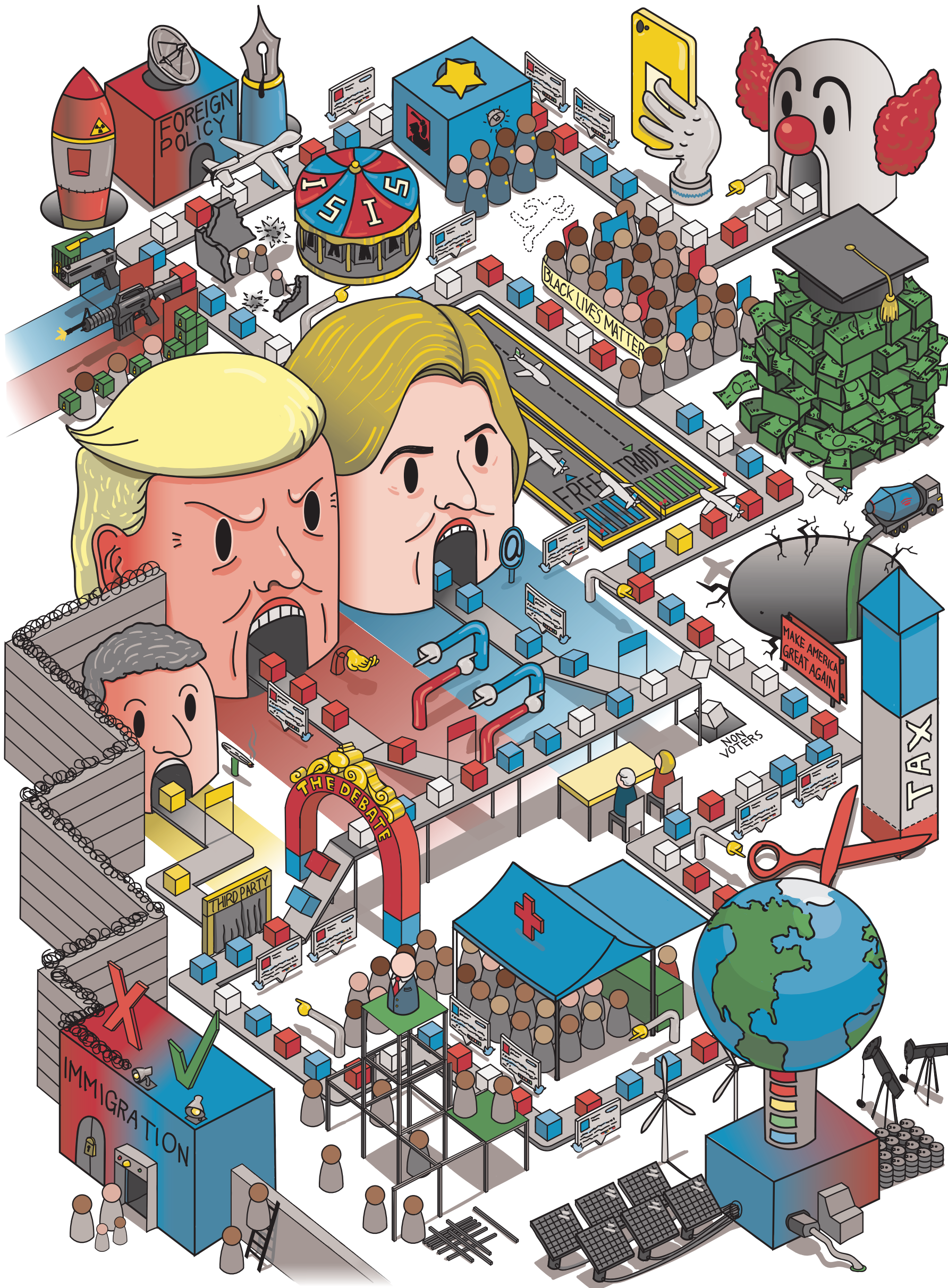


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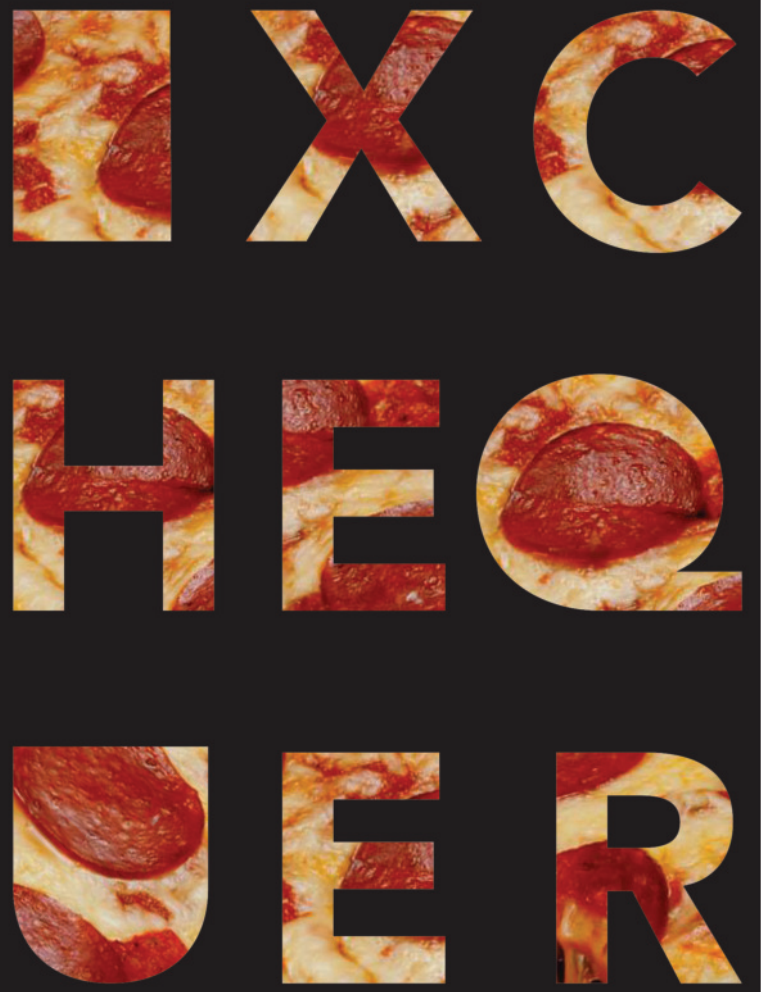


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An extremely good next stop: tour: much better Trump tour than other tours



Sophie Lucido Johnson

Following the first presidential debates, Trump Industries unveiled a Trump Tour of Chicago, offering a unique window into one of America's scariest cities. Below is the transcription of the inaugural tour, as presented by a qualified guide. While participant questions and comments have been redacted, they are indicated here in stage direction format.

Transcript from the Trump Tour of Chicago

Hello and welcome to the Donald Trump Community Improvement and Tremendously Winning Very Good Looking Tour of Chicago. Before we go any further, I want to let you know that, on behalf of Trump Industries, we think you are making the most non-loser choice when it comes to city tours, and you should feel extremely — EXTREMELY — good about yourself. I'd also like to make sure that everyone has paid the \$99.99 tour fee with Kristin at the front desk. Kristin is a 10, isn't she? We only hire 10s for our tour offices, and you can quote me on that. The price covers the tour amenities, one steak, and the assurance that the kinds of people joining you on this tour are the kinds of people you can trust. Part of the beauty of this tour is that it is for the very rich. We think you'll agree that that is unquestionably the most important qualification when it comes to a great tour of a city. Has everyone been properly outfitted in a bulletproof vest? (Everyone nods.) Good. Then let's begin.

We start the tour here with Trump Tower: a bastion of hope in a city of utter misery and despair. If you haven't been inside Trump Tower, let me tell you this: There's a hotel in there, and the shampoos you get in your hotel room are very nice. These are some top-quality shampoos, people. I dare you to use this shampoo and not have a woman want to sleep with you immediately. (A female tourist raises her hand; asks a question.) HA HA! No, ma'am, a woman would not want to sleep with you. I'm talking about your husband here! Ha ha!

If you'll quickly glance to your left, you will see two African Americans. The African Americans in this country — and in this city in particular — are living in hell. Without being too obvious about it, just look at these people's bodies. They probably haven't eaten in days. That's what it's like for Hispanics and African Americans: They all live in utter poverty; it's like the underworld for them. (One tourist makes a comment.) You're right; that one does seem to be carrying a smoothie from Freshii. It's almost certainly a decoy. Let's move on.

I think one thing you'll notice immediately is that you're seeing these people all over the streets — and some of them are bad people; I mean, they are real monsters, and a lot of them are illegal immigrants — and there isn't a cop in sight. This is one of those terrifying facts of life that (Another tourist makes a comment) —

"You need more police. You need a better community, you know, relation. You don't have good community relations in Chicago. It's terrible. I have property there. It's terrible what's going on in Chicago."

— Donald Trump, September 26, 2016; first Presidential Debate.

"We have a situation where we have our inner cities, African Americans, Hispanics are living in hell because it's so dangerous. You walk down the street, you get shot."

— Donald Trump, September 26, 2016; first Presidential Debate.

Sophie is the managing editor of F Newsmagazine. She has published work in The Guardian, VICE, The Nation, and elsewhere.

ok, yes, you're right, there is one ... I mean, three police officers ... yeah, ok, I guess to be fair that's technically an entire fleet of police officers on Wabash Avenue. But come on. They're bicycle police. We all know bikes are for pussies.

I'm going to open it up for questions now. (A woman raises her hand and asks a question.) Yes, so you'd like to know what some of the architectural achievements are in the downtown Chicago area. I think that's a really great question; I mean, that is a truly beautiful question. Our current president, Barack Obama — who may or may not be a US citizen — is from Chicago. There have been 5,000 shootings since he got into office. I mean, that's a real problem. Look around. There's a gorgeous skyscraper right behind us — Trump Tower — and that's absolutely an architectural achievement. But you can't even look at it because you're too terrified of the gangs that are roaming the streets.

Yes, another question, in the front here. (A man asks a question.) You'd like to know where the honorary Trump Plaza Boulevard street sign is. You're right, it used to be right here. Well ... the truth is that the government has borrowed the sign to see how it would look in front of the White House. That's definitely true, and now another question. (A child, not very cute, raises her hand.) Oh good! Our child tour attendee! Yes, little boy, what can I help you with? No, no, no; you did not read in the paper that 47 aldermen and the mayor voted to have the sign taken down last week. You probably can't even READ. The liberal media is trying to brainwash you! I'll bet you go to public school. (The child retorts.) What do you MEAN you're a girl?

Another question, quickly, please! Uhhhhh ... OK, yes. You in the back. (A shady figure in the back asks a question.) NO! IT IS NOT TRUE THAT THE NUMBER OF GUN DEATHS IN CHICAGO ARE ACTUALLY BELOW PREVIOUS EQUIVALENT PERIODS! WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU? THE ONLY FACTS YOU NEED ARE THE FACTS THAT COME OUT OF MR. TRUMP'S MOUTH! Wait a minute. Wait. A Minute. Where's your bulletproof vest? YOU DIDN'T PAY FOR THIS TOUR. SECURITY!?!? SECURITY!?!?!?!?! THERE IS AN INTRUDER ON THE TOUR!!!! GET HIM OUT OF HERE AND USE GUNS FOR INTIMIDATION!!!

(Tour guide straightens his tie.) I think it's probably time for steak.

Let there be pizza

Enjoying the cheese
and the scenery at Reno

Annie Leue

As far as I know, anyone new to the city of Chicago has a civic — nay, spiritual — duty to explore and consume mass quantities of food at any Cook County Department of Public Health-approved eatery within a walkable or train-able distance from their apartment. Having just moved to Chicago in August, I think I'm finally ready to test the limits of this expectation by eating all of the city's food without asking and crying about my ex. (I have yet to unpack the emotional baggage I brought with me from Buffalo, New York.)

After a grueling 11-hour, un-air-conditioned drive across two intensely mediocre states to get to Chicago, my mother and I went to dinner at Reno on the corner of North Milwaukee Avenue and North Kedzie Boulevard. This would be my most recent trip there, in fact: I had patronized the bar-meets-casually-cool-pizza-haven-meets-gastro-erotic-Chippendale's this past October when I was in town for a short weekend trip. It wasn't the food that brought me back this time, though you'd think it would be; last time I ordered a fried chicken thigh sandwich with melted white cheddar, dill pickles, and hot honey which, combined, tasted like humid sex (in a good way). No, what brought me back was the atmosphere and the waitstaff — or should I say, babestaff.*

As a single lady with a passion for pizza and independent working men in plaid, Reno tugged at my heartstrings and salivary glands. But to have that independent working man in plaid serve me said pizza? Well, toss me in the defect bin and sell me at a deeply discounted price because that's about all I can handle.

Because we desperately needed booze (and because this is how restaurants work) we ordered cocktails first. I aimed for the stars with a Hendrick's gin mule and Mom bought a one-way ticket to Margaritaville. I'll tell you right now: Reno makes its cocktails what you might call "liquor-forward," and that is certainly not a bad thing. My mule had only a splash of ginger beer which made room for the flavor of the lime juice to take the rest of the drink hostage, but like, a good hostage situation where the kidnappers have snacks and let you use the bathroom at your leisure. My mom wasn't so jazzed about her marg, as they replaced the Triple Sec with Curacao, a decidedly drier and more bitter liqueur.

It was more along the lines of the flavor profile you'd expect from a Negroni, but with all the party vibes that tequila brings to the table. The glass was rimmed with salt, but may have been better off rimmed with sugar to balance out the bitterness.

After getting our drinks (because this is also how restaurants work) we ordered dinner, going with the Alley-Oop pizza and Wisconsin Burrata starter. We had to Google what "burrata" was, but once we saw the words "outer shell of mozzarella" and "filled with cream," our mouths made up our minds for us. Reno's burrata is served on toasted ciabatta with strawberries, basil, arugula, and balsamic vinegar; both texture and flavor were beautifully balanced. Curiosity did not kill the cat this time — though it did make the cat very bloated and sleepy and maybe just a little suspicious of every figure in his/her life that purposefully (?) hid this cheese product from him/her up until this moment.

Oddly, we received the pizza before the Burrata (not how restaurants work), but I honestly didn't care,

because once pizza of any flavor or format graces my tongue, I lose all track of time and any grasp on the basic principles of the English language.

They could have forgotten the Burrata entirely and I probably wouldn't have noticed, nor would I have been able to form the words necessary to bring it to our server's attention.

The Alley-Oop pizza was topped with sun-dried tomato, caramelized garlic, onion & leek, kale, goat cheese, and sweet peppers. Being a little biased due to a not-so-brief stint of eating exclusively chevre rolled up in slices of deli meat for lunch in college, I was a bit overwhelmed by the flavor power of the combined goat cheese and sun-dried tomato. My mom loved it, however; definitely order this pizza if that list of toppings makes you go "ugh yes pls." The crust was an 11/10 on the YASSS scale and is the second thing that will keep me coming back for more. (First thing = consensual eye contact.)

Though known for their pizza, Reno has plenty of other menu options to satisfy your cravings at any time of day, including wood-fired bagels and shmears, pastas, boozy ice cream, and a more-than-respectable lunch menu. As far as price goes it's affordable, given the amenities that accompany the meal, including atmosphere and the slow rediscovery of your ability to love. The drinks are around — even under — the standard price for a cocktail in the city (\$8 to \$12), and the price of the pizzas range anywhere from \$14 to \$18 depending on how fancy you want to get with it. (This is the only instance where grilled chicken cubes will ever be referred to as "fancy.") It's a great casual place to go on any night of the week if you're in the mood for an effortless meal in a warm industrial setting that makes you feel like you're a background extra on the set of "Friends."

IN CONCLUSION

Price: Relative to similar restaurants in the area, Reno is pretty middle-of-the-road in terms of cost. Take ya girl there. Get drunk on a Tuesday. Turn up. Drown in cheese.

Location: Reno is quite literally a hop, skip, and a few legal pedestrian maneuvers away from the Logan Square Blue Line station; so it's basically in the center of Logan Square and maybe even the universe. Sorry, Beyoncé.

Taste: The flavors are strong and the drinks are even stronger. The pizza wasn't particularly subtle in taste, but, I mean, isn't confidence all any woman is really looking for in her...pizza toppings?

Overall experience: Aside from the weird timing of the meal — they should read my book, "How Restaurants Work" — we had a great time. The service was wonderful and everything came out quickly — and hot. Really hot. *wink*

Worth it? Absolutely. If you decide to go there as a result of this review, mention my name. They won't give you anything or know who you're talking about, but it'll plant a mental seed that I may sow at a later date, please and thanks.

**Bespoke puns available upon request; prices vary.*

Annie Leue is a first year MFA student in visual communication design. You can find her listening to Africa by Toto on repeat anywhere at any time.



Lady parts sex
exes +
talk with Kitten
elections
and the Squeeze

Dear Kitten and the Squeeze,
I went through a breakup around this time last year. It was horrible. I don't think I'll ever get over this person, TBH. I've been seeing someone new and they're awesome, hot, etc., etc. But I fantasize about my ex when I'm having sex with them. Thinking of my ex is usually what sort of pushes me over the cliff, if you know what I mean. My new partner isn't quite as ... skilled. Am I as horrible as I think I am?

— Thinkin' Thoughts

Dear Thinkin',
There's a kind of pathological avoidance of being alone in our culture. If you're not dating, you're a loser; if you're not going out much, you're depressed (and a loser). Choosing singleness for a season (or a lifetime) means many people will treat you like you're mentally ill. Though it is true that community is important for humans, it's also true that intentionally spending time alone, reflecting, taking walks, reading, making art, and generally doing your best monk impression (skip the weird bowl cut, maybe) is really, really good for you.

So, I think you should consider cooling it with the new person until you're done grieving a breakup so bad that a whole year later, you're still having flashbacks to the relationship, the connection, and the sex.

You will have sex again. You will be turned on by another person in this life. A lot of other people, most likely. But you're not, yet. Take care of yourself. You will get over it. While you do, eliminate the guilt that you're adding to your psychologically already-burdened plate.

Need sex advice from ladies who know?
Email kittenandthesqueeze@fnewsmagazine.com

Dear Kitten and the Squeeze,
I'm a survivor of rape and I'm finding a lot of the rhetoric surrounding Donald Trump and sexual assault to be extremely triggering. Do you have any advice on what I should do until November? Should I just avoid all the news? I want to stay informed, but I'm finding it all to be way too much.

— Sad and Scared

Dear Sad and Scared,
First of all, let me be clear: Everything you're feeling is real and valid and absolutely normal. When there is a presidential candidate who is not only using sexist language (and body language) to intimidate his female opponent, but has been recorded threatening sexual assault, and has been accused by multiple women of rape, it would be strange if you didn't feel awful. And it doesn't stop: Since an egomaniacal misogynist is at the center of the media circus that is the 2016 election, so is the kind of language that can be especially emotionally difficult for survivors of sexual assault.

It is completely acceptable if you decide to take a break from the news. If you know how you're going to vote (and it sounds like you probably do), there's no need to listen to anything that comes out of this man's mouth anymore.

Do what we all have to do when under attack: Find a support network and plug into it. At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), there's the Maverick feminist group on campus, which meets regularly to discuss these kinds of issues and to provide support for all women. On a national level, RAINN is the largest sexual assault support organization in the country. I've called the 24-hour hotline (1-800-656-4673) a few times in dark hours, and I can't recommend it enough.

You are not alone. This election is, unfortunately, a reminder of the degree to which women (and actually, pretty much every minority group — Trump has said triggering things about African American communities, immigrant communities, gay and lesbian and transgender communities, and plenty of others) are still majorly under attack on a national level. Put one foot in front of the other at whatever pace feels right to you. Your survival is an inspiration. Please don't forget that.



Kitten and the Squeeze are a mysterious duo with one mission in the world: to make sex fun, safe, and FABULOUS for everyone on Earth.



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Han Young Cho
Untitled, 2015
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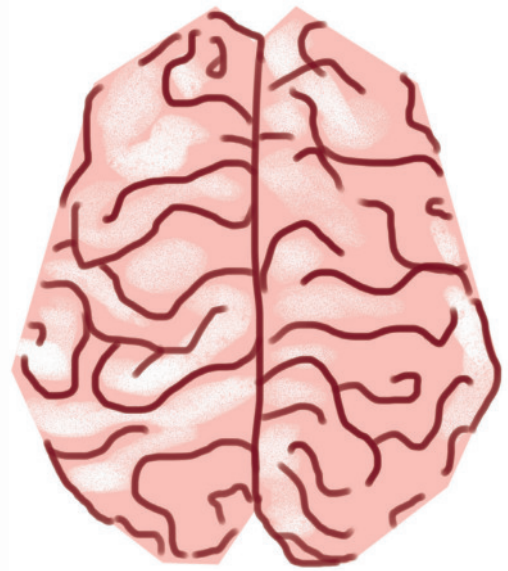


School of the Art Institute of Chicago

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gray matter

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a selection of themed picks



Gray Matter: An Outlet for Artistic Expression

Yowell, Nicki. 2011. Print.
SAIC Thesis | Flaxman Library

Interested in zines or how to twist journalism into a unique art form in and of itself? Take a look at this thesis and accompanying experimental journalism zine booklet. According to its description, “The Gray Matter’ is a journalistic experiment in storytelling. These stories are narratives, our lives. We are seeking to use the methodology of art-making within the context of documentation.”

FUN FACT Nicki Yowell recently contributed to The Copacetic Comics Company’s “Chromazoid #2,” which aimed to “deliver a science fiction/horror hybrid gross-out gag-fest in ‘Vampire Tampons from Outer Space.’”

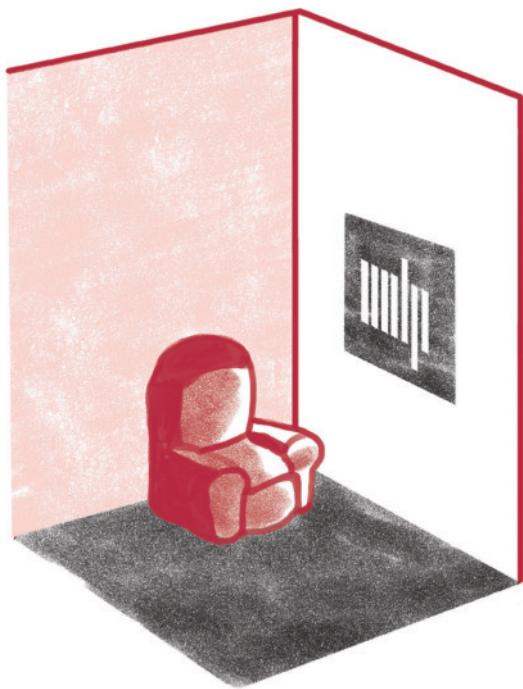
Flaxman Staff

Shades of Gray: A True Story

Directed by Bob Wilkinson. Seminal Films, 2010.
DVD | Flaxman Library

Not to be confused with “50 Shades of Gray,” this documentary tells the story of Gray Barker. Barker was a journalist who wrote elaborate stories of UFO sightings and even perpetuated the story of “Men in Black” (government agents who keep UFO witnesses silent). This documentary focuses on the role Barker played in creating much of the mythology of UFOs.

FUN FACT Barker’s book, “They Knew Too Much About Flying Saucers,” was a direct inspiration for the 1997 Will Smith/Tommy Lee Jones blockbuster, “Men in Black.”



Grey Room

Periodical | Flaxman Library

This MIT Press journal brings together articles from the fields of architecture, art, media, and politics. You’ll find special issue topics that range from “On Brainwashing: Mind Control, Media, and Warfare” to “Acoustic Modernity,” and feature length articles like “When Windows Were Wires: The Projection of Network Invulnerability and the Architecture of the AT&T Long Line,” featured in the fall 2015 issue. Students at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) have full electronic access to this journal, and it’s also available in print.

FUN FACT The minimal logo you see on the spine of MIT press books and journals actually spells out “MIT.”

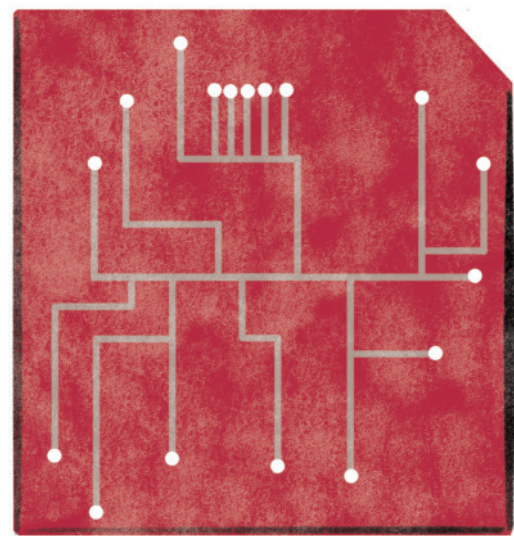


Grey Suit: Video for Art & Literature

VHS | Flaxman Library

“Grey Suit” was a quarterly video magazine that featured the work of poets, performers, filmmakers, and video artists from around the world. Started by performance artist Anthony Howell, “Grey Suit” ran from 1993 to 1995 and the Flaxman Library owns all of the issues on VHS. (They also have a VCR so you can watch them.)

FUN FACT The last film in this series, “Grey Suit #12,” includes a short called “Speed Zombie” by Kim Hjorthoz, Karl Ramberg, and Per Teljer. It is a five-minute film of gore spattered clichés of classic slasher films.



Systems

Shanken, Edward A, Editor. 2015. Print.
Print book | Flaxman Library

Been loving HBO’s new series “Westworld?” This book “traces this radical shift in aesthetics from its roots in mid-20th century general systems theory, cybernetics, and artificial intelligence to the cutting-edge science of the present.”

FUN FACT One of the artists surveyed — Brian Eno — created one of the first albums to be explicitly considered “ambient music.”

IS THAT A GUN IN YOUR POCKET?





Grace Wells

On the 50th anniversary of the deadly UT Tower Shooting at the University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin), new gun rights legislation in the state went into effect.

Senate Bill 11 (SB11), also known as the Campus Carry Law, was passed in June of last year and took effect in August. The law allows licensed gun owners age 21 and older to carry concealed handguns on public college campuses, including classrooms and dorms. Despite the fact that an FBI investigation showed only one campus shooting stopped by a civilian with a gun (the civilian happened to be an ex-marine), Texas State Senator Craig Estes told Breitbart News Network the bill “makes Texans safer.”

In a signature statement released by the state, Republican Governor Greg Abbott claimed that “by signing these bills into law, Texans can be assured that their Second Amendment rights will be stronger and more secure than ever before.”

Many students and professors at the university are unhappy with the new legislation. According to a video posted by the group Cocks Not Glocks, UT Austin Professor of Economics Dr. Daniel S. Hamermesh said that “if you asked the professors at this university to vote on this issue, there’d be about ten to one at least saying ‘no guns on this campus.’” This consensus among students and professors prompted the creation of Gun Free UT, an association of faculty, staff, students, parents, and alumni — from which Cocks Not Glocks was born.

Former UT student Jessica Jin said that though students would soon be able to carry firearms into classrooms and dorms, UT’s student rules prohibit the open display or carry of obscene objects like dildos on campus. Jin started the Cocks Not Glocks group after creating a Facebook event called “Campus (DILDO) Carry.” The idea: Dildos and guns have a statistically equal ability to protect students from campus shootings. According to the description of the Facebook event, the association between dildos and guns stems from her belief that “there’s no reason for people to be afraid of sex, but there’s every reason for people to be afraid of violence.”

Despite the media attention SB11 has received, Texas has a long history of favoring gun rights groups over gun control. The Republican-controlled legislature regularly broadens gun rights, including allowing open carry of firearms in the state and eliminating background checks for private sales of weapons. One pro-gun UT Austin student told The Guardian, “Shooting sprees happen in gun-free zones. It’s just crazy not to arm yourself.”

Gun rights groups who favor Campus Carry have sent death threats to the organizers of Cocks Not Glocks. Gun rights activist Brett Sanders recently released a video in which a black man breaks into the home of an actress playing organizer Ana Lopez, and shoots her. Though the video has received backlash for its graphic nature, it seems to accurately represent the message and fears of pro-gun Texans.

Grace is a BFA student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She enjoys coffee and politics to a degree that is probably unsafe.

Reflections on Cocks Not Glocks protest at UT Austin

Taking this response and Texas’ political leaning into consideration, how effective can a protest like Cocks Not Glocks be?

In an interview with the Houston Chronicle, Jin justified the protest: “I need this proliferation of dildos to offer people a visual representation of what it would be like if we all carried guns. It should look ridiculous to you. That is the point.”

From that perspective, Jin has accomplished her goal: The protest has received national attention and garnered the support of celebrities like former Nightly Show host Larry Wilmore, who started the hashtag #solidaritydildo.

But while Cocks Not Glocks has garnered national attention, the protest is relatively unknown at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). Many Texas natives in the SAIC community seemed to be unaware of the protest, though they were not surprised by the legislation which prompted it. SAIC academic advisor and Texas native Turnip Van Dyke said that he and others are “frankly not sure how effective Cocks Not Glocks is going to end up being at UT. The organizers talk about how it started off fairly satirically, and without a specific goal in mind.”

Van Dyke then added that “Cocks Not Glocks has been effective at highlighting how gendered American ideas about violence and security are.”

Aside from the fact that SAIC students live in a community that is much more pro-gun control than UT Austin, Cocks Not Glocks’ dildo distribution is a truly unique style of protest, though dildos have been used as instruments of protest in the past; a famous example to be found in the November 1974 issue of Artforum, in which artist Lynda Benglis posed naked with a dildo in protest of the centerfold and its contributions to the sexualization of women. While Benglis’s fight was a noble one, it exemplifies the dildo’s single use in past protests: a tool, so to speak, for commenting on gender and sex. Until Cocks Not Glocks, sex toys have been confined to use in protest surrounding sex, gender, sexuality issues, and feminism. Cocks Not Glocks is the first protest of its kind simply because it ties sex into the protest of other conservative issues. In a state known for legislators who fear sexual health and education while promoting the carry of weapons, Cocks Not Glocks’ smartly unique message hits two conservative birds with one stone.

“The event claims that dildos and guns have a statistically equal ability to protect students from campus shootings.”

A brief timeline of gun legislation in the United States

- 1791:** The Second Amendment of the US Constitution, which gives people the right to keep and bear arms, is ratified.
- 1813 to 1839:** Beginning with Kentucky in 1813, eight states pass laws banning the carrying of concealed weapons. Louisiana, Indiana, Georgia, Arkansas, Tennessee, Virginia, and Alabama follow suit soonafter. After 1850, similar laws will spread outside the Southern states.
- 1871:** The National Rifle Association is formed.
- 1911:** New York passes the Sullivan Act, which requires that anyone possessing and carrying a pistol must have a license to do so.
- 1934:** President Franklin D. Roosevelt passes the National Firearms Act, which adds a \$200 tax to all gun sales, and requires all buyers to fill out paperwork subject to the approval of the Treasury Department.
- 1938:** The Federal Firearms Act is passed by Congress requiring anyone involved in the selling of firearms to obtain a Federal Firearms License from the Secretary of Commerce. Firearms sellers are also now required to record the names and addresses of everyone guns are sold to. People convicted of certain crimes, or who did not have a gun permit, may no longer purchase firearms.
- 1961:** Washington state passes one of the first right-to-carry laws, creating a concealed weapon permit allowing permitted individuals to carry a handgun in public.
- 1968:** President John F. Kennedy is assassinated by a mail-order gun. As a result, federal gun laws are revisited, and the Gun Control Act is passed, which expands license requirements. The Act also outlaws mail-order sales of rifles and shotguns.
- 1972:** The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms is created.
- 1990:** The Crime Control Act outlaws the assembly of illegal semi-automatic rifles or shotguns from legally imported parts.
- 1990:** Twelve states now have laws favoring the right to carry concealed weapons by ordinary citizens.
- 1993:** National instant criminal background checks are mandated for gun sales through the Brady Handgun Violence Act, passed by Congress.
- 1996:** Twenty-eight states now have laws favoring the right to carry concealed weapons by ordinary citizens.
- 2005:** Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act prevents firearms manufacturers and licensed dealers from being held liable when crimes are committed with their products.
- 2008:** A lower court ruling declaring a handgun ban unconstitutional is upheld in the Supreme Court.
- 2014:** Illinois becomes the last state to pass a concealed-carry law. All 50 states have legislation allowing qualified individuals to carry certain concealed firearms in public.

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*Winter
2017*



the eternal war

The anniversary of Si Lewen's
'Parade' evokes harsh realities that
haven't disappeared

Chris Zhu

When I walk by Millennium Park on my way to class, I remember that it's easy to forget how insulated we are from war. Others are not so fortunate — this year marks the 59th anniversary of Si Lewen's "Parade."

Lewen's book is comprised of 55 drawings and sketches, depicting scenes of war as harrowing, shadowy marches: an ordered chaos. Although Lewen grew up in the wreckage of Germany post-WWI (and later served for the U.S. army in WWII), his work highlighting the psychological toll of the war remains relevant today.

For example, a study conducted by the Department of Veteran Affairs shows that more than 20 U.S. veterans commit suicide daily — far exceeding the number of combat deaths overseas.

With the fifteenth anniversary of the September 11 attacks recently upon us, and in the context of terror and war around us, Lewen's ragged and austere aesthetic perfectly encapsulates many aspects of conflict. Yet, war has changed since Lewen's experiences in both world wars. The battle lines have changed; the weapons are new; the people fighting are different. How does modern warfare in the context of the United States — and modern depictions of war — differ from past eras?

It can be argued that, culturally, the U.S. has a different outlook towards war. We've never seen a mainland invasion, or a decisive military defeat. We've never had to live under the threat of an enemy marching over the border and into our homes. Indeed, war has traditionally been thought upon in the U.S. in the context of victory: We, as a nation, were born out of the Revolutionary War.

The U.S. rose as a superpower during World War II, and achieved some of its greatest technological advances during the Cold War.

Today, the main two presidential candidates on either side of the aisle advocate for more drone strikes, and more action against radical insurgent groups — whether these actions involve boots on the ground or not. Recently, the White House released a conservative estimate of roughly 2,700 individuals killed in 473 covert drone strikes since the start of the Obama administration — this, of course,

does not take into account strikes in "areas of active hostilities," such as Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria. Compared to our NATO allies, America is much more inclined towards interventions and strikes. Do we as a country have a disposition skewed towards war?

War does seem to be careening towards us. In a CNN/ORC poll, a majority of Americans advocated for additional ground troops in Syria and Iraq to combat radical Islam. Nina Simone said that, "an artist's duty ... is to reflect the times." An aspect of modern war that Lewen's "Parade" misses — or is succeeded by — is the blurring of combat lines and battlefields. Although "Parade" is dominated by striking depictions of soldiers, uniforms, and flags, such iconography is becoming more and more rare in the age of asymmetrical warfare. Documents that attempt to govern warfare, such as the Geneva Conventions, define war as conflict between two uniformed entities with clear opposition to each other. When was the last time the United States went to arms against a uniformed enemy? The combatants our veterans face overseas don't look like the uniformed, marching band that Lewen depicts in "Parade"; rather, they wear the same clothes as civilians and friends. The flags and uniforms of wars past have all but become irrelevant.

Moreover, with the emergence of war journalism through social media, war has a much more pronounced presence in our lives. Until recently, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) owned a Twitter account that published battle information and combat videos. Similarly, combat footage is frequently sent from the helmets of U.S. soldiers straight to news and online sources: Suddenly, war is in our living rooms and computer screens.

Martha Rosler, a contemporary artist known for her photo collages and paintings, documents this phenomenon in her series "Bringing the War Home: House Beautiful." Compared to the dark, austere style of Lewen's work, Rosler's colorful collages depict idyllic living rooms and kitchens that are interrupted by soldiers pasted in. One of her more famous works currently on display at the Art Institute of Chicago features a set of doorways blocked by men in U.S. Army fatigues. These imposing figures have no shadows, don't look towards the viewer, yet they dominate the frame. Something that is not truly there still governs our thoughts and influences our lives. Sound familiar?

It's easy to feel afraid in times of war. Although war has shifted insofar as enemies and conflicts are concerned, the way we fight and our attitudes towards war — the atmosphere of fear that pervades our homes — remains. Perhaps, this is due to the prevalence of media in our lives. Shootings, bombings, and terrorist attacks plague TV screens and computer monitors. The bayonets and rifles depicted in "Parade?" Today, they would be military drones, airplanes, and battleships that bombard a target miles away.

In the wake of tragedies past, and in anticipation of war careening towards us, there is no "right" response, only a human one. As artists, Americans, or just people, we can only do our best to find out what that is — and keep living our lives.

Chris is a Graphic Design student at SAIC. He enjoys photography and urban exploration.

DO GERMANS DO ART SCHOOL BETTER?

KUNSTSCHULE

"Grundgang" exhibition is a big event at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, which the academy does not own a space for. It's held at Sullivan Galleries, In-land building.

far less intense than at SAIC. Students in Germany schedule their critique deadlines with professors, instead of having designated time to finish up work. To tell you the truth, I probably get more work done at SAIC, but I truly enjoyed my own pace in Germany.

everyday life, it is convenient to be a student. Health insurance is covers almost everything. If you don't want to stay a little closer to home, there are programs in other countries. You can go to art schools, both in the United States and abroad. International Exchange has partner schools in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, the Netherlands, South Korea, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and New York City. These are immersion programs, and sometimes require advanced foreign language skills. Keep in mind that arrangements are typically not available through traditional studyabroad; you'll have to find a place to live on your own; you'll have to find a place to live on your own.

For more information on any of these programs, visit [saic.edu/studyabroad](#), or email [studyabroad@saic.edu](#).

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AICAD Exchange: If you want to stay a little closer to home, you may want to look into the exchange program SAIC maintains with the Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design (AICAD). There are AICAD schools all over the country (and in Canada), so if you're so over the Chicago winters, think about spending a fall semester in San Francisco, Laguna Beach, or Memphis. Not ever AICAD schools accept exchange students, but there are enough to choose from that you're sure to find a home away from home you'll love.

Affiliate Programs: Can't find the program you want? Think outside the box with an Independent Study Away or a Tuition Transfer Program at the school of your dreams. Tuition Transfer has the benefit of allowing you to maintain enrollment as SAIC while studying at an affiliate school, while students who take an Independent Study Away semester have to take a Leave of Absence from SAIC and apply for transfer credits.

Take a summer or winter Study Trip: If you don't want to commit to a whole semester away, take a faculty-led study trip. There are organized trips to Berlin, China, Cuba, Germany, India, Ireland, Italy, London, Paris, the Netherlands, New York, and Tanzania (depending on whether you want to go in the summer or the winter). You can lighten your college credit while studying away, too, so you can lighten your course load in the fall.

Go to Ox-Bow: Want to get down to business this summer? Consider spending a week or two at SAIC's Ox-Bow School of Art. You'll get to take intensive courses with studio access 24 hours a day. You'll also have the celebrated opportunity to learn and collaborate while earning credits in a condensed period of time.

far less intense than at SAIC. Students in Germany schedule their critique deadlines with professors, instead of having designated time to finish up work. To tell you the truth, I probably get more work done at SAIC, but I truly enjoyed the comfort of finding my own pace in Germany.

In terms of everyday life, it is convenient to be a student in Germany. Student health insurance is covers almost anything (there's no such thing as approximately four cafeterias serve organic hot meals for approximately four dollars (3.5 euros); and the German equivalent of a UPas works for the entire year — you can use it without limit during winter break and for the whole summer.

It is also fortunate to study in North Rhine-Westphalia, a state in which students do not only have unlimited

I was also fortunate to live in a region with unlimited bus and L-train rides, but also unlimited regional train rides. Every weekend I was able to sightsee a different city or town in my region for free. Every town, big or small, had its own art museum — no exceptions.

Everyday life in Chicago can be definitely more stressful and expensive. The only anxiety-inducing aspect of German everyday life was looking for an apartment, because universities do not own dorms there. The dorms are owned by the city; they accept students from all universities in the region, and do not guarantee a space for everyone. (In fact, most of the students have to look for apartments.) Luckily, I was able to get a room in the dorms (which saved me the trouble of navigating lease agreements in German), because I applied early enough.

Experiencing different life-styles and education styles in Münster and Chicago was quite a surprising experience, and it came with some side effects. When I returned to Chicago, I ended up having higher expectations about food and public transportation than I've ever had. On the other hand, I strangely missed the sight of snow (forgetting about the inconveniences of Chicago winters) in rainy Germany. I also started to appreciate how easy it is to find a public WiFi in the U.S. I missed Chicago while I was in Europe, but now Münster is the place I'm homesick for. If you're lucky enough to study in two great places, you'll always be nostalgic about them both.

Weronika is an undergraduate senior, focusing on Painting, Art History and Criticism. She enjoys coffee, cooking, movies and opera. Her favorite German word is Flaussschiffahrt.

The "Rundgang" exhibition is a big event at Kunstakademie Münster, even though the academy does not own a separate exhibition space like SAIC's Sullivan Galleries. Instead, once a year (usually in February), the whole building is turned into a huge exhibition space for "Rundgang." All studios are cleaned and students curate the space there. The artworks for other public spaces (foyers, smaller exhibition halls, corridors, the courtyard, and the garden) are chosen by a committee consisting of the selected students and faculty. For a week, the entire building transforms into a festive gallery space, attracting a huge number of visitors — artists, alumni, art collectors, yes; but also tourists and families with children for whom "Rundgang" is an exciting tradition. Food, wine, and German beer are sold, and the celebration goes on and on.

Side-note about wine and beer: I was surprised and slightly

Side-note about the drinking culture in Germany: Germans are surprised and slightly alarmed by the legal drinking age in the United States. In Germany, 16-year-olds can consume and possess wine and beer. When you turn 18 you gain access to "stronger" alcohol (spirits). I did not have a chance to see what effect this law has on high school students, but I can say that the college students seemed to be experienced in drinking reasonably. Alcohol is present at gallery openings in university spaces, and you might even raise a toast with your professor during the annual end of academic year party. However, I have not seen students drinking excessively — apparently, they all learned alcohol etiquette long before starting college.

Freshman students begin their time at Kunstakademie during a long interdisciplinary program after which they are free to choose their own studio and area of focus. At the end of their education, students create a thesis body of work and have an opportunity to show it during a solo show in the academy's exhibition hall (comparable in size to SAIC's LeRoy Neiman Center Gallery). To make a solo exhibition possible for everyone, students have to display their work during various times of the academic year — some do this before the summer break, but others exhibit in the middle of the semester.

Academic classes (and seminars) can be taken for attendance credit and credit. To get a grade, students must show initiative and responsibility. Professors about the required homework. Usually, professors ask for an oral presentation and a research paper about the topic related to the class.

All of my professors were open to the topic related to the class. Professors' assignments and were quite generous with deadlines (paper due at the end of the semester break, not at the end of the semester itself). As an international student who participated in classes held in German, I found tremendous support in terms of learning the language. Professors challenged and encouraged me to take part in some presentations and discussions in German, but they sometimes allowed me to write long, academic paper in English.

My favorite art history classes were studied in Vienna and Switzerland, where we discussed art at length while inside museums for five days. Considering our packed our schedules were (we visited six cities during our six-day Switzerland trip), I came to the realization that German professors and students are masters of time management — we get everything done, even during discussions.

man professors and students — masters of time management — they always get everything done, take time to do it (discussions and critiques are never rushed), and rarely stress. This ease around time also applies to the number of deadlines, which are

“Interestingly, students who have already worked with the professor have a say in who’s admitted to the class.”

**“In terms of everyday life,
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student in Germany.”**

Weronika Malek

Weronika Malek

I spent the last academic year studying abroad at Kunstakademie Münster (Academy of Fine Arts in Münster), Germany. Although higher education (and art education in particular) in Germany is similar in many ways to higher education in the United States (there are critiques of higher education in the United States, but there's criticism instead of letter grades for studio art), I found myself enjoying the primary education during the freshman year. I found myself mostly noticing the interesting differences between the two systems. The biggest novelty for me was the system of studio classes. In the United States, you have various studio classes every semester. In Germany, you have one studio class every semester. In the United States, you have various studio classes every semester. In Germany, you have one studio class every semester.

The biggest novelty for me was the system of studios. Instead of having various studio classes every semester, I "belonged" to a single studio. In our own studio, the seniors, every fine arts professor leads their German art students choose a studio after completing freshman year and presenting a portfolio to their preferred professor. Interestingly, students who have already worked with the professor have a say in who's admitted to the class. Several students explained to me that any new students should be a "good fit to the community." This may sound scary, but I participated in a few new student reviews and my class members were very insightful and supportive in the admission process—and the final decision belongs to the faculty anyway.

Students share studio space and typically stay with the same faculty and peers for the entire duration of their

study. That means that they usually get feedback from the same professor and the same group of people, and they enjoy the unity of the learning experience. The classroom becomes like a family, and a true mentorship bond is formed between students and faculty.

[illegible]

Problems of storing artwork for summer or finding a place to work outside of class hours were nonexistent in Germany. We were not required to remove our belongings from the building during summer and winter breaks. The ability to work at my own pace, in my own space, and without worrying about storage gave me great artistic freedom and courage. The only time when the studio was unavailable was during a week-long "Rundgang" exhibition, when our classroom was used as a gallery space.

This is not a beer stein.

dies ist ein Bier Stein nicht

dies ist ein Bier Stein nicht

design by Zach Cooper and Sevy Perez ‡ illustration by Sacha Lusk

portrait F Newsmagazine sits down with of the artist SAIC's very own Michelle Grabner

Emily Mercedes Rich

Emily Mercedes Rich: As an introduction, can you tell us what do you do and why?

Michelle Grabner: I am the Crown Family Professor of Painting and Drawing at School of the Art Institute. I started teaching at the school in 1996 as a grad advisor and continued to this day. So that is an important base to thinking about all the work that I do. Everything else — whether it's critical writing, or showing an exhibition — I end up seeing those bodies of work as part of teaching. Then, of course, there's studio practice which is very important to me; and sometimes it's social where I'm collaborating, but often it is a very traditional practice where I go into the studio for long stretches of time and think about ideas — such as repetition and time — that are found in patterns that are very familiar to us, such as gingham.

EMR: Were you always drawn to teaching?

MG: Yes, I think so. Even as a precocious high school kid who would spend a lot of time in the arts area, taking a lot of art classes when I could, [I understood] teaching as a way of being an artist in the world, that was always one piece to me. I grew up in northern Wisconsin [where] we didn't even understand what an art career could be or that there was a possibility of making a livelihood based on art-making alone, so teaching was always there. I never thought I wouldn't teach.

EMR: Teaching is often viewed by young artists as a backup plan or a pay-the-rent plan. Was it that for you or was it something you always wanted to do in addition to making art?

MG: No, I think there's something very virtuous about teaching — whether that's teaching a bunch of middle-school kids or teaching graduate students to think about theory. I think it's an admirable profession; we just happen to be living in a current situation where teaching is not valued the way it was at a certain point in time. I think it would be a very dreadful condition if one had to rely on vagaries of the marketplace to sustain a living or to sustain a studio practice. So to be able to have a steady relationship to work, to time, to income, and let your practice work within that and let it evolve freely because your rent is taken care of; your supplies are taken care of. Teaching is very freeing; to have a relationship, to have a job, to have money, to have time is very freeing on the studio practice.

EMR: You mentioned the business side of art, how do you navigate that?

MG: I navigate it as a reality. The commercial art world is a real force within contemporary art. I also understand that the commercial art world is built on a world economy, and as the world fluctuates, so will the economics of the art world. So take advantage of it when it is doing well, but [don't] make everything you do contingent on it, acknowledge it and [don't] trust it's a stable situation.

EMR: In the past 20 years, you've shown your work in over 60 solo exhibitions and well over 100 group exhibitions. To what do you attribute that success?

MG: Thanks for counting! I didn't know that! That's kind of horrifying! It's another cliché, but basically it's hard work. I work very hard, and I also love work. I think that really helps. I do enjoy working. I enjoy people. I enjoy art. That's a constant negotiation within the art world. I also try to say yes, even if it's a dubious exhibition or I don't know the people in it; I still will try to say yes. It's those kinds of situations where I can learn from others in terms of my ideas. I will get feedback that I never thought I would get. So by showing one's self, one's writing, one's work through exhibition or curating in different contexts, one really comes to understand the breadth of the world you're working in.

EMR: You also co-direct at THE SUBURBAN and The Poor Farm. Can you tell us a little about those spaces, what drew you to them, and what continues to draw you to them?



MG: They're spaces that my husband and I decided to embrace, to take on, to create a platform for other artists so you know we're conventional in one way where we have three kids, we have mortgages and so forth. That comes with some limitations and there's a pretty great, active art world swimming around us. That's something we can't keep our eyes off of, so how do you get these artists from all over the world to come to you? You offer them exhibition spaces and possibilities for projects, and try to find resources to get them there. Often it's out-of-pocket, so we can have this interaction with artists and spend time with them and figure out how they think. What are their methods? How do they make work? How are they handling this very specific condition of a gallery space that's in rural Wisconsin [or] in Milwaukee? It's a little selfish, but it also helps us get a greater understanding of the vastness of methods of work and artists and their ideas. As an artist, one always has to be reminded of that. Working and interacting with other artists and their ideas allows me

to be more myself in the studio; more refined in terms of my own ideas.

EMR: Did you always perceive a need to provide space for other artists and to observe their practice in that way?

MG: Yeah, I think so. It's a professional strategy to open up a space. And let me tell you, the last thing you want to do is open up a space and think that it's going to come back and increase the visibility of your work or create a way for you to enter the world. That is not the case at all. You really have to like working with artists. Artists have all kinds of needs. No artist that you work with is the same. Every time you invite somebody in and you're working with them, even on a monthly basis, you're in for a whole new experience. So you really have to love the diversity, the multiplicity of people in the world. You have to love people. All in all, the short answer to that is when I have the opportunity to give back, to offer a different kind of context for artists to work in, that gives me great pleasure, and it is a responsibility.

EMR: If you could have asked an artist any question when you were in college or just starting out, what would it have been?

MG: Why art-making and not the law? That's it. Why art-making and not the law?

EMR: The function of this series is to show that working as an artist is an achievable goal; your résumé is almost evidence enough, but if you were to provide another piece of evidence for our readers, what would it be?

MG: I think it's important to realize that you could be a very successful artist within the conventions of ordinary life, that it's not exclusive, that one doesn't have to carve out and understand a place of being an artist that is wholly unique to the world we live in. I knew very early on that I wanted to have a conventional lifestyle with kids and a dog and a mortgage, but also wanting to engage with issues of culture actively and be able to think about how those things fit into or push at the life I chose to have. That's super compelling to me. That made it easy. It's often very difficult

if we work against our human nature; we each carry a kind of human nature with us, and if we work against that, if we want to obtain something outside of that, it's very, very difficult, and you're always fighting your instinctual being. It's important to understand who one is. Even if one has these very, very almost prosaic desires to be a mother in the world, it doesn't at all prevent you from having an influence in terms of shaping a world outside of that. Sometimes limitations really help clarify and push you forward.

EMR: Where can we find your work?

MG: You'd find it in my studio in Milwaukee and my studio in northern Wisconsin. That's a different kind of circulation.

Emily is a first-year Writing MFA student. She's a playwright, photographer, and teaching artist by day, and preferably asleep by night.

water, 'Affreightments' water, makes a splash everywhere at the Gunder Mansion

Irena Frumkin

Few naturally occurring elements on earth have the ability to both sustain life and to take it away; but water, so crucial, so damning, and so mysterious, continues to create and destroy at its will.

The theme of water and how we use it — commercial, socially, and industrially — is at the forefront of Gunder Exhibitions' latest group show "Affreightments." The exhibition features the works of some well-established artists and artisans such as Michael Dinges, Jaclyn Mednicov and Ian Schneller, alongside up-and-coming Chicagoans like Suture Blue.

"Affreightments" comes together inside of the historic Gunder Mansion, a post-Edwardian home once belonging to pharmaceutical company executive Samuel Gunder. It exists on the site of Edgewater's Berger Park and is one of Chicago's last standing lakefront mansions. Gunder Exhibitions' repurposing of the Gunder Mansion as a free-to-the-public artistic space has enabled the formerly abandoned dwelling to retain some of its previous glory.

Gunder Exhibitions is not your grandmother's art space. Gunder's curator and primary visionary, Bianca Bova, who gave me a formal tour of "Affreightments," discussed her goals for Gunder's future in great detail. Bova is undeniably passionate about her work and her specific energy can be physically felt while in her presence. It is no wonder that her year-old brainchild, Gunder, is thriving. Gunder continues to host its seasonal fall group shows ("Affreightments" is its second), and for the first time ever was able to fund an artist residency for the 2016 year.

Bova grew up in Chicago and was heavily influenced by the city's public art programs. To her, Gunder is a democratic (and totally free) way to allow the general public access to what she describes as "museum-quality art."

A politicized conversation about water — specifically its access and its privatization — was not on Bova's mind when developing the curatorial theme for "Affreightments." The primary and perhaps somewhat fanciful wish of Bova's is to bring together art that is able to adapt to changing environments apolitically. Bova isn't worried about art that is "about something" and instead curates her shows based on the stories the works of art can tell when interacting with one another.

Upon entering the mansion, it's impossible not to feel the lived-in presence of a once-grand family home. The decorative elements of plants and greenery abound, hearkening to Gunder's background in medicine. Like breaking the lock on a forgotten suitcase that was never yours, being inside the Gunder Mansion feels voyeuristic at worst, and nostalgically thrilling at best.

After walking up the main wooden staircase and into a wide-set hallway making up the first space of the exhibition, you are confronted almost immediately with Michael Dinges' piece "Container Ships." Composed of push brooms with altered bristles resembling the silhouettes of industrial ships on water, "Container Ships" makes a maritime statement with mundane objects.

Similarly, in "Captain's Chair," which stands on a pedestal in the next room of the show, Dinges uses a scrimshawed plastic lawn chair to combine a mundane, domestic object typically seen on land with a traditional engraving practice used by both artisans and sailors.

"Affreightments" boasts a large-scale fabric installation by Jaclyn Mednicov and a 2D projection by Suture Blue. Mednicov's piece, titled "Surface (Peach)," is made from sharktooth scrim — a material often used as a reinforcement for sails. "Surface" interacts with the light coming through the doorway it hangs in front of to take on an almost skin-like appearance; a nod to human-ness within an industrial fabric.

The final stop of the exhibition was originally an open-air area for Samuel Gunder to grow his various medicinal plants. What exists now is a rehabbed, well-lit room with windows opening directly to a stunning view of Lake Michigan; a watery vastness appropriately presenting itself to the viewer and lending itself to the art. Here, what greets you is a highly sensuous experience; a sound installation by



"A politicized conversation about water — specifically its access and its privatization — was not on Bova's mind when developing the curatorial theme."

Richard Marshall plays, overlaying a jazz score with maritime sounds bringing the viewer back to the original theme of the show in real time.

The "Affreightment" show-stealer, however, is Alyce Haliday McQueen's visually jarring "Hurricane Odile." The installation combines the image of a woman lying on what appears to be the bottom of a body of water, inside of a kiddie pool and surrounded by pieces of cinder blocks and other materials one would find scattered about after a major storm. The name and visuals are reminiscent of the catastrophic effects of water and how something so life-sustaining can become a grave. The piece also tends to conjure up literary and historical images: a kind of Victorian damsel in distress with hints of an "Ophelia"-esque tragic end.

A "contract of affreightment" is a binding agreement between a shipowner and a charterer with the promise of a transport of goods as the main goal. It seems appropriate that Gunder Exhibitions uses the term "affreightment" in the rare plural form, as if to allude to the individual contracts made between the pieces of art, transporting a narrative. Whether or not "Affreightments" meets its curatorial goal of a post-political artistic experience is left up to what the viewer brings to the story. Even if it doesn't, it's still worth seeing, ideally just as the sun is rising over Lake Michigan.

Irena is F Newsmagazine's arts editor and a master's student in SAIC's Modern and Contemporary Art History program. She's a Philadelphia native who only listens to Kate Bush.





BACON,

'What Was Breakfast' is an intimate

EGGS,

peek into the daily lives of strangers

AND

Jose Nateras

I started working as a host at The Cherry Circle Room (CCR) over a year ago, just a short while before Alan Epstein — the photographer behind the “What Was Breakfast” project — started as a server there himself. It’s fitting then, that when arranging our chat about his recent artistic endeavors, we decided to meet at the James Beard Award-winning, refined dining restaurant of The Chicago Athletic Association Hotel. While the idea of an artist working in the service industry as a means to an end is a familiar one, The CCR manages to employ a staff that is often as devoted to service as it is to its members’ individual artistic practices. In that regard, it’s interesting to note that when I first met Epstein, he didn’t have much of an established art practice at all.

When he started at CCR, Epstein had recently relocated to Chicago from Argentina where he had run his own restaurant in Buenos Aires. “It was an American-style bar. Burgers and fries,” he said. “I was living in Vegas before that and I was working in nightclub promotions. So I was making some pretty cool money and then the mortgage crisis hit and all of a sudden I wasn’t. So I went to Buenos Aires.”

Unlike many artists/waiters, Epstein was an individual without many specific artist aspirations. “You know, my dad was an accountant. So I always kind of had this internal feeling that I should be doing something business-related. I guess it took me a really long time to break out of that thought process. I would end up in business and would always hate the business aspect of it but really enjoy the creative aspect of things,” he told me.

To see Epstein interact with his co-workers, or to watch him engage with the patrons at his tables, you may get the impression that he’s a naturally outgoing guy. Friendly, interested, and easy to talk to, it’s surprising to hear that he considers himself more of an introvert. “I feel like I’m kind of an introverted person who will get in my head quite a bit,” he said.

With plenty of articles extolling the benefits of improv training for introverts, it’s easy to understand Epstein’s interest in making Chicago home when he and his family returned to the States. “We moved to Chicago specifically because I wanted to do stuff at Second City and I wanted to do stuff at iO. I’m not really an actor but I found a lot of cool insights from doing improv. There are a lot of things from improv that are just cool ways of going through your

day. The yes-and-ing. A lot of the principles are applicable to other parts of life,” he said.

It was ultimately trusting that impulse that led him from Argentina to Chicago, pursuing the art of improvisation that would eventually lead him to photography. “The camera I’m shooting on, I bought so I could film stuff for Second City,” Epstein told me.

If you look up Epstein’s “What Was Breakfast” profile on Instagram, you’ll find yourself browsing through a collection of photographs of people: people of different races and ages, couples, parents and children, siblings. Beneath these images you won’t find their names or descriptions of their jobs; just their answer to one simple question: What did you have for breakfast?

The answers vary as much as the subjects do, but the simplicity and straightforwardness of the question provides a whimsically intimate humanity. The composition of the photos is simple—yet—elegant, and there is a casual, familiar intimacy to each picture. Despite the fact that there are no names to accompany the faces, there’s a sense of something shared: the city, the starting of a new day, the sharing of a meal. There is the inherent idea that as different as all of these people are, they all — we all — have something in common.

It seems surprising that someone might just stumble onto so insightful a project, yet Epstein hardly had any photography experience before he started his Instagram project.

“I think I just became a photographer by doing this,” he said. Prior to this project, he told me he “messed around just very briefly in Argentina. My good friends were photographers and they kinda, like, just showed me the ropes and I like, would take a couple of pics with them and help them on shoots and stuff. But nothing ever really came of it, nor did I try to do anything with it.”

As we sat in one of the plush leather booths of The CCR, eating a late breakfast, the interconnectedness of it all seemed obvious.

Epstein said, “At work as a waiter I ask people what they’ll have [for breakfast] and in the streets I ask what [they] had.” Yet, finding balance and symbiosis between work and artistry is rarely an obvious or straightforward thing. “I might have to work a 12-hour day [at the restaurant]. That’s physically rough, but when I’m like, on the way there, I might snap something cool, or on my little break, I might be able to snap something cool — I would certainly

say it makes my day a lot better. It gives me something to be excited about and in the moment. I think one of my favorite things about it is I’m just so in the moment.”

This notion of being in the moment — of engaging with life as it’s happening — is so often what’s missing from the eternal slog from work to the train, to the next obligation, and so forth through our days. It really is a testament to the artistry of Epstein’s project that it allows for a brief moment to simply re-engage with, as Colisha (one of Epstein’s managers at CCR) put it, “A little slice of life.”

“It’s one of my favorite new Instagrams,” said fellow CCR server, Katie, who took care of us the afternoon of our interview. “I think it’s an interesting perspective. It’s something everyone does every day, but it’s very interesting to see. I’m interested every time I see a picture. I’m interested to see what they ate, it’s a little piece of reality.”

The bartender working that afternoon, Joel, agreed: “It’s a very human account. I mean everyone has to eat at some point. I think that the act of eating is a very together-ing aspect of humanity. It’s a good window into someone’s personality, what they had for breakfast. It’s supposedly the most important meal of the day, and it gauges what someone’s like. I mean, sometimes my breakfast is coffee and a cigarette, there’s something in that.”

In terms of where Epstein’s work will go from here, it’s hard to guess. If the success of similar projects, like Humans of New York (HONY), for example, is any way to judge, there very well may be big things on the horizon. In terms of how he sees his work comparing to HONY, Epstein said, “On one hand I understand, yeah, it’s street photography with a caption; but I’m just happy doing it that, right now, that’s kind of like the mission in itself.”

When so often artists find themselves taking on jobs unrelated to their artistic passions, it’s refreshing to find a story of one who has been able to find his artistic passion through his job. More importantly, it asserts the notion that there are no jobs unrelated to artistic passions. The human experience is an interrelated one. Our experiences — both artistic and seemingly mundane — share the context of the lives we lead.

“It doesn’t exist like an art exhibit in a vacuum,” Epstein said of “What Was Breakfast.” After all, like he joked offhandedly to his wife, “We’re all just people eating breakfast and trying to get through the day, you know?”

Jose is a writer, actor, and nerd.

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crash + burn

Clint Eastwood has greatness inside him;

Unfortunately, his latest isn't proof

J. Howard Rosier

Clint Eastwood was once the cinematic embodiment of American grit and toughness. He was also apolitical in the sense that everything anyone knew about his worldview came from watching his films. In their unflashy and melancholy way, those films provided ample opportunity for America to truly see itself — flaws and all.

"Unforgiven," for example, took the strict right-or-wrong structure of a Hollywood western and flipped the logic so that the audience empathized with the bandits rather than the sheriff. Justice becomes relative depending on how you're exposed to it.

Years later, he would carve up the facets of masculinity in back-to-back masterpieces: "Mystic River," a whodunit about a detective trying to solve the murder of his volatile friend's daughter; and "Million Dollar Baby," the story of a retired boxing coach who ends up euthanizing a protégé at her request. Though the films tell very different stories, a molested mutual friend in one film and an abandoned daughter in the other contribute a heightened sense of anguish — private tragedies metastasized into grotesque personas.

But that's just one version of Eastwood. The other side of his psyche was exemplified when he filmed himself talking to an empty chair used to personify President Obama at the 2008 Republican National Convention. If you thought that was a once-in-a-lifetime fluke, forgivable in polarizing times, he squandered any goodwill he would have gained when he expressed solidarity with Donald Trump.

This is the other Clint Eastwood — of "Flags of Our Fathers," and "J. Edgar," and "American Sniper." Though all technically well-done, the content in each film is always more about protecting an idea society has about itself rather than a serious examination of humanity.

Take a guess which Eastwood column "Sully" falls under.

Clint Eastwood's latest occupies a singular category of badness. No one else could have made this movie, which is marketed as the untold story of an unassailable American hero, Captain Chelsey "Sully" Sullenberger, who, with all 155 passengers alive, managed to nail an emergency landing on the Hudson River after hitting a flock of geese and disabling both engines. Far from a glorified victory lap, "Sully" has a more homespun, earnest mood. It feels less like lionizing and more like a hat-tip to the good old 9 to 5 clock-in — an elegy for competence and decency.

Both of those adjectives do much to describe Eastwood's visual style. The claustrophobic chaos of the cabin during the descent; the panic that ensues once the plane hits the water; and the media tour Sullenberger is forced to trot out on after it becomes apparent how unique his situation is are all fine. They're directed quietly; they're just distant enough. As a viewer, you're not a witness of events so much as you're a witness of the ways in which the events have affected the people involved.

When added up, though, these moments make up roughly 30 of the film's 90 minutes. The rest is filled with CGI-conjured fantasies of the plane crashing into New York City buildings. These are supposed to represent Sully's PTSD, but they look so cheap and melodramatic that they only work in theory.

Likewise, the tenuous relationship that Sullenberger has with his wife falls flat. While he is in New York City, waiting out a National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigation from his airline and unable to fly until it's finished, Sully's wife is at home with their two daughters. On unpaid leave — and with his newly-launched consulting business on the line — the couple get into a number of spats. However, their tense conversations about the media circus and unoccupied



rental properties don't seem to signify anything. Though probably factual, the erratic-woman-on-the-phone trope has been done so much that it feels fake.

Furthermore, the central antagonist — the NTSB — takes the film into ridiculous territory. If Sully is facing so much self-doubt and psychological anguish about his famed miracle landing, then the main bad guy isn't bureaucracy — it's Sully himself. But questions of whether or not Sully is a hero or an overly anxious fraud are only touched on briefly.

"Sully" is a failure of type. This could have been a realist meditation on Sully's competency. It also could have been a kooky satire about how important things get ground through the systems mill and swallowed whole. But a realist film about a decent man up against a sinister government agency that cares more about insurance claims than hard-working Americans? It's too much.

However, not for The Other Clint Eastwood. In his attempt at developing a vision of our country's unique take on greatness and lore, his picture has come out of focus.

J. Howard (MFAW, 2018) is a news editor at F News magazine. He is probably wearing a blazer and cradling a stack of papers.

"He was also apolitical in the sense that everything anyone knew about his worldview came from the watching of his films."

season of the (Blair) witch

The sequel you didn't know you wanted

Jose Nateras

1999's "The Blair Witch Project" changed the game in many ways. While its trend-launching "found footage" premise didn't do anything that hadn't been done before, "The Blair Witch Project" did manage to utilize a freshly ripening internet culture and a groundbreaking viral marketing strategy to reach levels of mainstream success that was unprecedented. This success went on to launch the flop of a sequel that was 2000's "Book of Shadows: Blair Witch 2" and now, 16 years later, Adam Wingard's effectively tense "Blair Witch."

Before its September 16 theatrical release, "Blair Witch" had been shot and publicized under the pseudonym "The Woods," making it the surprise sequel that left quite an impression at advanced festival screenings. Brad Miska, of the website Bloody Disgusting, gave "Blair Witch" four and a half out of five possible skulls in his review. Miska said of the film: "'Scary' is probably an understatement as this may just be the first film since 'The Exorcist' that will leave younger audiences scarred for life." However, with a 36 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes and a disappointing performance at the box office, one has to wonder: How good is "Blair Witch" actually?

Though he's been making films since 2004, it was Wingard's 2011 film "You're Next" that really made him a household name (depending on the household, that is). With a filmography heavy on genre flicks, Wingard seems as fit to relaunch the lapsed "Blair Witch Project" properly as anyone.

Piggybacking off the non-canonical "Book of Shadows," "Blair Witch" picks up 17 years after where "The Blair Witch Project" left off. The movie starts with the same typed text as the first, reporting that the following footage was found out in the woods of Maryland on "memory cards and hard drives," as opposed to Heather's old school tapes. (Heather was the aspiring filmmaker in the 1999 original.) This time

around, we have her younger brother James (James Allen McCune) who holds out hope that his sister might still be out there in the woods, 17 years later.

This far-fetched hope is bolstered after he comes across a video posted online by the shady locals Lane (Wes Robinson) and Talia (Valerie Curry). This video shows footage from a newly discovered cassette that features a figure who just might be Heather. Bringing

"By skipping the interviews and documentary stylings of the original, the new film cuts to the meat of the scares much faster."

along his childhood friend, Peter (Brandon Scott), Peter's girlfriend Ashley (Corbin Reid), and another would-be documentarian Lisa (Callie Hernandez), James heads off into the Black Hills of Maryland on a quest to find his sister.

It's Lisa, a documentary film student, who has access to the sort of equipment which provides the technological upgrade that's the new film's most notable strength. One of the biggest criticisms of the first "Blair Witch" concerns the shaky cameras and poor film quality. The new film still has a lot of shaky and unclear imagery, however, as initial shots of the 2016 crew's equipment reveal. They also tighten the forced, first-person perspective through which the audience experiences the events of the film.

When the field of vision is so tightly limited to that of the characters, their fearful trek through the woods becomes ours. Furthermore, beyond the central four P.O.V. cameras, there is also Lisa's handheld camera — a drone-mounted device for overhead shots from above the trees; and Lane's old-school, handheld camera that uses the same type of cassettes that Heather did. The variety of equipment provides plenty of opportunity

for the "found footage" to be cut together in interesting and various ways, with a style and purposefulness of cinematography the first movie lacked.

Some critics of "Blair Witch" might claim that it merely retreads the same old ground as the original and they're not entirely wrong; however, by skipping the interviews and documentary stylings of the original, the new film cuts to the meat of the scares much faster.

There's less world-building to do and since some of the locals (Lane and Talia) come along for the ride, explorations of Burkittsville mythology happen while the trek into the woods does, keeping a sense of momentum going.

In terms of the fates these characters meet, "Blair Witch" is far from ambiguous. Whereas the original left a lot to the imagination, the 2016 film offers some gruesome imagery and doesn't shy away from showing a number of its characters meeting their ends.

Narratively, "Blair Witch" does some interesting things with time. The format of "found footage" moments, and the inclusion of times when cameras are turned off, raises the question of the story's continuity. Wingard leans into this while folding in some fascinating questions regarding the passage and manipulation of time.

Overall, "Blair Witch" does a lot right and successfully brings the 1999 "Blair Witch Project" into 2016 with a fresh perspective and enough new twists and techniques to entertain audiences both familiar with the original and new to the series. In terms of the thematic implications horror movies centering on witches get to explore (subjects of gender and patriarchy, societal attitudes towards women with power and religious oppression), "Blair Witch" has little to offer; especially when compared to the other big witch flick of 2016, Robert Eggers' expertly executed "The Witch." Yet, if you are going for a fun, tense, jump-filled fright fest, you could do far worse than "Blair Witch."

Jose is a writer, actor, and nerd.

AN ILLUSTRATED GUIDE TO GROWING PLANTS INDOORS

ANA MARIA GONZALEZ

Decide if you want to grow your plants
in:

Soil

or

Water



Soil is easier to grow! You don't have to do much maintenance



In **Water**, plants are less likely to get bugs. Also, you can put fish in your water plants. Their waste matter provides nutrients for the plants.



If your plants look weak with small leaves, you might need **Artificial lights**.

Which type should you use?



Incandescent lights:

Relatively inexpensive; not especially effective; your electricity bill will go through the roof.



Fluorescent lights:

Relatively inexpensive; good for leaves and herbs, but not for vegetables.



LED

More expensive; extremely efficient; extremely effective. They come in blue or red or both. Blue lights tend to make leafy plants, and red lights help plants to flower.

Bonus!

LED lights help prevent Seasonal Affective Disorder.

You may want a **timer** for your lights so you don't have to worry about turning them on or off. The lights should stay on for **14 to 18 hours** per day.



Or, you might want to try an **Aero Garden** system—they come fully equipped with everything you need to grow plants. It's a great idea for someone who is just starting out.

No matter what you choose, **plants require vitamins**.

You can buy nutrients for plants online or at a plant store. You can also make your own compost if you have the capacity.



Some great plants to grow inside are:



Dill:

Great for Greek foods and sandwich spreads.



Rosemary:

Smells fantastic! Tastes incredible with potatoes.



Basil:

Useful in tons of dishes (Hello, Pesto!) It comes in green and purple—the purple variety can really mix up your plant collection.



Sage:

Dry it, tie it in bundles, and burn it to fill your house with a beautiful smell.



Chamomile:

Flowers beautifully, and is terrific in winter teas.



Chives: Chop 'em up and put 'em on everything.



Mint:

Mojitos all year long! (also, cats love to smell mint) Tip: Trim mint often, and especially when the plant starts to flower.



Oregano:

Makes wonderful tea when you have menstrual cramps.



Cilantro:

Who doesn't love cilantro? It's great in guacamole and salsa.



How to look Smooth

Jeana Kang

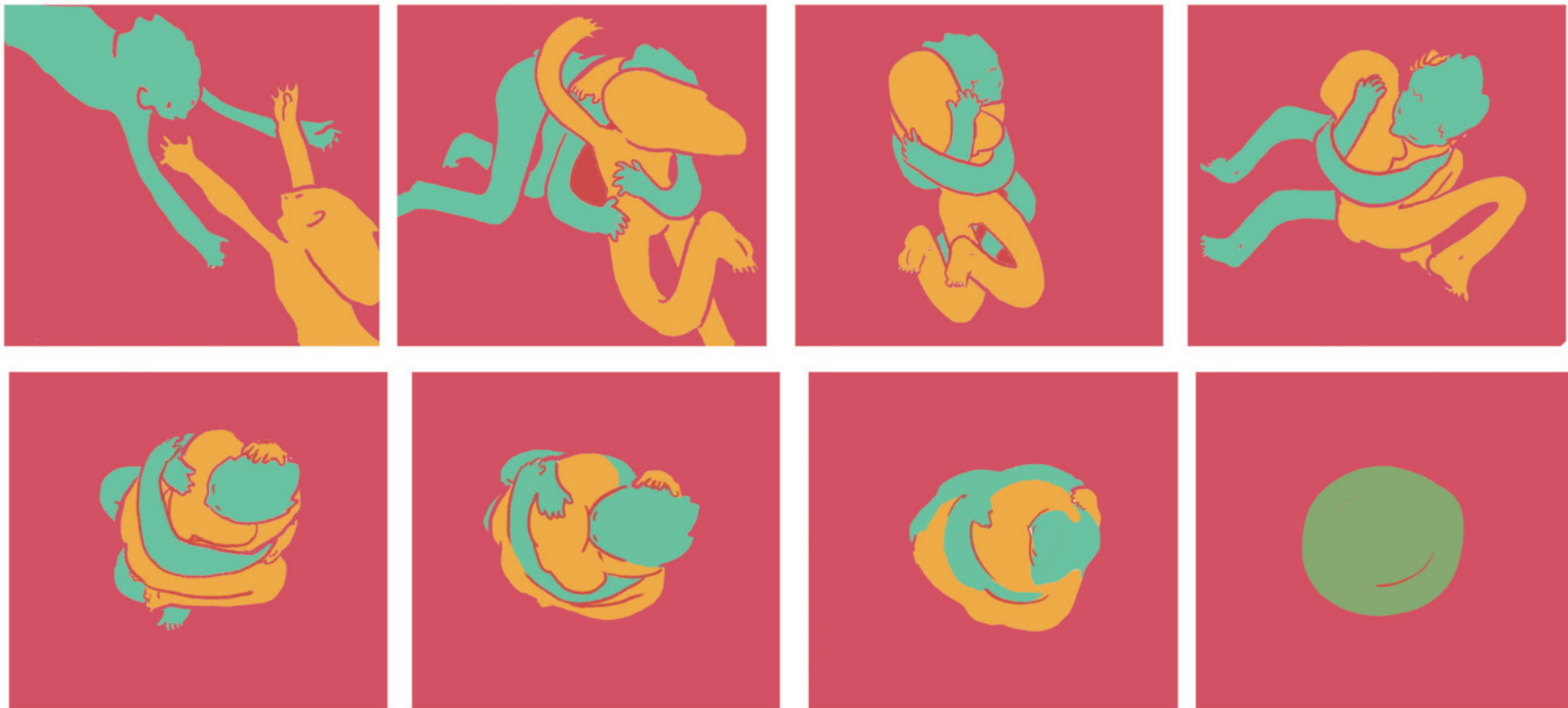
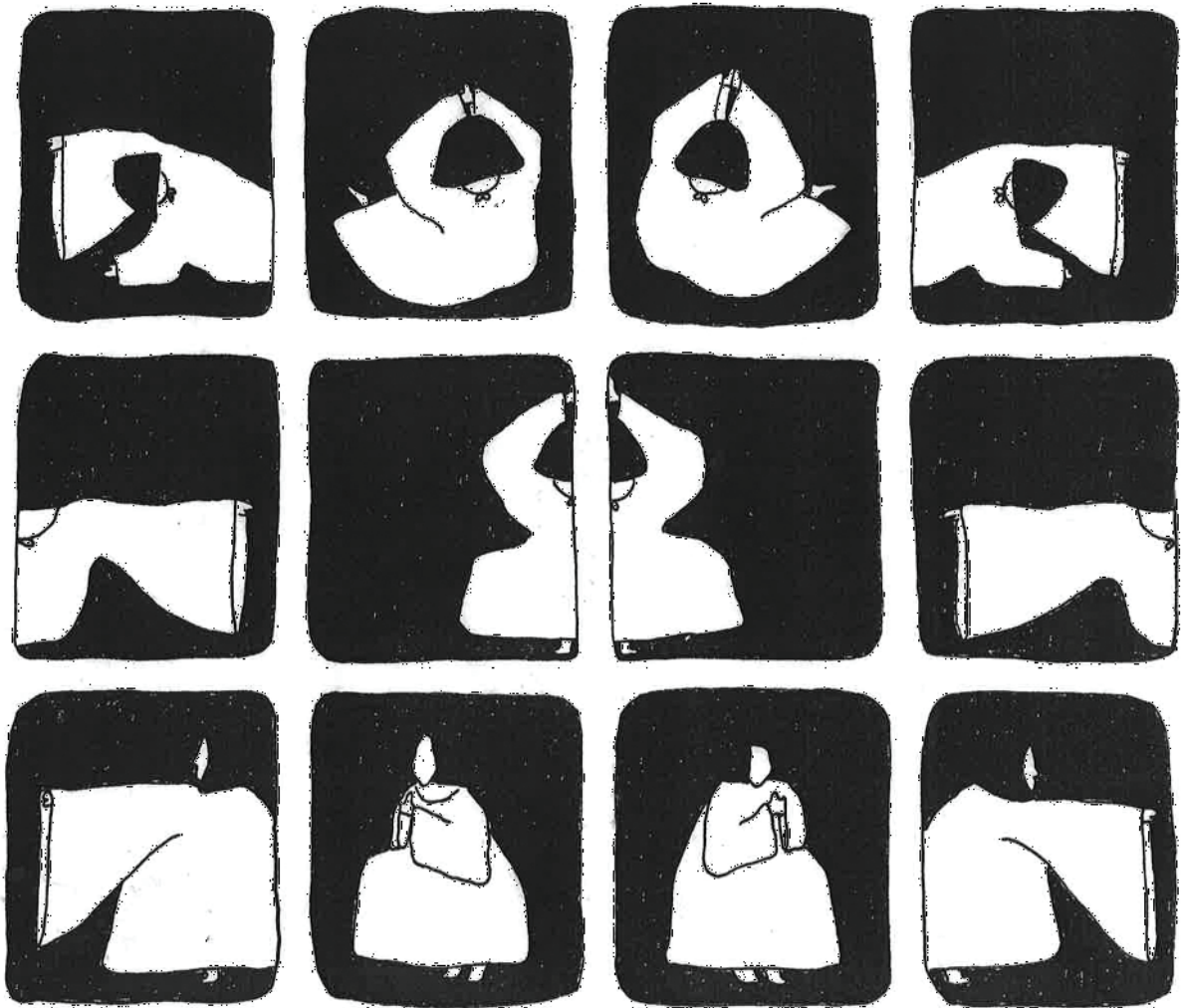


How to look Dumb

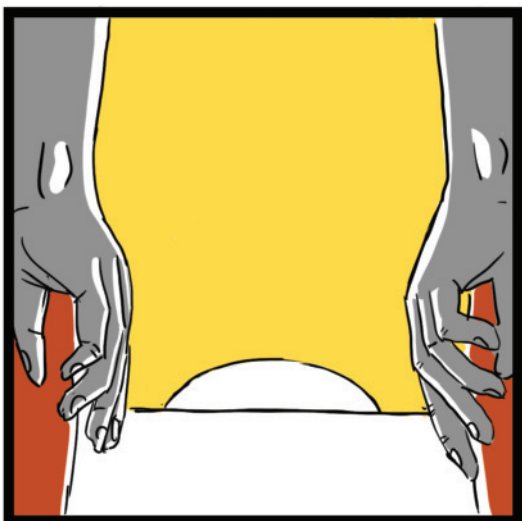
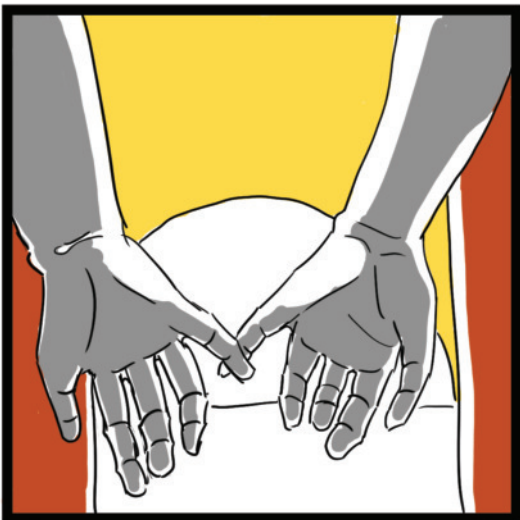
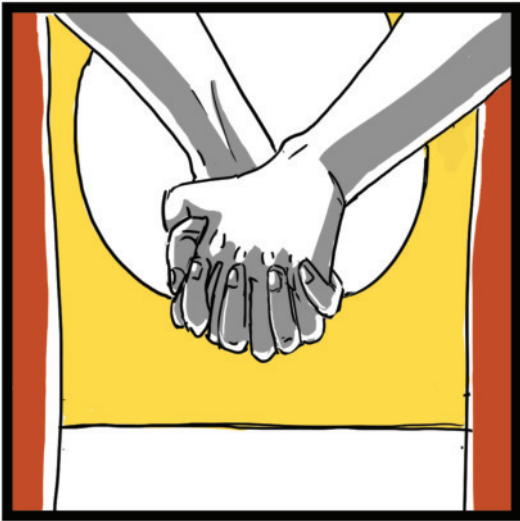


forest spirits

by Carolina Velez



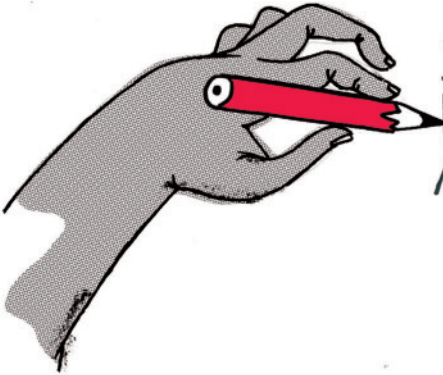
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Diana Thater. *Delphine*, 1999. Four video projectors, nine-monitor video wall, five players, and four LED wash lights; overall dimensions variable. Installation view, *Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination*, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 2015-16 © Diana Thater. Photo © Fredrik Nilsen.

Diana Thater: The Sympathetic Imagination was organized by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

ONEOFUS Julie Atlas Muz and Mat Fraser. *Beauty and the Beast*. Photo: Juliet Shalam.

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