

Daves



ISSUE #1



#### HIRST

Tonight... my friend... you find me in the last lap of a race... I had long forgotten to run. *Pause* 

Harold Pinter's No Man's Land

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# EDITOR'S WELCOME

It is my pleasure to present the first issue of *Waves*, The Purcell School's new multimedia magazine.

Following a deluge of entries it has become an agglomeration of invention featuring a selection of writing, artwork and photography that showcases an incredible breadth of creativity. My vision is of a magazine where the work of students and staff is exhibited side by side, generating a continuous current of inspiration which passes between generations.

Nothing would give me greater delight than to hear that people are dipping in and out of *Waves* and discovering pieces that resonate with them. There is already interest in producing a second issue next year, so I hope this magazine is here to stay.

This project would not have been possible without the kind help and support of Ms Millman and the staff members who submitted entries and encouraged their students to do the same. Thank you for sharing your creativity, love, dedication and hard work.

This issue contains three guest entries by some of the most influential people in my life: composer and saxophonist Matthew Herd, whose featured poem appears in his new album *Seafarers*; artist Marie-Thérèse Ross who has a selection of her visceral sculptures on display; and my good friend Abhisekh Chatterjee, with whom I made *The Toasty Plumber* film quintology, who submitted his poem *eden* and also created the magazine logo.

Stay safe and happy exploring...

Hugo Max Editor June 2020





# Alexandra Peel WATERSHED







### Peadar Hay A SERIES OF REFLECTIONS INVOLVING 'THE THREE' TO SOME EXTENT

If I was a lemur, the trees from which I would effortlessly bound would be the grey endless slate of sky. Colourless and heavy.

And in that moment of perfect tension, the heart and body would fully understand that I am about to grasp onto Absolute Nothingness.

The path the fathers have trailed through this endless expanse of sky is the dancing of smoke.

I saw children dance on smoke, they grew smaller and danced more fervently.

The centaurs shot them with arrows and they landed softly on the grass.

There was one the arrows could not hit – McGee danced on wisps. Long after the fire had smouldered.

His mother was made of clingfilm And cried for a fortnight

Then was very still.

And she grasped the budding grass between her toes (that endless earthy rite). Into the ground her hair grew. And as the Earth, she drew back her head and blew into the sky (that mighty breeze, the mothers' kiss). The fall of night.

The sun raised its stony head upon two lonesome bodies on that heavy and flat expanse. Under the shade of the mother tree. Their heads against the trunk. His feet to the north, his to the south.

"the dead float lazily upon that endless river" "our mother shelters us from its torrent too".

### Rebecca Nicolas UNTITLED Acryclic on canvas 25cm x 30cm



### Fiore O'Sullivan WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE STORIES OF THE PAST TO HELP OUR OWN ACCEPTANCE OF THE FUTURE?

Shakespeare's tragedy, *Coriolanus*, was a product of social and economic crisis, within which ruling elites went against governmental measures. Only 57 years after it was written, the plague returned to London in 1665 and an Elizabethan version of "stay home, save lives" was observed. The spread of disease has occurred throughout history and has been referenced in each of Shakespeare's plays. We might take comfort in the resolution of one play in particular, *The Tempest*, where the characters experience growth after a disaster. Rather than seeking someone to blame for the present, Prospero uses "forgiveness" to put aside the past and "love" to look towards the future.

The most pressing antagonist of this pandemic

is time. Time to find a cure, a vaccine, tests. Time to open schools, shops, restaurants. And for all of us, the intense demand on life that time effects. There is too little time whilst people are dying but also, for many of us, too much time. Like Prospero, the most powerful man in *The Tempest*, we are all limited by time, regardless of how much power we have.

Rather than taking time to seek out someone or something to blame for the future, instead we can use the time to find reassurance from the past

be wandering freely in time and space. Like us, Hamlet experiences the challenges of confinement within his castle and withdrawals to a place of introversion where "time is out of joint". Days of the week and the clock are less meaningful, if not meaningless, when there are few commitments to observe.

The disorderly ship in *The Tempest* functions as a metaphor for 2020. The individuals are all vulnerable, regardless of their power. Every person is at risk from an invisible force in The Tempest and Covid-19. Rules set by experts must be adhered to in order that a collective safety can be reached (with the exception of day trips to Barnard Castle, of course...) It is not usually helpful to blame and be accusatory in these circumstances, yet that always seems to happen. In Coriolanus, "the Gods make [the famine]" and the rulers fail to take responsibility. During the first major outbreak of pox in Naples in 1494, Europe was involved in a war of blame. In 2020 the obsession with blaming others has not changed and it comes in the way of acceptance and progression.

Towards the end of Shakespeare's life, his plays handle time with great care and consideration. The actions of his stories are compressed into one theatrical performance and the passing of time in real life does not equate to time in his plays. He uses techniques to convince the audience that time is passing at the rate he has decided it to pass, for example the playing of music, which is dependent on a duration. Within an Act there are relatively short scenes on which he focuses our attention, thus making us forgetful of the clock. We are convinced that time has advanced because the story has. Shakespeare tells us by how much.

The lockdown holds a similarity; time is marked by rituals, for example the weekly clapping for our healthcare workers. Without these formalities, we would Ultimately the wisdom Prospero gains in *The Tempest* stems from love and forgiveness rather than power. Ariel is released after twelve years of servitude, Alonso is forgiven and repents for his sins, Antonio and Sebastian are put in their place and Caliban promises to be "wise hereafter". Perhaps we might learn something from Shakespeare here: that despite the tragic circumstances we can try and take it as an opportunity to exercise love and forgiveness, and therefore grow wiser as a result. In the midst of this pandemic we might try and use time to our advantage. Rather than taking time to seek out someone or something to blame for the future, instead we can use the time to find reassurance from the past.

# Lydia Cochrane METAMORPHOSIS







### **Rebecca Nicolas** TALK

She cried, she cried so hard. Hot tears escaped from her hazel eyes, trying to hold them back, grasping for air she could not find. Yet here she is, her smile so full of pain, her eyes glistening with tears, sitting upright hoping no one would notice. But I did.

We talked for hours and I could feel her heart breaking as the words came flooding out, too strong to contain. She kept fighting, convincing me she would be happy now that they'd gone but it happened day after day, tucked away in the girls' bathroom, unseen.

After I did what was right, I have never seen her so golden. She is so proud and though you can't unfold a crumpled piece without leaving marks, it doesn't ever need to be folded again and I hope she doesn't.

However, even if someone is wearing a smile, they can be shattering underneath. It is often said that the people who smile the most are the ones who are in the most pain.

### Ruize Ma PETAL MODEL

Mixed media (petals and ink on paper) 21cm x 30cm each





Petal model

# Harvey Cullis CHAMALEONS





































# Harvey Cullis LEMURS





























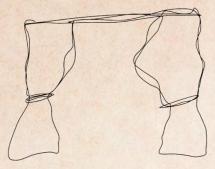






# Reuben Bance FIVE DREAMS

a shaken carpet dissolves and plumes of dust assume the shape of curtains

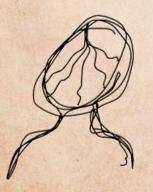




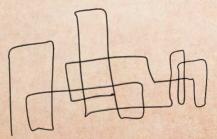
there is a clock in my room with a second hand which does not tick but creaks like a train or water

white noise of sun and skin drowns my head beneath a lake of grass

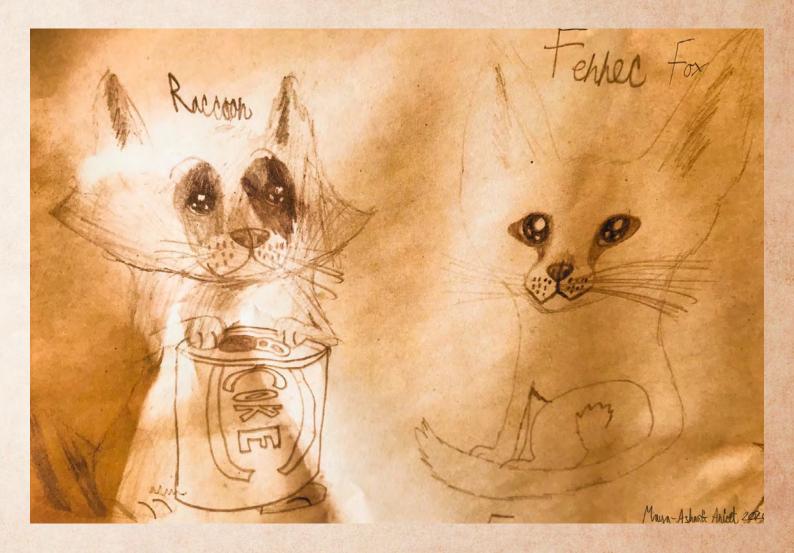




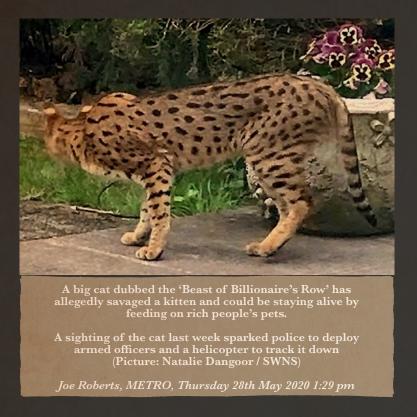
bricks and glass could weave a living or form the moss of an urban forest headaches feather and crackle unfolding a seam of discomfort amongst an otherwise uneventful afternoon



### Maya-Ashanti Anicet WOODLAND RASCALS Graphite on paper 21cm x 30cm



### Hugo Max SEAMS



Pink embers decay, setting the Suburb in Prussian blue. Minutes before dark.

Gaping roads lead you by the mansions of Wildwood, Ingram, Bishops. The impending Heath. You stroll past silent cars, carcasses slick with late light. Majestic sleepers. Some driveways are empty; you trace the line of a chain that slinks across the dull gravel. Roses with plaited stems arch and pine in fits of passion, frozen in the humming summer air. Electric. The sun has subsided, your puffy hands cool. Sweat becomes sweet.

Light peels across ground-floor windows, dark and sullen, below which bushes twitch as long leaves fold, breathing in symbiosis, shifting from lawn to lawn. Foxes scatter as you pass, then seamlessly re-emerge to trot alongside you before rejoining the shadows. You are journeying through an organism cut from forest. Houses should be separated by hedges, they once said. Gardens curated like galleries, you struggle under the rich stench of moist petals. Japanese maples guard front lawns, now looming drifters, their daytime spark extinguished.

Several feet away three, maybe four foxes gather, whining. Their infantile shrieks diminish as you approach and they disperse, returning to their meandering; a continuous stitch-motion from hedge to hedge. On the ground lies a small shape, from a distance resembling a sculpted pot. It could nestle comfortably into the palm of your hand. Night settles. Still, warm air pulsates through the watery cosmos. It is a kitten's head, neatly severed, taken too fast for any mess. Open eyes like well-formed stones.

A subtle wind calls you back. You anticipate the sensation of hurtling towards the far side of London. You detest the cold lights of the tube, the urine-soaked stairwells, caverns of off-white tiles. You must go home. You do not want to leave the kitten's head for you pity its helplessness. You cannot tread onwards, yet tomorrow will come. All day you will work with clay, distracted. In the early evening you take the train back to walk these roads at the same hour and savour their scent. Somewhere, in the third week, a casket of molten gold shatters and spills its contents across the stars. At this conjunction, you will sell.

\* \* \*

The woman leads you down a cream corridor. Early sixties. She may have been beautiful once but now her skin is cracked like dry sand, abused by years of fake tan. She motions to art on the walls as we venture deeper, tortoiseshell glasses slipping to the tip of her nose as she says Mondrian, Hockney, Rousseau. This passageway from the front hall, in which two identical red staircases weave from the pristine marble floor to the upper landing like the wave of an arm or swish of a ribbon, eventually opens into an expansive living room. A chandelier, limp as a corpse in elevenses daylight. The click of her heels like a metronome as we pass a Henry Moore positioned beside a diamond-encrusted sofa. On the mantelpiece is a small statue of a tiger poised in midair, its hind legs prepared to spring from the supporting branch. Above hangs a female nude by Schiele, bruised and contorted with blood-red nipples on fire.

Sliding open the door at the far end of the room, she beckons you onto the terrace. Through the rippling glass you see the far-stretching garden, gleaming under the morning sky. Early shadows decay with the rising sun which has hoisted itself above the chimney, melting fine beads of dew across the lawn. Although you recognise your handiwork, for it is impossible not to notice, you desire distance from pride. You allow the flaming grass to blind you as you stumble from the house into the fresh air. She laughs lightly, offers an arm to guide you and on looking up, your eyes meet those of a gargantuan skull. Your fingertips instantly recall the soft crevices of the maquette, slippery grey. Crusty clay churned with biscuit between your teeth. This break-time brought distance; you will cast it in plaster, tall as a man.

Pale flesh, in luminous planes, flows to form some unknown countenance. Protrusions argue otherwise; a sexual struggle, beasts at war. Passionate violence alive in defined cheekbones. Limbs. Eleven fifty-four, the sun peaks and makes it glow like bone devoid of flesh and muscle. A masterwork, she says, the smile washed from her face to leave wonder. The same bewildered expression you noticed at the show four days ago. She stood for what seemed like hours while all else swam under a film of champagne.

Scanning the garden, your sculpture seems at home among the bushes, beside the willow that showers green despair. A piece of you will mark this land forever, will live on the cold stone before this stately body of grass, blue in the mornings under the shadow of the mansion and ochre as the sun sets. The ground tears from your feet as you circle your work, preparing to return inside. It pleads for you to remain. Looking deep into contours of plaster you realise that you are full of seams. Somewhere beneath your ribs a titanic cavity empties and leaves you with nothing but clouded memories, voices. Old ghosts are hauled up out of the well, their musings patterned with minuscule inflections that rip the velvety sheen that has since formed. You are blinded by your own false skin, this consuming fascination: front lawns, edifices of brick worth billions. You forget what lies beneath the silent ripples.

On re-entering the living room you are surprised to notice a large bowl of red-brown meat drenched in a visceral translucent paste by the door of the terrace. You recall another at the doorway to the kitchen. You have seen no cat or dog or blanketed basket. The house smells like soft petals delicately plucked. Sandalwood, patchouli, violet leaves. The biting aroma of coffee and tree resin.

Earl grey steams. You cup the yunomi between your palms, talking, sitting on a leather walnut-coloured armchair facing the diamond-encrusted sofa where she is positioned with her tea, speculating, prescribing narrative to your work. The hours pass. You lunch with her, although she barely touches her food. Seared salmon cooked in honey. It arrives out of nothingness, the low-lit entrance of the kitchen. The bowl of meat on the marble floor.

Afternoon unspools unnoticed until the brass clock opposite the mantelpiece reads four. By the time you leave the sun lies flat across the Suburb. You know you have stayed too long, yet her creased smile dissolves your discomfort. A tug within as you drift onto The Bishops Avenue, scrunching across pools of pebbles and onto the pavement, waving as she lingers in the driveway. She backs into the hall, the door shuts and fissures slowly form upon the cable binding the two of you. Your sculpture is trapped far away, you are powerless. You stare into the hollow residences, all owned but few lived in. A fox waits at the street corner in late afternoon light and disappears. By the time you reach the Heath, the decomposing cable is housed in glass.

\* \* \*

Two weeks. You hear nothing, yet observe the remnants of the cable daily, occasionally returning to the Suburb at dusk to tread upon memories. Swollen raindrops banish you to the studio for several endless nights. Damp crawls across your paint-flecked mattress. Smoothing over your seams, you think of the woman with a piece of you in the garden of her mansion on The Bishops Avenue. The layers of salmon as they separated beneath your fork. The meat in bowls on the terrace, by the kitchen.

The irises need deadheading. Grass is tall after the rain, the bushes wild. They whisper in the summer wind. Violent cries of birds in the Heath's canopy. You exit onto Ingram and notice they have changed the street-lamps, sodium-vapour's burning fizz replaced with bright white. The dark is now darker. Last night you dreamt of dancing in her garden. The sculpture reached out to take your hand beneath the moonlit sky, snarling and roaring as you pirouetted across the lawn.

Whining stutters through the air, crescendos. The form of a single fox sprints down the street, struck by oblivion. You turn, the silent road stretching into night, points of light trickling through the windswept leaves above. The brittle tarmac barely supports night's gravity; the air sinks, claustrophobic and dense. You turn back as the whining becomes whimpering, short breaths, shallow breeze. Then a growl, bass register. The trees part from one another in your vision as you accelerate down the pavement. A tendril of shadow joined to a muscular hind-leg springs into the road, snatched from view.

You pant in the middle of the Avenue. Houses enclosed behind magnificent gates; boxed-up empires. There is nothing to see. You rejoin the pavement, continue on, then turn. A shining pool several metres back. You retrace your steps and kneel before the head of a fox, fur around the neck matted with fresh blood. Half-shut eyes, universes hidden beneath those lids. Mouth open, a bead glistens on the tip of a canine. You stroke the fur gently, fingers wet with blood, drawing tears. You would work on it at home, add clay and latex to bring it back. You want to find the woman's house, ring the doorbell, sit with her and see your sculpture again, resting what pounds within.

The crunch of gravel beneath your feet. By now you would be on the train. A bloodied hand rings the doorbell, leaves a print. Looking over your shoulder you see the towering gate of the house across the street, bookended by stone slabs, the building itself unidentifiable and caressed by dark. You ring again, the fox's head dribbling into your left palm. Again. You pace across the gravel to the side gate, anticipate the sturdiness of the lock as you lean into the painted wood. You pause, hearing the shy slip of shingle upon shingle from behind. Pebbles pour like sand beneath paws at a steady tempo. For support you lean into the door, feel the wood against your face. Cooling in the night air, thinking of the tail shadow, the hind leg that springs from the gravel at this very moment.

\* \* \*

Sinatra spins on a turntable. Somewhere. You are dragged across the marble floor of the hallway. The two stairwells meet and join hands above, bright walls washed a deep blue from what little streetlamp light prevails through the treetops. The corridor; thick black dark, except the Mondrian, the Hockney, the Rousseau, lit from below their frames by warm yellow lights. You no longer hold the fox's head but sense its wiry hairs stuck to your left hand by blood. Your nails sketch little red lines on the floor that will not be wiped away till sunrise.

The living room, silver. The moon must be sinking, two o'clock, three. The symmetry of the chandelier. You are deposited beside the diamond-encrusted sofa and a searing pain rips at the sinews of your ankle. Trying to scream, the muscles of your neck tense and you look to your feet as it purrs, teeth reddened, slowly creeping behind the sofa. It's startling gold eyes hover under your closed lids, grimacing as the pain transforms like self-moulding clay. The skin up to your thigh is neatly flayed, revealing muscle that has been eaten away. Your whole head is numb, can barely comprehend the pain.

Summer wind haunts the room, the door to the terrace ajar. You see a segment of your sculpture through the glass. A nose, eyelid, or the elbow of a man, the thigh of a woman. Steely protrusions under the moon. The garden beyond. Seams ripple, opening and closing with your breath. The Sinatra continues to play from the far side of the room. Strings climax, unwind and the track dies to leave a faint whir. A desperate lost needle, persistent against the centrepiece.

You pull your body across the shiny floor. Hands flailing in front, they clasp some rough leathery surface, the armchair. But there are cracks, tiny pores. Sockets and fingers, all hollow. Playing with it in your hands, the matter within is slippery scarlet, detailed with light blue veins, covered in silky hairs. You toss the withered suit far away towards the terrace door. Limp. The empty form of the woman, neatly cut open from the legs up to the neck. Well-worn.

Scrambling across the floor, back towards the corridor. The bass growl fast approaching, a sharp tug on your leg. Your chin meets the hard floor. Splitting, spitting, you roll onto your back and see the Savannah with its mouth to your foot. Leopard-print splattered with blood, layers folding as the meat of your leg is consumed. You long for the tube, to sway in the centre of the carriage amid the dirt. Staring into the aureate cosmos you become conscious that it is composed of gold leaf. Obliterating the surface, scratching away the layers of obsession and fascination reveals nothingness. Artificial constellations formed out of disgust, concealing old ghosts.

It will force itself through the seams within.

# Lea Kozokaro SAFTA

1

Black and white chalk on watercolour paper 28cm x 38cm

# Lydia Cochrane VITAMIN D IN THE TIME OF CORONAVIRUS

A factor in severity of COVID-19?

#### **INTRODUCTION**

COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a recently discovered novel coronavirus, the outbreak of which began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. The outbreak was declared a pandemic on the 11th of March 2020. Vitamin D has been proven to reduce risk of getting the common cold (Rondanelli et al., 2018). It also increases cellular immunity (Cantorna, 2010), and enhances expression of antioxidation-related genes (Sharifi et al., 2019). Recently, in light of reports that ethnic minorities suffer more severely from the virus, vitamin D levels have been suggested as a possible contributing factor to disease severity. Therefore, we set out to investigate vitamin D deficiency as a possible contributing factor to severity of COVID-19 symptoms by analysing a range of data sources.

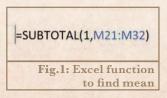
#### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Data was taken from Coronavirus Deaths adjusted for population (("Coronavirus Update (Live)," n.d.), Coronavirus cases (adjusted for population) ("Coronavirus Update (Live)," n.d.), sunlight hours ("List of cities by sunshine duration," 2020), UVB levels("WHO | UV Index," n.d.), vitamin D deficiency, vitamin D levels and skin tone ("World map of Skin tone degree by country (Luschan Scale) by Country - TargetMap," n.d.). Sunlight and UVB levels were used as points of comparison, as when skin is exposed to sunlight, vitamin D is made from cholesterol. UVB levels in the sunlight hit cholesterol, providing the energy for vitamin D synthesis to occur (Tsiaras and Weinstock, 2011). Skin tone is useful as a comparative due to the different concentrations of melanin affecting how much UVB reaches cholesterol, and therefore the amount of vitamin D produced.

#### **DATA SOURCING**

Specific statistics for deaths (per million people), and cases (per million people), were chosen as they are adjusted for population, making them much more directly comparable.

As the data for sunlight hours was initially given per city, the average per country was found, in order to enable comparison against the coronavirus data. I used an excel function (fig.1) to find the average, and then filters to individually select each country and record the average for each. I then chose the 3 months that COVID-19 was most active in each country and used the same function to find the average of these months. This gave the final result: Sunlight hours per most active months of Coronavirus per country.



The same functions were applied to UVB levels, to go from cities to countries, and 12 months to the most prevalent months to result in UVB levels per most active months of Coronavirus per country. As the vitamin D deficiency data was from a map, it had to be input manually in its 3 distinct categories.

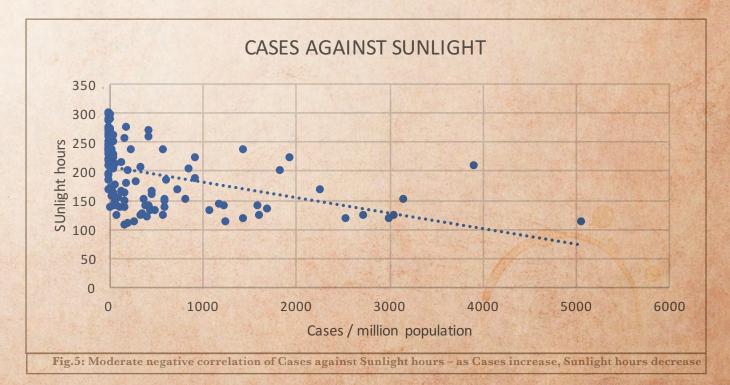
The data was then streamlined, blanks removed, and combined it into a table (fig.2). Following this, the CORRELL function was used to find the linear correlation coefficient of each factor against cases (fig.3), and against deaths (fig.4)

	Cases Per 1m	Deaths per 1M	Average sunlight hours per most	UVB Levels most active	Vitamin D levels in adults			Skin Tone Luschan	
Country	Population	Population	active months of COVID - 19	months of COVID - 19	<30 nmol/l %	<50 nmol/l %	<75 nmol/l %	Scale	Vitamin D Level
Afghanistan	22	1	205.2	A STATE OF A			A LOAD STORY	8.4	
Albania	180	9	160.3333333		and the second second		all all and	5.9	Con a star
Algeria	49	9	258.3166667		The State	Contraction and	and the second	9	
Angola	0.6	0.06	206.6666667			P. B. Land		12.9	
Argentina	57	3	201.3066667	6.666666667				6	42.7
Armenia	391	8	149	Part in the state				6.3	S. S. S. S. S.
Australia	254	3	235.6666667	8	4	31	73	5.7	60.92571429
Austria	1,600	57	139			and the second	The second second	5.2	
Azerbaijan	127	2	136		BROWLING ST		White of ales	6.1	State Char
Bangladesh	10	0.7	207.6666667	A REAL PROPERTY	36	80		6.3	and the second
Belarus	445	6	130					5.5	
Belgium	3,003	540	116.6666667				171212	6	49.9
Benin	3	0.08	238.9111111			120	and the second	13.3	1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1. 1
Bolivia	38	3	155.4666667	State State State				6.1	CAR PRAN
Bosnia and Ierzegovina	356	16	120.66666667	S. 19			No. Contraction	6	
Botswana	6	0.4	267.4888889	Charles and the second	and the first of	C. C. S. Mar	- The second	11.6	
Brazil	137	13	161.544444	9	Star Marker	77		6.7	17.60714286

#### **RESULTS**

Ca	ses Per 1M Populatio	n	De	Deaths Per 1M Population			
Sunlight	-0.421831222	-42.18	Sunlight	-0.298913675	-29.89		
UVB Levels	-0.413512035	-41.35	UVB Levels	-0.319091275	-31.91		
Vitamin D <30	-0.113479202	-11.35	Vitamin D <30	-0.20435617	-20.44		
Vitamin D <50	0.011654994	1.17	Vitamin D <50	-0.102760852	-10.28		
Vitamin D <75	0.18078103	18.08	Vitamin D <75	0.043802946	4.38		
Skin Tone	-0.323423072	-32.34	Skin Tone	-0.193703395	-19.37		
Vitamin D General	0.064481213	6.45	Vitamin D General	0.105060568	10.51		

**Fig.3:** Cases per 1m population against factors. Correlation coefficients are seen in the second column and are multiplied by 100 for easier comparison in the third column Fig.4: Deaths per 1m population against factors. Correlation coefficients are seen in the second column and are multiplied by 100 for easier comparison in the third column.



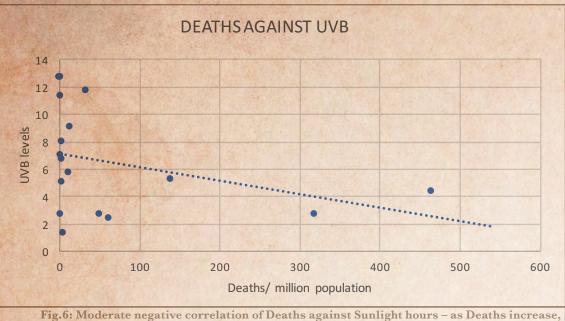


Fig.6: Moderate negative correlation of Deaths against Sunlight hours – as Deaths increase, Sunlight hours decrease

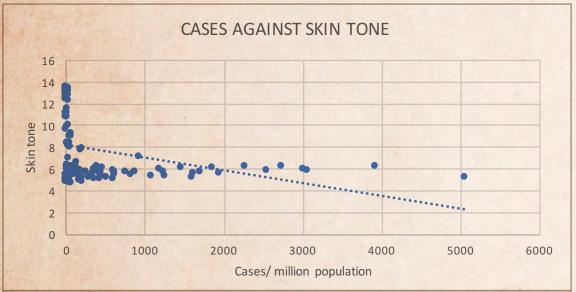
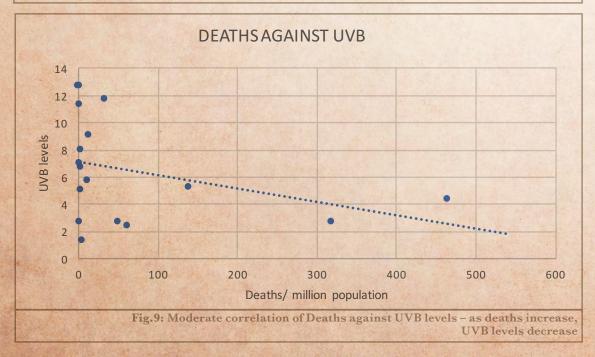
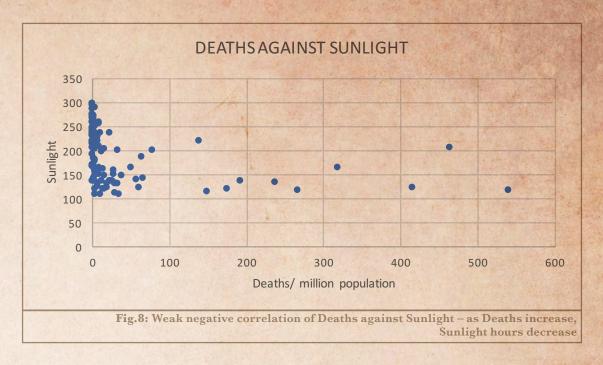


Fig.7: Moderate negative correlation of Cases against Skin tone (Luschan's scale) as Cases increase, Skin tone decreases





#### DISCUSSION

There is a weak negative correlation between deaths and sunlight hours, which could be attributed to the production of vitamin D being higher when sunlight hours are higher, supporting the hypothesis that low vitamin D levels increase the potential for disease severity. This is also supported by the stronger negative correlation between deaths and UVB levels, as UVB is the key element of sunlight that stimulates cholesterol to begin vitamin D production.

It is even possible that this correlation underrepresents the true effect. For example, generally sunnier areas often act as tourist destinations, with more people in and out of the country, and therefore there will be a much higher concentration of people in these sunnier areas, artificially inflating the case number. As well as tourist areas, some hotter areas, such as Africa and Haiti, are more affected by poverty, meaning that people are already more susceptible to the virus. Poverty and overcrowding, in Brazil, for example, also mean that the virus spreads more quickly between communities, and there are fewer hospital beds available, meaning more people die without medical attention.

However, an alternative explanation for our results is that COVID-19 does not survive as well on surfaces in hotter climates. Previous Coronaviruses have shown marked winter seasonality (Articles April 1 and 2020, 20), so therefore may not spread as quickly in warmer climates, which often have higher sunlight hours.

On the other hand, pandemics often don't follow the seasonality of more normal outbreaks, and the USA has 1948 cases per million people, more than triple the world average of 463.22 cases per million people, despite also having an average of 220.1 sunlight hours, higher than the world average of 194.69 hours.

Again, this could be a stronger correlation, hidden by other cultural factors. For example, there is a huge Mediterranean smoking culture, especially in Italy, meaning people are more susceptible to the virus, and often have worse symptoms, causing them to be tested and confirmed as cases. Another cultural difference is that, again especially in the Mediterranean, but also Asia, Grandparents are often much more present in family lives, with often multiple generations living together, causing more cross generational contact, meaning that the virus spreads more quickly, and to a greater proportion of vulnerable people.

There is a negative correlation for cases against skin tone, which is opposite to the expected result. However, there are again other factors which could have affected this, such as lower access to testing, and higher population density in many countries which have a darker average skin tone.

There is no significant correlation between Vitamin D levels and cases or deaths, but this could be due to my data not being very reliable, since there are far fewer points of reference in this category.

#### CONCLUSION

Overall, there is a negative correlation between principle factors in producing vitamin D, such as sunlight, and UVB radiation level, and severity of Coronavirus symptoms. However, given the lack of significant correlation between both Vitamin D deficiency and overall Vitamin D levels to coronavirus symptom severity, these results are inconclusive overall, and further investigation is required.

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World map of Skin tone degree by country (Luschan Scale) by Country TargetMap [WWW Document], n.d. https://www.targetmap.com/viewer.aspx?reportId=7301 (accessed 4.21.20).

#### SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Raw Data: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IQh4eyBcMCLyUoAE7Pu4W5ilkBUoQ62j/view

Eva Serksnaite ANYA (1)









# Eva Serksnaite ANYA (2)









# Matthew Herd YOU, ASLEEP IN THE MORNING

A tiny bird lies dying in the closing heat. I watch in silence. Fleeting shadows dart across it's broken beak, And fatted flies feast amongst the matted down.

I'm sure I had a meeting but I can't think. Or speak.

Years ago.

When I knew, as much as I ever did. You, asleep in the morning. Naked, save for socks. Sallow tissue, limbs askew, adrift within this pallid plot. I flipped my phone and climbed atop the counterpane to view.

All was long forgotten. That is, until today. Where this tawny clump of feathers ruffle in decay. A heritage of huntsmen stand proud above their prey.

But under my skin there drifts a doubt. A mawkish ferment fills my mouth. And gut blood drips down ratline ribs.

Inevitable considering. Reactionary.

We were sleeping then on separate sheets. Our cattish clawing had me weak and I was never one to speak, nor try to make amends. Then there it was. You, asleep in the morning. Drunk. Alone. But gentle. And it was all I couldn't do to forever own your pain.

Late lunch break, heading back to work. An isolated office clerk. I'm reminded of our torment by a torn and mangled bird.

It's you, you see it always was! I prise apart my camera's jaws to take a final snapshot. You've lain dormant since that day.

I turn to leave, to retch or run. Stricken in the autumn sun. And deep below the pavement, a rumbling insists.

Up through roots and down from trees, clatter branches, feelings free, and at my feet, the strangest thing, the bird's neck twists, unclasps its wings.

The gauzy film that blinds its eye dissolves and you make haste to fly.

Now back to the flat, you stir, you stretch,

I topple, my head upon your chest,

you wrap your arms around me, release your weary breath and then, with a dumb crescendo, the fact is screaming true,

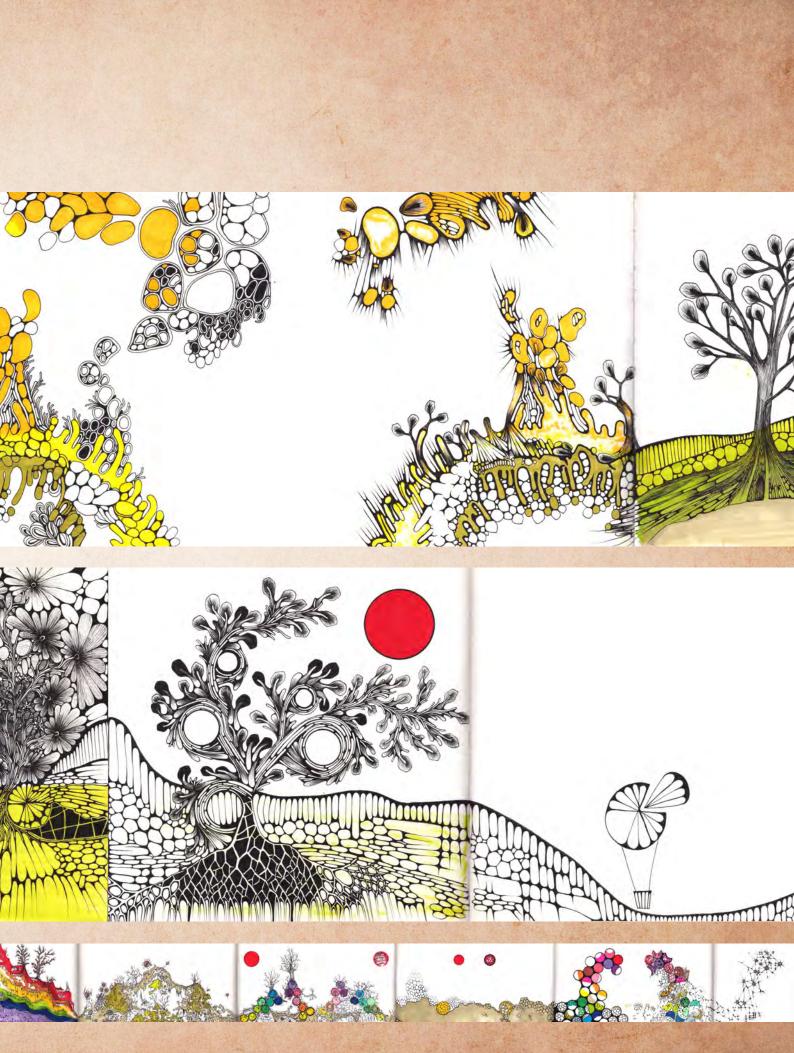
one simple realisation, of which I'm sure you knew:

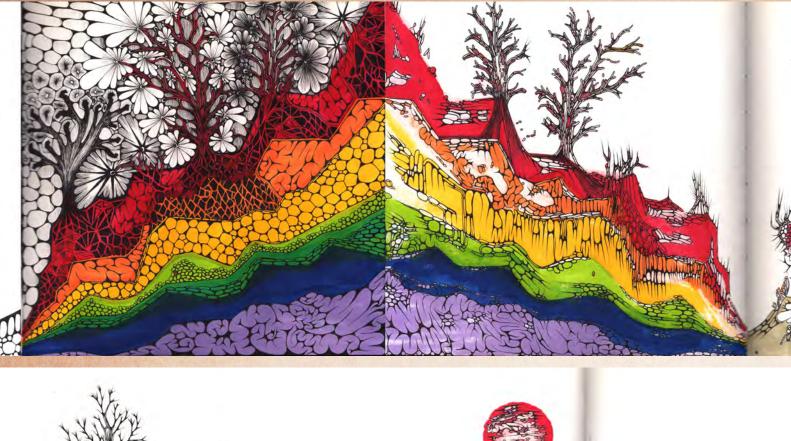
That I always, always loved you and never knew what to do.

## Nadine Sender UNTITLED

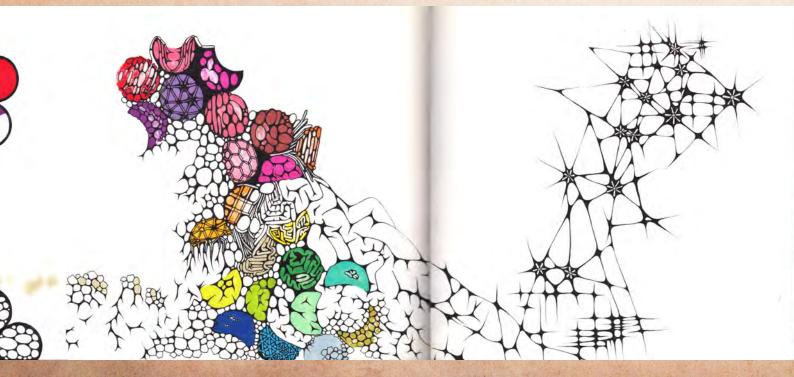
(Panorama, work in progress) Pigment pen and pro marker on cartridge paper 20 x 20cm

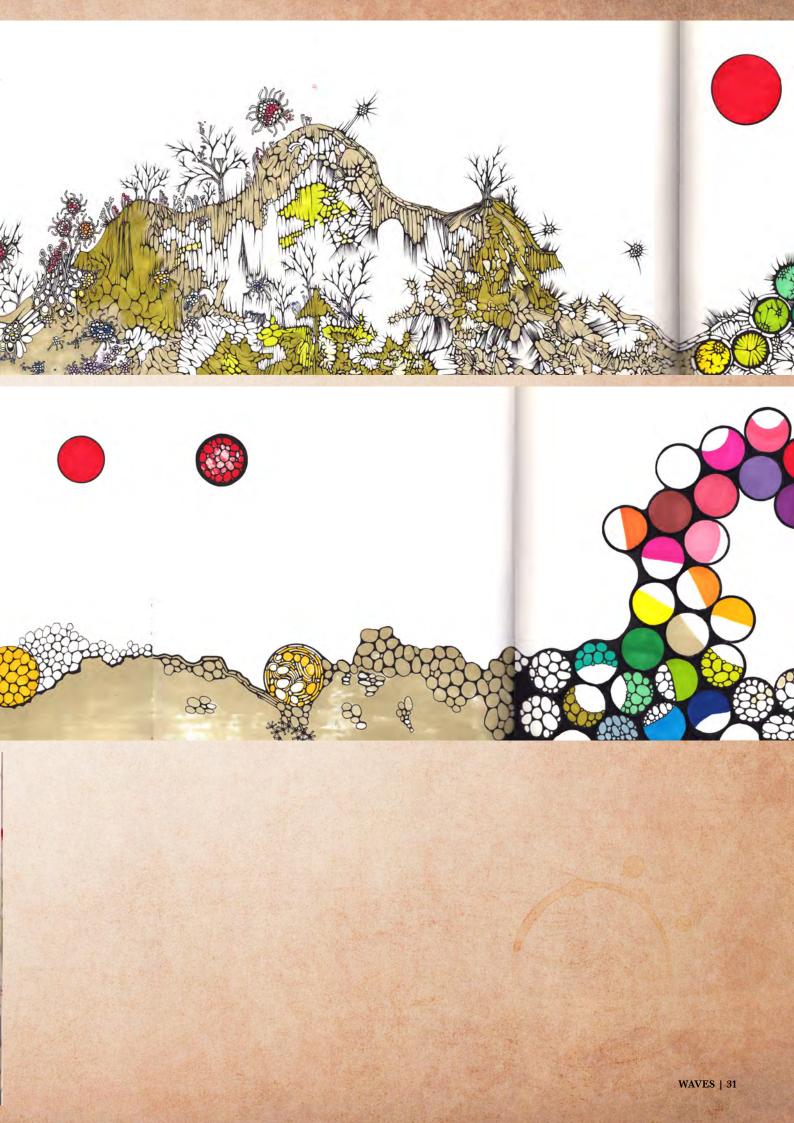












#### NOTABLE REWATCHES

Eraserhead (1977) [18] David Lynch

Paris, Texas (1984) [15] Wim Wenders

Dead Poet's Society (1989) [PG] Peter Weir

#### Dreams (1990) [PG] Akira Kurosawa

Eyes Wide Shut (1999) [18] Stanley Kubrick

Audition (1999) [18] Takashi Miike

Memories of Murder (2003) [15] Bong Joon-Ho

A Bittersweet Life (2005) [18] Kim Jee-Woon

There Will Be Blood (2007) [15] Paul Thomas Anderson

Norwegian Wood (2010) [15] Tran Anh Hung









# Hugo Max INTERLUDE

#### **MOTHER** 2009 [15]

Bong Joon-Ho's brilliantly paced, superbly acted and beautifully made murder mystery might just be my favourite discovery of this period.

#### **DEATH IN VENICE** 1971 [12]

Winner of the 25th Anniversary Prize at the Cannes Film Festival, Luchino Visconti's adaption of Thomas Mann's short story concerning a man's infatuation with ideal beauty is haunting, featuring an unforgettable and arguably questionable utilisation of Mahler's Adagietto from the Fifth Symphony. The finale is utterly tragic.

#### AMERICAN PSYCHO 2000 [18]

Brilliantly infuriating, Mary Harron's adaption of Bret Easton Ellis' 1991 novel becomes cleverer the more I think about it. Deceptively vapid, Christian Bale is outstanding as Patrick Bateman. It is unbelievable to think that this film is twenty years old. Never forget, it's hip to be square.

#### THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH 1976 [18]

Three years after **Don't Look Now** (1973) [15], forever in my top ten of all time, Nicolas Roeg's following film starring David Bowie in his first screen role is profound. It is hard to write about Roeg's films because their language is distinctly visual; just thinking about The Man Who Fell To Earth makes me want to re-watch it immediately. Having seen it thrice in isolation, The Man Who Fell To Earth has confidently crept into my top five. Quarantine has been a grand time to discover new films, whether classics I've missed or arthouse gems. Here are those that have, for better or for worse, inspired me.

#### IF... 1968 [15] and O LUCKY MAN! 1973 [15]

Two wonderful films by Lindsay Anderson, both featuring a charming performance by a young Malcolm McDowell as Mick Travis.

#### **A TAXI DRIVER** 2017 [15]

Not to be mistaken with Scorsese's 1976 picture, Jang Hoon's film follows a taxi driver as he unknowingly takes a reporter into Gwangju during the Uprising in 1980. Song Kang-ho, my hero of 2020, delivers one of his very best performances in a film that is hopeful but heartbreaking, hilarious and devastating. A must-see.

#### **CROUCHING TIGER, HIDDEN DRAGON** 2000 [12]

Ang Lee's sweepingly romantic martial-arts epic is for everyone, young and old. It is a cinematic wonder.

#### **GOODFELLAS** 1990 [18]

It is appalling that I have not seen this before. Martin Scorsese's gangster saga balances style and substance perfectly and works so well because of its rich emotional core. The inventive craft, particularly the cinematography, is underscored by a soundtrack of hits that just keep coming. A virtuosic piece of cinema.

#### **OKJA** 2009 [15]

Bookended by Bong-hits, I have decided to close this list with *Okja* which won my heart. It has similarities to early Spielberg, but as with all of Bong's films the narrative meanders in inventive and utterly surprising directions. His films function as urgent societal commentaries and as works of genre cinema, a supreme and generous blend of craft and art.











#### NOTABLE REWATCHES

Rango (2011) [PG] Gore Verbinski

A Field In England (2013) [15] Ben Wheatley

> Snowpiercer (2013) [15] Bong Joon-Ho

The VVitch (2015) [15] Robert Eggers

Mad Max: Fury Road (2015) [15] George Miller

> Queen of Earth (2015) [15] Alex Ross Perry

The Red Turtle (2016) [PG] Michaël Dudok de Wit

> Mandy (2018) [18] Panos Cosmatos

> > Bait (2019) [15] Mark Jenkin

Parasite (2019) [15] Bong Joon-Ho

# Emily Henderson THE END OF THE ROAD





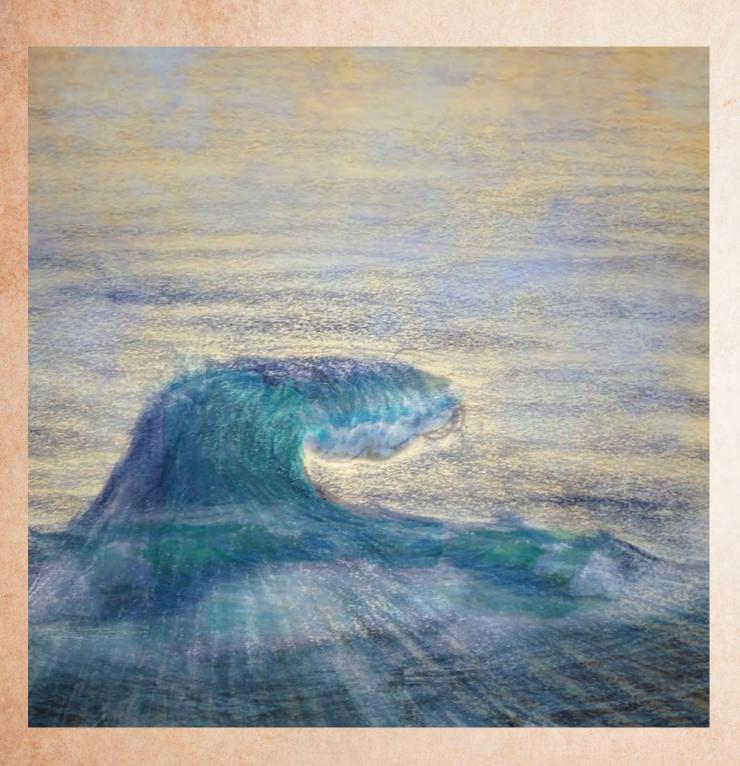


#### Abhisekh Chatterjee EDEN

I enjoy the sticky, sweet fruits of my garden Caress the exotic petals I grew from dull seed My rewards are plentiful – But the core is sickly, unsettling to the stomach That taste brings forth Questions, fears to which Shadows on my wall only listen, nobody hears Their answers I have, within – Sick irony it must be then That these are my creation, my hands' work A parasite of my own devotion To a past that haunts and whips and drives A present that must be seized And a hopeful future's temptation.

Petals fall silently on concrete, Bitter pith discarded. I will tend to my garden year on year, until I am nothing More than my work. Perhaps then you will hopelessly seek The answers I sought In the dust.

#### Phoebe Papandrea AGUAMENTI Coloured pencils and chalk on paper 19cm x 19cm



## Jack Gonzalez-Harding LIVE TO PERFORM OR PERFORM TO LIVE?

When Hugo approached me to write an article for Waves I saw an opportunity to think about what it is to be a musician, but now that my cat is my only musical company I'm not sure that I can say anything of significance. But I will try!

Upon first reading, one might think that 'live to perform' is the healthier of my title's two options. It seems easier and doesn't make us feel as if our next artistic voyage will become a life or death situation. But those three words suggest that we believe we live only to perform. A performance can be an event that's all about the performer or an event that's about anything but the performer. Few people enjoy concerts where too much ego is on display.

Does one have a right to call oneself a musician, or should there be a rite of passage? What defines "musicianship"? Music should be for everyone, but music can be misused as the source from which one's ego is projected. It is my core belief that as musicians we have a duty to serve 'the music'. 'The music' is a composer transmitting the outpourings of their soul to those who make music, sometimes via an array of dots, which the musicians explore to produce magical vibrations. Everyone involved is equally important whatever their role, because we are all musicians and share a common humanity. Here I see the beauty in the second part of my title, performing to live, because it means that whatever is happening in our day-to-day life, whether that be going to the cinema, taking a walk with friends, studying or practising, that's part of the equation; we are doing what humans must do… live! Those who prefer to live their lives wearing spectacles tinted with the tinge of success may fail to enjoy the life they are supposed to be living because they are chasing that which is unattainable.

If we live to perform we are living our lives to the fullest: we are visiting art galleries, reading great literature, laughing and smiling and, even more important, walking the long and exciting road of life, not only with those we are close to but with those that we aren't close to and even with those that we will never meet. We must try to be decent human beings and useful members of society before we lock ourselves away in our practice rooms. This gives us that which is bigger than ourselves – 'the music'. Remember to be grateful that life is far more than our next concert, because life is not about music, but music is about life.



### Marie-Thérèse Ross GRANDE SOEUR

Acrylic paint on wood with mixed media 138 x 59 x 5cm



#### SELF PORTRAIT Acrylic on wood with mixed media 53 x 42cm











#### Marie-Thérèse Ross MUSIC LESSON Mixed media 41 x 61 x 38cm



## Edward Stanley Tait ON A COLD WINTER'S NIGHT

All was quiet, all was dark, With not a single Londoner in sight, Only the shadows of the lamplit streets, On the cold winter's night, All was silent, all was black, Whilst the moon shone like a torch of light.

As I walked along the black stone path, I thought to myself "well, finally alone! With no one to guide me, no one to protect me, As I voyage towards the unknown!" But then just before I approached the edge of the road, I noticed a human figure, standing there all alone!

As the figure started walking towards me, My heart started wobbling like a floppy sea kelp, But then, I saw another figure walking up behind him, With a knife, ready to let out a big yelp, I quickly turned around and I heard the scream, I was scared, so I shouted for help!

Neighbours rushed out onto the road, Whilst the murderer ran quickly away, into the night, As everyone stood there watching the blood-soaked body, All their faces filled with fright, I realised; I was too young to be alone, So, I ran home, out of sight!

> All was quiet, all was dark, With not a single Londoner in sight, Only the shadows of the lamplit streets, On the cold winter's night, All was silent, all was black, Whilst the moon shone like a torch of light.

## Gareth Hunt LET IT GO



## FROZEN ROSIE LEE



## Mina Hobson-Mazur SKETCHBOOK EXTRACTS

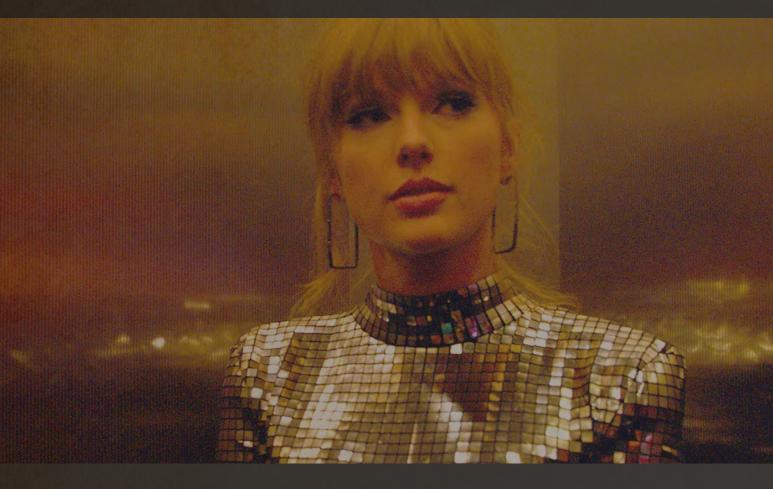
Mixed media 30 x 21cm each





## Jaison Jeyaventhan MISS AMERICANA:

A Swift Insight Into Pop Music, Politics & Perfection



"I would like to be excluded from this narrative, one that I have never been asked to be a part of, since 2009," said Taylor Swift in 2016 after her public feud with American rapper Kanye West hit breaking point. These were her last public words before withdrawing from the public eye for a year and working on her darkest and most cathartic record, reputation. Four years later, fresh from the release of her highly political seventh studio album Lover, Miss Americana sees Swift taking back the "narrative" that was once stolen from her and speaking more openly than ever before about current political issues.

Director Lana Wilson is known for making hardhitting films on complex issues, including her 2013 abortion documentary After Tiller, and Miss Americana is no different. Swift has been vocal in her music about the sexist double standards that women face in society - her latest single The Man imagines how the media would treat her differently if she were male, more explicitly Leonardo DiCaprio - and with Wilson she assembled an all-female production crew. In relation to the feud with Kanye West, Miss Americana argues that it is unfair to attack women for their opinions, however controversial they may be. In

exploring freedom of speech, Wilson's documentary pays tribute to the American country trio Dixie Chicks who were heavily criticised in the United States after band member Natalie Maines denounced President Bush and his part in the Iraq War at a concert in London in 2003. Maines' comment aroused anger in fans of the country genre, from where Swift originated, who boycotted and insulted their music; at one hatred demonstration people were encouraged to bring along their Dixie Chicks CDs to be crushed by a bulldozer.

The most invigorating moments of *Miss Americana* 

focus on Swift creating her sixth and seventh studio albums, reputation and Lover, in the company of producers Jack Antonoff and Max Martin. Seeing her at work following her emotional distress in response to the aforementioned media backlash is an inspiration, composing a bridge to one of the songs in no more than thirty seconds. On the day that the Grammy nominations were announced, Swift's manager Tree Paine informed her that she had not been nominated for any awards for reputation. However heartbroken she was, Swift was determined that her next record would be even better than her last and so *Lover*, arguably her greatest album, was born. ME!, the album's lead single, is crafted before the audience's eyes with Swift toying with the I-VI-IV-V chord sequence on the piano in the studio before it later explodes into the final pastel-coloured pop song accompanied by an even more a buoyant music video, also featuring Brendon Urie of Panic! At The Disco.

Wilson not only documents the upbeat moments of Swift's life and creative process but also the tragic elements. Life as a high-profile pop star devastatingly resulted in her eating disorder, a consequence of paparazzi attacking her from every angle when leaving the house, which she has been quiet about up until now. Swift simply confesses "it's not good for me to see pictures of myself every day"; the media's comments on her weight had caused her to stop eating. I was in disbelief when watching the footage of Swift performing on her in 2015: dancing intensely, singing sustained notes and performing on an empty stomach, leaving the stage feeling dizzy at the end of the show. I was hugely relieved to experience her revitalised energy in person at Wembley Stadium in 2018 on her Reputation Stadium Tour, dancing even more intensely and singing more powerfully than she had ever done before. Other moving moments in Miss Americana include Swift discussing the cancer diagnosis of her mother, Andrea Swift, her sadness expressed in the prayerful country ballad Soon You'll Get Better which features the Dixie Chicks. The documentary subtly reveals Swift's incredibly close relationship with her mother through scenes of them laughing together on a private jet and driving to a recording session in her early days of fame. Although I have revisited the film in lockdown, seeing it with a large audience at the Prince Charles Cinema back in February with my best friend had the biggest emotional impact.

Despite these unfeigned moments, the pivotal section of Wilson's film focuses on Swift's political views. The title is derived from the most forthrightly political track on Lover. Written shortly after the 2018 US midterm elections. Swift utilises a typical American High School relationship occurring in the midst of the political climate to voice her dismay at the Republican government. Previous interviews suggest that Swift had no desire to communicate her political opinions through her art, that she only intended to write songs about "breakups and feelings". However. heightened stakes following

the Swift-West feud made injustice. Her father and this, once again fearing for her safety. Regardless, in October 2018 Swift posted her most political statement on Instagram which received 2.17 million 'likes'. In this post Republican candidate Marsha Blackburn who voted against the Reauthorisation of the Violence Against Women Act. This Act protects women from the violence and sexual abuse which Swift herself had experienced. LGBTO+ rights is also an an issue which Swift feels a close connection to, as evident in the lyrics and music video of her 2019 single, You Need To Calm Down. Footage shows Swift receiving the award for Video Of The Year at the 2019 Video Music Awards where she invited her LGBTQ+ music video costars on stage and denounced the White House for not responding to her petition, 10 years after being publicly humiliated at this very event by Kanye West. She has now taken back the "narrative" that was once stolen from her. Although Blackburn won the election in 2018, a sequence depicts Swift feeling inspired to write Only The Young where she urges the younger generation to become politically engaged and involved, to challenge the result of the 2016 presidential election as well as addressing gun violence.

*Miss Americana* is a film that reveals remarkable and honest insights into a figure I hugely admire. Wilson has crafted an excellent study of a singersongwriter in her prime that, for this Swift fan, achieves perfection.

#### Nadia Potter WALL PAINTINGS COLLECTION Acrylic on plaster, Large Elephant 97 x 160cm,

Small elephant 59 x 68cm, Giraffe 78 x 205cm, Cherry tree 416 x 230cm



## Rio Harada-Parr FLIGHTS OF FATIGUE

Not much is worth its weight in dirt Fickle soil that gives us tools Learning and striving a new way To feel the same adolescent feelings Further decomposing the fragile artificial Into soil That consumes the hands that hold it Acquainted too well with the broken glass Once held Now buried into the soil Breaching the skin Blood spoiling the fermenting mud No witnesses Only regret and reminiscence Stand by idly crackling with laughter

## Eva Serksnaite SCENES ON THE THAMES





#### Juliana Niu PORTRAIT OF DEAREST MUM Oil on board 20 x 20cm



#### Antonia Zadrag THE STOPPING OF TIME

time is engulfing your mind, quicker than you might find. the waterfalls of ticktocks roam deep in the walls of your home.

> are you aware of the click? now this might make you sick, the only way out of this trap, no. it is not a nap.

> > it is death.

# Hugo Max **STANLEY HAS LOST HIS LUNGS** from 'THE STANLEY SERIES' Mixed media on wooden board 93 x 73cm



'The Stanley Series' book can be purchased online or by email

#### Philip Theodorou THE GLARE

Our shadows scuttled silently through the castle's veins, only the smokey dim candlelight illuminated our hooded figures as we swept across the great carpeted floors. Three armoured guards pursued us, their heavy metal clanging as they ran effortlessly; I turned to face the enemy, grasping my crossbow with every intention of staying alive and fired my last bolt directly upwards and straight between the slit of the helmet into one of their featureless faces. A yellow bile erupted across the great stone slabbed walls and continued to do so in jerks as the creature's heart kept beating, until eventually it collapsed onto two knees and then onto its front where it would lie amongst its own fluid for an eternity evermore. A hand dragged me onwards; my inner voice beckoning me to continue, saying that the plan must be completed. In agreement I forced my unwilling below to pursue its fate: I had to kill the King.

Eventually the corridor turned and split, with one path leading out into the courtyard and another leading deeper into the heart of the castle. As was the plan, my fellow contours ran to the courtyard in an attempt to lure our stalkers to follow, from whence I would bar the great doors shut and thus lock out everyone except myself. Back against the rough and sharp wall, I listened and sure enough the guards followed them out. I looked up almost in prayer, only to see a candle-wrung chandelier gently creaking as a drop of hot wax fell onto my shoulder. I flung myself outward and with an almighty crunch, slammed the doors shut and let the great log fall into its place. Walking nervously over to a window, I hastily wiped away the condensation cloud I had created, however it was hard to decipher what was happening for a mist loomed outside and choked the world in all its musky-silver moistness. Immediately the window was pummelled by a spray of blood, I turned my head away to save myself from seeing whose blood it was, however a gut-curdling feeling told me that it was not a Guard's.

The other path led onwards and weirdly the corridor began to condense, in width and height. Before long it was exactly the right size for me alone to walk down, until eventually it finished with a small, vine infested but silver-patterned wooden door. My steps echoed until they met their stony demise, my lonely presence being announced only to the surrounding spirits for wherever they may have been. I gently pushed my hand against the frosty metallic door handle, but to my horror the vine suddenly began to twist and curl. Sliding slowly, it entangled itself around my hand and began to squeeze, tighter and tighter. At this moment a great bashing coming from the courtyard door shook the castle's innards; the guards were trying to get back in. My bones sent a searing pain along my nervous system and in desperation I yanked my hand away, pulling the ivy with it. The vine died and I threw its carcass against the wall, my hand, crushed and colourless, looked back at my eyes as if questioning its miserable existence in such a world of pain.

The doorway opened to reveal a cavern, stretching for seemingly miles until a small speck of warm yellow light could be seen flickering at the far end. As I looked back, the doors withheld no longer and with an almighty crunch they were flung aside. The two Guards stood like gods against the deep grey misty backdrop, a reddish glimmer shining bright against their cold black armour. The fog now began to slither inwards, claws outstretched as it engulfed the castle's innards. To my surprise, the Guards removed their helmets to reveal an eyeless countenance, but even so I could tell that their glare was at I. However they did nothing, even as I crept backwards through the doorway, all I received was a blood wrenching wave from the Guard on the right, its featureless face resembling a smile.

A wave of cold, damp air washed over my face as I passed through the ivied door into the wide opening of the cavern. My feet tapped gently against the ground, even so, not a sound was to be heard; almost as if I were already but a mere ghost gliding gently across the silty coarse rocks. One by one, unseen torches lining the edges of the cavern began to light up, like gentle eyes watching my every movement as they flickered with every step I took. The calmness brought an unexpected peace to my inner self; small specks of dust began to dance in the torchlight, just as I imagined sprites lurking in the depths of forests would have done. However the atmosphere was somewhat supernatural, drops of water echoed through the darkness for far longer than they ought to and my shadow began to play around on its own accord, no longer at my servitude. Time passed,

the difference between minutes and hours became blurred and soon I was enchanted by this weirdly claustrophobic yet hypnotic place. The tunnel's silvery ending seemed never to come for I would find myself drawing nearer to the end, only to lose myself in a thought, from whence I would notice the cave's tip farther from my reach once again. It seemed impossible to keep focus, no matter how many times I attempted it, consciousness would always slip from my control. I knew that if I continued like this I would forever be in the grasp of the cavern, locked for an infinity in a situation of no escape. My eyes searched desperately for anything to keep me attached to reality; holding my focal point for enough time, I noticed the gentle waves of heat coming from the cave's lining of fire. Tearing a torch away from the cavern's wall, I shoved it against my left forearm, the pain ripping its way violently through skin to bone. Without warning, the other torches began to flare in a sudden surge of anger.

"Murder!" One word whispered by an unseen voice, bellowed through the cave's thick moist air. I ran and ran with an obedient shadow through the no longer sparkling dust, the end drawing nearer and nearer, the light becoming larger and larger until finally it consumed me and the cavern was no more.

I opened my eyes to find myself on my back, looking up at the ceiling, a dark oak backdrop encased a massive scenery of skilfully crafted bookshelves and desks, each laden with an ink pot and an empty book. Dragging myself off the soft carpeted floor, I looked around, the desks and the bookshelves went on for as far as my eye could see, with every desk exactly the same as its neighbour's. On every one of the work surfaces lay a jar, with a single eyeball in each, floating aimlessly about in a clear liquid. Waxy candles in golden sculpted candlestick holders sat besides each of the books, with the positioning of every object on each desk exactly identical as all the rest. I wondered who would have had the time to prepare everything to such precision when suddenly there was a rustle of paper from behind me. I turned and to my surprise, the colossal space seemed to have a front, at which there was a great writing desk and on it a book similar to all the others. Except that this book was being written in by a feathered quill, writing alone. As I walked past the vast amount of work surfaces, I picked up a random book to see its contents, yet not a single word was written anywhere, it was a complete blank canvas.

"Put it back, just as you found it," a sudden stern voice from behind shocked me to such an extent that I dropped the book onto the floor. "Pick it off the floor and put it back," she repeated with austerity. I turned to see who this was and horrifically I found myself in opposition to a spider, larger than a cow with its gargantuan poison tipped pincers, undoubtedly which would find no difficulty in dismembering my body. An obscurely shaped octet of glasses covered each of her many eyes and even as she remained looking at me, she was busy rearranging books on bookshelves and dusting various objects with her other legs.

I did as she asked, my hands visibly trembling as I carefully put the book back on the table with two sweaty palms.

"What are you doing here," she asked. I answered avoiding the truth.

"I am lost," I replied.

"Well that's ridiculous how can you get lost." She took a breath, "Why do I smell burned clothes?"

I lifted up my left sleeve and quickly lowered it again for I felt sick at just the sight. The arm was virtually incapable of moving itself and the pain was beyond comparison.

"What happened to your arm? I'm not blind and I'm certainly not stupid, you've come through flames to get here and you claim to be lost?" she questioned, irritably.

"Yes, you may not believe me or understand me but I found myself in a cave where my subconsciousness seemed it would keep me trapped there forever," I tried to explain, "I had to act as I did."

"Yes everyone gets tricked by The Cave." I turned to check where The Cave connected with this perplexing space, yet it was nowhere to be seen. "As for your burn," she continued, "it was unnecessary. If only you had enough intelligence you would've realised, all you had to do was open your eyes."

"What do you mean by this?" I asked.

"You have this strange inability to open your eyes, you have all the ability to see for your own accord, but meanwhile walk blindly over the sunlit places of the earth. But of course you have no idea what I mean," stated she.

I walked over towards the closest bookshelf, hundreds of books lay written on a single shelf,

yet as I looked further into the distance I noticed empty bookshelf behind empty bookshelf. I selected a book: "First Steps" it read. Curiosity opened it to find text describing the first steps of a small boy.

"'Arthur look, look! He just got up, for the first time!' said his mother, her eyes sprinkled with happiness. The boy's father put his right arm around the mother's shoulders lovingly, the two unified in this moment of happiness.

'Our boy. Yes he does make his dad proud,' replied the father. They both stood, with the window slightly open, giving a breeze through the sitting room to rustle their hair. The pair, tall against the troubles of the world, seemed like celestials standing up against the streams of sunlight breaking through the curtains, singing their silent arias of love whilst watching as their creation made his very first steps on the world, arms outstretched towards the parents he loves. Grandma came from the kitchen to see her grandson walk for the first time, step by step. Tears streamed from her eyes as she called for Grandpa to come, who rushed as fast as his great spruce stick could take him."

I slammed the book shut, figuring the past should not be dwindled with. My shadowed eyes raised upward until the main desk was in plain view, the quill still scribbling away, filling the very few last pages of the book. I began moving in its direction when I accidentally knocked an eye jar off a table with my weakened arm. To my disappointment, instead of landing softly onto the carpet as I would have expected, it smashed, spilling the liquid contents and the eyeball itself all over the floor.

"You foolish pathetic life form! Don't you have any sense of reality? By the time I return from the cabinet I do not wish to see that you have touched anything else with those dangerous hands, or I shall have your incompetent head removed from the miserable wretch of a body it sits upon." She turned and began her silent descent past the endless line of shelves and counters to wherever the cabinet may be. Just as she was about to turn a corner she added, eyes shining: "Your family was proud". I pondered on the thought for a moment, only to receive the blow with an even greater force of momentum. Though it had no physical form, it still threw me to my knees and there I stayed for a few moments, my head in my hands whilst tears cleansed my palms as they flowed from the very eyes I saw this unfortunate world from.

It seemed as if the heavens gave me the strength to carry on. I rose and once again began to step towards the great desk up front. As I was drawing nearer, the current book that was being written closed and began to float towards the farthest filled bookshelf. The only drawer from the great desk opened and a book of a similarly small size to the others emerged, however this one was a deep golden colour, with soft silvery threaded patterns on its front. The candles began to quiver as the book lay down upon the desk, the presence of its thud having made me think it was heard throughout the entire castle. I wondered if the Guards would have stopped to listen, just to this very thud in its uttermost purity.

The front of the book read: "The End", before the page turned and the quill began to write:

"He stood, gazing towards what he knew to be the inevitable, fate entwined dangerously with memories..." my legs collapsed in front of the desk, even they could not stand to see the truth. My right hand trembled violently as it opened the drawer from where the book came, and I was not surprised to see it filled with a few other books exactly the same as this, the difference being that these ones were filled. My eyes followed them down to the very bottom, reading "The Beginning". This was followed by "Family" then "Friends", which preceded "Love" and "Politics", until finally the last golden book, that which was currently being written, titled "The End". It was then that I realised the beats. Two beats, before a gap, before another two beats, before another gap; all coming from the very back of the drawer. Drops of nervous sweat crept their way down my cheek as I reached into the darkness to retrieve the source of the noise, I touched something warm and moving; throbbing even. It felt quite heavy in my hands as I lifted it out, and only when my eyes saw what I held did the true horror begin to sink in. A live heart; a human heart, one which was still violently pulsating was encased in my hand. Amidst my anger, my hand began to squeeze, draining rich red blood from inside as it crumpled, the thick liquid seeping through the gaps of my fingers and dripping down to stain the white carpeted floor. I realised what I was doing and I stopped forthwith, hand relaxing as it opened like a flower, with the crushed human organ in its centre.

The chances of success were now looking dangerously slim, and although the essence of time was very indistinguishable in such a place as this, I could still feel it running through my clasp just as the blood had done but moments before. Was this another trick to stall my progress? Even if it was so, there was one last thing to do. I reached into the drawer and laid out all the books on the table.

Apart from "The Beginning", every single other book had been damaged, the pages having been torn and crumpled. Even my heartless soul wept to see everything before it in ruins, my existence being represented before my very eyes by a few pieces of ripped paper. It was then that I heard it, far off in the distance:

Tap.

Tap.

The arthropod was returning, and I was sure that her decapitation threat was no joke. Although I could tell she was still far off, I had to move. Behind the desk was a great greyish silver plated doorway, the words "King's Library" carved beautifully into its framework. I stepped up to the very edge of the so-called Library and looked back, everything as it is and as it was, just to admire the beauty for another moment, before opening the doorway to hell.

I walked into a colossal hall, with heaven-touching stone pillars holding up a cosmically chiselled, cloudy white coloured roof. Looking up, I could see some of the stunning carvings upon the pillars, seeming to describe ancient times of happiness, of characters dancing around giant bonfires or lying hand in hand with family in long grassed fields whilst watching as fiery stars shot past above. A red carpet led to a giant throne made of matt silver, upon which the King sat: his beard, just as white as the ceiling above, hugged a pair of fissured lips. Wrinkles surrounded his spry blue eyes and his broken nose was crooked from many fights gone by.

"You have come here to kill me, have you not?" he questioned. I could not reply, his oceanic glare that once would have been so strong suffered far too much from life's erosion and now remained weakened and frail. "Go ahead, I have all the power to stop you but even if I wanted to, I would not. The clock cannot tick further, my time ended long ago. Only now do I realise that I could have done so much more, explored the infinities with greater respect for the finite time which had been given; but I have destroyed my cage, so for this I am sorry."

"The way of the world is cruel, strength survives on weakness yet the weak cry to be strong. Happiness exists in Sadness' absence yet Melancholy longs for Pleasure. At some point this vicious circle must break or else hell will become the living reality!" I screamed. Hot tears splashed onto my hand as I reached for my sheathed dagger. My arm shook violently as I drew it out, and to my horror I realised I was crying tears of blood. As I took a first step onto the carpet it squelched and the same gelatinous scarlet liquid oozed out to reveal its true colour to be white. I looked up at the King who sat silently amongst the shadow of his impending doom, like a saint amongst the chaos of the world. I glanced back to the doorway, slowly but definitely the doors began to close and I had the feeling that once they were shut there was no going back. I turned and looked back up towards the King, however he was not there. Instead, the terror of what he became strangled my consciousness until eventually I realised it was the reality.

An eyeball, a gargantuan eye, sat upon the throne, the veins red and pupils searching as it glared its way around the room. When it found me it stopped and stared directly into my own eyes, the utter disgustingness of this creature becoming more vivid by the moment. I stepped up to the silver seat and fingered the weapon I held so dearly. I looked through the great glass window which loomed up above the throne to see that the mist was still asphyxiating the outside, and I wondered why I deserved to be created as the weak who would suffer such unjustified pain whilst far worse people roamed about their lives of indulgent pleasures. My reflection returned my stare, and found itself surrounded by my fellow assassins. One by one they each lowered their hoods to reveal the faces of those dearest to me, the people my love had never left even after I had long gone from their my side. I looked towards my mother, whose arms lay outstretched towards me; then towards my father who was smiling just the same as she, my siblings fighting and my friends laughing; until my gaze eventually fell towards myself. My dry white beard shrunk back into my face and my cracked lips smoothed, my broken nose straightened and eventually the only part of me which remained the same throughout were my young blue eyes. I was myself, how I was in the present day. My grip upon the blade tightened as I lifted it high above my head, outside the mist fled the sunlight which, breaking through the darkness, gleamed warmth against the knife's gold patterned handle. I looked down towards the enemy; the eye, then upward towards my friends. No tears dropped as the knife fell, for it was only then, just before the moment of plunging darkness, that I knew what I was doing was right.

# Edward Longstaff ANDROID SINFONIA

'What did you do in the lockdown of 2020, daddy?'

'Well, offspring, for the first four weeks I worked on an electronic version of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, ditching his tunes but working from an analysis of the structures and harmonies – a sort of written out middle-ground analysis, if you will – and then playing them into Logic X using only pre-set sounds.'

'But why, Daddy, why?'

Long silence.

'Well, it's very hard to say now, but at the time it seemed like a good idea...

'It basically came from curiosity. Would Beethoven's tonal scheme and sense of proportion still work to make a convincing piece if divorced from the famous melodies and surface rhythms? It was fascinating to find out. My feeling about the result is that the first three movements work very well. The fourth was much harder to do and I felt that the process gave me some insight into the difficulty that Beethoven himself might have encountered in trying to put together such a relentlessly upbeat movement. It is a massive effort of will.

"When I started the piece, I transposed everything down into A to draw a clear line between my experiment and the original. But, as I went on, I felt that hiding the inspiration was unnecessarily coy, so I put it back into C. In a further tribute to Beethoven, I tuned the piece to A=430, which is our best guess as to what his pitch would have been, and used a well-tempered tuning.

'Fortunately, at this stage of lockdown the sun came out, so I spent more time in the garden. One day, I'll tell you all about skipping.'

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