

# CRACCU M

THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND STUDENT MAGAZINE ISSUE 03, 15 MARCH 2021

## A Marriage Story: Model Minorities and Māori

Mairātea Mohi explores how Chinese immigration in New Zealand has influenced Māori and Asian race relations in the modern day.

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## Chicken Pad Tired

Feeling mouth-bored? Jump on Matthew Yang's spoon aeroplane departing to some tasty food destinations in Tāmaki Makaurau.

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## Breaking Language Barriers

Bronson Burgess discusses how language connects us to new worlds with a Māori-Pākehā student who speaks Spanish, an Englishman who speaks Cantonese, and a Tongan-Taihitian student who speaks Korean.

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# CULTURE





AUSA AND UOA  
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## The People to Blame

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**SHADOWS**  
BAR & EATERY

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GABBIE DE BARON  
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WINNER OF \$50 SHADS VOUCHER

TE AO MĀORI EDITOR  
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**stuff**



We are filling in  
UoA's diversity quota <3

# Culture is Experienced, Not Defined.

**We've all seen it.** A public library hangs up a few red lanterns and a six-year old's painting of a dragon framed by some buchaechum fans. Oh, and there's also a cotton candy vendor outside. Gong xi fa cai, bitches. *We're cultured.*

Culture is often thought of as a diversion from what is natural to everyday life, leaving so much room for reductive and one-dimensional views of important parts of people's identities. Because of this, some cultures are easier to identify than others, but that doesn't mean that only certain people are allowed to have one. If there's one thing we share as Auckland students in a time like now, its grit, resilience and adaptability at our best, and loneliness, procrastination and a lack of work-life boundaries at our worst.

Although culture is everywhere and in every issue of *Craccum*, space should always be afforded for people to talk about their ethnic cultures. This is why there is a particular focus on place, language and movement in this issue.

Maybe you've had your pride, roots and language completely erased in a Pākehā-conforming high school to the extent that you're more homogenised with your entire cohort than a 3L bottle of milk. Maybe you've lived in three cities prior to Tāmaki Makaurau and half-spoken four languages and you just resort to saying [average suburb] when people ask, "where are you from?" Or maybe, you're bordered off from your family at home, and you're making dedicated trips out to the imported groceries shop for a home-cooked meal that momentarily takes you back to your grandma's place.

These feelings about culture can never be reflected in a few display cabinets of *exotic* trinkets, or by drenching your green outfit from Look Sharp in Guinness on St Patrick's Day. People are more complex than

that, and we need their stories. You'll notice that many in this issue aren't sugar coated. Culture is often celebrated, but rarely given space to be challenged or reflected on with honesty.

Culture is neither given enough space to be disagreed on between those people who identify with the same one. While we're both labelled ethnically Chinese, we speak different dialects, have different preferences for food, and (unfortunately) different tolerances for spice. Most importantly, we have unique ways for identifying with our own culture. Our upbringing and backgrounds shape us, and naturally affect our experience and perspectives on culture too.

Of course, ethnic culture is only one fragment of the wider culture umbrella, and for some of us, it may not be the biggest contributing factor to shaping our lives. For all of us, student culture fuels our experience at university. In other cases, some might turn to cultures inspired by art forms as a means for freedom of expression.

What's ultimately most important is how we all connect with culture, and how our own interactions create the biggest impact on our lives. The title of this week's editorial is that culture is experienced, and not defined. Our hope is that with our contributors relaying their personal stories, it inspires you to connect with your culture in your own way, whatever that may be.

We're turning celebration of culture up to another level here at *Craccum*. This isn't folding paper lanterns in the teen section of your local library.

Yours faithfully,

**Eda Tang (she/her) and Brian Gu (he/him)**

Co-Editors of *Craccum* 2021

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# Summer Research Students Put Their Knowledge to the Test

JESSICA HOPKINS

**Summer Research Scholarships** are a ten-week programme where selected students work with leading researchers at the University. Students Melodee Panapa Leilua and Annie Kang talked to Craccum about their experiences.

## Melodee Panapa Leilua, Pacific Studies and English

Melodee was a research assistant on a project called 'Mapping Innovations in Indigenous, Feminist, and Culturally Appropriate Research Methodologies', supervised by Dr. Marcia Leenen-Young and Dr. Lisa Uperesa. "We worked off the text, *Decolonising Methodologies* by Professor Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and followed the movements of Pacific research." This project was her first choice, as indigenous methodologies is an area of interest.

She didn't know what to expect going into the programme but was pleasantly surprised at how her journey went. "The community at Pacific Studies welcomed us into their office and helped us with anything we needed. The student support group did a great job building a community of scholars. There were coffees every Thursday, pizzas after lectures and everyone in the staff was really forthcoming." She says it was a shame the summer students were spread out across different projects and couldn't form strong connections.

## Annie Kang, Population Health, and Anthropology

Annie worked with Dr Karolina Stasiak in the Department of Psychological medicine. "We've been working on a chatbot called Aroha to help young people cope with the stress and isolation of lockdowns." She says her research focused on interviewing Summer School students about the chatbot and how they found 2020. "Generally, people seem to really like it and appreciate being listened to and getting advice."

Annie told *Craccum* that she had a clear idea of what type of project she wanted to work on when applying, and this one was a great fit. "I wanted to talk to people and didn't want to look at numbers and spreadsheets all day. I've always been interested in mental health; my pathway through health science was mental health and addictions."

Melodee says the experience was eye-opening and allowed her to understand what it is like to work for the University. "Working alongside successful academics gives you insight into the inner workings of an office. It seems like a really good place to work." She says it was a great introduction to postgraduate study, which she had been considering. "It cleared up the fact I wanted to do postgrad and proved to myself I could do it. It's a sink or swim kind of thing, and I feel like I grew from it."

Working with a team of professionals allowed Annie to determine if research was something she wanted to do for her future career. "It was a good way to dip my toes into research, and it helped me realise I do enjoy it." After completing the programme, she also feels more confident about

entering the workforce. "I was worried about working with the supervisors and whether I would be useful to these super qualified people. I felt a lot of imposter syndrome going into it, but they definitely made me feel like I have something to bring to the table. My supervisor has offered to hire me as a research assistant, which I am super excited about."

Annie found the workload to be very manageable. "It depends on your supervisor, who you're working with, and what project you do, but for me, it was all good: it was almost nothing." However, Melodee says the workload was challenging and that the compensation offered was not enough. All summer scholars receive a tax-free stipend of \$6,000 for ten weeks of work. "I enjoyed the work, but the workload was a lot. If you expect students to work 40 hours a week, that doesn't work out to be a full-time wage."

Melodee has suggested there be reduced hours or increased pay for summer students. "At the beginning, I was just stoked to get it. They call it a scholarship, so you have this feeling of winning an award. However, when you work out the financial side of the scholarship, it's not great." Melodee says although it was a lot, they were flexible with how and when you worked, and her supervisor let students take a break or work from home when needed.

While Annie had a positive experience, not all students she has spoken to feel the same. "Your experience really depends on your supervisor. I've heard of some students who worked from home. Their supervisors wouldn't talk to them and just told them, 'look at this data and figure it out yourself'". She feels lucky to have been able to go to campus to talk to supervisors and meet people. "It definitely affirmed a feeling of a friendly corporate environment."

Melodee enjoyed having more autonomy over her learning, and it forced her to overcome personal learning curves like procrastination. "There are no tutorials, no lectures to attend; you were fully in charge of your workload. It helps shape your habits and identify strengths and weaknesses." She says students might not realise the endurance they need for full-time work. Annie echoes this sentiment, "You learn all this theory in class, and it's actually really different once you put it into practice."

Annie warns students considering summer research to choose their project carefully, advising students to "see if it is something you're interested in and if the supervisor is good." Melodee also agrees having an interest in the subject matter is essential. She says opportunities like summer research are not advertised enough to Arts students. "Pacific studies is quite tight-knit, so we are bound to hear about something through word of mouth. But in the Arts Faculty, opportunities like summer school and jobs aren't accessible."

She believes summer research is for everyone. "I think there's learning in the process for anyone. There are students out there who don't know their own power, and if they had a chance to have a go at a summer scholarship, they could prove to themselves they are better than they think."



# Going the Extra Mile: Student Support in the Arts Faculty

OLYMPIA ROBB

In the Faculty of Arts, a small team of seven are situated in Belgrave (one of the merchant houses) with the sole aim of supporting students. Despite being smaller than most faculties, arguably, these staff pay that much more attention to the wellbeing of their students, often going above and beyond their roles to support students.

One unique aspect of the Faculty of Arts student support services is Arts+. Arts+ is a first year in-class mentoring programme, manned by over 100 student mentors. The programme allows an opportunity for first year students to engage with older students who support their adjustment into university life, but also provides an opportunity for the Arts student support team to 'be in the class', let students know what services are available, and be there to support them. Ash, the Student Development and Engagement advisor, noted how often students "fall through the cracks" because they simply didn't know what support was available to them, or how to reach out for help.

Last year with COVID-19, student wellbeing took a particularly hard hit. The University provided laptops for students in need. However the Arts student support team went one step further. They distributed 900+ computers or modems to students, sometimes in very rural areas, after sourcing funding from local philanthropists. Their support team noted the importance of these devices not only being necessary for online learning, but highlighted that any student who did not have access to a device in lockdown was equally lacking access to it during a normal

semester, placing them at a disadvantage.

The Arts Faculty also last year established the Faculty of Arts Student Emergency Fund, which provides up to \$500 in the form of vouchers for Ubiq, Auckland Transport (AT), or Countdown. This fund arose as an answer to how invasive the University Hardship fund can often be, seeking detailed bank records over past months, and instead tries to ease any extra burden upon students. The student support team noted how often they would have students coming to them for support in this, and members of the team themselves would help students write their application, or advocate on their behalf.

The Faculty also provides support to clubs and student organisations, such as financial support of the Interesting Journal and close mentorship and support of the Arts Student Organisation (ASO) and their initiatives to help students. They also host a morning tea early in the semester, inviting the presidents of arts-related clubs in order to form relationships with these groups.

The Arts Graduate Study Centre is also available for arts students. This space is designated for postgraduate students and intended to be used for quiet study, and provides computers, printers, lockers and other facilities. Despite the closing down of the Social Sciences Building (commonly known as HSB) where this space was originally located, space has been made available in Te Puna Reo/CLL Building to ensure postgraduate students still have access to this facility.

# Virtual Clubs Expo Attracts Students Despite Lockdown

BRIAN GU

Auckland's abrupt lockdown at the start of Semester One forced the University to hold the Clubs Expo online as a "Virtual Fair".

The whole-day event, taking place on the first Thursday of the semester, saw students browse *Engage* to sign up as club members, or meet club executives virtually over *Zoom*. Students could attend either a morning or afternoon virtual session.

Anne-Marie Parsons, Associate Director of Campus Life's Student Engagement team, says feedback for the event has been positive, with club executives being "happy to have an opportunity to connect with peers". Parsons revealed that "there were over 1800 attendees at each virtual session".

The decision to hold the event online was made a single day after the Alert Level 3 announcement, giving the University and attendees three days to prepare. "There has been a Virtual Fair option on *Engage* since mid-2020," Parsons says, "and we had looked into the technology as part of contingency planning."

Louise Miao, Secretary of the Auckland University Muay Thai Club, was surprised by how many students signed up virtually. "Our overall sign-ups for the year have definitely exceeded our expectations considering Virtual Expos were so last minute," Miao tells *Craccum*. Despite this, a lot less students attended her club's *Zoom* session than the number that signed up. Miao attributes this to the daunting nature of joining a call with several strangers.

"It's not our preferred way to meet returning and potential club

members but you gotta do what you gotta do."

STEM for Global Health President Catriona Miller agrees that "it was great getting to talk to so many interested students one on one." She also recognises "it was handy having it connected to the *Engage* portal so that students could quickly sign up and browse club events." This was great news as more *Engage* signups increases how much funding a club can apply for. (Note: Parsons clarifies "membership numbers are one factor in grant decisions. However much more emphasis is put on the application itself and the ideas proposed by clubs.")

Ultimately, Miller points out that "[they] definitely saw fewer students than if it had been in person," owing to not having the opportunity to chat with people walking by. "In-person Clubs Expos bring a bit of excitement to the first week of uni and are a great way for students to meet clubs that they'd never thought of joining," says Miller. However, she adds she would be keen to see a mixed online/in-person for the Clubs Expo in the future.

Meanwhile, for AUMT, Miao points out *Zoom* session "limits [their] ability to do demonstrations and showcase what our club has to offer," and therefore her club fully prefers Club Expo sessions being held in-person.

Parsons says her team is investigating whether both methods can be integrated to enhance the event. "Clubs and associations have been clear that while they appreciated the virtual opportunity, they value a face to face experience," Parson says. "Understanding the technology allows us to consider how it could compliment an on campus experience."

# Sustainable Hygiene Start-up Scores First Place in Summer Lab Programme

JESSICA HOPKINS

Equa, led by CEO Kianna Legg, was chosen by a panel of expert judges as the first place winner in the Summer Lab entrepreneurship development programme. Summer Lab is a free programme offered by the University of Auckland's Centre of Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

The biotechnology student has been working on a sustainable hygiene start-up called Equa with a few friends since last year. 'Living in a flat with five people, there was a shit ton of plastic on the bathroom floor. In all households, there's always so much plastic. We want to create a product to take on the problem of plastic in the hygiene industry.' To tackle this problem, she developed liquid shampoo and conditioner formulations with sustainable packaging and will allow customers to refill their bottles at a refiller tap.

Summer Lab is a four week intensive program where students are 'provided mentorship and professional advice' to create a start-up, says Legg. The programme began with an ideation session, where mentors take participants through the step-by-step process of creating and ideating an idea. 'The first day, I pitched my idea in front of everyone. I really wanted to bring my idea forward but needed a minimum of five people. The second day, I managed to get a team together.' Now, the CEO of Equa is joined by five other students Ryan Gwynn, Dweep Kapadia, Sarah Hao, Yihui Xu, and Anuruddha Caldera.

Equa's CEO is passionate about finding environmentally sustainable hygiene solutions using completely safe ingredients for its users and the ocean. 'The environmental impact of plastic is huge, but there is an increasing demand for plastic each year despite this. A lot of shampoos and soaps have nasty chemicals that go into the ocean and damage marine life.' She says there are already sustainable hygiene products on the market that solve this problem but people are still using a ton of plastic.

During the programme, Equa conducted market validation and primary and secondary market research. 'We found 88% out of 250



respondents to our survey prefer liquid soaps and shampoo to solid bars.' They discovered the packaging for many liquid shampoos are not as sustainable as it may seem. 'Every single sustainable liquid option is greenwashing. Recyclable plastic rarely gets recycled, and bioplastics break down into microplastics which end up harming fish and the ocean.' She says companies are starting to use aluminium packaging but this is also problematic. 'Aluminum is a material that requires one of the highest energy emissions to produce, and it also produces carbon dioxide.'

A mentor supported the team to develop a prototype for their product. 'Our mentor Debra Hall, who has experience in the industry, gave us advice on understanding what the customer wants, our unique value proposition because the market is so saturated.' Hall also provided Equa guidance with intellectual property, financing and funding.

The programme culminates by pitching ideas to a panel of investors. Equa pitched against 18 other teams and was chosen as the first place winner. 'A lot of people weren't doing it to win, but for the experience,' Legg recognises. 'I wasn't thinking about winning; I just wanted to do the best pitch I could for my team.'

When reflecting on the experience, Legg says the experience pushed her out of her comfort zone and being in a diverse team helped her do things she wouldn't have done without the program. 'We learnt so much and now have a massive advantage in entering Velocity's Innovation challenge and \$100k Challenge. We are in contact with an angel investor and have formed a valuable connection with her.'

Equa's next step will be doing consumer testing on their products. 'We are going to have a stall at the Velocity Kickoff event and will be giving out free shampoo and conditioner samples to get user feedback.' Legg recommends the Summer Lab programme to anyone who wants to learn more about innovation and entrepreneurship, saying 'it doesn't matter what degree you are in.'

# Shadows Back Open After Alert Level Changes

ELLA MORGAN NGĀTI RAUKAWA KI TE TONGA

After the Auckland Alert Level changes prevented it from being open at the start of the semester, Shadows Bar is now open to serve students and planning for a big year ahead.

Matt Marquet, Shadows Manager, told *Craccum* that while the bar lost money daily over lockdown, it was "hit twice over" as campus shut down for students.

'A good chunk of our business comes from university, we're a campus bar and that's what we're here for...we're purely targeted toward students, so without that it becomes a bit tough,' says Marquet. 'We've thankfully got a lot of loyal clubs that have come through that have got bookings, up until mid-semester break we're fully-booked already, which is adding a new problem of trying to schedule other events, but it's a good headache to have.'

'It makes us as a team here at Shads feel really positive about the fact that people still want to be out there having that social aspect that university brings, which I'm really glad to see.'

According to Marquet, the Shadows team have "salvaged what they can" from their O-Week events and are reworking these ideas into other events. Pre-lockdown, Shadows was planned to be involved in the Auckland University Students' Association's O-Week Festival.

'We wanted to create an experience of that fun and excitement of being on campus, so piggybacking on AUSA and being a part of their festival was a way to do that. That's why I'm really glad they're rescheduling it.'

AUSA has now rescheduled their O-Week festival to be held on the 22nd-24th of March, which Shadows will be a part of. A hot wings challenge will be held in partnership with Culley's, along with a range of other events and competitions. Shadows will also host the after party for the AUSA's Party in the Spark on the 31st of March.

Shadows has a number of daily food and drink deals on offer to students throughout the week. Located on Alfred Street, they will be returning to their normal hours opening at 8am when Auckland returns to Alert Level One.



# Waipārūrū Hall Evacuated Without Social Distancing in Midst of Alert Level Three

ELLA MORGAN & JESSICA HOPKINS

Waipārūrū hall was evacuated twice on Thursday 4th March without social distancing in the midst of Auckland's second Alert Level Three lockdown so far this year.

The first alarm, a room alarm, went off at 5pm. The second alarm occurred at 7:30pm and was confirmed to be caused by burnt popcorn. Students at the hall have claimed on social media that the first fire alarm was set off by a vape.

In videos posted to TikTok, large groups of evacuated residents were seen in close contact with each other outside of the building. Amongst the crowds, only some residents were seen to be wearing masks.

*Craccum* understands the hall's residents have been isolating in floor-wide bubbles over the Alert Level Three period. According to the University website, the hall is home to 786 residents.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was questioned regarding guidelines for managing Alert Levels in student accommodation in Friday's post-cabinet press conference. While she could not speak to the Waipārūrū situation specifically, "the Ministry of Education did some excellent work pretty early on with tertiary education institutions with how they would operate under the different alert levels," Ardern said.

"I would need to go back and check that we have covered off things like an evacuation. I would imagine it would. It may just be that they [university staff] just didn't execute their plans."

"What I will do is ask the Minister for COVID-19 Response & Education [Chris Hipkins] to compare the notes from MIQ protocols [to that of university accommodation facilities] because we have protocols on what do we have to do when we evacuate people who are already at risk of having COVID. There will be some clear things which will be helpful to share with university accommodation."

University of Auckland spokesperson Lisa Finucane has confirmed that some cohorts were close to each other and breached. One Waipārūrū Hall resident says they were evacuated with people on their floor waiting on COVID-19 test results. "It was a lot of confused teenagers not wearing masks mixing all the floor bubbles which all have people waiting on COVID test results."

The student also told *Craccum* that these students were not separated from the rest of the residents evacuating. "A couple girls from other floors came over during the first fire alarm and said they were evacuated with the people on their floor waiting on test results."

Finucane says that while some Waipārūrū Hall residents are awaiting COVID-19 test results, they are lower risk students who are being tested because of flu-like symptoms. "No student is in a room at Waiparuru and isolating because they are connected to the February cluster. Any student who was a casual, casual plus or close contact is isolating at

home or in a studio in another building." The University's spokesperson also told *Craccum* that hall staff offered masks to students, and made hand sanitiser regularly available. "Staff did their best to keep students together in their bubble."

The same resident says the resident advisors tried to keep students socially distanced. However they say this did not happen, as everyone took the stairs during the evacuation which meant the floor bubbles all mixed. "After we got out we got into our floor groups, but everyone was still very mixed and people were seeing their friends, maximizing the opportunity."


A second resident also said that those using stairs and elevators were unable to practise social distancing, and although Waipārūrū staff attempted to organise residents into floor groups once outside, this was largely unsuccessful after the first alarm. "The second time around was definitely much better, in that they enforced the staying in your bubble rule."

The hundreds of students allegedly came into close contact with residents of a neighboring apartment complex. "We all had to shuffle around for the fire truck and cars and random residents from Empire (another apartment complex) were walking through our 'mosh pit'."

The student says some students joked about setting off the alarm because they wanted to see their friends on different floors. Another former resident commented on social media "if there's one thing I don't miss about Waipa it's them constant fire alarms."

The student we spoke to says it has been implied that fire alarms go off falsely and frequently at the hall. However the University's spokesperson says that "with any evacuation there is a focus on supporting students to exit the building safely to prevent loss of life."





"What I want most as a second-year student is to have a normal experience at university, which is proving to be difficult."

"As a recently-eighteen-year-old fresh out of high school, I would say I was taken aback to find out the first week was online."

"I feel that learning remotely definitely affected my understanding of different concepts and ideas that were really important to nail down for Stage Three papers."

"Does anyone ever become familiar with spending too much time in their own thoughts?"

Whaka  
Rongo  
Mai



# Whakarongo Mai!

How did Auckland students find the most recent lockdown?

BRYONY AMMONDS-SMITH

**It goes without saying** that we were expecting a different start to the 2021 university year. But alas, the entire student body returned to (or were thrown into) online learning. First years were welcomed to university with overflowing Zoom lectures, and returning students were falling into old routines. We ask both new and returning students how this fourth lockdown affected their day-to-day life, and how this made them feel about their studies.

## Jane\*, 18, Health Science and Arts

"The lockdown this time around feels different. Given that I'm an Aucklander, it ain't my first, or my second, or even my third rodeo. But even so, the feeling of suffocation from the four walls of my small bedroom still creeps in. Stale air tastes just the same. The bread trend is long gone. Just because we've had so many attempts to get used to this doesn't mean we will ever be okay. Does anyone ever become familiar with spending too much time in their own thoughts?"

## Emma\*, 20, Law and Arts

"Navigating uni through lockdown in 2020 was a task in itself. I feel that learning remotely definitely affected my understanding of different concepts and ideas that were really important to nail down for Stage Three papers. That was something I've been kind of anxious about in returning to uni, which funnily enough hasn't happened due to lockdown.

Mentally it's actually kind of hard to keep a clear mind, even though arguably I have more time to reflect on things and chill, but it's a work in progress and I guess it's about understanding that there really is no timeline or deadline to life, only assignments."

## John\*, 18, Arts

"The Level Three 'lockdown' didn't come as a surprise to me, although I didn't expect it this early on in my studies. As a recently eighteen-year-old fresh out of high school, I would say I was taken aback to find out the first week was

online. After hearing the announcement of Level Three, I would say I did panic and stress. I much prefer talking face to face, however I can handle online meetings for a short while. I felt deserted and alone, coming from out of Auckland. I was also feeling a disconnect from my studies."

## Sonya\*, 19, Arts.

"What I want most as a second-year student is to have a normal experience at university, which is proving to be difficult. Being both neurodivergent and mentally ill, I deeply struggle to maintain a good work ethic when my environment is constantly changing. This lockdown has made me feel like I'm already falling behind, as I am overwhelmed by online learning and the lack of motivation that stems from my anxiety. While I am grateful for the resources given to me by the University, my procrastination has gotten worse due to the lack of confidence I have in my coursework."

\*NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED.

## SHADOWS BAR & EATERY

### MONDAY

FREE POOL  
2 FOR 1 TOASTIES

### WEDNESDAY

PROJECT 5  
2 FOR 1 PIZZA

### FRIDAY

BLOWOUT  
GARDEN SESH

### TUESDAY

BURGER & PINT  
NIGHT

### THURSDAY

COCKTAIL NIGHT  
HOT WINGS

### SATURDAY

ODD  
SATURDAYS

# The Taniwha and the Dragon

The Māori and Asian journey of cultural representations in the media



MAIRĀTEA MOHI TE ARAWA

## Thinking of cross cultural

relations I instantly think of the two oldest minorities of New Zealand, our Māori and Asian communities. The two groups have been in close contact since the 1800's but have been kept apart by the media and personal prejudices.

A loooooong time ago, New Zealand was once known to have the finest race relations in the world. News media at the time were referencing the Treaty, its fairness, and the coming together of Māori and Pākehā. However, with recent news events such as John Banks' racist tirade on the radio and the evil 'foreign buyer' myth, it makes one think if this title of "world's finest" still applies?

It's the job of the media to reflect an objective mirror back on society. What often happens instead, is that the media has saturated

**It's the job of the media to reflect an objective mirror back on society. What often happens instead, is that the media has saturated the market with its own agendas. With the media's favourite target being minorities, it has managed to fuel racial instability in New Zealand.**



(THE YELLOW PERIL, PUBLISHED IN NEW ZEALAND TRUTH, 16 FEBRUARY 1907)

Newspapers, unfortunately, have detailed the long history of active racism within the New Zealand media. The famous 'yellow peril' and Hori comics of the 20th century emphasised that one community would be to the detriment of the other. The two communities are often portrayed as opponents in the media, shown to be inferior to Pākehā and constantly fighting over resources and opportunities. The comics are a representation of the ideas and the thought processes of the time. They highlight the rampant racism and prejudice felt by mainstream New Zealand towards not only its indigenous but introduced communities. As Māori and Asian people are some of the oldest minorities in New Zealand, their journeys of racism directly parallel each other.

This dark time in history heralds the introduction of anti-Chinese legislation

The repercussions, however, saw the near decimation of Māori identity and spiritual practices. Not until Helen Clark's Prime Minister term did the people and families affected by the poll tax receive an apology. This apology was given in 2002, a whole 120 years after the tax was introduced. We have yet to hear an apology from the Government for the attempted decimation of the Māori language and culture though. (Tick tock!)

The sustained negative news coverage throughout the years has found to damage the self worth and sense of belonging from both communities. These feelings have only heightened with the recent surge in prejudice garnered from racist Chinese rhetoric surrounding Covid-19. To fight these damaging beliefs it is crucial more than ever to see our people come together. Seeing Māori and Asian communities unite under the



**To fight these damaging beliefs it is crucial more than ever to see our people come together. Seeing Māori and Asian communities unite under the umbrella of manaakitanga (shared respect and gift giving) would be to the detriment of media moguls and the white man.**

umbrella of manaakitanga (shared respect and gift giving) would be to the detriment of media moguls and the white man. Groups like 'Asians Supporting Tino Rangitiratanga' and the growing numbers of Maori students in Asian Studies show the potential of coming together. We are also starting to see more collaboration between Māori and tauwiwi under the scheme of business and

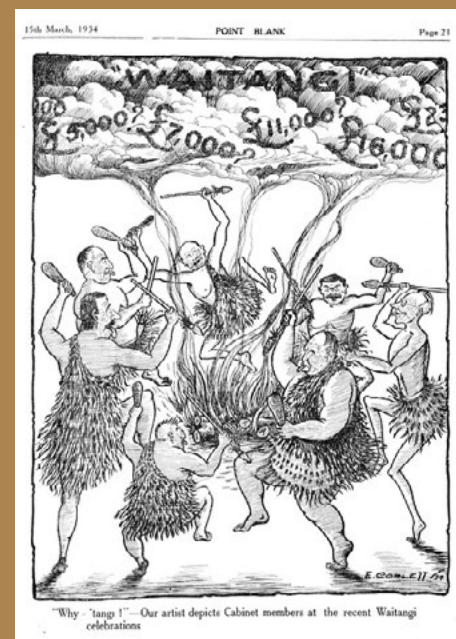


JUSTICE TO THE PAI-MARIRE, PUBLISHED IN PUNCH IN CANTERBURY, 13 MAY 1865.

cultural appreciation. From overseas interest interacting directly with Iwi and the availability of free Treaty workshops for incoming immigrants, we are developing cross cultural relations on an economic and ground level. The coming together of our communities shows a greater need for institutional and legislative initiatives that can ensure the flourishing of not only Māori, but all cultures. We are hearing from students the need of tikanga and cultural acceptance in schools and institutions. There's an even greater call for positive representation in our places of work, education and TV.

Our greatest example of tikanga on the institutional level are trailblazers like Nanaia Mahuta, who have set precedent on not only being the first woman but the first wahine Māori to hold the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs in New Zealand. As the face and first respondent to diplomatic relations she fronts every issue with a moko kauae, quite literally bringing her culture with her wherever she goes. New Zealand has always been considered a 'little Britain' since our first contact with England. Mahuta is flipping this idea on its head representing herself and our country by being unapologetically Māori. She has received great reception representing her culture abroad, much better than the reactions she receives back home. The good work of Nanaia Mahuta urges for more cultural inclusion in our schools, our workplaces and our general society. A great first step is to actually start singing the Māori verse in our national anthem rather than just mumble rap the whole thing.

In our societies' attempts to become a more worldly country, citizens and the media need to see and portray people accurately in their best light. The words of Kingi Tāwhiao, "ki te kāhore he whakakitenga ka ngaro te iwi", a message for unification, emphasises that without vision, the people will be lost and in these dark times his words ring true. Looking at the steady growth of Asians Supporting Tino Rangitiratanga and newspapers like The Herald pulling racist opinion pieces from papers shows new hope in cultural representation and harmony. This is a new ground for press and radio media. These same institutions that fueled racial instability are now urging its viewers to not view te reo Māori on the air or on TV as 'threatening.' The Broadcasting Standards Authority's decision to no longer take complaints from people upset about the use of te reo Māori on-air and



WHY-TANGI, PUBLISHED IN POINT BLANK, 15 MARCH 1934

on-screen shows hope for the revitalisation of language and culture. The media hold the responsibility of being the mode to share our culture to not only fellow New Zealanders but the world, also. Watching media industries practise accountability and attempting to be more egalitarian in their approach to reporting provides some hope that this is now changing.

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# The Real Student Culture at UoA

Who are we, really?



BRIAN GU

**UoA has no culture.** At least, that's the myth.

With a campus so spread out and a student body so diverse and dispersed, sometimes it feels like the international aisle at Pak'n'Save has more culture to offer than UoA.

This is in stark contrast to other universities in New Zealand. For example, if you're artsy and your favourite movie is *Pulp Fiction*, then you probably went to Wellington. If you have a mullet, a Hilux, and smash Diesels on a Wednesday arvo, then you probably went to Dunedin. Meanwhile, it seems like the only attraction that UoA boasts for students is Provost John Morrow announcing two subjects have broken into QS' Global Top 30.

So what is the student culture at UoA? Where can we find it? Does John Morrow kind of look like Kiwi filmmaker Sir Peter Jackson?

To answer two-thirds of these questions, we need to look introspectively, and embrace the common culture we share at UoA.

Many challenges plague the student culture here. The physical separation of students, with many choosing to live at home, means most have limited time to spend on extracurricular activities. Students disappear on a one-hour bus journey home, instead of staying late for a drink with mates.

In COVID times, continual disruptions to in-person learning exacerbate these existing problems. Long gone are the days where

you were able to pick out which of your classmates haven't showered in a week, because they've been wearing the same hoodie. Worse still, class gossip has been seriously lacking due to online learning. How else will you know the class couple have broken up if you can't spy on them walking to class holding hands?

Since culture starts with the student population, it's hard to label ourselves when our classmates are black grids on Zoom recordings. But just because everything's hard, it doesn't mean we shouldn't try. We're all capable of bringing some culture back to UoA.

In fact, unlikely as it sounds, lockdown



brought us glimmers of hope that our student culture is alive and kicking. Seeing our student body unite to shit on Dawn Freshwater's \$5 million dollar mansion purchase evoked more emotion in me than a Coldplay song. There's nothing like the collective pride of instigating change from the grassroots.

So perhaps, now that students flock back to classes with unkempt hair and the same hoodies they were wearing at the start of lockdown, it's time to remind ourselves that we are a student body, and we do have culture. It's just not what everyone expects 'student culture' to look like. Sure, we might not have a lot in common, but there are plenty of things we can all unite over. Let's celebrate our return by lighting up our construction-ridden campus. Have a drink at Shadows (but don't hit on the Freshers, for the love of god). Take a long, romantic stroll down Symonds Street flexing your newest Stolen Girlfriends Club or Stüssy. Take your sugar daddy for a meal at the campus food court. Get along to your favourite club events. Because above all, UoA is a land of opportunity. We can be anything we want to be.

In the end, we're 40,000 students suffering from expensive housing, minimal student support, and just general Auckland shittiness. So let's suffer together.

And while you're down at Shads, don't worry about pretending you're not getting a Shads jug, because that's the cheapest and you don't know your drinks. At those club events, don't worry about being alone, because we're all just losers trying to avoid our old high-school cliques.

And most of all, don't feel pressured to hide the fact that you're as proud as Peter Jackson impersonator, John Morrow, that we've got 2 subjects in the top 30. Because the likely reason you're here is that you're a smarty pants too.

And that's the real culture at UoA. We're a bunch of nerds, sorry. I know it, you know it, we all know it. UoA is the University of international clout. We're the bloody jafas, too good for these provincial folk (just kidding, haha... unless?). But seriously, we belong to a University that prides itself on quality of

education. I'll bet it means that you value education too.

We've earned ourselves the label of UoA nerds, (also known as try-hards, teachers pets and w\*nk\*ers) so let's embrace it. It's okay—it's better than being a Vic dropout.

**And while you're down at Shads, don't worry about pretending you're not getting a Shads jug, because that's the cheapest and you don't know your drinks.**

Be Well

**We need your help!**

Scan the code to complete a quick survey on period poverty at the University and claim a **FREE menstrual cup** from the Wellbeing Team!







# Sustainability at UoA

Toward a plastic-free campus



XZADIA JOHNSON

Picture this: it's 12:30 P.M. Maybe you're fresh out of a lecture, or hangry after a long bus ride. You look inside your bag, rifling around. Keys, wallet, laptop, notebooks, maybe an old muesli bar, crumbling under some forgotten receipts. Ah shit. You've forgotten your lunch... again. It's ok, you think. You've still got some of that sweet, sweet StudyLink money. You'll get sushi again, or a pie. Treat yo'self!

If this sounds familiar, you're not alone. Many of us wish we were food prep queens, bringing in mason jar salads every day. But the reality is, it's hard out here. There are uni commitments, there are extracurriculars, there are family commitments, and there's having a life. You're not the only one who has to buy a pie or five every week.

But aside from the state of your bank account after a particularly busy week, have you ever felt guilty about the collection of soft plastic slowly building up at the bottom of your bag? A sushi carton, a takeaway cup, wooden chopsticks, plastic containers. It all adds up pretty quickly.

The environmental cost of single-use plastic production is remarkably steep. Single-use plastic items take over 20 years to break down, leaving behind toxic chemicals that then break down into even smaller pieces—

**Single-use plastic items take over 20 years to break down, leaving behind toxic chemicals that then break down into even smaller pieces—microplastics.**

microplastics. Plastic waste and microplastics cause significant harm to the natural environment and animal life, as well as contributing to greenhouse gas emissions.

A 2015 study by the University of Georgia found that between 4.8 million and 12.7 million metric tonnes of plastic make their way into the ocean each year. Once this plastic has polluted our oceans, it not only disrupts marine life, but contaminates the seafood that many people rely on.

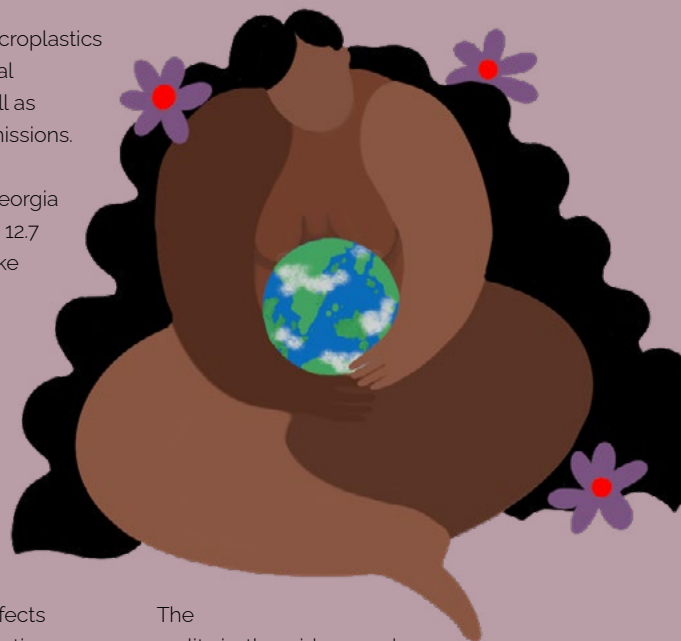
Residual plastic, and single-use plastics in their entirety, can strangle, disable, and kill wild life. Plastic has also been linked to issues such as infertility, birth defects and cancer, in addition to contaminating our soil and water. Our current culture of plastic consumption is unsustainable,

That's not to say that minimising waste is the sole responsibility of the consumer. We all slip up. But if we all do the best we can, we can make concrete change.

New Zealand has done a great job of discouraging excessive plastic consumption. As of July 1<sup>st</sup> 2019, single-use plastic shopping bags were banned, and stores were then forced to offer environmentally friendly alternatives. Then, of course, everyone jumped on the "skip the straw, save the sea turtle" bandwagon, which resulted in the majority of restaurants and businesses switching over to paper straws. Fantastic! Ka pai, Aotearoa!

But what about the University of Auckland?

While some students actively support the goal of having a plastic-free campus, and take personal steps to achieve this (e.g. bringing reusable keep cups), other students feel that outlets that distribute single-use plastics are still cheaper and faster than most other food providers on campus, making them their go-to choice.



The reality is, the widespread culture of consumption has taught us to value convenience and accessibility over values like environmentalism. It's a hard habit to unlearn, but it's also important to acknowledge that institutions and systems that uphold the status quo concerning single-use plastics often leave us with little option.

Ryan Patterson, a student at UoA notes that it's important to make little changes to be environmentally conscious, "but it's unlikely I'll go completely plastic free in my opinion."

Another student, Savannah Syred, added that "I would go out of my way to use the most sustainable option, but it is hard to find entirely sustainable businesses, especially nearby."

So what steps has our campus taken to provide us with sustainable alternatives, and how do the businesses and clubs at UoA support or encourage the elimination of plastics at school? How do we turn away from our culture of convenient consumption, and toward a culture of sustainability?

I reached out to some environmentally

focused clubs, and popular food providers on campus and to find out.

*Ha! Poke*, located on Symonds Street, responded stating that they currently use plastic free bowls and cutlery that are compostable, and offer 10% discounts for B.Y.O containers. The next step now is for the University to adopt bins for compostable materials.

Once or twice a week, vegan lunches are held by *The Veda Club* or the *Sustainability Network* and they offer discounts on lunches for those who bring their own tupperware. According to *Veda Club* President Kalindi Fletcher, at least half of the students attending their lunches bring their own containers. The alternative to their B.Y.O initiative is compostable/ biodegradable cutlery and containers, which they provide for an additional .50 cents.

On these changes, Fletcher noted that "It is seriously important to us to adopt a low waste lifestyle and make it easier for students on campus to lower their plastic consumption too." Their approach acknowledged that "We are in no way perfect, and avoiding plastic entirely is nearly impossible in this day and age. However, I think our lunches have definitely saved a ton of plastic being bought and consumed — think of all the Munchie Mart pies dressed in plastic and chip wrappers that we've saved from landfills!"

*Mojo Coffee*, located on Symonds Street, does not currently offer incentives such as discounts for B.Y.O items, but all of their takeaway products are compostable, and they are involved in the "Again Again" reusable cup network - "a cup lending system that eliminates single-use waste".

Donna, head of operations, expressed how their staff are encouraged to give feedback and suggest ideas to create a

more sustainable workplace. For example, there was a complaint about butter coming in pre-packaged plastic containers, and so they made a company-wide decision to begin hand-wrapping pre-cut butter in baking paper. They are also impressed by the number of students that do decide to bring their own reusable cups, despite any incentive!

So it appears most businesses and clubs on campus are trying to support plastic-free or zero waste lifestyles in some shape or form. These contributions bring a plastic-free future within reach, because they pave the way for future vendors on campus. They also incentivise students to bring their own reusable items. Not only does this benefit the University's plastic footprint, but it benefits you wherever you go. No more guilty clean-outs of various accumulated trash! (But maybe more lunchboxes to wash, oop).



So, what would a plastic-free campus look like? In short, any product purchased on campus would be distributed in recyclable, compostable, reusable, or sustainable materials. It would be easy to then put the responsibility on businesses to offer a larger variety of products, expand their locations for convenience, and carry sustainable products.

Although this would be ideal, personal responsibility also has a part to play. We should all be seeking these plastic-free businesses and supporting them, whether or not it is an extra five minute walk, or doesn't sell the exact brand of oat milk you usually use.

Personally, I only allow myself to purchase a takeaway coffee if I have my keep cup with

**To create a culture of sustainability, and to achieve a plastic-free lifestyle on the UoA campus, both businesses/clubs and individuals must make small sacrifices and do their part.**

me, otherwise, I'm just out of luck. This goes for cutlery too. I keep a small reusable cutlery set in my bag for when I get takeaway food, and if I don't have it with me, I choose an option that doesn't require any. I also like to keep a fabric tote bag folded up inside my purse/bag, so if I end up shopping or needing more space, I don't have to opt for a less sustainable carry option. If we all integrated simple habits like these into our lives and communities, they would begin to make a significant impact.

Contributions to sustainability, made by businesses and students, would result in a significant decrease in the University's contribution to plastic pollution in Aotearoa. Additionally, the adoption of conveniently placed, and plentiful, recycling and compost bins on campus would assist the goal of sustainable living at UoA. Only when all food providers use sustainable products to serve their food/drinks, campus stores provide carry bags made from recyclable materials, and students bring reusable items from home, will the University of Auckland be on path to measurably reducing single-use plastics.

To create a culture of sustainability, and to achieve a plastic-free lifestyle on the UoA campus, both businesses/clubs and individuals must make small sacrifices and do their part. If we, the University of Auckland, make an effort to reduce our plastic consumption, there will be a multitude of benefits such as: less carbon dioxide emissions, cleaner water, safer food, reducing pollution, and a clear conscience! If we all do our part, we *can* save the Earth. Kia kaha UoA!

**So it appears most businesses and clubs on campus are trying to support plastic-free or zero waste lifestyles in some shape or form.**



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# Connection and Communication

Fostering diversity through language



**BRONSON BURGESS** NGATI KAHUNGNŪNU KI TE WAIROA

## "I crave diversity."

For many UoA students, like Sarah, who studied a foreign language in another country, the desire to learn languages was fueled by a desire to understand the values and modes of thinking embedded in other cultures.

There are many reasons why someone would want to learn another language. One of those is the fact that a language isn't just a language. It's a bond with those who speak it, and it provides an understanding of their cultural identity.

Ervin, a Samoan who learned Fijian while living in Suva, says that as the greeting '*bula*' literally translates to '*life*'. It means when Fijians greet each other, they're actually bestowing upon each other a blessing of good health.

Sarah, a Tongan-Tahitian who learnt Korean fluently in Busan, says that the Korean phrase "*sugohaesseoyo*" is said in any instance when someone does well, but this literally translates to "you worked

hard", which informed her of how the people correlate the idea of success with one's work ethic.

For these students, learning another language broadened their cultural horizons, and increased their cultural competency.

Other students say their motivation to learn languages comes from their admiration of immigrant and international students, who come to places like New Zealand to learn English.

"The world doesn't revolve around me," says Trent, a Māori-Pākehā who learned Spanish living in Barcelona. "Rather than staying in my comfortable bubble, I wanted to enter into their world, which I could only do more completely by learning another language."

But learning a new language, especially in an immersive situation, can be pretty overwhelming. "Everyday things, like shopping for groceries or catching the bus, seemed like insurmountable obstacles," he says. "Everything was alien."

This meant that Trent developed a deeper understanding and empathy for

those trying to learn English in New Zealand and other Anglo-Saxon countries.

Students also shared their mistakes. "The word for hobby (*shumi*), and the word for sin (*tsumi*) are very similar," says Iverson, who learned Japanese while living in Sapporo. "So when I was talking to someone, I went to ask what their hobbies were, and instead I asked what their sins were."

Sarah adds that despite trying to connect as best she could, she could only get so far. "Someone made a comment about me being a foreigner and it shocked me, because at that time I really didn't see myself as one. I felt so connected with Korea through their language and habitat. But it reminded me that I am not Korean and never will be, no matter how well I speak Korean."

Trent agrees with the need to eventually respect such boundaries. "Even if you have a good grasp of the language, you're never going to quite understand all the intricacies of their culture."

Regardless of the errors they made and limits they encountered, these students say the rewards of connecting with people through their language outweighed any obstacles, and so they chased the pressure that came with learning. "I



knew if I wanted to make friends and meet people, I needed to learn how to speak, so I put myself in situations where I had no choice but to do so," says Harry, who learned Cantonese while living in Hong Kong. "It was sink or swim!"

Some students were appreciative that their struggles to initially speak were met with compassion from locals. "In Japan, the people absolutely love when they see you putting in effort to speak their language, rather than defaulting to English," says Iverson. "They always comment on how good your speaking skills is, even when you know you have said something completely wrong."

Harry expresses hope that those in New Zealand and elsewhere will give those speaking English as a second language the same level of patience he received speaking Cantonese. "I think that generally as native English speakers, we tend to be prideful and have this mindset that if you live in this country, you need to speak fluent English – and if you don't, then that's not good enough."

In time, the students' commitment to learning new languages yielded both the results they had hoped for, and some that were unexpected. "I've got lifelong friends in Japan now," says Iverson. "The time I spent there was the happiest in my life."

"It's also special whenever you meet a native speaker in a country that's not their own," says Trent. "It creates an almost instant friendship between you."

Sarah says the prolonged immersion in another culture rubbed off on her personality. "I mean you only have to look at their history and how fast they developed their economy after the Korean War to

understand the Korean work ethic," she says. "This was definitely great exposure for me."

Ervin says the experience also furthered his resolve and dedication to his Samoan culture, including how he expresses it as a student at UoA. "I've always been vocal and proud of speaking our native Pacific languages in public, and it is what I will continue to do."

In addition to observing the differences in those they lived amongst, students say they also found many similarities. "When you strip back culture and language, most humans are pretty similar and are seeking the same things out of life," says Trent. "They also have the same issues and struggles, the only difference is that it's in Spanish, not English."

"I grew up in the villages in Samoa," says Ervin. "In Fiji, I saw the same common struggle in regard to culture, language, education and employment opportunities."

While admitting the inherent difficulty in the task, many students share their belief that the average university student who wishes to engage with another ethnic group by learning their language can be successful. "I think everyone is capable of learning another language," says Harry. "The first several weeks are the most overwhelming, but you don't need to compare yourself to others and their speaking abilities in this process. Everyone learns things at different rates."

What happens when one intimately embraces a culture outside their own over a lifetime is evidenced in Professor David Williams. Under no obligation as a Pākehā, he studied Te Ao Māori, learned to speak Te Reo, and has carried out a life purpose of allyship in the legal system for tangata whenua. While I

justice with such a short summary, his selfless investment has led to securing multiple settlements and protections for iwi.

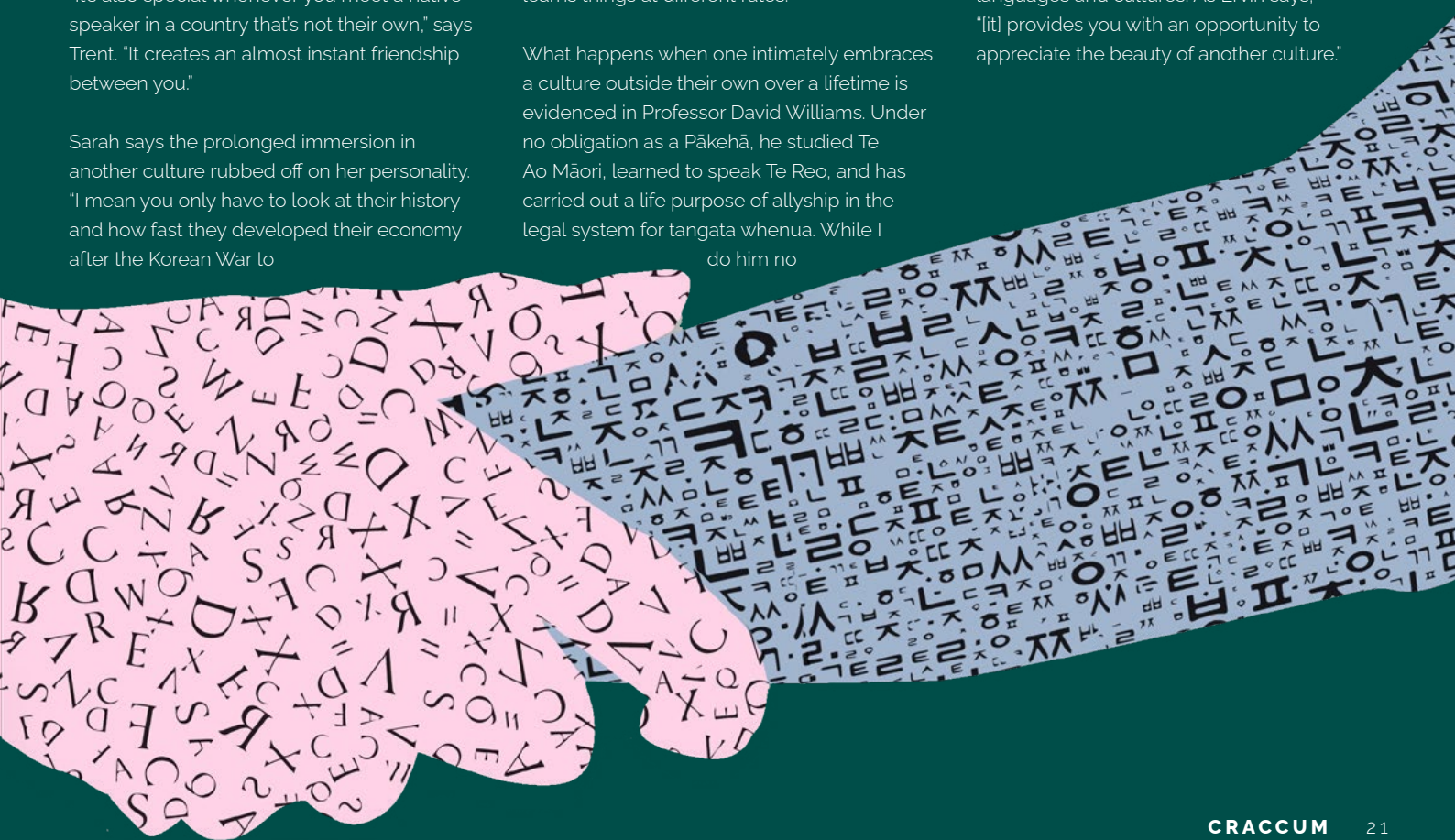
It's reassuring to know that legacies similar to Professor Williams are unfolding in the lives of our peers, and that there are others at UoA who want to emulate the dedicated efforts of immigrant and international students who engage with us here in New Zealand.

While learning a language is not the only or most important marker of engagement with an ethnic group, it is evidence of an immersion in another culture spanning multiple years.

But attempts to create a connection with those in other ethnic groups, no matter how large or small, will not just add worth to the world, but add worth to the life of the individual that makes the effort, as it has done for these students. They've gained friendships, unique life experiences, and a more enlightened comprehension of their personal existence as a global citizen. And who can tell what the future will hold for them?

If the opportunity is available to you to learn another language (if you've claimed your own), take it.

In the end, these students created deeper connections through engaging with other languages and cultures. As Ervin says, "[it] provides you with an opportunity to appreciate the beauty of another culture."



# Reviews.



## FILM WILLY'S WONDERLAND DIR. KEVIN LEWIS

JAY ALEXANDER

Any seasoned film fanatic would jump to see this flick, based on premise alone. How could a movie about a silent **Nicolas Cage**, stuck in the middle of an animatronic fun house, paying off the fees for his busted car over one action-packed night be a bad time? Well... it is. And it's a real shame to see all this missed opportunity on screen. **Kevin Lewis** seems to have miscommunicated the basic tone, focus and all together fun in what is supposed to be a campy B-grade romp fest. It's hard to distinguish much flavour and originality from generic cliché, the lack of consistent tone and obvious source material that you would have to be under a rock to miss. Rest assured, all you Nic Cage parishioners, the star has every best scene of action and laughs in the movie. However, the cluttered, poorly written supporting cast is distracting. The group of teens are some of the worst characters I've ever seen and they take up so much of the already bloated screen time. The best cheesy B-romps possess a charming stupidity through consistency and simplicity of character and technique. No one wants to be bombarded with techniques that have little reasoning or illogical motions of action. Lewis' unfortunate, unpolished direction, awful colouring and terrible characters flash across the screen haphazardly, ruining what could have been the next big Nic Cage romp for any party or piss up. This B-movie gets a three out of ten, and definitely not in the way it intends.



## CRACCUM STAFF PICK P.S. C U SOON K M T P

MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY

Hot off the back of the release of their debut EP *P.S. C U SOON*, **Keria Patterson** has announced the advent of a new 'casual gig series' called *I Love My Friends*. The first session at Whammy on the 26th of March will see Patterson's musical project **K M T P** supported by Treenurse and Wellness. This series follows the sentimental sound cultivated on the EP, presumably conducting some cosiness onto Karangahape Rd.

Throughout the six tracks on *P.S. C U SOON*, Patterson offers up a variety of sounds, while keeping a steady throughline throughout. The opening track 'Home' establishes the peaceful, comforting tone that largely carries the whole EP, with Patterson's voice leading smoothly through the folky tune. *I Love My Friends*, which gives its name to the gig series, takes a pretty stripped back approach, allowing you to enjoy the dreamy bird chirps and strums in all their unpretentious glory. The final song "This Is A Recorded Message" rounds out the list with a voicemail note to a lover, indulging in bittersweet chords alongside some pretty amusing speech.

*P.S. C U SOON* confidently captures the weird transitional turbulence that many young uni students find themselves pushing through in their years on campus. There's confusion about what 'home' means after moving away, a deep appreciation and love for the support of devoted friends, and an unapologetic, serious indulgence in silliness that makes small moments feel big and memorable.



## NEW TO STREAMING STAR DISNEY+

MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY

And in one fell swoop, Disney+ eclipses Netflix with the drop of their extensive streaming collections. The mega-corporation has been holding its cards close since the service initially dropped but they've now dealt their hand, and will presumably collect some massive winnings. While collecting property after property through its various acquisitions, Disney has faced a major crisis in preserving its image. The mainline, capital D Disney brand is largely known as a brand of G-rated content: it's home to vaguely feminist princesses, animal adventures and nostalgia-ridden, morning cartoon classics. Films like *Alien* and shows like *Dirty Sexy Money* don't exactly gel with popular expectations of Walt's classic fairytale land. However, with Star, the new 'channel' launched alongside Pixar, Marvel, Star Wars, and National Geographic, Disney is able to distinguish their mouse house from its other branches, while enjoying the profits that they've been longing to seize.

The selection of STAR isn't too bad. With a large selection of sitcoms, lots of horrors and a deep archive of classic films that Netflix sorely lacks, Disney+ has put itself in the running to top the ever-growing pile of streaming services. However, the service seems to really miss the mark with any original series outside of their Star Wars and Marvel collection. Without the equivalent of a *Stranger Things*, Disney+'s STAR fails to build any fanfare, becoming a somewhat forgettable channel amongst the services other pop-cultural achievements.





MUSIC  
**PUPPET AND THE  
PLACEHOLDER**  
GUSH PUPPETS

SOPHIE SUN

West Auckland based artist **Gush Puppets** kicks his way into 2021 with a funky new wave beat. The 18 year old's latest single 'PUPPET AND THE PLACEHOLDER' continues to build upon the indie, rock, and hip hop inspirations that formed inspired previous singles 'Ramona' (2020) and 'Atari Teen Wannabe' (2019).

**Gush Puppets** embodies the teenage angst that we might imagine being trapped in our parents' suburban garage would grant us, except he actually makes mad bangers whilst the rest of us just yell and kick spades. 'PUPPET AND THE PLACEHOLDER' encompasses the all too familiar emotion of when we form a grandiose image of someone we've just met, ignoring all the red flags and warning signs. With an upbeat intro, **Gush Puppets** takes us on a journey of adoration, blissful ignorance and the pursual of that perfect person in our minds. In many ways the song transports us to that euphoric state of someone who could never hurt us nor do no wrong. Despite **Gush Puppets'** warnings of a "dangerous temptress", it's hard to extract ourselves from this romanticised lover and to (ahem) face the music. Everytime I finish listening to 'PUPPET AND THE PLACEHOLDER', I find myself snapping out of a dream-like state or waking up from some comforting yet falsified hallucination and I suppose sometimes it's nice to be transported away like that. And then, I'm hit with another reality... **Gush Puppets** created this rich, mental wonderland at the age of just 18. **Tune in to 95bfm this Friday at 10:30am if you want to fall down the rabbit hole.**



TV  
**WANDAVISION**  
DIR. MATT SHAKMAN

OGGY NWEKE

Disney and the Marvel Cinematic Universe have often been likened to McDonald's, and for good reason. The Marvel team are experts of mass production, and fantastic at generating cross-cultural appeal, repeatedly packaging themes such as romance, love, and good vs. evil into fun, easy-to-watch films. I'll never forget watching *Black Panther* and enjoying how excited and emotionally amplified the movie theatre was. *WandaVision*, the Disney+ special that explored the story of Wanda and Vision has been a welcome diversion from typical products of the Marvel-Industrial Complex.

The attention to details shines through in *WandaVision*. The cinematography perfectly imitates each decade that the show references, from the 70s to the 2000s. The high degree of accuracy and attention was impressive, especially alongside the exploration of two unexplored Marvel film characters. That's really a testament to the talent at work; **Elizabeth Olsen** and **Paul Bettany**, who play the titular characters, tantalise and impress within their roles. A special mention must go to Bettany's Vision character, who is continuously covered head to toe in red paint, but never swings towards cartoonish presentation.

Rather than the full season dropping at once, a format we have grown used to in the Netflix era, *WandaVision* compacted episodes into weekly 40-minute releases. This decision left audiences wanting more and sharing theories frantically across Reddit and Twitter. At 11 o'clock on Friday evenings, I would look up the USA release time and stumble across spoilers through the immense social media chatter. There is definitely a reason that *WandaVision* literally crashed the Marvel website.

AVAILABLE ON DISNEY+



PLAYING AT ACADEMY'S  
\$5 WEDNESDAYS  
**GOODFELLAS**  
DIR. MARTIN SCORSESE

THOMAS GIBLIN

30 years on from its release, what is there to say about **Martin Scorsese's** mob epic *Goodfellas* that hasn't been said already? The film is a craft perfected. **Roy Liotta** gives the performance of a lifetime. New York of the '70s and '80s is captured as a beautiful nightmare of insecure status-driven men and cocaine-fuelled anxiety. Editors **Thelma Schoonmaker** and **James Y. Kwei** offer an education on how to edit in a third act that explodes with paranoia, shaking you to your core. Scorsese invites you to look deeper and beyond the shallow pleasures of these mobsters to see them for who they truly are. Moments of black comedy find you seeking comfort where you thought none could be found. After experiencing all this, you can't help but want to watch it again, and again, and again.

A film like *Goodfellas* needs to be seen on the big screen and with anyone you can find. To feel the audience squirm and fidget, to hear the audience gasp and laugh, and to watch them experience Scorsese's masterpiece on a big screen is an absolute pleasure. So, see it in a theatre, or on the biggest screen you can find, with as many people as possible. Then, simply, enjoy one of the greatest films ever made.

TO GO INTO THE DRAW TO WIN A DOUBLE PASS TO GOODFELLAS AT ACADEMY'S \$5 WEDNESDAY, EMAIL [ARTS@CRACCUM.CO.NZ](mailto:ARTS@CRACCUM.CO.NZ) AND TELL US ABOUT THE LAST FILM YOU WATCHED!



## An Interview with Lily West



MADELEINE CRUTCHLEY

**Ahead of the start** of their 'Soft Energy' Aotearoa tour, Lily West, one-third of the critically acclaimed Mermaidens trio, chats all things lockdown, 'Soft Energy' and the Auckland gig scene.

I've caught you in a pretty busy period, off the back of a big summer of festivals like RNV as well as your own Mermgrown shows, and right before the kick off of your national 'Soft Energy' tour! You were supposed to launch with a show in Palmy today too. I'm sorry to hear it's cancelled because of COVID restrictions... how are you feeling amongst all of it?

Yeah, I'm a bit sad to not have a show today.

We just love doing stuff, so when things can't go ahead, we're always gutted. I loved being so busy over summer, and I really, really enjoy touring. There's always a bit of ants in your pants when you're not out and actually doing things.

Yeah, the harsh transition is pretty jarring, I'm guessing especially so after the Pōneke Mermgrown festival.

Mermgrown was so much fun. I am the most nervous and pessimistic of the group so I was very nervous about things going wrong, but it went so well! We have such an incredible team and it was such a nice day. We really loved hosting other acts too.

I've been tuning into your last album *Look Me In The Eyes* this week, and I



almost feel like it's been expressing my nervous, yet hopeful lockdown emotions. Obviously that album was released pre-pandemic times, but has the meaning and sound of the album shifted in the time that has passed?

Oh, I'm glad it's been bringing you some hope. I honestly haven't listened to that album in



ages, but maybe I will after this. We still play a few of those songs live and do really enjoy that. I guess they do have a kind of optimism to them. The whole album is kind of positive and optimistic, coming away from earlier stuff that was all quite dark and moody, and fresh out of being grumpy teenagers. But I'll give it a listen and have a think!

And in the time since that album, do you feel that the restrictions and lockdowns we faced have affected you guys musically and aesthetically? I watched the 'Bastards' video, which seems to be pretty dystopian and sci-fi...

Yeah, that Bastards video had already been made before COVID and then we released it, I think, during Level 3 or 4 last year. And it felt, because there's literal coughing in it, very prescient. I guess since then, with the lockdowns, there's been a lot more time to be introspective which is really cool for songwriting. There's also more to worry about, and everyone's a bit more anxious, which is kind of a fascinating social phenomenon. In terms of writing, we're doing more by correspondence because Gussie lives in Auckland, so we have to work a bit harder on collaboration which has been a nice challenge. I'm quite an introvert so I'm not necessarily writing more about being at home alone because I already do that (laughs).

'Soft Energy' is fresh out today... It's pretty 70s, really dreamy, quite a shift from the 'Bastards' video. Where do you feel like that came from aesthetically?

It doesn't feel like a shift because it's all us. Gussie and I are mad into science fiction. We love to be able to experiment and play with what we create and put out visually and sonically. We were really excited to be a bit more silly with 'Soft Energy' because I think that there's a tendency in music to get a bit serious and pigeonhole yourself into a

space that people get familiar with seeing you in. We're all real stupid and silly and we joke around a lot; our approach to the band is really playful so it made sense to bring in a bit more comedy. It feels very us. It's retro, but a bit twisted.

What's most exciting when you're thinking about playing this song specifically on tour?

That song is quite a journey. It's kind of relentless. There's this juicy bridge where it kind of chills out with some nice harmonies. That bit is kind of the light when you're playing that song. But about half of our set that we've played over summer has been new songs, so that's been really fun to test out songs and get the reaction. We can see what's working and what's not, which is really nice before recording anything.

And what is that response looking like?

We're so close to [the songs], it's hard to have perspective on how things are sounding. It's really nice to have people come up and say that the new songs sound different, or like a step up. That's great to hear because it makes us think we're doing the right thing!

And with Mermgown coming to Tāmaki Makaurau, what should we be looking forward to with that show?

Oh, I think it's going to be such a fun time, it's going to be a really different challenge from Te Whanganui-a-Tara because that was all outside. Inside, in Whammy, I'm really excited to transform the space and make it into something juicy and different from what Aucklanders are used to. I reckon it's gonna be an awesome party with great music.

How do you go about forming that connection between your music and the feel of the stage?

We just love the whole world of being in a band; it's all part of it. We definitely enjoy playing with presentation and how visuals can add to the music. It's part of adding to the experience for the listener and the viewer. It also feels really powerful as a performer to,

you know, wear a cool outfit.

On campus, we've had a lot of first-years who have just arrived in town, and are maybe feeling a little underwhelmed and alienated from the scene because of the snap lockdown. How would you describe the experience of gigging for students who haven't been in that space before?

If you haven't been out to gigs in Auckland, I reckon Mermgown is going to be the best crash course ever. There's gonna be so many different kinds of music there, you can get a taste of everything. They'll be some dancing, they'll be some rock, they'll be some chill stuff. You can go to Whammy, Backroom and Wine Cellar. It's the full Auckland experience.

It's like Orientation Day!

If they think they like music then they should get down to Mermgown - it's gonna be a really fun time. We can't wait to see them there.

CATCH MERMAIDENS IN TAMAKI MAKAUURAU ON THE 20TH OF MARCH FOR MERMGOWN, WHERE THE BAND WILL FILL OUT WHAMMY, BACKROOM AND WINE CELLAR WITH A LONG LIST OF OTHER ACTS INCLUDING KANE STRANG, LEAPING TIGER AND PHOEBE RINGS. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM [UNDERTHERADAR.CO.NZ](http://undertheradar.co.nz)





# From ELAM to LA

An Interview with Chelsea Jade

ILENA SHADBOLT

**In the midst of her** Aotearoa homecoming, Chelsea Jade digs into her time at university, her songwriting process and growing affection for Zoom.

**You're a former student of the University of Auckland, and you attended the Elam School of Fine Arts for a few years before pursuing your music career. Was it a case of knowing that you wanted to be creative, but realising that you wanted your art practice to manifest through music?**

Yeah, that's exactly right. I felt like I went to art school to learn to think laterally. That's pretty vague, but I think it's a strong reason to be in higher education. The ambition was pretty amorphous. When the opportunity to apply creative impulse through music came along, it started to mesh with my academia and I thought, well, music is the perfect way to apply what I'm learning. And when I weighed the two up, it felt as if, in that moment, I could pursue a version of lateral thinking highly applicable to my amorphous ambition. Does that make sense?

**Completely.**

I think that there was also a capacity issue. I didn't have the capacity to produce the world that art school demanded at the same time as the world that I wanted to bring with music. I guess I had delineated the two halves pretty heavily.

If I were to go back to university now - which is something I think about all the time, because I didn't finish - I would have more of an understanding about how those two things could work in tandem. It's the same case with a lot of people: you've just finished a form of higher education with high school. When you're a creative person, you need to fill up

your cup again. It can be abrasive to return to a learning environment like that. At the time, my brain was like, 'I can't tell the difference and I need to figure something out on my own.' If I went back now, it'd be more like, 'Oh wow, there are so many incredible people to talk to here and so many amazing resources.'

**Since art is something you're interested in, how does art inform your musical work?**

I can't really tell the difference between my taste in music and my taste in art. It's all the same world to me. I like that experience of it. It means that I feel quite taken with things on the same level of curiosity in all mediums. I've recently been re-watching old Solange performances, as well as David Byrne's show *American Utopia*, which I went to and thought was just the perfect crossover of elegance and joy. Solange has the same experience in her performance. To me, that's the ultimate art: elegant joy.

**...and it can be found in any art form. That's a great phrase!**

**What is your process when it comes to song-writing? Do you go into the studio with words and themes**

**already on the table, or go in blind, letting sounds and words organically bubble up?**

It's a combination of everything, but what exists as a constant hum is taking on phrases. I always write down phrases I like without adding context, so that when I revisit them it's from a fresh perspective. My friend once told me a story and she said, 'I'm sorry, I've probably told that story to you a million times.'

I told her that I actually love hearing that story- or any story- over and over again. Each time, I'm at a different point in my own perspective

and so I take it on differently. Each time, you tell it differently. I feel the same way about recording little snippets of thought. It's nice to be able to have an esoteric time capsule of your history, each phrase existing in its own world, without any connection to the linear day-to-day.

**Right? I do the same with writing down phrases that I think could become lyrics or that crystallises a scene or feeling in time, even if I won't remember what it referred to.**

Exactly. And then you can incorporate them into however you're feeling on the day that you start making a song. The thing I most doubted with music making was just the lyrics. It's what I keep very insular. I hoard that to myself.

But then again, no one is an island. To make those phrases come to life in a





new way, I usually find someone to work on a loop. I'll take it away and expand on the idea myself. It's an amalgamation of two people's interpretations, which makes the idea richer. It's like when you have a conversation with a friend.

At the end, when something is pretty close to being finished, I take it to somebody else with no connection to the process so they can hear it for what it really is, as opposed to what I think it is.

A lot of your music videos are very Auckland. You've filmed in the Waterview Tunnel and Silo Park. How has the place you've grown up in made an imprint on your work?

I've never thought of my music videos as being a geographical record of Auckland, but you're right, they definitely are. Part of it is the admin side. Since I'm a DIY solo artist, I have to find financial backing to do these ideas and NZ On Air has come to the table quite often. I like to put the money back into the place that gave me the money. I like to retain my sense of community here. Funny, I also try to eliminate identifying features of places as much as possible, so that they could be anywhere. In part that's just a minimalism thing.

I noticed. Even though you filmed in the Waterview Tunnel, you wouldn't know that it was that specific tunnel unless you're already familiar. It's almost as if these spaces

become fantasy worlds through their contextual remove. Or an aside for those in the know.

That's exactly what it is. You've nailed it. It's trying to take away context. But I like to think that it's still as tactile as the world you know. It's not like outer space or another world altogether. It's a world you know but you don't know.

This past year has been turbulent for the music industry. How has the pandemic affected your creative and collaborative processes?



When I first moved to LA, I did a lot of session-writing. This basically meant that I was hopping from different producers' studios five days a week, writing for people that I'd never met before. In a studio setting, the songwriter usually sits behind the producer. There are two different spaces; you are looking at someone's back. There's a dynamic happening.

But now, there's a lot more intention because it's a different concentration. I've found a really lovely change has been doing remote sessions in real-time without needing to send stems. There's a plugin that you can put into your digital audio workspace where everyone can hear the same thing but you're working together on Zoom. It's way more equalising and everyone's ideas are on the same level playing field. It feels more interpersonal, actually.

How has returning home been after spending time away?

I definitely felt a sense of euphoria in the first couple of days of being back amongst people. Of course, with euphoria comes the opposite feeling. It's been an emotional rollercoaster, but not anything unmanageable. As horrific as the pandemic has been for a lot of people, the truth is that I feel that I've learned a lot of lessons. Many people haven't been able to reflect on, or within, this time.

How do you feel about the NZ music scene right now?

It feels exciting. There's a lot more infrastructure within the independent scene that didn't exist so much when I lived here, which I've enjoyed watching from afar. I'm really excited about **Phoebe Rings**, which is fronted by **Crystal Choi**. She's an incredible piano player, and she's put together this great band. I also love **King Sweeties**, which is **Bic Runga** and **Cass Basil**.

You have a show on as part of the Auckland Arts Festival. Is there anything else on the horizon that we should be excited for?

Oh, there is, but I don't know if I'm allowed to talk about it... but I'm excited!

CATCH CHELSEA JADE ON THE 17TH OF MARCH AT THE AUCKLAND ARTS FESTIVAL AT THE CIVIC CLUB, WHERE SHE WILL BE JOINED BY BREAKOUT ARTIST DERYK. TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE FROM AUCKLAND LIVE



# Happiness is Only Real When Shared

Capitalist Critique on Shortland St



FLORENCE WU

## "Down the rabbit hole."

That was my first impression of the contemporary art exhibition, *happiness is only real when shared* at Gus Fisher Gallery. Upon entry, the kaleidoscopic dreamscape of neo-deco colours kindly sweeps you away from Auckland CBD's concrete greys. One minute I was hurrying past lawyers and bankers on Shortland street with medium-sized Atomic coffee cups, and the next I was Alice at the Mad Hatter's tea party. However, instead of a banquet, I was a guest to Mark Schroder and his *Bureau of Happiness*.

*happiness is only real when shared* is a three-artist exhibition, hosting works by Wong Ping from Hong Kong, Mark Schroder from Aotearoa, and Pinar Yoldas from Turkey and the USA.

"I decided we would limit the number of artists to three, but these three artists are the least minimal artists I can find," said Lisa Beauchamp, curator of the exhibition. "A key idea was to jolt us into an alternative world, away from the throws of daily life and the fears and isolations of COVID-19. Yet it is also an examination of the post-2020 consumerist mindset and corporate landscape."

As an objective fact, the works are colorful. It's playful, it's engaging, catches the eye, demands attention, and can almost pass off as cheerful, at first glance.

According to Lisa, the exhibition is a response to the gallery's 2019 exhibition *We're Not Too Big To Care*, which featured a diverse range of 16 international and domestic artists from Aotearoa, Australia, China, Canada, the UK, and the US. The current exhibition continues

**As an objective fact: the works are colorful. It's playful, it's engaging, catches the eye, demands attention, and can almost pass off as cheerful at first glance.**

the examination of modern capitalism through the lens of consumerism, mass production, and corporate hierarchy from a wide variety of cultural contexts.





The series also references the historical significance of the gallery's location on Shortland Street, as the first commercial street in Auckland before Queen Street.

*"Purposefully cliché," and that is the point.*

"The exhibition begins with Wong Ping; you are learning about these fables and alternative views of society's morals. You then encounter Mark's installation and this familiarity of how these powers are interacting with us in a workplace. Finally, it finishes with Pinar's work of looking into the future with AI and this outer layer of control," said Lisa.

#### WONG PING: *FABLES* (2018-19)

Wong Ping is a Hong Kong artist whose animated series, *Fables*, is featured within the first gallery space. The exhibition is titled after one of his animations "happiness is only real when shared."

"Before doing *Fables*, I did a lot of research and read many big-name fairy tales, and I found they weren't really practical for today's society. For instance, I know I have to be good to my parents, but it's hard to do that when I'm away a lot and I can't spend more time with them," said Wong in an interview with Ocula Magazine. "I wanted to write something that's very honest, that tells kids that they don't have all the time in the world to be with their parents, friends, or lovers—that's just a fact."

His five fables include satirical, absurd tales

of animal protagonists' journey through the media-saturated, capitalistic modern-day Hong Kong. His animations have a nostalgic quality that nods to the era of neon-colored cartoon characters and beeping arcade games. They capture the essence of a turbulent Hong Kong under various layers of power, tension, and control.

"It's not a straightforward critique to modern consumerism. Because Wong Ping is based in Hong Kong, if you want to have political content in your work it has to be very hidden," said Lisa. "With Wong Ping, there is always a twist, and it's this twist that makes you stop and think."

## His five fables include satirical, absurd tales of animal protagonists' journey through the media-saturated, capitalistic modern-day Hong Kong.

The fables are often highly complex and multi-layered tales of self-made "heroes"



MARK SCHRODER, *FORTUNE TELLER*, 2021 (INSTALLATION DETAIL). COURTESY OF THE ARTIST. PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM HARTNETT.

caught in a web of love, suppressed sexuality, narcissism, and self-acclaimed righteousness. The fables feature ludicrous yet jarringly relatable characters such as an insect-phobic tree, a social media obsessed chicken, and a self-made billionaire cow. In the end, the viewers are left with the bittersweet tagline that almost commands to be read, repeated, and memorised --- "happiness is only real when shared."

#### MARK SCHRODER: *FORTUNE TELLER* (2021)

The main booth of the gallery is occupied by the Aotearoa artist Mark Schroder's maze-like installation *Fortune Teller*. Mark is an artist as well as a financial lawyer -- a dual identity that gives him a unique insider-outsider look into Auckland's corporate culture.

"During another exhibition I did, my lawyer world and my art world collided and some of my art friends thought my law friends - all these people in suits and ties - are part of the installation," Schroder told RNZ in an interview.

The installation is home to *The Bureau of Happiness* that specialises in the well-being of employees. The overly cheerful and cliché motivational posters, cheese blocks, plastic bananas, toylike ceramic objects, yoga balls, and sneaky notes omnipresent in these old-styled office spaces are juxtaposed alongside dried leaves, dead tree branches, and bare wooden structures. The post-apocalyptic office space feels incredibly lonely.

Lisa disclosed to me that once a cleaning staff at the gallery actually started to clean up the



WONG PING, *WONG PING'S FABLES 2*, 2019 (INSTALLATION DETAIL). COURTESY THE ARTIST AND EDOUARD MALINGUE GALLERY, HONG KONG / SHANGHAI; TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY, NEW YORK / LOS ANGELES. PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM HARTNETT.



PINAR YOLDAS, *THE KITTAY AI: ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE FOR GOVERNANCE*, 2016 (INSTALLATION DETAIL). COURTESY THE ARTIST. PHOTOGRAPHY BY SAM HARTNETT.

dried leaves and branches of the installation. "Maybe they thought it was an actual office space," Lisa laughed. "I was like 'God, don't touch the leaves. It's an artwork!'"

While the installation is seemingly absurd and surreal, there is also a cynical undertone that questions the sincerity of these mottos and corporate slogans - do institutions really care?

"Being a lawyer on Shortland street, you catch glimpses of different corporate values and mottos and they all start to blend into one. Why do you need to say 'respect, honesty, and integrity,' because shouldn't that be inherent to what you do without having to say it as a promotional line?" asked Schroder in the interview.

Continuing Wong Ping's search for happiness amongst a concrete jungle, the question of "real happiness" is again reiterated by a motivational poster from *The Bureau of Happiness*: "What use is success if it can't be shared? What happiness does that bring?"

#### PINAR YOLDAS: *KITTAY AI* (2016)

The exhibition finishes in the third and last booth hosting Pinar Yoldas's animated video *The Kitty AI*. It is a speculative fiction that explores the possibility of a world run by an AI that has taken the form of a cat to increase its likability.

"I was exploring an alternative to current day politics, specifically a democracy that integrates A.I." Yoldas said in an interview with UCLA. "My practice explores art in the Anthropocene in order to engineer effect and critical thinking in the viewer. I design multimodal experiences in an attempt to create intellectual, discursive disruptions and provoke long-lasting activism."

Yoldas' work ends the exhibition on a futuristic note that takes the conversation on control from the micro-levels of individual characters and spaces to the macro social-political makeup. The kitty AI with the robotic baby voice is eerie yet almost strangely likable.

"With the *Kitty AI*, it's incredibly surreal but it's incredibly real at the same time," said Lisa. "It's happening all around us: everyone can be tracked, everyone can be found. With COVID, we are checking-in everywhere. All these other layers of control around us may be invisible but they are absolutely there."

*"Acutely self-aware."*

The satire and subtleness of the artworks are what makes the exhibition powerful --- that we as viewers need to find our way through the maze of candy wraps and clichés.

"It goes around in a circle: the surrealism almost makes us more self-aware. It's that

satire and cynicism that masks the serious undertones, but they are absolutely there and, intentionally, they do come through," said Lisa.

In a way, we are inadvertently spoiled by easy answers and solutions in the modern media world --- "just google it," they say.

As a result, we almost normalise our daily doses of "tragedies" - breaking news, death, atrocities reduced to a single app notification. By not choosing a gloomy and serious tone for the exhibition, *happiness is only real when shared* forces us to investigate the authenticity of its own happiness. The works' denial of a single solution to the tension between the search for happiness and consumerism stimulates discourse and contemplation from the viewer.

Unable to resist, I asked Lisa for an easy way out.

"Do you think the exhibition offers an answer as to whether social justice and capitalism are compatible?"

But I think she suspected my motives.

"We are putting out these commentaries from the three artists and leaving it open," she said. "I always resist the desire to try and find a resolved answer because I don't think that is possible, and I don't think that it is the purpose of exhibitions."

THE EXHIBITION *happiness is only real when shared* WILL SHOW AT THE GUS FISHER GALLERY WITH FREE ENTRY UNTIL THE 8TH OF MAY.

**Yoldas' work ends the exhibition on a futuristic note that takes the conversation on control from the micro-levels of individual characters and spaces to the macro social-political makeup.**





These photos were taken on film, as a 'behind the scenes' type thing for a video project that I was working on at the time. The idea I had behind the video was that it would be an opening sequence to a film about two aspiring creatives who decide to finally step out of their comfort zones and pursue their dreams. I've been getting into doing more of these video projects lately as it gives me the freedom to dream up ideas for feature-length films without having to actually commit to completing the whole thing.

### Three Songs

'Downtown' by RIMON

'Lost & Found' by Jorja Smith

'Lucky I Got What I Want' by  
Jungle



# Strangers

ARTIST: FLORA XIE @FLORAESCENT

MODELS:

MARLIES GOUBITZ @MARLIESGOUBITZ

AND

TOBY FURMANSKI @TOBYFURMANSKI



# Tagalog: Two Perspectives

Gabbie de Baron revisits her heritage and what it means to speak Tagalog, and what it means to be Filipino, to be Chinese.

Keeara Ofren follows up with a reflection on feeling different from your supposed culture, and navigating the alienating worlds we can find ourselves in.



# Bilingualism and Identity



GABBIE DE BARON

**"Being able to speak** another language is generally linked to a more flexible brain" - Buckby, 2016

So if that's the case, by deduction, when one is used to expressing themselves bilingually, does that cause restraint to how they express themselves when they are forced to speak only through one tongue?

Bonny Norton (n.d.), a professor of Language and Literacy Education at the University of British Columbia, claims that "the minute you speak to someone you're engaging in an identity negotiation [...]. Who are you? Where are you? How do I relate to you? How do you see me?" So when someone says their personality changes, what they're saying is: "When I talk to *other people* my personality changes," and based on personal experience... this is very true.

"Tagalog" is what we call the specific dialect, mainly spoken in Manila, Philippines: the city where I grew up in. Most people confuse it with speaking 'Filipino', as it is dubbed the national language. *But* that's problematic, as the archipelago is home to a diaspora of dialects, and none sound like another.

I'm half Chinese/half Filipino and a third generation New Zealand immigrant. My dad grew up here in Epsom, and even went to Auckland Grammar and finished a Bachelor of Commerce at UoA. I grew up in half and half. I moved back to Manila when I was around six years old, but lived here for each summer, some Christmases, and moved back in 2018 for my own university experience.

Candidly, it can be claimed that conversational language is the language you *choose* to express yourself in, and wherein you find comfort. Thus, for me that is *Taglish* - the use of Tagalog and English simultaneously; my brain and tongue switches in and out in a snap. Growing up in the Philippines, I never realised how intertwined my personality and my bilingualism was. I

can claim I'm pretty extroverted and very outgoing, I have just always felt very loose since I've grown up expressing myself in two languages *at the same time*. Though a part of me thought that I spoke more of English; most of the content I ingest (music, shows, books, etc.) is 60% in English, and in High School - thanks to colonisation and American Imperialism - all of our textbooks were in English, and our assignments and presentations had to be too... but in hindsight?



The only time I spoke in full English was when I had to be formal about it, and I never realised that persona was attached to it.

My humour, my expressions, and the way that I engage with people are so heavily tied into the fact that I've always felt comfortable switching in-and-out of Tagalog and English. So when I moved back to Auckland, a whole separate Gabbie debuted; she was more rigid and reserved. English is the common denominator with most of the friends I've made here. I really pushed to be as non-reluctant as I usually am, because this was uni - and immediately, that corresponds to a "fresh start". I wanted to be confident and take as many opportunities as I could, and I knew language wasn't going to be a hindrance to that.

The hardest part was having to build an identity centralised on only speaking English, especially in conversations, because how does one

replicate the exact same persona through a different expression? With such aggression, I tried to force myself to have the same amount of personability and I thought that since English was one of my best subjects at school it would be easy, but it was totally different. It was condensing your regular vocabulary whilst engaging with more words to be able to fully scope what you meant or what you felt, and even then, it could not be captured. And if I'm being honest, it was really hard to gather my bearings and be truly comfortable when I moved here because I didn't know what lines I could cross, but you just go on and hope it gets better. In the end, what propelled my hundo-identity-crisis in my two decades of living was how quick I expected myself to shift.

But! Like all shores that get washed by the tide, movement settles and turns into rhythm- my good friends, my partner, my flatmates, and my classmates - it's a white world. To add, even the Filipinos I have met in my cohort don't engage in Tagalog the same way I do, so there really has been a paradigm shift that took 18 months to move through - which is quicker than most, so I can only be thankful.

I used to think it was such a fraud of me to have two separate Gabbies inside of me, that could only be unleashed when one language is in use. I used to think they cancel one another out, but they really just compliment each other. They both have separate definitions of comfort that they've labeled for themselves, whether that's being gregarious or being silent. I've also realised that the people I've met as English-only Gabbie, started seeing my bilingual shift as I've become more comfortable around them. I feel like this is a sign too, that I definitely find more comfort in one over the other, and that's fine, because that's how I grew up. The fact that my "sense of comfort" is oozing into the reality that I live here, only proves that I'm able to build some sense of warmth and hints of home. I doubt I'll ever conclude on a fully merged persona, since the semantics of language and identity is ever evolving and oh-so-complex, and I think that's okay.

# Trading Kingdoms



KEEARA OFREN

**Have you ever felt like** you didn't belong? That you were too foreign for here, but too foreign for there? Or maybe you felt like an immigrant more than anything else, even if you were born here?

This is the story of my journey with Tagalog and why I decided to reconcile with the language of my heritage.

I was born in New Zealand into a frequently travelling Filipino family. As a baby, my family lived in the Philippines, Tagalog was my first language. I was raised in the United States in my early childhood, which is where I learned to read, write and speak in English. We then moved back to New Zealand and I have been raised here ever since.

Early on, I had the impression that my family was 'different' in that we were not the same as other Filipino families. Both my parents had left the Philippines in the 1980s for scholarships to an English language university in Thailand. They were different to how other Filipino families were, having been exposed to other worlds longer. Touchstones of Filipino culture were separate from my family -- we did not go to church regularly, nor were we religious. My family was not focused on festivals or community gatherings so much and we were not so close to our extended families compared to others. I was also not taught Tagalog; though my parents spoke it at home, they spoke predominantly in English. So, it would be natural, growing up in New Zealand, that I would feel a closer affinity to feeling like a New Zealander.

However, in claiming to be a 'New Zealander', I felt shunned. People saw me for my appearance as 'foreign'. To most, what it meant to be 'foreign' and Filipino was in the form of jokes people would make about Asians, Filipinos who defended and worshipped authoritarian leaders, or child sponsorship commercials. It felt somehow

disempowering when people associate your culture with being a place of kidnappings, political ignorance and poverty.

But when I went to the Philippines, I too was the focus of feeling out of place. My paternal grandmother would openly scold in public and complain that I did not know how to speak Tagalog. Even though I understand Tagalog fluently, I could not say anything without people mocking me saying "nosebleed!", a Tagalog insult for not being able to understand English or the speaking speed. Even though I looked like everyone else and have the same ethnic origin, when people heard me speak,



they would say 'Ah! Foreigner.'

This push and pull from the two sides of my identity made me give up on wanting to have a close association with the Tagalog language. Sadly, this is not an uncommon experience. Gatekeeping and bullying have been experiences of friends of fellow mixed identities, such as friends of Māori or Korean New Zealander or Chinese New Zealand descent.

It would take a later meeting with a mentor and the solidarity of other diaspora students to reconcile with who I am. The human rights situation in the Philippines is terrifying and Southeast Asia is in a critical time for whether they cling on to a dream of democratisation and protest, or if the region will succumb to

authoritarianism of past decades. What is happening now, will have effects on the future of the country and millions of lives, so I had come to an uncomfortable but empowering conclusion: that whether I choose to or not, my heritage and knowledge of the culture, history and nuances would give me tools to act in situations of change that not everyone has, but that Tagalog would be the tool to do so.

Though it is saddening to know that areas that were once trading kingdoms are now slums, I feel empowered to know that I am a descendant from a line of seafarers and epicentres of anti-colonial resistance. My journey learning Tagalog meant that

I also understood my heritage as someone of Austronesian descent, which helped build my sense of solidarity and learning for other communities as I noticed similarities in our languages. Tagalog, which has a Malay and Spanish influence, has similarities to Polynesian and Māori vocabulary. This way, I understood that if I, or other people of Austronesian background ever felt out of place, this was not a result of the culture I was from, but rather, the colonial divisions and markers placed on our diverse and

beautiful cultures and the meaning to belong. Divide and conquer has then been internalised by communities who gatekeep. Being aware of this helps us become more inclusive of the many lived experiences of what it means to be Filipino for instance.

For those wanting to rediscover their heritage through language, my advice would be to learn language and culture, starting from a hobby. For me, this was history and film. Surround yourself with a support network, be open with who you are and your struggles. There will be others like you who will need you as a mentor as much as you have been mentored by others. The journey is difficult, but wanting to learn and knowing who you are is the first and most important step!



# Tāmaki Makaurau: It's More Than Just Sushi, Okayyyyyyy

Ready for your tastebuds to tango, siva, and naach bharatanatyam?



MATTHEW YANG (@KOWI.KAI)

Auckland is one of the most multicultural cities on the planet. According to science (Science, 2021), the greater the cultural diversity, the greater the range of delicious places to eat. We're meant to be spoilt for choice here...which makes me quickly breathe air through my nose, because we seem to be repeatedly choosing fried chicken, sushi, kebab, and not much else. We have a melting pot...where's the fondue?

Some cuisines are seriously overeaten. Some cuisines are seriously underrated. Here's my pick of some places around Auckland that might diversify your stomach a little. Pro tip: go to a restaurant with a person who knows that cuisine! No use going to a Thai place and only ordering the Pad Thai and then using chopsticks (the horror). Pro pro tip: Do not try to make friends this semester based on what ethnic foods you've wanted to try. Dawn still hasn't returned my calls.

Grab your mates, go to a neighbourhood you've never been before. Who knows, maybe there's a place down the street that you didn't know about...

## Vietnamese – Try It Out, Ōtāhuhu

Bit of a famous one, and the best rare beef phở in town, I reckon. Bánh mì goes off too. You know that scene in Ratatouille where Colette crunches the baguette to tell that it's a good baguette? Yeah. That's the quality of the bread here. Absolutely stuffed with meat, coriander and đồ chua (pickled veg). Is it worth it? My parents would do an 80-minute return trip for date nights here. Every week.

## South Indian – Satya – Grey Lynn, Eden Terrace, Mt Eden

Indian, but not your usual tikka and vindaloo. Try their famous panipuri and chaat. Can't go past the masala fries at the Sandringham branch.

## Tongan and Samoan – Fale Kai, Papatoetoe & Taste of Samoa, Henderson

The best Islander food I've had has always been homecooked. And that's straight facts. However, there are a lot of local businesses that are very popular (same rule applies here as it does for Asian restaurants that don't have Asian diners...if you don't see an Islander eating there, don't go there...). There's always the night markets to try something Pasifika styles, but for **Tongan** I'd say try **Fale Kai in Papatoetoe**, they open 'til late all the time, and for **Samoa** try **Taste of Samoa in Henderson** – chop sui and palusami never tasted better.

## Lebanese – Shefco, Mt. Roskill + Dominion Rd Takeaway

Charcoal chicken. Lamb kebab. Shawarma. Hummus. Salads. Chips (ofc). \$25 AYCE on Friday and Saturday evenings. What more could you want. Came here with one of the boys once, didn't talk much cause we were so focussed on the feed. When it's not a buffet, there's kebab and all the usual suspects (their house pita is also great). Hummus, babganoush and pita for takeaways? Pretty divine.



## Filipino – Gold Ribbon, Glen Eden

I have only been here for the halo-halo (shave ice but so much more) and the ube cake. Holy



moly the things you can do with potato's cousins! Thank you, Philippines, now bring Jollibees here. Note: you may have heard of Turo Turo in Gl. Filo friends said it was average, and non-Filo friends said it was delicious. Perhaps it's more for Western tastes..?

## Korean – Tai Ping, Glenfield

You wot m8? I am confusion. Yes yes, I said what I said. Had to include Korean 'cause this isn't your usual bibimbap/kbbq/food you saw in your guilty pleasure K-drama. At the back of the supermarket there is a Korean dumpling and steamed bun shop (right next to the Korean donut shop, which is right next to the Korean fried chicken shop). The dumplings hit home and the red bean buns make me outwardly smile. Buy 'em frozen for snacc later hehe – and get a ggwabeggi (twisted sugar donut)!

## Māori – Blue Rose Cafe, Sandringham

TE AO MĀORI EDITOR HERE!

Māori kai is hard to come by in shops and nothing slaps more than a good ol' marae-made meal so usually, I would just wait until my next visit home to eat. But when I saw a TikTok of a lady eating HANGI PIES I knew I had to make my way there. You heard that correctly whānau, Hangi pies. *Blue Rose Cafe* in Sandringham homes not just Hangi pies but Boil-up pies too. So if you're in the mood for the Hangi Pie's creamy kumara and pork stuffing, or the Boil-up Pie's salty bacon bones and watercress, your marae kai cravings will be satisfied! I'm personally a fan of the Boil-up Pie, with its flaky crust and JUICY meat inside (how do they do that!?!). Pair both pies with some tomato sauce, YUM!

# Golden Child

In the words of writer *Maryum*, this poem is an amalgamation of the enigmatic experience of raw emotions associated with having lived in three countries, speaking three languages, but belonging nowhere.



MARYUM

mother, you tell me  
to study well, eat well, and sleep well  
forget my old life-this is for the best  
but it is hard  
harder than I imagined  
seems like  
I'm far more sentimental  
than I'm willing to admit.

existing in my body is still uncomfortable.

The first night in my own room  
I don't sleep at all  
it feels so foreign  
without the snores,  
without the pulling of sheets,  
with all the space to myself,  
I cry  
flowers could grow underneath my bed  
from all the tears

I water them every night.

I'm barely 16, yet I feel like  
I have lived long enough; no more.  
*"you're so mature for your age"*  
I try to rationalize it  
*"I'm a couple months older than my peers"*  
hoping graciously that it is enough

what a silly attempt.

It takes strength  
to convince myself  
that I'm not a fraud,  
and my achievements aren't a fluke  
I fight against myself  
I'm deserving of my opportunities  
but perhaps *someone else*  
could do so much more

I feel like a child.

It is a jarring experience to see  
old people at work  
putting themselves through  
the same physical strain as me  
they remind me of my sweet grandma  
I can't help but be helpful.  
I find it more jarring  
to see their surprised faces  
at my attempts to be helpful  
I wonder if I'm rude for that?  
but it seems cruel to me  
to make one's elders struggle  
for, my sweet grandma  
passed away at only 52  
although I didn't realize then  
how short her life was

mortality upsets me.

I suppose, things are different here and  
such is just the way of life  
in the land of the sheep.  
no longer confined to boxes  
of what others perceive  
skeletons of femininity  
I'm free  
I embrace it-I'm finally myself

I stay in my own bubble.

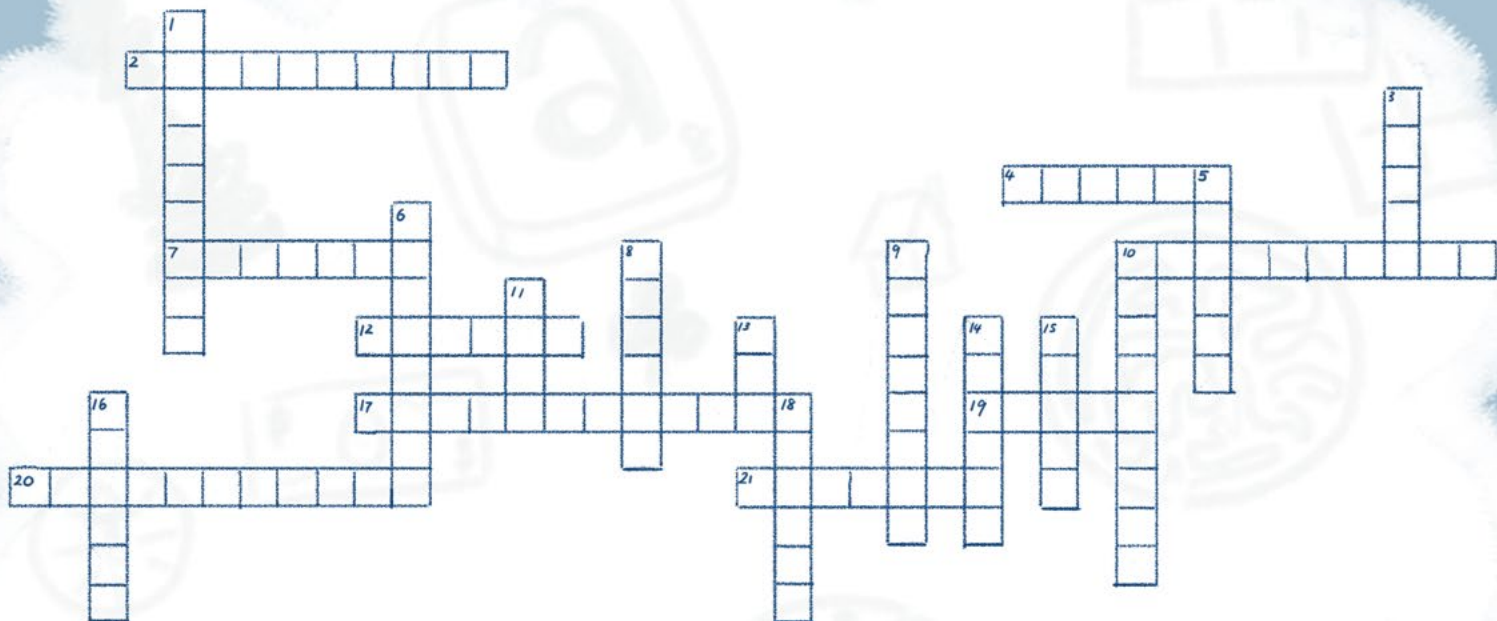
nonetheless, an identity crisis is due  
a rite of passage  
for I never really belonged anywhere;  
my place of birth, and neither  
the place I grew up in.  
I have no evidence to show  
of my life in those places in my memory  
just my mother tongue, and  
the generational trauma  
of my parents

it ends with me.



# PUZZLES

ILLUSTRATION BY SOPHIE SUN



## Across

2. Stalin's successor
4. Ghost, vengeful spirit, Prince Phillip
7. Filipino president; Marcos puppet
10. \*\*Robin Williams voice\*\* Neon Genesis
12. Marilyn, Charles, Shirley
17. Definition: make them boys go loco
19. Opposite of zenith
20. Paralysis below the neck
21. Pairs with cytosine

## Down

1. Classical monster believed to be a whirlpool
3. The tree Buddha attained enlightenment under
5. God's abode; alternately, a place on earth
6. Māori word for our native bats
8. A castrated male
9. Th-th-tha-tha-that's all, folks!
10. Language created by a Polish doctor in 1880s
11. Capital of Qatar
13. Cousin of the ostrich
14. Hold me closer, tiny (blank)
15. Killed the radio star
16. Camp, tacky, ironic
18. The virgin sceptic to Mulder's chad believer

9							5	
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		7	3					
		8			4			2
7	9			5			6	4
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	2							8

## Last Week Answer Key

1. luftballons 2. vegeta 3. charon 4. thirty 5. asmr
6. oracle 7. pōwhiri 8. sonic 9. rupaul 10. mercenary
11. demimoore 12. dildo 13. solitude 14. chardonnay
15. mukbang 16. gaslight 17. bridges 18. babylon 1
9. pope 20. soju 21. oligarchy 22. arrogance
23. inferno 24. problematic



# Horoscopes

This week, all of us at *Craccum* took turns at being noted horoscope columnist *Delma Vinkley*. But me, Delma Vinkley Prime? Just from me to you. I love you.

## Aries (Mar 21 - Apr 19)

This week you will get the sniffles, so get a COVID test. It's probably nothing but make sure you stock up on Campbell's Condensed Chicken Noodle Soup to flaunt in front of your professors on Zoom for sympathy. Your lucky numbers are 12 and 39.



## Taurus (Apr 20 - May 20)

Taurus, you're bound to be disappointed this week. But that's because you've defaulted to doing things the easy way. But remember, you don't have to settle. You deserve better. So keep your chin up, actually try for once, and for the love of god stop buying Instant Japanese Teriyaki Cup Noodles. I'll say it again: you deserve better. Your lucky numbers are 32 and 37.



## Gemini (May 21 - Jun 20)

This week, you'll rock up to campus, excited for some in person learning, only to remember that most classes are still online. You will sit socially distanced and still alone on the darkest floor of the library. Like Indomie Hot & Spicy noodles, this week you will expect excitement and be met with blandness. Sorry bub, maybe next week. Your lucky numbers are 44 and 55.



## Cancer (Jun 21 - Jul 22)

Like High Mark Crispy Noodles, you're firm. But with too much pressure, you'll snap in half soon. Take a bath, flop around. Become one with life's twists and turns, and you'll find that you'll never have felt such flexibility before. Your lucky numbers are 1 and 11.



## Leo (Jul 23 - Aug 22)

It's time to let someone else shine this week. Do something wholesome for yourself and your friends. Buy them some Samyang HOT Chicken Curry Flavour Ramen to share. But make sure it's the Halal version. Stop being selfish and think about someone else's needs for once, Leo. Your lucky numbers are 45 and 82.



## Virgo (Aug 23 - Sep 22)

You're on fire this week, Virgo. Congrats! Well done, but be careful not to burn out. It's like eating Samyang's Ramen Spicy Chicken Roasted Noodles, you'll end up shitting yourself if you don't slow down. Your lucky numbers are 9 and 18.



## Libra (Sep 23 - Oct 23)

Everyone's fan favourite, this week you will have an *elite* experience. Maybe you'll win a prize, or be awarded class credit for hottest on Zoom. Whatever it is, things are looking up this week. Like Nongshim's Shin Spicy Black Noodle Cup Soup, every other flavour—I mean, Zodiac sign—will be jealous of how good you taste. Your lucky numbers are 24 and 31.



## Scorpio (Oct 24 to Nov 21)

Like Indomie Beef Mi Goreng, your week will be... ok. Maybe you've been in your comfort zone for too long. Push yourself. Add that whole chilli packet this time. It'll taste so much better, I promise. Your lucky numbers are 99 and 101.



## Sagittarius (Nov 22 - Dec 21)

You don't have a flavour, Sagittarius. You're Maruchan's Instant Lunch Chicken Flavour: forgotten the moment the fork has been put in the washer. Do something this week to make people remember you. Now!!! Your lucky numbers are 66 and 76.



## Capricorn (Dec 22 - Jan 19)

You're perfectly acceptable, like Nongshim's Bowl Noodle Savoury Lobster Ramyun. Acceptable, not bold. Fly high, or straddle the same airways as the ducks, I guess. Your choice. Your lucky numbers are 38 and 54.



## Aquarius (Jan 20 - Feb 18)

This week you're feeling nostalgic. Go ahead, treat yourself to some Nongshim Asian Kimchi Ramen Noodles. You'll be taken right back to the last time you felt happy -- at 11 years old. Maybe it's time to go to therapy. Your lucky numbers are 51 and 90.



## Pisces (Feb 19 - Mar 20)

As always, try not to take things too personally this week. Maybe your flatmate did slam the door too loud because they're mad at you, or maybe there was just a draft. Chill. The first step is to stop eating MAMA's Spicy Shrimp Tom Yum. Because if you don't have a seafood sensitivity already, your cry-baby attitude is about to give you one. Your lucky numbers are 63 and 81.



WEDNESDAY 31ST MARCH | 9PM TILL LATE | SHADOWS BAR | R18

# FREQS IN THE SHADOWS

## SLY CHAOS



BENNY BOY

Support from  
STiX, RIXY b2b BRI

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IN THE  
SPARK  
AFTERPARTY



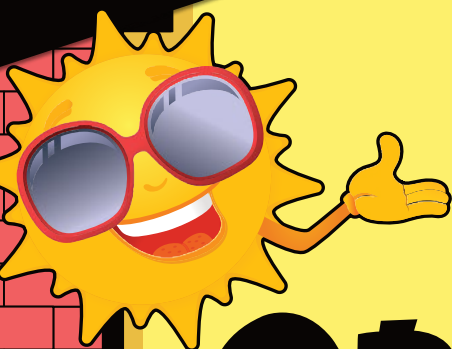
George<sup>™</sup>  
beats working...

SHADOWS  
BAR & EATERY





**NEW DATE**



**AUSA'S**

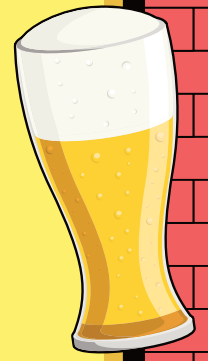
# **ORIENTATION**

**FESTIVAL**



22ND-24TH MARCH 2021 · ALFRED STREET · CITY CAMPUS

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