

THARUNKA



UNSW'S STUDENT MAGAZINE / FEBRUARY 2017

EXPLORE

THARUNKA

THE TEAM

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THARUNKA ACKNOWLEDGES THE TRADITIONAL CUSTODIANS OF THIS LAND, THE GADIGAL AND BEDIGAL PEOPLE OF THE EORA NATION, ON WHICH OUR UNIVERSITY NOW STANDS.

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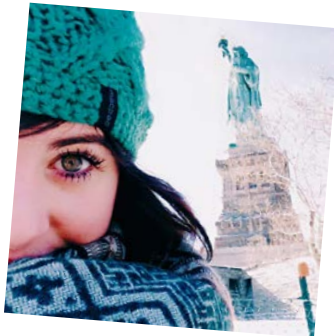
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GIVE US A LIKE AND A FOLLOW AND A RETWEET AND SEND WHATEVER YOU HAVE TO SAY TO THARUNKA@ARC.UNSW.EDU.AU (WRITING, ARTWORK, IDEAS, FEEDBACK, LOVE LETTERS, PICTURES OF CUTE DOGS - WE WANT IT ALL).

Letters From the Editors



MANAGING EDITOR

BRITTNEY RIGBY

When I moved to Sydney four years ago, it meant leaving my hometown: population of 7,000, small-town politics, gossip as currency, the only home I'd ever known. It was, in many ways, the bravest but loneliest thing I've done.

I think that's when I figured out what true exploration is. It's being unsure but jumping into the unknown anyway. It's taking risks and immersing yourself in all that's new and good. It's the feeling you get when your toes are buried in foreign soil and yet you feel at home. It's becoming an archaeologist: uncovering new parts of yourself, dusting them off, handling them gently, preserving your history. It's saying yes to as many things as possible and saying no when you want to and saying "why?" to everything. It's blooming again after the worst thing happens and embracing every small beginning and looking at the stars and marveling at it all.

So, as we say hello to the beginning of a new academic year, I want to say welcome (back) to campus and to Tharunka's pages. It's an honour to have been entrusted to create and discover and unearth UNSW's stories

with you in 2017.

But UNSW's stories are your stories, and we need your help. We want our pages to be a home for students of all identities and backgrounds: LGBTQI+, Indigenous, wom*n, rural or remote students, people of colour, students with disabilities.

We recognise that these communities cannot be properly represented by one voice or in one piece. We acknowledge that minority groups are often burdened with explaining their histories and justifying their positions. But we also understand that we cannot claim to know your lived experiences, or speak for you, rather than with you. So, if you'd be generous enough to share your stories with us this year, we would be honoured to have you, and our publication all the better for it. In a time of unrest and uncertainty, we want our pages to be a safe place for ideas and for you.

As for now? You're here. Find your passion, find your people, find yourself. Find home wherever you are, with whomever you're with. Explore a little.



EDITOR

ALICIA D'ARCY

It was pretty shocking when Trump got elected late last year: a slap in the face to my belief that maybe – just maybe – women had finally gained a foothold in the world.

His election and inauguration will undoubtedly harm many people in the United States and globally, with especial impact upon minorities or otherwise vulnerable people. What it has done, however, is made me newly determined to fight against authority figures who fuck us over.

Student journalism is integral in this. Creating a space where uniquely student voices can be heard is important because I believe that we are idealistic and energetic enough to say things the real grown-ups don't want to say. This year is the year that we battle the university on trimesters, ensure that they actually implement good sexual assault policies, and generally just be a little bit annoying.

So please, send us your ideas and share your thoughts.

Looking forward to a good one!



EDITOR

SHARON WONG

Moving into the new year is always unexpectedly, yet unsurprisingly, the same. The same promise of an unblemished year ahead, yet to be marred by the same poxy scars and pits of yesteryear. The same renewal of resolutions and delightfully optimistic promises to finally go to the gym, or maybe eat a salad instead of sinfully taking advantage of the returned McNuggets offering from your local Maccas.

But there's also that glimmer of possibility that just keeps us going, a sparkle that's not just a fading memory of the fireworks display our government spent \$7 million dollars on. The hope that you'll finally part from routine and do something exciting, like try that new drink on the menu, or buy that ridiculous outfit online, or even do something as preposterous as finishing an assessment on time. For the more adventurous, it's a chance to seek out a new favourite café, finding a new exhibition, or going overseas alone for the first time.

Whatever it is that gets you going from this point out, I can only hope you'll enjoy this ride through Tharunka's first issue of 2017, and that you'll stay with us and our stories through to the first issue of next year.

Maybe this year, together, we can explore.



EDITOR

DOMINIC GIANNINI

Hello? Is anyone there? Does anyone actually read this section?

Guess what, print is dead, so who is the real King of Tharunka?

I legit only became an online editor to find a platform for my memes.

Have fun reading nerd, but pls like our FB page, like srsly, my job depends on it.



DESIGNER

LEO TSAO

As a woke bae, I'm entering into 2017 with more apprehension than any previous years. Having said that, I'm also quite excited! Not only is it the the perfect breeding ground for some juicy Tharunka content, it's also an opportunity to speak up and take action on the issues that we value!

I'm looking forward to working with the amazing 2017 Tharunka team, and delivering some technicolour, iridescent and eyeball stiumulating visuals to you. Wishing you all many rewarding, magical and mind-expanding explorations as we traverse together into the unknown.

BY ALICIA D'ARCY

Agony Ibis



Dear Agony Ibis,

All of my friends went on amazing holidays to exotic and expensive locations over the break, and I'm very jealous. How can I fit in with all the new friends I'm planning on making, especially given my Insta game has been so sub-par?!

Kind regards,
Stuck in Sydney

Hey Stuck in Sydney,

I. Feel. You.

wI too was stranded in the sweltering, hot mess that was Sydney over the summer (mostly being a pest in Hyde Park #soznotsoz) so I empathise with your non-exotic, cheap-ass pain.

I'm going to take a stab in the dark and guess that you're a first year, in which case, welcome! But also: don't worry too much about making friends! Just ~be~ ~yourself~ etc etc. You know the drill. But, if you're having trouble believing an ibis without many friends, (people call me "bin chicken"!?) I have some extra pointers that I picked up from aggressive IRL-stalking.

1. If you were home over the summer, you were probably doing some type of paid labour. Three cheers for the-worst-people-in-the-world (aka "Christmas shoppers). So, you have bank. And with bank, you can buy stuff. Tip number 1: buy your friends.
2. Be that person. You know, the one who always has to one-up their friends' stories. Make up stuff. Summer in Paris? Yep. Party in Ibiza? Tick. New Years in New York? Been there, done that. Fake it 'til you make it. And once you make it, keep faking.
3. Speaking of faking it, also fake your Insta account. Take a picture at a miscellaneous beach in Sydney with a mojito, set the location to Phuket and insert the caption "I heart Thailand *palm tree emoji*". Regram hot pics of hot girls who won't care about copyright. Enjoy the fame. Rinse, lather (the fake tan), repeat.

Anyway, best of luck with it all! Please keep me updated; I'm very invested because all the other ibii hate me. But, if everyone ends up hating you too, remember my motto: fuck 'em. *knife emoji*

xoxo Agony Ibis

ART BY AMY GE

BY LARA ROBERTSON

It's 2017 and I can't Believe we're Still Debating...

Political Entitlements

"The age of entitlement is over," declared former Treasurer Joe Hockey in 2014.

But for whom? The so-called "age of entitlement" certainly lives on for politicians, as well as the wealthy corporations that line their pockets.

Hockey, the very same man who told Australians to be "lifters not leaners," was a recipient of an outrageously generous \$370,000 per year salary, (not to mention a lifetime pension of \$90,000 per year) yet he didn't bat an eyelid when he charged taxpayers for babysitters, lavish dinners and housekeepers.

In 2015, former Speaker for the House of Representatives, Bronwyn Bishop, made headlines when she charged taxpayers \$5,000 for an 80 kilometre chartered helicopter flight from Melbourne to Geelong to attend a Liberal Party function. Further investigations uncovered more instances of Bishop's excessive spending of taxpayer dollars, which was argued to be "within entitlements and in accordance with parliamentary guidelines." Facing outrage from the Australian public in the wake of these findings, former Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, stated that a "fundamental review" of the ministerial entitlements system would be undertaken.

However, we are currently seeing a flood of similar headlines: taxpayers charged for ministers to attend AFL Grand Finals, fundraisers, parties and dinners (including expensive bottles of wine) and for partners and family members to travel business class. In response to these findings, Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull, announced that an independent parliamentary authority will be set up to monitor and assess the expenses of Federal MPs, modelled on the UK's entitlement system.

Whilst this is certainly a step in the right direction,

will it change anything? MPs caught up in the scandal have already stated that their spending was within guidelines. Clearly, the guidelines themselves need to change.

This problem is an institutionalised one, with politicians (pretty understandably) not wanting to let go of the entitlements they have enjoyed for so long.

But enough is enough.

If the government is really concerned about a budget deficit, perhaps they should first take a good, hard look in the mirror.

The age of entitlement should be over.

ART BY JENI ROHWER



New Year

What You Need to Know About UNSW's 2025 Plan

INTRODUCTION

Returning to UNSW, you might notice that change is in the air. No longer will UNSW "Never Stand Still"; we're now "Australia's Global University". It's an ambitious tagline. If you're new to New South (or if you were living under a rock last year), you might not know about the extent of the upcoming adjustments. But if you're just beginning your studies, the changes will affect you the most. So what's happening at UNSW in 2017?

2025 PLAN

This year marks the beginning of the implementation of the 2025 plan. Every ten years, the university organises a committee to develop a document to act as the university's strategic guideline. It is an opportunity for the Vice-Chancellor and governance team to make a lasting impact on UNSW's structure and community.

Development of the 2025 plan began in 2015, with the intention of consulting students and staff in 2016, and implementation beginning in 2017. However, many of the changes have students and staff alike up in arms. For brevity, I will focus primarily on the effect these changes will have on students.'

WHAT'S THE CONTROVERSY?

Whilst change often sparks controversy,

resistance to the 2025 plan has been unusually fierce. The proposed restructuring is ambitious, with students and staff arguing it will adversely affect their studying and working conditions.

The most controversial change is the switch to a trimester calendar system. Our current academic calendar has two, 17-week semesters, with one week's mid-semester break, one week's StuVac, and two weeks of exams. A full-time study load is four subjects per semester. The university is now planning to have three, 13-week semesters, with no mid-semester break, only one week's StuVac, two weeks of exams, and three subjects per semester.

The university argues that this gives students more flexibility to complete their degree, aligns better with northern hemisphere universities for exchanges, and will reduce workload for students. However, students (primarily through the SRC) argue that course content will shrink, with no reduction in course costs, that the workload will be more intense, (due to a lack of a mid-semester break and small semester breaks) and, as a result, students who work or face other barriers to their studies will be further marginalised.

Meanwhile, faculty specific

administrative staff members are being made redundant in an effort to centralise the university's administration. The university argues that this is to make the administration more efficient. By automating previously manual processes, and removing duplicated administrative positions, the university can lower its operational costs, and improve consistency. However, many students and staff argue that faculty-specific administrative staff are trained in direct response to the needs of a school or faculty, and that this is something that general administrative staff will not be equipped to handle.

Additionally, the automation of administrative roles will make it harder for students to receive support and advice. This change is also controversial because faculties are expected to oversee the implementation of the 2025 plan; without local administrative support, this could prove unfeasible.

You may have been surprised to hear that students were consulted last year about these changes. However, UNSW's attempt

to connect with and gauge the mood of its students has been objectively poor. The university bases its understanding of student attitudes on an email survey sent to all students, around 5,000 of whom replied.

The university states: "Of [the 63% of students] who preferred an alternative [calendar] model, the UNSW3+ model was most popular." However, this neglects the fact that 37% of respondents preferred the current calendar, and only 28% of students preferred the UNSW3+ (trimester) model. This survey was conducted before complete information was available about the proposed plan.

The university has continued to engage poorly beyond this survey. The university talked to a few student leaders, but often behind closed doors, and there were few noticeable changes made to the plans. After the plan was released, there was a passionate student response, and an SRC-directed rally against the changes.

The 2025 committee used this forum to address students concerns, but according to an SRC exit survey, most students were unsatisfied with the response. The university sent a new survey out to students, which asked recipients to choose from a set of pre-approved positives and negatives about the plan.

The SRC requested that the university release a document outlining: the methods used to handle student feedback, the key concerns identified by students, and changes made in response to these concerns. The 2025 committee promised this document in November, postponed it to December, and has now dropped the matter.

MOTIVATION?

The 2025 plan aims to internationalise UNSW. This is clear in UNSW rebranding itself as "Australia's Global University". The university aims to increase the number of students taking exchanges overseas, and increase the number of international students at UNSW. But whether trimesters actually facilitate this is, at best, questionable.

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Despite the university's actions to date, implementation of this plan requires the cooperation and compliance of the student body. The university is confident in (and reliant upon) student apathy, evidenced by their poor engagement and consultation.

Students need to raise their voices, and get involved. Every bureaucratic and alienated decision made on your behalf erodes the value of education and student autonomy.

So what can you do? If you want to hear more about the proposed changes, students are meeting in protest at 1pm, 8 March 2017 (Wednesday, Week 2) on the Library Lawn.

Be sure to follow Stop the UNSWTrimonster on Facebook, and contact the Education Officer, Dylan Lloyd, (education@arc.unsw.edu.au), or myself (t.walmsley@arc.unsw.edu.au) if you'd like to know more.

The Education Collective meets every Wednesday, 12-1pm at the Arc offices.



UNSW Students Affected by Centrelink Debt Notices

Any mention of the word “Centrelink” over the summer, and thousands of Australians’ blood would begin to boil. Between July and December last year, Centrelink sent out debt notices to thousands of welfare recipients, using a new automated compliance system.

At a very conservative estimate, 20% of those notices were incorrect. The effect? Many of Australia’s most vulnerable people are still being unfairly pressured to pay back the government money they simply do not owe.

Many noticed that the debt notices appeared incorrect. However, others may not have been so ‘lucky.’ It also emerged that Centrelink staff members were told not to remedy incorrect notices unless a welfare recipient pointed out the error.

Roydon Ng is UNSW student who received a Centrelink debt notice. He finished his Bachelor of Arts at the beginning of 2016, and immediately began a Masters of Journalism.

Whilst studying his undergraduate degree, Roydon was on Youth Allowance. However, it was necessary for him to move over to New Start payments once he began his postgraduate degree.

Since the end of 2015, Roydon informed Centrelink staff three times that his allowance needed to be changed.

Despite these phone calls, Centrelink only implemented the change in June 2016. In September 2016, Roydon received a debt notice for over \$2,000. This notice was issued even though he would have been entitled to higher payments under the New Start scheme.

Since then, Roydon has spent hours waiting on the phone, attending Centrelink offices, lodging an appeal with Centrelink, and, most recently, lodging an appeal at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

He claims that he has been told nothing except that his appeal is pending. He was told he would be informed of the result within 28 days.

At the time of going to print, he’s been waiting for over four months.

“Suddenly having two grand taken off [you] is surprising and this has affected my budgeting,” Roydon said.

“What is most frustrating is that they [Centrelink] treat us like dirt for making enquiries about this.”

The government’s Centrelink debt recovery system has been an utter disaster, and the Turnbull government has shown particular incompetence in responding.

In late January, Alan Tudge, Minister of Human Services, point blank refused to recognise that there was a problem with the automated service.

“ They treat us like dirt ”

Instead, he bizarrely blamed the Opposition.

“Labor has been deliberately putting up cases to the media alleging that people have been so-called victims of the online compliance system, when in many cases, in fact, they do owe significant amounts of money,” he said.

However, such a disaster is not an unexpected consequence of the government’s continued disdain for those – including students – on welfare payments.

In this instance, the government decided to use machines and algorithms to replace humans and cut costs in the pursuit of efficiency.

The result? Centrelink employees face more work than ever as they are tasked to deal with the fallout, and students like Roydon are left in limbo. Efficiency? No. Injustice? Absolutely.

Light Rail Update

If you were (un)lucky enough to venture into uni over the summer, it was like stepping into an alternate universe.

Tripview was meaningless and Anzac Parade was a big, construction-y wasteland.

Fear not though, because the joy of the 370 arriving 4 – 17 minutes late at Gate 2 has now returned.*

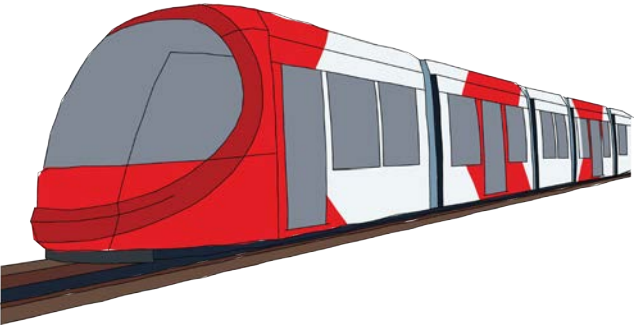
The reason for all the mess and bus-confusion, you ask? That’s right everyone, the mystical Light Rail™ is coming.

It will run from Circular Quay to both Kensington and Randwick, fulfilling every UNSW student’s public transport-related wet dream come 2019 (don’t lie, we’ve all been there).

So, if you’ll still be around in 2019, lucky you. While trimesters are coming (cue panic), you’ll be comforted by getting to uni in a “high-capacity” (read: “sardine-like”) manner. Yay.

I would also recommend hitting up @UNSWLightRail on Twitter for all your Light Rail needs. Truly inspiring stuff (matched only by yours truly, @tharunka – chuck us a follow and a few retweets, would ya?).

*It was, for a brief and frightening period, an outrageous 8-minute walk away on Anzac Parade.



What Bassem Tamimi Teaches us About Caring About Palestine

The struggle of Palestinians against the repression of the Israeli state, for justice and the right to exist, is an essential political struggle that has been ongoing for more than half a century. Since the establishment of Israel in 1947, 85 thousand Palestinians have been killed, over 5 million Palestinian refugees are still yet to be settled, and Israel has illegally expanded its borders to cover the vast majority of the region. Despite the juggernauts of world military might being against it – the US, Australia, Britain and, of course, Israel – Palestine has been a hotbed of resistance.

A prime example of this is the weekly protests in Nabi Saleh, a small village near Ramallah. Every Friday since December 2009, the villagers protest the increasing seizure of land, seizure of the villages' freshwater spring by the nearby illegal settlement of Halamish and the occupation as a whole. The response by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) and settlers has been brutal.

On the day of the first protest, settlers set alight 150 of the village's olive trees (as well as being a useful crop, olive trees signify the relationship between Palestinians and the land). Other responses to these protests by the IDF have included liberal use of tear gas, child snatching, rubber bullets and live ammunition. By 2011, 64 of the 550 residents had been arrested at various points (almost half of those children); 432 residents have been injured; two have been killed.

Despite this heavy handed repression, the protests have continued, and Nabi Saleh has seen some of the most defiant and boisterous demonstrations amongst such villages, becoming a symbol of the struggle.

Bassem Tamimi is one of the community leaders of these protests against Halamish. He has been arrested over a dozen times, and spent four and a half years in gaol. In 1993, he suffered a subdural haematoma and partial

paralysis as a result of a torture interrogation at the hands of the Israel Security Agency. During this interrogation, he was described by Amnesty International as a “prisoner of conscience”. The Israeli Civil Administration has ordered the demolition of Tamimi's home.

On 28 August 2015, Bassem Tamimi's family recorded a video that shows the spirit and tenacity of this resistance. The video shows a soldier attempting to arrest his son, 11-year-old Mohammed Tamimi. In response, his 14-year-old daughter, Ahed, wife, Nariman, and sister-in-law, Nawal, grappled with the soldier, eventually overpowering him and freeing Mohammed.

This video was widely circulated, reaching 1 million views in three days before YouTube removed it. The clip viscerally demonstrated the struggle of Palestinians and their determination to survive this repression. In response, Israeli politicians called for a review of live-fire regulations, outraged that the soldiers couldn't fire on the Tamimi family.

The IDF has carried out several raids on Nabi Saleh, including night raids, in order to intimidate and arrest people without provocation.

Despite this persecution, Tamimi has been an outspoken advocate for Palestinian rights.

“If the American consul came to us and said, ‘I am Superwoman; I can immediately remove Halamish,’ I would say, ‘Fine, but we want to end the whole occupation,’” he said in an interview with The Electronic Intifada in 2011.

During his trial in 2011 for the “crime” of organising illegal demonstrations, (in this case, illegality applies to any demonstration over 10 people) he repeatedly questioned the legitimacy of the military court system and Israeli law generally. These courts oppress the

Palestinians in the West Bank, and have a conviction rate of over 99%. Tamimi defends the throwing of stones at occupiers and settlers, as a symbol of the rejection of the occupation. He also seeks to not only protest the seizure of the land around Nabi Saleh, but to spread the unarmed revolt all across the occupied territories, arguing that they provide the basis for a third Intifada.

Palestine's struggle remains a hotly debated and controversial topic, but far too often, the debate is weighed in favour of the interests of Israel and its Western allies.

To show and share more of the other side of the story, Bassem Tamimi is coming to Australia in April. He will be speaking on the opening night of, and throughout, the Marxism Conference, the biggest left wing conference in Australia. The conference regularly attracts over a thousand attendees from all across the country, discussing contemporary issues, history, political theory, and most importantly, resistance to oppression and violence.

The conference's Middle East stream is a must for left-wing supporters looking to understand this important region and its struggle. Over 100 other sessions at the conference will cover issues such as the rise of Trump in the US and the far-right globally, women's rights, racism and Marxist theory and history.

To learn more about the Marxism conference and grab your ticket, head to <http://marxismconference.org>.

Bassem Tamimi will also have a forum at the University of Sydney on 11 April 2017. The event can be found on the Palestine Action Group Sydney Facebook page.

A “Post-Truth” 2017 or Just More Lies?

What does “post-truth” mean? It's a term that has been used a lot in recent times, particularly in reference to Donald Trump's presidential election campaign and the Brexit campaign. In fact, “post-truth” was selected as Oxford Dictionary's “word of the year” in 2016 due to its sudden transformation from an obscure academic term to one that featured in the headlines of major newspapers.

Oxford Dictionary defines “post-truth” as:

“Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief.”

This definition does have merit; I'm sure many people can think of examples of post-truth in action.

Rather than terms such as post-modernism and post-colonialism, which are more historically-based, post-truth suggests that truth itself has become irrelevant, that political culture aims to ignite emotion rather than explain policy.

Post-truth is the Brexit campaign relying on the notion that EU membership costs the UK \$470 million a week, which could be spent on the National Health Service instead. This fuelled a sense of anger in many UK citizens. Yet this claim was never checked for its accuracy; it was later proven to be false.

Post-truth is Donald Trump stirring up the frustrations of the American working class rather than facing facts. The organisation, PolitiFact, found that over the past five years, 70 per cent of Trump's claims were false, 15 per cent “half-true” and 15 per cent true. Nonetheless, Trump's supporters were undeterred by this, considering these fact-checkers to be associated with mainstream and liberal media. Trump himself frequently makes attacks on the integrity of the media, leading to a new “anti-media” rhetoric.

With these examples in mind, people have defined post-truth as just the spreading of “lies”. Which leads to another question: does the term need to exist?

Post-truth is linked to “fake news”. Everyone is a publisher, making it easier for like-minded people to form clusters and strengthen each other's beliefs, personalised newsfeeds reinforcing prejudices and bias.

Social media sites are not media companies, but rather tech firms driven by algorithms. When Facebook automated its “trending news” section, it promoted many “fake news” articles propelled by clickbait headlines. The “information glut” we're faced with limits the time people have to fact-check, which is also incentivised by the commodification of clickbait.

In light of this, the term “post-truth” helps to define the current situation. There are concerning issues posed by online media, but it's also important for us not to resort to “anti-media” rhetoric. A diversity of opinions is needed but so is journalistic integrity, along with technologies that will help us curate and interpret data ethically. Of course, “lies” aren't a new concept. But the intersection between fake news, politics and technology is new. A post-truth world is one where, more than ever, the onus is on us, as individuals, to be open-minded, think critically and scrutinise the content we read. The onus is on us to find the truth.

The Theatrics and Mastery of Zoe Coombs Marr

Zoe Coombs Marr, one of the masterminds behind standout performances such as Trigger Warning and Oedipus, Schmoedipus knows her stuff. Currently performing with Mish Grigor and Natalie Rose in Ich Nibber Dibber, the UNSW alumna discusses performance, inspirations and much more.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO PURSUE ACTING?

I didn't, really. I, like many people, wanted to be an actor when I was younger because I wanted to perform and I didn't know there was any other option other than being an actor. Then I moved to Sydney, went to uni at UNSW and studied performance and theatre and discovered that I didn't really want to do acting – I wanted to be a theatre maker.

HOW IMPORTANT IS POLITICAL SUBTEXT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF YOUR PERFORMANCES?

Performing onstage is, inherently, a political act. Talking about yourself and what you think about the world, by writing and performing, is a political act. The way you're perceived by an audience is loaded. That [means] that very early on, when writing and creating work, we were becoming very much aware of the way we were received.

HOW DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH YOUR CHARACTER WITHIN

ICH NIBBER DIBBER?

Well, it's not really a character – it's me. So, it's all based on the conversations we've had over the last ten years. So, we're performing ourselves when we're much younger and then coming up to the present day. I guess I relate less to myself when I was 19 than I do to myself now. Though we relate to them because they are us.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PERFORMANCE IN ICH NIBBER DIBBER?

It's not a task of trying to get into ourselves [and] it's not really acting. It's more a relationship between the text and the relationship to the audience and the performance's context.

HOW DO YOUR PRIOR PERFORMANCES COMPARE WITH THIS THEATRICAL PIECE?

Everything is different; they're completely different shows. [Though] there are bits of text that are in the script that are from

recorded conversations that we were having while we were making that show. So, this is sort of the backstage chat of the other shows.

HOW DID THE OPPORTUNITIES PRESENTED AT UNSW HELP PUSH YOUR CAREER FORWARD?

Well, for me it was an opportunity to learn things, you know? I met people at uni, worked with all these different people and created ongoing relationships with a lot of the lecturers that I encountered. A lot of those educational relationships became professional ones later.

WHO IS ONE OF YOUR BIGGEST INSPIRATIONS AND HOW DID THEY IMPACT YOU?

I suppose when starting out, I remember seeing rural productions and touring Shakespeare productions and thinking it was really cool – I liked the live aspect of that.

I also remember watching stand-up comedians like Judith Lucy, Sarah Kendall and The Mighty Boosh. I remember seeing stuff like that and it was always the live stuff, the live audience and the way that they interacted that I thought it was cool.

WHAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING FOR A PERFORMER TO REMEMBER THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREER?

If you're in university and you're reading this, know it takes a really long time. I think it's important to remember that it does take a long time.

On Travelling

Travel enjoys a status in contemporary Western society almost singular in its untouchability. So many of us travel, want to travel, and make decisions about money, work and relationships based on our ability to travel in the future. To travel, or a desire to travel, is broadly viewed as a valid, fulfilling, adventurous use of one's life.

Travel is also offered as a cure to life's dilemmas: personal stasis, boredom in a relationship, a lack of direction about one's future or career. The implication is that travel is a solution, in and of itself. The issue with this, of course, is that the traveller must always be present during the travelling. We've all heard the old cliché, "you can't run away from your problems". But there's something about the destabilising force of travelling, the deliberate and self-inflicted thrust into a realm where sensations are more vibrant, more memorable, more. Comfort is often forsaken: you're cold on a windy boat ride, ill after those delicious roadside tacos, cramped in a tiny bus. None of these are serious, of course, but in our lucky, modern, Western existences, where survival is not generally a matter of contention, part of travel's allure is in its very discomfort.

Then, there is the possibility, the attraction of the unknown, which surrounds the traveller, the foreign land filled with new faces and new terrain which is, to the traveller's mind, uncharted. Of course, there are so many uncharted places close to home, but there are always reasons not to go, more important things to do.

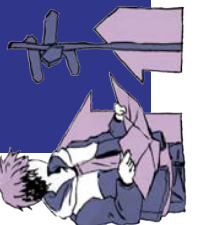
I have experienced this desire to be immersed in the unknown so entirely, to be in a place where reinvention is so close, where more than what usually seems possible is possible. Whether armed with guidebooks or trying your luck with no accommodation plans, the idea that life could, somehow, be changed forever in a single moment is too tempting.

The truth is, your life is probably not going to be changed. You probably won't meet the love of your life, or find yourself, or discover your passion. Alain de Botton understands this, and he tells us in his *Art of Travel* that such an embrace of the unknown, of possibility, can be achieved right here at home.

Now—and I digress here for a moment—I picked up *Art of Travel* because it was lying around my parents' house, the assigned reading for my younger brother's Advanced English HSC class. I had dismissed de Botton in the past—his writing tends towards the trite—but having come back from almost eight months overseas, I thought I'd see what all the fuss was about.

He goes on and on about how a maid had to shuttle him out of his hotel room in order for him to explore Madrid (the horror!), explains how Bermuda was marred by an argument over dessert and muses that Wordsworth may have been exaggerating about the exquisite quality of squirrels' fur over in the Lake District. But, essentially, he comes to the point that there is a sense of wonder and deep acceptance with which we generally approach travel.

It would do a great deal of good to think of our own homes with that same marvel.



Spotlight On



KRYSTAL
SUTHERLAND

Our Chemical Hearts privileges the perspective of seventeen-year old Henry Page as he navigates his feelings for the school's newest student, Grace Town. From the outset, Henry notes how "Grace looked unclean and unhealthy ... I'd seen junkies that looked in better shape." However, as their combined efforts on the school newspaper conveniently force them together, Henry's interest in Grace gains traction.

Set in a typical American high school, Our Chemical Hearts features all the narrative tropes of coming-of-age fiction. Teachers are characterised by their clinical dandruff conditions and some serious Facebook stalking occurs. However, Our Chemical Hearts yields to neither patterns nor predictability. And neither does its author.

Krystal Sutherland is a UNSW student in the final stages of her Bachelor of Arts, yet she's already got one book published, a second scheduled for publication and a third she's currently drafting.

While Sutherland's main characters in her debut novel are both teenagers, she is quick to warn against the dangers of selectively positioning Our Chemical Hearts as "young adult fiction," stating that it "is really just a marketing term, a helpful label to let booksellers know where to place a novel on shelves." Indeed, Our Chemical Hearts has drawn an intergenerational readership since its publication in October 2016.

Sutherland says that Our Chemical Hearts was the result of "some pretty serious hustling" between studying full-time, weekend work and interning at Bloomsbury. While the book was being drafted, Krystal was also editor of UNSW's Blitz magazine (but emerged from her editing experience decidedly less tortured than Henry). Nevertheless, the journey from

first draft to shelves taught Sutherland a lot about the challenges of the publishing industry.

"I'd say you really need to get used to rejection, because it's going to happen a lot. Agents will reject you. Editors will reject you. Readers will reject you. In the end, though, it doesn't matter how many times you face rejection: you only need one person to say yes."

And it seems that more than one person has said yes to this UNSW high-achiever.

"Book two is currently going through edits and is set for publication in September this year. Book three is in the very early stages of drafting," she said.

"The Our Chemical Hearts movie, which I'm attached to as an executive producer, is in development (exciting things are happening, but I'm not sure I can spill the beans on them publicly yet) – so hopefully I'll have some solid news on that front soon!"

People come to university for all sorts of reasons. In the grand scheme of things, a very small percentage of people get the opportunity, and I'm well aware that it's a sign of my privilege that I know a lot of people who have taken up tertiary opportunities. At the end of high school, choosing a course and institution felt obligatory. University was part of the "adult world".

There have been plenty of boring articles written about the laziness of millennials, as "kidults" live at home for longer and have "mid-life crises" in their teens or early twenties. Yet, contrary to this, the experience of young adulthood is incredibly diverse, and plenty of young people in Australia work hard and get by in an incredibly unfriendly housing climate. Is it surprising that the opportunity to study for a number of years, even as a way to put off full time work, is so commonly taken up?

Returning to my hometown over the summer, I found that many friends who hadn't gone on to university were doing wonderful and interesting things. There were musicians who have honed their craft while I write essays. Artists have put on shows, labourers built houses and gardens and pagodas, activists organised protests and vigils. People were changing things and themselves, not always well or neatly, but they were doing

M I D D L E G R O U N D

great things. It made university seem like a very expensive patch of middle ground.

On one hand, a degree makes a person statistically more employable. A university degree can be an amazing asset to overcome oppression, strengthen social mobility and broaden opportunities and job prospects. Education is important, there's no denying that.

But what do we do while we're on this middle ground?

Maybe you, like me, don't know where you'll end up after your degree. Maybe you have years of study left and you're feeling stagnant. Despite the plans you may (or may not) have for the future, it can feel like you're training for your life rather than living it.

As far as I can tell, there's really only really one thing we can do: engage with what's around us. Volunteer. Join societies. Read the news. Join a community choir, a sporting team, a rally. Question things, research them, care. Listen to people, make friends with them. Maybe visit a church, temple or mosque.

The adage "university isn't for everyone" really is true. But if you're here, good for you. Good for us. Let's make the most of this middle ground.

SATIRE

Centrelink Sends False Credit Notices, Crushing Students' Dreams Once and for all

Students across Australia were elated on Tuesday afternoon, when they received credit notices from the Department of Human Services.

The letter asked the recipient to confirm their name, address, and bank account details, before signing full control of their account over to the Department.

The most ambitious budget recovery technique to date, spokesperson for the Department of Human Services, Hank Jongen, said he was proud of the Human Services team.

"In the office," he smiled proudly, "we call it the Nigerian Letterbox Heist."

However it's not all fun and games, with Jongen explaining that the Department has a very serious role.

"The government was given a mandate to be innovative with its administration," Jongen said.

"So we were given a monumental task, but our experiments have had astounding results."

This latest scam comes after a series of other failed approaches to raising revenue.

"We tried issuing misleading debt notices, then putting every second call on hold permanently, in the hope that the silly peasants would get frustrated and give up."

However, many Australians were upset with this approach, including Ben Anderson, head of the community group, Dentists For Debt.

"The government is doing everything it can to skirt around the issue at hand," Anderson said.

Anderson, a retired 70-year-old dentist from the Northern Beaches, has seen the Department change many times over his lifetime.

"It was most effective when it tried to make a real difference in people's lives," he said.

"They were good back then, throwing rocks through windows, setting fire to rubbish bins, writing threatening letters. All of these [methods] were highly effective for the Department to extort money from vulnerable people."

These days, he says the government can't see through the "smoke and mirrors".

Jongen, however, says the Department should stick to its guns.

"We have an ambitious goal. And an ambitious team. People feel threatened about what we've achieved, and they can say what they like – but we're doing something unprecedented here, and history will canonise us."

If you have been issued a false credit notice, contact us on tharunka@arc.unsw.edu.au with your full name, student ID, address, and credit card details.

ART BY JENI ROHWER



BY SIDDHARTH SHANKAR

Uluru



untitled poems

A man seeks
beauty in the night
love in poetry
explosion of delight;
office phone salesman.

A bird shuffles
blunt talons on spindles
chirps shrill from beak;
keep me free

Rain's fallen
sun-cracked earth sullied
foamy salt rises
Death cooks bones unburied death
cooks bones for the crows;
dirt soup

A Trilogy

It begins with an intricate white ceiling,
A question
(no answer)

I turn to the white border
Around your faces,
It reminds me

For dessert we had:
Your hand around her neck,
Your arm around her waist-
His little game of Chopsticks wasn't enough
to distract me,
Nor was the ice cream,
(I'm sorry)

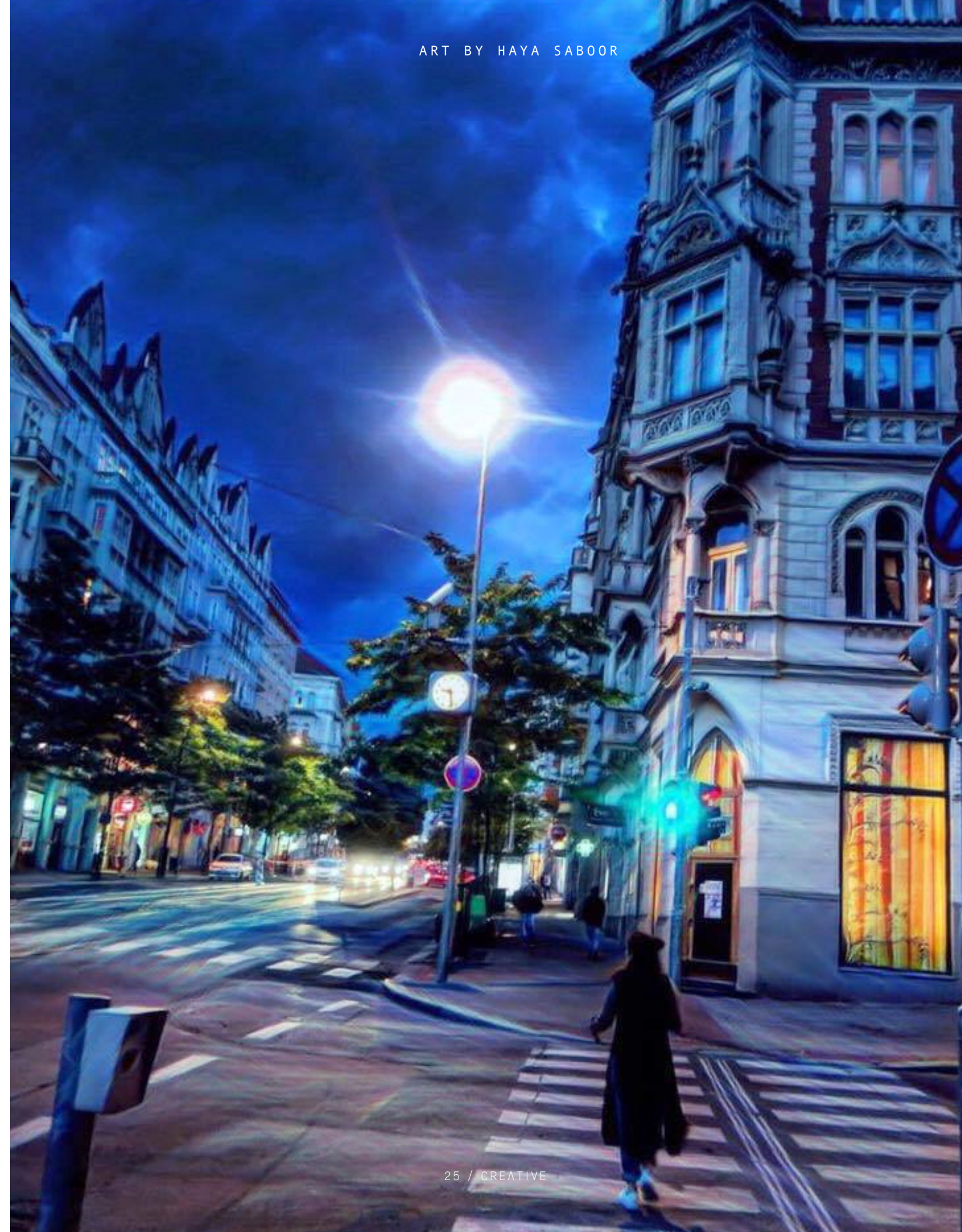
I stare straight into her, breathless,
Violent blood, that pours down her sticky
body
(a talent I'm glad I won't be reproducing)

Perhaps she can use these words!
To design a Thing in the flesh
Of misery (of course)

We take cover
Under the palm of your hand,
I'm safe (for now)
(not forever)

Parading Through Prague

My love affair with Paris began before I understood what love meant. In its purest form, it is true, passionately deep, without reason, constant. I can come and go to Paris as I please, but with you, my dearest Prague, it is very different. Your bridges are just as romantic as those in my beloved Paris, your history just as rich, your food just as divine. Yet, I am but a young traveller, flitting from one city to the next and falling in love with each place I breathe in. Fill my eyes with your colours and my mind with the memory. Let me rest a while, before I take the ever-going road tomorrow.



BY ERIC QIAN

It's "not the end of the world" they say.
Well I'll tell you this:
People have been lying to you
this whole time, because
everything is the end of the world.
Everything.

The sound of a distant storm,
you'd mistake for the bins — that's the apocalypse —
loping through the landscape to
ring your doorbell,
meet you on the porch, and
punch you in the throat.

The mark on your hand —
you don't know how it got there —
that right there — the plague.
Incurable.
Hangover times seven hundred thousand.

Every incorrectly punctuated sentence,
incorrectly spelt name,
in a birthday card,
in a ...
in a ...
Leads to a fate so terrible
that even people who
wear scarves indoors
find it terrible.

And the teapot you cracked last week?
Expect horror and tears in a ratio
of about 4:1

Which is incidentally the ratio for cordial,
a pleasant Summery beverage,
but I promise you,
this confection will be be much, much worse.

Bring on hordes of demons,
bring on nuclear war,
bring on people not hearing your joke and
you repeating it.
Again.
Again.
Again.

But wait, you say,
"Every cloud, no matter how dark,
looming,
cloud-ular,
has a silver lining."

Don't fucking get me started on that one.

BY JEAN KEARNEY

Naoshima: a Japanese Art Island Offering a Glimpse Into the World



The Japanese island of Naoshima is peculiar. It's an art island, better known to tourists than it is to locals. Capturing the imaginations of our small group of artists and art students, the island was an essential detour on our exploration of Japan. And we were not disappointed.

We could sense the creative pulse even as awaited the ferry to Naoshima — a looming sea-themed sculpture greeted commuters, colourful fish occupied the foreshore, the ferry was spotted with large, red dots. Our first sight of the island was an enormous bulbous form, glowing with the sunlight (we later learnt it was a “simple” bike shed).

Eager to explore, we quickly acquired bicycles (popular among tourists and locals alike), and after a short interlude (in which we had to teach one member of our group how to actually ride a bike), we began our journey. At first, the ride took us through narrow streets dotted with small wooden houses, some of which appeared burnt. We passed one of the many “Art Houses” — unoccupied houses that artists had converted into stand-alone works of art.

As we moved further afield, the roads opened up to reveal ocean views, bright and calm in the cold morning air. We encountered almost no one, only wintry trees and hidden shrines.

Quite suddenly, we came upon Yayoi Kusama's Pumpkin, an artwork that, had it been in Sydney or Tokyo, would have been swarming with tourists. But here, on a secluded beach, it rested unobtrusively on a jetty leading out to the sea. Bright yellow, and spotted black, it looked both jarring in the natural landscape, and completely at home.

Soon, looking at the work was not enough: we raced across the jetty, dodging breaking waves, and experienced the slightest of touches — smooth, cool — before sprinting back, shoes soggy and socks drenched, beaming.

As we continued our ride through sculpture gardens, pedalling up increasingly steep hills, we came upon the looming Lee Ufan Museum. Descending heavy concrete stairs, we were confronted by what would be a recurring motif in Tadao Ando's architecture — rock. To reach the entrance, we walked through a courtyard scattered with small grey pebbles. Then: a larger boulder, a towering obelisk of stone, and a resting metal sheet.

Further along, soaring concrete walls led us away from the trees and the beach, and into a minimalist's paradise. My personal highlight was a sculpture of an inquisitive boulder staring at a tilted piece of dark metal, quiet and contemplative.

A short ride later was the Chichu Art Museum. Again, this complex was dominated by powerful concrete walls, which lead us, maze-like, through the gallery's many levels. The first work we encountered was James Turrell's Open Sky — a concrete room with a window framing the air above. There were no crowds, so we sat meditatively, staring upwards as clouds crossed.

Standing in stark contrast to their harsh stone home, we also discovered pieces taken from Monet's Waterlily series. The large Impressionist paintings truly brought home the rich and diverse connection Naoshima has with the history and diversity of art.

As we were cycled slower than we had hoped, and a number of the galleries were closed for winter, we took shelter in a beautiful little café overlooking the port. Even Café Konichiwa showcased art. A stack of sketchbooks, some used, some new, lay ready to be perused or drawn in.

We sat, cupping hot drinks, marvelling at the infinite world of art created on this tiny island, filled with promise.



Variations on a Synapse

BY EMILY OLORIN

I want a map of your brain
For my own.
I want to wander through your axons,
Basking in the moss-tinged luminescence,
Wrapping my hands around your dendrites,
Feeling the throb of information within,
Pressing my palms to your cell bodies; and
Feeling the polarisation changes as my own.
I want to be the spark
Setting your neurons twittering – like birds –
Flicking between each other,
Lighting up sparse inter-neural spaces with their excitement.

I want to soothe your neurons into quiescence,
They are overburdened,
Your demeanour frazzled.
I want to watch the stark light fade to
An essential glow;
Watching over you as you drift to sleep.

Shadows

BY JULES PHAN

When night falls,
our perpetuated shadows
scatter across remnants
of the dim-lit streets,
briefly grazing each other
out of sympathy, before
break
ing
a-
part
into smaller fragments;
invisible,
lonely
shadow tears.

Who said shadows aren't humans?

Northward

BY DEBBY XU

I always imagined this moment
differently.
The kettle now spilled
over crucible boiling point,
lava and spit,
with raucous fervour and rage
in bloodshot eyes.
But instead it was dad.

He told me in a park, and
there was peaceful silence, except for
the grey building's warm extended exhale,
similar to my own.

And apart from two dust particles
gliding in the air,
everything
felt
robotic.

No breeze whispered through the
leaves, their naked shivers rattling
alongside each other.

For we were born alone
And go this way too.
Nothing moved except for
A silent car
And a lone bird flying northward.

Saudade



I peer through heavy lids as first light peeks through the shades of the airplane window. Squinting, I watch as the clouds dance to the sky's silent, a diminuendo of red into orange and finally, blue. The somewhat familiar landscape draws closer, buildings inching towards me. After fifteen hours in transit, I arrive in the country I've only ever explored through my parent's stories, brought alive by the nostalgic glint sparkle in their eyes.

This city is alive, a throbbing vein of twenty-two million people. Despite winter's onset, the humidity refuses to be chased away, polluting the air with the gasping desire of its people. Like clockwork, sweat oozes and mosquitoes hunt for blood, creeping their way under my clothes, tearing into fragile, foreign skin.

It is a constant cacophony – a dissonant symphony of beggars' pitchy cries, religious chants echoing from marble temples, the staccato calls of hawkers, and the ever-steady bass line of beeping from every angle. Daring individuals puncture the continuous flow traffic of traffic, darting to the other side of the road.

Wind coursing through my hair, I am swept into the swift and steady current of the crowds boarding the train, grasping the silver bars for dear life. The ebb and flow of the masses brings me to a trail of cross-legged men and women assembling garlands, like breadcrumbs strewn through a rushing forest of desire. Under the corrugated tin roofs, I lose myself in the maze of stalls lined with woven baskets. Each basket overflows with fresh blooms in colours as rich as the scent of spices in the air – orange and golden marigolds, fuchsia and mauve chrysanthemums, pure white jasmines, blood red roses.

I find myself strolling across a rickety, worn down bridge, a flower garland draped around my neck. I nestle into the foliage of a three hundred year old rainforest, escaping the scathing heat of the sun. I breathe, intoxicated by the musky scent of red earth, threaded by the sharp perfume of greenery and vanilla, cardamom, chilies, turmeric and cloves. Humidity wrestles through my once protective shield, a glue between skin and cotton. Sweet relief is found in lavender infused water trickling down my spine; glue is nothing but a distant memory.

My toes slowly sink deeper and deeper into the sand; the air here is cooler, saltier. Waves crash against the shore like a stampede. Paragliders and jet skiers are ushered back to shore and the tourist crowds dwindle. The sun kisses the brightly coloured Portuguese-style houses goodnight. Transient wisps of golden clouds scatter amid the backdrop of a lavender sky over a glittering ocean. India is sparkling.

REVIEWS

The Nature of a Gleam

A review on Nude: Art from the Tate Collection, at the Art Gallery of NSW

Beautiful, classic, draped and alone. This how we have historically seen the bare human body portrayed in art. Poetically called “the nude”, art has often romanticised nakedness and rendered the raw figure as a smooth, picturesque figure of marble, iron or paint.

Currently, the Art Gallery of NSW is hosting art from the Tate collection and displaying them as the summer blockbuster: *Nude: Art from the Tate Collection*, where audiences of every age come together to witness the body in its beauty, its rawness and at its most frank.

Pre-technology years saw the human body as the ultimate piece of machinery, a tool. The form of the person was taken and its essence manipulated into art pieces like Sir Hamo Thornycroft’s *Teucer* (1881) or Herbert Drape’s *The Lament for Icarus* (1898). The body is hailed as the one pure object, early examples emphasising the strength of the male form and the delicacy of the female.

The Art Gallery of NSW delivers what it promises: an exhibition filled with nudes from an impressive list of artists. Each room is categorised: the historical nude, the private nude, the modern nude, real and surreal bodies, paint as flesh, the erotic nude, the vulnerable body, and body politics.

Yet, as you enter each room, you can’t escape the gallery itself; too little room has been given to contemplate the depth of each artwork, even though you’re peering into the most guarded places of the human anatomy. The lighting is too continuous and the hangings sit too comfortably at eye level. It’s difficult to give each artwork enough attention, and you could be easily forgiven for forgetting the monumental impact each piece has had on the art world.

This was a struggle from the beginning, as I first spotted Lord Leighton Frederic’s romanti-cised imagery of his lover and muse in *The Bath of Psyche*, first exhibited in 1890. The strength of the model’s gaze whilst bathing in the reflection of herself is at competition with the Thornycroft sculpture, and the room’s shadows dominate. The contrast between the vulnerability of the innocent biblical female form and the male body in the next piece is dis-locating.

In “the private nude” room, the nude is conveyed in muted tones, each painting an invita-tion to a private moment between the artist and their model. As Walter Sickert proclaimed, “Perhaps the chief source of pleasure in the aspect of a nude is that it is in the nature of gleam – a gleam of light and warmth and life.” Sickert embodies this within *La Hollandaise*, (1906) where the soft edges of his female model are highlighted. The curve of her naked body is draped only in paint and the body is displayed in its truth.

With the advancement of technology, the imagery changes. At first, the shift to futurism is displayed in “the modern nude” room, where bodies are abstracted and the exploration of self and identity is questioned. When machinery can do it for you, the value of the body shifts. Pablo Picasso’s figure in the *Seated Nude (Femme nue assise)* (1909-1910) is a pure example of the abstraction process, as the body takes a mechanistic form. The body’s beauty is captured in Alexander Archipenko’s *Women Combing her Hair*; (1915) the mundane task of hair combing is transformed into a disfiguration of the model’s body.

After time periods have been explored, the exhibition’s curation becomes more subjective. Pieces described as **MUSICAL IN GAME** “surreal bodies” could also easily be categorised

as an “erotic nude” or “painting as flesh”. No painting better fits into all three categories than Sir Stanley Spencer’s *Double Nude Painting*, (1937) depicting the artist and his second wife.

Spencer’s self-depiction features somewhat-transparent skin, his body on display as he looks glumly down at his wife, while she ignores his gaze. Her body is also open for view-ing, yet her defiant gaze makes this painting feel like a feminist piece; her legs are power-fully open for the viewer to explore, the skin taut with her stretch.

The blockbuster room of the exhibition holds Auguste Rodin’s *The Kiss (Le Baiser)*, (1901-4). The three-ton, pentelikon marble sculpture commands centre-stage in the erotic room. The carved couple engage each other’s attention and desire, their smooth bodies contrast-ing with the roughly carved rock upon which they sit. The weight of the statue references the importance of flesh in all relationships. However, this tasteful rendition of desire – a kiss, not an orgasm – is complemented by the intimate drawings and paintings of Joseph Mallord William Turner, Pablo Picasso, David Hockney and Louise Bourgeois, all of which surround the sculpture. The display provokes questions about the personal and political challenges desire poses. As Bourgeois says, the nude takes us “deep into the drama.”

The exhibition also displays the work of artists who prompt discussions of identity and dis-rupt social expectations. For me, this is the true power of the exhibition. This is particularly emphasised in Barkley L Hendricks’s powerful gaze in *Family Jules: NNN (No Naked Nig-gahs)* (1974). Hendricks paints George Jules Taylor eyeing the audience, his open stance inviting the audience to take his figure in. From Mr

Taylor’s black, lean body, its soft lines flowing in flattering light, we face the dominating glare of Jo Spence’s *Remodelling Photo History: Colonization series* (1981-82).

Spence stands her ground and defends her domestic setting, the bottles of milk ready by the door for the family’s breakfast, her womanly figure not hidden, but paraded. The rest of the room has stellar pieces, including the politically-charged *Guerilla Girls*, David Wo-jnarowicz’s haunted figures, John Coplans’ naked, 60-year-old body, and Sarah Lucas’s incredible *NUD CYCLADIC series*. In it, she completely disrupts the male gaze and offers a solution to the absurdity of objectifying women’s bodies.

In the final room, the tiny space is made even more claustrophobic by the huge work by Ron Mueck: *Wild Man* (2005). This piece sits at almost three metres high and amplifies every anxiety of not only appearing in front of a large crowd, but also appearing naked. The detail in this piece demands attention, and had the audience awkwardly looking around; the anxiety transferred onto us, the viewers.

A connection between an artist’s nude and our personal reflections is rounded out by Rineke Dijkstra’s post-birth series of photographs (1994). The series includes three photos of Julie, an hour after giving birth; Tecla, one day; and Saskia, one week. The women look out with mixed emotions: pride, tiredness, disbelief, and vulnerability. The juxtaposition be-tween the newborn and the rawness of a post-birth body brings together the innocence of a baby with the stigmatised female form.

A newborn’s nude is so fresh and untainted; it is impossible for it to be corrupted with the connotations that a grown nude triggers. There is the joy of a newborn pushed against a body that would be censored and critiqued on social media. But the body is celebrated here.

The exhibition is freeing, allowing us to feel the power of the human form through our own clothes, appreciating our own nakedness.

A beautiful film that’s ultimately unsatisfying

A Review of La La Land

For weeks, I refused to be enticed by Damien Chazelle’s *La La Land*. Despite opening to almost universal praise, and dominating at the Golden Globes, I continued to be skeptical of the hype. A long musical about two in-love performers seemed tedious, and not something a large, overpriced frozen coke could fix. I realised I was right as my eyes slowly began to close, preparing for an overnight stay at Hoyts. Yet, while I remain personally unconvinced of *La La Land*’s masterpiece status, I cannot deny that it is a beautiful film. As a vivid flashback to the golden age of Hollywood, it excels in its use of colour, joyful choreography, and catchy melodies.

I enjoyed the way it used these techniques to grapple with the consequences of being a dreamer. Will the rough and tumble of the industry force you to sell-out? Are love and professional success mutually exclusive? Can you have it all? Chazelle explores these themes skillfully, starting in the opening minutes. Amid typical Los Angeles gridlock, a young Hollywood hopeful emerges from her car, singing about the challenges of *La La Land*. Soon, she is joined by hundreds of others, erupting into a vibrant chorus of voices. The bright colours, hectic choreography, and weaving shot that echoes a single-take, all work to capture the crowd’s optimism. The scene concludes with a return to normality, through an overhead shot of the traffic-congested freeway.

Compared with the extraordinary sight that preceded it, we now find Mia immersed in the reality of Hollywood. She is rehearsing her lines, Seb behind her, honking for her to move. Throughout, Chazelle continues to grapple with this concept, culminating in his rejection of an idealised ending to Mia and Seb’s relationship. Ultimately, the exploration of these ideas is thought provoking, and, if

nothing else, a pleasure to look at.

Yet despite the positives, I continue to hold an average view of the film. As I feared, the length of movie meant it lagged in the middle. This was when my eyes began to close, and I snuggled into the reclining seat.

The final straw, though, was the lack of character development. While Chazelle explores Seb’s “purist jazz club dreams”, there is little on Mia’s passion for acting. Bar a few humorous auditions and brief glimpses into her one-woman show, there is scant dialogue dedicated to Mia’s creative pursuits. In spite of Emma Stone’s strong performance, the primary take-away I have is her assertion that, “No Jamal. You be trippin”.

In many ways, I feel the film is also open to feminist critique, with Mia’s ending cause for concern. As film critic Gila Lyons pointed out, “in the most maddening signifier of ‘having it all’ – she comes home to a man and a baby,” with her professional success inadequately captured by a bland Los Angeles billboard. Similarly ironic is Ryan Gosling’s casting as the saviour of American jazz, a genre founded by black Americans. It seems odd that the only significant person of colour – John Legend’s Keith – is cast as a sellout.

In any case, I’d say that while *La La Land* is a visual hit and ticks all the boxes cinematically, it is nonetheless overrated... especially if you’re not a fan of musicals.

PRESIDENT

AISLINN STEIN-MAGEE



Hey there UNSW - My name is Aislinn Stein-Magee and I'm your new SRC President for 2017!

When I was a kid, I watched my mum work full time night shift at our local hospital, raise my sister and I, and then spend the time she had left studying to get a university degree (forget sleep!). I thought if my mum was willing to work as hard as she did to get that degree while juggling it with all the other responsibilities she had, then education has got to be pretty damn important.

Ever since then, I've wanted to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to get an education like my mum and everyone who has visions of changing the world (cheesy but true) can have the opportunity to do so. It's why I came to uni in the first place and I never dreamed that I'd meet so many people who wanted to do the same thing.

My favourite thing about UNSW is all the amazing students who work so hard so that one day they can make real change as doctors, scientists, authors, teachers – you name it. I got involved with the SRC because us students deserve a platform for all our incredible ideas to be realised, and I wanted to do everything I could to make that happen.

I couldn't be more excited to be working with my SRC team and UNSW students to make sure that students are at the heart of everything UNSW does in 2017. Now more than ever, it's so important that students come together to fight for our voice to be heard on major issues and our ideas to be realised.

An area where this is vital is concerning

Trimesters. Ever since UNSW announced the move to a new calendar, students all across this university have been telling the SRC, telling staff and trying to tell the university about the impacts that trimesters will have on us as students – not just in terms of the quality of our education, but our ability to work and support ourselves, our ability to have quality time with staff, and our ability to undertake internships or extracurricular activities to have the best learning experience possible. In 2017 the SRC is committed to standing with students against trimesters. We'll be running a campaign, kicking off with a rally on March 8th, as well as making sure that your experiences, ideas and feedback are heard on this issue.

We also have a lot of fun stuff planned for the year ahead – more art and music at UNSW, free food during exams, subsidised RSA/RCG courses and a whole lot more.

If you have any feedback, ideas, or you want to get involved with our campaigns, you can check us out on Facebook, attend collective meetings, or drop me a line at srcpresident@arc.unsw.edu.au Let's make 2017 the year of the UNSW student.

GENERAL SECRETARY

ZACK SOLOMON



G'day UNSW, my name is Zack Solomon and I'm your 2017 SRC General Secretary.

Growing up in Fiji, I was exposed pretty early on to the fact that to make real change, you need to get in and get your hands dirty. That's why on my first day at UNSW, I signed up at the O-Week stall and was lucky enough to meet Aislinn, 2017's SRC president. Since then, I have been continuously blown away by the amazing opportunities for change that our SRC gives us. In the role of General Secretary, I work closely with the SRC President in the implementation of campaigns and running of the SRC.

Whether you want to meet a diverse range of passionate people or truly shape your own university experience, the SRC is the place to be. We campaign, we organise, we advocate. Whenever you have an issue, whether it be with academic problems, issues accessing basic necessities, or aspects of Uni you would like to see changed, it is integral that the SRC is accessible to you.

One of the biggest changes occurring at UNSW at the moment is the introduction of trimesters. As someone who had to leave my last university because of them, I'm all too aware of how important student advocacy is when these decisions are being made. The SRC will be running both an educational campaign highlighting the real impact of trimesters on students. A rally opposing trimesters has also been organised for Wednesday 8 March at 1pm on Library Lawn.

Whether it's pushing for the expansion of more 24/7 study spaces on campus, the introduction of subsidised RSA/RCG courses, the campaign

GENERAL SECRETARY

ALEX LINKER



to stop the introduction of trimesters and many other initiatives, the SRC has a pretty full on year ahead. Make sure to get involved; trust me when I say that involvement is truly the most rewarding of experiences at UNSW.

To get involved contact us online or attend any collectives. Here are their times:

Women's:
- 11-12pm Wednesday
- 11-12pm Friday

Disability:
- 2-4pm Thursday

Queer:
- 1-3pm Monday

Environmental:
- 11-12pm Monday
- 12-1pm Monday (Fossil Free)

Welfare:
- 12-1pm Wednesday
- Free Breakfast 10-11am Thursday

Education:
- 12-1pm Wednesday

Indigenous:
- 5:00-6:00pm Friday

Ethno-cultural:
- 3-4pm Monday
- 12-1pm Wednesday

Cheers UNSW,

Zack Solomon
generalsecretary@arc.unsw.edu.au

Welcome back to another amazing year of uni! This year the Students with Disabilities Collective is really aiming towards getting together an enthusiastic group of students to share experiences and advocate for the rights of Students with Disabilities. We hope to provide a safe space and a sense of community for all disabled students.

We're planning a bunch of fantastic social events (like barbecues and movies) to provide the opportunity to meet like-minded students, as well as weekly meetings to catch up and discuss ways we can improve accessibility for all students at UNSW.

This year, the Students with Disabilities Collective will be focused on advocating for changes to provide an equal opportunity to access education for all students. In light of this, we are planning some major visibility and activism events throughout the year – so watch this space!

For O-Week, we have organised a couple of fun events to get to know the people involved with the Collective – come and visit us at the SRC stall or check out our Facebook page (<http://tinyurl.com/unswSWD>) for more information.

We hope to see you all throughout the year :)

If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to email disabilities@arc.unsw.edu.au.

GENERAL SECRETARY

LIZZIE BUTTERWORTH



Hi! My name is Lizzie and I'm the Women's Officer for 2017. As Women's Officer, my role is to lead the Women's Collective, run campaigns and events, and to act as a female representative advocating on the issues that matter to UNSW women. I'm dedicated to ensuring equal access to education, opportunity, and student services for all women.

This year I'll be continuing work on the sexual assault campaign, fighting for efficient and accessible reporting measures, and working to ensure strict consequences for behaviours that promote rape culture. A key contributor to the unfair treatment of women at university is unconscious bias, so later in the year we'll be launching a campaign to tackle negative attitudes towards female students. I'm also looking to diversify our collective by increasing its accessibility to women students from all backgrounds and faculties.

The Women's Collective (WoCo for short) is an activist and support group at UNSW focused on improving the experiences of female-identifying students as well as engaging with larger gender based issues. Whether you're a loud-and-proud-activist or someone just beginning to wrap their head around this whole "feminism thing", WoCo is a place where you can collaborate and learn, stand up for your values, and where you'll always be accepted. It's a great way to meet female identifying students from across campus. And, with a focus on safe spaces, activities, and events for women on at UNSW, WoCo is a social group as well.

If you're interested in getting involved with the Women's Collective in 2017, come to one of our regular meetings and join the UNSW Women's Collective on Facebook

INDIGENOUS
TAMARA KENNY



Hello from the Indigenous Collective!

We have some deadly events coming up for you mob this year.

We aim to foster a more culturally aware and inclusive campus and to create more opportunities for students to engage with local Indigenous communities. We are planning some more cultural activities that Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike can participate in. We would LOVE to see more people involved with our planned events and activities!

This O-Week we will have a 'Weave and Yarn' session held in Nura Gili (opposite the Globe Lawn) where you can come and learn how to make bracelets using traditional Aboriginal weaving techniques. This is a great opportunity to sign up to the Indigenous collective and learn more about our planned activities and events for 2017.

The Indigenous collective will be meeting on Tuesdays from 5-6pm. Feel free to come along and join in on our meetings to learn more about the Indigenous Collective and what we have planned.

WELFARE
AMY MILLS



Welcome to 2017 to all students at UNSW. I'm Amy, the new SRC Welfare Office for 2017. I study Fine Arts at UNSWAD and I'm completing honours this year. I love art and am passionate about art representation in Australia. I have been on the UNSWAD council for the past couple of years. I began as an equity officer and was lucky enough to be elected as president last year. I spent much of the year fighting against the merge with SCA and trimesters; I believe that both damage students' experience and welfare at UNSW. Both campaigns were instrumental in demonstrating the power of each student's voice and reinforcing that we need to take action when faced with inequalities.

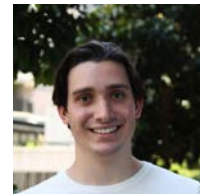
In 2017, I want the University take a stand against student poverty and develop innovative and ethically sustainable ways to combat it. The Welfare Collective should understand the challenges students face while attending university and help to develop strategies, through student-run initiatives. One example of this is teaming up with the Enviro collective to hold free breakfasts, using donated and locally sourced and produced food.

This year will also see a reinvigoration of the Welfare and Disabilities room on main campus. We are bring a whole lot of life and colour to this room and we need your help. Currently, we are looking for bright, colourful artworks for the new gallery wall. If you're an artist (in any medium) who would like to see your work displayed, please get in touch. The room will also provide blankets and pillows to use for rest periods and welfare packs available for students in crisis.

Our focus is on intersectionality and how lived experience can define the way a person moves through life. If you want to be part of the Welfare collective for 2017, please send your name and contact info to: welfare@arc.unsw.edu.au

QUEER

**PRIYA GAUCHAN, JACOB
COURTENAY, ANNA TRAN,
MIRACHAEL RACELA**



Hey! We would first like to welcome you (back) to uni.

This is an exciting new year for the Collective! This year we are revamping some old ideas and introducing new strategies, so as to increase the awareness and outreach of our Collective. We aim to update our popular events such as; IDAHOT/gay wedding and Wear It Purple Day with the safety and enjoyment of the queer students in mind.

O-Week is also an imperative day for us in welcoming new students and reintroducing ourselves to existing students. It's also a great chance for queer students from all faculties to socialise, meet people and have fun. We've organised a lot of bonding and ice-breaking events throughout the week.

Furthermore, we are improving access to representation and member engagement through the launching of Collective's new Instagram and refreshed Facebook posts. The collective has also introduced monthly potlucks and "Queer Collective goes to" events, thanks to suggestions from members.

We will continue to have weekly general collective meetings (1-3pm every Monday) as well as autonomous meetings (Bi/Pan/Fluid, Trans/SGD, Ace/Aromantic, QPOC) at the Queer Space. Here students will be able to voice their concerns, hang out and get updates

ENVIRONMENT
BREANA MACPHERSON-RICE



G'day keen beans! How was your summer? I am positive that most of you complained at least once, probably not far off 27 times, about the whopping heat we experienced over the break, right? And while the heat ain't even a thing when you're splashing in the waves down at Coogee, if you're further away from the ocean, or trying to get a job done, it can be a tough slog. Unfortunately we're in for more of this – not only was 2016 the hottest year on record, but scientists reckon it's only going to be more of a problem in years to come. (If you're thinking 'climate change?' you guessed it).

So have a think about the profession you're studying for and what it will be like on the job with more and more heatwaves in 10 years time. I'm studying environmental science and dread the thought of 45 degree days doing fieldwork in a swamp; but maybe if you end up being a high-flying lawyer in an air conditioned office, you won't mind too much. Either way, we've got nothing on the concerns of workers that live on the front lines of climate change – in the bush, on low lying island states and in the global south, to name a few.

If this all sounds a little bit doom and gloom, it doesn't have to be. The UNSW environment collective will be meeting every Monday 11-12, and the Fossil Free campaign team will meet straight after from 12-1 in Arc. We're determined to halt climate change in its tracks – and that means getting UNSW to divest from the fossil fuel industry, as well as any campaigns you think would be worthwhile. Make 2017 the year you do something about climate change, and join us! #unswdivest

ETHNO-CULTURAL
CINDY EL SAYED



Hello UNSW!

I'm Cindy and I'll be your Ethno-cultural officer for 2017!

The Ethno-cultural collective is something that helped me so much when I got to university. As a Lebanese Muslim person, racism is something that I experience personally and perceive to be on the edge of my consciousness at all times. Islamophobia and racism is rampant in Australia and that means it's also in our universities. The Ethno-cultural collective was a space where I could feel safe and understood. It's where i learned about white supremacy, intersectionality, and inclusive forms of feminism.

Race and culture are important parts of our identity and experience even today in 2017; racism is not something that has or can be left in the past. That's why my biggest passion is creating a cohesive community of people of colour and culturally and linguistically diverse individuals.

There is strength in numbers, support in community and power with the people! The aims for the year are to build relationships with all the ethnically and culturally diverse clubs and societies on campus, as well as bridge the gap with other campuses as well. Education is also an essential part of what the collective is for, and I plan to hold several workshops, and create spaces where People of Colour and culturally and linguistically diverse students can be heard. There's plenty to come this year so come chat with me at collective meetings, Mondays at 3-4 and Wednesdays at 12-1.

Looking forward to meeting you!

ETHNO-CULTURAL
DYLAN LLOYD



2017 is shaping up to be a huge year for education at UNSW and across Australia! On campus, we're hard at work fighting the deeply unpopular and inequitable move to impose a harmful trimester system alongside disastrous staff cuts. We're also promoting greater textbook accessibility, a return to Pass Conceded grades and the removal of unfairly-applied Academic Withdrawals from students' transcripts.

Meanwhile, the National Union of Students has been campaigning for a return to free education and greater accessibility of higher education in Australia, and together we've got some amazing opportunities for you to get involved, have your say and help lead one of the most important national debates of the decade.

To get involved, come along to one of our upcoming actions, and join the Education Collective:

* UNSW Students Say No to Trimesters: Wed 8 March (Week 2), 1 PM @ Library Lawn

* Make Education Free Again: 22 March (Week 4), 11 AM @ Library Lawn, 1 PM @ USyd Library

* Education Collective: Weekly meetings upstairs at Arc (email education@arc.unsw.edu.au)

* And like the anti-trimester campaign for up-to-date info and opportunities to get involved: <https://www.facebook.com/unswtrimonster>

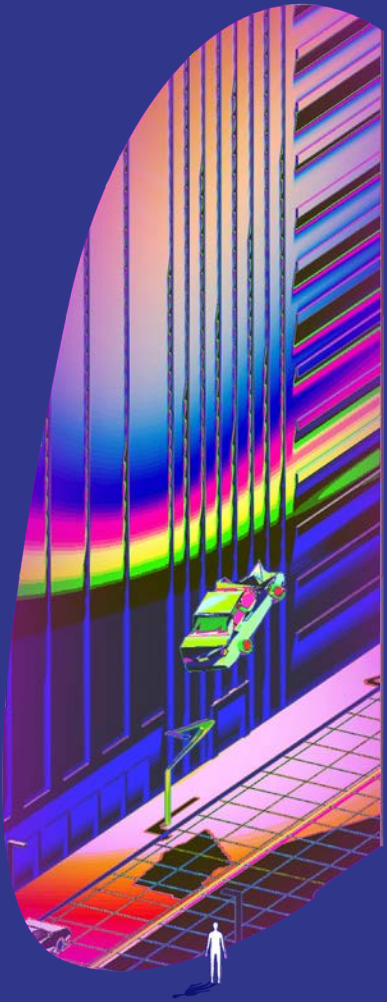
As the Education Officer, I'm also here to help you with any academic issues coming your

way. Chuck me an email at education@arc.unsw.edu.au if you're facing any troubles with assessments, course requirements or accessibility to resources such as textbooks, and I'll help point you in the right direction.

Arc also has a Legal & Advocacy service you can check out if you'd like professional and confidential assistance (make sure you sign up as an Arc member too – it's free!).

We're bursting with opportunities to get involved this year, so make sure your voice is heard!

* Dylan, 2017 Education Officer.



WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

**SEND YOUR STORIES, IDEAS AND OTHER
SUBMISSIONS TO THARUNKA@ARC.UNSW.EDU.AU**

