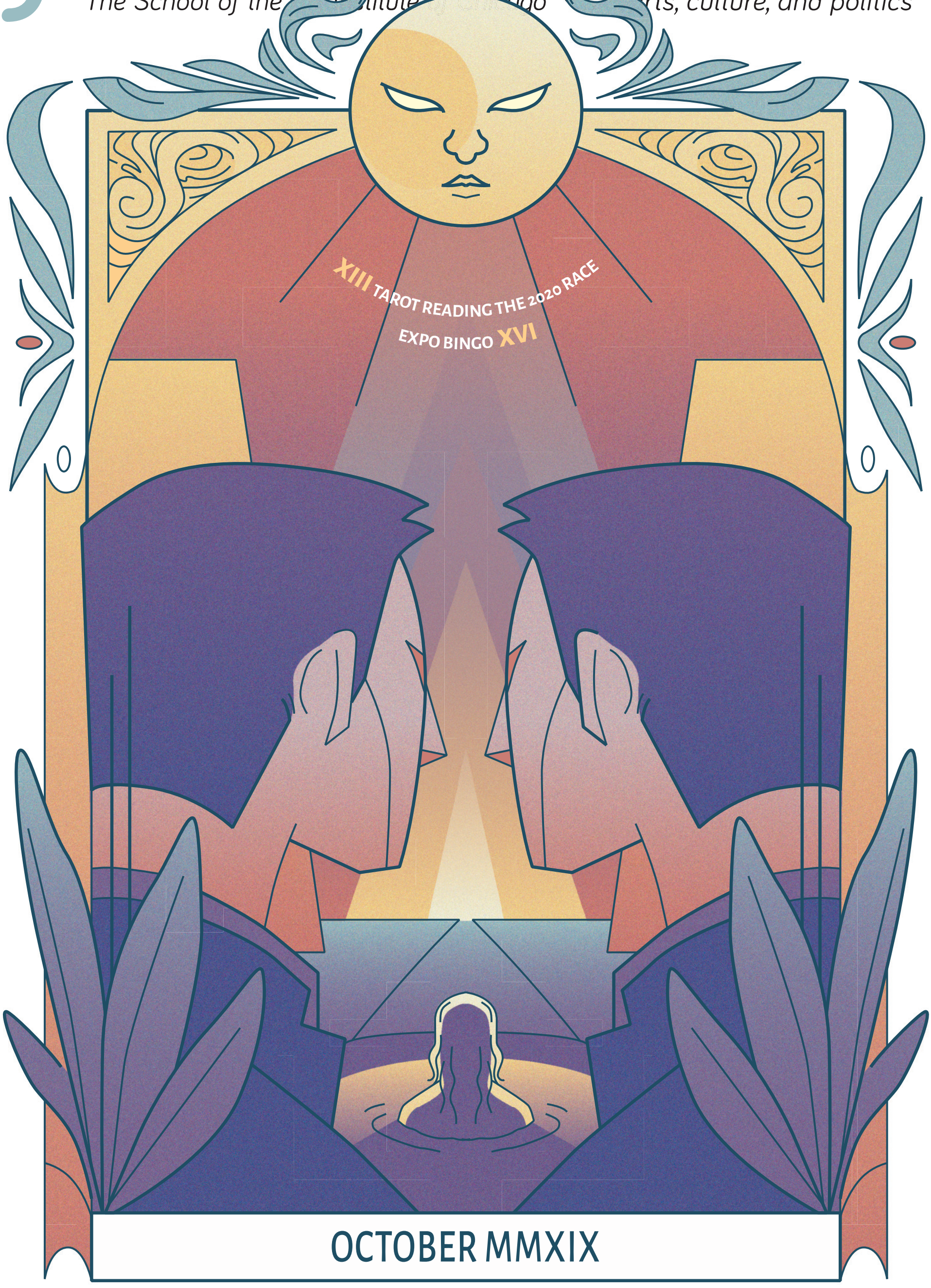
fnewsmagazine

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago — arts, culture, and politics



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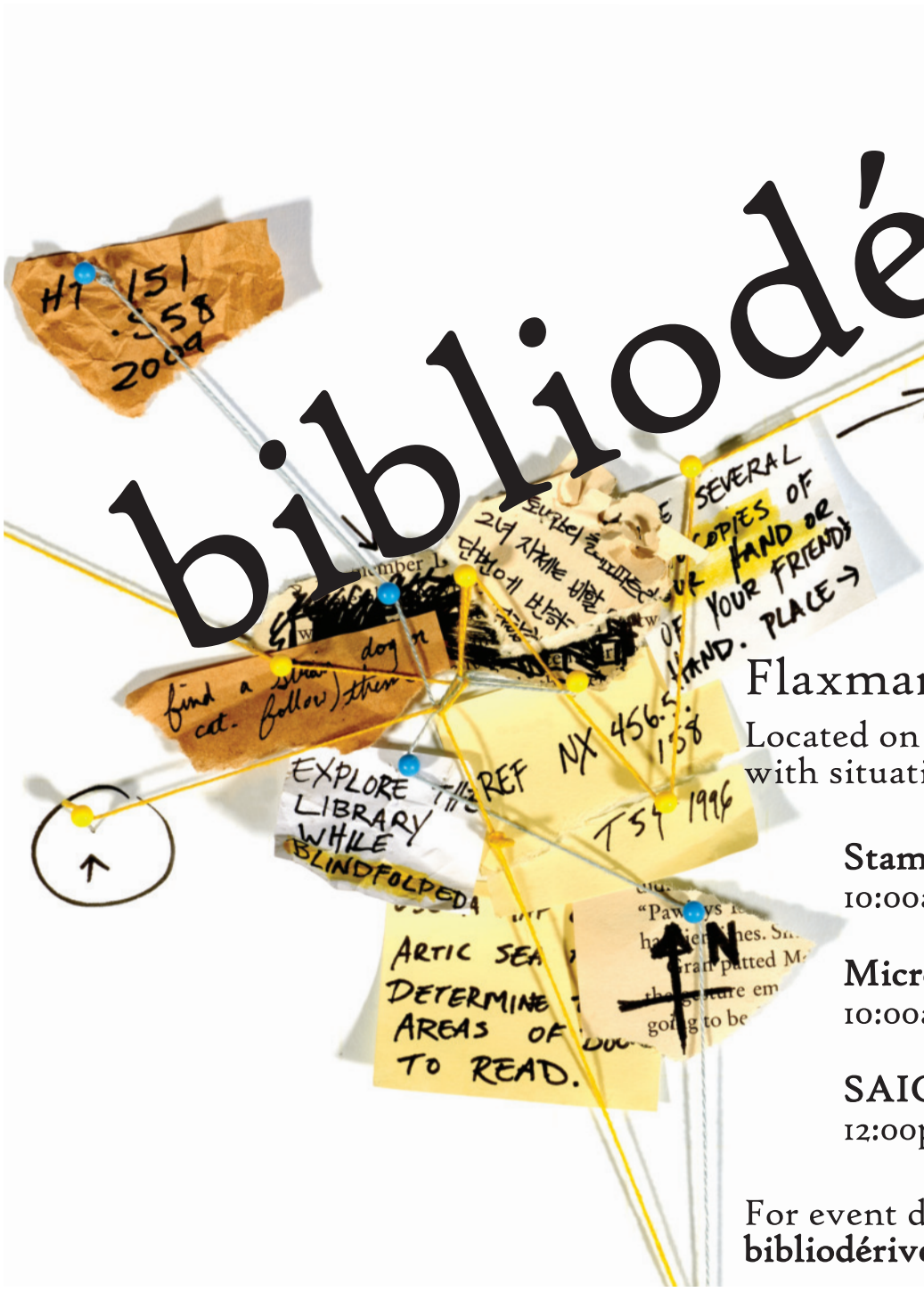

bibliodérive

→ October 31, 2019

Flaxman Library & Special Collections

Located on the 5th and 6th floors of the Sharp building
with situations and events throughout the day

Stamp Out the Patriarchy
10:00am - 7:00pm, 6th floor

Microbookmarking
10:00am - 7:00pm, 6th floor

SAIC Free Radio Dance Party
12:00pm - 1:00pm, Room 613

For event details and other ways to participate, visit
bibliodérive.tumblr.com

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fnewsmagazine

F Newsmagazine is a journal of arts, culture, and politics, edited and designed by students at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The print edition is published eight times a year, but articles are published year-round on our site, fnewsmagazine.com.

October 2019

SAIC

News

Cover: *Decisions* by Cat Cao **Interior Illustration:** *Bohn Jowers* by Raven Mo

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CUPIDS & CHERUBS

MFA student Ricardo Partida discusses his projects with sex work and the role of desire in his practice.

by **Dustin Lowman**

Dustin Lowman: Where are you from?
Ricardo Partida: Originally I'm from Mexico, from Ciudad México, Distrito Federal. My family moved to south Texas in 1998. I was about eight, nine years old, and I was raised in south Texas.

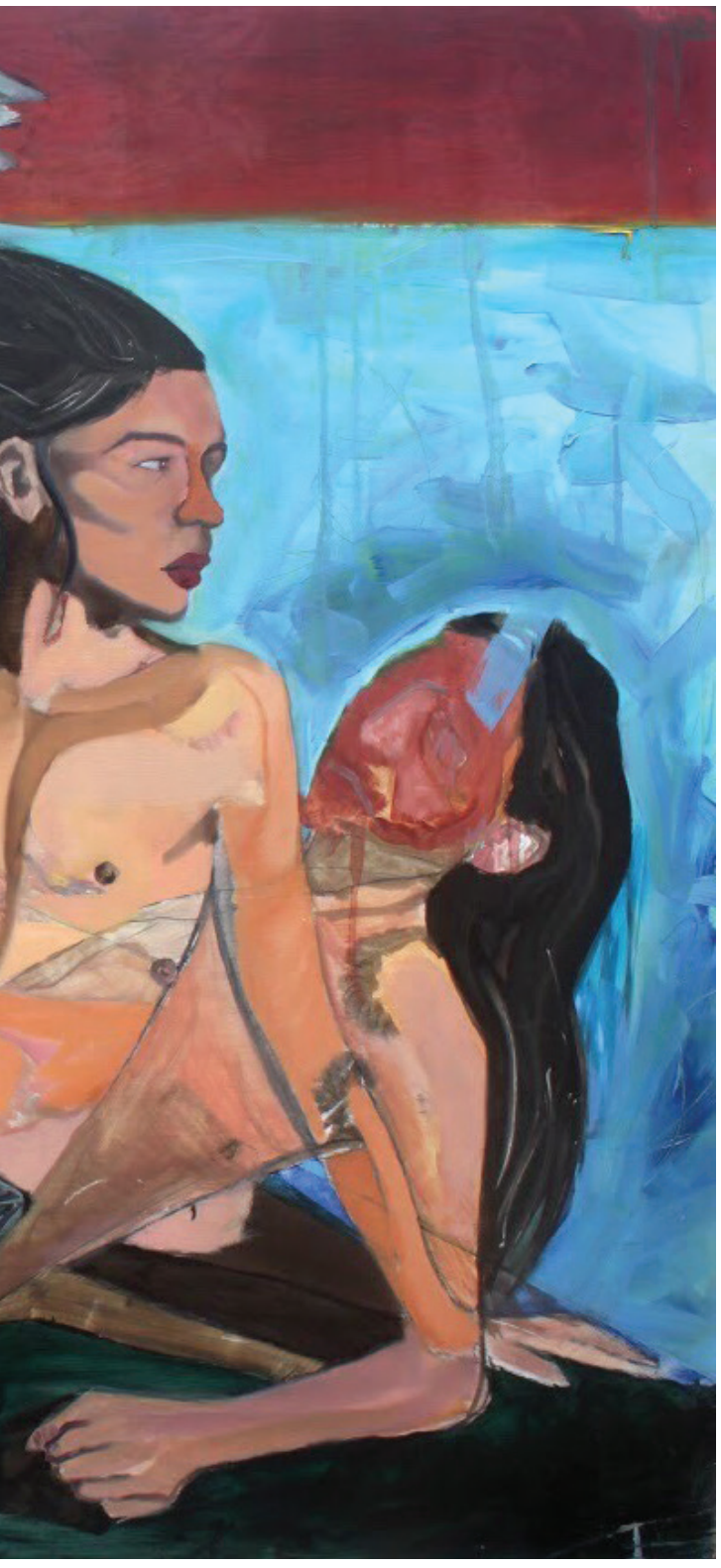
DL: What was the move like?
RP: It was a lot of adaptation, cultural adaptation, as well as an adaptation to the idea of Americana. I remember assuming that the entire U.S. was like Texas, but I eventually realized that Texas is its own little realm. What I believed to be Americana, or my impression of American living, was actually just whiteness, that I was interpreting as Americana.

DL: When did painting become essential for you?
RP: Back in undergrad, I had an art history teacher who instilled this idea of making contemporary art, placing myself in the canon, being part of a conversation. I had no prior training. I did some competitive jazz dancing in middle and high school, and I feel like that was something that propelled my interest in the figure, the way I interpret it, the way I draw it. I've always been really into Picasso, the way that he allows the body to take the shape of the frame, oblong itself to occupy space.

DL: When I first met you, you told me about art that was inspired by a community of sex workers. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that.
RP: So after I finished my four years of undergrad, I moved to the Rio Grande Valley, and I came across this community of sex workers in South Texas. Due to its being a tight-knit Catholic Latino community, the sex workers were not really talked about. I took it upon myself to fully submerge myself in the culture. For six months, I lived with and partook in sex work, to inform myself about what happens in the circuit. I've always seen the southern Texas border as a place where these kinds of communities thrive, due to non-documentation, lack of employment, a way to work when people lack green cards. Also, a lot of people in these spaces are transitioning, or they don't necessarily conform to conventional ideas of masculine bodies. They seek these communities out for shelter and support.

DL: How did you become aware of the community? And what was sex work like?
RP: I came across the community through the club scene. I've always really liked to party, to insert myself into the nightlife. It's a realm for possibilities, especially as a queer man. You can be whatever you want to be, however you want to be it. It's just for a night. They were very skeptical about me from the beginning, since I was

Ricardo Partida, "Bed Hopper," 2018 (left) and "Los Chicos de Gastel," 2018 (right). Images courtesy of the artist.



coming into this space as an academic, a green card holder, someone they knew didn't need to use the circuit to make a living. I met their house mother, who was an escort from back in the day, then did some pornography, and then moved back down into Texas. She would usually take a cut from whatever everybody made.
She provided a room, as well as protection and guidance. It was definitely a safe space, especially for sex work. I partook in the sex work not just as a way to prove myself, but to satisfy a curiosity, too.

DL: What did you think?
RP: It was really interesting. I thought it was just going to be a lot of sex, but it was mostly human interaction. There's a lot of doubt that people carry, and being a sex worker was being able to provide a safe space for people to be vulnerable, as well as allowing yourself to have that exchange. It was a lot of talking to guys about their dogs, or talking about their mothers. Dogs and mothers, and how concerned they were about them.

DL: What emotions did you take away from that?
RP: Empathy. I developed more of an empathy towards different types of people, that I wasn't quite aware of how to address or navigate before.

DL: How did you put that into creative work?
RP: I did some documentation, we took some photos. I used those to get a likeness. All the compositions were

"I've always wanted to depict unconventional bodies, unconventional ideas of masculinity."

referencing old masters' compositions, as well as other, different works that I found visually stimulating at the time. Michelangelo, Rembrandt, different ways to move the eye. In some of the paintings I actually included myself as a patron. I've always wanted to depict unconventional bodies, unconventional ideas of masculinity.
DL: What did your parents think? Did they know?
RP: Yeah, I remember telling my dad about it, and him being very worried about the police. He saw it as something I was doing for research — not only research for my work, but for my understanding of that space that I occupied, my connection to my community. He could appreciate that there was an investigation going on.

DL: And your mom?
RP: I don't think she knew. She was aware of the idea, but we never really talked about it. I showed her a body of work and I remember her being taken aback by it, really liking it. It was a win-win.

DL: You and I have talked about how desire is fascinating to you. Why is that?
RP: I've always been interested in the concepts of desire and menace. As a queer man, a lot of navigating heterosexual realms revolves around the gaze, it makes me aware of my safety, desire, the different dynamics which play into human interaction. I'm sure you've had the experience of entering a train car, and having somebody look at you. You wonder whether it's a gaze of desire or a gaze of menace. You don't know how to greet it, so you have to keep your guard up.

Over the summer, I ran into a scuffle at the Jackson connection, between the Blue and Red lines. There was a guy who was calling my friend and me derogatory terms, and I decided to turn around and scuffle with him. That was a moment of fight or flee. I remember the adrenaline going through my body, and I remember the gaze that we exchanged. I feel like that moment was a pivoting point to my practice that allowed me to become more interested in what that gaze was, different ways in which I could dissect it.

DL: There's definitely a desire in anger, in wanting to confront somebody like that.
RP: Also I feel like there's a thin line between the alluring and the menacing, the alluring and the grotesque, the push and pull that happens.

DL: So did you fight?
RP: Yeah.

DL: Did you win?
RP: I don't know. I think I might have lost. But we were fine. They broke it up and we each went our ways.

DL: So let's talk about this work, what you're engaged in now.
RP: Right now I'm working with these images of cupid, cherubs. I like to think of them as surrogates of desire, symptoms of desire or seduction. I started the series, it's called "Sweet Honey Iced Tea," an acronym for SHIT. It's right on the borderline between desire and grotesquerie.

DL: You notice immediately that they're all looking at you in an alluring way.
RP: Yes, and at times I like to arm them with knives or swords. Very reminiscent of that interaction that I was talking about, that exchange of energy, of looks.

DL: You feel something, but you're not sure what it means.
RP: Right.

DL: What makes you do a big one versus a little one?
RP: The little ones are made from the leftover palette for the big ones. So every time I'm working on a big one, before I wipe down my palette, I use the paint and create the little guy.

DL: I don't meet that many painters. I've heard painting regarded as passé. Is that on your radar at all?
RP: Painting being dead? Yeah, paint is dead. I hope we start the interview with this, that paint is dead. That said, I do think figurative painting is on the rise at the moment. I happen to be doing it. It's an intimidating medium because of the history that comes with it, the previous notions of painting we have, it's hard to place it in contemporary moment. You have this burden of history. The question is always how much to reference it, and how much to grow past it. I am highly informed by ideas of antiquity. They definitely propel my decision-making with these projects. I think a lot about Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Tintoretto. But at the same time I'm looking at Jonathan Lyndon Chase, Lou Fratino, Francesco Williams.

DL: So what's your dream? What's your ideal situation for yourself as an artist?
RP: I wanna be someone I'm proud of. I really don't see any failure happening other than not taking a chance. I took a chance to get into this program, and every day I'm taking a chance not to mess these up, to make good work. That's another reason why I make the little ones. At the end of the day, if I don't get one of the big ones done, at least I leave for home with a little one.

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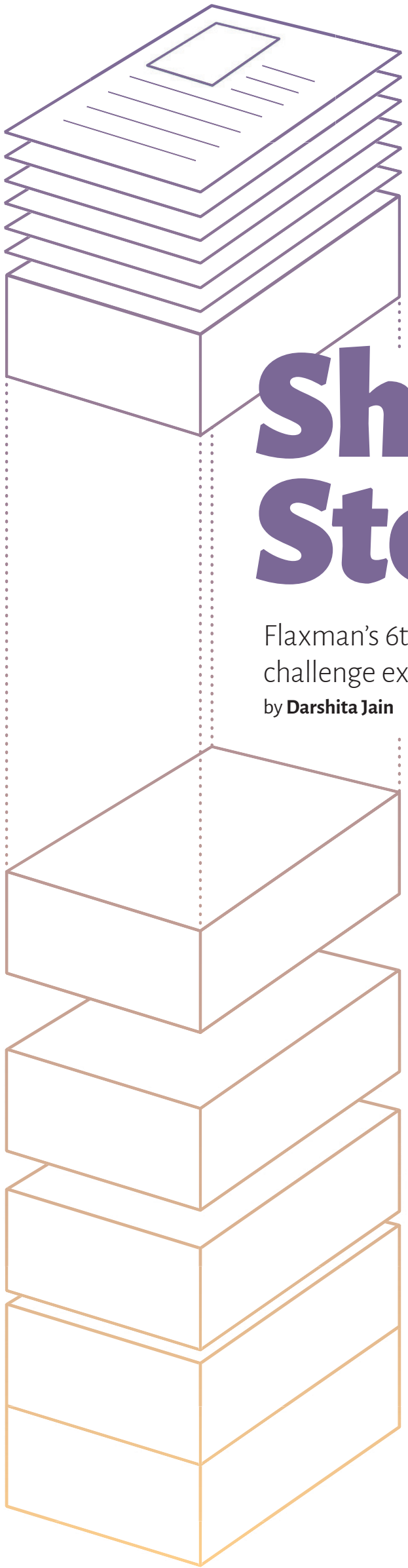
Dustin Lowman (MFAW 2020) is the SAIC editor at F Newsmagazine. In 2020, he would like to see a cardigan elected president.



Shelving the Stereotypes

Flaxman's 6th annual Bibliodérive seeks to challenge expectations in the library.

by **Darshita Jain**

When I was 7, my mother asked me to write down one-page summaries of every book I read. When I wrote a summary for her, she asked me to find ten words in every book I read that I didn't know and find their definitions. As an adult, I see what she was doing: helping me develop skills to abstract plot and narrative, understand and summarize, and comprehend complex words. I had stumbled onto research methods that I didn't even know were guiding the way I thought.

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago's (SAIC) Flaxman library holds more than 30,000 volumes, including books, sound pieces, games, and magazines. It is a resource built for study and research. On a good day, you can find at least 50 students in the library, working. But can a library be more than just that? Is a silent, serious, systematic space the only way to do research?

Is it okay to disrupt a library? If so, how do you do it? That is what SAIC's Bibliodérive — roughly translated to "library drift" — claims to do. Held together by the ideas of chance and serendipity, Bibliodérive has been held annually since spring 2015. The event is a one-day "disruption of the traditional use" of the library.

On October 31, 2019, Flaxman will have its 6th edition of the Bibliodérive. The first Biblioderive was conceptualized by then-Graduate Dean Rebecca Duclos, who uses similar concepts of disruption and play in her own practices.

As told to me by Research & Instruction Librarian Mackenzie Salisbury in an email, the event has two main components: Situations and the Prompt Deck. Situations are typically large-scale performances or actions that

Illustration by Nura Husseini

happen at a specific time or throughout the day. Often using the library space as a prop, Situations are proposed and facilitated by faculty, students, staff, and sometimes entire classes.

The Prompt Deck is a deck of cards with prompts that use "playful construction" as a way of interacting with library space. They intend to help expand the scope of the library beyond just reading. Once prompted by the deck, the library becomes a venue for exploration and play with research and discourse as seasonings.

"Most people think the library is where you come to find a book that you are already looking for," Mackenzie explained, "or to read something where you then gather the information that you can use later. While these are traditional ways of thinking about the library, it can also be a place for discovery, a location to use intuition, or even make connections that we might not otherwise think of. The library space has a lot of stereotypes like organized, quiet, and unknowable. By opening our space up to the community to play with and utilize in different ways, we hope to encourage folks to question those norms."

"We have Mean Girls in the library and John Coltrane's sound pieces in the hearing room. Who knew?"

I asked Mackenzie what her favorite Bibliodérive experience was. "In spring of 2017," she said, "we had 'No tengo las palabras (I don't have the words)' in which a student selected the number of books [authored by Latinx immigrants and published in the U.S.] equal to the number of people that have been deported from Chicago — a sanctuary city — since Trump became president. They then tried to carry them for the duration of an hour, but there were so many, the student just kept dropping giant stacks of books, which was alarming to hear and see — but very effective. My favorite Deck Prompt is 'While walking through the library, listen to others' conversations, find a book by searching for words overheard.'"

Mara Seay (ARTH 2020) attended Bibliodérive last year. When I talked to her, she expressed delight in the performance put together by Dean Arnold Kemp and other sound experiments. However, she thought the whole thing felt more like an experimental art installation in the library or a series of library orientation activities with a twist.

"Perhaps this is because I'm a tactile, visual person and not an auditory learner," said Mara, "but I learned more about the Joan Flasch collection through the experience, and the Flaxman collection already does great collaborations with classes. If there were little 'mobile collections' in various buildings, or perhaps art pieces by students inspired by books on display, I think it would be more accessible and less disruptive."

Many undergrads and new SAIC students were excited about the event. A friend in the Historic Preservation department reveled in the moment of reprieve from the research. Nothing in Bibliodérive was a part of her actual work, but it was interesting to get to know the library in a newer way. "We are after all in an art school and Bibliodérive is just a day of break from the Greenburgian theory and thesis deep dive. We have 'Mean Girls' in the library and John Coltrane's sound pieces in the hearing room. Who knew?"

There are other ways of gaining knowledge. It doesn't have to be so cut and dry. Like my mother's exercises, you can learn without knowing it. I remember, during last year's installment, the word that came to mind was "play." The event is participatory — like a choose your own adventure game — and intends to help students look at the library as a place for collaboration, experimentation, and potential, not just as a supporting resource. Sometimes, the greatest thoughts occur when you are not looking to find them. Sometimes, you stumble on inspiration.

Bibliodérive will take place for one day across the SAIC campus, opening any and all resources to drifting, including the school's Video Data Bank, the Fashion Resource Center, the Joan Flasch Artists' Book Collection, and more. Since the event only lasts one day, some students cannot participate due to their schedules. But, Mackenzie says, "We have talked about extending events over a few days, or even a week. That's still a work in progress, so stay tuned!"

Darshita Jain (NAJ 2020) is the Lit Editor of F Newsmagazine. She oscillates between being the human version of a question mark and an exclamation point.

Ethical Dilemma

The DOJ is relaxing ethical guidelines for college admissions. Will SAIC be affected?

by **Leo Smith**

Minor changes with big potential impacts are coming in college admissions policy. The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) publishes a code of admissions ethics that most American universities follow. But the Department of Justice (DOJ) has completed an antitrust investigation and concluded that this code is illegally restricting competition among colleges.

The potential suit is against NACAC, not the universities themselves. NACAC is an association of admissions counselors and high school guidance counselors. They pass their ethical guidelines by collective consensus. Most colleges choose to follow them, but none are binding. The May 1 "Decision Day," for example, is a NACAC guideline, not a hard rule. Member colleges follow it voluntarily.

NACAC's current code of ethics includes recommendations about recruitment and student "poaching." The DOJ alleges that three of their policies prevent student choice.

The first rule under review is against financial incentives for early decision (ED) applicants: "Colleges must not offer incentives exclusive to students applying or admitted under an Early Decision application plan." Such incentives could include housing, financial aid, and special scholarships.

The second is a rule against trying to recruit students who have already decided to enroll elsewhere, or "poaching": "Once students have declined an offer of admission, colleges may no longer offer them incentives to change or revisit their college decision."

The third is a rule against soliciting transfers from students enrolled elsewhere unless they have requested transfer information — another form of poaching.

The Department of Justice believes these provisions "restrain competition among colleges." Rather than face a lawsuit, NACAC will likely remove these recommendations from their code of ethics.

The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC)'s admissions may be affected by the removal of these provisions. The removal of the first rule will not affect SAIC directly, as it is not an ED school. Some of its competitors, however, are: The Maryland Institute College of Art, Cooper Union, and the Rhode Island School of Design are all ED schools which could potentially begin increasing incentives for their ED recruits.

The current NACAC code advises against recruiting students who have already declined at SAIC, or who have enrolled elsewhere. SAIC's admissions director, Vice President of Enrollment Management Rose Milkowski, said that SAIC has no plans to start doing so.

"No, I think we are not going to be going after students after May 1," she said in an interview.

Normally, after May 1, SAIC's admissions department sends the names of all their accepted students to a clearinghouse (an independent national database). SAIC admissions then requests data on where the students who were accepted, but not enrolled, ended up attending.

Under revised NACAC guidelines, SAIC would be allowed to continue reaching out to those students after May 1.

But, said Milkowski, "No, we're not going to be aggressively recruiting students in the summer."

As for the third guideline, it is not SAIC's current policy to solicit transfers. The aforementioned clearinghouse provides the data that would be required to do so. Under revised NACAC guidelines, SAIC or competing art schools would be able to send unsolicited transfer information to each other's enrolled students.

The Department of Justice believes these provisions "restrain competition among colleges."

Applications and attendance at SAIC are steadily increasing. Likewise, demand for a four-year college education has been steadily on the rise for the last few decades. Last admissions cycle, SAIC received 7,000 undergraduate applicants, its highest number yet. 2019 is SAIC's largest incoming class in history.

However, there is an upcoming downturn in the number of high school graduates in the United States. This is due to a decline in birthrate during the Great Recession, 2007-2009. Starting in 2025, the number of people turning 18 and starting college will drop in most states. According to a study from Carleton College, the number of college applicants will drop by 15 percent between 2025 and 2029. According to the same study, demand for degrees from elite schools will keep increasing during that period. As a result, colleges may be competing for a smaller pool of students in the next few years.

Many admissions officers have criticized the repeal of these guidelines. Admissions officer Brennan Barnard asserted in Forbes that this change would actually restrict student choice further: "If colleges are permitted to offer incentives ... then students will experience even more pressure to make choices about college prematurely. FOMO (fear of missing out) will drive an applicant's college search rather than an intentional focus on finding a college that will match their strengths, interests and hopes."

Milkowski agreed: "My opinion is this: There is an admissions cycle." When it ends on May 1, students and families have closure. "Now, post-May 1, students are going to continue going through the process they've already been going through for months." A 12-month recruitment cycle, she said, will be stressful for all parties involved.

NACAC will in all likelihood pass these changes to avoid a lawsuit from the DOJ. According to a NACAC member email, the association will vote on it next month. "The likelihood of a consent decree — as well as the prospect of a continuing investigation and possible litigation ... leaves NACAC with little choice."

Illustration by Cat Cao

Leo Smith (BFA 2021) is the managing editor at F Newsmagazine. Their vinyl collection consists of one (1) Tchaikovsky concerto.

Rideshare Giant, Going Up

Neofuturism and Uber's new lease on a historic Chicago site

by **J. Livy Li**

463,000 square feet of programmers, a potential helicopter pad, and whispers of futuristic air Ubers may not be the first things one associates with the Old Main Chicago Post Office, but the future may find a home in the long-forgotten landmark as soon as spring 2020. Overlooking the Chicago River, nestled among a crop of major transit buildings, the old post office is set to become Uber's second-largest headquarters, an intersection of their Freight, Eat, and Ride branches.

The prospects are monumental: The transport giant promises thousands of new jobs and millions in real estate investments. This refocusing of transit in such macro scales as shipping containers to such micro scales as Chinese takeout — in a historical building no less — immediately recalls and perhaps accidentally pays respect to Chicago's past as a major transportation hub, the raison d'être of its nickname, "The Second City." Uber's revitalized interest in small-scale aviation, in particular, presents a new frontier in spatial programming that is especially bold. Considering the history of how transportation has shaped and developed the urban fabric of Chicago, Uber's acquisition might induce a vision of science fiction upon our landscape.

Illustration by Ishita Dharap

A crash course on urban blocks and the automotive city

When viewing a map of Chicago, it's striking how the blocks become negative space and the streets become threads weaving and intersecting. Architects often use the term "urban fabric" to denote the stuff a city is made of — neighborhoods, demographics, density — and how these different facets intermingle and flow together. It's hard to imagine, then, what Chicago would look like without any streets cutting through the layered cake of skyscraper blocks, or without the articulation of the many bridges stitching the Loop with the West Side. Perhaps the fabric without these man-made boundaries would become an amorphous blob, for better or for worse.

The far-reaching effect that transport has on the formation of modern urbanism cannot be understated. In Chicago, major geographical features both informed and were further defined by large-scale transportation. For instance, the development of the Loop area was largely tied into Lake Michigan's proximity to the Mississippi River, thus making the city the biggest inland port in the world because of its longitudinal access to the rest of the continent. The downtown core was further built up as a result of Chicago's location in the lateral center of the country, making it a key junction in early railroad routes. In short, the city grew as an intersection of two major axes of transportation. From there, mainstream adoption of cars brought the urban fabric to a much higher resolution. With the advent of the automobile, regulatory laws came into play that designated roads to be car-centric.

In creating separation between the distance that pedestrians and their four-wheeled friends could occupy, the paved spaces between lots grew ever wider while buildings had their own growth spurt, notably after the invention of the elevator. The end effect, observable in the downtown area of Chicago especially, is that streets read like valleys, carving out negative space between megalithic modernist towers.

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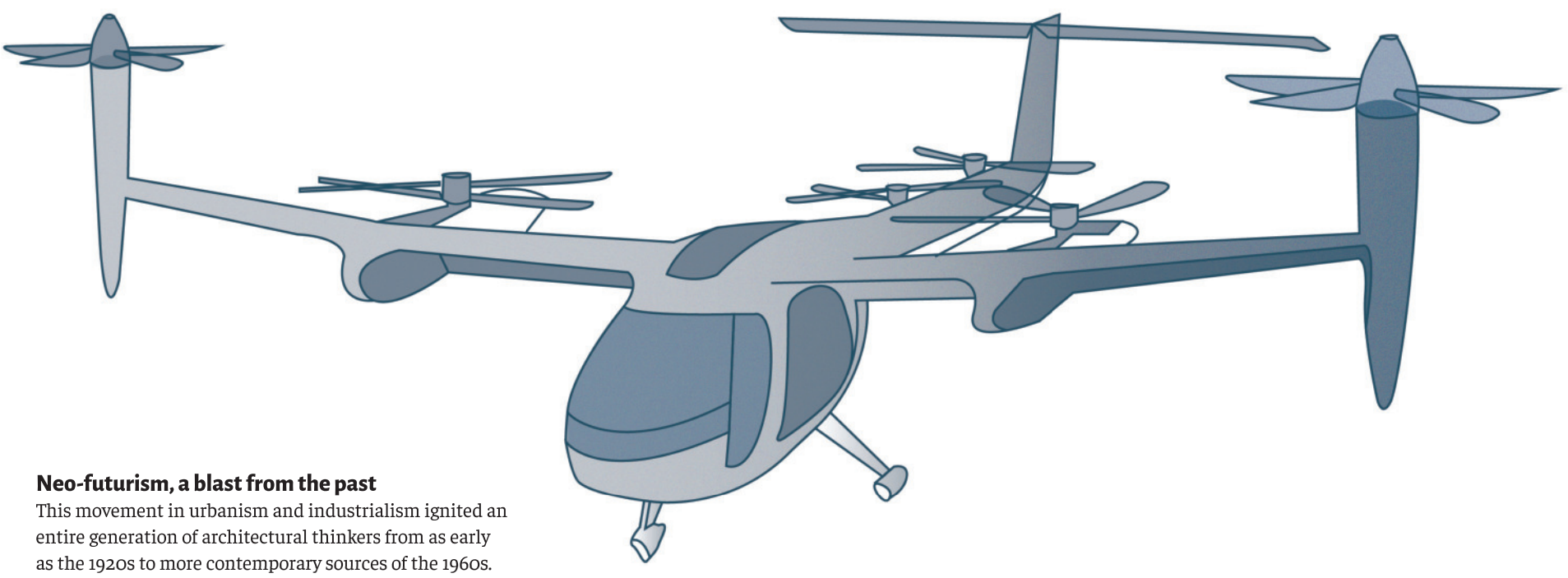


Neo-futurism, a blast from the past
This movement in urbanism and industrialism ignited an entire generation of architectural thinkers from as early as the 1920s to more contemporary sources of the 1960s. Take, for instance, “Walking City” by Archigram, a collective of avant-garde British architects active from 1961 to 1974. Archigram has a history of candidness in crediting their inspirations, including their confrontation of post-war issues with emerging technologies. Proposed in 1964, “Walking City” is a series of drawings depicting a massive ambulatory city, all contained into one big shell. The Cold War was in full swing, so Archigram envisioned this city roaming a post-apocalyptic landscape, able to dock as needed to refill supplies. This was no doubt inspired by the technological advancements of a world preparing for nuclear war, including increasingly large forms of mass transportation. Such developments led to the ubiquity of the steamboat as a mode of transportation. After all, Archigram existed in the same century as such mythicized goliaths as the Titanic. In observing the aforementioned drawing, there’s a sense of kinship with the water traffic of Chicago; notably, consider the similarities between the large-scale vessels migrating through the river this month, floating from dock to dock, the bridges of the city lifting to accommodate their scale.

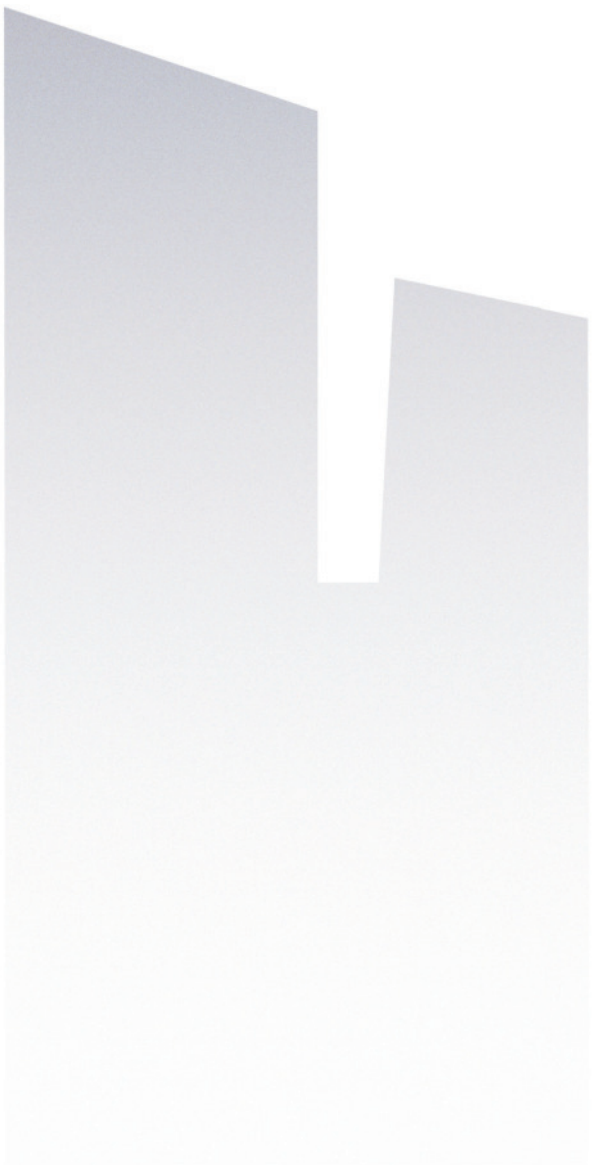
Another reference, this one to the future, can be seen in the project’s leggy stature and angular gait. To the modern viewer the “Walking City” may resemble the All Terrain Armored Transport (AT-AT) of Star Wars fame; but in the real world, Archigram managed to predate (by one year) General Electric’s Cybernetic Walking Machine, a 3000-lb transport device designed to carry groups of infantry over large swaths of rough terrain. Here, it is unclear whether life inspired art or vice versa.

In the way Archigram’s flight of fancy spoke to a near future manifestation of comparable real-world technology, Uber’s proposal of air taxis in Chicago can be linked back to earlier architectural imagination. Harvey W. Corbett was one of the first to hypothesize about the future of cities as inspired by transportation. In 1925, he published a spread in Popular Science Monthly entitled “The Wonder City You May Live to See.” Included was an imagined section perspective of a busy street, featuring four different modes of transportation (five including foot traffic). The cut-line reveals a stacking of paths, with the topmost datum reserved for pedestrians, the next for slow-moving traffic (large rigs, trucks), followed by fast-moving traffic (personal cars) and finally at the very bottom, a train tunnel. Overhead is a blimp ambling through the buildings, the sky labeled ‘Aircraft Landing Fields.’ As fantastical as this design may seem, some of these ideas have manifested in cities. The subterranean paths immediately bring to mind the organization of Lower Wacker Drive and the underground train that we know today as the subway system.

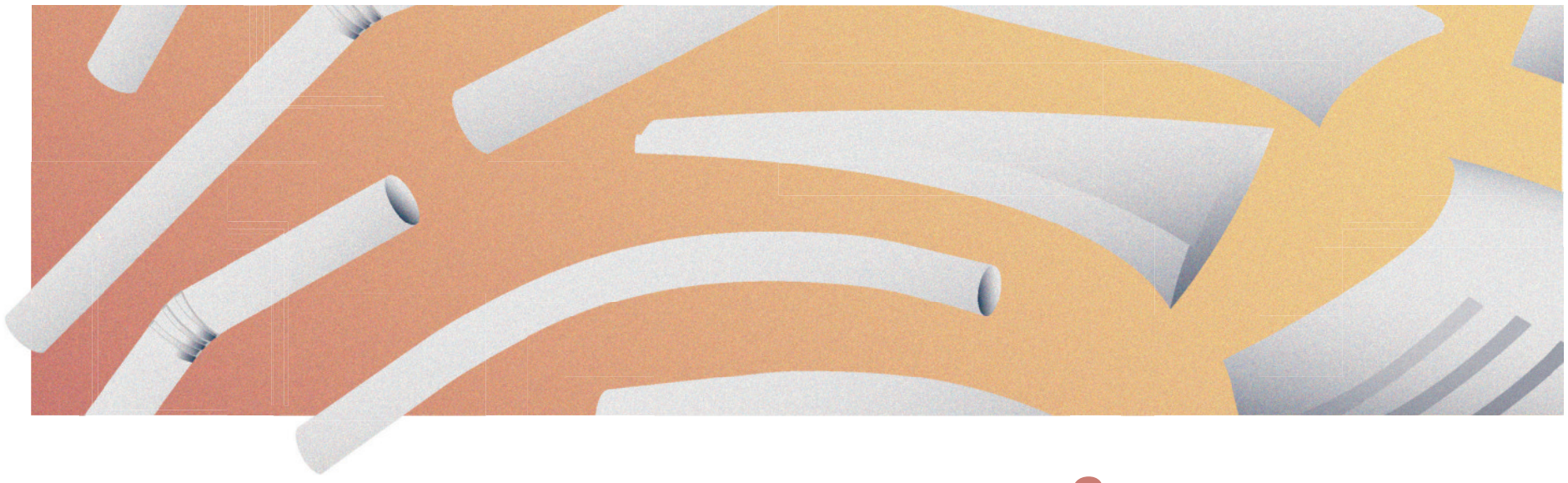
When viewing a map of Chicago, it’s striking how the blocks become negative space and the streets become threads weaving and intersecting.

Now consider Uber’s proposal of the air taxi, the inception of accessible, almost casual aviation, backed up by a company with the influence to organize fleets of such technology, and centrally located in a major metropolis. While the idea of the blimp as readily available transportation may not have come to fruition, the reality remains that air taxis have the potential to fulfill yet another of Corbett’s prophecies.

Uber’s expansion to Chicago offers the potential to reimagine our city’s skyline and produce a new datum of transportation. Recalling the fantastical predictions made by architects of past decades, the proposed methods of travel offer current architects the opportunity of carving out a new space in the sky. As Archigram once wrote, the purpose of the structure — the city, the building or as one could argue, architecture at large — is ‘to provide an umbrella within which growth and change can take place.’ The time has come for this generation of theorists to address the possibility of an updated urbanism, a newer neo-futurism.



J. Livy Li (BFA 2021), as per her Tinder profile, is into responsibly designed spaces, law, and where they intersect.



Green Herring

Opinion: In the face of climate change, the straw bans are a straw man.

by **Olivia Canny**

A dismal reality looms over those of us who make deliberate attempts at maintaining a sustainable lifestyle: Our metal straws and reusable shopping bags make a difference, but their impact on our consciences is much more pronounced than their impact on the planet. These efforts on the part of individual consumers are not futile, but it's crucial for us to understand how our contributions compare to those of multinational corporations and the governments that regulate them.

This past July, The Guardian reported on the concerning rate of deforestation in Amazonia, emphasizing Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro's laissez-faire attitude towards the commercial entities that operate in the region and his administration's non-committal involvement in the Paris Agreement. Bolsonaro's policies go beyond passivity and negligence. Aware of the most devastating consequences of deforestation, his administration offers these businesses a warm welcome with profit-thirsty arms.

Back in the Northern Hemisphere, we passionately share satellite heat maps on social media, then step outside to wheel our sorted recycling bins out for curbside pickup. It feels like the least we can do. We relinquish our waste to the powers that be, and hope for the best. Out of sight, not quite out of mind, but close enough.

In mid-July, NPR's Planet Money released the second part of an exposé on recycling that, for me, felt like taking a horse-sized red pill to the eco-conscious paradigm that I know I share with most Americans. The symbols and practices of recycling are deeply woven into our social and cultural infrastructure. Unfortunately, the meticulous care that we take when sorting our cardboard and mixed plastic is rendered obsolete as soon as the contents of those blue bins meet the gates of private waste management facilities, where "trash" and "recycling" often become one. It's not entirely the fault of said facilities: As soon as China stopped buying our trash and selling it back to us in the form of polyester t-shirts, the whole system fell into chaos and flames.

China's fateful National Sword policy, which limits the amount and type of recycled materials it imports for processing, went into effect in January 2018. This initiated a sharp increase in the cost of domestic recycling, a cost which countless cities cannot accommodate in their budgets. Some cities burn their residents' recycling and convert it into electrical energy (with the obvious consequence of increased air pollution). The alternative involves paying a quadrupled rate to monopolies like Waste Management Inc., which, upon finding a recycling bin to be "contaminated" with even the slightest amount of food residue, will send the contents to its own landfills, escalating its own profits. As consumers (and often responsible disposers), we have every right to feel devastated with such dismal odds, but it's important for us to understand the fate of our waste, our role in its journey, and ultimately, our alternative routes towards enacting change.

The individual's commitment to sustainability cannot compensate for the lack of commitment among industrial giants.

So, we're part of a deeply complex and flawed system that forces us to maintain a level of self-awareness, ultimately breeding guilt for our own inevitable participation. Unfortunately, the individual consumer's commitment to sustainability cannot compensate for the lack of commitment among industrial giants, like the 100 companies that are responsible for well over half of global greenhouse gas emissions from 1988 to the present day. China's coal industry takes the lead, with ExxonMobil, BP, and Chevron following close behind.

Bans on single-use plastic bags and straws teeter on the edge of inaccessibility as they affect individual consumers in other areas. At the end of the day, sustainable lifestyle adjustments are relatively simple and affordable, but they place a level of responsibility on the consumer that diminishes the magnitude of corporate contributions to environmental degradation and the liberties granted to these entities. We need emissions regulations and politicians with sustainable agendas more than we need localized straw bans.

Jair Bolsonaro is a fatal symptom of an insidious mentality. Like our own president, Bolsonaro appeals to the masses with a gaudy populist agenda, paving the way for the type of capitalism and conservatism that places environmental welfare on a distant back burner. The most discouraging aspect of this conflict is Bolsonaro's recent finger-pointing at environmental groups as the cause of the fires, and his administration's hindering of the crucial deforestation prevention efforts of the Amazon Fund.

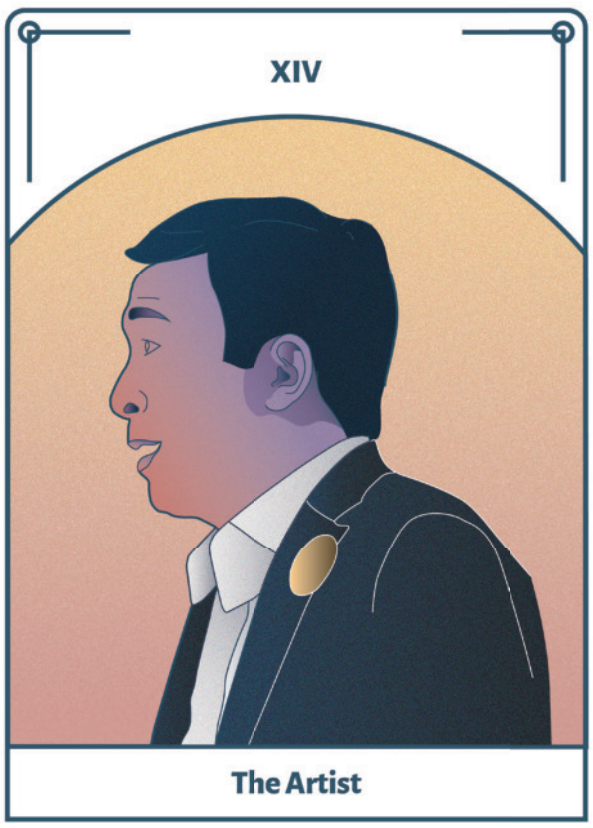
Such politicians virtually reverse the prospects of charity, activism, and ethical consumption. We can't let such a grim truth push us too deep into cynicism, though; there is one ultimate act of engagement that may be our saving grace. Zero-waste or not, we need to mark up every page of every ballot that we can get our hands on, and throw them in that fateful bin. Our voting power is more potent than our individual investments in solar power.

Illustration by Audrea Wah

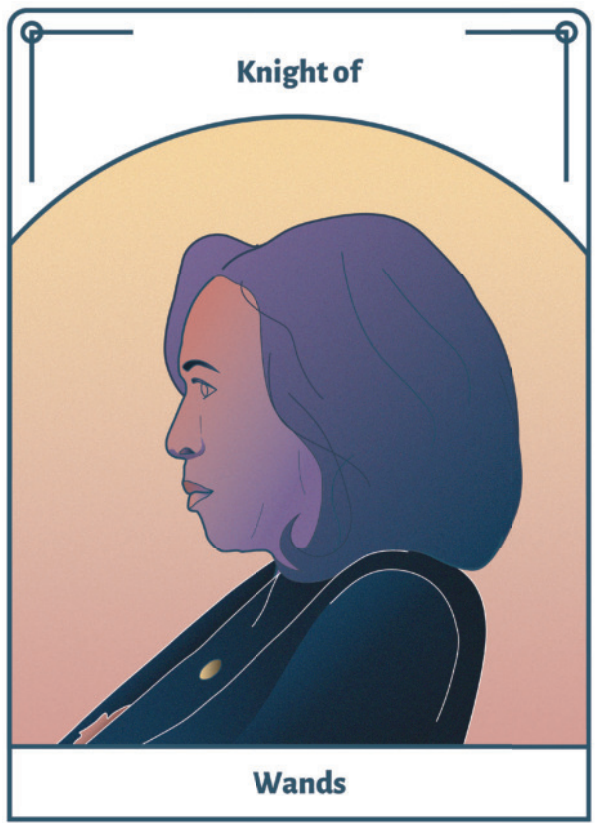
Olivia Canny (NAJ 2021) is the news editor at F Newsmagazine. She likes taking long walks on Google Street View.

2020: What's in the Cards?

A tarot reading to predict the presidential election



The Artist



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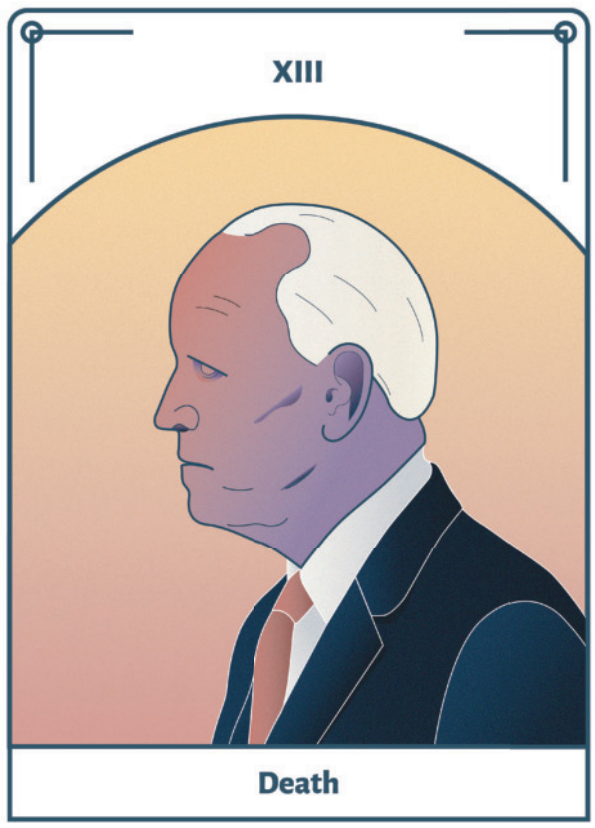


Death

by **Leo Smith & Cat Cao**

The presidential race seems to start earlier and earlier every election cycle. Everyone is clamoring for predictions, but it's too early to know anything of substance. Or at least, so the liberal media will tell you. But here at F Newsmagazine, we're committed to getting answers, so we sat down with a tarot reader. Han Lumsden (BFA 2022), a practicing witch and a clairvoyant by blood, walked us through the process. The three cards drawn represent past, present, and future.

Illustration by Nura Husseini

Leo: How will the 2020 Democratic primaries play out?

Past: Knight of Wands
The Knight of Wands represents accomplishment and adventure, but also deception. The Knight tells "little white lies," pretending to serve the needs of others while accomplishing nothing of value for anyone but themselves. "Shiny deception," as our reader put it.

Interpretation: *Politics as usual, right?*

Present: Death
Not as bad as it sounds, Han assured us. The Death card represents change and new beginnings. When pulled at the right time, it is a good thing. But sometimes that change can be dangerously irreversible: "We might fear that what's happening cannot be changed, and it's being changed in the wrong way." In the coming months, a big change will come, and we will have to let go of the past.

Interpretation: *Joe Biden will, finally, drop out. Andrew Yang will leap ahead into the top five before also dropping out. Marianne Williamson will see a brief poll spike when she releases a campaign ad where she hypnotizes viewers into donating to her campaign, and the resulting FEC proceedings will drag on for several years.*

Future: Nine of Pentacles
A mission has been accomplished. This is a self-reliance card. Following a lot of hard work, a lot will be gained. Looking to the future, said Han, there is great potential for change for the better: "Probably, whoever wins is going to be the right person."

Interpretation: *Buttigieg will shift gears into a highly successful lifestyle blogger while defense consulting on the side. Beto will see reason and go run for Senate instead. Sanders will leave to run as an independent, with Yang as his VP. (They will earn 3% of the popular vote next November.) The final democratic candidates will be Warren, Harris, and Booker.*

Cat: What will the consequences of the election be for the American people?

When Cat pulled for this, all three cards came out upside-down. This means that, in the reading, their meanings are reversed.

Past: The Artist
The Artist is the vessel of creation. This card represents mankind at its most upright and stable. The reverse, unfortunately, represents restlessness, greed, and instability. Said Han, this read implies that the voting in 2016 was driven by selfish, judgmental, and restless emotions.

Interpretation: *Yeah. Sounds about right.*

Present: Seven of Swords
This card represents dishonesty, stealth, and destruction. Look at what you've done! But in reverse, it represents taking responsibility, acceptance, and a turnaround.

Interpretation: *The backlash against Trump will leak from the left into the right as the trade war escalates and hinders the flow of discount MAGA apparel.*

Future: The Fool
Appearing at the beginning of a journey, the Fool is the spirit of innocence, uncorrupted and unpredictable. The Fool avoids responsibility. Reversed, the Fool represents negligence, apathy, and carelessness. But it also means the opposite of impulse, and a sense of responsibility that things need to be fixed.

Interpretation: *The American people will grit their teeth, take a deep breath, and start voting in their local elections.*

Leo Smith (BFA 2021) is the managing editor at F Newsmagazine & Cat Cao (BFA 2020) is the art director. They would both love to pet your dog.

Flour in the Desert

Emma Robbins discusses her practice, her Navajo upbringing, and her new exhibition “, her x mark.”

(From left to right) **Emma Robbins** “Treaty No. 16,” 2019, Blue Bird Flour Bag, horse hair, thread, 20 x 16 in. ; “Treaty No. 9,” 2018, horse hair, jingles, post cards, 20 x 11 in. ; “Haashk’aanz,” 2019, porcupine quills, rez wood, yucca fruit pods, 21 x 12 x 4. Images courtesy of Mickey Gallery.

by **Chava Krivchenia**

Walking down Grand Avenue on a Friday this July, I stumbled on a crowd of people eating sno-cones outside of a gallery. The sno-cones had come from Mickey Gallery, rather than the standard gallery opening wine and cheese. The contemporary art gallery in West Town, which is run by Mickey Pomfrey, was showing the work of School of the Art Institute Chicago alum Emma Robbins (BFA 2013). Robbins based in Los Angeles and the Navajo Nation, but spends some of her time in Chicago. She was present for the opening of ", her x mark," which included installation work, wall pieces referencing food package branding, and recipe instructions. Robbins directs the Navajo Water Project and maintains a rich research and studio practice. Between her time in LA and on "the rez," we found a time to speak on the phone to reflect on her show at Mickey Gallery and to discuss her making process.

Chava Krivchenia: How would you describe your relationship to art and craft growing up, before your time at SAIC?
Emma Robbins: I am from the Navajo reservation. I myself am Diné, which is another word for Navajo.

Growing up on the rez, you are always surrounded by arts, and I think it sometimes gets into that complicated conversation about what we consider as "arts" and "crafts." As artists, we all know this is a huge debate which can get very political. Growing up, I was surrounded by lots of making, specifically with the types of materials that I use now. These include a lot of things traditional to the Navajo nation and to our culture, but also things that are more modernized, like the flour bag, which is from a mill in Colorado that's owned by a white family. I also use modern day supplies, and of course different things that can be considered "rez." And also things that are very pan-indigenous, such as quills, which are not native to the Navajo culture.

My mother's side is Jewish and from Chicago, and so I grew up spending part of my summers in Chicago. I would actually go to the Art Institute a lot. So my practice is a marriage of both of those things.

I never really saw myself as someone going to art school. It was more like, "I want to make art." On my father's side, my grandmother wove and made jewelry, and that was always something in the back of my mind.

"I never really saw myself as someone going to art school. It was more like, 'I want to make art.'"

CK: Many of your pieces are assemblages of objects that you have woven or sewn together. What do you look for in objects that you incorporate into your work? Where do you go to find the objects?
ER: I love bling and the super embellished. I like the idea of Native Bling, which would entail gold jingles and turquoise or heavily beaded things. A lot of my work is very labor intensive; sewing takes a thousand years. I'm currently stitching a paper piece, and it's like, "I know how long this takes, but does anyone else know, does it even matter?"

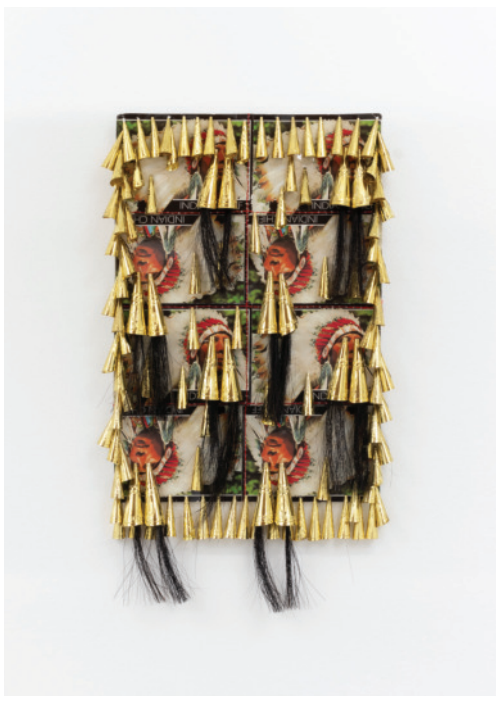
I work a lot with hair. I am very drawn to that for a number of reasons. Hair is very taboo in Navajo culture. In Navajo culture, we have a lot of witchcraft and different ideas around that, and hair is something for me that represents the very personal. It's interesting to see how hair is assigned to these different ethnicities. And when it comes to Native Americans, it's always so bizarre to me that it's this long black hair that's always in two braids, in terms of pop culture, no matter what tribe you are or what indigenous nation you're from. In Halloween costumes, it's always an "indicator" of who is Native or not.

In terms of the flour bags, that's something I've been working with forever. A lot of that comes with the idea that Navajos are very DIY, which comes from most of us not having a lot of money. And figuring out how to reuse a material, like a cloth bag that flour comes in that we are making food with. And I love the idea of using these materials in ways they haven't been used before. So, for example, with the flour bag, they might be made into aprons or purses, or things that can be hung up on a wall. A while ago, I made a corset out of the flour bags.

CK: Your work at Mickey Gallery in Chicago this summer contained messages of social and environmental justice. How does your object 2-D/3-D practice relate to your social action work?
ER: It's only when I see my work in bulk that I realize there is an Earth component. As a Navajo woman who grew up on the reservation and who does a lot of activism, I see that there is just no way of separating ourselves from our Mother Earth. I always think it's interesting when people can separate themselves from Earth, whether they're indigenous or not. Whereas for me and many other Navajo people, when our Earth is hurting, we are hurting.

It's also such a delicate atmosphere in deserts and people always forget that. I have had people visit me on the rez and they assume that there is no life here in the desert. This couldn't be further from the truth. We do have a lot of plants and resources, including things like uranium and other ores that are mined.

In terms of my profession, I am the director of the Navajo Water Project, which is under the umbrella of a human rights organization called Dig Deep Water. My responsibilities as director are a huge part of what I do everyday. I advocate for folks and work with water to make sure we are protecting one of our most precious natural resources.



CK: Your Mickey Gallery show hosted events which centered around Navajo foods. What is your mission in providing community events, especially in Chicago?
ER: I am always thinking about community and how to bring people together. Eventually, I want to have an art space. One of my goals is to bring people into a space, like a gallery, who may not normally be there.

In Chicago, many of my Native friends aren't involved in the art world, in terms of galleries or museums. So to be able to reach out to other Natives or friends and say, "Hey, I'm having a Navajo taco dinner, will you please come," gives an opportunity for them to come and experience feeling welcomed. There's no longer the "Other" mentality or an implication that you have to dress a certain way to enter.

I also like bringing experiences to folks who might not normally have the chance. One example is a Picadilly, which was served at the ", her x mark" opening reception. Most people won't come into contact with a Picadilly, which is a Kool-Aid slushie with gummy bears and pickles in it, and so that opens up a lot of conversations. People say, both on and off the reservation, "That is so disgusting. How can you even eat that?"

Well, why do you think we use foods like this? It's because we are located in a food desert. We only have 13 grocery stores in a sovereign nation the size of West Virginia. And most of these grocery stores don't carry vegetables or fruit. We eat fried breads because that's what the federal government rationed to us. Lard, powdered milk, flour. Again, it goes back to that idea of DIY, and how we claimed these things and made them our own.

Chava Krivchenia (MA 2020) writes about and works with contemporary sculpture artists. Her favorite things include the color orange, bats, bubble baths, and poppies.

Our purpose in going was no longer to see art that would inspire us, or to purchase art for our respective collections. We just wanted to win at BINGO.

Gaming the system at Chicago EXPO 2019

Going to EXPO Chicago has me thinking about malls, which leads to pondering the Crystal Palace. Like the Crystal Palace, the poshest exhibition space in 1851 London, the best mall where I grew up was clad in glass. Technically, it had an enormous skylight and strategically placed windows, but all that natural light is part of what made it seem upscale. This is where important shopping trips would take place, not unlike a destination art fair.

At the mall, we would park and walk through a department store filled with yellow artificial light, briefly look around before exiting to the hub of small retail and fast food, into my beloved blue room. My mom would ask, "Why do you call it the blue room?" "Because everything is blue!" What I meant was this: Southern California sunlight streams in through the glass roof and fills this '80s-pastel meets Y2K-silver atrium with cool natural light that bounces off every gleaming surface.

My local mall and the Crystal Palace have about the same square footage — around one million — which is over five times larger than EXPO, a good reminder that our local art fair, already overwhelming and difficult to navigate, would happily extend itself into Lake Michigan if it were profitable.

EXPO feels similar to other conventions I have visited and worked at (for running and specialty food, respectively) in that they all claim to be nexuses of industry culture. But due to the cost of participating they inevitably represent what is predictable in the market, the ideas that already possess commercial appeal. This is, in part, what my fellow EXPO conspirator Leah Gallant and I hoped to show by creating an EXPO Bingo board.

Between searching for Hans Ulrich Obrist lookalikes and checking the price for a glass of Ruinart, we repeatedly observed that much of the art we initially encountered online was disappointing in person. Navy Pier's Festival Hall does not have any windows to facilitate glittering sunlight, but in our pockets we have screens that glow.

In 1936, the Crystal Palace burned down in a fire that began in the women's cloakroom. An article in Life Magazine the following month wrote that the fire had "turned the roof of the central transept into a rain of molten glass." While speculating about destination commerce and the internet's role in mediating our lives I keep thinking about that description. What does glass look like when it burns?

— Kristin Leigh Hofer

Illustrations by Ishita Dharap

Kristin Leigh Hofer (BFA 2020) wants to talk about what you've been watching lately. Ask her about the best Pop Danthology.

BINGO

The most supreme sensory experience I had at last year's EXPO Chicago, Chicago's extremely well advertised art fair, was when I accidentally stumbled out of it and into the plastic surgeon's conference that was also being held at Navy Pier. They gave me a glass of bright green champagne, which I chugged while looking around shiftily before returning to The Art.

This year, Kristin had the brilliant idea of going prepared with EXPO Bingo. We drafted twenty-five categories of things we thought we would be likely to see: Monitors Displayed Diagonally On The Floor, LOL ... Plants, and Trash Item That Is Better Version of Art, for example. Naturally, Hans Ulrich Obrist, the Swiss celebrity curator and a moderator for some of this year's panel discussions, is at the center of our world.

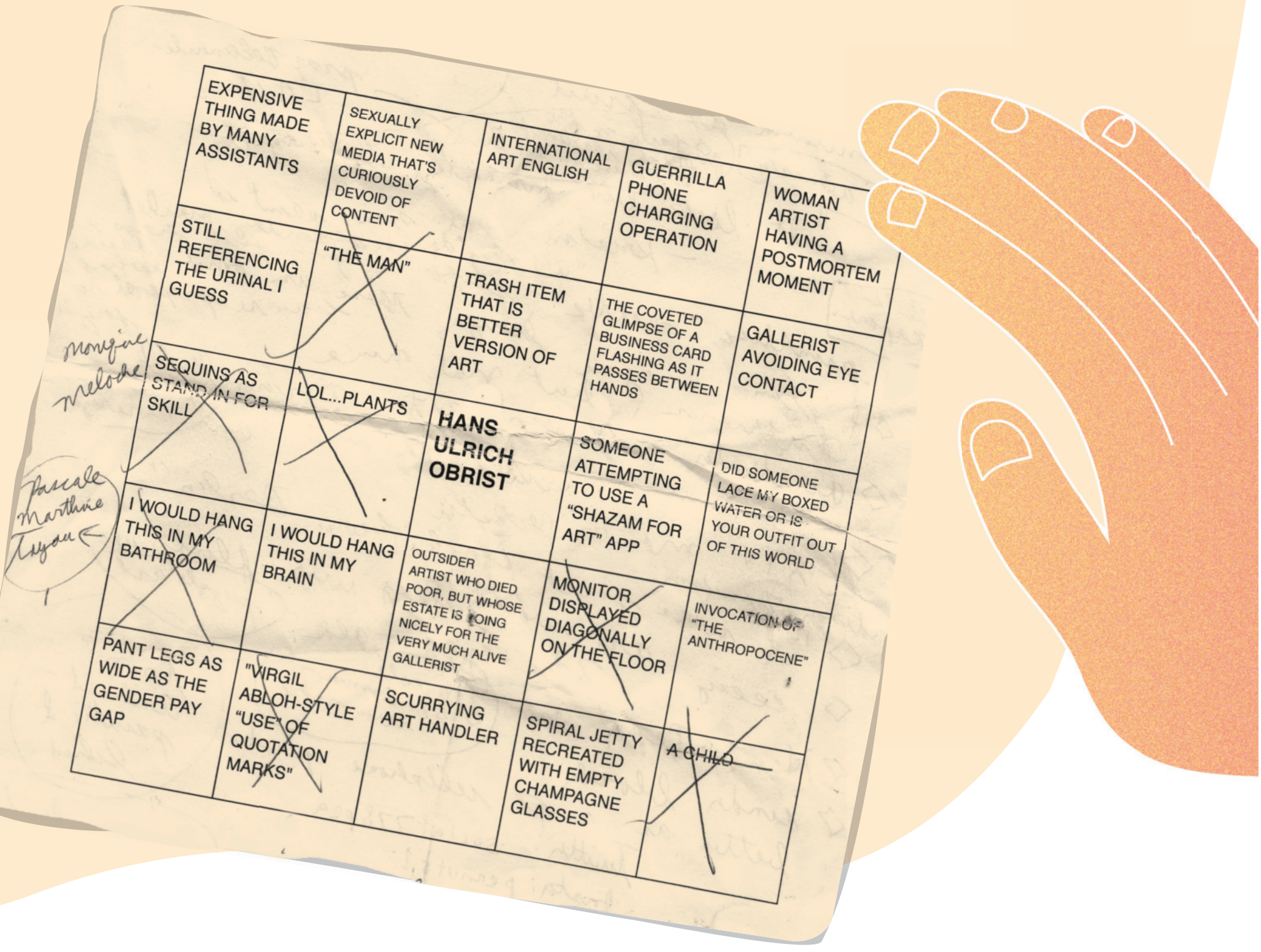
I think this is what writing criticism of art fairs might look like: a schema of fragmentary descriptions that brings together the lived experience of going to an art fair, the social world of it [the aforementioned scurrying art handlers, running into people, the slow, soul-congealing effect of several hours in the aquarium lights of Navy Pier] with the experience of the art itself, in which there will always be moments of brilliance and lucidity. Well, sometimes. Our purpose in going was no longer to see art that would inspire us, or to purchase art for our respective collections, which totally exist. We just wanted to win at BINGO.

Some of these categories were difficult to decide. While probably many of the things on view would have fit into Category One ("Expensive Thing Made By Many Assistants"), we kept holding off for something really spectacular — I was hoping for something with Sarah Sze or Tara Donovan levels of fiddly little parts. Was there stuff we genuinely, unironically, liked? I can't remember. Was there anything we would hang in our brains? We were tempted by a luscious David Hockney folding screen at Timothy Yarger Fine Art Gallery. Its hinges would, conveniently, allow one to collapse it in one's brain. But would it invariably spark joy? We wandered on.

We gravitated towards a group of Alex Gardner paintings, which Kristin had seen on Instagram. The paintings were nice; they were weird, black figures with smooth, featureless heads. They had a certain bizarre appeal, but, like many others things we saw, were not as good in person. (For next year, we'll include the obvious category: Looked Better on Instagram). The carpet was a shaggy white rag rug. As we crossed towards one of the paintings, an enormous seven-foot-tall gallerist in a crisp suit rose from his table and lumbered, golem-like, forward. He was headed straight towards us, but he was peering down into his phone so intently (Category: Gallerist Avoiding Eye Contact) that I had to perform a dramatic, slow-motion, Capoeira-like torso lean backwards to avoid collision.

Kristin and I looked at each other, and whispered, in unison: "THE MAN."

— Leah Gallant



Leah Gallant (MA 2020) is the Arts Editor at F Newsmagazine. Like Brad Pitt, she is mostly made of water.

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Renovations for an Icon

The Cleve Carney Museum expands for an exhibition of works by Frida Kahlo.

by **Luis López Levi**

The Cleve Carney Art Gallery in Glen Ellyn, Illinois, will soon upgrade to the category of museum in preparation for what will be their most high-profile exhibition so far: a 26-piece show of works by Frida Kahlo. The main exhibition space for the College of DuPage, which closed for renovation this September, is scheduled to reopen in March 2020, just a few months before this show's opening in June.

Since its construction, the gallery, now renamed the Cleve Carney Museum of Art, had mostly hosted work by Chicago-based artists, as well as work by DuPage faculty and students. The Kahlo exhibition came about thanks to a friendship between Alan Peterson, a benefactor of the college, and Carlos Phillips Olmedo, director of the Dolores Olmedo Museum, home of the largest collection of works by the Mexican artist.

"This show is really out of the ordinary for us, which we're enjoying a lot. We're often overwhelmed by what an amazing opportunity this is," says Heidi Holmes, assistant curator for the museum, located in the college's McAninch Arts Center.

The show, scheduled to run next summer from June 1 to August 31, will include 19 paintings and seven drawings by Kahlo, as well as a historical exhibit that will give insight into the artist's life, displaying replicas of her clothes, bed, and medical devices. To prepare for the exhibition, the museum will undergo a 1,000 square-foot expansion, as well as an upgrade to their lighting system and temperature and humidity control.

The last show hosted by the gallery before its temporary closure, a retrospective of Mexican printmaker José Guadalupe Posada, served as a lead-in to the upcoming exhibition, showing an artist who was influential in Kahlo's work, Holmes adds. Posada, who was active from the late 19th century until his death in 1913, is best known for popularizing the image of La Catrina, a female skeleton that represents death in the Mexican tradition and is most often associated with Day of the Dead festivities.

The show gave particular emphasis to Posada's satirical work in partnership with newspaper publisher Antonio Vanegas Arroyo. These prints depict smiling skeletons in all sorts of circumstances, from sweeping streets to reenacting a battle from the French Intervention in Mexico. Posada usually made the skeletons highly expressive and energetic, conveying a playful tone representative of traditional Mexican views towards death.

"A lot of Posada's drawings are not true-to-life illustrations," said Holmes. "They're exaggerated, inspired, funny little takes — a lighter tone."

The Posada exhibition offered a unique insight into Mexican society at the turn of the century, as a nation that always found a way to laugh and cope with common hardships. The printmaker himself, Holmes says, wouldn't have thought of his work as art, yet his aesthetic style continues to shape Mexican popular art to this day.

Like Posada, Frida Kahlo's cultural impact transcends her. Her face and her work are everywhere.

"It's almost like he was a factory worker in the newspaper, producing so many images," she added. "He would never have considered himself to be an artist or artisan, just a hard worker representing the Mexican people."

The exhibition included a segment that helped solidify Posada's cultural legacy: a section of multiple works to show the printmaker's influence in popular culture. This section covered all sorts of cultural references, from a photograph of Diego Rivera's famous mural "Dream of a Sunday Afternoon in the Alameda Central," in which he includes both Posada and La Catrina, to a poster for a Grateful Dead concert that copies a Posada print of skeletons dancing to folk music with harp accompaniment.

Like Posada, Frida Kahlo's cultural impact transcends her. Her face and her work are everywhere, to the point of parody, becoming an indelible part of the Mexican imaginarium. The upcoming show will no doubt attract a wider audience to the Cleve Carney Art Museum, which will now have the space to program larger, more ambitious exhibitions.

Illustration by Reilly Allen Branson

Luis López Levi (NAJ 2020) is a former arts reporter, avid podcast listener, vinyl enthusiast, and lover of folk music. He never turns down free chips and guacamole.

Boobs on Your Tube

The horror genre loves female nudity as much as Jason loves his hockey mask.

by **Jill DeGroot**

As an adolescent, whenever a sex scene came on the TV, my mother would tell me to cover my eyes. In fact, she still does. I'm 24. I still remember the first time I saw the 2009 remake of "Friday the 13th" with my family in my grandma's living room on Halloween night. The franchise is well known for its overuse of female nudity, and when the time came for bombshell Bree (Julianna Guill) to disrobe, I heard the usual: "Close your eyes, Jill." Up came my sweaty palms and fingers, shielding my retinas from the graphic images just a few feet in front of me.

But much to my mother's dismay, I only have two hands. My uncovered ears heard the whole thing. I still heard Trent DeMarco (Travis Van Winkle) say, "Oh, wow. Your tits are stupendous." Stupendous — that's a direct quote. And after the sex scene continued for what felt like a little too long, Jason Voorhees broke into the home and impaled Bree with the antlers from a taxidermied buck mounted to the wall.

Within the horror genre, female characters experience violence and brutality at the hands of male antagonists considerably more often than male characters do. They are also far more likely to experience sexual violence (see the rape-and-revenge subgenre: "I Spit On Your Grave" (1978), "A Gun For Jennifer" (1997), "The Girl With the Dragon Tattoo" (2009), etc.). The horror genre also tends to mix sex with violence, and even murder (see: the "Scream" franchise rule that if a character has sex, they die).

But why are there so many exposed breasts in horror films? Gratuitous female toplessness is more frequent in horror and slasher films — whose target demographics are often men roughly between the ages of 17 and 30 — than any other genre of film. The nudity almost never serves the film's plot. These scenes simply serve to stimulate the male gaze, a term originally coined by Laura Mulvey in her 1975 essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." Mulvey describes the male gaze as the depiction of female characters on screen in an overtly sexualized and dehumanizing manner. Though Mulvey never mentioned the horror genre specifically, the male gaze continues to further the degradation of women in horror, with exploitative scenes that almost always end in gory violence against female characters.

Gratuitous toplessness is more frequent in horror and slasher films than any other film genre.

There are 732 titles on the International Movie Database (IMDb) under the category "feature film, horror, female-frontal-nudity." There is not a male-frontal nudity category within in the horror genre on IMDb.

There is, however, a scene in "A Nightmare on Elm Street 2: Freddy's Revenge" (1985) that does use male nudity in horror in an interesting way. Jesse (Mark Patton) is trapped in the locker room by Coach Schneider (Marshall Bell), and the uneasy tension on screen suggests his intent to sexually assault the teen. But although it's clear that the coach is naked, at no point is there any male full-frontal nudity in the way we see it with women. His body is always shot shadowed or from behind. But the association with nudity and imminent violence still holds true here. As the coach approaches, completely naked, he falls victim to Freddy, slashed twice in the back by Freddy's clawed hand as blood sprays from the locker room showers.

Pivoting to a more contemporary example, the indie horror comedy "Other Halves" (2015) was pulled from the Amazon streaming service in 2017 for having seven seconds of full-frontal male nudity in its opening scene. Though the scene itself wasn't sexual, the streaming company insisted that the filmmakers edit out the male nudity in order to remain on the platform. It is also noteworthy that while there was also full-frontal female nudity in the same shot, it was not mentioned by Amazon as the problematic content in question.

Perhaps the most recent instance of a horror film containing both male and female frontal nudity is "Midsommar" (2019). It received a "severe" rating for nudity on IMDb, and incorporates this element into its depiction of ritualistic sex. The newly-released director's cut includes even longer scenes of full-frontal male nudity that were excluded presumably to dodge an NC-17 designation, a rating that filmmakers strive to avoid. Films that get this rating are often edited and resubmitted in hopes of achieving an R rating, which allows them to be distributed to more outlets and, in turn, make more revenue. The message here is women's bodies sell, men's bodies are obscene.

So, can the horror industry do away with exploiting women's bodies before brutally murdering them for spectacle? If it were up to me, this busty and boring trend would die a long, horrible, and entirely overdue death.

Illustration by Audrea Wah

Jill DeGroot (NAJ 2020) is a performer, editor, writer, and audio journalist. Her writing has been published at I CARE IF YOU LISTEN and Cacophony Magazine.

Thinking Inside the Toolbox

On their new album "Fear Inoculum," Tool sticks to their classic formula.

by **Luis López Levi**

Start with an Adam Jones clean guitar riff on the lower strings (tune that 6th string down to a D for optimal results). Definitely do this in a minor key or in a vaguely Middle Eastern-sounding scale. You're going for something not quite angry yet, but certainly moody.

Introduce a low and punchy Justin Chancellor bassline to add some oomph to the riff, and then slowly bring in drummer Danny Carey. Don't unleash him on the drum kit yet (you know what he's capable of). Instead, have him start by playing some Indian tabla to amp up that ritualistic, angsty-yet-Zen vibe initiated in Step 1.

Cue in some lyrics by Maynard James Keenan, crooned in his trademark ethereal voice, like he's thinking out loud. Tell him it doesn't matter what words he sings, as long as they read like a goth 10th grader's poems. "Contagion, I exhale you ... venom in mania ... read my allegorical elegy." Whatever! Just make it sound edgy. Step on that distortion pedal and blast the first electric guitar riff. Go for the same mood as indicated in Step 1, knowing that the distortion will now bring it closer to anger. While crafting this riff, use whatever time signature you'd like. If possible, don't settle for 4/4. The more irregular, the better!

Choose a few power chords and start strumming. Since you don't have to worry about any melodic complexities at this point, you can double down on the odd rhythms. Change the time signature. Then change it again, and again. Your listeners are building up fury, but also trying to count the rhythm in their heads.

Introduce your first rhythmic counterpoint. Make the drums play in six beats and the guitar and bass play in seven. Have them phase out and sync up again. Then drop a two-beat bar to throw off your listener just when they were starting to grasp the numbers. Keep the math rock going, slowly bringing everyone to their loudest. Listeners are already releasing the tension accumulated up to this point. Think about how this moment will look in live performances, with fans likely doing their best to headbang over those weird rhythms, and later describing it as a spiritual experience.

Repeat steps 1 to 7 several times with slight variation. Slap some trippy Alex Grey fractal art on the cover and boom! You've got yourself a Tool album.

Thirteen years had passed since Tool's last album, so their fans were more than ready to embrace any new material. Enter their 2019 release, "Fear Inoculum," amply praised by critics and diehards alike. The mostly laudatory reaction initially seems to be at odds with the album's structure, which finds the quartet at its most formulaic. All the songs (excluding three short, digital-only interludes) essentially follow the band's tried-and-true formula.

The immediate answer that comes to mind is, of course, nostalgia. The band's followers were so eager for new music, and they got exactly what they wanted: over 80 minutes of relentless rock, the kind that never drops its pace despite constantly shifting time signatures. It not only fuels a familiar sense of angst, but also plants in listeners the all-encompassing feeling that my problems are too complex for anyone to understand, and these musicians are the only ones talented enough to express them for me.

But there is more than nostalgia-heavy predictability going on here. Prior to "Fear Inoculum," Tool's most ambitious work was arguably their song "Lateralus," from their studio album of the same name. The 2001 track is a nine-minute epic with lyrics and time signatures constructed to follow the Fibonacci sequence. It checks all the boxes of the ideal Tool song: a long, slow burn towards a boiling point of mathematical madness. It's rational rage.

It doesn't matter what words he sings, as long as they read like a goth 10th grader's poems.

The band not only delivers with the musical quality expected of them, but also makes sure every song is a virtuosic powerhouse on par with "Lateralus." In previous releases, these longer, stretched out tracks only appeared once or twice per album, combined with shorter, more straightforward progressive metal songs (which by Tool standards means around 6 or 7 minutes). In contrast, no song on "Fear Inoculum" is under 10 minutes. And although seven intricately grandiose tracks sound like overkill, the end result has an overarching pulse that welcomes the listener back to a state of juvenile resentment that their earlier work accomplished just as masterfully.

Tool's last release before "Fear Inoculum" was "10,000 Days," named after the approximate duration of Saturn's orbital period (about 27 years). After that 2006 album, Saturn had to go nearly halfway around the Sun for new Tool music to appear. There's no way to speculate how this same album would have been received if only three or four years had passed since the last one. Tool didn't feel the need to make a hard U-turn on their musical approach. They didn't try to innovate or provoke their audience. They didn't try to make a radical musical statement. They stuck to their formula, but that formula is, wittingly or not, really what everyone wanted from them anyway.

Illustration by Shannon Lewis

Luis López Levi (NAJ 2020) is a former arts reporter, avid podcast listener, vinyl enthusiast, and lover of folk music. He never turns down free chips and guacamole.

LITTER, LITTER EVERYWHERE

Some of the strange, grotesque, and intriguing things left on Chicago streets

Photo Essay by **Jesse Bond**


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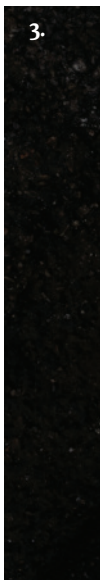
2.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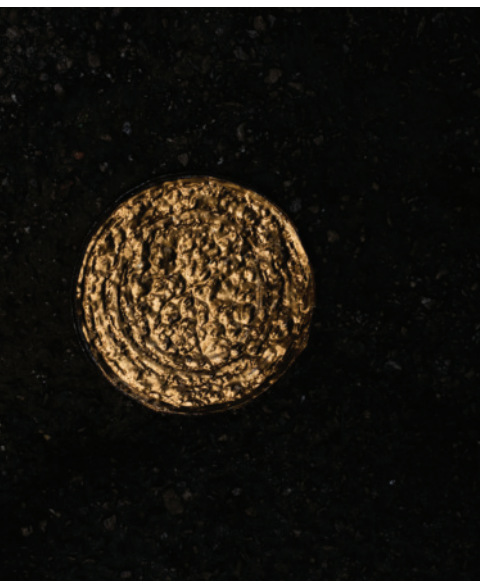


4.

5.

9.

1. The shadow of a passer-by looms over an arched piece of paper towel on the corner of N State St and W Randolph St.
2. Empty liquor bottles line the inside of a destroyed dresser on E Haddock Pl.
3. An upside-down, empty pie tin sits in the shade of a nearby building on E Haddock Pl.
4. A bird feather, swept up by passing cars on N Wabash Ave, finds its way to an empty Popeyes bag.
5. On N Wabash Ave, a McDonalds bag rests beside a crusty banana peel.
6. On E Benton Pl, a Chick-fil-A container and a Capri Sun pouch lay side-by-side, crushed after being run over by a car.
7. A distressing yellow liquid fills a water bottle on E Benton Pl.
8. Tires, tin cans, and ten gallon water jugs clutter the side of the road on On E Benton Pl.
9. Gnarled rubber gloves lie on the pavement on E Benton Pl.

Jesse Bond (BFA 2022) is a photographer for F Newsmagazine. They stay hydrated no matter what.

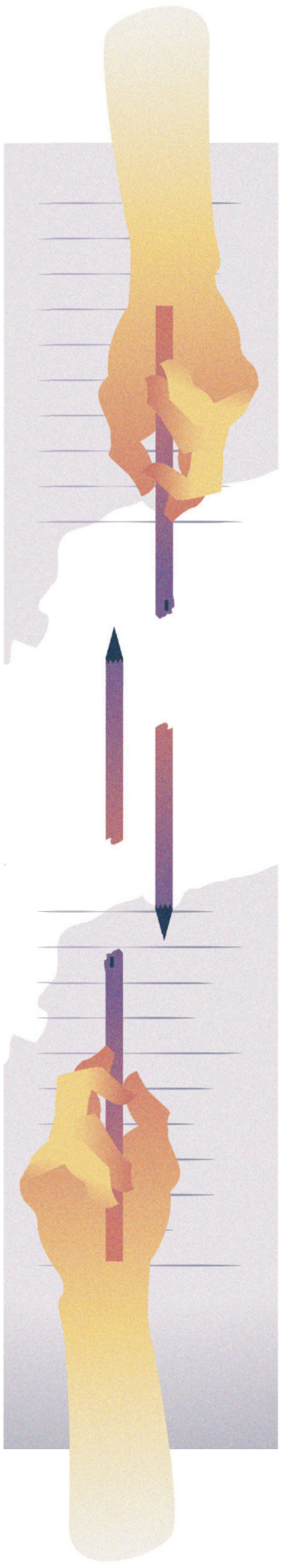


Illustration by Raven Mo

Dear Mr. Hicok

Poet & professor Bob Hicok's essay "The Promise of American Poetry" was recently republished in the Utne Reader. In it, he describes feeling invisible as a straight white poet. This is a response to that essay.

by **Darshita Jain**

Dear Mr. Hicok,

It took me a while to read your letter. It took me a while to get over my indignation and disappointment. It was, after all, a 4,000-word essay marking how you fear turning invisible. It was ironic. You had 4,000 words to write about how you think you don't have space anymore. After nine books, a teaching career at Virginia Tech, a Guggenheim Fellowship and being a two-time finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award — you feel invisible. I wonder if there is any truth to that feeling. Let's explore.

You talk about how aware you are that straight white men have shadowed every narrative and controlled literary and institutional spaces in America. You say, "But I'm also torn between my pleasure at seeing part of American culture take significant strides toward equality and my sorrow due to the diminishment of interest in my work."

The VIDA Count has tracked gender disparities in literary journals and reviews in the last decade. It found that in 2017, only 2 of 15 major literary publications achieved gender parity among their contributors. Over 60 percent of contributors to The New Yorker were men, as were over 75 percent of contributors to The New York Review of Books. Yet you feel invisible.

I read, "I write this because I'm dying as a poet. My books don't sell as well or get reviewed as much as they used to," and I think, it is not a zero-sum game. Do you think if poets of color are getting a little more, that must mean less for white poets like you? Did it occur to you that poets of color might be expanding the audience, or inviting new readers into this previously exclusionary canon? Poetry has lived in closed quarters for the longest time, excluding most. It is having a moment right now. According to National Endowment for the Arts survey, the poetry reading rate in 2017 was five percentage points up from 2012. More and more people are interacting with poetry. It is becoming more accessible with forms like slam and spoken word and community learning.

By saying that the marginalized, the women and the people of color are having a moment because of our identities, you reduce us all to stereotypes of our identities and diversity quotas. You discredit all work that might have gone into any and all achievements to mere identity. And by emphasizing how you feel instead of what is, you not only refuse to see the facts but you succeed in putting the straight white male voice back into the center of the conversation. Your "I'm a liberal" rhetoric between the recurring lament does nothing but remind us that you are shouting at the top of your voice.

I wonder what kind of entitlement goes into thinking this way. I was back home in India the day your essay was published. Back home, the state of Kashmir was on day five of complete lockdown and curfew — the world's most militarized zone, completely cut off. People in the state were being palleted and tortured, families had no way to reach one another and everyone was trying desperately to get words in and out of the state, to know if their people were still alive. People in Kashmir, some with a semblance of internet, were trying to send pictures out in the world to say, hey, we are being tortured, we are being shot at, please remember. They were shouting and trying to ask for help. It was life and death. We couldn't hear them. My government was helping silence their voices.

As a woman, as a woman of color in the U.S., I have to earn my space. Whatever I say or write has to matter enough, be important enough to deserve space and time and attention. It has to represent my people. We were brought up with the notion that there is only so much space in the world and if you want to be seen/heard, you have to say something better than everyone else. Space is a commodity, space is a privilege, space means something. I wonder what those 4,000 words would mean to a resident in Kashmir who needed them more.

Dear Mr. Hicok, you are nowhere close to being invisible. The fact that I am writing to you also means that you are not. You have everything an emerging poet could work for in their lifetime and never get. You have it all. No one is taking that away from you. We cannot. You are an all-powerful white man. You have time and space, yet you are not writing about the things people care about. The poetry world is choosing to engage with race and class, and conversations around loss and human grief. Maybe write poetry that speaks to the times we are living in and struggling against? Participate in the conversations. Contribute. You did not. Instead, you chose to use these 4,000 words to lament about the loss of space.

Disappointedly,
Darshita

Darshita Jain (NAJ 2020) is the lit editor at F Newsmagazine. She oscillates between being the human version of a question mark and an exclamation mark.

Jonquils

by **Brianna Douglass**

jonquils
1

hands made of stars decant full
buckets dusting down the world
in spring snow they fill
their cups with fire
of the morning better than
coffee upon waking while
the bowl of the sky pours us dark
indigo dye we speak
of sturdiness tensile green
stalks erect with water
and warm worming
into decomposition back
to the bulb in the dark this
is the murk that was their
test of grit we part
as friends at the fork
in the lane

jonquils
2

open white faces standing clustered by spears
of their own green pucker yellow mouths
where they hang over lichened graves someone
dropped them here in their bulbs in their winter
hibernation of un-birth we look on discontent
to believe beauty butts up to the unbeautiful
thing most full of silence an overpacked
suitcase whose contents poke at the seams

Brianna Douglass (MFAW 2020) primarily writes poetry. She is interested in childhood memory and the landscape of the South and Southwest.

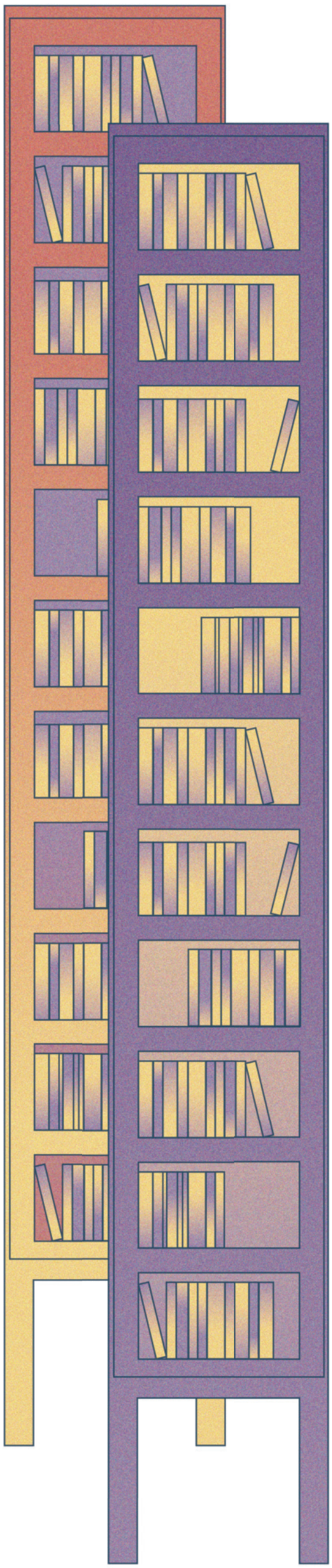


Illustration by Raven Mo

The Bookstore My Dad Warned Me About

On the opening of the new Inga bookstore in Pilsen

by **Carmen Luz Corredor**

Around the age of five, my dad began to take me on trips to our local public library. Every day consisted of me coming to terms with a learning disability, while my dad would be happy to just see me encased in a sea of tomes. Even if I wasn't reading any text, the pictures would suffice. He discouraged bookstores. Those institutions became another capitalist arm that made it harder to access something which he considered should be free: literature. "Free" meant inclusivity to immigrants like my father — the ones who had to pay for everything. And a moment of silence and joy that he could bring to his child that were not line items allocated for his taxes.

It was with this same skepticism in mind that I walked into the grand opening of Inga Bookshop, a new bookstore right on Pilsen's 18th Street stretch. I could tell the shop was at capacity with attendance. There was an obnoxious number of "excuse me"'s as I tried to fold through the sea of canvas tote bags. I was happy to see a fair mixture of readers of color once I waded the waters. I was also happy to see my friend and Chicago poet Imani Elizabeth Jackson getting ready to perform some of their poetry in the bookshop's backyard space. They traversed the volumes and readers with ethereal grace, accentuated by the color green: green garment, green peas, green flecks of color skittering across their irises. I would be lying if I said I wasn't enchanted by the homemade ice cream that Imani provided for the opening. It was a surprise to have my lips tingle from the sensuality of cherry and pepper ice cream along with ginger sorbet.

It didn't take long for me to count the number of attendees I recognized. These were old classmates, colleagues, friends, all somehow connected to the art world. I witnessed a majority of them interact with the materials laid out around the bookshop, peek around to see who they recognized in the crowd, and put down the publications they were holding shortly afterward. It was the same vibe that I've picked up on when I attend opening receptions for art exhibitions.

The community that was not in attendance were the Pilsen residents who'd made 18th Street their home since generations before most of the attendees were born. The families who passed the shop looked inside, curious but confused. I want to say that these books were made for them, but I know that would be a lie. The selection of books didn't resemble the titles I grew up with. Authors' names were devoid of accents, diacritics, and heavy inflections. The shop itself had the same makings of a pop-up in Brooklyn — temporary and constructed in a way where materials could be quickly stored. The scarce air conditioning and a group of people turning papers into fans were what transported me back to the New York Art Book Fair.

I wondered why this space, why now, and who it was for.

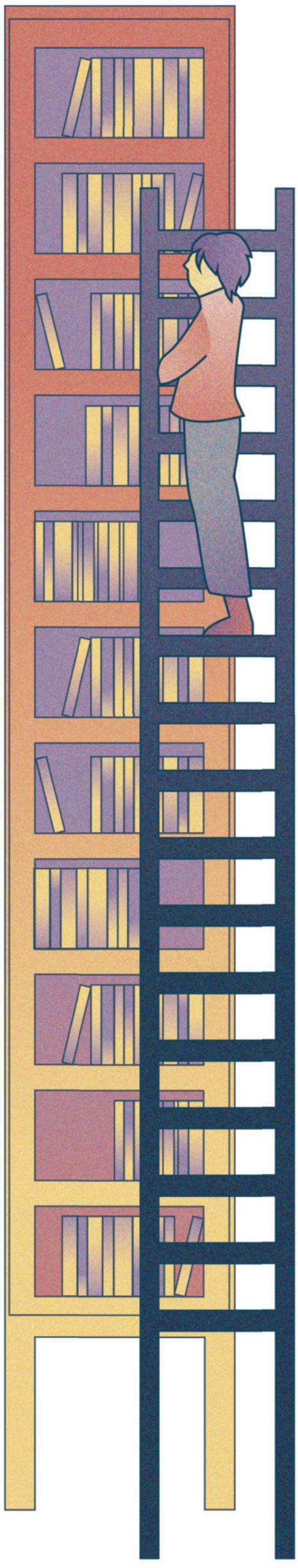
As I browsed the stacks, I continued to experience a recurring sensation of vinegar in my soft palate. I couldn't help but think, "These are the kinds of texts I would find at SAIC," and that was it. These were titles that focused on a certain audience that had a familiarity with arts and culture. So much so that it didn't present itself as open for the community it was inhabiting. I wondered why this space, why now, and who it was for.

My fears were confirmed when I looked behind the counter to see who was in charge: a small circle of mostly white owners. I asked them if this space was now a permanent staple in the community. One owner looked apprehensive. They informed me that Inga is open two days of the week (Sundays from 11 am – 4 pm and Mondays from 1 – 8 pm) and the rest of the week, space is known as Filmfront: a "cine-club located in Chicago's Pilsen neighborhood," their website reads. "selected programs draw from overlapping spheres of global, classic, documentary, experimental and local cinema. situated at the core of a diverse community, our storefront venue invites a cross-cultural dialogue in the form of discussions, panels, lectures, and exhibitions in addition to our regular screenings." Filmfront was founded in 2015 by Alyx Christenson, Rudy Medina, Alan Medina, Malia Haines-Stewart, and Oscar Solis. Its programming is free.`My gut reaction was negative. I hadn't realized that their "diverse community" would be so interested in a storefront that confounds the local and the global in the same breath. Here is a book shop, sitting on one of the most gentrified streets in the Pilsen community, with a majority of white owners and inconsistent hours, set to promote "self-published and independently distributed titles on art, design, film, and theory." As I took in the sights of Inga, my imagination swayed in the direction of what space would look like on Tuesday. Do the books just become stored for five days, being encased in comfortable darkness of the back room?

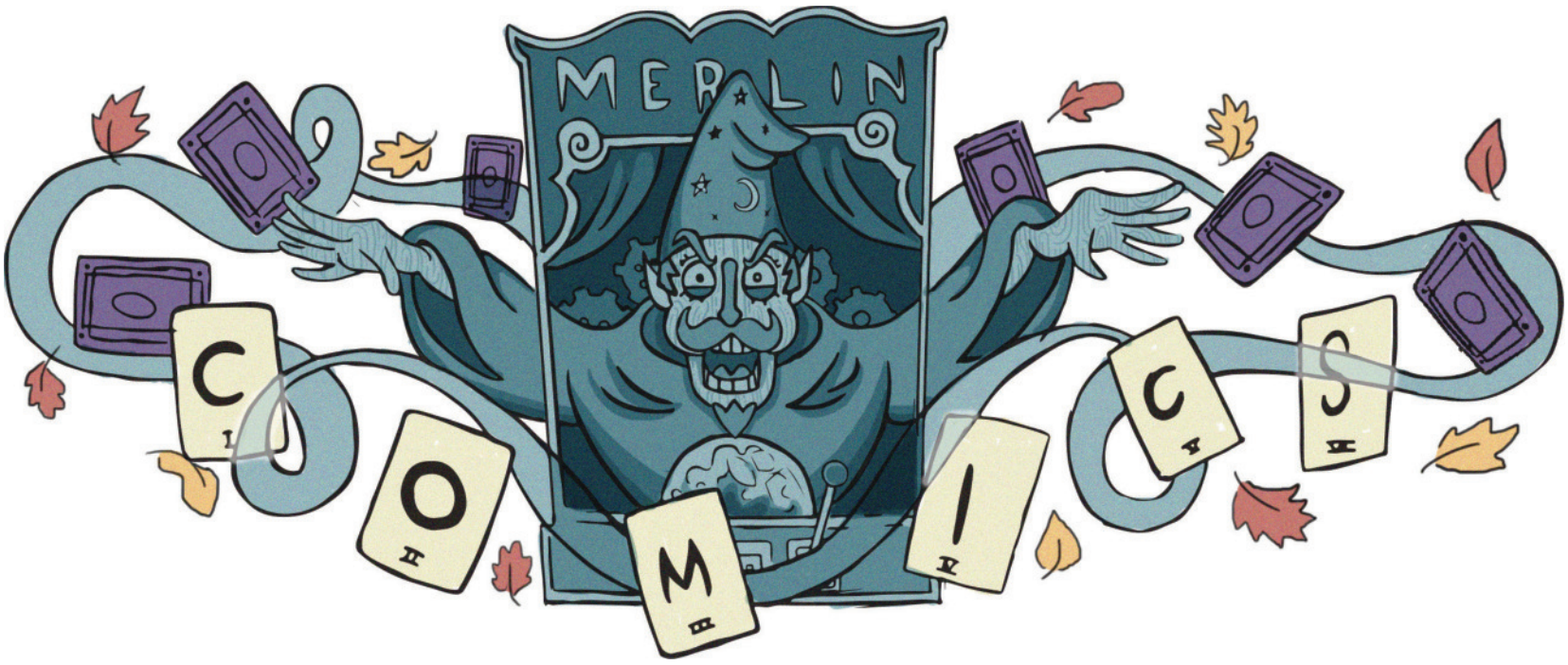
With a cue from one of the white organizers, everyone in the store was encouraged to move to the backyard space; Imani's performance was about to begin.

Through the alley, the mass exodus arrived at a small patch of backyard lawn. The guests sat in a circle, Imani resting at one end with a bowl of green peas and papers, ready to perform. The white organizer gave a small speech detailing her gratitude for Imani's work and the number of attendees who made the house packed on opening night. As Imani read from their piece, which they wrote for the occasion, they kept eating peas and passing them around the circle. As I shared in this participatory nutrition, I thought about the concepts of family, generational wisdom, and self-sustainability, all themes in Imani's poetry. With each dropping of a page, I felt Imani reach a deeper level of unearthing the generations that come before them, resting on the simplest form of the pea.

As the performance wrapped up, and the attendees went on their way out, I looked into the storefront from the outside. Peering in, you could see the number of attendance swell once again. This place did not feel like it was designed for me, or the people I live around. No one asked for this. And I could slowly feel myself turning into my father, with an anti-bookstore sentiment ringing loud. How many months will it take for this establishment to have a similarly gentrifying neighbor? The ripple effect of shifting real estate is a legitimate problem. Maybe invest the space back into the original community members and allow them to do with it as they please. Too often, these temporary projects will insert themselves into communities, do their business, and leave, rarely trying to reach out to the surrounding community. If this trend continues, Pilsen and other communities of color will continue to be seen as zones for temporary splurges instead of rich cultural hubs. Instead of coming to Inga, I'll most likely be spending my Sunday afternoons in the Rudy Lozano Branch of Chicago Public Library, only a few blocks away.

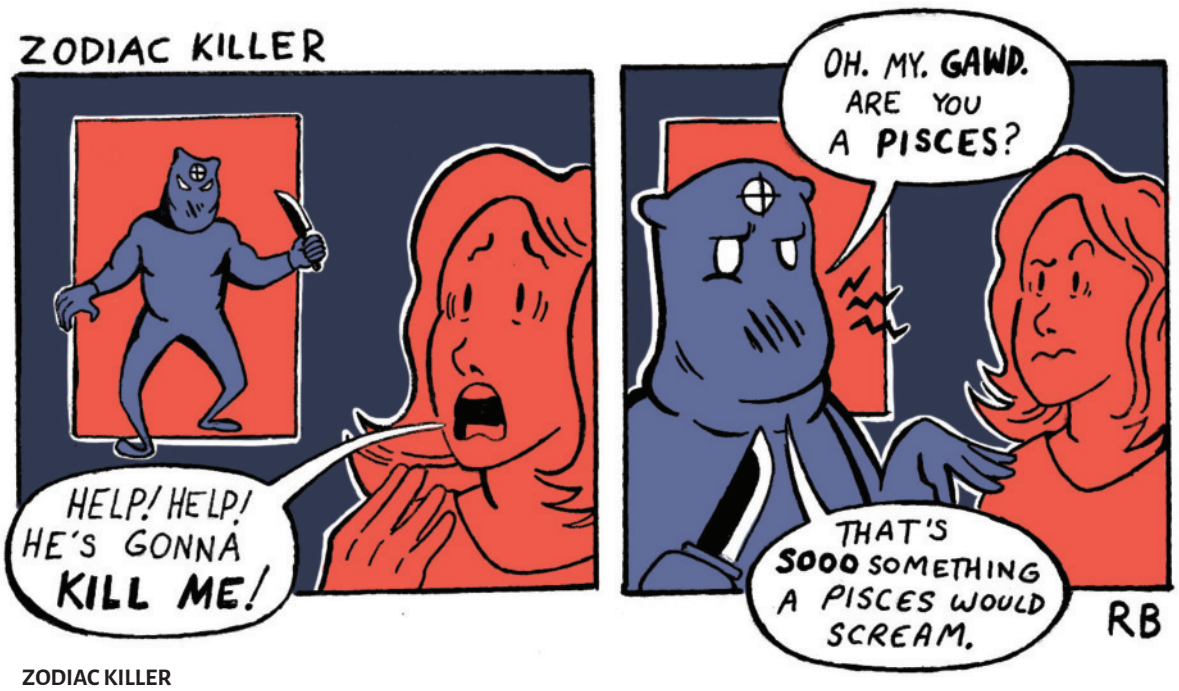


Carmen Luz Corredor (NAJ 2021) is a poet and publisher. You can find her bopping between queer-centered events, trying to swallow any shards of Chicago sunlight she can find.



HELL HOLE
RUBY LAPORTA

LUTEBOY AND THE GREETING
MADELEINE AGUILAR



ZODIAC KILLER
REILLY BRANSON

SALUTE TO HENRY ROSSEAU
MIKEY WANG

OH DON'T TELL ME
EMMA ROSENGARTEN

/R/ENALITY
MICHAEL ORR