



UBUNTU



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KIA ORA, VANNAKKAM AND DUMELANG!

If you're reading this, I will begin by saying thank you. Thank you for picking up a copy of Ubuntu – AUSA's first ever international student magazine. The first of many. My name is Varsha Ravi, I am a Tamizh Indian raised in the heart of Southern Africa, Botswana. I study a conjoint in Laws and Global Studies, majoring in Global Politics and Human Rights and moved to Aotearoa in 2018 for my undergraduate degree.

Coming to Aotearoa, I've engaged in deep reflection about *whakapapa* – what is my genealogy, what is my ancestry, where does my DNA call home? However *whakapapa* goes beyond the simplicity of DNA, it's my connection to the soils that have nurtured me, it's the respect I pay forward for the soils that will serve my peoples and I. It's the weaving of the web of life, its leaving pockets of thread to connect to different people, it's the stories orated to me and it's the songs I sing to share them. I wanted to expand this label of "international" to include everyone. Are we all not mana-international? Are we all not peoples of the world by way of spirit?

As I sit here writing this editorial, I'm overwhelmed with emotion. This year has been a massive battle to provide more visibility for international students and change the perspective the University has of us. We are not the super-rich kids, you cannot measure our intellectual ability simply through our proficient use of the English language and more importantly, our experiences and stories will not be reduced to a stereotype. Along with a sexual health campaign, advocating to discontinue the confirmation of enrolment document fees, exposing our international students to better understand their rights, I wanted to leave behind a tangible memento that would capture our international voice. This led to the creation of International week, a week to celebrate people from all walks of life from all over the world. It was a week to celebrate our connection to each other, our connection brought to life by our presence in T māki Makaurau, in Aotearoa. In addition to International week, I conclude my year as International Student Officer leaving behind this treasure you are reading – *Ubuntu*.

For many wondering, what does *Ubuntu* mean? It would be hard to express this concept in mere words, but an attempt to do so would be through this sentence;

"I am, because We are". Ubuntu speaks to the humanity we owe each other in life. It speaks to the existence of a balance. In order for you to exist, so must I. It speaks to the importance of tolerance, respect and space. Space for you, space for me, space for us. This magazine will be a space for all of us internationals.

Love always,
Varsha

I would like to dedicate this first edition of Ubuntu to the following people:

To my Amma, Appa and sister, Srinidhi. Thank you for your unconditional love and support throughout everything. Thank you for teaching me the importance of pouring passion into everything you do.

To Bonnie, Janko and Laura, my friends that Aotearoa has given me, thank you for holding my hand through this journey that is University and giving me a friendship I will cherish for a lifetime to come.

To Flora, Naomii and Brian, thank you for guiding me with your Craccum knowledge and supporting this initiative.

To my AUSA executive of 2022, thank you for the laughs, the cries, tolerating all my tantrums and for just always having my back. To the AUSA Staff that hold down our fort, we would be nowhere without you.

And finally to my international students, thank you for your courage and confidence in making this decision to study at Waipapa Taumata Rau and thank you for electing me as your representative. This one is really for you, you will always have a voice with Ubuntu.

P.S This is not about the Linux Software system. The identical name is by mere coincidence and nothing more.

INTERNATIO

Photos by Sher



ONAL WEEK

rkhan Mazari





IS TRUMP TO BLAME FOR THE RAPID RISE AND FALL OF POPULISM?

By Barak Goren

In the summer of 2015, when Donald Trump announced his candidacy for President of the United States while walking down the infamous escalator, the world slammed on its breaks. Or at least it did for me. The events that followed was the beginning of a snowball effect that spread past the borders and shores of the United States.

Personally, I tend to lean more centre-left when it comes to political ideas. This became particularly evident during the election cycle of 2016 while I was in boarding school in Tennessee. Being positioned in the 'deep' south, it was almost a given that there would be folks walking around with the red MAGA hats and Trump flags. However, I don't think I would have ever expected to be in the real presence of his supporters who were there from the beginning.

Once Trump was elected in 2016, I'm not sure if it was his win, but it brought the election and internal politics of other countries to the forefront for me. Brazil, Poland, Indonesia, India, and the UK to name just a few, elected 'populist' leaders in the wake of Trump's triumph. Even though the concept of a populist leader is not something new, it's as if we (I) now started to base these leaders' actions based on what Trump was doing. If these leaders did or said anything that resembled Trump, they were 'like' Trump or too 'extreme' and therefore they became a danger to their democracies and to democracy in general.

While the agenda or playbook of a populist leader is to eliminate and dwindle out the corruption of the 'elites' in political society, the leaders of the abovementioned countries have done little or nothing to fulfil that promise. From Boris Johnson's disregard to his own rules for the country, Bolsonaro's constant deforestation decisions to please the elites in renewable energy, Narendra Modi's subtle power of making India move in the direction of a secular state and Andrej Duda trying to meddle in the judicial system for his benefit. These leaders are ones that entered the presidency with huge popularity as the outcasts and ones to fight 'the system', yet they are merely doing and benefiting from the same behaviour. These folks have seen their popularity tumble and have begun to question the legitimacy of the justice system ahead of election cycles in their countries, similar behaviour to that of Trump. Hopefully their countries' system of rule of law upholds them from attempting anything the like of Trump in January 2021.

Since leaving office, Trump has worked hard on keeping his foot in the door and continues pushing

his 'agenda' as much as possible. Notwithstanding, there has been a trend where left leaning leaders have been elected against an extreme right opponent in the two years since Trump's ousting. In Colombia with their first leftist leader in decades to Peru's school teacher turned leader, France remaining centre-right, and Australia voting out Scott Morrison. Additionally, with the start of war in Ukraine, the west, known for democracy, has united in a way that I personally did not expect. This low expectation is from the observation of how poorly the Covid response was.

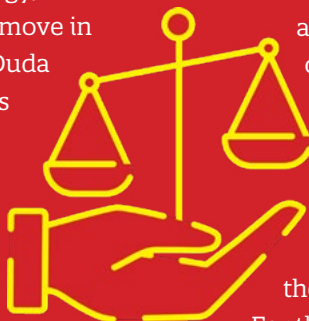
Now is it right to say that this leftward trend that I perceive is a result of Trump no longer being in power? I wouldn't say it's one hundred percent as a result, but assuming that the United States is still considered the police of the world, it should matter what type of leader and what their beliefs are while they sit in the White House. The world has recuperated some of the hope that may have been lost during the Trump years with Biden's win. Still, there is a lot of damage control that needs to be done in the coming years to feel like the people who lead us aren't coming to power merely to fulfil their own agendas over their countries' best interests.

Being someone who, until this year was very supportive and had a more pro East (China centred) stance in general, I have retracted this idea. Once Russia invaded Ukraine and China undisputedly aligned itself by defending the aggressor, I came to the realisation that it may be the end of China's rise as a world leader. I think the small countries around the world have taken notice of the powers the US wields tacitly. Given that most of these small countries hold their foreign reserves in US dollars, they must be cautious where their loyalties lie. For the time being the US has a power unmatched by any other.

Whether the current world order will remain towards the left leaning, west dominated setting, is yet to be known. However, despite it seeming like there are still far too many problems plaguing the world, I personally feel like the world is in a better place and in better hands than it was four years ago.



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CAN WE AT LEAST LISTEN TO THE CHILDREN?

By Mira Askari

The story of a 9-year-old boy taken out of his classroom by multiple armed troops to be forcibly arrested. The story of a 16-year-old boy being arrested, blindfolded, and beaten by 20 armed troops while buying groceries for his family, only to be denied medical care for 3 weeks in detention despite having a broken shoulder. Both their crimes? Alleged stone-throwing. If I told you this happened in New Zealand, without hesitation you'd think these stories are horrible, shocking, unimaginable, but when I tell you these events happened in the Middle East, our reactions change. Still, for most, these stories are saddening and horrible, but they are no longer as shocking to us. After all, that's what happens in the war-stricken Middle East, right?

The mistreatment of children in countries known for violence and conflict has become normalised. These stories are no longer shocking, the world has stopped talking about them, and these children are forced to struggle in silence. These stories leave me sad and angered. Sad that their arrests were allowed to happen in the first place; angry that these stories were nowhere else to be seen. Not on the world news, not trending on twitter. We have become numb to the suffering of children in these conflict-stricken countries, especially Palestine, a country that has been in continuous conflict for the past century. The world needs to start paying attention to what is really going on in Palestine. We know how to spread awareness, we just need to start giving a voice to those who need it, those who cannot speak for themselves, starting with the persecuted children in Palestine.

The root of the issue surrounding child persecution in Palestine is the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, but since news sources would rather not cause controversy by taking sides or being on the bad side of the all-powerful Israeli government, they ignore the issue of child persecution altogether, and the cycle of Palestinian children suffering continues. An Al Jazeera article on why mainstream media fails to cover Palestine stories with accuracy and empathy talks about how the fear of being accused of antisemitism as well as being targeted by Israel's powerful govern-

ment are key factors into why there is so little media coverage of what's happening in Palestine. Sarah Helm, former foreign correspondent for an independent UK newspaper commented on how often reporters come under pressure when reporting events in Palestine because they know there is an "intense and concerted" Israeli media and political lobby. She even said that newspapers are often contacted and pressurised by the Pro-Israel lobby for the eventual outcome that readers won't have a clue what Palestine is. She tells a story about once reporting about the atrocities against Palestinians committed by Israel, only to be told by the paper that they were, "not keen on having her writing from Gaza", and was

advised by an editor to steer clear of the conflict altogether.

It saddens me that there are reporters that try to keep their writing honest and talk about issues that go unnoticed, but are told to "steer clear", out of the fear of being accused of antisemitism. It's even more upsetting that Pro-Israel lobbyists target these same reporters and try to construct a

narrative that Palestine does not even exist. It seems that government connections and politics have become more important than human life. Former Israeli ambassador to South Africa discussed how, "Israel was brilliantly successful in offering a narrative to the western hemisphere that was embraced with no judgement" and that since the issues in Palestine are so "complex and deep-rooted", the "appetite of Western media has diminished." For change to be made, our media has to be honest and raw, not influenced by what may cause controversy or could damage an outlet's credibility. For justice, the truth must be told.

The group most affected by the conflict are Palestine's children, and they deserve a voice. We can do this by supporting honest reporters who share raw stories despite possible backlash and accusations of antisemitism and sharing their works. When we see media that is skewed towards a certain agenda and paints a false narrative, we should question it, confront it, talk about it. When we start talking without fear of backlash, this is when positive change can start happening.



THE CLASSROOM TUTORIAL IS DYING

By Arka Basu

Lectures, delivered inside imposing, Colosseum-like venues by part-professor, part-performer figures, set the opening scene of countless undergraduate journeys at university. Examinations, conducted within stark white-walled halls, under the close scrutiny of black-slacked invigilators, for better or worse, usually bring these academic odysseys to a close. In between these two learning strategies, which continue to exist in a spirited dialogue with one another, the classroom tutorial sits uncomfortably, like a neglected middle child.

The peri-pandemic embrace of technology and promotion of social distancing have not done the tutorial medium any favours: in-person attendance has fallen, peer engagement has reduced, and requests for recording tutorial material have poured in.

The lecture-and-tutorial model, employed by numerous universities around the world today, has its roots in an Oxbridge pedagogic tradition. Course cohorts are divided into tutorial groups, which convene with tutors to discuss and analyse the contents of lectures. The tutorial system is designed to provide students with a comfortable learning environment in the form of smaller study groups, to receive more personalised attention from academic staff, and to develop key communication skills to engage with emerging knowledge. Tutorials provide students the opportunity to get to know their peers, academically and socially, fostering a community of learning. The system is certainly not perfect: it indulges extroversion, it often makes preparatory demands of pupils to keep pace with the class, and it requires students to regularly show up to a venue. But it offers something that a simple lecture-and-examination model lacks: a place for students to collectively deliberate, deconstruct, and diverge from the contents of their own education.

A decade ago, I sat behind a linoleum desk on a wet Loughborough morning, waiting for my first tutorial to commence. I had enrolled in a paper forebodingly titled 'The Essay'. It began with a nerve-wracking call to swap seats, dislodging me from my preferred inconspicuous spot at the back of the class. I now found myself

among a group of equally jittery first years and Erasmus students, and we were soon invited to discuss our prior experiences with essay writing among ourselves. We briefly complied—before airing our thoughts on the atrocious weather, why we found ourselves in that nondescript corner of the East Midlands, and what we were planning to do after class. Pre-class tasks, quizzes,

group activities and presentations brought us together that semester, even when our interests, timetables, and backstories had little in common. As the autumn gave way to winter, I started to look forward to meeting this group every week, discussing everything from the Rogerian rhetoric to student discounts in town, and eventually we forged friendships, a few of

which still survive. For an international student with a school education that favoured one-way instruction, that tutorial formed my first impressions of university as a place for the open exchange of ideas. What's more, it gifted me my social starter pack.

Looking at the recently deteriorating interest for classroom tutorials among my students, I cannot help but feel that we may be losing something invaluable precious to the global pandemic: our ability to learn with and from each other. Indeed, we need to reconfigure the idea of a tutorial to suit a virtual classroom. Undoubtedly, we must reassess our expectations of classroom participation to accommodate every type of learning personality. But if we let the tutorial die in the meantime, we may lose sight of what makes a university: a space where knowledge is born from the meeting of minds.





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CONVERSATIONS WITH NZISA PRESIDENT VIKRAM SELVARAJ

By Varsha Ravi

Our International Student Officer, Varsha Ravi sat down with New Zealand International Students' Association President Vikram Selvaraj to talk student politics, stereotypes and advice for international students in the years to come. Vikram is a recent graduate from University of Canterbury where he studied a Bachelor of Criminal Justice. Vikram hopes to join NZ Police one day, to continue his passions of serving the community and helping our youth.

HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH NZISA?

I'm someone who is an extrovert and when I came to NZ, I definitely found it intimidating, being away from family, all alone. But I was definitely looking for opportunities to grow and that is how I got to UC - the course I did was very new, and it aligned with my passion to become a police officer. But coming to UC, I noticed the lack of support and lack of voice for international student issues. When I started as a student, I felt the lack of involvement of international students, and I wanted to be supported by UC and wanted to support UC. I was getting a bit tired of how people don't listen to you, that's when I started thinking of ways to advocate for international students. I thought about how I could advocate and represent internationals, and that's how I came across NZISA. I tried my luck - I applied and I got elected. It's a big responsibility, to not just represent UC students but actually represent all international students in NZ.



WHAT STEREOTYPES ABOUT INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DO YOU WANT NZ TO MOVE AWAY FROM?

There are those general stereotypes around homesickness, international students being rich kids, mental health crises, cultural shock, English not being our first language. There is a change in the perspective of how people see international students over the years. One of the common stereotypes I have experienced from many is the thought that international students won't speak up. That they would not engage. But it's not that. We want to engage; it has never been about us not wanting to do things or speak up, we definitely want to, it's just about whether you are willing to listen. Cultural shock is an interesting one because there is culture everywhere. Even in your own countries there are cultures that are new to us, so I hate saying we all are going to experience cultural shock, it's just all about learning. In fact, I'd say that it is a culture shock for Kiwis, seeing us in their country. They feel the shock more. At times they find it difficult to adjust to us being here, they need to accept that we are here and that they can also learn from us, just as much as we can learn from them. At the end of the day, it is all about respecting

each other and listening to each other. This is one thing that I always wished people understood. Just because we come to your country does not make you superior to us, people need to realise that. Also, just because I am a Person of Colour doesn't mean I am any less at all. People lack geographical knowledge. Whenever I say I am from Singapore, they're immediate reaction is "you do not look Singaporean". I've heard people say to me "Singapore is part of China, you don't look Chinese so you're not Singaporean". China is literally on the other end of Asia. People also find it shocking that I speak English. According to many, Singaporeans only speak Chinese. This kind of general knowledge is extremely important for people to understand it's okay for us to speak English. It's okay for us to be speaking even better English than them! It is also completely okay for us to be speaking English in different accents. People need to understand that English is just a language to communicate, that it does not reflect how smart you are or how educated you are. I wish these were the things people understood and would learn, grow, and change their perspectives of international students from.

IF THERE WAS ONE THING YOU COULD SAY TO THE MINISTER FOR IMMIGRATION, WHAT WOULD IT BE AND WHY?

That is a good question. Personally, what I would say is, before you make any decisions, go to the ground. Talk to people. Understand where they come from, what they are trying to do and then make the changes. Do not have this stereotypical assumption that this is going

... IF WE ARE SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY TO THE PEOPLE THAT WANT TO FIND A FUTURE HERE IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND, I WOULD SAY DO NOT GIVE UP. DO NOT LOSE HOPE.

WHEN I SAY "PEOPLE HAPPY", WHO ARE WE EVEN MAKING HAPPY? IS IT THE ACTUAL PEOPLE OR THE CORPORATE WORLD?

to be good for them. You need to have that continuous conversation. When I see the policy changes they come up with sometimes, I'm sitting here wondering how the hell did they come up with this?? Or why did they even come up with this? Is this policy even bullet proof? Is it something that is going to be effective in the next 5 years? Sometimes I feel like the policies that are out there are to fix a short-term gap - just to make "people happy". When I say "people happy", who are we even making happy? Is it the actual people or the corporate world? These are some of the things I've always wanted to ask the Minister of Immigration. However, the one thing I would like to say is talk to the people.

WHAT'S YOUR ONE PIECE OF ADVICE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WHO ARE CAUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE OF POLICY CHANGES?

I think this question is really hard because it depends on different students' personalities and agendas. Some are really just here on a short-term basis, they are just here for their education and then they want to leave, it is not going to impact them at all. Some of them want a future here and they want to give back to the community and these policy changes will impact them. For me, it really depends on who we are targeting, and if we are speaking specifically to the people that want to find a future here in Aotearoa New Zealand, I would say do not give up. Do not lose hope. There are people like me, people like you, Varsha, who are here to make noise. But we need your support, and in order for us to advocate efficiently, we need you to have that hope. If you don't have that hope, you're not going to support us, and you won't end up communicating your issues with us. You need to have that hope that things can change and that is

where we can grow together so I would say to our international student space, NEVER GIVE UP. NEVER LOSE HOPE in Life. You have taken the biggest steps already coming to NZ and for that we acknowledge your courage and have a massive amount of respect for you. Don't lose hope easily just because of different circumstances or situations.

HOW DO YOU INCENTIVIZE FUTURE INTERNATIONALS TO COME TO NZ WITH THE HOPES OF STAYING POST STUDY WHEN THESE ARE THE CURRENT POLICY CHANGES?

This is where I am someone who would take a different approach. More than me telling students to come study here, it is important that the government and the country shows them. The government must actually acknowledge and deliver what they have promised. When I say government, I also mean the educational institution and the community. When I first arrived in NZ, one of the first things they told me was New Zealanders are very friendly, they have a lot of support systems and services but after having lived here for a few years, I began to wonder, why am I not getting this support? This is why it is important for institutions to continue supporting and changing the way they approach these narratives. Once they see the change, people automatically will want to come. Social media is everywhere, it just takes one video for someone to make a "this is where I'm studying and I

MORE THAN ME TELLING STUDENTS TO COME STUDY HERE, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COUNTRY SHOWS THEM. THE GOVERNMENT MUST ACTUALLY ACKNOWLEDGE AND DELIVER WHAT THEY HAVE PROMISED.

YOU ARE COMING OUT OF OUR COMFORT ZONE, YOU ARE LEARNING A LOT, YOU ARE GROWING. YOU ARE NOT JUST LEARNING NEW CULTURES, BUT YOU ARE LEARNING A LOT ABOUT YOURSELF AS WELL.

love it", and it could go viral. That would change the whole narrative. That's why it's very important to change the narrative and support our current students so that future students will hear this and want to come.

WHAT DO YOU RECKON IS THE BEST PART ABOUT BEING AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT IN NZ?

It is freedom. Coming from your home country, you're always surrounded by your family and friends. You are coming out of our comfort zone, you are learning a lot, you are growing. You are not just learning new cultures, but you are learning a lot about yourself as well. That was very important for me as an international student, to believe in myself, that I can't just live in another country but can also study in another country. This confidence and belief were of utmost importance.

HOW DO YOU FIND A HOME AWAY FROM HOME?

The people. The people are the strongest factor in your life. You could be in your own home and feel isolated or unloved. But finding the right people around you and reaching out to the people that care for you, it makes your next home. Home is just a place but it's the people that make you feel like it is home.



STORYTIME



By Rahel Schneider

I saw Jesus holding a pizza slice, a stranger prayed for me, someone told me “I love you”, my friend got kicked out of a bar, and I got Covid. One has nothing to do with the other, it just happened. All in one week. Hi, I am Rahel, an international student from Germany, and New Zealand is not what I prepared for. I thought I came prepared, but your country has been a surprise since the minute my sleepy head got out of that plane.

I know the Student Society for Internationals and the welcome club, the how-are-you-club, and the want-another-merch-goodie-bag-club want us to be prepared for University life on another continent and you did prepare us! I don't think I've ever been more prepared for anything (but could I have another pencil, please? It will look so cool when I come back to my no-merch Uni in Germany). But somehow, this first week before classes started went in a direction, I and maybe not even the student societies saw coming. I thought I'd share it, maybe this is just how things go in Auckland and I am the stupid german student.

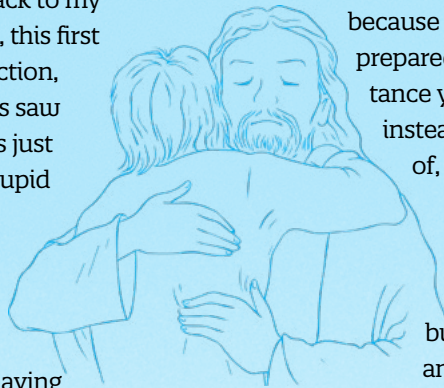
Day 1: It started when I wanted to go to the beach with my chicken bowl after an introduction in the unleash space (I will accuse my German university of not having such a space). I didn't know where the beach was exactly so I ended up at the spark arena. About 300 people my age were coming out of there and so I asked a friendly-looking woman: “What is happening?” She told me that it was a church conference for young people and they were holding a seminar right now, I should come to join them. She had three kids, so I trusted her, bought a ticket, ate my chicken in front of the security guy, and went in. Now, this is where I am not sure if I tripped or what but the next thing I knew, there was a giant picture of Jesus holding a pizza slice in his hand on a monitor so big it should have Harry Styles on it, but it had Jesus, and on the stage was a tattoo artist or at least that's what I think they introduced him as and he drew the pizza slice on to another

young guy on the stage and everyone cheered him on. The overall mood was great so I went with it. But can someone please explain?

In Germany, there's also no 3-year-old from that friendly-looking woman who grabs my arm out of nowhere and says “I love you”. I replied, “nice dinosaurs” because if you're from Germany, you are not prepared for the overflow of love and acceptance you'll receive, so you start panicking instead and say the next thing you can think of, which was “cool dinosaur-jacket”.

Anyways then we were told to pray for each other and I thought we'd do that in silence, as we do in Germany but a woman tapped me on my shoulder and asked if she could pray for me and I said, “yes thank you” and she said “is there anything in particular that you want me to pray for” and I said, “health” and then she prayed a beautiful prayer that I can't recall because I was too touched, but it was really impressive how many things she wished me in just two minutes without pray-paration. It made me feel like something good is going to come and then I got Covid. But I will ignore that and take the next good thing that happens and make the prayer responsible for that.

Day 2: If you want to go to Countdown (and you live at Carlaw Park), google maps is going to send you through the domain. There you are going to stand, wondering



if the nature in front of you is a path or just nature and after you decided it's a path, you'll need new shoes and want to sue google maps for your trust issues, but you also need pasta so you swallow your pain, adjust and drag your baptized feet to Countdown.

Day 3: Today we were running through campus trying to find the orange man. The orange man is part five of our campus challenge, a challenge designed for us internationals to not get lost and find shelter at Shadows. It was raining all day, so I was only there because of my google maps trust issues. Our group of four Germans watched the other groups running away in amazement and collected our first clue. Tim suggested going to shadows, the rest of us thought we should at least try, so we made it to clue number five: "Go to the OGGB and find the orange man and he'll tell you the next clue" (basically). However, nobody told us that there was construction going on somewhere, meaning we went to the man in the orange vest, confident and ready for the next clue and he told us a room number. Tim suggested going to Shadows, but after a few unnecessary steps, we found the number and confidently walked into something that looked like an office and turned out to be an office. Everyone there was highly confused but they welcomed their dripping intruders and had fun watching us being confused as they told us that they had no clue about a campus challenge. Slightly embarrassed, we made our way out of there as quickly as possible to find the real orange man sitting outside the building, handing us the next clue. Tim suggested going to Shadows, and we gave in. But to this day, I wonder how this construction worker could so confidently mislead us, I'm impressed but also pissed.

Day 4: My friend got kicked out of the first bar we went to, just because I decided to wear my fluffy sweater that night. That sweater is my favorite, but very inappropriate for a club if you want to be sexy, very helpful though if you don't want people to bump into you, because all you'll feel is a cushioned shock and then you'll get a compliment for the softness of your sweater followed by various foreign hands stroking it. On the counterpart, it gets very hot under there, so my friend and I decided to be responsible and drink some water, which was refreshing, especially when he poured it over my head, but the security guy thought otherwise and ten seconds later my friend was on the street and I had to find the

glasses he lost in the battle. I didn't find them but I had a chat with another security guard who thought I was 18. Why, because I had one water bottle?! (Note from the author: No, because I was at bar101. Thanks, flattie for telling me that afterwards.)

Day 5: I bought the Hop Card - for Oregon. Why? Because they have one too and I wanted to buy it online because I'm lazy and stupid. After two seconds of being very proud to be the first one who discovered their online services, my roommate, a very experienced hop card user, revealed the truth which led to several emails with Erwin from the HopCard Service (in Oregon) asking me for my email Address via email. After that missing information was clarified, I got my money back, but not my dignity. So if you're also new to Auckland (and you're stupid and lazy), Oregon is not Auckland, and also who's in favor of Auckland having its own online service?

Day 6: My credit card isn't working anymore because I forgot to put more money on there. The only good advice, in this case, is to get a Kiwi Card asap, so you don't live on credit anymore, but you may also go to a coffee shop and see how many dollars you have left - because we all know it just can't be a total zero, and then you can enjoy your coffee like it's your last and feel better about yourself while walking home because the only train you can take is cruising around somewhere in Oregon.

Day 7: I love it here, the university is great, I got four new pens, three new bags, two notebooks, and post-its, and the third free pizza this week. Credit card, I'll be fine without you! I also got a place where I can go and learn if I have ADHD! I don't have it, but it's nice to know that it's there!

Day 1: Fuuuck, I'm sick.

Day 2: Can Jetlag return if it didn't have enough time to go away?

Day 3: Yeah, it can.

Day 4: Am I gonna be ok?

Day 5: What day is it? Oh, never mind, it's getting dark again.

Day 6: Roommate made brownies, their friend made brownies, I'm good.

Day 7: The Wifi has just let me down. Guess I have to write about everything that happened last week then.



FINDING CONTENTMENT IN SOLITUDE: KEEPING A HEALTHY MIND

By Aryn

I've not known the importance of keeping a healthy outlook on life before coming to New Zealand, and my recent experiences during the lockdown has brought upon a series of mental hardships that took a toll on my wellbeing. But with the help of licensed professionals and close friends, I gradually was able to overcome such challenges. This issue of mental health is a contentious topic for many Asian societies, whereby the stigma surrounding professional mental help is one only meant for the clinically insane.

In the eastern value system, ensuring pride and not “losing face” has discouraged many to speak of their personal afflictions. But as someone who was brought up in that setting, I completely understand the mental hurdles one must face in-order to overcome such entrenched taboo. It is sadly a commonplace for international stu-

dents to experience mental hardships, as many of us come with a little-to-no support system here in Aotearoa. Writing this, I recognize that there are many others out there that are going through similar circumstances, some of whom have yet to remove the dark clouds that surround them. I hope that by sharing my experience of

seeking therapy and counselling, international students who might be otherwise too afraid to reach out would see greater impetus to do so, as we all deserve a chance at mental clarity and a healthy mind.

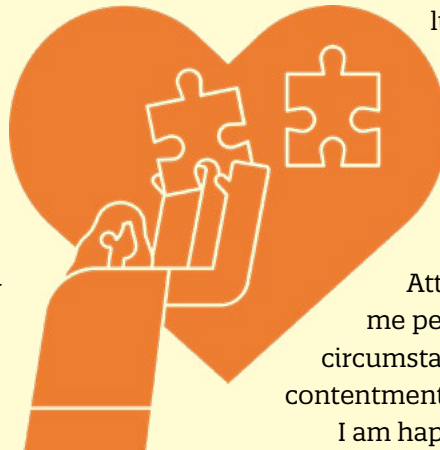
Coming abroad to further one's education presents a certain set of challenges. Besides having to adjust living in a new environment, getting familiar with necessities such as grocery shopping or understanding public transportation may pose a challenge. Like a fish out of water, you're placed in a completely foreign setting, often having to face it in solitude in the initial stages. I came to New Zealand right before the Coronavirus pandemic hit our shores, which only served to compound the problem of adaptability. Having never lived apart from my family before, I relished for the opportunity to live by myself. I had hoped to gain new friendships, be part of university societies, and to completely immerse myself into the culture and society of what New Zealand had to offer. But as the pandemic struck, we were all confined to our bubbles, stuck in a rut with no clear end in sight.

I had chosen to flat with some people, students whom I had barely known but met through mutual friends back home. We had decided to live together during my first year here, as it was considerably cheaper than university accommodations. My time in isolation would've been far worse if not for my flat mates, as we sought solace in one another although we had little in common. Throughout the day we would keep each other company, but as we retreated to our rooms at dusk an overwhelming feeling of dread would rush over me. An active person that relishes team sports and social interaction, I felt alone and out of my depth. I could feel that I was dwelling deeper into the abyss as the days went by. My grades were slipping, and I was sinking fast. As we were undertaking different courses, I found it difficult to reach out to my flat mates. There was little they could do about my personal afflictions, which I had kept private. I was too prideful to speak to them about my troubles. It all came crashing down when I failed most of my courses throughout the year. I was crestfallen, defeated beyond

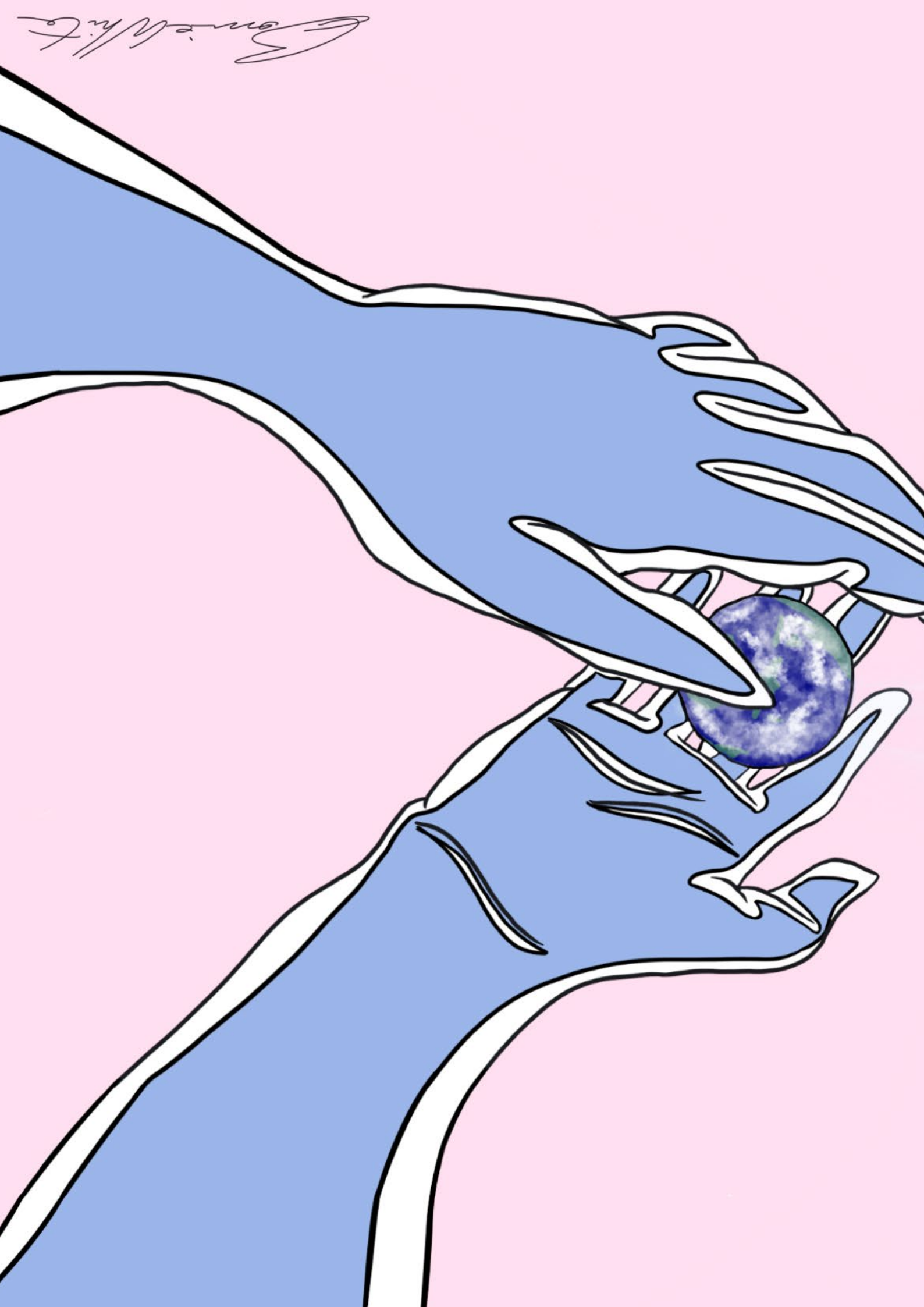
repair. I chose to hide what I was feeling from my parents, telling them that "university is a lot harder than I expected" rather than sharing what was really bothering me. I allowed bouts of unproductivity and loss of direction to consume me whole. Solitude really did a number on me.

My saving grace came when I stumbled upon an ad online. It pushed me to seek professional help, and I had to churn out every ounce of courage to contact a licensed therapist. I was lucky to have spoken to one that guided me through the process of using my student insurance to cover my therapy sessions after the initial consultation. It took a while for me to open up, but with patience I was able to speak about my troubles. Attending therapy fortnightly, it gave me perspective on how I can rise above my circumstances, reinvigorate my focus, and find contentment in being by myself.

I am happy to report that I am doing much better now. Being involved in team sports at university, having a healthy network of friends that I can confide in and I no longer attend therapy. But writing this I recognize that there are so many others who have not explored this option due to the fear of financial strain or social stigma, and I'm here to tell you that it is okay and there should be nothing to fear. My advice to you is to seek help as I have and to confide in those you trust, because who knows what I might've done if I hadn't sought help. You are not alone, and I hope that you seek the help that you need, to achieve contentment in your time here in New Zealand.



MY SAVING GRACE CAME WHEN I STUMBLED UPON AN AD ONLINE. IT PUSHED ME TO SEEK FOR PROFESSIONAL HELP, AND I HAD TO CHURN OUT EVERY OUNCE OF COURAGE TO CONTACT A LICENSED THERAPIST.



Concilio



MY EXPERIENCE OF CULTURAL DETACHMENT

By Brandon Goh

Cultural detachment means different things to different people. For some they have a conventional understanding of this phenomenon where a migrant distances themselves to assimilate into the host country. For others, the phenomenon is being a third culture kid, where they create an alternative culture that blends their parents' & hosts' cultures. For me personally, I do not really fit neatly into either definition and perhaps you can form your views on where I stand from the story I'm about to recite to you. My purpose of writing this is to share my experience and perhaps resonate with your story, hopefully to give you the moral courage in life.

MY BACKGROUND

So Kia ora, my name is Brandon, and I grew up in Kuching, a sleepy city in Malaysia on the island of Borneo. I was brought up in a Chinese Christian family with my mother having been brought up in Vancouver, Canada. As you can see the dynamics at play here are very unconventional. Malaysia is a Muslim majority nation with Malay people making up the biggest racial demographic. It is also estimated that only 5% of Malaysians are part of the diaspora. Basically, you could say you have better odds at lotto than finding another me.

MY CULTURAL BUBBLE

Growing up, I was brought up in this bubble world-view and probably quite sheltered because most of the population did not share the same cultural affiliations as I did. I hardly ever interacted with other people outside this bubble and so my views on life were very much shaped by only this bubble. For example, people outside my bubble often spoke in Bahasa Melayu

while I spoke English. You see, there was difficulty in communicating ideas. People outside the bubble celebrated different holidays from Christmas & Easter, ate different food and had different (negative) views of each other's religion. Every time Malaysian culture was presented overseas, I never felt represented and so I was never really attached to the idea of being Malaysian.

HOSTILITY

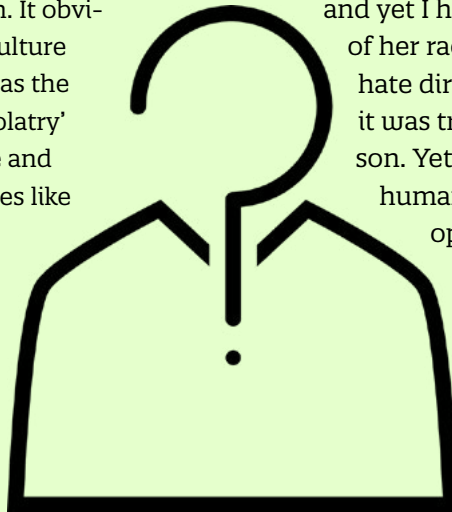
But the real kicker is the intolerance and hate prevalent between the communities. Even though we live side by side, the government of the day always treated Christians and Chinese people with suspicion. They would always promote and pass laws subjugating everyone to their standards of faith. For example, it is punishable by criminal law for someone to leave the Islamic faith, they shame women openly for wearing clothing they consider begging for it and they provide special government favours for their own community like special interest rates, generous scholarships, and government positions. In turn, within the Chinese bubble we openly discriminate against Malay people. Whether it's private sector employment, housing or even dating. A Malay person was frowned upon. In the Christian bubble,



we were taught falsely about the maliciousness of Muslim people and how they were out to forcibly convert people. We talked about Muslims being paedophile apologists for permitting child marriages although we conveniently forget about the Catholic Church. Hate speech and animosity was and is rife in Malaysia, period. It was hard to form any sense of unity and solidarity with the country I was born into.

NOT QUITE FITTING THE BUBBLE

But even putting Christian, Chinese & born to a diaspora parent together was also contradicting. For example, a majority of Chinese Malaysians worship their ancestors or have a Buddhist faith. It obviously shapes the thinking of Chinese culture and their belief in superstitions, whereas the Christian bubble views this as 'devil idolatry' that must be purged. Between Chinese and diaspora there was a difference in values like filial piety. My mother was adamant to keep an arm's length with her in-laws because she did not want the in-laws to dictate how she raised the kids. My father viewed it as keeping close familial ties. And of course, between Christian and diaspora/ western educated, there was an inherent conflict between the rights of a woman's choice vs the role of women as homemaker and being subservient.



one knows that if you belong to the wrong race, the public universities will only enroll you in classes that nobody took.

PERSONAL CONNECTION

To add salt to the wound, a Malay classmate had a guaranteed place in at least one of the public universities because of her connections through her parents. She was also conditionally offered a scholarship to study overseas by the government whereas for non-Malays you would either have to afford your own tuition or take out a loan from the government with interest. What makes the whole episode an irony is that she was my friend and yet I hated the privilege she had because of her race. In this bubble, there was so much hate directed against her that at times I felt it was true, maybe she was a horrible person. Yet she showed me a different side, a human side that I connected with that was opposed to everything said about her. The discrimination there also felt like collateral damage on me because I did not even feel affiliated with any one of the bubbles perfectly. The constant contradictions and estrangement with myself and the world I lived in was one of the reasons why I left Malaysia for good to start afresh.

REAL LIFE IMPLICATIONS

To summarise, I grew up in a very niche bubble that did not quite fit into one category, and I did not feel I belonged anywhere. But that was not my biggest concern in life then since I was only a child. The conflicting and contrasting forces only really started to show when I was in my last year of high school. At the time I was deciding where to lead with my life and my peers had similar grades and aspirations of further study/ jobs. I wanted to have a career in diplomacy but was quickly shot down by my Chinese friends. They pointed out that there was literally no such career available because of the colour of my skin unless it was a diplomatic post to China. My father and teachers echoed similar sentiments and I was quite pissed. It was also pointedly obvious that I could not further my studies in Malaysia. Every-

A FRESH START?

And so here I am in New Zealand, learning about what it means to live in harmony. I reject a lot of what I grew up with but still ponder whether I harbour some toxic sentiments. New Zealand is not perfect, so I take time to consider the values they stand for. In some ways, I am creating something alternative. I still second guess myself about creating a cultural detachment from Malaysia because familiarity calls. Overall, I believe I made the right choice with some moral courage, and everyone approaches their life story differently. What I do hope is that this story could bring some perspective to your experience in migrating to New Zealand and perhaps be the call you needed to take a leap.

"ENJOY YOUR FREEDOM"

By Arshia

The one thing everyone told me before I came to university was “enjoy your freedom”. It was funny at first, but the more I heard it, the more I wondered, what exactly was I getting freedom from?

I've been brought up in a very privileged family (I've been given this opportunity to study in Aotearoa after all), so this entire notion of “enjoy your freedom” felt really strange. I could go out whenever I wanted (maybe not like a late night trip to Sensash), I could wear whatever I want, and I could study whatever I want, which is a win for most South Asian households. I never had to create an alternate identity for my parents, I could just be my authentic self.

On coming to New Zealand, I thought the freedom would be the satisfaction of doing something different and on your own, with this newfound independence: like using a different kind of laundry detergent and going out for gigs more frequently than I would have back home. As I spent more time in Auckland, and explored the city, I learnt that I got freedom to finally learn and be comfortable with my identity, and this was something that I never had a chance to explore back home.

While my family was pretty “woke” compared to most, homophobia was still pretty prevalent amongst society. All the uncles and aunties pretended to be nice and accepting on the outside but would instantly be shocked if they heard someone was bi, or even worse “a gay”. This façade of acceptance never provided a safe space for us to explore our identities. Instead, we were told to focus on our studies, as that was the only thing that seemed to matter for our lives to have any value.

Auckland was different. It was accepting of who you were regardless of your ethnicity or your identity. In one of my geography classes, I remember the cities being described as a free city, a radical city. You had the freedom and a space to be who you were but also had the collective strength of the city to support you, especially the Rainbow community. I was brought up in a city in India, but I had never seen this side of the city. I only noticed this in my many visits to Karangahape Road. The pride flag themed pedestrian crossing and the occasional drink at bars like Eagle taught me about myself- it is okay to form new ideas about your-

self and move away from the identity that was always placed on you. For me it was acknowledging that I am bi and that I don't fully identify with the gender that I was assigned. Seeing these initiatives and safe spaces gave me the freedom and made me feel like the city was supporting the journey that I had embarked on.

Reflecting back on my journey with this freedom, I was very intrigued how Karangahape Road was a safe space for me to learn more about my identity?

How was it different from back home? Sticking to my parents' advice, I focused on my studies- I wrote my Capstone research paper on Karangahape Road. I studied the K'weens of K'Road- a drag show organised by the Karangahape Business Association and Queer AF to learn how the spectacle they created was a safe queer space and what were its implications.

Through the course of my research, I learnt that there were five ‘frames’ that made a safe queer space- **fortification, anonymity, inclusivity, separation, and control** (Hartal, 2018) and looking back I can see how Karangahape Road had glimpses of these frames to make it a safe

space. While there was no physical fortification the sense of community did provide a sense of safety from any sorts of violence. There still was the freedom to have your identity completely anonymous with no judgement, but at the same time shops would display different pride flags making Karangahape Road an inclusive space. Events like the K'weens of K' Road allows people to celebrate a particular part of their identity, in this case drag; and organisers like the Karangahape Business Organisation and Queer AF controlled the boundaries to ensure the space was safe for the people participating in the event.

Before getting on my flight to Auckland, I was really anxious on what the next three years were going to bring me. I was unaware of what I would learn about the world and more importantly myself. So to the Arshia from three years ago and to many others who might be are in my shoes from back then, I just have one piece of advice- **Enjoy your freedom.**



TABOO OR NOT TABOO

By David Tupou

Sex, racism, what you believe... all those uncomfortable subjects. Let's talk about it all.

I grew up in a conservative family, but I still talked to my Dad about everything. The chick I want to talk to, the ones I've talked to, the one I've... everything. To many of my mates growing up, that was unheard of, and they found it so different. I found the way they found this weird, weird. How could you not have that outlet with your family as I did. An Uncle/Aunty? A sibling? To many of my mates, there was a gap between talking about the stuff you talk to your closest mates about, with their parents or family.

Now, don't get me wrong. It's still awkward for me to talk about some stuff to my family, but for the most part I find it healthy to filter what goes on in my day-to-day with my Dad (and Mum too!). The amount of life experience these guys have, I will never catch up to them while they're here so might as well ask them errthing. I'd be a fool if I didn't tell them what I'm going through because of the excuse "they wouldn't understand". At least that's what I think.

However, this space is a mutual relationship built by all parties involved. My dad definitely made it easy for me to talk to him about all things. And of course, if my family didn't make it easy then why the heck would I bring it up.

"Ask my Nana that stuff? Bro, you're crazy!"

I know- but I urge you to try it out. Ask them what their first kiss was like or, didn't they find it awkward when they went on their first date? When did they realise their parents were humans as well and not just the superheroes we grow up thinking they are. Ask them about their past. Sometimes it's the innocent questions that gets the fire going.

Some questions I've asked my family members that have sparked up mean dialogue:

- Why did you choose to study what you did/ not study?
- When did you actually start to believe in God?
- Why don't you believe or What do you believe?

- How did you feel cheating?
- Do you regret losing your virginity like that?

Depending on your view, these can all sound like super normal questions, or they may sound crazy as hell to ask family about. Nonetheless, it is important that we establish talking points with the people who have been with us our whole time. For me, that's one thing that

sucks the most about being away from my family. The time it takes to establish that path towards the deep stuff in conversation. Recently, I was lucky enough for my family to visit for the last month. In this time, I realised it's literally the time doing nothing where I learned the most about my siblings, dad and Aunties and Uncles. It's in the long drives or the late nights talking about absolutely nothing.

These are the unseemingly gateways to the DMC's that are hard to get over the phone. Not to say it doesn't happen online, but the magic seems plentiful in these little "human" moments. I learned more about my Dad and older sisters in those moments doing diddly squat than in the last few years of communicating on and off over the phone. Just makes you think, when are we going to get those holograms like Princess Leia in Star Wars: A New Hope? Nah, hear me out if Elon can get us to Mars, mate just make us holograms already. For real!

Back to the story, whatever path you use to get to that DMC, use it to find something you never thought you'd talk about with your family. I know it's made my family unit tighter and my journey studying abroad better. Knowing that if my family has stuck by me through all

those dang failures and pitfalls and all the dumb things I've done (willingly and unwillingly telling them too), the road is a lot easier to travel.

So go out there and ask 'em which family member they hate! Nah don't (unless...). Stay curious fam!



PS Check this out if you want to see more!





TE TĀONGA O TE KAPA HAKA

*Ko Ngāti Whakaue tōku iwi.
Ko Ngāti Hurungaterangi tōku hapū.
Ko Te Arawa tōku waka.
Ko Rotorua tōku tūrangawaewae.*

*Kai ngā maunga whakahī, otirā, kai ngā moana āio o tēnā iwi, o tēnā iwi, nau
mai ki taku kauhau mō tēnei tāonga tuku iho e kīia nei, ko te kapa haka.*

Mauriora ki a tātau,
My name is Anipātene Biddle, and I am a product of all the different lessons and opportunities that come from this tāonga known as kapa haka. For generations kapa haka has been an instrumental part in the revitalization of te reo Māori, tikanga Māori and it has also created a platform for Māori to express the deep desires and conflicts of our hearts. What was once traditionally haka and mōteatea to our tūpuna centuries ago, has developed into a six-item performance that is show-

cased annually by many different groups, of all ages, from all iwi across Aotearoa. This writing will touch on my personal experiences with kapahaka and how this Māori treasurer has shaped me into the person I am today.

THE BEGINNING OF MY KAPA HAKA JOURNEY

I was 5 years old when I first stood on a stage. It was at my marae in Ōhinemutu, Te Papaiōuru,

alongside my whānau of Ngāti Whakaue. We were performing at the 100th Birthday of one of our kaumātua and although we may have only performed two items before the seniors took over the main performance, I remember feeling so alive and at home. It was in that moment - singing about stories of my land and my people in te reo Māori alongside my whānau - I knew that I was going to do kapa haka forever. As I grew older, I performed alongside my school, Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Koutu, at different ahurei and at regional and national competitions which helped my love for kapa haka grow. However, it wasn't until I reached the senior performing age for Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue that I truly found my footing in te ao kapa haka.

TE KAPA HAKA O NGĀTI WHAKAUE

I always knew that my first performance would be for Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue. It is my whānau group that my Koroua, my dad, my aunties and ultimately, my entire family have performed in. I remember getting excited for the time I could finally stand alongside my iwi and in 2018, that moment finally came. A little bit of a back story about Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue; our rōpū had not advanced to Te Matatini, the national kapa haka competition in over 30 years. Despite knowing that that was another possibility, especially with the high calibre of kapa haka in Te Arawa, performing is more to me than just competing. It is doing what you love to do, with the people that you love and telling the stories of your people to ensure they live forever. I remember the pride in my dad's eyes when he dropped me off to my first practice, I remember how emotional I felt when I put on my Ngāti Whakaue bodice and piupiu and most of all, I remember the cheers of my kaumātua when they announced that Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue would return to Te Matatini stage and represent our iwi at a national level. Once again, kapa haka made me feel alive.

Since my first regional competition, I have performed with Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue numerous more times, once at Te Matatini in 2019 and again at the Te Arawa Regionals 2020, where our efforts once again helped us advance to the following Te Matatini. Due to covid-19, Te Matatini has been postponed twice and if all goes well, our kapa, alongside many more, will get to see the

national stage again in February 2023. However, kapa haka is not just performed at competitions; we also participate in a variety of other kaupapa, such as events to celebrate special occasions, bid farewell to recently deceased loved ones, or maintain ties to Māori culture. Competitions take place once a year, but kapa haka is a gem that never dies.

MĀURUURU, TAHITI

Speaking of gems, this tāonga has taken me to both National and International stages. In July of 2022, I, alongside my whānau of Te Kapa Haka o Ngāti Whakaue were fortunate enough to travel to Tahiti, to perform at the Heiva i Tahiti Festival. It was the most magical experience that allowed us to learn more about our whanaunga over in Tahiti - their language, their culture, their histories - as well as share more about Te Ao Māori with them. Many people claim that Kapa Haka can't take you anywhere, yet the margaritas I sipped by the beach in Tahiti, on a 27-degree day with a clear blue sky, would argue otherwise. I'm not the only one that has travelled through kapa haka; my friends have performed in Rarotonga, Hawai'i, Australia, The United States, Spain, Poland and more. The world loves this tāonga as much as Māori do and I don't blame them.

KUPU WHAKAMUTUNGA

To finish my kōrero, Kapa Haka has been a guiding force for me. It has allowed me to connect with all different aspects of my ao Māori and my whānau. Don't get me wrong, a lot of time, effort and dedication goes into kapa haka, and at times it is challenging to be able to commit to, however, the positives always out-weigh the difficulties. I am super lucky to have this connection with kapa haka and I hope this writing has encouraged you to take up an experience of your own, whether it be learning a waiata, going to watch a performance or understanding kapa haka as a tāonga tuku iho, a blessing passed down. Although kapa haka may just seem to involve singing and dancing, it actually contains the means through which te iwi Māori will continue to exist forever.

E tū I te tū a Hinerēhia,
E haka i te haka a Tānerore.

New Zealand through my eyes

By Emily Ma



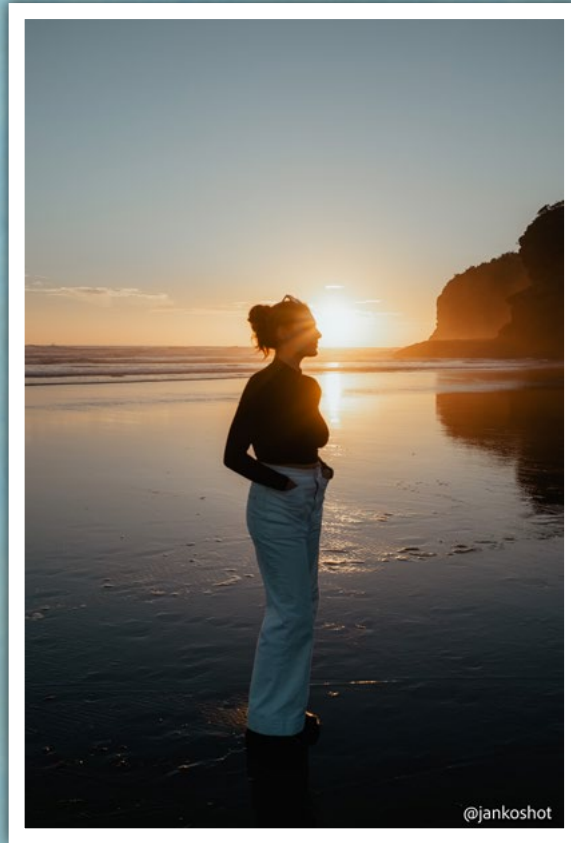
When we think of New Zealand, we tend to think of green. The grass, the native forest, and the green kiwi fruits. But when we look at this beautiful country from a different angle, we find that its beauty is not limited to green-related objects. Each unique snowflake on the green mountains is a sight to see, a beauty unlike any other.



Once you have travelled a lot, you will eventually find that the best way to get to know a place is to visit the local museum. A visit to a museum is an exploration of the origin, the past, the beauty and integrity. Maybe we can't always connect with museums, but we can always find the meaning of life down there.



What is behind this ancient and mysterious door are responsibilities, expectations and attitudes unseen by passers-by.



The ocean's horizon

As I stare at the ocean's horizon, I feel heavy.
 My heart is pounding.
 I feel the soft air caressing my skin and warming up my veins.
 I am not where I'm supposed to be, I need to break through the chains.
 I wish I could just go beyond,
 Cross over to the next bit of land,
 And discover what is hidden behind this blue vast.
 I crave the mystery, desire the adventure, long the thrill.
 My feet sunk in the sand, I want to take off.
 Where am I going?
 How do I get there?
 Who am I going with?
 Maybe time will tell.
 Attracted like a magnet, the waves pull me in.
 My body dives into the delicacy of my dream.
 This one finally, becomes reality.
 I elevate, my heart is light, my blood cools off.
 I reached across,
 This is it, I commence my journey.
 May time show mercy, I will be there, wherever it takes me.

Bonnie White

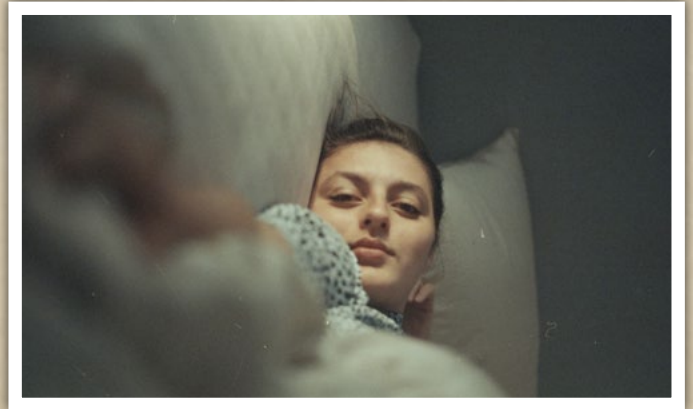
My reality

I can hear the sounds of these two words
Buzzing in my ears.
My reality.

I can go wherever I wish,
Meet whoever I want,
Accomplish whatever I fancy.
Never too far to reach,
Never too hard to obtain,
Oh, how beautiful my reality is.

I grew up feeling invincible.
I grew up believing nothing was impossible.
I grew up privileged.

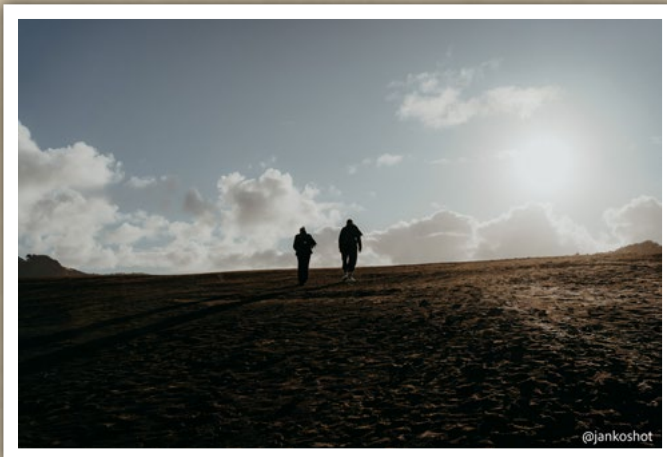
You don't know what real life is.
But what is the real world?
Coming out of my bubble,
I burst.
Recently, I started to see.
I began to recognise.
The luck, the opportunities, the freedom!

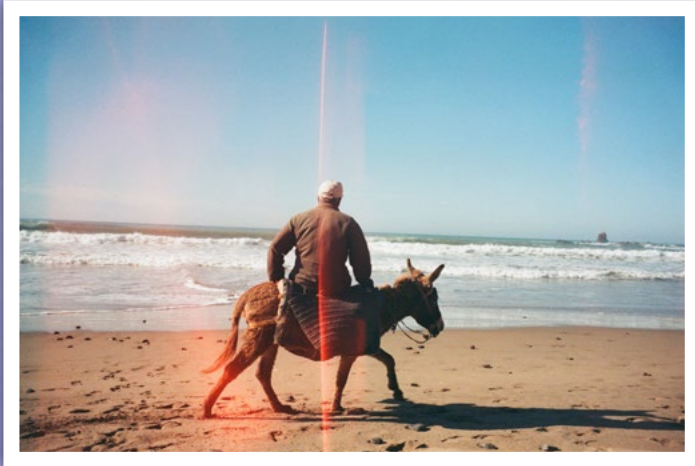


I travel the world and open my eyes.
I see treasures and wonders,
Kindness and love.
But oh,
I realise they are only a sheer curtain
Hiding misery and malice,
Violence and war.
My reality only exists alongside many others.
I go, I discover, I learn, I grow.
Others, that are so different from mine.
This reality doesn't just belong to me,
It is alive and feeds from others.

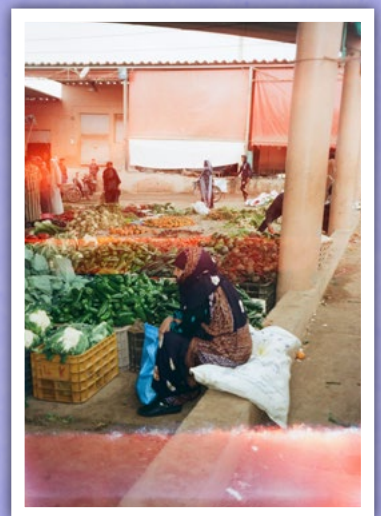
I want to grasp this privilege,
Learn to give it back.
The world is *our* oyster
And I am ready to attack.

Bonnie White





I left behind a home
 To a land I had heard of but was unknown
 I grew up in a place far away
 In a place that held my roots
 I remember my hometown like the back of my hand
 The intricately planned streets we cycled our way through
 The roof from where I could see the sunset's red hue
 The vendor who sold sweets in my street at 5pm sharp
 The kids laughing on the swings in the nearby park
 The huge pomegranate tree that leaned into my balcony
 The shopkeeper who always gave me an extra scoop of ice cream for free
 My friend next door who smothered me in colour every Holi
 I remember wanting relive this on the day before my flight
 I left it all behind
 And then I woke up in a room
 To the sound of a blaring alarm
 Making my way through a bustling crowd
 Revising in my head the cultural norms I needed to learn
 Walking into class with an anxious breath
 Only to realise something interesting
 All of us were sleep deprived, functioning through caffeine
 Each one of us waited for someone to say "Hi"
 We all yearned for a connection through this rush of growing up
 Just looking for a smile while the day goes by
 I think I understood something
 We were all the same
 I am beginning to fall in love with this place
 And it is no longer unknown
 It has been an intriguing journey
 From being scared to feeling loved
 But it was worth it
 To come to this point where
 I found people to call my own
 I found a place to call home



Samridhi Gupta



Finding a New Home

Dear me,

It's your first day in New Zealand and you have not made any friends. You've moved often enough to know that it's not an easy task and that it will take time. Even so, I know you're afraid. Don't be.

Tomorrow you'll go for a walk by the ocean and you'll think that you might be happy here. Next week you'll meet new people and you'll know that you're going to be happy here.

Over the years, as you meet new people, you'll tell stories of home: about the places and people you used to know.

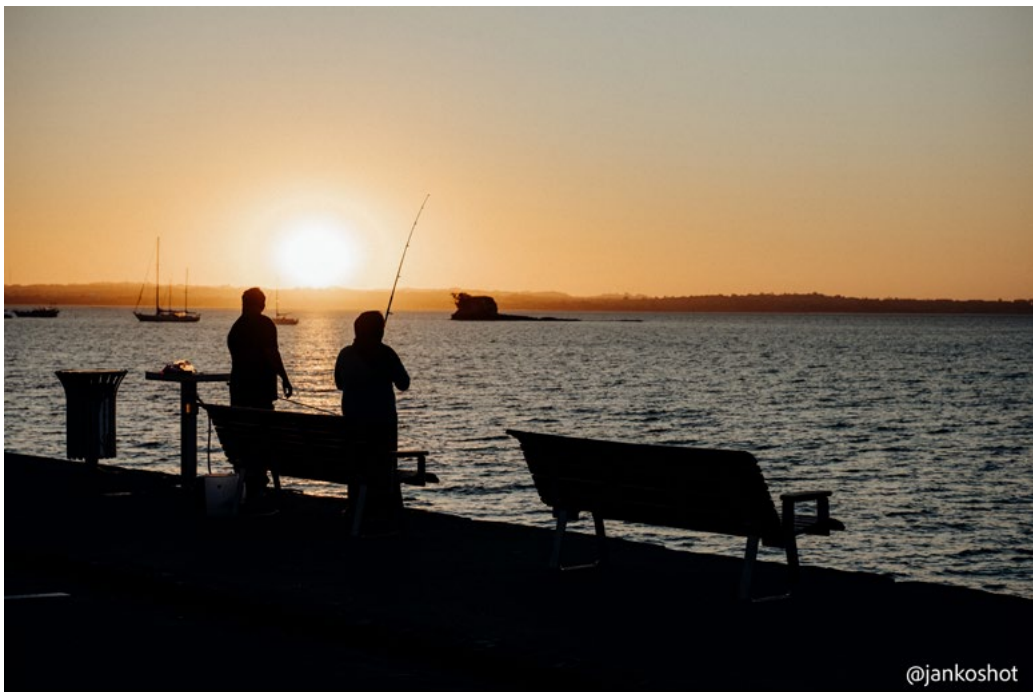
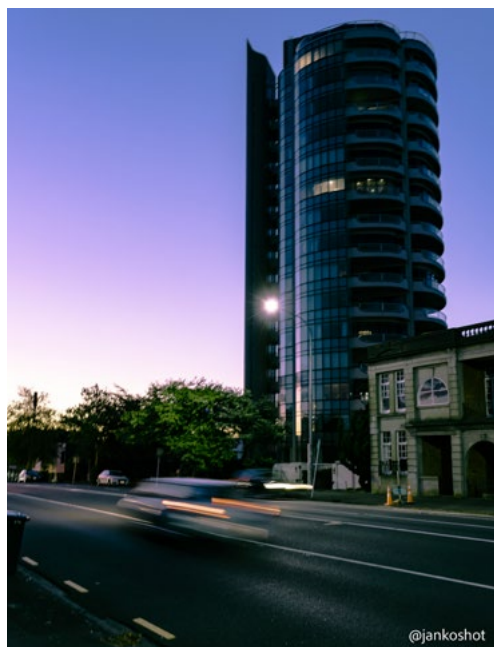
Your studies in this country so far from your home will be very challenging. You'll even want to quit once or twice, but you won't.

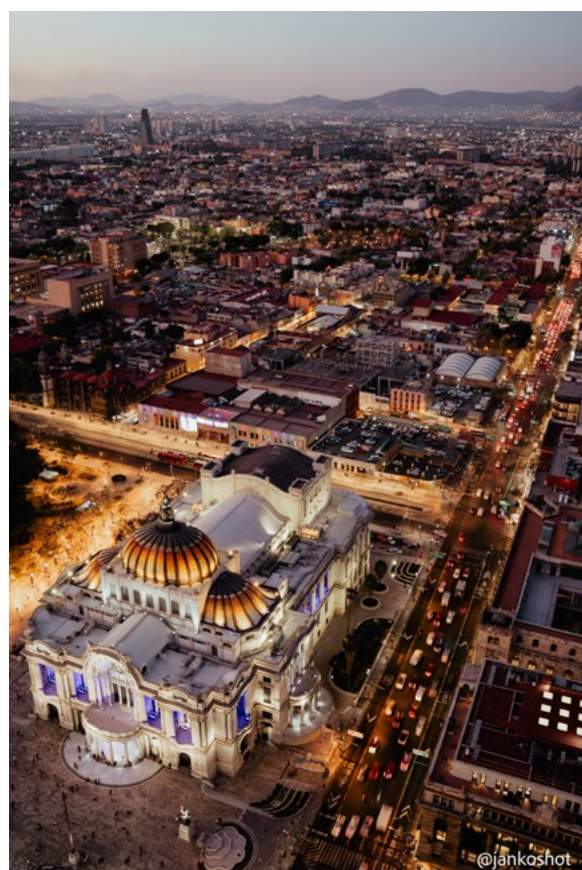
The people you meet and the places you see will change the way you see the world. Living in Aotearoa will teach you many things, but the most important lesson you will learn is about love. You'll learn to fall in love with everywhere you go, everything you do, and everyone you meet.

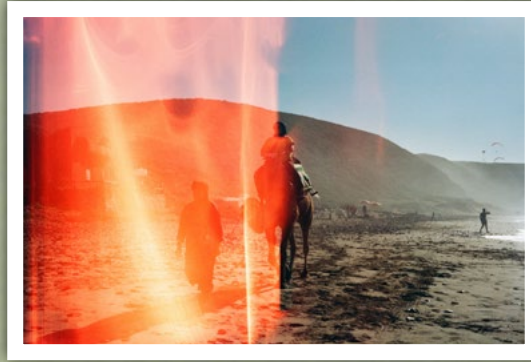
I am writing to you from three years hence. Today is our first day in a new city and we have not made any friends. We're afraid. But we shouldn't be. Tomorrow, as we meet new people, we'll tell stories of home: about the places and the people we used to know. But this time we'll be talking about Aotearoa, our new home.

Love,
Laura

Laura Frank







Where Do I Stand?

A land where I was born that I won't say I come from,
A land where I was raised that now feels like haze,
A land that I pay to live on so one day I can write a will on.
And of course, let us not forget the land that my heart yearns for as it gets torn by the white man.

I see a problem.
But the problem I see, I foresee no solution.
The problem was not made by me but is now my responsibility.
It is a problem even for she that is yet to exist with me in this debris.

Optimist.
I remain an optimist, hoping one day I'll break the stand of the white man.
Build on hope, love, and peace, take away the rope, whip, and leash.
Stand tall my dear neighbour, for our shoulders need be strong for she, so she can stand
on land that one day can never be no mans.

I fight for a system built by the bourgeoisie,
I fight for a system that I cannot foresee,
I fight for a system that never included me,
Why do I fight for a system that never included me?

Resistance,
The brave believed in community,
The brave believed in unanimity,
The brave believed in you for he and she,
So, I will rally the brave to relieve us from the debris.

I sing for a land where love can live, so hate won't try to replace it.
I sing for a land where easy should not get complex because a child's tears cannot
quench the thirst of conflict,
I sing for a land, so stories aren't narrated by silence so that equity isn't a question of
reliance,
I sing for a land so even the dead may rise and see,
That rejuvenation, reincarnation, and resuscitation is all karma for the done deed.

Varsha Ravi

mik, jy moet afrikaans praat [mik, you must speak afrikaans]

mik, jy moet afrikaans praat [mik, you must speak afrikaans]

i don't want to, i only speak english

hoekom? [why?]

afrikaans is jou moedertaal [afrikaans is your mother tongue]

the truth is i want to

ek wil dit praat [i want to speak it]

ek wil dit goed praat [i want to speak it well]

2000 was the year i arrived in the land of the long white cloud
on a humanitarian visa
my aunt's points got us in

it would be 11 years since i'd leave again
not back to that land
ever
but to another

jy weet [you know]

"the crime in south africa is bad"

that's what i'd say to people when they asked why i left

ons het gevlug [we fled]

i can see my nan laying
metal in her body
she is still
but she is breathing

sy is dapper [she is brave]

grandpa is there
his soul departed

hy besoek my [he visits me]
i share my thoughts with him

ma
your heart is broken

kan ek help? [can i help?]
i will spend my life into adulthood trying to mend you



i will sit in every therapy session and cry for you
i will tell them my story and it always starts with you

i will read books on generational trauma and wonder why i can't just fix you
and me
and all of us

when there's a chill in the air and i wear my blue coat
i feel at home
alone

mik, vertel my 'n storie [mik, tell me a story]
gee jou pa 'n drukkie [give your dad a hug]

well i dress like you dad
like when you were younger

shorts and a top tucked in
we have the same summer tan

i go to the water when i miss you
i even took up fishing

waar is my hanky? i ask myself [where is my hanky? i ask myself]
i always use it to wipe my tears

an heirloom holding an unexpected significance

how are things in eltham?
oh same old, you know there's not much going on here

yeah

het jy met jou suster gepraat? [have you spoken with your sister?]

nah not really

sy is jou suster, jy moet met haar praat [she is your sister, you must speak with her]

we don't have anything in common, i say
but we do

we share a burden
both our hearts have a little door
and inside is that story which shaped our upbringing

there is no manual to trauma



Mik Breitenbach

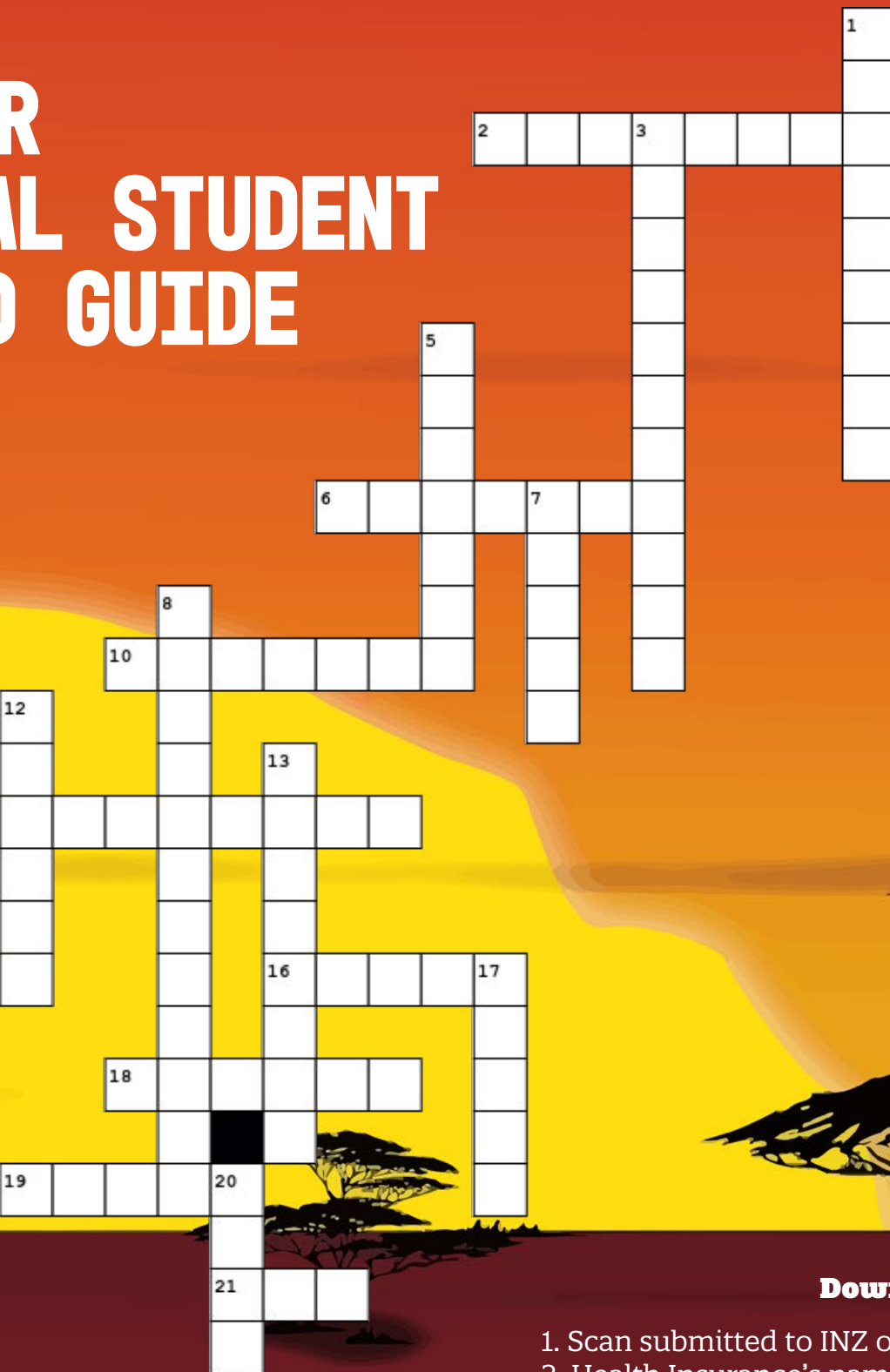
YOUR INTERNATIONAL CROSSWORD



Across

2. Students studying overseas enrolled at UoA
6. AUSA international programme
10. Student Bar
11. Some international students experience this when they first arrive to NZ
14. Best place for a holiday in NZ
15. International students wanting to stay in NZ want
16. Needed to use transport in Auckland
18. How do you greet someone in Te Reo Māori
19. National Voice for International Students
21. How many free counselling sessions do you get with UoA?

R AL STUDENT D GUIDE



Down

1. Scan submitted to INZ once every 3 years
3. Health Insurance's name
4. University of Auckland's new name
5. Closed for 3 years
7. Language test for visa
8. Minister for education
9. Tallest Building in Southern Hemisphere
12. Undergrad visa work limit per week (hours)
13. Land of the long white cloud
17. How do you get to NZ
20. Your students association



buddy programme
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