



THE BRUIN BULLETIN

Spring Edition 2024

Britannia Community Centre
Renewal: Is it Still Happening?

Student Art

Media Reviews

Opinion Pieces

Editors Note

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- Sunny Zatzick, editor-in-chief

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“Hate to Hope”: Embracing Diversity in Britannia’s New Mural

By: Ella Tsang (12)

When walking through the Britannia community, public art is always in sight. From the grounds to the walls, the splashes of colour and vibrance provide a chance for local artists to showcase their talents. Each piece and mural has a unique backstory, making Britannia even more diverse within its community.

The newest addition to Britannia’s murals has its own important backstory. “Hate to Hope”, painted by Paige Jung, Malena Mokhovichova, and the Britannia youth, illustrates the importance of a diverse and tight-knit community. The mural embodies collective transformation, and is a celebration of a unified and resilient community. The Bruin Bulletin had the chance to interview Jung and Mokhovichova, who were both very passionate about the process and backstory of their mural.



Credit: Rémi Yuan via paigejung.com

How did you reach out to Malena? Have either of you done mural painting before?

Paige: I was originally contacted by the BC’s Office of Human Rights Commissioner and the Vancouver Mural Festival to see if I wanted to take part in this mural project. I have painted murals around the city before, but was excited to embark on a project that collaborated with the community more. They put me in touch with Malena, a former graduate of Britannia Secondary School, to support me with painting the mural and organising the youth painting volunteers. I’m so glad to have Malena there, supporting the students and the project, as her passion and connection to the youth really made a difference!

Credit: Rémi Yuan via paigejung.com

What was the process like from the conception to the completion of this artwork? Were there any challenges you had to overcome during the process of painting this mural, and how did you overcome those challenges?

Paige: First off, we wanted to consult the youth about their ideas for the mural design. Malena took charge of brainstorming the concept with the youth. Afterwards, I drew up on the mural design concept based on the feedback and ideas I got from the youth and Malena. After the design was approved, we moved to production. I sketched out the mural design on the wall for the first two days, then Malena and youth volunteers came to help fill in the sketch with paint the following days. It took us about a week to finish painting. I would say there weren’t any major challenges that appeared during the process. It was a very smooth week, and we had a lot of youth eager to volunteer!

Malena: The process fascinated me as someone who enjoys making and seeing art but with no prior mural painting experience. Paige was the powerhouse of this project and taught me and the Britannia Youth so much over that week. I enjoyed learning about the scaling of the artwork and how to adapt the initial draft to a large format. Working with the weather was a challenge that stood out to me - as Vancouver greeted us with chilly mornings and humid afternoons, it was interesting to see how much faster or slower the paint dried, which motivated us to approach the process differently every day. I’m grateful to say that Paige coached me through every challenge I faced; thanks to her, it is an experience I will carry with me for the rest of my creative career.

How did the community or surroundings influence the design of the mural? What does it mean to you to contribute your art to the local community? How do you hope the mural will impact the local community?

Malena: After our meeting with the youth from Brit, Paige created a gorgeous draft based on the ideas pitched in that meeting - such as the importance of diversity, inclusivity, community, and growth. This was shown in the river and plants that flourished as the design went on, as well as with the imagery of stars and the community growing closer. Paige made every effort to include me in the creative process, which meant a lot to me and helped me feel like I was giving back to the community that made me into who I am today.

Growing up on the Drive, I remembered every mural on my walk from home to school; it has always been a dream to contribute to the beautiful tapestry that makes our community so vibrant. Now, I got the gift of having that dream come true while reconnecting with the youth from Brit, many of whom I worked with or coached over the years, which only added to how meaningful this experience was. While painting, I also got to see my past and present mentors, teachers, and friends. I have so much love for East Van and hope this mural brightens others’ day and makes the neighbourhood warmer, the way many others did for me growing up. Once a Bruin, always a Bruin!

Paige: I think it’s very important to know and acknowledge the community you’re serving and what land the mural is on. When I design a mural concept, it’s one of my top priorities to make sure the community feels seen and represented, whether that means visually in the design, or making sure their feedback and ideas are incorporated.

It is an immense blessing to be able to contribute a mural in a community and is a true feeling of trust that I do not take for granted. We hope this mural will be a visual celebration of collective transformation, and will embody the community’s resiliency and togetherness in difficult times. We also hope that the youth involved can be reminded of their tremendous impact in their own community.

“Hate to Hope” has demonstrated the importance of a community, bringing together a neighbourhood that has been through ups and downs. This mural has brought the Britannia community together through mural festivals and events, reiterating the impact of public and easily accessible art on a community.

View more of Paige Jung’s artwork through her website paigejung.com or through her Instagram [@paigejung_](https://www.instagram.com/paigejung_)

Credit: Rémi Yuan via paigejung.com



Transphobia in Modern Day Canada

By: Logan Keilty (11), Sam Quastel (12)

In the past several years, transphobia is an issue that has gotten much more prominent globally, and Canada is no exception. In the United States, there has been a wave of anti-trans sentiment and legislation. As American culture and politics often do, this has started bleeding into Canada. Several transphobic laws were passed in January 2024 in Alberta, and in addition there have been a surge of anti-trans protests across Canada. Accordingly, there have also been counter demonstrations from trans rights activists, one of which was attended by reporters from the Bruin Bulletin in September 2023. We will look at how this increase in transphobia has arisen in Canada and the United States, and how these reactionary ideas migrate north, in particular to the protest attended.



Credit: Logan Keilty

Over the past years the United States has seen a massive wave of anti-trans legislation. According to the *American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU)*, 32 out of 50 states have introduced a total of 274 limiting transgender health care, civil rights, and public existence. This all comes as the latest issue in the American right's strategy of targeting minorities in a broad scale "culture war". This is not a new strategy. In response to social progress, right wing reactionary political strategy has always adapted by finding new targets. In the 1950s and 60s the civil rights movement was targeted, and in the 70s and 80s the gay rights movement was a target. The strategy of funneling social prejudices against liberation movements is a tried and tested method of generating popular support for regressive policies. This is also important to understand in the context of the political interdependence between the United States and Canada.

While transphobic beliefs are in no ways uniquely American, the mainstreaming effect caused by American politicians has brought them further attention in Canada. The anti-trans movement has begun using ground gained in America to further their influence in Canada, just as reactionary movements have. It is in this environment that the protest we attended occurred.

A statement made by the organizers unsettled us. They said, "We were told there would be police here supporting us",



Credit: Logan Keilty

which asks the question of why police were assigned to a protest in defense of transphobic organizations. This is harmful, as those in government and positions of power have the responsibility of protecting all citizens, including minorities. However, there have been many instances in the past of the VPD and police in general opposing vulnerable communities, so we were not surprised to hear that had happened here.

At first glance of the protest there was a clear domination of support for the pro-trans community. There was approximately triple the amount of support for trans supporters in relation to the anti-trans side. The organizers used a strange approach in their protest, with children onstage being told to say transphobic and homophobic statements. Most children seemed uncomfortable and scared, as they were being told to say things and being screamed at.

It seemed unethical to use children on stage, especially when the children seemed uncomfortable and were being forced to talk about something they likely didn't know much about.

Even though the transphobic protestors had the advantage of a material stage barrier and speakers, the pro-trans side still seemed to overrun the protest, aided by power in numbers. As heartbreaking as seeing an anti-trans protest was, seeing the pro-trans side with significantly more supporters filled many with hope.

Overall, the influence of American transphobic politics has been gaining ground in Canada, and while it is a worrying influence on our political landscape, there remains strong opposition.

From what we found attending a counterprotest in Vancouver, there is still a much greater force of liberal and leftist resistance. The Canadian political sphere is oftentimes heavily influenced by that of the states, and there is a frequent trend where reactionary ideologies travel north across the border. Civil rights in this country are again under attack as they have been many times in the past, however there remains a stronger contingent of supporters for trans rights. The wheel of progress still turns, and this is just the last in a long string of failed attempts to stop it.



Credit: Logan Keilty

The Problems with Jo Koy's Golden Globes Speech

By: Ann Ho (10)

The Golden Globe Awards are a platform to acknowledge artists' talent, share their unique perspectives, and occasionally, spark conversations. However, this year's ceremony has seen its fair share of controversy with this year's host Jo Koy. Koy's recent speech remarks have ignited a heated discussion about the line between humor and crossing boundaries.

Koy began his monologue by making a joke about Taylor Swift, saying that the Globes would have fewer camera shots of Taylor Swift than N.F.L. telecasts: "As you know, we came on after a football doubleheader. The big difference between the Golden Globes and the NFL? At the Golden Globes, we have fewer camera shots of Taylor Swift," Koy said, referring to the frequent reaction shots of her recent appearances at Kansas City Chiefs games to cheer on Travis Kelce (the tight end of the team). Swift, who was seated in the audience, looked unamused, pursing her lips while sipping from her drink. Even though Swift remained calm and barely reacted at all, some have responded by saying how she was overreacting, proving an iconic quote from Swift of how "a man can react but a woman can only overreact."

In his interview, Koy later acknowledged that the joke fell "just a little flat." The comment was later widely criticized and mocked on social media. After the ceremony concluded, Koy attended the Billboard after-party, where he answered a few questions from Extra. When asked about the cutaway to Swift, Koy replied, "It was a compliment. It's like, she can be more intimate tonight. That's all," he said.

Jo Koy then had a take on the movies *Oppenheimer* and *Barbie*. When comparing the two, Koy said "*Oppenheimer* is based on a 721-page, Pulitzer Prize-winning book about The Manhattan Project," while "*Barbie* is based on a plastic doll with big boobies... I watched *Barbie*, I loved it, I really did love it," the host added. "I don't want you guys to think I'm a creep, but it was kind of weird being attracted to a plastic doll. It's just something about your eyes, Ryan... Margot, it's not always about you."

Only a few audience members laughed, and Gerwig smiled and nodded, however painstakingly showing how a "joke" can strip away all the hard work someone has put in through their career. The "joke" also proves the point of the *Barbie* movie and why it was made in the first place.

Barbie's purpose has been to inspire the limitless potential in every girl, and woman. The importance of *Barbie* being a comedy is that audiences can humorously engage in a conversation about sexism, feminism, and historically vulnerable topics, while also experiencing a range of emotions alongside Barbie as she discovers what it means to be a woman.

Koy's comments received extensive criticism for the fact he's belittling a movie so many women felt empowered by and reducing the movie to a sexual joke. The camera then panned to the crowd, many appeared straight-faced and speechless. Actress and musician Selena Gomez put her head in her hands, which later became a meme representing viewers' feelings about Koy's performance.



Credit: Entertainment Weekly



Credit: Vogue

The writer-director of *Barbie*, Greta Gerwig addressed the joke made by Koy, while appearing on *BBC Radio 4 Today*. The joke has been criticized by some for being reductive or sexist, but Gerwig offered host Martha Kearney a different take on Koy's joke. "Well, he's not wrong. She's the first doll that was mass-produced with breasts, so he was right on," she said. "And you know, I think that so much of the project of the movie was unlikely because it is about a plastic doll."

After his joke bombed, Koy's take on it was "I got the gig 10 days ago!.. You want a perfect monologue? Yo, shut up. You're kidding me, right? Slow down, I wrote some of these — and they're the ones you're laughing at... We were still writing up until they said we're live," Koy said.

"Absolute cold reads never got a chance to work out anything. And this is not an excuse. I'm just trying to paint the picture because I don't think people understand, in any situation, how is that geared towards winning?" Despite everything, Koy doesn't regret taking the gig, though: "I'm happy I did it because I did accept that challenge." Regardless of the controversy, the Filipino comic also took pride in the cultural representation he was able to bring to the Globes, an award show that has faced criticism in the past for its lack of racial diversity. "I'm the first Asian to ever be a solo host. It's 2024. I'm the first out of 81 years," Koy said. "Imagine if someone said yes before me. We'd still be at the 82nd Golden Globes and still no Asian as a solo host, so if I didn't say yes, there still would never have been." Koy is the second Asian host of the Golden Globes, following Sandra Oh as the first one. Sandra Oh became the first Asian co-host of the Golden Globe Awards as well as the first woman of Asian descent to win multiple Golden Globes in 2019.

Even if Koy was the first solo Asian host, that doesn't excuse Koy's actions, and is harmful for the Asian community to be used as justification. The Golden Globes have always been a platform for creativity, but this year's event reminds us that with great influence comes the responsibility to foster an environment that embraces all perspectives with sensitivity and respect. Even though Koy is in part to blame, the hosts of this event cannot be forgotten; The Golden Globes. Ever since the incident, the Golden Globes haven't released any statements of any kind to apologize or to acknowledge the controversy.

Overall, this has prompted reflection on the responsibilities that come with the microphone at such a prestigious event, and a chance to speak out against normalized offensive humour.

Credit: Daily Beast



Credit: BuzzFeed

The Highly Anticipated Renewal of Britannia Community Centre

By: Elsie Iwankow (11)

Over 50 years ago a group of Britannia students felt strongly about the lack of recreational resources that were available to them outside of school hours. Without a library, recreational facilities, or a place to foster community, students gathered and advocated to the city of Vancouver for the establishment of a community centre. Now, 50 years later, with limited space for a growing neighbourhood and failing mechanical systems, Britannia Community centre is falling apart. For almost 20 years the community has been pushing for a full renewal of the facilities, and although it has been a tumultuous process, plans are finally being solidified.

In 2005 a formal needs analysis was conducted on the facilities, concluding that the site needed to be renewed and expanded. However, the renewal of Britannia Community Center was not a project to just simply restore current conditions. The vision was to expand and improve the centre, creating new opportunities for students and other members of the neighbourhood.

Credit: Vancouver Sun



Craig Ollenberger, Vice President of The Board Of Directors

Craig Ollenberger, who a director on the Britannia Board, joined the Britannia renewal process as a representative of Britannia. He explains that “It would have been a generational change for this community”. The new centre had plans to provide a brand new pool and ice rink, a larger gym, areas for students to work and study, space to run programs and child care services, bigger kitchens to run food programs, and spaces for cultural gatherings and learnings.

“This is something that would’ve had a direct benefit to the students in the near [future] and obviously a lifelong benefit to them as they continue to grow in this community,” Ollenberger describes. In 2014 Britannia was able to get on the city’s capital plan, and by 2015 the capital funding package was approved. With the acceptance of the master plan in 2018, Britannia’s renewal was on the road to development. However, barriers began to reveal themselves.



Credit: City of Vancouver

The Vancouver School Board and the Britannia community have had a rocky relationship for many years, with conflicting priorities and perspectives in the past. This posed as one of many obstacles throughout this renewal process. In June of 2023 folks of the Britannia community were hit hard with devastating news that the city of Vancouver postponed the renewal in favour of another project. Ollenberger describes what was like to hear the news at the beginning of the summer. “It was a gut punch; I mean it felt awful... feeling like all the years of work that I personally put in and thousands of hours that others put in were being thrown away.” Britannia’s renewal was to be a change for the community and provide generations of people with opportunities that other spaces have had for years. So, this setback to the renewal was particularly upsetting as it demonstrated how the city was willing to neglect the needs of people who have not been able to access resources that they deserve.

It showed a disregard to the many members of the Grandview Woodland Area Council who put hours into planning, researching, and trying to bring this vision for a new Britannia community to life. Many members felt frustrated with the lack of communication from the city about any sort of plan in regards to the future of the project. It was a moment of fear for many. There was concern that Britannia’s future as a whole would cease to exist if the community centre was not renewed. In spite of the fear, this also became a time where people were able to come together and share with the city that their needs are important and do not deserve to be brushed aside and postponed as they had been. Craig emphasised the importance of young people’s, specifically the students of Britannia secondary, involvement on the issue. “I certainly encourage the students to see their future in this community centre, it’s going to be [theirs]. It’s really for them and their children, and make their views known to the city.”

As we know from understanding the origin of this centre, the voices of young people carry weight. Although youth involvement wasn’t the leading force, when all different people from the Grandview Woodland area came together and voiced their stance demanding that Britannia get the restoration it needed, the city finally listened. The project for the renewal of Britannia Community Centre is back on the road to development because of devoted community pressure. However, as the conditions of the facilities have become even more dire there has been a slight shift in focus. The renewal project is prioritising critical maintenance needs above all else. Although edits have been made to the project, Britannia Community luckily has the chance to be preserved. This can only be attributed to the people of this neighbourhood who stood up for their needs even when the city attempted to brush them aside.



Hem 337: A Food Review

By: Jenny Chi (11)

At the heart of Britannia Secondary's food scene, Hem 377 is the newest stop for Vietnamese beverages and street food. It opened its second location on Commercial Drive in November 2023, introducing both traditional and modern takes on Saigon flavours. Being so close to Britannia Secondary, it has been a popular lunch stop for students.

My Personal Review (as of February 2024)

I decided to check out the cafe myself to get my own feel of Hem 377. As expected, it was a quick three minute walk from school. Hem 377 has a quiet atmosphere and an impressive interior, inspired by the aesthetics found in Vietnam. The walls and furniture are in playful pastels, and a few remarkable murals decorate the cafe. For some of the seating, bright plastic crates were used, reminiscent of the seating you could find outside of restaurants in Vietnam.

The cafe holds an extensive menu of beverages, with a diverse range of flavours. They also offer a few food and dessert items that are familiar to traditional Vietnamese food. I chose to try their Strawberry Fresh,

Honey Black Milk Tea, Strawberry Matcha Cheesecake, and their Deconstructed Bánh Mì in a Bowl with Shredded Chicken & Pâté.

Strawberry Fresh \$6.25 (7/10)

The first beverage I tried was the Strawberry Fresh, which is described on the menu as fresh strawberry milk made from real strawberries. The drink is heavy on the milk, but it matches well with the taste of the strawberry chunks. The different textures between the strawberry chunks and the milk also made the drinking experience different, but delightful. The overall drink was not too sweet, and with the ice, I found it refreshing.

Honey Black Milk Tea \$5.95 (8/10)

Described as a black tea with sweet milk on the menu, this drink was my favourite. There's a pleasant honey aftertaste which again, is not too sweet. The tea flavour was there, but the overall drink felt quite light. I see myself ordering this again but with less ice.

Strawberry Cheesecake Matcha \$6.95 (6.5/10)

The colour schemes of the strawberry purée and matcha cheese foam worked perfectly with the delicate toppings of the butter cookie crumbs. Compared to the other drinks I've tried so far, this one was definitely the thickest in consistency thanks to the matcha cheese foam.



Strawberry Cheesecake Matcha

Deconstructed Bánh Mì in a Bowl

I ordered less ice this time, but again, there was more ice than expected. The strawberry and cheesecake flavours were not as prominent, which was disappointing. However, if you like matcha, I'm sure that you'll like this.

Deconstructed Bánh Mì in a Bowl (Shredded Chicken & Pâté) \$8.45 (6.5/10)

The proportions were decent for the price, and this dish had an appetising smell. Disappointingly, the food came out at room temperature; almost cold. The shredded chicken was kind of dry, but it wasn't horrible. However, I really enjoyed the added green onions, Vietnamese-style pickled carrots, and daikon radishes, which complemented

the richer flavours of the dish. The crispy fried onions also gave an extra level of texture and umami. However, the star of the show was definitely the baguette and pâté. The baguette was exceptional, as it was grilled perfectly with buttery seasoning and flakey salt. In between the baguette, there was a smothering of pâté. Together it was incredible. I was initially sceptical of how they were going to implement the pâté due to its unique consistency, but this was honestly the best way it could've been done. Throughout the dish, there was a comfortable spice that really completed the bowl.

Things to Note

When paying in person with their card reader, choosing a custom amount to tip is difficult. The system forced a minimum tip of \$1, and if you didn't do that, you would have to tip at least 12 percent. The option to skip the tipping process was also hidden with taped paper.

I don't mind tipping as it's a nice gesture, but this could have been more customer-friendly. Another thing to note is the wait time. Compared to other cafes popular among Britannia Students, the wait time at Hem 377 is noticeably longer. Drinks took up to 10 minutes and the food took 20 minutes. This is not a criticism, just a heads-up.

Final Opinion

Overall, I think Hem 377 is a great place for a Britannia student because of its convenience. Most of the popular cafes in the area also serve mainly western based specialties, which can get repetitive. With Hem 337's Vietnamese inspired treats, they add variety to the food scene, satisfying specific cravings. Personally, I can find myself getting a drink every once in a while because of this reason. I also really appreciate its authenticity as a Vietnamese-based cafe. The interior is immersive and highlights the culture of Saigon in such a fun way. Definitely give Hem 377 a try if you can!



Interior design and seating within Hem 377



Student Art



Strathcona

By: Jenny Chi (11)



Untitled

By: Logan Keilty (11)



Album cover: *Get To Heaven* by Everything Everything

By: Alex Hoffman-Weldon (11)

Untitled

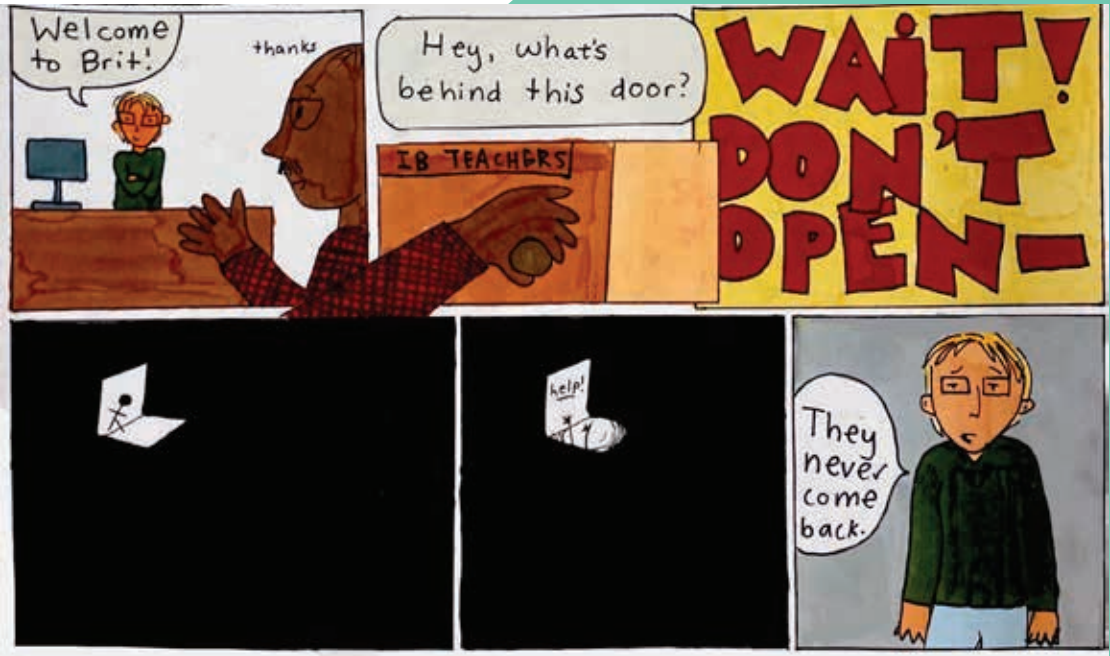
By: Grace Fong (12)

A look into what appears as a simple domestic moment, however there is clearly something wrong that no one is acknowledging. The figure symbolizes how the woman is physically missing but it's not at all addressed, representing missing and murdered Indigenous women and the impact their losses leave on generations.



The Black Hole of Brit

By: Sunny Zatzick (12)



Did you know that there's a tunnel under Ocean Blvd Album Review

By: Chiya Amin (10)

8.5/10

Did You Know That There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd is the ninth studio album by Lana Del Rey, and it's her first album release since her 2021 album *Blue Banisters*. Lana had first announced the new album on December 7, 2022, with the release of a single of the same name. She later announced the album track list and gave her fans a chance to listen to the album two days early at participating record stores. The album was finally released on March 24, 2023, and received critical acclaim from both critics as well as listeners for its production, vocals, and its wordy lyrics. Critics and listeners both noted that this album had sounded a lot like her previous 2019 album *NFW!*. The album would later get five nominations for the 66th Annual Grammy Awards including categories such as 'Album of the Year',

Credit: Pinterest

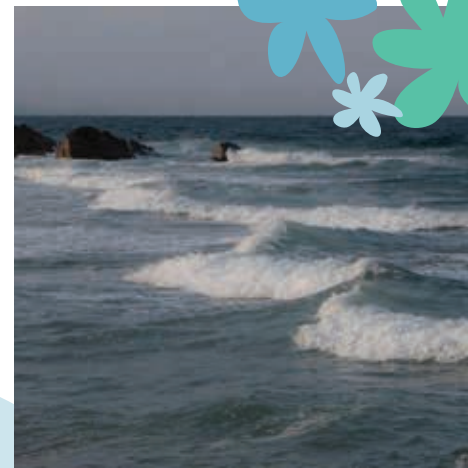


Credit: @ellacasaceli on Pinterest

'Best Alternative Music Performance', and 'Song of the Year'.

Out of all the album releases from 2023, in my opinion this album was by far one of the most impressive releases of the year. Not only does Lana use dreamy-like production and powerful vocals, but she also discusses personal themes which is something she's been known for since the start of her career. When listening to the album, you can tell that there was a lot of thought and creativity put into it, and we see Lana's growth as a person through this album. When you take a look back through her previous albums and interviews, we can see a difference about how she views herself and her perspective of the world. Rather than wishing bad upon herself, we see her growth and her gratefulness to have her family while also discovering her identity.

These themes are shown with the opening song, *The Grants*, which is about never forgetting about her family when she dies, and she talks about her identity with the third track *Sweet*. Lana uses both dreamy and intense production to show each of the song's different emotions.



Credit: Pinterest

Her past two albums, *Chemtrails Over the Country Club* and *Blue Banisters*, had a more relaxed sound to it and this goes for this album too.

If you are a fan of her more poppy music, this is something you should know before listening so you don't ruin your expectations. Overall, *Did you know that there's a tunnel under Ocean Blvd* is not only one of the most impressive albums of Lana Del Rey's career, but also one of the most impressive albums of 2023 that any Lana fan will enjoy. It will certainly go down as one of her best albums.



Credit: ELLE

The Percy Jackson TV Show: Why the Main Casting is So Good

By: Sunny Zatzick (12)

The new Percy Jackson TV show on Disney+ has provided a unique opportunity for creator of the book series Rick Riordan, in which he is able to shape and develop the characters he originally wrote in 2005. Riordan's dedicated involvement in the show's production and writing resulted in all changes being facilitated by him, with consideration to the characters' growth. This means the development of the characters is superior and heightened from even the book. This was unlike the poorly executed characters in the Percy Jackson films produced in 2010 and 2013, in which Riordan was not involved at all. The main trio is comprised of Percy Jackson, Annabeth Chase, and Grover Underwood, whose characters thrive in the new TV show.

Percy Jackson

Walker Scobell is the perfect Percy Jackson. When the first season of the show began filming Walker was 13 years old, leading to a closely accurate depiction onscreen of the novel version of Percy, aged 12. Due to earlier acting in projects such as *The Adam Project*, Walker's acting skills are absolutely superb, especially considering his young age.

Fans instantly forgot about Walker's appearance differences from the book version of Percy due to his talent and likeness to Percy. Walker has been described by Riordan as Percy himself - "I mean, Walker is Percy Jackson" - and all the beloved qualities that Percy inhabits such as sarcasm, humour, and passion, are all visible in Walker himself.

Grover Underwood

Grover Underwood is played by now 17-year-old Aryan Simhadri, who many book-readers state is exactly how they pictured Grover. Riordan used the show as an opportunity to develop Grover's beloved character, advancing what was sometimes a surface-level role to more significant with some changes to the storyline. Throughout the first season, Aryan's acting skills progress as he perfects Grover's comedic timing and warm presence. Aryan came from a childhood of acting and musical theatre, contributing to his charisma and talent.

Annabeth Chase

Annabeth Chase is reimagined and brought to life by Leah Sava Jeffries. Her incredible talent instantly shuts

down racist trolls claiming her inability to play Annabeth, a character originally written as white, due to her race. In response to racist comments, Riordan wrote: "The core message of Percy Jackson has always been that difference is strength... The things that distinguish us from one another are often our marks of individual greatness... If you don't get that, if you're still upset about the casting of this marvellous trio, then it doesn't matter how many times you have read the books. You didn't learn anything from them." Leah fully embodies Annabeth's character, with fantastic facial expressions and tone of speech that always elevates her dialogue and the scene. Additionally, her and Walker's on-screen performance of Percy and Annabeth is top tier and is mirrored in their off-screen friendship as well.

Filmed in Vancouver, it is magical to see a universe as special as *Percy Jackson and the Olympians* brought to life. The stories told hold a special place in many people's hearts, specifically creating a place for kids with learning disabilities to feel seen and understood. It's important that the show is attracting people who haven't read the books as well, so they can absorb the wonderful messages the series shows.

Overall the trio has incredible chemistry, and their relationships in future seasons will certainly develop and strengthen along with the characters. Although some fans find it strange or awkward that the actors are so young, their ages add to the genuineness and purity of the characters that keeps the show special and with somewhere to go. Rick Riordan's casting was superb and his choice to further develop and grow his characters beyond their written roles is inspiring and an opportunity more author's should grasp.

Credit: @updatespercy on X



Make Fashion Slower: The Consequences of Deciding What to Wear

By: Sophia Digol (11),
Tikki Wilkinson (11)

Have you ever thought about what it really costs to follow the latest fashion trends? Beyond the surface of our favourite brands, there's a global issue – fast fashion. Fueled by our love for trend-driven clothing supported by social media, companies produce tons of clothes on a yearly basis, often avoiding ethical practices and contributing to heaps of waste. Due to this, it has become easier and easier for companies to produce vast amounts of clothing at cheaper costs, with the use of unethical labour and extensive quantities of waste. Companies rely heavily on the aspects of supply and demand as a way for consumers to be interested in their products, which is problematic due to the wide spectrum of different styles today, otherwise known as 'aesthetics'. Fast fashion means more cheap, short-lived clothes flooding the market. Platforms like Instagram and TikTok play a role in this as they reflect and influence our shared craving for the newest trends, keeping that cycle of quick buying and discarding in full swing.

Ethics and Child Labour

Have you ever looked at the tag on the back of your pants or shirt? Often, it'll say the name of the country it was made in like Bangladesh, Vietnam, or China. But there's more to the story than just the name of a country.

Imagine you're a kid in a developing country on the other side of the world. You go to work to help make ends meet for you and your family, just like 11 percent of kids in the world. You

were promised a decent wage, but the amount you get isn't as much as they said it would be. You work at a factory making lots of clothes for people who live far away and have lots of money. The factory doesn't smell great- in fact, you've heard stories of other people who work there getting cancer because of the chemical fumes that come from carcinogenic azo dyes. There are also heavy metals, like chromium and lead used to stabilise the colours in the dyes. They can accumulate in the kidney or liver by being absorbed through skin and cause cancer or dermatitis. You have no choice but to continue working there seven days a week and up to sixteen hours each day.

The employers of a factory or a clothing corporation don't want their goods to be damaged, or to pay their workers very much. They want obedient employees, and workers that are easily acquired. The solution found: children. Children are taken advantage of and exploited through cheap and quick labour.

Obviously, child labour is far less than ideal. Kids have rights, no matter where they are or how they identify. *UNICEF* states, "no child should be treated unfairly for any reason". Some believe providing the child a job and with money to survive is better than letting them live in

to survive is better than letting them live in unemployment and poverty. In certain cases, families can't afford school, and are systemically forced to put their children to work in order to pay the bills necessary for basic living. Pin-pointing who's to blame for child labour is a difficult task, and it is likely more than one name or corporation. *UNICEF* also states "governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job." So, are the governments to blame? There is also the fact that we're consuming clothes at an unreasonably quick rate. Are the consumers the ones to blame? What about the brands employing these companies? There is no easy answer.

Because fast fashion is true to its name and extremely fast, pressure is put on factories and corporations to work quickly, exploiting resources and employees. Whether part of the six million children in forced labour or not, the working conditions of the apparel industry are too often unfair and unethical. It is important to note that fashion brands often don't know where exactly their garments were sourced. When demand gets extra high, factories will make subcontracts, hiring other people or smaller corporations to help them meet the deadlines. Often, the brands or companies ordering these products don't hear about these shady subcontracts.

The Environment

Outsourcing garments from far away dramatically impacts the environment. While encouraging overconsumption, fast fashion is the second largest polluter in the world. According to *TED-Ed*, transporting materials between cotton farms, spinning facilities, factories, and stores all around the world accounts for 10 percent of global carbon emissions. The fashion industry also uses up a ridiculous amount of water. Buying a t-shirt would be a different experience if the tag said "used 2,700 Litres of water"; the average amount of water used according to the University of Waterloo. That's enough to fill more than thirty bathtubs full! Cotton, a material clothes are commonly made of, is grown with large amounts of pesticides and insecticides. According to the Environmental Justice Association, cotton accounts for 16 percent of global insecticide releases more than any other single crop. These chemicals are not only harmful to the exposed workers, but also to surrounding ecosystems. Fast fashion increases the demand for cotton, which means increased use of these toxic chemicals.

In the fast-paced realm of fashion, shops such as Zara, H&M, Forever 21, Nike, and Shein command attention, alluring consumers with an unceasing flow of rapidly changing trends that remain budget-friendly. However, beneath the veneer of these stylish storefronts lies a less glamorous reality marked by exploited labour and environmental consequences. Fast fashion transcends trend-following; it actively contributes to overconsumption, carbon emissions, and environmental damage, notably through pesticide-soaked cotton farming.

The disposal challenge is equally disconcerting. A truckload of fashion waste is deposited into global landfills

every second, underscoring an avoidable predicament. Over half of these discarded textiles could potentially find a renewed purpose. Many countries, both industrialised and developing, grapple with the overflow of our fashion excess.

Clothing After Exile

What happens to our clothes after we dispose of them? We know that fast fashion means people are consuming lots of clothes, but what happens when you can't cram any more in your wardrobe? Often, people take this as a sign to sort through the unproportional number of articles of clothing they own. Many people sort by three piles: garbage, donate, or keep, but the amount that goes to the garbage is staggering.

A study by the University of Waterloo and Seneca College found that in Canada an estimated 500,000 tonnes of textiles are disposed of each year, which is the equivalent weight of about 100,000 elephants. But does it really have to go to the landfill? The same study discovered that over half of this textile waste could be reused.

A lot of this "waste" goes to landfills in hot countries to be "fried by the sun". In 2021, Chile received 126,000 tons of fashion waste, creating a colossal pile that can be seen from space. Reported by the *U.N.*, the problem is caused by worldwide overconsumption, overproduction, and fast fashion. There are also massive dump sites in Indonesia, Kenya, Ghana and other countries. Many of these clothes have never been worn. Too often, a company will produce more clothes than can be sold and they get shipped off to a giant heap of textile waste. These piles don't only take up vast spaces: the cheap, synthetic fibres release toxic gases that, at times, force residents of nearby towns to stay indoors. They also contribute to clogging rivers and leaking dyes, contaminating soil and groundwater.

Additionally, these synthetic materials don't degrade quickly. Some take hundreds of years, like polyester, which takes more than 500 years to decompose.

What can I do?

But it doesn't have to end there. There are things you can do, like using worn out fabrics as rags/cloths. A teacher at my elementary school used old socks (yes, they were clean) as whiteboard erasers, and they worked perfectly!

Cultivating a sustainable approach to clothing consumption involves making thoughtful decisions. Prioritise enduring quality and consider the origin of each item. Engage in responsible practices such as garment maintenance, repair, and repurposing to maximise utility. Embrace environmentally conscious habits like clothing swapping, thrifting, or gifting to extend the life of garments. Through mindful choices, we can contribute to a more responsible and ethical fashion landscape, reducing environmental impact and fostering a culture of conscious consumption.



Saltburn Movie Review

By: Benisse Uwumukiza (12)

8.5/10

The disturbing masterpiece that got us all talking after the winter break: *Saltburn*. The movie stars Barry Keoghan, Jacob Elordi, and Archie Madekwe. It is written, directed, and produced by Emerald Fennell, who is also known as Midge in 2023's *Barbie* and the director of *Promising Young Woman* (2020).

The movie starts at Oxford University in 2006, where the charming and popular Felix Catton meets the quiet genius Oliver Quick. They both have completely different experiences in school; Felix has lots of friends and Oliver struggles to make any.

But that all takes a turn once they start talking to each other and become the closest of friends.

Now what's a movie without an instigator? That would be our dear Farleigh, who just doesn't like Oliver very much, viewing Oliver as competition and scared that he would steal attention from him. Mostly, Farleigh sees himself and his own lack of wealth reflected in Oliver's character.

After losing his father and with his mother in a rehab center, Oliver confides in Felix, who feels the only thing he can do to comfort Oliver is bring him home to his estate for the summer. The Catton Family is very wealthy, which is one of the many reasons why Felix fits in at Oxford. Once Oliver meets the family, the dynamic of the movie shifts. There is an uneasy feeling that comes from not knowing what is going to happen next. The Catton's show pity and an unsettling amount of generosity towards Oliver.

The mother, Elspeth Catton, seems to enjoy his company. She is quite shallow and has some questionable morals. She gives the impression of enjoying the fact that Oliver has such a tragic life, and is entertained by his and others' trauma. Once you see Oliver get more and more comfortable with the family, you also realize something is wrong. Some might say he was getting too comfortable...

The writers did an amazing job portraying Oliver's obsession with Felix. They showed how far he would go to have Felix for himself. We all have our moments where we think about crossing a line for something or someone we really like: stalking, changing our looks and opinions, lying, sabotaging relationships, drinking their bathwater and so on. Okay, maybe not all of those...



Credit: IMDB

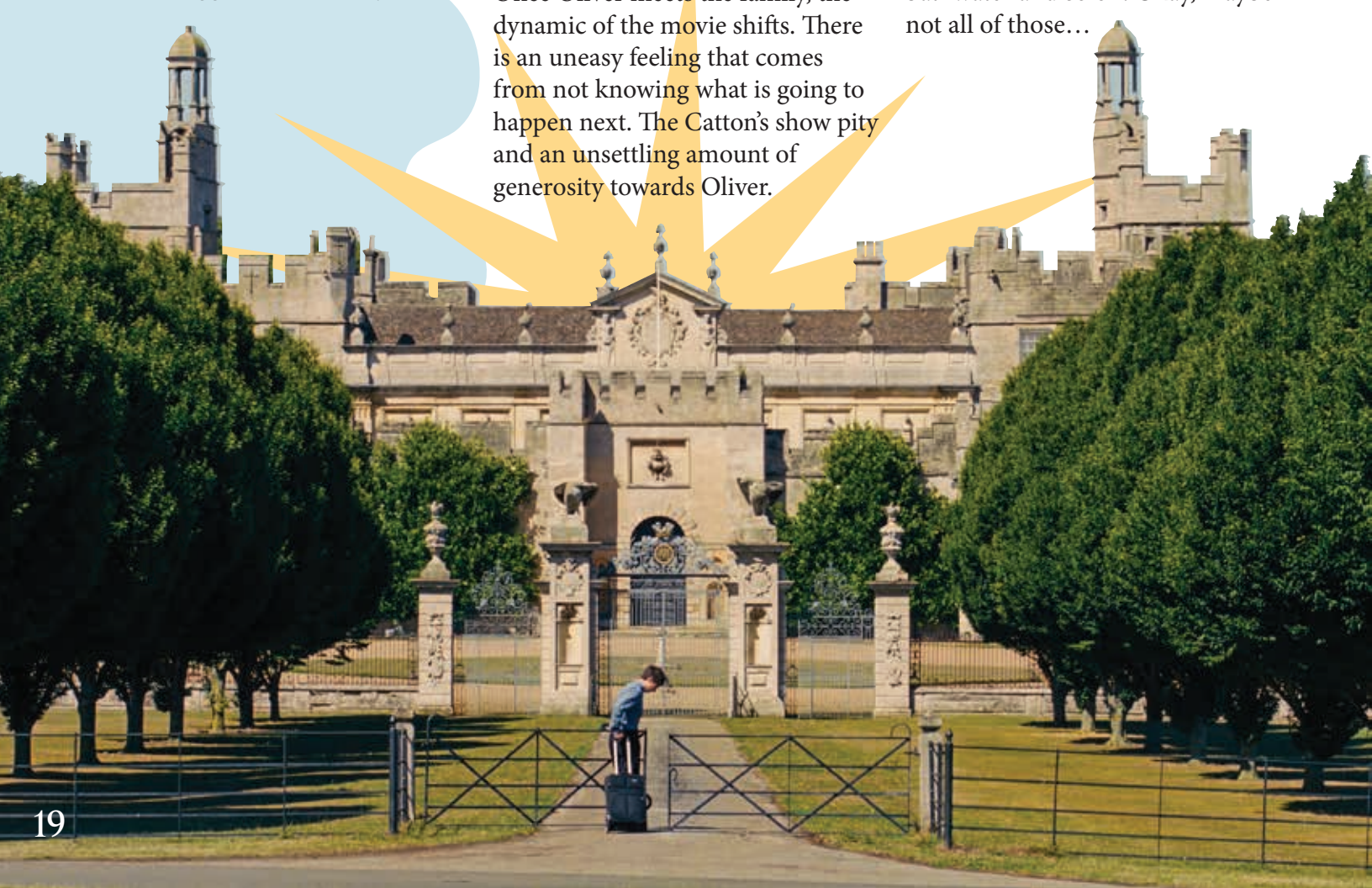
Anybody who watched this movie did not know what was waiting for them: the bathtub scene, the vampire scene and the grave scene, to name a few. Honestly, no one knows which one is the most disturbing. Heads were turned, jaws were dropped, and eyes were closed. Movies with vulgar imagery have been around for a while before *Saltburn*. So, what made *Saltburn* so popular? One of the main actors, Jacob Elordi, was already a known actor because of his previous roles in *The Kissing Booth* and *Euphoria*. Barry Keoghan has also had previous popular roles. Some scenes went viral on social media platforms and made a lot of us curious. The movie was provocative and sparked conversations about class divide, jealousy, the destruction of desire, and sexuality.

Throughout the whole movie Oliver is the narrator. He started and ended with the question "Did I truly love Felix?" I think he did but he loved his wealth a little more.

Sandgren's work for *La La Land* (2016) won an Oscar for 'Best Achievement in Cinematography'. This was well deserved because this cinematographer's work is just incredible. A lot of scenes communicate very strong feelings like fear and sadness, and was influenced by the movements of the camera, the framing, the color he used, and the lighting. Sandgren deserves all the recognition he's getting. The movie was rated 'R' for graphic nudity, strong sexual content, language, drug use and more disturbing content. It was stated that it was a 'thriller' with some 'dark comedy', with the script being surprisingly funny and twisted.

The movie was well put together, captivating and unusual in the best way possible. I truly believe that *Saltburn* has made a change in the movie industry. I have never seen anything like it and hope to see more. And let's not forget, *there's a murder on the dance floor*.

Credit: IMDB



The Significance of Lily Gladstone’s Golden Globe’s Win

By: Bec Ly (12)

The Golden Globe Awards is an annual award ceremony held since 1944 that gives recognition to and honors artists and professional’s talents. Lily Gladstone was the first Indigenous woman to win a Golden Globe Award, winning ‘Best Actress in a Drama Picture’ on January 7th, 2024. Gladstone plays the protagonist, Mollie Burkhart, a member of the Osage nation in *Killers of the Flower Moon*. In the film, Mollie challenges the justice system as members of her community are murdered out of exploitation for the oil found in her reservation. The film highlights the importance of Indigenous land and identity, which Gladstone conveys through her powerful acting.

In Gladstone’s acceptance speech, she exemplified how important her native language is to her, and what that means through her win. She opened her speech speaking in her Native language of Blackfeet people, Siksiká, stating by saying “Hello all my relations. My name is Eagle Woman. I am Blackfeet. I love you!” She continues, saying “I’m so grateful that I can speak even a little bit of my language, which I’m not fluent enough here, because in this business, Native actors used to speak their lines in English and then the sound mixers would run them backwards to accomplish Native languages on camera... This is a historic [award].”

“It doesn’t belong to just me... This is for every little rez kid, every little urban kid, every little Native kid who has a dream, who is seeing themselves represented and our stories told by ourselves in our own words with tremendous allies and tremendous trust with and from each other. Thank you all so much.”

Gladstone, whose background is Blackfeet, Nez Perce, and European, split her childhood between Seattle and the Blackfeet reservation in Montana. Gladstone’s speech states that the award doesn’t just belong to her, but to Indigenous actors and people in general. Unfortunately, it is not common to win awards that recognize an Indigenous person’s achievements in the American or Canadian film industry. An Indigenous woman winning this award shows the progress and significance of the Indigenous community in a predominant white male environment. Gladstone’s representation was phenomenal as Mollie Burkhart, a strong willed and passionate woman, furthering the positive representation of Indigenous women. Her role spreads awareness of well-deserved Indigenous people’s achievements and talents.



Image credit: CBC

Wormy Headache Maze

By: Bryan Green



