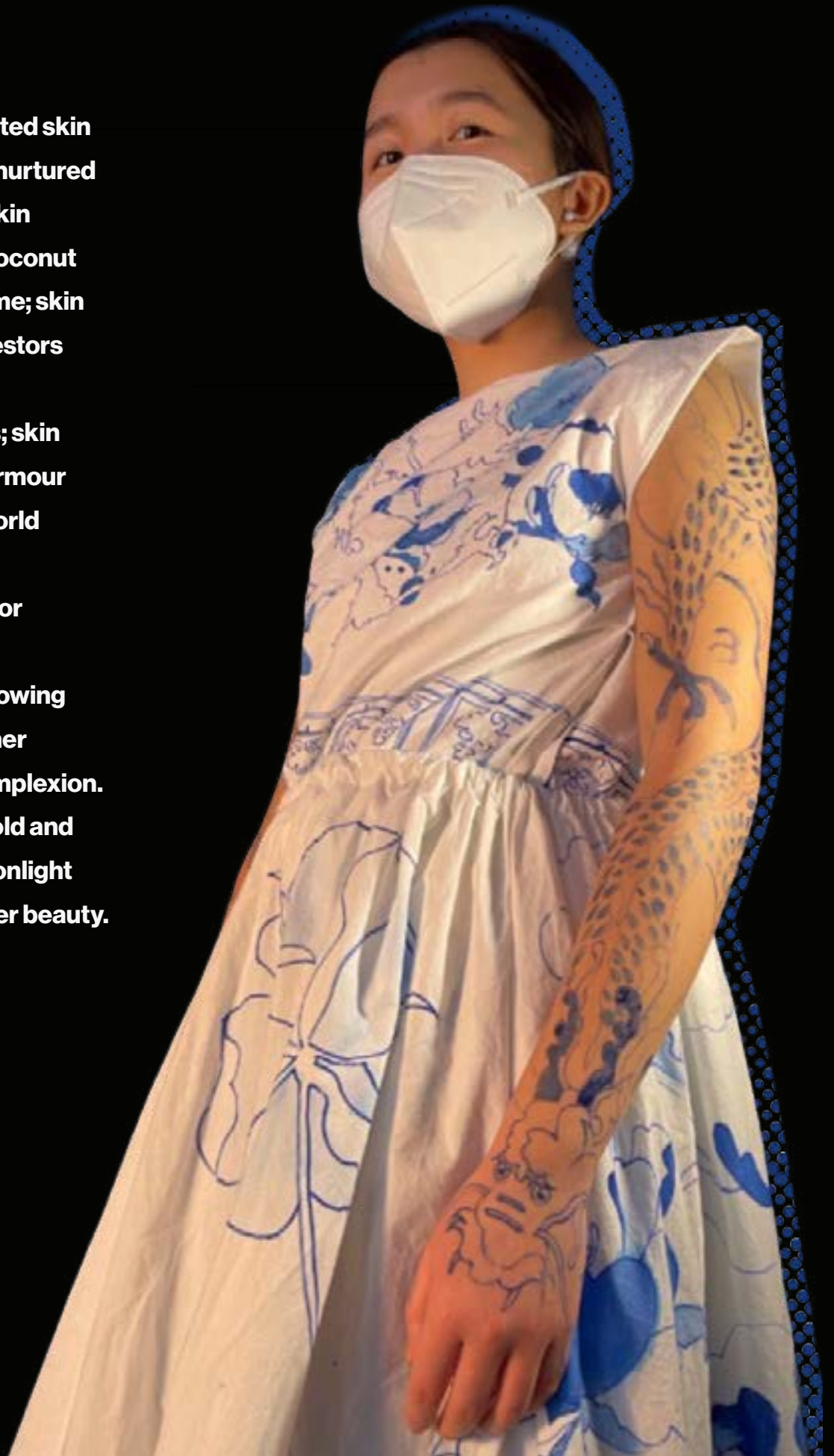
**She is inescapable,
all powerful and hungry.
Consuming, devouring, de-
stroying
the wretched bodies of the
unlovely:
Aphrodite's forsaken children.**

**Were we not sculpted
(from clay and mud)
in her image,
or was she not birthed
(from porcelain voices)
in ours?**

Skin

by Mekha Benny

How could I have ever hated skin that has been loved and nurtured by Mother Sun herself; skin that reminds me of the coconut trees that grow back home; skin that binds me to my ancestors and will leave its roots within my descendants; skin that acts as my bronze armour against the hatred the world has to offer; skin that is not a defining factor but rather a feature; skin that has such richness flowing through it and makes other envious of my brown complexion. My skin is woven from gold and shimmers under the moonlight as the earth embraces her beauty.



Porcelain

by Madeline Shaw ▶

I. *magkaribal* • rival

as a child,
I knew that my skin defined me.
often covered up
and lathered in sunblock,
trying to protect
that paper white baby skin.
“gold” wasn’t a good look on me.
“white” will take you farther.

She
was born with lighter skin
and lighter hair.
they fawned over her.
she was beautiful.
she embodied what was right.

Others
compared our tones
reinforcing the rivalry,
that we are not the same,
that one was more beautiful than the other.

I tried
to “stay light.”
I used the soaps,
bought the whiteners,
advertised by the others that looked like her.

translucent skin -
glowing
taunting
better than me.

II. *mestiza* • the look of privilege

I’ve known that color
defines Me.
defines Them.
I’ve clung to that
shred of whiteness
in my name,
the European traces
although it amounts
to less than one percent.
I allowed it to define me.
I’ve learned to be proud
when someone asks
“where are you from?”
because Filipino doesn’t cut it
with one look of
my light skin.
I took pride in looking different
in not being one of Them.
but who am I
if in between?

feelings

by: Cheyanne Ramon

III. *maganda* • beautiful

I gathered
my role models
from television shows
some spoke my language
but had skin
lighter
than mine.

“that’s what you’re
supposed to look like,”
Society whispered
in my ear
“here’s how you get there,”
“look over here,”
“see, this is ideal”

white
with a dash of
exotic
and a surfer boy
on my arm
waves of blonde.
that is what
I want.

IV. *ngayon* • now

sociology woke me
that the white
I was trying to be
was all a fantasy
one created by
History
to teach me
to be like them
shed my differences
and perpetuate
this society.

the color of my skin -
thought to be a
privilege
but all it did
was destroy
my connection
to my family,
the culture
I pushed aside
to achieve
what was
embedded
in my head
all along.

and now
I’m trying to
own
what is
Mine.

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE

MEDIA & CULTURE



Representation is Global

by Amelia Cho / 조주형

Striving to navigate 'middle-ground' in between two cultures I have grown up familiar with was similar to territorial conflict. I kept finding myself in the middle of unnecessary stress due to continuously falling for what I now know to be a false premise that I needed to be one version of myself and one version only.

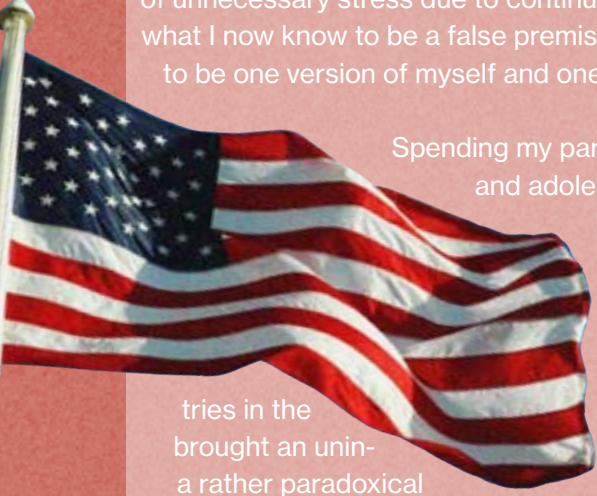
Spending my partial childhood and adolescence in the

United States, one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse coun-

try, had intentional and

clash in the

magnitude of



tries in the brought an unintentional and security of my identity. The magnitude of just how strongly I had been influenced by a culture I wasn't supposed to assimilate to within a very small time window was what made the least amount of sense. It felt wrong to be willing to hold onto a cultural aspect I was introduced to only for such a short period of my life and merge it with my pre-existing Korean identity. It felt as if I needed to solely adhere instead of adapt.

Living in Korea as a Korean person doesn't convey the difficulties of feeling inaccurately represented or not represented at all -since there was no need for 'representation' in the context of race and diversity. Everywhere I would look, from teachers to doctors and nurses, from politicians to family and friends, I wouldn't feel the longingness for someone to look up to, feeling a sense of kindred connection in the knowledge that they might've faced similar life experiences in society, to emerge. However, it wasn't until I was becoming more and more interested in becoming involved in international politics which was a contrastingly different environment despite the similarity in the realm of politics that I felt underestimated, discouraged, and simply not there. It felt eerie to know that what I knew my entire life was not the entire full picture, almost comparable to the time I felt lost in direction when I was an Asian in America.

There were imperceptible limits as to how I can feel present in a world where people of color who are

also the global majority, simply weren't the global majority. No matter how well-represented I am in the country I spent the majority of my life in, appearing and making the attempt to appear beyond is challenging and entails restrictive obstacles. Which subsequently helped me to realize the potential of influencing without borders Asian representation encompasses.

Despite being able to hear and watch Asian news reporters and actors and actresses on the big screens, I still couldn't help but go through emotions that I'm not thoroughly defined nor was I interpreted well in multiracial, multicultural contexts. However, the intensity of empowerment I would receive just by being able to see people I would see back home fearlessly following their passions fostered a newly found understanding of home. I finally started to feel a sense of sensical belongingness in an intercultural place where Asian representation is adequately facilitated. Regardless of how people might deem the form of representation to be shallow, the reason behind why so many people like myself feel seen and heard in a world where we would it would be tough to be seen and heard should be more than indicative of how unavailable and insufficient Asian representation was and how it continues to be misled in the present.



I recall a memory from late November of 2021 feeling overwhelmingly happy after seeing the debut of a Korean-American muppet named 'Ji Young' on Sesame Street, a show that people grew up watching for multiple generations now. I could vividly depict my young five-year-old self, a kindergartener in America, still confused how she isn't Chinese like her friends who she looks like the most, who would be more than fascinated and in awe of a character like 'Ji Young' on television! I would like this piece of writing to once again serve as a reminder to everyone reading that representation enables, representation is global, and representation matters.

When Representation Isn't Enough

By Ian Sun

Since the protests calling for racial justice last year, many believe that representation has taken a great leap forward. After all, a highly-acclaimed movie and TV show featuring stellar minority representation were released this year. The Hollywood Diversity Report announced significant increases in minority film representation over the past decade, including women and people of color becoming more represented in film positions. Many activists are cheering over this increased minority representation. But is it enough?

People called on the United States to deeply reflect on its systemically-rooted racism. Racial justice advocates stressed the need for various action steps: implementing policies, calling out bigoted statements, supporting movements for racial justice, and increasing education and awareness. Educating yourself reveals a lot about racism in the US; for centuries, racism has showed itself in all kinds of laws and practices, such as slavery, segregation, redlining, stereotyping, and more. Racism has also prevented people of color from effectively pursuing better lives because they were denied opportunities to advance socioeconomically. As a result, as the US developed, top institutions became white-dominated. People of color rarely make it to high level positions within a multitude of professional fields, such as science, entertainment, business, and more, leading them to believe that these positions are unobtainable. After all, we all look up to people in those institutions, hoping to one day become one among them. Therefore, racial justice advocates call for increased representation in the media, in higher education, in healthcare, and in any position that's predominantly white. Representation, according to activists, means having your own identity present on "the big screen." It fosters a sense of inclusiveness among marginalized groups and increases diversity in a homogenous environment, letting people of color express themselves as who they truly are, and not by some stereotype.

Fortunately, it seems that progress has already begun. Black Panther's release in 2018 provided Black Americans an effective way to express themselves and their culture authentically, untampered by any stereotypes. Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings,

released this year, held a similar sentimental value for Asian Americans, telling a tale fitting to Chinese traditions and cultures. In politics, the 2021 elections delivered major wins for candidates of color into mayor and governor positions. And the election of Kamala Harris as the 49th vice president of the United States allowed women and Blacks/South Asians to see their identities in the White House.

But will this representation alone bring us racial justice? Obviously not.

In order for racism to truly cease, representation must be accompanied by policies and practices that combat the country's racist infrastructure and provide equity among marginalized groups.

So far, anti-racist actions have been less than satisfactory. Some states and institutions have even deviated from the path towards equity, proving that representation alone is not enough.

Police brutality is still running rampant with police officers murdering over a thousand people a year – not to mention that their victims are disproportionately Black. Qualified immunity still exists to prevent police from being held accountable by protecting them from lawsuits. A police reform bill in Congress proposed last year has not been touched on or mentioned for months, and President Biden's promises to address racism have yet to be met so far.

School curricula are still lacking in diversity. History classes often teach explicit racism in the past tense, rarely linking it to modern-day racism. Literature classes often assign books written by white male authors, and health classes teach health tailored to a white, cis, straight audience while scantily considering health for marginalized communities.

Despite these academic gaps, several states are beginning to restrict discussions of racism, with some even lifting the requirement that schools teach about the Civil Rights Movement and white supremacy altogether.

Anti-Asian hate continues to proliferate through hate speech and physical assaults, despite the existence of highly-acclaimed Asian cinema such as *Shang-Chi and Squid Game*. Over nine thousand cases have been reported since the pandemic began, and there could be thousands more unreported cases. Biased coverage of Asian countries continues to make this problem worse.

Collective change starts with individual effort, and it is our responsibility to enact this change through our individual actions. As individuals, you can start by calling racist remarks out. If you do not feel comfortable doing that in front of your friends, you could pull them aside for a while and explain to them privately why the remark was harmful. You can also donate to or join organizations that advocate to address racism.

As activists, we should continue advocating for increased representation, but we should not stop there. Our activism must also combat the other facets of racism just as vigorously. Whether it is police brutality, hate crimes, or a whitewashed school curriculum, these facets of racism are just as harmful, if not more, than lack of representation. After all, lack of representation is not the reason why a quarter of Asian Americans feel fearful over anti-Asian hate crimes, or why many Black Americans live dreading police violence.

For police brutality, ending qualified immunity and having officers foot the court bill are a start. Defunding the police and reinvesting in communities are not bad solutions. To address the increase of anti-Asian hate, start by describing the pandemic

correctly and minding the media coverage, especially that on China. For the curriculum, advocate for expanding the current content to include the authentic histories of other peoples in the world while maintaining the high-level credit.

Even in regards to representation, it falls short. In the same Hollywood Diversity Report mentioned earlier, marginalized individuals are still underrepresented in the film writer, director, and executive producer roles, making up only a quarter of directors but 40% of the US population. Additionally, women only make up 20% of director positions despite making up half of the total population.

Representation also runs the risk of tokenism. It is all too common to hear that a movie with diverse actors is released only to find out that those actors take on perfunctory or heavily stereotyped roles, or that a workplace/school brags about its diversity only for its underrepresented members to be denied opportunities and/or feel excluded.

Representation cannot stop the other facets of racism and can, instead, give an illusion that racism is finally addressed. Representation fosters a sense of inclusiveness among marginalized groups, increases diversity in a homogenous environment and creates a platform for people of color, but that's it. Thus, we must address racism in its other forms in order to truly reach an anti-racist society. We've come so far, but we still have a long way to go.



Covers of books in Barnes and Noble's Diverse Editions, starring reworks of classical works where the lead characters are non-white, proposed in February 2020. Diverse Editions was criticized for its use of Blackface and its repurposing of classical works written by white authors, rather than featuring works by authors of color. It was ultimately not published.

Examining what “good representation” means through an Asian American lens

I attended my first Vietnamese beauty and philanthropy pageant recently, and during the question and answer section, one of the contestants' questions was, “Is there good representation of Asians in the media?” Her answer, given on the spot, was a convoluted combination of ‘yes’ and ‘no,’ which initially frustrated me. But the greater emotion I felt in that moment was how the question of what “good representation” meant boggled me. I saw myself in Billi from “The Farewell,” but not Lara Jean Covey in the “To All The Boys” franchise. But I know other young Asians look up to Lara Jean, but not Billi. After some reflection, though, I realized that she’s not wrong.

Good representation starts with the story. For many creatives, especially writers, it is a commonly known phrase to “write what you know.” Many complex and authentic stories come from a place of truth within the creator. Director Lee Isaac Chung wanted to tell his life story of when his family moved to rural Arkansas, and so the semi-autobiographical and eventually Oscar-award winning film “Minari” was made. Anyone can clearly see Korean American actor Steven Yeun on screen as Jacob in “Minari,” but not everyone feels represented in Jacob’s character and development throughout the film. You represent a part of yourself in the story you choose to tell.

It’s quite impossible to give the idea of “good representation” a singular definition. It is up to the viewer to decide whether a piece of media has good representation. Art and its meaning is up to anyone’s interpretation; there is no singular right method to what could be considered “good representation.” It is a result of someone’s willingness to be vulnerable and share their life experiences with the world, and in doing so, the art can spark discussion and other meaningful dialogue. When people share their various opinions on a character or story, those opinions, whether they are similar, reflect how complex these stories are. And it’s in the discussions we have of a character or story that determine whether or not a minority group such as Asians are accurately represented on screen.

Let’s take the hit film “Crazy Rich Asians.” Because the film included many different Asian and Asian American personalities, almost everyone praised the show for its authentically featured Asian cultures and characters. “Variety” writer Audrey Leo Yap expressed her appreciation for how the film highlights the various experiences of being bicultural, saying that “[‘Crazy Rich Asians’] puts these varied experiences — of being Asian in Asia, of being Asian in America ... front and center as if to say, ‘Look. We’re not all the same.’”

But not everyone in the world can have the exact same opinion. Many criticized the film for not truly authentically representing Asians since not every Asian is 'old money' wealthy the way the Young family is. Others criticized the film for pigeonholing Singaporeans, saying the film was "a misrepresentation of Singapore at the most basic level, obscuring Malay, Indian, Eurasian, and more populations who make the country the culturally rich and unique place that it is" (Han, "Crazy Rich Asians is a win for Asian Americans. But it gets Singapore wrong.")

However, both sides of this discussion make valid points, and that discourse determines whether a character is properly representing a minority group.

When we share our truths about a character that came from someone else's truth, we are fulfilling the core meaning of art and fostering discussions. Humans are not perfect, and through art, we can shine a light on our humanity and find connections within ourselves and each other. When we find ourselves represented on screen, it ignites a feeling within us that encourages us to share our feelings about the story with others.

Good representation is not an isolated concept; it is a result of vulnerability from the artist and the audience. It is more than just being seen on screen; it is when a piece of media can spark insightful conversations. If beauty is in the eye of the beholder, then so is finding good representation in media.

Her Eyelids Flutter
by Chloe Sun



“The Cable Guy” Super Bowl Commercial

► *The End of Cable, the Rise of Inclusion*

By: **Meghan Dhawan**

Every year when the Super Bowl is announced, I put on some comfy clothes, grab some pretzels, mozzarella sticks, alcohol, and various other Super Bowl-themed snacks to prepare for a fun night. While most people watch the Super Bowl for the game itself, which is *technically* the intended purpose of the national television event, I watch the game purely for two things: the iconic and well-designed halftime performances, and the commercials.

When I was much younger, around the age of 13 or 14, I began to take interest in the Super Bowl commercials, with them having a longer runtime and incorporating the voices and personalities of various celebrities of different importance and statuses. I began having an affection for the sillier, more “unnoticed” commercials, such as the M&M commercials, which were much more subdued at the time and aren’t the subject of controversy for the leaked information that their parent company, “Mars,” uses child labor to make the famous chocolate brand, as well as the recent news regarding the “modern” transformation the company’s well-known characters went through to be more inclusive to the general public, with mixed opinions as a result.

I have always enjoyed these commercials, as well as the Doritos chips brand, Planters Peanuts, and the release of new movie trailers. These commercials held much significance to me, as they helped shape my interests and overall identity regarding my passion for the Film and Television industry. However, as the years went by, the rise of thought-provoking topics such as racial justice and accountability were introduced through social media, which opened my eyes to glaring issues within my favorite industry. Through careful exploration

and research, I began to ask the noticeable question to the conspicuous issue: “Where are all the Brown people?”

“Where are all the Brown people?”

Recently, in mainstream media, there have been a surprisingly high increase of South and North Indians being represented in the media, such as Maitreyi Ramakrishnan in the hit Netflix series “Never Have I Ever,” Priyanka Chopra in the TV show “Quantico” and her most recent film, “Matrix the Resurrections;” Kuhoo Verma in the Hulu film “Plan B,” and Geraldine Viswanathan in the TBS show “Miracle Workers;” starring alongside another Actor of Indian descent, Karan Soni, from the hit Marvel film “Deadpool,” as well as Daniel Radcliffe and Steve Buscemi.

I wasn’t sure what I was expecting when it came to the 2022 Super Bowl commercials, but I knew that many famous white celebrities were going to make an appearance, such as Actor Seth Rogan and fellow friend/Actor Paul Rudd, as well as Anna Kendrick, my personal favorite, and many more. As the commercials went on throughout the evening, my eyes were drawn to a particular commercial for Verizon, which starred one of my favorite celebrities, Jim Carrey, who was a big influence in my childhood years. In the commercial, Carrey reprised the role of Chip Douglas, an oddball cable installer, a character he portrayed in the infamous film “The Cable Guy,” alongside Actor Matthew Broderick, known for his role as Ferris Bueller in “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off” (1986). The film had moderate success, but was heavily panned by critics, later gaining a cult following.



However, years later, and *The Cable Guy* is back! Jim Carrey's reprisal as the kooky character was unmatched, as he utilized his ever-evolving facial features to perfectly capture the very essence of the character people grew up with and loved.

In the commercial, Chip Douglas, speaking with a lisp, movements quick and rapid with some still moments to increase tension, knocks on the door of an apartment screaming "Cable Guy!" in true energetic nature. Whilst Douglas waits after knocking, the camera pans to the closed door, which is then opened by none other than one of the previously mentioned Actresses, Geraldine Viswanathan! This was a pleasant surprise, as while Geraldine's work is getting more recognition, and with the knowledge that she is currently still far from being considered an A-list Actress, her appearance in the commercial spoke volumes to me. It gave me assurance that Indian and brown girls are starting to be more recognized in mainstream pop culture and media, and that it is ushering a new wave of fresh faces for today's predominantly white audiences that consume this type of media to start recognizing, admiring, and even valuing!

This commercial was a huge leap forward for Geraldine Viswanathan, as this opportunity could open more doors for her career-wise, potentially earning her more opportunities to expand her filmography, by being featured in commercials, television shows,

and even more feature films. Viswanathan has been expanding her filmography in addition to her work in the popular TBS series "Miracle Workers," which she became a part of in its inception in 2019. Before that, Viswanathan garnered attention with her performance in "Blockers" (2018), where she portrayed best friend Kayla, opposite Actress Kathryn Newton, and starred alongside A-List actors Ike Barinholtz, Leslie Mann, and even John Cena. She appeared in a few more films, more notable ones including "Bad Education" (2019), in which she had a supporting role, and even a starring role as Lucy Gulliver in "The Broken Hearts Gallery" in 2020, which was advertised in movie theaters amidst the pandemic. She has also had some voiceover experience, lending her voice to the recurring character, Tawnie, who appeared a few times throughout the entire six-season run of the Netflix Original Series.



Geraldine Viswanathan seems to be soaring in her career, especially starring alongside iconic actor Jim Carrey as he reembodyed his nostalgic character, Chip Douglas, from *The Cable Guy* for the Verizon advertisement. Personally, I would love to see Viswanathan soar even further in her career, hopefully one day becoming a household name like Priyanka Chopra is today. If she is recognized even a small fraction behind Chopra, Geraldine Viswanathan could be the next Brown girl to take center stage and win the hearts of Hollywood.



by **Chloe Sun**

Challenging the stereotype of Asia as “dirty bat-eaters” or “dog-eaters” in the midst of a pandemic often called the “China virus” or kung-flu, this piece was fueled by an angry passion to defend my identity. This past year, the world witnessed an endless tirade of hate and disgust, calling me and my brothers and sisters dirty, uncivilized eaters. Eaters of bats, eaters of dogs, eaters of things the prim and proper and pristine Western inhabitants of the world would never dream of touching. It was because of the eaters that this pandemic was here, apparently. Seeing something so incredibly wrong and damaging drove me to create this piece—something just to address that I, the apparent eater of dogs and bats and who knows what else, am not the one to blame. Asia is not dirty, it is not savage, it is not backward. The “eaters” are tired of being the scapegoat.

Eater

I've Been Told

by Jer Pader Yang

"My name is Jer!

It is spelt J-E-R. No, the J is not silent. It's not pronounced, Her, that's my pronoun. No it isn't Yer, where'd you get the Y from now?

I am an American. Yes, I am also Asian. I'm not Chinese, I'm not Korean, I'm not Japanese. I am Hmong. My race is not your fetish. My skin is not exotic. We Asians take 60% of this world population if you haven't noticed.

I am a women.

I've been told I'm cute. I've been told I am tiny.

You think I haven't noticed that about myself.

I've been told I'm weak. I have been told I am quiet. I have been told I need to be more conservative. Cover up. Yea, no thanks.

I have a voice. I am smart. I can be loud when I want to. I am strong. In my world I wear the pants better than some of these so called "men."

I am turning 24 years old.

I get to live another year being told who I am. What I get to do. What I need. How I should feel. When and where I should be. No! No. Not last year nor this year. I will be who I want to be. I get to do what I want. I know what I need. I should be where I am. I will not let my feelings get invalidated.

You know this anger I have does not only go towards to the one that killed and hurt those Asian women and elders, but goes to society. It goes to the people of colors, it goes to my community, my friends, my family, my racist parents, and it goes towards me. Especially me. I've been told, I've been told, I've been told, but I also keep telling myself, this will pass. Just like any others. I tell myself I can't make a difference. I'm just this small Hmong girl from nowhere. What I do won't matter. I'll just get silenced again. Cause no one listens to the small Asian girl in the corner. No. Look where we're at. We were there on that day for the demonstration. Because those years before was Black Lives Matter. Last year was Stop Asian Hate. What about this year? What will be the next hashtag.

We blame society, when we are the society.

I've been told too many times.

I'm tired of being told, being the one listening. Being the one who is suppressed.

So, now I am telling you, stop living in fear, get their attention, and make them listen. Speak yourself!

My name is Jer Pader Yang. I am a 23 Hmong American Women.

Let's stand together."



IN LOVING MEMORY
VIRGINIA LOU NG

Born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Virginia and her family moved to New York City in the 1960s seeking better access to higher education. Always creatively inclined, she attended the High School of Art and Design as well as the School of Visual Arts. She met her husband John, in 1974 and they were married in New York City's Transfiguration Church. Their first son, Jonas, was born a year later, so they moved to Bloomfield, NJ to allow for their growing family. Maxwell was born two years after that.

After owning her own small card and gift shop, Virginia answered a call to service in 1986 and went to work for the Girl Scouts of Essex County (NJ) as a Field Manager. Following a relocation, she took a new position with the Girl Scouts of Bergen County (NJ); there, she made strong friendships, embraced the nonprofit world of youth leadership and empowerment, and discovered her talent for fundraising.

Her work with the Girl Scouts introduced her to her great passion - advocacy work, and she was nominated to serve as Commissioner for the Bergen County Human Rights Commission. Through this work, she also became a passionate advocate on behalf of Asian Americans. She would go on to twice serve as President of the OCA-Asian Pacific American Advocates New Jersey Chapter (OCA-NJ). With OCA-NJ, she created several programs to assist Asian American and Pacific Islander youth; an internship program with the New Jersey State Legislature; a scholarship fund to assist with the increasing costs of college expenses; and a career fair to help seed Asian American leadership. Through all of this, she also created the fundraising support to sustain these programs, inaugurating various black-tie fundraisers and pushing to increase OCA chapter membership. She organized and chaired the OCA National Convention that was hosted by OCA-NJ in Jersey City in 2016. Her interactions at the state level were noticed at the federal level, and she would go on to serve OCA as the National VP of Finance and National VP of Chapter Development.

Her service to others extended beyond her advocacy work and continued with personal endeavors as well. She was the leader of five different Girl Scout troops, of which 18 girls would go on to earn their Gold Award, the highest youth award in Girl Scouting. She herself would be awarded the Thanks Badge, the highest honor for an adult volunteer. A hobby that started during the time she owned her card shop, she would often prepare wedding stationary for friends and family with decorative calligraphy. As the proud parent of a trans son, she began to advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, speaking to other parents struggling with their children coming out. The entire Ng family would receive the National Queer Asian Pacific-Islander Alliance (NQAPIA) Community Catalyst Award in part because of this work. After retiring from the Girl Scouts, Virginia would continue to tap her skills and talents to fundraise for the Charles B. Wang Community Health Center so underserved Asian American communities would have access to high quality, affordable healthcare. She also volunteered with AARP and was awarded the Andrus Award for Community Service.

Virginia devoted herself to family, a group that she defined without limitation. She was beloved and will be dearly missed. If you would like to honor her and the connections you made because of her, the Ng family encourages you to donate to the OCA-NJ scholarship fund named in her honor.

<https://virginiangscholarship.org>

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