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MANAGING EDITOR
BRITTNEY RIGBY

When I moved to Sydney four years ago, it meant leaving my hometown: population of 7,000, small-town politics, group as currency; the only home I’d ever known. It was, in many ways, the braver 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 “why?” to everything. It’s saying no when you want to and embracing your history. It’s saying yes to handling them gently, preserving parts of yourself, dusting them off, an archaeologist: uncovering new stories, and unearth UNSW’s stories with you in 2017.

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

We recognize that these communities cannot be properly represented by one voice or in one piece. We acknowledge that minority groups are often buổied with explaining their histories and justifying their positions. But we also understand that minority voices can be heard as important because I believe that we are ideicial and energetic enough to say things the real grown-ups don’t want to say. This year is the year that we battle the mainstream on ministries, ensure that they actually implement good mental health policies and generally do a little bit astounding.

Student journalism is integral in this. Creating a space where uniquely student voices can be heard is important because I believe that we are ideicial and energetic enough to say things the real grown-ups don’t want to say. This year is the year that we battle the mainstream on ministries, ensure that they actually implement good mental health policies and generally do a little bit astounding.

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.

Looking forward to a good one!
It’s 2017 and I can’t Believe we’re Still Debating...

“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.

Political Entitlements

Hey Stuck in Sydney,

I. Feel. You.

I 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. 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.


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 ibis hate me. But, if everyone ends up hating you too, remember my motto: fuck ‘em. *knife emoji*

xoxo Agony Ibis

Agony Ibis

Dear Agony Ibis,

All of my friends went on amazing holidays to exotic locations over the break, and I’m very jealous. How can I fit in with all the new friends I’m jealous. I can’t even believe we’re still debating... Especially since I did not end up making any new friends.

I empathise with your non-exotic, cheap-ass pain, Stuck in Sydney

Kind regards,

Agony Ibis
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, 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, and 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.

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.

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.

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 now has dropped the matter.

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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 UNSW Trimonster on Facebook, and contact the Education Officer, Dylan Lloyd, (education@arc.unsw.edu.au) if you’d like to know more.

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

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

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.

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

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.

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

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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 occupation 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 hornet 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 villagers’ 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 stop, after tennis, in 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 have been injured; two have been killed.

Despite this heavy handed repression, the protests have continued and Nabi Saleh has been seen as one 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, spent four and a half years in gaol. In 1993, he has been arrested over a dozen times, and led the protests against Halamish. Bassem Tamimi is one of the community leaders of these protests against Halamish. He has been arrested over a dozen times, and led the protests against Halamish.

In 1993, 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, Nouran, 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 visually 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 IDF had ever removed it. The clip viscerally demonstrated the 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, Nouran, and sister-in-law, Nawal, grappled with the soldier, eventually overpowering him and freeing Mohammed.

The conference’s Middle East strand 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 contesting narratives and controversial topics, 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.

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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 on-stage is inherently a political act. The way you’re perceived by an audience is loaded. That’s very early on, when writing performance’s context. 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.

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 a more relationship between the text and the theatre’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 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 autonomy based on the desire to travel in the future. To travel or to decide to travel, trends vary. Travel is an unspoken feature of our society. We tend to think that travel is about being in the present, and that the destabilising force of travelling, the deliberate and self-inflicted thrust into a realm where sensations are more vibrant, more memorable, 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 things are important to remember throughout your career. 

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 the answer to these issues. However, when we travel, we are also reinforcing the idea that we can escape our problems through travel. Travel often promises more than it delivers.

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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.

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

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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 pattern 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 things. There were artists who had honed their craft while I write essays. There were musicians who have honed their craft while I write essays. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things. There were plenty of interesting things. There were interesting things.

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

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, 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.”

“Sometimes, we were even forced to use some of the more traditional methods,” Jongen said.

These days, he says the government can’t see past the “smoke and mirrors.”

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

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

Rain’s fallen
sun-cracked earth sullied
foamy salt rises
Death cookes bones unburied death cookes bones for the crow;
dirt soup

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

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.
“It’s just an expression, Bob,” says Phyllis. “You’d mistake for the bins — that’s the apocalypse — this confection will be much, much worse. Bring on people not hearing your joke and which is incidentally the ratio for cordial, hangover times seven hundred thousand. Don’t fucking get me started on that one.

“Every cloud, no matter how dark, has a silver lining.”

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.

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 Tadasu 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.

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.

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Shadows

BY JULES PHAN

When night falls,
our perpetuated shadows
scatter across remnants
of the dim-lit street,
brie fly grazing each other
out of sympathy, before
breaking
or
part
into smaller fragments;
invisible, lonely
shadow tears.
Who said shadows aren’t human?

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 moon-tipped luminescence,
Wrapping my hands around your dendrites,
Feeling the throb of information within,
Praying my pulse to your cell bodies, and
Feeling the polarisation changes as my own.
I want to be the spark
Setting your neurons twitching – like birds –
Flicking between each other;
Lighting up sparse inter-neural spaces with the ir excitement.
I want to soothe your neurons into quiescence,
Your demeanour frizzled.
I want to watch the stark light fade to
An essential glow,
Watching over you as you drift to sleep.

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 shrivels 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.
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.
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 pure 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 Henry Thompson’s ‘Tracer’ (1881) or Herbert Draper’s ‘The Lament for Ecures’ (1898). The body is hailed as the purest objet d’art, 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.

Taylor’s black, lean body, its soft lines flowing in luminous 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 normally figure out of place, but parallel. The rest of the room has its stellar pieces, including the politically-charged Guerrilla Girls, David Wojnarowicz’s haunted figures, John Copley’s naked, 66-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 womans bodies.

In the final room, the tiny space is made even more constraining by the large work by Ron Mueck. Wild Man (2005). This piece sits at almost three metres high and amplifies every anxiety of not only appearing 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 emotional and political 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 between the newborn and the familiar is a poignancy of a post-birth body being 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 contaminations that a grown nude triggers. There is the idea of a screen protecting 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.

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 unconvincing 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 the golden age of Hollywood, it excels in its use of colour, joyful choreography, and catchy melodies. The detail in this piece demands attention, and had the audience awkwardly looking around; the anxiety transferred onto us, the viewers.

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The exhibition is freeing, allowing us to feel the power of the human form through our own clothes, appreciating our own nakedness.
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 I believe everyone deserves a platform for all our incredible ideas to be heard. Everyone has the opportunity 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 SRC collective meetings.

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/unswwsd) 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.

H! My name is Lizzie and I’m the Women’s Officer for 2017. At 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 contribution 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 active 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...
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 our planned activities and how you can participate.

Welcome to 2017 to all students at UNSW. I’m Amy, the new SRC Welfare Officer for 2017. I study Fine Arts at UNSW 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 a teaming up with the Enviro collective to hold free breakfasts, using donated and locally sourced and produced food.

This year will also see a reinvigorated of the Welfare and Disabilities rooms on main campus. We are bringing 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@src.unsw.edu.au

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 and transgender) 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, Ati/Aromantic, QPOC) at the Queer Space. Here students will be able to voice their concerns, hang out and get updates from us about important matters.

We hope to see you all soon and wish you a wonderful year to come. For more updates, please visit our Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/UNSWQ/
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!

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.

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