

# fnewsmagazine

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

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**14** THE KASHMIR QUESTION

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HATE SPEECH

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CENSORED

**NOV '19**  
SPECIAL SECTION:  
CENSORSHIP



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## EXPO PREP PROGRAMS

Sat, Nov 2 10 - 4 p.m.	<b>Documenting Your Work</b> Michelle Murphy (MFA Performance 2017) will demonstrate the best ways to document your work in any media. Held in the Documentation Space in the Columbus Building, Rm 110.
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Thurs, Nov 7 4:30 - 5:45 p.m.	<b>Talking to Strangers</b> At this CAPX party, learn how to get comfortable talking with new people so you can connect confidently with potential internship providers and employers at Internship and Job Expo.
Mon, Nov 11 9 - 5 p.m.	<b>RésuméMonday</b> Drop by CAPX any time between 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. for a final résumé review before Expo! You'll walk away with a résumé that's Expo-ready!
<b>Thurs, Nov 14 3 - 6 p.m.</b>	<b>Internship + Job Expo</b> Meet with representatives from over 50 creative organizations, nonprofits, startups, and more. Use this opportunity to chat and network with other creatives and industry professionals. Check out the growing list of employers at <b><a href="http://saic.joinhandshake.com">saic.joinhandshake.com</a></b> !

### INTERNSHIP INFO SESSIONS

Oct 28 4:15-5:15 p.m. 162 N State St 16th floor Solarium	Nov 1 12-1 p.m. Lakeview 1429 CAPX Conference Room	Nov 7 12-1 p.m. Sharp Room 327	Nov 8 1:30-3:00 p.m. Sharp Room 205 Student Leadership Suite
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**SAIC** School of the Art Institute  
of Chicago

CAREER AND  
PROFESSIONAL  
EXPERIENCE

# November 2019

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**JORDAN MARTIN & CHRIS GIVENS** of F Newsmagazine were united in marriage on October 5th in Chicago, IL.

Jordan is the former art director of F Newsmagazine, now a digital experience designer at One North. Chris is the former art director of F Newsmagazine, now a graphic designer at IA Collaborative.

Rumors that they needed counseling over what typeface to use on the invitations, the couple say, are false. The use of Souvenir Sans was a harmonious decision.

The ceremony and reception were held at A New Leaf in Lincoln Park. After their honeymoon in the wild wild west, Jordan and Chris Martin-Givens returned to Chicago, where they live with their three chickens, two cats, and one beehive.

♥ The F is for FELICITATIONS ♥

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# BUILDING UP TO THE TEACHERS' STRIKE



Samuel Kryczka, a 3rd grader at Beaubien Elementary School paints a banner alongside Josie Osborne of Art Build Workers.

An art build  
in preparation for the  
Chicago Teachers'  
Union strike  
by Olivia Canny

*Two sets of paint-covered helping hands* grip the edges of a 10-foot long canvas banner, and take a cautious turn down the staircase of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) headquarters in West Town. It is day two, hour five of their community artmaking event, and the building's walls are lined with picket signs and canvas sheets of various sizes, sporting graphic illustrations of smiling faces, and crisp text: "A NURSE IN EVERY SCHOOL EVERY DAY! PRIVATIZATION IS THE PROBLEM!"

On Sept. 26, the CTU voted on and approved a potential strike for Thursday, Oct. 17. They wasted no time in seeking provisions, arranging for Milwaukee-based Art Build Workers to bring their enthusiastic brand of art and activism to the Chicago community on Oct. 5 and 6. At the time of the art build, the likelihood of the strike rested on whether or not Mayor Lightfoot would officially commit to the CTU's demands.

Volunteers at the art build are concerned about the lack of arts education, specifically for students in lower grades. Samuel Kryczka is a 3rd grader at Beaubien Elementary School, where art classes only teach students in 4th grade and up. He's from a family that values arts education; his father, Marion Kryczka, taught painting at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) for 30 years. Samuel's school offered art classes for students his age last year, and even though he'll definitely be able to study art next year, he expresses concern for his younger brother, who is currently in 1st grade.



Painting materials sit atop a banquet table, along with an over eight-foot long banner to support the Local 73 chapter of Service Employees International Union.

April Tondelli's son is in kindergarten at Belding Elementary School and isn't able to take art classes. "He loves art," Tondelli says. "It activates parts of his brain that he wouldn't normally use." Both Tondelli's son and Samuel take art classes after school through Chicago Park District, whose workers are also planning a strike.

Mike Applegate is an alumnus of SAIC's Master of Arts in Art Therapy and Counseling program. He's at the art build with his pre-kindergartener, and even though she won't be attending a Chicago public school, Applegate has personal concern for students who are part of the CPS system. He practices at a therapeutic day school through a private alternative education company called Camelot Education. Many students come to the program from the Chicago public school system, and Applegate says that these students are markedly troubled, as their schools lack the resources — like art classes and social workers — to address childhood trauma.

Among the SAIC alumni at today's art build is William Estrada, a practicing artist and teacher who completed both his BFA and Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) at the school, and has lectured there in the past, too. Currently Estrada teaches at the University of Illinois at Chicago, and at Telpochcalli Elementary in Little Village. The prints he's working on today contribute to the total of 3,800 picket banners, patches, and poster signs. Estrada was a key organizer in the

**Volunteers at the art build are concerned about the lack of arts education, specifically in the lower grades.**

partnership between the CTU and Art Build Workers, and says that he wanted prints to include graphics that emphasize the faces and concerns of marginalized communities, an aspect that aligns with both his creative and social practice and the issues to which the CTU wants to raise in the upcoming strike.

When speaking about the fate of the banners and signs, volunteers at the art build use the word "potential" before referring to the strike. But even without a certain cause for artmaking, the event offers a means for community building, too.

### Roots in activism and education

Art Build Workers was founded in 2018, initially organizing alongside groups fighting for social justice causes including immigration rights and gun regulations. Within the past year, they started working closely with the National Education Association (NEA), directing much of their efforts into education activism. Art Build Workers co-founder and professor of Art Education at the University of Wisconsin's Peck School of the Arts Kim Cosier outlines the process in a scholarly article about art builds as a labor and art practice: the NEA helps the Art Build Workers team connect with teachers' unions to identify themes and slogans for designs, and reach out to and collaborate with community artists. Art Build Workers discusses the designs with the union and finalizes their form.



Art Build volunteers lift a freshly painted parachute to allow it to dry before going into storage.

Then, they seek out a space that can accommodate stations for food and artmaking for participants of all ages. Finally, they join their partners and volunteers in the streets, combining art and action. Much of the material is crafted with longevity in mind, so slogans and images are designed to align with the overall mission of the union or partner and could support their cause for years to come.

Joe Brusky manages social media and organizing for Milwaukee Teachers Education Association (MTEA). He travels around the country with Art Build Workers, documenting many of their builds and even attending strikes, like that of United Teachers Los Angeles this past January. He notes that the art builds "make it easy for people to share in the images and what's happening," adding that participants can experience the equity involved in the communal painting process as it moves into the subsequent marches and demonstrations.

For the CTU and their ally in the cause, Service Employees International Union Local 73 (SEIU), the art build also offers a means for developing their identity and image, already defined by the CTU's brand of bright red and SEIU's purple. Eric Ruder manages communications for the CTU, and he has a background in graphic design, so he had some specific priorities surrounding what imagery to paint, screen print, and stencil at the art build. Ruder notes that the process started with submissions from local artists with portfolios rich in social justice art, adding that a key criterion was "a balance between graphic art and faces of diversity."

Many educator movements that Art Build Workers supported culminated in progressive outcomes. A few months after an art build with MTEA, the Milwaukee Public Schools cancelled their proposed budget cuts, gave healthcare to full-time substitute teachers, and raised wages for school employees. United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) went on strike for six days in January, returning to work when their school district agreed to a 6 percent raise, decreased class sizes, and an increase in support staff, including nurses, librarians and counselors.

UTLA's priorities are not so different from the CTU's, which include lower class sizes for each student age group, ensuring that every school has a nurse on staff for every day of the week, and hiring more social workers and counselors to even the ratio to students and meet the national standard. Currently, CPS employs 349 nurses who circulate among 520 schools as needed, one counselor for every 500 students, and one social worker for every 700 students.

At today's art build, family-friendly hip hop music wafts among several paint-splattered banquet tables, screen printing stations, and stacks of pizza boxes. At one table, Devan Picard and Jessica Rosenbaum paint bright orange letters spelling "SOLIDARITY" on a banner with SEIU's logo. They're both alumnae of SAIC's MAT program, and teach art at two different college preparatory high schools in Chicago. "As teachers, we prepare, so that's what we're doing," says Rosenbaum. ■

# PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS

Despite campus sustainability efforts,  
the Art Institute of Chicago makes  
money from fossil fuel investments.

by Dustin Lowman



## ***The first of a new series exploring divestment and the AIC endowment.***

**I was at Middlebury College** in 2013 at the dawn of the divestment movement. Students had learned that Middlebury's endowment relied on funds derived from oil industry investments, and, particularly at an institution so keen on celebrating its carbon neutrality efforts, this could not be tolerated. Students marched, occupied, and otherwise demonstrated, hoping their indignation would force administrators' hands. I was cynical. I felt sure that administrators saw the actions of undergraduates as, well, exactly that: youthful rage in need of a target, for the moment directed at a pair of old favorites, gas companies and campus higher-ups.

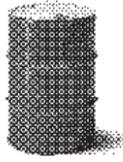
Then, six years later, a post-Christmas miracle. On January 29, 2019, Middlebury's Board of Trustees voted unanimously to fully disentangle its endowment from fossil fuel companies within 15 years. An announcement attributed the change of heart to "the profound threat of climate change." Though, as the Chronicle of Higher Education reported in August, the move likely had as much to do with fossil fuel companies' sinking profitability as with an injection of moral rectitude.

Whatever the cause, divestment from fossil fuels happened at Middlebury, and it's happening elsewhere, too. More than a thousand institutions have divested funds from fossil fuel companies — 15% of which are educational institutions. If you type "Chicago" into the divestment database's search bar, you get two results: Chicago Medical Society and the Field Museum. No School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC).

The finances of both SAIC and the Art Institute of Chicago (AIC) are managed as one entity. Audited financial statements for each fiscal year are freely available online. Looking them over, I learned the total value of the Art Institute of Chicago's assets — a little over \$1.6 billion. Alexandra Holt, the AIC's executive vice president for finance and administration, told me that SAIC's share of the endowment is around \$240 million. When I asked, Ms. Holt told me that number includes "a small amount of energy assets."

She sent me the Official AIC Divestment Policy, adopted in 2013. The policy contends that the AIC's job is to educate, not intervene in political matters: "The Art Institute maintains a strong presumption against divestment for social, moral, or political reasons." Divestment will only occur if a strong case can be made that continued investment in a particular sector threatens the AIC's ability to educate creatives.

If you Google "SAIC divestment fossil fuel," one of the top results is a [gofossilfree.org](http://gofossilfree.org) petition started by Francesca Dana at least five years ago, calling on then-president Walter Massey to "develop a plan to divest within five years from direct ownership and from any commingled funds that



include fossil fuel public equities and corporate bonds." The 99th signature came from Catherine C., two years ago. Compelled both by the roundness of 100 and the possibility that entering triple-digits would bolster the petition's status, I signed it.

Nothing happened. Walter Massey is no longer president, Francesca Dana has graduated, and SAIC has taken a firm stance against divestment. Whatever movement SAIC once had has fizzled.

### **Is Divestment Good?'**

It seems intuitive that taking money away from fossil fuel giants would hurt them. But really, it depends on the kind of pain you're expecting to inflict. If you're hoping for immediate damage to their share prices, dream on: One institution's divestment is another institution's (or individual's) opportunity. Investors unconcerned with their investments' ethical values will jump at the opportunity to occupy vacated space.

***So, if sin wins, and if there's little correlation between divestment and companies' share prices, why divest?'***

For evidence, look at the apartheid divestment campaign, which started in the 1960s and gained steam in the 1980s. Eventually, about 150 U.S. educational institutions pulled investments from companies doing business in South Africa. One study found that the movement meant relatively little for the companies' share prices: "The boycott primarily reallocated shares and operations from 'socially responsible' to more indifferent investors and countries," reported the New Yorker.

Additionally, "sin stocks" — commodities like alcohol, tobacco, gambling, and/or defense — consistently outperform the market. Essentially, this means guns and booze stocks grow at a faster rate than the market as a whole. For example, the Barrier Fund (formerly the Vice Fund), a prominent "sin-vestor" which exclusively invests in sin stocks, "has beaten the S&P 500 by an average of nearly two percentage points per year since 2002." In other words, when the whole market is up 10 points, sin stocks are up 12 points. Sin, generally, is big business.

So, if sin wins, and if there's relatively little correlation between divestment and companies' share prices, why divest?

Ideally, divestment catalyzes a cultural shift. High-profile divestments help stigmatize malignant sectors, spotlight social/political movements, and encourage other high-net-worth people and organizations to follow suit. Divesting funds from fossil fuel companies may not deal their shares a fatal blow, but it may well spark broader change.

In the case of divestment, it has. On September 10, 2018, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and London Mayor Sadiq Khan co-authored an op-ed in The Guardian in which they pledged to fully divest their cities' public pension funds from the fossil fuel industry, and called on "all cities" to do the same. Two days later, California Governor Jerry Brown issued an executive order committing California to 100 percent use of zero carbon electricity by 2045. In a recent appearance on "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," presidential candidate Joe Biden declared climate change the single most urgent issue the country faces today. This is the cultural shift activists hope to effect: foregrounding climate change in the broader political discourse.

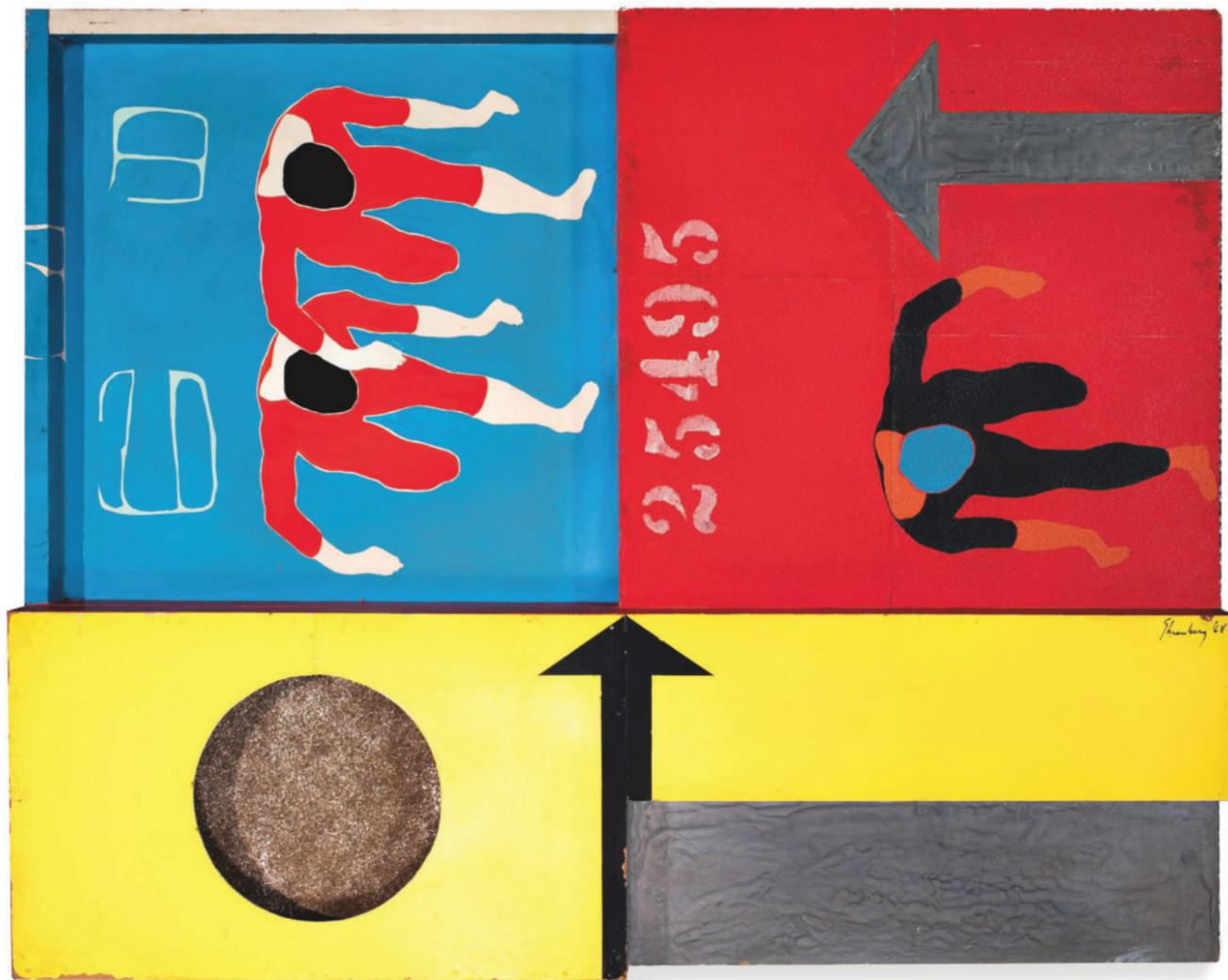
### **How SAIC Fits In**

The climate is changing, and our students care. In a politics survey conducted by F Newsmagazine last year, climate change was the issue most frequently mentioned when students were asked about their major concerns. On September 20, thousands of people marched in the Global Climate Strike, many of them students.

"SAIC is committed to becoming carbon-neutral," Tom Buechele, Vice President for Campus Operations, told me via email. "Even though our campus footprint has expanded by more than 232,000 gross square feet since 2009, we have reduced our carbon footprint by 57%. Last year, we were 67% carbon neutral." Also, per a recent announcement from President Elissa Tenny, as of Jan. 1, 2020, "SAIC will be 100 percent carbon neutral."

These are significant steps forward in a world where the need for progress is beyond urgent. SAIC deserves praise for these sustainability initiatives. But the fact that the Art Institute of Chicago's vast investment portfolio includes fossil fuel means that SAIC relies in part on its industrial health. One must wonder: How does the impact of campus carbon neutrality measure up against the impact of fossil fuel investments?

There's more work to be done in determining the causal link between fossil fuel investment and the effects of climate change. We also must evaluate the financial benefits of these investments — if proven to produce unreliable returns, the motives behind the investment would be called into question. Ultimately, we climate-concerned students deserve to know about the extent to which our tuition dollars are contributing to the planet's degradation. ■



"Caja no. 25495 (Box no. 25495)" (1968) by Felipe Ehrenberg.

# AGIT PÓP

A new exhibition at the Block Museum shows the way Latin American artists politicized pop art.  
by Luis López Levi

*A tried and true way* to annoy anyone from Latin America is to refer to the United States as America. That name, many will respond, can refer to the entire Western Hemisphere, including, but most definitely not limited to, the United States of America. While in the U.S., one may, of course, refer to the whole continent as "The Americas," but that term ends up reinforcing an "us vs. them" way of thinking, a refusal to understand the region as a system.

That little accent above the "e" in "Pop América," the title of the Block Museum of Art's exhibition currently on view, does so much more than translate the title into Spanish and Portuguese. It makes a point to look south — all the way down to Tierra del Fuego — and therefore understand the region as a whole. Of course, every Latin American country has its own specific issues in its history from 1965 to 1975, which is the exhibition's time span. However, it isn't difficult to draw parallels between them as they faced oppressive regimes and criticized a burgeoning consumerist culture inherited from the North.

The show's thesis statement manifests in its titular piece, "Pop América" (1968), by Chilean artist Hugo Rivera-Scott. The cardboard collage, with its comic book-like spikes of fire and bubbles of smoke, follows in the footsteps of Roy Lichtenstein's print "Explosion" (1967), on display next to it. The work, according to Rivera-Scott, implies the use of "pop" not only as shorthand for "popular," but also as a verb: to burst.

No piece explores this more literally than Brazilian artist Cildo Meireles's "Insertions Into Ideological Circuits: Coca-Cola Project" (1970). The series of soda (or "pop") bottles, with white text printed on them after purchase, are meant to be put back into circulation to spread the messages to other customers. The text is hard to see when the bottles are empty, but becomes evident once they're recycled and refilled in the factory. The interventions include the demand "Yankees go home," encouragement to other consumers to add their own critical opinions, and instructions on how to use the object to build a Molotov cocktail.

Meireles's piece exemplifies Latin American pop art's concern not only with the political situations in the region, but also to U.S. imperialism, perceived most overtly in its consumer culture. The exhibition succeeds in showcasing this by including U.S. works in several key places. Just behind the Coca-Cola bottles is a print of Andy Warhol's iconic "Campbell's Soup," and next to it hangs Antonio Caro's "Colombia Coca-Cola" (1976), a rendition of the painter's home country's name in the brand's

universally recognizable cursive. They both reference mass-produced goods, but the latter takes it up a notch. It makes it political.

The common thread of explosions appears in ways beyond consumerist critique. "Erased Museum of Art" (1970) by Peruvian artist Emilio Hernández Saavedra is exactly what it sounds like: a photograph of an avenue in Lima, where that city's main art museum is cut out and, as a consequence, obliterated. In "Lolita Lebrón, Puerto Rican Freedom Fighter" (1971), artist Marcos Dimas portrays his fellow countrywoman, who famously led an armed attack against the U.S. House of Representatives to demand the island's independence. Dimas' screenprint presents the activist in a two-by-two grid with alternating reds and blues, playing on the commodification and idolization of celebrities, much like Warhol's serializing of Marilyn Monroe's face.

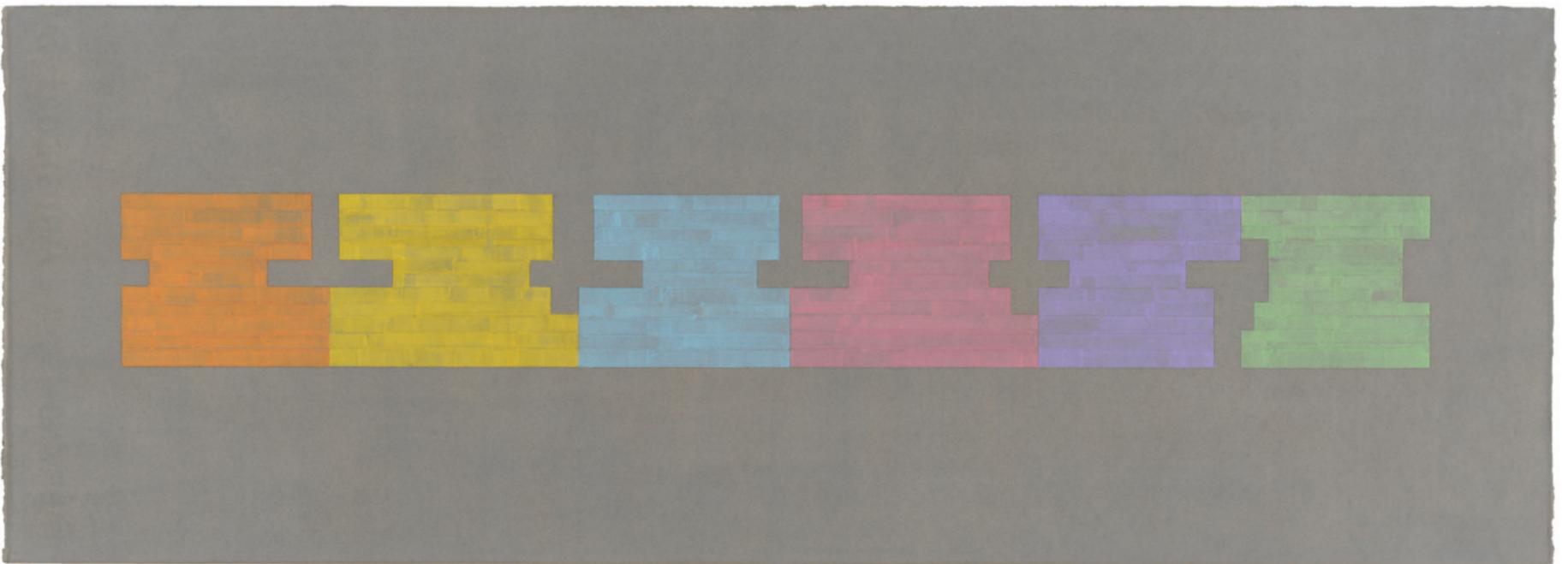
The show certainly ran the risk of trying to bite off more than it could chew — synthesizing the histories of multiple countries and appropriately representing them is a tall order. But "Pop América," in its deliberate juxtaposition of artworks from different national origins, and inspired by different political situations, manages to summarize without simplifying, allowing the viewer to draw their own parallels. Furthermore, the show doesn't drown the viewer in context, instead prioritizing each piece's emotional impact.

In this sense, no exhibition about Latin American art in the '60s and '70s could be complete without referencing the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City. The show dedicates substantial space — it compiles posters, stamps, and garments — to American artist Lance Wyman's classic geometric ripples that defined the event's identity. Just days before the inauguration of the international athletic competition, ironically decreed the "Games of Peace" that year, the Mexican government slaughtered hundreds of unarmed civilians who protested the organization of the games. The show places the official Olympic paraphernalia next to prints made by protesters who condemned governmental oppression. Wyman's

**That little accent above the e in "Pop América" does so much more than translate the title.**

"Mexico 68" logo appears in an anonymous print next to a political cartoon-like drawing of a monstrous, sharp-toothed police officer swinging his baton at a kneeling protester.

The work in "Pop América" is now half a century old — yet it maintains its relevance. Puerto Rico continues to fight for political power, especially after a poorly managed and underfunded post-hurricane recovery. Brazil still grapples with a culture of strong business interests as the Jair Bolsonaro administration rolls back human rights for minorities and responds with negligence to the Amazon rainforest fires. Mexico deals with state violence to this day — 2019 marks the fifth anniversary of the 43 disappeared students in the southern teaching school of Ayotzinapa. The pop was certainly heard around the world, but it's still echoing off the walls.



"Threshold — Matrix: harbour [ spectrum : transposed ] / for E and L (2014-15)" by Julia Fish. Photograph courtesy of the artist and David Nolan Gallery, New York.

## PORTRAIT OF A FLOOR PLAN

Julia Fish's paintings, on view at the Depaul Art Museum, take architecture drawings into the realm of abstraction.  
by Kristin Leigh Hofer

*When I step into my apartment* at the end of the day, I don't think about the slight gap by the deadbolt between the door and the frame. I occasionally consider the state of the yellow-orange hardwood floor, the kind typical of budget living in Chicago—neither chic nor objectionable. Maybe once a month I spend a few seconds eyeing the scuff on the wall that remains from moving a cumbersome bookshelf.

In contrast to my weak domestic observations, the artist Julia Fish has spent three decades developing an encyclopedic knowledge of her own home, a 1922 Chicago storefront. The last decade of Fish's work is surveyed in "Julia Fish: bound by spectrum," an exhibition currently on view at DePaul Art Museum. Based on architectural details, like floorboards and doorframes, Fish's paintings animate space with intimacy. The show is delightfully cerebral. Her work is most successful when deploying intricate networks of fragmented lines and geometric shapes, which are the basis of her abstraction. It struggles when the work succumbs to swaths of empty space, effectively centering on single letters of the alphabet.

Convoluted titles like "Threshold — Matrix: harbour [ spectrum : transposed ] / for E and L" provide

the only key to the real-life architectural counterpart depicted in the paintings. All three of the "Threshold — Matrix" paintings are 30 x 70 inches, a size that pushes the landscape orientation to its limits and becomes technological — not a painting, but a server panel or widescreen cinema. In the aforementioned "harbour" piece, Fish uses oil paint and transfer chalk on a rich grey ground that resembles a lush chalkboard. Marks appear Rainbow Brite on top of it, and little blips of line occasionally meet in a corner or assemble themselves into Tetris-like forms. In the midst of regimented lines and hexagons, Fish deploys a painterly style with the leftover residue of chalk, apparently smudging it away with a finger. It is captivating evidence of the artist's hand in works that typically revel in showcasing her incisive eye.

The color of the marks in "harbour" moves through a spectrum of hues from cool blue to yellow, mimicking the mutability of natural light. Similar to this tidal refraction, Fish's paintings are often irreducible to one vantage point. I follow the implied lines and imagine the seams of hardwood flooring, or the space between a baseboard and the floor, but the forms are resistant to interpretation. Instead, I am left contemplating the relationship between me and someone else's home as an extension of painting's figure-ground conundrum. Though it originated in Gestalt psychology, figure-ground no longer refers solely to the flickering that occurs between two profiles and a vase; rather, it signifies a perennial existential question about the relationship between an individual and a community, or an idea and its context. Viewing Fish's paintings feels like trying to read a language of which I have little knowledge: Nuances in syntax evade me, but there is an expressiveness to the grammar that grips my attention.

Also on display are six of Fish's "Threshold" paintings. The wall text informs viewers that works in this series are "1:1 scale and based on the shapes created by doorjambs, doors, and flooring, such as wood, linoleum, and ceramic tile, as if looking from directly above." Like nearly all the paintings in the show, each one is at least one-and-one-half times as wide as it is tall. Though they claim to have a direct relationship with reality, due to their dense patterns, which are surrounded by placid pastel colors, they appear to exist somewhere between an architectural plan and a microscopic image. Each piece depicts one shape that is bisected and rendered using two distinct systems: presumably, a description of one room as it meets another.

The large shape presses against the top and bottom edges of the canvas, as in "Threshold,

SouthWest — One [ spectrum : red ]," in which the pale pink background notches into a dense thicket of line work. Like a Dürer engraving, the marks are so compact they seem woven together. I found it difficult to discern whether Fish is following the existing thread of the canvas or crafting her own fibrous pattern on top of it. The bottom pattern is made up of lines the color of a sage-heavy rainbow, punctuated every few inches by a slim pillar that captures a microcosm of that spectral phenomenon. Here, what painting seems to offer the subject of architecture is an ambiguity that can be read as expansive.

The show includes studies for the "Threshold" paintings, small works in gouache on paper. The studies depict thick shapes with contours, like a capital serifed letter "I," made up of a square grid of smoldering, closely related colors. It is the layout of a threshold that serves as the foundational shape for the paintings, in which Fish adds other architectural details. I found it difficult to abandon the association to a typeface design, especially because each composition leaves a hefty white border. What I typically find enjoyable about a study is witnessing an artist's early process. The idea is still flexible when it is first transcribed into form. In "bound by spectrum," the "Threshold" paintings are sophisticated and candid, while the "Threshold" studies are one-note.

*Nuances in syntax evade me,  
but there is an expressive-  
ness to the grammar that  
arises my attention.*

Prior to seeing this exhibition, the paintings I was most familiar with by Fish were the playful but focused recreations of tile flooring made at the same time as her 1998 site-specific installation of die-cut vinyl on top of floor tiles, called "floor [flore]. The tile works are intriguing because they invoke seemingly contradictory painting conventions, offering themselves up as representational, but executed in the style of all-over abstraction. The wall text introducing the current exhibition declares that these paintings are "leveraging abstraction in service of representation." This strikes me as imprecise. The text could easily flip the hierarchy, stating instead that the paintings use representation in service of abstraction. Fish's work defies reductive categorization. The paintings do not yield easily, and it is this very stubbornness that I relish.

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

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SPECIAL SECTION:

# CENSORSHIP



Information has never been more valuable or more policed. And today, information is governed not only by the state, but also by corporations. Around the world, in Chile, Kashmir, Lebanon, and other places, protests are met with media blackouts. In the U.S., Facebook waffles on hate speech and refuses to filter misinformation on its platform. In Hong Kong, protesters lash out, and American corporations willingly side with the Chinese government.

Here are five stories on state and corporate censorship and the questions implied.

# APPLE

How Apple became an accessory to Chinese government censorship  
by Olivia Canny

*When Xi Jinping took office as President of China in 2013, he made it clear that he wanted his country to have access only to an internet that matched its government's values. China has been restricting its citizens' internet activity since the early 2000s, but Xi's administration invested in specialized technology to advance censorship and surveillance, providing foundational infrastructure to what is now called the Great Firewall of China. American tech giant Apple has since laid a few bricks on top.*

The internet, of course, has always been good at scaling walls. For many years, Chinese citizens kept each other informed through blogging about political discrepancies, and using virtual private networks (VPNs) to gain access to restricted sites. But in 2017, Apple removed 674 VPN services from China's App Store at its government's request.



# TAKES A BITE

One year prior, Apple removed The New York Times app, too. The Great Firewall blocked The Times' website in 2012, so the app served as the last means for citizens to read its content without specialized software, like a VPN. Upon removal, Apple did not disclose which of China's laws the app had violated. This, as The Times reports, limits the possibility of filing an appeal or challenging the government in any way.

Just before the removal of its apps, The Times was working on reports of how the Chinese government subsidizes the world's biggest manufacturer of iPhone parts in the city of Zhengzhou. The factory is owned by Apple product manufacturer Foxconn, which employs over one million Chinese workers. The Times' 2016 report refers to the plant as "iPhone City" per Zhengzhou locals' terminology, noting that, at the time, it could produce as many as 500,000 iPhones every day. This past September, China Labor Watch exposed the factory for illegally hiring temporary workers, implementing forced overtime, and neglecting to distribute bonuses to workers while pushing production of the iPhone 11. Apple has since acknowledged these violations of its work standards, but initially denied the claims.

More recently, in early October, Apple complied with China's request to remove the app for online news organization Quartz, which provided extensive coverage of unrest in Hong Kong. Since its inception, Quartz has disseminated information about digital platforms, access points, and global economic dynamics. During protests this past July,

Quartz reported on Hong Kong demonstrators' use of Apple's AirDrop feature to share photos and videos of demonstrations with internet users on the other side of China's Great Firewall, which censors most — if not all — press coverage of these events.

The protesters' attempts at sharing content with mainlanders were deliberate; some Hong Kongers went as far as captioning AirDropped photos and videos with the simplified form of Chinese used by mainlanders, rather than their own native Cantonese.

Many of the files were also explanatory, intending to educate recipients on how China's authoritarianism brought about the Tiananmen

***Just before the removal of its apps, The Times was working on reports of how the Chinese government subsidizes the world's biggest manufacturer of iPhone parts in the city of Zhengzhou.***

Square massacre in 1989. Other files contained QR codes that appeared to link to major Chinese mobile payment systems, but instead of accessing money, recipients would find information about the extradition law that set the present unrest into motion and why it isn't in mainlanders' interest to support it. Imagine receiving what looks like a Venmo payment from a stranger, only to find a link to a web page with eye-opening information about a topic you've only seen one side of. One Twitter user called these images "cheeky."

So, AirDrop, a trademarked feature exclusive to Apple products, became a tool to subvert the censorship that the tech giant has since supported. This is not the only contradiction within Apple's relationship with China.

Unlike its kindred monoliths, Facebook and Google (both of which are essentially banned in China), Apple sees China's population of almost

1.4 billion not only as a booming consumer market, but also as a vast workforce. The company relies on Chinese factories for the majority of its production, which includes over 200 million iPhones annually, and according to reports by The New York Times, its stock price tends to rise and fall depending on its sales in China.

Upon criticism from U.S. senators regarding its involvement with the Chinese government and compliance in removing VPN apps in 2017, Apple responded: "We believe that Apple can best promote fundamental rights, including the right of free expression, by being engaged even where we may disagree with a particular country's law." This statement continues to set the tone of their relationship.

In mid-October, in the midst of fierce protesting, HKmap.live was the most downloaded travel app in Hong Kong for less than a week before Apple removed it with the explanation that it violated guidelines and "local laws." The app, which still has a web location accessible at HKmap.live, depicts a map with icons to indicate the locations of police, riots and safe zones, helping both protesters and more passive civilians avoid encounters that might include tear gas and water canons.

In a statement, Apple claimed that the Hong Kong Cybersecurity Technology Crime Bureau blamed the app for helping protestors "target and ambush police, threaten public safety, and criminals have used it to victimize residents in areas where they know there is no law enforcement."

At the time of the removal, the HKmap.live's Twitter account shared that Google had not removed the app from Android's marketplace, where it saw half as many downloads as on the App Store. The account also tweeted: "HKmap is used by passerby, protesters, journalist, tourist, and even pro-government supporters. It might be hard for people outside to imagine tear gases in your neighborhood, train station, or your go-to shopping mall, but ~5000 of them is fired since June."

Apple released an update to iOS products in late September in which it altered the emoji keyboard for users in Hong Kong and Macau to hide Taiwan's flag. The Chinese government does not acknowledge Taiwan as an autonomous state. The emoji is still accessible in apps and even through predictive text, but Apple's incentives are clear. This micro-censorship of a political symbol might be even more powerful than words. As we move into the next decade, this question of free speech must extend beyond national borders and into the digital, global marketplace. ■



# Kashmir on Lockdown

Media blackouts, sovereignty, and human rights in the contested region of Kashmir  
by Darshita Jain

*I know I want to talk about Kashmir*, but I don't even know where to begin. Who am I to speak for Kashmir? Aren't I also a part of the Hindu nationalist India that rejoiced in the 370 repeal? Not me in particular, but who am I if not my identity — and here I stand, a Hindu woman in the United States, who won't be targeted for writing this piece. I spoke to a journalist friend who was a part of a four-journalist group that went to live in Kashmir and produce an eighty-page report for *CounterView*. They call it “open-source material for whoever finds it useful.” She says she is not afraid, but she is looking behind her shoulder.

Let's back up. What about Kashmir?

Kashmir has been a contested region in India for 70 years now. After independence from Britain and subsequent partition with Pakistan, Article 370 in the Indian Constitution gave Indian-administered Kashmir autonomy in all areas except defense, communication, and foreign policy. Article 35A gave only “permanent residents” of Kashmir the right to own property. It was designed this way when Kashmir's Hindu ruler at the time decided to join India and not Pakistan, under the condition that it would be granted this level of autonomy.

It is currently the only Muslim-majority state in India. When 370 was struck down on Aug. 5, 2019, the picture painted by the Indian media was that the state of Jammu and Kashmir was celebrating. I was in India when this happened. Any dissenting opinions were shut down, threatened, and censored. Not surprising in a country where most media outlets are privately owned by the rich and the politically powerful. The only photos we had access to were government-approved or in *The New York Times*. We heard that the state has had approximately 35,000 additional troops stationed there. (Kashmir is already the most militarized zone in the world, with 400,000 troops stationed regularly.) A major Hindu pilgrimage was cancelled, schools and colleges were shut, tourists and pilgrims visiting from other parts of India were forced to leave, telephone and internet services were suspended, and regional political leaders were placed under house arrest.

The repeal was made without consulting Kashmir's state legislature, a move that has been denounced as illegal by scholars and journalists. Since there is no state legislature in Kashmir, it was easy to not consult them. Many Kashmiris believe that the current government's agenda is to change the demographics of the Muslim-majority region by allowing non-Kashmiris to buy land there. This is the 51st time India has pulled the plug on mobile and internet communications — in 2019 alone.



Just goes a step further in establishing India as a Hindu nationalist country.

Prime Minister Modi then announced that the territory would be cut in half and turned into two federally controlled territories, which he said would bring peace and prosperity. Mukesh Ambani, owner of Reliance Industries, the biggest conglomerate in India and a known under-the-table donor to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) campaign — the current ruling party known for its Hindu nationalist agenda — promised to invest in Kashmir a week after the shutdown. Makes you question whether the entire move was to cripple the local economy and give the biggest moneymakers in the country freedom to expand. Al Jazeera reported on Oct. 24 that the

**This is the 51st time India has pulled the plug on mobile and internet communications — in 2019 alone.**

Indian government switched cellphone service back on for much of the Kashmir Valley, though the internet remains off. For the first time in more than 60 days, Kashmiris were able to call loved ones — or an ambulance, if they needed it. Doctors have said that as a result of the communication blackout, at least a dozen people died needlessly. A group of women marched in Srinagar, expressing outrage that many of Kashmir's political leaders, including a member of Parliament, Farooq Abdullah, remain in detention.

With the Indian media showing specials of Modi's National Geographic documentary and celebrity weddings, there hasn't been a trustworthy source for reports for me. I live in the U.S., but I was in India when 370 was scrapped. I rely on social media, Instagram, and YouTube to get my information. What do you do when the state is in lockdown?

A YouTube channel named Peeinghuman has been documenting the not-so-subtle media decline. Journalists I trust are now working with international papers. Rana Ayyub was heavily criticized and persecuted for reporting on the religious riots in the state of Gujarat, and she is now reporting for *The Washington Post*; Arundhati Roy has been speaking all over the world, but received death threats in India. Ravish Kumar from NDTV and his entire network have publicly reported death threats for their coverage.

Some of the most authentic-feeling stories are coming from an Instagram account @withkashmir, which reported earlier in October that the Indian government has restored partial cell service in the Kashmir Valley. “Over 3 million phones continue to remain disconnected due to the partial lifting of the ban,” reads one of their captions. To accompany an image of men standing in line to pay their landline bills, they quote Irfan Hussain, a cardiologist who works at a large hospital in Kashmir: “People won't die now because they can't call an ambulance,” he said. In an essay in *The Wire*, Asim Ali writes, “To be Indian in these times is to battle a crisis of faith.” The idea of questioning the legalities and the ethics of the country and its politics is leading to a state of depressing acceptance. The internet has been shut down for more than 75 days now.

On the day of the repeal, I remember I was wearing silver jhumkas, a kind of oxidized silver you can only find in the streets of India. They had a prominent lotus motif. I was having dinner with friends, some of whom were Muslim women, who looked at my earrings and asked if I supported what the current government is doing. The lotus, a symbol for the current government, is more BJP now than it has ever been. Something I had so carelessly put on was now a symbol of oppression. I did not have it in me to say it was just jewellery. I took off the earrings and never wore them again.

# CENSORING HATE

At a Constitution Day event, SAIC students consider the Bill of Rights and the First Amendment in their modern context.

by **Dustin Lowman**

**In 2015, after Satanists threatened** to hand out their own literature, Orange County (Fla.) public schools banned Bible distribution. School administrators also faced pressure from the Freedom From Religion Foundation, who were threatening to distribute a pamphlet entitled, “An X-Rated Book: Sex and Obscenity in the Bible.” In the end, the groups were successful in banning the most unban- nable book of all.

I know this because I attended the School of the Art Institute of Chicago’s (SAIC) Sept. 17 Constitution Day event, which featured voter registration, free pocket-size U.S. Constitutions, a platter of red, white, and blue mini-cupcakes, and a table full of banned books. People mostly gravitated to the latter — a motley array whose titles included “Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out,” “Maus,” “The Handmaid’s Tale,” and “Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows.”

According to Ned Marto, writing lecturer in the Liberal Arts Department and reference and instructional assistant at SAIC’s Flaxman Library, the event’s purpose was “to bring visibility to books and events oppressed by institutions or Presidential administrations.” He went on, “When banning books, institutions cite terms like ‘offensive’ and ‘inappropriate,’ terms which are very malleable, attempting to establish objective definitions of what they mean.”

Marto pointed out that the Bible is an inter- pretable text, whose meaning and content shifts depending on the historical moment. “Ever since its inception, it has been edited and annotated,” he said. “What’s been passed down over the centuries are a number of different versions of the same book, where a number of things are changed or com- pletely excluded.”

There’s an obvious parallel here with the U.S. Constitution — a legal text. According to Colum- bian-born constitution aficionado Daniel Jimenez (MAAAP 2020), U.S. citizens often treat it like gospel.

“It’s very interesting to see how the American Constitution is perceived these days,” he said. “No- where else in the world is it treated like so sacred a text.” As part of a broader interest in human rights, Daniel has read the U.S., Colombian, Spanish, Ar- gentine, Peruvian, and Mexican constitutions.

Zemaye Okediji (MA 2020, Art Therapy) agreed that she rarely encountered the Constitution out- side of worshipful contexts. “The only other places

where I feel like I encounter the Constitution are museums,” she said. “But this is bite-sized, ap- proachable,” she said, referring to the little volume.

She vowed to read it, adding, “I’m more curious now. I’m thinking more critically. My art therapy program is very social justice-oriented, which makes me question things. It’s not just, ‘This is what I know to be true,’ it’s, ‘Why are things this way?’” Comprehending the Constitution, she suggested, would be one way to better answer that founda- tional question.

## Reappraising the Constitution

As with many national holidays, the concept of Constitution Day feels strange in a contemporary context. Similar to Thanksgiving and Columbus Day, it has an air of patriotism of which we are increas- ingly suspicious. We know how fine a line there is between patriotism and nationalism, between belief in shared values and overzealousness.

Also, many of us don’t think about the Consti- tution until it’s weaponized: invoking the Second Amendment to shoot down gun legislation; the Fifth to conceal incriminating secrets; the First to defend speech and actions that straddle the bound- ary between discourse and hate.

Among the more pressing Constitution-based questions facing the U.S. today is the point at which an ideological group becomes a hate group, no longer protected by the First Amendment. The task, in other words, is deciding at what point censorship becomes necessary. That distinction sparked debate this winter when InfoWars founder and conspiracy theorist Alex Jones was kicked off Facebook, along with 89 pages related to him.

To many, banning Jones was a no-brainer. To others, like journalist LZ Granderson, it’s not so clear-cut. In a CNN.com opinion piece, Granderson denounced Jones, but warned of the perils of cen- sorship, writing, “Restricting offensive or harmful language for the greater good is all fine and dandy until you become beholden to a definition of ‘greater good’ you don’t agree with. ... I don’t like what Alex Jones has to say. But I do like the fact that I can call him an idiot. That’s America, baby.”

Unsurprisingly, Donald Trump weighed in the day after Jones was banned, tweeting, “I am con- tinuing to monitor the censorship of AMERICAN CITIZENS on social media. This is the United States of America — and we have what’s known as FREE- DOM OF SPEECH!”

*The task, in other words, is deciding at what point censorship becomes necessary.*

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Citing a causal link between “what people say online and what people do offline,” The Washington Post’s editorial board argued in favor of the Jones ban. “Fringe figures [like Jones] will always be able to find a platform. ... But if it isn’t Facebook, they will certainly have a harder time hurting people.” Being that the ban came in the wake of a slew of mass shootings, and that Jones trades on incendi- ary rhetoric, the link is not so far-fetched.

Other cases present even less clear paths for- ward. For example, YouTube took down a video of House Speaker Nancy Pelosi altered to make her sound drunk, but Facebook left it up. 9/11, flat earth, and anti-vaccination conspiracy theory videos remain on YouTube. In each case, there are people who find the videos offensive, and others who de- fend them doggedly.

“How do you measure hate?” Zemaye reflected. The answer is as urgent, and unclear, as ever.

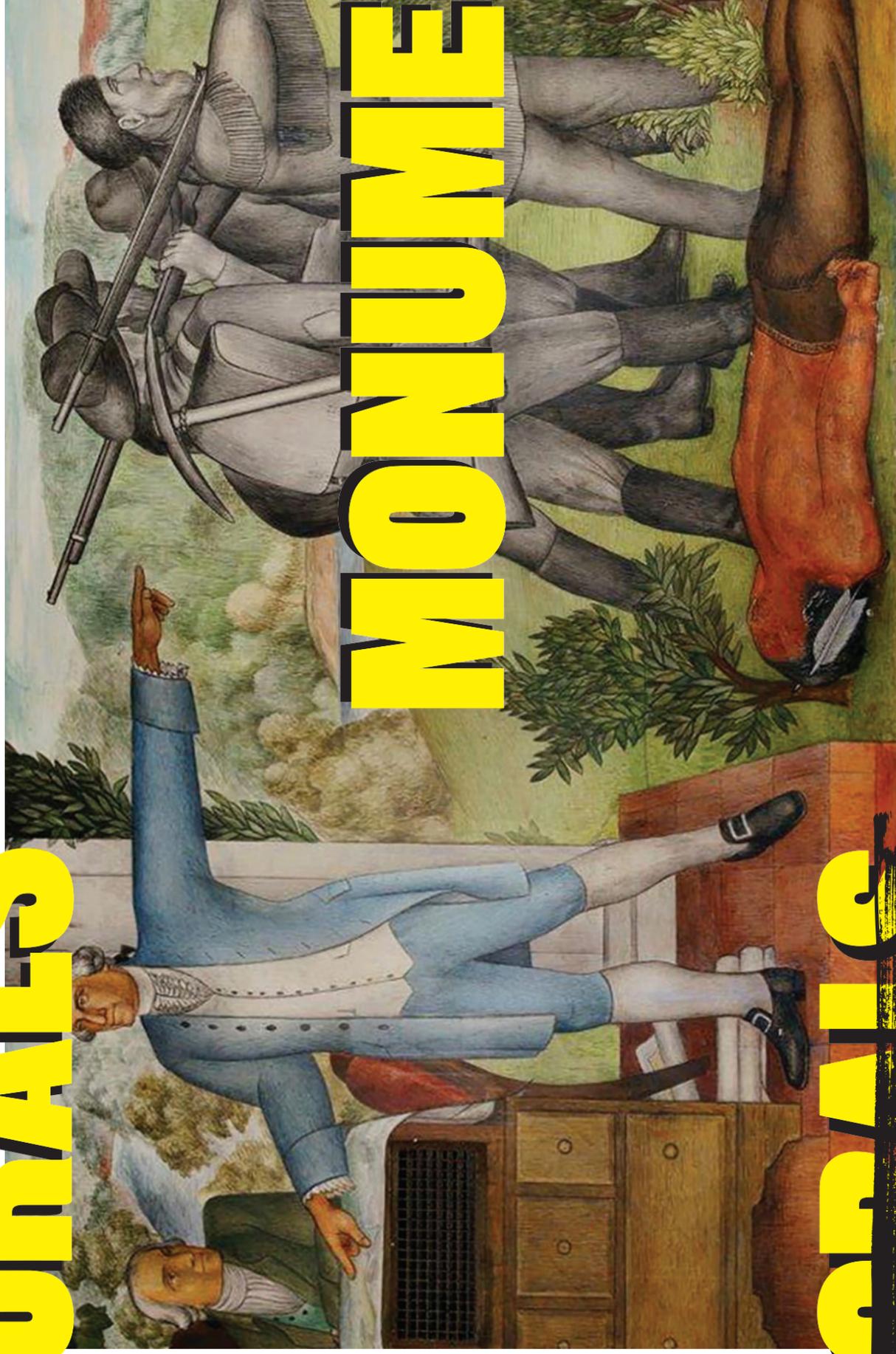
At SAIC, outside reinterpretation of key amendments, students reported knowing of, but not actively considering, the Constitution’s role. “I thought about the Constitution a lot as a seventh and eighth grader when I had to take tests on it,” said Wayne Tate (BFA 2020), Marto’s Flaxman counterpart. “Since then, when it’s not in the news, it’s been very distant.”

Wayne takes a class led by Dr. Eugenia Cheng which interrogates our educational systems. According to Dr. Cheng, modern pedagogy has its roots in a time when literacy rates were so low that teachers had to read books to illiterate students. Be- cause literacy is now nearly universal, Wayne said Dr. Cheng argues that the entire education system needs to be dismantled and rebuilt. “I think about the Constitution similarly,” said Wayne. “I read an article about the diction of the Constitution, which basically asked the question of who America was written for.”

Indeed, reading the Constitution is heavy lifting, in large part because it’s a legal document, and legal texts make for notoriously dull reads. Addi- tionally, the President, Vice President, and other high-ranking officers are always referred to as “he,” an unsavory reminder of this country’s deep-seated gender disparity.

“It deserves a rewriting,” Wayne said.

# MURALS



"The Life of Washington," series at George Washington High School, San Francisco, California by Victor Arnautoff.

# MONUMENTS

# & MURALS

Controversy around the George Washington murals at a San Francisco high school gets convoluted. Who decides?  
by Leah Gallant

*specious and without any attempts to comprehend the trauma of colonialism that is not just historical, but woven into U.S. culture."*

What has been glossed as a two-option problem actually holds far greater nuances. As Dunbar-Ortiz, Scott, and Crumpler have pointed out, the knee-jerk response of many white pro-preservation commentators has been to cry censorship without acknowledging that this mural is a source of pain. As Crumpler says in an Artnet interview with Ben Davis, "I am right with those students. I support their activism. It is just that the outcome here is confused."

early October of this year, the George Washington High School Alumni Association announced it was suing the School Board over its decision to cover the murals with

**Public art shapes and is shaped** by worldviews of what is considered important and good. It is an exercise in public memory and cultural value. As ideas shift about what is right – or as control of public space is taken by violent or nonviolent means – our built environment changes. Monuments get put up and torn down. What becomes visible in these moments of conversion or destruction is who believes what is important; and who has the power and money to decide.

Nowhere is this more confounding than in the controversy surrounding a cycle of WPA murals depicting the life of George Washington at the George Washington High School in San Francisco. In this case, unlike the sides that formed around the Charlottesville monument, those supporting its destruction and those opposing it are people of color, members of the high school community, leftists and liberals.

The Life of George Washington is a cycle of thirteen murals by Russian émigré artist Victor Arnautoff, painted in 1935-1936. In the murals, scenes from the

**It's not Neo-Nazi vs. Antifa, but liberal vs. liberal. And on both sides, there are very vocal white people claiming to represent the interests of people of color.**

life of the first president are shown in bright, swarthy figures with modelled shading, testament to the communist painter's time studying with Diego Rivera. The debate centers around two panels in particular. In one, slaves are pictured in the background, working on George Washington's family plantation, Mount Vernon. In another, a dead Native American is shown lying at the feet of a four settlers in coonskins who walk over him en route to Westward expansion.

In the spring of 2019, a committee of high school parents and community members assembled to investigate the murals found that they constituted a threatening environment for black and Native students, and demanded their removal. In June 2019, after months of contentious meetings and op-eds, the San Francisco Board of Education voted unanimously to whitewash the murals. Two months later, they re-voted instead 4-3 to cover the panels with a temporary veneer — a compromise which seemed to please no one. But the debate continues: In

This wasn't the first time the murals have come under fire. In the 1960s, black students at the high school criticized the mural for its depiction of black Americans. They called for the addition of a mural that centered the experiences and contributions of black Americans. As Robin D.G. Kelley, writing in *The Nation*, points out, the criticism was focused on the depictions of slaves, with no mention of the dead Native American man. Eventually, then-22 year old black artist Dewey Crumpler painted a mural entitled "Multi-Ethnic Heritage," that celebrates the histories of Americans of color. Located in the same hallway as the Washington murals, through a set of doors, Crumpler's image shows a Native American figure holding Alcatraz as Turtle Island, as well as Dolores Huerta and Cesar Chavez.

Those who support the destruction of the Washington murals point to the fact that the violence against black and Native American subjects is an unwelcome visual assault inflicted on viewers of color. As one parent said, "Not one Native American student should feel uncomfortable at having to confront this image every day." (Students apparently use parts of the mural as convenient labels for meeting points, agreeing, for example, to meet "at the dead Indian.") Those who support the mural's preservation note Arnautoff's critical handling of American history: He dared to show the raced violence of the United States was founded upon, they say, and what is needed is education about Native genocide and white supremacy as this specific mural refers to it, as well as in American history curriculums at large.

I am a white viewer, and I believe that centering the perspectives of people of color matters more than my own reaction. But there is no clear division along racial lines between the two sides. Some of the most prominent supporters of its destruction are black and Native American students and parents; an open letter drafted by some of them was signed by the San Francisco chapter of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), the Chinese Progressive Association, and San Francisco Rising, an organization that builds political power in communities of color.

"Preservationists," on the other hand, include Choctaw Indian elder Tamaka Bailey; Dread Scott, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago alumni whose work involving the American flag was denounced by Congress; and muralist Dewey Crumpler, who has said that to destroy the George Washington murals would be to destroy his own work. (Many scholars and arts professionals, such as Judith Butler and New York Times Chief Art Critic Roberta Smith, have also opposed its destruction.) It's not Neo-Nazi vs. Antifa, but liberal vs. liberal. And on both sides, there are very vocal white people claiming to represent the interests of people of color.

Part of the ambiguity is in the visual. The very same elements are cited as visual evidence by each side to support their argument. The slaves bent over in the fields in the background either show the representation of black Americans as docile, passive recipients of violence, or they show honestly the raced violence on which this country is built, the stolen labor and livelihood of black people. As Robert W. Cherney, a historian who wrote a biography on Arnautoff, has pointed out, this ambiguity was necessary in order for the artist to evade censorship in his own time: it had to be able to pass as Americana to sidestep the fate of, say, Diego Rivera's mural at the Rockefeller Center.

I asked Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, indigenous historian and author of "An Indigenous People's History of the United States," who tweeted her support for the mural's preservation, why she thought this issue, unlike other recent controversies around art that relate to the United States' foundations in raced violence, has pitted progressives, leftists, and community members of color against one another. She told me by email:

*"Because this is the first encounter between Native Americans and liberals. Native activists have for decades protested anti-Indigenous public works and figures, notably, for instance, Columbus and Junipero Serra (the Franciscan/Spanish colonizer of California Natives) statuary and hero worship. In the Washington mural, what most eyes perceived was the trope of the dead Indian, the erasure of Native people. They were looking at the effect rather than the intent of the artist. Liberals are all too happy to admit to European and United States colonial genocide but less willing to deal with the ongoing presence and colonization of Native peoples. Local and national art professionals and preservationists did not help matters with their arguments that all art is beyond reproach, romanticizing art as such, pointing out that art should be provocative, but their arguments were*



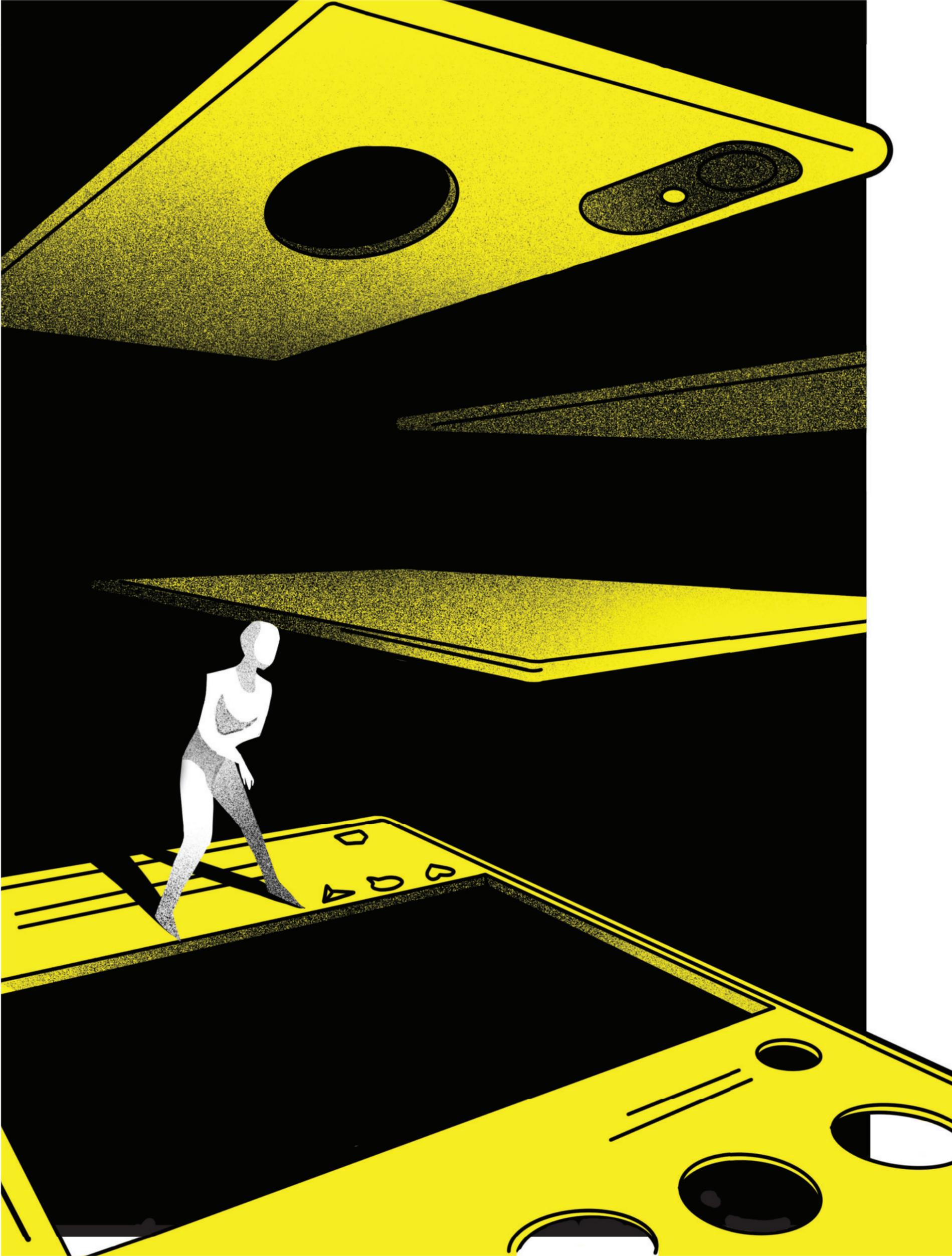
The controversy over these murals questions something else. It reveals a moral shift in how we think about representation, in which only people who are part of a minority group should have the right to represent their experience.

**What becomes visible in these moments of conversion or destruction is who believes what is important, and who has the power and money to decide.**

But Arnautoff wasn't working in the age of Tumblr politics. He was an artist and a communist at a time when censorship of anything deemed anti-American posed a real threat to radicals like himself. It was a threat Arnautoff faced when he was called before the House Un-American Activities Committee for defending the work of his fellow artist, Anton Refregier. Refregier's San Francisco post office murals came under attack for depicting the Chinese-American workers who built the railroad being assaulted by a racist mob.

When I asked Dunbar-Ortiz what she thought should be done about the mural, she told me: "The four panels of the fresco tell an accurate history and should be used as a teaching tool along with materials and speakers who stress the resistance and continued existence of Native peoples."

I support the preservation and continued display of the murals, a position that I would not hold if it were not for the critical perspectives of artists and scholars of color. But only on the condition that those spurred to action on behalf of some pictures will campaign even harder to build material and political power for Native and black members of the high school community and in the country at large. I must hold myself to this as well. If those who support the mural's preservation, particularly those white people who support it, cannot stand with black and Native communities in building equity, then the mural will become a testament to selective democracy, American-style: the type of democracy whose values of freedom of speech and artistic expression are built on stolen lives and stolen land. ■



# Reading Between the Community Guidelines

How social media giants target and restrict sex workers on their platforms

by Liv Meyer

As sex workers enter cyberspace, their use of modern technology to promote their content on social media is met with censorship and permanent bans. By imposing strict censorship, social media is attempting to “smoke out” the sex workers from their sites. Many young people use the ease and accessibility of sites like Twitter and Instagram to sell their services. But with posts constantly being removed, this supposed ease turns into a stressful merry-go-round of lost content.

In March 2018, the United States Senate passed the FOSTA-SESTA (Allow States and Victims to Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act/Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act). This bill was proposed with the apparent intention of protecting sex workers by making it easier for them to sue websites for the misuse of their content. However, it also makes it easier for state prosecutors to hold websites that distribute sexual content criminally liable for their user produced content. This means that many websites, in order to avoid lawsuits, are now choosing to ban sex work from their sites altogether.

Websites originally used specifically for sex work, such as Backpage, are also becoming far less user-friendly. This, along with the popularity and accessibility of app-based sharing, is why sex workers are choosing to move their content to more mainstream social media websites like Instagram and Twitter. Many sex workers prefer the environment of these sites and are able to reach a larger audience by utilizing the structure of these highly interactive platforms.

Jade Perry (@bashfulbunnie on Twitter) is one of the hundreds of sex workers who use social media to sell nude photographs and videos. “I used to use Instagram stories and Twitter posts to sell my nudes. The benefits were that the market was less saturated, and I already had thousands of followers that knew me and were interested in me,” she says. Perry can use her already established following to connect with people specifically interested in her content, and reach out to others who may have similar preferences.

The structure of social media means that sex workers can review their customer’s profiles in order to become familiar with those they’re selling to. But after about four months of using Instagram to sell nudes, she was perma-suspended from the app and her account was deleted. She lost thousands

of followers and more importantly, her platform of known and trusted customers. This destabilized her business and put her into unsure territory, where she must rebuild a following from scratch, a laborious and potentially risky practice. She is now unable to vet her clients, creating a dangerous situation of one-sided anonymity.

Even when sex workers are not entirely banned from social media, their posts are often deleted with such frequency that it forces them to delete their accounts themselves. Like Perry, Goldie Schmiedeler (goldiestar.net) used Instagram to sell nudes and advertise other services. They too felt Instagram to be more popular and accessible than sites intended for sex work, but they were only able to keep their account viable for about three months. “Even though I wasn’t posting full nudes, almost every other photo I posted got taken down. It wasn’t worth having the account anymore,” they explained.

Schmiedeler, like many others, attempted to avoid censorship by posting less explicit but still

**“Even though I wasn’t posting full nudes, almost every other photo I posted got taken down. It wasn’t worth having the account anymore.”**

suggestive content, but Instagram continued to take their posts down with little to no explanation. “When my posts first got deleted, I tried to contact Instagram and tell them they made a mistake but I realized soon that wasn’t worth my time. To ultimately avoid getting censored, I just deleted my account.” This is just one example of the ways in which social media frustrates and targets sex workers until they are forced off the platform.

One could argue that these apps aren’t doing anything deliberately harmful to sex workers. They simply have a set of community guidelines to which they must adhere, and all users are subject to equal censorship. In their guidelines, Instagram states: “We know that there are times when people might want to share nude images that are artistic or creative in nature, but for a variety of reasons, we don’t allow nudity on Instagram.” But many sex workers have reported that while their sexual content is taken down, the explicit content posted by people who are not selling their content — they cite Kim Kardashian — is often left alone.

Jade Perry observes this phenomenon firsthand. When asked if she felt she was censored more than

she would be if she weren’t selling her photographs and videos, she responded simply, “Yes, because my Instagram had never been censored before.” In order to combat this unfair application of policy, prominent sex worker and activist Rebecca Crow has started a petition, asking Instagram to discuss policy with sex workers and come to a more reasonable arrangement. In a statement about the petition, Crow writes: “Instagram’s censorship policy is disproportionately affecting sex workers on Instagram. We try our best to stay within Instagram’s vague guidelines, but increasing numbers of sex workers are having their accounts deactivated unfairly and it is seriously impacting our ability to maintain our businesses.”

Additionally, the “female” nipple is censored because it is seen as sexual, whereas shirtless pictures of men do not receive the same attention. This stigma causes a bias against sex workers with breasts, who are unable to post equally revealing photos as those without breasts. This issue is further complicated by the presence of non-binary and gender fluid sex workers who feel their body parts should not be viewed as inherently sexual due to gender association. Goldie experienced this discrimination firsthand when they posted topless photos. “When such photos are taken down, I get a message from Instagram stating that images of female nipples are not permitted, and I do not identify as female.”

Many sex workers can’t afford to be banned, because their revenue depends on their social media presence for exposure. That presence can include non-sexual content, but this, too, can be censored. This creates a loss of creative freedom and a stressful pressure on those trying to create an honest and interesting online presence.

President of the Adult Performers Actors Guild, Alana Evans, highlights the ridiculousness of how wildly unrelated and innocuous content is censored simply because it comes from a sex worker. “There are performers who are being deleted because they put up a picture of their freshly painted toenails,” she said in an interview with VICE.

Without strict censorship, social media would have the potential to provide a safer and more affective platform for sex workers. Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook could function as virtual havens for those looking to sell content to trusted sources and create supportive fanbases; but, like many institutions, these social media websites have chosen to make the lives of sex workers more difficult.

Now, sex workers are rising up against the injustice of unfair and extreme social media censorship. Recently, over 200 sex workers have come together and put their screen names on a letter to Facebook speaking out about how their sexually explicit content is taken down, whereas those of popular celebrities are left untouched. Sex workers will no longer silently endure the oppression of disproportionate censorship. ■



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Ten years later, what do the thinkpieces still miss about Jennifer's Body?  
by Georgia Hampton

The comedy horror film "Jennifer's Body" turns 10 this year and, as is true for many under-appreciated films which reach an anniversary that is a multiple of five, it was briefly thrown back into the public consciousness with an avalanche of nostalgic praise — the film was "ahead of its time"; it was feminist before we viewers could understand it as such; Megan Fox is a sex-positive bisexual icon that we didn't appreciate at the peak of her fame.

For what it's worth, "Jennifer's Body" definitely deserves its brief moment of decade-late adoration. The film offers with delightful camp a story of revenge, female friendship (and a little bit more than that), and, yes, the desperate hunger of a sacrificial-offering-turned-bloodthirsty-demon-girl. The basic plotline is this: High school hottie Jennifer Check (Megan Fox) is kidnapped by a touring band (fronted by an aggressively eye-linered Adam Brody) who decide to offer her as a virgin sacrifice to Satan in exchange for fame and fortune. One problem: Jennifer isn't a virgin. So instead of dying, Jennifer becomes a succubus, a flesh-eating demon who must subsist on high school boys to stay alive. Her unlikely best friend, Anita "Needy" Lesnicki (played by a pre-"Mamma Mia" Amanda Seyfried) finds out what is going on, and vows to stop Jennifer's murderous rampage.

Needy is presented as the protagonist, but the real show-stopper is Megan Fox's Jennifer. In 2009, Fox was at the peak of her career, having just skyrocketed into super-stardom for her role as Mikaela Banes in "Transformers" in 2007. She had played a high school queen bee before, in "Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen," but Jennifer Check offered up a take on that archetype that was wholly different: not just demonic, but disgusting. Jennifer Check is lewd in a way usually reserved for the "Superbad"-type male lead, and Fox delivers her vitriol through a swipe of lip gloss. In one particularly memorable moment, Jennifer — resplendent in a beige cropped puffer coat and silver hoop earrings — sidles up to Needy's boyfriend Chip (Johnny Simmons) and says, "It smells like Thai food in here. Have you guys been fucking?"

Much of the praise surrounding "Jennifer's Body" at its 10 year anniversary serves two purposes: a reclamation of a movie we weren't yet ready for in 2009, and an apology to Megan Fox. To champion Megan Fox now is like reconciling with the hot girl you called a slut in high school, before you knew about internalized misogyny. Because in 2009, the world was monstrous to Megan Fox. And that's why "Jennifer's Body" was initially a flop.

In 2009, the cultural consensus around Megan Fox was predictable for the first decade of the 2000s: she was a hot bitch who was — gasp! — openly bisexual. Her sexuality was predictably played toward male audiences; the sort of frat guy girl-on-girl fantasy that portrays queerness as a performance for the

male gaze. So, when promotion began for "Jennifer's Body," it was advertised as yet another extension of Megan Fox-as-sex-symbol-for-straight-boys. Promos for the film leaned heavily on the fact that Amanda Seyfried and Megan Fox have a kissing scene. Even the trailer distilled Jennifer's urge to kill into some soggy "what if the hot girl is evil but in a hot way" fantasy. It was presented, as Roger Ebert described in his review of the film, as "Twilight for boys" — a macabre fantasy that's just sexy enough to get the blood flowing, with viewers left to take care of the rest.

"Jennifer's Body" has its share of fantasy elements — including the much-awaited kissing scene between Seyfried and Fox — but "Twilight" for boys, it is not. And for the straight male audience anticipating a pouty-mouthed Megan Fox to serve as a conduit for their high school fantasy, "Jennifer's Body" was a massive

disappointment. This is often credited as the reason for its initial failure at the box office, with the film's screenwriter Diablo Cody going so far as to say she predicted the film's lackluster support as a result of its doomed marketing. This also makes it possible for current-day viewers to dust off the film's former context and polish it anew. Removed from its initial marketing missteps, it's allowed to take up the space it couldn't before.

In 2019, it's easy to see the deliciously subversive nature of Jennifer Check. It's easier to root for Jennifer as she devours high school boys who, much like real-life high school boys did with Megan Fox, misunderstood Jennifer's overt sexuality as vapid and beguiling. The ending offers a #MeToo era sense of justice; Needy — after killing Jennifer, winding up in a mental institution, and developing some of Jennifer's powers — escapes to hunt down the now-famous band that tried to sacrifice Jennifer. We don't see the violence onscreen, but as the credits roll we are treated to police photographs of its aftermath: the blood-soaked hotel suite, a male body slumped over a bathtub full of red water.

**To champion Megan Fox now is like reconciling with the hot girl you called a slut in high school, before you knew about internalized misogyny.**

Many articles praising "Jennifer's Body" claim that, if the movie was released today, it would be a smash hit. This desire to bring the film into the present day is the connecting thread among all these praise-saturated articles. Audiences love "Jennifer's Body" now. Only now can it be given the respect it deserves. And the wave of articles praising "Jennifer's Body" are right. This film did things with the "hot girl" stereotype and the demonic horror genre that mainstream audiences in 2009 weren't ready for. But it is this fantasy of fixing time that misses the point: It is its context that makes the film worth discussing.

"Jennifer's Body" was smart to market itself as a sexy movie for straight boys. Let them buy a ticket to this movie, let them misunderstand. Then make them watch Megan Fox unhinge her jaw and sink her fangs into the doughy neck of a teenage boy, spew black vomit all over the floor. This movie is not for these boys, though they were tricked to believe it. That is the true power of "Jennifer's Body" — it seduces its straight, male viewers as Jennifer does, promising all sorts of unseen pleasures, promising the ultimate fantasy, only to deny it.

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## The Goldfinch film adaptation is a masterclass in over-promising and under-delivering.

by Leo Smith

*Immediately upon its release, "The Goldfinch" became a target of near-universal derision. I love a good panning, and by the time I read a review calling it "cinema as taxidermy," I was morbidly fascinated. Donna Tartt's bestselling novel, adapted for the screen by John Crowley from a screenplay by John Straughan: How awful could it be? I sat down with the elderly for a matinée showing to find out for myself.*

*It lived up to all that letdown, and more. "The Goldfinch" is emotionally baffling and profoundly shallow. It has more gaps than a redacted White House transcript — spaces where you feel there should, there must be something more. Yet that something never materializes. In 2.5 hours, it revealed no narrative goal to me. I spent the last hour feeling like the film could end at any moment. I had no idea what event, choice, or moment would bring closure, and frankly, I had no idea what had been opened.*

*We meet Theo (Oakes Fegley) just after he has survived a terrorist(?) bombing at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. His mother is dead, and his alcoholic father was out of the picture before the attack. With nowhere to go, he ends up in the frigid hands of a loveless family of NYC WASPs, the Barbours. The family is headed by Mrs. Barbour (Nicole Kidman), whose generous amount of screen time is spent either silently staring at her unpleasant husband across the dinner table or silently staring at Theo through half-open doors. What no one else knows is that Theo, in a moment of traumatized confusion, secreted a painting out of the bombed Met gallery: The Goldfinch, by Dutch master Carel Fabritius.*

***The Goldfinch has more gaps than a redacted White House transcript — spaces where you feel there should, must be something more.***

*A little less than a year passes. Theo and the other children, in stilted dialogue written by adults, fail to bond. In similarly robotic style, he befriends Pippa, a girl his age who survived the blast with him. Pippa suffered a form of brain damage that, for reasons never addressed, render her unable to play music anymore. A perfunctory romantic attachment arises, one Theo will carry into their adulthood, when he (now played*

*by the ever-affectless Ansel Elgort) meets Pippa again in the full bloom of her Manic Pixie Dream Girlhood. Anyway, back in his childhood, Theo is also befriending her guardian, antique furniture restorer Hobie (Jeffrey Wright, underutilized again in his same wise-old-specialist role as "Hunger Games" and "Westworld"). Theo's interest in the antique furniture is given the movie's signature swaths of depthless screen time.*

*This zombielike screenplay was written by Peter Straughan, who adapted "Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy" in 2011 with equal lifelessness. I wasn't aware of the connection while watching "The Goldfinch," but in retrospect, I can see that they share the same taxidermied human relations and sieve-like narrative structure. For Straughan, character development is durational, not experiential: If enough time passes, this person will become interesting. If adult Theo snorts enough crushed-up pills, we'll learn something about him. It feels like the exposition never ends.*

*Just as young Theo is settling in with the Barbour family, his father (the incongruous Luke Wilson) reappears and sweeps him away to Las Vegas. For the first time, Theo makes a friend: the Russian-accented, drug-dealing, cigarette-smoking child Boris (Finn Wolfhard). Boris's blithe, earnest energy livens the movie up so much that you realize how dead everybody else is. (I call this phenomenon the Tormund Effect.) The atmospheric, era-neutral plink-plink piano soundtrack is suddenly replaced with New Order, "Jai-Ho," and Radiohead. Here, where sources close to me (my aunt) say that the book loses steam, the film surprisingly wakes up.*

*The two boys live in different alcoholic, abusive homes in the same empty, foreclosed development in the desert. It's an engagingly haunted environment, with empty pools and one overflowing garbage dumpster. Theo seems to inch towards emotional processing. For the first time, he is not alone. He loves someone, and they love him. As Theo and Boris go on their age-inappropriate drug escapades together, the film becomes compelling. When Theo begs Boris to run away with him to New York, Boris prevaricates — then he impulsively kisses Theo goodbye. It was, for me, the only heartbreaking moment in the film. Boris promises to follow him, in just a few days. As Theo rides away in the taxi, you know he never will. Theo knows it too. In the entire 2.5 hour ordeal, the loss of that relationship was the only loss I truly felt.*

*Which, by all rights, shouldn't have been the case. Because, to get personal for a moment, I was in proximity to a terrorist bombing in 2013. I*

*wasn't close enough to be in any physical danger, nor did I witness the damage the way Theo did. But I had my fair share of survivor's guilt, and even shell-shock. For a few years, the sound of fireworks or engine backfires would make me shake, and a mention of the attack would make me nauseous. So when Theo's monotone monologue told me, in the opening scene, "It was my fault," I thought maybe this would be a film about processing. Maybe one I could relate to. Regrettably, no. Theo's guilt, mentioned vaguely and in the same terms several times, never develops — he neither explodes, reclaims, nor gets absolved, "Good Will Hunting"-style. Of course this attack wasn't his fault, of course his mother's death wasn't his*

***Hit me a little harder on the nose, would you, Mr. Crowley? I don't think you broke it.***

*fault. But nobody onscreen ever tells him that. By the end, he's still in the same place he started.*

*The final act shows grown-up Theo, a perfunctory engagement to Mrs. Barbour's daughter, a furniture fraud plot, an affair, and a sudden, bizarre shift into the crime underworld. None of it holds together — at best, it's a series of over-done metaphors about how we bury our true selves, or something. Like how Theo has a storage locker where he goes to snort drugs and embrace the still-newspaper-swaddled painting. Hit me a little harder on the nose, would you, Mr. Crowley? I don't think you broke it.*

*Frankly, I have no idea what this movie wanted me to feel while watching it, or what it wanted me to walk away with after it ended. There was so much clumsy moralizing that the moral became completely unclear. What did it tell me about grief, loss, or trauma? Anything? What values did it endorse, in regards to class, substance abuse, or art? The Goldfinch painting itself plays almost no role. Where is its value located? Its chain? Its mystery? Its resilience, as in the staggeringly literal story about the painter's death they shoehorned into the final act? I'd speculate that this true story was Tartt's inspiration for the novel's central conceit, but including it in the actual dialogue is heavy-handed enough to tilt the Earth on its axis.*

*I wish that the movie had actually shown me something of substance about grief and recovery. Instead, I watched a million static elements converge to form nothing at all. ■*



# The Gospel of Lizzo

How the pop diva continues my family's message of self-love

by Brejenn Allen

*When I was singing along with Lizzo* about being “100% that bitch,” I didn’t know who she was. I just knew that her music made me feel like the baddest chick on the planet. I first saw the actual Lizzo in a photo on Instagram, dangling her bare titties out of a hotel window with her arms outstretched and a big grin on her face. She was big and she was black, and she was publicly naked in an upscale hotel window with no shame. I proceeded to listen to all of her music.

“YES! YES! YES! Somebody else gets it!” I thought, trying to jam quietly in the Harold Washington Library this summer. She was putting to melody what the women in my family have always preached to me. And that familiar message was everywhere, not just in her music. The way Lizzo carries herself holds an eerie resemblance to the strong black women I grew up around. “I am a Queen, so are you. You’d better fall in love with the way you are made because there is no changing it” — that is what my grandmother told my momma, and my momma tells me. My mom loves to work out; she started bodybuilding before I was born. She can lift 200-pound weights and has the bulging neck muscles to prove it. She rides her bike every day, she’s a vegetarian, but she is stigmatized as unhealthy because she’s a proud member of the “300-pound Club.”

Through the women in my family, I was taught to love every bit of myself, especially the parts that I thought weren’t worthy of love. Those are the parts of myself that are most worthy of love, my mom told me, because they make me the most extraordinary. “I know I’m a queen but I don’t need no crown,” raps Lizzo in “Soulmate” — my mom’s words and Lizzo’s lyrics echo one another.

My parents are two old-school preachers, so when I wasn’t in the church choir singing Shirley Caesar, Fred Hammond, and Dr. Watts, I was singing along to Aretha Franklin, Al Green, and the Staple Singers. I grew up surrounded by these powerful voices, and Lizzo’s voice fits right in.

Her recently released full-length album, “Cuz I Love You,” combines the funky vibes of an 8-track tape recorder with the front pew soul of a Baptist church. The beats in Lizzo’s music are familiar to me, but delivered in a fresh, surprising way. “Boys” leans heavily on the old school beat and takes me down the Soul Train line from wherever I’m sitting. When Lizzo belts out, “Cuz I love you!” it makes me want to cry, or get saved at the altar, or both.

I have bad skin days where I feel like my acne scars and hyperpigmentation show through more than on other days. I have bad fro days where my natural feels a little crunchy. Most often I feel mentally stripped, tired, and unworthy. But Lizzo makes me feel heard, understood, and represented. “I’m feelin’ vulnerable / I don’t need to apologize / Us big girls gotta cry,” Lizzo sings in “Crybaby.” Lizzo frequently opens up about her own battles with depression. “I self-love so hard because everything feels like rejection ... It feel like the whole world be ghostin’ me sometimes,” she wrote in a post on Instagram. Her open vulnerability shows me that my emotions are valid, and that even the most confident people sometimes struggle. She helps me to accept the lower parts of my life, like crying at 3 in the morning over a last minute art project. My stressed art school tears don’t make me a weak emotional woman — they make me a strong passionate one.

**When Lizzo belts out, “Cuz I love you!” it makes me want to cry, or get saved at the altar, or both.**

Lizzo came onto the scene with all of herself acting, singing and rapping self-love as aggressively as any mainstream pop diva on the scene today, even with the cards duly stacked against her. But Lizzo is just as naked, wearing just as commanding fashion, dancing just as hard as any other pop diva. Before anything else, she takes all the parts of herself that could be used against her — being fat, being black, being anything at all — and she chooses to love herself instead. She loves herself not despite the things she is, but because those things make her the most extraordinary. Just like my momma said.

# I'm Still Here



Chanel Miller's memoir, *Know My Name*, sends a message of strength, solidarity, and survival.  
by Kaitlin Weed

*During the tumultuous case and trial* of State of California vs. Brock Turner, she was only known as Emily Doe to the public. But now, with her breakout memoir "Know My Name," Chanel Miller prints her name in bold white font, describing the harrowing account of her life from her assault, the trial that followed, and her life afterwards.

In accessible language, Miller catches the essence of even her broadest, darkest moments. She credits her dexterity with writing to her mother, a first-generation Chinese immigrant who was a writer before she came to the United States. "My writing is sophisticated because I had a head start, because I am years in the making, because I am my mother and her mother before," Miller writes "When I write, I have the privilege of using a language that she fought for."

Her language is where she found her power, first as Emily Doe in her trial. After the release of her Victim Impact Statement at the hearing, many accused Miller of having someone else write her statement on her behalf. She commented, "What they are really saying is, victims can't write." "Know My Name" breaks through the legacy of erasure of survivor's voices and, through her own story, demonstrates how trauma begins to heal under the tidal wave of support, often by other survivors.

Survivors, including Miller, are at the whim of the court system. Miller herself was the "best-case scenario" — taking her attacker to trial and winning. However, her experience in the courtroom became its own kind of violence, as Miller was forced to relive the assault in excruciating detail over and over again. As a survivor who never had a chance to bring their own assault to court, I had never considered how debilitating this process could be. How can one heal from an assault while being forced to re-experience that trauma?

Some of the most powerful passages in "Know My Name" show the steady growth of support around Miller. It's so easy to become isolated after an assault, something Miller herself grappled with. As she began to share her story with others, more and more gathered at her side. In one powerful

moment, Miller told a friend about her assault, and revealed that she was taking her attacker to court. Her friend had also been assaulted and, like me, was unable to seek legal action. She told Miller, "This is your opportunity."

Miller describes that by the time the trial concluded — despite Turner's shockingly lenient sentence — she felt uplifted by the number of people in support of her. After the release of Miller's Victim Impact Statement, email after email poured into her inbox championing her. This support would send her off to sleep after scrolling for so long of endless cruel comments. "Know My Name" serves a

**Through her book, Miller is creating an even larger community of solidarity.**

similar purpose; through her book, Miller is creating an even larger community of solidarity.

By the end of the memoir, Emily Doe has finally merged with Chanel Miller. Emily had, at first, served as a separate entity, tucked away both by necessity and design. Throughout the book, Miller claims her identity and her ownership over her experiences, just as she wishes other survivors will one day reclaim their own. "I thought of the man in the thick black jacket, sitting by the tracks in the foldout chair, hired to save lives. That was the job I wanted," Miller writes. "The only difference was I sat on a chair at home, writing the words that would get you to stay here, to see the value of you, the beauty of your life. So if you come on the worst day of your life, my hope is you catch you, to gently guide you back."

The memoir's power is its vulnerability. After the hearing, Chanel told herself, "Your suffering means something," and began to write. I murmured this to myself, in tears, before I fell asleep. "Know My Name" is for us, for survivors — a push to create out of what has threatened to stop us.

There are so many of us whose first language isn't English. We have such a unique relationship with English. As some friends and I got to talking over the last year, we realized just how much power the language has, as social capital in our countries. It also has power on individual levels, where the sheer exhaustion of having to translate your thoughts all the time is a very real thing.

The series is an exploration of everything that happens in the act of translation. How it happens in your head, how it affects you, what words are so hard to translate, what emotions you can only access in your own language. The best part is that this is a bilingual series. It looks like whatever language the writer is thinking in, to give you, our readers, an idea of what the inside of this everyday translation process looks like.

Darshita  
Editor, Lit Section

## POEMS DE LOS MUERTOS

### Calaveritas and the Day of the Dead

by Luis López Levi

*November 2, the Day of the Dead in Mexico*, is my favorite holiday for so many reasons. It is the time to remember our loved ones who have passed on; to create elaborate altars filled with their pictures and favorite foods and drinks, filled with marigold petals that, in traditional beliefs, guide the spirits' way back to the realm of the living for one night of the year. It is also the ideal time to indulge in some pan de muerto and hot chocolate. And apart from all that, it's the one time that I can read poetry in the newspaper.

On that day, a spread features dozens of calaveritas, short poems that serve as affectionate accounts of someone's death. Politicians, celebrities, and religious authority figures — all living people — will each have one or two stanzas dedicated to them about when and how Death found them (accompanied by a toothy skull cartoon drawing of each person). The poems are meant to be playful and satirical — an ideal opportunity to take a jab at a major scandal in a zeitgeisty way.

Newspapers, of course, are not the only place where calaveritas appear, only the most public one. But a person with a knack for quick rhymes can write a few for their family or close friends. The tradition summarizes the essence of the Day of the Dead: a belief, deeply ingrained in Mexican culture, that death doesn't have to be just a sad, heavy subject.

Neither the calaveritas nor the Day of the Dead in general mock or minimize grief. Rather, it offers a day in the year where mourning a loved one can be put aside to celebrate their life and the chance to spiritually connect with them. People will crowd the cemeteries, laying flowers on their family graves and spending time together there. People will have lunch there, dedicate songs to their passed relatives (full mariachis are often hired to perform in graveyards that day), or simply talk to their deceased, filling them up on what's new since last year.

Good calaveritas can make many people laugh, but the best ones make the subject chuckle. In the end, the goal is to make them smile after reading about their own ultimate demise, when Death arrives while they're doing what they love the most. In essence, it's about celebrating the possibility of someone living their best life until their literal last breath. If we're all going there, why not entertain the idea and laugh while we're at it?

The rules for a good calaverita are simple, but must be followed closely in order to compose an effective one. Verses are traditionally eight syllables long to give them a sing-songy feel. They must also have a defined rhyme scheme (usually ABAB or ABBA) that must be consistent throughout. Finally (and perhaps obviously), it has to be about death. Although they are usually in Spanish, I decided to try out a few bilingual examples jumping from one language to another as I make fun of a few people who might not be as larger than life as we think they are.





### Bernie Sanders

Ya se andaba petateando  
Después de aquel patatús.  
But ol' Bernie's still peleando  
Making headlines on the news.

La Muerte lo vio en la tele,  
And she thought, "¡ay, madre mía!  
¿Qué le queda a este pelele?  
¿One percent de batería?"

### Lizzo

Lizzo poured herself a hearty  
Shot de tequilita fuerte.  
Who was also at that party?  
One hundred percent La Muerte!

Not long after, la bebida  
Tumbó a la super chanteuse,  
Y La Muerte, complacida,  
Dijo "blame it on the juice!"



### Natalie Wynn

Grabando un video nuevo  
Under glaring, hot pink light  
Natalie looked pretty fuego  
In La Muerte's deathly sight.

Natalie, al ver a La Flaca  
Le dijo "Hey, how are you?"  
Death firmly gripped an estaca,  
"Goodbye, Diosa de YouTube!"

### Lin-Manuel Miranda

Overlooking el Caribe  
Boricua, from his veranda  
La Muerte creyó imposible  
Resistirse al buen Miranda

"I'm a fan," le dijo aquella,  
"Pero eso won't make me stop.  
Lástima, I have to slay ya.  
I'm not throwin' away my shot!"



# F Chats!

Every **Wednesday from 12 to 1 p.m.**, SAIC Section Editor **Dustin Lowman** and Staff Writer **Luis Lopez** broadcast live from the Free Radio SAIC booth.

F Chats consists of three sections:

**Hot Topic:** Hosts and guests discuss arts/entertainment news.

**Guest:** An F News editor/contributor goes deep on one of their projects.

**Out of the Waxwork:** Hosts share music that might have flown under your radar.

Here's what went down this past month.



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**9/25**

**Hot Topic:** Lana Del Ray unleashes the rage of her 9.5 million followers on renowned critic Ann Powers. How did it get so ugly?

**Guest:** Georgia Hampton, F's entertainment and photo editor, discusses her thesis on the serial killer as a mutation of the hypermasculine male ideal.

**Out of the Waxwork**

**Luis:** The easygoing, end-of-summer vibes of Dominican Vicente Garcia. **Dustin:** The equally autumnal, lyrically dense mysticism of Cass McCombs

**10/2**

**Hot Topic:** Kanye West vows to stop making "secular music," causing us to ask the age-old question: What is going through his head? Other artists have made similar vows. Why?

**Guest:** Darshita Jain, F News-magazine's literary editor. Darshita is pioneering a new series called (Lost) in Translation, examining the politics of translation.

**Out of the Waxwork**

**Luis:** The wry stylings of Deendra Banhart's new album, "Ma". **Dustin:** Karen Dalton, sultry '60s folksinger who rarely gets her due

**10/9**

**Hot Topic:** Martin Scorsese says Marvel movies are "not cinema." What does he mean? Do we agree?

**Guest:** Leo Smith, F Newsmagazine's managing editor, tells us tales of art forgery and crime.

**Out of the Waxwork**

**Luis:** Monterrey, Mexico accordionist and singer/songwriter Celso Piña, whose fans included Nobel laureate Gabriel García Márquez. **Dustin:** Disco Dylan — need we say more?

**10/16**

**Hot Topic:** The Art Institute is about to open a show devoted to Andy Warhol. Why Warhol, why now? Are there good reasons beyond business?

**Guest:** Olivia Canny, F's news editor. Olivia previews censorship-related issues, focusing on Apple's alliance with China.

**Out of the Waxwork**

**Luis:** Macy Gray's "Stripped," her first strictly jazz album, including a stirring cover of Metallica's "Nothing Else Matters". **Dustin:** Jazz piano legend/Shakespearean fool, Thelonious Monk

**10/23**

**Hot Topic:** Lizzo is accused of plagiarism for the second time this year. Does it constitute plagiarism? How do we draw lines for plagiarism in pop music?

**Guests:** Arts Editor Leah Gallant and Art Critic Kristin Leigh Hofer on their EXPO Bingo board and the state of the modern art fair.

**Out of the Waxwork**

**Luis:** Rhiannon Giddens, folk re-revivalist. **Dustin:** Deerhoof — when classical met indie (without pretentiousness!!)

## Get ready to register!



Work by artist & winter faculty kg; Blue Eye; 10"x9"; 2018



Registration for Winter session at Ox-Bow takes place on...

**November 11, 2019**

**\*\* REMEMBER \*\***

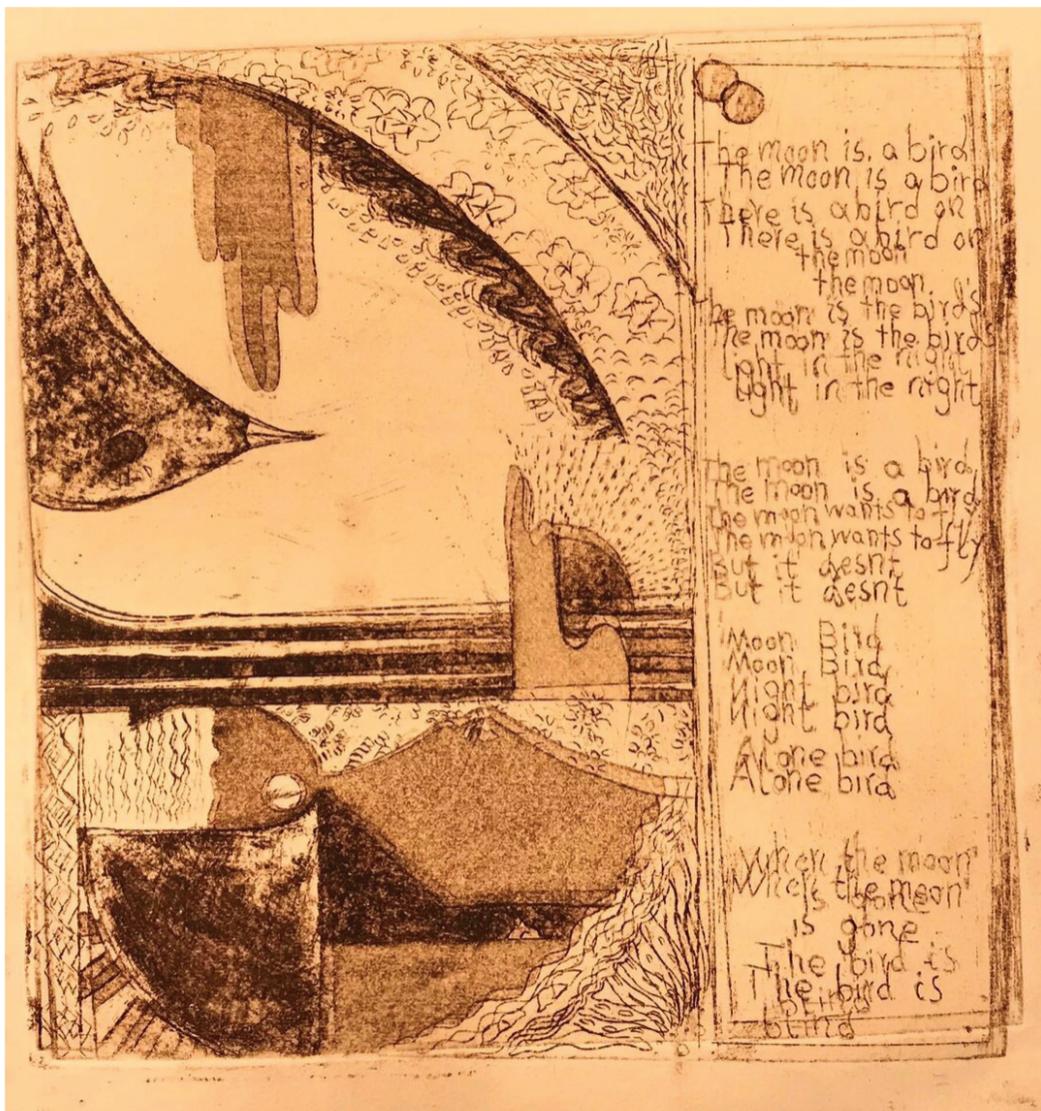
*In-Person Registration & Work Scholarship sign-up takes place in our office at 8:30am CST - Sullivan 14th floor*

*Online Registration begins at 1:00pm CST & continues until classes are full.*

....

**VISIT US ON THE 14TH FLOOR OF SULLIVAN!**

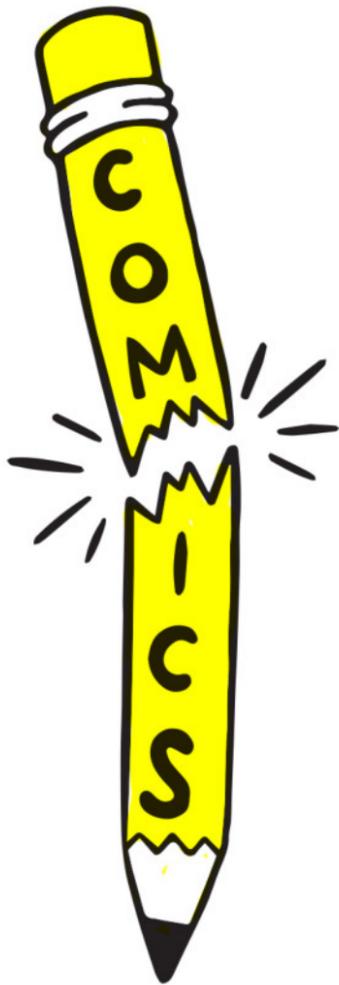
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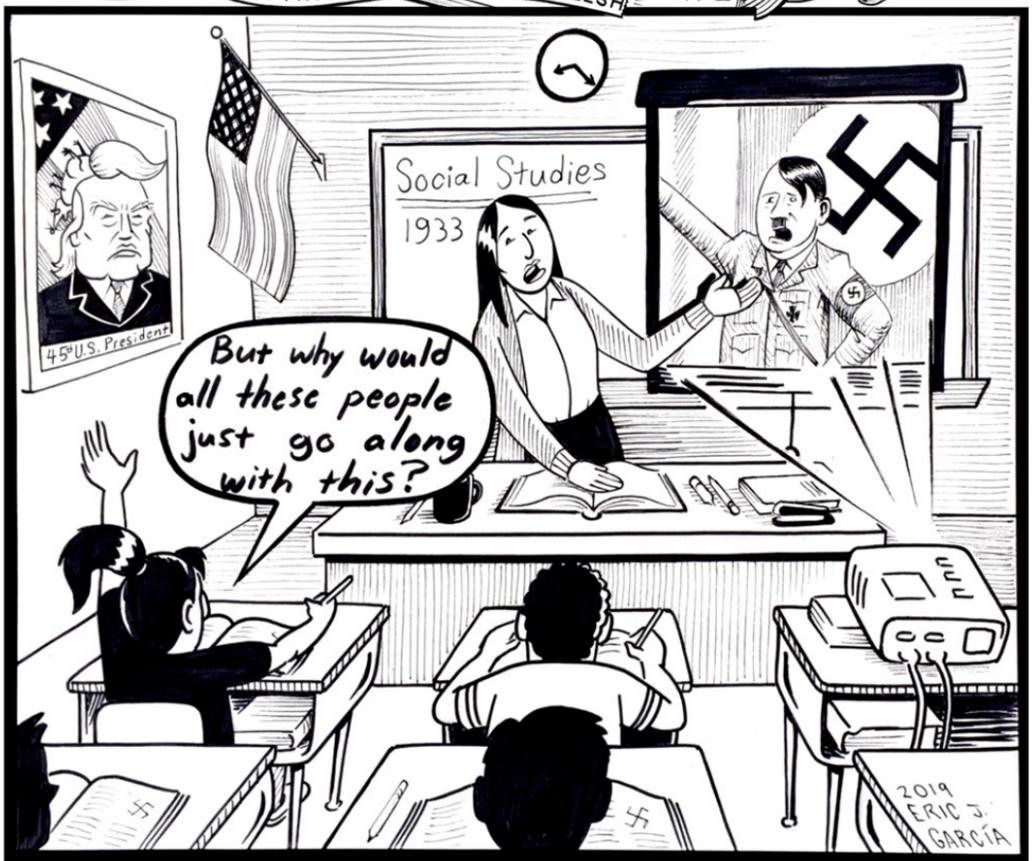
by Alson Zhao

月亮是一隻鳥  
 月亮上有鳥  
 月亮是鳥在夜晚發出的光  
 月亮是一隻鳥  
 月亮想飛  
 卻不飛  
 月亮鳥  
 夜的鳥  
 一隻的鳥  
 當月亮離開  
 鳥就瞎了眼睛

The Moon is a bird  
 There is a bird on the moon  
 The moon is the bird's light in the night  
 The Moon is a bird  
 The moon wants to fly  
 But it doesn't  
 Moon bird  
 Night bird  
 Alone bird  
 When the moon is gone  
 The Bird is blind.



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**SCARE-BEAR**



Megan Dwyer



9-19  
Comfort  
Teddie Bernard



Steve Save Us  
Hanna Field

**Caption This!**

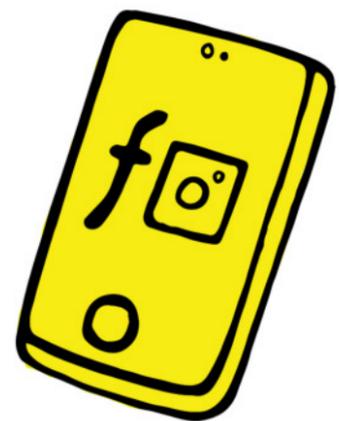


**“Who’s the sky rat now?!” –Teddie Bernard**

**Honorable Mentions:**

“When you’re late to critique but it’s a performance class.” –Carlos Antonio Piñón

“I can’t believe I’m the only one reaching my Paris Agreement goals, smh.” –Rosalind Smith



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**ATTEND AN INFO SESSION!**

- 11/4, 9:30pm @ 162 N. State 16<sup>th</sup> Media Room
- 11/13, 9:30pm @ Buckingham 2nd Floor
- 11/19, 4:15pm @ Jones 15th Floor
- 12/5, 4:30pm @ Sharp 327

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- 162 N. State**
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